

From: Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education

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To: Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee – 11 January 2019

Subject: Skills and Employability

Classification: Unrestricted

Future Pathway of Paper: N/A

Electoral Division: All

Summary: Kent's current position on apprenticeships, any difficulties and our direction of travel, including who holds the responsibility for apprenticeships within KCC. Outlining the revised Skills and Employability Service and responsibilities under the newly established LATCo, The Education People (TEP)

Recommendation(s):

The Children, Young People's and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the content of the report.

1. Skills and Employability Service

1.1 The Skills and Employability service has moved into the newly established LATCo, The Education People (TEP). It has combined with the School Improvement Service for Secondary Special and PRUs to ensure a wrap-around and coordinated approach for schools, colleges, alternative provision, training providers and employers.

1.2 In addition to the Education, Quality and Standards work provided by School Improvement, the service focuses on Participation, Apprenticeships, Careers Information, Advice and Guidance and Employer engagement including supporting the Industry Guilds. The Head of this combined Service is Celia Buxton.

2. Participation, NEETs and Unknowns

2.1 The local authority has a statutory obligation to monitor the progression of school leavers into education, employment and training, widely known as participation. This obligation is laid out in the Participation of Young People in Education, Employment and Training- Statutory Guidance- September 2016, issued by The Department for Education.

¹The annual DfE Participation data is an average of the information collected from the previous December, January and February, when the data is deemed to be at its most stable. DfE reports by pupil at a fixed point therefore 16-17 year olds includes all pupils in years 12 and 13.

- 2.2 The percentage of 16-17 year olds participating in education and training is 91.6% compared to 92% nationally and an increase of 1.1% from 2017. This is made up from 83% in full time education, 6.1% in an apprenticeship and 2.6% in other education or training.
- 2.3 93.0% of 16-17 year olds were made offer of an education place in 2018, under September Guarantee; an increase from 92.9% in 2017
- 2.4 The September Guarantee is defined as; All young people will receive a guaranteed offer of learning by the end of the September after they complete year 11.
- 2.5 A great deal of specific, targeted work has taken place over the last three years to ensure NEET figures (Not in Education, Employment and Training) continue to fall, including the training of staff in qualifications such as CIAG (Careers Information, Advice and Guidance). This has helped staff to enable students to make well informed decisions around career pathways, therefore increasing sustainability on chosen pathways and avoiding 'drop out' from education, employment or training.
- 2.6 The percentage of 16-17 year olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) or whose activity is Unknown is 5.4% compared to 6.0% nationally and a decrease from 6.8% in 2017. The percentage of 16-17 years olds who are NEET is 2.6% compared to 2.7% nationally and a decrease from 3.1% in 2017. The percentage of 16-17 year olds whose destination is Unknown is 2.8% compared to 3.3% nationally and a decrease from 3.7% in 2017.
- 2.7 The additional 3% of 16-17year olds are either in employment without training or not available for EET.
- 2.8 The Service continues to track all young people up to the age of 19 and provides advice, guidance and support to improve participation, including:
 - Analysing the availability of suitable destination routes and identifying where there are gaps in provision.
 - Using this intelligence, in shaping the post 16 offer for vulnerable learners and those at risk of becoming NEET in each of Kent's districts.
 - Collaborating with MI in ensuring the data captured is accurate
 - Providing a tracking support service and helpline for schools between 10am – 6pm, Monday to Friday, including each school having a named point of contact.
 - Providing in school support for appropriate September guarantee and early identification of those at risk of NEET.
 - A NEET support service for young people, currently provided by CXK.
 - Ensuring the tracking staff are trained to level 4 in CEIAG.
 - Monthly Participation meetings with providers and schools, co-chaired with EHPS to review NEETs and identify support.
 - Maintaining the 'Ready to work Kent' website providing information and support to young people and professionals working with them on the alternative post 16 offer.
 - The development of 14-19 (24) high quality provision for all learners.

- Transition programmes in each district to ensure effective transition from one educational stage to another or to employment with training.

