



POLICY AND PARTNERSHIP NEWS

Edition 4 – Tuesday 7th November 2006

REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

- 1. Remarks by Ed Balls MP, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, at the 2006 PIMA Annual Conference.**

This is a speech by Economic Secretary to the Treasury Ed Balls to the 2006 PIMA Annual Conference in London. He discusses promoting savings and asset ownership for all across the life-cycle - from childhood, through working life and beyond into retirement, so that individuals can have security for the future.

http://www.hmtreasury.gov.uk/newsroom_and_speeches/press/2006/press_81_06.cfm

- 2. Consultation on the European Social Fund in England and Gibraltar 2007-2013**

This document invites comments on the draft European Social Fund (ESF) Operational Programme for England and Gibraltar in 2007-13. The programme establishes the priorities for spending ESF in England to support policies to improve employment opportunities and develop human resources.

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/dwp/2006/esf/esf-consultation.pdf>

- 3. Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change**

This is the full report to the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer from Sir Nicholas Stern, Head of the Government Economics Service and Adviser to the Government on the economics of climate change and development. It is the most comprehensive review ever carried out on the economics of climate change.

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/stern_review_economics_climate_change/stern_review_report.cfm

4. DWP Statistical Summaries

This webpage provides an overview of the most important benefits, schemes, agencies and associated bodies administered by the department.

This Statistical Summary aims to give users a structured overview of the National Statistics published by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Statistics are grouped by component area of DWP and, for each statistic, links are given for users to access more detailed information.

A statistical summary for August 2006 has been added.

http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/statistical_summaries.asp

5. Delivering on Child Poverty: what would it take?

A report by an independent adviser to the Department for Work and Pensions saying that more family-focused employment services would help more parents into work and boost our progress towards the target of eradicating child poverty by 2020.

Lisa Harker was appointed to provide independent advice to the Department on its work to cut child poverty. Her report - Delivering on Child Poverty: What would it take? – is published today.

Lisa Harker's remit was to provide independent advice on possible new approaches for the Department for Work and Pensions on what John Hutton called the Department's "number one priority" – tackling child poverty.

Her appointment was announced on June 26 this year.

The full report is available on the DWP website on www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/dwp/2006/harker/

6. First National Skills Academies Ready To Go Live

On 31st October Education and Skills Secretary Alan Johnson announced the launch of the first three National Skills Academies to drive up the standard of industry training, improve productivity and tackle skills shortages across England.

In addition, Mr Johnson announced the next four sectors that have successfully bid to be part of the National Skills Academy programme. The first three academies that have been approved and will shortly become operational are in Financial Services, Construction, and Manufacturing. A fourth, representing the Food and Drink sector is close to being approved.

Bids from the nuclear industry; the chemical industry; the hospitality sector; and the creative and cultural industries have been accepted by the Government and will now be invited to work up business plans ready for the next stage of the process.

The aim is to have up to 12 academies operational by 2008 and the Government is investing £90 million in the programme which will be delivered through the Learning and Skills Council working with employers and their Sector Skills Councils. Two bidding rounds have taken place so far, a third is planned for early 2007.

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2006_0154

7. Social Security Advisory Committee Publishes Nineteenth Report

The Social Security Advisory Committee (SSAC) has published its Report for the period from August 2005 to July 2006. The report will be presented to the Committee's first 'Stakeholder Seminar', to be held in London on 2 November 2006.

The Report features a summary of the year's work, including scrutiny of proposals for legislation and the Department's public information products, the Committee's responses to the Welfare Reform Green Paper and the Pensions White Paper, and an account of members' visits to operational sites.

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/mediacentre/pressreleases/2006/oct/emp06-311006.asp>

8. European Social Fund provides cash boost to help unemployed back into work

€2.75 billion of European Social Fund (ESF) money will be invested in jobs and skills in England over the next seven years was announced Work and Pensions Minister James Plaskitt.

The new ESF programme, which supports employment and training projects in the Member States of the European Union, will help to extend employment opportunities and develop skills across the country.

There will be a national ESF programme for England to ensure money is targeted effectively. The national programme will also help strengthen the role of Regional Skills Partnerships to address distinctive regional and local needs.

A consultation is now underway and the consultation seeks views from interested organisations on the activities that will be supported by the new programme and how it will be delivered. The consultation ends on 22 January 2007.

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/mediacentre/pressreleases/2006/oct/emp006-301006.asp>

The consultation document, draft European Social Fund (ESF) programme, response form and supporting annexes are available on the ESF website at www.esf.gov.uk

The launch of the consultation follows the publication by DTI, on 23 October 2006, of the UK's National Strategic Reference Framework for the 2007-2013 round of Structural Fund programmes. The Framework establishes the high level priorities for spending future Structural Funds in the UK, and indicative allocations for UK's nations and regions. The Framework is available on the DTI website at:

<http://www.dti.gov.uk/consultations/page28796.html>

9. Local Strategic Partnerships: Shaping their future - an analysis of responses

This report outlines the findings of the questionnaire included in the *Local Strategic Partnerships: Shaping their future* consultation document. The analysis was conducted by Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute for Communities and Local Government

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1504146>

10. Strong and Prosperous Communities – The Local Government White Paper

The aim of this white paper is to give local people and local communities more influence and power to improve their lives. It is about creating strong, prosperous communities and delivering better public services through a rebalancing of the relationship between central government, local government and local people.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1503999>

11. Through the Glass Ceiling: Equalities in the 21st Century

This is a transcript of the speech by Minister for Women and Equality Meg Munn at the University of Northampton on 23 October 2006. She talks about how equality in employment is a key factor in achieving equality in society.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1504049>

BRIEFINGS FROM THE LGIU

The following briefings have appeared on the LGIU website and can be accessed by clicking on the following link:

<http://www.lgiu.gov.uk/briefings.jsp?section=briefing>.

