

# QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

**DIRECTORATE:** Environment  
**SERVICE:** Economic Regeneration  
**PERIOD:** Quarter 1 to period end 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This quarterly monitoring report covers the Economic Regeneration Department first quarter period up to 30 June 2008. It describes key developments and progress against 'key' milestones and performance indicators for the service.

The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained in Appendix 6.

***It should be noted that this report is presented to a number of Policy and Performance Boards. Those objectives and indicators that are not directly relevant to this Board have been shaded grey.***

## 2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Pion Economics have completed the Halton Economic Review 2008, a comprehensive study detailing the current and modelling the future performance of the local economy. Evidence provided by the Halton Economic Review 2008 will be utilised to develop the Borough's next Economic Development Strategy.

Further progress has been made with respect to the Halton Science Initiative. The Website [www.wheresciencesucceeds.com](http://www.wheresciencesucceeds.com) is being completely overhauled to provide a comprehensive information resource for businesses in the science, technology and advanced manufacturing sectors.

Since 2000, the Council has delivered a series of small ICT projects helping local businesses to exploit ICT ranging from simple websites to more extensive back office integration activity. With changes in funding streams, it is no longer viable to continue this activity so the latest project 'ICT Investment for Growth' will be the last and will close December 31 2008. Meetings have taken place with the Council's Accountants and External Funding Teams to ensure a balanced financial outturn at the conclusion of the project. Of a team of three, one member of the ICT Investment for Growth Team has already retired in July 2008 and another has secured employment with another local authority.

Delivery of the BID's programmes at Astmoor and Halebank Industrial Estates continues to gather pace. A private security company has been appointed to provide security services. Every business on the estates will be visited to be enrolled for the key holding and alarm response services. Businesses have also been provided with the DNA forensic property marking equipment, SmartWater. The mobile security patrols covering Astmoor Industrial Estate commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> May to provide a visible deterrent to criminals.

The new Widnes Waterfront Business Steering group continues to develop. In June it considered a draft action plan for the area based on the findings of a survey conducted last year. There will be a further meeting of the Group in August to endorse the plan and to elect a Chair from a resident business.

Successful delivery of H208 youth event with over 10,000 attending.

Funding of £40k for the present academic year has been secured from Riverside College to deliver additional PCDL (personal community development learning) in Halton. Further funding is under discussion for August 2008 onwards.

A very successful Adult Learners' Awards ceremony took place on 16 May, with 144 individuals nominated for a variety of awards. Over 200 people attended the ceremony, including representatives from LSC, ELS PPB, JCP and other elected members.

Work began on developing an SSP website 'learninghalton' – which will be a one stop site for all learning and advice/guidance available in the borough. The site is being funded by LSC, but overall management will be through the Adult Learning & Skills Development Division. A launch of the site will take place in autumn 2008.

Halton has taken the lead in a local authority consortium across Merseyside seeking funding from the LSC for Skills for Life through the Train to Gain programme. The consortium has secured a contract and will shortly be holding pre contract negotiations. Additionally, Halton is part of a Skills for Employability consortium (Wirral taking the lead).

Work has commenced in developing a Science Skills Group, to mirror that of the Skills Group established around Logistics. The new post of Skills Strategy Officer has recently been advertised and this post will take the lead on all such sector skills groups in future.

The Adult Learning and Skills Division has been part of a national Skills for Life Quality Improvement Programme. Part of this includes the assessment of candidate's literacy and numeracy skills during the recruitment process. If candidates cannot demonstrate level 2 skills, conditions of employment will include enrolment onto and achievement of a level 2 qualification. Halton's involvement in the programme was

highlighted as good practice at a North West event run by LSC in Q1.

The results of the first part time childcare course delivered by the department have now been received with all 20 participants passing (14 gained a distinction and 6 gained a merit). Participants are being tracked and a number have progressed into the college whilst others have entered directly into employment.

An employment outreach pilot has commenced in the Castlefields Health Centre. 8 local residents have been engaged of which 2 have started work.

The new business start up room at the Heath Business and Technical Park is starting to show promising signs of use with 5 new businesses presently resident.

The Enterprising Halton Programme continues to support entrepreneurship with 16 new start-ups during Q1, 2 of which registered for VAT. The programme has supported the creation of the first social enterprise in the borough with Windmill Hill Telematics Centre becoming a Community Interest Company. The social enterprise coach is working with several other third sector organisations that we expect to convert to social enterprises, one in particular, Sports 4 All, which is led by a local disability group, is expected to come on stream soon.

