QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

DIRECTORATE: Environment

SERVICE: Economic Regeneration

PERIOD: Quarter 4 to period end 31st March 2009

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This monitoring report covers the Economic Regeneration Department fourth quarter period up to year end 31st March 2009. It describes key developments and progress against <u>all</u> objectives and performance indicators for the service.

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 2008/09 financial statements for the Department will be prepared and made available via the Council's Intranet once the Council's year-end accounts have been finalised. A notice will be provided within the Members' Weekly Bulletin as soon as they are available.

The way in which traffic lights symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Appendix 6.

It should be noted that this report is presented to a number of Policy and Performance Boards. Those objectives and indicators that are not directly relevant to this Board have been shaded grey.

2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Recession measures

- A Real Help Now event for local people was delivered at the Stadium in March aimed at helping people who were recently unemployed or under threat of redundancy.
- A business breakfast briefing took place in March to explain to local businesses what help is available from which organisations (76 local business and supported by eight partner agencies)
- The new WNF (Working Neighbourhoods Fund) Apprenticeship project that was due to start in April was accelerated and commenced in January 2009. Up till the end of March 25 new apprentice opportunities identified in local businesses with 20 of them filled. The new apprentices include 15 young people who were previously NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).
- The department made a successful bid to the LSC's (Learning & Skills Council) to deliver the Local Redundancy Response ESF (European

- A twelve page 'recession special' Halton Today which will be mailed to approximately 2,400 local businesses is under production
- A radical overhaul of the web site <u>www.runcorn-widnes.com</u> has taken place to include recession measures from partners
- A programme of targeted events and clinics is under development and will start shortly including surgeries from ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) and Halliwells solicitors
- A partners recession group has been establish involving Business Link, HBC, Halton Chamber and the LSC which will focus on what is happening with businesses locally

Other key developments

- Significant progress has been made on developing the Halton Employment Partnership (HEP). The HEP is the partnership that has been developed by the Employment Learning and Skills SSP to bring together agencies and key local providers to offer businesses a joined up service.
- A new Halton Investors' Handbook has been developed by the HEP and has been distributed to key partners/organisations. This identifies the 'complete employment offer' for businesses.
- The new Halton Employment Partnership Team was formed in February 2009. This is co-located with the HPIJ at Rutland House and provides the capability of developing bespoke training packages with local companies with a view to equipping unemployed people with the necessary skills to gain employment. A new training room has been developed to deliver bespoke employability programmes at Rutland House and a second room is under development at the Stadium.
- The Enterprising Halton Programme supported 78 new start ups during the year and despite the recession the number of initial business enquiries has increased significantly since January 2009.
- The Inaugural Business and Tourism Awards took place in February. This joint venture between Halton Chamber of Commerce and Halton Tourism Business network was held at The DeVere Hotel, and was hosted by BBC Radio Merseyside's Roger Phillips who spoke very positively about what was happening in Halton on his radio show.
- Meetings have taken place with Heritage Lottery Managers to discuss a way forward for the Heart of Halton Plaque Scheme. This would place plaques at key locations to commemorate local people and events. The concept was well received and we have been asked to consider making the scheme larger than our original plans. A bid will now be brought together to encompass all the suggestions they made.
- The new Halton tourism DVD has been finalised and was used at Business and Tourism Awards. In the future it will be used by local hotels and tourism forum members to promote Halton.
- A date for the New Mersey Gateway Public Enquiry has been announced. As a consequence the Economic Development Officer (Development) has been working almost full time preparing the

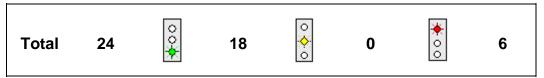
- Council's case for the enquiry and it is expected that this level of activity will continue throughout the enquiry. This combined with recent staffing reductions and long term sickness mean that only the highest priority work is now taking place.
- Total crime on Halebank Industrial Estate has reduced by 65.5% during 2008-09, whilst on on Astmoor Industrial Estate it has reduced by 32.2%. This is the first year that the two Business Improvement Districts have been operational and crime reduction has been a high priority within the BID plans. Mobile security patrols have been introduced, CCTV enhanced and smartwater property marking has been introduced across the estates.

