



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

**Monday, 11 November 2013 at 6.30 p.m.  
Council Chamber, Runcorn Town Hall**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David W R', is centered on the page.

**Chief Executive**

**BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

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

*Please contact Michelle Simpson on 0151 511 8708 or e-mail  
michelle.simpson@halton.gov.uk for further information.  
The next meeting of the Board is on Wednesday, 8 January 2014*

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

**Part I**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
<b>1. MINUTES</b>	
<b>2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)</b>	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item.	
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<b>(A) LOCAL ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT (LEA) - PRESENTATION</b>	<b>17 - 39</b>
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*In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.*

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

**DATE:** 11 November 2013

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Policy and Resources

**SUBJECT:** Public Question Time

**WARD(s):** Borough-wide

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 34(9).
- 1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDED: That any questions received be dealt with.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Standing Order 34(9) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows:-
- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for dealing with questions from members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.
  - (ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.
  - (iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be given by 4.00 pm on the working day prior to the date of the meeting to the Committee Services Manager. At any one meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
  - (iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner, which may or may not be answered at the meeting.
  - (v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-
    - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
    - Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;
    - Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or

- Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.
- (vi) In the interests of natural justice, public questions cannot relate to a planning or licensing application or to any matter which is not dealt with in the public part of a meeting.
- (vii) The Chairperson will ask for people to indicate that they wish to ask a question.
- (viii) **PLEASE NOTE** that the maximum amount of time each questioner will be allowed is 3 minutes.
- (ix) If you do not receive a response at the meeting, a Council Officer will ask for your name and address and make sure that you receive a written response.

Please bear in mind that public question time lasts for a maximum of 30 minutes. To help in making the most of this opportunity to speak:-

- Please keep your questions as concise as possible.
- Please do not repeat or make statements on earlier questions as this reduces the time available for other issues to be raised.
- Please note public question time is not intended for debate – issues raised will be responded to either at the meeting or in writing at a later date.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

None.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

None.

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

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

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

6.3 **A Healthy Halton** – none.

6.4 **A Safer Halton** – none.

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

**7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1 None.

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

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

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

**DATE:** 11 November 2013

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Chief Executive

**SUBJECT:** Executive Board Minutes

**WARD(s):** Boroughwide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The Minutes relating to the Community Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board are attached at Appendix 1 for information.
- 1.2 The Minutes are submitted to inform the Policy and Performance Board of decisions taken in their area.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Minutes be noted.**

## **3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 None.

## **4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None.

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

### **5.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

None

### **5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

None

### **5.3 A Healthy Halton**

None

### **5.4 A Safer Halton**

None

### **5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

None

**6.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

6.1 None.

**7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1 None.

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

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

**APPENDIX 1**

**Extract of Executive Board Minutes Relevant to the Employment, Learning Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board**

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 5 SEPTEMBER 2013**

**EXB58 RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP 2013**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, which updated Members on the plans for the Rugby League World Cup 2013 (RLWC 2013).

The Board was advised that the RLWC 2013 would run between 26 October 2013 and 30 November 2013. Halton Stadium would host the USA team Training Base after their arrival in England. It was reported that a number of partner agencies (the Halton consortium), had prepared a delivery plan, which was attached to the report at Appendix A. The Halton consortium would prepare detailed plans for a Civic Reception, Coaching Master Class, Open Training Session and Community Engagement Activity. The Board noted that the delivery plan was intended to attract engagement across the age ranges in sport and cultural activities, with the opportunity to deliver further activity in other community settings.

Other opportunities for services to re-brand their activities during the tournament were detailed in the report, with the opportunity to link into a number of national initiatives such as Try Reading and Education Resource.

**RESOLVED:** That the contents of the report be noted and the Delivery Plan, attached at Appendix A, be approved.

**EXB59 WIDNES RECREATION SITE DEVELOPMENT**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities, which provided Members with an update on the re-development of the Widnes Recreation Site, Liverpool Road, Widnes.

The Board was advised that a business plan had been prepared which contained background detail, project outline and associated financial implications for the development of a sports facility at the former recreation site. It was noted that the new sports facilities would include new changing facilities, an indoor activity room, kitchen facilities, an external multi use games area, a new cricket pitch, reconfiguration of the outdoor sports pitches and improvements to the car park. The Board noted that the draft business plan



would be sent to Sport England for comments.

It was reported that the estimated £2.680m required to fund the scheme would be raised by the proposed sale of 3 acres of land at the Widnes Recreation site for housing development.

The report constituted a preliminary estimate report for the purposes of Procurement Standing Orders 2.1.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the proposals for the redevelopment of the former Widnes Recreation Site, Liverpool Road, Widnes, be approved;
- 2) Council be recommended to approve inclusion of the former Widnes Recreation Site development within the Council's Capital Programme;
- 3) the Strategic Director, Communities, the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Community and Sport, be authorised to implement the project, provided planning permission is obtained and the indicative prices outlined in the report are not exceeded;
- 4) Officers be authorised to begin public consultation with Sport England on the sports facility proposed within the Business Plan, attached at Appendix A; and
- 5) Officers be authorised to proceed with planning applications and place the proposed housing land on the open market to obtain tendered prices for the build cost.

### **EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2013**

#### **EXB93 THE LIVERPOOL CITY REGION GROWTH GRANT**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which updated Members on the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Business Growth Grant Programme.

The Board was reminded that at its meeting on 11 July 2013, it considered a progress report on the LCR Growth Grant Programme. It was

reported that the Growth Grant could support businesses which planned to invest in capital or equipment which would directly create or safeguard jobs and increase business output. It was noted that the LCR Growth Grant was designed to unlock private sector investment, with a leverage ratio of 5:1.

The report detailed the eligible costs for which funding could be given which included capital expenditure, investment in new technologies, systems and software and employment and training aid. The report further outlined how the scheme would operate in Halton and the key stages of the preferred Delivery Model, the latter supported by information in Appendices 1 and 2.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the proposed mechanism to be used to deliver funds to Halton businesses through The Liverpool City Region Growth Grant, detailed in Appendices 1 & 2, be agreed;
- 2) the partnership agreement between LCR Local Enterprise Partnership and Halton Borough Council for the delivery of The Liverpool City Region Growth Grant be accepted; and
- 3) the award of Liverpool City Region Growth Grant be delegated to the Operational Director Employment, Enterprise and Property in consultation with the Operational Director, Finance, the Operational Director, Legal and Democratic Services and the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development.

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

**DATE:** 11 November 2013

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Chief Executive

**SUBJECT:** Specialist Strategic Partnership minutes

**WARD(s):** Boroughwide

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 The Minutes relating to the Economic Development Portfolio which have been considered by the Specialist Strategic Partnership are attached at Appendix 1 for information.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Minutes be noted.**

### **3.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 None.

### **4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None.

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

#### **5.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

None

#### **5.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

None

#### **5.3 A Healthy Halton**

None

#### **5.4 A Safer Halton**

None

#### **5.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

None

**6.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

6.1 None.

**7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1 None.

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

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

## Employment, Learning & Skills SSP


### Executive Group Meeting Minutes


**Kingsway Learning Centre 29 July 2013**

#### Present

Wesley Rourke	HBC - Economy, Enterprise & Property (Chair)
Hitesh Patel	Halton CAB
Debbie Houghton	HBC – Children & Enterprise Policy Team
Debbie Ainsworth	Job Centre Plus
Cllr Eddie Jones	Halton Borough Council
Tracy Ryan	HBC – Children & Enterprise Policy Team (Minutes)
Simon Clough	HBC Learning & Achievement Services
Shelah Semoff	HBC
Janine Peterson	DWP
Cleo Pollard	Halton Family Voice

Item		Action
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Apologies</b> Kevin Smith, Riverside College Siobhan Saunders, HBC Clare Bradbury Priory Partnership	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Minutes and Matters Arising from 13.5.13</b>  The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Introduction to Community Budgets</b>  Shelah Semoff delivered the presentation outlining an introduction to Community Budgets. The presentation and hand-outs are attached.  Core idea involves a range of partners agreeing common outcomes, pool resources etc – it builds on the work of 'Total Place'. Will assist local communities to have more power and control over local services. Community Budgets help ensure agencies/services make better use of resources to meet the needs of individuals and the community. Supporting local partnerships and governance arrangements. Sixteen pilot schemes have been undertaken and additional themes have now been added.  A number of barriers and factors for success were highlighted. Lessons learnt from the pilots have identified several areas for improvement across services/partners.  LGA commissioned Ernst and Young to undertake a review of	

	<p>community budgets, their report indicates better outcomes etc are achieved from this approach.</p> <p><b>Questions/discussion arising from presentation:</b>          WR - Are Community Budgets feasible in Halton?          SS – Yes, small local authority, good partnership working          JP (JCP) Unsure as partners may be wary about pooling budgets due to austerity measures and organisational changes taking place. May be more around pooling other resources. Agreed with idea of mapping needs etc          CP – There may be issues around accountability, as a ‘client’ this would be welcomed and suggest taking a bold move to establish community budgets in Halton would be good.          SC – Sought clarity on what is involved, is it about pooled budgets or more about pooling services to avoid duplication. Breadth of type of jobs for different skills now available to schools via new software system, as an authority it’s about influencing schools to promote this.          EJ – Different organisations have different agendas which can be difficult to align as not one organisation, it makes sense but the detail of this is important. Little bit wary of this.          DH – First priority should be understanding and considering the ‘client/customers’ needs, review gaps. How much duplication is there? Are we making best use of the resources that we have available?          HP – A co-ordinated approach to advise people on getting into work and the skills etc needed would be useful. Advice/signposting could be given by other non- traditional organisations but we are all offering the same advice in a co-ordinated way.</p>	
4.0	<p><b>Discussion around Key Questions</b></p>  <p>COMMUNITY BUDGETS KEY QUEST</p> <p><b><i>What are the key issues - priorities to focus on</i></b>          Having a co-ordinated approach to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>support/assist people into work</li> <li>jobs for the future - learning and skills for people/pupils</li> <li>sign-post information, advice and services that are already available</li> </ol> <p><b><i>Barriers</i></b>          Scenario AN Other is out of work and needs a job:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JCP arrange back to work meetings with AN Other, develop case load, complete a skills analysis and action plan to support until back into employment – funding has driven behaviour of JCP. Due to Localism JCP now</li> </ul>	

	<p>in a position to do things totally different.                  Other partners tasked/funded to provide similar support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to agree the sustainable Impacts, requires bite-size chunks as huge agenda to achieve</li> <li>• NEET – already working closely with JCP but data sharing has been a significant barrier that we have now overcome</li> </ul> <p>Members indicated committed to doing more along the ideas of community budgets but need to be realistic. Agreed to select a priority group to work with and perhaps within a geographical location – a designated ward. Pilot to be developed.</p> <p><b>Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Develop key specification to progress Halton’s pilot approach to Community Budgets</b></li> <li>• <b>Research and Intelligence to provide geographical data at individual ward and area forum basis (Appleton, Riverside and Kingsway &amp; Windmill Hill, Castle ward, Norton North and Norton South - Shelah/Debbie to follow-up via Neil McSweeney</b></li> <li>• <b>Identify caseload perspective - cohort group to be agreed – possibly 18-25 year olds</b></li> <li>• <b>Information from Simon Clough on work/progress with NEETs and JCP</b></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Contact Kevin Smith, Riverside College for update on targeted ward level work</b></li> <li>• <b>Update/progress to be reported to the HSPB in September</b></li> </ul>	<p>SS/DH/WR</p> <p>SS/DH/WR</p> <p>SS/DH/WR</p> <p><b>Complete - Attached</b></p>  <p>ELS PPB Skills info from Simon Clough.dc</p> <p><b>TR</b></p> <p>SS/DH/WR</p>
<p>5.0</p>	<p><b>AOB</b> None</p>	
	<p><b>Meeting dates: 2pm at Kingsway Learning Centre, Widnes</b></p> <p><u>Please note change of date from 21/10 to 14/10 for next meeting:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14 October (Theme Mersey Gateway)</li> <li>• 16 December '13</li> <li>• 10 February '14</li> </ul>	

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	11 November 2013
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Strategic Director Children and Enterprise
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Economic Development
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Local Economic Assessment (LEA)
<b>WARDS:</b>	Borough-wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To consider the Local Economic Assessment for the Borough of Halton.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**

- (1) The intelligence provided by the Halton Local Economic Assessment be utilised when formulating the key strategic documents of the Council

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

The Local Economic Assessment is a key evidence base for the Borough of Halton, providing an accurate picture of the economic performance. The LEA looks to link in with the strategic priorities of the Liverpool City Region and will be key in providing supporting evidence for funding programmes, such as the European funding programme.

### **Scope of the Report**

The Halton LEA focuses upon the following key themes which influence the performance of a given local economy:-

- Economic Value and Growth by sector
- Employment and Economic Activity
- Skills
- Economic Inactivity and Unemployment
- Land and Property markets

The draft Halton LEA, where possible, utilises information contained in previous Halton Economic Reviews to provide a longer timeframe for the analysis of structural changes in the economy of Halton. The utilisation of an economic forecasting model to anticipate, for example GVA and employment growth, was a key element of previous reviews. The procurement of a bespoke, Halton specific, economic model to underpin the production of a Halton LEA proved prohibitively expensive. The modelling of the future performance of the economy of Halton will, therefore, be provided by Cheshire East Council utilising the Cheshire and Warrington Economic Model, amended to include Halton. The results of that exercise will be available in July 2011 and will be factored into the next iteration of the report.



## Key Themes

### Economic Value and Growth by sector

Gross value added (GVA) is a measure in economics of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy.

Key LEA findings:-

- The 2012 Merseyside Partnership Economic Review estimated that in 2009 Halton provided £2.3bn of the Liverpool City Region's GVA (around 10%).
- The Liverpool City Region has a number of growth sectors that will have an impact on Halton. The identified sectors are: Creative and Digital Industries; Advanced Manufacturing; Finance and Professional Services; Life Sciences; Low Carbon; Visitor Economy.
- The 2012 Merseyside Partnership Economic Review forecasts long-term employment growth in life sciences i.e. Daresbury.

### Employment and Economic Activity

This theme focusses on the workforce, wage levels and business demography.

Key LEA findings:-

- Halton has a higher proportion of people working in full-time jobs when compared regionally and nationally.
- Halton's workforce is similar when compared nationally and regionally. Halton does have a lower level of Managers and a higher level of Machine operatives.
- The average weekly wage for a worker in Halton is higher than the North West (£470) but lower than England (£512).
- The average weekly wage for a resident in Halton is lower than the North West (£473) and England (£513).
- Halton has a higher proportion of businesses who turnover £1million plus when compared to England and the North West.
- Halton's employment rate is similar to regional and national rates.
- Halton has a lower proportion of residents in professional occupations when compared regionally and nationally. However the borough does have a higher proportion of residents working in associate professional and technical occupations.

### Skills

This theme focusses on Adult skills and learning, Higher education and Apprenticeships

Key LEA findings:-

- Similar to the City Region, Halton resident's qualification levels are lower than those of the North West and England.
- The 2011 skills for life survey showed that Halton has improved in each of the categories (Literacy, Numeracy and ICT Skills) when compared to the 2003 Skills for Life survey. In comparison to local, regional and national averages, Halton has outperformed all in terms of improvement.

- Nationally, Halton has amongst the lowest proportions of pupils entering Higher Education.
- Halton had 2,000 apprenticeship starts in 2011/12. Around half of these end in achievements.

### **Economic Inactivity and Unemployment**

This theme covers all elements of worklessness, including; economic inactivity, out-of-work benefit claimant levels and Job Seekers Allowance claimant levels.

Key LEA findings:-

- 18,900 (24%) of Halton's working age population are economically inactive.
- 17% of Halton's working age population are claiming out of work benefits.
- In line with the City Region rate, Halton's JSA rate is around 5%. This is higher than the national rate.
- At 11%, Halton's youth (18-24 year olds) unemployment rate is above regional (8%) and national (6%) rates.

### **Land and Property markets**

This section seeks to quantify the demand for, and the supply of, commercial property (development land and industrial, office and retail space) in Halton from 2000 to 2011.

Key LEA findings:-

- The number of enquiries for commercial property received by Halton Borough Council's Business Improvement and Growth (BIG) Team fell between 2008-09 and 2009-10 mirroring the global economic slowdown.
- Significantly, since 2008-09, there has been a decrease in inward investment enquiries but a marked increase in local businesses requiring commercial property to satisfy their expansion plans together with new start-up companies seeking commercial property.
- The supply of commercial property in Halton has increased dramatically since 2008. For example, there is now three times the amount of 1000-5000 sq. ft. industrial space recorded on the BIG Team database compared with 2008.

## **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The evidence regarding the current and anticipated performance of the local economy contained within the final draft of the Halton LEA will be utilised to shape the development of future Council policy.

## **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

None

**6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL’S PRIORITIES**

**6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

Continuous improvement in terms of the educational attainment of the Boroughs young people will impact profoundly upon the future performance of the local economy

**6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

The availability of a flexible, skilled and motivated workforce will be vital to the future performance of the economy of Halton

**6.3 A Healthy Halton**

Worklessness is a key determinant of poor health. Measures, therefore, to improve the employability of local people will have a positive impact upon the health of the Borough

**6.4 A Safer Halton**

Worklessness is a factor in many instances of crime and anti-social behaviour. Measures to increase employment, be they through a general upskilling of the local workforce or improved levels of entrepreneurship, will reduce instances of criminal or deviant behaviour.

**6.5 Environment and Regeneration in Halton**

The provision of an adequate supply of high quality development land which can be brought forward within the framework of the Council’s Core Strategy and specific development priorities will impact positively on the urban renewal of the Borough.

**7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

The provision of comprehensive, evidence based LEA will provide the necessary intelligence to identify and address the key challenges facing the Borough of Halton. The production of a Halton LEA will, therefore, mitigate a number of the risks associated with developing policy and allocating resources.

**8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

None

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
None under the meaning of the Act.		

Local Economic Assessment 2013



Produced by Halton Borough Council

## 1: Context and place

To make Halton a better place for its residents, employers and employees, a strong emphasis on economic prosperity is required. For Halton 'place-making' extends beyond the development of capital schemes in isolation but leads us to an approach which connects our capital assets to Halton's communities, so that local people benefit from these opportunities.

