

## Employment, Learning & Skills SSP

### Minutes of Executive Group Meeting 27 November 2008

9.30 am, Jobcentre Plus, Runcorn

**Present:**

Mark Wilson  
Gary Collins  
Gerry Fitzpatrick  
Andy Guile  
Neil Maguire  
Jane Trevor  
Mark Grady  
Diane Sproson  
Cath Sharples  
Eleanor Carter  
Andrew Pannell  
Maria Salcedo  
Claire Bradbury  
Jean Morris

**Organisation:**

Jobcentre Plus  
Economic Regeneration (HBC)  
Enterprise & Employment (HBC)  
Halton Voluntary Action  
LSC  
Jobcentre Plus  
HBC Policy & Partnership  
Connexions  
Jobcentre Plus  
External Funding (HBC)  
HBC Planning  
Amion  
YMCA  
Procurement (HBC)

#### 1. Welcome/Apologies

- 1.1 Mark Wilson welcomed everyone to the meeting The Group provided introductions. MW apologised that he would only be able to chair the meeting until 12.15 pm with Gary Collins assuming the Chair for the rest of the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies had been received from:
- |                   |                               |
|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Kevin Mothersdale | LSCGM                         |
| Lyn Rhodes        | Riverside College             |
| Siobhan Saunders  | Adult Learning & Skills (HBC) |
| Colin Billingsley | Jobcentre Plus                |
| Cheri Kelly       | Jobcentre Plus                |

#### 2. Previous Minutes & Matters Arising

- 2.1 The previous Minutes were reviewed and the Group agreed on their accuracy. Matters arising were:
- 7.3: Benefits bus – JT informed that she now has a couple of projected dates to take this forward. MW felt it important that this is an appropriate gateway for pre-recruitment This has also been picked up by the Health SSP.
- 7.8: WNF Commissioning pot – next steps: GC will email MW his views on best way of bringing the core funding and commissioning pot together into one clear programme.
- 10 : Engagement Strategy – Skills Sub-Group pulling this together with the appointment of Marie Hoyles as Strategic Skills Officer.
- 12.1: DAF (Deprived Areas Funding) - The final paperwork has been signed off and GC will ask for invoices to be sent in.

### **3. Local Employment Issues**

#### **Section 106**

- 3.1 Andrew Pannell (HBC Division Manager Planning & Policy) explained the meaning of 106 Agreements (of the Town and Country Planning Act). It covers both planning agreements (as part of planning permission) and unilateral arrangements and is intended to make a proposed development acceptable by means of community benefits, local employment & training strategies, open spaces etc., that would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms
- 3.2 MW provided an example of S106 being used in the Tesco and Debenhams developments in Warrington where permission was only granted with agreement that a number of jobs would be available, although not necessarily guaranteed. Working in partnership with Debenhams, who designed the pre-recruitment training and offered interviews to candidates with a range of needs, JCP ran a series of recruitment programmes.
- 3.3 Andrew Pannell felt that Halton should take a consistent and universal approach where developers were informed of what would be required of them. It is recognised that S106 works best with partnership working starting with regeneration officers and those responsible for planning the different streams for Halton.
- 3.4 GC queried whether a quick framework for sector specific local training places could be established with the legalities following on and how funding could be injected. It was felt that maybe a filtering document could be issued which has several criteria.
- 3.5 NM informed that LSC have a routeway programme for pre-employment. The Halton Investors' Handbook was launched at the recent Skills Sub-Group meeting.
- 3.6 AG suggested specific advertising of jobs according to type and on a voluntary basis and that at LSP level all partners could sign up to this. Jean Morris informed that contractors would need to be advised how scoring took place when the tender packs were issued.
- 3.7 MW emphasised the importance for Halton, especially LSOAs. GC enquired whether any unallocated WNF could be used
- Action:** MW and GC to reflect on the best way to formulate this, looking at putting into place a cross-cutting piece of work with an approach to the LSP board by correspondence.

