

Public Document Pack



Employment, Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board

Monday, 13 November 2006 at 6.30 p.m.
Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

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

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Eddie Jones (Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Frank Fraser (Vice-Chairman)	Labour
Councillor Ellen Cargill	Labour
Councillor Susan Edge	Labour
Councillor David Findon	Conservative
Councillor Mike Hodgkinson	Liberal Democrat
Councillor Harry Howard	Labour
Councillor Stan Parker	Labour
Councillor David Lewis	Conservative
Councillor Margaret Ratcliffe	Liberal Democrat
Councillor John Stockton	Labour

*Please contact Lynn Derbyshire on 0151 471 7389 or e-mail lynn.derbyshire@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Board is on Monday, 15 January 2007*

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

Part I

Item No.	Page No.
1. MINUTES	
2. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	1 - 2
3. EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	3 - 6
4. DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY ISSUES	
(A) ADULT LEARNING PRESENTATION	7
(B) VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS	8 - 9
(C) ANNUAL REPORT FOR VOLUNTARY SECTOR FUNDING	10 - 33
(D) ENTERPRISE TOPIC ACTION PLAN UPDATE	34 - 36
(E) EMPLOYMENT TOPIC ACTION PLAN UPDATE	37 - 40
(F) SKILLS TOPIC ACTION PLAN UPDATE	41 - 46
(G) EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING AND SKILLS SPECIALIST STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP	47 - 50
(H) CAPITAL OF CULTURE	51 - 52
5. PERFORMANCE MONITORING	
(A) QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORTS	53 - 56

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 and Skills Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 13th November 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

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 (11).

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(11) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows: -

- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for 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 submitted by 4.00 pm on the day prior to the meeting. At any 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 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 that 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 RISK ANALYSIS

None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None.

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

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

REPORT TO: Employment Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 13 November 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Executive Board Minutes

WARD(s): Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Minutes relating to the Employment Learning and Skills Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board and Executive Board Sub since the last meeting 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

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

None.

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

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

APPENDIX 1

**Extract of Executive Board Sub Committee Minutes
Relevant to the Employment Learning and Skills Policy
and Performance Board**

EXECUTIVE BOARD 7 SEPTEMBER 2006

EXB29 2006/2007 BUDGET SAVINGS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy providing details of budget savings.

It was noted that the Council set its 2006/07 revenue budget on 1st March 2006 and, in doing so, approved the inclusion of a savings reduction of £250,000 for each Directorate. Details of how the savings were to be implemented by each Directorate were presented in the Appendix to the report.

RESOLVED: That the savings proposals presented in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

EXB32 LOCAL ENTERPRISE GROWTH INITIATIVE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy regarding Halton's Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) submission. It was noted that the LEGI Programme was a competitive bidding process aimed at providing additional financial support to promote enterprise in deprived areas; this was only open to the 81 Neighbourhood Renewal Areas.

Following feedback received from Halton's unsuccessful round 1 application, it was considered that the next bid needed to be bolder and more ambitious. Consequently, Halton's round 2 bid referenced Halton's economic opportunities as providing the catalyst for transformational change.

The bid was likely to be £15 million over 3 years and comprised 3 work streams:

- (1) creating and embedding an enterprise culture;
- (2) supporting and growing strong businesses; and
- (3) attracting and retaining inward investment relevant to the needs of business.

It was noted that Halton's strategic partners were currently preparing some 30 project proposals to feed into these workstreams.

The application concentrated primarily on the Windmill Hill, Castlefields, Halton Lea, Riverside and Kingsway Wards, although the programme would have benefits for the whole of the Borough, and Members noted that the deadline for receipt of applications was 14th September 2006.

RESOLVED: That the signing off of the final submission be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder.

Chief Executive

EXECUTIVE BOARD 21 SEPTEMBER 2006

EXB38 CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

The Council's Strategic Risk Management Framework required the Board to review the Corporate Risk Register periodically. In reviewing the Register, it was not proposed that any new risk be added to the register at the present time (although the risk in relation to Civic Contingencies had been reworded to reflect the fact that the position had moved on considerably as the Council had taken steps to implement the legislation). A copy of the Corporate Risk Register as reviewed by officers had been previously circulated to the Board.

RESOLVED: That the revised Corporate Risk Register be approved and submitted to full Council at their next meeting.

Strategic Director
– Corporate and
Policy

EXB44 LOCAL AREA AGREEMENTS

A Local Area Agreement (LAA) was a three-year Protocol that sets out the priorities for a local area. This must be agreed between Central Government and the area itself, as represented by the Lead Local Authority and other key

partners through Local Strategic Partnership. Government had stipulated that Halton would be in Round 3 of the Programme. Consequently, an agreement must be negotiated by April 2007. The Board considered an update report on the process and progress made to date.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the draft agreement be endorsed and its submission to Government Office by the 30th September deadline be agreed; and
- (2) the Leader and Chief Executive be given delegated power to make any necessary drafting amendments to the submission following the meeting of Executive Board.

Chief Executive

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

DATE: 13th November 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director of Environment

SUBJECT: Adult Learning

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To receive a presentation about the work of the adult learning and skills development division.

2. RECOMMENDED:

- 2.1 That the presentation be noted and that any issues arising from it be fed into the work of the Adult Learning Topic Group.**

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 As part of the scrutiny function, the Board has decided to form a topic group to look at adult learning and particularly the post inspection action plan and skills for life issues. This presentation provides an introduction for the Board to this work.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Improving adult skills is a key part of the Corporate Plan. The scrutiny of this activity will help the council to assess the progress being made to date and opportunities for improving the service.

5. RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 Given the low levels of recorded skills in the Borough, the highest risk is associated with not delivering the service as this will result in maintaining the status quo.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 6.1 The Adult Learning Team has a number of specific targets regarding equality and diversity known as EDIMs (equality diversity impact measures) that will be explained as part of the presentation.

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning and Skills PPB

DATE: 13 November 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Health and Community

SUBJECT: Voluntary Sector Grants

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To receive a presentation from Halton Voluntary Action (HVA) about their work and contribution to Halton's priorities.

2.0 Recommended that:

- (1) the presentation be noted;
- (2) Members of the PPB comment on the work of HVA, particularly in relation to the service offered for the amount of grant received.

3.0 Supporting Information

3.1 In 2005/06 the Prosperity and Equality PPB received presentations from all the voluntary sector organisations in receipt of a grant of £5000 or over.

3.2 Of such organisations the CAB and Halton Voluntary Action (HVA) received the major grants. For 2006/07 CAB received £179,755 and HVA £75,000.

3.3 Both these organisations have three year Service Level Agreements that terminate in March 2007. The agreements are currently under review. Hence, it is timely for this Board to consider the work of these two organisations. The CAB attended the September Board Meeting and HVA will be in attendance at the November meeting.

4.0 Policy and Other Implications

4.1 None at this stage.

5.0 Other Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications as the grant has already been approved for 2006/07.

5.2 The work of HVA should impact greatly on social inclusion, community engagement, involvement and diversity issues. These should be highlighted in the presentation.

6.0 Risk Analysis

6.1 None directly. The PPB, however, will monitor that the grant is being spent appropriately and the Council and Halton people receive value for money.

7.0 Equality and Diversity Issues

7.1 To receive a grant, organisations have to demonstrate that acceptable equality and diversity policies are in place.

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

8.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning and Skills PPB

DATE: 13 November 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Health and Community

SUBJECT: Annual Report for Voluntary Sector Funding

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To receive the Annual Report for Voluntary Sector Funding

2.0 Recommended that:

(1) the report be noted.

3.0 Supporting Information

3.1 Report submitted which looks at the Benefits to Halton from funding to the Voluntary Sector for 2005/2006 see Appendix 1.

4.0 Policy and Other Implications

4.1 None at this stage.

5.0 Other Implications

5.1 There are no financial implications as the report is reviewing the funding allocation in 2005/2006.

5.2 The work of the voluntary sector receiving core funding grants impacts greatly on social inclusion, community involvement, anti-poverty and diversity issues.

6.0 Risk Analysis

6.1 None directly. The PPB, however, will monitor that the grant is being spent appropriately and the Council and Halton people receive value for money.

