Title: Improving the Employability Prospects of Barking and Dagenham’s Young People – Progress Update and Feedback

Report of the Commissioning Director, Education

Open Report

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Summary:

At its meeting on 12 July 2017, the Children’s Services Select Committee (CSSC) agreed to undertake a ‘mini’ scrutiny review on supporting young people with education, employment and training in the 2017/18 municipal year. Once this review was scoped, it was agreed that the title of the review would be ‘Improving the Employability Prospects of Barking and Dagenham’s Young People’.

This report provides an update on the progress of the scrutiny review and the timeline and steps to completion. It also asks members of the CSSC who have attended the visits relating to the scrutiny review to provide verbal feedback to the Committee at the meeting on the issues they noted from the sessions.

Today’s meeting agenda includes a discussion with representatives of various businesses who work with Council to offer work experience and apprenticeship opportunities to the borough’s young people. Members are asked to reflect on these discussions when providing their comments on the findings of the review, as requested in recommendation three below.

Recommendation(s)

The CSSC is recommended to:

(i) Note the progress of the scrutiny review and the timeline and steps to completion;
(ii) Note the verbal feedback from members who attended the visits relating to the scrutiny review; and
(iii) Based on the feedback from the visits and today’s discussion with representatives of businesses, provide commentary to officers as to any potential recommendations that may be made as a result of the scrutiny review.
Reason(s)
The first formal draft report with recommendations to help improve outcomes, arising from the scrutiny review on Improving the Employability Prospects of Barking and Dagenham’s Young People, is due to be presented at the CSSC meeting on 22 January 2018. Today’s meeting is an opportunity for members of the CSSC to comment on the findings from the visits, today’s session with representatives of businesses, and other material provided to members as part of the review, so that officers can take this into account whilst completing the first draft of the scrutiny report.

The issue of Improving the Employability Prospects of Barking and Dagenham’s Young People relates to the Council’s following priorities and objectives:

- Encouraging civic pride
  - Narrow the gap in attainment and realise high aspirations for every child.
- Enabling social responsibility
  - Ensure children and young people are well-educated and realise their potential.
- Growing the borough
  - Develop a local, skilled workforce and improve employment opportunities.

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 The CSSC agreed to undertake a mini scrutiny review on Supporting Young People with Education, Employment and Training at its meeting on 12 July 2017 for the 2017/18 municipal year. At its meeting on 2 October 2017, having received a scoping report, the Committee agreed that the title of the Review should be ‘Improving the Employability Prospects of Barking and Dagenham’s Young People’ and the terms of reference (ToR) for the review should be as follows:

1. What do young people and parents expect and want from an offer of work experience and work-related learning, and how do they see this best contributing to young people’s employability skills?
2. How can the Council better engage with businesses to enable them to support the development of employability skills in our young people?
3. What are the views of parents and young people around apprenticeships? How might we improve the perception and take up of Apprenticeships by borough residents?

1.2 At this meeting, members received a presentation on work experience and work-related learning and current engagement with businesses and, apprenticeships, and agreed the following work plan for the review:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>ToR Questions covered</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 October</td>
<td>The views of young people around work experience, work related learning and apprenticeships. Meeting with a cross section of young people in Year 9 and above, including some undertaking apprenticeships, to discuss</td>
<td>1 and 3</td>
</tr>
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approaches to work experience, work related learning and the promotion of apprenticeships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Specific Details</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 November 2017, 6-7pm</td>
<td><strong>The views of parents around work experience, work related learning and apprenticeships.</strong></td>
<td>Meeting with a cross section of parents of secondary aged pupils to discuss approaches to work experience, work related learning and the promotion of apprenticeships.</td>
<td>1 and 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 November 2017 (CSSC meeting)</td>
<td><strong>CSSC session with businesses.</strong></td>
<td>An opportunity for all CSSC members to hear from local businesses around how the Council might better support them to develop employability and work-related learning skills in our young people.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 January 2018 (CSSC meeting)</td>
<td><strong>Draft Scrutiny Review report with recommendations</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 March 2018 (CSSC meeting)</td>
<td><strong>Proposed final Scrutiny Review report with recommendations</strong> (relevant Cabinet members to be invited).</td>
<td></td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.3 Members who attended the sessions, which have taken place so far, are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Councillors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 October 2017</td>
<td>meeting with young people at The Vibe</td>
<td>Kangethe, Bremner, Oluwole and Ingrid Robinson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 November 2017</td>
<td>meeting with parents</td>
<td>Kangethe, Bremner and Ingrid Robinson</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.6 The members who attended the above sessions are asked to provide verbal feedback to the Committee on the issues that were raised, and potential areas for recommendations, keeping in mind the ToR of the scrutiny review at 1.1 of this report. The CSSC will also wish to reflect on their discussions with the representatives of businesses at today’s meeting for this purpose.

2. **Next Steps and Time-line for Completion**

2.1 The table below sets out the steps remaining and time-line for completing the scrutiny review.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Date for Completion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drafting of the scrutiny review report with recommendations.</td>
<td>A start has already been made on the report and officers will continue to work on the report until week commencing 8 January 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First formal draft of scrutiny report circulated to CSSC (and other stake-holders).</td>
<td>In the week commencing 8 January 2018</td>
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3. Implications

3.1 There are no implications arising directly as a result of this report. Implications of the recommendations arising from this scrutiny review, should they be accepted, will need to be sought prior to the publication of the proposed final version of the scrutiny report.

4. Reading List

4.1 The scoping report that was circulated to members for the 2 October 2017 meeting included the following reading documents, which the report recommended that members familiarise themselves with:

- ‘Accelerating NEET reduction, particularly in vulnerable groups’ (LBBD Cabinet Report, 2017);
- ‘A Guide to Apprenticeships’ (National Apprenticeship Service, 2017);
- ‘A-Z of Apprenticeships’ (National Apprenticeship Service, 2017);

These papers can be accessed via the following weblink (see appendices under item 9):

Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report:

Scoping report:

List of appendices: None.