

By: Head of Democratic Services

To: Customer and Communities Policy Overview and Scrutiny
Committee
18 November 2011

Subject: **SELECT COMMITTEE - UPDATE**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report updates Members on the progress of the Select Committee on the Student Journey

Select Committee – “The Student Journey”.

1. (6) The Select Committee, under the Chairmanship of Mr Kit Smith, has almost completed its evidence gathering sessions with key stakeholders, including representatives from business and education, and from young people. It continued gathering evidence until the beginning of November 2011.

(7) The Committee met on 1 September 2011 to signpost areas for possible recommendation. The potential recommendations were met with widespread agreement by key KCC officers who will be responsible for the implementation of most recommendations. The draft recommendations are set out in **Appendix 1**. More recommendations may follow, the POSC's and the Scrutiny Board will be kept informed at their meetings.

(8) It is intended that the Select Committee will submit its final report to the Cabinet in April 2012 and to County Council in May 2012.

(9) The bullet points below provide an outline of the main draft recommendations.

- *Dialogue and Collaboration* - Local Planning Forums need to be reshaped and should be accountable to Locality Boards.
- *Finance* - The existing approach to funding creates perverse incentives, encouraging learning and skills providers to study for qualifications that they will easily pass, rather than those which are best for educational progression to further and higher education and to skilled employment. Rather than fund on the basis of qualifications, the Committee proposes that Government funds on a per student basis.
- *Work readiness* - There should be less emphasis on irrelevant qualifications and on exam results, and more on the ability to add value to employers, apprenticeships, Higher Education and

entrepreneurship. Information, advice and guidance (IAG) are essential and need improvement rather than reduction.

- *Employers* - A series of initiatives have been proposed in order to promote closer collaboration with employers and high quality experience of the workplace for young people. For instance, up to 5 business sectors should be represented in the delivery of a work-focused teaching programme in schools across Kent. Apprenticeships and internships should reside within the Education, Learning and Skills Directorate at KCC. A need for a holistic review of them, with new realistic targets, has been identified.
- *KCC internal communication* - KCC should review its policy on the use of social media. Also, a critical review of cross-directorate communication should take place in order to strengthen the employability of young people in Kent.
- *Implementation of recommendations* - The Committee proposes to run a pilot scheme - which is aimed at promoting dialogue between local learning and skills providers and local businesses - in one Kent District, and with the collaboration of its Locality Board. The Committee will report progress with this initiative to the Scrutiny Board.

(10) Excellent collaboration between officers and Members in the production and in testing the implementations should be noted.

Suggestion for a Select Committee topic reviews

2. (1) At the meeting of this Committee, under its Crime and Disorder remit, on 8 July 2011 it was agreed that a proposal for a Select Committee topic review on Domestic Abuse would be submitted to the Scrutiny Board on for their consideration.

(2) The Scrutiny Board met on 2 November 2011 and heard from Mr Hill and Mr Beaumont who spoke in support of the proposal. The Board agreed to set up at Select Committee on Domestic Abuse, which will start its work in early 2012. This Committee will be kept informed of the progress with this review.

Recommendations

4. Members are to note the draft areas for recommendation proposed by the Select Committee on the Student Journey, and to note the establishment of the Select Committee on Domestic Abuse.

Background Information: *Nil*

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The Student Journey Select Committee

Potential Areas for Recommendation

Collaboration

Issue 1 – Dialogue and collaboration

Promote communication and collaboration between local learning and skills providers and businesses. Also, strong evidence suggests that there is the need to promote the setting up of educational courses teaching young people employability skills necessary to meet local employers' needs.

Potential recommendation

Strategic County-wide level - Recommend the setting up of a **Kent strategic forum** which includes representatives/leaders of learning and skills providers and of businesses in the County. The objectives of this forum are:

- To discuss any issues that could present challenges to enhance the employability of young people in Kent, and to find solutions to these issues.
- To secure the commitment of all the leaders of key organisations in Kent that the solutions will be implemented.
- To set out clear and measurable targets to be achieved within agreed timescales.
- Organisations represented may include: Skills for Business Growth; Kent Association of Further Education Corporations (KAFEC), Connexions, Jobcentre, KATO, EBP Kent, Chambers, Federation of Small Businesses, Kent representatives of primary and secondary schools.
- A strategic overview post may be required to coordinate the activities of the strategic forum. It is important that the work of the coordinator is independent and transparent.