3.0 EMERGING ISSUES

- Various government departments are developing response programmes to the recession. It would seem that not all of these are joined up. Some are being commissioned at a national level and some at a more local level. It will be important to keep all initiatives under review to ensure Halton maximises the benefits they bring and also to understand the degree that they duplicate or enhance existing programmes.
- There will be an OFSTED inspection of LSC/DWP funded programmes within Economic Regeneration in the next quarter. Whilst the majority of the inspection will focus on the more traditional Adult Learning & Skills Development programmes, some projects within Enterprise & Employment will also be inspected.
- Following the DIUS (Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills) consultation in 2008 of informal adult learning, the Government have now published the Learning Revolution White Paper, which sets out the proposals for adult learning in the future. Local Authorities will play a key role in managing this and an adult learning pledge will need to be signed by the LA. How the Foundation Learning Tier will impact on existing First Steps funding is still unclear as losing this funding to FE colleges would have a significant impact on the adult learning service.
- The NWDA has now completed the procurement for the regional Intensive Business Start up Support Programme. Within Merseyside local authorities have been given the opportunity to manage the start up contracts for their own areas subject to local authority monies being used as co-finance. This would provide an opportunity for Enterprising Halton to better co-ordinate business start up and support services in the borough. Proposed NWDA contract documentation is presently subject to review by Legal Services.
- The TMP (The Mersey Partnership) secondment that provided a tourism officer has now come to an end. The workload of the team is being reviewed to ensure key tasks continue.
- Meetings have been held with representatives from Halton Miniature Railway to look at what could be developed in the future
- Following the completion of the Halton Economic Review 2008 work is

progressing on the Borough's next Economic Development Strategy.

4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

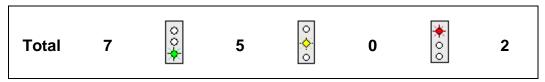


The majority of objectives/milestones have been achieved during the year. For further details, please refer to Appendix 1.

5.0 SERVICE REVIEW

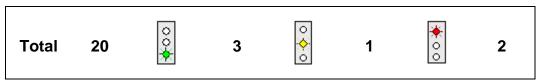
- The service delivered to Children's Centres by the Adult Learning & Skills Development Division is being reorganised with a view to delivering a more localised and responsive service. The creation of 5 new Children's Centre tutor posts will enable staff to be based out within 5 different Children's Centres.
- A further meeting of the Town Centre Management PPB Scrutiny Panel took place during March. At the meeting the Elected Members endorsed the transfer of the Town Centre Manager post from Economic Regeneration to Environmental and Regulatory Services with a view to better integration of town centre management and the cleansing and maintenance of the town centres.

6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



Targets for five of the seven "Key" performance indicators have been met, however those relating to inward investment enquiries and job creation were not. For further details, please refer to Appendix 2.

6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



Of the 11 "Other" indicators reported 3 achieved their targets, 2 did not and one received an amber light which is explained in the commentary.

The remaining 5 are new national indicators for which targets were not set. An additional 9 indicators are not able to be reported at this time. For further details, please refer to Appendix 3.

7.0 PROGRESS AGAINST LPSA TARGETS

For further details, please refer to Appendix 4.

8.0 RISK CONTROL MEASURES

During the production of the 2008-09 Service Plan, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Key Service Objectives.

Where a Key Service Objective has been assessed and found to have associated 'High' risk, progress against the application of risk treatment measures is to be monitored, and reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

For details please refer to Appendix 5.

9.0 PROGRESS AGAINST HIGH PRIORITY EQUALITY ACTIONS

During 2007/08 the service was required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. Progress against actions identified through that assessment, with associated High priority are to be reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

No actions have been identified as high priority for the service.

10.0 DATA QUALITY

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.

11.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1- Progress against Objectives/ Milestones