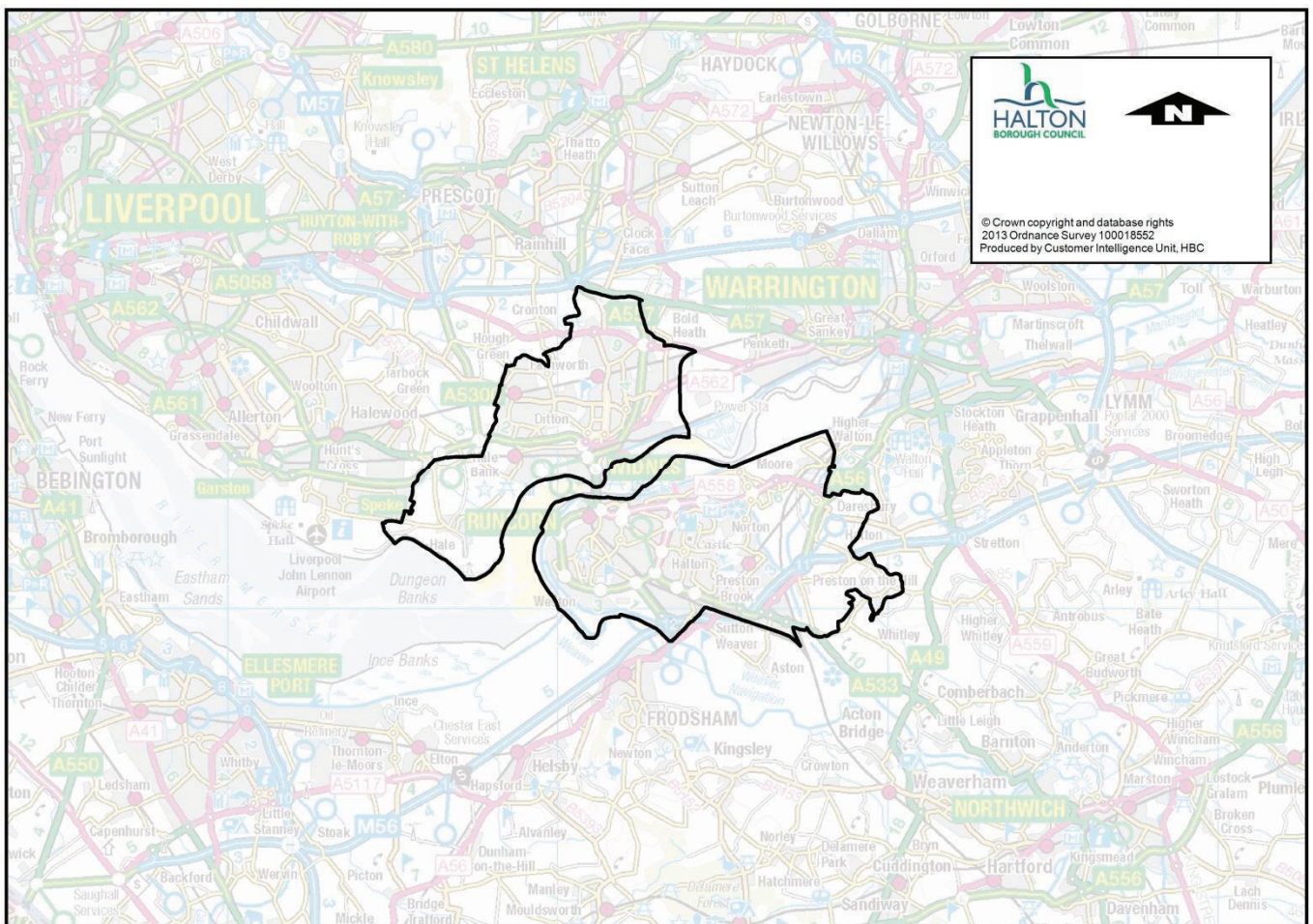
If we are to drive future economic growth and prosperity in the borough

effectively, it will require the alignment of activities, development of new approaches and vehicles to regeneration and pooling resources accordingly.

The current economic climate requires the delivery of services in a different way; they need to become more focused; and there is a need to develop new ways of working, particularly with the private sector.

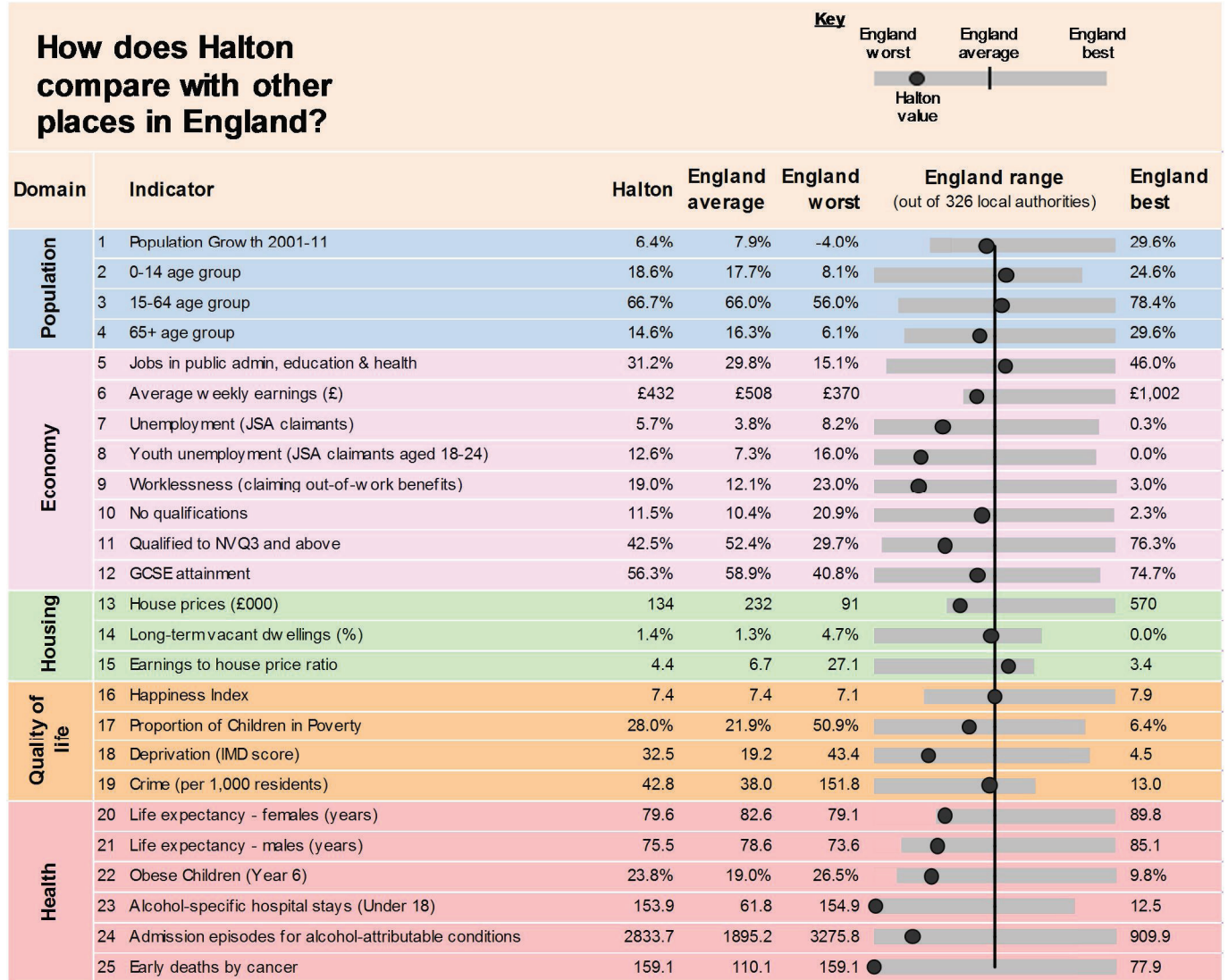
The Halton Economic Assessment will comprise a robust evidence base about the Halton economy and a clear functional analysis of economic activity across the borough. This will then feed into the development of a local strategy and a rigorous assessment of key policy issues, trends and future scenarios.

### Map of Halton



**What other information is out there?**

The following “spine” chart provides contextual information for Halton. Information is constantly updated and can be accessed at [www.halton.gov.uk/research](http://www.halton.gov.uk/research)





## 2: Economic Value and Growth by sector

### GVA and the City Region Context

Gross value added (GVA) is a measure in economics of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy. The Liverpool City Region has a

**£23.1bn** economy

The 2012 Merseyside Partnership Economic Review estimated that in 2009 Halton provides

**£2.3bn** of the Liverpool City Region's GVA (around 10%).

#### Comparative GVA

Area	GVA 2011 (£m)
Greater Manchester	48,202
Lancashire	23,382
LCR	23,059
Cheshire	20,321
Cumbria	8,950
England	1,124,881

### Growth Sectors

The Liverpool City Region has a number of growth sectors that will have an impact on Halton. The identified sectors are:

- Creative and Digital Industries
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Finance and Professional Services
- Life Sciences
- Low Carbon
- Visitor Economy

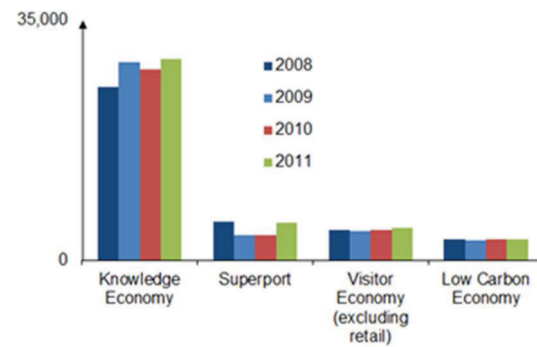
Within the City region context the following sites within Halton have been identified as being key:



1. 3MG
2. Mersey Gateway
3. Daresbury
4. The Heath

### Current Halton picture of growth sectors

The chart below shows the number of jobs in growth sectors, the largest proportion being those classed as forming part of the knowledge economy.



### The future picture

The 2012 Merseyside Partnership Economic Review provided the following economic forecasts:

#### Baseline Growth Sector Employment in Liverpool City Region

	2009 (000s)	2000-2005 (% pa)	2005-2010 (% pa)	2010-2015 (% pa)	2015-2020 (% pa)	2020-2025 (% pa)
Low Carbon	14.6	-0.2	-3.5	0.3	0.3	0.5
Knowledge						
Advanced Manufacturing	35.1	-4.3	-3.4	-0.3	-0.8	-0.4
Digital & Creative	25.9	2.0	-5.6	1.3	0.3	0.4
Life Sciences	56.2	1.7	1.6	-1.2	0.7	0.9
Professional & Financial	70.6	3.1	-1.9	1.0	0.9	0.9
Tourism & Visitor	50.0	4.3	-0.6	0.3	0.4	0.7
SuperPort	30.8	2.8	0.3	0.6	0.2	0.4
<b>Total LCR Economy</b>	<b>645.8</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>-0.4</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.5</b>

Note: Workplace based employment.

Source: LEFM Baseline consistent with Cambridge Econometrics' UK Regional Economic Forecast, July 2011.

Growth expected in life sciences, i.e. Daresbury

## Baseline Growth Sector GVA in Liverpool City Region

	2009 (£m 2006)*	2000- 2005 (% pa)	2005- 2010 (% pa)	2010- 2015 (% pa)	2015- 2020 (% pa)	2020- 2025 (% pa)
Low Carbon	421.5	1.3	-0.7	6.2	4.3	3.5
Knowledge						
Advanced Manufacturing	1,623.9	-2.8	-2.3	4.3	2.1	2.1
Digital & Creative	1,071.1	2.8	0.3	4.7	4.7	5.0
Life Sciences	763.4	4.4	10.5	2.9	5.1	3.7
Professional & Financial	2,842.8	2.1	1.7	2.8	3.0	3.6
Tourism & Visitor	768.5	2.5	-1.9	1.4	2.2	2.4
SuperPort	975.5	0.9	-1.4	3.5	2.2	2.8
<b>Total LCR Economy</b>	<b>20,265.5</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.5</b>

Source: LEFM Baseline consistent with Cambridge Econometrics' UK Regional Economic Forecast, July 2011.

\* Figures quoted in £millions based on 2006 prices.

GVA forecast to increase in Digital & Creative, i.e. Heath/Daresbury

For more detail see the 2012 Mersey Partnership Economic Review:

[http://www.liverpoollep.org/docs/Economic\\_Report\\_2012.pdf](http://www.liverpoollep.org/docs/Economic_Report_2012.pdf)



### 3: Employment and Economic Activity

#### Workforce in Halton

**60,000** people work in Halton

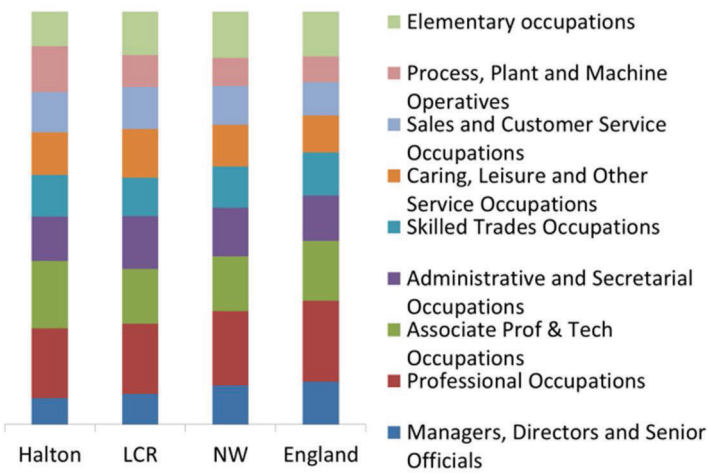
Halton has a higher proportion of people working in full-time jobs when compared regionally and nationally

#### Status of workforce in Halton

Area	% full-time	% part-time
Halton	77	23
LCR	73	27
NW	74	26
England	74	26

Halton's workforce is similar when compared nationally and regionally. Halton does have a lower level of Managers and a higher level of Machine operatives.

#### Workforce by occupation type



#### Wages

The average weekly wage for a worker in Halton is higher than the North West (£470) but lower than England (£512).

**£493** average weekly wage for workers in Halton

The average weekly wage for a resident in Halton is lower than the North West (£473) and England (£513).

**£452** average weekly wage for residents in Halton

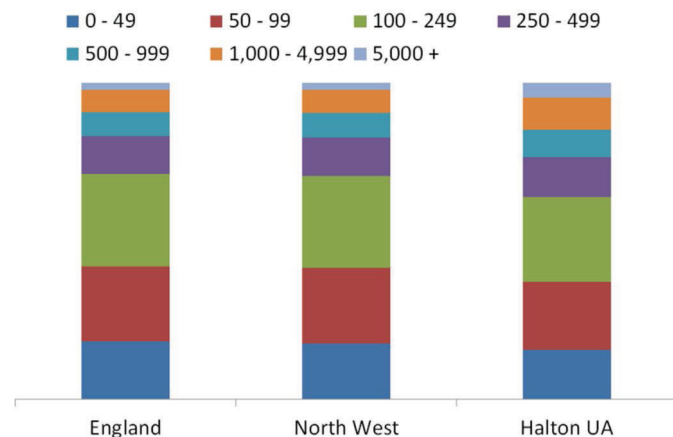
#### Businesses in Halton

**3,500** businesses (local units) in Halton

Business type	Count
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	30
Production	335
Construction	375
Motor trades	110
Wholesale	190
Retail	410
Transport & storage (inc. postal)	190
Accommodation & food services	200
Information & communication	185
Finance & insurance	80
Property	110
Professional, scientific & technical	435
Business administration and support services	285
Public administration and defence	30
Education	135
Health	265
Arts, entertainment, recreation	215

Halton has a higher proportion of businesses who turnover £1million plus when compared to England and the North West

#### Turnover size (£ thousand)



**Resident Analysis**

Halton's employment rate is similar to regional and national rates

Employment rate (% working age)

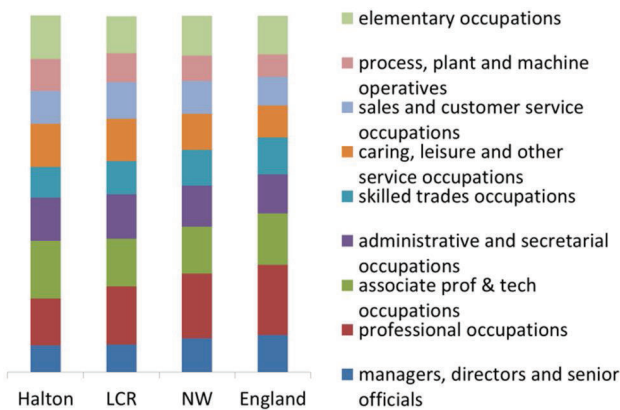
Area	All	Male	Female
Halton	68	70	65
LCR	66	68	63
NW	69	73	65
England	71	76	66

**6%** of Halton's working age residents are self employed

This is lower than the LCR (7%), North West (8%) and England (10%)

Halton has a lower proportion of residents in professional occupations when compared regionally and nationally. However the borough does have a higher proportion of residents working in associate professional and technical occupations.

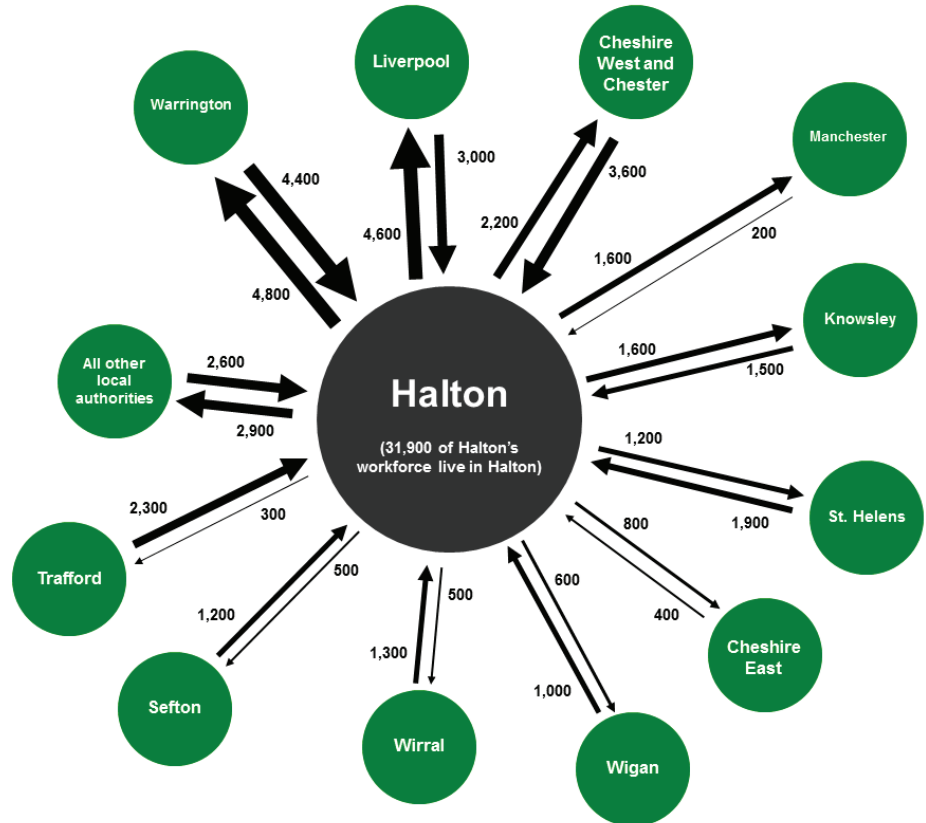
Occupation type of Halton Residents



Travel to work

**31,900** of Halton's workforce live in Halton.

Halton's largest import and export of workers is to Warrington.

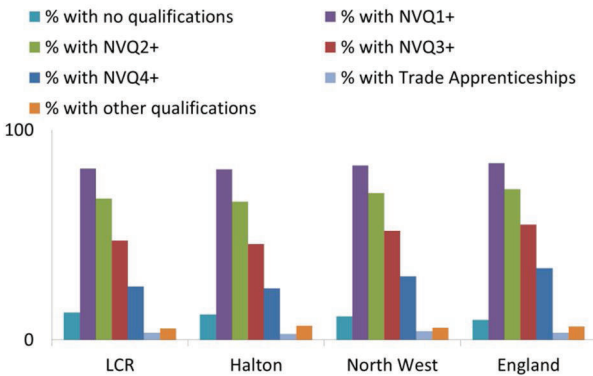


## 4: Skills

### Adult Skills and learning

Similar to the City Region, Halton resident's qualification levels are lower than those of the North West and England.

**12%** of Halton's working age population have no qualifications.

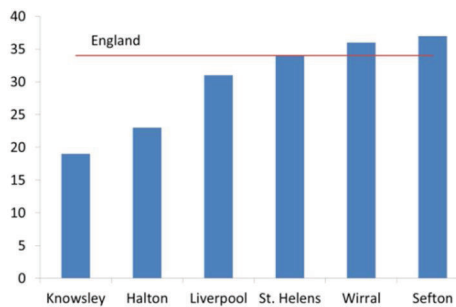


The 2011 skills for life survey showed that Halton has improved in each of the categories (Literacy, Numeracy and ICT Skills) when compared to the 2003 Skills for Life survey. In comparison to local, regional and national averages, Halton has outperformed all in terms of improvement.

