

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

**DATE:** 9 June 2010

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director Corporate and Policy

**SUBJECT:** Sustainable Community Strategy Performance Report

**WARDS:** Borough-wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To provide information on the progress towards meeting Halton's Sustainable Community Strategy targets at 2009 – 10 financial year-end.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDED THAT:**

- i. The report is noted
- ii. The Board considers whether it requires any further information concerning the actions being taken to achieve Halton's LAA targets.

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 The revised Local Area Agreement, which comprises an element of Halton's Sustainable Community Strategy, was signed off by the Secretary of State in June 2008. The LAA contains a set of measures and targets agreed between the Council, local partner agencies (who have a duty of co-operation in achieving targets) and government. There are 32 indicators within the LAA along with statutory and education and early years targets. The current agreement covers the period April 2008 to March 2011.

3.2 The Agreement was refreshed in March 2010 following a review with Government Office North West. Any changes to performance targets that resulted from this review are reflected within the enclosed report.

3.3 Attached as Appendix 1 is a report on progress to the 2009 – 10 financial year-end which includes those indicators and targets that fall within the remit of this Policy and Performance Board.

3.4 In considering this report Members should be aware that:-

- a) All of the measures within the National Indicator Set are monitored through Quarterly Departmental Service Plan Monitoring Reports. The purpose of this report is to consolidate information on all measures and targets relevant to this PPB in order to provide a clear picture of progress.

- b) In some cases outturn data cannot be made available at the mid-year point and there are also some Place Survey based indicators for which information will not become available until 2010 i.e. the next date the survey is due to be undertaken.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 The Sustainable Community Strategy for Halton, and the Local Area Agreement contained within it, is the main mechanism through which government will performance manage local areas. 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 Local Area Agreement acts as the delivery plan for the Sustainable Community Strategy for Halton and is therefore central to our policy framework.

#### **6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The achievement of Local Area Agreement targets has direct implications for the outcomes in relation to Comprehensive Area Assessment judgements.

#### **7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

- 7.1 This report deals directly with the delivery of the relevant strategic priority 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 thorough the regular reporting and review of progress and the development of appropriate actions where under-performance may occur.

#### **9.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

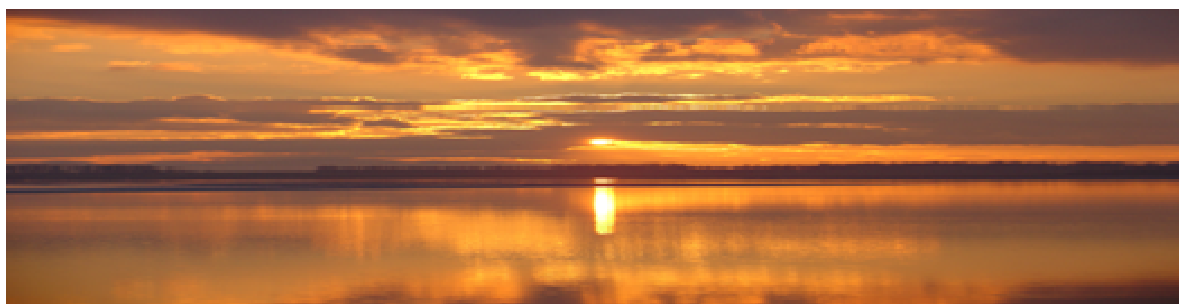
- 9.1 One of the guiding principles of the Local Area Agreement is to reduce inequalities in Halton.

#### **10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPAERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

Document                      Local Area Agreement 2008 – 11

Place of Inspection    2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Municipal Building, Kingsway, Widnes

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# **The Sustainable Community**

## **Strategy For Halton**

**2006 - 2011**

### **Year End Progress Report**




**01<sup>st</sup> April 2009 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010**

## EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING & SKILLS







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

It provides both a snapshot of performance for the period 01<sup>st</sup> April 2009 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 and a projection of expected levels of performance to the period 2011.









The following symbols have been used to illustrate current performance against 2010 and 2011 target levels.

