



**Employment, Learning and Skills Policy
and Performance Board**

**Monday, 28 January 2008 at 6.30 p.m.
Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn**



Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Eddie Jones (Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Frank Fraser (Vice-Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Peter Blackmore	Liberal Democrat
Councillor Susan Edge	Labour
Councillor David Findon	Conservative
Councillor Harry Howard	Labour
Councillor David Lewis	Conservative
Councillor Stan Parker	Labour
Councillor Christopher Rowe	Liberal Democrat
Councillor John Stockton	Labour
Councillor Philip Worrall	Liberal Democrat

*Please contact Lynn Derbyshire on 0151 471 7389 or e-mail
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The next meeting of the Board is on Monday, 10 March 2008*

**ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

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In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

REPORT TO: Employment Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 28th January 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Public Question Time

WARD(s): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 34 (11).
- 1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That any questions received be dealt with.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Standing Order 34(11) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows: -
- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.
 - (ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.
 - (iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be submitted by 4.00 pm on the day prior to the meeting. At any meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
 - (iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner which may or may not be answered at the meeting.
 - (v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-
 - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
 - Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;
 - Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or
 - Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.

- (vi) In the interests of natural justice, public questions cannot relate to a planning or licensing application or to any matter, which is not dealt with in the public part of a meeting.
- (vii) The Chairperson will ask for people to indicate that they wish to ask a question.
- (viii) **PLEASE NOTE** that the maximum amount of time each questioner will be allowed is 3 minutes.
- (ix) If you do not receive a response at the meeting, a Council Officer will ask for your name and address and make sure that you receive a written response.

Please bear in mind that public question time lasts for a maximum of 30 minutes. To help in making the most of this opportunity to speak: -

- Please keep questions as concise as possible.
- Please do not repeat or make statements on earlier questions as this reduces the time available for other issues to be raised.
- Please note that public question time is not intended for debate – issues raised will be responded to either at the meeting or in writing at a later date.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None.

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

There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO: Employment Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 28th January 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Executive Board Minutes

WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Minutes relating to the Employment Learning and Skills Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board and Executive Board Sub since the last meeting are attached at Appendix 1 for information.
- 1.2 The Minutes are submitted to inform the Policy and Performance Board of decisions taken in their area.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Minutes be noted.

3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None.

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

There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

APPENDIX 1

Extract of Executive Board Minutes Relevant to the Employment, Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 1st NOVEMBER 2007

EXB51 CULTURE AND LESIURE EXTERNAL ASSESSMENTS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Health and Community regarding the Halton Regional Cultural Stakeholder Commentary and the Improvement and Development Agency’s (IdeA’s) validation of the self-assessment framework “Towards an Excellent Service” (TAES) of the Culture and Leisure Services Department, which was part of the Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA). The process was carried out against a standard benchmark and was intended to:

- (a) promote closer alignment of national, regional and local cultural objectives;
- (b) strengthen and extend relationships between cultural agencies and local authorities; and
- (c) achieve better, more effective cultural provision from a more unified approach to strategic and improvement planning.

The Regional Commentary, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, was produced after desktop research; consideration of relevant strategies, plans and reports; and in-depth meetings with relevant staff within Culture and Leisure Services and the Corporate Policy Unit. Members were advised that, in general, it was a very positive Commentary identifying key strengths and areas for development.

The Board noted that the TAES framework provided Culture and Leisure Services with an approach to assessing the quality of its services and was beginning to be used widely by local authorities across the country. The self assessment was carried out in June 2007 and was then validated by the IDEa. From this, an objective report and an Action Plan for Improvement had been produced, attached at Appendix 2 to the report. Again, this report had been very positive.

Members noted that both pieces of work had identified areas of good practice and improvement that was felt worthy of being shared with a wider audience. To that end, the IDEa/DCMS (Department for Culture, Media and Sport) had commissioned a case study of Halton’s Culture and Leisure Services and had asked the Operational Director – Culture and Leisure Services to sit on the DCMS’s Cultural Services Improvement Project – Sounding Board.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the reports be received;
- (2) the Action Plan included in the TAES report be endorsed; and
- (3) implementation of the Action Plan be monitored by the Employment, Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board.

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning and Skills PPB

DATE: 28th January 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Health and Community

SUBJECT: Public Art Presentation

WARDS: ALL

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To receive a presentation from a Consultant engaged by Halton Borough Council to develop a strategic approach to the development of Public Art within the Borough.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- i) The PPB receives the presentation.
- ii) The PPB comments on the future approach to Public Art within the Borough.
- iii) The PPB suggest how the issue of Public Art can be progressed.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Consultants have been funded by Arts Council North West to develop a strategic approach to Public Art in Halton.

3.2 Halton Borough Council, over a number of years, has developed a range of high quality public art works, many of which engaged local communities in their development. To date however, the work has been fairly fragmented. The support from Arts Council North West allows the opportunity for a coherent plan and shared vision to be developed.

3.3 The presentation will consider how Art in Public Places can be complementary to good urban and building design and how it provides environmental, artistic and economic benefits.

3.4 It is anticipated that the work of the consultants will: -

- Make recommendations for securing public art work
- Provide guidelines for the development of Public Art projects in Halton to ensure quality of concept design and execution of public artwork - through a Planning Guidance Note
- Concentrate on the areas of both banks of The Mersey and Castlefields (up to Norton Priory) as pilot areas
- Identify the expertise needed (both internal and external) and clarify the roles and responsibilities of all those involved

- Outline a Commissioning Code of Practice
- Signpost funding opportunities for development
- Include an Action Plan, which provides mechanisms for effective project delivery. The Action Plan would guide future development and would include specifically recommended actions for the next three years.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The work of the consultants will produce a sustainable approach to the development of Public Art within Halton, fully recognising the benefits it might bring.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None at this stage.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People

Public Art, through workshops and involvement offer the opportunity to acquire and develop many skills.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills

Opportunities will be developed for Halton's Cultural Industries.

6.3 Urban Renewal

Public Art will make a strong contribution to the continued regeneration of the Borough, and will attract visitors into the Borough.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 None at this stage.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 None at this stage.

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

- 9.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

Document

Place of Inspection

Contact Officer

REPORT TO: Employment Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 28th January 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Learning and Skills Council

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The Board has been very active in developing an understanding of skill issues in Halton, most recently by considering the content of the latest business survey. At its last meeting, the Board requested that the Learning and Skills Council be invited to a future meeting to enable a discussion on the future skill needs of the borough.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

That the Policy and Performance Board considers a presentation from the Learning and Skills Council regarding skills in Halton.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Learning and Skills Council has been requested to cover in its presentation the following items.

- What are the big skills issues for Halton now and in the future?
- What level of resources have gone into Halton the past?
- What is happening now?
- How are things expected to change in the future?

3.2 The table below contains qualifications data for Halton (Jan 2006-Dec 2006). Appendix one gives data over a number of years.

	Halton (numbers)	Halton (%)	North West (%)	Great Britain (%)
NVQ4 and above	12,100	16.8	24.8	27.4
NVQ3 and above	24,400	33.9	43.7	45.3
NVQ2 and above	41,200	57.2	63.5	63.8
NVQ1 and above	53,600	74.5	78.3	77.7
Other qualifications	3,800	5.2	5.8	8.5
No qualifications	14,500	20.2	15.8	13.8

Source: ONS annual population survey

Numbers and % are for those of working age
% is a proportion of total working age population

No qualifications: No formal qualifications held

Other qualifications: includes foreign qualifications and some professional qualifications

NVQ 1 equivalent: e.g. fewer than 5 GCSEs at grades A-C, foundation GNVQ, NVQ 1, intermediate 1 national qualification (Scotland) or equivalent

NVQ 2 equivalent: e.g. 5 or more GCSEs at grades A-C, intermediate GNVQ, NVQ 2, intermediate 2 national qualification (Scotland) or equivalent

NVQ 3 equivalent: e.g. 2 or more A levels, advanced GNVQ, NVQ 3, 2 or more higher or advanced higher national qualifications (Scotland) or equivalent

NVQ 4 equivalent and above: e.g. HND, Degree and Higher Degree level qualifications or equivalent

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Corporate Plan identifies key objectives in relation to developing a learning culture and also to promote and increase employability. The work of the Learning and Skills Council is very relevant to these objectives.

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

There still remains in Halton a real challenge of helping people to increase their skills and qualifications. This is particularly so in relation to knowledge based businesses and organisations that are being attracted to the Borough. A key part of the local response will be developed by HBC and the Learning and Skills Council working in collaboration to develop future skills programmes.

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 challenge in the future of the Learning and Skills Council is the change to the 14-19 arrangements and how it will then manage the 19+ agenda. This is something the Policy Board may wish to ask questions about.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 The Learning and Skills Council is very active in seeking to address diversity and equality through its commissioning processes.