Appendix 2- Progress against Key Performance Indicators

Appendix 3- Progress against Other Performance Indicators

Appendix 4- Progress against LPSA Targets

Appendix 5- Progress against Risk Treatment Measures

Appendix 6- Explanation of traffic light symbols

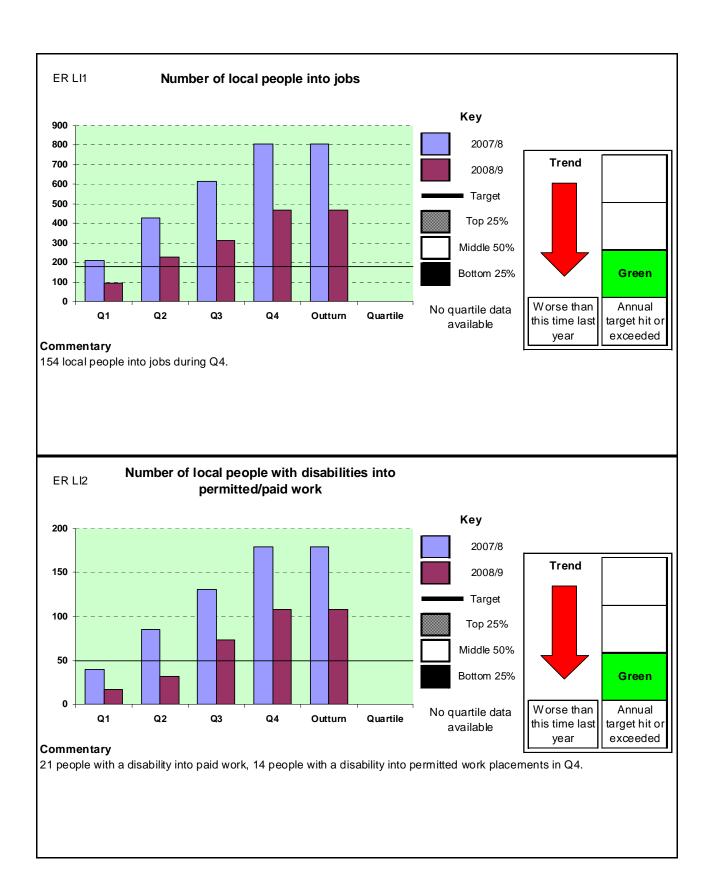
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
ER 1	To foster a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship, particualrly amongst the low skilled, making	Enterprising Halton Competition, Nov 2008	oo *	Competition completed.
	Halton an ideal place to start and grow economic activity	Secure continuation of Enterprise coaches, Jun 2008	oo 	Enterprise coaches service continued.
		Enterprise week programme, Nov 2008	oo 	Enterprise week very low key due to vacancies although the Halton Enterprise Fair took place on 21/1/09.
		Launch Enterprising Halton DVD, Dec 2008	00*	DVD of Enterprising Halton including video clips of Enterprise Fair now nearing completion.
ER 2	To develop a culture where learning is valued and raise skill levels throughout the adult population and	Completed sector skills plan for logistics with first provision commencing, Sep 2008	oo *	Complete
	in the local workforce	Completed sector skills plan for Science with first provision commencing, Mar 2009	* ○ ○	A joint Urban Renewal & ELS PPB Topic on 'Skills in the Science, Technology and Advanced Manufacturing Sector' (agreed in Q4) will commence in the next quarter. Provision is likely to commence in the autumn of 2009, given priority being placed on other sectors e.g. logistics, customer services, retail.
		Recruitment of dedicated apprenticeship officer post, Jul 2008	*	Now expected to recruit Q2 2009/10
		Halton Learner awards, May 2008	oo ∗	The next Adult Learners Awards ceremony is planned for May 2009.

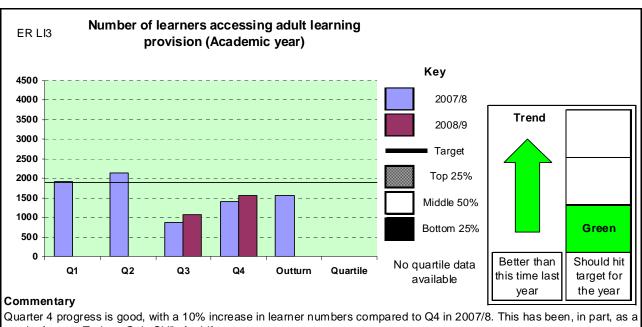
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		Delivery of 5 adult/family learning courses in each CYPAN area, Mar 2009	00.♦	A new SLA has been agreed between the Adult Learning & Skills Development Division and Children's Centres. This will commence April 2009. Courses were delivered.
ER 3	To promote and increase employability of local people, to identify and remove any barriers to	Complete reconfiuration of E&E division to embed outreach, Jul 2008	00*	Reconfiguration delayed but outreach is embedded.