	Target is likely to be achieved or exceeded.
	The achievement of the target is uncertain at this stage
	Target is highly unlikely to be / will not be achieved.

### EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS



71	153	<u>Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods</u>		
73	163	<u>Working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher.</u>		
75	171	<u>VAT Registration rate</u>		

### Non Local Area Agreement Measures / Targets

Page	NI	Descriptor	09/10 Target	2011 Target
76	ELS1	<u>Reduce the proportion of adults with no qualifications</u>		
77	ELS2	<u>Increase the proportion of adults qualified to Level 3</u>		
77	ELS3	<u>Increase the rate of self-employment</u>		
78	ELS4	<u>Ensure unemployment in any Lower Super Output Area is less than 20% above the borough average</u>		

## EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING & SKILLS

### NI 153 Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods

Baseline (2007/08)	2009 - 10			2011	
	Target	Actual	Progress	Target	Projected
31.5%	29.5%	<b>33.5%</b>		Maintain the 0.4pp gap below NW average	

#### Data Commentary

The data supplied is for quarter 3 2009, which is the latest data available. The source is the Work and Pensions longitudinal study.

The data reflected a worsening of the Job Seekers allowance figures during the last quarter of 2009. Unemployment had risen each month from October 2009 ahead of national and regional averages. There were a number of reasons for this.

Given the nature of industry in Halton e.g. distribution, logistics, manufacturing the figures would be influenced by seasonal work and a higher proportion of agency workers. Linked to this given low skills and low qualifications' levels in the borough, often residents are employed in the lower paid jobs, which are particularly vulnerable in the current climate.

Private sector partners advise that given Halton's geographical position many Halton residents commute outside the borough and there are redundancies outside the borough that have affected Halton residents.

Although there have not been 'large scale redundancies' announced in the borough there was a steady flow of smaller redundancies, all of which have a bearing on the overall NI 153 figure i.e.

October 09 – DHL 85 jobs;  
 November 09 – Dept Children Families and Schools 80 jobs;  
 December 09 - Avery Denison 17 jobs;  
 December 09 – Thermaphos 69 jobs

#### General Performance Commentary

As part of the LAA refresh process the Government Office acknowledged that the target would need to be revised and Government agreed that the Halton target would equate to a 0.4 percentage point gap below the North West average

## EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING & SKILLS

### Summary of key activities undertaken / planned during the year

A range of events and door knocking exercises have been delivered to engage with residents of Hallwood Park, Palacefields, Castlefields & Windmill Hill, linking in with partners such as NMT, Connexions, Telematics Centre, Schools and Job Centre Plus.

A new NEEO for Central Widnes will be recruited and will undertake a mapping exercise of Central Widnes to identify potential groups which could best benefit from this



The Future Jobs Fund Initiative was launched. As part of the programme Halton People into Jobs have been working with partners to discuss employer requirements prior to the advertisement of vacancies.

In February, the 3MG Recruitment Project, managed by the Halton Employment Partnership (HEP), commenced. Following an initial launch of the recruitment project, the HEP took nearly 5000 enquiries from individuals wishing to gain employment on the 3MG site. The majority of these were from Halton residents. In addition, nearly 2000 individuals requested some pre employment training (e.g. interview techniques). The HEP team followed these requests up and allocated pre employment training to those who still required it. The training was delivered by partner organisations within the HEP including HBC and Riverside College and continues to be delivered.

Application packs have been sent out with an expectation that a large proportion of jobs will be obtained by Halton residents.

Interviews will commence (have commenced) in April and HEP colleagues will support Tesco with the whole recruitment process, from scoring application forms to organising the pre employment checks during interview. Tesco will provide daily updates on successful candidates. The interviews will last for a number of weeks.

## EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING & SKILLS

Baseline (2006)	2009 - 10			2011	
	Target	Actual	Progress	Target	Projected
60.1%	65.7%	<b>61.6%</b> (2008)		67.5%	

### Data Commentary

The figure relates to the period January 2008 to December 2008. The source of the data is derived by DIUS from the ONS Annual Population Survey (LFS/IHS) The number of people of working age with level 2 or above qualifications during this period was 43,800 or 57.9%.