### Higher Education

Nationally, Halton has amongst the lowest proportions of pupils entering Higher Education.

% of pupils aged 15 in 2005/06 entering Higher Education before they are 19



### Apprenticeships

Halton had 2,000 apprenticeship starts in 2011/12. Around half of these end in achievements.

The highest number of apprenticeships was in the Business, Administration and Law sectors, although Engineering and Manufacturing Technology apprenticeships offer a more successful completion rate.

Area	Starts	Ends
Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	20	0
Business, Administration and Law	740	310
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	90	40
Education and Training	40	10
Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	230	220
Health, Public Services and Care	380	130
Information and Communication Technology	110	30
Leisure, Travel and Tourism	90	90
Retail and Commercial Enterprise	310	210
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,010</b>	<b>1,040</b>

### Science Technology and Manufacturing (STAM) analysis

In 2012 Halton Borough Council carried out an analysis of STAM companies within the borough. Overall, Level 6 qualifications are the most required for the current employment types offered by Halton STAM companies, with fewer opportunities for those with lower qualifications, especially in the Bioscience and Engineering sectors.

Current recruitment opportunities are available for those qualified to at least Level 3. Future recruitment opportunities seem to require a wider range of qualification levels from Level 3-8 (though most opportunities are again at Level 6).

Apprenticeships appear to be well represented, with opportunities tending to be towards the Advanced and Higher Level Apprenticeships (leading to Level 3 and 4 qualifications). Companies in the Bioscience sector offered the fewest number of apprenticeships.

The table below summarises these comments:

	Employment Types	Recruitment Opportunities	Apprenticeship Opportunities
<b>Bioscience</b>	L6+	Current L3-5, Future – most at L6	Few - Advanced
<b>Chemical</b>	L2+ (most at L6)	Current none, Future – most at L6	Many – Advanced/ Higher/Undergraduate
<b>Digital</b>	L2+ (most at L6)	Current L3-4, Future – most at L3, 4, 6	Some – All levels
<b>Engineering</b>	L5 and 6	Current L5-8, Future – L3, 5-8 (L5-6 most)	Many – advanced / higher

For further information the report can be found here: <http://sciencehalton.co.uk/Halton-STAM-Skills-Report-2012.pdf>

## 5: Economic Inactivity and Unemployment

### Economic Inactivity

**18,900** (24%) of Halton's working age population are economically inactive

12,300 (65%) of the economically inactive do not want a job.

1 in 3 of the female working age population are economically inactive.

### Out of Work Benefits

**17%** of Halton's working age population are claiming out of work benefits

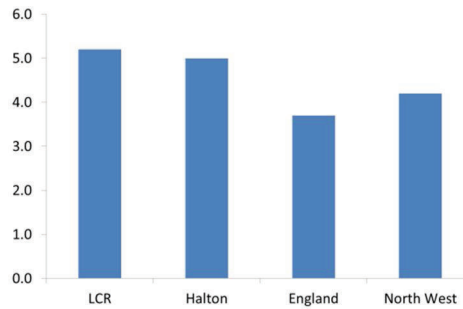
The out of work benefit with the largest number of claimants is ESA/incapacity benefits. The chart at the bottom of the page shows the out of work claimant rate at ward level. Windmill Hill has the highest proportion, with a third of the working age population claiming a key out of work benefit.

### Job Seekers Allowance

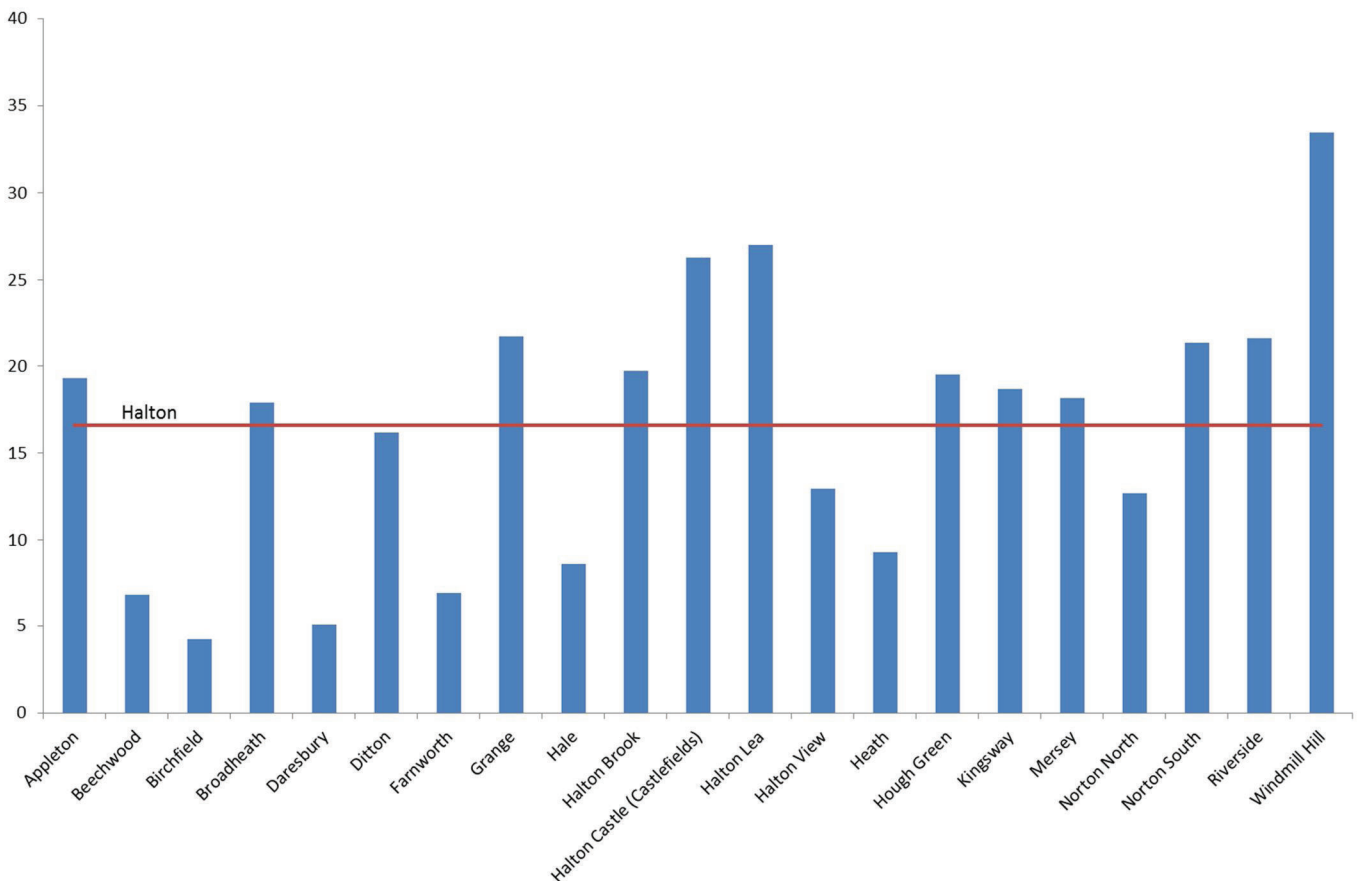
In line with the City Region rate, Halton's JSA rate is around 5%. This is higher than the national rate.

**29%** of JSA claimants have been claiming for over 12 months

At 11%, Halton's youth (18-24 year olds) unemployment rate is above regional (8%) and national (6%) rates.



Out of work benefits (ward level)



## 6: Land and Property markets

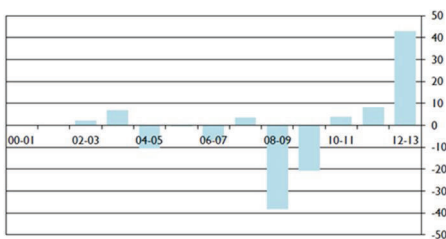
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The analysis is based upon information held by (and collected by) Halton Borough Council's Business Improvement and Growth (BIG) Team, it is, therefore, based upon an incomplete picture of both the total number of investment projects completed in the Borough each year and the supply of commercial property and should be read accordingly.

### The Demand for Commercial Property 2000-2011

The number of enquiries for commercial property received by the BIG Team fell between 2008-09 and 2009-10 mirroring the global economic slowdown. The largest fall in Investment enquiries was 38%, occurring between 2007-08 and 2008-09. However, in 2010-11, investment enquires increased for the first time since 2007-08.

#### Total enquiries - % change



Following the global recession, enquiries for industrial and office units have started to increase in 2010-11, while retail and site

enquiries appeared to recover in 2009-10 but then fell again in 2011-12. Preliminary figures for 2012-13 show industrial enquiries still increasing, an increase in retail, but a slowing of enquiries for offices and sites.

Over the period of the review there has been no change with respect to the split of overall enquiries between Runcorn and Widnes.

Since 2007-08 there has been a decrease in enquiries for freehold properties together with an increase in 'no preference' of lease type.

Significantly, since 2008-09, there has been a decrease in inward investment enquiries but a marked increase in local businesses requiring commercial property to satisfy their expansion plans together with new start-up companies seeking commercial property.

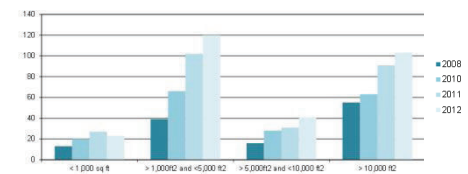
### The Supply of Commercial Property 2000-2011

The supply of commercial property in Halton has increased dramatically since 2008. For example, there is now three times the amount of 1000-5000 sq ft industrial space recorded on the BIG Team database compared with 2008.

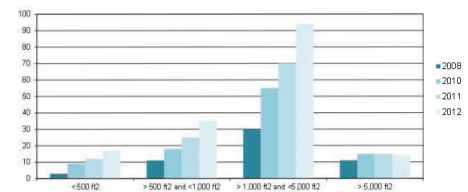
However, there have been a number of notable exceptions to the general trend of increasing

property supply. For example the supply of small industrial premises, large sites (20 acres +) have decreased over the last year, while large retail units and offices have remained largely the same.

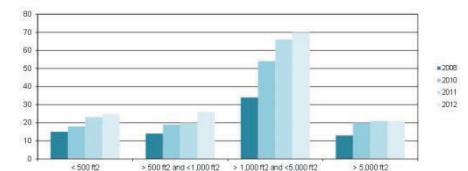
#### Industrial availability (units)



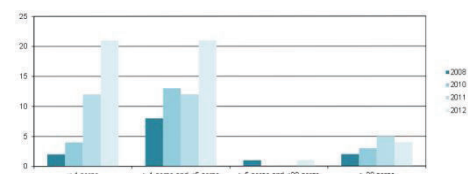
#### Retail availability (units)



#### Office availability (units)



#### Site availability (units)





# It's all happening IN HALTON



[www.halton.gov.uk](http://www.halton.gov.uk)

# Local Economic Assessment

## Scope of the Report

- Economic Value and Growth by sector
- Employment and Economic Activity
- Skills
- Economic Inactivity and Unemployment
- Land and Property markets



# Local Economic Assessment

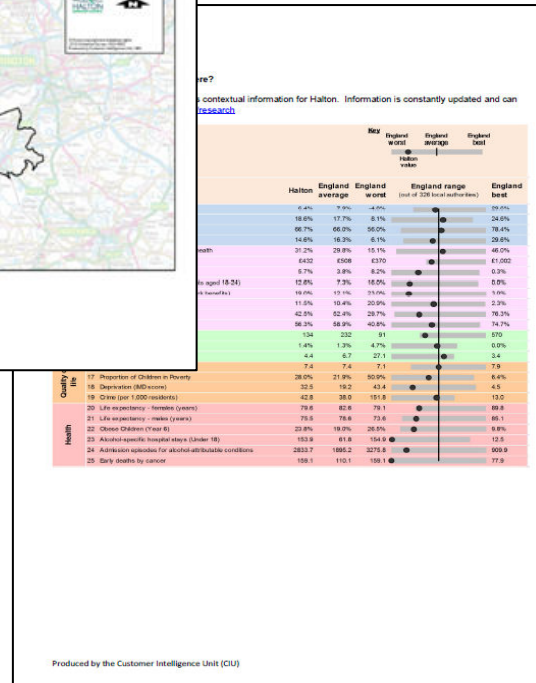
**1: Context and place**

To make Halton a better place for its residents, employees and enterprises, a strong emphasis on economic prosperity is required. For Halton place-making extends beyond the development of capital schemes in isolation but leads us to an approach which connects our capital assets to Halton's communities, so that local people benefit from these opportunities. If we are to drive future economic growth and prosperity in the borough effectively, it will require the alignment of activities, development of new approaches and vehicles to regeneration and pooling resources accordingly. The current economic climate requires the delivery of services in a different way; they need to become more focused, and there is a need to develop new ways of working, particularly with the private sector.

The Halton Economic Assessment will comprise a robust evidence base about the Halton economy and a clear functional analysis of economic activity across the borough. This will then feed into the development of a local strategy and a rigorous assessment of key policy issues, trends and future scenarios.

Map of Halton

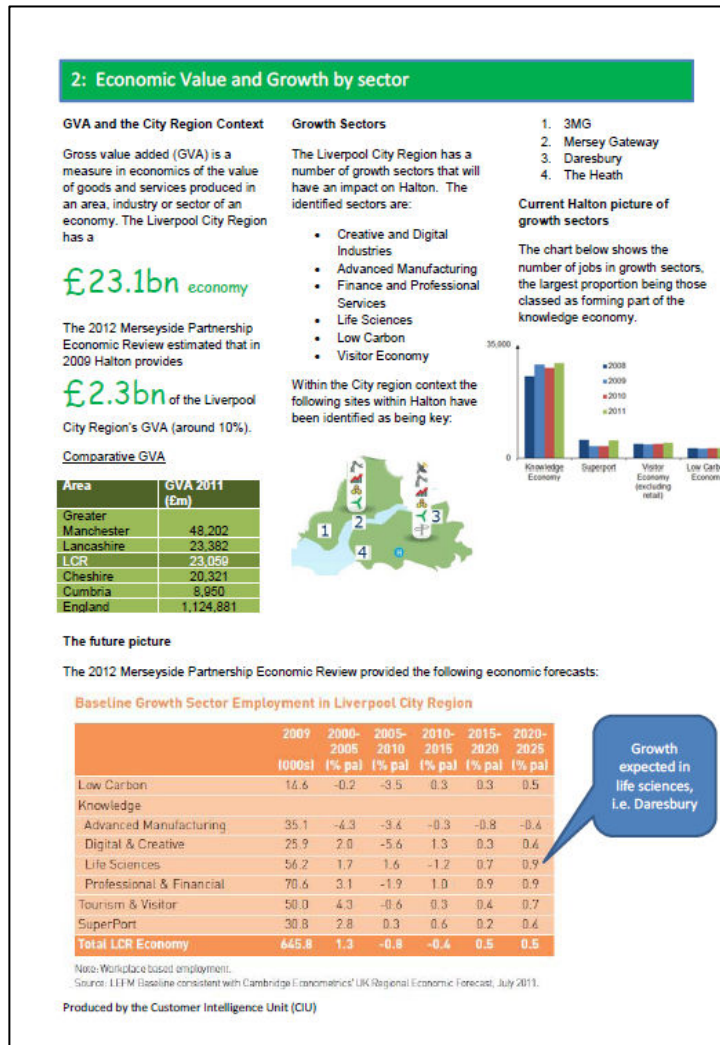
Produced by the Customer Intelligence Unit (CIU)



## Context and Place

- Introduces the geographical setting of Halton
- Identifies the demographic make-up of the Borough
- Briefly summarises the wider determinants and challenges faced within Halton

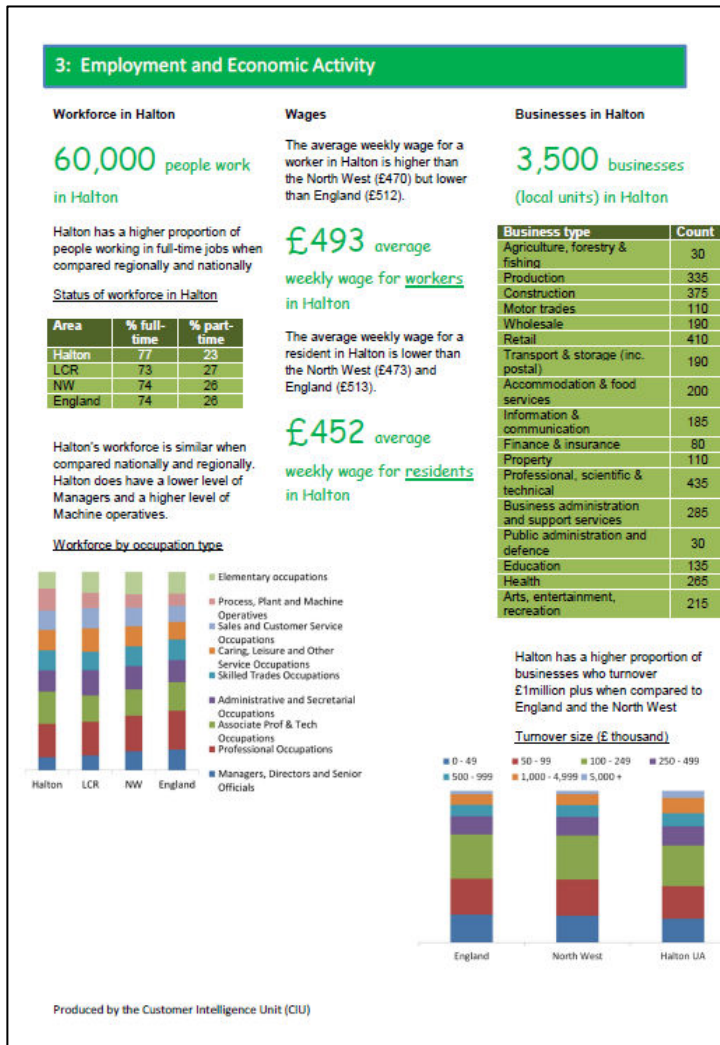
# Local Economic Assessment



## Economic Value and Growth

- Gross value added (GVA) is a measure in economics of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy
- Halton provides an estimated 10% of the Liverpool City Regions GVA (£2.3billion)
- Growth is projected in life sciences sector (i.e. Daresbury)

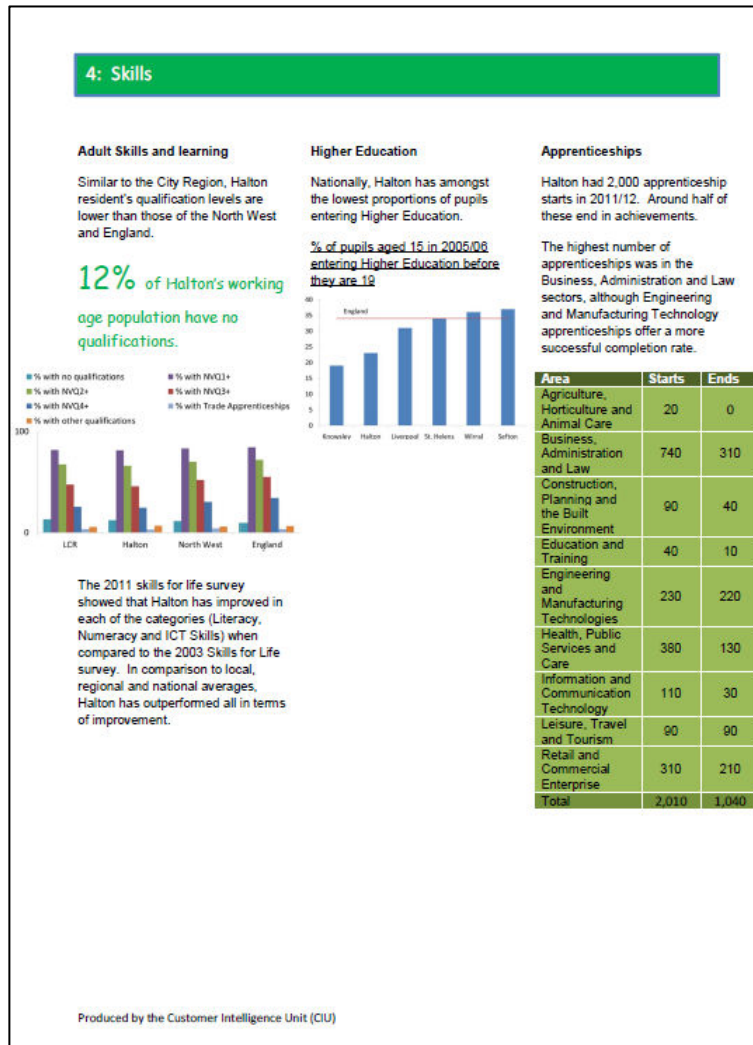
# Local Economic Assessment



## Employment and Economic Activity

- This theme focusses on the workforce, wage levels and business demography
- People working in Halton have a higher average wage than people living in Halton
- Halton has a higher proportion of businesses who turnover £1million+ when compared to the NW and England