### **3.0 EMERGING ISSUES**

As a consequence of the global economic climate both investment enquiries and conversion have experienced a dramatic decline in the current reporting period. The total number of property/sites enquiries fell from 79 in the first quarter of last year to 59 this year. The biggest decline was enquiries from start up businesses which fell from 19 in the first quarter last year to just 5 this year. The slow down in the UK economy will impact upon the economy of Halton in terms of fewer investment projects, reduced commercial letting and a marked reduction in new business formation. Dependent upon the extent of the global slow down jobs may be lost locally, particularly in the manufacturing sector.

The Economic Development Officer (Development) continuing secondment to the Mersey Gateway Team, for two days each week, to develop a relocation strategy for companies displaced by the new bridge, continues to impact upon the Business Development Teams capacity to meet its performance targets in terms of investment enquiries and conversions.

Following the success of last years Continental Market in Widnes Town Centre a further market is planned for October 2008. The Town Centre Manager is also bringing forward proposals, with other departments of the Council, for a regular street market in Runcorn Old Town.

There is a lack of clarity about how to apply for ERDF funding to support Tourism initiatives in the borough. The Mersey Partnership is able to accommodate ERDF funding for projects in the former Objective1 area under the phasing in arrangements but this is not available to Halton. Clarification is being sought from the NWDA about how these activities can be funded in Halton (either through the general North West ERDF allocation or other resources).

Work is underway with other Merseyside Local Authorities to explore ways in which local small and medium sized businesses can be supported when tendering/bidding for contracts within the public sector. This will build on the Employment Learning and Skills PPB Scrutiny Panel work programme last year that considered the Council's procurement policy and its role in developing local employment opportunities.

Meeting with Destination Performance UK City 4 group (towns that are roughly the same size and history). Halton is seeking to engage further with these towns to try and identify common activities with a view to benchmarking like authorities in future.

Expressions of interest for the annual Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities grant were submitted at the end of Q1. Full proposals will be submitted in Q2 with successful projects commencing September 2008. Last year, 17 individual projects received funding but this created a huge administrative strain. The panel to consider applications will consist of HBC, Riverside College and an ELS PPB member.

An expression of interest has been submitted to LSC for a share of the £200k Greater Merseyside Family Learning Impact Fund. If successful, additional teaching staff will need to be recruited.

The successful Skills for Life Train to Gain contract will require additional staffing to be recruited. Job descriptions/person specs are currently being written and it is hoped these will be advertised some time in Q2.

Planned building works at the Acorn Centre are expected during Q2 as part of the Castlefields Children's Centre Campus model. The work should happen during the summer break so that classes are not affected. The works will enable a further teaching room to be established in the centre.

The outcomes of the job evaluation in relation to adult learning tutors are still to be determined. Discussions are taking place with personnel and the unions.

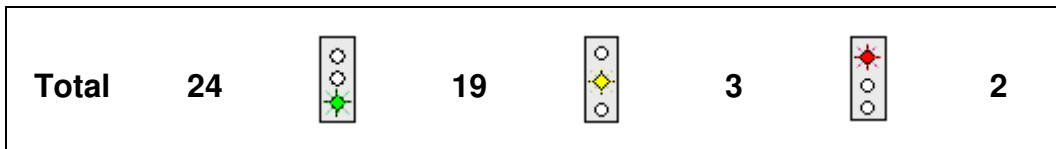
The LSC will be moving to a shadow structure to reflect the proposed new Skills Funding Agency. It is unknown as yet, where adult

safeguarded budgets will sit with the new agency, or what priorities the agency will have in terms of non accredited learning.

New Family Learning Guidance from the LSC was issued during Q1; there are changes to some family learning provision and this will impact on how the Family Learning Curriculum (and staff) will be timetabled. It will also impact on crèche regulations as courses are now expected to last longer than 2 hours (the maximum crèche time currently allowed).

The government has recently issued its proposals for reform of the employment related services in England. Numerous proposals are contained including increased compulsion and more use of the private and voluntary sector. The paper is presently being reviewed and a report on its contents will be produced.

#### 4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

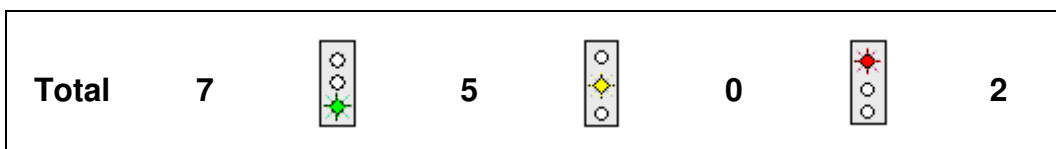


Generally good progress towards objectives/milestones. A number of “non-key” milestones have been reported by exception this quarter (shown in italics). For further details, please refer to Appendix 1.