Potential recommendation

Local level – recommend the employment of existing **Local Planning Forums** to promote dialogue between local learning and skills providers and local employers. Although strategic leadership is necessary to secure commitment at county-wide level, local issues and solutions are best discussed at local level, with local accountability residing with the Locality Board.

- Each Planning Forum would cover two Districts.
- Each Forum would be facilitated by a coordinator (some KCC officers already undertake this role). The main role of the coordinator would be to

promote dialogue between local learning and skills providers and local employers in an effort to improve the employability of local young people.

- Representatives of Vocational Skills Centres should be included in the Forums to discuss and identify with local business representatives (perhaps including Chambers and the Federation of Small Businesses) specialist courses and qualifications that prepare young people for the jobs that local businesses intend to offer.
- Representatives of Districts should be included.
- The Sittingbourne Planning Forum should be adopted as model of good practice by the six Forums.

Wolf Report – Recommendation 5

The overall study programmes of all 16-18 year olds in ‘vocational’ programmes (i.e. currently everything other than A levels, pre-U and IB, and including ‘Foundation Learning’) should be governed by a set of general principles relating primarily to content, general structure, assessment arrangements and contact time. Provided these are met (and see recommendation 6 below), institutions should be free to offer any qualifications they please from a recognised (i.e. regulated) awarding body, and encouraged to include non-qualifications-based activity.

Wolf Report – Recommendation 6

16-19 year old students pursuing full-time courses of study should not follow a programme which is entirely ‘occupational’, or based solely on courses which directly reflect, and do not go beyond, the content of National Occupational Standards. Their programmes should also include at least one qualification of substantial size (in terms of teaching time) which offers clear potential for progression either in education or into skilled employment. Arrangements for part-time students and work-based 16-18 year olds will be different but the design of learning programmes for such students should also be considered.

Wolf Report – Recommendation 27

At college and school level the assessment and awarding processes used for vocational awards should involve local employers on a regular basis. Awarding bodies should demonstrate, when seeking recognition, how employers are involved directly in development and specification of qualifications.

Careers Education, Guidance and Funding

Issue 2 – Funding, careers guidance and “easy” qualifications

Current funding, league tables and accountability regimes promote perverse incentives which encourage schools and colleges to steer young people into easy courses and qualifications, rather than ones which will genuinely enhance

their employability. This misguided information, advice and guidance can lead students to pursue educational routes leading to saturated careers.

As schools and colleges are allocated a budget to provide career education and information, advice and guidance to their students, it is paramount that IAG is impartial and accurate.

Although an increasing number of learning and skills providers are moving outside KCC's jurisdiction as a Local Education Authority, KCC can still hold them to account through other channels and organisations. Education institutions should focus on students' demands and needs.

Potential recommendation

The Select Committee endorses Recommendations 4 and 11 of the Wolf Report:

The Department of Education should make sure that performance management indicators and systems should not give schools incentives to divert low-attaining pupils onto courses and qualifications which are not recognised by employers or accepted by colleges for progression purposes.

Funding for full-time students age 16-18 should be on a programme basis, with a given level of funding per student. The funding should follow the student.

Additional Information and issues

- The Government on 6th October launched a consultation (will end on 5th January 2012) to seek views on how to implement key recommendations from Professor Wolf's Review of vocational education.
- The Education White Paper, which is due in late October 2011, could give an indication on whether, and the extent to which, the Government will act upon Recommendations 4 and 11 of the Wolf Report.

Wolf Report – Recommendation 4

DfE should review current policies for the lowest-attaining quintile of pupils at Key Stage 4, with a view to greatly increasing the proportion who are able to progress directly onto Level 2 programmes at age 16. Performance management indicators and systems should not give schools incentives to divert low-attaining pupils onto courses and qualifications which are not recognised by employers or accepted by colleges for progression purposes.

Wolf Report – Recommendation 11

Funding for full-time students age 16-18 should be on a programme basis, with a given level of funding per student. (This can and should be adjusted for

differences in the content-related cost of courses, and for particular groups of high-need student.) The funding should follow the student.