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
	employment to get more people into work	Deliver targeted outreach campaigns (2 in each priority ward), Mar 2009	○○★	During Q4 HPIJ continued to deliver weekly outreach services across 20 LSOA locations to better engage with harder to reach customers. A series of targeted outreach campaigns took place in Q4 as follows: Castlefields – 3000 properties leafleted promoting follow up appointments at Phoenix Park. Free refreshments and entertainment. ASDA vouchers used as incentives to engage with priority group customers Halton View – 800 properties leafleted promoting follow up appointments at Warrington Road Children's Centre. Free refreshments and entertainment. ASDA vouchers used as incentives to engage with priority group customers Riverside – 2100 properties leafleted promoting follow up appointments at Catalyst Museum. Free Entry into the museum along with children's entertainment to engage with priority group customers Halton Lea – 1600 properties were leafleted promoting follow up appointments at Palacefields Community Centre. ASDA vouchers used incentives to engage with priority group customers along with FREE raffle prizes Windmill Hill – 1000 properties leafleted promoting family fun day at Windmill Hill Play Centre.

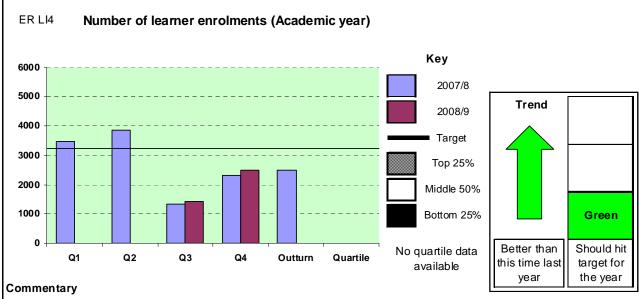
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary		
		Launch pre-recruitment partnership, Jul 2008	* 00	The Halton Employment Partnership Team is now in place and delivery commences from April 2009.		
		Complete Employment strategy for disabled and carers with launch of disability employment network, Sep 2008	*00	The strategy has been delayed due to delays in government announcements in this area. It is presently being finalised. The Disability Employment Network has been formed.		
ER 4	To develop a strong, diverse, competitive and sustainable knowledge based economy	Commence delivery of logistics campaign, Sep 2008	o o *	The six-month logistics campaign reported to PPB on June 18 2008 was completed in January 2009.		
		Deliver a new tourism promotion DVD, Nov 2008	* 0 0	The DVD has been finalised and used at the recent awards. It was delayed due to the need to shot new footage in good weather.		
		Launch with SOG the Heath new build marketing programme, Jul 2008	00	Programme completed. The first new building is nearing completion		
		Deliver Major events programme, Mar 2009	oo. *	All delivered		
		Deliver capital of culture youth event, Jul 2008	00	Delivered at the Stadium and Brindley		
ER 5	To create and sustain a thriving business environment	Commence delivery of Widnes Industrial Area Action Plan, Dec 2008	⋄	A business led steering group has been constituted and a chair elected. All the actions contained within the 2008\09 Action Plan have been completed		

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		Complete Business Improvement District phase 1 actions (CCTV, security, signage), Mar 2009	oo . ₩	All actions associated with the implementation of Phase 1 of the BID programme have been completed
ER 6	To revitalise the town centres to create dynamic, well designed high quality commercial areas	Deliver a continental market in widnes, Dec 2008	00*	The market took place in Widnes town centre in October
	quality confinercial areas	Launch a weekly Runcorn street market, Sep 2008	* 0 0	After much planning and discussion with external agencies and consultation with local shops the street market is scheduled to take place in May/June 2009 subject to necessary permissions
		Deliver gum cleaning programme, Aug 2008	°° ÷	Completed July\August 2008
		Deliver Christmas programme, Dec 2008	o o *	A full festive programme inc' Christmas Lights, reindeer parade, grotto etc was delivered November\December 2008