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

Document

Place of Inspection

Contact Officer

None

Appendix One

Skills in Halton since 1999**No Qualifications Halton**

Date	Halton	Halton (%)	North West (%)	Great Britain (%)
Mar 99-Feb 00	16,000	22.5	19.1	16.8
Mar 00-Feb 01	15,000	20.6	18.9	16.7
Mar 01-Feb 02	15,000	20.9	19.0	16.5
Mar 02-Feb 03	15,000	20.7	18.9	15.6
Mar 03-Feb 04	18,000	24.7	17.7	15.1
Jan 05-Dec 05	14,400	19.9	17.0	14.3
Jan 06-Dec 06	14,500	20.2	15.8	13.8

Other Qualifications Halton

Date	Halton	Halton (%)	North West (%)	Great Britain (%)
Mar 99-Feb 00	7,000	9.5	8.3	9.7
Mar 00-Feb 01	5,000	6.6	6.4	8.6
Mar 01-Feb 02	4,000	5.5	6.7	8.9
Mar 02-Feb 03	5,000	6.2	6.5	9.0
Mar 03-Feb 04	4,300	5.9	6.4	8.8
Jan 05-Dec 05	4,100	5.6	6.2	8.4
Jan 06-Dec 06	3,800	5.2	5.8	8.5

NVQ1 and above Halton

Date	Halton	Halton (%)	North West (%)	Great Britain (%)
Mar 99-Feb 00	48,000	68.0	72.6	73.5
Mar 00-Feb 01	53,000	72.0	73.8	74.0
Mar 01-Feb 02	54,000	73.6	74.2	74.6
Mar 02-Feb 03	54,000	73.1	74.6	75.4
Mar 03-Feb 04	50,600	69.4	75.8	76.0
Jan 05-Dec 05	53,900	74.5	76.7	77.2
Jan 06-Dec 06	53,600	74.5	78.3	77.7

NVQ2 and above Halton

Date	Halton	Halton	North West	Great Britain
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		(%)	(%)	(%)
Mar 99-Feb 00	36,000	50.4	57.2	57.9
Mar 00-Feb 01	37,000	50.9	58.7	58.8
Mar 01-Feb 02	40,000	54.0	58.7	59.5
Mar 02-Feb 03	41,000	55.5	59.6	60.6
Mar 03-Feb 04	39,600	54.3	61.3	61.5
Jan 05-Dec 05	39,900	55.1	62.0	62.9
Jan 06-Dec 06	41,200	57.2	63.5	63.8

NVQ3 and above Halton

Date	Halton	Halton (%)	North West (%)	Great Britain (%)
Mar 99-Feb 00	21,000	29.2	37.3	39.3
Mar 00-Feb 01	22,000	29.7	39.2	40.3
Mar 01-Feb 02	25,000	33.4	39.2	41.0
Mar 02-Feb 03	26,000	34.8	39.6	42.0
Mar 03-Feb 04	24,100	33.1	41.4	43.1
Jan 05-Dec 05	25,600	35.4	42.4	44.4
Jan 06-Dec 06	24,400	33.9	43.7	45.3

NVQ4 and above Halton

Date	Halton	Halton (%)	North West (%)	Great Britain (%)
Mar 99-Feb 00	9,000	13.4	19.6	22.5
Mar 00-Feb 01	11,000	15.1	21.2	23.3
Mar 01-Feb 02	12,000	15.9	21.1	23.6
Mar 02-Feb 03	12,000	16.2	21.4	24.2
Mar 03-Feb 04	11,400	15.7	23.1	25.2
Jan 05-Dec 05	13,400	18.5	24.2	26.5
Jan 06-Dec 06	12,100	16.8	24.8	27.4

Notes

Source: ONS annual population survey

Numbers and % are for those of working age

% is a proportion of total working age population

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

DATE: 28th January 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Health and Community

SUBJECT: Community Centres "Providing a valuable service"

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform the Employment, Learning & Skills Policy and Performance Board how we consult our service users and to provide evidence of continual improvement across the Community Centre's Service.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- i) Members of the PPB comment on the service provided by Community Centres.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Community Centre service is part of the Community Involvement Team (CIT), sitting in Cultural and Leisure Services in the Health and Community Directorate
- 3.2 There are 5 Council run Community Centres, a service which employs 33 staff and a significant number of volunteers who are an integral part of the running of the Centre's. We have Service Level Agreements (SLA's) with; Children's Services, Adult Day Care Services, Youth Services, and the all these organisations deliver services from site. Our partners include; Age concern, The PCT, The Women's Royal Voluntary Service, Four Estates, Vulnerable Adult Task Force, Total People, Police, Housing Associations, Age Concern and various Council departments such as Children and Young People, Personal Social Services, Community Development, etc.
- 3.3 Community Centre's have evolved in recent times, they have increasingly become places where agencies and organisations engage with the community, deliver their services, tackle inequalities and sign post users to other interventions and support services. It is no surprise therefore that we have witnessed an increase in attendances and

income across Community Centres for the third successive year as figure 1 demonstrates.

Centre	Usage 04-05	Usage 05-06	Usage 06-07	Variance (last 2 years)	Income 04-05	Income 05-06	Income 06-07	Variance (last 2 years)
Grangeway	45,514	49,949	61,880	11,931	£95,312	£81,251	£82,957	£1,346
Castlefields	25,852	31,184	35,267	4,083	£25,457	£21,637	£27,182	£5,545
Upton	68,120	72,043	66,202	(5,841)	£48,582	£50,460	£55,829	£5,369
Ditton	101,422	101,796	95,386	(6,401)	£24,933	£31,816	£57,162	£25,346
Murdishaw	21,754	18,158	19,755	1597	£42,728	£33,178	£23,136	(£10,042)
Total	262,662	273,130	278,490	5360	£237,012	£218,342	£246,266	£27,924

Fig 1

- 3.4 What is immediately apparent is a significant increase in attendances at Grangeway and Castlefields, an increase due predominantly to occupation by Day Care Services though use by one or two new user groups (e.g. Junior dance has had an additional impact).

It was envisaged that Upton would build on last years 'Most improved Performer' success with The Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE), however the anticipated increase at Upton has not transpired due largely to Day Care Services continuing only on a sessional basis as opposed to formal adoption of a 'Base Room' like the Runcorn Centre's. The down turn in attendances at Upton is mainly due to 'Children's Centre's (formerly Sure Start) restructuring their service delivery and not continuing to use Upton as a satellite site.

In the case of Ditton Community Centre, bookings and income has increased despite a decline in attendances, which would seem to contradict the increased usage by services at Upton. The statistics signify we are supporting more variety and diversity (hence more bookings recorded) despite experiencing a slight drop off in numbers attending sessions. Agency meetings in particular, which invariably involve often-small groups but require hospitality, have increased.

Whilst individual Centre performance is important it is perhaps more important to recognise that overall we have seen an increase of 5360 attendances across Community Centres.

- 3.5 Centre income is up across the service by £27,924 or 12% on total income in comparison to the previous year. Four centres have experienced an increase whilst in the case of Murdishaw it is only the Riverside and LHT agreed incremental withdrawal of funding by £10,000 per annum, which is negative. If we disregard the incremental funding withdrawal we can see that Murdishaw is maintaining user income parity.

The most significant increase in income is at Ditton Community Centre and is partly attributed to revising an existing Service Level Agreement with the Children's Centre and negotiating another SLA to provide management support to the Early Years Support Centre. In addition Ditton has achieved an impressive £10,000 additional income on bookings and secondary spend i.e. catering and photocopying. Buffet menus were recently revised to better reflect the requirements of community centre users, particularly for private and commercial hires.

Grangeway experienced a significant drop in income from 04-05 to 05-06 due to the impact of losing the Cook and Café reduction. The Café is now used as a training space with basic refreshments to users which now include Day Care Services.

In the same year Castlefields experienced a drop in income as the end of Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) with an associated impact on running the café.

- 3.6 Based on recent draft Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) reports for 06/07 Year 9, there is clear evidence of operational improvements on Year 8 particularly in respect of 'Net Cost Per User, Operational Recovery and Percentage Capacity Utilised. Importantly these are three of the Performance Indicator suite, which are considered in order to determine which authorities are in position for nomination as 'Improved Performers'.

Castlefields Community Centre in particular as Fig 2 demonstrates, is showing significant improvements in these key performance areas.

NCP Net Cost per user
OR Operational Recovery
PCU Percentage Capacity Utilised

Centre	NCP Yr 8	NCP Yr9	OR Yr8	OR Yr9	PCU Yr8	PCU Yr9
Castlefields	£2.46	£2.19	22.01%	26.01%	11.99%	37.95%

Fig 2

Indeed of the 4 other Centre's as fig 3 shows, we can see an increase in percentage utilisation in 3 of the centre's with Upton being the exception.