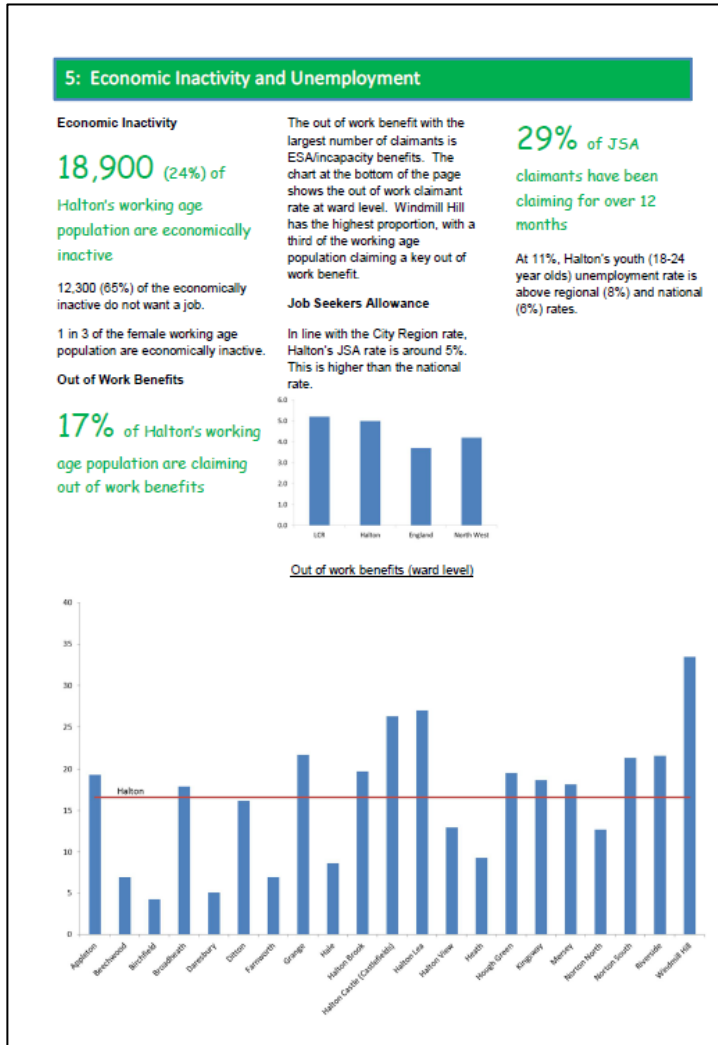
# Local Economic Assessment



## Skills

- This theme focusses on Adult skills and learning, Higher education and Apprenticeships
  - Similarly to the Liverpool City region, adult qualification levels in Halton are lower than the North West and England
  - Halton's figures for literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are all improving
- \*Skills for life survey 2011

# Local Economic Assessment



## Economic Activity and Unemployment

- This theme covers all elements of worklessness, including; economic inactivity, out-of-work benefit claimant levels and Job Seekers Allowance claimant levels

- Around a quarter of Halton's working age population are economically inactive (with 65% of this group not wanting a job)

- In line with the Liverpool City Region, Halton's unemployment claimant rate is higher than regional and national rates



# Local Economic Assessment

## 6: Land and Property markets

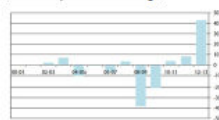
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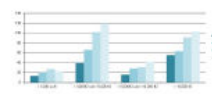
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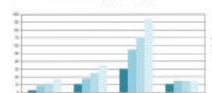
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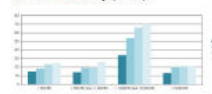
### Industrial availability (units)



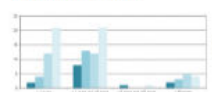
### Retail availability (units)



### Office availability (units)



### Site availability (units)



Produced by the Customer Intelligence Unit (CIU)

## Land and Property markets

- This section seeks to quantify the demand for, and the supply of, commercial property (development land and industrial, office and retail space) in Halton from 2000 to 2011
- No. of enquiries for commercial property received by Halton Borough Council's Business Improvement and Growth (BIG) Team fell between 2008-09 and 2009-10 mirroring the global economic slowdown
- Significantly, since 2008-09, there has been a decrease in inward investment enquiries but a marked increase in local businesses requiring commercial property
- The supply of commercial property in Halton has increased dramatically since 2008

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Employment, Learning, Skills and Community PPB
<b>DATE:</b>	11 November 2013
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Strategic Director Children & Enterprise
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Economic Development
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Outcomes of 2011 Skills for Life Survey and improvements in Halton
<b>WARDS:</b>	All

## 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- To provide Members with details of the outcomes of the recently published 2011 Skills for Life Survey
- To inform members on the progress made since the 2003 survey results published in 2005.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

**The report is noted**

## 3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Skills for Life 2011 Survey was commissioned by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills.  
The last Skills for Life Survey was conducted in 2003 and the results were published in 2005.
- 3.2 The survey was designed to measure basic skills amongst people aged between 16 and 65 (inclusive) in England.
- 3.3 The aim of the Skills for Life survey was to provide an evidence base upon which the government could judge what progress had been made on Literacy and Numeracy amongst adults of working age in England since 2003. The survey also provided robust evidence of the standard of ICT skills in the population.
- 3.4 Data is available for the Local Authority and modelled estimates are available at ward level.
- 3.5 All learning providers, including the Adult Learning and Skills Development Team, delivering Skills for Life provision in Halton may have contributed to the improvement in Literacy, Numeracy and ICT levels.

3.6 Table 1 represents the Qualifications framework– levels and examples of equivalent qualifications

Table 1

Level	Examples of equivalent qualifications	Age
Level 2	GCSE Grade A* - C	13-15
Level 1	GCSE Grade D - G	11-13
Entry 3	KS2 - Primary	9-11
Entry 2	KS1 - Primary	7-9
Entry 1	Foundation – KS1 - Primary	5-7

#### 4.0 LOCAL IMPROVEMENT

4.1 Skills for Life levels in Halton have improved in Literacy, Numeracy and ICT when compared to the 2003 Skills for Life Survey. In comparison to local, regional and national averages, Halton has outperformed all in terms of improvement.

#### 4.2 Literacy

4.2.1 The number of respondents reaching Literacy Level 2 in Halton has improved by 17% since 2003.

4.2.2 Tables 2 to 5 represent the 2011 Literacy Levels and percentage improvement since Skills for Life Survey 2003 at Halton, Greater Merseyside, North West and England levels.

Table 2: Halton

Literacy Level	2003	2011	% Improvement
Level 2	32%	49%	17%
Level 1	45%	31%	-14%
Entry 1-3	23%	19%	-4%

Table 3: Greater Merseyside

Literacy Level	2003	2011	% Improvement
Level 2	37%	50%	13%
Level 1	48%	31%	-17%
Entry 1-3	15%	19%	4%

Table 4: North West

Literacy Level	2003	2011	% Improvement
Level 2	41%	54%	13%
Level 1	42%	30%	-12%
Entry 1-3	18%	15%	-3%

Table 5: England

Literacy Level	2003	2011	% Improvement
Level 2	44%	54%	10%
Level 1	40%	30%	-10%
Entry 1-3	16%	16%	0%



4.2.3 Halton's percentages in 2011 are similar to the North West and National picture as detailed in Table 6.

Table 6

Literacy Level	Halton	North West	England
Level 2 and above	49%	54%	54%
Level 1	31%	31%	30%
Entry Level 3	10%	9%	9%
Entry Level 2	3%	2%	2%
Entry Level 1 and below	6%	4%	5%

4.2.4 Table 7 represents 2011 Literacy levels compared to 2003 levels in Halton's Wards

4.2.5 The wards showing the most significant progress (decrease of below Level 2 Literacy skills) from 2003 to 2011 are:

- Hough Green 15.1%, Appleton 14.5%, Halton View 14.4%, Ditton 13.9%, Mersey 13.9% and Halton Brook 13.3%

Table 7:  
LITERACY

Council Ward	EL1 and below	EL2	EL3	L1	L2 and above	2011	2003	Progress from 2003 to 2011
						Below Level 2 skills	Below Level 2 skills	Below Level 2 skills
Appleton	7.0%	3.1%	10.8%	32.6%	46.5%	53.5%	68%	14.5%
Beechwood	4.2%	2.0%	7.8%	29.3%	56.6%	43.4%	53%	9.6%
Birchfield	3.2%	1.6%	6.3%	26.6%	62.4%	37.6%	42%	4.4%
Broadheath	7.7%	3.4%	11.6%	33.4%	43.9%	56.1%	66%	9.9%
Halton Castle	10.6%	4.4%	14.2%	34.6%	36.2%	63.8%	73%	9.2%
Daresbury	3.4%	1.7%	6.6%	27.0%	61.4%	38.6%	42%	3.4%
Ditton	6.4%	2.8%	10.1%	31.8%	48.9%	51.1%	65%	13.9%
Farnworth	4.5%	2.1%	8.0%	29.3%	56.0%	44.0%	53%	9.0%
Grange	8.3%	3.6%	12.0%	33.1%	43.1%	56.9%	68%	11.1%
Hale	4.9%	2.3%	8.6%	30.3%	53.9%	46.1%	57%	10.9%
Halton Brook	7.0%	3.1%	10.6%	32.1%	47.3%	52.7%	66%	13.3%
Halton Lea	9.0%	3.8%	12.7%	33.8%	40.6%	59.4%	69%	9.6%
Halton View	5.3%	2.5%	9.0%	30.9%	52.4%	47.6%	62%	14.4%
Heath	5.0%	2.4%	8.7%	30.5%	53.4%	46.6%	58%	11.4%
Hough Green	6.4%	2.8%	9.9%	30.8%	50.1%	49.9%	65%	15.1%
Kingsway	7.0%	3.1%	10.6%	32.2%	47.1%	52.9%	65%	12.1%
Mersey	6.0%	2.7%	9.8%	31.7%	49.9%	50.1%	64%	13.9%
Norton North	5.4%	2.4%	8.8%	29.6%	53.8%	46.2%	59%	12.8%
Norton South	8.1%	3.5%	11.8%	33.0%	43.7%	56.3%	68%	11.7%
Riverside	7.0%	3.1%	10.9%	32.7%	46.3%	53.7%	65%	11.3%
Windmill Hill	11.0%	4.6%	14.6%	34.8%	35.1%	64.9%	77%	12.1%

### 4.3 Numeracy

4.3.1 The number of respondents reaching Numeracy Level 2 in Halton has improved by 8% since 2003.

4.3.2 The number of respondents reaching Numeracy Level 1 in Halton has improved by 7% since 2003.

4.3.3 At both regional and national level, the number of respondents reaching Numeracy Level 2 has fallen since 2003, whilst Halton and Greater Merseyside region have improved significantly over the same period.

4.3.4 Table 8 to 11 represent the 2011 Numeracy levels and percentage improvement since Skills for Life Survey 2003 at Halton, Greater Merseyside, North West and England levels.

Table 8: Halton

Numeracy Level	2003	2011	% Improvement
Level 2	11%	19%	8%
Level 1	20%	27%	7%
Entry 1-3	69%	54%	-15%

Table 9: Greater Merseyside

Numeracy Level	2003	2011	% Improvement
Level 2	13%	21%	8%
Level 1	26%	27%	1%
Entry 1-3	61%	52%	-9%

Table 10: North West

Numeracy Level	2003	2011	% Improvement
Level 2	23%	17%	-6%
Level 1	28%	28%	0%
Entry 1-3	49%	54%	5%

Table 11: England

Numeracy Level	2003	2011	% Improvement
Level 2	25%	23%	-2%
Level 1	28%	28%	0%
Entry 1-3	46%	49%	3%

4.3.5 Table 12 shows that Halton has a higher percentage of Level 2 and above Numeracy than the North West

Table 12

Numeracy Level	Halton	North West	England
Level 2 and above	19%	17%	23%
Level 1	27%	28%	28%
Entry Level 3	27%	29%	26%
Entry Level 2	19%	18%	17%
Entry Level 1 and below	8%	8%	7%

4.3.6 Table 13 represents 2011 Numeracy levels compared to 2033 levels in Halton's Wards

4.3.7 The wards showing the most significant decrease of below Level 2 Numeracy skills from 2003 to 2011 are:

- Riverside 10%, Norton South 8.7%, Hough Green 8.6%, Appleton 8.1%, Mersey 7.8%, Windmill Hill 7.3% and Halton Lea 7.1%

Table 13:

<b>NUMERACY</b>						<b>2011</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>Progress from 2003 to 2011</b>
<b>Council Ward</b>	<b>EL1 and below</b>	<b>EL2</b>	<b>EL3</b>	<b>L1</b>	<b>L2 and above</b>	<b>Below Level 2 skills</b>	<b>Below Level 2 skills</b>	<b>Below Level 2 skills</b>
Appleton	8.7%	20.2%	27.8%	26.1%	17.1%	82.9%	91%	8.1%
Beechwood	5.5%	15.1%	25.8%	29.9%	23.7%	76.3%	77%	0.7%
Birchfield	4.1%	12.2%	23.8%	31.7%	28.3%	71.7%	67%	-4.7%
Broadheath	9.3%	21.3%	28.4%	25.3%	15.7%	84.3%	89%	4.7%
Halton Castle	12.1%	24.7%	28.3%	22.2%	12.6%	87.4%	89%	1.6%
Daresbury	4.3%	12.6%	23.9%	31.4%	27.8%	72.2%	67%	-5.2%
Ditton	7.9%	19.1%	27.4%	27.0%	18.6%	81.4%	87%	5.6%
Farnworth	5.7%	15.1%	25.5%	29.9%	23.9%	76.1%	77%	0.9%
Grange	9.8%	21.9%	28.1%	24.8%	15.4%	84.6%	89%	4.4%
Hale	6.6%	16.9%	26.6%	28.6%	21.2%	78.8%	80%	1.2%
Halton Brook	8.6%	20.1%	27.7%	26.3%	17.3%	82.7%	87%	4.3%
Halton Lea	10.5%	22.9%	28.5%	24.0%	14.1%	85.9%	93%	7.1%
Halton View	6.8%	17.5%	27.0%	28.4%	20.3%	79.7%	85%	5.3%
Heath	6.5%	16.8%	26.6%	28.7%	21.4%	78.6%	80%	1.4%
Hough Green	7.5%	17.9%	26.4%	27.6%	20.6%	79.4%	88%	8.6%
Kingsway	8.4%	19.7%	27.5%	26.5%	17.9%	82.1%	88%	5.9%
Mersey	7.6%	18.8%	27.5%	27.3%	18.8%	81.2%	89%	7.8%
Norton North	6.5%	16.5%	25.8%	28.7%	22.4%	77.6%	84%	6.4%
Norton South	9.5%	21.5%	28.1%	25.1%	15.7%	84.3%	93%	8.7%
Riverside	8.8%	20.4%	27.9%	26.0%	17.0%	83.0%	93%	10.0%
Windmill Hill	12.5%	25.2%	28.3%	21.7%	12.3%	87.7%	95%	7.3%

## **5.0 2011 Skills for Life Survey Outcomes**

- 5.1 The improvement in Literacy and Numeracy levels for people aged between 16 and 65 in Halton is very positive.
- 5.2 Significant improvement in Literacy and Numeracy levels has been made since 2003.
- 5.3 The borough-wide Skills for Life Assessment Service enables adults aged 19+ living and/or working in Halton to access Literacy and Numeracy assessment to establish the current level and provides information, advice and guidance which leads to individuals progressing to the most appropriate provision in the borough. Additionally, tutors and learners are able to quickly progress to a more detailed, diagnostic assessment and develop individual learning plans at the start of the programme. This service is delivered by Halton Borough Council's Employment, Learning and Skills Division.
- 5.4 The outcomes of the 2011 Skills for Life survey evidence that more local people have the literacy, language and numeracy skills to make the most of all the opportunities available to them.
- 5.5 The achievement of Skills for Life qualifications has contributed to significant progress since 2003, leading to a decrease in the number of adults with no qualifications.
- 5.6 Through the achievement of English and mathematics qualifications, parents and family members are better able to support children's learning, resulting in increased attainment levels
- 5.7 Local people are now better placed to provide an effective and efficient service to employers, including Halton Borough Council.

## **6.0 Next Steps**

- 6.1 The development of Literacy and Numeracy skills and the progression and achievement of the level will remain a priority in Halton
- 6.2 Skills for Life provision is a regular agenda item at the Halton Strategic Partnership Board (HSPB) Skills Group meetings. The outcomes of the 2011 Skills for Life Survey were discussed at the September 2013 meeting.
- 6.3 Learning providers in Halton will share information and best practice to ensure provision continues to meet the needs of local people.
- 6.4 The Council's Adult Learning and Skills Development team will implement an appropriate curriculum design to meet the needs of adults.
  - 6.4.1 The Council's Adult Learning and Skills Development team has started to implement a 'mixed delivery model' from September 2013 to ensure an appropriate curriculum design is offered for adults. The mixed delivery model will include:
    - sessions will increase to 2.5 hours in the main learning centres and will remain 2 hours in Children's Centres in line with crèche requirements

- individuals will attend two taught sessions per week in the main learning centres
- intensive English and maths programmes will be available (4 days per week for 4 weeks)
- Blended Learning provision will be introduced from September 2013 (taught sessions, distance learning and tutorials)

6.4.2 The Council's Skills for Life and Employability team will better monitor learner attendance and have a stronger focus on improving quality through existing quality processes to improve retention and success rates for a small number of learners on English and mathematics courses.

6.4.3 English and mathematics courses will be evaluated by the council's Skills for Life and Employability team on a termly basis and improvements identified leading to timely implementation.

6.5 The Employment, Learning and Skills Division will continue to offer an integrated Information, Advice, Guidance and Assessment service to help, guide and support adults in Halton to access the most appropriate learning provision or employment.

6.6 The Council's Skills for Life and Employability team will maximise the Simplified Funding model introduced by the Skills Funding Agency from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2013. The new funding model will result in an increased amount of funding for each full Functional Skills learning aim in the 2013/14 academic year. This will allow the delivery of the required increase in learning hours to achieve full qualifications.

## **7.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Whilst significant improvement has been made since 2003, Literacy levels in Halton remain lower than in the North West and in England and, although Numeracy levels are higher than the North West, they remain lower than in England. The development of Literacy and Numeracy levels and the progression and achievement of the next level must remain a priority in Halton.

## **8.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The introduction of Functional Skills qualifications for adults in September 2012 has resulted in learning programmes that require an increased number of hours in learning and, as a result, a greater commitment is required if individuals are to succeed in improving their English and maths skills.

