



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

**Wednesday, 30 May 2012 at 6.30 p.m.
The Board Room - Municipal Building,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David W R', positioned above a faint rectangular stamp.

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Susan Edge (Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Carol Plumpton Walsh (Vice-Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Lauren Cassidy	Labour
Councillor Harry Howard	Labour
Councillor Peter Lloyd Jones	Labour
Councillor Geoffrey Logan	Labour
Councillor Andrew MacManus	Labour
Councillor Stan Parker	Labour
Councillor Joe Roberts	Labour
Councillor Christopher Rowe	Liberal Democrat
Councillor Geoff Zygadlo	Labour

*Please contact Michelle Simpson on 0151 511 8708 or e-mail
michelle.simpson@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Board is on Monday, 17 September 2012*

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

Part I

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1. MINUTES	
2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)	
<p>Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal or personal and prejudicial interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached and, with personal and prejudicial interests (subject to certain exceptions in the Code of Conduct for Members), to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on the item.</p>	
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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, Skills and Community
Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 30 May 2012

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Policy and Resources

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(9).
- 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(9) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows:-
- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for dealing with questions from 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 given by 4.00 pm on the working day prior to the date of the meeting to the Committee Services Manager. At any one 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 your 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 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 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton** - none.

6.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton** - none.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton** – none.

6.4 **A Safer Halton** – none.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal** – none.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

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

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

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

DATE: 30 May 2012

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Executive Board Minutes

WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Minutes relating to the Community Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board and Executive Board Sub 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

- 3.1 None.

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 Children and Young People in Halton

None

5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

None

5.3 A Healthy Halton

None

5.4 A Safer Halton

None

5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

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

8.1 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 15 MARCH 2012

EXB112 VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING – GRANT ALLOCATION 2012/13

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, on the Voluntary Sector Grant Awards for 2012/13.

The Board was advised that voluntary sector organisations had been invited to submit applications for funding in 2012/13. Applications were assessed and recommendations agreed by a Panel consisting of the Executive Board Portfolio holder with responsibility for the Voluntary Sector and Officers from the Commissioning and Complex Care service in the Communities Directorate.

The report contained details of the recommended annual allocation for the financial year 2012/13. It was noted that the proposed budget saving of £12,000 for the year resulted in two organisations – Halton and St Helens VCA and Halton Citizens Advice Bureau –receiving a reduced allocation.

RESOLVED: That the recommended grant allocations, as detailed in the report, be approved.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 15 MARCH 2012

**EXB123 OFSTED 2011-12 SURVEY INSPECTION PROGRAMME:
EMPLOYABILITY - THE IMPACT OF SKILLS PROGRAMMES FOR
ADULTS ON ACHIEVING SUSTAINED EMPLOYMENT**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, on the outcomes from the recent Ofsted Survey Inspection of the Employment, Learning and Skills Division.

The last full Ofsted inspection in June 2009 awarded the service a Grade 2 – Good. The current inspection took place over three days between November 2011 and January 2012, with evidence collated in a number of ways, including staff and participant interviews, scrutiny of relevant documents and observation of four learning sessions.

The Board noted the key findings and areas for improvement from the

Survey Inspection, as detailed in the report.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the successful Ofsted Inspection of the Employment, Learning and Skills service be noted; and
- 2) the actions arising from Inspector be endorsed.

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

DATE: 30 May 2012

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Children and Enterprise

PORTFOLIO: Economic Development

SUBJECT: Annual Report 2011/12

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE AND CONTENT OF REPORT

1.1 To receive the Employment, Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Boards' Annual Report for 2011/12.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the 2011/12 Annual Report be recommended to Full Council.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Article 6 of the Constitution requires each Policy and Performance Board to submit an Annual Report to Council outlining their work, making recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods as appropriate.

3.2 The Annual Report (see attached) has been submitted to the Employment Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board for consideration.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton
None

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton
None

6.3 A Healthy Halton

None

6.4 A Safer Halton

None

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 None

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 None

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

9.1 None under the meaning of the Act



Cllr. Sue Edge
Chairman

ANNUAL REPORT
(Employment Learning & Skills and Community) POLICY
AND PERFORMANCE BOARD
APRIL 2011 – MARCH 2012

“ For the past 7 years I have been a member of scrutiny on The Employment Learning Skills & The Community. within this period my positions have been inclusive of 2yrs as Vice Chair and this my second year as Chair. In respect of this I would like to take this opportunity to thank Members of this committee for the continuing support you have shown me.

As usual the quality of the debate that we have had on a variety of topics during the year has been excellent. The last 12 months have been challenging and I believe that your knowledge and experience of a wide range of complex issues has enabled us to make a real and positive difference to people, living, working and or studying in Halton.

I would also like to thank the officers for working with me to ensure that agendas and papers have not only reflected the role and remit of the PPB but have reflected a positive and proactive approach to tackling the economic down-turn. Difficult times often require difficult discussions to take place and as you will see in the report below we have been required to consider a number of topics and these have been presented in an informative and considered way.

Together I believe that the PPB has fully demonstrated its value in supporting the organisation to develop its policies in respect of Employment learning and Skills and Community initiatives in Halton.”

Councillor Sue Edge
Chairman, Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board

MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

During 2011/12 the Board comprised eleven Councillors – Councillors Edge, (Chair) P Lloyd-Jones (Vice Chair), Carlin, Horabin, Howard, MacManus, Parker, C Plumpton-Walsh, Roberts, Rowe and Zygadlo.

The primary function of the PPB is to focus on the work of the Council (and its Partners) in seeking to improve economic prosperity in Halton, the skills and employment prospects of its residents, and their access to good sporting and cultural amenities, to scrutinise progress against the Corporate Plan in relation to the Employment Learning and Skills priority.

	<p>Employment, Learning and Skills Priority.</p> <p>REVIEW OF THE YEAR</p> <p>The full Board met four times during the year, and set out below are some of the main initiatives that the Board has worked on during the year.</p> <p>Reports that were prepared by the ELS and C PPB are as follows: -</p> <p><i>Local Economic Assessment</i></p> <p>The Board considered a report regarding the development of a Local Economic Assessment (LEA) for the Borough of Halton.</p> <p>The Board was advised that an LEA would be used to provide a longer timeframe for the analysis of structural changes in the economy of Halton. The LEA included an economic forecasting model to anticipate, for example GVA and employment growth, which would help us to prioritise and forward plan our economic regeneration activity.</p> <p><i>Digital Inclusion Strategy</i></p> <p>The Board considered a report which set out the Digital Economy and Inclusion Strategy (DEIS) and supporting evidence paper which had been produced for Halton. The Board was advised that the strategy targeted Next Generation Access (NGA) Broadband as a mechanism for driving economic development of social inclusion in Halton. It was noted that the new communications technologies not only helped businesses trade and develop but also created opportunities for businesses to develop new applications and services.</p>
	<p><i>Single Work Programme</i></p> <p>After discussion at the ELS and C PPB, a report was presented to the Executive Board to notify Members that Halton Borough Council was entering into contracts with the Prime Contractors Ingeus and A4E to deliver the Single Work Programme in Halton.</p> <p>Members were advised that as part of the Government's welfare reform proposals, a number of existing employment support programmes had ceased and had been replaced by a new initiative called "The Single Work Programme".</p> <p>Prior to the awarding of the contracts, Halton Borough Council, (through Halton People into Jobs), bid to deliver Work Programme provision in Halton on a sub-contracting basis.</p> <p>Both prime contractors expressed an interest in working with Halton Borough Council via the Halton People into Jobs team. Halton was awarded 'end to end' delivery contracts for both organisations.</p>

	<p><i>Employment Learning and Skills and Community PPB Riverside College Presentation</i></p> <p>The Board received a presentation from Kevin Smith – Vice Principal: Adults, Skills and Enterprise from Riverside College which set out the College’s contribution to the Employment Learning and Skills agenda in Halton.</p> <p>Arising from the presentation the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievements to date were excellent, particularly the best in England A level results which were physics, combined English and sociology; • Links could be formed with the Heath and Daresbury Laboratory in relation to science and the possibility of apprenticeships; • Concerns were raised with regard to proposals of secondary schools forming their own 6th forms and there no longer being a need for facilities at Riverside; and • There was a high percentage of adults in the Borough who did not have level 1 education, schemes to improve this could be investigated.
	<p><i>Scrutiny Topic Assessing the Impact of Deficit Policy on Employment Learning and Skills in Halton</i></p> <p>The Board received an update on the scrutiny topic “Impact of Deficit Policy on Employment Learning and Skills in Halton”.</p> <p>The topic group considered the Government’s deficit policy would have an impact on the wider range of initiatives and measures in Halton but that it was important to remain focussed on issues that would be of specific relevance to this Board.</p> <p>The group carried out an initial assessment of emerging Government policy relating to the Employment, Learning and Skills (ELS) agenda and an overview of the ELS policies that the Scrutiny Topic Group considered was appended to the report for information.</p> <p>Arising from discussion of the report Members suggested further involvement with local employers will be undertaken to encourage them to engage with college students and provide relative work experience. In response it was noted that this would be investigated. In addition the Board agreed to receive a progress update report in six months time.</p>

Presentation on the Enterprise Zone at Daresbury

Members received an informative presentation from the Chief Executive that Daresbury Science and Innovation Campus had received Enterprise Zone status. Members were advised that partners submitted a bid for Enterprise Zone status to further encourage and stimulate demand from high value businesses to the site.

It was reported that The Enterprise Zone status (which uniquely has the full support of 3 LEP's - Liverpool, Manchester and Cheshire and Warrington) would enable the accelerated delivery of the plans to build on Daresbury's continuing role as a nationally designated Science and Innovation Campus, containing internationally competitive facilities, developing world-class science, and maximising opportunities for knowledge transfer.

It was noted that All Enterprise Zones would benefit from;

- A business rate discount worth up to £275,000 per business over a five year period
- All business rates growth within the zone for a period of at least 25 years will be retained by the local area, to support the Partnership's economic priorities and ensure that Enterprise Zone growth is reinvested locally
- Government help to develop radically simplified planning approaches for the zone using, for example, existing Local Development Order powers
- Government support to ensure that superfast broadband is rolled out throughout the zone, achieved through guaranteeing the most supportive regulatory environment and, if necessary, public funding.

Bridge Tourism

The PPB received a report on the potential for tourism relating the construction of the Mersey Gateway.

With the progress now being made on the construction of the Mersey Gateway, a scoping paper has been developed to consider the potential impact it could have on tourism in the Borough.

The paper considers the potential tourism benefits and possible activities through a number of case studies of construction related projects.

Members agreed that working in partnership will be very important. It was noted that there are a number of hotels and tourist operators already interested in working together and a number have volunteered to be part of a delivery group. The future concessionaire will have a critical role to play and will no doubt have its own ideas to contribute.

The Halton Employment Partnership (HEP) and Tesco Extra Stores recruitment project

Members were recently provided with an update on the HEP/Tesco Extra Store recruitment project which the Halton Employment Partnership supported with the aim of supporting local unemployed people into jobs at the new Widnes store. An intensive programme of pre-employment training, interviews skills workshops and interviews was provided leading to 94 local people securing employment at the store.

Report on Business Development Activity

The PPB received a progress report on the work of the Business Development Team (BDT) within the Economy, Enterprise and Property Department. The primary aim of the team is to encourage investment into the Borough and to support companies already based in the Borough to expand and grow. The report also provides information on the positive measures the team is taking to support Halton's businesses during the economic down turn. The report advised on recent announcements regarding 'employer facing' initiatives and set out proposals for how the team will respond to these announcements.

Community Development

The board received an annual report on the Councils Community Centres service for the operating year 2010/11. The report detailed APSE (Association of Public Service Excellence) benchmarking data providing information on efficiency and the direction of travel for the service over the last five years. The benchmarking data overall demonstrates improved performance across the service and identifies areas of focus to support continuous improvement. The report also outlined contributions to the Councils efficiency programme and details of the significant savings achieved in reducing energy costs by adopting good housekeeping measures. The report hi-lighted how the provision and usage of community centres contributes to the Councils key priorities and identified future challenges for the service.

The Board considered a report which outlined the delivery of **Community Development in 2011/12**.

It was reported that the purpose of Community Development was to build relationships with our communities, to help groups and networks of people take joint action on matters that concerned them. It was also about enabling individuals to influence the decisions that affected their lives.

The Board were informed that to do this the Community Development combined a number of aspects which were outlined in the report for information. The Board was advised of the service performance and service development which detailed the following:

- Starter Grants;
- Community Development Grants;
- Voluntary Youth Organisation Grants; and
- Bursaries.

The Board also received a report which outlined the **Annual Report for Voluntary Sector Funding**. The report provided performance information on the 12 organisations Core Grant supported in 2010/11, which were detailed in the report for information.

WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2012/13

The Board has decided that during the next municipal year (2012/13) it will focus on:
Welfare Reform and The Single Work Programme;
Interface with the Private Sector and Employer Facing Services;
Sector Development;
The Low Carbon Economy;
Apprenticeships.

The topic groups Barriers to Employment (from an Employer perspective) and;
Apprenticeships will be completed and reported to the June Committee

Members of the Public are welcome at the meetings of the Board. If you would like to know where and when meetings are to be held or if you would like any more information about the Board or its work please contact (Wesley Rourke, Operational Director, Economy, Enterprise and Employment)

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

DATE: 30 May 2012

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Children & Enterprise

PORTFOLIO: Economic Development

SUBJECT: Barriers to Employment (from an employers perspective) topic group

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To consider the scrutiny topic group report on barriers to employment from an employer perspective

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) **Members of the ELS and Community support the recommendations contained in pages 13-18 of the attached report, namely;**
- *To continue the Recruitment and Training 'offer' to inward investors provided through the Halton Employment Partnership and seek funding for a dedicated resource to provide this coordinated support on a medium term basis.*
 - *To seek Government support to help Halton support people from disadvantaged groups and areas within Halton to access jobs and training opportunities arising in the construction industry.*
 - *To support the development of a wider system of vocational qualifications focused on the STAM agenda.*
 - *To support the development of the Fab Lab concept.*
 - *To ask Government to revisit the Apprenticeship Eligibility rules*

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

A summary of the key messages contained in the report, is provided below:

- 3.1 This topic report builds on the previous topic regarding barriers to employment from an **employee** perspective. This time, a report has been prepared which presents an **employer** perspective on barriers to employment.
- 3.2 The report concludes that the perceived barriers to employment from the perspective of the individual job seeker in Halton are well documented.
- 3.3 There are a number of barriers or key considerations cited by employers when they are considering recruiting staff. Whilst there are common themes, the requirements vary according to the job and sector. Interestingly, whilst some employers insist on experience and or qualifications, others prefer to focus on attitude to work.
- 3.4 The Halton Business Perception Survey is considered to be a key document in obtaining and presenting the views of employers on employment and employability. All businesses who took part in the Business Perception Study 2010 were asked to rate by importance the required skills of potential employees using a five point scale from 'very important' through to 'very unimportant'.
- 3.5 Three skills or attributes were found to be of greatest importance to local employers; **communication, numeracy and literacy**.
- 3.6 Members commended the borough's joined up approach to engaging with employers through the Halton Employment Partnership, which allows for limited resources to be deployed in a more focused and effective way.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 It is felt that this is a helpful piece of work because it provides an examination of some of the issues which prevent employers from employing (local) people. This research can be used to inform future priorities in respect of engaging with employers.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None at this stage.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 Children and Young People in Halton

By highlighting the recruitment needs of employers, it is suggested that the considerations presented in the report can be used to better prepare our young people for the world of work

7.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

The report highlights the fact that there are a number of factors which influence employer decisions when recruiting and appointing people. It is acknowledged from this report that a whole system approach is required which does not focus purely on learning and skills in isolation, but is founded upon a more bespoke relationship with employers and businesses.

7.3 A Healthy Halton

None

7.4 A Safer Halton

None

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

8.1 There are no significant risks associated with this report

9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

9.1 By capturing the views of employers we can ensure that we provide better support to people finding work in a more targeted and inclusive way.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None under the meaning of the Act

APPENDIX 1 – Topic Brief

Topic title: HCT Scrutiny Working Group

PPB(s) responsible: Urban Renewal / Employment Learning & Skills

Officer Lead: Mick Noone Tel: 0151 471 7370

Support Officer: Jeff Briggs 0151 471 7381

Planned start/end date: Short series of meetings (3 to 4), mid February to late March 2012

Topic description and scope:

A review of the operations of, and services provided by, Halton Community Transport (HCT) including identification of funding streams which contribute towards HCT's operations and service delivery. To consider the potential social and inclusion benefits that the services operated by HCT provide to its users and the impacts on these users should service discontinue.

Terms of Reference

1. To consider the Council's duties and policies for securing the provision of public transport services, including community transport.
2. To consider the role community transport can play in helping the Council fulfil its duties and meet its priorities.
3. To consider the aims and objectives of HCT, the details of its current fleet, the number and type of passengers it carries, and the services it provides to the communities of Halton.
4. To consider the legislation governing the operation of CT services (permit systems, licences, etc.).
5. To consider the service level agreement that exists between Halton Borough Council and Halton Community Transport in terms of levels of service provision, standards of quality required and funding levels.
6. To consider whether HCT, or indeed other community transport operations that may be supported by the Council, can be deemed to be benefitting from an unfair financial and competitive advantage in relation to other transport providers.
7. To consider the potential impacts on users of the specialised transport services that HCT provide should any such service be withdrawn, wholly or in part i.e. less vehicles provided, reduced days/times of operation.

8. To consider other possible transport service alternatives available for users whom rely on existing specialised transport.
9. To consider other potential ways in which alternative specialised transport services could be provided by different transport providers more effectively and/or at reduced cost.
10. To consider the detrimental impact on the Council's duty under Section 63 (8) of the Transport Act 1985 'it shall be the duty of any council, in exercising or performing any of their functions to have regard to the transport needs of members of the public who are elderly or disabled' should specialised transport services be withdrawn in their entirety.
11. To consider the impact of cuts to the supported bus service budget and the impact this is having or could have on the provision of local bus services in certain areas. Demand responsive transport services such as the Council funded Dial-a-Ride provided by HCT, are a fall-back for residents (in meeting the duties as set out above) from areas where there is no alternative public transport provision.
12. To consider the Community Impact Review and Assessment (CIRA) for reduction of funding for specialised transport services and consequential impact on duties as part of the Equalities Act.
13. To consider the potential impact on the Local Sustainable Transport Fund bid application, which includes elements of provision by HCT and could be worth £4.3million over the next three years, should funding levels provided be discontinued.
14. To consider the existing passenger fares and other charge levels made by HCT for services provided for individuals and for affiliated groups.

Why this topic was chosen:

In the current financial climate where major savings are required and every budget line is being closely scrutinised, the HCT scrutiny working group aims to identify the overall effectiveness of the services provided by HCT and to review the current operations of HCT as well as funding levels provided by the Council.

Key outputs and outcomes sought

Outputs:

A clear understanding of –

1. HCT's operations, the services it provides and its sources of funding.
2. The role Community Transport can play in helping the Council meet its statutory duties and its priorities.
3. The service level agreement that exists between Halton Borough Council and Halton Community Transport and it's overall content.

4. The potential impacts on users of the specialised transport services provided by HCT should these services be withdrawn or significantly reduced.
5. Any other possible transport service alternatives available for users and/or potential alternative specialised transport service provision.
6. The Council's duty under Section 63 (8) of the Transport Act 1985 when determining the need to consider the transport needs of members of the public who are elderly or disabled.
7. The requirement to produce a Community Impact Review and Assessment (CIRA) for any reduction of funding for specialised transport services.
8. The Local Sustainable Transport Fund bid application, HCT's role and how this and other forms of public transport fit with the overall aim of the LSTF bid.

Outcomes:

1. The identification of any significant risks and issues from the review of HCT's activities and operations.
2. The identification of any significant benefits and opportunities from the review of HCT's activities and operations.
3. To reach a conclusion on whether the subsidy provided by the Council to HCT is providing value for money and whether future support should be maintained (subject to availability of funding).
4. A clearer scope and direction for future provision of specialised transport services with knowledge of all of the relevant surrounding information.

Which of Halton's 5 strategic priorities does this topic address and what are the key objectives and improvement targets it will help achieve?

A Healthy Halton, Key Objectives including:

- Responding to the needs of an ageing population, improving their quality of life and thus enabling longer, active and more fulfilled lives;
- Removing barriers that disable people and contribute to poor health by addressing the wider determinants of health;
- Improving access to health services, including primary care

Employment Learning and Skills, Key Objectives including:

- Developing a culture where learning is valued and skill levels throughout the adult population and across the local workforce can be raised;
- Promoting and increasing the employability of local people and removing barriers to employment to get more people into work

Environment and Regeneration, Key Objectives including:

- Providing a well connected, sustainable and accessible borough and ensuring a variety of safe efficient travel and infrastructure options for people

Nature of expected/desired PPB input

Involvement by a small number of Members and officers in a series of working groups, involving approximately 3 or 4 meetings. Working group reports to be considered by PPB as appropriate.

Preferred mode of operation

As above.

Media/Communication implications/opportunities arising from examining this topic.

None at this stage.

Agreed and signed by:

PPB Chair Officer

Date Date

Name of Board: Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board

Date of Meeting: 14th March 2012

Report Title: Policy & Performance Board Work Programme 2011/12

Author: Jeff Briggs

STANDARD SECTIONS – CHECKLIST		
All reports must be submitted together with the following checklist fully completed		
	Yes	No
<p>Resource Implications The financial, manpower and land (buying or selling) considerations should be clearly detailed including any corporate implications of following the recommended course of action.</p>	√	
<p>Social Inclusion Implications Any implications relating to social inclusion/anti poverty should be highlighted</p>	√	
<p>Sustainability Checklist Any implications that affect the sustainability themes of economy society and the community and the environment should be included,</p>	√	
<p>Best Value Any Best Value implications should be included.</p>	√	
<p>Legal Implications Any Legal implications should be included.</p>	√	
<p>Crime and Disorder Issues Any crime and disorder implications should be included.</p>		√
<p>Community Impact Review & Assessment (CIRA) Is a CIRA relevant to this report? Has a CIRA proforma been completed?</p>	√	
<p><i>Please review these potential effects, within the context set out overleaf, to compose your summary assessment</i></p>		
<p>Summary assessment of Implications: The subsidy paid to the operator has been identified for withdrawal following the maximum period of payment being reached and also as a contribution towards the total saving requirement for the next financial year. <i>This wording will appear in the Board report.</i></p>		



*Scrutiny Review Barriers to Employment from
an Employer Perspective*

Final Report
May 2012

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1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of the report is to report back on the Employment Learning and Skills Scrutiny Topic “Barriers to Employment from an Employer Perspective” and to set out recommendations for acting upon the views of employers.

2.0 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This report is structured with the introduction, a brief summary of the methodology followed by evidence, analysis with findings/conclusions and recommendations. The annexes include the topic brief, methodology detail and an action plan to capture the recommendations of the report.

3.0 INTRODUCTION

3.1 Reason the report was commissioned

In September 2010, the Council’s Executive Board received a comprehensive report on the Barriers to Work Scrutiny Topic Group. The group had been established to analyse research that had been commissioned by the Employment Learning and Skills Specialist Strategic Partnership to better understand why worklessness was so high in the then Neighbourhood Management Areas in Halton. In conducting this Topic Group emphasis was placed on the ‘employee experience’ and was more focused on employability issues and the support Halton’s partners provided in helping people to find jobs.

Members felt that it was important to complement this work by obtaining a view from an “Employer Perspective”.

3.2 Policy and Performance Boards

This report was commissioned as a scrutiny working group for the Employment Learning and Skills and Community Policy Performance Board.