Issue 3 – Earlier career education, soft skills and literacy and numeracy standards

Consistent evidence, especially from businesses, indicates that young people lack the “soft skills” (for example, punctuality, professionalism and motivation) that employers seek in potential employees. Learning and skills providers should teach soft skills to young people in order to prepare them for the world of work.

Also, career education in schools is often taught too late, when pupils are about 16 year old. Career education, enterprise education, soft skills and work ethics should be taught from Key Stage 1/2 to ensure that they remain ingrained in young people’s attitudes and behaviour.

Finally, the business community - as well as the Wolf Report - points out that young people’s literacy and numeracy standards when completing compulsory education – especially those of lowest attaining learners - are inadequate in order to secure recruitment.

Potential recommendation

Kent County Council (or KCC Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills) should write to the Secretary of State for Education to urge the teaching of employability and “soft skills” in the curriculum from Key Stage 1 (or KS2). Literacy and numeracy standards, especially those of lowest attaining learners, should be raised.

Potential recommendation

Kent County Council should develop an **electronic version of a portfolio** which contains a list of activities that young people in Kent should undertake in order to improve their employability. The e-portfolio should be available to students from the last two years of primary school to university; it should record the activities that will help students enhance their employment prospects through their different “student journeys”.

Additional Information and issues

- The idea of an e-portfolio is currently being developed by the 14-19 Entitlement Team. By building on the current scheme it is hoped that costs would be reduced.
- This portfolio, which can be accessed electronically by students, should record progress made by the student. The Kentchoices4u website should host the e-portfolio.
- The portfolio could include activities and tasks such as: attitudinal/psychometric tests; learning how to produce a curriculum vitae to a high standard; mock interviews; personal career education and

information, advice and guidance; work experience; support from families in the development of students' soft skills.

- Students in the last two years of primary school should begin to use the e-portfolio. It is hoped that this would help the development of soft skills from an early age, and would support students in consolidating their employability skills during their transition to secondary school.
- If the e-portfolio can be devised and promoted in a way that can contribute to positive outcomes in the Destination Measures assessment by Ofsted, local schools and colleges may be more inclined to support it. A “transfer value” attached to the portfolio is desirable. A prestigious qualification/kitemark?
- The e-portfolio is in effect a CV for those in education and work-based learning. The Committee believes that it should be called “Student Footprint”, as it includes qualifications, soft skills and other achievements of students during their journeys from childhood to employment in adulthood. The title relates both to Bold Steps for Kent, and to the different journeys that students take.

Wolf Report – Recommendation 7

Programmes for the lowest attaining learners – including many with LDD as well as those highly disaffected with formal education – should concentrate on the core academic skills of English and Maths, and on work experience. Funding and performance measures should be amended to promote a focus on these core areas and on employment outcomes rather than on the accrual of qualifications.

Wolf Report – Recommendation 9

Students who are under 19 and do not have GCSE A*-C in English and/or Maths should be required, as part of their programme, to pursue a course which either leads directly to these qualifications, or which provide significant progress towards future GCSE entry and success. The latter should be based around other Maths and English qualifications which have demonstrated substantial content and coverage; and Key Skills should not be considered a suitable qualification in this context. DfE and BIS should consider how best to introduce a comparable requirement into apprenticeship frameworks.

Wolf Report – Recommendation 10

DfE should continue and if possible increase its current level of support for CPD for mathematics teachers, and give particular attention to staff who are teaching post-16 students in colleges and schools. DfE and BIS should discuss the possibility of joint funding for post-16 CPD activities in English and Mathematics, especially as they relate to apprentices and to general FE colleges recruiting adults as well as young people.

Issue 4 – A kitemark scheme, and a national careers mentoring scheme, for information, advice and guidance

It appears that the national Universal Careers Service will cease to exist in 2012. Responsibility for the provision – and the extent of the provision - of careers education and information, advice and guidance to students will be left to schools. This could potentially create variation, inconsistency and inequality in the amount and quality of careers education students in different schools receive. This is a matter of concern for members of the Committee, who feel that careers education and information advice and guidance are vital and should be supported.