8.2 Awarding Bodies have responded to the need for short qualifications in English and mathematics and accredited units have been approved by Ofqual within the Qualifications Credit Framework (QCF). As a result the unit qualifications are funded by the Skills Funding Agency. The achievement of units will lead to adults being able to achieve Functional Skills Awards and credits towards a full Functional Skills qualification. However, a similar time commitment is required to achieve a full Functional Skills qualification, but it is hoped that unit accreditation will maintain motivation and commitment and lead to the achievement of the full qualification.

**9.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

**9.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

Through the achievement of qualifications in Functional Skills in English and mathematics, parents and family members will be better able to support children's learning resulting in increased attainment levels.

**9.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

The achievement of Skills for Life qualifications has contributed to a decrease in the number of adults with no qualifications and the improvement in Skills for Life levels in Halton since 2003 evidences this decrease.

The outcomes of the 2011 Skills for Life survey evidences that more local people have the literacy, language and numeracy skills to make the most of all the opportunities available to them.

**9.3 A Healthy Halton**

None

**9.4 A Safer Halton**

None

**9.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

None

**10.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

10.1 The introduction of Functional Skills qualifications for adults has resulted in learning programmes that require an increased number of hours of learning and a greater commitment for individuals.

**11.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

None

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

None

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy & Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	11 November 2013
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Strategic Director – Children and Enterprise.
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Economic Development
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Children and Enterprise Quarterly Policy Update
<b>WARDS:</b>	All

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

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

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION:**

- 2.1 **That the report is noted.**

## **3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 A number of policy, legislation, consultation and guidance documents, are issued by government departments and agencies that have varying degrees of relevance to issues on the employment, learning and skills agenda and related topics.
- 3.2 A brief summary of key announcements is provided in this report along with observations of local relevance, where appropriate, so the Board can consider whether to initiate more detailed scrutiny and/or report to a future meeting.

## **4.0 NEW POLICY, STRATEGY AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE**

### **Cutting red tape for business improvement districts that help small shops and local traders**

The Department for Communities and Local Government ended the red tape which made it harder for local firms and traders to set up business improvement districts where high streets stretch across council boundaries.

The changes, which come into force on 7 October 2013 mean that business improvement districts will no longer need separate ballots in each authority where a business improvement district crosses with another local authorities' boundaries is proposed. Instead there will be a single ballot for the entire area.

Business improvement districts are a tried and tested approach, used in towns and cities across the world, to fund improvements in local trading areas and the new regulations. The potential for business improvement districts to successfully support town centres growth was outlined by Mary Portas in her [review of High Streets](#).

The government is committed to support this model as a catalyst for high street regeneration and will detail how new business improvement district areas can get help with their start up costs through the £500,000 loan fund scheme later this year.

There are currently over 150 business improvement districts across the UK working on issues such as town centre safety, improvement of public realm, support for local traders and parking initiatives.

**COMMENT: Halton currently has two Business Improvement Districts which work well, indeed both have recently voted to continue for another five years. The changes to legislation whilst not having a direct impact on the BIDS in Halton, are to be welcomed as should there be a cross boundary BID in the future, only a single ballot would be required.**

### **Ofsted Single Inspection Framework**

Ofsted has published its single framework for inspecting local authority services for vulnerable children, examining early help, child protection, looked after children and care leavers and fostering and adoption services.

The inspection is universal and will be conducted in a three-year cycle from November 2013. Selection of local authorities will not target 'inadequate' authorities. There will be a balance of authorities from the outset, including those previously found to be 'good'. If a local authority is judged to be 'inadequate' for overall effectiveness it will be subject to a full inspection within 12-18 months unless otherwise directed by the Secretary of State for Education.

A summary of the Framework and link to the full document are attached below.



Ofsted Single  
Inspection Framework

**COMMENT: This will be the biggest single inspection of the local authority's children's services since 2011 and the Ofsted's framework is more wide-ranging and challenging than anything that has gone before. Halton will have its own particular and unique challenges within this through the intention to concurrently inspect areas with a shared Director of Children's Services. Planning and preparations have been ongoing since 2012 for this inspection however to ensure Halton is ready, including the undertaking of a review of practice in July 2013.**

### **Free school lunch for every child in state-funded infant school and disadvantaged students in further education**

Every child in reception, year 1 and year 2 in state-funded schools will receive a free school lunch from September 2014, Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg has announced. The government will fund schools in England to provide every child in reception, year 1 and year 2 with a hot, nutritious meal at lunch time. The aim is to improve academic attainment and save families money – over the course of a year the average family spends £437 on school lunches per child.

**COMMENT: Regular, nutritious meals are crucial in supporting the healthy development of children. This initiative can help to promote positive eating habits and links to education, helping to ensure that all children are able to concentrate and perform well in the classroom. From a financial perspective, it could also provide**



**some relief to those families with young children who have been hit hard by the economic downturn. It will be important to ensure this does not negatively impact on spending to support children and families in other areas however.**

### **Changes to early entry at GCSE**

From 29 September 2013, only a student's first entry to a GCSE examination will count in their school's performance tables.

**COMMENT: This measure will at once remove the trend in some areas to bank C grades and higher at the earliest possible time. This can remove the level of stress for pupils by spreading examinations over a wider period but also has been seen as a way to help boost league table performance. The change could have significant implications for any Halton students partway through their GCSE studies who might have expected early entry to any GCSE examinations.**

## **5.0 RESEARCH, CONSULTATIONS AND GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **The vanishing high street: the Grimsey Review**

The last three years have seen various strands of work, by Government, local authorities and civil society to draw together policies and measures to help preserve and rejuvenate high streets and town centres, notably activity stemming from **Mary Portas' Government-commissioned review in 2011**. In September 2013, former Wickes and Iceland Chief Executive Bill Grimsey released a rival review put together by an expert team and explicitly set up as an alternative to Portas' work, which Grimsey criticised.

As well as providing a concise account of the backdrop of changing consumer trends, Grimsey attributes the continuing decline of the high street to a lack of clear targets and success measures in initiatives such as the Portas Pilots; the need for a strong, coherent plan and management approach to address town centre issues holistically and channel the enthusiasm of small business and civil society; and a failure on the part of Government to address the financial challenges facing small businesses in particular in a substantive way. His alternative sets out some overall principles:

- Overall, high streets must embrace a mixed-use vision involving housing, public services, work spaces and social and cultural provision – there will be less retail and what remains must be integrated far better with internet-driven technology
- There are areas where government action is essential, such as on reforming business rates
- Local authorities should lead on establishing town centre commissions to devise long-term, holistic business plans for their town centres, driven by accurate local and national intelligence and linking to planning policy, investment strategy, transport, digital offer and marketing.

**COMMENT: Each high street is different, but many are struggling and must adapt to survive, and councils, businesses and communities must work together to deliver that. Internet shopping, supermarkets and out of town retail, have had a significant impact on our town centres and their impact is unlikely to diminish. Whilst they do have an important role to play in offering consumers choice and competition, retailers need to embrace the change if they are to survive.**

## Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

On 30<sup>th</sup> Sept the Liverpool City Region submitted its Governance Review to Government., which recommends that we create a Combined Authority for the Liverpool City Region, including Halton.

A combined authority will not see the creation of a 'super council' but would enable strategic decisions to be made around economic development, regeneration, housing and transport. The submission also shows Government how it would ensure 'clear and transparent' leadership, deliver economies of scale and streamline decision-making processes. The proposals were subject to extensive consultation with Members, businesses, partners and the public, and were supported by LCR Cabinet and Council in each of the six City Region boroughs and the Merseyside Integrated Transport Authority. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with over 80% of respondents supporting the proposals.

Government will now consider the proposal and will carry out a further consultation exercise in the Autumn. If there is support for the proposal, an order will be laid before Parliament to create the Combined Authority from April 2014.

**COMMENT: The Combined Authority if accepted by Government will ONLY deal with strategic economic development, transport, housing and employment and skills. The conclusion of the Governance Review is that a Combined Authority is the best model to support economic growth and secure more jobs, in Halton and across the LCR. The Combined Authority will help us signal to businesses and Government that we are serious about working together. It is expected that it will also be able to attract devolved powers and funding from Government. The proposals were subject to extensive consultation with Members, businesses, partners and the public, and were supported by LCR Cabinet and Council in each of the six City Region boroughs and the Merseyside Integrated Transport Authority. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with over 80% of respondents supporting the proposals.**

## Locally Led Delivery Projects for Raising the Participation Age

The DfE has published research into phase four of the locally led delivery projects (LLDP) for Raising the Participation Age (RPA). Informed by the findings of a series of trials and projects led by local councils, the report makes recommendations which will be of use to local authorities in helping them implement effectively and efficiently this ambitious legislative driven change. The recommendations relate to partnership working and collaboration, data and tracking, early intervention, support for vulnerable groups and retaining 17 year olds in learning and training.

**COMMENT: Work on RPA in Halton is well established, including a 14-19 Commissioning Statement developed in partnership with the 11-19 Strategic Partnership of Schools, the College and training providers and aims to secure sufficient suitable education and training provision. The Data Management Group works to ensure there is robust data on young people's activity available and strategies in place to engage those who are not participating or those whose activity is not known. A Halton Participation Strategy has been developed to address the statutory duties in relation to RPA and ongoing work will be informed by the learning from the delivery projects within this research.**

## Government proposes 'SME friendly' public sector procurement market

The Government has outlined plans to further standardise public sector procurement in a bid to support smaller businesses. The consultation outlines plans to create a small and medium sized enterprise (SME) 'single market' for public procurement, simplifying and standardising how contracts are advertised, bid for and paid across the sector.

Proposals include a requirement for all public sector contracts over £10,000 to be accessible on the same site and a banning of pre-qualification questionnaires for low value public sector contracts.

**COMMENT: Supporting local businesses and encouraging business growth are key priorities for the council. Should these proposals lead to more local businesses winning local contracts then they should be welcomed.**

### **Government announces independent reviewer for benefit sanctions**

The Government has appointed a member of the Social Security Advisory Committee to undertake an independent review of benefit sanctions. Matthew Oakley, who is also head of economics and social policy at think tank Policy Exchange, will examine the clarity of information provided to Jobseeker's Allowance claimants. Stipulated in the Jobseeker's (Back to Work Schemes) Act 2013, the review will consider – where a sanction has been given - the quality of information given to claimants about their sanction, options they have going forward and the explanation given of the review and appeals process.

**COMMENT: Benefit sanctions result in people having their money stopped for a period of time for not following the rules of the benefit they are getting, such as going to an interview or medical examination. People accessing Jobseekers' Allowance, Incapacity Benefit or Employment Support Allowance, and in the future Universal Credit are expected to take certain steps towards employment and failing to do so can result in benefits being stopped. Benefit sanctions have significant impacts on individuals and families so there is a need to ensure claimants fully understand the requirements upon them whilst claiming these benefits, the penalties and how the sanctions can be reversed.**

### **Workers see pay packets drop by £30 a week since 2007**

Workers in the UK have lost more than £30 a week in their pay packets since 2007 according to new research.

TUC has compared hourly pay rates in 2007 with those in 2012 as part of its Britain Needs a Pay Rise campaign. It found that the North West is the hardest hit region in the UK, with hourly pay falling by 8% in real terms. Darlington was hit the hardest, with workers seeing a 16.2% fall in real terms, which equates to a £75.94 cut in weekly pay packets. The analysis also shows that men in the UK have seen their wages drop more in real terms, with an average fall of 7.4%. Female employees saw their wages decline by 4.7% in real terms.

**COMMENT: The north west has seen its pay packets hardest hit and this has a significant impact not only on the ability of families, particularly those on low incomes, to make ends meet, but it also results in less spend in the local economy impacting on businesses.**

### **Ofsted Survey Going in the right direction? Evaluation of careers guidance in schools from September 2012**

Since September 2012, schools have been legally responsible for securing access to independent and impartial careers guidance for all their students in Years 9 to 11. For this survey, Ofsted inspectors visited 60 secondary schools and academies between December 2012 and March 2013 to evaluate how well this new duty is being carried out. This report gives their findings and recommendations to Government.

**COMMENT: Career advice and guidance is a key step in preparing young people for work, so it is essential that schools offer a quality service that informs the choices young people make whilst at school.**

### **16-19 Accountability, DfE Consultation**

The DfE is consulting (until 20 November) on proposed changes to the accountability arrangements for providers of 16-19 education and training in England, including performance tables and minimum standards for provision both at level 2 (for the first time for 16-19 providers) and at level 3. The changes are intended to help parents, students and inspectors to understand the quality of provision through a combination of (i) top line data giving a snapshot of a provider's overall performance and (ii) additional data on specific areas of the provider's performance (eg. particular types of course or particular students). The data – which will be published – will enable parents and students to identify the best provision for their needs and help providers to improve their performance; the data will be used by the DfE to set minimum standards, and by Ofsted in inspection.

**COMMENT: A response to the consultation will be submitted by Halton in conjunction with the 11-19 Learning Partnership.**

### **Industrial strategy: government and industry in partnership**

On 1 August 2013, the Government published its strategy for offshore wind, the last of eleven industrial sector strategies. In addition to offshore wind, the strategies cover nuclear power, UK oil and gas, construction, the agri-tech industries, aerospace, the automotive industries, life sciences, information economy, professional and business services, and further and higher education.

In its guidance for Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) on Growth Deals, the Government indicated that LEPs' strategic plans should have regard to national policy on growth, including its industrial strategy. The sector strategies could contain important signals for LEP priorities and strategic plans. Some of the sectors have a specific spatial focus whilst some might entail strategies for supply chains spread across the country.

These publications support the government's industrial strategy. They explore areas where government action can have a real and early impact, including:

- developing strategic partnerships with industry
- supporting emerging technologies
- improving access to finance for businesses
- working with business to help develop skills that businesses will need
- publishing government contracts to provide confidence to business investment

**COMMENT: National growth policy is taken into consideration at both the Liverpool City Region (LEP) and local level. The new combined authority, should it be approved**

**will have a key role in driving forward strategic economic development and employment and skills across the sub-region.**

### **SEN Reforms**

A consultation with more detail on plans to overhaul the special educational needs (SEN) system has been published. Alongside draft regulations, the government has issued a revised, clearer 0 to 25 SEN Code of Practice which provides practical advice for professionals and families on how to support children and young people with SEN. The new code reflects the changes being introduced by the Children and Families Bill, such as the introduction of personal budgets and reformed arrangements for 16- to 25-year-olds in further education and training.

In addition, the government is also consulting on the timetable for transition to the new system, which will be phased in from September 2014. We want all children and young people with SEN and their families to benefit from the improved arrangements as soon as possible, while at the same time ensuring that the best possible service is maintained during the transition.

**COMMENT: Work is underway across in conjunction with partners across Halton Children's Trust to ensure Halton is ready by September 2014. A Lead Project Officer has been appointed and multi-agency implementation group is being established and will begin meeting shortly. All relevant partners across the Trust have committed their support to the process.**

### **Tax-Free Childcare – HMT consultation and implications for Universal Credit**

The Treasury have published *Tax-Free Childcare: consultation on design and operation* which will be phased in from autumn 2015 replacing over time the existing system of Employer Supported Childcare. The consultation also covers details of the planned increase in childcare support within Universal Credit, available from April 2016, as childcare support moves from tax credits into Universal Credit. Consultation closes on 14 October 2013.

The new Tax Free Childcare scheme will support working families with 20% of their childcare costs up to a limit of £1,200 per child each year. In the first year, all children under 5 will be eligible, with the child age limit eventually including all children under 12. It will only be available to families where both parents work, or for a single parent who works. Earnings must be less than £150,000 for each parent per year. The scheme will, for the first time, be available to the self-employed. It will not be available to families that receive support through tax credits or Universal Credit (which will be introduced in the next two years to replace tax credits), as instead parents can get up to 70% of childcare costs paid by the government. From April 2016 this will increase to 85% but only for households where all parents pay income tax.

**COMMENT: This is a consultation document which is part of the Government's commitment to providing access to affordable childcare.**

### **Daniel Pelka Serious Case Review, Coventry LSCB**

The overview report of the Serious Case Review of the events leading to the death of four year old Daniel Pelka, published by Coventry Safeguarding Children Board, highlights the opportunities missed by a number of agencies to protect him.

**COMMENT:** This SCR report identifies a number of opportunities where professionals from a number of local agencies could have done more to protect Daniel. Like with all SCRs the publication of the report will be used to ensure any learning is taken on by partners within Halton. The case led to some calls nationally to implement a system of mandatory reporting of professionals' concerns of abuse and/or neglect to help to protect more children but overall there is little evidence that professionals do not current report their concerns to local authority children's social care.

### **Child Poverty – CPAG and NCB reports**

The Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) report [The Cost of a Child in 2013](#) (CPAG) shows that the cost of bringing up a child is increasing much faster than incomes, especially for those living in poverty, and that the number of children in poverty is also rising. [Local Authorities and Child Poverty: balancing Threats and Opportunities](#) considers the potential impact of these changes on local authorities who have a duty to mitigate the effects of child poverty. The National Children's Bureau (NCB) report [Greater Expectations](#) warns that unless policy takes a different direction there is a real risk of the UK 'sleepwalking into a world where inequality and disadvantage are so deeply entrenched that our children grow up in a state of social apartheid'.

**COMMENT:** Addressing child and family poverty is a key priority for the council and whilst we are making some progress, we recognise that there remains much to do. The council is currently revising its' Child and Family Poverty strategy and will continue to support children, young people and families to help ensure that that a disadvantaged start in life does not limit their life chances.

### **Contact Us:**

For more information please contact the Halton Children & Enterprise Policy Team through any of the options below:

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

6.1 The varied range of issues covered in this report potentially present a number of challenges and opportunities across a number of the Council's current priorities. Where appropriate a more detailed analysis of the information and relevance to the council will take place.

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There are no immediate risks directly relating to the information in the report.



**8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 Not applicable.

**9.0 FURTHER INFORMATION**

9.1 If members would a more detailed analysis of any of the issues mentioned in this report, or paper copy of any of the documents referred to, the should contact; Debbie Houghton at [Debbie.houghton@halton.gov.uk](mailto:Debbie.houghton@halton.gov.uk) or 0151 511 8231

**10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act. (For information - Hyperlinks to all of the full reports are embedded within the headings.)



## **Ofsted Single Inspection Framework**

Ofsted has published its single framework for inspecting local authority services for vulnerable children, examining early help, child protection, looked after children and care leavers and fostering and adoption services.

The inspection is universal and will be conducted in a three-year cycle from November 2013. Selection of local authorities will not target 'inadequate' authorities. There will be a balance of authorities from the outset, including those previously found to be 'good'. If a local authority is judged to be 'inadequate' for overall effectiveness it will be subject to a full inspection within 12-18 months unless otherwise directed by the Secretary of State for Education.

Judgements will be on the expected four-point scale:

- Outstanding
- Good
- Requires improvement
- Inadequate

Two other frameworks have also been published for inspecting voluntary adoption agencies and independent fostering services. Both take immediate effect.

The ambition is clear – only 'good' is now good enough and this reflects the intention of the draft guidance that was released for consultation in June 2013 that 'good' is now the new minimum.

The protection of children and young people is a key judgement. Services that are less than 'good' will no longer be judged adequate, but to 'require improvement' until they meet the standard that children, young people and their families deserve and have a right to expect. The key test is the extent to which children's experiences are prioritised and the effectiveness of the help, protection and care that they receive.

As expected, inspectors will make three key judgements that cumulatively lead to a judgement on the overall effectiveness of services and arrangements. These are:

- the experiences and progress of children who need help and protection



- the experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence
- leadership, management and governance – the focus of this is on DCS and Lead Member engagement and an effective HSCB, as well as engagement with Health & Wellbeing Board and other local partnerships

If a local authority is judged 'inadequate' in any of these three critical areas, it will automatically be judged 'inadequate' overall.

In addition, there will be graded judgements on:

- the experiences and progress for care leavers
- adoption.