7.0 Equality and Diversity Issues

7.1 To receive a grant, organisations have to demonstrate that acceptable equality and diversity policies are in place.

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

8.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

Appendix 1



Voluntary Sector Funding

The Benefits to Halton from
funding the
Voluntary Sector 2005/06

Contents Page

Background – The National Perspective 1 – 2

The Halton Borough Council Response 3 – 4

External Funding Accessed by
organisations receiving Core Funding 5 - 6

Organisation Profiles 7 – 21

Voluntary Sector Funding

The Benefits to Halton from funding the

Voluntary Sector 2005/06

Background

In a speech to the Institute for Public Policy Research in April 2006, the speaker said: "We need more responsive public services that more closely meet individual and local needs, particularly the needs of the disadvantaged. This means increasing the range and diversity both of supplier and of services, to be able to offer services that are truly personalised."

In 2002 the Treasury undertook an inter-departmental review into the role of voluntary and community sector (VCS) in the delivery of public services. The review made a commitment to increasing the role of the VCS in service delivery in key areas of public services. This was translated into a Home Office target to increase the sector's involvement in public services by 5% by 2006. If it is compatible with their objectives and properly funded, the voluntary sector can reach more of its beneficiaries and provide a better service.

Many charities and statutory funders moved from direct grants to service level agreements as public provision became more varied and extensive.

It seems clear, however, from recent government briefings and announcements, that ministers are looking for a step change in the way the VCS delivers public services. This could see charities getting more involved with mainstream services such as schools, primary health care and welfare benefits.

Ann Blackmore, Head of Policy at NCVO says: 'It is more than just a public service delivery role. The sector is used because it's innovative. We need to be careful about performance assessments and recognise that this is an independent sector and not a part of the state.

Research commissioned by Futurebuilders also asked VCOs how they could better contribute to public service delivery. 96 per cent thought their services were innovative and 94 per cent said they had strong links with the communities in which the services were delivered.

The study, *Investment with a Difference*, captures the experiences of VCOs that have benefited from Futurebuilders investment and are already engaging with the public sector. It shows that public sector agencies enjoy 'added value' benefits when buying services from VCOs, including services reaching niche groups or directed at people who have been excluded from traditional service provision.

Futurebuilders Chief Executive Richard Gutch says: 'Through the Futurebuilders' concept, we are demonstrating that, with the right kind of support, VCOs can deliver the very best services - because they have the flexibility, community links and specialist knowledge.

Fiona Mactaggart gave a ministerial forward to Change Up, where she said:

“Voluntary and community activity is a crucial part of public life – connecting people and helping them to shape their communities.

Frontline groups and organisations are formed by, and harness the skills, resources and passion of paid and unpaid activists. Enabling people to become more active in their communities and supporting frontline organisations is at the heart of the Government’s commitment to renewing civil society and involving voluntary and community sector organisations in service delivery, especially in meeting the needs of those who are socially excluded.

The voluntary and community sector plays a crucial role in delivering public services and in building strong cohesive and self-determining communities. Frontline organisations often work with those most at risk from social exclusion, providing help and support and meeting multiple needs in ways which not only give citizens and users a voice, but also the means to tackle themselves, the underlying causes of their problems. Different organisations have specific needs, which will vary with each stage of their development. There can be no one size fits all.”

The Halton Borough Council Response

Halton Borough Council recognises the vibrancy, diversity and range of services provided by the voluntary and community sector to the people of Halton. We support the voluntary and community sector through the provision of core funding grant aid and support in kind.

Funding Core Costs

All organisations have central core funding costs. They need to pay for premises and associated costs as well as management and services/activities. Contributing to core costs enables the organisations to create:

- A healthy and productive voluntary sector able to do the job
- A relationship between the Council and VCS which meets needs on both sides
- Getting the very best value for money.

Overheads are common to all organisations, but there are particular circumstances affecting voluntary organisations:

- Many organisations are either new and have no running surplus or have been operating on very fine margins for many years
- Voluntary organisations change their size and scope – it is part of their value that they can be very responsive to new requests and needs, but such change is costly.
- They draw their income from a range of different sources, act across government departments and deal with a number of regulators.

Core Grants allow the organisation to administer their activities and without them the organisation can't survive and deliver its mission. Core costs have the following features:

- They are essential to keeping an organisation going
- They tend to be needed long term, although they may fluctuate over time
- They may not be attractive to donors or trust funds.

By funding core costs it allows for the creation of mature and stable voluntary organisations able to take opportunities and make a full contributions to the residents of Halton

Voluntary Sector core funding is applied for in December and awarded the following March, with funding commencing in the April. The successful organisations tend to be those who provide services, which support the Council's priorities across Halton. For a synopsis of the organisations and the services provided see Organisation profiles later in the report.

Halton Borough Council's Funding Criteria

As well as meeting the general objectives outlined above, groups must also meet the following specific criteria:

- Working in one or more of the Council priority areas
- Networking and liaison with statutory and voluntary bodies within the Borough.
- Commitment to equal opportunities in service delivery.
- Accountability within the organisation.
- Effective management of paid/volunteer staff.
- Effective financial management.

- Examines to what extent the service is already being provided and demonstrates added value and additionality to the service thus avoiding duplication.
- Providing an accessible service (accessible meaning the ease with which the Community can access and use the service).
- Providing value for money.
- Being non-party political.
- Providing a quality service.
- Provides a service throughout Halton
- Has considered whether another Authority might be reasonably expected to be a more appropriate source of funding e.g. health authority.
- Has the ability to continue after the grant money has expired.

Last year 2005/2006 we had a budget of **£362,150** and awarded a total of **£358,595** to Voluntary Sector Organisations for core funding. A further **£3,555** was allocated later in the year to organisations we fund who offer volunteer opportunities, A maximum of £300 was awarded for activities/products which the volunteers identified as needed.

Organisations receiving under £5000 report on activities on a 6 month basis and organisations receiving over £5000 sign a Service Level Agreement and are monitored quarterly. All organisations receiving funding have regular liaison meetings with HBC Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator throughout the year. The Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator also works with the various organisations offering advice and support, often working in partnership on joint initiatives. Monitoring reports are available for Members perusal in the members rooms. Monitoring information is presented to PPB at mid and end of year. Organisations receiving large grants are also invited to give presentations to PPB.

Halton Citizens Advice Bureaux and Halton Voluntary Action were granted a 3 year funding agreement in 2004/05. As we are now in the final year, a review on the funding arrangement is to be completed to inform recommendations for future funding arrangements.

The table below shows how the amounts were awarded for core funding 2005/2006

Cheshire Asbestos Victims Support Group	£22,000
Cheshire Racial Equality Council	£6,615
Cheshire Relate	£10,000
Cheshire Victims Support	£6,000
Cheshire Vision Support	£9,623
Community Legal Services Partnership	£5,000
Halton Citizens Advice Bureaux	£179,755
Halton Disability Advice & Appeals Centre	£3,000
Halton Talking Newspapers	£3,438
Halton Voluntary Action	£75,000
Runcorn Frodsham District Mencap	£950
Samaritans	£5,855
Shelter Cheshire	£16,059
Widnes & Runcorn Cancer Support Group	£10,300
Windmill Hill Community Forum	£5,000
Total	£358,595

The unrestricted core funding that Halton Borough Council provides allows the organisations to access other funding streams thereby leveraging external money to contribute to services for Halton residents.

