

**REPORT TO:** Business Efficiency Board

**DATE:** 18 November 2015

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Community & 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: The Board 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 over £12.5m. 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.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

N/A

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

N/A

## **Halton Council Efficiency Programme**

### **Progress update – November 2015**

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

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

A new Library Service structure was implemented in April 2015. An ongoing evaluation has been in place since the new structure was implemented and this will be concluded with an on-site assessment of the service during November. The operation of the staffing structure and pattern of opening hours has been monitored, alongside analysis of monthly service statistics.

The functionality of the new arrangements appear well established, with no adverse feedback from stakeholders.

A formal evaluation report is being drafted and will be considered by the Efficiency Programme Board in January. It is planned that the workstream will then be formally closed and Libraries service management will facilitate any future changes / improvements.

Sustainable Revenue savings of £400,000 have been achieved.

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

This review is currently at implementation stage. A revised staffing structure and suite of rota's has been agreed, and will be implemented in January 2016.

It is anticipated that the service will be more stable and better able to respond to tenants fluctuating needs where they occur. Savings of £83,000 are expected.

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

A proposed To-Be model for the service was endorsed by the Efficiency Programme Board in September and has been subject to consultation with staff in the service during October. Responses are under consideration and final proposals for a future structure will be considered by the Efficiency Programme Board towards the end of November. Following that, a final structure will be brought forward for implementation.

Introduction of the new structure is planned for February 2016, with anticipated savings in the region of £140,000.

### **Review of Agency Workers (Wave 6)**

Following a period of in-depth analysis, this workstream has now progressed to implementation stage. A robust organisational approvals process has been agreed by Management Team, and endorsed by the Efficiency Programme Board.

This is currently being translated into an electronic process that will be used to make a request for an agency worker, and will also form the basis of the management authorisation chain. It will be based upon the recently introduced electronic 'Request to Amend Establishment' and 'Request to Advertise' processes now being used across the Council to provide a faster and more effective interface with the HR section.

The process will address a number of process issues that were identified as part of the review. In addition, management of the contract has been consolidated into the Efficiency Programme Office where regular management information will be generated and provided to Management Team.

Following introduction, cost reductions resulting from the implementation of this process will be monitored and reported to Management Team at regular intervals.

Having now established a number of organisational principles, a placement by placement review of agency workers is underway

### **Review of Premium Pay Arrangements (Wave 6)**

This workstream remains in progress, however priority has been given to the work that has taken place on Agency Workers (refer above).

### **Review of Casual Worker Usage (Wave 6)**

This review will be progressed from late 2015 onwards, along the same lines as the Review of Agency Workers.