

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

**DATE:** 26 September 2016

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director – Enterprise, Community  
and Resources

**SUBJECT:** Local Economic Assessment - 2016

**WARDS:** Borough Wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To consider the Local Economic Assessment for the Borough of Halton.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**

2.1 Members welcome the publication of the report;

2.2 Members consider that the intelligence gathered through the Halton Local Economic Assessment should be utilised when formulating the key strategic documents of the Council.

2.3 Members consider the development of an accompanying document to this assessment, which will provide a more detailed topic-specific analysis to assess the future economic threats and opportunities to Halton.

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### Background

3.1 The Local Economic Assessment is a key evidence base for the Borough of Halton, providing an accurate picture of the economic performance. The LEA looks to link in with the strategic priorities of the Liverpool City Region and will be key in providing supporting evidence for funding programmes.

3.2 The Halton LEA follows previous editions and focuses upon the following key themes which influence the performance of a given local economy :

- Economic Value (GVA) and Growth
- Employment and Economic Activity
- Skills
- Economic Inactivity and Unemployment
- Housing
- Land & Property Markets

### Economic Value (GVA) and Growth

- 3.3 Gross value added (GVA) is a measure in economics of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy. 28bn is the value of the Liverpool City Region (LCR) economy (2014).
- 3.4 £18,621 is the value per head of population in the City Region (2014). 5% increase in GVA per Head, for the City Region (2010-14).

### Employment and Economic Activity

- 3.5 59,000 people work in Halton. Halton has a higher proportion of people working in full-time jobs when compared regionally and nationally (2015).
- 3.6 £532 is the average weekly wage for a worker in Halton (2015). This is higher than the North West (£489) and the same as England (£532). The average weekly wage for a resident in Halton (£492) is lower than the North West (£485) and England (£533).
- 3.7 99% of businesses in Halton are Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's). The proportion of SME's (less than 250 employees) in Halton is in line with the North West and England proportions (2015).

### Skills

- 3.8 9% of Halton's working age population have no qualifications (2015). Similar to the City Region, Halton resident's qualification levels are lower than those of the North West and England.
- 3.9 57% of pupils achieving 5+ GCSE's A\*-C including English and Math (2014/15). Halton's attainment rate is higher than the North West and England rates.
- 3.10 1,420 Programme starts in Halton (2014/15). This is the same as the previous year, however nationally and regionally apprenticeships have increased.

### Economic Inactivity and Unemployment

- 3.11 16,200 of Halton's population are economically inactive in 2015. 64% of these are female (includes: student, looking after home/family, temporary/long term sick, discouraged, retired).
- 3.12 13% of Halton's working age population are claiming out of work benefits (Nov 2015). The out of work benefit with the largest number of claimants is ESA/incapacity benefits.
- 3.13 39% of Job Seeker Allowance Claimants (JSA) have been claiming for over 12 months (June-2016).

## Housing

- 3.14 Average house price for Halton is £151,232 (2015). This is below the North West average of £172,842 and the England & Wales average £271,981.
- 3.15 This is 6 times the average wage. This is lower than the region and Nationally (2015) – so more affordable.
- 3.16 63% of Halton homes owned. This is higher than the City region, however 27% are owned outright which is lower than the City Region (2011 Census)

## Land & Property Markets

- 3.17 Overall, enquiries for commercial property received by the Business Improvement & Growth Team have fallen since 2014-15, though this rate has lessened in the previous 2015-2016 period.
- 3.18 Site enquiries increased in 2015-16 compared to the previous period, with 36 enquiries for sites being the highest since 2007-08.
- 3.19 Demand for Retail and Office and Industrial units has continued to fall since 2014-15, though overall numbers are still higher than those seen post- Global Economic Recession.

## Next steps

- 3.20 That the attached report be published via usual communication channels (internet/intranet).
- 3.21 If services want further analysis to contact CIU if required.

## **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Local Economic Assessment will provide an evidence base for a variety of policies and strategies.

## **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None identified.

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

- 6.1 The Local Economic Assessment will have an impact on all evidence bases for all of the council's priorities, and services applying for funding may need to update their information.

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 None identified.

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None identified.