

EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Employment, Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 8 March 2010 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Jones (Chairman), Edge (Vice-Chairman), Austin, Findon, Howard, Loftus, Parker and Rowe

Apologies for Absence: Councillor M. Bradshaw, Stockton and Worrall

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Simpson, I. Atherton, H. Cockcroft, N. Goodwin, W Rourke and A. Villiers

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

ELS46 MINUTES

The Minutes from the meeting held on Wednesday 13th January 2010, having been printed and circulated, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

ELS47 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was reported that no public questions had been received.

ELS48 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The Board considered the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board Sub-Committee held on 14th January relevant to the Employment Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board.

In receiving the minutes the Members noted that the total budget available was £3,004,000 however the resolution noted that the tender submitted by Globe

Action

Management Services Limited had been accepted with a contract sum of £2,508,643. Members queried where the remaining approximate £500,000 was allocated. In response, it was noted that this information would be sought and reported back to Members.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

ELS49 SSP MINUTES

The Board received the minutes of the Employment Learning and Skills Specialist Strategic Partnership meeting held on 14th January 2010.

In receiving the minutes the Board felt that the meeting focused on the finances, the impact of respective projects and the potential to get added value through PSA2 rewards, rather than clearly stating what the Partnership was delivering in terms of activity for people in the Borough who were suffering as a result of the economic climate. In response it was noted that information would be provided showing a clearer picture of where resources were allocated to certain services to tackle these issues.

In relation to 8.2 Members queried the outcome from the 10 interviews carried out with young people in Halton who were eligible for Future Fobs Fund. In response it was noted that this process had been paused in order to take stock of the wider Future Jobs Fund agenda. However, it was expected that at least 6 candidates would be engaged.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

ELS50 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE COMMUNITY CENTRES SERVICE FOR 2008/09

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Health and Community which outlined the performance of community centres in the 2008/09 operating year.

It was reported that the delay of the Annual Report date was due to the time taken to collate and collect the data from the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE).

The Board wished to note their congratulations to the Health and Community Directorate in relation to the Award for Ditton Community Centre for most improved services.

Outlined in the report for consideration were tables of information that demonstrated that Halton's Community Centres had achieved a continual increase on income and attendances over the last three years. The report further outlined the key activities in Community Centres in 2008/2009 in addition to the key developments and activities for 2009/10. The report also set out the implications for the Council's priorities, in that Community Centres made a significant contribution to supporting the Council's priorities. Members were also informed of the activities across the Centres that impacted on each priority which were set out in the report for information.

The Board was advised that the service also supported T. H. Brown Trust in operating Churchill Hall. It was noted that this service sat with the Health and Community Directorate in the Community Involvement Team and worked closely with community development. Members queried whether Churchill Hall was DDA compliant. In response, it was noted that it was currently undergoing alterations after which were completed Churchill Hall would be DDA compliant.

The Board discussed replacement costs and it was noted that there was no formal programme in place for replacement however, there was a new Castlefields Centre being developed and Murdishaw Community Centre was fairly new. Renewal programmes would be carried out as and when required.

Arising from the discussion, Members queried whether Widnes Recreation Club would be re-opened. In response, it was noted that there was a paper going to Executive Board in April asking for permission to tender for expressions of interest in managing the site. It was noted that the changing rooms and the playing fields were currently still being used and would remain open.

In relation to the activities and achievements outlined in the report, Members noted that different achievements were listed for individual Community Centres therefore it was difficult in terms of comparability. In response, it was noted that a more detailed document containing the data with the same categories for each Community Centre could be forwarded to Board Members.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) The Report outlining the service on performance for

the year 2008/2009 be noted; and

- 2) Information that sets out performance for each Community Centre and the same categories be forwarded to Board Members.

ELS51 LOCAL ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which provided a briefing on the Local Economic Assessment of Halton.

It was reported that from April 2010 there would be a duty on Councils to prepare a Local Economic Assessment (LEA) for their area. Once completed Local Authorities may revise an LEA at any time and they should consult with organisations that they felt appropriate in developing them. It was further noted that this was not just an exercise of gathering data as it was using this assessment to inform the Council on the types of services that could be used in the future for understanding local economic challenges.

The Board was advised that Local Authorities would need to take account of a broad range of factors that impacted both positively and negatively on their area and would need to work across different service areas such as economic development and regeneration, education and skills planning, transport, sport and culture when preparing assessments. Detailed in the report for information were the objectives that local economic assessments should achieve.

The Board was informed that local authorities were requested to adopt a broadly consistent approach so that assessments were comparable and could be readily aggregated to inform sub-regional strategies. As such, assessments should address a core set of themes including Business and Enterprise, People and Communities and Sustainable Economic Growth.

