

REPORT TO: Employment Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 14^h January 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Employment Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board Work Programme 2009/10

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report is the first step in developing a work programme of Topics for the Board to examine in 2009/10. While the Board ultimately determines its own Topics, suggestions for Topics to be considered may also come from a variety of other sources in addition to Members of the Board themselves, including members of the Council's Executive, other non-Executive Members, officers, the public, partner and other organisations, performance data and inspections.
- 1.2 The key tasks for Board Members are:
- to suggest and gather Topic ideas on issues relevant to the Board's remit:
 - to develop and prioritise a shortlist of possible Topics for examination, bearing in mind the Council's agreed selection criteria (Annex 1):

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Employment Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board

- (1) Put forward and debate its initial suggestions for Topics to be included in the Board's 2009/10 work programme
- (2) Develop and informally consult on a shortlist of its own and others' 2009/10 Topic suggestions ahead of the Board's meeting on March 9th, bearing in mind the Council's Topic selection criteria

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Given that detailed scrutiny cannot be carried out on everything, Members are asked to target attention on a specific number of areas. The recommendation of the Chief Scrutiny Advisor is that good practice based on experience suggests that 2/3 Topics is manageable. Following their adoption by this Board these are then to be worked up as detailed topic briefs and agreed with the Chair of the PPB in conjunction with the

lead officer for this Board. The Council's Chief Scrutiny Advisor further suggests that this action is considered now so that an early start can be made on the scrutiny work.

3.2 In considering which are good topics to include in the work programme Members will need to keep in mind the Overview and Scrutiny Guide/Toolkit. Guidance on Topic Selection is attached as an aide-memoire. In particular the Board's attention is drawn to paragraphs 12, 13 and 14 which relate to added value, capacity and resources.

3.3 It has been suggested by the Strategic Director Environment, that the following might be appropriate issues to review at this time:

- A joint group with Urban Renewal PPB on Jobs and Skills for the Science and Technology sector.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Corporate Plan identifies key objectives in relation to creation of a twenty first century business environment that can support high levels of business growth, to foster a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship, to develop a learning culture and also to promote and increase employability. The Logistics Industry covers all these objectives and represents a substantial economic opportunity for the borough.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None at this stage

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None at this stage

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None at this stage

6.3 A Healthy Halton

None at this stage

6.4 A Safer Halton

None at this stage

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None at this stage

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The most tangible risk that can be identified at this time is referred to in paragraph 3.2, namely ensuring there is capacity to undertake the review. By keeping the number to 2, this should be achievable.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 All topics finally selected will take into account equality and diversity implications.

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

Document

Place of Inspection

Contact Officer

None

Annex 1

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Topic Selection Checklist

This checklist leads the user through a reasoning process to identify a) why a topic should be explored and b) whether it makes sense to examine it through the overview and scrutiny process. More “yeses” indicate a stronger case for selecting the Topic.

#	CRITERION	Yes/No
<i>Why? Evidence for why a topic should be explored and included in the work programme</i>		
1	Is the Topic directly aligned with and have significant implications for at least 1 of Halton's 5 strategic priorities & related objectives/PIs, and/or a key central government priority?	
2	Does the Topic address an identified need or issue?	
3	Is there a high level of public interest or concern about the Topic e.g. apparent from consultation, complaints or the local press	
4	Has the Topic been identified through performance monitoring e.g. PIs indicating an area of poor performance with scope for improvement?	
5	Has the Topic been raised as an issue requiring further examination through a review, inspection or assessment, or by the auditor?	
6	Is the Topic area likely to have a major impact on resources or be significantly affected by financial or other resource problems e.g. a pattern of major overspending or persisting staffing difficulties that could undermine performance?	
7	Has some recent development or change created a need to look at the Topic e.g. new government guidance/legislation, or new research findings?	
8	Would there be significant risks to the organisation and the community as a result of <u>not</u> examining this topic?	
3.0		
3.1 <u>Whether?</u> Reasons affecting whether it makes sense to examine an identified topic		
9	Scope for impact - Is the Topic something the Council can actually influence, directly or via its partners? Can we make a difference?	
10	Outcomes – Are there clear improvement outcomes (not specific answers) in mind from examining the Topic and are they likely to be achievable?	
11	Cost: benefit - are the benefits of working on the Topic likely to outweigh the costs, making investment of time & effort worthwhile?	
12	Are PPBs the best way to add value in this Topic area? Can they make a distinctive contribution?	

13	Does the organisation have the capacity to progress this Topic? (e.g. is it related to other review or work peaks that would place an unacceptable load on a particular officer or team?)	
14	Can PPBs contribute meaningfully given the time available?	