Inspectors will evaluate the quality of plans for children's futures, the management and practice oversight of those plans to make them happen and the extent to which any delays are being swiftly reduced. They will also consider the quality of support and care for young people becoming independent and leaving the system, including the provision of safe and good housing, access to education, training and employment and the extent to which those individuals feel supported by their corporate parents.

Once this inspection framework has been launched, Ofsted will be working closely with partner inspectorates to establish the additional criteria required to evaluate and judge the contribution of health, police, probation and prison services in the help, care and protection of children and young people. This work will inform the development of a joint inspection of child protection and safeguarding arrangements to be led by Ofsted from 2015. These criteria will be subject to consultation during 2014.

### **Other Key Points to consider from the Guidance**

- Intention is for concurrent inspections in areas where the Director of Children's Services holds statutory responsibility for more than one authority – significant implications for Halton and no indication of this prior to the launch of the final framework.
- Notification will be received one day before the lead inspector and small team of inspectors arrive on site to begin inspection.
- Rest of inspection team will be on site at the beginning of the week following local authority case auditing of files.
- Inspection Team – normally 7 inspectors, 6 will be experienced in Social Care, 1 in Education. The Team will be on site for about 11 working days.

- Where there are perceived weaknesses in multi-agency practice the relevant inspectorates will be notified and may decide to inspect in accordance with their statutory powers.
- The scope of the inspection is children and young people who are:
  - at risk of harm.
  - in need of protection and provided with a multi-agency child protection plan.
  - no longer needing a child protection plan but still require some help and support.
  - in need of Children's Social Care support but below the significant harm and looked after thresholds
  - missing from education or offered alternative provision
  - looked after
  - care leavers
- The guidance notes 3 key judgements and 3 graded judgements within paragraph 20 as per the consultation guidance. There is only detail on two graded judgement areas however, there is no detail on a graded judgement on the effectiveness of LSCB as expected, this is referred to only in the Leadership, Management and Governance section.

## Appendices

The full Inspection Guidance is attached below, which also details the scope of Annex A



Framework and  
evaluation schedule f

The frameworks and grade descriptors for the inspections of voluntary adoption agencies and independent adoption agencies are attached below



Adoption inspections of voluntary adoption of



Fostering inspections of independent fosterer

*Mark Grady 25.9.13*

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	11 November 2013
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Strategic Director Children and Enterprise
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Economic Development
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Draft Welfare Reform Scrutiny Review Report and Recommendations
<b>WARD(S)</b>	Borough-wide

### 1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To present the Board with the draft Scrutiny Review of the Welfare Reform Topic Group Report and recommendations.

### 2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That:**

- i) ***the Board approve the draft Welfare Reform scrutiny review report and recommendations.***

### 3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 This report (attached as Appendix 1) was commissioned by the Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board. A scrutiny review working group was established with five Members from the Board, Operational Director, Principal Policy Officer and Partnership Officer.

The report was commissioned as the *Welfare Reform Act 2012* represents the biggest change to the welfare system since its conception 60 years ago. Given that a key pillar of the Government's reform is a focus on "making work pay", it was felt that there were a number of issues that required further exploration within and ELS and C. context.

The scrutiny review was conducted through a number of means between June 2013 and September 2013, as follows:

- Monthly meetings of the scrutiny review topic group;
- Presentations by various key members of staff from the Council and partners (detail of the presentations can be found in *Annex 2*);
- Provision of information;

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Existing policies are endorsed by the report.

5.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The recommendations highlighted within the Action Plan will require resources to undertake, mainly from operational teams.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

The welfare reforms will continue to impact upon children, young people and families in the borough due to potential new charges to families such as the bedroom tax, contribution to council tax costs, possible loss in income etc

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

The Welfare Reforms will result in an overall loss of money to residents and therefore will result in less money in the local economy. Also people who may not have worked for many years due to ill health etc will now potentially be required to seek work. This will be a real challenge particularly for HPIJ. As the welfare reforms require applications to be made online, then there may also be a need for more access to IT and improvements in residents' IT skills .

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Elements of the Welfare Reform Scrutiny Review impact on this priority, for example, people being taken off disability benefits and required to seek work opportunities. Also changes to the benefits system is likely to cause stress for some vulnerable groups, for example those with mental health problems, which may impact upon their health and well being.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

Due to reductions in household income and the potential impact on vulnerable groups, such as those with substance misuse issues, there could be a corresponding rise in crime, in particular domestic abuse.

6.5 **Halton's Environment and Urban Renewal**

The welfare reforms will result in less money in the economy which may impact upon existing and new development. On the positive side Halton has a good supply of local labour skills to support economic growth and regeneration.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The report and recommendations support the Council's strategic priority of Employment, Learning, Skills and Community. The welfare reforms present a number of risks to children and families in the borough, due to families being likely to have less money and increasing demands on that income

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The implementation of the recommendations will help to mitigate against the impacts of the welfare reforms on the residents of Halton.

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

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
None		



# *Welfare Reform Scrutiny Review*

DRAFT  
Report  
*October 2013*

## CONTENTS

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## 1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The *Welfare Reform Act* received Royal Assent in March 2012. It introduces a number of new measures which the ELS and C PPB Scrutiny Topic Group is considering. The purpose of the report, as outlined in the initial topic brief (at *Annex 1*) is to give consideration to the following questions:

- What are we doing/have done to address these issues both as a Council and with partners for our residents?
- Is there any information/documentation that has been produced or which needs to be produced to advise our staff/customers/residents on the changes?
- How can we best collaborate with partners in order to mitigate any potential negative impact of the Welfare Reform Act in Halton?
- Are there any changes needed in how we deliver our services. Do we anticipate an increase/change in demand for the services provided?

The Topic Group has focused on the impact of Welfare Reform from an ELS perspective. However, as the report explains, there has been a cross-referencing with other themes given the complexity and interrelationship with other service areas.

To respond to these questions Members identified key lines of enquiry which might inform the review as follows:

1. Gathering a Partner View and Expert Opinion from Colleagues.
2. Mapping out what support can and will be provided.
3. A Literature Review which summarises what the legislation says.
4. Identify opportunities for service development
5. Identification of problems and potential solutions.
6. An assessment of which partners are doing what.
7. What information do we need to set a baseline and how do we measure/establish the impact?
8. Targeting of resources. How we do this.
9. Impact on debt and debt recovery.
10. Universal credit – budgeting and support and the identification of training needs.
11. An assessment on the Impact on the wider economy e.g. retail sector.
12. National Pilot schemes and whether any early experience could inform the Topic Group discussions.



## 2.0 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

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

## 3.0 INTRODUCTION

### 3.1 Reason the scrutiny review was commissioned

A presentation to the borough's Local Strategic Partnership Board in March 2013 explained that measures introduced in the *Welfare Reform Act 2012* represent the biggest changes to the welfare system since its conception 60 years ago. Given that a key pillar of the Government's reform is a focus on "making work pay", it was felt that there were a number of issues that required further exploration within and ELS and C. context.

The *Welfare Reform Act* introduces a number of new measures which the ELS and C PPB considered in more detail, in particular:-

- Identify what are the problems and impacts facing pilot areas?
- There is a need to assess the rules and changes brought in now and those that the Act will impose with a later timetable. .
- Act is quite broad; impact of how we cope from both Member and Officer perspective.
- Use of the Topic Group to set KPIs to evaluate impact.
- Consider impact on Registered Social Landlords.
- Assess and map out systems already in place.
- Map out Training facilities – what is available?
- The impact on access to services.
- Possible use of Schools.
- Need to factor in bedroom tax and partner input.
- Also Housing Strategy and whether this reflects changes in Welfare Reform

The Topic Group will be a useful forum for developing a coordinated response to how best to deal with the issues arising out of the changes to the Benefits System.

### 3.2 Policy and Performance Boards

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

### 3.3 Membership of the Scrutiny Working Group

Membership of the Scrutiny Working Group included:

Members	Officers
Cllr Sue Edge – Chair Cllr Carol Plumpton Walsh Cllr Peter Lloyd Jones Cllr Lauren Cassidy Cllr Geoff Zygadlo Cllr Norman Plumpton Walsh	Wesley Rourke – Operational Director for Economy, Enterprise and Property Debbie Houghton – Principal Policy Officer Shelah Semoff – Partnership Officer

### 4.0 Methodology Summary

This scrutiny review was conducted through a number of means:

- Monthly meetings of the scrutiny review topic group;
- Presentations by various key members of staff and partners (detail of the presentations can be found in *Annex 2*);
- Provision of information.

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

#### 5.1 Potential Impact of Welfare Reform and the impacts on the Employment, Learning & Skills Priority

Wesley Rourke presented to the group a table with the impact of the welfare changes in Halton. This included changes to working tax credits, housing benefit, child tax credits, income support and council tax benefit amongst others. This report was produced by Knowsley Council as part of their work on child and family poverty. Report attached in Annex 3.

Wesley Rourke also presented a discussion paper to the Topic Group (Report provided by Lisa Driscoll, Principal Policy Officer), which looks at how some of the effects of the 2012 Welfare Reform Act may potentially affect the aims and

objectives of the Employment, Learning and Skills Priority on a practical level. As many of the wider issues of Welfare Reform such as Personal Independence Payments and changes to Council Tax Benefit fall potentially within the remit of other priorities, it focused in more detail at some of the issues sitting directly under this priority such as those relating to the forthcoming introduction Universal Credit, and the overall financial impact of the Benefit Changes, regionally and locally.

The report identified potential impacts of the Welfare Reforms for each of the ELS and C objectives, as set out below.

- To develop a strong, diverse, competitive and sustainable local economy.
- To foster a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship and make Halton an ideal place to start and grow a business.
- To develop a culture where learning is valued and skill levels throughout the adult population and across the local workforce can be raised.
- To promote and increase the employability of local people and remove barriers to employment to get more people into work.
- To maximise an individual's potential to increase and manage their income, including access to appropriate, supportive advice services.

The Full report is attached in Annex 3

### **5.1.1 Conclusion**

In terms of absolute loss attributable to Welfare Reform by total population, including factors such as the 1% cap in annual increases in most working age benefits, research indicates that the welfare reforms will mean a loss of revenue to Halton of £51 million per annum. Overall, the North West is the worst affected region with an average loss of £560 per head of working age population, a total loss of £2,560 million per annum.

The three regions of northern England (North East, North West, and Yorkshire) are all hit substantially harder, per working age adult, than the South and East of England. Beyond Blackpool and Westminster, more than two-thirds of the 50 local authority districts worst affected by the reforms could be described as 'older industrial areas.' In these older industrial areas the incapacity benefit reforms, in particular, hit very hard indeed. The reforms to Disability Living Allowance, which often affect the same people, also hit hard here. Incapacity claimant rates in older industrial Britain are far in excess of those in more prosperous parts of the country, not least because of the difficulty that men and women with health problems or disabilities face in finding work in these difficult local labour markets. More generally, the higher reliance on benefits and tax credits in older industrial Britain means that the failure to up-rate with inflation and the reductions to tax credits have a greater impact here. In total, the three northern English regions lose around £5.2bn a year. One way of looking at the regional differences is that if the five worst affected regions (the three northern English regions plus Wales and London)

experienced the same per capita loss as South East England, total incomes there would be £2.8bn a year higher.

The impacts of welfare reform are very substantial – an estimated loss of income of approaching £19bn a year once all the reforms have been fully implemented, or an average of £470 a year per adult of working age across the whole of Britain. For some of the individuals affected by the changes the loss of income is much, much greater. What is also clear, however, is that the financial losses arising from the reforms will hit some places much harder than others.

As a general rule, the most deprived local authorities across Britain are hit hardest. The loss of benefit income, which is often large, will have knock-on consequences for local spending and thus for local employment, which will in turn will add a further twist to the downward spiral. A key effect of welfare reform will therefore be to widen the gaps in prosperity between the best and worst local economies across the country.

### **5.1.2 Recommendations:**

**No direct recommendations from this report**

## **5.2 Overall Financial Impact Assessment - Sheffield Hallam University Research**

Wesley Rourke presented a summary of the findings from the Sheffield Hallam research into the overall impacts of the welfare reforms. (*Sheffield Hallam Report*

[http://www.shu.ac.uk/research/cresr/sites/shu.ac.uk/files/hitting-poorest-places-hardest\\_0.pdf](http://www.shu.ac.uk/research/cresr/sites/shu.ac.uk/files/hitting-poorest-places-hardest_0.pdf))

The research states that Halton is the 36<sup>th</sup> (from a total of 379) most affected local authority in terms of money lost to an area with a loss per working age adult per annum of £620. This compares to Blackpool at the top of the scale for losses (£910) and City of London at the bottom (£180). Overall, the North West is the worst affected region with an average loss of £560 per head of working age population, a total loss of £2,560 million per annum.

### **5.2.1 Conclusion**

- When the present welfare reforms have come into full effect they will take nearly £19bn a year out of the economy. This is equivalent to around £470 a year for every adult of working age in the country.
- The biggest financial losses arise from reforms to incapacity benefits (£4.3bn a year), changes to Tax Credits (£3.6bn a year) and the 1 per cent up-rating of most working-age benefits (£3.4bn a year).
- The Housing Benefit reforms result in more modest losses – an estimated £490m a year arising from the ‘bedroom tax’ for example – but for the households affected the sums are nevertheless still large.

- Some households and individuals, notably sickness and disability claimants, will be hit by several different elements of the reforms.
- The financial impact of the reforms, however, varies greatly across the country. At the extremes, the worst-hit local authority areas lose around four times as much, per adult of working age, as the authorities least affected by the reforms.
- Britain's older industrial areas, a number of seaside towns and some London boroughs are hit hardest. Much of the south and east of England outside London escapes comparatively lightly.
- Blackpool, in North West England, is hit worst of all – an estimated loss of more than £900 a year for every adult of working age in the town.
- The three regions of northern England alone can expect to lose around £5.2bn a year in benefit income.
- As a general rule, the more deprived the local authority, the greater the financial hit.
- A key effect of the welfare reforms will be to widen the gaps in prosperity between the best and worst local economies across Britain.

### **5.2.2 Recommendations:**

To include economic indicators which highlight footfall and visitor spend in our town centre into the borough's Local Economic Assessment

### **5.3 Welfare Reform Overview**

Dave Gray from Welfare Rights Team gave a presentation about Welfare Reform changes. Bedroom tax and localisation of council tax changes are already having an impact on residents and demand for help and support has risen. Universal credit (UC) and Personal Independence Payments (PIP) are still to happen and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is underway but at various stages. Tameside is a very limited pilot, with only a very small group of people, however it may be useful to get their perspective on the changes and their experience to date.

David advised that agencies are working together and the Halton Information and advice Providers Group has facilitated this work. The Council has been focusing on benefit appeals and supporting people that have been taken off benefit that perhaps shouldn't have been. There has been an increased demand to help residents fill in forms. Housing Associations are also reporting

on the impacts of the Reforms. Riverside has reported that 6,190 people affected regionally by the Bedroom Tax and of those half have not paid anything and a quarter have paid in full. Arrears actions will be further down the line. HHT more upbeat so overall mixed views from housing providers.

Also 7,000 people got their first Council Tax bill this year, 3,900 summonses have already been issued for non- payment People must talk to Council Tax if they have problems paying due to arrears with benefit payments etc. However many people are worse off so it is difficult for them to pay.

Reforms will affect some groups such as pensioners that have not been affected before. We know pensioners are now turning up at food banks.

Low paid employment – changes to Tax Credit have already taken effect. 6000 people on incapacity benefit and long term sick are now having to qualify for continuing employment support allowance. If they fail to qualify they are being transferred to job seekers allowance. Families with an employee working in public sector are more likely to be adversely affected than those in the private sector. More people in north west are employed in the public sector, therefore are hardest hit.  
<http://www.publicfinance.co.uk/features/2013/05/what-about-the-workers/>

Mental health issues are not always taken into account by ATOS and most believe they are under instruction to reject claims where possible. Onus is on individual to gather evidence to support their claim but doctors can charge for letters between £10 - £120. people with mental health issues including ?

### **5.3.1 Conclusion**

There has been an increased demand to help residents fill in forms arising from changes to the Welfare System Support appeals.

Welfare reforms will affect many groups, in particular older people and people with mental health issues will need additional support

Many are now being asked to pay Council Tax when they have never paid this before.

### **5.3.2 Recommendations:**

- ***Work with CAB/ other agencies to identify volunteers to support residents to complete the relevant forms.***
- ***Tameside be invited to the Topic Group to present the findings from the pilot.***
- ***Raise awareness of support provided by the Council's Adult Learning Service which assists residents with basic literacy and numeracy.***

**5.4 A Halton Strategic Partnership perspective – i) Mapping Partners’ support; ii) partner responses to the welfare reform agenda; iii) joint working opportunities**

Shelah Semoff gave an overview of the work of the Halton Strategic Partnership Board. The Chair of the Halton Strategic Partnership Board (HSPB) is Cllr Polhill and the Employment Learning and Skills Specialist Strategic Partnership sits under this Board. There have been 2 HSPB meetings so far dedicated to the welfare reform agenda, with different speakers invited, looking at the impact that the welfare reform changes will have on both service providers and our local communities and how the Partnership can work better together , avoiding duplication and filling the gaps.. The HSPB has agreed that there is a need to differentiate between the levels of support provided to people. So for example will be IT literate, whilst others will not have these basic skills.

The Partnership has produced a leaflet for front line staff, which highlights the key welfare reform changes. This then sits alongside work which is ongoing to identify where support is available locally. This information is available electronically and easily updated.

Also presentations about the welfare reform changes have been given to different front line staff and voluntary groups.

Digitalisation was also a key consideration as Government expect services will be digital by default, which is difficult in an area like Halton. “Go ON” is a national model initiative which focuses on increasing digital skills and is the successor to Race Online. There is no current Go ON project operating in Halton, however the HSPB agreed to support the exploration for implementing one in Halton and this is currently being taken forward

David Gray stated that approximately 80% of claims for Universal Credit will be on line. Also Jobs match requires IT literacy skills. Small employers are having issues providing real time info, which should be used on daily basis to calculate the hours that people have worked. This will directly link to the benefits paid.

**5.4.1 Conclusion**

Two key messages were presented:

People will be hit by more than one of the changes and it is important that people need to seek that professional help early. Also help is available for people but there is a need to raise awareness. An action plan has been agreed with Job Centre Plus about what is required and how this will be undertaken.

It should also be noted that Wesley Rourke is the nominated strategic lead officer for the HSPB on this issue and another Partnership event has been arranged for the 27<sup>th</sup> November. This event is aimed at front line staff and will

try to establish a better understanding of exactly what impact the welfare reforms are having on the communities in Halton , as well as across partner organisations.

#### **5.4.2 Recommendations:**

- **To complete a Partnership directory. CAB are doing this through advice services transition fund**
- **Adult Learning to work with support to help ensure people they have the necessary access to IT and the right literacy skills and budgetary skills;**
- **To develop a Partnership bid for further advocacy support.**
- **To support the implementation of the “Go ON” project in Halton.**

### **5.5 Benefit reform and war veterans**

The Topic Group received a presentation from Billy Jones from the Runcorn Veterans Association (RVA). The RVA was set up in 2011 as a not for profit organisation, primarily to provide support for younger soldiers. The Group works with soldiers and their families and provides practical help and signposting including to welfare advice. Staff are trained to deliver this work.

#### **5.5.1 Conclusion**

The presentation provided three helpful case studies to outline how the RVA works with other agencies to provide a “One Stop” approach to soldiers. It was noted that soldiers tended to relate better to peers/former soldiers rather than colleagues from other agencies.

#### **5.5.2 Recommendations:**

Agencies should use the RVA as a broker to signpost soldiers and their families to additional support.

