

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

25 February 2019



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

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The report provides members with an update on the progress made in relation to the recommendations contained within the Economy and Enterprise OSC review group report of support provided for skills development within County Durham.

Executive summary

- 2 The Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2014/15 were concerned about ensuring that young people in the county had the necessary skills to meet the requirements of local employers.
- 3 As a result in October 2015 the committee agreed the terms of reference for a review focusing on investigating and understanding the role and performance of DCC and key partners in supporting skills development in County Durham.
- 4 The review group held nine meetings during which it received evidence from various partners and local businesses. The group also visited new College Durham and two training providers in the county.
- 5 The review report was considered by Cabinet at the meeting on the 19 October 2016 and made several recommendations as detailed in paragraph 11 and included in the template attached as appendix 2.

- 6 Members will be aware that as part of the review process we ask that detail of progress made against the recommendations be provided to the committee, normally three updates per review. The committee has received two previous updates.

Recommendation

- 7 Members of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider and comment upon the progress made in relation to the recommendations contained in the Scrutiny review report.

Background

- 8 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. 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.

- 9 A review group consisted of 13 members from the membership of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Evidence was gathered over nine meetings and three visits providing members with the opportunity to see ‘first hand’ the type of skills support provided by partners in the county.
- 10 In addition to the report being considered by Cabinet in October 2016 the report was also shared with the Business, Enterprise and Skills Working Group of the County Durham Economic Partnership at the meeting on the 24 November, 2016.
- 11 The review made 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) A summary of AAP activity currently undertaken across the county focusing on skills development.
 - (b) A summary of activity undertaken to develop further opportunities for business and education engagement.
 - (c) An update on the progress of the three local apprenticeship programmes (Teenage Parent Apprenticeship Programme, ICT Apprenticeship Hub Programme and the CDAP).

12 Members heard when receiving the last update that some of the recommendations are no-longer relevant however members will be updated on those recommendations which still apply.

Conclusion

13 Members will receive detail of the progress made in relation to those recommendations which are still relevant.

Background papers

- Support provided for skills development within County Durham - Review Report 2016.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not applicable

Finance

Not applicable

Consultation

Not applicable

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Not applicable

Human Rights

Not applicable

Crime and Disorder

Not applicable

Staffing

Not applicable

Accommodation

Not applicable

Risk

Not applicable

Procurement

Not applicable