### General Performance Commentary

Whilst this is still above the North West average (64.2%) in relation to the baseline, this figure is improving, not least, because of the range of actions taking place and partnerships responses now being felt.

### Summary of key activities undertaken / planned during the year

Although this covers the period January – December 2008, below are a couple of activities currently being undertaken (quarter 4 2009/10) to generally support the increase in qualifications of our residents and ensure that these qualifications and skills are linked to employer needs.

#### Skills for Life (Q4 figures)

Between January and March 2010, 384 Skills for Life Assessments were carried out by the Skills for Life Project Officers. Most referrals came from general adult learning enquiries, with a good number of referrals coming from HPIJ, HEP and JCP.

55% of those assessed then progressed onto a learning programme. A total of 79 City & Guilds qualifications were achieved during January and March 2010, which included:

- 19 learners achieving Level 1 Literacy
- 25 learners achieving Level 2 Literacy
- 12 learners achieving Level 1 Numeracy; and
- 23 learners achieving Level 2 Numeracy.

#### Skills Development

## EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING & SKILLS

The 2009/10 Business Perceptions Survey was presented during March 2010.

- 'Being close to customers' was the most frequently given reason for businesses being in their current location
- The majority of the businesses taking part (86%) had no more than ten employees
- In the previous twelve months there had been a slight overall decline in staffing levels and this was more likely in medium and large companies. However, there are companies doing well and showing signs of growth who have been able to increase staffing levels
- The three most important skills to business as a whole are: communication, numeracy and literacy
- Currently, 12% perceive a gap between the skills they need and those present amongst their workforce. Looking ahead, 10% expect to have skills gaps in 2 years time
- Skilled trades are those where gaps are most severe, followed by the professions and senior management. The most likely remedial action was to provide training for existing staff
- Most businesses (84%) felt that local people did have the necessary skills, qualifications and experience to fill any vacancies they may have. This represents a significant change from the previous survey when more than 60% felt there was a mismatch between the skills of the local workforce and the skills that were needed.
- Some 8% of businesses currently have Apprentices and they are clearly seen as a way to provide training for existing employees
- Only 7% of businesses currently have vacancies and these are mainly at the higher levels of employment. Word of mouth is the most likely way to recruit, even for the larger companies.
- At least one in four companies expect to be recruiting in the next year
- A very high proportion (more than 80%) are happy to employ people from both areas of Halton; a very few have concerns about potential travel difficulties.
- Three out of four businesses see it as important for training to take place but some are quick to add that funding it is difficult.
- Two out of three have a formal business plan but only 35% an available training budget.
- Acknowledged training needs are currently limited.
- Training initiatives and services with the highest levels of awareness tend to be the national ones such as Job Centre Plus, Business Link, Apprenticeships and Train to Gain. But there are good levels of awareness for 'Halton People into Jobs' (57%) and Halton Employment Partnership' (40%).
- One in four businesses have employees currently undergoing some form





## EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING & SKILLS

of training and just over half of them were funding this or contributing to the cost. Most of the training was job specific.

- The level of satisfaction with all aspects of training provision in Halton – availability, quality, range, delivery, affordability, innovation and accessibility – was around 70%.
- Barriers to training are mainly funding and employees being able to spare the time. The same was broadly true in the previous survey but now far fewer employers perceive a reluctance amongst employees to undertake training which will be beneficial to the objective of up-skilling the workforce.

### NI 171 VAT registration rate

Baseline (2007/08)	2009 - 10			2011	
	Target	Actual	Progress	Target	Projected
42.3%	42.3%	<b>44.5%</b> (2008)		42.8%	

#### Data Commentary

This data is from the Business Demography 2008 dataset provided by Office for National Statistics - <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=15186>

This replaces the previously used VAT registrations dataset from BERR.

NI 171 is the number of new businesses (births) per 10,000 adult population (16+). The baseline 42.3% is an average from 2005-2007. The 2008 figure is 44.5% (NW 49.6%) which is above our 2010 target but below the North West rate.