In total for the **£358,595** from HBC the organisations draw down **£1513,243** from other sources. This means for every **£1** Halton Borough Council provides as core funding a further **£4.22** is matched by other sources

Below is a breakdown of the estimations of other funding accessed based on a mixture of applications form and accounts submitted information for 2005/2006

Cheshire Asbestos Victim Support Group

HBC = £22,000

Other = £26,000

Cheshire Halton & Warrington Racial Equality Council

HBC = £6,615

Other = £23,961

Cheshire Relate

HBC = £10,000

Other = £45,000

Cheshire Victim Support

HBC = £6,000

Other = £72,640

Cheshire Vision Support

HBC = £9,623

Other = £41,573

Community Legal Services Partnership

HBC = £5,000

Other = £31,930

Halton District Citizens Advice Bureau

HBC = £179,755

Other = £361,399

Halton Disability Advice & Appeals Centre

HBC = £3,000

Other = £5,837

Halton Talking Newspaper

HBC = £3,438

Other = £837

Halton Voluntary Action

HBC = £75,000

Other = £769,862

Runcorn Frodsham & District Mencap

HBC = £950

Other = £20,000

Samaritans

HBC = £5855

Other = £12,000

Shelter

HBC = £16,059

Other = £11,636

Widnes & Runcorn Cancer Support Group

HBC = £10,300

Other = £73,983

Windmill Hill Community Forum

HBC = £5,000

Other = £16,585

Organisation Profiles

Please note that the information below is only a synopsis of the information and monitoring held for these groups.

Cheshire Asbestos Victims Support Group
3/5 Fryer Street, Runcorn Cheshire WA7 1ND
01928 576641

£22,000

Access & availability

- An open door advice service providing a minimum of 20 hours per week at 3/5 Fryer Street, Runcorn
- Opening times are from 9am – 1pm
- Telephone lines are staffed from 9am – 1pm for work with ongoing clients and to receive referrals from other agencies. Plus a 24-hour answer phone service at other times
- Home visits for housebound victims throughout Halton Borough Council

Aims and objectives

Advice and assistance is given on the benefits available to those suffering with an asbestos related disease.

Provide information on Asbestos and create awareness of the dangers of asbestos to the public in general

Advice and assistance is given to families of those who have died as a result of an asbestos related disease.

The group runs a static caravan in Wales for use by victims and their families, organise trips and have recently organised self-support meetings.

Monitoring information

Activity	Yearly totals
Counselling hours	390
Welfare Rights obtained	£209,105.20
Civil Claims etc DTER	£2,204,950.00
Volunteer hours per year	3618 approx
No of volunteers over the year	16
Telephone enquiries	1405
Personal visits to centre	319

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Cheshire Halton & Warrington Racial Equality Council
2, Hunters Walk, Canal Street, Chester, CH1 4EB
01244 400730

£6,615

Access and availability

Contact by phone 10am – 4pm Monday to Friday

Aims and objectives

To work towards the elimination of good relations between persons of differing racial groups

To this end REC works under 4 main areas of work

- 1 Complainant Aid – this involves providing legal advice & assistance to individuals complaining of racial discrimination & harassment
- 2 Policy Development – providing advice to the public, private and voluntary sectors regarding good equal opportunities practice. Also encourages adoption of CRE standards – Racial Equality Means Quality, Racial Equality Means Business & ‘Learning for All’ standard for schools.
- 3 Community Development – helping local community groups to become self-sustaining, establishing groups where none exist, developing consultation roles for local ethnic minority communities.
- 4 Public Awareness & Campaigns – providing general information on race issues to the public.

Monitoring information

Activity	Yearly totals
Attend CLSP Exec & Provider meetings	4
Hate Crime Panel	1
Local Criminal Board Consultation & Sub Group	4
Race issues multi agency group	4
Cheshire Chief Executive Advisory Group on Gypsies & Travellers	8
Casework	1 male 1 female
REC connecting communities project – people registered for work from Halton	18

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Halton’s Children & Young People

Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Cheshire Relate
Allman House, Langley Road, Northwich, Cheshire, CW9 8AW
01606 350995

£10,000

Access & availability

- Relate operates an appointment based counselling sessions in Runcorn to cover all clients in Halton
- Telephone contact service 9am – 9pm Monday to Thursday, 9am to 4pm Friday

Aims and objectives

Relate works in Halton to promote Health, Respect and Justice in Couple and Family Relationships. The Relate service in Halton generates opportunities and creates the support systems that enable individuals and families to support themselves

Relate believes good couple and family relationships form the heart of a thriving community

The central office is in Northwich, Halton is supported by a team of 2 full time appointment secretaries, the Central Admin infrastructure and by the apportioned time of the Director.

In Halton there are 5 voluntary counsellors and one part time paid counsellor. There are 2 part time paid office co-ordinators and 2 voluntary evening receptionists

Monitoring information

Activity	Yearly totals
Counselling hours	1253
'Relateen' group hours	108
Volunteer hours per year	1253
No of volunteers over the year	16
Telephone enquiries	905
Personal visits to centre	1253

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Halton's Children & Young People

Cheshire Victims Support
Cheshire Victim Support, Warrington Police Station, Arpley Street,
Warrington, WA1 1LQ
(Will be moving to Widnes Police Station July 2006)
01925 419339

£6,000

Access and availability

- Maintain a 5 days 7.30am – 4pm local response system for supporting victims of crime
- A national help line is available (0845 3030900) from 4pm to 12 midnight 7 days a week.
- Working in close consultation with police and other relevant agencies. The Police Family Liaison Officer now operates as 1st point of contact for all victims of serious crime; they then refer to Victims Support. All other crime victims go directly to Victims Support.

Aims and objectives

Victims Support aims to provide a comprehensive service to all victims of crime and their families, and to all witnesses (especially with vulnerable and intimidated), both prosecution and defence, attending Crown and Magistrates Courts.

Actively involved with both Community Based Victim Support and Witness Service

Provides all volunteers with ongoing training especially around new initiatives e.g. Dealing with Children and Young Persons and working with witnesses within the Video Link Rooms

Monitoring information

Activity	Yearly totals
Counselling hours	583
Volunteer hours per year	1757
No of volunteers over the year	8
Telephone enquiries & letters/e-mails/fax	2681
Home visits seen	242
unseen	277
Pre Trail visits	369
Court Attendances	1368

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Cheshire Vision Support
Halton Independent Living Centre, Collier Street, Runcorn, WA7 1HB
01928 582944 (evening answer phone)

£9,623

Access & availability

- An open door advice service providing a minimum of 5 days per week at Halton Independent Living Centre. Opening times from 10am – 3pm
- Telephone lines are staffed from 10am to 3pm for work with ongoing clients and to receive referrals from other agencies. There is also a 24-hour answer phone service.
- An extensive home visiting service for housebound people who request it throughout Halton.
- Vision Support now has a Mobile Resource Unit for Cheshire. This will be visiting venues in Widnes & Runcorn, e.g. shopping centres, medical centres, sheltered housing accommodation and anywhere it is able to park, where they might reach more people with a visual impairment
- Tele-friending service now contact visually impaired people in Halton and operates between 6&8pm and is staffed by a team of trained volunteers.

Aims and objectives

Their aim is to enhance the quality of life, promote the continuing independence, and raise awareness of the needs of all visually impaired people throughout the community, irrespective of age.

People do not have to be registered blind or partially sighted to receive this service. RNIB survey found that 23% of visually sighted people living in private households who are eligible to be registered as blind or partially sighted are in fact registered. Vision Support bridges this gap by offering support to all.

Halton pay for 25 hours of support worker time to visit service users in their own homes to enable individuals to obtain their rights and entitlements by providing front line information, advice and representation service which is confidential and free.

Vision support also runs training courses and support groups and has recently started a new service called Tele-befriending.

Monitoring information

Activity	Yearly totals
Clients visits to Resource Centre inc family visit	854
Telephone enquiries from service users & their families	705
Other agencies visits to centre	448
Other agencies telephone calls	1252
Home visits to new and existing service users	1477
Welfare Rights inc. DLA and back pay	£51,768.40

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Community Legal Services Partnership (Not funded 2006-07)
C/o Runcorn Town Hall, Heath Road, Runcorn, WA7 5TD
0151 424 2061

£5,000

Access & availability

- By phone Monday – Friday office hours

Aims and objectives

- The purpose of the Halton CLSP is to provide an effective policy and planning framework that gives strategic direction to advice and information providers in Halton.
- The CLSP aims to establish a network of quality providers of advice and legal services, supported by co-ordinated funding, delivering accessible services to local communities based on an effective assessment of local needs

Monitoring information

Activity	Yearly totals
Number of enquiries dealt with	65
Face to Face	23
Meetings attended	41
Individual assistance	16
Events	6
Mapping Exercise	22

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Halton's Children & Young People

Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Halton District Citizens Advice Bureau**Unit 3, Victoria Building, Lugsdale Road, Widnes, WA8 6DJ****0151 257 2443****£179,755****Access and availability**

Public advice line no. 019128 710000 – out of hours, answer phone should be on to give information regarding opening time

Hours open to public 10 – 4pm Monday/Tuesday/Thursday

10 – 1pm Wednesday/Friday

CAB provide a minimum of 24 hours of open door access for advice and information per normal working week

Clients will receive an appointment

Clients with appointments may be seen outside of the 'open door' office times

Home visiting service for housebound people in Halton is provided where possible.