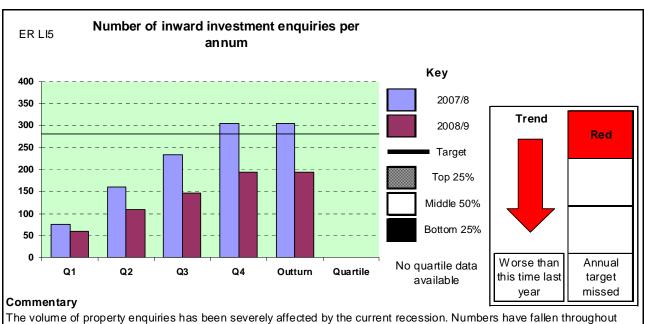




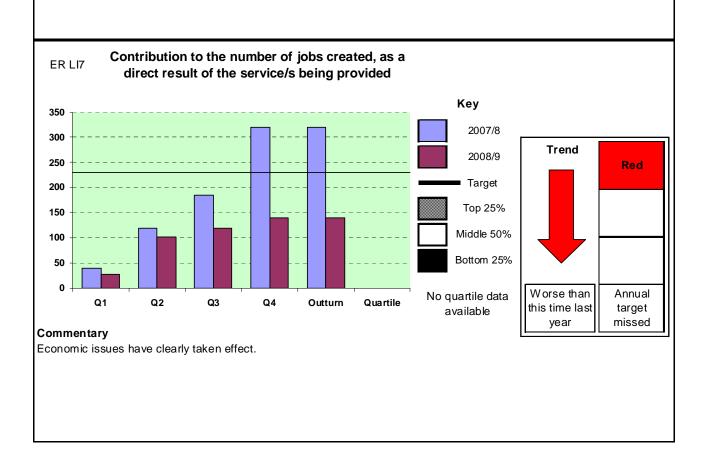
result of a new Train to Gain Skills for Life contract.

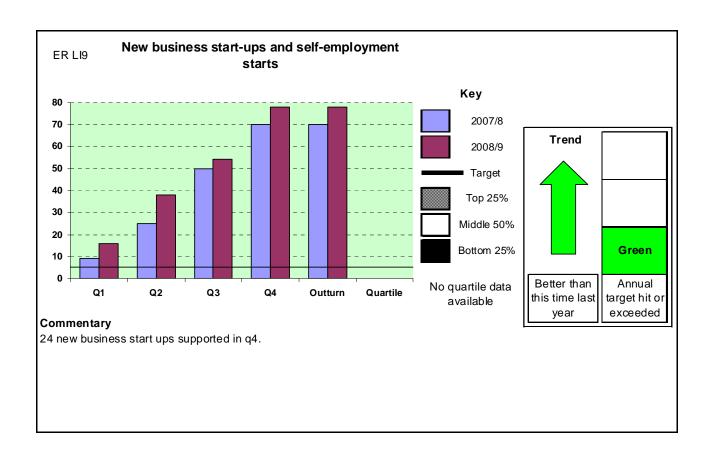


Quarter 4 progress is good, with a 6% increase in enrolments compared to Q4 in 2007/8. Similarly, this has been, in part, as a result of a new Train to Gain Skills for Life contract.



The volume of property enquiries has been severely affected by the current recession. Numbers have fallen throughout 2008\09 and are expected to continue to do so in 2009\10. The impact of the recession is particularly felt throughout the commercial property industry





Ref ¹	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
Cost & ER LI13	Efficiency Cost per job created and/or safeguarded to which the authorities inward investment promotional activity has made a significant contribution. (£)(Audit Commission ECR18d)	153.15	140	N/a	N/a	Data not available at this time. Will be available by Q2 2009/10
Quality	,					
ER Ll12	Percentage of business customers using the inward investment services (including aftercare) expressing satisfaction with the services & support provided (Audit Commission ECR18e)	92	85	N/a	N/a	Data not available at this time. Will be available by Q2 2009/10
Service	Delivery					
ER LI6	Inward investment enquiry conversion rate (%)	13.5	11.5	11.9	oo *	Although the percentage target has almost been achieved, the actual numbers of businesses taking property within the borough has fallen by 40%
ER LI8	Contribution to the number of jobs safeguarded, as a direct result of the service/s being provided	443	400	235	* 00	Number of vacancies has fallen by 53% over the last 12 months (JCP statistic) so it is proving very challenging in finding alternative jobs for people being made redundant.