#### 5.0 SERVICE REVIEW




Over the coming months the Town Centre Management function will be the subject of a wholesale strategic review as part of the Urban Renewal PPB Scrutiny Process.

#### 6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



2 indicators, the number of inward investment enquiries and contribution to number of jobs created, are not expected to meet their targets this year. For further details, please refer to Appendix 2.

#### 6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>0</b>		<b>2</b>
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2 “Other” indicators have been reported by exception this quarter, inward investment enquiry conversion rate and contribution to number of jobs safeguarded, are not expected to meet their targets this year. For further details, please refer to Appendix 3.

## 7.0 PROGRESS AGAINST LPSA TARGETS

Good progress is being made towards the 2 LPSA targets for the service. For further details, please refer to Appendix 4.

## 8.0 RISK CONTROL MEASURES

During the production of the 2008-09 Service Plan, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Key Service Objectives.






Where a Key Service Objective has been assessed and found to have associated ‘High’ risk, progress against the application of risk treatment measures is to be monitored, and reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.





## 9.0 PROGRESS AGAINST HIGH PRIORITY EQUALITY ACTIONS

During 2007/08 the service was required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. Progress against actions identified through that assessment, with associated High priority are to be reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4.

## 10.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1- Progress against Objectives/ Milestones  
Appendix 2- Progress against Key Performance Indicators  
Appendix 3- Progress against Other Performance Indicators  
Appendix 4- Progress against LPSA Targets  
Appendix 5- Financial Statement  
Appendix 6- Explanation of traffic light symbols

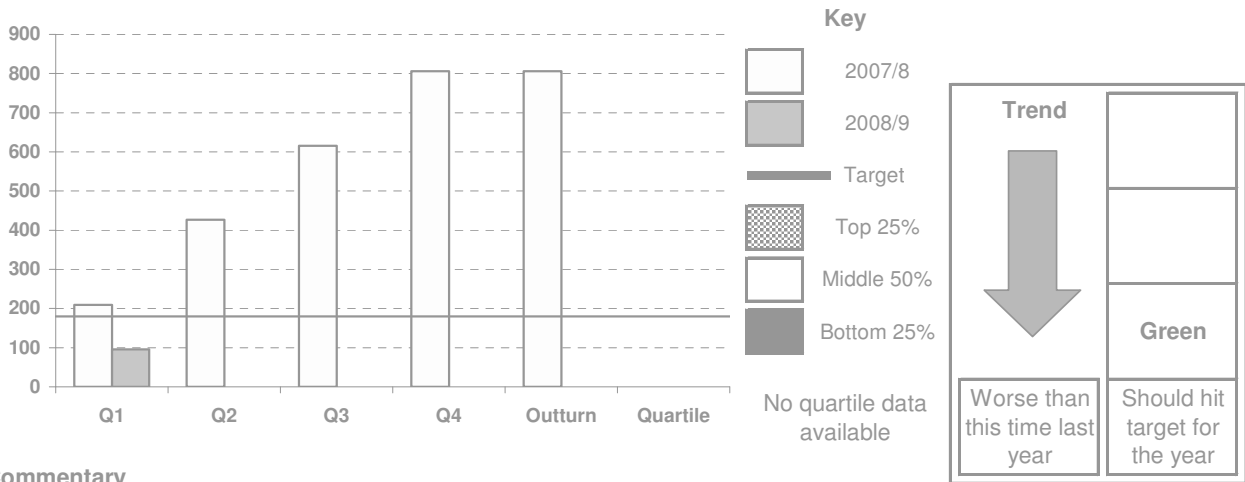
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
ER 1	To foster a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship, particularly amongst the low skilled, making Halton an ideal place to start and grow economic activity	Secure continuation of Enterprise coaches, Jun 2008		Enterprise Coach service fully operational in priority neighbourhoods.
ER 2	To develop a culture where learning is valued and raise skill levels throughout the adult population and in the local workforce	Completed sector skills plan for Science with first provision commencing, Mar 2009		The first working group meeting has taken place. Initial meeting took place with the Regional Manager for the National Skills Academy (NW) for Process Industries to establish what already exists in terms of science skills plans. .
		<i>Recruitment of dedicated apprenticeship officer post, Jul 2008</i>		Delayed pending reorganisation of E&E division. Recommend new target of November 2008.
ER 3	To promote and increase employability of local people, to identify and remove any barriers to employment to get more people into work	<i>Complete reconfiguration of E&amp;E division to embed outreach, Jul 2008</i>		Delays as a consequence of JE. Recommend new target of November 2008
		<i>Launch pre-recruitment partnership, Jul 2008</i>		It has not been possible to finalise the partnership due to delays in finalising JCP prime contracts for employment. Recommend new target of November 2008