Aims and objectives

- Provision of free, confidential, impartial and independent legal and practical advice on a wide range of issues e.g. Welfare Rights, Debt, Consumer, Employment, Housing, Immigration, Tax, Relationships, Health, Education and many other areas of law.
- It is the only agency in Halton to have the Specialist Quality Mark in both Debt & Welfare Rights & offer a free service.
- CAB also exercises a responsible influence on the development of social policies and services, both locally and nationally.

CAB operates from 2 bases, one in Lugsdale Road, Widnes and also from Grosvenor House in Runcorn. In 2005/06 they had a combined total of 50 volunteers and staff.

CAB receives many different streams of funding which are ring fenced to certain projects e.g. Out reach in Hale Bank, Out reach for Sure Start, Specialist Debt workers.

Monitoring information

Activity	Yearly totals
Information/Advice Given	4309
Welfare Rights	£808,425.00
Debt written off	£51,357.00
Debt handled	£9 million
Gains (employment)	£50,342.00
Volunteer hours	14,312
Number of volunteers	34
Telephone enquiries	3,433
Letter/email/fax	1551
Home Visits	267
Tribunals attended	49
Court attendances	67

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Halton's Children & Young People

Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Halton Disability Advice and Appeals Centre
The Old Police Station, Mersey Road, Runcorn WA7 1DF
01928 588511

£3,000

Access and availability

By phone or drop in at centre Monday to Friday 9 – 2pm

Aims and objectives

- The provision of a specialist Welfare Rights Service for people with disabilities and their carers in Halton.

They offer drop in service and appointments, each advisor can deal with 4 appointments per day as necessary. The take up of this service in Runcorn is higher than Widnes and they are based in Runcorn they do not receive enough funding to provide a service in Widnes.

Monitoring information

Activity	Yearly totals
Number of new cases opened	317
Number of cases closed	253
Number of contacts with clients	1268
Number of phone enquires (estimate)	2000
Amount of monies gained	£232,289.00
Amount of lump sums	£44,543

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Halton Talking Newspaper
The Old Police Station, Mersey Road, Runcorn, WA7 1DF
(Mail contact- Mrs P Johnson, 2 Royden Ave, Runcorn WA7 4AL)
01928 588500

£3,438

Access & availability

- The organisation has a recording studio and copying facilities at the Old Police Station.
- All the people involved in this project are volunteers
- Service Users tend to be referrals from Social Services

Aims and objectives

To provide Blind and Partially Sighted people with access to local news by producing and distributing a ninety minute audiotape of local news by volunteers

Talking News sends out the tapes and have them returned free by Royal Mail

Talking News also distribute tapes quarterly containing the information from the Inside Halton and other publications, enabling people to keep informed about important issues affecting their lives e.g. Theatre groups, explaining performances and local government agencies information.

Monitoring information

Activity	Yearly totals
Numbers of individuals receiving recordings each week	208
Volunteers involved with the organisation	40
Weeks per year service is provided	50
Volunteer hours per year	1638 approx

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Halton Voluntary Action
Sefton House, Public Hall Street, Runcorn WA7 1NG
01928 592405

£75,000

Access & availability

- Providing an open drop-in service Monday – Friday between the hours of 10am to 4pm
- Providing telephone answer phone facilities and appointment service outside these hours
- Maintaining a paper database of voluntary/community groups in Halton and introducing an E-access directory
- Production and distribution of a quarterly newsletter

Aims and objectives

- HVA is a Council for Voluntary Groups (CVS) – a voluntary organisation which is set up, owned and run by local groups to support, promote and develop local voluntary and community action.
- Their goal is to make our local voluntary sector as strong, vibrant, effective and diverse as they can – Strategic aims are:
 - To improve the capacity and quality of voluntary and community groups
 - To provide support and develop individual volunteers and volunteer-involving organisations
 - To facilitate liaison within the voluntary sector and with statutory and private organisations on behalf of volunteers, groups and organisations in the community
 - To support and promote local voluntary community action
 - To promote best practice and be well managed, financially secure and quality assured organisation.

Monitoring information

Activity	Yearly totals
Information & Advice given	4149
Individuals - sessions attended - Training / Activities	154
No of volunteer involved in HVA activities	11
No of volunteer hours	3000
Telephone enquiries	7050
Newsletter distributed	2542
Volunteers recruited (for placements)	203

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Halton's Children & Young People

Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Runcorn Frodsham & District Mencap
The Acorn Club, Laburnam Grove, Runcorn, WA7 5EX
01928 722910

£950

Access & availability

- Not a drop in facility – there are regular activities run regularly through the week for a target client group – people with extra learning needs who do not necessarily attend day centre
- List of activities include :- Cooking and basic skills, keep fit, youth club, disco
- Astmoor use the centre for outreach
- They run a 3 week play scheme in the summer
- They have a weekly bingo to raise funds

Aims and objectives

To provide a centre for education and social activities for people (adult & children) with learning disabilities. They also provide respite for their parents and carers.

They act as a focus group to improve services for people with learning disabilities.

The group strive to ensure that inclusion is paramount in their organisation and that people with a learning disability are active at all levels including the management committee

Monitoring information

Activity	Yearly totals
No of volunteers over the year	5
Personal visits to centre for activities	3579

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Samaritans
46 Arpley Street, Warrington, WA4 1LX
01925 235000

£5,855

Access & availability

- 24 hour a day help line – The Samaritans we fund, are a local branch of a national support organisation.
- The service is primarily a telephone contact service – however there is limited scope for people to visit the centre on an appointment service
- Samaritans also have a 5 strong prison team who support the Listener Scheme in Risley Prison, attending fortnightly evening support meetings and occasional suicide meetings.

Aims and objectives

Samaritans are a local branch of a national organisation and a charity in their own right.

They provide a confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those, which may lead to suicide. The service is provided entirely by volunteers who are carefully selected, trained and supported.

Monitoring information

Activity	Yearly totals
Counselling calls	16,378
Volunteer hours per year	47,000
No of volunteers over the year	50
Telephone enquiries	16,378
Personal visits to centre	28

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Halton's Children & Young People

Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Shelter Cheshire, Halton & Warrington (Not funded 2006/07)
3 York Terrace, York St, Chester, CH1 3LR
01244 340637
Advice line – 08451 221 205

£16,059

Access & availability

- Telephone advice for clients and agencies was available Monday to Wednesday 10am to 1pm and Fridays 1-4pm. In addition Shelter's free phone service is available daily 8am – Midnight.
- Surgeries were provided from 3 sites: at Runcorn & Widnes CAB and Y's up for Runcorn Old Town. Ad hoc surgeries took place via the Welfare Rights Bus.
- Home visits were available for those clients who were unable to access the Service through a surgery or telephone call.

Aims and objectives

To provide information, advice, advocacy and representation to clients experiencing problems with their housing e.g. homelessness, disrepair, discrimination, landlord and tenant disputes

To provide consultancy and referral service to other agencies

To provide policy comment based upon the collation of client evidence

To provide housing rights awareness

To provide information about the needs of provision for homelessness and badly housed people.

Monitoring information

Activity	Yearly totals
Advice bus sessions	5
Clients advised on sessions	1
Housing Rights briefing sessions	29
Telephone enquiries	94
Surgeries	76
Referrals received	80

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Halton's Children & Young People

Widnes & Runcorn Cancer Support Group
21-23 Alforde Street, Widnes, Cheshire, WA8 7TR
0151 423 5730

£10,300

Access & availability

- The centre is open Monday to Friday between the hours of 10.00am to 3.00pm
- Busom Buddies group meets on the first Wednesday of each month at Trinity Church Hall, Peelhouse Lane, Widnes for patients with breast cancer.
- Outreach Service at The Old Police Station on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm. Open to any patient or carer from any part of Halton with any type of cancer
- Out of hours answer phone service.

