

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

**DATE:** 15 June 2015

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Children and Economy

**PORTFOLIO:** Economic Development

**SUBJECT:** Scrutiny Topic Group Items

**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Inward Investment Topic Group.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That: Members note progress to date and support the next steps outlined in the report.**

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 At the PPB meeting in January 2015, Members were advised that the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority is developing a collaborative city region approach to inward investment.

3.2 ELS and C PPB Members agreed that it was important to understand the current arrangements for managing Inward Investment enquiries locally, including the source of these enquiries and the resources allocated to delivering the service. This would then determine whether there is synergy between a local and city-region wide inward investment service and where added value can be obtained.

3.3 Therefore, it was proposed that a Scrutiny Topic Group should be established in order that Members could evaluate the effectiveness of the current Inward Investment service and would assess where Halton's Inward Investment priorities should lie, together with an assessment of future resource requirements. The work would also be considered within the context of an emerging Liverpool City Region Business Growth hub (and its delivery locally), as well as the Halton Business Survey, previously reported to this Board.

3.4 The Topic Group would also consider the scope and principles that are being developed to formulate an Inward Investment Service for the Liverpool City Region and will assess whether the approach will be beneficial to Halton.

- 3.5 Members have asked that an interim report on the progress of the Inward Investment Topic Group would be reported to the June meeting.
- 3.6 Members are advised that a topic brief and programme has been prepared. This is provided in Appendix 1.
- 3.7 The first meeting focused on a review of Inward Investment in Halton, outlining the role of the Council's Business Improvement and Growth Team, the type of enquiries received and how enquiries are handled. An explanation of Inward Investment concepts i.e. Foreign Direct Investment and Investor Development. The notes of this meeting are contained in Appendix 2
- 3.8 At the second meeting, Mark Basnett Executive Director at the Local Enterprise Partnership attended to provide a presentation on the development of an Inward Investment Strategy for the Liverpool City Region and outlined some principles in respect of how partners will work together to develop a strong Inward Investment offer for the LCR. The notes of this meeting are contained in Appendix 3.
- 3.9 **Next Steps:** It is proposed that a third session is arranged which will focus on obtaining the views of the Business Community and business perceptions of the borough as a place in which to invest and do business. 'Expert witnesses' will be sought from local companies and the Chamber of Commerce. A final session will be used to draft the final report with the intention that this is presented to Members at the September PPB.

#### 4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority was established on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014. It commits individual Local Authorities and the LEP to work more effectively and efficiently together in order to grow the economy of the Liverpool City Region. In return for this collaborative working, further devolvement of powers and resources to the Liverpool City Region is anticipated.
- 4.2 The proposition is that by working together, partners in the Liverpool City Region can deliver a 'best in class' investment service.

#### 5.0 **OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

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

##### 6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

None.

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

There are a number of implications for this priority, although the Topic Groups will consider the implications in more detail.

However, by promoting a more efficient and proactive client-led approach to Inward Investment, this should lead to greater levels of investment and jobs in Halton.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

N/A

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

N/A

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

N/A

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There are no risks identified. However, in preparing for this Scrutiny Topic, the following key steps have been applied

1. Have we chosen the right topic?
2. What are we looking at?
3. Why are we looking at this topic?
4. What do we hope to achieve?
5. Is the topic geared towards Halton's top priorities?

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

None under the meaning of the Act.