

Priority Based Report

Priority: Employment, Learning and Skills

Reporting Period: Quarter 4, Period 01 January 2015 – 31 March 2015

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress towards the priority of Employment, Learning and Skills, that have occurred during the period of the report. The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within the Appendix (section 8).
- 1.2 Please note initials have been provided to indicate which Operational Director is responsible for the commentary to aid Members. A key is provided at the end of the report in Appendix (section 8).

2.0 Key Developments

2.1 Investment Enquiries (WR)

The Business Improvement and Growth (BIG) Team managed 239 commercial property inward investment enquiries in 2014/15, 10% of which were converted (inward investment enquiries 'converted' into actual investment projects).

The cumulative total of enquiries (total enquiries 2014\15 of 239) exceeds the annual target of 200. The cumulative conversions to date are at 10 %, this equals the 2014\15 annual target of 10%. However, the total number of enquiries in 2014\15, while on target, is down on the previous year.

2.2 Liverpool City Region Apprenticeship Hub (WR)

3 Hub Co-ordinators were appointed in Q4 and their contracts will run until the end of July 2015 (the posts are funded through the Employer Skills Fund – Local Response Fund). The co-ordinators will deliver on a range of projects that will take place between March –July 2015 including a Graduation Ceremony and individual employer events for each local borough. HBC's Chief Executive has also committed to being an Apprentice Employer Ambassador for the North West.

2.3 Merseylink developments (WR)

The first of the 2 Visitor Centres was opened on 10th February at the Catalyst Museum. Merseylink are progressing well on all their employment and skills key performance indicators and gave a presentation on progress at the March ELS PPB.

12 students completed a training scheme developed between Riverside College, Merseylink and Halton Employment Partnership, to help local residents gain the knowledge and practical skills required for a career in construction and to improve their employment prospects.

Trainees then completed a work placement with Merseylink, where they gained valuable work experience on the Mersey Gateway Project. 9 trainees have been offered positions with Merseylink. 4 have been offered apprenticeships and 5 have been offered full roles.

2.4 Skills Funding Agency Community Learning Mental Health Pilot North West (WR)

The Government's 2014 Autumn Statement announced an additional £5m 2015-16 and £15m in 2016-17 for pilot community learning courses to help adults recover from mild to moderate mental health problems. An invitation to tender was issued at the end of December 2014 and Halton will be submitting a bid. There will be 5 contracts awarded from the 24 North West Local Authorities.

2.5 SciTech Daresbury (WR)

Tenders were received in September 2014 from Barr, Galliford Try, Grahams Construction, Eric Wright.

Start on site is estimated March 2015.

£3.57m EZ Capital Grant awarded, two payments have been received by Halton BC.

£1.1m bid to ERDF for Phase 1b Techspace; bid approved.

Sci-Tech Funding Route Map workshop – this workshop brought relevant stakeholders together to consider the current and future skills needs of the campus and consider possible sources of funding to deliver on the skills strategy. A number of spin-off meetings to look at specific funding pots are due to take place.

2.6 EUROPEAN PROGRAMME 2014-2020

National Update:

- Negotiations between Government and the EC regarding the approval of Operational Programmes have been slow.
- The Programme will more likely be launched middle of 2015.
- Further delay may occur due to the General Election in May and purdah, which will start around the end of March 2015.
- Discussions are taking place regarding extending current ERDF projects past June 2015, to mitigate the impact of the delayed start to the programme.
- There has been official confirmation that TO7 for transport has now been removed from the English ERDF operational programme (except for less developed regions). Government now need to agree with the EU the wording around Low Carbon to see how, and if any of our transport activities can be included.

Liverpool City Region (LCR) Update

- The Liverpool City Region (LCR) Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) are having discussions with partners regarding potential new projects where Government funding that could be used as match is time sensitive, such as Youth Employment Initiative funding (YEI), this must be spent by the end of 2017. The eligibility of participants that can be assisted through the YEI has been narrowed, and in conjunction with the tight timescale for spend, this is becoming a real challenge.

- The LEP is continuing to work with partners on the development of a series of projects, Technical Assistance and European Social Fund (ESF) skills related activity.
- The first round of calls for the Blue/Green Portfolio will be for an LCR 2 Energy Hub, which will be a vehicle to find match funding and develop calls around Energy efficiency, Modal shift for SMEs, Ship to shore connections, Heat networks.
- It is envisaged that SME support will be provided via the Business Growth Hub and that some Blue/Green activities will be delivered through the Innovation Portfolio, such as offshore wind and hydrogen network.
- Draft project calls have been produced for the Business Economy portfolio. There are four key areas of activity around which first round calls will be developed; Brokerage / Growth Hub, Generic business support activity, Business start-up support, Targeted business support.
- Workshops are being held to consult with local partners regarding Innovation Exchange and this will be a dimension of the Growth Hub.
- LCR LEP is looking to ensure that the activity which may have come through the ERDF opt-ins, will be covered under mainstream business support provision.
- The Local Incubation for Social Innovation (LISI) mechanism, as an alternative to Community Led Local Development / global grants. This is a small grants programme working with community-led organisations that have had a great impact in previous programmes and is a 3 stage process providing support to individuals and groups from the more disadvantaged areas of the City Region. This will be worked up with a view to issuing a call once the programme is open. The Voluntary sector will continue to develop this proposal over the coming months.
- The Local Impact Fund (LIF) and LISI are complementary; organisations looking to access a grant are not likely to be investment ready in order to access a loan.
- The LEADER offer letter has been received by the Combined Authority. The programme could start spending early this year, but cannot duplicate any activity that might be delivered under the new EU programme. The Eligible areas for LEADER/Rural funding in Halton are Hale, Daresbury, parts of Ditton and parts of Farnworth. Further information will follow in the next couple of months.