### **5.6 Policy and Research Low Pay/No pay**

It was noted by the Topic Group that the term “worklessness” is high on the political agenda. Since the election of the current coalition government in 2010, welfare spending on the working-age population has been strongly targeted in its public spending reductions. Some Political leaders have justified these reductions, at least in part, by depicting unemployment as a ‘lifestyle choice’. The Prime Minister has stated that some people who are ‘claiming welfare are just not entitled to it’.



Within this context, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation undertook research examining the relationship between what is often described as 'poor work' and the 'low pay, no pay' cycle. The report found that long-term worklessness is a relatively unusual experience. Stringent welfare rules have been in place for some time, which mean that, even if an individual were resolutely work-shy (and there is absolutely no evidence that many people are), avoiding work in the long term, or even permanently, would be no easy feat. Greater recognition needs to be given to low pay, no pay churning if governments are serious about establishing conditions for working life which allow acceptable levels of social and economic security. It is often assumed that lowpaid work or 'poor work' is the preserve of younger generations who are on pathways towards better jobs, but, as our research has shown, this is clearly not the case for some groups of workers. For some of the poorest and most disadvantaged workers, 'poor work' is where their working life ends as well as where it starts.

Debbie Houghton gave a brief presentation

(link:<http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/events-presentations/885.pdf>) on the low pay no pay cycle and the myths surrounding people on benefit. The presentation was from research in the north east but applies equally to Halton. The presentation used real life case studies to challenge the myths of:-

**'Work *always* provides the best route out of poverty'**

**'The unemployed don't want to work'**

**'Unemployment is a 'lifestyle choice'**

**'There are families with three and even four generations of worklessness'**

Link to summary of the study which explores experiences of poverty and the low-pay, no pay cycle amongst people living in deprived neighbourhoods in Teesside, North East England.

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/unemployment-pay-poverty-summary.pdf> and <http://www.cpaq.org.uk/sites/default/files/CPAG-Poverty142-low-pay-no-pay.pdf>

Despite moving in and out of unemployment and low-paid jobs over years, people in the study expressed great and enduring commitment to work. Repeated engagement in jobs failed to provide routes away from poverty, largely because of few opportunities being available in the local job market. The insecurity of low-paid and low-quality work was the main reason why shuttling between benefits and jobs had been interviewees' predominant experience of working life.

This cycling in and out of low-paid work extended to middle-aged and not just younger workers. Thus, these jobs are not necessarily stepping stones to better employment. Caring for children and other family members limited

labour market participation, as did health problems. Ill-health was sometimes the result of 'poor work' and unemployment. Wider aspects of disadvantage beyond the labour market led interviewees to lose and leave jobs. Financial necessity, their desire to work and the lack of better opportunities led people to take poor quality jobs that trapped them in long-term insecurity and poverty.

Gaining further qualifications did help some people in the search for jobs. A significant finding, however, is that overall, levels of educational attainment did not straightforwardly predict improved labour market fortunes. Even the best qualified – those with university degrees – participated at times in the low-pay, no-pay jobs cycle. Interviewees reported that the support offered by statutory and voluntary sector agencies to help people into jobs can be limited, patchy and sometimes unhelpful. Most agencies were more geared to helping the longer term unemployed, and catered less for people who moved in and out of work with shorter periods of unemployment. Commonly, informants felt the stigma of being unemployed and having to attend the Job Centre. Most deplored claiming welfare benefits and some avoided it for as long as they could, using savings or loans to tide them over between jobs

### **5.6.1 Conclusion**

- Many people in work remain poor or close to poverty
- Welfare is never generous, often leaving people in everyday hardship – and sometimes severe poverty
- For virtually all, unemployment is not 'a life-style choice'
- Unemployed people want to work, actively seek jobs & repeatedly engage with jobs - that are low paid, low skilled and insecure (but socially & economically necessary)
- Even the best qualified – those with university degrees – participated at times in the low-pay, no-pay jobs cycle. The study reported that the support offered by statutory and voluntary sector agencies to help people into jobs can be limited, patchy and sometimes unhelpful. Most agencies were more geared to helping the longer term unemployed, and catered less for people who moved in and out of work with shorter periods of unemployment.

### **5.6.2 Recommendations:**

- **Encourage other employers to set up paid Internships, similar to those run by Halton Borough Council**
- **Service providers could do more to maximise the skills that voluntary staff can bring to an organisation. They have now increased the number of hours that you can do on a voluntary basis**
- **Greater need to provide opportunities for residents to develop budgeting and IT skills, particularly important as new benefits system will rely on online systems. (Sue Riley (JCP) to take up**

with each LA in the sub region. Will take time so don't want payday lenders to benefit from this. Sue must set up a plan that reflects problems in Halton. )

- **Consider organising a credit union join up day for council staff and also work with other employers in the borough to encourage their employees to join the Credit Union.**

## **5.7 Halton and national data on low paid and temporary work**

Report circulated from Neil McSweeney in the Research Team (copy attached in Annex 3). National data highlights elementary occupations as having the largest percentage of low paid jobs nationally. A high percentage of Halton residents are employed in elementary professions. The two occupational areas with the lowest pay in the North West, are the most sought occupations in Halton, which are elementary and sales and customer service occupations. This has a knock on impact on the local economy.

Possible reflecting the current economic climate the number of longer term Job Seekers Allowance claimants is increasing. However it is people who have been out of work for shorter time periods who are more likely to get back into work. In Halton around 25% of jobs are part – time but this is no different to regional and national positions.

### **5.7.1 Conclusion**

In summary this shows that the jobs which pay less than a living wage are elementary or low skilled jobs and it is these very jobs that are highly sought after in Halton, helping to keep people in a cycle of poverty instead of lifting them out of poverty.

### **5.7.2 Recommendations:**

- **to develop appropriate indicators to measure the impact of the benefit reforms in Halton**

## **5.8 Disability and employment/ unemployment - A Halton Perspective**

Debbie Houghton presented an overview of the statistics (attached in Annex 3) and there was a discussion around the usefulness of this data in setting a baseline to monitor the impact of the welfare reforms over time. Disability Living Allowance claimants (Nov-12) are higher in Halton than in both the NW and England. Highest numbers of claimants live in Halton Lea, Windmill Hill and Halton Castle.

**Disability Living Allowance** is made up of two components around care and mobility and differing levels depending on need. Under the welfare reforms,

this benefit will be removed and replaced only for people of working age. However these changes are incremental over time, rather than due to take place on a set date like the 'Bedroom Tax.' Due to the timescales for the change, the impact will not have been felt yet, although many affected by other benefit changes will also be affected by this but at a later date.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) claimants - new claimants will get Personal Independence Payment (PIP) not DLA, however existing claimants of working age are not being re-assessed until 2015 at the earliest. Current claimants can however refer themselves as self-selectors, to be re-assessed before this time and anyone currently on DLA whose claim is up for renewal will also be re-assessed starting October this year. Those on indefinite awards will not be assessed until Oct 2015. Approximately 75% of people on DLA in the north west are on indefinite awards.

Some people are essentially not employable/very difficult to employ due to poor health, but will be taken off disability benefits as they no longer meet the thresholds for the new PIP and so will be expected to look for work. May be many people in this category and this is likely to impact on services.

Mental health problems were raised as a particular concern as their health could be made worse by the benefits reform, as people will struggle on the lower income without disability benefit and will potentially be unable to find work. There aren't many jobs around now anyway and people with mental health and other disabilities, will be competing against people without disabilities and often for zero hour contracts or low paid part time hours.

Appeals – People with a progressive condition, may be knocked back as depends on how they presented on the day. Also re: giving evidence on their conditions, people's memories can be quite bad and they may not be able to express themselves fully at the tribunal. Need to get hold of medical notes etc to prove your case. GP reports often don't provide a sound evidence base. They do not say what the consequences are of the health conditions. Often consultants and Community Psychiatric Nurses know more about a person's treatment than a GP

### **5.8.1 Conclusion**

It was suggested that it will be people on the lower rate of DLA that will be most impacted upon by the welfare changes, as they are unlikely to meet the new criteria for PIP . The welfare reforms essentially mean people will have to manage on reducing benefits, whilst at the same time deal with increasing costs. People who are working are often on a limited working week etc and so there is likely to be a big impact on health.

### **5.8.2 Recommendations:**

- **to consider how we could better support people through the appeals process, by working together with health services to get people access to the information and support they need.**

- **to establish the right measures to enable us to monitor the impact of welfare reforms in Halton, for example breakdown of health issues by ward for DLA and other benefits**

**(not a recommendation)**

## **5.9 Welfare Reform and the impact on disabled people – Dave Gray**

Currently the benefits system doesn't cope well with change? People on zero hours contracts are entitled to pay when not working, but there is little faith that the system will be able to cope with managing real time change in line with changes in people's circumstances.

Benefits changes have resulted in contribution based Employment Support Allowance (ESA) limited to 12 months under most circumstances. , Many people are not aware as yet of these changes, but they are having a significant impact.

Non means tested Attendance Allowance, DLA (new claims only up till age 16) mobility and personal care, PIP (came in from April) points based system not cope will people with low levels of care. PIP can only be newly claimed by people of working age. Those disabled under 16 will still be claiming DLA.

People with lower levels of disability will lose out and the focus of the reforms has been to support most in need. Incapacity benefit abolished in 2008 but many are still on it. ESA is much harder to get. Over 3 year period all being reassessed (we are in last year of this). Those on IB assessed for new benefit (roughly 40% being assessed as fit for work) but with support for appeals nearly 90% are successful. People who are likely to be unsuitable for work and may never have worked or not worked for many years; some over 60, are now being asked to seek work.

Dave Gray gave two case studies from people whom he has been involved. He expects that there will be more marginal cases coming forward, many with mental health problems who are older. We will help everyone that comes to the council for support, but we have to prioritise the level of support we can give.

Advice Services transition Fund that CAB have in partnership with 3 other voluntary organisations will help to better support people through welfare changes. This funding will be used to redesign services and ensure better partnership working across the sector within the borough and will improve the support given to those most vulnerable to the changes brought in by the Welfare Reform Act.

### **5.9.1 Conclusion**

Indefinite awards DLA will not be re-assessed until 2015 and afterwards but effects will be noticeable, Halton will be second most affected borough out of 325 LAs. Change will be incremental over time so will get noticed less.

People with lower levels of disability will lose out and the focus of the reforms has been to support most in need.

Incapacity benefit abolished in 2008 but many are still on it. ESA is much harder to get. Over 3 year period all being reassessed (we are in last year of this). Those on IB assessed for new benefit (roughly 40% being assessed as fit for work) but with support for appeals nearly 90% are successful. People who are likely to be unsuitable for work and may never have worked or not worked for many years; some over 60, are now being asked to seek work.

The council is only one of many agencies helping people. However demand for help is likely to outstrip supply but will recruit more volunteers to give support at a lower level, rather than the complex cases. Issue can be the quality of the advice that people get? Complicated how the different benefits work together and it can be difficult to advise people on which benefits to or not to apply for. Advice is really critical. Also carers allowance is very complicated, so people are likely to need advice and support.

### **5.9.2 Recommendations:**

**Consider how we could better support people with lower levels of disability who are more likely to lose out with the benefits reforms.**

#### **5.10 Welfare Reform - The perspective from a voluntary sector group that supports disabled people in Halton – David Atkinson Link:- <http://www.haltondisability.org.uk/>**

Halton Disability Group employs 3 part time staff. They have noticed a steady increase in people seeking advice on disability benefits. Training people to give good advice is critical. Need to share knowledge of who is best placed to give what advice.

The group has one information and advice support officer and have been successful in obtaining a 5 year grant from the lottery.

They are seeing 3 or 4 people are coming through the door once a week, but they recognise that people are also using other agencies, such as CAB etc. Currently there is limited training for advisors and some are accredited and some are not. CAB want to work with a more pooled resource. Link up with transition funding as a starting point. Also there is a steering group looking at having a strategic managers' forum rather than front line service provision. Warrington Disability services co-located, could we look at?

#### **5.10.1 Conclusion**

A one stop shop approach to benefits advice and support would be great, we currently have disaggregated service provision. Also we could have more services co-located. If people fall out of benefits and can't work, this will have very expensive consequences for people and services.

#### **5.10.2 Recommendations:**

**Consider the feasibility of a one stop shop approach to benefit advice and support, either through co-location of services and/or a one front door approach with referrals to the most appropriate support service.**

**5.11 Welfare Reform a perspective from the Council's Employment Learning and Skills Division - Siobhan Saunders, Divisional Manager, Employment, Learning and Skills**

Siobhan gave an overview of the impact of the welfare reforms on the long term unemployed that are on the work programme. The advisors are now seeing examples of people being evicted and getting into rent arrears. In terms of council tax, many never had to pay before and are in denial about having to pay. There is a shortage of one bed flats so they are unable to downsize to avoid the bedroom tax. More people are now in arrears which has a knock on effect on other appointments etc. Also if they move properties they may need to leave the area that they grew up in, which impacts on their mental health. Some people are being taken off disability benefits that are not well enough to work. Siobhan circulated info on the impact of welfare reform on HPIJ customers, attached in Annex 3.

Universal jobs match, new job seekers claimant etc now all done on line. JCP have a target to get more services on line. This is really difficult for people with limited skills or who can't read. Therefore mistakes are being made. Libraries and some businesses have offered to make computer facilities available.

There are some initiatives that we do that support customers as set out in the information attached. All advisors need good knowledge of other services eg. drug and alcohol. Staff have access to food bank vouchers to help people in the short term.

**5.11.1 Conclusion**

The work programme advisors are starting to see people being evicted from their homes, increasing numbers with arrears etc. These instances represent the beginning of the fallout from the welfare reforms, but these are ramping up all the time. Some people are paying but are going into debt so only a matter of time before they can no longer pay. Increasingly access to benefits and jobs is on line, so we need to ensure people have the right skills and access to IT in order to apply. There is a lack of one bedroom properties to enable those hit by a bedroom tax (they cannot afford) to move.

**5.11.2 Recommendations:**

**Improve public internet access and support** - Establish internet centres that we can open up to public access to help people use on line services and

access applications for benefits etc. Also possibly hold an open day event at libraries with support staff available to help access on line services.

**Housing** - To further promote the principle of house swaps and liaise with HHT to determine the most appropriate way of achieving this

## 6.0 Overall Conclusion

This scrutiny review has been both a successful and a worthwhile exercise in terms of covering all the outputs and outcomes from the initial topic brief and gaining a sound knowledge and understanding of the issues affecting and resulting from the benefit reforms in Halton.

It is recognised that there is much good practice happening in Halton and excellent working relationships between the council and our partners and the public.

There are recommendations for further improvement that have been identified from this scrutiny review and these have been arranged into an Action Plan at Annex ? for ease of reference and monitoring.

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**TOPIC BRIEF**

<b>Topic Title:</b>	Welfare Reform Topic Group
<b>Officer Lead:</b>	Operational Director (Employment, Enterprise and Property)
<b>Planned start date:</b>	June 2013
<b>Target PPB Meeting:</b>	January 2014

**Topic Description and scope:**

A review of the current issues associated with the Government welfare reforms in Halton, focusing on understanding how the reforms will impact on the objectives and work of the Employment, Learning, Skills and Community PPB.

**Why this topic was chosen:****Key outputs and outcomes sought:**

- What, if anything, are we doing/have done to address these issues both as a Council and as a partnership for our residents?
- Is there any information/documentation that has been produced or which needs to be produced to advise our staff/customers/residents on the changes?
- How can we best collaborate with partners in order to mitigate the impact of the Welfare Reform Act in Halton?
- Are there any changes needed in how we deliver our services. Do we anticipate an increase/change in demand for the services provided?
- What are the problems and impacts facing pilot areas?
- Rules and changes and more being introduced and we need to assess this.
- Bill/Act is quite broad; impact of how we cope from both Member and Officer perspective.
- Use of the Topic Group to set KPIs to evaluate impact.
- Consider impact on housing associations.
- Assess and map out systems already in place.

- Impact of and on Welfare Rights Service.
- Map out Training facilities – what is available?
- The impact on access to services.
- Possible use of Schools.
- Need to factor in bedroom tax and partner input.
- Also Housing Strategy and whether this reflects changes in Welfare Reform

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

**Employment, Learning and Skills:**

- To develop a strong, diverse, competitive and sustainable local economy.
- To foster a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship and make Halton an ideal place to start and grow economic activity.
- To develop a culture where learning is valued and skill levels throughout the adult population and across the local workforce can be raised.
- To promote and increase the employability of local people and tackle barriers to employment to get more people into work.
- To maximise an individual's potential to manage and increase their income.
- Including access to appropriate, supportive advice services.

**Nature of expected/desired PPB input:**

Member led scrutiny review of the impact of the welfare reforms on the Employment, Learning and Skills priority.

**Preferred mode of operation:**

- Invite speakers from partner agencies who have been directly involved with the welfare reforms to provide an overview of the process and implications for residents and partners.
- Presentations from relevant officers within the Council to examine current practice regarding managing the welfare reforms and

implications for the council and in particular the Employment, Learning Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board

- Invite partners including Department of Work and Pensions and the voluntary sector to give their perspective of the welfare reforms in Halton

**Agreed and signed by:**

**PPB chair** .....

**Officer** .....

**Date** .....

**Date** .....

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## METHODOLOGY DETAIL

## a) Presentations

The following officers gave presentations as part of this scrutiny review:

Name of officer	Title of Presentation
Wesley Rourke	<p>Potential Impact of Welfare Reform and the impacts on the Employment, Learning &amp; Skills Priority</p> <p>Overall Financial Impact Assessment - Sheffield Hallam University Research</p> <p>Setting a baseline position and measuring impacts (identifying KPIs)</p>
David Gray	<p>Welfare Reform Overview</p> <p>Welfare Reform and the impact on disabled people</p>
Shelah Semoff	<p>A Halton Strategic Partnership perspective – i) Mapping Partners’ support; ii) partner responses to the welfare reform agenda; iii) joint working opportunities.</p>
Debbie Houghton	<p>Policy and Research Low Pay No Pay</p> <p>Halton and national data on low paid and temporary work</p> <p>Disability and employment/unemployment - A Halton Perspective</p>
Billy Jones – Runcorn Veterans association	<p>Welfare Reform and the Armed Forces</p>
Ste Lloyd (DWP)	<p>Welfare Reform Key Issues</p>

	and Challenges for Disabled people  Welfare Reform Key Issues and Challenges for those on the low pay no pay cycle
David Atkinson	Welfare Reform - The perspective from a voluntary sector group that supports disabled people in Halton
Siobhan Saunders	Welfare Reform a perspective from the Council's Employment Learning and Skills Division

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**Children and Enterprise  
Directorate**

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## Documents Considered within the review

### Corporate Plan – 2011 – 2016

<http://moderngov.halton.gov.uk/documents/s14868/ExecB%2022Sept11%20DftCorpPlanAppend.doc.pdf>

### Sustainable Community Strategy – 2011 – 2026

<http://hbc/services/policystrategy/Policy%20Documents/Policy%20and%20Strategy/Sustainable%20Community%20Strategy%202011%20Final.pdf>

