

SCRUTINY BOARD (SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY AND CULTURE)

INQUIRY INTO APPRENTICESHIPS

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 At its meeting in June 2013, the Board identified jobs and skills as a priority area of work for the coming year. It was agreed that a working group would meet with officers from City development to consider a focus for the inquiry.
- 1.2 The working group met on 9 September 2013 and proposed that the inquiry should focus on apprenticeships. This decision was made in the context of an explicit intention to carry out further subsequent inquiry work on other aspects of the jobs and skills agenda in the future.
- 1.3 The following issues were identified as shaping the inquiry:
 - High levels of unemployment among young people, particularly in the more deprived areas of the city
 - There are a number of apprenticeship vacancies across the city which are not attracting applicants
 - The availability of useful local data about apprenticeships
 - The recent changes in the information, advice and guidance service available to young people
 - The important role of parents and carers in influencing young people's choices about future employment, education and training
 - A general lack of awareness and understanding about the details of apprenticeships
 - The wide range of schemes and initiatives in operation
 - Potential barriers to accessing apprenticeships, including qualification requirements, and how these can be overcome
 - Levels of pay
 - The council's role in supporting and promoting apprenticeships both city-wide and at a local level
 - The council's own role as a major employer in the city
- 1.4 There is a clear link to the findings of the inquiry report published in April 2013 by the Children and Families Scrutiny Board following its inquiry into increasing the number of young people in employment, education or training. The inquiry also builds on previous work carried out by the Sustainable Economy and Culture Scrutiny Board focused on the council's use of its planning and procurement powers to promote employment and skills opportunities. The recommendations from both of these inquiries are still being actively monitored by the respective Scrutiny Boards. Any relevant information emerging from that monitoring process will be incorporated into the evidence for this inquiry.

2.0 Scope of the inquiry

2.1 The purpose of the Inquiry is to make an assessment of and, where appropriate, make recommendations on the following areas:

- The role of apprenticeships in getting Leeds residents into employment
- How best to make information about apprenticeships accessible to young people, parents and employers
- Whether there is anything more the council could be doing as a major employer to support apprenticeships.

3.0 Desired Outcomes and Measures of Success

3.1 The decision to undertake this Inquiry has been based on the city priority to drive the sustainable growth of the Leeds economy to support the creation of new jobs and skills. In conducting the Inquiry the Board wishes to promote access to employment and skills development through apprenticeships as one route to tackling unemployment levels in the city.

3.2 It is also important to consider how the Scrutiny Board will deem if its inquiry has been successful in making a difference to local people. Some measures of success may be obvious at the initial stages of an inquiry and can be included in these terms of reference. Other measures of success may become apparent as the inquiry progresses and discussions take place.

3.3 Some potential initial measures of success are:

- Increased number of apprenticeships available in the city
- Increased take-up of apprenticeships
- A reduction in the number of unfilled apprenticeship vacancies
- An increase in the number of people supported to be ready to take up an apprenticeship

4.0 Comments of the relevant Director and Executive Member

4.1 In line with Scrutiny Board Procedure Rule 12.1 where a Scrutiny Board undertakes an Inquiry the Scrutiny Board shall consult with any relevant Director and Executive Member on the terms of reference.

5.0 Timetable for the inquiry

5.1 The Inquiry will take place over two formal Scrutiny Board sessions, supplemented by a working group meeting to engage with young people, with a view to issuing a final report in the spring of 2014.

5.2 The length of the Inquiry is subject to change.

6.0 Submission of evidence

6.1 Session one – 19 November 2013

The evidence for this session is aimed at providing an overview of apprenticeships for the Board. It will include input from Executive Members and Leeds City Council officers, covering the following information:

- Background information about what an apprenticeship is and the range of opportunities available
- The benefits of apprenticeships as a career pathway compared to other options for young people
- Data on the apprenticeship opportunities available in Leeds
- Information on how apprenticeship opportunities are promoted to young people nationally, city-wide and at a locality level
- Information on pre-apprenticeship provision and support for those not meeting the initial requirements for functional skills
- General information on the work of Jobs and Skills with education and business partners in brokering apprenticeship opportunities in Leeds
- Information on the council's commitment as an employer to apprenticeships

6.2 Session two – 21 January 2014

The evidence for this session will enable the Board to broaden the debate through discussion with partners. It include input from Executive Members, Leeds City Council officers and other key stakeholders, covering the following information:

- The role of schools and colleges in providing impartial information, advice and guidance, including information about apprenticeships
- The role of the Connexions service in supporting young people to access apprenticeships
- The role of the National Apprenticeship Service and the role of the Apprenticeship Training Agency in Leeds
- The role of employers in providing apprenticeships and promoting apprenticeship opportunities to young people
- The training aspect of apprenticeships

6.3 A working group session will be arranged to hear young people's views directly.

7.0 Witnesses

7.1 The following witnesses have been identified as possible contributors to the Inquiry:

- Executive Member for Jobs and Skills
- Executive Member for Children's Services
- City Development
- Children's Services
- Schools
- igen
- National Apprenticeship Service
- Apprenticeship Training Agency
- Employers
- Training providers
- Young people

8.0 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

8.1 The Equality Improvement Priorities 2011 to 2015 have been developed to ensure our legal duties are met under the Equality Act 2010. The priorities will help the council to achieve its ambition to be the best City in the UK and ensure that as a city work takes place to reduce disadvantage, discrimination and inequalities of opportunity.

8.2 Equality and diversity will be a consideration throughout the Scrutiny Inquiry and due regard will be given to equality through the use of evidence, written and verbal, outcomes from consultation and engagement activities.

8.3 The Scrutiny Board may engage and involve interested groups and individuals (both internal and external to the council) to inform recommendations.

8.4 Where an impact has been identified this will be reflected in the final inquiry report, post inquiry. Where a Scrutiny Board recommendation is agreed the individual, organisation or group responsible for implementation or delivery should give due regard to equality and diversity, conducting impact assessments where it is deemed appropriate.

9.0 Post inquiry report monitoring arrangements

9.1 Following the completion of the Scrutiny inquiry and the publication of the final inquiry report and recommendations, the implementation of the agreed recommendations will be monitored.

9.2 The monitoring will be undertaken by the Board. This will be done at regular intervals appropriate to the content of the recommendation.