The introduction or development of a reputable kitemark scheme in Kent would encourage the provision of good quality information, advice and guidance, and consistency across the County. The introduction of a national careers mentoring scheme, where volunteers offer careers information, advice and guidance as well as pastoral support to students, would provide schools with a cost effective option for a personalised careers service.

Potential recommendation

Kent County Council (or the Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills) should urge Government (or the Secretary for Education) to set up a national mentoring scheme for volunteers to provide young people with careers information, advice and guidance, as well as pastoral support in schools.

Additional Information and issues

- The scheme should encourage the take up of mentors drawn from the business community.

Potential recommendation

KCC should set up a pilot scheme, in at least two schools (secondary schools and/or colleges) per District, where mentors are regularly made available to provide students with careers information, advice and guidance (details on how regularly mentors should provide IAG, and on its content, will have to be finalised).

Potential recommendation

The 14-19 Entitlement Team should pilot an online career education mentoring website for Kent based on the national model of www.horsesmouth.co.uk.

- The website provides a safe social network for informal mentoring; it enables users to search for a mentor, it gives information on how to become a mentor and is a source of inspirational mentoring stories.

- The scheme should encourage the take up of mentors drawn from the business community.

Potential recommendation

Kent County Council should develop a reputable kitemark scheme in Kent in order to encourage the provision of good quality information, advice and guidance, and consistency across the County. The e-portfolio initiative (please see above) should be included in the requirements for the achievement of the quality standard.

Additional Information and issues

- A Kent kitemark scheme, which acts as a quality standard for the management of career education and information, advice and guidance (CEIAG), already exists. It is called “Investors in Careers Award”, and has been created by KCC (14-19 Entitlement Team) in partnership with the Connexions service. It is the most widely recognised kitemark for CEIAG in the Country. The development and expansion of this existing scheme would provide a cost effective way of promoting good quality and consisted CEIAG in the County.
- At the moment 45 Kent primary and secondary schools are taking part in this initiative, of which 25 have achieved “advanced” level. No colleges are currently taking part, but they can if they wish to.
- It is important to promote the kitemark scheme to schools and make it relevant to Ofsted’s Destination Measures assessment in order to encourage take up.
- The kitemark licence costs a unique payment of £450, half of this amount is currently paid by Connexions.
- The IAG health check process to measure and monitor the kitemark quality standards currently costs KCC £10,000 (£100 per school).

Issue 5 – Re-channelling of grants

According to oral evidence, the removal of Government grants, such as the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), could disproportionately impact negatively on students aged 14-24, leading for example to an increase in dropout rates. The re-channelling of resources from other grants - such as the Early Years Intervention grant - to the 14-19 Entitlement Team would help KCC address the issue.

Potential recommendation

Kent County Council should channel part (amount?) of the Early Years Intervention grant to the 14-19 Entitlement Team to support the planning and provision of education-related services for young people aged 14-24.

Additional Information and issues

- The Early Years Intervention grant (or part of it) could be used to support the development of young people's employability skills and/or to support the provision of personal careers education and information advice and guidance advisers. Advisers could be placed, for example, in the Connexions service or within KCC (Youth Service facilities?).

Issue 6 – Financing of the Young Chamber project

The Young Chamber project promotes a greater understanding between the business community and their prospective future employees. It offers local businesses the opportunity to raise their profile and branding with schools and students. It also gives students the opportunity to learn recognised skills to progress into employment, self-employment or further training towards their desired careers.

Members were asked if they could offer financial support to the Young Chamber project, as many schools are unable to fund the project now that Government funding has been withdrawn. Last year a KCC Cabinet Member sponsored the Young Chamber licence fee of £500 to allow Kent Invicta Chamber to run the programme throughout Kent.

Potential Recommendation

Kent County Council should support the Young Chamber project by sponsoring the Chamber's annual licence fee of £500.

KCC - Internal

Issue 7 – A Communication strategy

Communication between KCC directorates and teams could be improved to strengthen the employability of young people in Kent through education, and to promote engagement with young people to find out their needs in terms of their education and employability through the democratic process. A cross-directorate communication strategy could be produced to improve internal collaboration and to promote the engagement with young people through innovative initiatives and the use of modern communication technology.

Potential recommendation

Kent County Council should produce a cross-directorate communication strategy in an effort to strengthen the employability of young people in Kent through education, and to promote engagement and communication with young

people through innovative initiatives and the use of modern communication technology.

