

**REPORT TO:** Employment Learning & Skills & Community Policy  
& Performance Board

**DATE:** 26<sup>th</sup> March 2012

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director - Policy & Resources

**SUBJECT:** Sustainable Community Strategy Performance  
Framework 2011 – 16 and Mid- Year 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) arising from the mid year review.

## **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 20<sup>th</sup> 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.
- 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 The views of Lead and Senior Officers and Elected Members have been captured in a number of forums within Halton BC and Partner organisations, via the ELS SSP Performance Sub Groups, who were consulted on the selection of appropriate measures and targets in the period April to October 2011.
- 3.7 Selected measures and targets for Employment Learning & Skills community priority are summarised in Appendix 1, using the Halton Corporate template, designed for the purpose of bringing together all relevant items of performance information. For instance, this considers the levels of performance that have been achieved to date and provides a contextual backdrop in relation to national, regional and statistical neighbours. The template also provides a clear evidence based rationale for measure selection, which will further evidence and support value for money judgements by the Audit Commission and ensure outward accountability.
- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 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.
- 3.10 Attached as Appendix 2 is a report on progress to the 2011-12 mid – year 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.

## **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 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 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 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Municipal Building, Kingsway, Widnes |
| Contact Officer     | Hazel Coen DM (Performance & Improvement)                   |

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Employment, Learning & Skills SCS Performance Framework 2011-16.  
Appendix 2 - Mid Year SCS Progress Report for 2011/12