3. Careers Advice and Guidance

- 3.1 A significant part of the participation work requires the schools to provide high quality Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG).
- 3.2 The Careers Enterprise Company (CEC) was established nationally by the Government in 2015 to help link schools and colleges to employers and to increase employer engagement with young people. In response to the governments Careers Strategy they work with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to build a national network and fund programmes to provide high quality employer engagement activities for young people where they are most needed. Their aims include:
- Building Networks: Linking schools and colleges to employers and other external careers providers through the Enterprise Adviser Network and Careers Hubs.
 - Supporting Careers Leaders: Providing training and support for Careers Leaders in schools and colleges.
 - Backing the Gatsby Benchmarks: Supporting implementation of a best practice standard for careers support, the Gatsby Benchmarks, with tools and targeted funding.
- 3.3 TEP are working with the Careers Enterprise Company (CEC) to increase the coverage of this network across Kent and Medway. By April 2019, the number of full time CEC coordinators working across the area will have increased from 2 to 6. The number of Enterprise Advisors, individuals from industry working with the Coordinators to deliver on the aims, is currently 42 and the target is to increase this number to 120.
- 3.4 With these targets there will be full coverage of mainstream schools by the Enterprise Adviser Network by the end of academic year 2019/20. With each school offered an Enterprise Coordinator and matched to an Enterprise Adviser.
- 3.5 In addition, TEP provide:
- CEIAG cluster meetings for schools which bring together school careers leaders and co-ordinators to share good practice, network and disseminate LA and CEC priorities, supporting schools to meet the Gatsby benchmarks
 - The Kent online post 16 prospectus 'KentChoices4U' ensuring comprehensive information regarding all post 16 opportunities is accessible and the application process is supported.
 - 'Made in Kent' events where young people have a practice interview with an employer.
 - A minimum core offer of 4 hours Apprenticeship/ Participation support for all schools (LA maintained and Academies)

4. Apprenticeships

- 4.1 The apprenticeship levy was introduced from April 2017. UK employers with an annual pay bill of over £3,000,000 must pay 0.5% of their annual pay bill. For KCC this includes maintained schools, connected parties and all non-school staff. The levy payments are made available monthly through a digital account and employers must use this within 24 months. As a larger levy payer, the Government provide an additional 10% top up on this amount to employer. Levy funding is limited to training, assessment and accreditation and cannot be used for any other purpose.
- 4.2 As well as the introduction of the levy, all public sector organisations were given the target that 2.3% of all staff should be on an apprenticeship. The Skills and Employability Service have responsibility for the school apprenticeships and KCCs Human Resources Operational Department the non-school apprenticeships and management of the digital account.
- 4.3 Prior to the introduction of the levy and the 2.3% target, KCC had an annual target of 150 apprenticeship starts (110 for non-school and 40 for schools). Between April 17 - April 18 KCC saw an increase in the number of apprenticeship starts, with 269 non-school and 168 in schools.

4.4 Apprenticeship performance across Kent

Note: the levy operates on a financial year. The targets and figures published are quarters of an academic year.

- 4.5 Since the introduction of the Levy, there has been a decrease in apprenticeship starts across the UK. Kent has seen a 24% decrease of starts, compared to last year, a lesser decline than the national decrease of 46% for the same time period.
- 4.6 Of Apprenticeship starts from Sept 2017 - Sept 2018, 41% of those were adults aged 25 or over, 30% were aged 19-24, with 29% aged under 19. The distribution remains consistent with previous years.
- 4.7 Reduction in Apprenticeship numbers has been attributed to several issues, including:
- The levy has been criticised as being complicated or too time-consuming to draw-down apprenticeship funding.
 - The requirement for 20% of training to be completed “off-the-job” is a barrier for some employers, especially SMEs of which there are a high proportion in Kent.
 - For Kent schools, the requirement of KCC to go through a procurement process for training providers reduces their ability to select the provider which most fits their needs in terms of delivery.
 - The DfE suggested that there was an “unusually large” increase in the number of apprenticeships which began in March and April 2017, ahead of the introduction of the levy, and an unusually large decline in starts in May 2017, which might exaggerate the size of the downturn.