	YR8	YR9
Ditton	30.88%	32.48%
Grangeway	27.6%	33.64%
Murdishaw	21.34	21.76%
Upton	26.03%	23.12%

Fig 3 Percentage utilisation

Ditton Community Centre narrowly missed out on a service award in the 'Most Improved' category at the year 9 APSE awards ceremony

2007. The Community Involvement team delivered a workshop to delegates around 'Shared Spaces, Shared Buildings and Shared Impacts' highlighting the growing role of Community Centre's as a service delivery hub and the emergence of a Voluntary Sector One Stop Shop concept, which was very well received.

- 3.7 We are seeing increasing investment in community centre's both locally to support organisational service delivery and through funding mechanisms, most recently successful applications to Area Forum Panels and the Waste Recycling Environmental Network (WREN). An additional £200,000 of investment to core funding in the last two years has ensured much needed building improvements have taken place. This additional income couldn't be timelier as community cohesion rises up the Local Government agenda. The 'Integration for Community Cohesion', recent Government report detailed that those communities that were most cohesive, benefited from a community hub and this provided a pivotal role in integrating those communities they serve.

In Halton certainly and through the work of the Council's Community Involvement Team (CIT) there is tangible evidence of the benefits of good community centre provision to promote agency service delivery. Some examples include;

- Country Garden Catering, which has won an 'Equality and Diversity Award', a North West Employers Service Delivery Award and a Four Star Service Rating from Environmental Services.
- The evolution of Sure Start to Children Centres and forming of Children and Young Peoples Area Networks (CYPANS).
- Age Concern's Together Group, an initiative targeting socially isolated and vulnerable elderly residents in Castlefields.
- Currently planning for extending youth provision and establishment of a Youth Academy at Grangeway.

In addition several voluntary sector organisations including MIND, Victim Support and Vision Support at the recent voluntary sector network day discussed the benefits of their services having community centre based activity to support their work. The CIT co-ordinated this very successful event.

- 3.8 To ensure that community centre's continue to deliver services effectively, meet expectations and maintain a focus on support and facilitation, we recently undertook an evaluation and consultation exercise in order to further measure performance and feed into the Culture and Leisure Services TAES (Towards An Excellent Service) Improvement Plan.

The consultation provided a snapshot of customer profile and enabled us to review our service standards and gauge customer satisfaction levels with;

- Agencies with whom we have SLA's
- Regular users and casual users

3.9 The scope of the evaluation considered responses covering; - user profile, meeting expectations, accessibility, programming, suggestions/comments and customer care. The result of the evaluation can be seen in the attached document in Appendix 1.

In addition to the direct user consultation through questionnaires a Focus Group will be established early in the New Year to attend a consultation event, which will have an independent facilitator, TPAS performance hub research associates. The focus will be to determine what participants feel about using public accessible spaces in community settings.

3.10 Future developments for the service include;

3.10.1 Quality Standards

Looking at customer satisfaction and quality standards service delivery lead us to evaluate the appropriateness of quality improvement models such as 'Charter Mark', 'Quest' and Visible Communities. Recently however we found that APSE are in the initial stages of developing 'Quest' in order to produce a generic model which can be adopted and used as a standard for community centre's and other buildings falling outside the typical leisure centre model. We are waiting to see the outcome of this work.

3.10.2 A Dementia Café

This will be undertaken in partnership with Social Services. It will involve several stakeholders and be piloted at Murdishaw Community Centre. It will be open to individuals and families who are affected by dementia and other forms of mental incapacity such as Alzheimer's etc.

3.10.3 Planning for the new community centre at Castlefields

Planning permission has been granted for the new community centre at Castlefields and the finer detail of the 'fit out' is being discussed with partners and users following a successful £50,000 grant application to WREN. The new building will house a new Community Café, small Library with Internet café access as well as a bespoke shared space for Day Care Services and Youth Services.

3.10.4 Developing the Youth Academy at Grangeway with Youth Services

This will include looking at refurbishing of the youth space so as to provide an environment where young people can realise their

aspirations around arts and culture in particular through performance and modern technologies.

3.10.5 A youth led refurbishment of the Youth Hall at Ditton Community Centre. The project will provide a training opportunity for young people with aspirations around the construction industries. The education to employment (e2e) is the most likely vehicle for delivering this proposal.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 NONE

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

5.1 A recent Internal Audit report reflected the good shape of Community Centres and the effective processes and procedures that are in place to ensure they are run effectively.

The report highlighted no high priority action with only a small number of medium priorities several of which were in hand preceding the audit. The majority of the 21 proposals were low priority and related to firming up on procedures accounting.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

6.1 The purpose of the consultation and evaluation was to look at equality and diversity initially enabling us to user profile. In addition comments would help us establish what users feel our strengths and weakness's are in respect of service delivery.

6.2 Supporting the transition of Day Services was very enriching and enabled the CIT to witness real tangible benefits from the integration of Adults with Learning Difficulties (ALD). The success of that change should provide a platform to further explore service integration particularly with Physical and Sensory Disabilities (PSD) and perhaps provide service user opportunities through the Bridge Building Initiative.

7.0 COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 Community Centres impact on all Council priorities. Our shared future: Report of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion and progress report in 2007 acknowledges that in looking at case studies of cohesive communities, those communities with a community facility were deemed to be more cohesive and it was a significant component to the integration of those communities.

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

8.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

Executive Summary of the Consultation in Community Centre's November 2007.

The consultation was devised by the Community Centre's Service and considered by the Council's Research and Development Team before being undertaken.

212 people and organisations responded to the consultation exercise. All Council run Community Centre's participated and the majority of centre user groups were represented.

The consultation took the form of a questionnaire with 18 questions 8 of which allowed for additional comments. The period of consultation was one month throughout November; Centre Staff distributed forms to users. The statistics were collated across the service and a flavour of the comments is provided in this executive summary.

The analysis, which has been undertaken and is shown in graph form in the executive summary, was across the service rather than centre-by-centre.

The process of undertaking the consultation was enriched by dialogue between users and it became apparent that users are passionate about their communities and their centre's.

Variables Impacting on the Consultation

Our intention was to keep the Consultation simple and short so that respondents could complete it with a minimum amount of support or advice from Centre Staff, to that end it was successful. The following was observed during completion of the questionnaires.

- Some respondents ticked several categories on the forms they returned as they choose to complete the form as a couple or small group this in itself was useful as we observed it generated discussions amongst users. For the purposes of counting the returned form was only counted as one response though it had consensus opinions.
- Some response sections were left blank, reasons could vary.
- Some people suffered multiple disabilities and therefore selected more than one box in the equal opportunities monitoring, several added Learning Disability
- Some respondents highlighted that they along with other users travelled to the centre's by different means and therefore ticked several boxes offering different modes of transport.

- Some respondents choose not to select any specific days of use as their use was on a drop in basis mainly for the café rather than for a programmed activity.

Use of the Centre (2&3)

- Wednesday and Thursday are most used days across the service.
- Weekend usage has been a growth area 4 of our 5 Centre's now have regular weekend usage.
- 29% of Service Users use Community Centre's more than 1 day per week.
- 6% use Community Centres every day the centre is open.
- 1-3 days usage was the most popular category of respondents
- Hours of stay was not recorded but it is worth noting that some users do stay for a number of hours and in so doing account for a large proportion of the centre's 'secondary spend income' from using the cafes and or vending facilities.
- Spending extended periods at the Centre's is a characteristic of several users particularly at Ditton and Castlefields.

Comment;

*" it gives me a place to go as I live on my own I'm happy coming here"
(Ditton)*

Meeting Needs and Staff Customer Care (4,5,7)

- Over 80% of users said we are meeting needs fully.
- The remaining 20% respondents selected partially

Comment

*" I have always found the centre to be clean welcoming and interesting... It is also a valuable source of information about activities
(Ditton).*

- 92% of respondents considered staff to be friendly and helpful

Comments

*"I would like to say the staff here are so friendly and accommodating to the needs of the youth centre, Thanks" (Grangeway)
"The Café Staff are very friendly it's a joy to dine here" (Castlefields)*

- 92% of respondents felt staff were responsive to their Centre User needs.

Comments

"I have found staff to be friendly and supportive" (Ditton)

" Staff have always been prompt to provide the service" (Castlefields)

Building Clean and Safe (6&9)

- Almost 95% of respondents answered 'yes' to being happy with the overall cleanliness of the buildings.

Comment

Murdishaw Community Centre is a lovely place to run our 'Stop Smoking Group' as it provides everything the service is seeking in a venue. The Community Centre is spotlessly clean, if not one of the cleanest venues in Halton" (Murdishaw).

- Of the 6 respondents that said they were not happy with the overall cleanliness, 3 reflected on the 'tired' appearance of Castlefields rather than the cleanliness per say.