Halton Update

- Halton representative continues to attend the EU Core Team Meetings at the LEP, providing regular updates to partners.
- Continued support is being provided to local partners to prepare them for when calls will be launched.
- Halton representatives have been attending workshops and consultation events that the LEP Portfolio leads have been holding.
- Continued discussions are taking place with partners organisations in Halton to identify local priorities.

2.7 Merseyside Business Support Programme (WR)

The Merseyside Business Support Programme continues to engage the Halton business community. To date, there have been 257 enquiries for assistance to the programme. Of these 114 are currently engaged on the programme. The project is now collecting information on jobs created / safeguarded and the financial impact of the support. To date

businesses have reported 64 jobs created (57% of target) and 16 jobs safeguarded (27% of target). To date 10 businesses have reported an increase in gross value added of £3,016,554.

2.8 Community Development (CP)

Community Development has delivered a programme of Health & Wellbeing Grants on behalf of the Health & Wellbeing Board. During the period there have been 6 Healthy School Awards, 19 Community Group Awards and 28 Recognition Awards for Health Champions. The programme has supported a wide range of activities from burlesque fitness sessions to encaustic painting to school gardening and healthy messages posters. The Mayor has presented the Health Champion Awards recognising the contribution people make going over and above for others which significantly impacts on residents' wellbeing.

2.9 Community Shop (CP)

In March, the ELS&C PPB also received a report on 'Community Shop', which sought endorsement from Members to further explore this concept for Halton. Community Shop is a member only supermarket that sells goods at 70 percent less than RRP. The initiative provides a programme of mentoring support to tackle financial exclusion, improve health & wellbeing and support employability skills. The Members endorsed the project exploration with further reports on progress to be presented.

2.10 Community Centres (CP)

In March, the ELS&C PPB received an annual Community Centres report. The report detailed the usage and income for the service which demonstrated an overall positive direction of travel. The report highlighted over 267k attendances at the Community Centres during the year and that there had been a significant reduction in operating costs.

The Board were advised that Ditton Community Centre won "Best Performer" in the APSE (Association of Public Service Excellence) Annual Awards for the Civic, Cultural and Community Venues category. The Centre had previously won a "Most Improved Performer" award, recognising the effective management of the service and the staff and centre's achievements in delivering a wide range of activities for the local community. The progression to "Best Performer", the highest category of award, shows the continuous improvement within the service to now be the top performer.

2.11 Pilot Community Centre Initiative (CP)

The Area Forum funded pilot initiative to provide improved meals provision and an increased range of activities for young and old at Upton Community Centre is underway.

The initiative is proving to be successful and has generated a considerable amount of interest from the target audience, in both the immediate and wider area. The Tea Dance event in particular is very popular, with attendance figures rising from an initial 30 for the first event held in March to 70 at the latest event.

2.12 Other activities that have been piloted to date, with good attendances, are as follows:

- Indoor bowls

- Prize Bingo
- Exercise Sessions (Tai Chi and Chair Based Exercises)

Officers have received feedback and suggested additional activities from users and will take comments on board for upcoming events. Consultation with users is also planned and opportunities for sustaining the initiative beyond May (the end of the initial 3 month pilot period) are being explored.

The potential for providing information or delivering targeted presentations during events/sessions is being explored with the Fire Service and Police/PCSOs.

2.13 THE BRINDLEY (CP)

The annual pantomime (which ran from Q3 to Q4) was the most successful in terms of tickets sold since the Brindley opened in 2004. Most evening performances were sold out and afternoon performances were at least 75% full.

2.14 THE STADIUM (CP)

A lot of promotion is being undertaken for Stadium Fitness which now has its own email contact and Facebook page, making it easier to measure the effects of the publicity. Despite competition from the local commercial gyms the Ladies Gym is proving a good attraction.

2.15 An introductory offer to HBC staff produced around 20 new members. New promotional photos have been taken and the website page has been updated. A Facebook promotion is currently underway and the page followers have more than quadrupled in the last week.

2.16 The new Legends Bar is now up and running. Daytime business has been steady dependant on activity in the Sports Hall. New promotional photos have also been taken of the bar and there is a new page on the website. A new leaflet featuring Stadium Fitness and Legends Bar is being designed, which can also form part of a new general Stadium Leaflet.

An inventory of the large concourse posters has been carried out and new posters are being designed for Weddings, Parties, Legends Bar and Stadium Fitness.

The Pink Ball, Mayor's Ball and Rainbow Ball were held in the marquee.

This is the right time to do this to coincide with the start of the Vikings season. New Business Cards and Feedback Forms have been produced for the Stadium Conference business. A Stadium e-newsletter has been set up and we are just waiting for the header graphic from the designers.

The New Halton Suite is proving popular attracting new custom due to the excellent modern layout and accessibility.

A brand new digital CCTV system has been being installed the old analogue system was outdated and could not generate the quality images needed to ensure site security.

A major Sky initiative was held at the Stadium, the “Sky Try Initiative” was held here in conjunction with RFL and Sky to encourage rugby league at grass roots level.

Widnes Vikings season has started – Widnes v Wigan opening game of Super league was televised and watched by a record crowd of over 9,500, on the same day we (in conjunction with Widnes Vikings and the CCG) broke the World Record attempt received nationwide coverage on Sky and BBC and ITV for the largest participation to a keep fit video.

