

## Employment, Learning & Skills SSP

### Executive Group Meeting Minutes

Kingsway Learning centre 13 May 2013

#### Present


Wesley Rourke	HBC - Economy, Enterprise & Property (Chair)
Emma Mellor	HBC - Halton Employment Partnership Team
Hitash Patel	Halton CAB
Lindsay Carr	HBC - Halton People into Jobs
Siobhan Saunders	HBC - Employment, Learning & Skills
Debbie Houghton	HBC – Children & Enterprise Policy Team
Heather Hayes	Blue Orchid
Debbie Ainsworth	Job Centre Plus
Kevin Smith	Riverside College
Cllr Eddie Jones	Halton Borough Council
Tim Leather	HBC - Economy, Enterprise & Property
Tracy Ryan	HBC – Children & Enterprise Policy Team

#### Apologies

Helen Woollacott	Skills Funding Agency
Simon Clough	HBC Learning & Achievement Services

Item		Action
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Welcome &amp; Introductions</b> WR welcomed new members to the group.	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Minutes and Matters Arising from 10/12/12</b> The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Partner Updates</b>	
<b>3.1</b>	<b>CAB</b> CAB have submitted a BLF funding bid which will assist in creating future opportunities – recruitment of a dedicated trainer, 3/4 new jobs and recruiting and training more volunteers. If the bid is successful, CAB will set up an evening advice service, to which other partners will be invited along to offer a joint approach. CAB are waiting for confirmation of the outcome of the bid  CAB has been under significant pressure keeping the 2 offices running, particularly with the benefits reform and they are seeing more people coming to them with mental health	

	<p>problems.</p> <p>KS agreed would welcome CAB input at their open evenings. SS asked about volunteer training, HP suggested would welcome discussion with partners to avoid duplication.</p> <p><b>3.2 JCP</b>          Working with 6 Merseyside local authorities JCP have secured a DWP bid to host a public jobs fair themed 'It Pays To Work' to be held at St Georges' Hall, Liverpool on <b>4 July 9.30am-5pm</b>. The event will provide unemployed people with skills health checks, internet accessible devices for jobs search, National Careers Service bus will be available, WIFI access within the room and a variety of employers that have local vacancies have been targeted to attend to host display stands. JCP intend to undertake a 13-week track of clients to check if moved from unemployment register. 5,000 clients are expected to attend. There will be over 50 employers, including Debenhams (Christmas recruitment), Army, hospitality sector alongside the NAS, JCP, local authorities and debt advice services.  <b>Action:- JCP will cascade marketing information when it is available.</b></p> <p><b>3.3 Riverside College</b>          Contracts and KPI's are going from strength to strength; Higher Education recruitment for September intake is being progressed; remodelling of the back of the Kingsway site will be undertaken as part of a several million pounds face lift; new classrooms are being built at the Cronton site.</p> <p><b>3.4 HBC</b>          The Mersey Gateway bids have been submitted, scores agreed and the preferred bidder is to be announced in June. A Skills Action Plan has also been agreed.</p> <p>Across Halton and Warrington, the highways contract has been awarded to Tarmac. As part of the contract they will be required to provide job opportunities for Halton residents.</p> <p>Adult Learners week award ceremony takes places on 10th June. SS reminded members that the deadline for responses to the Richard Review of Apprenticeships is 22nd May.  <b>Action:- Feed any comments on the Richard Review to Siobhan Saunders</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center; vertical-align: middle;"><b>DA</b></p>
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<p><b>4.0 &amp; 5.0</b></p>	<p><b>City Region Employment &amp; Skills update &amp; European Programme Workshop update</b></p> <p>WR, EJ &amp; SS recently attended a European workshop regarding the new European Structural Funds, during which the emerging priorities for Halton were also strongly reflected at the City Region level. LEPS will be submitting a Plan for the LCR at the end of June. The work that Siobhan and others have been pulling together for Halton will feed into this Merseyside Plan.</p> <p>SS advised that as the Council are now an Apprenticeship Hub and that this attracts government funding, an action plan has been drawn up itemising different strands of activity/projects for example apprenticeship awareness raising. Higher level apprenticeships are particularly needed and we will look to access European funding to address this need. Connexions are leading on awareness raising of apprenticeships in schools. City Region procurement group are in place and will look at how we can best maximise apprenticeship opportunities etc.</p> <p><b>ACTION: WR to mention to GM re links with schools.</b></p>	<p><b>WR</b></p>
<p><b>6.0</b></p>	<p><b>Worklessness Seminar 30.4.13</b></p> <p>SS/WR recently attended a Liverpool University 'Fresh Thinking on Big Ideas' seminar, the theme was 'Are cultures of worklessness passed down generations?' Research on this was undertaken in Middleborough and Glasgow and the outcome found they were unable to prove the hypothesis that worklessness begets worklessness. They suggested that the low-pay/no-pay cycle that people get stuck in was having a much bigger impact on their lives and stresses the importance of more support for people when they first become unemployed, so they aren't left on no pay.</p> <p>The next event is titled 'The Future of the Third Sector' and takes place on 11<sup>th</sup> June, from 3.30 – 5.30pm. Email from Siobhan re: this event is attached below:-</p> <p></p> <p>INVITATION - Fresh thinking on big issues</p>	
<p><b>7.0</b></p>	<p><b>Sub Group Updates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Meeting cancelled</li> <li>b) Meeting cancelled.</li> </ul>	