Comment

"I think the Centre is in need of refurbishment the hall is draughty. The blinds are in need of replacement. Generally it is very tired" (Castlefields).

The other 3 comments were where cross over between user groups was back to back where the tidy up is the responsibility of the proceeding user.

- 81% of respondents said we were very good at providing a safe environment 15% said we were fairly good. Respondents choosing 'fairly' supplied some comments; several related to relatively low risk incidents namely splinters from the stage at Ditton. Several users had concerns about car parking at Upton and Ditton and Castlefields where better lighting and CCTV are being requested.

Comments

"Fully meets our needs for and easily accessible, safe and clean venue"(Grangeway)

"The automatic door pads are too low and can be reached by children" (Murdishaw)

Customer Care(10)

- 81% of respondents felt customer care was very good, 10% felt it was fairly good, less than 1 % were negative the remaining left the answer blank.

Comment

"The centre is excellent for the needs of Stroke survivors, I don't think there is anything that requires improvement" (Murdishaw)

Service Standards

- The response to this question was mainly omitted but some suggestions included;
- The need for regular and programmed property maintenance checks.
- Better coordination between staff and contractors to ensure minimal disruption to community centre activity.
- Ensure best values are met

Accessibility, Travelling to the Centre and Public Transport (12,13,14)

- 95% of respondents were either very satisfied or fairly satisfied with accessibility.

Comment

"Disabled spaces fill up quite quickly..... I appreciate the automatic doors"

- Some respondents choose multiple modes of transport.
- 44% travelled on their own by car, 26% travelled by car with others.
Total 70% car users
- 7% travelled by foot, both taxi and by bus equated to 5% apiece.
- The significance of this snapshot perhaps point toward an increase in wider community access i.e. outside centre catchment areas, this is substantiated by some centre's performance management data.

Comment

"A Bus Stop near the centre would be useful".

"There is no evening bus service from Castlefields to Grangeway"

- 39% of respondents said that transport links were not sufficient a large proportion of these were Castlefields and Murdishaw residents 31 % were not sure.

Comment

"Public transport is practically non existent in Castlefields after 6.30-7.30. The only bus is the x1, which runs hourly. The place is like the dead every night.

- 29% of users were not sure or not concerned

Booking Centre's and Multiple Use (16&17)

- 85% of respondents had no problem accessing or booking the centre's
- Of those experiencing problems the majority were those unable to hire the facility due to it being used at the time they required.
- Significantly Centre's are a well used resource during the evening, spare capacity in centre's is predominantly during the day time and in the small group rooms as opposed to the Main Hall and Café space.
- We have many regular evening users who can use the Centre's up to 3 or 4 nights per week.

Comment

I do have a lot of time already and there are more Community Centre users, time has to be given fairly if I could have more hours it would be great'

- 19% of respondents are multiple centre users with over half the amount using more than one other centre.

User Profile and Analysis

- 18% of centre users reported having a disability either singular or multiple. 22 had multiple the highest number had a physical disability. Some respondents added learning disabilities to their forms.
- The largest age range of respondents was in the categories of 51-65 and over 65 accounting for over 59%. Usage increased across the age ranges with use by under-20 year olds looking particularly low. It is important to note however that the majority of users who access Youth Services and Sure Start fall into the under 20-year old age category and therefore we do not consider that this section of the community are excluded. Reasons for non-participation in the consultation are worthy of review.
- The ethnicity of 88% of respondents was White British

Q2 How often do you use the centre ?

- every day
- 1-3 times per week
- 4-5 times per week
- once per month
- twice per month
- less often than once per month

Q4 How well is the community centre meeting your needs?

- Fully
- Partially
- Not at all

Q6 Are you happy with the cleanliness and standards for the Building?

- yes
- No
- Not Sure

Q9 How good are we in providing a safe environment?

- Very Good
- Fairly Good
- Neither
- Fairly poor
- Very poor

Q12 How satisfied are you with the accessibility of the centre?

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

Q14 Do you feel that there are sufficient Public transport links to the community centre?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

- Equal Opps monitoring
- Disability
- No disability
- Visual
- Hearing
- Physical
- Mental
- Learning

Gender

Male

Female

Age

Under 20

21-30

31-40

41-50

51-65

Over 65

Nationality

White British

White and Black caribbean

Mixed Other

Asian or Asian British (bangaldeshi)

Black or Black British African

Other

White Irish

White and Black Caribbean

Single centre user

Multi-centre user

Q3 On what days do you use the centre		
totals		totals
	14 Monday	41
	160 Tuesday	42
	9 Wednesday	65
	5 Thursday	49
	17 Friday	29
	7 Saturday	4
	Sunday	14

Q5 Are the centre staff friendly and helpful?		
totals		totals
	172 yes	192
	33 No	0
	0 Not Sure	7

Q7 Do you feel staff are responsive to your needs		
totals		totals
	199 yes	194
	6 No	1
	6 Not Sure	7

Q10 How good is our Customer Care?		
totals		
	172 Very Good	170
	32 Fairly Good	21
	2 Neither	2
	0 Fairly poor	0
	1 Very poor	0

Q13 How do you normally travel to the centre?		
total		
	176 Car on own	100
	25 Car with others	61
	1 Bus	12
	1 On foot	38
	2 Taxi	12
	Other	4

Q16 Have you experienced any difficulties in booking the centres?		
total		totals
	76 Yes	9
	57 No	180
	61 Not sure	13

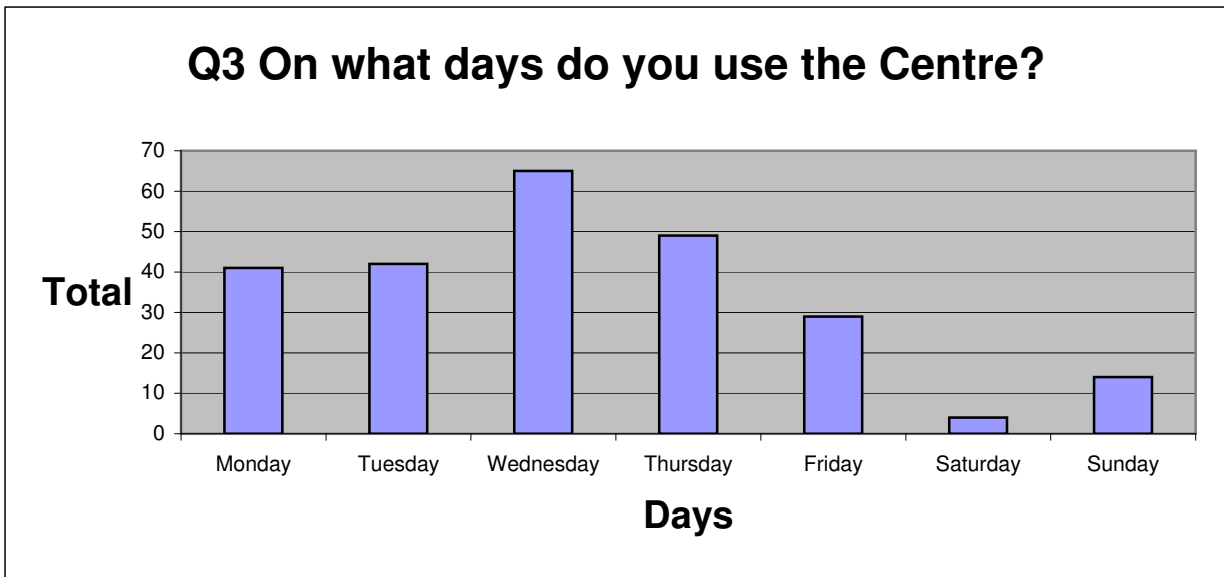
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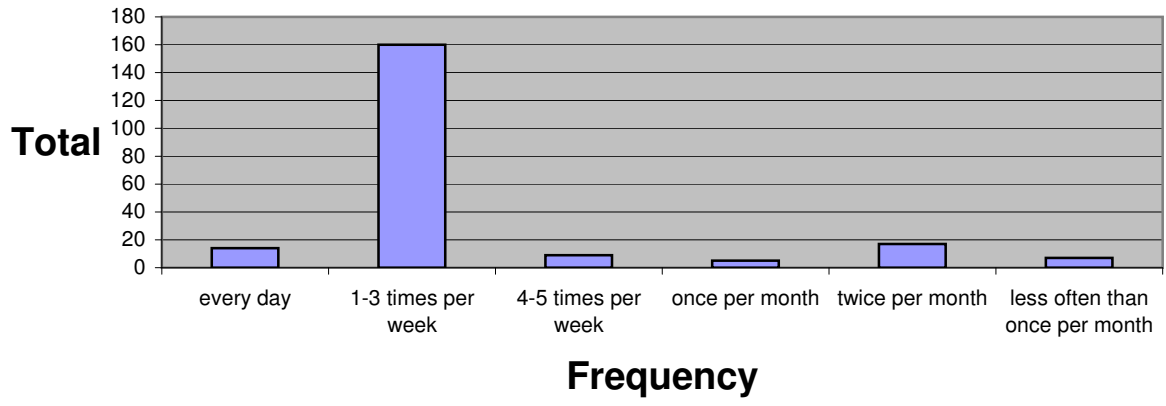
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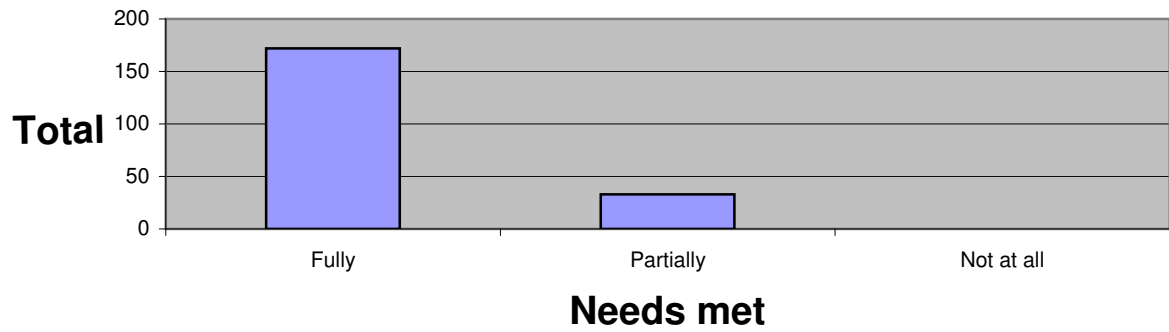
90
40