Liverpool Ladies season has also started as they attempt to win the Ladies League for a third consecutive year.

The Crucial Crew event was once again (10+ years running) held at the Stadium which saw over 2,000 Primary School age children attend the Stadium for lessons on stranger danger, keep safe and basic first aid.

2.17 SPORTS STRATEGY DELIVERY 2014/15 (CP)

Theme 1: Increase Participation and Widen Access

Get Active: Get Active is set to help more local people aged 25-55 years, get into sport. Nearly 1,000 people have attended an activity class since the project started. New sessions this quarter include Rebound, Metafit, Kettlercise, Clubbercise (new class trends).

Go Run for Fun activities (delivered in partnership with INEOS), took place in Victoria Park, Widnes and Phoenix Park, Runcorn over 1,400 primary school children took part in a 2km run. Sports Leaders from Cronton College assisted with the activities.

In addition to all the new activities the Sports Development Team continue to support over 50 established community classes.

Halton Sports Coach Scheme: Q4: has delivered over 227 hours of coaching from grass roots to excellence at schools, special schools, clubs, charities & organisations. 2652 contacts made in schools and community settings and 113 adults received training.

Sports coaching and support Schools SLA provides a professional coaching service, 27 packages have been purchased for 2015.

Leisure Centre Activity: Sports centre visits in last quarter are down on last year. This can be attributed to the decline in Gym memberships, a direct result of the opening of low cost Gyms in Runcorn and Widnes and a reduction in the number of juniors enrolling on swimming lessons. It should be noted that gym membership numbers at BRC and KLC are slowly rising, this could be due to the initial membership offer at Pure Gym ending. KLC will be price matching Pure Gyms Widnes membership from 1st April.

Halton Leisure Card: 1302 Leisure card were sold in 2014, leisure card holders made 14,654 visits to the Councils 3 Leisure facilities.

Bowlers: Grass Sports Hire and HDL are now administering the sale of Bowling Green Cards. From 1st April anyone wishing to use a Council Bowling Green must purchase a Bowling Green Card, cards cost £25 and are valid from April 1 to March 31.

2.18 Theme 2: Club Development

Sport in Halton Booklet: Sport in Halton 2015 booklet produced and circulated, also available online. This Girl Can national campaign launched in January, templates and marketing information available, information sent to clubs. Club Matters, Sport England's, new online tool provides free guidance, support and learning on all aspects of running a club. Club Matters is a convenient and flexible tool designed to fit around volunteers, with practical guidance to help clubs attract and retain members, to improve and develop skills and build a club that lasts. Sports Development Officer will have access to additional resources to assist clubs with club accreditation, development plans etc.

75 clubs receive direct mailings, providing updates, such as, grants opportunities, coaching courses receive ongoing support with club accreditation

2.19 Theme 3: Coach Education and Volunteering

Coach education courses: Sports Coach UK 'Safeguarding & Protecting Children' workshop delivered to 20 people assisting 7 different clubs.

Sports Coaching Bursaries

Halton Farnworth Hornets	6 x L2 coaches	£600.00
	3 x L1 coaches	£285.00
Widnes Boxing Club	1 x L2 coach	£ 20.00
West Bank ARLFC	4 x L1 coaches	£380.00
	3 x L2 coach	£300.00
Total for quarter		£1,585.00

Total for the year 35 sports coaching bursaries awarded = £3,885 distributed to clubs

Theme 4: Sporting Excellence

Sports specific development work with local clubs continues to support talented athletes, coaches and officials to reach their full potential. Halton School Games continues to provide opportunities for local schools to take part in competitions. Halton sporting venues, including Kingsway Leisure Centre and the Stadium, played host to a number of the Merseyside School Games events taking place throughout a week-long festival of Winter School Games finals in March.

Theme 5: Finance and Funding for Sport

Sports Development Grant Scheme

Q4: 7 bursaries and 5 group grants (cumulative £17,300; 35 bursaries and 6 group grants)

Theme 6: Sports Facilities

Liverpool Road Playing Fields Project: Construction work on the Liverpool Road project is nearing completion. The facility, which will be known as the Frank Myler Sports and Recreation Ground will provide opportunities for the community to take part in a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities.

Improvement Plans: We are presently assisting a number of clubs with their facility improvement plans including

- Runcorn Linnets
- Widnes Tennis Academy
- West Bank Bears
- Widnes RUFC
- Kingsway Boxing Club

2.20 LIBRARIES (CP)

Efficiency Review

The review of the Library Service is now drawing to a conclusion and the new structure and opening hours will be implemented from Monday 13th April. The Service will be led by the Library Strategy and Development Manager supported by two Area Managers and a small team of Development Officers and Resources staff.

Area Managers will be responsible for services delivered through the static libraries in either Runcorn or Widnes. Frontline staff will work on a rota basis spending time at each site within their area, these teams will comprise of Library & Information Assistants and Floor Managers. External recruitment is underway for a number of posts which remain vacant.

The Mobile Library was withdrawn following its last day of operation on Saturday 28th March and options for the disposal of the vehicle are being considered. One of the priorities for the service in the coming months will be for Outreach staff to ensure that residents who cannot access a static library can use the service by other means

Public Lending Right – Sample authority

Public Lending Right (PLR) is the right for authors to receive payment for the loans of their books by public libraries.

