



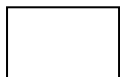
Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Scrutiny Board (City and Regional Partnerships)

Date: 23rd October 2008

Subject: Progress Report on the Board's Working Groups

Electoral Wards Affected: All



Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Scrutiny Board has established a Small Businesses Working Group and a University Fees Working Group to consider the appropriateness of bringing forward draft terms of reference for consideration by the Board with a view to undertaking inquiries on these issues.

2.0 Small Businesses Working Group

2.1 A note of the last meeting of the Small Businesses Working Group held on the 7th October 2008 is attached for Members consideration.

2.2 The fact sheet provided by the Chief Economic Services Officer and the Head of Business Support and Tourism which is referred to in the note is also attached for Members information.

3.0 University Fees Working Group

3.1 The Board in July considered a request for scrutiny from Leeds University Union concerning their fees campaign. The University Union wants the Scrutiny Board to investigate what impact the current funding model has had on applications to their local institutions from local students, but also what wider impacts the city could face if an increase of fees was introduced following the 2009 review.

3.2 It has proved difficult to find a suitable date when all the parties could meet together to discuss this issue since the original request for scrutiny was heard in July. The Universities themselves were extremely busy over the summer months dealing with their new intake of students for 2008/09.

3.3 However, a date has now been agreed and the University Fees Working Group will meet on the 17th October 2008 with representatives from the Universities and the University Unions and the outcome of their deliberations will be reported at today's meeting.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Board is asked to

- (i) receive the note of the Skills Working Group held on 7th October 2008 and the report of the Chief Economic Services Officer and the Head of Business Support and Tourism.
- (ii) note the outcome of the University Fees Working Group meeting held on 17th October and consider how it wishes to respond to the University Union's request for scrutiny.

Background Papers – none used