#### **HBC Procurement**

- 3.8 Jean Morris (Head of Procurement) informed the Group that there is currently a lot of focus on working with other Merseyside authorities since within Halton there is no central procurement unit. The team is working on setting standards for documents and have created a website to advise contract opportunities.
- 3.9 MW suggested a further meeting with JM to review forthcoming contracts from which it may be possible to invite local providers with brokerage arrangements to deliver a project. JM felt it would be necessary to look at standing orders with a need to be proactive. Review of the procurement strategy for the next 3 years has now commenced.

#### **Construction Employment Integrator Project**

- 4.0 Maria Salcedo of Amion Consulting provided a background to Amion, the core functions of the CEI and outlined the project. A briefing paper was circulated.
- 4.1 A question and answer session followed:
- AG queried whether the model had been tried outside the construction industry. MS replied that it had not been but felt it could be applied.
  - It was suggested that it might be possible for Wirral to champion the model on behalf of the City Employment Strategy and whether the NWDA would be interested in this type of approach.

- DS explained that for Connexions success would be turning poor quality candidates into good candidates and how you could go about it. Training programmes are available but there is a mismatch between the candidates' ability and their moving into industry.
  - From an LSC perspective it would seem that construction is the natural sector to pick with jobs ranging from the actual construction to end use.
  - GC said he didn't see much difference between the model and other construction initiatives.
  - MW cautioned that previous house building initiatives had worked in a small way but looking at scale the numbers of local people into local jobs had not been realised. However, Halton does have a range of opportunities most of which will happen, such as the Bridge, Widnes Waterfront and within a 2-year span there are enough projects to consider how to proceed providing a model has been put in place.
- Action: NM to speak to SS/Skills Group to prepare a proposal to bring back to the Group recommending how Halton can adapt the model, real cost/funding implications, integration with HEP approach, inclusivity, etc.**

## 5. Credit Crunch/Redundancies

- 5.1 MW has written to David Parr and other colleagues setting out JCP's perspective on redundancies and action to be taken. There has been a doubling of the Regional Redundancy Fund. He felt it important that local partners have a joint approach. JT to discuss with everyone to make sure have quick response in place. GF commented that in Halton there are a high number of SMEs (up to 250 employees) and any scheme will need to be able to support these. LSC have an early response model and together with JCP/NWDA have put together a regional redundancy blue print. GC felt the main issue is to keep individuals motivated with the focus on making a good transition and 'holding on' to the individual. It is a real challenge for the LSP.
- AG felt that there will be lessons to be learned for the Group over the next few years and it would be timely to review action plans.
- JCP will be contacting everyone re the letter sent out including the letter sent to MPs. If anyone has not received this they should contact JT for a copy.
- 5.2 MW outlined presentations and discussions for care leavers at the last LSP meeting. This year there seems to be no funding for care leavers. MW stated he needs to be involved in discussions regarding care leavers. In the subsequent discussion:
- MW promised to try and make more placements with appropriate individuals and providers.
  - GC queried the lack of funding for the care leavers employment work as he understood £65,000 of WNF had been allocated from the CYP SSP.
  - DS informed that Connexions are learning lessons and there is real work to be done. A report showing Connexions data will be brought to the next meeting.
- Action: DS**
- NM felt a potential solution would be for an employer pool to provide placements on a short term basis (as was a previous Merseyside project). Now out to tender. Must have a link either as a sector or group of bodies.
  - The Commissioning pot plan has £120,000 for wages to cover the first year cost of employing a care leaver. However, this was based on there being a dedicated employment officer to support the care leavers and their supervisors. With no progress made on appointing such a post (it was to be funded as part of the care leavers employment project mentioned above), this brings into question the waged scheme.

- CB suggested links with VOLA (Voluntary & Community Sector Learning and Skills Consortium). If care leaver jobs are to be increased then more funding will need to be made available.

## 6. Budget

6.1 GC outlined the revised Financial Plan as regards particular proposals. He advised that it is necessary to ensure that all SLAs are in place.