Aims and objectives

To provide support services for the people of Halton who are living with cancer

To extend those services to the Carers and families of those living with cancer

To provide information and advice about Cancer for the general public in Halton Borough Council

Services provided include information, advice, listening, sign-posting, emotional and psychological support. Counselling is available by appointment. There are currently two Self-Help groups which meet weekly (HUG club) and monthly (Bosom Buddies).

Services now include

Complementary therapies, Beauty Therapies, Art Therapies, The Bowen Technique and Reiki Healing sessions for patients and carers

Online support for those unable to attend the centre

Monitoring information

Activity	Yearly totals
Counselling hours	68
Listening hours	983
Information centre - patients	66
Volunteer hours per year	2844
No of volunteers over the year	48
Information phone calls	49
Listening phone calls	373
HUGS club	1130
Outreach group	237
Busom buddies	415
Therapies and workshops	933

HBC Priorities met by organisation

A Healthy Halton

A Safer Halton

Halton's Children & Young People

Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Windmill Hill Community Forum Ltd.
The Playcentre, Norton Hill, Windmill Hill, Runcorn, Cheshire WA7 6QE
01928 790228

£5,000

Access & availability

- The Community Office is open a minimum of 25 hours per week for drop in office facilities
- Telephone lines are staffed from 10am to 3pm

Aims and objectives

To develop the people living on the Windmill Hill Estate in Runcorn. The Forums aims are:

- To develop awareness and fight deprivation on the estate
- To support existing voluntary community groups
- To help new groups develop and reach their goals
- To provide a fully staffed office service for all voluntary groups
- To motivate people and get them moving forward in their lives by providing free computer courses, including helping some to gain qualifications recognised in the modern workplace

Monitoring information

Activity	Yearly totals
No of attendances at the various IT training courses	2198
Volunteer hours per year	1637 approx
No of volunteers over the year	11
Telephone enquiries	488
Personal visits to centre to use office	413

HBC Priorities met by organisation
A Healthy Halton
Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

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

DATE: 13th November 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director of Environment

SUBJECT: Enterprise Topic Action Plan Update

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide a briefing on progress of enterprise topic group action plan.

2. RECOMMENDED:

2.1 That progress on the action plan be noted and that the Policy and Performance Board (PPB) identifies any further actions that it considers appropriate.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 As part of the topic work of the former Life Chances and Employment PPB, it established a topic groups looking at skills issues in the Borough.

3.2 As part of the final reports from the topic group to the PPB, a number of recommendations for improvements to the service was developed and put into an action plan. Appendix One details the action plan and provides an update on progress

3.3 In summary, some progress has been made, for example the enterprise game, enterprise charter and starting to implement the broader strategy. However, the single major constraining factor is the lack of resources for enterprise. Small amounts of money have been secured from Neighbourhood Renewal Funding, but nothing on the scale that is required. Recently a Local Enterprise Growth initiative bid has been made to government for funding for £40m over 10 years. Over 50 authorities applied, 15 will be short-listed and only 10 will be supported.

3.4 The one area that has made no progress at all is the establishment of high street Enterprise shops. At this time, the cost of such shops is seen as prohibitively expensive. However, provision for such shops has been included in the recent bid.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Enterprise agenda is a key priority within the Corporate Plan. As such, implementation of the action plan is seen as vital if the targets within the plan are to be achieved.










5. RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 The biggest risks in implementing the action plan are associated with a lack of resources. As stated above, a bid for government money has been made but if this is not secured it is very doubtful that significant progress will be made. Indeed, when Neighbourhood Renewal Funding ends, even the small-scale activity will cease.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 6.1 As a result of work undertaken at the Employment Learning and Skills SSP, there is now a clear message regarding the need to target groups and areas that are most excluded from the labour market. In terms of geography, the target areas are Castlefields, Windmill Hill, Halton Lea, Kingsway, Riverside, Appleton and Grange. In terms of groups, the targets are 50+ (silver economy), economically inactive women, lone parents, young long term, people on Incapacity Benefit/disabled.
- 6.2 It is anticipated that later this year we will be in a position to contract with providers to deliver for the first time in Halton a dedicated programme of start up activity for 50+ and women entrepreneurs.

Enterprise

Action	Progress	Commentary
There is a need to ensure more aftercare takes place post start up		No additional provision in place at this time, but has been included in recent Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) bid to government
Need to promote and support social enterprise more, including development of a possible social enterprise accountancy initiative.		Business Link has found some money to provide advice to would be social enterprises during this year. Additionally, it has been included in recent Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) bid to government
Business people should be encouraged to become mentors, included those recently retired.		European money secured for HPIJ to appointment an enterprise broker who will develop a network of business mentors.
Need to make sure that new internet style businesses are supported		No additional provision in place at this time, but has been included in recent Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) bid to government
The topic group supports the concept of high street presence and becoming more proactive		Still viewed as potentially an important tool but cost prohibitive at this time. Has been included in recent Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) bid to government
The enterprise game is viewed as an important tool for developing both enterprise awareness and basic skills in Halton and its development is strongly supported.		Game to be launched in November
The development of enterprise charter to promote self-employment to both employed and unemployed should be progressed quickly.		European money has been secured by HPIJ to commence the development of the enterprise charter and for a dedicated enterprise broker to be based in HPIJ
NRF funding should be sought to initiate the implementation of the Enterprise Development Strategy.		NRF funding of £90,000 has been secured over 2 years
Given this new and expanding area of work it is considered that a dedicated enterprise development officer to lead this work should be appointed.		ELS SSP has released funding for a two year fixed term post

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

DATE: 13th November 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director of Environment

SUBJECT: Employment Topic Action Plan Update

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide a briefing on progress of Employment topic group action plan.

2. RECOMMENDED:

2.1 That progress on the action plan be noted and that Policy and Performance Board (PPB) identifies any further actions that it considers appropriate.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 As part of the topic work of the former Life Chances and Employment PPB, it established a topic groups looking at Employment issues in the Borough

3.2 As part of the final reports from the topic group to the PPB, a number of recommendations for improvements to the service was developed and put into an action plan. Appendix One details the action plan and provides an update on progress.

3.3 In summary, reasonable progress has been made in terms of employment. For example, the future of HPIJ has been secured until March 2008, the supported employment team has been transferred to the Economic Regeneration Department and the ILM (Intermediary Training Scheme) scheme is being extended where possible.

3.4 The one area that has made no progress at all is the establishment of high street Jobs shops. At this time, the cost of such shops is seen as prohibitively expensive. However, provision for such shops has been included in the recent Local Enterprise Growth Initiative bid to government and it may well be possible to include employment provision within these premises should the money be secured.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The employment agenda is a key priority within the Corporate Plan. As such, implementation of the action plan is seen as vital if the targets within the plan are to be achieved.

5. RISK ANALYSIS

5.1 The risks in implementing the action plan are very of a very similar nature to those originally identified. The significant concerns are -

- The increasing trend for government contracts to be awarded on areas larger than local authority boundaries.
- The clear government policy to commission work from the private and voluntary sectors with barriers to the public sector making bids.
- What will happen when Neighbourhood Renewal Funding ceases?
- The government decision to close nationally the highly effective Jobcentre Plus Action Teams project where advisors went out into deprived areas and replace it with a much smaller scheme known as Deprived Areas Funding.

5.2 Of course, bids will be made where possible to continue to provide resources for such work. Also, the council will look to partner with external agencies as a way of ensuring local provision of employment services as exists at the moment with the New Deal programme.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

6.1 As a result of work undertaken at the Employment Learning and Skills SSP, there is now a clear message regarding the need to target groups and areas that are most excluded from the labour market. In terms of geography, the new Employment Strategy targets Castlefields, Windmill Hill, Halton Lea, Kingsway, Riverside, Appleton and Grange. In terms of groups, the targets are 50+ (silver economy), economically inactive women, lone parents, young long term, people on Incapacity Benefit/disabled.








