

**EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING, SKILLS AND COMMUNITY POLICY AND
PERFORMANCE BOARD**

At a meeting of the Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 24 March 2014 in the Karalius Suite, Halton Stadium, Widnes

Present: Councillors Edge (Chairman), C. Plumpton Walsh (Vice-Chairman), Cassidy, Howard, P. Lloyd Jones, Logan, MacManus, Parker, Roberts, Rowe and Zygadlo

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Simpson, W Rourke, N. Goodwin, C. Patino and M Patino.

Also in attendance: J. Rule, CEO Widnes Vikings

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

	<i>Action</i>
ELS40 MINUTES	
The Minutes from the meeting held on 8 January 2014, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
ELS41 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
It was reported that no public questions had been received.	
ELS42 SSP MINUTES	
The Board received the Minutes of the Employment, Learning and Skills, Specialist Strategic Partnership from 24 February 2014.	
RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted.	
ELS43 VIKINGS IN THE COMMUNITY - PRESENTATION	
The Board received a presentation from Mr James Rule, Chief Executive Officer of Widnes Vikings which set	

out the work undertaken in the local community groups and schools by the Widnes Vikings Rugby League Team.

The presentation outlined the following:-

- Community focus – building relationships with residents;
- Influence the Widnes Vikings players have on young children;
- Visits to schools by young players who had recently signed for the Vikings 1st team;
- Partnership work carried out with local amateur rugby league clubs;
- Details of various projects and schemes carried out in local schools;
- Provision of a B-Tech. course in Sports for young people;
- Healthy heart and nutrition project;
- Vikings inspire award;
- Vikings against bullying;
- School games award;
- Community Fit 4 Life and Schools Fit 4 Life; and
- Visits to children's wards in hospitals

Arising from discussion of the presentation Members noted the positive impact the work carried out by the Widnes Vikings had on the local community and ways of encouraging schools from Runcorn to take part in activities provided.

The Chair thanked James Rule for an informative presentation.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be noted.

(NB: Councillor P. Lloyd Jones declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item due to being a Board Member of Murdishaw Community Centre.)

ELS44 COMMUNITY CENTRES - ANNUAL REPORT

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Communities which provided the annual report on Community Centres for the operating period 2012/13.

It was reported that the Community Centres Service consisted of five buildings: Castlefields, Ditton, Grangeway, Murdishaw and Upton. The centres provided programmes of community activities, varying models of community café's

and service outlets, i.e children's centres, youth centres and day services. It was noted that the centre's provided a community hub and central point at the heart of communities for residents to enjoy chosen activities and receive services in their neighbourhoods. It was further noted that they were based in deprived wards in the Borough and were well utilised. In addition Churchill Hall also received grant funding to support community use.

The report set out performance data for community centres which contributed to a whole area approach to health and wellbeing. It was noted that the Community Centres service demonstrated continuous improvement through its performance monitoring and contributions to the Council's efficiency programme.

The Board was advised that community centres were benchmarked as part of the APSE (Association of Public Service Excellence) against other Civic, Cultural and Community Venues owned and run by other local authorities.

The report further set out annual usage of Community Centres, detailed profiles for each Community Centre and future challenges.

The Board received a presentation from Nicola Goodwin, Community Development Manager, which set out the following:-

- Service performance;
- Statistics on each of the Community Centre's;
- Examples of community engagement and demographic evaluation;
- Service objectives; and
- Information regarding income generation.

Arising from discussion of the report and presentation Members commented on the possibility of co-location for example sharing use of the building with job centres or debt advisors. In addition the Board commented on the bus stop at Murdishaw Community Centre as it was felt that it was located too far away from the actual centre, and whether there was a possibility it could be relocated.

The Chair thanked Nicola Goodwin for an informative presentation.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

(NB: Councillor C. Plumpton Walsh declared a Disclosable Other Interest in the following item due to being a Member of DC Leisure Centre)

ELS45 BUSINESS PLANNING

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which presented the business priorities for the Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board.

Members were advised that each Directorate of the Council was required to develop a medium-term business plan, in parallel with the budget, that is subject to annual review and refresh.