- Apprenticeships : Gerry Fitzpatrick
- Pre L2 : Siobhan Saunders
- Foundation Learning: Riverside College
- NEET : Allocated to NEET Strategy Group
- Employability : Siobhan Saunders
- NEO : Gerry Fitzpatrick
- Moped : Transport (David Hall)
- Inward Support : Gerry Fitzpatrick
- Enterprise : Gerry Fitzpatrick

6.2 DAF is now resolved with the small balance to meet the costs of the New Start Centre.

## 7. Riverside College

7.1 JW and JT to meet on 15 December to progress the Pre-Recruitment Programme and Foundation Training and agree on how the programme is to be implemented.

7.2 **Action: College to produce an SLA within the deadline.**

## 8. Sub-Group Reports

- GF informed that there had been 112 new business start-ups since the project started, creating 79 jobs. New businesses now receive a £500 start-up grant.
- GC reported that from NWDA meetings, it looks as though Merseyside local authorities are to be used to promote/deliver the NWDA business start-up programmes. The Halton figure is c180k per annum probably for the next 3 years although this money can only be used for start-up advice and priority customers. (NWDA works on approx. 2.5k per start-up). There are a number of issues yet to be resolved and it is planned to take a report to the Enterprise Board.

## 9. LSP Update Reports

9.1 MG outlined the reports circulated with the agenda and the following was noted:

- Sustainable Community Strategy mid-term review – this is updating the original Strategy to ensure it remains relevant through to 2011. The update document will include the LAA indicators. MG stated that support in updating the ELS indicators, as well as the SSP's version for 2025 would be welcome.
- LAA Review and Refresh – the report highlighted the timetable for the review and refresh through to March. MD noted that action plans on each indicator for Halton were submitted to Government Office earlier this week and feedback has yet to be received.

## 10. Any Other Business

10.1 There was no other business.

## 11. Date and Time of next meeting

11.1 Date: Thursday 15 January 2009  
 Time: 9.30 am  
 Venue: To be confirmed.

## **Working Neighbourhoods Fund**

### **ELS SSP Core 2008-09**

#### **Skills for life assessor**

The Skills for Life project will continue to bring together the organisations supporting and delivering Skills for Life learning provision in Halton to work collaboratively to provide initial and diagnostic assessment for a range of individuals e.g. employed and unemployed people, parents and carers etc to establish their starting point. This will support the decision making process when advising and guiding learners to the most appropriate learning provision.

#### **YMCA Skills for Life project worker**

Halton YMCA is an accredited Foyer and Provider of accommodation and Training. We work with the most disadvantaged residents of Halton, many having a number of barriers which can reduce their ability to moving on (including alcohol and drug abuse.) If these barriers are ignored, this may in turn affect the ability to sustain employment. 70% of our residents have a basic skills need. Working with Basic Skills Agency online material we will utilise our IT Centre and deliver our "Everyone can learn to Learn" Skills for life programme, which involves creative media and art, together with basic skills. One worker will be attributed to this Project.

#### **YMCA lone parents IAG**

We aim to take four Information Officers out into the Community within the deprived wards and deliver Information in regard to In Work benefit Calculations and Tax credit information in partnership with CAB and JCP. We will take ex claimants from these circumstances and train them to engage the very communities which they understand, learning from their own experiences.

#### **Business Survey**

Survey of local businesses skills issues and needs. Next survey 2009/10

#### **Childcare**

The project would be two part-time childcare courses, each incorporating 2 two-hour sessions of contact time each week for 32 weeks. Costings are initially for 2 groups of 15 students. In addition, learners would be expected to fulfil work placement requirements of 40 days for full achievement of the qualification. The teaching will take place in the Kingsway Learning Centre and will be delivered by HNC's Adult Learning and Skills Development Team. Childcare for adults attending the course will be offered as part of this project. Participants will also complete a basic paediatric first aid certificate and receive safeguarding training as part of the course. The course is accredited by the Council for Award in Children's Care and Education at level 2. The project will support Halton's Children's Workforce Strategy and will attempt to address the skills shortages within the childcare sector. Whilst full time qualifications are available in Halton, those adults who attend Family Learning courses at Level 1 on a part-time basis find it difficult to make the transition to full time study. However, there are currently no part time level 2 qualification courses and this project would attempt to fill this gap.