Under the PLR system in the UK, payment is made from government funds to authors, illustrators and other contributors whose books are borrowed from public libraries. Payments are made annually on the basis of loans data collected from a sample of public libraries in the UK. Halton will be included in the PLR sample from 1st July 2015.

Purchasing consortium

Public library authorities in the North West and Yorkshire regions have joined together for the purpose of procuring the supply and servicing of library materials. The Participating Authorities serve a population in excess of 9.8 million and issue nearly 36 million items per

annum. The key objectives of the tender are to procure the supply and servicing of library materials in the most efficient and cost effective manner for the Participating Authorities.

The current contract arrangements for the supply and servicing of Adult Non Fiction, Adult Fiction, Children's Materials, Reference Standing Orders, Academic Materials, Music CDs and DVDs ends on 31st May 2015. The Authorities believe that a joint procurement exercise is the most efficient and cost effective method for both the Participating Authorities and tenderers.

It also enables the Participating Authorities to examine current working practices in order to standardise and streamline various functions, thus improving the supply chain in a manner which is beneficial to Authorities and Contractors. The aim is to achieve best value in the procurement of library materials and improve the speed and efficiency of delivery to our customers.

The contract will be awarded for a period of 3 years and will commence on 1st June 2015.

Widnes Library

English Heritage has commissioned Environmental Consultants Ecus to undertake research into pre-1939 public libraries. Post war libraries are in the process of being assessed as to whether they should be a potential addition to the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest by English Heritages Designation Department. Widnes is one of the 28 examples that have been selected for additional research to help inform a decision. The photographic survey of Widnes has been completed, this will form the basis of the evidence presented to English Heritage.

Health benefits of Libraries

The Arts Council has published research showing libraries can save the NHS money and makes a positive contribution to people's health and wellbeing. The new research quantifies the economic value of the benefits to health and wellbeing contributed by public libraries. It shows that the benefits people gain from public libraries could be valued nationally at around £748.1million per annum. This includes benefits to their quality of life and improvements to health which can save the NHS around £27.5million a year. The methodology used in the research was consistent with HM Treasury's Green Book guidance, the Government's guide to assessing the economic value of public services.

Using a library service is associated with a 1.4% increase in the likelihood of reporting good health and library engagement is associated with a range of positive wellbeing outcomes. Based on reductions in GP visits caused by this improvement in health, libraries can save the NHS around £27.5 million per year. This cost-saving could be much higher if other medical services were taken into account.

READING WELL; Books on Prescription for dementia

A new Reading Well Books on Prescription scheme for dementia was launched by the Reading Agency in January. The scheme is endorsed by leading health organisations and is delivered in partnership with the Society of Chief Librarians with funding from Arts Council England.

Halton Libraries is part of this national scheme and launched the service locally on the 5th February. The core booklist of 25 titles includes professionally endorsed information and advice for people diagnosed with dementia, their carers and people worried about symptoms or wanting to find out more about the condition. Health professionals can use the scheme to recommend helpful reading but individuals can also self-refer. The scheme is evidence-based and works within NICE clinical guidance for the treatment of common mental health conditions and for dementia care. It also delivers in accordance with the CCG Outcome Indicator Set 2014/15.

Dementia Friends

The Library Service has a member of staff who is a trained Dementia Friends Champion. Dementia Friends training has now being rolled out to 16 staff.

Digital access/workforce development

The service has continued to roll out training to staff focussing on the libraries role in supporting people to access information and services online in life-critical areas such as careers and job seeking; health, personal financial information and benefits. To date 48 staff have participated with 153 course enrolments and 117 course completions.

Central to this offer is helping people to use vital government online information services. This Universal Information Offer aims to bring together government and non-government sources of information, which have been researched by information professionals in public libraries, giving a level of quality assurance to the customer and to ensure that staff are continually developing their skills to provide the help some people need to access information and services online.

3.0 Emerging Issues

3.1 Adult Learning in Children's Centres (WR)

Confirmation of contract is awaited from Children's Centres in order to plan for provision from April 2015 onwards. Children's Centre promotional materials post April 2015 are currently being drafted for publication and adult learning engagement will be disadvantaged if not included.

3.2 Liverpool City Region Business Growth Grant Programme (WR)

The current Liverpool City Region Business Growth Grant Programme is fully committed.

However, the combined Merseyside Chambers of Commerce have applied under the government's RGF Round 6 for funds to deliver a scheme offering grant of up to £75,000.00 while Merseyside Special Investment Fund (MSIF) have applied, again under RGF Round 6, for funds to deliver a scheme offering grant between £75,000.00 and £1,000,000.00

Local Authorities were precluded from making applications under RGF Round 6.

It is anticipated that government will announce in February 2015 whether the above applications have been successful.

The sum of £15m has also been included within the Liverpool City Region 'City Deal' to continue the current scheme for a further two years.

3.3 Liverpool City Region Growth Hub (WR)

The Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has developed a proposal to create a 'Growth Hub' for the city region. A Growth Hub is not a physical entity but rather a virtual organisation to provide business support services across the City Region. Government is, however, very prescriptive with respect to the form and function of the Growth Hub model they will support. The prescribed model suggests a preeminent role for local Chambers support by Local Authorities. Halton Borough Council and Halton Chamber of Commerce and others are, therefore, discussing in detail how the Growth Hub might work in Halton and how best the model might serve the needs of the local business community

At a city region level an initial funding package of £550,000.00 has been agreed between the LEP and BIS to support the development of a LCR Growth Hub. The LEP are obliged to undertake a full OJEU procurement exercise to appoint the partners who will deliver the Growth Hub locally. It is the intention of the LEP to appoint partners to a framework for five years to deliver the Growth Hub and other business support services. The Council and Chamber will, therefore, work together to submit a tender response to deliver the Growth Hub in Halton.