3.3 Membership of the Topic Team

Membership of the Topic Team included:

Members	Officers
Cllr Sue Edge (Chair) Cllr Margaret Horabin Cllr Stan Parker Cllr Harry Howard Cllr Joe Roberts Cllr Peter Lloyd Jones Cllr Andrew MacManus	Wesley Rourke, Operational Director

4.0 Methodology Summary

This scrutiny review was conducted through a number of means:

- Six Meetings of the scrutiny review topic group;
- Presentations by the Operational Director for Economy, Enterprise and Property
- A Review of Primary and Secondary Research (Halton Business Perceptions Survey)

- Discussions with Employer Organisations including Halton, Chamber of Commerce and the EEF

Members of the Group referred to Corporate Guidance on undertaking scrutiny reviews.

Members considered the following questions:

- 1) Have we chosen the right topic?
- 2) What are we looking at?
- 3) Why?
- 4) What do we hope to achieve?
- 5) Is the topic geared to our top priorities?

Members considered that the chosen Scrutiny Topic Group was timely, given the announcements in the Government's Spending Review in the Autumn of 2010, which placed and continue to place emphasis on the need for services to be employer facing. This topic complemented the scrutiny topic "Impact of Deficit policy on regeneration in Halton"

Members initially discussed whether the topic should focus on the needs of employers or the needs of individuals. It was felt that both aspects should be considered, but that views from employers on how they could be encouraged to employ local people, including those from vulnerable groups would be sought, as otherwise this would duplicate work previously done.

Members also discussed the methodology for engaging with businesses. It was agreed that views from a cross-section of businesses would be sought. The businesses to be approached would focus on sites, sectors and size of company.

An audit of information available took place to ascertain the key evidence needed. Members, considered a list of companies, together with a list of sources information which was then filtered down.

Members initially felt that where there were gaps in the information, that this might lead to the development of a questionnaire for business to further understand the reasons behind their decisions on employing people, and how we can increase employment levels in the borough. However, as the Topic Group progressed it became clear that a wealth of primary and secondary research had been gathered which led to the conclusions and recommendations contained in this report, and therefore, removed the need to undertake this additional work.

5.0 Evidence (summary of evidence gathered) and Analysis with findings/conclusions

Members concluded that the perceived barriers to employment from the perspective of the individual job seeker in Halton are well documented. There are a number of barriers or key considerations cited by employers when they are considering recruiting staff

▪ National Perspective

A study, undertaken by the University of York and the Social Policy Research Unit on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions entitled 'A Qualitative Study Exploring Employers' Recruitment Behaviour and Decisions', found that the overriding concern of employers was 'to find someone who they perceived could 'do the job' or 'who was the best person for the job'.

The study found that employers short-list candidates on the basis of :-

- CV construction
- the applicant's travelling distance to work
- their qualifications, skills and experience
- their age and employment history.

Employers reported forming first impressions of candidates from their appearance, manner and dress. The candidate's perceived performance at interview informed recruitment decisions.

Successful candidates were appointed in relation to a range of factors :-

- **Flexibility.** Employers sought someone with a flexible attitude to work and a willingness to perform a number of roles, especially in an economic recession.
- **Competence.** Could the person do the job properly?
- **Reliability.** Would the person be at work when they were supposed to be?
- **Stability.** Personal stability could be taken by some employers as a sign of reliability.

- **Location.** Employers perceived that employees living close to workplaces can minimise costs and disruption associated with travelling to work.
- **Attitude to work.** A strong work ethic was valued by employers.
- **Personality.** Personable employees were thought to enhance customer relations, especially in the service sector.
- **Honesty.** Employers wanted employees they could trust with the best interests of the business.

Source : <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2011-2012/rrep754.pdf>

See also : Select Committee on Education and Employment : Barriers to Employment <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm199900/cmselect/cmeduemp/60/6008.htm>

The Engineering Employers' federation (EEF) were also approached to provide an employer view on the challenges to employing young people. They had recently conducted research with four companies. The findings are contained in appendix 1.

In summary, employers felt there was a pressing need for careers advice to focus on increasing opportunities in the engineering sector and that advice to be given to young people prior to deciding their GCSE options. Employers felt that we need to raise the profile of Apprenticeships in schools as a career option.

▪ **City Region Perspective**

Arising out of the Localism Act, Government set out its proposals for restructuring the coordination of economic regeneration in regions. Government is currently progressing the City Deal approach which has invited Local Authorities within the Liverpool City Region to put forward asks of Government aimed at promoting economic growth in the area.

As part of the process Halton submitted a number of asks to Government under the theme of raising skills reducing unemployment. These asks are included under the conclusions and recommendations included later in this report.

▪ **Local Perspective**

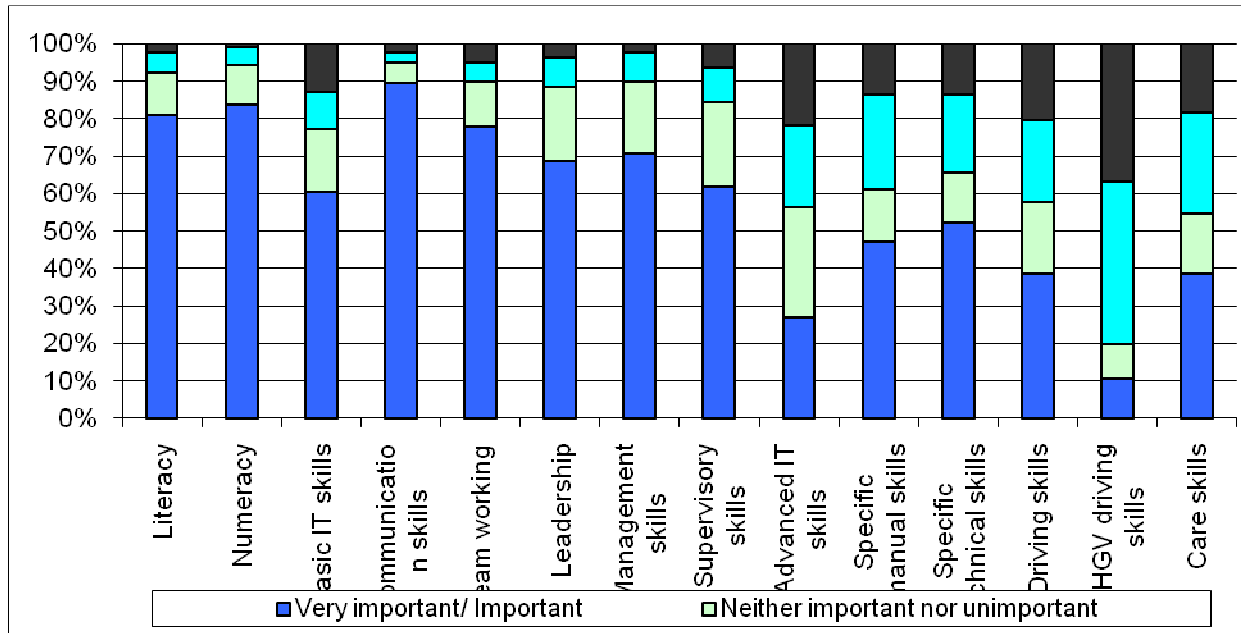
It was also concluded that in the recent past Halton Borough Council have undertaken a number of studies to ascertain the views of the business community on a range of matters. Studies which touch upon barrier to the employment of local people include :-

- **STAM Skills Survey** : Peat Associates. 180 businesses in the science, technology and advanced manufacturing (STAM) sector are currently being interviewed by PEAT Associates as part of a joint project involving Halton Borough Council, Halton Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise, Riverside College and a specialist private sector technical recruitment company to ascertain the future skills needs of the sector. Preliminary results are expected in now (March 2012)
 - **STAM Skills Survey** : In collaboration with Riverside College Halton. A basic, on-line survey of 174 STAM businesses in 2011 to help Riverside College better plan their future science and technology curriculum. A very poor response rate was recorded rendering the results statistically meaningless
 - **STAM Skills Survey** : AMION Consulting. A 2009 study of 161 STAM businesses surveyed by email / phone / face-to-face. 32 businesses responded (20% response rate)
 - **Business Perceptions Survey** : ECOTEC Survey. The most recent of a series of Business Perception Surveys was undertaken on behalf of the Employment, Learning and Skills Team in 2010. The survey asks a broad range of questions seeking to identify the recruitment, training and skills needs of the Borough's employers.
- Findings

All businesses who took part in the Business Perception Study 2010 were asked to rate by importance the required skills of potential employees using a five point scale from 'very important' through to 'very unimportant'.

Three skills or attributes were found to be of greatest importance to local employers; **communication, numeracy and literacy.**

The following table gives a visual representation of the relevant importance of skills, where 'very important' and 'important' have been aggregated, as have 'very unimportant' and 'unimportant'.



Participants in the Business Perception Survey were also asked a number of qualitative questions regarding the attributes they were seeking in potential employees.

A number of respondents felt that, as a result of redundancies, organisations were seeing a higher calibre of applicant for their vacancies, meaning that those people with fewer skills were facing more competition and would, therefore, struggle even more to find employment:

"We're getting a much higher calibre of applicants for our admin jobs, so the job market is much more competitive for people with lower skills."

Most respondents agreed that Halton was lacking in people with level 3 and 4 qualifications:

"People are lacking in higher level qualifications...people are often trained to level 2 but not level 3. Previously you did not have to be highly trained to gain employment, but that is what employers are looking for now."

There was also a feeling that some basic skills were lacking, such as literacy and numeracy, as well as more personal skills such as "attitude and motivation".

Some respondents mentioned that some employers had such specific requirements that they would almost prefer to employ someone that they could 'skill up' to do the job:

"...they would much prefer to have somebody who they could train and skill up. It's great to have a round peg in a round hole, but what they often say is 'you provide me with the right individual and I will ensure that they get the right training and skills...'"

When asked about gaps at particular occupational levels, respondents almost unanimously reiterated the need for people with level 3 and 4 skills, as current jobs at these levels were being filled by people from outside Halton:

"There is a level three, higher level, skills gap, there's no doubt about it. There's demand for more employers with what we'd refer to as a level three skill. We know that employers are able to fill, at the moment, those vacancies, but it tends to be from people outside of the borough."

Summary

It is evident that there exists consensus amongst the local business community that the key skills\attributes they seek in potential employees are :-

1. Communication
2. Numeracy
3. Literacy

Team working, leadership and management skills were also felt to be of particular importance.

A Local 'bespoke' Approach

Increasingly, through the Halton Employment Partnership (HEP) initiative, the Borough Council engages with employers at an early stage in relation to their recruitment needs in order to develop bespoke, pre-employment training programmes that meet the needs of the employer. For example, a considerable degree of preliminary research and consultation was undertaken to understand both the recruitment and retention needs and potential barrier to employment for O2, Tesco and The Hive.

Part of that process involves setting out the real expectation associated with the roles for potential employees. For example, potential recruits for the Tesco chilled distribution facility were informed from the outset that they would be working in a fridge, so if they didn't like the cold, then they should not undertake the training.

HEP routinely work with employers to determine their understanding of potential barriers to employment and staff retention. HEP then develop appropriate skills solutions through the design of specific pre-employment training programmes.

As part of its discussions the Topic Group acknowledged that employer needs varied according to the type and size of business as well as the sector in which the business operated. Members felt that in certain areas businesses placed varying degrees of emphasis on qualifications, skills and experience. Some employers wanted individuals with the right attitude towards work and were content to train up potential employees – some employers placed greater emphasis on qualifications. A discussion took place regarding the National Curriculum and that qualifications of the past equipped individuals with literacy and numeracy competencies which were often valued by today's employers. It was felt that this needed to be balanced with an acknowledgement that modern jobs also required modern skills, for example, IT.

Members considered a paper on individuals Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). The paper was an extract from the Strategic Analysis to support the 14 – 19 Strategic Commissioning in 2012/13. It was suggested that the paper was an important reference point in better understanding of NEET issues in Halton. It was a reminder of the difficult economic environment in which young people were trying to find employment and further emphasised the need to help people into work through initiatives such as the Halton Employment Partnership.

Members of the Topic Group considered an evaluation report that had been commissioned by the Welsh Assembly in 2009 which looked at Employment Programmes in Wales: Barriers to Success and Best Practice from an employer perspective.

The paper set out several key messages which accord with the experience of Halton Borough Council and its partners when engaging with employers through Government funded employment programmes.

Members also considered a wide range of initiatives which were being developed to further promote relationships between potential employers and potential employees. Examples included Halton Science, The Science Routeway and Halton Apprenticeships, which are referred to in the recommendations contained in this report.

Recommendations

Recommendation One

Halton is bucking the trend in respect of a number of physical regeneration opportunities being brought on the back of the Mersey Gateway project and we can apply proven employment and employability principles to reinforce the competitive edge of these sites.

The HEP is a voluntary arrangement between the borough's partners i.e. NAS, college, JCP, Chamber, Council, where we work closely with employers to determine their employment requirements. This includes understanding the job types available and the skills requirements of employers. Where appropriate the whole of the recruitment process is managed. Through this kind of partnership working with the employer, the HEP is able to actively support local people into newly created jobs in the borough.

- ***To continue the Recruitment and Training 'offer' to inward investors provided through the Halton Employment Partnership and seek funding for a dedicated resource to provide this coordinated support on a medium term basis.***

Activities we would continue include:

- Funding to deliver ACL/IT/Skills for Life/Employability skills in community venues (including funding for IT equipment and Internet access)
- Funding to continue the Skills for Life Assessment Service long term
- Increased/enhanced level of funding for Pre-Entry, Entry 1 level SFL provision to allow us to deliver 1:1 or very small group provision that funds small steps in progression towards a nationally recognised qualification
- Longer term core funding to be able to plan provision on 3/5 year basis rather on a year to year basis

It should be noted that existing companies are supported through the Council's Business Improvement and Growth Team. However, it is hoped that this service will be augmented further by the development of an ERDF funded Business Support Programme (decision pending).

Recommendation Two

- **Construction Halton** is a project that acknowledges that the forecast scale of development and other construction related activity in the borough offers significant potential for moving people from benefits into work. The Mersey Gateway Project, Building Schools for the Future programme and 3MG highway infrastructure works have been identified as offering significant training, employment and supply chain opportunities.

Construction Halton is focused on facilitating a range of measures to deliver community benefits from construction related work, in the form of employment, apprenticeships, training and work experience opportunities. However, again this is a project that is delivered on an ad hoc basis.

To seek Government support to help Halton support people from disadvantaged groups and areas within Halton to access jobs and training opportunities arising in the construction industry.

Recommendation Three

- **Science Halton** is the new name for the combined Science, Technology & Advanced Manufacturing (STAM) Steering Group and Halton Science Action Group. The membership of the group is broad and includes Halton Borough Council, STFC, Riverside College, schools, and sector skills councils, Jobcentre Plus, Connexions and Skills Funding Agency.

To support the development of a wider system of vocational qualifications focused on the STAM agenda.

The strategy will involve the creation of **strong pathways** towards professional careers that are understood and recognised by employers and provide clarity and value to prospective learners.

Collaborative networks between higher and further education institutions will ensure alignment between economic development priorities and the skills provision available locally.

Given this backdrop, it is clear, therefore, that at a local level we have some potential gaps in provision in the STAM related curriculum, we have a net growth in STAM related jobs and we have a new Skills Strategy for England that is clear about making local provision reflect the needs of local employers.

Recommendation 4

- **The Science Halton Routeway**

The Science Halton group is clear about the strategic importance of the STAM sector in Halton and has developed an online routeway of information, skills, training and advice for careers advisers, young people and their parents.

The Science Halton Group has already enabled a number of STAM related initiatives to move forward. For example, the feeder primary schools to Bankfield College are being supported by Bankfield School to gain the **Primary Science Quality Mark**. Riverside College science students have been identified to act as **science champions/mentors** for young people considering science as an option. A Halton Employment Partnership **Award in Science** is being developed in partnership with Riverside College, with a view to helping plug a gap at below level 2 provision, as identified in the skills gap analysis referred to earlier. Pro Skills have worked in partnership with 2 secondary schools in **assessing learning materials** developed through this particular sector skills council.

Given the uniqueness that Halton affords with its significant Science & Technology offer at both Daresbury Science & Innovation Campus (DSIC) and the Heath Technical Business Park, Science Halton group members are extremely keen to pursue the **Fab**

Labs (Fabrication Laboratories) concept. A **Fab Lab** is a fully kitted fabrication workshop which gives everyone in the community from small children through to entrepreneurs and businesses, the capability to turn their ideas and concepts into reality. **Fab Lab** can help children realise their potential and go beyond the classroom boundaries. Community groups that would like a space to meet and to develop new ideas, build teams or make something incredible can use the Fab Lab; and businesses of all sizes can have the opportunity to develop and make prototypes for new product ideas.

To support the development of the Fab Lab concept.

Recommendation 5

- **Halton Apprenticeships**

In recent times apprenticeships in the borough have been supported by a number of funding pots, in particular Working Neighbourhoods Fund (WNF).

We work closely with the National Apprenticeships Service (NAS) to ensure that resources are deployed efficiently and effectively in order to create apprenticeships that are relevant to both the needs of the employer and young people.

In the past Halton partners have provided an Apprentice Business Grant of up to £3,000 to support employers in recruiting a new or additional apprentice. We do not have the funding to do this anymore.

Whilst the Government's new incentive packages are welcome, they are not enough to encourage large numbers of employers to take on an apprentice.

To qualify for the grant employers must pay at least the national minimum wage depending on the age of the candidate and recruit someone who is currently unemployed. This means that young people who are **not** unemployed i.e. not on JSA from enrolling on an apprenticeship.

To ask Government to revisit the Apprenticeship Eligibility rules

6.0 Overall Conclusion

This scrutiny review has been both a successful and a worthwhile exercise in terms of covering all the outputs and outcomes from the initial topic brief and gaining a thorough knowledge of barriers to Employment from an Employer perspective. One continuing problem remains the difficulty in engaging with a high proportion of the existing SME's in the Borough. This means that inevitably and quite correctly, the help available is concentrated on the small number that are prepared to engage and large companies wishing to move into the Borough. Successfully addressing this issue is vital for both the Borough and its businesses.

There are recommendations for further improvement that have been identified from this scrutiny review. There are also actions identified in annex 1 of this report which it is anticipated will progress the implementation of these recommendations

ACTION PLAN

ANNEX

Action No.	Action	Responsible person	Timescale	Resources Required	Progress
1	Formally recognise the Halton Employment Partnership as the single officer voice and strategic lead for employer engagement	Siobhan Saunders	September 2012	Other ELS partners	
2	Undertake an analysis of early intervention on careers advice in schools	Connexions	tbc		
3	Promote the Education Business Partnership's Work Experience Programme	Simon Clough/Siobhan Saunders	September 2012	ELS division Corporate Strategic Organisational Development Group	
4	Identify Funding for a future Halton Business Perceptions Survey	Wesley Rourke	September 2012	Business Improvement and Growth team, ELS division	
5	Raise the profile of Apprenticeships in schools as a career option	National Apprenticeship Service	Ongoing	Other partners	
6	Lobby Government on Apprenticeship eligibility through the City Deal dialogue	Wesley Rourke	March 2013	Liverpool City Region Employment	

				Board	
7	To work with the Department of Work and Pensions on the Leading By Example Initiative which takes a multi agency approach to supporting employability and worklessness issues	Wesley Rourke	Ongoing	Job Centre Plus, Local Strategic Partnership	

Bibliography:

Halton 14-19 Strategic Commissioning document

Youth Unemployment – Engineering Employers Federation Study

Barriers to Success and best Practice from and Employer Perspective – Welsh Assembly 2009

A Qualitative Study Exploring Employers Recruitment Behaviour and Decisions – University of York

Barriers to Employment – Department of Work and Pensions Select Committee

Halton Business Perceptions Survey 2010

Halton Science, Technology and Advanced Manufacturing Surveys

Halton Borough Council Research and Intelligence – Monthly Reports

Nomis Official Labour Market Statistics

Recovery Britain Economic and Social Research Council March 2011

REPORT TO:	Employment, Learning, Skills and Community, Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	30 May 2012
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director – Children and Enterprise
PORTFOLIOS:	Economic Development, and Children, Young People and Families
SUBJECT:	Joint Scrutiny Review of Provision of Apprenticeships in the Borough
WARDS:	ALL

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To approve the draft report on the Joint Scrutiny Review of Apprenticeships and forward it to the Executive Board for consideration.**

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

The report is approved and forwarded to the Executive Board.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The draft report (attached at Appendix 1) was commissioned jointly by the Children, Young People & Families and the Employment, Learning & Skills and Communities Policy and Performance Boards. A scrutiny review Topic Group was established comprising of six Members (three from each Board), and was chaired by Councillor Edge,

There has been a significant resurgence in the Apprenticeship model in recent years, with the current Coalition Government providing enhanced financial incentives to employers, and especially SME's to encourage them to offer apprenticeships.

The review focused on the following specific aspects;

- The implementation of an Apprenticeship programme for the Council.
- Monitoring and review of the programme.
- Engagement with the private sector.

- The roles and responsibilities of partners to drive the Apprenticeships agenda in Halton.

The review itself was conducted through a number of means:

- Monthly meetings of the scrutiny review topic group;
- Presentations by various key members of staff and external partners;
- Examination of local and comparative data and information.

4.0 FINDINGS

A considerable amount of high quality work has been done by the Council and a range of partners over recent years to promote and increase the quality and availability of suitable apprenticeship opportunities in Halton. However, there are still considerable existing and emerging challenges to be overcome, a key one of which is how to respond to the changes in funding from September 2013 for Apprenticeships from 25+ with the introduction of Level 3 and 4 post-24 loans for Advanced and Higher Level Apprenticeships.

The recommendations for action and further improvement identified from this scrutiny review are listed on Page 12 of the scrutiny report and have been arranged into an Action Plan at Annex 1 for ease of reference and monitoring.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Apprenticeships can help develop employability skills and help people gain confidence. They support the Sustainable Community Strategy and Council Corporate Plan by promoting and increasing the employability of local people and removing any barriers to employment.

Also, the embedding of the use of apprenticeships within the recently adopted People Plan has the potential to put Halton Borough Council at the forefront of the creative and constructive use of apprenticeships as an example to other local employers

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Apprenticeships present an additional opportunity to enable young employees to secure the skills they need to succeed in their working lives. The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children & Learning Act (2009) includes the requirement for all young people to be in education or training until the age of 18 by 2015, and an entitlement to an Apprenticeship place for each suitably qualified young person who wants one from 2013.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

A package of qualifications offered through the Apprenticeship Framework, will have positive implications for employment, learning and skills

6.3 A Healthy Halton

In some instances people seeking an apprenticeship will have known health problems perceived as barriers to employment. In such instances employers will be given support in terms of advice and adaptations and individuals may need support though the development of condition management plans.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

The proposals are not significant enough to require a full risk assessment at this stage.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

Apprenticeships present an opportunity to engage with the wider community and contribute to ensuring equality of access for all in helping people find sustainable employment and transferable skills. An equality Impact Assessment is to be undertaken and any significant outcomes will be reported to your meeting.

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

None under the meaning of the Act.

