

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: 29 th November 2016	Meeting Name: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Sub Committee
Report title:		Supporting young people into employment in Southwark	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Emily Nice – Head of Organisational Transformation Elaine Gunn- Principal Strategy Officer, Local Economy Team	

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Employment support

The Local Economy Team

1. The Local Economy Team (LET), in the Chief Executive's department, is responsible for the delivery of the Council Plan target to support 5000 local people into jobs and create 2000 apprenticeships by May 2018 as part of the delivery of the [Economic Wellbeing Strategy](#). The councils combined commissioning and partnership work has now ensured 3299 job starts and represents excellent progress towards our 5000 jobs target by May 2018. To date, the council has supported the creation of 803 apprenticeships towards its target of 2000 by 2018.

Southwark Works

2. The LET commissions the council's employment support programme, Southwark Works, to support those who need additional help to address barriers to work and move into sustainable employment. Southwark Works operates as a network of providers who specialise in supporting specific 'cohorts'; people with learning difficulties and disabilities; young people, etc. It has been operating since 2004. The current projects were commissioned via a Framework and have been delivering since July 2015.
3. Through Southwark Works, the InSpired to Work programme is available to young people aged 18 – 24. It provides training, job searching & creation, advocacy and bursaries. This programme includes the Employee Mentor programme, which matches a young person's aspirations with a mentor and placement in an organisation. An employer mentor guides the young person's work placement and supports their future career development.
4. Since the Southwark Works Framework started (July 2015) over 1280 young people have been supported and 355 have moved into work.

Youth Fund

5. The LET also commissions and manages employment support programmes through the council's Youth Fund, detailed below:
 - The Southwark Employment and Enterprise Development Scheme (**SEEDs**) provides a wage subsidy and support to small and medium sized businesses to support high needs young people to gain employment for at least 12 months at the London Living Wage. It provides mentoring and support for the employer and young person. The SEEDS1 project ran from 2014 to June 2016 and supported 47 young people with complex needs into employment. Building on this success, SEEDS2 will start delivery in early 2017.
 - **Getting Ready for Work** (delivered by Inspire) provides a 'ladder of support' for young people who are keen to engage in employment but are not work ready. The offer targets support based on the level of need and work readiness of the young person. A recent impact assessment found major advantages to this approach over mainstream employment services such as Jobcentre Plus and the DWP Work Programme.
 - The Part Time Employment Project called **GROW** (delivered by St Giles Trust) is the third Youth Fund project that supports young people who are still in education or have other responsibilities (such as caring) into part time work.
6. Since the Youth Fund projects started delivery in 2014 700 young people have been supported and 221 have secured jobs.

Construction

7. To enable residents to take advantage of the employment opportunities created as a result of investment and development in the borough, employment in construction is a key focus of delivery. Through S106 agreements secured by the council, 908 Southwark residents have been supported into construction related employment since 2014.
8. The Council, in partnership with Lendlease, opened the Southwark Construction Skills Centre at Elephant Park in May 2016 .The Centre provides construction and employability training to Southwark residents to equip them with the skills and qualifications to access apprenticeships and employment opportunities within the local construction sector.
9. The Centre delivers up-skilling training to existing construction employees in the local construction sector and provides engagement programmes to local school-aged young people and other local residents to promote vocations within the construction and wider development industry as careers of choice.
10. To promote the Construction Skills Centre locally, the council has secured funding from DWP's Flexible Support Fund (FSF). The Construction Outreach Project, which started delivery in May 2016, provides specialist support to those claiming out of work benefits who live in the Elephant and Castle area. Specifically, support is provided to help:
 - Promote the construction industry as a career choice to local people

- Take up paid work experience
- Deliver essential skills training
- Link to other training opportunities through Southwark's new Construction Skills Centre.

Employment support – links to the Care Service

11. The above mentioned projects are available to care leavers in Southwark. The Care Service makes direct referrals to the Getting Ready for Work programme and referrals are made to the GROW programme, via hostels and semi-independent accommodation. These programmes have been promoted via the Children's Rights Team and the Children's Social Care Employment Advisor, based in the Care Service, is part of the Southwark Works network, regularly receiving updates about the employment and apprenticeship opportunities available to residents in Southwark.
12. Inspire and St Giles Trust are members of the recently convened NEET Expert Panel, led by Children's Social Care, which aims to meet on a quarterly basis. This group meets to discuss NEET care leaver cases and agree action plans to engage care leavers and support them into education, training and/or employment. As well as Children's Social Care and the Participation, Education and Training Team from the council other members include 2nd Chance, Drive Forward Foundation, Step Ahead, Roots and Shoots, the Princes Trust, Reed in Partnership and training providers.
13. The council's Children in Care Board was established in July this year. It is chaired by the Strategic Director of Children's and Adults Services (other members include the Strategic Director of Housing and Modernisation and senior representatives from the Clinical Commissioning Group, Children's Social Care, Education, Commissioning and the Chief Executive's Office). The Board aims to develop and deliver shared strategic ambitions for children in care and care leavers across the council and consider how to get most impact from partnership working to achieve these ambitions.