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2008/09 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		Complete Employment strategy for disabled and carers with launch of disability employment network, Sep 2008		Draft Report ready for circulation. However, recent government proposals will lead to major change in this work area and as such further work now required. Recommend new target of December 2008.
ER 4	To develop a strong, diverse, competitive and sustainable knowledge based economy	Commence delivery of logistics campaign, Sep 2008		A marketing and PR campaign for the logistics sector has been developed and was reported to PPB on June 18 2008
ER 5	To create and sustain a thriving business environment	Complete Business Improvement District phase 1 actions (CCTV, security, signage), Mar 2009		All actions associated with the implementation of Phase 1 of the BID programme have either been completed or are ongoing.
ER 6	To revitalise the town centres to create dynamic, well designed high quality commercial areas	<i>Launch a weekly Runcorn street market, Sep 2008</i>		Delays in agreeing issues around street closure with the emergency services have delayed this project.



ER LI1

### Number of local people into jobs

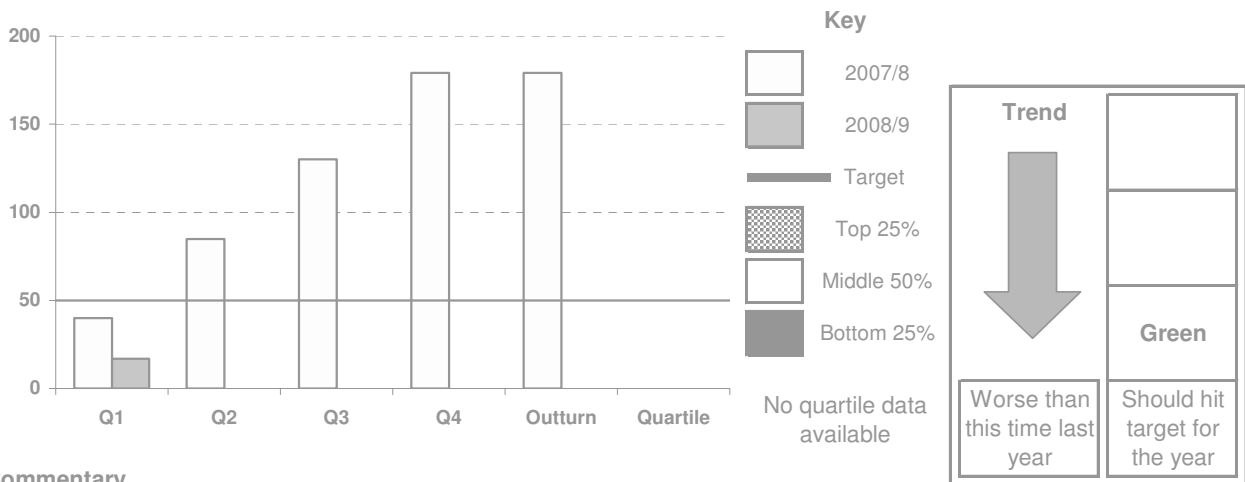


**Commentary**

HPIJ has helped 72 residents and the Employment Team helped 24 residents into employment in Q1.