Q2 How often do you use the Centre?

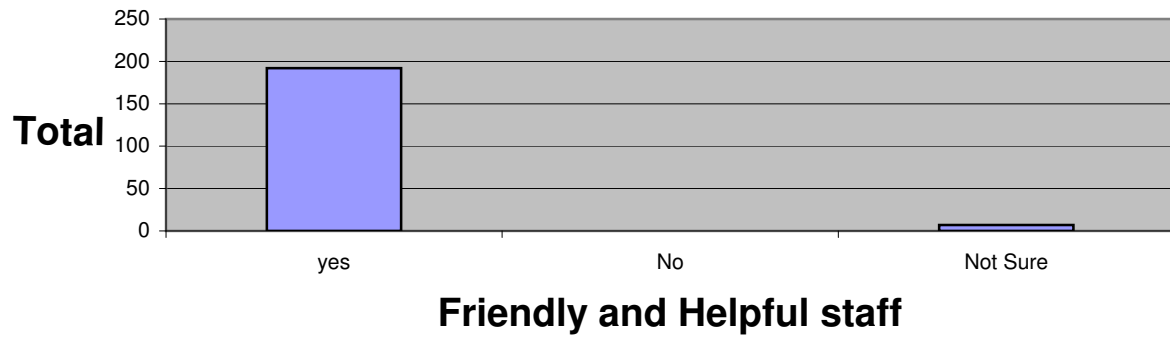


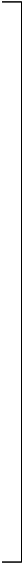
Q4 How well is the Community Centre meeting your needs?



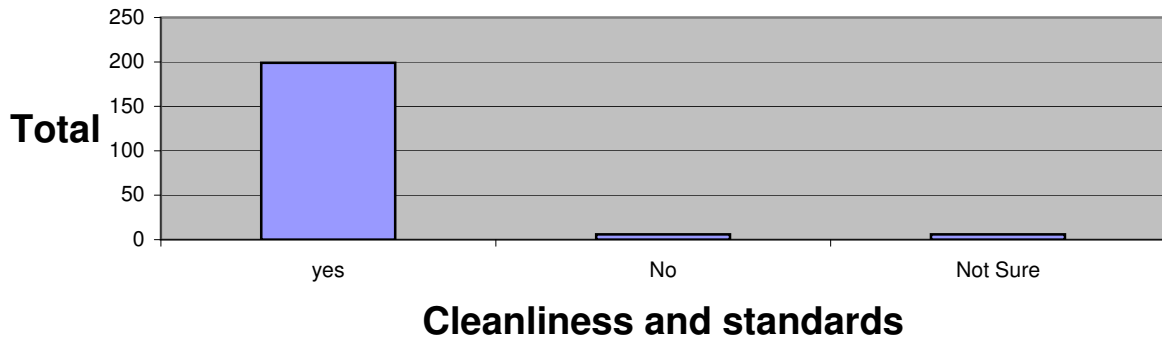


Q5 Are the Centre Staff friendly and helpful?

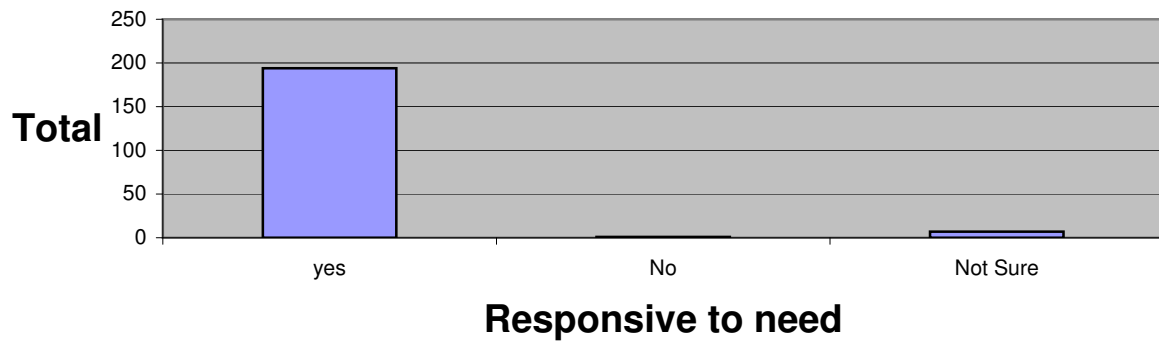




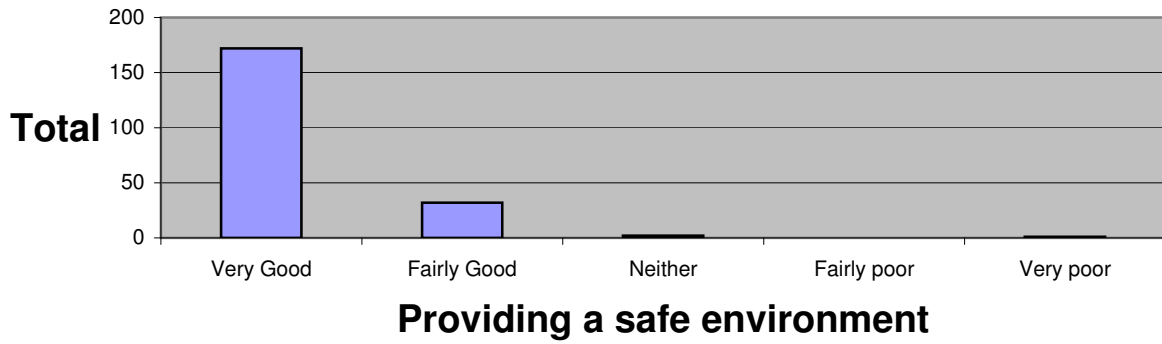
Q6 Are you happy with the cleanliness and standards of the building?



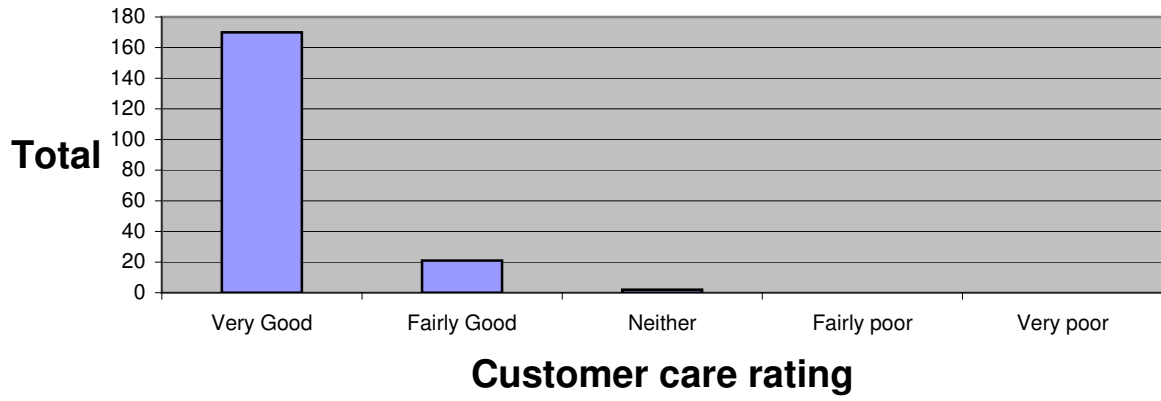
Q7 Do you feel Staff are responsive to your needs?