Halton Borough Council documents:

- Corporate Plan – 2011 – 2016
- Sustainable Community Strategy – 2011 – 2026
- People Plan, 2012-2015.
- Strategic Analysis to support 14-19 Strategic Commissioning for 2012-13

External Documents:

- Skills for Sustainable Growth Strategy Policy Document.
- Building Engagement, Building Futures: Strategy to Maximise the Participation of 16-24 Year Olds in Education, Training and Work
- Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy
- Apprenticeships in Higher Education

Place of Inspection

Contact Officer

Municipal Building, Widnes

Nick Mannion



*Scrutiny Review of Provision of
Apprenticeships in the Borough*

Report

April 2012

Draft 2

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1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of the report, as outlined in the initial topic brief agreed by the Children & Young People Policy & Performance Board at its meeting on 5th September 2012 is to undertake a review of the provision of Apprenticeships in the Borough of Halton. The review will consider the following specific elements;

- ◆ The implementation of an Apprenticeship programme for Halton Borough Council.
- ◆ Monitoring and review of the programme i.e. the effectiveness of the programme.
- ◆ Engagement with the private sector.
- ◆ Roles and responsibilities of respective agencies to drive forward the Apprenticeships agenda in Halton.

2.0 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This report is structured with an introduction, a brief summary of the methodology followed by evidence, analysis with findings/conclusions and recommendations. The annexes include the topic brief, methodology detail and an action plan to capture the recommendations from the scrutiny review.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 Reason the scrutiny review was commissioned

The bringing together of Children and Enterprise within one directorate recognised that for most young people it was the transferable skills that were developed at school and in further education that would determine their success in a range of jobs throughout their lives.

With reductions in funding, Local Authorities and partners need to work even more closely with NAS to ensure that resources are deployed to create Apprenticeships that are relevant to both the needs of employers and young people

It was therefore agreed at the September 2011 meeting of the Children & Young People PPB that a scrutiny topic on apprenticeships would further cement these principles. It was proposed that the topic group would be jointly overseen by members of drawn from the Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board and the Children, Young People and Families Policy and

Performance Board. Councillor Susan Edge was elected to chair the joint topic group.

3.2 Policy and Performance Boards

This report was commissioned as a joint scrutiny working group for the Employment, Learning & Skills and the Children & Young Policy and Performance Boards.

3.3 Membership of the Scrutiny Working Group

Membership of the Scrutiny Working Group included:

Members	Officers
<p>Cllr Susan Edge Cllr Mark Dennett Cllr Margaret Horabin Cllr Stan Parker Cllr Harry Howard Cllr Peter Lloyd Jones</p>	<p>Wesley Rourke - Operational Director, Economy, Enterprise & Property. Siobhan Saunders - Divisional Manager, Employment, Learning & Skills. Simon Clough - Divisional Manager, Learning & Achievement Services. Claire Gurney - 14-19 Programme Manager John Gallagher – Principal Policy Officer – Corporate & Organisational Policy Nick Mannion - Principal Policy Officer - Employment, Learning and Skills</p>

4.0 Methodology Summary

This scrutiny review was conducted through a number of means:

- Regular meetings of the scrutiny review topic group;
- Reports and presentations by various key members of staff;
- Provision of information and comparative data;
- A presentation by the National Apprenticeship Service.

5.0 Evidence (summary of evidence gathered) and analysis with findings/conclusions

5.1 The National Picture

Several areas factors and issues are coming together which should increase the demand for Apprenticeships:

- The Education and Skills Act 2008 will increase the minimum age at which young people in England can leave learning.

- University tuition fees are increasing to up to £9,000 (from £3,000) per year from 2012 and latest figures from UCAS on 28th November 2011 show applications are down 12.9%, 23,427 on last year.
- The development of more Higher Level Apprenticeship frameworks at Levels 4 and 5. There are currently eight issued and £25 million has been allocated to develop a total of 19 more for release by the end of 2012 and a further 10 by the end of 2013

All this comes at the same time as nationally youth unemployment is rising. Within Halton whilst Job Seeker Allowance claimants have risen, the proportion of young people aged 16-18 that are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or work-based Training) in Halton has risen more slowly and is only slightly higher at 10.89% in October 2011 compared to 9.69% October 2010.

In releasing funds to support young people into learning or employment, the Government announced on 29th November 2011 that its Youth Contract that started in April 2012 will provide nearly half-a-million new opportunities for young people, including apprenticeships and work experience placements. This will include:

- To encourage smaller employers to take on their first Apprentice, a total of 40,000 grants of £1,500, divided evenly between businesses with less than 50 employees and those with between 50 and 250 that have not had an Apprentice in the past three years, are available.
- Simplifying processes to make it quicker and easier for employers to take on an apprentice.
- A renewed focus on targeting the programme where Apprenticeships deliver greatest value - including on younger adults, new employees, higher level qualifications and particular sectors where they can make the greatest impact.
- Apprenticeship providers will be required to offer training in English and maths up to the standard of a good GCSE (level 2) for all Apprenticeships.
- Apprenticeship programmes must also last a minimum of 12 months

The Government had also announced a new £150m programme to provide support to some of the most vulnerable 16-17 year olds NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) from April 2012. This will provide vital support to help them to get back into education, an apprenticeship or a job with training.

5.2 The Halton Picture

Key details of the work done in recent years, particularly on the issue of NEETs, was discussed, especially regarding Appendix A in the

background information pack - Strategic Analysis to support the 14-19 Strategic Commissioning, 2012-13.

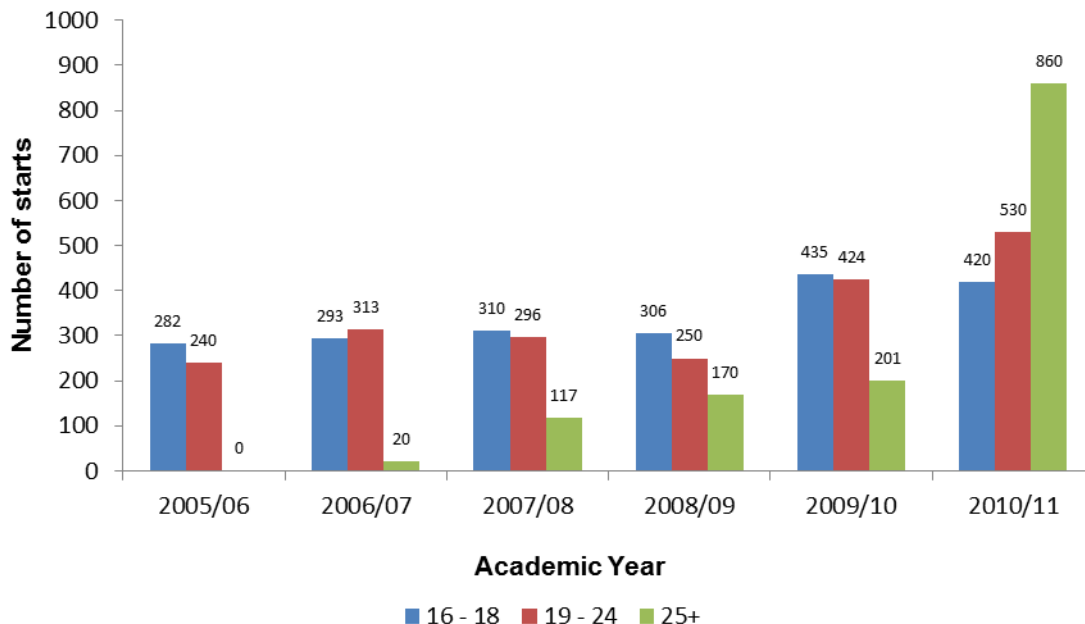
The latest data demonstrates that since 05/06 there has been a significant increase in Halton residents starting apprenticeships.

Age		2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
16-18	No.	282	293	310	306	435	420
	%	6%	6%	6%	6%	9%	9%
19-24	No.	240	313	296	250	424	530
	%	3%	3%	3%	3%	5%	6%
25+	No.	0	20	117	170	201	860 *
Totals		522	626	723	726	1060	1810

[Source: www.thedataservice.org.uk]

- A proportion of these may be existing employees that have moved onto an Apprenticeship.

2005/06 - 2010/11 Halton resident Apprenticeship Starts



The top 4 sectors delivering to Halton residents in 2010-11 were Business Administration and the Law; Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies; Leisure, Travel and Tourism, and Retail and Commercial Enterprise. Matched against the Halton growth sector areas of Logistics and Distribution; Retail;

Science, Technology and Advanced Manufacturing, and Construction and the Built Environment.

Challenges

The key challenges set-out in the Action Plan, especially around KF 1, 2 and 3 that present the most severe challenges will benefit from increased practical support.

Other challenges for Halton are;

- How to increase the number of young people (16-24) entering higher level apprenticeships (Level 3 upwards), especially as the offer from local training providers, whose current provision offer is heavily weighted towards level 2.
- To persuade more smaller (less than 50 employees) local businesses and new employers to take on their first apprentice
- The impending removal of the requirement for schools to provide pre-16 work experience opportunities may see many opt out, taking away a previously useful first 'taster' of the world of work for young people.
- To continue to provide work-readiness and pre-employment training, so that young people are able to access suitable Apprenticeship opportunities.
- Maintenance of the availability of impartial IAG (Information Advice and Guidance) so young people are more aware of ALL the post-16 routes available.

Conclusion;

The Topic group concluded that this initial information sharing and awareness-raising session on the current and emerging local and national picture clearly demonstrated the hard work done in recent years, and the high level of expertise and knowledge that the local partners have around the issues of delivering a successful apprenticeship programme in Halton.

However, there are significant emerging issues that are likely to be exacerbated by the deteriorating economic situation.

5.3 National Apprenticeship Service

Peter Finney of the National Apprenticeship Service ('NAS') attended the January 2012 meeting of the topic group. He delivered a presentation that covered current developments in the application of the apprenticeship concept, the work of the National Apprenticeship Service and future opportunities and issues

He opened by advising that an apprenticeship has three elements;

- The workplace environment – key functional skills
- Competency-based qualifications (literacy/numeracy/IT)
- Knowledge-based qualifications

Each of these must be delivered in line with the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards in England (SASE).

The level of participation is growing rapidly, up 60% in the past three years, with nearly 443,000 new apprenticeship starts during 2010/11. The NAS' priority is still the 16-24 age group, but many people and employers are still not aware that an Apprentice can be of any age. The level of satisfaction amongst both employers and learners also continues to improve, with tougher minimum standards scheduled to be introduced during 2012 to drive quality up even higher.

The Government launched its Skills Strategy in October 2010, with Apprenticeships being placed centre stage, whilst the other employer-based training programme 'Train to Gain' has been closed. The strategy also launched a drive to specifically increase the number of advanced and higher apprenticeships being offered.

The current minimum rate for (16 year old) apprentices is £2.60 per hour, rising to £2.65 from September 2012, with an average gross wage of £170 per week across all apprenticeships. There is likely to be an announcement during next week's National Apprenticeship Week on improved financial incentives to smaller employers to take on an apprentice. PF went on to explain the 'Skills Escalator' – a process by which people can move from an entry level Apprenticeship to a Higher Apprenticeship, equivalent to a Foundation Degree and beyond to degree level

Competition for apprenticeship places is currently creating downward pressure - with more 'academic' young people opting to take-up intermediate and advanced apprenticeships for which they are 'over-qualified' at the expense of less academically gifted young people. This could be due to the increased cost of university provision and prevent young people that are NEET obtaining an Apprenticeship.

There are also currently only a limited range of Higher Apprenticeships available locally, but more Higher Apprenticeship frameworks are in the process of being developed.

PF concluded with an overview of the Halton position. Whilst there has been a healthy increase in the number of intermediate and advanced apprenticeships in Halton, out of a total of 1755 apprentices in 2010/11, less than 20 were higher apprentices. He went on to stress that this has been recognised, and NAS is working hard alongside HBC and other partners to promote the availability and attractiveness of apprenticeships to both students and employers. Science Halton, Daresbury SIC and The Heath could all offer potential opportunities.

During the course of the meeting members raised a number of points, which are summarised below.

In response to a query about the number of ICT related apprenticeships available it was confirmed that two categories widely available, including for local apprentices - IT user and IT professional.

As to how we could increase the number of NEET 18-24 year olds starting apprenticeships, PF suggested that one effective way was via better financial support for employers. Also, and Halton already has some work-readiness and pre-employment provision in this area, by helping NEET young people to prepare themselves for the application and entry process. However, there is still scope for better 'joining-up' in some areas.

Asked if there was anything the NAS would like specifically from the council, PF urged it to continue to develop the apprenticeship option as an employer, embedding apprenticeships in how the council recruits new staff and trains existing employees. He referred to Manchester City Council's approach on this as a local authority that is now making extensive use of apprenticeships.

Queried how this concept could be 'sold' at a time when the council workforce is set to reduce, PF suggested that a business case can be made to take the apprenticeship option when looking to fill most vacancies at entry level. The Value for Money case will include;

- Less pressure on the corporate training budget
- Free, or heavily subsidised support through training paid by central Government funding, via the Skills Funding Agency.
- Commitment to develop new and also existing workforce.
- Offering more local opportunities to Halton residents.

Conclusion

Whilst local partners work together effectively, and some, mainly the bigger, employers have enthusiastically embraced the apprenticeship concept in Halton, there is still much work to do. The availability of higher apprenticeships and the proportion of small employers offering apprenticeships could be greater.

5.4 Halton Borough Council Support for Apprenticeships

The January meeting of the topic group also considered two short presentations on how the Council is working to increase the number of apprenticeships.

Borough Council's People Plan

John Gallagher started by pointing out that the council is Halton's largest employer, and we also want the council to be recognised as the best employer in the Borough! The development of a People Plan for the Council is aimed at helping to achieve this goal.

Work had been on-going to develop the People Plan for some months, and it is hoped to have it in place by spring 2012. Two pieces of work undertaken at an early stage were a Staff Survey and the assembly of an accurate Workforce Profile for the council. These have been completed and revealed the high average age of council employees (45-54 age band) along with the very small proportion of employees aged under 24 (less than 5%). These figures closely correspond to that of the overall demographic profile of Halton's workforce population.

It is intended that the People Plan will help the council to develop a more balanced workforce with regard to age, gender, ethnicity, residence etc., and to also make better use of our employee's skills and knowledge. Apprenticeships may also be an option for older and 'at risk' staff.

Another element of the plan will be a Talent Strategy that will ensure a more pro-active approach and will have four relevant elements;

- A career pathway to support employees to make full use of their talents
- Skills for the future/address recruitment challenges facing the organisation.
- Attracting future employees from both within and outside the borough.
- The Apprenticeship Scheme/The Graduate Programme/ The Volunteer Project

The plan will also include proposals for an Employee Recognition & Award Scheme that will help improve staff morale. One option could be an 'Apprenticeship of the Year' award.

Another thought-provoking piece of information that emerged from the Workforce Profile exercise is that the average academic qualification of Halton employees is relatively low at Level 2 (equivalent to 5 A*-C GCSEs).

The number of Apprentices that will be employed by the council at the end of March 2012 is expected to be 49, with up to 25 more in the pipeline already for 2012/13. Also, NAS has been very helpful in facilitating and brokering the development of these.

Waste Management Apprenticeship Pilot

SS outlined the Waste Management Apprenticeship Pilot. The council is currently working with NAS to select a suitable training provider (only two currently offer appropriate training in England). Trade unions have been engaged in the process and looking to learn from the experience and roll-out to other parts of the council

Subsequent to the meeting Myerscough College were selected as the preferred training supplier. Also, a Recruitment Day took place on 30th March to promote a total of twelve Apprenticeship vacancies; Waste Management (6) and Open Spaces (6) to local unemployed people. Over sixty people attended and the recruitment process is progressing.

Another recent development has been the attendance of colleagues from Knowsley MBC and NAS at a meeting of the Council's Corporate Organisational Development Group to discuss the experiences at that local authority in developing and expanding Apprenticeship schemes.

6.0 Overall Conclusion

This scrutiny review has been both a successful and a worthwhile exercise in terms of covering all the outputs and outcomes from the initial topic brief and gaining a thorough knowledge of the concept and opportunities that apprenticeships can offer to both employers and students in Halton.

Members of the topic group found the presentations interesting, and especially welcomed the Council's pro-active approach to embedding Apprenticeships into its workforce in service areas that have not traditionally seen a very significant adoption of Apprenticeships.

There has been a considerable amount of high quality work by the council and a range of partners over recent years to promote and increase the quality and availability of suitable apprenticeship opportunities in Halton. However, there are still considerable existing and emerging challenges to be overcome. One of which will be how to respond to the changes in funding from September 2013 for Apprenticeships from 25+ with the introduction of Level 3 and 4 post-24 loans for Advanced and Higher Level Apprenticeships.

From the council's own perspective, the embedding of the use of apprenticeships within the recently adopted People Plan has the potential to put Halton Borough Council at the forefront of the creative and constructive use of apprenticeships as an example to other local employers.

The recommendations for action and further improvement identified from this scrutiny review are listed below and arranged into an Action Plan at Annex 1 for ease of reference and monitoring.

Recommendations:

- a) **Actively promote and support three Key Focus Areas in the Halton 14 – 19 Apprenticeship Action Plan. Namely:-**
 - **Key Focus Area 1: Forge closer links with employment sectors to better understand the needs in the borough**
 - **Key Focus Area 3: Increase the take up of Level 3 and Higher Level Apprenticeships**
 - **Key Focus Area 4: Work with the 14-19 Partnership to promote alternative routes to higher level qualifications.**
- b) **Continue to work closely with the National Apprenticeship Service to maximise the take-up and provision of apprenticeships in Halton with regard to both students and employer.**
- c) **Adopt a policy that ALL new roles shall be assessed for their suitability to be filled by way of an Apprenticeship.**
- d) **Use the Halton Employment Partnership ('HEP') as the main co-ordinating forum for determining the workforce needs of incoming and expanding employers with regard to Apprenticeships.**
- e) **Promote and market the recent introduction of improved financial rewards for SME's to offer apprenticeships and new/expanding businesses via the Halton Employment Partnership ('HEP').**
- f) **Include a corporate Apprenticeship Strategy within the Council's People Plan**
- g) **The Waste Management and Open Spaces Apprenticeship Pilot programme to be evaluated and rolled-out across the Council.**
- h) **Review and evaluate progress report to the Executive Board on a six monthly basis.**

APPRENTICESHIP SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN

ANNEX 1

No	Action	Lead Organisation/ Responsible person	Timescale	Measure of Progress
1	Employ partnership approach involving Job Centre Plus, HBC, National Apprenticeship Service, Sector Skills Councils and local employers to explore the employment and training needs of local employers by sector starting with Logistics, and Science, Technology and Advanced Manufacturing. Use the information to inform the commissioning of provision and the development of apprenticeship frameworks	Halton Employment Partnership	By December 2012	Apprenticeship frameworks available locally align with key employment growth areas – increased number of apprenticeship frameworks offered locally; increased number of local people accessing apprenticeships locally
2	Survey learners on Level 2 and Level 3 Apprenticeship programmes to identify young people’s aspirations to higher level courses to inform the commissioning of provision	Claire Gurney Halton Borough Council	Survey May 2012 Results June 2012	Increase : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level 3 – Advanced Apprenticeship starts from September 2012 onwards • Level 4 - Higher Apprenticeship starts from September 2014 onwards
3	HBC and Foundation Learning Group to explore the work based curriculum offer in Halton for 16 and 17 year olds that assists with the preparation of young people to successfully access Apprenticeships.	Claire Gurney Halton Borough Council	By September 2012	Increase numbers of young people progressing from Foundation Learning to Apprenticeships in year from Sept 2012.
4	Design and implement Organisation Apprenticeship Scheme, integral to the Talent Strategy and underpinning one of the Key Strategic Aims of HBC’s People Plan 2012-2015, namely “Attract, Develop and Retain Excellent People”. Scheme will be crucial to help achieve a more balanced Council workforce.	Organisational Development Group, as represented by John Gallagher.	By March 2013	Year 1: Apprenticeship Scheme in place, supported by Elected Members and Senior Management, with a number of apprentices enrolled across the organisation. Year 2: Number of Apprentices successfully completing their qualifications.

No	Action	Lead Organisation/ Responsible person	Timescale	Measure of Progress
				Year 3: Apprentices applying and being successful in acquiring jobs within the LA.
5	Implement and evaluate the Waste Management and Open Spaces Apprenticeship Pilot programme within Halton Borough Council	Siobhan Saunders/Jimmy Unsworth/Paul Wright – Halton Borough Council	Start April 2012. Sept 2012 (interim evaluation) March 2013 (final evaluation)	6 Waste Management Apprentices recruited and complete the programme. 6 Open Spaces Apprentices recruited and complete the programme Pilot extended
7	Review and refresh Halton’s Apprenticeship Strategy in line with the refresh of the Liverpool City Region Strategy (<i>this is likely to focus on specific sectors, particular levels, rather than on just increasing the number of apprentices</i>)	Claire Gurney, Halton Borough Council	September 2012	Halton contributes to LCR apprenticeship activity including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union learn apprentice champions project • NAS advanced apprenticeship schools project

TOPIC BRIEF

Topic Title:	Provision of Apprenticeships in Halton
Officer Lead:	Operational Director (Employment, Enterprise & Property)
Planned start date:	December 2011
Target PPB Meeting:	May 2012 (CYP) June 2012 (ELS)

Topic Description and scope:

A review of current provision of apprenticeships in Halton; specifically the availability of suitable apprenticeship opportunities, the take-up by local employers of apprenticeship opportunities, the engagement of key agencies towards achieving these objectives.

Why this topic was chosen:

By the bringing together of Children and Enterprise within one directorate it was recognised that for most young people it was the transferable skills that were developed at school and in further education that would determine their success in a range of jobs throughout their lives.

With reductions in funding, Local Authorities and partners will need to work even more closely with NAS to ensure that resources are deployed to create apprenticeships that are relevant to both the needs of employers and young people

It was, therefore, proposed that a topic title on apprenticeships would further cement these principles. It was proposed that the topic would be jointly overseen by members of the Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board and the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board. Councillor Sue Edge had offered to chair the topic group.

Key outputs and outcomes sought:

The topic will consider the following:

- The implementation of an apprenticeship programme for Halton;
- Monitoring and Review of the programme i.e. the effectiveness of the programme;
- Engagement with the Private Sector;

- Roles and Responsibilities of respective agencies to drive forward the Apprenticeships agenda in Halton.

Which of Halton's 5 strategic priorities this topic addresses and the key objectives and improvement targets it will help to achieve:

Children & Young People:

Apprenticeships present another approach to enabling young employees to secure the skills they need to succeed in their working lives. The 2009 Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act includes the requirement for all young people to be in education or training until the age of 18 by 2015, and an entitlement to an Apprenticeship place for each suitably qualified young person who wants one from 2013.

Key Objective A - Improve outcomes for children and young people through effective joint commissioning.

Key Objective B - Improve outcomes for our most vulnerable children and young people by targeting services effectively.

Key Objective C - Improve outcomes for children and young people through embedding integrated processes to deliver early intervention.

The safeguarding of Halton's children and young people is a key priority across the Trust and runs through all our work.

Employment, Learning and Skills:

To develop a strong, diverse, competitive and sustainable local economy.

Key Objective B - To develop a culture where learning is valued and skill levels throughout the adult population and across the local workforce can be raised.

Key Objective C - To promote and increase the employability of local people and remove barriers to employment to get more people into work.

Nature of expected/desired PPB input:

Member led scrutiny review of Apprenticeships.

Preferred mode of operation:

- Invite member from National Apprenticeship Service to provide an overview of the national, sub-regional and local position, along with an assessment of the local position and examples of areas of best practice nationally
- Evidence and meetings with relevant officers within the Council to examine current practice, issues and performance. Also, specific regard to the challenges faced by local young people designated as NEET (Not in

Education, Employment or work-based Training) in securing an apprenticeship.

- Briefings on the emerging People Plan and how apprenticeships could be embedded into the Council's recruitment and employment policies.

