

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2010

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director - Environment and Economy

**SUBJECT:** Scrutiny Review of Employment Practices for people with learning or physical disabilities or mental health issues

## 1.0 **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report as proposed in the topic brief was to:
- Review current employment opportunities for people with a learning or physical disability or mental health issues in Halton
  - Develop an understanding of the financial processes around employment for these specific groups
  - Consider best practice and local examples in terms of supporting people into employment
  - Develop an understanding of corporate responsibilities in supporting vulnerable people into employment
  - Devise a series of recommendations and accompanying action plan to improve the authority's performance in relation to supported employment opportunities

## 2.0 **RECOMMENDATION : That the Executive Board**

- (1) **Consider the contents of the report; and**
- (2) **support, where resources allow, the recommendations made by the Employment Learning Skills and Community PPB and Health PPB as set out in the scrutiny report and action plan (annex 5).**

## 3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### 3.1 **Background**

As part of a Care Quality Commission performance assessment carried out in 2008, it was noted that, while Halton had supported more people with a learning or physical disability or mental health issue into employment than was predicted, performance was still lower than comparators. Care Quality Commission also noted that targets set in relation to supported employment were relatively low.

Despite a number of interventions through employment and social care programmes in Halton, the number of people with learning disabilities progressing into employment remains low and is significantly lower than north-west averages. As a result of this assessment, a scrutiny review of current practice was commissioned.

### **Employment Topic Group**

- 3.2 The Employment Topic Group comprised:
- Cllr Ellen Cargill (Joint Chair)
  - Cllr Eddie Jones (Joint Chair)
  - Cllr Geoff Swift
  - Cllr Bob Gilligan
  - Cllr Martha Lloyd-Jones
  - Cllr Pamela Wallace
  - Audrey Williamson, Operational Director Prevention & Commissioning
  - Stiofan O'Suillibhan, Divisional Manager Community Services
  - Gerry Fitzpatrick, Divisional Manager Enterprise & Employment
  - Emma Bragger, Service Development Officer
  - Jo Burrows, Service Development Officer
  - Katy Rushworth, Policy Officer

### **Methodology**

- 3.3 The scrutiny review was conducted through a number of means, including:

- Regular meetings of the scrutiny review topic group
- Attendance at meetings by various key members of staff and external guests
- Provision of information
- Visits to a number of local authorities

By following the above process, a Scrutiny Report was agreed by members (Appendix One) and within this report, a series of recommendations (25 in total) have been discussed and agreed by the members of the Employment Topic Group.

## **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Linked to the implementation of the recommendations set out in the scrutiny report, a number of updates or reports may be required to be developed and presented to the Executive Board in the future.

## **5.0 FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Any financial implications, which may impact on the delivery of the recommendations of the scrutiny review, will need to be explored in detail through the development of a Business Case. Any such implications will be explored in detail and presented to the Executive Board in due course.

## **6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 None identified

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 The risk of the recommendations not being agreed and progressed fully, is that Halton will not be in a position to improve it's performance rating for National Indicators 146 and 150 and maybe be subject to closer review by the Care Quality Commission.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 8.1 None Identified.

9.0 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None under the meaning of the Act.