

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

At a meeting of the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 21 September 2015 in the The Boardroom - Municipal Building, Widnes

Present: Councillors Edge (Chairman), MacManus (Vice-Chairman), S. Baker, Cassidy, P. Lloyd Jones, Logan, Parker, C. Plumpton Walsh and Joe Roberts

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Howard and Rowe

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: W Rourke, A. Jones, C. Dinsdale, N. Goodwin, D. Houghton, C. Patino and S. Saunders

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

		<i>Action</i>
ELS9	MINUTES	
	The Minutes from the meeting held on 15 June 2015, were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
ELS10	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
	The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.	
ELS11	EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
	The Minutes of the Executive Board meetings relevant to the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community PPB and resolved since the last meeting of the Board were submitted for information.	
	RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.	
ELS12	PRESENTATION RIVERSIDE COLLEGE	
	Due to unforeseen circumstances this item would be deferred to the next meeting of the Board.	

ELS13 LIVERPOOL CITY REGION GROWTH GRANT
PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The Strategic Director – People and Economy, presented a report to the Board which provided an update on the delivery of the £15m Liverpool City Region (LCR) Business Growth Grant Programme.

The Board was advised that the LCR LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) successfully secured £10m from round 3 of the Government's Regional Growth Fund (RGF) Programme and a further £5m from RGF round 4, to establish a pan-Merseyside scheme to provide grant support of between £50,000 and £1m to eligible businesses across the City Region.

The LCR Business Growth Grant supported businesses planning to invest in capital or equipment that directly created or safeguarded jobs and increase business output and was also designed to unlock private sector investment. It was explained therefore that Private Sector leverage must be at least 5:1, so every £5.00 invested by a business could potentially lead to £1.00 of support from the Grant.

The report went on to explain how the scheme worked in Halton using the Council's Business Improvement and Growth Team. It also provided information on the final RGF 3 spend position and the current RGF 4 spend position, as well as a summary on the LCR Business Growth Grant Spend and Output. Members were referred to Appendix 1 to the report which provided a detailed breakdown of the spend and outputs associated with the LCR Business Growth Grant in Halton. The Operational Director (EEP) also gave Members details of the types of schemes that had been supported.

It was noted that the Council was working with the businesses who received the grant to offer assistance and receive feedback on how the grants were being spent.

RESOLVED: That the Policy and Performance Board supports the performance on the Liverpool City Growth Grant Programme in Halton with respect to:-

- a) the number of companies supported;
- b) the level of grant contracted and paid;
- c) private sector leverage generated as a consequence of the receipt of grant; and
- d) the anticipated number of jobs created and

safeguarded as a consequence of the receipt of grant.

ELS14 LIVERPOOL CITY REGION GROWTH HUB UPDATE

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director – People and Economy, which advised Members of the development and proposed implementation of the Liverpool City Region Growth Hub Brokerage Service in Halton.

Members were advised that the creation of Growth Hubs was a Government initiative intended to:

- provide clarity, consistency and simplification across the business support agenda;
- increase the migration of business support from the public to the private sector; and
- provide gateway support; that is information, guidance and brokerage, to the business community.

It was noted that Growth Hubs were not intended to be suppliers of business support but rather the interface between the business community and increasingly, commercial business support providers.

The report provided further information on the Liverpool City Region Growth Hub and the Halton approach to a local Growth Hub. It was noted that the LEP informed the Council in July 2015 that Halton Growth Hub Partnership had been successful at tender and had been appointed to the LCR Growth Hub Brokerage Framework and a contract was issued to the Borough Council as lead applicant to that effect.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) endorses the Halton approach to the delivery of Liverpool City Region Growth Hub Brokerage Service in Halton; and
- 2) notes the likely intention to recruit a Halton Growth Hun Broker for a fixed term period not exceeding 36 months.

ELS15 DEPT FOR WORK AND PENSIONS WORK PROGRAMME CONTRACT

The Board received an overview of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Work Programme Contract currently being delivered by Halton People into Jobs.