As part of the development of a LCR Growth Hub the LEP has also proposed a pan-Merseyside computerised record management (CRM) system to manage investment projects, commercial property enquiries and future grant and business support programmes. The Business Improvement & Growth Team has contracted to roll out the new CRM system locally.

3.4 Liverpool City Region Inward Investment Strategy (WR)

The Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership has proposed the creation of a stand-alone inward investment agency for the City Region called 'Invest Liverpool'. However, any such agency would have to be resourced by the six Local Authorities, primarily through the provision of secondees. However, to resource such an agency, given the current demands placed upon Local Authority budgets, is unrealistic.

It is, therefore, proposed that existing inward investment activity across the City Region be formalised. Once the resource currently utilised to support inward investment activities across the City Region has been identified it can be used as match to draw down additional resources from the European Programme 2014-20.

To accelerate the process the LEP have issued a tender for a private sector consultancy to work with the Local Authorities to identify the 'Liverpool City Region Offer'.

3.5 Aerospace\Automotive Cluster (WR)

The first meeting of a small cluster group, made up of local companies involved in very specialist, high tech' aspects of the aerospace and automotive industries will take place on, Thursday 05 March 2015.

It is intended that the group, going forward, be private sector led and meet on a regular basis to discuss matters of shared interest and promote the sector further locally, regionally and nationally

3.6 Runcorn Retail BID (WR)

A Business Improvement District (BID) proposal, encompassing Runcorn Old Town, Trident Retail Park and Runcorn Shopping Centre has been proposed.

Groundwork Cheshire have been appointed to facilitate the development of a BID Business Plan, manage a major consultation exercise and oversee a ballot of all businesses within the programme area.

The proposal will be launched at the Brindley on February 05 2015 and a ballot will be held in July 2015. It is anticipated that, subject to a successful ballot, the BID will be in place by September 2015.

3.7 CDM Regulations 2015 (WR)

The Construction Design and Management (CDM) regulations 2015 come into force on 1st April 2015. These will have a significant impact on our projects as they place additional H&S responsibilities on clients and create a new role of Principal Designer which will be required on the vast majority of projects, as opposed to the current CDM-C role which is only required on the larger scale projects. We have been reviewing the implications of these changes and have put processes in place to ensure we comply with the new regulations. Briefings have been organised in late April 2015 for staff who are involved in project delivery.

3.8 Procurement (WR)

The new public procurement regulations have now come into force. These have a significant impact on our procurement processes and we have been liaising with the procurement centre of excellence to review our procedures to ensure compliance will comply with the new regulations. In short the regulations restrict the use of the pre-qualification process to higher value works only and are designed to give SME's more of an opportunity to obtain work in the public sector, which is welcomed, they are likely to result in higher numbers of submissions having to be evaluated however which could impact on workload.

3.9 Growth Hub (WR)

The Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has developed a proposal to create a 'Growth Hub' for the city region. A Growth Hub is not a physical entity but rather a virtual organisation to provide business support services across the City Region.

At a city region level, an initial funding package of £550,000.00 has been agreed between the LEP and BIS to support the development of a LCR Growth Hub. The LEP plan to recruit a team of 'Business Brokers'. A core team of Business Brokers will be based at the LEP and a single Business Broker will be based within each Local Authority area, embedded either within the Local Authority or local Chamber.

The LEP have issued an OJEU (Official Journal of the European Union) tender for the delivery of the Growth Hub. The tender will, however, be broken down into six lots, one for each LA's area. Organisations successful at tender will be appointed to a five year framework. The providers of future business support programmes will then be selected from the framework. Halton Borough Council and Halton Chamber of Commerce will respond to the tender independently, and, if successful collaborate with respect to the delivery of the Growth Hub. Tenders to deliver the Growth Hub in Halton must be completed by 16 April 2015.

3.10 Pan-Merseyside CRM (WR)

As part of the development of a LCR Growth Hub the LEP has also proposed a pan-Merseyside CRM system to manage investment projects, commercial property enquiries and future grant and business support programmes. The LEP, following a competitive tender exercise, has selected a system called Evolutive. Halton has agreed to adopt the Evolutive system. However, a number of other LA's and Chambers have procured their own systems.

The BIG Team are currently working with developers Alcium and the Council's ICT Team to migrate data from the existing system to the new Evolutive system.

3.11 EMPLOYMENT, LEARNING & SKILLS (WR)

DWP Work Programme – new basket of measures

The changes in numbers and types of referrals to the Work Programme, together with the new stretching targets to achieve, will require some infrastructure changes within Halton People into Jobs. The real focus will be to ensure those clients that gain employment remain in employment.

4.0 Risk Control Measures

4.1 Risk control forms an integral part of the Council's Business Planning and performance monitoring arrangements. As such Directorate Risk Registers were updated in tandem with the development of the suite of 2014 – 15 Directorate Business Plans.

4.2 Progress concerning the implementation of all Directorate high-risk mitigation measures relevant to this Policy and Performance Board was reported at quarter two.

5.0 Progress against high priority equality actions

5.1 Equality issues continue to form a routine element of the Council's business planning and operational decision making processes. Additionally the Council must have evidence to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which came into force in April 2011.