Agreed and signed by:

PPB chairs

Officer

Date

Date

METHODOLOGY DETAIL**a) Presentations & Reports**

The following officers submitted written reports and/or oral presentations as part of this scrutiny review:

Name of officer	Title of Report/Presentation
Wesley Rourke	An overview of the recent history, the current position, and developments in Halton with regard to apprenticeships.
Simon Clough/Claire Gurney	Apprenticeship Scrutiny Topic Group Information Pack. Contents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy • 14-19 Commissioning Statement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appendix A – Strategic Analysis Appendix B – Employment Learning and Skills • Halton Apprenticeship Strategy Group Terms of Reference • Halton Apprenticeship Strategy Group Action Plan
John Gallagher	Oral report on the Council's emerging People Plan and related Talent Strategy
Peter Finney	Presentation on the National Apprenticeship Service. Briefing on Higher Apprenticeships. Comparative data on Apprenticeship
Siobhan Saunders	Oral report on the Apprenticeship Pilot Programme in the Waste Management Division.

Documents considered during this review

Links to external data:

The link below is to the Data Service web pages, Apprenticeship Summary Tables for the Academic Years 2005/06 to 2010/11. The data is broken down into various categories and organised into Excel spread sheets.

http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/statistics/statisticalfirstrelease/sfr_supplementary_tables/Apprenticeship_sfr_supplementary_tables/

The link below provides apprenticeship data for the region and individual local authorities in England by age and level of Apprenticeship.

http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/7D482205-936A-499D-9FA5-22D86B8DF886/0/January2012_ApprenticeshipStartsbyGeographyLevelAge.xls

Halton Borough Council documents:

- Corporate Plan – 2011 - 2016
- Sustainable Community Strategy – 2011 – 2026
- People Plan, 2012-2015.
- Strategic Analysis to support 14-19 Strategic Commissioning for 2012-13

External Documents:

- Skills for Sustainable Growth Strategy Policy Document
- Building Engagement, Building Futures: Strategy to Maximise the Participation of 16-24 Year Olds in Education, Training and Work
- Apprenticeships in Higher Education
- Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Strategy

DRAFT

REPORT TO:	Employment, Learning, Skills and Environment Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	30 th May 2012
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, Children & Enterprise
PORTFOLIO:	Transportation
SUBJECT:	Halton Community Transport Scrutiny Topic Group
WARDS:	Borough-Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To notify the Board of the outcome from a series of meetings in connection with the Halton Community Transport (HCT) scrutiny topic group involving Councillors A. Lowe, S. Edge J. Gerrard, G. Zygadlo, R. Hignett, P. Nolan, E. Cargill and Council officers including Jeff Briggs, Lead Officer Transport Co-ordination as well as Mick Noone, Operational Director Policy, Planning & Transportation (initial meeting only).

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Board:

- 1) acknowledge the content of this report and confirm that they support the overall process.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The HCT Scrutiny Topic Group was set up to review the operations of, and services provided by, HCT including identification of funding streams which contribute towards HCT's overall operations and service delivery. Another focus of the group was to consider the potential social inclusion benefits that the services operated by HCT provide to its users and the impacts on these users should services discontinue. A terms of reference was devised for the group and agreed at the first meeting, this is attached as Appendix 1.
- 3.2 A series of four meetings have been held as part of this group, a brief explanation of the discussions that have taken place at each of these meetings is as follows:
- 3.2.1 10th February 2012; initial scoping out meeting to confirm to those members of the group why the group had been set up and the overall scope of the group, to discuss and finalise the terms of reference and consider a range of associated documents including: the Section 19/22 permitting system, the Service Level Agreement

held between HBC and HCT as well as a PPB report produced by HCT describing the various services offered by them as an organisation.

- 3.2.2 24th February 2012; several witnesses were invited to attend this meeting to bring forward potential evidence of anecdotal allegations of unregulated or improper conduct and operations by HCT that are not in line with the permitting system under which they operate. As part of this process, allegations and circumstantial evidence of inappropriate operations were unproven and unfounded as none were brought forward.
- 3.2.3 9th March 2012; the General Manager of HCT was invited to attend this meeting to provide an in-depth overview of the services provided by their organisation and to answer a number of questions from Members present as well as providing clarity on a number of issues. This discussion took place with a satisfactory outcome.
- 3.2.4 16th March 2012; at this final meeting a general discussion took place with regards to the information that had been discussed at preceding meetings. Some final clarifications were sought prior to the meetings of the group being brought to a close.

Recommendations for HCT

- 3.3 The outcome of the group and recommendations to be put forward in order to strengthen HCT's operations in a number of areas are as follows:
 - 3.3.1 Procedures to be put in place for restricting the number of hours to be worked by voluntary drivers. As volunteer drivers are not governed by the working time directive comprehensive paper records are required to be held as confirmation that excess hours are not being worked by volunteers. Overall recommendation is that volunteers should work to the same conditions (maximum allowed hours) as contracted/paid drivers.
 - 3.3.2 Mileage log sheets should be issued on each vehicle and completed by drivers prior to and at the end of each shift. A book of log sheets should be issued to and retained on each vehicle in the fleet to ensure that accurate records are maintained.
 - 3.3.3 Vehicle daily 'walk-around' check sheets should be issued and retained on each vehicle. Drivers should complete a check sheet prior to taking any vehicle out at the start of a shift. Each vehicle should be issued with a pad of numbered sheets to be used.
 - 3.3.4 Vehicle scheduling system and vehicle tracking devices to be installed and used on all vehicles operating Council funded services. This will ensure that routes are scheduled to maximum effect in terms of route planning and maximising passenger usage, it will also

ensure that vehicles are tracked in real-time in order that each vehicle location will be known at all times.

Further Recommendation

- 3.3.5 An attempt should be made to establish a continual funding stream for HCT and should endeavour to ensure that no further funding reductions are faced by this organisation, therefore recognising the importance of the specialised services operated by HCT and the impact on the most vulnerable people in the community should the services discontinue.

3.4 OUTPUTS

The agreed key outputs for the group were to gain a clear understanding of:

- 3.4.1 HCT's operations, the services it provides and its sources of funding.
- 3.4.2 The role Community Transport can play in helping the Council meet its statutory duties and its priorities.
- 3.4.3 The service level agreement that exists between Halton Borough Council and Halton Community Transport and its overall content.
- 3.4.4 The potential impacts on users of the specialised transport services provided by HCT should these services be withdrawn or significantly reduced.
- 3.4.5 Any other possible transport service alternatives available for users and/or potential alternative specialised transport service provision.
- 3.4.6 The Council's duty under section 63 (8) of the Transport Act 1985 when determining the need to consider the transport needs of members of the public who are elderly or disabled.
- 3.4.7 The requirement to produce a Community Impact Review and Assessment (CIRA) for any reduction of funding for specialised transport services.
- 3.4.8 The Local Sustainable Transport Fund bid application, HCT's role and how this and other forms of public transport fit with the overall aim of the LSTF bid.

It can be concluded that these key outputs were produced.

3.5 OUTCOMES

The desired outcomes of the group were agreed to be as follows:

- 3.5.1 The identification of any significant risks and issues from the review of HCT's activities and operations.
- 3.5.2 The identification of any significant benefits and opportunities from the review of HCT's activities and operations.
- 3.5.3 To reach the conclusion on whether the subsidy provided by the Council to HCT is providing value for money and whether future support should be maintained (subject to availability of funding).
- 3.5.4 A clearer scope and direction for future provision of specialised transport services with knowledge of all of the relevant surrounding information.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 In connection with the goals and overall vision as set in Local Transport Plan (LTP3). LTP3 states:
 - The bus strategy should recognise the importance of providing a good network of local community services which provide convenient, attractive and affordable links to a range of local community facilities.
 - The Council will strive to continue to develop demand responsive "Door-to-Door" type services.

A further reduction in funding for the existing specialised door-to-door transport services would inevitably result in the current range of services being reduced or even being withdrawn entirely.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council has a duty under Section 63(8) of the Transport Act 1985 which states 'it shall be the duty of any Council, in exercising or performing any of their functions to have regard to the transport needs of members of the public who are elderly or disabled'. Should the existing specialised transport services, operated by HCT, not be provided then the Council could be risk of failing in its duty.
- 5.2 As a result of the comprehensive spending review and current austerity measures, the Council's budget for supported local bus services has been drastically reduced resulting in increasingly difficult yet unavoidable decisions on scaling back or discontinuing certain subsidised bus services. The Dial-A-Ride service, provided by HCT, has and will increasingly become a fall-back position for passengers who are left with no alternative public transport service due to local bus services having been removed.
- 5.3 The Council has recently submitted a Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) bid to the Department for Transport. This bid is focussed on Economic Growth and Carbon Reduction (promoting sustainable travel modes and changing travel behaviours). The bid will, if successful, be worth £4.4 million to the Council over three years (£8.0 million including partner contributions) and HCT are a strong partner within this bid. If HCT

were not in existence then certain essential parts of the bid would not be deliverable placing the entire bid in jeopardy.

- 5.4 The Council has duties under the Equality Act 2010 in meeting the transport needs of the community, particularly groups under the listed protected characteristics. A Community Impact Review and Assessment (CIRA) has been produced for the general reduction in supported local bus services due to funding reductions, however in meeting its duties the Council has stated that the Dial-A-Ride service will remain available for the most vulnerable in society, particularly where alternative public transport services no longer exist and walking distances to connect with other service are excessive creating problems with those with mobility difficulties.
- 5.5 A Core grant is provided to HCT from the Council for the provision of the Dial-A-Ride daytime and evening transport. The level of core grant provided in 2010/11 was £122,630, this amount was reduced to £82,630 for 2011/12 with a further proposed 10% reduction for 2012/13 bringing the core grant down to circa £74,370. A detailed discussion took place during the group to identify how the funded services could be provided at less cost. The outcome of this discussion was that an alternative service could not be provided at similar cost. It was also raised that the service would not be able to continue following any further grant reduction.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

No implications

6.2 Employment, Learning, Skills & Community, key Objectives including:

- Developing a culture where learning is valued and skill levels throughout the adult population and across the local workforce can be raised.
- Promoting and increasing the employability of local people and removing barriers to employment to get more people into work.

This will continue to be achieved as a result of the availability of transport thus meaning that accessing learning and employment opportunities is not a barrier.

6.3 A Healthy Halton, Key Objectives including:

- Responding to the needs of an aging population, improving their quality of life and thus enabling longer, active and more fulfilled lives;
- Removing barriers that disable people and contribute to poor health by addressing the wider determinants of health;
- Improving access to health services, including primary care.

Continuation of the specialised transport services will ensure that these issues continue to be addressed and there are no significant barriers.

6.4 Halton's Urban Renewal, Key Objectives including:

- Providing a well-connected, sustainable and accessible borough and ensuring a variety of safe efficient travel and infrastructure options exist for people.

Should specialised transport services be reduced or withdrawn, this would have a major impact on the level of accessible transport services provided thus creating a gap in service and potentially not achieving the goals and vision as set in LTP3.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Increased provision of, and usage of, specialised door-to-door transport services by the most vulnerable members of the community will help to improve personal security and reduce crime and perception of crime.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Should Halton Community Transport not be in existence or certainly not be provided with a Core Grant from the Council for the provision of community transport services for the most vulnerable members of the community, an alternative provider would be required to provide a similar service as otherwise the Council would be at risk of:

- not meeting it's duties under Section 63(8) of the Transport Act
- jeopardising the current Local Sustainable Transport Fund bid which could be worth £4.4million to the Council over the next three years (circa £8.0million including partner contributions)
- not meeting it's duties under the Equality act 2010
- should an alternative provider be sought this would almost certainly be at higher cost and could be of inferior quality to the current provision

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Specialist passenger transport services provided by HCT on behalf of the Council are constantly monitored to ensure the operation of these services embrace equality and diversity issues in line with the Equality Act.

(NB ONLY INCLUDE 9.0, 10.0 AND 11.0 BELOW IF THE REPORT RELATES TO A KEY DECISION INCLUDED ON THE FORWARD PLAN)

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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APPENDIX ONE – Terms of Reference

Topic title: HCT Scrutiny Working Group

PPB(s) responsible: Urban Renewal / Employment Learning & Skills

Officer Lead: Mick Noone Tel: 0151 471 7370

Support Officer: Jeff Briggs 0151 471 7381

Planned start/end date: Short series of meetings (3 to 4), mid February to late March 2012

Topic description and scope:

A review of the operations of, and services provided by, Halton Community Transport (HCT) including identification of funding streams which contribute towards HCT's operations and service delivery. To consider the potential social and inclusion benefits that the services operated by HCT provide to its users and the impacts on these users should service discontinue.

Terms of Reference

1. To consider the Council's duties and policies for securing the provision of public transport services, including community transport.
2. To consider the role community transport can play in helping the Council fulfil its duties and meet its priorities.
3. To consider the aims and objectives of HCT, the details of its current fleet, the number and type of passengers it carries, and the services it provides to the communities of Halton.
4. To consider the legislation governing the operation of CT services (permit systems, licences, etc.).
5. To consider the service level agreement that exists between Halton Borough Council and Halton Community Transport in terms of levels of service provision, standards of quality required and funding levels.
6. To consider whether HCT, or indeed other community transport operations that may be supported by the Council, can be deemed to be benefitting from an unfair financial and competitive advantage in relation to other transport providers.
7. To consider the potential impacts on users of the specialised transport services that HCT provide should any such service be withdrawn, wholly or in part i.e. less vehicles provided, reduced days/times of operation.

8. To consider other possible transport service alternatives available for users whom rely on existing specialised transport.
9. To consider other potential ways in which alternative specialised transport services could be provided by different transport providers more effectively and/or at reduced cost.
10. To consider the detrimental impact on the Council's duty under Section 63 (8) of the Transport Act 1985 'it shall be the duty of any council, in exercising or performing any of their functions to have regard to the transport needs of members of the public who are elderly or disabled' should specialised transport services be withdrawn in their entirety.
11. To consider the impact of cuts to the supported bus service budget and the impact this is having or could have on the provision of local bus services in certain areas. Demand responsive transport services such as the Council funded Dial-a-Ride provided by HCT, are a fall-back for residents (in meeting the duties as set out above) from areas where there is no alternative public transport provision.
12. To consider the Community Impact Review and Assessment (CIRA) for reduction of funding for specialised transport services and consequential impact on duties as part of the Equalities Act.
13. To consider the potential impact on the Local Sustainable Transport Fund bid application, which includes elements of provision by HCT and could be worth £4.3million over the next three years, should funding levels provided be discontinued.
14. To consider the existing passenger fares and other charge levels made by HCT for services provided for individuals and for affiliated groups.

Why this topic was chosen:

In the current financial climate where major savings are required and every budget line is being closely scrutinised, the HCT scrutiny working group aims to identify the overall effectiveness of the services provided by HCT and to review the current operations of HCT as well as funding levels provided by the Council.

Key outputs and outcomes sought

Outputs:

A clear understanding of –

1. HCT's operations, the services it provides and its sources of funding.
2. The role Community Transport can play in helping the Council meet its statutory duties and its priorities.
3. The service level agreement that exists between Halton Borough Council and Halton Community Transport and it's overall content.

4. The potential impacts on users of the specialised transport services provided by HCT should these services be withdrawn or significantly reduced.
5. Any other possible transport service alternatives available for users and/or potential alternative specialised transport service provision.
6. The Council's duty under Section 63 (8) of the Transport Act 1985 when determining the need to consider the transport needs of members of the public who are elderly or disabled.
7. The requirement to produce a Community Impact Review and Assessment (CIRA) for any reduction of funding for specialised transport services.
8. The Local Sustainable Transport Fund bid application, HCT's role and how this and other forms of public transport fit with the overall aim of the LSTF bid.

Outcomes:

1. The identification of any significant risks and issues from the review of HCT's activities and operations.
2. The identification of any significant benefits and opportunities from the review of HCT's activities and operations.
3. To reach a conclusion on whether the subsidy provided by the Council to HCT is providing value for money and whether future support should be maintained (subject to availability of funding).
4. A clearer scope and direction for future provision of specialised transport services with knowledge of all of the relevant surrounding information.

Which of Halton's 5 strategic priorities does this topic address and what are the key objectives and improvement targets it will help achieve?

A Healthy Halton, Key Objectives including:

- Responding to the needs of an ageing population, improving their quality of life and thus enabling longer, active and more fulfilled lives;
- Removing barriers that disable people and contribute to poor health by addressing the wider determinants of health;
- Improving access to health services, including primary care

Employment Learning and Skills, Key Objectives including:

- Developing a culture where learning is valued and skill levels throughout the adult population and across the local workforce can be raised;
- Promoting and increasing the employability of local people and removing barriers to employment to get more people into work

Environment and Regeneration, Key Objectives including:

- Providing a well connected, sustainable and accessible borough and ensuring a variety of safe efficient travel and infrastructure options for people

Nature of expected/desired PPB input

Involvement by a small number of Members and officers in a series of working groups, involving approximately 3 or 4 meetings. Working group reports to be considered by PPB as appropriate.

Preferred mode of operation

As above.

Media/Communication implications/opportunities arising from examining this topic.

None at this stage.

Agreed and signed by:

PPB Chair Officer

Date Date

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

DATE: 30th May 2012

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director - Policy & Resources.

PORTFOLIO: Economic Development

SUBJECT: Employment, Learning & Skills Quarterly Policy
Update

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To inform the Board of recent national policy announcements relevant to employment, learning and skills.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

2.1 That the report is noted.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 A steady flow of policy announcements, consultation exercises, reports and ministerial statements are issued by government departments and agencies with varying degrees of relevance to issues on the employment, learning and skills agenda and related topics.

3.2 Therefore, brief summaries of key announcements in a 'digest' format to the board are provided on a quarterly basis, along with observations of local relevance, where appropriate, so the Board can consider whether to initiate more detailed scrutiny and/or a report to a future meeting.

4.0 RECENT KEY POLICY ANNOUNCEMENTS

4.1 2012 Chancellor's Budget

The Chancellor re-affirmed many of the features of the Autumn Statement and remained within the constraints of the current spending review, which will see local government facing year-on-year spending cuts into the next parliament, lasting a total of seven years.

Some better news for local government was the announcement of the extension of certain targeted funds, such as the Growing Places Fund which will see an additional £420m to stimulate local economic growth announced by the Chancellor in his Budget. There was also some good news for cities in the form of the new powers to retain revenue.

Announcements with specific relevance to employment, learning and skills included;

Public Works Loans Board - Reduced borrowing costs for Local Authorities.

Growing Places Fund - Following announcement in October of an extra £1 billion funding for the competition-based Regional Growth Fund ('RGF'), The Chancellor announced more money (loans) for the Growing Places Fund. This is given directly to local authorities to spend on their development priorities.

Land Auctions - The Government is taking forward land auction pilot on public sector land with the aim of having two sites ready for market by the end of the year.

National Loan Guarantee Scheme - The National Loan Guarantee Scheme (NLGS) was launched just prior to the budget. This will provide £20 billion of Government-backed guarantees to banks on their unsecured debt in return for a fee. Banks must then pass on the benefit they receive to small businesses. Businesses that take out a loan under the scheme will be offered a discount on interest rates of 1% compared to that which would otherwise be applied.

COMMENT; disappointing that only a small number of councils will get the new powers and some concerns about the potential impact on their neighbouring councils. However, the greater flexibility to local government over borrowing is welcome and already Halton has made loans of £1.6 million through the Growing Places Fund towards capital works at the newly established Daresbury Enterprise Zone.

A more detailed briefing on the Budget implications for local government can be found [HERE](#)

4.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27 March 2012, replacing all the previous Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) and Guidance (PPGs) etc.

It is a succinct single 50 page document and represents a radical overhaul of the UK planning system in line with the Government's ethos of only providing guidance that is relevant, proportionate and where it believes it is necessary to do so. It provides a framework for local planning authorities (and local residents in the form of Neighbourhood Plans) to produce their own land use plans which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

The NPPF's cornerstone is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This should be evident in both the plan making and decision taking processes. It emphasises development proposals that are in line with an adopted Development Plan should be approved without delay. If a Development Plan is 'silent, absent or out-of-date', planning permission for development that is sustainable should be granted.

COMMENT: The NPPF is unashamedly growth focused. It is not anticipated that it will create any major issues for the Council's emerging Core Strategy which is expected to be formally adopted by Autumn 2012.

4.3 The Youth Contract.

This was announced as part of the Chancellors Spending Review last Autumn in response to concerns about how to help the most disengaged 16 and 17 year olds by getting them back to school or college, onto an apprenticeship or into a job with training.

Several elements of the 'Youth Contract' commenced in April;

- Provision of 410,000 new work places for 18 to 24 year olds between 2012 and 2015.
- Wage incentives worth up to £2,275 per person, available for employers who offer an 18 to 24 year-old from the Government's Work Programme, a job lasting at least 26 weeks.
- Extra voluntary work experience places to ensure an offer of a place for every 18 to 24 year-old who wants one, before they enter the Work Programme.
- 40, 000 Apprenticeship grants for employers of 16 to 24 year olds. Aimed at helping small (under 50) & medium (50 to 250) sized employers offer young people employment by providing wage grants to assist employers in recruiting their first apprentice. Has a value of £1,500 in addition to the training costs of the Apprenticeship framework which are met in full for young people aged 16 to 18 and 50% for those aged 19-24.
- Support for disengaged 16-17 year olds in England. £126 million over three years to support NEET 16-17's in England. organisations to lead this programme on a regional/sub-regional basis in process of recruitment. Payment by results on how success in progression into sustainable positive outcome.

COMMENT; Whilst it is too early to assess the impact of these changes, the Government has also moved to address concerns about the 'dilution' of the quality of the Apprenticeship brand by announcing a commitment to bringing in benchmarks and minimum standards.

4.4 Launch of National Careers Service.

The National Careers Service (in England) was launched on 5th April, with the aim of providing telephone and online advice to 370,000 young people and face-to-face advice to 700,000 adults. The Council's Halton People into Jobs service ('HPiJ') has been commissioned to deliver elements of the services locally.

Also, from the start of the new academic year in September, high schools, academies and colleges required to directly commissioning their own information advice and guidance provision for pupils and students, but not necessarily to provide advice on a face-to-face basis.

COMMENT; Concern is that new careers advice arrangements for young people may prove to be inadequate and that there wide variations in the 'local offer' to young people will emerge; with many having either limited, or no access to face-to-face careers guidance.

4.5 Community Learning Trust Pilots.

On 11th April the Govt announced invitation for applications for between ten and fifteen Community Learning Trust Pilots.

Organisations that are directly-funded providers in receipt of an allocation from the Government's £210m Community Learning (previously called the Adult Safeguarded Learning) budget are invited to submit a proposal in collaboration with local community organisations, businesses and other service providers.

Applicants will be required to demonstrate how they will generate income in addition to public funding and how local people are taking a lead. NIACE (the National Institute of Adult Continuing Learning) will support the pilot trusts. Successful applicants will be announced in early July and expected to start work in August.

If pilot approaches are successful, trusts will be rolled out more widely from 2013. The Prospectus can be found [HERE](#).

COMMENT: A very tight timescale, with interested organisations having just six weeks to develop and submit their applications. If is the pilots are deemed to be a success, likely that the Government will seek to roll out the community learning trust model more widely from 2013 onwards.

4.6 European Union Update

The EU's policies for cohesion, rural development, maritime and fisheries are aimed at supporting sustainable, environmental, social and economic restructuring across the EU by supporting socio-economic development and employment growth – helping to rebalance local economies.

The main 'pot' that supports this agenda in the UK are Structural and Cohesion Funds, with the current funding period ending in 2013. The size of the individual funds from 2014 will not be known until later this year.

In March this year the EC published proposals on how this funding could be used most effectively; using a "common Strategic Framework" , supported at

the national level by a "Partnership Agreement". The Government's Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has opened a consultation on the proposals and the Council is preparing its own response and is also contributing to a wider city region one. The consultation closed on the 27th April, with the outcome due by the end of the year.