ER LI2

### Number of local people with disabilities into permitted/paid work

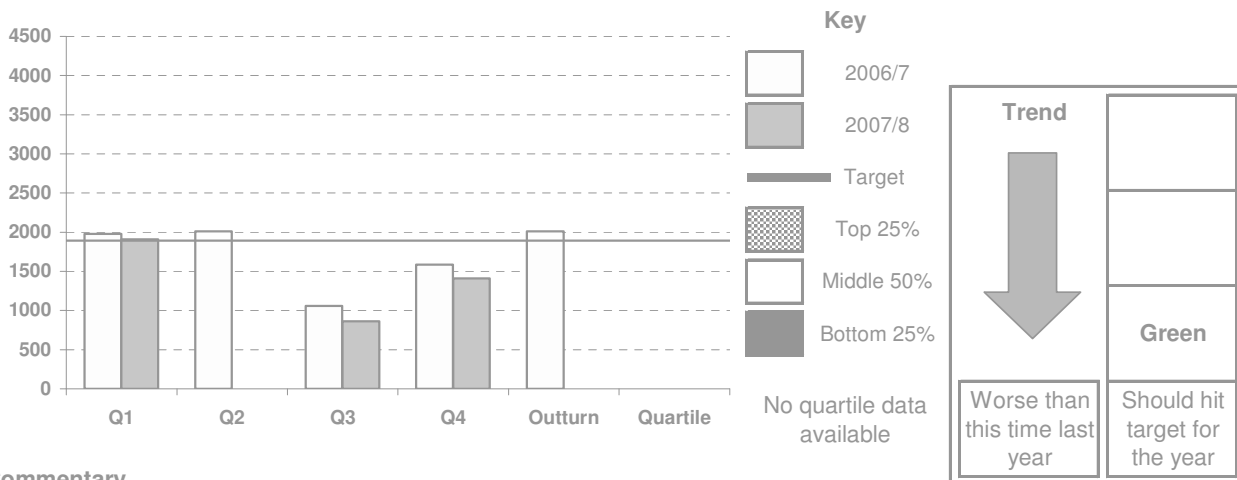


**Commentary**

HPIJ has helped 10 people in receipt of a health related benefit (DLA, Incap, Income Support Disability Related) into jobs and the supported employment service have helped 7 people into paid/permitted work.

ER LI3

### Number of learners accessing adult learning provision (Academic year)

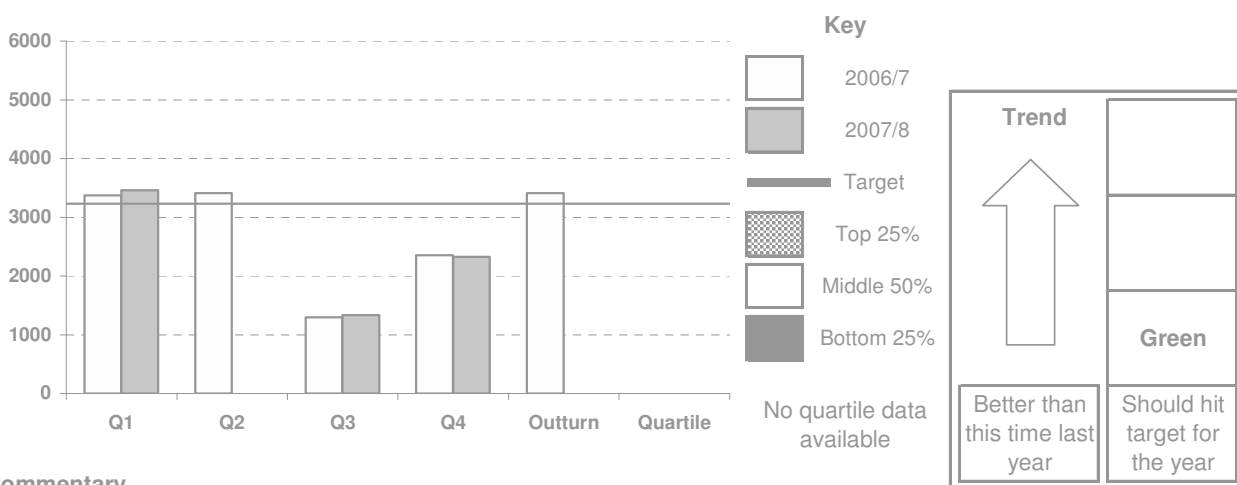


**Commentary**

Q1 included all learners on programmes that commenced in the summer term. Despite year on year reduction in LSC funding, learner numbers remain healthy and during Q1 included some learners who were funded from new monies, including PCDL allocation from Riverside College and WNF. Compared to Q1 in 0607, learner numbers are down by 69. However, given the LSC funding reduction, this was expected. Overall, learner numbers are on target to achieve the academic year outturn of 2010 by end July 08.