Partners may need to register to view the briefings, or alternatively hard copies can be sent to you upon request by emailing

lisa.driscoll@halton.gov.uk

White Paper 2006: Implications for Local Strategic Partnerships

The briefing discusses aspects of the recent Local Government White Paper which are particularly relevant for Local Strategic Partnerships. This includes a new duty on public services to co-operate in the development of Local Area Agreements, and greater co-ordination of strategy.

White Paper 2006: Implications for Neighbourhoods

The Department for Communities and Local Government recently published the long-awaited Local Government White Paper: Strong and Prosperous Communities. This briefing details the proposals relating to neighbourhoods and community engagement, including the Community Call for Action, and considers the likely implications.

White Paper 2006: Implications for Economic Development and Planning

The Local Government White Paper has a separate chapter on economic development, housing and planning in Volume 2 and contains some significant proposals for changes in planning. This briefing summarises and comments on these changes.

IN THE NEWS...

0800 numbers for those claiming benefits

New 0800 numbers for people claiming working age benefits is one of a number of improvements to people's first contact with Jobcentre Plus, announced today by Employment and Welfare Reform Minister, Jim Murphy MP.

The 0800 numbers will be made available to customers across the country over several months. In the majority of cases customers will only need to make a single call to a contact centre to get their claim for benefits such as Jobseekers' Allowance, Incapacity Benefit and Income Support processed. The change will affect all customers claiming benefits.

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/mediacentre/pressreleases/2006/oct/emp05-301006.asp>

Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up in 2004/2005

In addition to the main take-up statistics for all income-related benefits, this latest publication includes some further analysis of the characteristics of those who did not take up their entitlements and presents patterns in take-up between 1997-98 and 2004-05.

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/mediacentre/pressreleases/2006/oct/ifd261006benefits.pdf>

Businesses to be offered funding for workplace nurseries

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2006_0156

Strong and Prosperous Communities: Kelly Unveils New Vision for Local Government

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1002882&PressNoticeID=227>

[1](#)

Controlled access to UK labour market for new accession countries

<http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/aboutus/newsarchive/controlledaccessstouklabourmarket>

Margaret Hodge announces the national strategy for future EU structural funds spending in the UK

<http://www.gnn.gov.uk/environment/detail.asp?ReleaseID=236314&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False>

HALTON NEWS...

Launching the Enterprise Game

Halton EBP is currently finalising the initial production run of three thousand Games ready to launch 'The Enterprise Game' on November 16, 2006, as part of Enterprise Week. Two thousand of these Games will be 'standard' editions and can be played anywhere in the country. Five hundred, however, will be customised for Halton and feature 28 Halton enterprises, while another five hundred Games will incorporate the logos of 28 businesses drawn from the six boroughs of Greater Merseyside. The launch will take place at the Halton Stadium on 16th November 2006 between 9 a.m. and 1p.m.

For further information and to find out more about the launch contact Karen Tunstall at the Enterprise Business Partnership on 0151 424 2061 ext 4216 or email Karen.tunstall@halton.gov.uk

You can also visit www.enterpriseweek.org for more information about November's Enterprise Week.

Heath Business Park to expand

Halton Borough Council has given outline planning permission to a £20 million plan to extend The Heath Business and Technical Park in Runcorn. SOG, the owner and operator of the former ICI site, was granted outline permission to add another 180,000 square feet of office and laboratory facilities to the highly successful business park.

Peter Cook, Managing Director of SOG, said: "It is wonderful news that in principle our plans to extend the site have been approved. It provides a great

opportunity to attract major new investment while allowing us to offer even greater flexibility and wider state-of-the-art facilities to our existing clients."

SOG claims the scheme could bring up to 1,300 new jobs to the area. This would be in addition to the 170 British and international companies who have already been attracted to the 50-acre business park.

[More Information...](#)

Omega scheme gets partial go-ahead

Proposals for the first two phases of a huge mixed-use redevelopment on a 233 hectare brownfield site at junction 8 of the M62 have won outline planning permission from Warrington Borough Council.

The scheme is designed to provide a regional strategic site for north west England. Ultimately the project could see some 7.1m square feet of offices, production, technology and distribution space as well as leisure activities and a hotel and conference facilities.

The planning authority has referred these two outline consents to the Government Office for the North West for the Secretary of State to consider. The scheme is a joint venture between Miller Developments and the Royal Bank of Scotland, together with national regeneration agency English Partnerships.

[Visit Warrington Borough Council website](#)

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