COMMENT: The Council's response emphasised allowing maximum flexibility and freedoms on the use of the funding at the local level.

4.7 Government Response to the Portas Review

On the closing date for the submission of applications for inclusion on the 'Portas Pilots' programme, the Government published its response to the Portas Review, announced a second round of 'Portas Pilots' and its High Street Innovation Fund.

The Government response to the Review's 28 specific recommendations about what could be done to breathe life back into British high streets included measures to help high streets 'reclaim their role at the heart of their communities'. It issued a challenge to local partners to refocus their town centres and high streets so they offer something new and different that neither out-of-town shopping centres nor the internet can, going further than just shopping, with creative use of public spaces and a vibrant evening economy.

Portas Pilots Round 2: This was announced on closing date for Round 1 applications, with a closing date on 30th June 2012. The prospectus is identical to that for the first round.

High Street Innovation Fund - Another of the Government's responses to the Portas Review was its £10 million High Street Innovation Fund which will pay £100,000 each to 100 local authorities, including Halton, regardless of size or population. The purpose of the grant is to help Council's address the issues of last summer's riots and/ the high levels of empty shops in their area. Councils are urged to use their full range of tools and powers in collaboration with landlords to bring empty shops back into use. The grant is to be paid directly to local authorities, with little prescription about where or how it should be spent.

COMMENT: Whilst generally positive, the Govt response is notable for the Portas recommendation it has not supported; the recommendation of an "exceptional sign-off" by the Govt of any new out-of-town developments. Instead, it states that local authorities are already required to refer out-of-town building proposals above a certain size to the secretary of state.

The overall tone of the Government response is to place the onus upon local councils to make maximum creative use of their newly-granted freedoms and flexibilities under the banner of 'localism' and to provide strategic direction and leadership to revive their local high streets with private sector and community partners.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

5.1 The varied range of issues covered in this report potentially present a number of challenges and opportunities across a number of the Council's current priorities. Each would therefore require a thorough analysis at some point in the future.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 There are no immediate risks or opportunities directly relating to the information in the report at this point in time. Again, a full assessment could be necessary at some point in the future.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None under the meaning of the Act

FURTHER INFORMATION

If members would a more detailed analysis of any of the issues mentioned in this report, or paper copy of any of the documents referred to, they should contact;

Nick Mannion at Nicholas.mannion@halton.gov.uk 0151 906 4885

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

DATE: 30 May 2012

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Policy & Resources

SUBJECT: Performance Management Reports for Quarter
4 of 2011/12

PORTFOLIO: Resources:

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider and raise any questions or points of clarification in respect of performance management reports for the fourth quarter of 2011/12, to March 2012. The report details progress against service objectives/ milestones and performance targets, and describes factors affecting the service for:

- Economy Enterprise & Property extracts for Employment Learning & Skills.
- Community Services namely Library Services & other Culture & Leisure Services

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Policy and Performance Board

- 1) Receive the fourth quarter performance management report;**
- 2) Consider the progress and performance information and raise any questions or points for clarification; and**
- 3) Highlight any areas of interest and/or concern where further information is to be reported at a future meeting of the Policy and Performance Board.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Directorate Overview reports and associated individual Departmental Quarterly Monitoring reports have been previously circulated via a link on the Members Information Bulletin to allow Members access to the reports as soon as they become available. These reports will also provide Members with an opportunity to give advanced notice of any questions, points raised or requests for further information, to ensure the appropriate Officers are available at the Board Meeting.
- 3.2 Where a Department presents information to more than one Policy & Performance Board some reconfiguration of the reports has been

actioned to reflect Board responsibilities as shown in the following papers.

3.3 The departmental objectives provide a clear statement on what the services are planning to achieve and to show how they contribute to the Council's strategic priorities. Such information is central to the Council's performance management arrangements and the Policy and Performance Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

3.4 From 2010/11 direction of travel indicators have also been added where possible, to reflect progress for performance measures compared to the same period last year.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no other implications associated with this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Departmental service objectives and performance measures, both local and national are linked to the delivery of the Council's priorities. The introduction of a Directorate Overview report and the identification of business critical objectives/ milestones and performance indicators will further support organisational improvement.

6.2 Although some objectives link specifically to one priority area, the nature of the cross - cutting activities being reported, means that to a greater or lesser extent a contribution is made to one or more of the Council priorities.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Not applicable.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Not applicable		

Departmental Quarterly Monitoring Report

<u>Directorate:</u>	Children & Enterprise
<u>Department:</u>	Economy, Enterprise and Property (Extract)
<u>Period:</u>	Quarter 4 - 1 st January – 31 st March 2012

1.0 Introduction

This quarterly monitoring report covers the Economy, Enterprise and Property Department fourth quarter period up to 31st March 2012. It describes key developments and progress against all objectives and performance indicators for the service as relevant to this Policy & Performance Board..

The way in which the Red, Amber and Green, (RAG), symbols and Travel Indicator symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained in Appendix 6.

Given that there are a considerable number of year-end transactions still to take place a Financial Statement for the period has not been included within this report in order to avoid providing information that would be subject to further change and amendment. The final 2011 / 12 financial statements for the Department will be prepared once the Council's year-end accounts have been finalised and made available via the Council's Intranet. A notice will also be provided within the Members' Weekly Bulletin as soon as they are available.

2.0 Key Developments

2.1 Employment, Learning & Skills

The Division delivered the 6 week pre employment programme on behalf of **Tesco Extra**, which targeted local residents who had been unemployed for 6+ months. Successful completion guaranteed the individual a job. Tesco Graduation – *94 successful applicants* were offered a Tesco Extra job and the recruitment process culminated in a Tesco Graduation Evening. The store opened for service on *26 March 2012*.

Work Programme performance resulted in being issued with notices to improve by Ingeus and A4E. Performance Improvement Plans had to be developed as a result and the feedback from the Development Assessment was used to develop the Ingeus plan. Work Programme Improvement Plans will be reviewed and monitored. The service has already showed good signs of improvement and this must continue to allow for the contracts to be sustained.

National Apprenticeship Week (w/c 6 February) saw a number of successful events including a Liverpool City Regional 'Big Event' at the Echo Arena, an Apprenticeships Awards night at Riverside College and a number of taster days at Halton Housing Trust. During this quarter, HBC's apprenticeship pilot scheme to create 12 apprentices within Waste Management and Open Spaces was approved by senior management team, with the intention to roll it out across the council if successful. Recruitment and selection process for the 12 HBC apprentices, 6 in Open Space Services and 6 in Waste & Environmental Improvement Services, will take place in Q1. Recommendations from the Corporate Organisational Development Group will include creating an apprenticeship vacancy panel.

Science Halton research report was finalised and the report shared with key partners. The research identifies gaps in STAM provision at levels 4 and 6; Level 4: higher education certificates, e.g HNC and Level 6: Degree. The STAM research report will be launched across both the business community and education/training sector. It is proposed to combine the launch with businesses with a business event Paver Smith hope to have at DSIC.

Application to deliver the **National Careers Service (post March 2012)** was successfully submitted with a contract of £65k being awarded. The National Careers Service replaces the Next Step Service.

Final **Skills Funding Agency allocations** for the 2012/13 academic year for adult learning and skills were made available. Overall, these show a £6k decrease from the 2011/12 academic year. The service has identified a range of efficiencies for 2012/13 and the decrease can be easily managed.

The 2nd of 2 visits by **Ofsted** as part of the Inspection Survey took place in Q4. The focus of the inspection was on the impact of employability provision on achievement of job outcomes. The inspection findings were very positive with only a couple of areas for development identified. An action plan to address these has been produced.

The Halton Employment Partnership entered into discussions with the **Mersey Gateway** Project Team in agreeing how it can support the 3 consortia in engaging with local people around skills and employment.

3.0 Emerging Issues

3.1 Employment, Learning & Skills

Q4 saw the continued consultation for the Divisional **restructure**. This included a number of full staff briefings and drop in surgeries. These helped inform changes to the proposals. The new Employment, Learning & Skills structure will come into effect in time for the new financial year. New ways of working, changes to line management arrangements and improved accommodation should go some way to enhancing performance and outcomes.

4.0 Service Objectives / milestones

4.1 Progress against 'key' objectives / milestones

Total	8		8		0		0
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All 'Key' objectives / milestones have met their targets within the financial year.

For further information please refer to Appendix 1.

4.2 Progress against 'other' objectives / milestones

Total	11		9		0		2
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With the exception of the Halton People into Jobs (HPIJ) target to deliver 1431 sessions and the deadline to develop and implement an Employer Engagement Action Plan, all 'other' objectives were completed as planned. Additional details for all 'other' objectives / milestones for the service are provided in Appendix 2.

5.0 Performance indicators




5.1 Progress Against 'key' performance indicators

Total	8		2		0		6
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There are six indicators which have failed to achieve their target within the financial year. Reductions in staff and provision around adult learners and the effect the economic climate has had on market occupancy and rent collection has affect the service's ability to achieve some of its targets.

Please refer to Appendix 3 for more information.

5.2 Progress Against 'other' performance indicators

Total	21		9		0		3
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For further information please refer to Appendix 4.

There are currently 3 indicators which have failed to meet the targets set for the financial year. Again, reductions in staff, resource issues and the effect the economic climate has affected service's ability to achieve some of its targets.

There are also 9 indicators which can not be reported at this time.

6.0 Risk Control Measures

The backlog of maintenance on buildings will continue to be a risk as funding potentially decreases. However, in recent years, the Council has developed a longer term investment plan in respect of its maintenance programme. As a result, this has actually led to a small decrease in expenditure on maintenance of buildings in 2011/12.

7.0 Progress against high priority equality actions

As a result of undertaking a departmental Equality Impact Assessment no high priority actions were identified for the service for the period 2011 – 2012.





8.0 Data quality statement

The author provides assurance that the information contained within this report is accurate and valid and that every effort has been made to avoid the omission of data. Where data has been estimated, has been sourced directly from partner or other agencies, or where there are any concerns regarding the limitations of its use this has been clearly annotated.

9.0 Appendices

- Appendix 1 Progress Against 'key' objectives / milestones
- Appendix 2 Progress against 'other' objectives / milestones
- Appendix 3 Progress against 'key' performance indicators
- Appendix 4 Progress against 'other' performance indicators
- Appendix 5 Area Partner performance indicators
- Appendix 6 Explanation of use of symbols





Appendix 1: Progress Against 'key' objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective	
EEP7 (previous reference: EEB02)	Foster Enterprise and entrepreneurship in order to grow an enterprise culture in Halton	
Milestones	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Deliver Enterprising Halton Business Start Up Programme (WNF). Deliver 90 contracted outputs by March 2012 .		Halton People into Jobs continues to deliver an extended business start up programme in Halton BC with 97 starts achieved in total since 1 st April against profile of 90. This was achieved throughout the year as follows: 20 business start ups created in Q1 16 business start ups created in Q2 23 business start ups created in Q3, 38 business start ups created in Q4.
Deliver 12 Kick Start courses by March 2012 .		These courses provide pre-start up advice to local residents. Q1 - 3 kick start courses delivered Q2 - 3 kick start courses delivered Q3 - 4 kick start courses delivered Q4 - 3 kick start courses delivered 13 kick start courses delivered since 1 st April against profile of 12.
Manage Intensive Start Up Support Programme (NWDA) on behalf of A4e. Deliver 67 contracted outputs by December 2011 .		Delivery of the Intensive Start up Programme (ISUS) programme ceased 31 st Dec 2011. The project was successful in achieving 67 profiled business start-ups for year 3 of the contract.
Source alternative funding to continue Enterprise Services beyond March 2012 .		One of the strands of the Work Programme delivery model is Enterprise. The number of Enterprise Officers in the new structure will be increased by 1FTE. A re-launch of all enterprise services will

Appendix 1: Progress Against 'key' objectives / milestones



		take place in Q1 and will include raising awareness of enterprise amongst school children.
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Ref	Objective
EEP8 (previous reference: EEB3)	Reduce unemployment/worklessness by assisting people to secure employment

Milestones	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Deliver the extended Apprenticeship Support Programme. Deliver 43 contracted outputs by March 2012 .		All 43 Apprenticeship Business Support Grants have been committed. Additional funding also secured to support a further 10 businesses up to 31 st March 2012.
Develop Apprenticeships within the Council by September 2011 .		A recruitment open day took place on 30 th March. This was to promote 12 apprenticeship vacancies in Waste Management and Open Spaces to local unemployed people. The day was managed through the Halton Employment Partnership (HEP). Applications due in on 12 th April.
Secure future funding for HPIJ from the DWP Work Programme – June 2011 .		The Division was successful in securing funding for HPIJ through the DWP Work Programme in June 2011. The contract has a potential further 6 years to run subject to achievement of performance outcomes
Deliver the Work Programme in Halton via sub contract arrangement to Prime Contractors A4e and Ingeus Deloitte. Deliver 1279 starts on joint programmes, 257 job entries and 94 sustained		Ingeus – 811 starts and 94 job entries and 6 sustained job outcomes. There have been numerous issues which have impacted upon delivery for Ingeus, but mainly around IT, training and volume of customers. An action/improvement plan was implemented and

Appendix 1: Progress Against 'key' objectives / milestones

job outcomes by March 2012 .		improvements made against specific KPI's during the last quarter. A4e 352 starts – 51 jobs and 7 sustained job outcomes. IT issues have impacted upon implementation but not to the same extent as Ingeus. An action/improvement plan was implemented and improvements made against specific KPI's during the last quarter.
Ref	Objective	
EEP8 (previous reference: EEB3)	Reduce unemployment/ worklessness by assisting people to secure employment	

Milestones	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Increase the number of Information and Advice interventions. Deliver 1431 one to one sessions by March 2012 .		HPIJ continued to deliver Next Step (Information & Advice) in Halton on behalf of Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership (GMCP). During Q4, 218 one to one sessions were delivered (which equates to 1,133 in total from the start of Q1). The target of 1431 sessions was not achieved by the end of March 2012. A bid was submitted in March to deliver the National Careers Service (former Next Step). Halton People into Jobs were successfully awarded the contract which will commence 2 nd April 2012.
Develop and implement Employer Engagement Action Plan by October 2011 .		A new Employer Engagement Team to be managed by the Halton Employment Partnership Manager will be in place in April 2012. The strategy will focus on both large and small scale employers in relation to sourcing work experience, work placements, apprenticeships, graduate internships, job vacancies. Business Account Officers will undertake needs assessments with businesses, whilst Employment Brokers will match individuals to suitable opportunities.


Appendix 2: Progress Against 'other' objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
EEP9 (previous reference: EEB3)	To provide opportunities for families to learn together and thereby improve relationships that can impact on other areas of family life

Milestones	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
To undertake a needs analysis across stakeholders by the end of September 2011 to ensure that the family learning offer meets the needs of their emerging agendas.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Needs analysis sent to schools, children's centres, setting managers and elected members with a return date of 21 st October. This milestone is now completed although there is ongoing opportunity for stakeholders to inform future review.
To review the family learning curriculum during autumn term to reflect the outcomes of the needs analysis.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Feedback from schools indicates that the IT programmes put into place following the review have been well received and beneficial to parents. Course tutor has brought school based learners into the centre with a view to progressing IT skills through mainstream courses. Following the successful pilot of Functional Skills in Q3, the delivery through Family Literacy and Family Numeracy courses continued in Q4 although results are currently pending external verification.



Appendix 2: Progress Against 'other' objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
EEP9 (Continued) (previous reference: EEB3)	To provide opportunities for families to learn together and thereby improve relationships that can impact on other areas of family life

<p>To monitor management information at the end of each term (April 2011 and August 2011) including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the number of families engaging with the family learning service in schools • the number of families engaging with family learning in children's centres; • feedback from families and stakeholders regarding effectiveness; • retention rates, • attendance rates 		<p>Quarter 4: During Q4 there were 245 enrolments and 208 learners taking part in Family Learning programmes overall. Performance was excellent with 95% retention and 99% achievement rates (attendance data not currently available). In school based provision there were 130 enrolments and 126 learners which was an increase on Q3 (97 enrolments/92 learners) In children's centre based provision there were 115 enrolments and 82 learners which is a slight decrease on Q3 (165 enrolments/97 learners). Feedback from learners and stakeholders was good, 100% of schools reported they would recommend the service this quarter. Schools reported gains in children's confidence and ability and also in the number of parents becoming more involved in school activities.</p> <p>Q1 to Q4 829 enrolments (528 learners) on Family Learning provision <i>(a decrease on last year of 1054 enrolments/651 learners)</i> 385 enrolments (305 learners) taking part in schools <i>(a decrease on last year of 513 enrolments/392 learners)</i> 444 enrolments (223 learners) taking part in children's centres <i>(a decrease on last year of 541 enrolments/259 learners)</i></p> <p>Reduced provision compared to last year as a result of the restructure and reduction in staff</p>
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Appendix 2: Progress Against 'other' objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
EEP11 (previous reference: EEB03)	To widen participation in adult learning and skills by providing a boroughwide, community based accessible service, which breaks down barriers traditionally associated with returning to learn

Milestones	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Develop and implement a marketing campaign by September 2011 to raise awareness of the Skills for Life Assessment service.		The new Skills for Life Assessment Service leaflet was distributed and will be included in the Adult Learning and Skills Spring term prospectus. This milestone has been completed.
To offer periodical professional development opportunities related to Skills for Life for all tutors working across the whole adult learning and skills development curriculum – continuous improvement workshops in April 2011 .		Embedding Skills for Life within vocational programmes remains a priority, for example, a Numeracy tutor has supported the Floristry tutor in identifying the numeracy skills used within Floristry and producing learning resources to support the development and application of numeracy skills. This milestone has been completed.


Appendix 2: Progress Against 'other' objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
EEP11 (Continued) (previous reference: EEB03)	To widen participation in adult learning and skills by providing a boroughwide, community based accessible service, which breaks down barriers traditionally associated with returning to learn

Milestones	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
To increase the number of community partners and/or venues delivering skills for life services.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Skills for Life and Employability have been delivered in 17 different venues across the borough up to the end of Quarter 4.</p> <p>New venues in 2011/12:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy and Numeracy provision delivered at Runcorn Probation Office in Q1 • Literacy provision delivered at Upton Children's Centre in Q2, Q3 and Q4 • Numeracy provision delivered at Windmill Hill Primary School in Q2 and Q3 and Literacy provision in Q4 • Numeracy provision delivered at Windmill Hill Children's Centre in Q4 <p>Mapping of Skills for Life and Employability provision across the borough will be reviewed by the Halton Skills for Life Group in April 2012</p>

Appendix 2: Progress Against 'other' objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
EEP11 (Continued) (previous reference: EEB03)	To widen participation in adult learning and skills by providing a boroughwide, community based accessible service, which breaks down barriers traditionally associated with returning to learn

Milestones	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
To continue to develop and maintain the number of individuals accessing services and courses, including Skills for Life and qualifications in Literacy and Numeracy		<p>Quarter 4: 133 individuals completed Skills for Life Initial Assessment in Q4 and of these; 81 were directed to a Literacy or Numeracy course, 31 were directed to an Employability course, 2 were directed to the waiting list for HEP learning programmes, 5 were directed to the 1:1 Reading project, 1 directed to an Adult Learning course and 1 referred to Riverside College. 8 individuals were referred to Employment Advisers, 7 advised to attend Adult Learning Information and Enrolment days, 1 directed to IT assessment and 4 directed to Dyslexia Assessment. (9 learners were directed to 2 separate opportunities).</p> <p>Q1 to Q4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1198 individuals completed Skills for Life Initial Assessment (2419 Initial Assessments) • 402 individuals (615 enrolments) participated in Literacy and Numeracy courses • 74 individuals participated in the Employability Skills programme (12 week programme) • 83 individuals (164 enrolments) participated in the HEP programme (2 weeks programmes) • 98 individuals participated in the Tesco Pre-Employment Training programme (6 weeks)

Appendix 2: Progress Against 'other' objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
EPP12 (previous reference EEB04)	To offer a range of employability skills programmes and initiatives that relate to growth employability sectors in the Borough

Milestones	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
To undertake periodical research, including a Business Perceptions Survey every 2 years (next one due March 2012) to ensure the Division has up to date intelligence on growth sector plans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A business perceptions survey was undertaken during Q2 and focused on the Science, Technology & Advanced Manufacturing sector (STAM). 120 out of 210 STAM businesses were interviewed in relation to future training and recruitment requirements. The interviews were completed in Q2 and the final report produced in Q3. This milestone is now complete.

Appendix 2: Progress Against 'other' objectives / milestones







Ref	Objective
EPP12 (Continued) (previous reference EEB04)	To offer a range of employability skills programmes and initiatives that relate to growth employability sectors in the Borough

Milestones	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
To devise and deliver a programme of employability programmes responsive to the employment need of the Borough (timetabling takes place as a minimum in June 2011, October 2011, January 2012 and April 2012).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Employability programmes delivered up to the end of Q4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 Generic HEP Award courses – 2 week programme • 9 Sector Specific HEP courses (1 x Customer Care,, 3 x Hospitality, 5 x Retail) – 2 week programme • 5 Employability Skills courses (12 week programmes) • Tesco pre-employment training programme (6 week programme) • 164 enrolments on the HEP Award (2 week programme) – retention rate was 96.95%, achievement rate 93.71% and success rate was 90.85% • 74 individuals enrolled on the Employability course (12 week programme) – as this is a roll on, roll off programme, retention, achievement and success rates are not available • 15 Information/Open Day sessions delivered for Tesco applicants in partnership with Tesco • 19 Interview Skills Workshops delivered for 634 of the Tesco applicants, which included 1270 Skills for Life Initial Assessments and Interview Skills Training • 98 enrolments on Tesco Pre-Employment programme (6 week programme) – retention and success rates were 97.97% and achievement rate was 100% • Timetable for April – July 2012 finalised and prospectus produced







Appendix 3: Progress Against 'key' performance indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2010/11	Target 2011/12	Quarter 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
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Employment, Learning & Skills

Service Delivery							
ELS LI01 (previous reference EEB LI04)	Number of enrolments on Employment and Learning Courses (for the academic year)	3763	3450	4632			The service attracted 1197 enrolments during Q4. 4632 cumulative enrolments across the service show that enrolments have exceeded targets set for 2011/12, despite a reduction in staffing and delivery
ELS LI02 (new)	Number of adults engaged in Skills for Life learning	New indicator	500	476		N/A	Reduced provision compared to last year as a result of the restructure and reduction in staff
ELS LI03 (new)	Number of starts on DWP Work Programme	N/A	1279	373		N/A	373 starts across both the Ingeus and A4e Work Programme contracts.
ELS LI04 (new)	Number of job starts on DWP Work Programme	N/A	257	76		N/A	76 job starts achieved across both the Ingeus and A4e Work Programme contracts.
ELS LI05 (new)	Number of sustained (13/26wks) job outcomes on DWP Work Programme	N/A	94	13		N/A	13 sustained job outcomes claimed across both A4e and Ingeus Work Programme contracts.