Members had identified a small number of priorities for development and improvement that they would like to see reflected within the business plans. The report further set out emerging strategic themes and emerging service delivery priorities.

Appended to the report for consideration were the priorities for the library service strategy, sport and recreation centres, Local Enterprise Partnership Single Local Growth Plan and EU Investment Plan, BIG Team strategic priorities and the green / low carbon economy.

Arising from discussion of the report, Members commented on the opportunities for people who were currently working, but looking to gain additional qualifications to improve their career and whether funding was available for employers to provide this. In response it was noted that this would be investigated.

RESOLVED: That the priorities presented be considered and noted.

ELS46 IMPLEMENTING HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL'S APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise which provided an update on the corporate apprenticeship scheme.

It was reported that a report on apprenticeships was presented to the Executive Board in March 2014 which informed Members that Halton Borough Council's People Plan reinforced the need for the Council to continue to

attract, develop and retain excellent people. Furthermore, there was recognition that the Council had an ageing workforce and was developing a Talent Strategy to promote a structured approach to Succession Planning across the organisation.

The report set out the benefits of Apprenticeships, however it was noted that it had been difficult to allocate a specific resource to fund and support apprenticeships.

Members were advised that Executive Board considered three options as follows:-

- Option 1 – Use existing departmental resources to fund Apprenticeships;
- Option 2 – Use of the Council's Invest to Save Budget; and
- Option 3 – Explore the use of European Funding to develop a borough wide apprenticeship programme.

It was reported that Option 3 was identified as the preferred option, and a future cascade briefing scheduled for early May would be used to brief Managers on Apprenticeships. It was noted that the briefing would set out the processes for identifying, appointing, supporting and monitoring apprenticeships.

The Board was informed that since publication of the report Executive Board had approved Option 3 and a guidance booklet would be produced outlining the process.

It was noted that at the end of the 12 month period a number of further options would need to be considered such as the value of continuing with the scheme and whether existing apprentices would be offered further employment. The report further set out the implications for Council's priorities in relation to Apprenticeships and a risk analysis. Appended to the report for information was a list of frequently asked questions, regarding Apprenticeships.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) it be noted that Option 3 is the preferred option for developing the scheme; and
- 2) the report be noted.

ELS47 EUROPEAN PROGRAMME 2014-2020

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Enterprise, which set out how Halton's European Funding Action Plan was intended to support the business priorities of the Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy and Performance Board.

It was reported that EU regulations for the new programme required all EU funding to be spent on 11 thematic objectives; the Liverpool City Region had agreed that the themes would be taken forward through five portfolios as follows:-

- Blue/Green Economy;
- Business Economy;
- Innovation Economy;
- Inclusive Economy; and
- Place and Connectivity.

Members were advised that Halton had mirrored the five portfolios and had developed its own set of projects under the same themes.

A partnership event took place on 7 February where the borough's partners were invited to comment on the priorities that had been outlined to date. They were asked to confirm their support for the initiatives being developed, and or identify where they felt there were potential gaps in provision.

It was reported that the Inclusive Economy and Business Economy were the portfolios most relevant to this Board and emerging considerations for the both portfolios were set out in the report for information.

It was noted that an indicative allocation of £16.9 million was positive news for the Borough and in order to draw down the maximum grant available over the 7 year period it would be necessary to identify and secure appropriate match funding.

RESOLVED: That the report and emerging priorities that have been identified be noted.

ELS48 STANDING ORDER 50

The Board was reminded that Standing Order 50 of the Council's Constitution stated that meetings should not continue beyond 9.00pm.

RESOLVED: That Standing Order 50 be waived.

ELS49 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR
QUARTER 3 OF 2013-14

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Policy and Resources, which detailed the third quarter performance management report for 2013/14. The report set out progress against objectives / milestones and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments emerging issues that had arisen during the period.

It was reported that key priorities for development or improvement were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans for the various function areas as follows:

- Economy, Enterprise and Property extracts for Employment Learning and Skills; and
- Community Service extracts for Library Services and other Culture and Leisure services.

RESOLVED: That the third quarter performance management reports be noted.

The Chair wished to place on record her thanks to Board Members and Officers for the hard work carried out during the Municipal Year.

Meeting ended at 9.20 p.m.