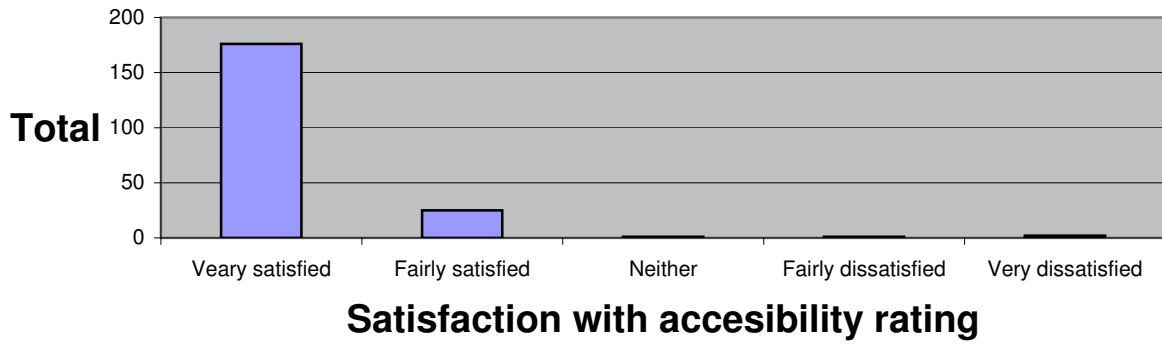
Q9 How Good are we at providing a safe Environment?



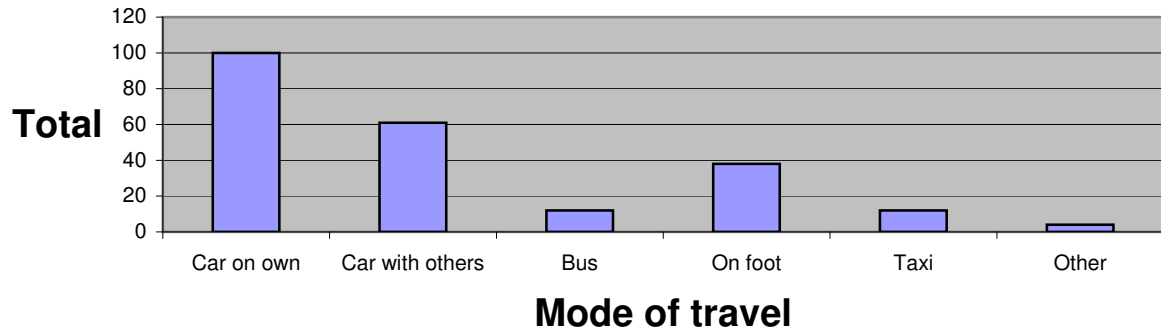
Q10 How good is our customer care?



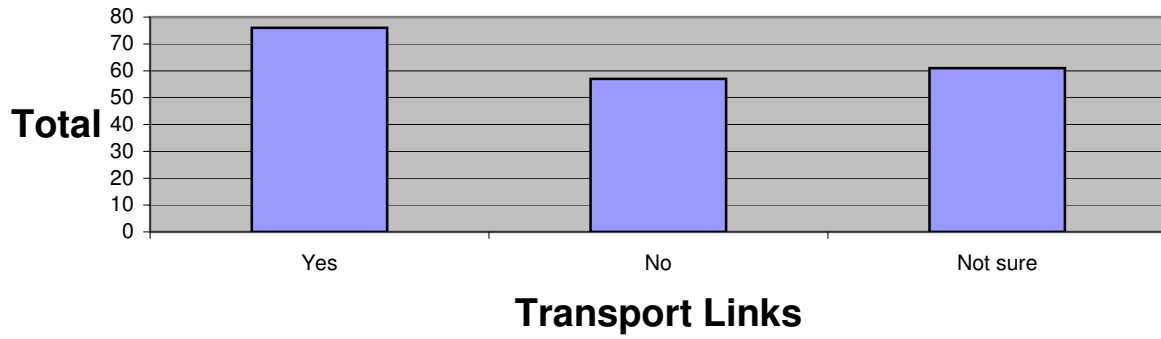
Q12 How satisfied are you with the accessibility of the Centre?



Q13 How do you Normally travel to the Centre?

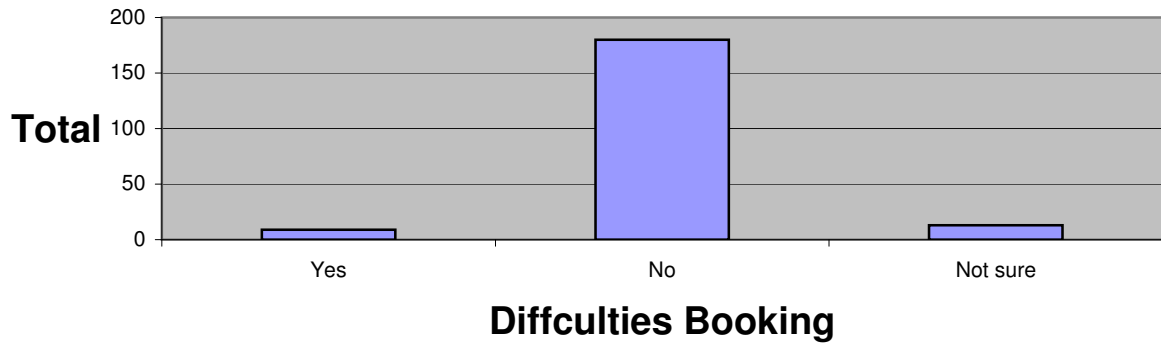


Q14 Do you feel there are sufficient Public Transport Links to the Community Centre?

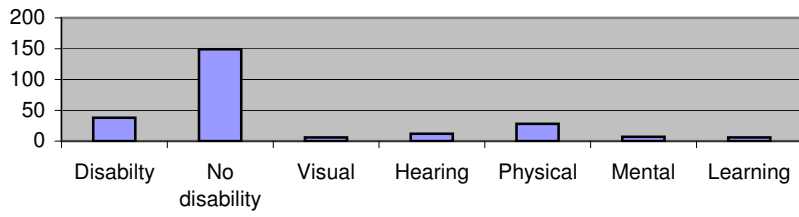




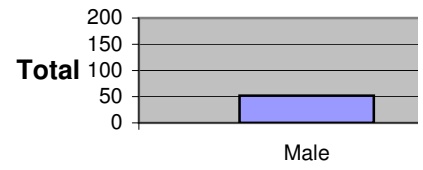
Q16 Have you experienced any difficulties in using or booking the Centre?