### Welfare Reform Literature Review



Welfare Reform  
Literature Review.doc

### Welfare Reform Local Services



Welfare Reform  
Local Services - versio

### Welfare Reform Booklet



Welfare Reform  
booklet v7 - final.pdf

### Welfare Reforms Impact on HPIJ Customers



Welfare reform  
impact on HPIJ custo

### Potential impacts of the Welfare Reforms for ELS & C



Potential Impact of  
Welfare Reform on th

### Low paid jobs data for Halton



low pay jobs  
data.docx

### Disability Data for Halton



disability data.docx

### Halton's Welfare Changes impact



HALTON's Welfare  
Changes impact.docx

**ELS & C PPB Welfare Reform Scrutiny Review**  
**ACTION PLAN**

Action No.	Action	Who	Timescale	Progress Update
1	Produce a resource pack of information relating to welfare reform	Steve Doore	Completed	Completed and attached in Annex 3
2	Adult education support to help ensure people have the necessary IT, literacy and numeracy skills and budgetary skills	Siobhan Saunders	Ongoing	<p>IT, literacy and numeracy classes are offered by ELS Adult Learning at Acorn and Kingsway Learning Centres and at other venues across the borough. Managing Money classes are delivered by Adult Learning in Children's Centres. Employability Programmes, including the HEP Award, are also delivered in ELS venues.</p> <p>Work Programme and National Careers Service clients are regularly referred to this provision to assist them in improving their skills and employment prospects and to</p>



				move them nearer to the job market.
3	Need more advocacy support. Ideal is for duty advisors to be at court picking up those without representation. We don't have the capacity to represent everyone in need.	David Gray	This action is not viable at this time	This is an ideal although very expensive and time consuming service that isn't practical and can't be resourced at this time
4	Development and roll out of "Halton Go-ON" project	Partnership Steering Group with support from Shelah Semoff	Ongoing	Report currently drafted and once agreed by the steering group will go through relevant partner approval before project launched
5	Consider a data analysis for Halton in relation to the Sheffield Hallam measures	Debbie Houghton	Ongoing	Performance measures will be agreed as part of the development of the Child and Family Poverty Strategy
6	Encourage other employers to set up paid Internships, similar to that run by Halton Borough Council. Also encourage businesses to offer work experience placements and opportunities for voluntary work.	Wesley Rourke	Ongoing	Halton Borough Council does not offer paid internships. The HEP team have arranged a couple of unpaid voluntary internships for clients earlier this year which have now come to an end. As part of its employer

				<p>engagement activity, the HEP team do work with local employers to source work experience placements and graduate internships for unemployed residents. These are normally unpaid and are undertaken on a voluntary basis and priority for the placements is given to Work Programme clients (required as part of WP contracts).</p> <p>As part of the People Plan and the Talent Strategy, there are plans to work with council departments to recruit volunteers, graduates and apprentices.</p>
7	Service providers could do more to maximise the skills that voluntary staff can bring to an organisation. They have now increased the number of hours that you can do on a voluntary basis	Wesley Rourke/John Gallagher	Ongoing	<p>The HEP Manager has recently been able to gain support from HBC Senior Management to help increase the number of work experience placements across the Council.</p> <p>As part of the People Plan and the Talent Strategy, there are plans to work with council departments to recruit</p>

				volunteers, graduates and apprentices.
<b>8</b>	Greater need to provide opportunities for residents to develop budgeting and IT skills, particularly important as new benefits system will rely on online systems. (Sue Riley (JCP) to take up with each LA in the sub region. Will take time so don't want payday lenders to benefit from this. Sue must set up a plan that reflects problems in Halton. )	Gill Bennett/ Steve Nyakatawa – Lead for schools working with Trading Standards	Ongoing	Curriculum support packs developed and currently being promoted to schools through Trading Standards
<b>9</b>	Consider organising a credit union join up day for council staff and also work with other employers in the borough to encourage their employees to join the Credit Union.	Wesley Rourke/ Debbie Houghton	TBA	This work can be considered as part of the development of the Child and Family Poverty Strategy
<b>10</b>	Need to develop appropriate indicators to measure the impact of the benefit reforms in Halton	Wesley Rourke/ Neil McSweeney	TBA	This work will be completed as part of the development of the Child and Family Poverty Strategy
<b>11</b>	Need to consider how we could better support people through the appeals process, by working together with health services to get people access to the information and support they need.	Julia Rosser (health)/ /David Gray	TBA as part of development of the Child and Family Poverty Strategy	Currently there is an inconsistent service from GPs. Some will provide the information at the request of the individual at no cost, others charge up to £100+, others will only provide info at the request of DWP and not to the

				individual.
<b>12</b>	Consider how we could better support people with lower levels of disability who are more likely to lose out with the benefits reforms. (If we have access to data on the people in Halton on low level DLA, we could target early support.)	Wesley Rourke/ David Gray	TBA as part of the development of the Child and Family Poverty Strategy	Under the new benefits regime some people will lose their benefits as the rules have changed substantially. However welfare rights will assist people with Mandatory reconsiderations and appeals. Actions might include awareness raising ( such as that ongoing with Halton disability forum), and promoting the services that can help more.
<b>13</b>	Consider the feasibility of a one stop shop type approach to benefit advice and support, either through co-location of services and/or a one front door approach with referrals to the most appropriate support service. Also explore the possibility of piloting a welfare reform information stall in Halton's market(s)	Peter McCann	Ongoing	Co-location of services would be very expensive and there is no commitment to do so at this time. A front door type approach where people phone one provider but are then referred to other providers as appropriate is more feasible. CAB are producing a directory which will help with the referral process but already have good informal referral processes in place.
<b>14</b>	Establish public internet access centres			IT drop in sessions are

	<p>where the public have support to help them access on line services and access application forms for benefits, jobs etc</p>	<p>Siobhan Saunders / Library staff</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>delivered by ELS Adult Learning at Acorn and Kingsway Learning Centres. The contents of these sessions are determined by the needs of the learners. CV workshops and two-week employability courses are also delivered at both Learning Centres. HPIJ Advisers also deliver workshops in job searching, job applications and interview skills to Work Programme clients at several venues across the borough. (HPIJ deliver 2 Work Programme contracts for Halton for Ingeus and A4E)</p> <p>Public PCs are provided at HPIJ's offices in Rutland House and Moor Lane to enable clients to job search and make online job applications.</p> <p>Public PCs area also available in Halton's Libraries where staff can give support. There are also a number of work Clubs across the Borough offering similar facilities and support.</p>
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15	Open day HHT, so people can turn up and look to swap houses. Could we get all HAs together and hold a bigger event.	The Strategic Housing Partnership	Ongoing	<p>All HAs are required to offer free membership for their tenants to one of a small number of national online exchange schemes (Abitas, Locata, Homeswapper, House Exchange.). HHT held a first event in September but attendance was poor. A second event is planned for 30<sup>th</sup> October, involving HHT, Riverside, LHT, Plus Dane and Guinness so the HAs are already working together on this.</p> <p>This is core business for the HAs</p>
16	Consider one day event(s) at library with support staff to assist people access internet services	Library staff/ Peter McCann	Keep under review	<p>Library staff already support people in accessing IT. Currently the only benefit accessed on line is relatively straight forward to complete. Hence demand is not currently there for putting welfare rights staff in libraries.</p> <p>Keep under review however it would need to be resourced if a decision was made to put such a service in place in the future</p>

<b>17</b>	Consider how to better engage with private landlords re making available one bed properties. Links between private sector HA and public sector HA.	Strategic Housing partnership	Ongoing	<p>The homeless service already makes as much use as it can of the private sector to accommodate homeless households, but it also is experiencing a shortage of smaller properties.</p> <p>Not sure how much demand there would be for private sector tenancies from HA sector given the unfavourable comparison in terms of rent levels, security of tenure, maintenance and management etc.</p>
<b>18</b>	Consider review of planning policy to build one bed homes etc. However we recognise that should Government policy change around bedroom tax, these properties would no longer be as desirable.	Strategic Housing Partnership/ Tim Gibbs	Keep under review.	Keep under review. However one bedroom properties would no longer be as desirable if the bedroom tax policy changed
<b>19</b>	Consider expanding Property Pool Plus to include private sector	Strategic Housing Partnership	Ongoing	There is already a facility for private landlords to advertise on PPP and we have started to use this in Halton, <u>but only for 'accredited' landlords.</u>





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

**DATE:** 11 November 2013

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Children & Enterprise

**PORTFOLIO:** Resources

**SUBJECT:** Business Planning 2014 -17

**WARDS:** Boroughwide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To offer a timely opportunity for Members to contribute to the development of Directorate Business Plans for the coming financial year.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Board**

- i. Notes the contents of the report**
- ii. Provides initial suggestions of priority areas for service development and improvement over the next 3 years.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Each Directorate of the Council is required to develop a medium-term business plan, in parallel with the budget, that is subject to annual review and refresh. The process of developing such plans for the period 2014-2017 is just beginning.
- 3.2 At this stage members are invited to identify a small number of priorities for development or improvement (possibly 3-5) that they would like to see reflected within those plans. Strategic Directors will then develop draft plans which will be available for consideration by Policy and Performance Boards early in the New Year.
- 3.3 Whilst providing a Directorate context each of the Directorate Business Plans will contain appendices identifying specific Departmental activities and performance measures and targets that will provide a focus for the on-going monitoring of performance throughout the 2014 – 15 financial year.
- 3.4 It is important that Members have the opportunity to provide input at this developmental stage of the planning process, particularly given on-going

budget pressures, to ensure that limited resources remain aligned to local priorities.

- 3.5 It should be noted that plans can only be finalised once budget decisions have been confirmed in March and that some target information may need to be reviewed as a result of final outturn data becoming available post March 2014.
- 3.6 To assist the Board, in the last two years a special meeting of this PPB has been convened to give full opportunity for Members to look at the identified issues and challenges facing the areas that fall within the Boards remit over the period of the next plan through a presentation, as well as proposed priorities for the Children & Enterprise Directorate. The session would provide opportunity to add to any issue and ensure all additional issues and challenges have been considered.
- 3.7 The priority for the Directorate identified within the Business Plan 2013-16 is:
- Driving the economic prosperity of Halton to the benefit of residents and the workforce

Further information on these priorities is attached within Appendix A, together with detail of identified cross-cutting and Business Critical Issues. Appendix B offers an indicative summary on a page of what the Directorate Business Plan will include.

- 3.8 The timeframe for plan preparation, development and endorsement is as follows:

	Information / Purpose	Timeframe
<b>PPB</b>	Discussion with relevant Operational / Strategic Directors concerning emerging issues, proposed priorities etc.	<b>October / November 2013 PPB cycle</b>
<b>Portfolio Holders</b>	Strategic Directors to discuss with Portfolio Holders emerging issues, proposed priorities etc.	October / November 2013
<b>Directorate SMT's</b>	To receive and endorse advanced drafts of Directorate Plans	<b>SMT dates to be agreed with Strategic Directors</b>
<b>Corporate Management Team</b>	To receive and comment upon / endorse advanced drafts of Directorate Plans	Early December 2013
<b>Portfolio Holders</b>	Strategic Directors to discuss with Portfolio Holders advanced draft plans, including relevant departmental service objectives/ milestones and performance indicators.	<b>Late December 2012/ January 2014</b>
<b>PPB's</b>	Advanced draft plans including details of relevant departmental service objectives/milestones and performance indicators	January 2014 PPB Cycle

<b>Executive Board</b>	To receive advanced drafts of Directorate Plans for approval	<b>7<sup>th</sup> February 2013</b>
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#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Business Plans continue to form a key part of the Council's policy framework and will need to reflect known and anticipated legislative changes.
- 4.2 Elected Member engagement would be consistent with existing "Best Value Guidance" to consult with the representatives of a wide range of local persons with regards to formulating plans and strategies.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Directorate Plans will identify resource implications.
- 5.2 Such plans will form the foundation of the performance monitoring reports received by Elected Members and Management Team on a quarterly basis.

#### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCILS PRIORITIES**

- 6.1 The annual review of medium-term business plans is one means by which we ensure that the strategic priorities of the Council inform, and are informed by, operational activity.

#### **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 The development of a Directorate Plan will allow the authority to both align its activities to the delivery of organisational and partnership priorities and to provide information to stakeholders as to the work of the Directorate over the coming year.


























#### **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 8.1 Directorate Business Plans, and the determination of service objectives, are considered in the context of the Council's equality and diversity agenda.

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

There are no relevant background documents to this report.

## Appendix A: Children &amp; Enterprise Directorate Priorities 2013-16

Overarching Theme	<b>Effectively Managing Resources to Deliver Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce</li> <li>• Asset Management – finance, physical capacity, low carbon economy</li> <li>• Child &amp; Family Poverty</li> </ul>			
Directorate Priorities	<b>Integrated Commissioning</b> 	<b>Child's journey through the continuum of need</b> 	<b>Improving opportunities for our most vulnerable young people</b> 	<b>Driving economic prosperity</b> 
Directorate Business Critical Issues	 Agree common understanding of commissioning across Directorate, Council and with partners	 Use the Munro Review of Child Protection to improve outcomes for children and families	 Narrow the attainment gap between vulnerable groups and their peers by early identification of need	Maintain HBC assets in order to provide a sustainable flow of income and capital
	 Support the long-term sustainability & development of key service providers	 Continue to embed common understanding of Early Help.	 Launch Halton Integrated Early Help Strategy	 Implications of Welfare Reform and the Single Programme
	Ensure Early Years, school and post-16 provision is sufficient, sustainable and high quality	 Implement and embed Halton's Early Help Strategy and local offer.	 Support School Improvement	 Develop apprenticeship opportunities and support apprentices
	 Ensure sufficient integrated and targeted support for young people in the borough	Safeguarding – review capacity and caseloads for social workers.	 Measuring progression of pupils and schools	 Delivering a comprehensive employment, learning and skills service
	Develop role as broker or commissioner of services as well as provider	 Improve outcomes for Children in Care and Care Leavers	Raising attendance, participation and achievement	 Mersey Gateway investment
	 Work with other partners to ensure we improve outcomes for all, focusing on our most vulnerable.	 Recruit and retain Children's Social Care managers to ensure management oversight and ensure effective care planning	 Tackling health inequalities	 Developing European Social Fund bid
	 Improving Child Health Outcomes		 Tackling Child & Family Poverty	Delivering a comprehensive development and investment service
				Interface with the Private Sector and employer facing services

<b>Lead</b>	<b>Ann McIntyre</b>	<b>Tracey Coffey</b>	<b>Steve Nyakatawa</b>	<b>Wes Rourke</b>
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## Appendix B – Indicative Directorate Plan Executive Summary – Enterprise

<b>Outcome-Focussed Priorities</b>	<b>Driving Economic prosperity of Halton to the benefit of residents and the workforce</b>
<b>Key Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategically manage and maintain the Council's assets in order to provide a sustainable flow of income and capital receipts as well as ensure that they are safe and fit for purpose</li> <li>• Deliver a comprehensive development and investment service</li> <li>• Deliver a comprehensive employment, learning and skills service</li> </ul>
<b>Major Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting the development of combined authority in areas of Economic Development and Employment Learning and Skills</li> <li>• HBC are leading on the development of the Assisted area map for the LCR</li> <li>• Develop and assist with delivery of actions to be funded through Halton's European Structural Funding allocation of £16,927,600 from 2014 – 2020</li> <li>• Secure external funding for key strategic priorities in Halton</li> <li>• Working with MerseyLink to deliver agreed job, training, supply chain and school engagement outcomes for local people, schools and businesses</li> <li>• Support local people into jobs through HPIJ</li> <li>• Support new business start ups in Halton</li> <li>• Encourage new apprenticeships and traineeships across the borough</li> <li>• Continuing with the delivery of the council's 3 to 5 year Asset Disposals Programme. £2.3m has been received over the last 2 years.</li> <li>• Energy Management – meeting the reduced emissions target of between 5% and 10% from 2010/11 levels over a 5 year period.</li> <li>• Support the new adult learning and skills tutor contracts that have been renewed</li> <li>• The council's homeworking Policy will be revised to take account of major road works which will take place as part of the Mersey gateway Development (Jan start)</li> <li>• Where funding is available, the council will look to improve and manage its' assets for the benefit of the community to improve service delivery.</li> <li>• We will maximise rental income from our Operational estate by actively seeking other public sector partners to share accommodation where feasible in order to reduce expenditure.</li> <li>• Continue to support the two business Improvement Districts (BIDS) as businesses have voted for them to continue for the next 5 years</li> <li>• Mersey Gateway acquisitions/disposals/ demolitions</li> <li>• Support business in the town centres through the Town Team and town centre grants</li> <li>• Development agreement Bayer</li> <li>• Venture Fields Barwood</li> <li>• Sci Tech Daresbury</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in shopping habits impacting on the vibrancy of town centres</li> <li>• Combined Authority will result in how funding is allocated for regeneration in Halton</li> <li>• Delivery of outcomes required for MerseyGateway</li> <li>• Low land values affects investment on key strategic sites</li> <li>• Funding regimes out of sequence, leading to delays in completion of projects</li> <li>• Difficult sites to remediate in Halton require greater remediation</li> <li>• National transfer of assets</li> <li>• Mersey Gateway – in short-term project could cause delay to adjacent sites</li> <li>• Impacts of the Welfare Reforms, for example more people on the Work Programme with mental health problems</li> <li>• Payment by results and more challenging targets in Work Programme</li> </ul>
<b>Lead</b>	Wesley Rourke

### Indicative Directorate Plan Executive Summary – Children’s

Outcome-Focussed Priorities	Integrated Commissioning of services to meet the needs of children, young people and families in Halton	Effectively supporting the child’s journey through the Halton Levels of Need Framework when additional needs arise	Improving opportunities for all through closing the gap for our most vulnerable children and young people
<b>Key Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure Early Years Provision for children is sufficient, sustainable and of appropriate quality</li> <li>• Ensure school and post-16 provision is sufficient, sustainable and of appropriate quality</li> <li>• Improve outcomes for children and young people through effective joint commissioning, with emphasis on our most vulnerable children and young people</li> <li>• Improve outcomes for children and young people through integrated and targeted youth support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve outcomes for Children in Care and Care Leavers</li> <li>• Improve outcomes for children and families through embedding integrated processes to deliver Early Help &amp; Support</li> <li>• Ensure that the changes required by the Munro Review of Child Protection to practice improves outcomes for children and families</li> <li>• Recruit and retain Children’s Social Care Managers to deliver the necessary level of scrutiny and management oversight to ensure effective care planning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the percentage of schools and Early Years settings where Ofsted judge overall effectiveness to be good or better.</li> <li>• Increase the GCSE attainment for 5 or more A*-C including English and Maths</li> <li>• Narrow the gap in attainment between vulnerable groups and their peers through early identification of need</li> </ul>
<b>Major Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnership working to reduce NEET and increase participation in Further Education and Training post 16</li> <li>• Exploring new options for Alternative Provision</li> <li>• Capital Investment &amp; Maintenance Programme</li> <li>• Increased range and volume of youth provision across Halton.</li> <li>• Exploring options for integrated commissioning of services with CWAC and other local authority areas.</li> <li>• Development of Pan-Cheshire Missing from Home Service</li> <li>• Implementation of Inspiring Families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation and rollout of new Halton Children’s Trust Levels of Need Framework</li> <li>• Developing further Early Help &amp; Support resource across Halton Children’s Trust</li> <li>• Implementing new approach to performance reporting and case files</li> <li>• Planning and preparation for future external judgements of services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Learning &amp; Achievement Strategy</li> <li>• Development of further Transition activities for children &amp; young people 0-25</li> <li>• Implementing all aspects of Children &amp; Families Bill in Halton, including SEND</li> <li>• Achievement &amp; Attainment at all Key Stages</li> <li>• Narrowing the Gap, Peer Challenge and Virtual School for Vulnerable Pupils</li> <li>• Understanding and ensuring all schools meet requirements of new Ofsted School Inspection Framework</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising the Participation Age</li> <li>• Information, Advice &amp; Guidance</li> <li>• Early Intervention Grant</li> <li>• Capital</li> <li>• Early Years</li> <li>• Provision</li> <li>• Workforce Development</li> <li>• Sustainability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changing external inspection landscape</li> <li>• Ensuring intervention and children supported at the earliest stage.</li> <li>• Adapting and implementing new ways of working</li> <li>• Ensuring we support children in residential care</li> <li>• Safeguarding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools and Academies</li> <li>• Meeting requirements of Children &amp; Families Bill by planned implementation dates.</li> <li>• Understanding all factors that need tackling to close the gap</li> </ul>
<b>Lead</b>	Ann McIntyre	Tracey Coffey	Steve Nyakatawa