## **Halton Family Groups**

The project aims to foster a culture of learning which is valued and raises skill levels through the adult population within Halton.

Originally run through Halton Family Groups and have now become an independent NCH project working in partnership with Halton Children's Centres.

The project is run by NCH, and offers local people within Halton the opportunity to complete an NVQ 2 in Children's Care Learning and Development, which is run through NCH learning Centre, and accredited by City and Guilds.

To be able to access this opportunity each candidate is inducted through NCH as a volunteer, this involves an application form and completing a CRB check. Through the safer care policy they will then be supported through their award by NCH.

Each candidate will then be inducted and registered onto the NVQ Programme, if the candidate already has a placement i.e. runs their own group, volunteers in a school, children's Centre then this can be used as their placement and this is where they will be assessed. If not a placement will be sort for the candidate.

Each candidate will need to be volunteering in the placement for min of 3 hours per week (L2) 8hpw (L3).

The candidates will receive access to workshops and regular meetings which are arranged to guide them through their award with their Assessor, they will also be able to access NCH training and Early Years training.

The Level 2 award is made up of 6 core units and one optional unit.

The Level 3 award is made up of 5 core units and 4 optional units.

Each unit is carefully planned with the candidate and the assessor, so that the candidate knows exactly what they need to do and can take ownership of their award.

The candidate has to show competency in skills and knowledge base within each unit (national standards). There is a variety of ways a candidate can provide evidence for this, although most of the evidence will be from their assessor observing their work within their placement.

The duration of the award is up to the candidate's and how quickly they can work with their assessor to show their competency at the correct level. But they will have a maximum of 2 years to complete a level 2.

Most candidates complete their award between 10 - 16 months again depending on quick turnover of evidence for their portfolio.

Candidates are certificated for individual Units and gain an over all certificate on completion.

## **Enterprise Development**

The Community Strategy for Halton has identified that the following outcomes to be achieved by 2011 will contribute to supporting the key priority of fostering a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship in the borough:

- Increase rate of self-employment by 20%
- Increase number of VAT registrations by 15%

The ELS SSP has developed the 'Connections, Connectivity and Communications : Enterprise Strategy and Action Plan' that sets out the steps that need to be taken to develop a thriving enterprise culture. The vision is that across Halton:

***“Anybody with talent, potential and drive to succeed in business should have the opportunity and necessary support to do so, regardless of their background or where they live”.***

The Enterprising Halton programme will be responsible for co-ordinating enterprise related activity across the borough and will provide an Enterprise Outreach and Coaching service to residents that are workless and/or unemployed who live in one of the 7 priority wards or are a member of the priority groups identified in the LAA. The Enterprise coaches will also offer ongoing advice and business support to new start-ups that have been assisted by the programme.

The Enterprising Halton programme targets for 2008/9 are:

- 220 new business enquiries
- 55 new start-ups
- 10 new VAT registrations
- 3 social enterprises created or expanded

## **Halton People into Jobs**

Halton People into Jobs and HBC's Employment Team deliver a range of services from two separate sites. In 2008/2009 a proposed restructure will take place within the Enterprise & Employment Division, which includes the merger of the two services to provide a more streamline service to residents from the priority wards and priority customer groups.

The merge will require relocating up to 10 staff from the Heath to Rutland House. Full training for staff will be required to enable a more co-ordinated approach when targeting priority group customers offering a menu of work focused interventions via a range of activities delivered in Halton with particular focus on DAF wards, where there are high concentrations of people in receipt of working age benefits (JSA, IB, IS, DLA, etc)

*What will be done:* The service will tackle economic inactivity and workless ness by coordinating and integrating a range of employability and capacity building interventions offered by HPIJ and partner organisations such as JCP, Connexions, Adult Learning Team, Shaw Trust, Link Up etc. Access to MATRIX accredited Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) from which an assessment of the individuals' need will be done in relation to employment support and a progression route developed. Individuals' can access direct support from HPIJ (Employment Charter, Halton Inspiring Women, Job Brokering, 121 IAG, In work Support and financial support), along with referrals and signposting to other suitable provision to help them on their progression route.