6.2 More directly linked to the action plan, there are already clear results from the transfer of Supported Employment to the Economic Regeneration Department with a number of disabled people now gaining access for the first time to ILM and waged activities.





Contacts

Gary Collins

01928 516100

Employment

Action	Progress	Commentary
Encourage Jobcentre Plus (JCP)/Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to continue and improve joining up. Encourage them to join up with other providers too. Encourage main agencies to consult with the Halton Learning Partnership prior to making decisions about provision.		JCP, LSC and Connexions now joint plan. Learning Partnership now replaced by Employment, Learning and Skills SSP and all three are members.
Council to review Procurement Policy to be able to let contracts to social enterprises.		Work ongoing – Is included in the LEGI bid
The Council should also look to join up its employment services and as such the Supported Employment Team should be brought together with other employment teams in the Regeneration Department.		Completed January 06
Encourage JCP/LSC to undertake joint commissioning to reduce provider confusion – at present there are far too many providers creating too much confusion.		Elements of JCP training budgets now transferred to LSC through national policy change to improve performance.
The future of HPIJ must be secured as a priority.		2 year funding secured (until March 08)
Develop a promotional campaign that explains the benefits of local recruitment.		A DVD promoting the benefits of local recruitment is to be produced. Specification prepared and going out to competitive quote.
That stronger links be developed with Education Business Partnership and Halton Youth Academy (LSC funded NEET Consortium) to promote extended work experience and Modern Apprenticeships with local employers. Host an 'Industry Day' at the Stadium to 'showcase' local employers and demonstrate the occupation		An Employer Engagement group has been established to develop stronger partnership links consisting of (Business Link – Skills Brokerage, Connexions, Education Business Partnership, HPIJ & Employment Team, JCP, LSC – representing Work based Learning providers including apprenticeships, Riverside College. The group plan to collaborate much more and host joint events – will explore

diversity available within local industry (not a jobs fair).		the industry event at the next meeting.
That the range and quantity of ILM schemes be expanded to offer more support to local people. Two particular schemes that are worthy of development are 'security in parks' and 'support for schools in addressing truancy'.		<p>The range of ILM activity is being expanded wherever possible. For example, a new ILM project has just been launched to provide environmental operatives to work out of Victoria Park.</p> <p>On further investigation it is not considered appropriate at this time to introduce the proposed ILMs. There may be potential to develop a security ILM in the future if the Community Safety Team is successful with a bid for additional Community Support Officers to be deployed in the boroughs parks.</p>
That the council and its partners need to develop very accessible drop in shops on high street locations to ease people into the world of work/training. These would then feed people into mainstream providers at the right time for the individual concerned.		Still viewed as potentially an important tool but cost prohibitive at this time.
The Council should take the lead in promoting Positive Action Employment & Training initiatives for specific groups of residents e.g. young people, graduates, people aged 50+ etc		NRF funding (£65,000) has been secured to develop a Care Leavers Pre-employment Initiative – early signs are encouraging. However, progress in other areas is slow.
More support is needed for the voluntary sector to enable people to re-engage with the world of work - volunteering leads to training leads to work trials leads to employment.		Halton Voluntary Action manages the Volunteer Bureau on behalf of the voluntary sector - supported by Age Concern and the Pact's Reach for the Stars Project. HVA are seeking NRF support to develop support for social enterprise development.

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

DATE: 13th November 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director of Environment

SUBJECT: Skills Topic Action Plan Update

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide a briefing on progress of skills topic group action plans.

2. RECOMMENDED: That

2.1 That progress on the action plan be noted and that the Policy and Performance Board (PPB) identifies any further actions that it considers appropriate.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 As part of the topic work of the former Life Chances and Employment PPB, it established a topic groups looking at skills issues in the Borough.

3.2 As part of the final reports from the topic group to the PPB, a number of recommendations for improvements to the service was developed and put into an action plan. Appendix One details the action plan and provides an update on progress.

3.3 In summary, reasonable progress has been made in terms of skills. In terms of influencing government about seeing achievement and progression, these messages are now being made by many skills based organisations and there are increasing signs that this is acknowledged. However, there is little tangible progress in this filtering down to changes in what is being delivered.

3.4 Of real concern is the continued budget reductions for the work of the adult learning team that has amounted to some 6.5%, although some nearby boroughs have had much bigger reductions.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Skills agenda is a key priority within the Corporate Plan. As such, implementation of the action plan is seen as vital if the targets within the plan are to be achieved.



5. RISK ANALYSIS



- 5.1 The risks in implementing the action plan are of a very similar nature to those originally identified. Lack of resources remains the key issue and further bids and submissions will be made as the opportunities arise. In terms of the influencing and lobbying effort, this will continue within in the context of wider lobbying from other local authorities and agencies on the same subject.






6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES




- 6.1 As a result of work undertaken at the Employment Learning and Skills SSP, there is now a clear message regarding the need to target groups and areas that are most excluded from the labour market. In terms of geography, the target areas are Castlefields, Windmill Hill, Halton Lea, Kingsway, Riverside, Appleton and Grange. In terms of groups, the targets are 50+ (silver economy), economically inactive women, lone parents, young long term, people on Incapacity Benefit/disabled.

Skills

Action	Progress	Commentary
<p>There is a need to offer pathways to skill development where achievement is recognised as well as qualifications</p>		<p>Achievement is now increasingly recognised but not yet embedded – the RARPA standard is now one of the Government’s new Measures of Success (within Success for All). However, government policy is increasingly funding qualifications.</p> <p>RARPA (Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement in non-accredited learning) is a tool for quality improvement and increases recognition of learner achievement. It’s a learner-focused system of recognising both anticipated and unanticipated learning outcomes arising from non-accredited programmes, thereby enabling learners (and providers) to evidence distance travelled towards more formal qualifications.</p>
<p>There is a need to see skills progression like a staircase, where people start at the bottom and can work their way up in manageable steps.</p>		<p>Progression routes and individual development plans now more widely used.</p> <p>LSC is developing an Adult Plan for Halton, and included in this will be the requirement for LSC-funded providers to plan their curriculum in collaboration to ensure that all bases are covered and progression routes are in place. LSC Skills Brokers will support progression opportunities within the workplace, with Brokers working closely with all adult learning providers in the borough. The</p> <p>Employment, Learning & Skills SSP has adopted the Workforce Development Strategy Action Plan and the Skills for Life Strategy Action Plan, both of which identify mapping of provision as a key priority. NRF has been made available</p>

Action	Progress	Commentary
		to complete this task.
<p>There is a need to deliver courses that engage and interest people as a first step – such courses to have variety including academic, vocational, physical, leisure etc.</p>		<p>The LSC, through its Area Adult Plan, is able to ‘purchase’ different types of provision through its planning processes. HBC is the identified ‘First Steps’ provider, whilst the FE College focuses on level 2 and 3 provision. There is an element of ‘leisure’ type learning available through LSC and other funded streams, offering adults a hook into more academic or vocational routes.</p> <p>However, LSC budgets for adult provision have been reduced significantly for 2006/7 academic year. Within Halton, the FE college has had a 15% cut in adult funding, whilst HBC’s Adult Learning service has had a 6.5% reduction. Obviously, this will have an impact on the volume of provision that can be offered.</p>
<p>There is a clear need to lobby government to give longer funding programmes.</p>		<p>NIACE (National Institute for Adult and Community Education) is the national advisory body for adult education and they lobby parliament on a whole range of adult learning and skills development issues, and in particular, funding for adult learning. NIACE also operates at a regional level and HBC staff are included in both national and regional decision-making processes via national and regional networks.</p> <p>NIACE facilitates LEAFEA (the Local Authority Adult and Further Education Association) – Halton’s Adult Learning service is a member of this and therefore able to contribute to a wide range of consultation papers proposed by government and LSC. LEAFEA responds on behalf of all local authority adult learning services, meeting formally three times a year to review progress and look to future agendas. In addition, Halton’s Adult Learning staff are able to respond to LSC consultations on issues relating to</p>