5.2 The Council's latest annual progress report in relation to the achievement of its equality objectives was published on the Council website during quarter 4 and is available via: http://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/pdfs/EandD/Equality_-_objectives_progress_report_-_April_2013.pdf

6.0 Performance Overview

6.1 The following information provides a synopsis of progress for both milestones and performance indicators across the key business areas that have been identified by each Directorate.

Priority: Supporting growth and investment

Key Milestones and Measures

Ref	Milestones	Quarterly progress
EEP2	Undertake a baseline review of business makeup sectors and capacity in Halton by March 2015.	✓
EEP2	Deliver the Business Improvements Districts Year 2 action plan by March 2015.	✓
EEP2	Agree priority action areas arising from the Mersey Gateway regeneration strategy by July 2014.	✓



SUPPORTING COMMENTARY

EEP2 – Research has been commissioned as reported at the last ELS and C PPB.

EEP2 – All milestones within the BID II Business Plan are on programme and on target.

EEP2 – Priority action areas have been agreed.

DIS I 06 -Inward Investment Enquiry conversion rate				SCS EL501 Increase the No. of active enterprises in Halton				SCS EL509 Gross weekly earnings of residents Halton (£)			
Current progress	Target	Quarterly progress	Direction of Travel	Current progress	Target	Quarterly progress	Direction of Travel	Current progress	Target	Quarterly progress	Direction of Travel
✓	10%	10%	↓	N/A	2750	N/A	N/A	✓	To close the gap to the CIPFA Nearest Statistical Neighbourhoods	£458.50	↓

Ref	Measure	13/14 Actual	14/15 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly progress
SCS ELS 02	Increase the proportion of business diversity in the following sectors: Knowledge Economy, Superport, Low carbon/green, Visitor economy	27.03% (March 2013)	27%	N/A	N/A	N/A
SCS ELS 03	Increase the number of people classed as self-employed	6% (Local Economic Assessment HBC July 2013)	7%	6.1%		

SUPPORTING COMMENTARY

DIS LI06 – The percentage of conversions in Q4 (enquiries ‘converted into actual investment projects) was 7%. However, the cumulative percentage is 10% and so the annual conversions target of 10% has been achieved.

SCS ELS01 – This information will be available at year end.





SCS ELS09 – This is an annual figure and will be reported at year end. The latest data available is for 2014. The figure for the gross weekly earnings for employees resident in Halton before tax is £458.50 for 2014. The previous data for Q3 reported on the gross weekly pay for full time workers in Halton (not just residents) which was £30 higher per week compared to the North West.

SCS ELS 02 - This information will be available at year end.

SCS ELS03 – The latest data available is for Jan 2014 to Dec 2014 at 6.1% taken from the NOMIS website – ONS annual population survey for those aged 16-64. 2014/15 data should be available in quarter 1.

Priority: Raising skills levels and reducing unemployment

Key Milestones and Measures

Ref	Milestones	Quarterly progress
EEP3	Deliver the Work Programme via subcontract arrangements to Prime Contractors A4E and Ingeus Deloitte in line with the contract	
EEP3	Complete SciTech skills for growth action plan by March 2015.	
EEP3	Implement Corporate Apprenticeships framework by November 2014.	
EEP3	Identify skills bank requirements from Mersey Gateway project by July 2015.	

SUPPORTING COMMENTARY

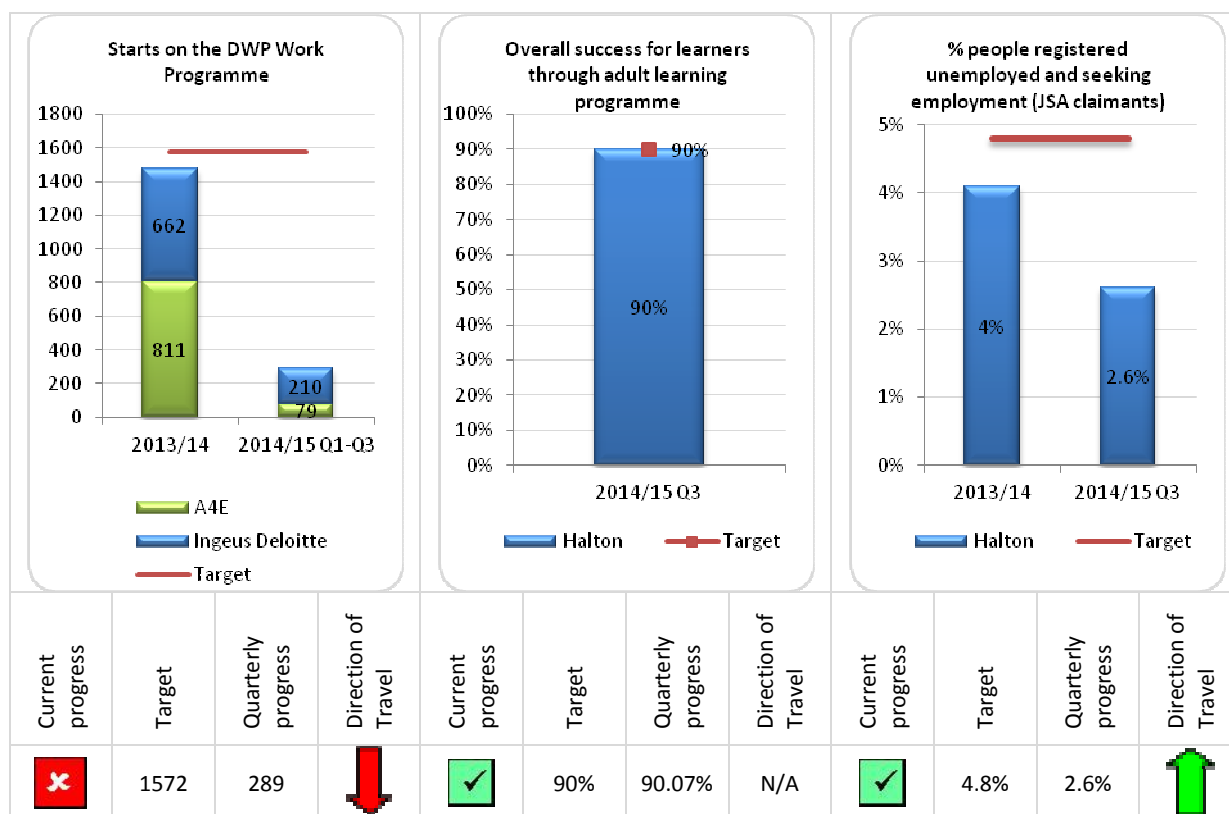
EEP3 – Job starts and job outcome targets haven’t been achieved on the Ingeus or A4e contract during this period but contracted minimum performance levels (MPL’s) for specified 3 payment groups were achieved on the Ingeus contract during quarter 4. Due to falling short by one job outcome in February we were placed on a formal performance improvement plan to achieve new DWP MPL’s March to June 15.