*How will this be done:* By working in partnership with internal/external organisations such as JCP, Link Up, Shaw Trust, Connexions, HBC's Adult Learning and Employment Teams. Individuals will be assisted in progressing towards work through being supported with: (not exhaustive) basic skills, confidence building, work experience placements, application and interview skills, job matching to local jobs and in work support.

*Who will do this:* Delivered directly by Job Brokers qualified to NVQ level and experienced in providing IAG in relation to employment and employability skills. Supported by two level 4 team leaders. The quality of IAG is quality assured via MATRIX (May 2007). Partners will include (not exhaustive): JCP, Shaw Trust, Connexions, Link Up, Adult Learning, Welfare Rights, Children's Centres, Crosby Training, A4E.

## **HPIJ partnership**

The Partnership is an enhancement and improvement of existing work delivered by Halton People Into Jobs (HPIJ). The HPIJ team will re-focus activity to integrate with a wider approach that sees all ELSSP members and many from other SSP's in our LAA, work together to ensure that Halton residents in priority groups/wards are better able to compete for job and training opportunities over the next three years.

Led by HPIJ with close involvement of Jobcentre Plus and the ELSSP Skills Group, the Partnership will offer a total support package to priority customers, both those seeking work & training, and Employers. The Partnership will in effect offer help at all stages of a typical customer journey :

The existing HPIJ team will be refocused on an intensive programme of customer and employer engagement. Concentrating on the 7 priority Wards the team will increase outreach in the local community, agree a big increase in the number of local venues for training & pre recruitment across Halton, carry out a wide range of communication activities and gradually build a live database of customers agreeing to take part in skills and pre recruitment programmes.

For Employers the team will increase contacts and launch an awareness campaign throughout Halton & wider afield as agreed by the Partnership i.e. OMEGA - promoting the Pre Recruitment Partnership. The new design service will work directly with employers to tailor pre recruitment provision to company need and importantly identify and develop company specific training programmes for available vacancies. Overtime this will result in a business focused set of training programmes applicable to key sectors within Halton.

## **Supported Employment**

### **Halton ILM**

The project is aimed at improving the employability of local priority residents who are unemployed by placing individuals within high quality work experience placements coupled with job focused training. It will enhance the existing portfolio of LSC and other programmes by providing a period of 'paid' employment. Economic Regeneration's Enterprise & Employment Team will manage the project.

An Employment Officer will source work placements for ILM workers with local employers; arrange for any job focussed training that may be required; and will monitor and evaluate the programme. Prior to commencement the ILM, workers will undertake a 4 day Induction that will include Health & Safety, Manual Handling and First Aid. ILM workers will be paid minimum wage i.e. £3.40 p.h. at 16/17 year olds, £4.60 at 18 – 21 years old and £5.52 p.h. at 22 years plus, for up to 35 hours per week, and will initially be offered a paid work placement of upto 13 weeks, but on average 6-8 weeks. The work placement will also include weekly jobsearch. Weekly extensions to the paid placement will be agreed by the Employment Team Manager if the extension will lead to full time employment.

ILM Wages will be administered and paid, via an existing contract, by Jarvis Training Management Limited. If the ILM Worker has not found a job towards the end of their placement, they will be given the opportunity to opt to undertake the two-week Halton People into Jobs 'Employment Charter' training programme which will better prepare them for seeking permanent employment. Following the 'Charter' training course HPIJ Job Brokers will support individuals with progression into employment.

## **Employment Outreach**

What will be done: This will be a HPIJ led partnership approach to provide access to a menu of work focused interventions via a variety of Outreach activity delivered from within the DAF wards, where there



are high concentrations of people in receipt of working aged benefits (JSA,IB,IS, DLA, etc ). The service will tackle economic inactivity and worklessness by coordinating and integrating a range of employability and capacity building interventions offered by HPIJ and partner organisations such as JCP, Connexions, Adult Learning Team, Employment Team, Shaw Trust, Link Up etc.