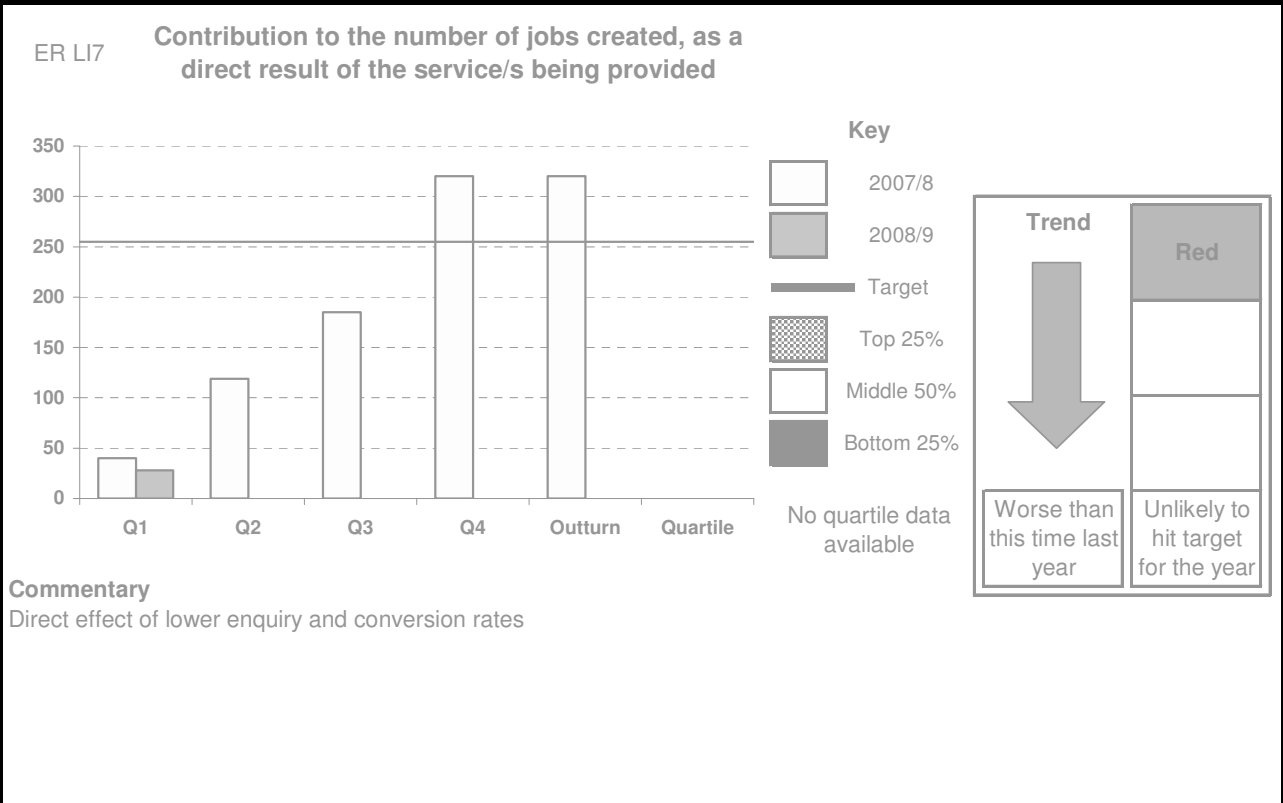
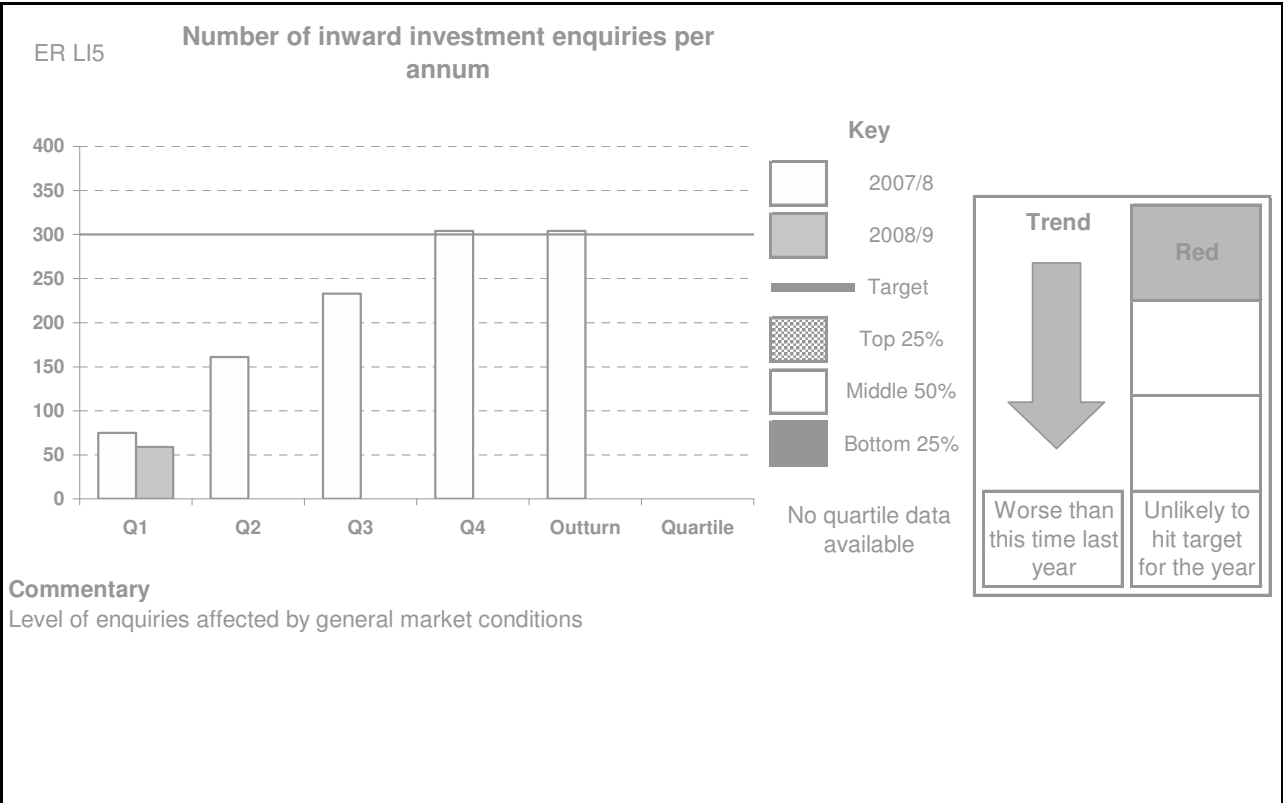
ER LI4