It was further noted that the guidance suggested if the Council had close collaborations with neighbouring authorities there could be potential to utilise some of the resources that the Merseyside Region attracted in terms of funding. Appended to the report was a sample of the type of questions and areas to be picked up through the sub-regional arrangements as detailed in the report.

Arising from the discussion, Members queried what measures would be in place to assess whether any

successful outcomes had resulted from the Local Economic Assessment. In response it was noted that it would be difficult to measure the successful outcomes. However, more robust systems would be implemented in terms of delivery of service, and all parties involved would benefit from working more collaboratively together on a sub-regional level.

Members also queried how this Local Economic Assessment would add to the chances of people obtaining work. In response, it was noted that as a result of the Local Economic Assessment a more robust evidenced based form could be developed from the outset which would establish where resources were required, therefore focusing on the right needs and resources.

The Board agreed that regular monitoring of the Local Economic Assessment process should be carried out by the Employment Learning and Skills Board.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Board supports the development of the Halton Local Economic Assessment; and
- 2) Regular monitoring of the Local Economic Assessment process be carried out through the Employment Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board.

ELS52 SHANGHAI EXPO 2010

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director Environment which advised Members of the Council's involvement in promoting the Shanghai Expo 2010 event.

It was reported that the event would take place from 1st May to 31st October 2010 and was expected that 70 million visitors and 200 participants would visit the exhibition which covered an area of 5.28 square kilometres.

It was further noted that Liverpool Vision was leading a North West Trade Pavilion which focused on Liverpool Gateway to the North West. The Board was advised that the benefit of the sponsorship to this event was the investment and opportunity for the Council to encourage local businesses to communicate with businesses from 200

nations. It would also provide businesses with a taste of the culture and how businesses operated on a global competitive market.

It was further noted that in taking forward the opportunity for Halton, the Council had, along with the other five Mersey Authorities agreed to contribute £18,000 as sponsorship known as the Platinum Package. Details of the package were outlined in the report for information.

The Council had been working with Halton Chamber of Commerce to raise awareness of Expo 2010. Initial discussions had also taken place with the Borough's Enterprise Board with the aim of encouraging as many local businesses as possible to participate in the Expo event. The Board also discussed the possibility of linkages with Tong Ling being utilised and given the same opportunities. It was further noted that a thematic approach was being considered to engaging with companies and businesses in Halton with a focus on science and innovation and distribution as it was felt that these were Halton's strengths in economic terms.

RESOLVED: That the Board supports proposals to ensure that Halton businesses were able to maximise any opportunities arising from the Expo 2010.

ELS53 WORK PROGRAMME 2010/2011

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Environment which sought to develop a work programme of Topics for the Board to examine in 2010/11.

The Board agreed two work programmes with Topics as follows:-

- Understanding the social and economic impacts of the recession;
- Barriers to employment from an employers' perspective – with the focus on "how employers perceive what the barriers are for expanding their businesses".

A third work programme was agreed which would not commence until later in the year in relation to the local economic assessment titled as followed:-

- Participation and consultation arrangements regarding the Local Economic Assessment.

Members agreed that they could investigate the information that was being gathered and how it could be used, therefore, they could remain closely in touch with the process and be involved in the drafting of the questions at a later stage in the process. It was reported that a subsequent report with a more detailed brief would be brought to a future Policy and Performance Board, giving the chance for Members to decide the next course of action.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the following Topic groups be established as part of the 2010/11 work plan.
 - Understanding the social and economic impacts of the recession;
 - Barriers to employment from an employers' perspective; and
- 2) a future Topic group be established in the later part of the year entitled "Participation and Consultation arrangements regarding the Local Economic Assessment".

ELS54 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORTS AND PERFORMANCE GROUP UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive on progress against service plan objectives and performance targets. Performance trends/comparisons and factors affecting services for Economic Regeneration and Culture and Leisure for the third quarter were outlined in the report for information.

In receiving the report Members requested whether they could have feedback from KIT meetings that had been attended at Riverside College to ascertain whether the College was progressing.

The Board also felt that many of the key developments outlined in the report were not necessarily **key**. Members requested that when Officers were reporting, key developments could more substantial/strategic for example key developments only, could be listed as opposed to routine operational, day to day activities. The Board felt it

would be useful if Officers could ascertain which pieces of information were relative and these could be included in the refining process of performance monitoring reports.

In relation to the Train to Gain Skills for Life funding and the requirement for additional staffing, Members queried the status of this in light of the current Efficiency Programme restructuring process. In response, it was noted that a response would be sought and reported back to Members.

RESOLVED: That the 3rd quarter performance management reports be received.

Meeting ended at 8.55 p.m.