The Board was reminded that in June 2011 Halton Borough Council entered into a subcontracting arrangement with two Prime Contractors (*Ingeus Deloitte* and *A4E*) who had been tasked with delivering the Department for Work and Pensions Work Programme over the next 4 to 5 years. The programme was mandatory although some voluntary referrals could be made by certain 'customer' groups (as listed in the report). There were 10 different groups with referrals to the programme coming from Job Centre Plus (JCP).

The report went on to discuss the payment by results concept and how performance was measured against the Priority Group (PG) customers. Further it discussed income and expenditure; detailed the lessons learnt to date and key strengths of the programme; and discussed the future strategic direction of the programme as it was currently in year 5.

Members discussed the report and noted that the contracts had generated a surplus of £800,000 for the 5 year period and that it was hoped that the contract would be extended to year 6.

RESOLVED: The Board recognised the progress made to date on Halton's Work Programme contracts.

ELS16 INWARD INVESTMENT SCRUTINY REVIEW REPORT

The Board was presented with the recommendations from the Employment, Learning and Skills, and Community PPB Inward Investment Scrutiny Topic Group.

Members were reminded that the group was established with four Members from the Board with support from various officers and Partner organisations, as listed in the report. The Topic Group's draft report was attached as Appendix 1.

The following comments were made by Members in relation to the report:

- The success of the business tours was discussed and the possibility of including other Members in a future business tour;
- Feedback had been received from employees regarding the lack of employability skills of school leavers with regards to behaviour and attitudes to work, which it was felt could be nurtured more in

schools;

- Links between industry and schools should be encouraged so that future work opportunities could be shown to them;
- The possibility of an employability profile in schools was discussed and it was commented that this concept was being discussed with colleagues in the Education Department, with an aim to progress this in the future;
- Clarification on the baseline date for the information as well as the level and type of Foreign Direct Investment identified; and
- The need to maintain a local identity.

RESOLVED: That the Inward Investment Scrutiny Topic Group's recommendations be endorsed.

ELS17 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

The Strategic Director – Community and Resources, presented the annual report on the Community Development service delivery for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015.

The report explained that Community Development supported the creation, development and sustainability of independent local community groups, which in turn generated the capacity for effective and inclusive community engagement with Council departments and services, thus enabling the delivery on many hundreds of community initiatives to tackle strategic objectives and community needs.

The work of the Community Development Officers was explained in the report which went on to provide some examples of projects and groups that the team were working with and alongside across the Borough, in the following Area Forum patches:

- Broadheath, Ditton, Hough Green and Hale;
- Appleton, Kingsway and Riverside;
- Birchfield, Farnworth and Halton View;
- Grange, Heath, Halton Brook and Mersey;
- Halton Castle, Norton North and South and Windmill Hill;

- Beechwood and Halton Lea; and
- Daresbury.

It was reported that the Community Development service also administered grants for Starter, Community Development and Voluntary Youth grants as discussed in the report, and a breakdown of expenditure was presented in tables.

The Chairman announced to the Board the opening of the Veterans Drop in Centre in the Appleton Ward and urged Members to visit. Members then discussed how the service would be used by veterans and the current services available to them. Members were advised that an updated report on the Armed Services Covenant would be presented to the next Environment and Urban Renewal PPB, which would include updates on the five pillars of the Covenant document: Housing, Employment, Education, Health and Wellbeing.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

ELS18 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORTS - QUARTER 1 2015-16

The Board was presented with the Performance Management reports for quarter 1 of 2015-16 (April to June) and were asked to consider and raise any questions or points of clarification in respect of these.

It was noted that the key priorities for development or improvement in 2014-2017 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans, for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:

- Enterprise, Employment and Skills; and
- Community and Environment

The report detailed progress against service objectives and milestones, and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period.

RESOLVED: That the first quarter performance management reports be received and comments made be noted.

Meeting ended at 8.20 p.m.