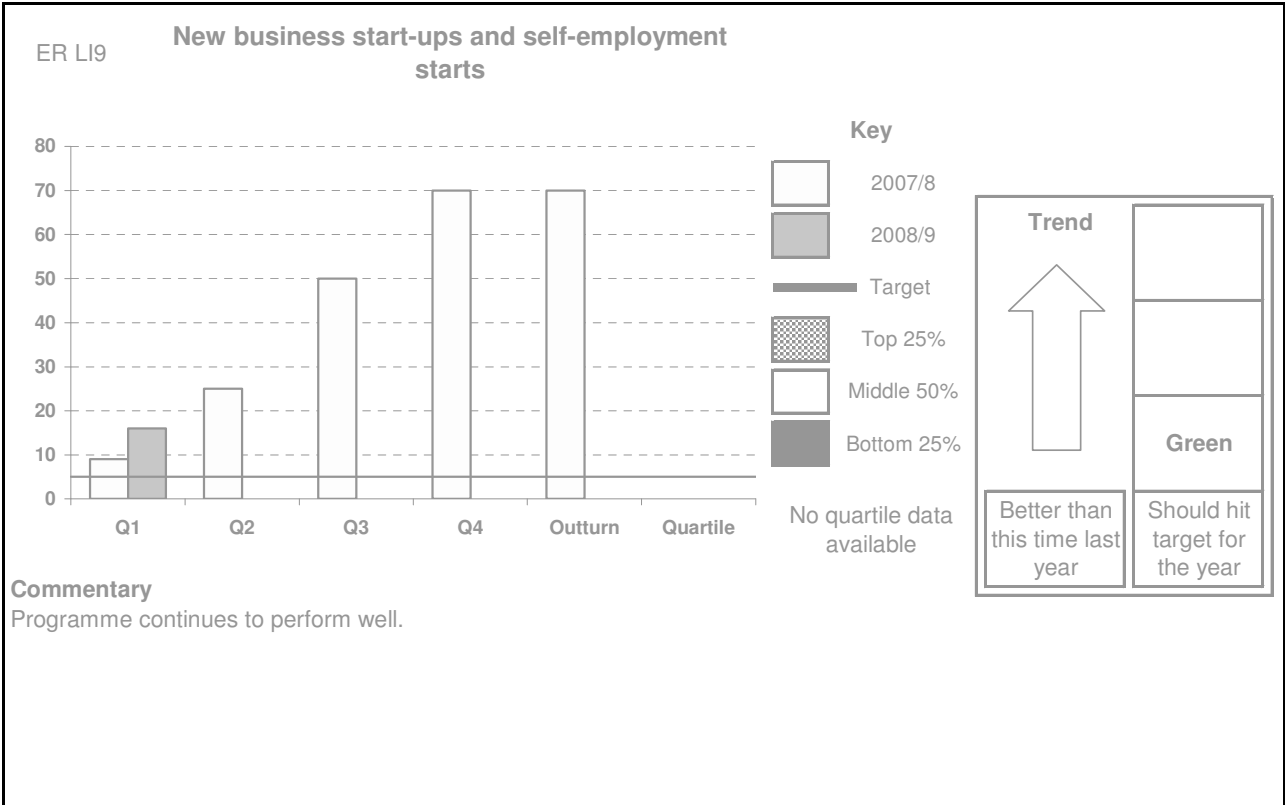
### Number of learner enrolments (Academic year)







**Commentary**

Q1 includes all enrolments onto programmes that commenced in the summer term. Despite year on year reduction in LSC funding, learner enrolments remain healthy and during Q1 included some enrolments from learners who were funded from new monies, including PCDL allocation from Riverside College and WNF. Compared to Q1 in 0607, enrolments are up by 83, meaning that whilst there are fewer learners this quarter, more of them have shown progression by enrolling onto more than one course.