5. KCC support for apprenticeships

- 5.1 TEP continue to provide a range of apprenticeship support services for schools, colleges, training providers and employers including:
- Kent Choices local events – attended by over 2400 young people

- e-learning programme – to promote the benefits of hiring an apprentice and to provide support with the process
- Helpline and online chat support - 5 days a week from 8am until 6pm
- Targeted communication with schools who have not yet taken up an apprentice and the development of ‘shared apprentices’ for smaller schools.
- Made in Kent Campaign - Phase 2 delivered 1,000 interviews to 1,000 young people with phase 3 providing 8 apprenticeship events across the county.
- ApprenticeKent website – for employers to post both apprenticeship and work placement vacancies. The site has received 1900 registrations within the last 6 months.

5.2 In order to see improvement towards the new targets, TEP are implementing the additional following actions:

- Minimum core offer of 4 hours Apprenticeship/Participation support for all schools (LA maintained and Academies) from the list of activities below, with additional targeted hours for identified schools:
 - Apprenticeship/Participation presentations and group activities
 - Higher apprenticeship presentation and application support
 - Website sign up support for groups and staff
 - One to one information meeting with staff, pupils and parents
 - Q & A Sessions
 - Attendance at careers events/parents’ evenings
- A district level pilot activity in Swale, which focuses on bringing partners together across the district to improve the availability and take up of apprenticeships.
 - The pilot engages a working group of partners from SBC – Economic Regeneration, KATO, the local schools and independent training providers, both the East and Mid Kent Colleges, Sheppey Employer Breakfast Club and Skills and Employability.
 - This group is working collaboratively to develop a local Apprenticeship Advice and Guidance pack for users which informs of vacancies and needs within the area; planning with schools their curriculum offer to ensure structured transition into apprenticeships and a talent pipeline for students to local opportunities.
- A proposal for KCC to use some of its levy funding to support SMEs in developing apprenticeship opportunities for our most disadvantaged learners. From April 2019, as a large levy payer, KCC will be able to use 25% of their levy to support other employers in accessing apprenticeship training. TEP are asking for consideration to be given to allowing funding from this 25% to pay for the training of apprentices aged 16 to 24 from a disadvantaged background and young people currently employed in a job without training. We would like to promote this offer, through the guilds, to Kent’s non-levy paying SMEs to encourage recruitment.

6. Support for Employer Guilds

- 6.1 TEP provides additional support for the Kent, Employer Guilds. There are currently seven Guilds; Construction, Engineering, Hospitality and Tourism, Financial Services, Science, Health and Social Care and Land Based, these are in line with the SE LEPs priorities for growth across the South East. There is a strategy and staffing structure developed that provides consistent and comprehensive support to the Guilds to ensure strong employer links with schools, colleges and other education and skills providers, including:
- 6.2 The expansion of the CEC coordinators across the county and changes to their role to include attendance at and support for the guilds.
- 6.3 Increasing the number of engagement officers across the county from 2 to 4. This role ensures young people have appropriate and relevant pathways by supporting education providers to develop training provision which not only fills the gaps in need for young people but ensures the feedback from employers on skills gaps are informing curriculum design.
- 6.4 The purchasing of Labour Insight, a software package which provides up to date labour market information. Information from this, in conjunction with administrative support, is provided to support the Guilds.
- 6.5 The development of the proposal to use a proportion of the KCC levy funding to support non-levy paying businesses to take on young people as apprentices.
- 6.6 Given the further improvement of the support from KCC/TEP, the Skills Commission is taking the opportunity to review the role, structure, function and performance outcomes of the Guilds. This review is currently underway, with proposals expected in February 2019.

7. Recommendation(s):

The Children, Young People's and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to NOTE the content of the report.

8. Contact details

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