Additional Information and issues

- Current KCC's policies discourage the use of social media and networking in KCC-based websites.
- Management of the "Apprenticeships" element has passed from the Supporting Independence Programme to the 14-19 Entitlement Team (both KCC).

Issue 8 – Promotion of the Kentchoices4u website and broadening of apprenticeships section in the website

Although initial evidence suggests that young people access the Kentchoices4u website for information advice and guidance about their future education and career, a broader access and choice could be offered. This could be achieved, for example, by broadening the apprenticeship section, and by introducing hyperlinks leading to kentchoices4u in other KCC websites that are popular with young people.

Potential recommendation

KCC should promote the usage of the Kentchoices4u website by introducing, if possible, hyperlinks in other KCC websites which are popular with young people. In addition, sections of the website, such as the apprenticeship section, should be expanded to offer broader information and choice to young people. Finally, the reach of the website should be expanded in order to be also used by young people in the last two years of primary school (academic years 5-13) as a resource for information and advice.

Additional Information and issues

- Management of the "Apprenticeships" remit and unit has passed from the Supporting Independence Programme to the 14-19 Entitlement Team, both in KCC.
- It is suggested by members of the Committee that the transfer of the Apprenticeships element should be followed by a holistic review of this element in Kent. The objectives and outcomes of the review should take into consideration the strategic leadership role by KCC with consulted and agreed targets for Kent.
- The website at present can be accessed by young people from secondary school. By expanding the reach of the kentchoice4u website to primary schools, the reach of the e-portfolio would also be expanded, as the portfolio is included in the website. It is hoped that this expansion would help the development of soft skills from an early age, and would support students in consolidating their employability skills during their transition to secondary school.

Employers' Engagement and Apprenticeships

Issue 9 – Support to employers

The very great majority of businesses in Kent are small and medium-sized businesses. Several of these businesses may find it challenging to invest time and resources to offer apprenticeship and work experience programmes.

Also, red tape, bureaucracy and ever changing employment regulations appear to complicate the setting up of apprenticeships by employers, and their take up by young people. At present there is only one member of staff (in the Supporting Independence Programme Team, but probably relocated to the 14-19 Entitlement Team) who promotes the benefits of apprenticeships to employers.

Potential recommendation

Kent County Council should increase its support, advice and guidance to local employers offering, or intending to offer, apprenticeships and work experience programmes to young people in Kent. It should help cutting bureaucratic processes in order to ease the setting up of apprenticeships by employers, and their take up by young people.

KCC should finance an additional post (or two additional posts, therefore allocating one officer to West, Mid and East Kent respectively) to promote the benefits of apprenticeships and work experience schemes to employers.

Potential recommendation

Kent County Council should encourage the establishment of a contact point which offers support, advice and guidance to businesses offering, or intending to offer, apprenticeships and work experience programmes to young people in Kent. The officers employed to promote apprenticeships should also run the contact point.

KCC should also encourage, in partnership with other organisations such as Connexions and EBP Kent, the set up of a database which retains shared information and contacts on areas including apprenticeships, work experience and health and safety matters. Some of the benefits resulting from the establishment of a contact point and of a shared database include:

- Growth of the economy.
- One easily identifiable source of information and support and guidance.
- Promotion of apprenticeships and work experience take up by employers.
- Recruitment savings by consolidating and sharing information and knowledge.
- Cutting of red tape through the consolidation of support and information.
- Enhanced engagement between employers and young people.

Additional Information and issues

Barriers may arise as a result of recent changes in the English education system:

- The expansion of Academies.
- Work-Related Learning and Careers Education are no longer statutory subjects.
- Focus on E Bacallaureate is increasing.
- Resources constraints.

Potential recommendation

Kent County Council endorses Recommendation 14 of the Wolf Report, and urges the Government to convert the recommendations into policy.

Wolf Report – Recommendation 14

Employers who take on 16-18 year old apprentices should be eligible for payments (direct or indirect), because and when they bear some of the cost of education for an age-group with a right to free full- time participation. Such payments should be made only where 16-18 year old apprentices receive clearly identified off-the-job training and education, with broad transferable elements.

