

THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

18 March 2013

12 MONTH REVIEW: INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP ON YOUNG PEOPLE AND EMPLOYMENT

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (ECONOMIC PROSPERITY)

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RECENT REFERENCES:

OS2 – [Appointments to Informal Scrutiny Groups and External Bodies](#), 1 June 2011

PER195 – [Customer Service Apprenticeship Scheme Proposal](#), 6 June 2011

OS25 – [Findings of the Informal Scrutiny Group on Young People and Employment](#), 23 January 2012

CAB2294 – [Young People and Employment Informal Scrutiny Group – Recommendations](#), 8 February 2012

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report summarises the progress made in delivering the recommendations of the Informal Scrutiny Group on Young People and Employment, as approved by [Cabinet on 8 February 2012](#).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Committee note the progress to date in implementing the recommendations of the Informal Scrutiny Group on Young People and Employment, as set out as an appendix to this report.

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#### DETAIL:

1. The [Findings of the Informal Scrutiny Group on Young People and Employment](#) (OS25 refers) were considered and endorsed at the meeting of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23 January 2012.
  - 1.1 The Informal Scrutiny Group's recommendations were then referred by the Committee to Cabinet and were approved at its meeting of 8 February 2012 (CAB2294 refers)
  - 1.2 This report provides a 12 month review of the progress made in delivering these recommendations. This update is set out as an appendix.

#### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

#### 2 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CHANGE PLANS (RELEVANCE TO):

- 2.1 The subject of the Informal Scrutiny Group was directly relevant to delivery of the Economic Prosperity outcome of the Sustainable Community Strategy, in seeking to ensure that young people are provided with opportunities to find training and employment when they leave education.

#### 3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 3.1 There are no additional resource implications to those originally set out in Report OS25.

#### 4 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 None directly arising from the monitoring of the implementation of the Informal Scrutiny Group's recommendations.

#### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

#### APPENDICES:

Progress achieved to date in implementing the recommendations of the Informal Scrutiny Group on Young People and Employment.

## APPENDIX

Progress achieved to date in implementing the recommendations of the Informal Scrutiny Group on Young People and Employment, shown in **bold** below:

- 1) Officers proceed with a commission for a study to:
  - i) accurately assess the number of NEET young people in the Winchester District;
  - ii) map current provision to help these young people into work;
  - iii) identify gaps in provision, where the system is failing young people;
  - iv) develop an outline action plan identifying pragmatic and cost-effective actions which could be taken by the Council and its partners in helping young people into training, education or employment.

**The mapping study was commissioned and completed, and was the subject of a well-attended special conference for local agencies working with unemployed young people held at the Guildhall last June. The conference was endorsed by the Winchester Local Children's Partnership, and actions from the workshops have formed the basis of further work in this area. A joint action plan is now under development to co-ordinate future work.**

2) The Council, through the Head of Organisational Development, makes a formal commitment to making a target number of 20 unpaid work placements per annum available to Job Centre Plus or other recognised agencies/organisations working with young people, and reports these to the Personnel Committee on an annual basis.

**A Council-wide coordinated programme of work placements will be developed further to continue to offer unpaid work experience opportunities for people within the District. This will cover a wide a range of services that the Council delivers to ensure we meet as broad a range of interests as possible. These opportunities will be made available to Job Centre Plus as well as local schools, colleges and other recognised agencies and organisations.**

3) That the Head of Organisational Development and Head of Economy and Arts produce a clear protocol to support the work placement programme;

**To complement the unpaid work experience opportunities a detailed guidance document will be developed to assist all parties to get the most out of the work placement. This will also help develop the CV of participating individuals and will include a learning and achievement log.**

**In addition, as part of the Employer Engagement Commission (see 5 below), officers are working with Radian Housing to create an Employer Toolkit which provides a simple, step-by-step guide to taking on interns, apprentices and work placements. This is in draft format at present and will be available to all employers in the District once it is finalised.**

4) The Council, through the Head of Organisational Development, makes a formal commitment to making a target number of 3 apprenticeships per annum available to Sparsholt College or other recognised organisations, as an example to other employers, and that these are reported to the Personnel Committee on an annual basis. This commitment is made on the basis of no additional direct cost to the Council.

**This target has already been exceeded in 2012/13, with 11 apprentices currently working at the City Council along with 2 National Graduate Trainees.**

**The Council is also involved in Apprenticeship Week (11-15 March 2013). Not only have apprenticeships been promoted with the Council, but we have supported one of several events across the County being organised by the National Apprenticeship Service. This event took place on Monday 11 March at the Milestones Museum in Basingstoke, and aimed to showcase the benefits apprenticeships can bring to local employers. The event was promoted to Winchester based businesses.**

5) The Council plays an active role in promoting both work placements and apprenticeships to other employers in the District, making information accessible and clear, and celebrating successful examples;

**An Employer Engagement Commission was awarded to The Business Collective, working in partnership with Radian Housing, this January. Its objective is to increase the number of workplace opportunities being offered by employers across the District, especially (but not exclusively) smaller businesses who may feel that they do not have the time or skills to make this happen without some external help/encouragement. Nearly 40 businesses have been approached already, and many are willing to help. Job Centre Plus is actively engaged in identifying appropriate jobseekers to take up the opportunities. The first batch of employers to come forward will be celebrated at a special reception with the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, Strategic Planning and Tourism shortly.**

**The commission was launched in January with a Jobseekers' Fair at St John's House, Winchester, which was attended by around 70 jobseekers. A further one being considered for the southern parishes later in the year.**

**In addition, a new grants scheme was introduced during the year to enable more apprentices to take up opportunities locally by paying basic costs such as equipment, travel or work clothing that they might not otherwise be able to afford.**

6) Officers commissioned a Job Club in Stanmore, using seed funding from the economic prosperity commissioning budget with the intention of establishing a self-sustaining, volunteer-based operation after two years;

**After speaking at greater length to the operators of other Job Clubs, and agencies supporting jobseekers, it was agreed that a place-based service was not the most effective form of support to commission. Consequently, a**

**commission for a volunteer-based one-to-one mentoring service for jobseekers has been drafted, and will be advertised shortly.**

7) The Council convenes a conference of arts providers in and around the Winchester District to consider opportunities for non-conventional interventions to support young people, in line with the Council's stated objective of drawing on the District's cultural strengths to find innovative new approaches to supporting the local economy.

**A 'cultural conference' is proposed for early summer, linked to the launch of the new Cultural Strategy (due to be adopted by Cabinet in April). This discussion will form one strand of the programme.**

8) That other member organisations of the Local Strategic Partnership be encouraged to consider measures designed to reduce youth unemployment in their own programmes and initiatives.

**Youth unemployment features high on most agendas at present, with initiatives by the Winchester BID, Winchester Area Community Action, Hampshire County Council and many other partner organisations already demonstrating this. The topic is routinely included in meetings of all kinds, and no specific additional action is planned at this time.**