There continues to be a reduction in referrals against indicative profiles during this period. A review of staffing/resources was completed in March to maximise income and productivity in year 5 of the contract (April 15-March 16).

EEP3 – Requests for contributions to a Sci Tech Skills Action Plan have been made in Q4. The planning is therefore within timescales although implementation will come later.

EEP3 – A corporate apprenticeship framework has still not been adopted – but particular vacancies within the council have been identified as possible apprenticeship opportunities.

EEP3 – All KPIs associated with the Employment & Skills Delivery Plan are on target to be achieved.



Ref	Measure	13/14 Actual	14/15 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly progress
ELS A1	The number of new apprenticeship starts in Halton Borough Council	361	5	5	N/A	✓
ELS LI04	Number of new starts into permitted/paid work for local people with disabilities (over 12 month period)	14 (Cumulative)	12	13 44 (actual 14/15)	Up	✓
SCS ELS 04	Reduce the proportion of people with no qualifications	12.1% (Jan to Dec 2012)	11%	10%	Up	✓
SCS ELS05	Increase the percentage of people achieving NVQ level 4 and above	24.5% (Jan to Dec 2012)	24.5%	25.6%	Up	✓
SCS ELS 08	Reduce the percentage of the working age population claiming out of work benefits	15%	16.5%	18.7% (Aug 2014)	Down	✗

SUPPORTING COMMENTARY

ELS LI03 – Referrals from DWP have been lower than indicative flows throughout this and the previous year; therefore fewer customers have started on programme which has been out of our

control. There continues to be an increase in the number of customers in receipt of Employment Support Allowance, approximately 60% of all referrals received are ESA claimants.

ELS A2 – 758 learners are active during Quarter 3, generating 1118 enrolments. To date, 1068 of those learners have been retained with a 90% success rate.

SCS ELS07 – HBC does not own this National indicator data. Data taken from NOMIS website shows that at December 2014 the number of JSA claimants is 2061, a reduction of 329.

ELS A1 – This is a corporate measure. The apprentices work in two different divisions within the Communities Directorate (2 Open spaces, 3 Waste Management)

ELS LI04 – 14 customers with disabilities/health conditions were supported into paid employment during quarter 3.





SCS ELS04 – In Quarter 3, 85 adults have achieved a qualification with HBC’s Employment, Learning and Skills Division. In addition, 73 qualifications have been taken and the results are awaited. The latest data available is for the period Jan 13- Dec 13 and is reported annually in arrears.

SCS ELS05 – HBC does not own this National Indicator data. NVQ Level 4 in the borough has risen. Halton has seen a continuous increase year on year.

SCS ELS08 – The latest data available is up to May 2014 from the NOMIS website. The total number of claimants of working age population in Halton is 15,210 which equates to 18.9%.

Priority: Enhancing residents’ quality of life

Key Milestones and Measures

Ref	Milestones	Quarterly progress
CE1	Continue to implement the Sports Strategy (2012-15) by March 2015.	
CE1	Active people survey results show an increase in participation rates from 2009/10 baseline by March 2015.	
CE2	Identify areas for improvement in line with the Business Plan and Marketing Plan by January 2015.	
CE4	Increase the use of libraries promoting reader development and lifelong learning, thereby encouraging literacy skills and quality of life opportunities.	
CE4	Deliver a programme of extended informal learning opportunities including support for digital inclusion meeting identified local targets by March 2015.	

SUPPORTING COMMENTARY

CE1 - The Councils Sport and Recreation Team continue to deliver and support activity against the key themes and objectives contained in the Sports Strategy. The service produces a detailed monthly report to highlight the key areas of work. Quarter 4 activities include:

- Community Sports coaches delivered 227 hours coaching; 2,652 coaching contacts and 113 training opportunities. (Full year totals: 1300 hours delivering 12,676 school SLA and 1,912 community contacts and 595 adults trained)
- Safeguarding and Protecting Children workshops delivered - 20 attendees, supporting 7 clubs, 17 coaching bursaries, 7 bursaries and 4 group grant. Year totals: 68 workshop attendees from 22 clubs, 37 coaching bursaries, 35 bursaries, 6 group grants. Other activities included;
- Parkrun launched 11 runs, 21 first timers, 165 average number in race.