Wolf Report – Recommendation 15

DfE and BIS should review contracting arrangements for apprenticeships, drawing on best practice internationally, with a view to increasing efficiency, controlling unit costs and driving out any frictional expenditure associated with brokerage or middleman activities that do not add value.

Wolf Report – Recommendation 16

DfE and BIS should discuss and consult urgently on alternative ways for groups of smaller employers to become direct providers of training and so receive ‘training provider’ payments, possibly through the encouragement of Group Training Associations (GTAs).

Wolf Report – Recommendation 21

DfE should evaluate models for supplying genuine work experience to 16-18 year olds who are enrolled as full-time students, not apprentices, and for reimbursing local employers in a flexible way, using core funds. Schools and colleges should be encouraged to prioritise longer internships for older students, reflecting the fact that almost no young people move into full-time employment at 16; and government should correspondingly remove their statutory duty to provide every young person at KS4 with a standard amount of “work-related learning”.

Issue 10 – Increase take up of apprenticeships

In order to increase the take up of apprenticeships in the County, it was suggested that KCC may set a challenge where 10% of 16-18 year old young people in Kent should be undertaking an apprenticeship by an agreed

timeframe. KCC could promote this increase by contracting with learning and skills providers that a proportion of their students should embark on an apprenticeship. Currently in Kent there are many young people in employment but not in training; it was suggested to increase the take up of apprenticeships by beginning to promote them to young people in employment and their employers.

Potential Recommendation

Kent County Council should put forward a challenge, where 10% of 16-18 year old young people in Kent should be undertaking an apprenticeship by an agreed timeframe. The local authority should support the initiative by contracting with learning and skills providers that a proportion of their students should embark on an apprenticeship.

Additional Information and issues

- What leverage can KCC use to persuade local learning and skills providers to take part in the initiative? What are the benefits for learning and skills providers? Perhaps Ofsted's Destination Measures assessment could be helpful.

Post-16 Transport Policy

Issue 11 – Kent 16+ Travel Pass

KCC is proposing to develop within the Post-16 Transport Policy 2012 a "Kent 16+ Travel Pass ("the Pass") for bus travel. The Pass will be available to Kent resident learners in the academic years 12 and 13 (and Year 14 students who are completing their 14-19 studies) and 16-24 year-olds with Statements of Educational Need or a Learning Difficulty Assessment. Three options for the operation of the new Pass are currently being considered; two options entail a financial contribution from learning and skills providers.

It appears that young people studying apprenticeships will be included in the scheme. However, it seems that only a limited number of passes will be available to apprentices, and be insufficient to subsidise all young people wishing to take up an apprenticeship. Travel expenses could discourage some young people from choosing to study an apprenticeship. At present, there are no measures in place to enable employers to purchase the pass for their apprentices, if they wish to do so.

Potential recommendation

Kent County Council should put in place measures to enable Kent employers to purchase the Kent 16+ Travel Pass for their apprentices.

Alternative Training and NEETs

Issue 12 – Alternative training and Young people not in Education, Employment or Training

About 5% of young people aged 16-18 in Kent are not in education, employment or training. As powerful collaboration structures between learning and skills providers already exist, KCC could encourage them to agree voluntary targets to reduce the number of young people who could potentially become NEETs when leaving school or college.

The Local Authority could also endorse and support the expansion of initiatives such as the Ashford Impact, which are aimed at identifying young people not in employment, education or training (or at risk of becoming NEETs) and at improving their confidence and employability through rigorous training.

Finally, Kent County Council should consider the proposal of the Kent-based Denne construction company to develop and support the delivery of a work-focused programme – the Engineering and Design programme for Schools - to be taught in secondary schools in Kent (please see Appendix A below).

Potential recommendation

Kent County Council should encourage learning and skills providers to agree voluntary targets to reduce the number of young people who could potentially become NEETs when leaving school or college.

Potential recommendation

The Local Authority should support the continuation and expansion of initiatives such as the Ashford Impact, which are aimed at identifying young people not in employment, education or training (or at risk of becoming NEETs) and at improving their confidence and employability through rigorous and specialist training.

Additional Information and issues

- Although the Impact is supported by KCC, the Connexions Service and other charitable organisations, funding has been severely curtailed and the organisation and its valuable work may come to an end.