Action	Progress	Commentary
		funding, with sub-regional networks in place, which are led by local LSC.
Reduce confusion of multiple providers.		The mapping exercise funded through NRF will identify the providers operating in the borough, together with the type of provision they offer. The Skills Group (as a sub-set of the ELS SSP) will be chaired by the local LSC and will drive forward the actions identified in both the WFD and the SfL strategies. The LSC Skills Brokers will act as the signpost to particular types of provision and this should help ensure employers are not confused about multiple providers. There are over 90 different providers operating in Halton, some with local LSC contracts, some with regional and national contracts. Whilst the Skills Brokerage service will improve the process of employers being matched with appropriate providers, the situation of a multiplicity of providers operating in Halton is unlikely to change.
Work more towards delivering skills development on site with businesses.		The new national train to gain programme delivered by the LSC through contracted providers should do just this – but will have to be monitored to see how effective it is locally. .
Basic Skills must be seen as integral to workforce development.		The Skills for Life Strategy (to be finalised by December 2006) dovetails the Workforce Development Strategy, with both action plans having shared goals. Train to Gain will include targets for Skills for Life in the workplace.
There is a need to develop short courses where there are skills gaps and there is a clear need for the Council to take a leading role in this, identifying gaps/creating solutions/lobbying partners/securing resources etc.		A Business Perceptions Survey carried out in March 2006 was able to identify skills gaps within businesses. NRF of £29K has been allocated to respond to these gaps by offering short, bespoke courses. The Council is taking the lead on this initiative. However, this funding is just for a year.
The vast majority of training is aimed at those in work. There is a clear need to develop training opportunities for unemployed people with courses that will enable people to get a job. (This is an		The Adult Learning & Skills Development team works closely with the Employment Team in offering training opportunities for unemployed people; one example of this is 'Get that Job'.

Action	Progress	Commentary
answer to the training 'catch 22' - cannot get training if not in a job, but cannot get a job without first having the right training).		The core work of the Adult Learning service is to widen participation in learning, with many beneficiaries being unemployed. Close liaison with the college and the LSC will ensure that training opportunities are available and that progression is possible. NRF is being used to offer childcare training to unemployed adults – the level 2 qualification will allow beneficiaries to enter the world of work. More examples of how providers and funders can work collaboratively to tackle worklessness will be progressed via the Skills Group of the SSP.
Real concern exists that new LSC contracts do not allow for training needs analysis support for companies that would help them identify future needs. This used to exist in previous schemes and will still exist in the other 5 Merseyside Boroughs but not Halton.		The new LSC Skills Brokerage service and the Train to Gain programme (launched August 2006) will offer employers a full training needs analysis. In addition, the Skills Brokers will be able to offer individual employees advice and guidance about the most appropriate provision and qualifications.
That employment and skills (i.e. adult learning team) related services within the Council be brought together within the Regeneration Department. However, there must be no loss of effort on delivery of the skills for life work already being delivered in the community.		Completed January 2006. The SSP Skills Group will bring together providers across the borough to plan provision effectively and to ensure that Skills for Life in the community remains a priority. Train to Gain will have Skills for Life targets for within the workplace.
That businesses are given support and encourage to undertake training needs analysis.		The LSC Skills Brokerage service will offer an individualised support package to employers, including training needs analysis service. In addition, NRF will be used to support businesses that are unable to attract LSC funding in offering a training needs analysis and short training packages.

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

DATE: 13th November 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director of Environment

SUBJECT: Employment Learning and Skills Specialist Strategic Partnership

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide a briefing on the Employment Learning and Skills Specialist Strategic Partnership (SSP).

2. RECOMMENDED: That

2.1 That progress on the development of the Specialist Strategic Partnership be noted and that Policy and Performance Board identifies any issues it would like it to feed into the SSP.

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Following on from changes made by the Local Strategic Partnership to its structure, the Employment Learning and Skills Specialist Strategic Partnership (SSP) was created. The first meeting took place on 31st march 2006. The new SSP was created to give greater focus to employment, learning and skills issues and was a consequence of lack of significant progress in these issues over the previous few years.

3.2 The SSP is chaired by the District Manager for Jobcentre Plus and the vice chair is the Operational Director for Economic Regeneration. Membership of the SSP presently comprises -

Jobcentre Plus, Connexions, Halton Borough Council (Economic Regeneration, Policy & Partnership and Benefits), Riverside College Halton, Business Link Greater Merseyside, Learning and Skills Council Greater Merseyside, YMCA/ Halton Together, Halton Voluntary Action

3.3 Since formation, the SSP has finalised the three strategies for employment, enterprise and workforce skills. It has also allocated its Neighbourhood Renewal Funding (NRF) budget for 2006-07 (see appendix one). For 2007-08, the SSP has provisionally allocated budgets (based on a 10% reduction for each project) but projects must make satisfactory progress to be able to obtain this funding.

- 3.4 Importantly, the SSP is just at the point of developing subgroups to drive the implementation of its three strategies. It has already established a performance sub group that will manage the NRF budget to ensure targets are hit and money is expended on time.
- 3.5 The SSP has undertaken an extensive mapping exercise of what all the partners are doing either directly or by way of commissioning and this has fed into the process of developing the Local Agree Agreement (LAA). The SSP itself has considered the LAA drafts and inputted its suggested amendments. The chair and vice chair are both on the LAA corporate working group.
- 3.6 The SSP is very focused on having private sector input into its work. It has taken the decision that this will not be achieved by trying to secure regular private sector attendance at the SSP meetings, but to be much more private sector friendly. Therefore, It will seek private sector input in to specific programmes and projects and the use of regular surveys. For example, the SSP lead on the development of the recent Local Enterprise Growth Initiative bid to government. It established a steering group of 18 private sector businesses that -
- Examined the present state of enterprise in the borough
 - Identified the thrust and key themes
 - Considered the options for developing the programme, including the actions from the Employment Topic Group
 - Determined the content of the submission
- 3.7 The SSP is keen to ensure that it integrates its activity with the wider regeneration of the borough and has received presentations on the benefits express/debt issues and sure start to later life.
- 3.8 Looking to the future, there are a number of important issues for the SSP
- How to maximise the impact of the money being spent by all the partners –much of this is about aligning budgets and removing duplication
 - Securing additional resources
 - Effecting a step change in skills levels and the rate of business start ups, both of which are low.
 - Ensuring those areas with the highest rate of worklessness are prioritised for support
 - Determining how the new regional Business Link will work locally when it replaces the existing 5 sub regional operations
 - Supporting the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in developing its dedicated team for Halton and ensuring the development of the new LSC adult plan meets the need of the locality.
 - Working to maximise the benefits of employment, learning and skills activities for disabled people.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Employment, Learning and Skills agenda is a key priority within the Corporate

Plan. As such, the SSP has a vital role to play to ensue the targets within the plan and the Community Strategy are achieved.

5. RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 The risks in taking forward the Employment, Learning and Skills agenda are complex. Clearly there is a significant risk should levels of government funding be squeezed as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review. There are a number of changes in government policy that may affect the work, such as the regionalisation of business links. The ongoing debate about how difficult it is for partners to work together within the present restrictions of the data protection act is yet to be resolved. The government desire to see regeneration funding budgets pooled is good and well intended, but the rules that prevent this remains a significant barrier. There are also local factors such as the changes to the Learning and Skills Council and how long they will take to bed down. Taking all these issues and others into account, the existence of the SSP is seen as a critical way of helping to address and manage these risks at the local level. For example, pooling budgets is very difficult within this area, but the SSP is playing a key role in helping to align budgets wherever possible.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 6.1 As a result of work undertaken at the Employment Learning and Skills SSP, there is now a clear message regarding the need to target groups and areas that are most excluded from the labour market. In terms of geography, the target areas are Castlefields, Windmill Hill, Halton Lea, Kingsway, Riverside, Appleton and Grange. In terms of groups, the targets are 50+ (silver economy), economically inactive women, lone parents, young long term, people on Incapacity Benefit/disabled.