Apprenticeships

14. In March 2015 Southwark Council launched the [Southwark Apprenticeship Standard](#), the first of its kind, to set a new standard for quality apprenticeships. The Standard sets out the key features that employers should design into apprenticeships, including the London Living Wage, secure employment, quality training and proper mentoring.
15. The LET has also recently commissioned some additional support to ensure that both smaller businesses and local residents are being supported to benefit from local apprenticeship opportunities. The **pre-apprenticeship programme**, delivered by Step Ahead, provides apprenticeship training and coaching with employers to help prepare for interviews. The **SME programme** offers free advice and support to any SME based in Southwark looking to create an apprenticeship, including help tailoring the job description and advertisement to recruit, access to recruitment channels, help selecting a training provider and providing on-going support once the apprenticeship has started. The pre-apprenticeship programme is available to care leavers.
16. The LET works closely with the Participation, Education and Training Team and

also with the Organisational Transformation Team, who manage the council's in-house apprenticeship service.

Organisational Transformation Team – Southwark Apprenticeship programme

17. Southwark started a council-wide apprenticeships scheme in 2005 as a strategic workforce talent management initiative which would maximise the opportunities available to people living in the borough. It was the first step towards creating talent pipelines; that would eventually foster career pathways into the different professional roles that exists within the council.
18. The Apprenticeship programme is a priority for Southwark Council, and is articulated with a Council Plan target to create 2000 apprenticeships across the borough by May 2018. In addition to this, the council also aims to ensure 3% of the workforce are apprentices or are at the first level of entry into the workforce.
19. Southwark are top of the London Councils' table in terms of apprenticeship recruitment for 2015/16, recruiting 60 apprentices and were named best borough in the London Council Apprenticeship Award.
20. Managers across the council are encouraged to create more apprentice positions to offer wider opportunities for entry to employment and career pathways.

Apprenticeship Levy and public sector targets

21. From April 2017 the government will launch changes to the national apprenticeship scheme with the introduction of an Apprenticeship Levy with the aim of increasing the number of apprenticeships nationally to 3 million by 2020. The government hopes that this will significantly increase apprenticeships amongst smaller employers; and encourage greater cooperation amongst some of the larger employers. The cost of the levy for the council is indicatively calculated at £750,000 (at October 2016).
22. The levy will be applied to employers who have a pay bill of £3 million or more at a rate of 0.5% paid through PAYE, alongside income tax and all NI contributions.
23. The public sector target of 2.3% of the council's workforce to be apprentices will be introduced in April 2017.

Support for looked after Children

24. Children's Social Care and Organisation Transformation will establish a working group for supporting care leavers into apprenticeships as part of a refreshed strategy. Actions flowing from this working group could include working with Children's Social Care to prepare care leavers to apply for council apprenticeships and also to encourage them to apply for other council roles; support with completing council application forms and interview skills coaching.
25. This will not duplicate the work currently underway in Children's Social care, who refer to a number of organisations to support care leavers with preparing CVs and interview skills, or that of the Local Economy Team. Any support will be tailored to complement their approach.
26. Southwark has a 'manager's guide' and information on the intranet, The Source, which promotes the benefits of the apprenticeship scheme, and specific protocols in managing apprentices. The Organisational Transformation Team will expand

- this to make sure that the specific needs of care leavers entering the work place are considered.
27. The NEET Expert Panel will continue to provide direct support to care leavers via a range of commissioned and external providers.
 28. There is evidence that, as a group, care leavers are more disadvantaged and experience more challenges than the general population of young people.
 29. Ensuring successful transitional planning for young people leaving care is crucial to them living happy and fulfilling lives. This means ensuring they are well supported, have suitable and stable accommodation and can live independently; manage their money, work or continue in education/training and look after their health and wellbeing.
 30. The employment support offered to young people detailed in this paper provides holistic support for young people; providers recognise that employment is often one of several things to address, including money management, housing etc. in order for them to succeed in securing a job and living independently. Providers support young people by being their advocate and treating each young person as an individual.

Policy implications

31. The government plans to introduce the **Youth Obligation** from April 2017 where 18-21 year old job seekers receiving Universal Credit will be expected to take part in an intensive activity programme from day 1 of their claim. They will be referred to training and encouraged to take up an apprenticeship. Should they not be on either after six months, they will be referred to a mandatory work placement.
32. The government's [Keep on Caring Strategy](#), published this summer, includes the following aims as part of their *improved access to education, employment and training outcomes* for care leavers:
 - promote the take up of supported internships, including through the provision of targeted information to Personal Advisers;
 - meet the training costs for care leavers undertaking apprenticeships up to age 25;
 - support care leavers' access to, and achievement in, further and higher education, employment and apprenticeships;
 - Guarantee a place on the National Citizen Service to every child in care or care leaver aged 16 or 17; and consider how best to improve access for care leavers to employment opportunities in government departments and their agencies
33. The government aims to introduce the **Care Leaver Covenant** to expand corporate parenting principles beyond the remit of local authorities to other public, private and charitable bodies to be able to set out how, as members of civil society, they too will make a commitment to support care leavers. The new voluntary care leaver covenant was due to be launched in October but has been delayed.
34. The council's **Economic Wellbeing Strategy** 2012-2020 is being refreshed, and an updated version will be published in December 2016. The refreshed strategy remains ambitious with the aim of ensuring Southwark is a full employment borough, with a job for every resident who wants to work. This

includes young people leaving council care.

35. The council adopted its **Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy** in February 2016. This includes the strategic priority to ensure *more care leavers are in education, employment and/or training*.
36. The councils **Corporate Parenting Committee** *seeks to ensure that the life chances of looked after children are maximised in terms of health, educational attainment, and access to training and employment, to aid the transition to a secure and productive adulthood*.
37. The council's **Children in Care Board** has been established to deliver shared strategic ambitions for children in care and care leavers across the council and its partners.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Economic Wellbeing Strategy	Local Economy Team, Chief Executive's Department	Elaine Gunn 55479
Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy	Children's Social Care, Children's and Adults Services	