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¹ Key Indicators are identified by an **underlined reference in bold type.**

Ref ¹	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
ER Ll10	No of day visitors per annum to the borough (Calendar year)	4.261m (2006) Annual count	+2%	4.363 (2007)	○○	Tourism now estimated to contribute 2,578 jobs to Halton economy.
ER Ll11	Footfall in the town centres (millions)	12.5	+2%	13.78	oo <u></u>	Target has been exceeded.
NI 13	Migrants English language skills and knowledge	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	Data not available until Autumn 2009.
NI 151	Overall employment rate	N/a	N/a	70.4%	N/a	NW 72.1% and GB 74.5% (data June 07 – July 08)
NI 152	Working age people on out of work benefits	N/a	N/a	17.8%	N/a	NI152 for Halton Date % Aug-07 18.2 Nov-07 18 Feb-08 17.9 May-08 17.8 Aug-08 17.8
NI 153	Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods	31.6	30.6	30.6	o ⋄ •	This is identified as amber at this time because whilst progress has been made the latest data does not yet take into account the impact of the recession. NI153 for Halton Date % Aug-07 31.3 Nov-07 31.1 Feb-08 30.8 May-08 30.7 Aug-08 30.6

Ref ¹	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
NI 161	Learners achieving a Level 1 qualification in literacy	481 (06/07)	N/a	N/a	N/a	Data is calculated by LSC based on the programmes it has commissioned.
NI 162	Learners achieving an Entry Level 3 qualification in numeracy	35 (06/07)	N/a	N/a	N/a	Data is calculated by LSC based on the programmes it has commissioned.
NI 163	Working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher	57.2 (2006)	65.4	57.4	*00	ONS annual population survey +/- 3.1
NI 164	Working age population qualified to at least Level 3 or higher	33.9 (2006)	N/a	32.6	N/a	ONS annual population survey +/- 3.1
NI 165	Working age population qualified to at least Level 4 or higher	16.8 (2006)	N/a	16.2	N/a	ONS annual population survey +/- 3.1
NI 166	Average earnings of employees in the area	£427.2 (2007)	N/a	£419.1 (2008)	N/a	Median Earnings (Nomis)
NI 171	Business registration rate	48.3 (2007)	N/a	N/a	N/a	Data available winter 2009.
NI 172	VAT registered businesses in the area showing growth	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	Data available winter 2009.
NI 173	People falling out of work and on to incapacity benefits	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	Accurate baseline yet to be established. Local JCP are on a national group trying to resolve issues with how data is collected.
NI 174	Skills gaps in the current workforce reported by	N/a	N/a	N/a	N/a	This indicator will be reported every 2 years. Data from the 2009 study will be available

_	Ref ¹	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 4	Progress	Commentary
		employers					April 2010.

LPSA Ref.	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Perform 07/08	Perform 08/09 Q4	Traffic light	Commentary
12	Increase the number of people who have been claiming an incapacity benefit into sustained employment of at least 16 hours per week for 13 consecutive weeks or more	18 for year ending 31/03/06	179 3 year cumulati ve to 31/03/09	72	171	00*	The cumulative total as at 31/03/09 is 171 against an overall target of 179. Therefore a further 8 customers need to remain in employment/self-employment during the tracking period of 13wks (April-June 09). There are 12 IB customers that have been supported into work/self-employment currently being tracked. Should at least 8 of these customers remain in sustained employment by 30.6.09 the 179 to target will be achieved.

Objective Reference	High Risk Identified	Target/ Deadline	Progress	Commentary
ER 1	Risk Identified: Lack of resources in schools to promote enterprise Control Measure: Potential use of WNF and development of entrepreneurs in residence	09/11/2008	00*	WNF has been secured for Halton Education Business Partnership to develop and introduce Entrepreneurs in Residence project to promote enterprise in both primary and secondary schools. A proposal for a joint appointment of a Halton Schools Enterprise Officer between the Education Business Partnership and Young Enterprise is well advanced.
ER 2	Risk Identified: Reductions in real terms LSC funding Control Measure: Increased efficiency and bidding for other budgets	08/12/2008	○○	Additional funding streams have been secured including: Train to Gain Employability Skills Programme Response to Redundancy
	Risk Identified: Increasing LSC focus on in work training at cost to unemployed skills development Control Measure: Working with LSC and JCP on provision plans	09/02/2008	00♣	The Halton Employment Partnership brings together key agencies including HBC, JCP and the LSC in presenting a 'complete employment offer' to businesses and those looking for work. WNF funding has been secured for unemployed skills development and other LSC/DWP monies are available to support both unemployed and employed people. It is essential that the HEP partners work effectively to ensure to training is delivered to the detriment of others.