Ref <sup>1</sup>	Description	Actual 2007/8	Target 08/09	Quarter 1	Progress	Commentary
<b>Service Delivery</b>						
ER LI6	Inward investment enquiry conversion rate (%)	13.5	11.5	6.8		Credit crunch is affecting businesses ability to acquire finance.
ER LI8	Contribution to the number of jobs safeguarded, as a direct result of the service/s being provided	443	400	56		This tends to be a more reactive service to staff reductions/closures. It is anticipated numbers will rise over coming months.

LPSA Ref.	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Perform 07/08	Perform 08/09 Q1	Traffic light	Commentary
10	Number of adults gaining a national Skills for Life qualification at level 1, 2 or 3 in literacy, numeracy or ESOL	19 04/05	116 measured in academic year ending 31/08/08	226	41		Total to date 297
12	Increase the number of people who have been claiming an incapacity benefit into sustained employment of at least 16 hours per week for 13 consecutive weeks or more	18 for year ending 31/03/06	179 3 year cumulative to 31/03/09	72	18		Achieved 06/07 = 38 07/08 = 74 Need to achieve 67 this year.

## Revenue Budget as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008

	Annual Revised Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (Overspend )	Actual Including Committed Items
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	1,525	346	334	12	336
Premises Support	2	0	0	0	0
Office	72	21	21	0	21
Accommodation					
Marketing	47	5	5	0	8
Programme					
Promotions	47	8	8	0	15
Development	21	1	1	0	1
Projects					
Supplies & Services	170	28	28	0	37
Halton People into Jobs	125	4	4	0	4
Mersey	75	75	75	0	75
Partnership					
Transport	34	9	6	3	6
Central Support	286	0	0	0	0
Services					
Departmental	26	0	0	0	0
Support Services					
Agency	0	0	0	0	0
Asset Charges	7	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>2,437</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>503</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Sales	0	0	0	0	0
Fees & Charges	-15	0	-8	8	-8
Reimbursements	-304	-13	-13	0	-13
Government grants	-341	-135	-144	9	-144
Employment					
Service	-256	0	0	0	0
Recharges to Capital	-17	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-933</b>	<b>-148</b>	<b>-165</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>-165</b>
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>1,504</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>338</b>

### Comments on the above figures:

In overall terms revenue spending to the end of quarter 1 is slightly under budget.

With regards to expenditure the staffing underspend relates to savings against costs for the Supported Employment Team, external funding is being used to fund eligible salary costs.

At this stage, it is anticipated that overall revenue spending will be within departmental budget by year-end.

### Local Strategic Partnership Schemes as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008

	Annual Revised Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (Overspend)	Actual Including Committed Items
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Employment Outreach	55	14	0	14	0
Halton People into Jobs	80	20	6	14	6
Adult Learners Celebration	82	20	0	20	0
Rail Maintenance	143	36	7	28	7
Halton ILM					
Castlefields	94	23	0	23	0
Employment Project Enterprise	152	38	29	9	29
Development					
Supported Employment	35	9	11	(2)	11
Skills for Life	26	6	17	(10)	17
Halton YMCA	82	21	0	21	0
Halton Inspiring Women	10	2	0	2	0
CES Contribution	14	3	0	3	0
Pre-level 2 Provision	35	9	0	9	0
Childcare	32	8	0	8	0
HPiJ Pre-recruitment Partnership	200	50	0	50	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,040</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>70</b>



### **External or Grant Funded Schemes as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008**

	Annual Revised Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance To Date (Overspend) £'000	Actual Including Committed Items £'000
<b><u>ERDF</u></b> ICT Investment for Growth	46	23	15	8	15
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>




### **Comments on the above figures:**

It is anticipated that spending will be in line with budget by the end of quarter two.

### **Capital Projects as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2008**

	2008-09 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation To Date £'000	Actual Spend To Date £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
<b><u>HBC Projects</u></b> Information Touch Screen Kiosks	50	0	0	0
<b>Total Capital</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

The traffic light symbols are used in the following manner:

	<u><b>Objective</b></u>	<u><b>Performance Indicator</b></u>
<u><b>Green</b></u>	 <p>Indicates that the <u>objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the <u>target is on course to be achieved</u>.</p>
<u><b>Amber</b></u>	 <p>Indicates that it is <u>unclear</u> at this stage, due to a lack of information or a key milestone date being missed, <u>whether the objective will be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that it is either <u>unclear</u> at this stage or too early to state whether the target is on course to be achieved.</p>
<u><b>Red</b></u>	 <p>Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain that the objective will not be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the <u>target will not be achieved</u> unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.</p>