Contacts

Gary Collins

01928 516100

Employment, Learning and Skills Partnership

NRF Funding

	Project	2006/07	2007/08	Total 2006-2008
Skills for Life	Skills for life assessments	24,000	21,600	45,600
	Staff development/qualifications	7,500	6,750	14,250
	Effective Promotion	12,500	11,250	23,750
	SfL Forum	2,000	1,800	3,800
	YMCA Project	22,500	20,250	42,750
	Database and mapping	2,000	1,800	3,800
Total SfL		70,500	63,450	133,950
WFD	Business Perceptions Survey		18,000	18,000
	Responding to Survey	29,000	26,100	55,100
	Fit for Purpose (ICT upgrade)	5,000		5,000
	WFD Publications	3,000	2,700	5,700
	WFD Sub-group	1,000	800	1,800
Total WFD		38,000	47,600	85,600
Skills Other	Childcare -Adult Learning Team	10,000	9,000	19,000
	Childcare - Halton Family Groups	34,000	30,600	64,600
Total Skills Other		44,000	39,600	83,600
Enterprise	Happen 4U	26,902		26,902
	Enterprise broker and start ups	60,000	54,000	114,000
Total Enterprise		86,902	54,000	140,902
Employment	Bulky Bobs	20,000	0	20,000
	Halton People into Jobs	200,000	180,000	380,000
	Supported Employment	143,000	128,700	271,700
	Halton ILM	110,000	99,000	209,000
	The Workshop	25,000	0	25,000
	Outreach team	125,000	112,500	237,500
Total Employment		623,000	520,200	1,143,200
Other	Benefits Express	90,000	81,000	171,000
	Bill payment service	36,229	32,606	68,835
	CAB Debt Advisors	76,000	68,400	144,400
	CLSP Co-ordinator	33,032	29,728	62,760
Total Other		235,261	211,734	446,995
Proposal Totals		1,097,663	936,584	2,034,247
Available NRF		1,103,841	957,800	2,061,641
Balance		6,178	21,216	27,394

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning and Skills PPB

DATE: 13 November 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Health and Community

SUBJECT: Capital of Culture

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update Members of Liverpool's Capital of Culture Programme for 2008 and any other developments.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

1) The update be received and Members of the Policy and Performance Board (PPB) comment on proposed programme development.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 2008 is Capital of Culture Year for Liverpool. Over recent months efforts have been made to ensure Halton's involvement in this, and a number of pan- Merseyside initiatives have been proposed.

3.2 The PPB has previously received an outline programme for proposed activities.

3.3 On 6th November Liverpool will announce its outline programme for 2008. This is way ahead of schedule and it must be accepted that activities will be added to that programme over time.

3.4 It is intended to update Members of the PPB of the programme announcement for 2008.

4.0 FINANCIAL ISSUES

4.1 None associated with the update. As members will be aware the programme for Halton did have financial implications, but these are being built into the budget setting process.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None. Support for Capital of Culture has already been agreed.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 None.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None. The Capital of Culture Company adapt a fully inclusive stance.

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

8.1 None.

Document

Place of Inspection

Contact Officer

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning & Skills PPB

DATE: 13 November 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director-Policy & Performance

SUBJECT: Performance Monitoring Reports for the 2nd quarter (2006/07)

WARDS: Boroughwide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The 2nd quarter monitoring reports for the Council services that come within the remit of this Policy & Performance Board were published last month and are available in both electronic and hard copy formats. The reports enable the Board to scrutinise progress towards achieving the service plan objectives, milestones and performance targets. Therefore, the purpose of this report is to draw attention to specific aspects contained in the full versions of the monitoring reports and to act as a 'signpost' to assist Board Members carry out their performance monitoring role.

2. RECOMMENDED: That the Policy & Performance Board

- 1) Scrutinise service performance and progress towards achieving objectives and targets and raise any questions or points for clarification in respect of the information contained in the quarterly monitoring reports; and**
- 2) Highlight areas of interest and/or concern that require further information or action to be reported at a future meeting of the Policy and Performance Board where appropriate.**

3. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Performance Considerations paper (attached as Appendix 1), highlights the key findings in the quarterly monitoring reports for the services listed below:

Environment Directorate

1. Economic Regeneration

Health & Community Directorate

1. Culture & Leisure Services

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Any policy implications arising from emerging issues or key developments that will impact upon the service or any action required to address performance issues, will be identified in the respective quarterly monitoring report.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Any other implications associated with issues connected with the service will be identified in the respective quarterly monitoring report.

6. RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 The risk control measures associated with the service objectives that were initially assessed as having 'HIGH' risks are summarised in the quarterly monitoring reports to monitor their implementation.

7. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 The actions identified arising from the Equality impact/needs assessments that are regarded as 'HIGH' priority for each service are in the Equality Action Plans and progress on their implementation is included in the respective quarterly monitoring reports.

8. REASON(S) FOR DECISION

Not applicable

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Not applicable

10. IMPLEMENTATION DATE

Not applicable

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Quarterly monitoring reports for:		
1. Economic Regeneration	Municipal Building 2 nd floor	Martin Holland- Performance Management Officer
2. Culture & Leisure Services		

PERFORMANCE CONSIDERATIONS

(2nd Quarter 2006/07)

SERVICE: Economic Regeneration (*Business Development and Adult Learning ONLY*)

Overview

This half-yearly report comments on the progress towards achieving the set of objectives, milestones and performance targets in the service plan that fall within the remit of this PPB. 2 of the 3 key objectives and 5 of the 9 performance indicators are on course to achieve their targets and have been given 'green' traffic lights. The remainder have been assigned 'amber' traffic lights indicating that it is uncertain at this stage whether the 5 targets will be met. Forecasts will be made as soon as the picture becomes clearer and in the meantime, some aspects are highlighted in the box below that the Board may wish to focus on.

Areas of Further Consideration

- The Greater Merseyside Learning & Skills Council has issued its draft framework for the development of an area Plan for Halton. It is unclear how this will be undertaken at local level and therefore, further reporting via the monitoring arrangements will be necessary to clarify what is to happen locally and by when.
- The Liverpool City Employment Strategy to tackle worklessness in the most deprived wards in the 6 Local Authority areas in Greater Merseyside has been given 'Pilot Status' by the Government. 'Ring-fenced' funding will be available although considerably less than originally expected. However, the monitoring report does not clarify whether a timeframe for the initiative has been confirmed or whether implementation has begun.
- Two of the milestones to foster enterprise and entrepreneurship in order to develop an enterprise culture (*Key Objective: ER 03*) is to establish the Halton Enterprise Partnership by the end of June 06 and identifying an Enterprise Champion by the end of July 06. The monitoring report indicates that these have not yet been achieved and therefore, the Board may wish to receive an update on progress and whether these delays have any implications for achieving the objective on time.
- The number of vacancies is down for the second quarter running and it remains unclear whether the performance target for helping the number of local people into jobs will be met (*ECO RLI 1*). The 1st quarter report highlighted that the reduction in the number of job vacancies was felt mainly in the retail sector. Whether the present local economic state will continue or an upturn sometime in the future is possible maybe aspects that the Board may wish to explore further.
- The target of 1029 for Halton's contribution to the number of jobs safeguarded, as a direct result of the service being provided (*ECO RLI 8*) was based on the large number of people finding work last year (2005/06). However, the 2005/06 figures had been overstated due to the double counting of Halton People into Jobs vacancies. Therefore, the 2006/07 target will need to be revised and an indication of the reduction would be appropriate for the Board to have.

SERVICE: Culture & Leisure (*excluding Parks & Countryside, Community Safety and the Drug Action Team*)

Overview

This half-yearly report comments on the progress towards achieving the set of objectives, milestones and performance targets in the service plan that come within the remit of the Employment, Learning & Skills PPB. All the objectives and the vast majority of the performance indicator targets have green traffic lights to indicate that they are on course to be achieved. Therefore, the prospects for the year are very good.

Areas of Further Consideration

- A significant key development was the discovery of legionella bacteria in the water system at Kingsway Leisure Centre in September which has since temporarily closed. There has been public and media interest about this issue and continued scrutiny and monitoring of the situation by the PPB will be important.