

**REPORT TO:** Children and Young People  
Policy Performance Board

**DATE:** 30<sup>th</sup> January 2017

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director Enterprise, Communities and  
Resources

**PORTFOLIOS:** Economic Development  
Children and Young People

**SUBJECT:** Proposed scrutiny Topic Group – Further  
developing links between Halton’s Businesses and  
schools

**WARDS:** Borough Wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to propose the establishment of a Scrutiny Topic Group to investigate the potential for further developing links between Halton’s businesses and schools.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: That**

- i) The PPB agrees to the establishment of a scrutiny Topic Group.**
- ii) The PPB agrees the proposed areas for further consideration that are outlined in this report.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Members received a report in January 2016 advising on work that had been undertaken to further develop the relationship between the education and business sectors in Halton.

3.2 The report took into account the emerging devolution arrangements for the Liverpool City Region and the long-term ambition to maximise the potential of Businesses and residents of the Liverpool City Region, and to significantly reduce the gap between the Liverpool City Region and the national average in terms of skills levels and welfare dependency.

3.3 Over the last 12 months, Halton Borough Council has been working with the Liverpool City Region to implement the devolution ‘asks’ to ensure that they are beneficial to both businesses and education sectors in Halton.

For Example, Halton has been taking a leading role in the establishment and operation of the Liverpool City Region’s Apprenticeship Hub. In addition, Halton is working with neighbouring authorities to establish a Liverpool City Region

Careers Hub, which would serve as a mechanism to improve the co-ordination and impact locally of careers education, information advice and guidance.

- 3.4 Importantly, the Liverpool City Region has an agreement that Government will work with the Combined Authority to ensure that local priorities are fed into the provision of careers and enterprise services – for all ages.
- 3.5 Additional work has been undertaken to both identify further opportunities for collaboration as well as consider areas there is the potential for duplication in the services provided.
- 3.6 Understandably, any arrangements being developed in the Liverpool City Region will have a bearing on the development and delivery of careers education, Information Advice and Guidance services in Halton. This will also have a knock on effect on the ability to form effective and long-lasting relationships between education and businesses in the borough
- 3.7 Consequently, given the strategic context described above, it is now prudent to investigate the potential for further developing links between Halton's businesses and schools.

#### **4.0 Points to consider**

- 4.1 In developing the scope of the topic brief, Members may wish to further explore the following areas:-
  - A stock take of which organisations provide careers education information advice and guidance locally and within the Liverpool City Region;
  - The resources both human and financial currently available to the local authority to develop links between businesses and schools;
  - The level of influence available to the local authority to shape careers education and information advice and guidance in schools.
  - An assessment of the policy context and research undertaken in this field for example "understanding the link between employers and schools and the role of the National Careers Service" Department for Business innovation and skills December 2014;
  - Work undertaken by Ofsted entitled Careers Guidance in Schools "Going in the Right Direction" and The Government's response;
  - The recommendations from the Area Based review of Further Education (Liverpool City Region).
  - How the strategic priorities of the local authority can align with the priorities of businesses in the borough and vice-versa.
- 4.2 One of the recommendations from the Area Based Review was to establish the Liverpool City Region Skills Commission. The Skills Commission will be providing oversight, challenge and direction for two key pieces of work:
  - A Liverpool City Region Employer Skills Survey
  - A Liverpool City Region Skills strategy.

Therefore, a Scrutiny Topic Group might wish to consider how the borough feeds into this process.

4.3 As part of the Scrutiny Review Members might also wish to consider whether the following is achievable:

- A consistent approach to employer engagement which is founded and relevant to the need of the local businesses.
- An increase in the number of businesses actively involved with schools.
- Better co-ordination of careers education information.
- Improved visibility in the services we currently provide.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Members are advised that in 2014 the Department for Education published statutory guidance entitled “Careers Guidance and Inspiration in Schools”. The document states that schools must secure careers guidance for young people so that, “...every child should leave school prepared for life in Modern Britain”.

4.2 Schools are required to have a strategy for the careers guidance they provide to young people which should include:

- Providing access to a range of activities that inspire young people;
- Build strong links with employers;
- Widen access to advice on options post-16, for example, apprenticeships, entrepreneurialism, or other vocational routes alongside the more traditional A levels and university route;
- Provide face-to-face advice and guidance;
- Work with local authorities to identify vulnerable young people and those at risk of not participating in post 16 education and training;
- Provide information to students about the financial support that may be available to help young people stay in education post-16;
- Work with Job Centre Plus to develop a smoother pathway between education and work.

4.3 A Careers and Enterprise Company for schools was established in 2014. It provides support to schools and colleges on careers information and advice. There is a £5m investment fund available to schools to support innovation and stimulate good practice in careers information, advice and guidance.

#### **5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES**

5.1 It is anticipated that the Scrutiny Topic Group will develop a series of recommendations which will help to ensure better communication and more informed discussions between schools, businesses, training providers, parents and students when providing a coherent offer aimed at improving future employment opportunities for young people.

## **6.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

There are no significant risks identified.

## **7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

There are no Equality and Diversity issues arising from this report

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

None under the meaning of the Act.