The service will provide access to MATRIX accredited Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) from which an assessment of the individual's needs in relation to employment support will be done and a progression route developed. From this the individual can access direct support from HPIJ (Employment Charter, Job Brokering, 121 IAG, In work Support and financial support), along with referrals and signposting to other suitable provision to help them on their progression route.

How will this be done: By working in partnership with internal and external organisations such as JCP, Link Up, Shaw Trust, Connexions, HBC's Adult Learning and Employment Teams. Community engagement events at accessible locations within the DAF wards (Such as Community Centres, Children's centres, Community Houses, Places of Interest), 121 surgeries (such as Jobcentre Plus Offices, Halton Direct Links, Drs Surgeries) and promotional activity within the wards will be organised by HPIJ, in addition to HPIJ attending other community partnership events arranged by Neighbourhood Management and Community Development teams. Individuals will be assisted in progressing towards work through being supported with : ( not exhaustive) basic skills, confidence building, work experience placements, application and interview skills, job matching to local jobs via HPIJ Job Brokering service, in work support.

Who will do this: Delivered directly by HPIJ Job Brokers with a level 3 (or equivalent) qualification, with experience of providing Information, Advice and Guidance in relation to employment and employability skills. Supported by two level 4 team leaders. The quality of IAG is quality assured via MATRIX (May 2007). Partners will include (not exhaustive): JCP Shaw Trust, Connexions, Link Up, Adult Learning Team, Welfare Rights, Children's Centres, Crosby Training, A4E.

### **Inspiring Women**

The service will provide activities and services in relation to employment, learning, skills and enterprise support direct to Halton residents with particular focus on the DAF wards (as above), with particular focus on disadvantaged or excluded groups within those wards. These include: Lone Parents/Women returnees or people with a caring responsibility, residents 50 years and over, residents 16-19, in particular NEETS, people with a disability/health condition or in receipt of Incapacity Benefit, members of BME communities, Ex Offenders, alcohol & drug mis-users, homeless people and Low Income Families.

### **Benefits Express**

The Benefit Express is a mobile office that can tour the borough.

From this office a variety of information and services can be obtained most notably Housing Benefit & Council Tax Benefit Advice, Welfare Rights and Money Advice. In addition through partnership working information on a whole range of council services is available. Other organisations such as Social Landlords, Employment Services and the voluntary sector are also providing services from the mobile office.

Officers by the use of 3G technology are able to process claims on-line from both the Benefit Express and the claimants home provided all the necessary information and supporting information to process the claim is available. This mobile working has been well received throughout the life of the project as the claimant obtains a decision regarding their claim for Housing and Council Tax Benefit immediately.

## **Budgeting Skills**

The project, through its targeted action, will improve the budgeting skills of Credit Union members and raise awareness as to which debts should be regarded as a priority.

The Budgeting Skills Officer (BSO) will assess an individual's current liabilities in terms of debts and expected living expenses. The officer will determine a weekly/monthly amount the consumer would need in order to meet such commitments. The BSO will educate members on a one-to-one basis in relation to financial matters e.g. how to manage a budget, how to make sound economic choices when shopping and how to manage money properly. The officer will also provide basic advice on the rights members have in relation to credit agreements they already have. The BSO is able to assess debt problems, identify where specialist advice is required and put members in touch with specialist advice when needed.

The BSO will work with social landlords to promote the Credit Union to new tenants.

The BSO will identify any trends in the type of high cost credit being used and will liaise with the Illegal Money Lending Team as appropriate.

Sources of advice on energy efficiency (providing hints and tips on how to reduce energy bills) and the availability of grants for energy efficiency improvements will be promoted during one-to-one sessions along with details of local transport schemes. Information relating to household and car insurance will also be supplied to members.

Where appropriate the BSO will liaise with United Utilities and British Gas on behalf of members who are in arrears with these companies in an attempt to access their Trust Funds and arrange for the arrears to be written off. The existence of any winter rebate or other discount schemes will be promoted to members.