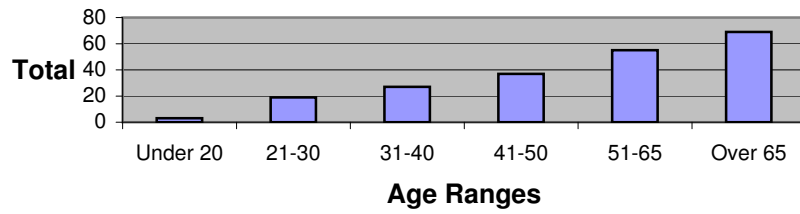
Abilities



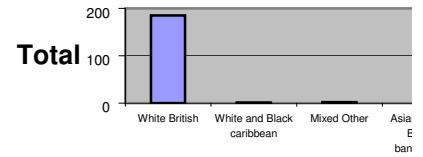
Gender



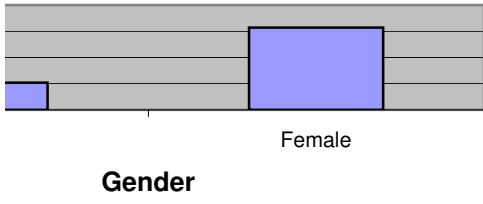
Age of centre Users



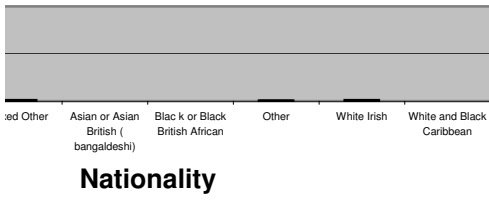
Ethnicity



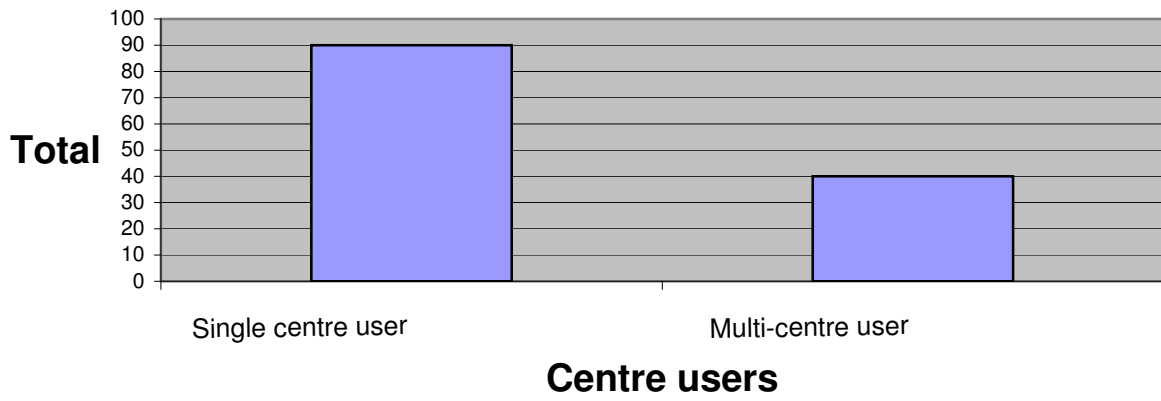
ender usage



nationality of user



Using more than 1 Community centre



REPORT TO: Employment, Learning and Skills PPB

DATE: 28 January 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Health and Community

SUBJECT: Mid Year Monitoring Report for Voluntary Sector Funding

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To receive the Mid Year monitoring report for Voluntary Sector Core Funding

2.0 Recommended that:

(1) the report be noted.

3.0 Supporting Information

3.1 The Council awarded Core Grants in for 2007/2008 to

Cheshire Asbestos Victims Support	£15,000
Cheshire Racial Equality Council	£6,615
Cheshire Victim Support	£8,400
Halton Citizens Advice Bureaux	£129,000
Halton Talking Newspapers	£3,500
Halton Voluntary Action	£42,000
Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre	£3397
Relate	£10,300
Runcorn & Frodsham Mencap	£2402
Samaritans	£4,000
Vision Support	£9,545
Warrington Law Centre	£15,000
Widnes & Runcorn Cancer Support Group	£13,000
Total	262,159

Those organisations who were awarded over £5,000 are subject to a Service Level Agreement and provide quarterly monitoring. Those organisations who received under £5,000 provide 6 monthly figures

3.2 Appendix 1 monitors those organisations receiving Voluntary Sector Core Funding for the first 6 months of 06/07.

3.3 All organisations are on line to meet expected targets and meeting their Service Level Agreements. Any variances are discussed with officer at monitoring visits. Warrington Law Centre is a relatively new Contract and although they are meeting their Service Level Agreement requirements, they are an expensive service.

3.4 The monitoring report will be available in the members rooms

4.0 Policy and other Implications

4.1 None at this stage.

5.0 Other Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications

5.2 The work of the voluntary sector receiving core funding grants impacts greatly on social inclusion, community involvement, anti-poverty and diversity issues.

6.0 Risk Analysis

6.1 None directly. The PPB, however, will monitor that the grant is being spent appropriately and the Council and Halton people receive value for money.

7.0 Equality and Diversity Issues

7.1 To receive a grant, organisations have to demonstrate that acceptable equality and diversity policies are in place.

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

8.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

Appendix 1



Voluntary Sector Funding

Monitoring information for
April to September 2007

6 Month Monitoring 07/08

Cheshire Asbestos Victims Support Group
3/5 Fryer Street, Runcorn Cheshire WA7 1ND
01928 576641 **£15,000**

Activity	6 monthly total	Yearly target
Counselling hours	743	No target
Welfare Rights obtained	£802,79	No target
Civil Claims DTER etc	£1298,242	No target
Volunteer hours per year	1128	No target
No of volunteers over the year	12	No target
Telephone enquiries	799	12,000
Personal visits to centre	117	300

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Cheshire Halton & Warrington Racial Equality Council
2, Hunters Walk, Canal Street, Chester, CH1 4EB
01244 400730 **£6,615**

Activity	6 monthly total	Yearly target
Attend HIAP Exec & Provider meetings	2	No target
Hate Crime Panel	0	No target
Local Criminal Board Consultation & Sub Group	0	No target
Race issues multi agency group	0	No target
Cheshire Chief Executive Advisory Group on Gypsies & Travellers	4	No target
Casework	4	No target
Representative from Halton on the BME consultation panel	21	No target

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Halton's Children & Young People

Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Cheshire Relate

Allman House, Langley Road, Northwich, Cheshire, CW9 8AW
01606 350995 **£10,300**

Activity	6 monthly total	Yearly target
Counselling hours	493	1266
'Relateen' group hours	104	No target
Volunteer hours per year	340	No target
No of volunteers over the year	7	No target
Telephone enquiries	680	874
Personal visits to centre	493	No target

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Halton's Children & Young People

Cheshire Victims Support

Widnes Police Station, Kingsway, Widnes, WA8 7QJ
0151 495 3528 **£8,400**

Activity	6 monthly total	Yearly target
Counselling hours	226	2340 support sessions To include all activities
Volunteer hours per year	970	
No of volunteers over the year	16	
Telephone enquiries & letters/e-mails/fax	623	
Home visits seen unseen	34	
Pre Trial visits	231	
Court Attendances	736	

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Cheshire Vision Support

Halton Independent Living Centre, Collier Street, Runcorn, WA7 1HB
01928 582944 (evening answer phone) £9,545

Activity	6 monthly total	Yearly target
Clients visits to Resource Centre inc family visit	713	600
Telephone enquiries from service users & their families	346	500
Other agencies visits to centre	213	No target
Other agencies telephone calls	627	No target
Home visits to new and existing service users	766	1,100
Welfare Rights inc. DLA and back pay	£7,942	£14,000

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Halton District Citizens Advice Bureau

Unit 3, Victoria Building, Lugsdale Road, Widnes, WA8 6DJ
0151 257 2443 £129,000

Activity	6 monthly total	Yearly target
Information/Advice Given	2960	4032
Welfare Rights	991	No target
Debt written off	£3,670	£1 million
Debt handled	3.8 mil	
Gains (employment)	£25,457	
Volunteer hours	4506	No target
Number of volunteers	23	
Telephone enquiries	1432	3800
Letter/email/fax	236	No target
Home Visits	201	No target
Tribunals attended	21	No target
Court attendances	0	No target

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Halton's Children & Young People

Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Halton Talking Newspaper
The Old Police Station, Mersey Road, Runcorn, WA7 1DF
(Mail contact- Mrs P Johnson, 2 Royden Ave, Runcorn WA7 4AL)
01928 588500 **£3,500**

Activity	6 monthly total
Numbers of individuals receiving recordings each week	174
Volunteers involved with the organisation	31
Weeks per year service is provided	26
Volunteer hours per year	500

HBC Priorities met by organisation
A Healthy Halton
A Safer Halton

Halton Voluntary Action
Sefton House, Public Hall Street, Runcorn WA7 1NG
01928 592405 **£42,000**

Activity	6 monthly total	Yearly target
Information & Advice given	947	No target
Individuals - sessions attended - Training / Activities	76	No target
No of volunteer involved in HVA activities	2	No target
No of volunteer hours	74.5	No target
Telephone enquiries	3400	No target
Newsletter distributed	1139	2800
Volunteers recruited (for placements)	155	100
Organisations receiving direct funding or group support	20	30

HBC Priorities met by organisation
A Healthy Halton
A Safer Halton
Halton's Children & Young People
Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre
26 Cairo Street Warrington WA1 1EH
01925 245 445/4 – 01706 347 330 **£3,397**

Activity	6 monthly total
Total calls to centre	720
Initial Assessments Runcorn & Widnes	31
Volunteers in service delivery	5
Counselling & Support hours	352

HBC Priorities met by organisation
A Healthy Halton
Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Runcorn Frodsham & District Mencap
The Acorn Club, Laburnam Grove, Runcorn, WA7 5EX
01928 722910 **£2,402**

Activity	6 monthly target
No of volunteers over 6 month	39
Volunteer hours per 6 month	2600

HBC Priorities met by organisation
A Healthy Halton
A Safer Halton
Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Samaritans
46 Arpley Street, Warrington, WA4 1LX
01925 235000 **£4,000**

Activity	6 monthly total
Counselling calls	6927
Volunteer hours per year	2000
No of volunteers over the year	56
Telephone enquiries	6927
Personal visits to centre	4

HBC Priorities met by organisation
A Healthy Halton
A Safer Halton
Halton's Children & Young People
Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Warrington Community Law Centre
64 – 66 Bewsey Street Warrington, WA2 7JE
01925 651 104

£15,000

Activity	6 monthly total	Yearly target No targets as total new service to Borough
Number of people contacted with information prior to court case	17	No target
Number of court sessions attended	9	No target
Number of people seen at court sessions	33	No target
Number of new cases	3	No target
Advice given	68	No target

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Widnes & Runcorn Cancer Support Group
21-23 Alforde Street, Widnes, Cheshire, WA8 7TR
0151 423 5730

£13,000

Activity	6 monthly total	Yearly target
Counselling hours	87	No target
Listening hours	705	No target
Information centre - patients	58	No target
Volunteer hours per year	1835	No target
No of volunteers over the year	55	No target
Information phone calls	57	No target
Listening phone calls	200	No target
HUGS club	498	719
Outreach group	72	
Busom buddies	193	
Therapies and workshops	272	

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Halton's Children & Young People

Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning and Skills PPB

DATE: 28th January 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Health and Community

SUBJECT: Library Service Book Analysis

WARDS: ALL

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 As requested by the last Board the Library Service is reporting on the quantity of Children's books withdrawn from stock and the suitability of this material for distribution to targeted families in the community.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- i) Withdrawn children's books be distributed as outlined in paragraph 3.7 of the report.
- ii) Approval be sought from Executive Board Sub to waive the loss of income.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Table 1 shows the number of children's books added to and withdrawn from library stock during the last financial year.