#### General Performance Commentary

Historically, Halton has had low levels of new registrations, but equally has low levels of de-registrations, which means that stock levels have been increasing year on year and business survival rates are good.

In 2007/8 the programme helped 68 new businesses start-up (of which 5 were VAT-registered).

In 2008/9 this increased to 78 (of which 8 were VAT-registered).

In 2009/10 the Enterprising Halton programme agreed a target of helping to create 100 new businesses, 10 of which were to be VAT-registered.

This target was exceeded, with 154 new businesses being created, 13 of

## EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING & SKILLS

which registered for VAT. In addition to the 154 new business owner/managers at least 61 further new jobs were created.



### Summary of key activities undertaken / planned during the year

It should be noted that responsibility for business start ups is managed through the Business Link Service which is organised on a regional basis. Business Link provides a free business advice and support service to anyone wishing to consider setting up in business.

The Enterprising Halton business start-up programme was introduced in 2007, and has the aim of developing a culture of enterprise within the Borough to promote self – employment as a realistic option, and provide 1-to-1 business advice and support to potential entrepreneurs .

### *Non Local Area Agreement Measures contained within Halton's Sustainable Community Strategy (2006 – 2011)*

#### ELS 1 Reduce the proportion of adults with no qualifications

Baseline (2007)	2009 - 10			2011	
	Target	Actual	Progress	Target	Projected
14,800	N/A	<b>13,800</b>		12,240	

#### *Data Commentary*

The latest figures relate to the period January 2008 – December 2008.

#### *General Performance Commentary*



The number of people with no qualifications during this period was 13,800 or 18.2% of the population. Whilst this is still above the North West average (25.6%) in relation to the baseline, this figure is improving, not least, because of the range of actions taking place and partnerships responses now being felt.

### *Summary of key activities undertaken / planned during the year*

Information not currently available

#### ELS 2 Increase the proportion of adults qualified to Level 3

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Baseline (2007)	2009 - 10			2011	
	Target	Actual	Progress	Target	Projected
12,400	N/A	<b>11,900 (2008)</b>		15,875	

### *Data Commentary*

The information is based on official labour market statistics covering the period January 2008 – December 2008



### *General Performance Commentary*

The number of people with level 3 qualifications and above during this period was 25,600 or 33.8% of the population. This is still above the North West average (44.2%) in relation to the baseline.

### *Summary of key activities undertaken / planned during the year*

Information not currently available

## ELS 3    Increase the rate of self-employment

Baseline (2007)	2009 - 10			2011	
	Target	Actual	Progress	Target	Projected
5.2%	N/A	<b>4.9% (2009)</b>		6.8%	

### *Data Commentary*

The figures are based on the period October 2008 to September 2009. According to the ONS annual population survey, during the period there were 700 categorised in self-employment in Halton.

### *General Performance Commentary*



In 2009/10 the Enterprising Halton programme agreed a target of helping to create 100 new businesses. This target was exceeded, with 154 new businesses being created (13 of which registered for VAT). In addition to the 154 new self-employed businesses at least 61 further new jobs were created.

### *Summary of key activities undertaken / planned during the year*

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The Enterprising Halton business start-up programme was introduced in 2007, and has the aim of developing a culture of enterprise within the Borough to promote self – employment as a realistic option, and provide 1-to-1 business advice and support to potential entrepreneurs.

### ELS 4 Ensure unemployment in any Lower Super Output Area is less than 20% above the borough average

Baseline (2007)	2009 - 10			2011	
	Target	Actual	Progress	Target	Projected
	Ensure unemployment in any Lower Super Output Area is less than 20% above the borough average	29 LSOAs (out of 79) more than 20% above the borough average		Ensure unemployment in any Lower Super Output Area is less than 20% above the borough average	

#### *Data Commentary*

*Source: JobSeekers Allowance claimant counts for LSOAs, ONS, Mar-09*

#### *General Performance Commentary*

#### *Summary of key activities undertaken / planned during the year*

Information not currently available