8.0	<p><b>Discussion Topic</b>  <b>‘Fostering a culture of Enterprise and Entrepreneurship...’</b></p>	
8.1	<p>LC circulated an Entrepreneurship Mapping exercise that HPIJ had undertaken; this outlined the various funding available and the criteria required to access this funding for both pre &amp; post start-up funding.</p>	
8.2	<p>HH gave an introduction to the work that she does as part of Blue Orchid. In her experience support for new businesses and social enterprises can be disjointed and is mostly available at the national rather than local level. Halton however does have useful local support and information available for unemployed people looking to start up their own business, such as ‘the Business Support leaflet,’ but how easy is this for individuals to find and navigate through?</p>	
8.3	<p>Schools and colleges have a big role to play in promoting enterprise as an opportunity for young people. However the statutory requirement for schools to deliver enterprise has now gone along with the funding. There are still smaller elements in some subjects such as business studies and citizenship but that is limited. EM felt that from a schools perspective there was a disjointed culture, good schools provide good support as opposed poor schools/poor support. Emphasis in schools is job ready/employability skills rather than entrepreneurship skills. HP thought more focus was required on employability as people could still set up their own business if they wished utilising these skills.</p>	
8.4	<p>HH from Blue Orchid has noticed a significant increase in referrals from JCP as unemployed people often feel they have no other option that to become self-employed, although they would prefer a paid job. Many vocational courses are targeted at the self-employed, Blue Orchid will work with people on these courses to deliver budget skills etc.</p>	
8.5	<p>HH from Blue Orchid has found that people think social enterprises are different to businesses but essentially they both need a sound business plan which will make money. Often people confuse a business with social values with a social enterprise. KS/TL wondered if a mapping exercise on social enterprises should be considered.</p>	
8.6	<p>There has been a big push on mentors nationally to help support people but the infrastructure isn’t in place to support this as yet. Locally we do have business mentors, but generally those individuals only want to give a few hours support. We therefore offer those services for new businesses once they are up and running, as this has been found to make best use</p>	

<p><b>8.7</b></p>	<p>of the limited resource available. We do however offer technical support to business start-ups, which is more valuable to them at this time.</p> <p>Halton Borough Council give £400 start-up grants to new local businesses. There are two Enterprise Officers, based in both Widnes and Runcorn. Blue Orchid offers business start-up support, targeting disadvantaged groups. This is a mixture of one to one support and workshops, with a minimum of 2 hours support offered. There is also post start up support for businesses up 3 years old. The Government Enterprise Allowance will give individuals starting up new businesses 13 weeks of full benefit followed by 13 weeks of no benefit.</p>	
<p><b>8.8</b></p>	<p>There were concerns raised about the impact of Universal Tax Credits on the self-employed and it was suggested that this impact will be considerable during the first 12 months.</p>	
<p><b>9.0</b></p>	<p><b>AOB</b> None</p>	
<p><b>10.0</b></p>	<p><b>Time/Date Next Meeting</b></p> <p><b>Monday 27 July, 2pm at Kingsway Learning Centre</b></p> <p><b>ACTION: Room and tea/coffee bookings for scheduled future meetings to be confirmed.</b></p>	<p><b>TR</b></p>