Appendix 3: Progress Against 'key' performance indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2010/11	Target 2011/12	Quarter 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
ELS LI06 (new)	Number of new or additional apprenticeships created using £3,000 Apprentice Support Grant	154	43	53			In 2010/11, there was more funding allocated to this activity. In 2011/12, all 43 grants have been either awarded or committed. Additional funding has been secured via A4e to support the recruitment of an additional 3 apprentices alongside this programme. In addition further local funding was sourced to support the recruitment of a further 10 apprentices.
ELS LI07 (new)	Learners accessing HBC services achieving a Level 1 qualification in literacy (links to NI161)	44	30	25			No learners achieved Literacy Level 1 in Q4. However, 13 learners achieved Literacy Level 2 in Q4. Reduced provision compared to last year as a result of the restructure and reduction in staff
ELS LI08 (new)	Learners accessing HBC services achieving a Level 3 qualification in numeracy (links to NI162)	33	50	21			6 learners achieved Numeracy Entry Level 3 in Q4. However, 23 learners achieved Numeracy Level 1 and Level 2 in Q4. Reduced provision compared to last year as a result of the restructure and reduction in staff







Appendix 4: Progress Against 'other' performance indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2010/11	Target 2011/12	Quarter 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
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Employment, Learning & Skills

Service Delivery							
ELS LI09 (previous reference EEB LI03)	Number of learners	2704	2041	2555			During Q4 there were 907 learners taking part in programmes across the service. 2555 cumulative learners for Q4 show that number of learners have exceeded the target set for 2011/12, despite a reduction in staffing and delivery.
ELS LI10 (new)	Number of employability skills opportunities offered	New indicator	New indicator	27 courses 336 enrolments		N/A	18 HEP Award courses, 5 Employability courses and 4 Tesco Pre-Employment Training programmes (336 enrolments) up to the end of Q4..
ELS LI11 (new)	The number of parents who would recommend their course to others	New indicator	New indicator	100%		N/A	Of those that answered the end of course question during Q1-Q4 100% of parents have indicated that they would recommend their course to others.

Appendix 4: Progress Against 'other' performance indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2010/11	Target 2011/12	Quarter 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
ELS LI12 (new)	The number of stakeholders who would recommend the Family Learning service to other organisations	New indicator	New indicator	100%		N/A	End of course questionnaires sent to head teachers asks for their feedback generally and specifically asks whether they would recommend the service to other schools/stakeholders. 100% have stated that they would.
ELS LI13 (new)	The number of parents receiving accreditation	New indicator	New indicator	74		N/A	The figures for Q4 provision are pending external verification and are not available at the time of writing. From Q1-Q3 49 parents achieved the Award in Supporting a Child's Learning and Development and 25 achieved Functional Skills accreditation.
ELS LI14 (previous reference EEB LI09)	Number of Business Start Up's created via the Intensive Start Up Support (ISUS) programme	94	67	67			Delivery of this programme ceased on 31 st December 2011. 67 starts for Year 3 were successfully achieved.
ELS LI15 (previous reference EEB LI09)	Number of new business start-ups supported with £500 start up grant	148	90	96			Enterprising Halton supported 38 business starts up in quarter 4.



Appendix 4: Progress Against 'other' performance indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2010/11	Target 2011/12	Quarter 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
ELS LI16 (new)	Number of Kick Start courses delivered	14	12	13			In quarter 4 Enterprising Halton delivered 3 Kick Start courses. 26 customers attended and completed the courses.
ELS LI17 (new)	Number of Next Step Information and Advice interventions.	1497	1431	1233			During quarter 4, 218 customers accessed one to one interventions with a Next Step advisor. Figures will be profiled with Prime Contractor.
ELS LI18 (previous reference EEB LI2)	Number of local people with disabilities into permitted/paid work	29	33	1			The impact of the Work Programme has been great. It was hoped that the Work Programme would provide a source of referrals but to date the majority of referrals have been JSA customers and none on health related benefits. In addition, at present 1 member of staff works on sourcing permitted placements but for only ½ day per week and unlike 2010/11 there is no additional funding for permitted work. The Divisional restructure will have a positive impact upon this as a new Disability Advisor full time post is being created.






Appendix 5: Progress Against 'area neighbours' performance indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2010/11	Target 2011/12	Quarter 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
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Employment, Learning & Skills

Area Partner National Indicators							
NI 146	Adults with Learning Disabilities in Employment	32	28	Refer to comment	N/A	N/A	The economic recession has continued to have an impact on the number of people in employment. This is DWP indicator.
NI 150	Adults in contact with secondary mental health services in employment	13	7	Refer to comment	N/A	N/A	This National Indicator is the responsibility of % Boroughs Partnership.
NI 151	Overall employment rate	66.6% Dec 2009	N/A	67.4% Dec 2010			<p>Latest data: Jan 2010-Dec 2010 67.4% source annual population survey.</p> <p>Halton's overall employment rate as at February 2012 was 67.9%, a slight increase on the figure taken from the annual population survey of 2010. Tesco recruitment took place in Q4 and included 98 local long term unemployed residents obtaining employment.</p>

Appendix 5: Progress Against 'area partners' performance indicators




Ref	Description	Actual 2010/11	Target 2011/12	Quarter 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
NI 152	Working age people on out of work benefits	18.9 % (August 2010)	18%	18.9% Aug 2011			In Halton 18.9% of the working age population are on benefits. The figures for the North West region currently stands at 15.2% and nationally 12.0% increasing over the year; whereas Halton has remained stable for qtr 1 & 2 , dropping in qtr 3 to 18.6% and then rising back up to 18.9% in qtr 4. Latest data is available 6 mths in arrears
NI 161	Learners achieving a Level 1 qualification in literacy	549 (2007-08)	N/A	630 (latest data 2008/9)	N/A		HBC does not own this NI data which is only available from the Skills Funding Agency 18 months after learners achieve the qualification showing increased attainment.
NI 162	Learners achieving an Entry Level 3 qualification in numeracy.	51 (2007-08)	N/A	143 (latest data 2008/9)	N/A		Data 18months in arrears from the Skills Funding agency showing increased attainment.
NI 163	Working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher	60.4% (2009)	TBC	61.4% (2010)	N/A		Data 18months in arrears from the Skills Funding agency showing increased attainment.

Appendix 5: Progress Against 'area partners' performance indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2010/11	Target 2011/12	Quarter 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
NI 164	Working age population qualified to at least Level 3 or higher	37.5% (Jan – Dec 09)	N/A	40.3% (Jan – Dec 10)	N/A		Latest Data Dec 2010 from the Skills Funding agency showing increased attainment. 2011 data available in July 2012.
NI 165	Working age population qualified to at least Level 4 or higher	18.3% (Jan 09 – Dec 09)	N/A	21.3% (Jan – Dec 10)	N/A		Latest Data Dec 2010 from the Skills Funding agency showing increased attainment. 2011 data available in July 2012.
NI 166	Average earnings of employees in the area	£443.60 (March 2010)	To close the gap to the North West average	£432.30 (Dec 2010)			This data is published annually by the Office of National Statistics. The gross median weekly earnings of all Halton residents is £430.30, whereas for the North West this has also fallen over the year from £471.20 to £460.00 at the same rate, though rising across all England from £501.40 to £507.60.
NI 171	Business growth rate (rate per 10,000 population aged 16+)	39.1 (2009)	TBC	N/A	N/A	N/A	Historically, Halton has had a low level of new Vat registrations, but equally has seen a low level of de-registrations. The most up to date data is from 2009 (2 years in arrears) in the worst period of the recession.




Appendix 6: Explanation of Symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
Green	 Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the annual target <u>is on course to be achieved</u>.</i>
Amber	 Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> , whether the milestone/objective will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> whether the annual target is on course to be achieved.</i>
Red	 Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain</u> that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the target <u>will not be achieved</u> unless there is an <u>intervention or remedial action</u> taken.</i>

Direction of Travel Indicator

Where possible performance measures will also identify a direction of travel using the following convention

Green	 Indicates that performance is better as compared to the same period last year.
Amber	 Indicates that performance is the same as compared to the same period last year.
Red	 Indicates that performance is worse as compared to the same period last year.
N/A	Indicates that the measure cannot be compared to the same period last year.

Departmental Quarterly Monitoring Report

<u>Directorate:</u>	Communities Directorate
<u>Department:</u>	Community and Environment Services (Extract)
<u>Period:</u>	Quarter 4 - 1 st January – 31 st March 2012

1.0 Introduction

This quarterly monitoring report covers the Community & Environment Services Department fourth quarter period up to 31st March 2012. It describes key developments and progress against all objectives and performance indicators for the service.

The way in which the Red, Amber and Green, (RAG), symbols and Travel Indicator symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained in Appendix 5.

Given that there are a considerable number of year-end transactions still to take place a Financial Statement for the period has not been included within this report in order to avoid providing information that would be subject to further change and amendment. The final 2011 / 12 financial statements for the Department will be prepared once the Council's year-end accounts have been finalised and made available via the Council's Intranet. A notice will also be provided within the Members' Weekly Bulletin as soon as they are available.

2.0 Key Developments

2.1 Stobart Stadium Halton

Stadium Fitness

Despite the recession hitting disposable income Membership numbers have increased over the last few months. Staff members have been out to various companies since January promoting the Stadium. Visiting Marks & Spencers, O2, Kingsway College and Tesco.

Jan 2012

FULL	620
CASUAL ADULT	1550
CASUAL JUNIOR	360
Halton Leisure Card (HLC)	283
Total	2813

April 2012

FULL	701
CASUAL ADULT	1640
CASUAL JUNIOR	433
Halton Leisure Card (HLC)	44
Total	2818

Also we have now been given a regular slot at the Home Retail call centre in Queens Avenue Widnes. During our visits we offer individuals an opportunity to sign up on a corporate membership, this is always very popular.

Staff are at the moment looking at improving a small area in the fitness suite by having a ladies only stretching and free weights area, which is something that members have been asking for. If this proves to be popular we will try out a ladies only evening.

Junior gym and family Karate continue to do very well with the regular class attracting over 30 participants at most classes.

The taster sessions started mid January on the I-Pitch. The Stadium Fitness staff are really enjoying this new challenge and are all very encouraged by all the positive feedback they are getting from the local football and rugby teams.

February was a very busy time over in Stadium Fitness. We had the Mayors Ball and the annual Maureen King Pink Ball both events were a great success. The Pink Ball raised over £7000 for the Breast Cancer Campaign.

Halton Table Tennis team have also done very well as usual and are in the Premier final of the British League. Also the junior team came second in the National Junior League.

2.2 Leisure & Recreation

Runcorn Market Hall

Work to convert the Market Hall in Runcorn to a new library and one stop shop has now been completed and opening on schedule at the end of April 2012.

Halton Lea Library

Halton Lea Library has been awarded an additional £10,000 of Lottery funding to continue the work started by the Community Libraries Lottery Project which remodelled the building providing improved community facilities. The funding will help establish the library as a community hub with a range of activities and events for older people

Exploring Halton Collections Website

The Exploring Halton Collections website has been launched which provides access to thousands of historical objects that tell the local, social and civic history of Halton. These objects are looked after by four public collections, and the project has brought them together into a 'virtual museum'. This website has been created through a partnership between Halton Borough Council, Norton Priory Museum Trust and Catalyst Science Discovery Centre. The project has been funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Halton Castle

Halton Castle has undergone extensive work to remove the vegetation from inside the castle walls. Funded by a grant from English Heritage all the internal walls and structures of the castle have been exposed. This will enable stone masons to restore previously damaged sections of the internal walls.

3.0 Emerging Issues

There are currently no emerging issues to report for this service.

4.0 Service Objectives / milestones**4.1 Progress against 'key' objectives / milestones**

Total	3		3		0		0
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All 'key' objectives have achieved their targets for the financial year.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for further information.

4.2 Progress against 'other' objectives / milestones

Total	12		12		0		0
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All 'other objectives have achieved their targets for the financial year.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for further information.

5.0 Performance indicators

5.1 Progress Against 'key' performance indicators

Total	2		1		0		0
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One 'key' performance indicator has achieved the target set for the year. There is also one further indicator which can not be reported at this time due to the availability of data.

For further information please refer to Appendix 3.

5.2 Progress Against 'other' performance indicators

Total	4		1		0		0
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One 'other' performance indicator has achieved the target set for the year.

There are also 3 further indicators which can not be reported at this time due to the availability of data.

For further information please refer to Appendix 4.

6.0 Risk Control Measures

During the development of the 2011 - 12 service activity, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Key Service Objectives.

No 'high' risk, treatment measures were identified.

7.0 Progress against high priority equality actions

As a result of undertaking a departmental Equality Impact Assessment no high priority actions were identified for the service for the period 2011 – 2012.


8.0 Data quality statement

The author provides assurance that the information contained within this report is accurate and valid and that every effort has been made to avoid the omission of data. Where data has been estimated, sourced externally, or where there are any concerns regarding the limitations of its use this has been clearly annotated.

9.0 Appendices



Appendix 1 Progress Against 'key' objectives / milestones
Appendix 2 Progress against 'other' objectives / milestones
Appendix 3 Progress against 'key' performance indicators
Appendix 4 Progress against 'other' performance indicators
Appendix 5 Explanation of use of symbols

Appendix 1: Progress Against 'key' objectives / milestones





Ref	Objective	
CE1	Increase participation in sport and physical activity, thereby encouraging better lifestyles.	
Milestones	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Increase number of new participants through Sport and Physical Activity Alliance delivery plan i.e. sports participation (This is part of a 3 year agreed programme with Sport England). Mar 2012. (AOF2 & 3)		<p>Sports Participation Project continues to develop activities that attract 'new participants'. New participants this quarter: 279 female; 61 male. Year end total 1598.</p> <p>2 new sessions developed and up and running this quarter Zumba Castlefields, Zumba Sandymoor Taster session delivered to Independent Living Centre and Day Services Castlefields.</p> <p>Meeting with Slimming World walk program, re support advice and partnership work. 210 registered for jog club. Run in Halton sites to be launched April 2012.</p> <p>5 courses delivered with a total of 53 people gaining a sports related qualification. Leisure Card year end total 1954.</p>

Appendix 1: Progress Against 'key' objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
CE4	Increase the use of libraries promoting reader development and lifelong learning, thereby encouraging literacy skills and quality of life opportunities.

Milestones	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Implement action plan derived from Public Library Service User Surveys to ensure services meet the needs of the Community. Mar 2012. (AOF 21 & 26)		Completed
Develop proposals for a new Runcorn Library. Mar 2012. (AOF21 & 26)		Building work now completed, opening planned for the end of April.

Appendix 2: Progress Against 'other' objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective	
CE1	Increase participation in sport and physical activity, thereby encouraging better lifestyles.	
Milestones	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Achieve full re-accreditation for Quest (Industry Quality Charter Mark). Mar 2012. (AOF 2 &6)		All Centre Quest assessment completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Runcorn Swimming Pool assessment 25.03.11 - 81% (increase from 80%) • Brookvale Recreation Centre assessment 13.05.11 - 82% (increase from 76%) • Kingsway Leisure Centre assessment 20th & 21st June – 86% (maintained)
Active People survey results show an increase in participation rates from 2009/10 baseline. Mar 2012. (AOF 2 & 3)		Last survey results published December 2011, report an increase in participation.
Review and update the Sports Strategy and Facilities Strategy and begin their implementation during 2011/12. Mar 2012. (AOF 2 & 3)		Sports Strategy consultation completed. Sports Strategy 2012 -2015 Document to be produced. Facility strategy to be reviewed as part of wider council asset management review.
Use promotional events to increase participation and raise awareness associated with Sporting Excellence and 2012 Olympics e.g. Halton Sports Fair Week 18-24 July 2011 (Olympic Weekend – 23/24 July 2011. Aug 2011. (AOF 2 & 3)		Lots of local press releases. Sports Fair Week 18 – 24 th July 70+ free sessions, majority provided by community sports clubs. Widely promoted including 4,000 booklets distributed.



Appendix 2: Progress Against 'other' objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
CE2	Increase the community usage of the stadium and to maintain and improve the health of Halton residents.

Milestones	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Visit Riverside College Halton and local Sixth Forms to advise and promote to students the leisure facilities available at The Stadium. Sept 2011 (AOF2)		Complete, in addition visits have also been made to a number of commercial businesses including Marks & Spencer and O2.
Measure customer satisfaction with Stadium Community Services. Jan 2012 (AOF2)		Recent exit questionnaire was informative and will aid in future planning
Promote off peak opportunities at the start of each quarter to charitable and community organisations to utilise Stadium facilities at a reduced price. Mar 2012. (AOF6 & 7)		This has proved to be a popular offer and will continue in to the new financial year.
Formulate proposals for events linked to the Football World Cup bid 2018/22 and the Rugby World Cup 2013. Sept 2011 (AOF2 & 7)		The Stadium has been informed that Halton will be a "Host City" for the 2013 Rugby League World Cup, an announcement will be made mid-February as to which team will be based in Halton.
Develop new, user friendly, interactive, Stadium website, Dec 2011 (AOF7)		A new Web Site is new fully operational, already the number of enquiries has more than quadrupled for the same period last year.


Appendix 2: Progress Against 'other' objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
CE4	Increase the use of libraries promoting reader development and lifelong learning, thereby encouraging literacy skills and quality of life opportunities.

Milestones	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Develop a plan to implement RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) technology in Halton to facilitate self service, thereby providing opportunities for added value services. Sept 2011. (AOF 15 & 26)		<p>As previously reported self service has been fully implemented at Widnes Library for the issue/return of resources and for computer bookings and printing. Wi-Fi is now available at Widnes Library.</p> <p>Self serve facilities have been included in the plans for new Runcorn Library.</p>
Deliver a programme of good quality Reader Development activities with at least 1 major event per quarter. Mar 2012. (AOF 15 & 26)		<p>To celebrate National Libraries Day the children's book character Kipper the dog visited Halton Libraries. More than 100 families met Kipper over the week, with guest appearances at 3 library rhymetime sessions. Kipper was also spotted walking around Halton Lea Shopping Centre promoting the rhymetime and libraries to families.</p> <p>With partner organisations Kipper also visited 2 Children Centres – Halton Brook and Halton Lodge, where families were encouraged to join the library.</p> <p>Halton Libraries National Libraries Day events also included an evening with award winning author Helen Walsh at Widnes Library and an evening with astrophysicist Dr Tim O'Brien from Jodrell Bank Observatory and presenter of BBC's Stargazing at Halton Lea Library.</p> <p>The service continues to provide support for 8 reading groups and launched a new online reading group in January 2012.</p>



Appendix 2: Progress Against 'other' objectives / milestones

Ref	Objective
CE4 (Continued)	Increase the use of libraries promoting reader development and lifelong learning, thereby encouraging literacy skills and quality of life opportunities.

Milestones	Progress Q4	Supporting Commentary
Deliver a programme of extended informal learning opportunities including Information, Advice and Guidance service targets. Mar 2012. (AOF 15 & 21)		52 Next Steps Information & Advice sessions have been delivered this quarter comprising CV assistance, job club, course information, and job applications 114 support sessions have been delivered covering how to get online, online basics, setting up e-mail accounts, social networking and safe internet use



Appendix 3: Progress Against 'key' performance indicators

Ref	Description	Actual 2010/11	Target 2011/12	Quarter 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
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Service Delivery							
<u>CE LI 6</u>	% of adult population (16+) say they have used their public library service during the last 12 months	47.3%	N/A Refer to comment				The cultural sector questions have not been included in Active Peoples Survey 5 (APS 5). They were included up to the end of APS 4
<u>CE LI 7</u>	% of adult population (16+) participating in sport and active recreation each week	26.3%	24.02%	27.4%			27.4% annual return for NI8 published June 2011.

Appendix 4: Performance Against 'other' performance indicators




Ref	Description	Actual 2010/11	Target 2011/12	Quarter 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel	Supporting Commentary
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Service Delivery							
CE LI 12	Uptake of the Halton Leisure card scheme (Previously SH L111)	368	325	394			The Halton Leisure Card has proved popular this past year.
CE LI 16	Participation in regular volunteering (Previously NI6)	N/A	20.02	See comment	N/A	N/A	This was a previous Place Survey measure and as such cannot be reported.
CE LI 17	Environment for a thriving third sector (Previously NI7)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	In the absence of a nationally prescribed survey, work is now being progressed to establish a more locally focussed survey to capture community perceptions and satisfaction levels.

Quality							
CE LI 22	% Overall satisfaction of Library Users (Previously CS1) (3-yearly 2012)	95%	97%	N/A	N/A	N/A	Next survey not due until Autumn 2012.




Appendix 5: Explanation of Symbols

Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
Green	 Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the annual target <u>is on course to be achieved</u>.</i>
Amber	 Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> , whether the milestone/objective will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that it is <u>uncertain or too early to say at this stage</u> whether the annual target is on course to be achieved.</i>
Red	 Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain</u> that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	<i>Indicates that the target <u>will not be achieved</u> unless there is an <u>intervention or remedial action</u> taken.</i>

Direction of Travel Indicator

Where possible performance measures will also identify a direction of travel using the following convention

Green	 Indicates that performance is better as compared to the same period last year.
Amber	 Indicates that performance is the same as compared to the same period last year.
Red	 Indicates that performance is worse as compared to the same period last year.
N/A	Indicates that the measure cannot be compared to the same period last year.

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

DATE: 30 May 2012

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Policy & Resources

SUBJECT: Sustainable Community Strategy Year End Progress Report 2011/12.

PORTFOLIO: Resources

WARDS: Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide information on the progress in achieving targets contained within the 2011- 2016 Sustainable Community Strategy for Halton.

2.0 RECOMMENDED THAT:

- i. The report is noted
- ii. The Board considers whether it requires any further information concerning the actions taken to achieve the performance targets contained within Halton's 2011–16 Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Sustainable Community Strategy, a central document for the Council and its partners, provides an evidenced-based framework through which actions and shared performance targets can be developed and communicated.

3.2 The previous Sustainable Community Strategy included targets which were also part of the Local Area Agreement (LAA). In October 2010 the coalition government announced the ending of government performance management of local authorities through LAAs. Nevertheless, the Council and its Partners need to maintain some form of effective performance management framework to:-

- Measure progress towards our own objectives for the improvement of the quality of life in Halton.
- Meet the government's expectation that we will publish performance information.

3.3 Thus, following extensive research and analysis and consultation with all stakeholder groups including Elected Members, partners and the

local community and representative groups, a new SCS (2011 – 2016) was approved by the Council on 20th April 2011.

- 3.4 The new Sustainable Community Strategy and its associated “living” 5 year delivery plan (2011-16), identifies five community priorities that will form the basis of collective partnership intervention and action over the coming five years. The strategy is informed by and brings together national and local priorities and is aligned to other local delivery plans such as that of the Halton Children’s Trust. By being a “living” document it will provide sufficient flexibility to evolve as continuing changes within the public sector continue to emerge, for example the restructuring of the NHS and public health delivery, implementation of Local Economic Partnerships and the delivery of the ‘localism’ agenda.
- 3.5 As such, articulating the partnership’s ambition in terms of community outcomes and meaningful measures and targets to set the anticipated rate of change and track performance over time, will further support effective decision making and resource allocation.
- 3.6 Placeholder measures have also been included where new services are to be developed or new performance information is to be captured, in response to legislative changes; for which baselines will be established in 2011/12 or 2012/13, against which future services will be monitored.
- 3.7 An annual ‘light touch review’ of targets contained within the SCS, will also ensure that targets remain realistic over the 5 year plan to ‘close the gaps’ in performance against regional and statistical neighbours.
- 3.8 Attached as Appendix 1 is a report on progress to the 2011-12 year end position which includes a summary of all indicators within the new Sustainable Community Strategy and additional information for those specific indicators and targets that fall within the remit of this Policy & Performance Board.
- 3.9 Further detail is contained in the report with corporate templates for each of the measures bringing together all relevant pieces of performance information in one place – considering the levels of performance that have been achieved over time to date. These templates also provide a contextual backdrop in relation to performance nationally, regionally and by our statistical neighbours where available. These show for a majority of measures, a continued trajectory of continuous improvement as shown by the upward direction of travel arrow, where performance is better than this time last year; or where performance has been maintained. A summary of key activities taken or planned to be taken to improve performance by the Council and its Partners is also stated for each measure by respective Lead Officers.