Table 1	2006-2007	
	Number of new books added to stock	Number of books withdrawn from stock
Children's Fiction	6488	3686
Children's Non-Fiction	1125	585
Total	7613	4271

In the first 6 months of this year a total of 2,075 children's books have been withdrawn.

- 3.2 Stock is withdrawn from the library service on the basis of condition, age and levels of use. If appropriate, the material it is then offered for sale through the normal library book sale process.
- 3.3 Children's stock is heavily used, over 35% of fiction is on loan at any one time and this figure rises to 55% for picture books, the stock is therefore subject to considerable wear and tear.

- 3.4 10% of withdrawn children's books have to be discarded straight away as they are only suitable for recycling. Of the remaining material, approx. 45%, 1,700 items would be suitable for distribution to targeted families on the basis of their condition.
- 3.5 These would fall into the categories of picture books, beginning to read and storybooks, and non-fiction.
- 3.6 Diverting any quantity of material away from the normal book sale would result in loss of income for the service, which is estimated at £1,000.
- 3.7 Material suitable for distribution could be identified by Library Staff at the withdrawals stage and sorted in to target age categories and offered to the Children and Young People's Area Networks (CYPAN's) and the Family Learning Team for distribution/use by their targeted families as appropriate.
- 3.8 Children in Halton already benefit significantly from a range of book gifting schemes, it will therefore be important to ensure that any withdrawn material offered to families is of good quality and condition and appropriate to their needs.
- 3.9 It is widely recognised that one of the most important things a parent can do to help their child learn is to read with them and inspire a love of reading and books. The Library Service co-ordinates and delivers with its partners the gifting schemes that help encourage parents and carers to spend time reading with their children.
- 3.10 Every child in the Borough receives 3 Bookstart packs before they reach school age. Health Visitors deliver the first pack "Bookstart for babies" at the 7-9 month health check, this includes an invitation to join the library and attend story and rhyme time sessions. The "Bookstart Plus" pack for toddlers is delivered through a variety of settings, Playgroups, Nurseries, Health Clinics, Libraries, Health Fayres and the Women's Refuge, whilst the "My Bookstart Treasure Chest" for 3-4 year olds is delivered through Nurseries. Each pack contains 2 free books, book lists, guidance and other materials aimed at engaging children with books, reading and writing.
- 3.11 The gifting schemes continue with every child receiving a free book pack in their reception year. The Booked Up scheme encourages Year 7 children to read for pleasure by providing free books and magazines through their schools. Boys into Books encourages teenage boys to read for pleasure and the latest scheme Book Ahead, which will provide libraries with free books for book boxes which will be available to local nurseries.

3.12 The Department for Children, Schools and Families has recently confirmed its commitment to continue funding the book gifting programmes, Bookstart, Booktime and Booked Up until 2011.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

The Library Service improves individuals quality of life and contributes to achieving a broad range of social issues including education and lifelong learning, social inclusion and community cohesion and contributes to the agendas of all the Boards

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None

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

Document

Place of Inspection

Contact Officer

REPORT TO: Employment Learning and Skills Policy
and Performance Board

DATE: 28 January 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Service Plans 2008-2011

WARDS: Borough wide

1. **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1. To enable Members to consider objectives and targets for services for the next three years.

2. **RECOMMENDED: that**

- i. The Board identifies any objectives and targets for the next three years that it wishes to see included in the Service Plans.
- ii. That Board Members pass any detailed comments that they may have on individual draft Service Plans to the relevant Operational Director by 31 January 2008.

3. **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1. The Departmental Service Plans are currently being reviewed and rolled forward. They will go to Executive Board for approval on 21 February 2008, at the same time as the draft budget. This will ensure that decisions on Service Planning are linked to resource allocation.
- 3.2. Each Operational Director will make a brief presentation to the Policy and Performance Board describing the key factors affecting their service and their main objectives for the coming three years. In preparation for this discussion, Board Members may wish to consider:
- the three things they would most like to see each department address in the next three years; and
 - the three things they would most like to have regular performance reports on in relation to each department.

3.3. The departments reporting to Corporate Services PPB are:

- i. Economic Regeneration
- ii. Cultural Service

4. **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1. Service Plans will clearly indicate how objectives and targets relate to the areas of focus identified in the Council's Corporate Plan.

5. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1. Financial, IT, Property, and Human Resource implications are all identified within the individual Service Plans.

6. **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

- Children & Young People
- Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton
- A Healthy Halton
- A Safer Halton
- Halton's Urban Renewal

6.1. The objectives in the Service Plans are intended to support the Council's priorities particularly that for effective and efficient service delivery.

7. **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1. Risk analysis of all key objectives within Service Plans is undertaken and summarised in the plan.

8. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1. All Service Plans will be subject to an equality impact assessment and any high priority implications will be summarised within the plans.

REPORT TO: Employment Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 28^h January 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Employment Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board Work Programme 2008/9

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 2008/9. 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 in 2007/8, bearing in mind the Council's agreed selection criteria (Annex 1):
 - to decide on a work programme of Topics to be undertaken in the next municipal year.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) Put forward and debate its initial suggestions for Topics to be included in the Board's 2008/9 work programme**
- (2) Develop and informally consult on a shortlist of its own and others' 2008/9 Topic suggestions ahead of the Board's meeting on March 10th, 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 Employment and Skills on Workforce and Skills for the Logistics Industry: Siobhan Saunders (Economic Regeneration) and Sally McDonald (Major Projects Department).

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
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None		
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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?	

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 28th January 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Local Area Agreement

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide a briefing on the timetable for the development of the new Local Area Agreement for Halton.

2. RECOMMENDED: That

- 2.1 Policy and Performance Board identify key issues it wishes to see addressed in the City Employment Strategy for Greater Merseyside.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The draft LAA timetable is -

January	LOG Meeting HVA Community Forum SSP Meetings GONW Lead Officers Meeting Draft SSP Action Plans	February	Executive Board Report HSPB Board LOG Meeting Advanced Draft LAA to GONW
March	PPB Progress Report SSP Meetings GONW Lead Officers Meeting	April	LOG Meeting Executive Board Report
May	Final LAA submitted to GONW	June	LAA sign Off by Ministers

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The LAA will be the vehicle for delivering focused action onto policy priorities as agreed through the Strategic Partnership.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

There will be at least 16 mandatory targets in the LAA and the Strategic Partnership will need to consider the need for more localised targets for inclusion. The new LAA will give more opportunity for employment and CYP activity to be brought together, particularly around NEET issues.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

The ELS PPB is represented on the ELS SSP by the chair of the PPB. This presents a clear opportunity for the priorities and concerns of the PPB to be fed into the development of the LAA through the SSP.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The recognition that addressing worklessness leads to improved health in an area is generally accepted now. The new LAA will offer an improved opportunity for work on the employment and health agendas to become more integrated.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Ensuring that neighbourhoods are a safe place to live and work is a vital precursor to being able to engage people in thinking about employment and skills issues.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

The work of the Urban Renewal SSP continues to be a high priority, particularly in relation to the attraction and creation of new jobs to Halton. Each new business that establishes here provides opportunities for local employment.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 The Halton Partnership is a well-established forum for tackling the strategic issues that face Halton. The Community Strategy provides a clear framework for the development of the LAA with well-established priorities. As such, the main risks are more likely to be associated with external factors such as tight timetable and the desire for numerous government departments and agencies to see their own priorities listed as targets. These issues can be managed and reduced through the good working relationships that exist with the Government Office.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Central to the new LAA will be the need to identify and address inequalities that may exist in the borough.