

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

26 September 2016



Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Review of Support Provided for Skills Development within County Durham

Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Director of Transformation and Partnerships

Purpose

1. The attached report presents the key findings and recommendations of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Review Group report focusing on support provided for skills development within County Durham.

Background

2. At a special meeting of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 29 October 2015 members agreed the terms of reference for the review with the aim of investigating and understanding the role and performance of DCC and key partners in supporting skills development, examine current partnership working, identify any barriers to employment and the future skill priorities for the county. It was agreed that the review would:
 - Consider and understand the current approach to skills development at a national, regional and local level.
 - Examine the existing occupational profile of County Durham including the skill base of residents within County Durham and compare to the regional and national skill base.
 - Consider and understand the role and performance of DCC and key partners in supporting skills development within the county including detail of various projects/initiatives.
 - Examine how DCC engages with key partners including the National Careers Service, Business and Education Board, FE colleges, specialist learning providers, employers and the County Durham Economic Partnership (CDEP) to support skills development within the county.
 - Identify any barriers to employment for a variety of specific sectors including: employers; adults; young people including young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs).
 - Examine any actions identified to address barriers.
 - Identify and consider future skill priorities for the county.

3. A review group of 13 members was established from the membership of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Evidence was gathered over eight meetings and three visits providing members with the opportunity to see 'first hand' the type of skills support provided by partners in the county.
4. The review group's key findings are attached at Appendix 2 and have resulted in the formulation of the following recommendations:
 - That the Council robustly analyses the impact of the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy and the statutory apprenticeship target on Durham County Council and further apprenticeship opportunities in the county.
 - That Durham County Council monitors the progress of the North East Area Based Review and the full devolution of the Adult Education Budget within the context of future FE provision within County Durham.
 - That Durham County Council (DCC) via the Regeneration and Economic Development (RED) Service Grouping is pro-active in promoting with SMEs and training providers in the county the various top up grants available from the County Durham Apprenticeship Programme (CDAP) together with the availability of support to employers to assist in applying for the various available top ups.
 - As part of the monitoring arrangements for the DurhamWorks Programme the Council ensures that the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive updates on the progress, performance and delivery of the programme.
 - That Durham County Council is pro-active in promoting with schools the importance of providing young people with good quality Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) together with an opportunity for meaningful work experience placement with local employers, and continues to monitor take up of provision by schools.
 - That the Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) continue to develop local skill projects and initiatives and where appropriate share across the AAP network and work with the Children and Young People's Services Service Grouping to determine whether any elements of individual AAP projects can be used to complement the DurhamWorks Programme.
 - That key partners within the county be encouraged through the County Durham Economic Partnership (CDEP) to use the same labour market tools and share data so that there is a consistent approach to predicting employer's future skill requirements.
 - That the Business and Education Board build upon the success of 'Get the Buzz' week by continuing to work with partners to identify and develop future opportunities for business and education engagement across County Durham.

- That a review of this report and progress made against the recommendations will be undertaken six months after the report is considered by Cabinet including as part of this process the following:
 - A summary of AAP activity currently undertaken across the county focusing on skills development.
 - A summary of activity undertaken to develop further opportunities for business and education engagement.
 - An update on the progress of the three local apprenticeship programmes (Teenage Parent Apprenticeship Programme, ICT Apprenticeship Hub Programme and the CDAP).

Service Response

5. The report was shared with Regeneration and Economic Development Management Team (RED MT) and Children and Young People's Services Senior Management Team (CYPS SMT) and resulted in following responses:
 - RED MT has considered the report and its recommendations and is happy for it to progress to Corporate Management Team and Cabinet for consideration. RED MT acknowledges the extensive work undertaken in producing the review report and welcomes its helpful findings.
 - CYPS SMT has considered the report, both its content and recommendations, and is happy for it to progress. The CYPS SMT would like to express its thanks to those Individuals and organisations that have contributed to and supported the review. The report's recommendations provide a useful basis to progress the skills development agenda in County Durham.

Next Steps

6. It is proposed following the committee's approval of the review report that it is considered by Cabinet at the meeting on the 19 October and at a future meeting of the CDEP.

Recommendation

7. That the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee agree the report of the Scrutiny Review Group looking at the support provided for skills development within County Durham and attached as Appendix 2.
8. That the report of the Scrutiny Review Group is submitted for consideration by Cabinet at the meeting on the 19 October 2016 and to a future meeting of the CDEP.

Contact:	Stephen Gwilym, Principal Overview and Scrutiny Officer
Tel:	03000 268 140
	Diane Close, Overview and Scrutiny Officer
Tel:	03000 268 141

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – None

Staffing – None

Risk – None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – The necessary Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared concerning the review report.

Accommodation – None

Crime and Disorder – None

Human Rights – None

Consultation – None

Procurement – None

Disability Issues – None

Legal Implications - None