



AGENDA

SELECT COMMITTEE - APPRENTICESHIPS

Tuesday, 22 January, 2013, at 2.00 pm

Ask for: Theresa Grayell

Pendragon Room, Invicta House, County Hall,
Maidstone

Telephone 01622 694277

Tea/Coffee will be available 15 minutes before the start of the meeting in the meeting room

Membership

Mr K Smith (Chairman), Mrs C J Waters (Vice-Chairman), Mr R H Bird, Mr A R Chell, Mr L Christie, Mr D A Hirst, Mr R J Lees (co-optee), Mr S C Manion and Mr M J Northey

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

- 13:00 - Interview with Becci Newton, Senior Research Fellow, Institute for
13:45 pm Employment Studies (Pages 1 - 4) *INTERVIEW CANCELLED DUE TO ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS*
- 14:00 - Interview with **Penny Denne**, Skills and Employability Programme
14:45 pm Officer, Skills and Employability Service, KCC (Pages 5 - 6)
- 15:00 - Interview with **Jonathan Smith**, Participation and Progression
15:45 pm Officer, Skills and Employability Service, KCC (Pages 7 - 8)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

Members of the Select Committee are asked to remain in the meeting room for 20 minutes at the end of the public part of the meeting for summing up.

Peter Sass
Head of Democratic Services
(01622) 694002

Monday, 14 January 2013

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Kent County Council

Apprenticeships Select Committee

Hearing 3

Tuesday 22nd January 2013

Biography

Becci Newton, Senior Research Fellow, Institute for Employment Studies

Becci's research interests include young people's engagement, learning and development – for instance, she recently managed the evaluation of the Activity Agreement Pilots, and a project that explored the operation of equality of opportunity in the Young Apprenticeships. She is currently involved in a project to explore best practice in the employment and training of young workers, and is leading research into the role of volunteering in supporting young people's transitions. She also explores careers guidance for young people and adults, and recently led a project to evaluate the Advancement Network Prototypes, and undertook research to provide insight into progression as a result of Careers Advice Service interventions.

She has worked on a range of projects that review adult and work-based learning and further education, for example, the evaluation of the Employer Training Pilots for Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and the Train to Gain Learner Evaluation for the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). A theme that Becci has developed at IES is the relationship between work-related training and age. She led three projects for the Department for Work and Pensions, the first of which reviewed the training experiences of older and younger adults in work, the second, training experiences of adults who are unemployed or inactive. The third in the series explored the types of training employers most value when employing older and younger unemployed or inactive adults.

The Institute for Employment Studies aims to improve employment policy in the UK and internationally by carrying out authoritative research of practical relevance to policy makers and those responsible for implementing policy programmes and initiatives. Their work covers all aspects of employment policy and labour market activity and is mainly organised around three main themes:

- unemployment and labour market disadvantage
- learning and skills
- work, health and well-being.

In addition, some of their work covers employment relations as well as more generic labour market research issues outside any one of the main programme themes.

They undertake local and regional research and evaluation in the UK, as well as working internationally for policy agencies and institutions in Europe, America and Asia, often in partnership with other research institutes around the world.

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APPRENTICESHIPS SELECT COMMITTEE

Hearing 3

Tuesday 22 January 2013

Witness Guide for Members

Below are suggested themes and questions. They have been provided in advance to the witnesses to allow them to prepare for the types of issues that Members may be interested to explore. All Members are welcome to ask these questions or pose additional ones to the witnesses via the Committee Chairman.

Themes and Questions

Becci Newton, Senior Research Fellow, Institute for Employment Studies

- Please introduce yourself and provide an overview of the topics of interest covered by the Institute of Employment Studies.
- What benefits, if any, do apprenticeships bring to both young people and employers?
- In your view, what are the current challenges surrounding apprenticeships?
- How adequately do current apprenticeship qualifications prepare young people for the world of work? How well do they meet the needs of the labour market in the current economic climate?
- What are the implications of the raising of the participation age (RPA) for apprenticeships?
- Is there any evidence to suggest that the increase of university fees will raise the demand for apprenticeships from young people?
- In your view, how effective is the careers information, advice and guidance (IAG) currently provided within schools? What are the issues surrounding this area, if any?
- In your view, is the teaching of soft skills in schools important? If so, who is best placed to teach soft skills in schools, and at what age should they be introduced?

- What, if any, are the difficulties for vulnerable young people in accessing apprenticeship schemes?
- To what extent do you agree with the recommendations in the Richard Review?
- In what ways – if any – can Kent County Council improve the quality and provision of apprenticeships in Kent? What can KCC do to increase the number of employers, particularly SMEs, offering apprenticeships in Kent? What can KCC do to increase the number of young people taking on apprenticeships in Kent?
- What is the direction of current national policies with regard to apprenticeships, and what are their implications for the future?

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Themes and Questions

Penny Denne, Skills and Employability Programmes Officer, Skills and Employability Service, Kent County Council.

- Please introduce yourself and provide an overview of your roles and responsibilities.
- Who are the vulnerable learners in Kent? How many young people in the County are classified as “vulnerable learners”?
- In your view, what are the current challenges facing the world of apprenticeships?
- What, if any, are the difficulties for vulnerable learners in accessing apprenticeship schemes?
- What more can be done to support vulnerable learners in accessing apprenticeships in Kent?
- In your view, how effective is the careers information, advice and guidance (IAG) currently provided to vulnerable learners within schools?
- In your opinion, how well do current apprenticeship qualifications prepare vulnerable learners for the world of work?
- In what ways – if any – can Kent County Council improve the quality and provision of apprenticeships in Kent? What can KCC do to increase the number of employers offering apprenticeships in Kent? What can KCC do to increase the number of young people - and vulnerable learners in particular - taking on apprenticeships in Kent?

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Themes and Questions

Jonathan Smith, Participation and Progression Officer, Skills and Employability Service, Kent County Council.

- Please introduce yourself and please provide an outline of your roles and responsibilities.
- Please provide an overview of KCC's apprenticeship service.
- What is the process by which young people are recruited into the KCC apprenticeship scheme?
- How well-prepared do you find young people who are applying for apprenticeships in KCC?
- What is the structure of an apprenticeship in KCC? What are the duties involved in a typical KCC apprenticeship?
- How many apprentices does KCC employ? What is the spread through each of the KCC directorates?
- Please discuss the nature of apprenticeships offered by KCC (i.e. administrative, IT etc).
- What levels of apprenticeship are currently offered by KCC? How many higher level apprenticeships are currently being undertaken within KCC?
- What is the completion rate of apprenticeships within KCC?

- What is the proportion of apprentices who go on to be permanently employed by KCC after completing their apprenticeship? What roles/careers do they progress into?
- Please discuss any barriers to increasing recruitment of apprentices within KCC.
- What, if anything, can KCC do to enhance the quality and number of the apprenticeships it offers?
- What changes do you expect to occur within the KCC apprenticeship service over the next 5 years?