The Consumer Protection Service will identify consumers who would potentially benefit from the services of the Credit Union. With the permission of the consumer their details will be passed to the BSO who will be responsible for making contact with the consumer and explaining the benefits of belonging to a credit union.

## **CAB**

### **The project has TWO key aims;**

***Aim 1: To tackle workless-ness through the provision of independent advice and practical support.***

#### **How will we do this;**

Halton CAB is the only "not for profit organisation" in the borough that has a "Specialist Quality Mark" in both Debt advice and Welfare Benefits advice. This means that the service we provide is comparable to that of a firm of solicitors.

Because of the sheer demand for our advice service we have developed a unique "online referral system" which allows partner agencies who are dealing with vulnerable clients to fast-track people into

our advice service, especially our debt and benefits advice. This system now allows us to monitor who needs advice and whether they actually get it.

The Debt advice process is fairly simple;

- We will help people prioritise their debts so that they do not face eviction, disconnection or even imprisonment.
- Then we look to see if we can maximise the debtors income by checking their entitlement to benefits, their tax codes, etc.
- Next we will debtors draw up a realistic household budget that allows them to keep on top of their bills and pay for essential items like food, cleaning, etc.
- Finally we will them negotiate a repayment schedule with their creditors at a rate that is realistic and one which they can afford.

***AIM 2: To encourage volunteering and providing a non-academic gateway to learning new skills and improving job prospects (in the last two years seventeen volunteers recruited, fourteen gained qualifications, seven found paid employment)***

**How will we do this;**

Halton CAB has a very good recognition profile within the borough and there is quite a lot of interest from the public in joining our team. We offer two types of training; an 8 week course in how to be an Information Officer and a 16 week course in becoming a legal adviser. The latter course is certificated. We also provide all volunteers with ongoing training and support and we help them devise a personal development plan to maximise their employment prospects.

## **Voluntary Sector**

### **Castlefields**

This programme will bring together in a coordinated way for the first time in Halton in one specific geographic location - Halton Borough Council, Learning and Skills Council, Neighbourhood Management, Jobcentre Plus, RSLs (CDS), Health sector (local doctors) and the voluntary sector (YMCA proposed). It will particularly seek to engage and help people with ill health through the local surgery ('job doctor' – one meeting already held with doctors) and also through local tenants groups facilitated by CDS. This programme is overwhelming about delivering provision and only one extra member of staff will be employed to work in the locality to ensure maximum mainstream delivery and localised implementation of this programme.

The central activity of this project is to engage people who would not otherwise be looking for work. This will be done through outreach campaigns (such as the recent one that resulted in 21 new contacts), referrals from the voluntary sector (particularly YMCA), existing adult learning courses, RSL's and also the local doctors surgery. Ultimately the aim is to launch an 'introduce a friend' programme for people who have benefited.

The programme will create additional learning and employability opportunities. Development of local brand linked to major rebuilding programmes will increase awareness and encourage participation. The following links to other services and activities will be maximised:

- Employment and Enterprise – managing delivery
- Adult learning – delivering basic skills outreach and then connecting with progression to Riverside College
- Physical regeneration of Castlefields – Major Projects, RSLs – identification of placements
- Jobcentre plus – direct progression to programmes if eligible
- Neighbourhood Management – Working with neighbourhood manager to identify potential clients and to link placements into NM programme of activity. Provision of progress data to local board.

## **CES contribution**

No longer required

## **Pre level 2 provision and Adult learners event**

For the employability skills element of the project delivered by the Adult Learning & Skills Development Division residents living in the above listed local priority wards and who fall into one of the five priority groups will be targeted initially:

- People who are unemployed
- Lone parents
- Aged 16-19 NEET
- People aged 50+
- People with a disability or claiming incapacity benefit

Halton YMCA Learning Power award will be delivered for the benefit of disadvantaged residents of the Grange Ward aged 19+ who are all below level two qualified or with significant barriers to learning and achieving (mental health issues, alcohol abuse, drug abuse, homeless, offending etc.)

The Adult Learners Celebration event will recognise borough-wide learners achievements and progress in learning.