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 The Sustainable Community Strategy for Halton, and the performance measures and targets contained within it will remain central to the delivery of community outcomes. It is therefore important that we monitor progress and that Members are satisfied that adequate plans are in place to ensure that the Council and its partners achieve the improvement targets that have been agreed.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Sustainable Community Strategy for Halton is central to our policy framework. It provides the primary vehicle through which the Council and its partners develop and communicate collaborative actions that will positively impact upon the communities of Halton.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The publication by Local Authorities of performance information is central to the coalition government's transparency agenda.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

7.1 This report deals directly with the delivery of the relevant strategic priorities of the Council.

8.0 RISK ANALYSIS

8.1 The key risk is a failure to improve the quality of life for Halton's residents in accordance with the objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy. This risk can be mitigated through the regular reporting and review of progress and the development of appropriate actions where under-performance may occur.

9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

9.1 One of the guiding principles of the Sustainable Community Strategy is to reduce inequalities in Halton.

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

Document	Sustainable Community Strategy 2011 – 26
Place of Inspection	2 nd Floor, Municipal Building, Kingsway, Widnes
Contact Officer	Hazel Coen DM (Performance & Improvement)

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Year End Progress Summary for 2011/12



**The Sustainable Community
Strategy for Halton
2011 - 2016**

**Full Year Progress Report
01st April – 31st March 2012**







**Document Contact
(Halton Borough
Council)**

Hazel Coen
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This report provides a summary of progress in relation to the achievement of targets within Halton's Sustainable Community Strategy 2011 - 2016.

It provides both a snapshot of performance for the period 01st April 2011 to 31st March 2012 and a projection of expected levels of performance to the year-end.

The following symbols have been used to illustrate current performance as against the 2011 – 12 targets and as against performance for the same period last year.

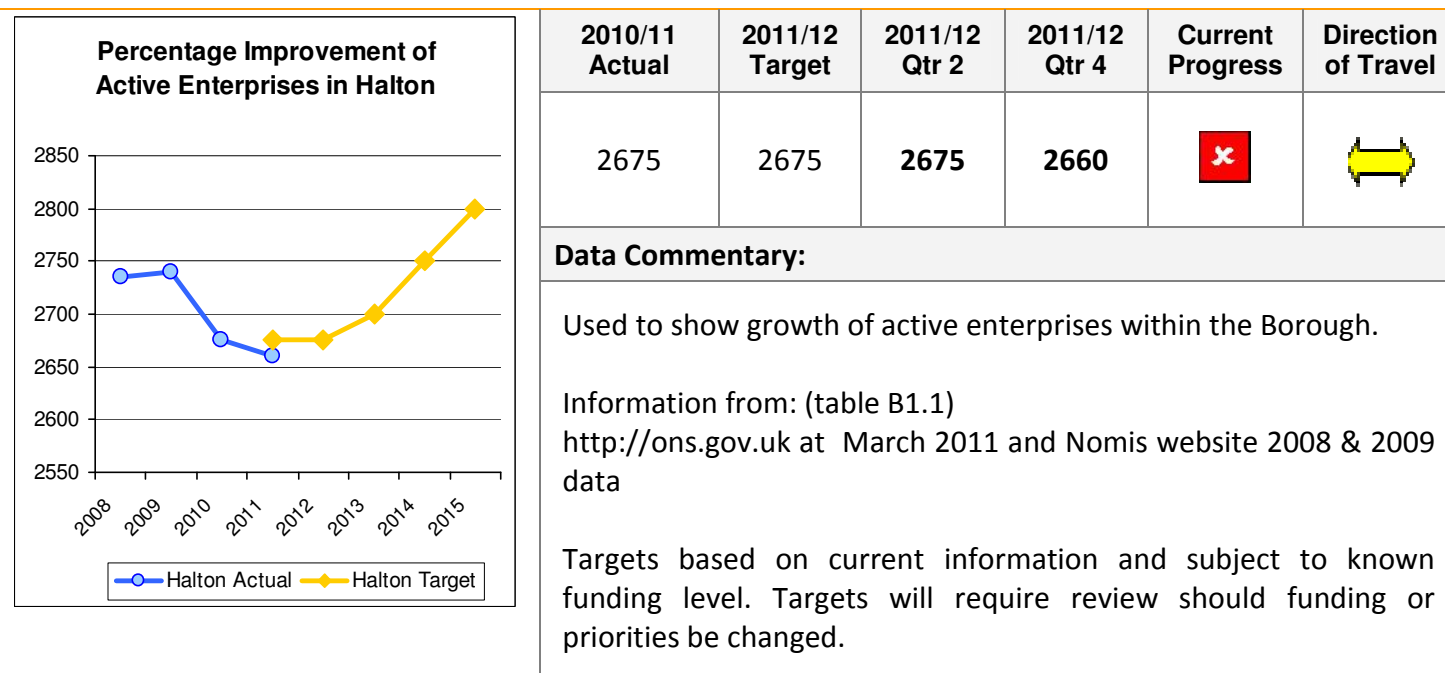
	Target is likely to be achieved or exceeded.		Current performance is better than this time last year
	The achievement of the target is uncertain at this stage		Current performance is the same as this time last year
	Target is highly unlikely to be / will not be achieved.		Current performance is worse than this time last year

Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Page	Ref	Descriptor	2011 / 12 Target	Direction of travel
4	ELS 1	Increase the number of active enterprises within the Borough (NEW 2011)		
6	ELS 2	Increase the proportion of business diversity (NEW 2011)		
9	ELS 3	Increase the number of people classed as self-employed (NEW 2011)		
10	ELS 4	Reduce the proportion of people with no qualifications		
12	ELS 5	Increase the percentage of people achieving NVQ Level 4 and above (Revised NI 165)		
14	ELS 6	Increase the percentage of adults using a library (NI 9)	Placeholder 2012/13	N/A
15	ELS 7	Reduce the percentage of people registered unemployed and seeking employment (JSA claimants) (NI 152)		
18	ELS 8	Reduce the percentage of the working age population claiming out of work benefits (Revised measure)		
20	ELS 9	Increase the gross weekly earnings by residents (NI166)		
21	ELS 10	Increase the number of residents accessing welfare rights/ debt advice at a casework level (Local Measure) a) Debt b) Welfare Rights		

SCS / ELS1

Increase the number of active enterprises within the Borough (New measure)

**Performance Commentary:**

A decline in the number of active enterprises was noted in the year to March 2011 of 15 active enterprises. Business closures were noted in the following sectors – Production, Construction, Accommodation and food services with active enterprises established in Retail, Education, Health and Information and Communication sectors.

However, in the twelve months to March 31 2012 Halton Borough Council Enterprise Team facilitated the creation of 97 new start businesses. In the same period the Business Improvement & Growth (BIG) Team facilitated either the expansion or relocation of 180 companies. In total, the activities of the Enterprise Team and the Business Improvement and Growth Team contributed to the creation of 287 jobs in 2011/12. In light of this, the downturn in the economy, the direction of travel has been assessed as being stable until further data is available from the Office of National Statistics (ONS).

Summary of Key activities taken or planned to improve performance:**Potential Changes to Business Support and Start Up Programmes in Halton**

- Start Up Support

Business start up support will change profoundly in the coming year. The demise of the North West Development Agency (NWDA) has led to the cessation of the Intensive Start-Up Support (ISUS) programme which has traditionally supported the activities of the Enterprise Team.

Halton Borough Council, together with the Cheshire and Warrington local authorities and partners Blue Orchid, Dane Plus Housing, Warrington Ventures and the Princess Trust, have therefore submitted a funding bid under ERDF Priority 4 (to support economic activity in disadvantaged areas) to deliver a business start up service locally.

The programme will be delivered by Blue Orchid, who will also act as Accountable Body. The funding proposal aims to draw down £1.9 m of ERDF funding across the programme area. Blue Orchid can also utilise NEA funding in Halton.

Based on the current funding profile the programme will result in the delivery of 43 new start businesses in Halton in Year 1. Halton Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise are also party to a combined Liverpool City Region funding bid under ERDF Priority 4 (Economic Activity in Disadvantaged Areas) to deliver a similar service in Halton

One of the strands of the DWP Work Programme delivery model is Enterprise. Halton Borough Council's Employment, Learning & Skills Division delivers the Work Programme on behalf of Ingues and A4E in Halton. The Division has just undergone a restructure which reflects an emphasis on supporting people to start up in business. A re-launch of all enterprise services will take place in the new financial year and will include raising awareness of enterprise amongst school children, business start up support and some financial incentives.

- Business Support

Business support nationally has changed profoundly in the recent past as the current government migrates business support from the public to the private sectors. This has resulted in the demise of a number of organisations and sector support bodies, for example NWDA and Business Link, who traditionally were active in Halton.

In 2011 the government awarded contracts to private sector consortia to deliver both the UKTI inward investment and the former 'High Growth' programmes nationally. The Business Improvement and Growth Team are, therefore, endeavouring to forge a strong working relationship with the new private sector providers to ensure that Halton companies are not disadvantaged.

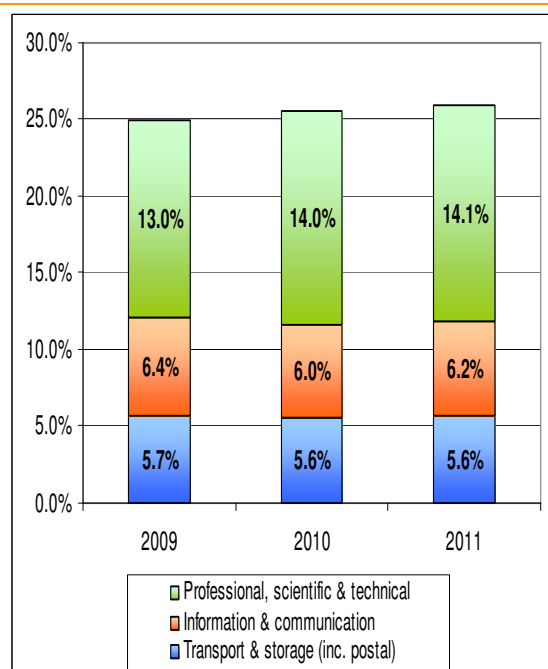
The recent merger of the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and The Mersey Partnership (TMP) will have an impact upon business support in Halton as the new body promotes a sub-regional delivery mechanism for a range of business support programmes. Halton Borough Council are also a key partner within a LCR consortia, made up of thirteen organisations, that has submitted a funding proposal for post start up support under ERDF 4.2 across the City Region.

The Halton element of the programme will result in :-

▪ No of business assisted to improve their performance	146
▪ No of gross jobs created	115
▪ No of gross jobs safeguarded	60
▪ No of businesses with improved performance	94

The Business Improvement and Growth Team are also collaborating with Halton Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise and, Daresbury based, Wild Fire Information Technology Ltd to develop a dedicated, bespoke, second stage business growth programme. The programme, entitled Total Business Manager, is currently at proof of concept stage and will be piloted with eight local companies during 2012.

SCS / ELS2	<p>Increase the proportion of business diversity in the following sectors: (New Measure)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge / Economy, • Super port • Low Carbon/ green • Visitor Economy
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2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Target	2011/12 Qtr 2	2011/12 Qtr 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel
25.61% (2010)	23%	N/A	25.94% (2011)		

Data Commentary:

The measure is in line with the Liverpool City Region priority agreed sectors for growth. Standard categories are used to classify businesses, which enables diversity of business within the local area to be measured. These particular categories have been chosen as areas of focus for growth and as representative of the four larger sectors within the local area. The following standard categories have been chosen as a proxy for these priorities:

- Professional, Scientific and Technical
- Information and Communication
- Transport and Storage

Data for prior years has been updated on the ONS website (www.ons.gov.uk). Targets for future years will be reconsidered in the light of annual performance and subject to known funding levels

Performance Commentary:

Over the 12 month period the three areas that are currently monitored, two have improved in sector size whilst the third has remained the same. The sectors for Professional, Scientific & Technical and the that of Information & Communication increased by 0.1% and 0.2% respectively. Transport and Storage has remained the same at 5.6%,

Summary of Key activities taken or planned to improve performance:**Knowledge / Economy**

The Business Improvement and Growth (BIG) Team work across the Authority and with external partners to develop the Science, Technology and Advanced Manufacturing (STAM) sector locally. Specifically, the BIG work with colleagues from the Employment, Learning and Skills Team to address the latent need for skilled and competent employees within the sector locally.

A study has recently been completed by PEAT Associates who interviewed 120 of the 210 STAM businesses in Halton to ascertain their present and future skills requirement. The information from PEAT Associates and other studies will be used to influence the Further Education sector to modify their curriculum in order to ensure that local young people are able to access the training they need in order to gain employment in the STAM sector.

A PEAT Associates study has recently been formatted in order that it might be emailed to all STAM businesses in Halton. An event is also planned aiming to build upon the momentum created within the sector by the study.

The Business Improvement and Growth (BIG) have also developed a suite of web resources to promote science business investment and growth;

- www.wheresciencesucceeds.co.uk to provide an information resource for businesses in the science, technology and advanced manufacturing sector
- www.scipodonline.co.uk to enthuse young people about science
- www.sciencehalton.com to provide young people and careers professionals with an online 'careers route way' illustrating available support, opportunities and useful courses and qualifications

The Business Improvement and Growth have also made numerous presentations to local schools and colleges about careers in science and technology, worked with Careers Academies UK to promote the development of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) Career Academies in Halton at, for example, St Chad's Catholic and Church of England High School and supported Bankfield School's five Primary feeder schools to obtain PSQM (Primary Science Quality Mark).

The roll out of Daresbury Enterprise Zone (EZ) will have a profound impact upon the STAM sector in the coming years.

- Local authorities with an enterprise zone will provide discounts on non domestic business rates of up to 100% for every business within that zone, with the Government reimbursing the local authority the cost of the discount.
- Discounts are limited by EU state aid law, up to a *de minimis* threshold of €200,000 over a rolling three-year period, the equivalent of approximately £55,000 per year. The relevant local authority will be required to ensure that businesses do not receive greater levels of support.
- Each business will receive discounts for five years from the start of its occupancy in the Zone, providing it enters the Zone by April 2015.
- Businesses will therefore see a major reduction in their rates, and there will be no direct cost for those authorities who introduce the discount within an Enterprise Zone.
- The uplift in business rates receipts as a result of the introduction of the Enterprise Zone will be used to support the priorities of the local enterprise partnership.
- All business rate growth within the zone for a period of at least 25 years will be retained and reinvested in the local area, to support the local enterprise partnership's priorities

Super Port

The BIG Team work closely with the SuperPort Sector Manager from Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership to provide detailed and up to date information about sites and properties within the Borough of Halton which compliment the wider LCR SuperPort portfolio of sites.

The BIG also work with colleagues from Major Project and the Employment, Learning and Skills Teams to facilitate the development of 3MG and associated sites and work closely with specific inward investing companies within the logistic sector who want to locate to Halton.

In January 2011 £9m was secured from the Regional Grow Fund to facilitate the further development of 3MG. Specifically, the Stobart Group of Companies will utilise £4.5m of the RGF grant for the reclamation of a heavily contaminated 100 acre site, which will enable private sector development to proceed which will ultimately create, in excess of, 1m sq ft (92,000 sq m) of warehousing space. The remaining £4.5m will be used for the provision of infrastructure to open up HBC field.

Preparatory works on the link road commenced in September 2011. The main link road works and the warehouse development were to commence in December 2011. However, with the potential legal challenge pending the developer has not yet progressed with the road or the warehouse development.

Low Carbon/ Green

The BIG Team work closely with the Low Carbon Sector Manager at Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership to identify opportunities for local companies in, for example, the growing off shore wind market

The Business Improvement District or BID programme at Astmoor and Halebank industrial estates has introduced numerous energy efficiency measures, for example an estate wide recycling team. The Business Parks Manager is also working with a number of agencies, for example Enviolink, Groundwork Cheshire and the major utilities provides, particularly e.on and Scottish Power, to bring forward Smart Grid, micro-generation and PV technologies at Astmoor and Halebank

Visitor Economy

The BIG Team supports the visitor economy in Halton through the management of the Tourism Business Network which brings together representatives from the Borough's hotels and visitor attractions to share information and develop activities of mutual benefit, the management of the web site www.visithalton.com, tourism blogs and four public information kiosks across the Borough. The 'Visit Halton' web site is currently benefiting from a major upgrade funded by the Borough Council and Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership

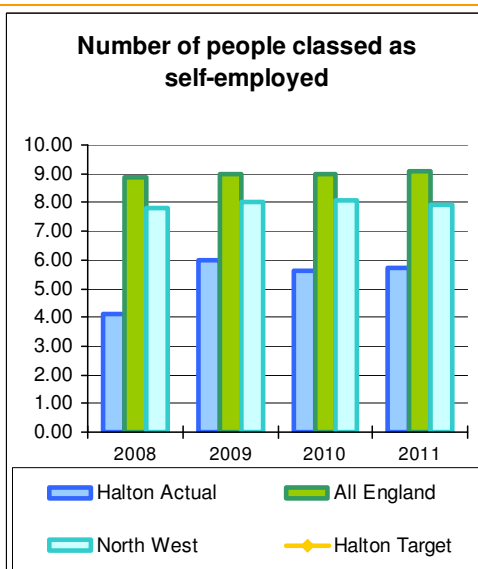
The Team also facilitate the management, in partnership with Halton Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise, of the annual Halton Business and Tourism Awards. The 2012 awards took place on Friday 30 March.

There are action plans in place to maximise the benefit to the visitor economy of the construction phase of the New Mersey Gateway and Widnes Viking's first season in Super League.

The visitor offer in Halton also improved in 2012 with the long awaited Lewis Carroll Visitor Centre opened to the public. Also, the Hive Leisure Development, featuring a new cinema, bowling alley, restaurants, hotel, public house and very soon an ice rink, was completed and is open for business.

SCS / ELS3

Increase the number of people classed as self-employed (New measure)



2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Target	2011/12 Qtr 2	2011/12 Qtr 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel
5.6% (Jan 10 to Dec 10)	6.0%	5.7% (July 10 to June 11)	5.7% (October to September 11)		

Data Commentary:

To show that the authority is supporting entrepreneurship by showing how much Halton has increased the number of people classed as self-employed.

Source NOMIS: % self-employed of those aged 16-64.

Self-employed information for the borough is available from the NOMIS website via the annual Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES). This measure is reported between September and December for the previous year. Targets based on current information and subject to known funding level. Targets will require review should funding or priorities be changed.

Performance Commentary:

Self employment rates have remained stable in Halton at 5.7%, though falling in the North West from 8.1% to 7.9%. Though failing to meet the aspirational targets, this is an improvement since 2010, 4600 people being self employed (3100 Males / 1500 Females).

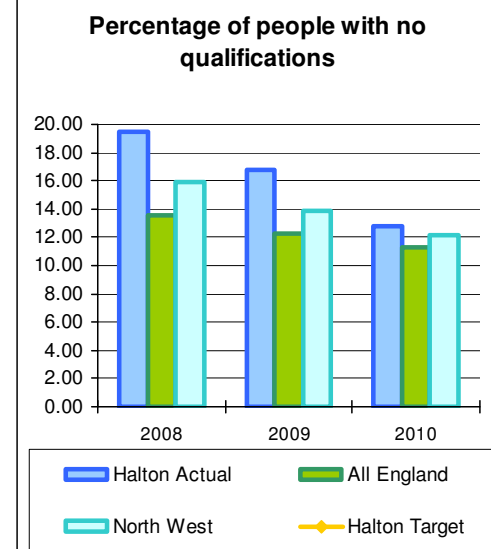
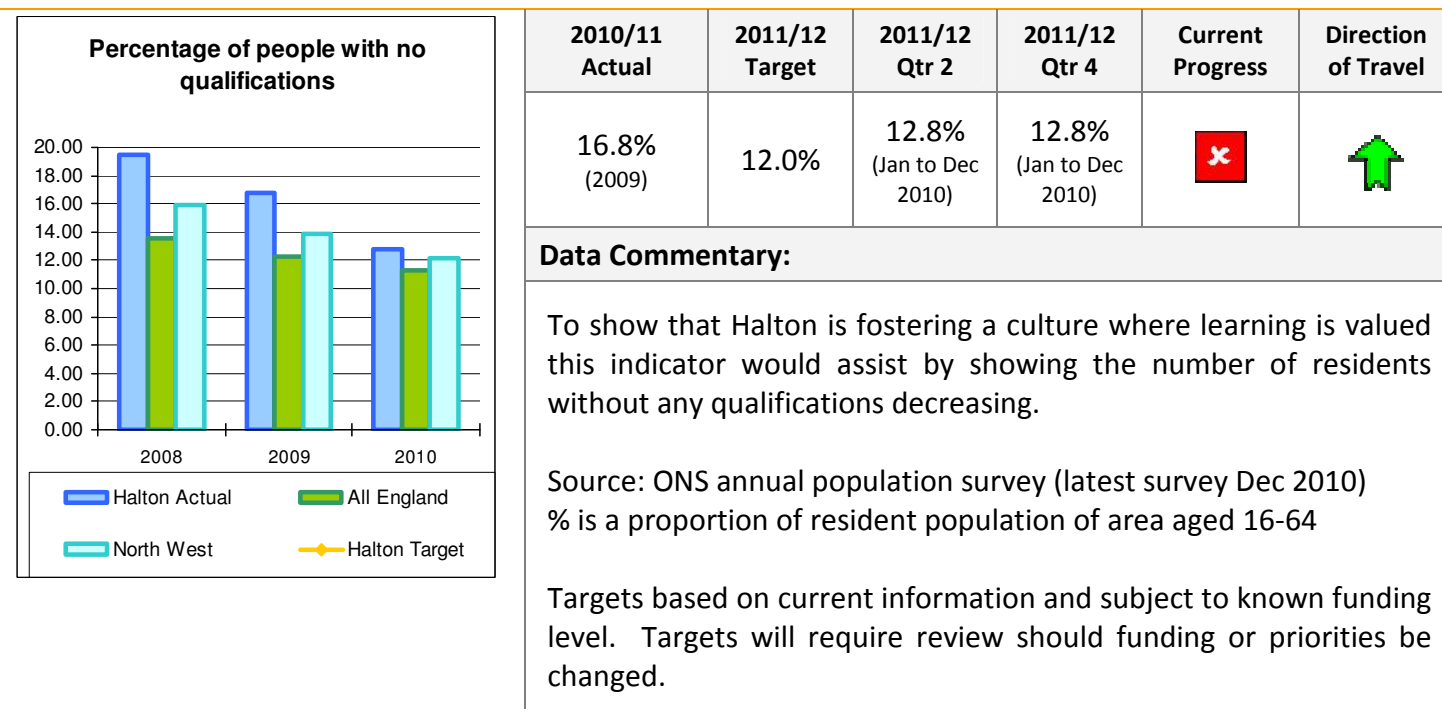
Summary of Key activities taken or planned to improve performance:

This measure links to objective 2 - to foster a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship to make Halton an ideal place to grow a business.

From April 2011 the New Enterprise Allowance (NEA) Scheme was introduced. This scheme is available to Job Centre Plus customers aged 25 years and over who have been claiming JSA for between 6-12 months and who move into employment with an allowance of £65 per week for 26 weeks, £32.50 for the following two weeks. Those new businesses that remain trading after 52 weeks will be able to access a low interest loan to be repaid in a period of 3 years. Blue Orchid has won the NEA contract covering Halton and will work closely with Enterprising Halton to support local people with starting their own business. Additionally, Halton Borough Council is included in a number of ERDF bids relating to enterprise and we are currently awaiting the outcome.