Potential recommendation

Kent County Council should consider the proposal of the Kent-based Denne construction company to develop and support the delivery of a work-focused programme – the Engineering and Design programme for Schools - to be taught in secondary schools in Kent

- Please see Appendix A below for further details.

Self Employment

Issue 13 – Promotion of self employment

Normally young people in Kent go through their education with a view to having three optional endings: continue their education, employment or unemployment. However, they do not often seem to consider a “fourth option”, that of becoming self-employed. The option of being more entrepreneurial and of becoming self-employed should be promoted, and information should be offered to young people about the support and guidance available to them. The Kent Foundation supports young people in Kent who are interested in starting a business, or who have started a business and need some business advice and support to grow the business.

Potential recommendation

Kent County Council should encourage schools to raise awareness amongst their students about the option of becoming self-employed, and to offer information about the support and guidance that are available.

The Kent Foundation should be supported in promoting entrepreneurship and self-employment, and in increasing the number of Kent young people starting up a business with its support. In addition, the organisation should be encouraged to deliver enterprise education to young people in Kent.

The Student Journey Select Committee

Denne Training Academy – Engineering & Design Programme for Schools

Background

On Tuesday 13th September 2011 representatives of the KCC Student Journey Select Committee visited Denne. As part of the discussions Denne suggested that the Company could develop and support the delivery of a work-focused programme to be taught in secondary schools in Kent.

Outline of Approach

The objective of the programme is to help equip young people with the skills to succeed in the workplace. The programme would initially be aimed at Year 9 students who have an interest in vocational and technical skills. It would focus on three areas of the curriculum; i) Mathematics, ii) English and iii) Design Technology.

This programme would be offered to a cohort of 30 students from year 9. They would continue within the mainstream of the school for all lessons other than the 3 subjects covered under the programme ie Mathematics, English and Design Technology. The science curriculum would not be included as part of the programme. However, it would be expected that aspects of science would be covered with the aim of reinforcing the understanding of its application to engineering and design. The schools would have a stand-alone teaching unit dedicated to delivering these subject areas.

The curriculum material would be designed to cover the national curriculum for these subject areas within year 9 of Key Stage 3. Engineering and design would be the context in which these subject areas would be taught.

A key feature of the approach would be the imposition of a work-based ethos as part of the learning environment. This would involve ensuring that strict codes of conduct are observed with regard to behaviour. Students would be held accountable for their performance just as they would be in a work environment. Employment style disciplinary procedures would be used to regulate behaviour.

Trained teachers with relevant experience in industry would be employed directly by the schools to deliver these classes. These would be either members of the existing teaching staff or new teachers recruited by the schools for this purpose. A Denne skills coordinator would work with the teaching staff to support the delivery of the curriculum and coordinate curriculum activities.

To ensure that the programme could be rolled out to all schools in Kent other companies would be recruited to deliver similar programmes.

Proposal

The proposal is for Denne to develop appropriate curriculum material in engineering and design, and then pilot the implementation of the programme

with 2 schools in the first year. In the second year the Denne pilot would be expanded to 5 schools. Assuming a successful outcome of this pilot the programme would be rolled out across other schools with Denne supporting up to 20 schools with the programme.

Other companies would be approached with a view of them developing a similar programme for up to 20 schools per company. This would mean that all secondary modern schools in Kent could be supported by a business partner. Denne would set up a Community Interest Company to deliver its programme.

Outline Timetable

April 2012	Agreement to proceed with Denne pilot
End of May 2012	Outline of curriculum developed and approved
End of June 2012	Two pilot schools identified and implementation approved
End of August 2012	Detailed curriculum material for the first term prepared and approved
September 2012	Commence delivery of Denne first stage pilot at two schools
December 2012	Details curriculum material for terms 2 and 3 prepared and approved
February 2013	Commence identification of 3 to 4 other companies to run programme
April 2013	Agreement to proceed with 3 to 4 other companies for first stage pilot
End of May 2013	Decision on 2 nd stage of Denne pilot – 5 schools to be covered
September 2013	Year 2 Denne pilot commence with 5 schools First stage pilot with other companies commence
End of May 2013	Decision on roll-out to up to 20 schools for Denne programme