



<b>Category</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>
<b>Social Enterprise of the Year</b> <i>Highly Commended</i>	Hack Back CIC <i>Riverside Boxing Club</i>	Wellbeing Enterprises
<b>Made in Halton</b>	Sandon Global Engraving Technology Limited	Jumpstart
<b>Apprentice/Young Achiever of the Year</b> <i>Highly Commended</i>	Liam Harris - Arvia Technology Ltd <i>Luke Craig - Display Team UK Ltd</i>	Runcorn and Widnes World
<b>International Business of the Year</b>	Perceptive Engineering Limited	Halton Chamber of Commerce
<b>Innovation in Health &amp; Wellbeing</b> <i>Highly Commended</i>	LPW Technology Ltd <i>The Heath School</i>	Widnes Vikings
<b>Outstanding Customer Service</b>	Hardman Office & Commercial Cleaning Ltd	Liverpool John Lennon Airport
<b>Keep it Green</b>	Acer Engineering Ltd	Inovyn
<b>Independent Retailer of the Year</b> <i>Highly Commended</i>	Sleeptight Beds (Widnes) Ltd <i>Mode Fashion</i>	Shopping City Runcorn
<b>Halton Foundation Award for Responsible Business</b>	Hack Back CIC	Halton Foundation
<b>BID Business of the Year – Astmoor</b>	Computer Disposals Ltd	Astmoor BID
<b>BID Business of the Year – Halebank</b>	Suresafe Electrics Ltd	Halebank BID
<b>Marketing Excellence</b> <i>Highly Commended</i>	Used Kitchen Exchange <i>HomeSmart Letting Ltd</i>	Merseylink
<b>New Business of the Year</b> <i>Highly Commended</i>	Ace Blinds <i>Freaking Awesome</i>	Merseyside Printing Company
<b>Entrepreneur of the Year – Female</b>	Liz Ashall-Payne - ORCHA Healthcare Ltd	Sci Tech Daresbury
<b>Entrepreneur of the Year – Male</b>	Lee Bradburne - Display Team (UK) Ltd	Sci Tech Daresbury
<b>Haltons Business of the Year</b>	LPW Technology Ltd	Halton Chamber of Commerce

## Annual Report

2017/18

# Annual Report 2017/18

## From the Halton Chamber Chairman and CEO

We are delighted to report that Halton Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise continues to make good progress, increasingly being seen as the voice for business in Halton. It has been a momentous year of challenge and success:

- Success in now being the BID Proposer and BID Body for both Astmoor and Halebank Industrial Estates.
- The creation of Halton Chamber Enterprises Ltd to manage both Business Improvement Districts in Halton following a successful ballot in February 2018.
- Becoming the lead partner in the delivery of the Halton Growth Hub service, with the Chamber now providing borough wide business support, advice and information to organisations across every sector.
- A new CEO appointed looking to drive the Chamber forward with an increased focus on marketing and customer engagement.
- The opening of the Mersey Gateway Bridge which has been welcomed by business for keeping traffic moving across the borough, as well as putting an end to the dreaded 'Run-cone' situation. It has, though, come at a price, and the Chamber continues to support businesses by recognising the full impact of this project.
- The promotion and part delivery by Chamber Associates of the fully-funded, ERDF Business Growth Programme (LCRIBS) helped ensure all outputs were successfully delivered and exceeded in a number of areas.
- The Export Certification service has continued to grow, despite the challenges of Brexit, with the Chamber experiencing a 25% increase compared to the previous year.
- The Chambers finances remain robust and on a firm footing.

### Membership and Services

Membership levels have remained stable, with around 10% of businesses across Halton currently in membership. We now look to focus on membership growth and retention, as we continue to enhance our existing services (highlighted below) by listening to our businesses and providing those that are most valued and needed:

- **Chamber Legal Expenses Insurance** - £1,000,000 aggregated cover annually to protect our membership businesses against unexpected legal and professional penalties.
- **Chamber Legal, HR and H&S Advice Line** - offering unlimited support on legal, employment HR and tax issues affecting a member business.
- **Foreign Exchange Service** - access to a discounted foreign exchange and payment service.
- **Westfield Health** - health and wellbeing services through the Chamber's employee healthcare plans.
- **Capacity Building and Training** - The delivery of funded business support programmes and bespoke, discounted training seminars and workshops.
- **Networking and Promotion** - providing our members and local businesses with opportunities to expand their contacts, build new relationships, and promote their products and services to an increasingly wider audience.
- **Representation and Lobbying** - on key issues affecting business.