- 3 clubs re-accredited for Club Halton, 1 new club accredited with Club Halton, 3 new clubs signed up to scheme
- Go Run For Fun: in partnership with INEOS, 1400 primary school children took part in 2 Halton events
- Get Active project registrations 953
- 3836 throughput with Get Active project, new sessions
- The new Get Active Exercise trends timetable has 18 new classes on it, including Metafit, Clubbercise, Rebound and Push and Tone
- On-going support to community exercise classes, over 50 groups
- 183,465 leisure centre visits during Jan/Feb/Mar. Total visits since 1 April 2014 587,298
- 1,302 Halton Leisure Card applications
- 7 Sportivate activities operating 80 participants (sport sessions for 14 – 25 year olds). £5,050 secured for 2015
- 92 registered on Door Step Clubs, £9,000 secured for year 2 delivery
- In house training for casual coaches.

CE1 - Halton Participation Headlines:

- 3 x 30 mins per week, formerly N18, increased by 1% from 24% to 25% (highest rate Halton has achieved in the survey).
- 16+ years 1 x 30 per week 36.8% (last year's rate 30.7% – 09/10 remains highest rate 41.2% Halton then had free swim for over 60s/additional resources from WNF/LPSA/SE grants)
- 14+ years 1 x 30 per week 37.2% (last year's rate 32.2% – this indicator was only introduced last year)

CE4 – Strategy priority - Inspiring a community of readers and learners

Reading Well Books on Prescription – Dementia: A new Reading Well Books on Prescription scheme for dementia is now available in Halton. The Reading Agency scheme is endorsed by leading health organisations and is delivered in partnership with the Society of Chief Librarians with funding from Arts Council England. The core booklist of 25 titles includes professionally endorsed information and advice for people diagnosed with dementia, their carers and people worried about symptoms or wanting to find out more about the condition. The books are available in all the libraries.

Reading Activists Project: 7 Reading Activists meetings have taken place this quarter with 42 attendees. The Reading Activist young volunteers planned and organised the Harry Potter extravaganza at Widnes Library providing games, crafts, stories and lots of fun during February half-term. 160 children and parents participated in the event.

Schools: 7 schools have been engaged in activities with the service this quarter with 723 children and young people participating in class visits.



Reading Groups: 17 Reading Group sessions have been held this quarter with 104 attendees.

Rhymetime: Over 900 children and parents attended 42 Rhymetime sessions in this quarter

Bookstart: 1639 Baby and 1625 Treasure packs have been delivered to Under 5's this year through Health Visitors and Nurseries. In addition 38 foreign language and special needs packs have also been distributed.

Other events: The library service attended Halton Lodge Children's Centre 10th Anniversary celebrations with 20 participants as well as Terrific 2's sessions. 40 Widnes Brownies participated in a Booklovers Badge session

CE4 - The Library Service delivered an Introduction to memory” session to 34 people at the Lunch Bunch club at Murdishaw Community Centre. Dementia Friends Training undertaken with 16 library staff. Safer Internet Families session delivered at Halton Lea Library. Digital access/workforce development - 48 staff have enrolled on 153 courses completing 117 modules. IT Clinics has been delivered at both Halton Lea and Widnes Libraries with 19 sessions having taken place with 128 attendances. 19 workclubs sessions supported by GMB have been delivered this quarter with 224 attendances.

Ref	Measure	13/14 Actual	14/15 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly progress
CE LI4	Diversity – number of community groups accessing stadium facilities	N/A	15			
CE LI6	Number of new members of the library service during the last 12 months	N/A	9,234			
CE LI6a	Number of physical and virtual visits to libraries (annual total)	675,989	680,000	139,920 Annual total 598,632		

SUPPORTING COMMENTARY

CE LI6a – Although performance has risen slightly this quarter overall the target has not been achieved.




The people counters at Halton Lea, Runcorn and Widnes have all had technical faults at some point this year so the annual total contains data which is estimated and therefore potentially inaccurate. The Efficiency Review has impacted on performance and has led to capacity issues as staff have not been replaced. In addition the decommissioning and withdrawal of the Mobile Library in Quarter 4 has had an impact on this PI.

7.0 Financial Summaries

- 7.1 The Council's 2014/15 year-end accounts are currently being finalised.
- 7.2 The year-end position for each Department will therefore be made available via the Intranet by 30 June 2015.




8.0 Appendix – Explanation for use of symbols

8.1 Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress		Milestone	Measure
Green		Indicates that the milestone is on course to be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	Indicates that the annual target is on course to be achieved.
Amber		Indicates that it is uncertain or too early to say at this stage whether the milestone will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	Indicates that it is uncertain or too early to say at this stage whether the annual target is on course to be achieved.
Red		Indicates that it is highly likely or certain that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	Indicates that the target will not be achieved unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.

8.2 Direction of Travel Indicator

Where possible measures will also identify a direction of travel using the following convention:

Green		Indicates that performance is better as compared to the same period last year.
Amber		Indicates that performance is the same as compared to the same period last year.
Red		Indicates that performance is worse as compared to the same period last year.
N/A		Indicates that the measure cannot be compared to the same period last year.

8.3 Key for Commentary

WR Wesley Rourke, Operational Director, Economy Enterprise and Property Service (EEP)

CP Chris Patino, Operational Director, Communities and Environment (CandE)