

LOCAL ECONOMY AND LIFELONG LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMISSION

MINUTES of the Local Economy and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Commission held on Tuesday 12 February 2019 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G02B - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Jon Hartley (Chair)
Councillor Victor Chamberlain (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Maggie Browning
Councillor James Coldwell
Martin Brecknell

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Kieron Williams, cabinet member for Jobs, Skills and Innovation

OFFICER SUPPORT: Julie Timbrell, scrutiny project manager
Dolly Naeem Head of Southwark Adult Learning Service
Catherine Verrinder, Team Leader Southwark Choices
Neil Gordon-Orr, Strategic Manager Education Access.
Sheila Luwero, former housing apprentice in 2015

1. APOLOGIES

VIDEO OF THE MEETING

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6kFbUhbUFU>

2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS.

There were none.

4. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on 6 December 2018 were agreed as an accurate record.

5. SKILLS STRATEGY & SOUTH LONDON INNOVATION CORRIDOR UPDATE

Councillor Kieron Williams, cabinet member for Jobs, Skills and Innovation provided an update on the Skills Strategy development.

Council apprentice: Sheila Luwero, former housing apprentice in 2015, explained the benefits of doing a council apprenticeship. She explained that she had gone to university but had no work experience. The council's advanced housing apprenticeship scheme was therefore perfect for her level of qualification and enabled her to gain skills rapidly through training and support. This included a mentor who identified skills gaps, who she then shadowed and this enabled her to pick up skills, like minute taking. She was able to complete her course and progress rapidly.

The cabinet member said council is a leader here and planning to do more; there are now specific apprenticeship qualifications in Planning and Health & Social Care.

She advocated for making an apprenticeship a good quality option. University is not for everybody and may not be necessary for some roles; increasingly qualifications can be gained on the job e.g.: social work. University gives education, whereas apprenticeships give skills.

The cabinet member emphasised the need for good quality apprenticeship. The council is encouraging employees to invest in these; which includes two days paid leave for training. Some employees are reluctant; however this is often the only way for employers to secure qualified employees.

He added that there are good quality, high paid jobs and careers available in London. More information is needed about the variety and pathways into these. Lend Lease are part of enabling this. Sheila Luwero agreed with this and the need for better information for parents and young people on the variety of opportunities and schools providing better information on the necessity work experience.

Luis, an Employment support case worker from St Giles, gave an introduction to the intensive support his team gives to young people and others looking for jobs. This includes conducting skills audits, helping young people overcome barriers, and enabling them to understand the job market and how to find the right role.

Elise John-Lewis, Social and Economic Development Manager, Elephant Park, presented on their initiatives to engage local people in a variety of work roles. People know about the trade opportunities; but less about the support and technical services jobs available.

6. ADULT EDUCATION UPDATE

Dolly Naeem Head of Southwark Adult Learning Service; Catherine Verrinder, Team Leader Southwark Choices and Neil Gordon-Orr, Strategic Manager Education Access contributed to this item.

Members asked about the report on NEETS and pathways from school e.g. Post 16 Education/ Training/ Apprentices. A member asked the available data for 18, 19, 20 year olds. Officers that they do not track this but do continue to work with this cohort.

The Commission then received a presentation on the Adult Education service and issues around repeat course fees. Officers said the majority of repeat learners are for non-accredited courses; often for courses that are about enjoyment and developing skills over a longer time frame, for example in the arts and crafts. The service has abolished the repeat fees. Although this has some cost the council had to weigh up the reputational cost and time addressing the unpopularity of the previous policy, with the value of repeat courses to many people.

Officers were asked about the different motivations for accredited and non accredited learning. Officers said that there were often different motivations with accredited courses being skills based (e.g. literacy or ESOL) whereas non-accredited are often about enhancing interests and improving health & wellbeing.

7. WORKPLAN

The chair invited ideas for presentations at the next meeting; the following were suggested:

- Addressing how we can retain young people in the borough and track how many work out of the borough,
- Look at careers advice and employment support.

Meeting ended at 8.45 pm

