

## SCRUTINY BOARD (SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY AND CULTURE)

TUESDAY, 19TH NOVEMBER, 2013

**PRESENT:** Councillor M Rafique in the Chair

Councillors D Cohen, M Lyons,  
P Wadsworth, R Harington, J McKenna,  
J Chapman, A Castle, D Coupar,  
J Marjoram, J Hardy and J Jarosz

### 51 **Late Items**

There were no formal late items of business to consider. However the Chair agreed to accept the following items as supplementary information:

- Draft terms of reference – inquiry into cultural organisations' engagement with communities (agenda item 8) (Minute 56 refers)
- Executive Board minutes of 6 November 2013 (agenda item 9) (Minute 57 refers)

### 52 **Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared at the meeting.

### 53 **Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ingham, with Councillor Jarosz in attendance as a substitute, and Councillor Khan, with Councillor Hardy in attendance as a substitute.

### 54 **Minutes - 8 October 2013**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

### 55 **Scrutiny Inquiry - Apprenticeships**

The Board considered a report of the Chief Officer Employment and Skills, as evidence for the first session of its inquiry into apprenticeships in Leeds. In attendance to address the Board and answer Members' queries were:

- Councillor Lucinda Yeadon, Executive Member for Leisure and Skills
- Sue Wynne, Chief Officer, Employment and Skills
- Gary Milner, Lead Officer, Skills for Learning and Life
- Nick Hart, Apprenticeship Hub Coordinator

Sue Wynne introduced the report, talking the Board through the learner and employer pathways for apprenticeship, and highlighting the key stakeholders and influences in promoting apprenticeship as a positive choice.

The following issues were highlighted in introducing the report:

- An apprenticeship is a job with a learning framework attached
- Apprenticeship is the government's key workforce development tool

- A new national pre-apprenticeship Traineeship programme is currently being piloted
- A mapping exercise of Leeds pre-apprenticeship opportunities is being undertaken for the next session of the inquiry in January
- The role of the council in supporting both young people and employers to access apprenticeships, including the roles of the Apprenticeship Training Agency and the Apprenticeship Hub.
- The number of 16-18 year olds starting apprenticeships has fallen, both locally and nationally
- The role of information, advice and guidance services
- Parental perception of apprenticeships
- The Executive Member stressed the priority to address the challenge to increase the number of apprentices and apprenticeships, through bringing together the players across a fragmented landscape and making it easier to access for young people and employers

The following issues were raised in discussion:

- Concern that the level of qualifications required in order to get onto some apprenticeships was inappropriately high and the lack of alternative entry level opportunities for young people
- The need to target support to young people to get them up to a level where they can successfully apply for an apprenticeship
- Support for activities to promote apprenticeships in localities
- The Work at Leeds programme
- The success of the devolved youth contract scheme in Leeds
- Work being undertaken by the Apprenticeship Hub to train young people in writing a good CV and application
- Other social rather than academic barriers that can prevent young people accessing an apprenticeship, for example housing issues
- Leeds City Council's use of apprenticeships and the retention rate for apprentices who have completed their training
- The support offered to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) through the Apprenticeship Training Agency
- The training subsidy provided by the government for those under 25 undertaking apprenticeships
- The impact of Raising the Participation Age, the introduction of vocational pathways at age 14 and the development of University Technical Colleges
- The importance of using methods of communication that will appeal to young people, and make accessing apprenticeships both more attractive and straightforward
- The potential consideration of some sort of local 'branding'
- The importance of getting the message about apprenticeships across to parents as a major influence on young people's choices
- The national competition from learning providers for the learning element of the apprenticeship
- The need to encourage more opportunities for young people to learn about the world of work at an early age
- The importance of providing support for looked after children as corporate parents

- The role of members as ward councillors and school governors in encouraging those high schools that are not already engaging to do so
- Opportunities to engage clusters and Area Committees
- Encouraging the circulation of apprenticeship vacancies as widely as possible
- The variation in quality of information, advice and guidance offered in schools, as evidenced in the recent national Ofsted report, and the support offered by Children's Services to schools
- The fact that schools can see apprenticeships as being in direct competition with them for pupils staying in school
- Looking at what more the council can do as an employer to support apprenticeships and preparation for apprenticeships
- Spreading awareness among the council's own workforce to promote an up to date and accurate picture of apprenticeships
- Laying out the challenge to other major employers in the city

The Board noted that there would be a further session of the inquiry in January, which would involve partners. A working group is also to be arranged to enable members to hear from young people.

**RESOLVED** – That the issues raised by this session of the inquiry be noted.

(Councillor Marjoram left the meeting at 11.20 during the discussion of this item.)

**56 Draft terms of reference - Scrutiny Board inquiry on cultural organisations' engagement with communities**

The Board considered draft terms of reference for an inquiry into cultural organisations' engagement with communities.

**RESOLVED** – That the terms of reference be agreed.

**57 Work Schedule**

The Board received a report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which set out the latest version of the Board's work schedule.

The Board discussed the joint working with Children and Families Scrutiny Board in relation to the youth offer and it was agreed to ensure that all Board members received a copy of the relevant reports.

The Board welcomed the Executive Board's decision not to introduce charges for residents' parking permit schemes. Members asked the Principal Scrutiny Adviser to confirm with the department that consultation would take place before any existing schemes were considered for removal.

**RESOLVED** –

- a) That the work schedule be agreed.

- b) That a member of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Board be invited to join this Board when the Community Infrastructure Levy is considered in future.
- c) That the Executive Board minutes be noted

(Councillors Wadsworth and Hardy left the meeting at 11.50 during the discussion of this item.)

**58 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 17 December at 10.00am (a pre-meeting will start at 9.30am for Board members.)

(The meeting finished at 12.00)