SCS / ELS4

Reduce the proportion of people with no qualifications.

**Performance Commentary:**

Data is awaited for 2011 which will be published on 18th July 2012. Though not achieving the aspirational target set to be in line with the North West average, considerable progress has been made over the last 5 years reducing from 20.4% in 2006 to 16.8% in 2009 to 12.8% in 2010.

During January and March 2012, The Employment, Learning & Skills Division supported in the achievement of 43 Skills for Life qualifications, broken down as follows:

Literacy:

- 1 learner achieved Entry Level 2 Literacy
- 1 learner achieved Entry Level 3 Literacy
- 13 learners achieved Level 2 Literacy

Numeracy:

- 2 learners achieved Entry Level 2 Numeracy
- 3 learners achieved Entry Level 3 Numeracy
- 13 learners achieved Level 1 Numeracy
- 10 learners achieved Level 2 Numeracy

The Division's performance this quarter is down on the previous year due to a reduction in staffing levels in the 2011/12 academic year. No further reductions are expected for the next academic year.

Summary of Key activities taken or planned to improve performance:



Links to SCS objective 3 – To develop a culture where learning is valued and skill levels throughout the adult population and across the local workforce can be raised.

There is currently funding in place to support those unemployed to attend training and increase their skills, of which those long term unemployed are most likely to have no qualification. Therefore target to reduce to level below that of England average given the significant improvement already seen over the past three years. The commentary below relates only to Halton Borough Council performance – data from other providers in the borough is reported to Skills Funding Agency; however, this data is not publicly available until 18 months afterwards.

Skills for Life and Employability programmes have been delivered in 17 different venues across the borough up to the end of Quarter 4. In terms of numbers of courses, there were 18 HEP Award courses, 5 Employability courses and 4 Tesco Pre-Employment Training programmes (336 enrolments) up to the end of Q4. Mapping of Skills for Life and Employability provision across the borough will be reviewed by the Halton Skills for Life Group in April 2012 with a view to identifying any gaps in provision and putting in plans to increase the numbers of Skills for Life opportunities.

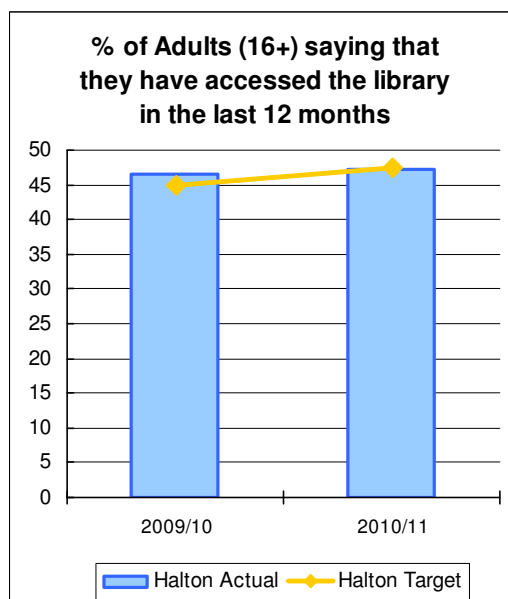
SCS / ELS5

Increase the percentage of people achieving NVQ Level 4 and above (Revised NI 165)

Percentage of people achieving NVQ level 4 and above	2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Target	2011/12 Qtr 2	2011/12 Qtr 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel
 <p>2008 / 2009 2009 / 2010 2010 / 2011</p> <p>Halton Actual All England North West Halton Target</p>	18.3% (Jan to Dec 2009)	22.0%		21.3% (Jan to Dec 2010)		
Data Commentary:						
<p>Showing the number of people achieving NVQ Level 4 and above qualifications show that residents within the borough are reaching a high level of educational attainment. NVQ4 equivalent and above: e.g. HND, Degree and Higher Degree level qualifications or equivalent</p> <p>Source: ONS annual population survey % is a proportion of resident population of area aged 16-64</p> <p>Targets based on current information and subject to known funding level. Targets will require review should funding or priorities be changed. Data for 2011 will be published by NOMIS on 18.7.2012.</p>						
Performance Commentary:						
<p>HBC does not own this NI data, which is only available from Skills Funding Agency 18 months after learners achieve the qualification.</p> <p>Considerable progress has been made to increase in recent years the percentage of people with NVQ Level 4 and above showing an upward trajectory of improvement.</p> <p>The aspirational target has been set to narrow the gap between Halton and the North West average over the five year period based on current funding levels and initiatives in place.</p>						
Summary of Key activities taken or planned to improve performance:						
<p>This measure links to SCS objective 3 – To develop a culture where learning is valued and skill levels throughout the adult population and across the local workforce can be raised.</p> <p>There is a current emphasis on high level apprenticeships driven from central government. Research underway to determine what our local employers require in order to influence local delivery of appropriate level 4 qualifications.</p> <p>Growth not expected to be significant for first few years due to time taken to achieve level 4. A growth employment area for Halton is within the Knowledge Economy (Science, Technology & Advanced Manufacturing - STAM). During Q3, a piece of research was commissioned to explore the future employment opportunities within STAM businesses in Halton and to identify any gaps in provision. The Science Halton research report was finalised in Q4 and shared with key partners.</p>						

The research identified gaps in STAM provision at levels 4 and 6. It is hoped new provision can be developed (in particular by Riverside College Halton) to meet the employment requirements and ensure local people can be upskilled to obtain employment requiring higher level qualifications. Additionally, the Government has allocated further funding to support the development of higher level apprenticeships.

SCS / ELS6 Increase the percentage of adults using a library (NI 9)



2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Target	2011/12 Qtr 2	2011/12 Qtr 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel
47.3	-	N/A		Placeholder 2012/13	N/A

Data Commentary:

CIPFA PLUS Survey, a public library user survey, will be undertaken in Autumn 2012 and then every three years. Data from this will be used to provide data around uptake of library services.

Performance Commentary:

No targets to be set against this data as the data source is no longer available. Performance will be reported first in 2013 and then again in 2016 and therefore this is a placeholder measure where the target will be to improve performance from 2012 to 2015.

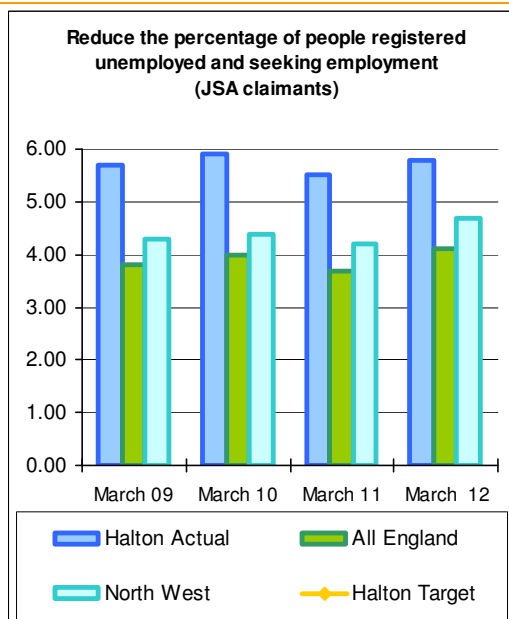
Summary of Key activities taken or planned to improve performance:

To increase the percentage of people using a library an number of initiatives have been undertaken during the year. For instance in quarter 4 :

- To celebrate National Libraries Day the children's book character Kipper the dog visited Halton Libraries. More than 100 families met Kipper over the week, with guest appearances at 3 library rhymetime sessions. Kipper was also spotted walking around Halton Lea Shopping Centre promoting the rhymetime and libraries to families.
- With partner organisations Kipper also visited 2 Children Centres – Halton Brook and Halton Lodge, where families were encouraged to join the library.
- Halton Libraries National Libraries Day events also included an evening with award winning author Helen Walsh at Widnes Library and an evening with astrophysicist Dr Tim O'Brien from Jodrell Bank Observatory and presenter of BBC's Stargazing at Halton Lea Library.
- The service continues to provide support for 8 reading groups and launched a new online reading group in January 2012.

SCS / ELS7

Reduce the percentage of people registered unemployed and seeking employment (JSA claimants) NI 152



2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Target	2011/12 Qtr 2	2011/12 Qtr 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel
5.5% (March 2011)	5.5% (March 2012)	5.5% (December 2011)	5.8% (March 2012)		

Data Commentary:

JSA claimant count records the number of people claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) and National Insurance credits at Jobcentre Plus local offices. People claiming JSA must declare that they are out of work, capable of, available for and actively seeking work during the week in which the claim is made.

The percentage figures express the number of claimants resident in an area as a percentage of the population aged 16-64 resident in that area. Data is available one month in arrears from the Office of National Statistics (ONS).

Targets based on current information and subject to known funding level. Targets will require review should funding or priorities be changed.

Performance Commentary:

During March 2012 the Halton Jobseekers Allowance claimant count was 4510 which was a 2.9% decrease on the February 2012 figures; and a 4.6% increase on the March 2011 figures. The March 2012 figures showed an increase in those claiming JSA across all ages when compared with March 2011.

Summary of Key activities taken or planned to improve performance:

Jobcentre Plus are active members of both the Employment, Learning & Skills SSP and SSP subgroups.

- Jobcentre Plus had 1202 vacancies in quarter 4, with a total of 3347 jobs which is an increase of 10.86% on the same period of the previous year.
- The Governments 'Get Britain Working' measures have seen an increase in customers accessing work experience leading to job opportunities (with in excess of 90 Halton residents starting Work Experience placements), volunteering opportunities, New Enterprise Allowance (NEA) to support those wishing to go into self-employment (with approximately 145 Halton residents starting NEA).
- There are currently 5 Work Clubs operating in Halton to support residents with job search, CV's interview technique whilst looking for employment opportunities.

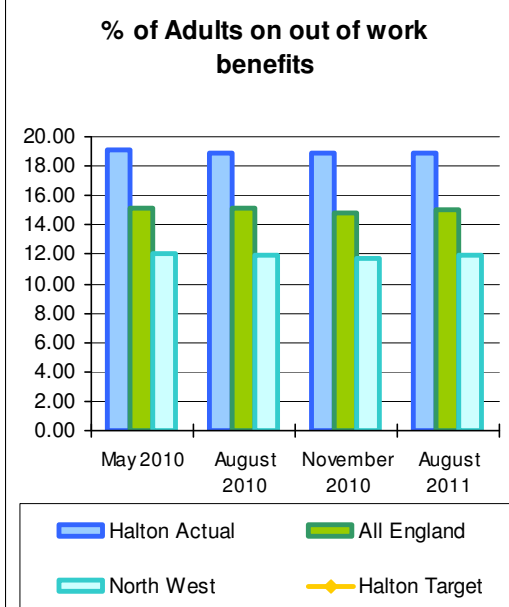

- There are currently 5 Enterprise Clubs in Halton working to support residents looking for self-employment.
- Halton are acting as a pilot area with 'Next Steps' are co-located in each of the Halton Jobcentre Plus offices offering immediate careers advice to customers.
- Jobcentre Plus are working closely with the Skills Funding Agency and their Providers to ensure that short job focused training opportunities are available to support short qualifications and an insight into occupational areas for Halton residents. These providers include Riverside College, Asset training, In Training and Scientium.
- Jobcentre Plus have worked with the LA to support the local transport bid, which in turn will support the local labour market through enhanced links to employers, in particular the industrial areas. Jobcentre Plus have been working with the NTT to design a transport questionnaire which is being dispatched to all customers in receipt of JSA across Halton.
- Good links have been forged with Prince's Trust looking at the youth agenda, working closely with Employment Advisers and the Work experience team to support the programme and those customers moving closer or into the Labour market.
- A youth employment plan is currently being drafted to support the Government's announcement of the Youth contract.
- During March 2012, Halton Jobcentre Plus hosted 2-weeks of Helping Young People Engage (targeted at 16-24 year olds in receipt of JSA) this fortnight saw the attendance of Providers, training organisations and support organisations attending the Halton Jobcentre Plus offices to inform Young People (16-24) of the services available to them.
- Jobcentre Plus are working with apprenticeships (contributing to the borough Apprenticeship plan via the Apprenticeship group) and Employment Advisers are promoting apprenticeships with employers that JCP are speaking with to support residents with apprenticeship opportunities.
- Jobcentre Plus support the NEET agenda, sitting on both NEET Groups to support customers into education or training.
- Jobcentre Plus are continually working with providers to support training requirements of the borough, a new provider is moving into a residential area to deliver training in the hub of the community focusing initially on up-skilling residents with basic skills needs.
- Jobcentre Plus has had a lead role in recruiting unemployed customers for the new development in Widnes. A relationship with employers, offering sifting application forms, setting up open days, and offering interview rooms. Within quarter Jobcentre Plus have obtained vacancies for a new shift with Mexichem.
- Jobcentre Plus have hosted 4 Sector Based Work Academies (SBWA) within Quarter 4 across Halton with Halton employers these SBWA resulting in 21 Halton JSA customers obtaining employment.
- Jobcentre Plus & Partners have supported the Tesco recruitment in Widnes. With 100 unemployed customers starting a pre-employment training programme. This training programme resulted in 98 of these

customers (who had been out-of-the Labour Market for over 6 months) being offered employment with Tesco.

- Logistics remain one of the top vacancies currently advertised in Halton. Jobcentre Plus have established links with the Road Haulage Association, Skills for Logistics, HBC and NAS to host an employer event on 22/05/12 targeting the agenda at recruitment needs, skills, qualifications and work experience opportunities.
- Jobcentre Plus currently issue on a daily basis a 'Stop Press' notice to all staff to promote local recruitment, large scale recruitment, learning opportunities and additional opportunities surrounding the borough.
- Jobcentre Plus are working closely with newly unemployed customers to support them with 'back to work sessions' to enable customers to have early knowledge of support, courses and up-skilling that is on offer to them borough wide.
- Jobcentre Plus predominantly support customers who are under 12 months unemployed, JCP will at this stage refer customers to the Work Programme.
- Jobcentre Plus is proactive in supporting inward investment recruitments, contacting local employers to actively promote services to support recruitment requirements.

SCS / ELS8

Reduce the percentage of the working age population claiming out of work benefits
(Revised measure)

	2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Target	2011/12 Qtr 2	2011/12 Qtr 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel
		18.9% (March 2010)	18%	18.6% (May 2011)	18.9% (August 2011)	
Data Commentary:						
<p>Out of work benefits includes Job seekers allowance, ESA (Incapacity Benefits), Lone parents and other income related benefits.</p> <p>Data is taken from the Department for work and Pensions claimant figures via the office of National statistics NOMIS reporting system.</p> <p>Data is available quarterly and is released six months in arrears.</p> <p>Targets based on current information and subject to known funding level. Targets will require review should funding or priorities be changed.</p>						

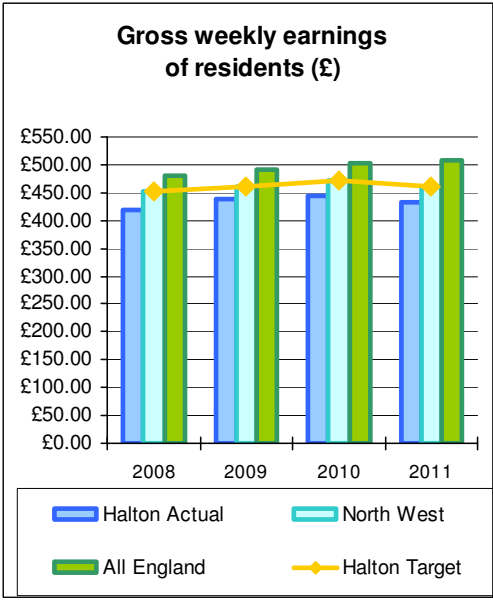


Performance Commentary:

In Halton, 18.9% of the working age population are claiming out of work benefits. The figure for the North West currently stands at 15.2% and nationally at 12.0%. Whereas as rates in Halton has stayed relatively stable over the last four quarters with a drop in May to 18.6%; this compares against increases for the North West from 14.8% (Nov 10) to 15.2% (Aug 11) and all England 11.7% (Nov 10) to 12.0% (Aug 11).

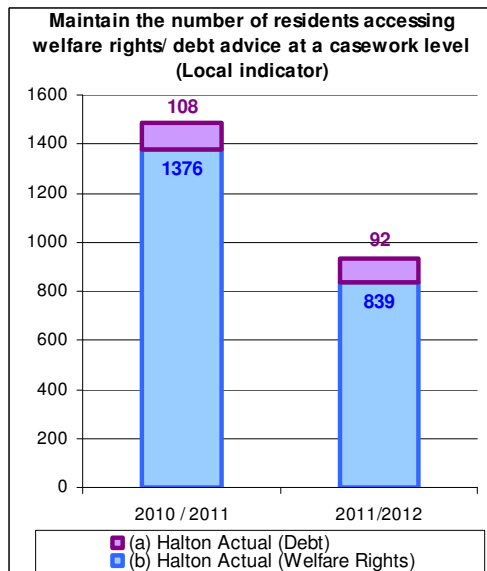
Summary of Key activities taken or planned to improve performance:

- Jobcentre Plus (JCP) work closely with all the Halton Children's Centres to support lone parent activity. Personal Advisers are currently on outreach in Widnes Children's Centres and this will once again role out to Runcorn in Quarter 1 2012.
- JCP have piloted 'Group Sessions' in 5 Widnes Children's Centres to support lone parents into training\employment. This has been well received and some Lone parents have moved into training\employment. 62 customers attended the group sessions, a further 23 were contacted by telephone as they could not attend the group sessions at the dates set. The group sessions also generated enquiries at the Widnes office about vacancies available. All of those who attended the Group Sessions had a NEXT Steps appointment. 10 customers obtained employment which was directly linked to the Group Sessions. The Group Sessions generated further enquiries from customers' enquiring about the TESCO recruitment and this then resulted in 25 obtaining placements on the Tesco Pre-Employment Training and subsequently obtaining employment.
- Children Centres are in attendance at the Runcorn Jobcentre Plus offices weekly to engage with lone parents and families to offer the support required.

- Jobcentre Plus sit on the Advisory Board of the Children Centre's to support the Economic agenda.
- Incapacity Benefit Reassessment is currently under way and will be completed by 2014. Customers moving into ESA (Work Related Activity Group) will be assigned a named Personal Adviser who will support customers move closer to the labour market.
- Jobcentre Plus has a Disability Employment Adviser in each site to support customers who require additional support going into employment. There are programmes such as Work Choices which supports customers with highest support needs, and helps moves them into employment.
- Access to Work can support customers with equipment required to support a return to employment for customers with a disability.

 <p>Gross weekly earnings of residents (£)</p>	2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Target	2011/12 Qtr 2	2011/12 Qtr 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel
	£443.50p	Close gap with NW average	£432.30p	£432.30p (Dec 11)		
Data Commentary:						
<p>The gross median weekly earnings of residents showing an increase would show that people are able to maximise their potential and rise out of poverty.</p> <p>Data obtained from NOMIS. The target is to close the gap to the North West average.</p>						
Performance Commentary:						
<p>All England weekly earnings figure saw an increase of 1.16% for 2010/11, whilst the north west and Halton both registered decreases; 2.37% (north west) and 2.5% (Halton). The gap between Halton and the region was virtually unchanged, widening by 0.1%.</p> <p>The economy's continuing sluggish recovery from the recession, and the Government's deep public sector spending cuts started to impact in Halton; both directly by the start of reductions in public sector jobs, and indirectly by major spending reductions in the local economy by the public sector.</p>						
Summary of Key activities taken or planned to improve performance:						
<p>Economic Growth – Work to attract new employers in sectors of the economy likely to see sustained growth. Example of this is the emerging Enterprise Zone at Daresbury, already attracting a series of new companies to the Borough. A recent survey commissioned by the BBC identified Halton as the best place in the North West for business growth, placing Halton 13th out of 324 English local authorities for the proportion of businesses with high growth potential.</p> <p>Maximising incomes - second element of work is to equip the local labour force with the skills, knowledge and confidence to compete for these new jobs, both in Halton and across the city region. The promotion of careers in science, technology and advanced manufacturing (STAM), through to apprenticeships and the work by HEP with new and expanding employers to maximise the proportion of new jobs filled by Halton residents.</p> <p>Reducing poverty – the work of partners to maximise household incomes and lift families out of poverty continues. Examples include the Child & Family Poverty Strategy and the recent LSTF bid.</p>						
SCS / ELS10	Maintain the number of residents accessing welfare rights/ debt advice at a casework level					

(Local Measure)
a) Debt
b) Welfare Rights



2010/11 Actual	2011/12 Target	2011/12 Qtr 2	2011/12 Qtr 4	Current Progress	Direction of Travel
a) 108 b) 1376	Baseline year	a) 39 b) 605	a) 92 b) 839		

Data Commentary:

This measure captures the number of people accessing a welfare benefits or debt advice agency and receiving a specialist casework service.

This is a numeric indicator, taken as a simple total which will reflect the level of uptake of specialist services to assist an individual to better their economic circumstances. To assist an individual to manage their income, both debt and benefits advice will be necessary and neither service in isolation is sufficient to address the needs of most individuals who need to access support. Much specialist welfare rights casework involves “in work” benefits such as Disability Living Allowance and Tax Credits and income maximisation.

Target is to maintain the performance from 2011/12 through to 2015/16. The Chart shows HBC information only to establish a baseline. Information anticipated to be supplied by Halton CAB in 2012/13.

Performance Commentary:

The demand for Welfare Rights and Debt advice services remains high and all services are at capacity. The number of advisers in large part determines how many people are assisted.

There has been a fall in casework figures from 2010/ 2011 to 2011/12 that reflects a reduction in the number of advisers. Proportionately the team have modestly over achieved in 2011/12. However, it is expected that if the number of advisers is maintained then the number of local residents given specialist help will broadly stabilise. There will always be small variations reflecting the fact that cases vary in complexity.

However, we have seen an increase in demand for specialist advice linked into the welfare reform agenda. This is especially from those who are receiving Incapacity Benefit and need to be assessed by Jobcentre Plus against the harsher criteria for Employment Support Allowance. This increase is essentially for more complex casework advice.

The welfare reform agenda is radical and due to gather substantial momentum over the next 5 year period. It is predicted that the demand for complex casework will increase further in both welfare benefits and debt advice and it may be the number of specialist advisers that determine to what degree this need is met.

Summary of Key activities taken or planned to improve performance:

This indicator measures the uptake of relevant advice services at a specialist level. It is necessary to draw a distinction between the provisions of advice via a leaflet, self-completed pro forma, or lower level tier assistance. This has a value but a distinction must be made between this and specialist work. This may involve as examples, financial negotiation for a client, court representation, a Debt Relief Order or appeal tribunal representation. It is not possible to gain a full picture of the advice sector with a single statistic and to be comprehensive would entail numerous performance indicators measures being measured and undue complexity. Commentary will be provided on key developments/ initiatives undertaken on a six monthly basis to provide further detail in monitoring reports.

It is therefore necessary to focus on a clear, easily measurable statistic, which avoids undue complications in definition. This statistic also largely avoids “double counting” which can easily happen with lower tier advice. Anecdotally, all specialist advice services have been working at capacity and the definition will illustrate reductions and increases in advice provision.

It is recognised that not all cases counted are equal in terms of content, but this does not matter because the indicator is measuring service access, and not being used as a method of inter-agency comparison. The statistics given have a value for comparative work within Halton, but external benchmarking has previously been found to be both complex and potentially very misleading.

This links to objective to maximise an individual’s potential to increase and manage their income, including access to appropriate, supportive advice services in the Sustainable Community Strategy. Also, the statistic provided will link into both the advice required to fulfil obligations under the Child Poverty Strategy.