### Networking and Business Engagement

**'Meet the Chamber'** - These meetings are open to everyone; organisations interested in becoming a member as well as those keen to get the most out of their membership. This informal gathering is proving to be very popular and a great way to get to know one another better.

**1stuesday** - Our monthly business breakfast network, continues to regularly attract over 50 or so businesses to each meeting. It remains a powerful platform for information and knowledge sharing, along with the promotion of business development opportunities.

**The Science and Manufacturing Network** - We have concentrated on bi monthly site visits, all of which have been very well received. The format, however, is still very much a work in progress and the steering group, made up of highly regarded specialists in their particular field, is looking to further develop the network's reach and interactions thereby increasing the benefits of this unique network in the region.

### Business Support

#### The Business Growth Programme (LCRIBS)

The Chamber has continued to deliver a substantial proportion of Halton Council's funded Business Support programme. The current programme finishes end Dec 2018 having achieved and in a number of areas, exceeded its targets. It is hoped that the programme will be extended and that the Chamber will stay involved.

#### LCR Halton Growth Hub

The Chamber in partnership with the Council successfully re-tendered for Apr 2018 – Mar 2019 contract after its successful delivery of the last programme. Since the previous Growth Hub Broker, Rachael Owen, has joined the Chamber as CEO a new position, Business Engagement and Support Executive, has been created at the Chamber with Maria Toolan now helping all organisations, across every sector throughout the borough, with business expertise, advice, guidance and information.

#### Business Improvement District Areas (BIDs)

The Chamber was successful in becoming the BID Body for both the Astmoor and Halebank Industrial Estates. This was a significant step for the Chamber as it showed our previous involvement had been appreciated by the tenant businesses who voted for both BIDs to continue for a third term. The Chamber has now recruited a new BID manager, Joanne Taylor, to further develop both BIDs over the next 5 years.

#### Stakeholder Engagement/ Representation

The new Mersey Gateway Crossing was opened at the end of 2017. This has raised a number of concerns as well as benefits for the business community. To gain a better understanding of the impact this has had on business, the Chamber intends to carry out a borough wide survey to look at the economy, workforce and business growth.

The 3rd runway at Heathrow airport is believed to have significant benefit to the LCR economy. The Chamber board voted in favour and MP's Dereck Twigg and Mike Amersbury were informed of the support from Halton businesses.

#### Halton Business Awards

2018 was the tenth Halton Business Awards and we were delighted to attract over 330 guests to our glittering Gala Dinner at the Halton Stadium. The increasing status of these awards in Halton was reflected by the record number of excellent entries received, making the judges job extremely difficult and resulting in several Highly Commended awards being presented. The Guest speaker, Martin Hawthorne of Cash Converters, gave an inspirational and amusing speech, focusing on successful customer engagement, making it a most enjoyable evening.

#### Community Support

The Chamber continues to play an active role in the Halton Foundation, which aims to help coordinate and support local community groups and individuals. The Charitable Trusts have been reactivated and monies transferred to the fund. Organisations and individuals are now, once again, benefiting from the Knight's Fund as a result.

#### Reaching Out

This year our web site has been totally updated and revamped making it easier to update and more flexible to manage. It's a big hit with everyone in the office and the good news is, our members tell us they like it too. We have also engaged more on social media which is now used increasingly to announce and report on events. During the Awards the Chamber achieved over 100,000 impressions.

So finally this year has seen the Chamber continuing to make good progress, increasingly being seen as the voice for business in Halton with a sound financial basis. It has been a momentous year of challenge and success. None of this would have been possible without the support of our members and stakeholders and the hard work and commitment of our management and staff – Rachael Owen, Diane McLoughlin, Maria Toolan, Joanne Taylor, Kieran Atkinson, Jemma Ross and Jane Kelly, as well as Ryan Morgan, who joined us under an ILM contract and Nicola Holland, to whom, on behalf of the board and members, I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation.



Peter Cook, Chairman



Rachael Owen, CEO