Objective Reference	High Risk Identified	Target/ Deadline	Progress	Commentary
	Risk Identified: Potential development by LSC of contestability resulting in possible loos of funding Control Measure: Identify additional income and efficiencies	08/10/2008	•	As a result of the Department submitting a successful PQQ with LSC, it means that HBC can submit relevant ITTs. Additional funding streams offered through ITTs have been secured including: Train to Gain Employability Skills Programme Response to Redundancy
ER 3	Risk Identified: Existing main funding sources cease March 31 2008 Control Measure: New business plan based on reduced income and make bids to new income sources	08/06/2008	oo ∳	The service has levered-in external funding from new LSC contracts and has secured significant WNF for enterprise development and worklessness. New draft business plan agreed, awaiting approval of divisional re-organisation to finalise business plan.
	Risk Identified: Not achieving progress on disabled employment fast enough Control Measure: Develop a disabled employment strategy and action plan	08/07/2008	* 00	Production of strategy delayed due to the need to await major government announcements in this area that have been delayed. However, a Disability Employment Network has been established and the Strategy is being finalised to reflect recent welfare benefit reform affecting disabled people in receipt of working age benefits. Progress on supporting disabled people into work has been achieved. During the year 90 disabled people have been placed into jobs or permitted work placements.

Objective Reference	High Risk Identified	Target/ Deadline	Progress	Commentary
ER 4	Risk Identified: Redeployment of resources to Mersey Gateway lowering performance in inward investment Control Measure: Re-prioritise workload and cease lower priority work.	08/10/2008	00♣	Increasingly the majority of the Economic Development Officer's (EDO) time is taken up with New Mersey Gateway related projects, particularly in the run up to the Public Enquiry. It has been possible to back fill a number of the EDO's back office type functions with a secondee from SOG Ltd. However, there exists a resource gap, in terms of both officer time and more particularly the necessary skill sets, to service major inward investment and company expansion projects. This has to be offset to a degree due to the down turn in enquiries.
	Risk Identified: Continued focus on Liverpool for tourism spend resulting in other areas being marginalized Control Measure: Increased lobbying and identify alternate funding	08/12/2008	00*	TMP continues to focus attention on a limited number of big schemes despite lobbying for a new approach. That said, £65,000 has been secured from the NWDA towards the Lewis Carroll centre by going direct to the agency.
ER 5	Risk Identified: Impact of new crossing on existing businesses Control Measure: Ensure provision of alternate premises	08/11/2008	00♣	The relocation of a number of key businesses in the line of the bridge has recently been agreed. However, there remains a considerable amount of work to do to accommodate businesses who's relocation needs are both complex and difficult to satisfy within the Borough

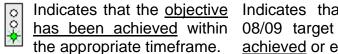
Objective Reference	High Risk Identified	Target/ Deadline	Progress	Commentary
ER 6	Risk Identified: Impact of major works over next 12 months Control Measure: Work with traders to manage situation	08/11/2008	00♣	The construction phase of the Stadium Development in Widnes has contributed to congestion in the town centre. The recent opening of a new multi-story car park at Runcorn Station has alleviated a number of parking problems around the station.
	Risk Identified: Longer term impacts on parking as centres become busier Control Measure: Work with travel team once parking surveys complete on wider accessibility plans	08/11/2008	oo 	Work still underway on parking issues within Highways.
	Risk Identified: Maintaining and improving cleanliness as centres become busier Control Measure: Work with E&RS on schedules	09/04/2008	oo 	The pending transfer of the Town Centre Management function to the Council's Waste Management Service will seek to rationalise and, therefore improve, the cleansing of the Borough's town centre

Objective Reference	High Risk Identified	Target/ Deadline	Progress	Commentary
	Risk Identified: Implications of increased night time activity e.g. cleanliness, accessibility Control Measure: Development of night time management plan	09/02/2008	* ○○	A number of new licensed premises have, or are about to, open in Victoria Square increasing the pressure on the public services with respect to the management of public order, safety and cleanliness. Cheshire Constabulary have made the policing of the town centres a priority and have scored a number of recent successes. The licensed traders in Victoria Square have also made a proactive approach to the police to fund additional public safety measures

The traffic light symbols are used in the following manner:

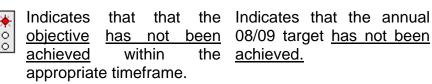
Performance Indicator Objective

<u>Green</u>



Indicates that the objective Indicates that the annual has been achieved or exceeded.

Red



that that the Indicates that the annual the achieved.