

Item No. 6	Classification: Open	Date: 14 March 2024	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Report of the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission: Community Wealth Building, Youth Employment and Procurement	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That cabinet note the recommendations from the education and local economy scrutiny commission arising from the scrutiny review on community wealth building and employment in the London Borough of Southwark, paragraphs 10 to 17.
2. That the cabinet considers the recommendations from the education and local economy scrutiny commission and request that the relevant cabinet member reports back to cabinet within eight weeks.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. At its meeting on 19 July 2023, the education and local economy scrutiny commission received a report from the Head of Economy, evaluating Southwark's strengths and weaknesses in the 5 pillars of Community Wealth Building (CWB); plural ownership of the economy, making financial power work for local places, fair employment and just labour markets, progressive procurement of goods and services and socially productive use of land and property.
4. At its meeting on 19 October 2023 the commission received a report from the Principal Strategy Officer on Youth Employment Support covering; new economic strategy, Southwark Youth Deal, Southwark Works, apprenticeships, council delivery plan, Southwark Local Offer and Southwark Information and Advice Service (SIAS), Education Business Alliance (EBA), sub-regional partnerships, youth opportunities bullet-ins, the one hub website and care leavers website targeting young people.
5. At its meeting on 5 December 2023 the commission received a written report from Camberwell Skills and Employment Manager, St. Giles Trust on Youth Employment (YE) covering skills and employment team, wider barriers, St. Giles approach to YE, council's role, and the schools' role & support.

6. Furthermore, at the same meeting the commission also heard from a case worker, working with young people with special needs at St. Giles trust. The case worker covered the following points; working with people having learning difficulties, disabilities, autism, 16-25 education support and training, interview preparation work, reasonable adjustments by employers, career development in schools, and two case studies on complex special needs and mental health issues. respectively
7. At its meeting on 30 January 2024, the commission heard from the Project Manager for East Street Market renovation, giving an update on; project team of community, traders and shop owners, Thriving High Street funding, regular meetings with market traders and shop owners working together and pooling resources, capacity building workshops, skills building for traders, mystery shopping exercises, housing development impact, church spaces for crèche and toilet provisions, redesigning market, zoning exercises, Wi-Fi and card machines.
8. At the same meeting, the commission also interviewed the Cabinet Member for Job, Skills and Business which covered the following points; Programme support for businesses, High Growth and Low Emissions economy, Investment and Growth stream, Green Economy stream; Thriving High Street funding stream, Inclusive neighbourhoods, Extending local ownership, Southwark Youth Deal, Flexible working, Green Jobs, Green Hub and apprenticeships.
9. The commission will be *considering and agreeing the recommendations with amendments* at its meeting on 14 March 2024. The rationale and commission recommendations are set out in paragraphs 10 to 17.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Set out below are the recommendations of the education and local economy scrutiny commission.

10. It is clear from officer addresses and the Centre for Local Economies and Strategies (CLES) report on CWB in Southwark, that there is a need to review the information gathering process in procurement. The commission welcomes the decision by the council in agreeing with some of the recommendations in CLES report; whilst also recognising the challenges faced in implementing some of the recommendations. However, the commission also feels that it's important to first gather data on unknown spend within the CLES report; and at the core of this issue is the devolved commissioning model in the council which causes gaps in the contract monitoring register.

Recommendation 1- that the Cabinet review the council's devolved commissioning model for procurement and revise its systems, structures and processes to identify and eliminate existing gaps in the contract monitoring register within the municipal year 2024-2025.

11. It is evidenced from officer addresses that the procurement of social value contracts are in only successful in certain areas of Section 106 and Southwark Works. The commission also appreciates the council's work in developing a more robust and comprehensive regional engagement program for Global Ethnic Majority (GEM) previously known as Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) jobseekers in the borough; And also the councils role in promoting this through Southwark Stands Together and Southwark Works.
12. The commission understands from officers, that developing a central social value framework and policies for procurement is a complex and difficult task; and needs more background research work to ascertain the core fundamentals and methodology to be used. The commission feels that it's important to have a knowledge base which includes; examples of such successful social value frameworks and policies implemented nationally. The elements of such a study could help develop a social value framework for Southwark in the future; wherein the commissioners could drive the procurement of social value contracts.

Recommendation 2 - That the Cabinet commission officers to research into the methodology (knowledge base) for creating a central social value framework and policies; which would aim to drive the procurement of social value contracts; and also that the Cabinet aim to initiate this work within the municipal year 2024-2025.

13. The commission noted member comments on the current graduate scheme; where in recent graduates having a 2:1 degree in areas such as Computer Science are working in gig economies and doing delivery jobs. Furthermore, the commission also understands that Universities provide graduate support for internships and placements well in advance of up to a year before graduation. The commission feels that graduates in Southwark could benefit from a change in the time line of the policy, being involved early in securing internships and work placements well before graduation.

Recommendation 3 - That the Cabinet with urgency review and make changes to the graduate scheme in Southwark; where in current graduate support for internships and placements is 1 to 2 years after graduation; and change this to; starting from 1 year before graduation to 1-2 years after graduation.

14. The commission understood from the St. Giles trust case worker's address and the report that career development in schools is lacking especially with regards to career guidance and aspirations. Young people have become disenfranchised, due to a lack of social interactions during the pandemic; young people need to be guided to pursue short term goals rather than their distant future careers. The lack of career guidance in schools presents even greater challenges to young people with special needs, as employers usually want potential candidates to be competent on the job from day one. It is important that more is done to invest in

organisations such as St. Giles trust to provide education and career development training for young people, especially young people with special needs. It's important to note here that the below recommendation might have to be considered by Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Refugees, and Cabinet Member for Jobs, Skills and Business due to overlapping remits.

Recommendation 4 – That the Cabinet develop a plan to build pathways for career development for young people especially young people with special needs in schools; with an aim to provide career guidance and aspirations, focusing on mainly short-term career goals; and also that the cabinet aim to develop this plan within the first half of the new municipal year 2024-2025.

15. The commission agrees that Southwark Works has been successful in working collaboratively with trusts such as St. Giles. However, the commission notes that there is a need to increase ring-fencing employment and work placement opportunities, whilst ensuring that employers, especially contractors live up to the the Mayor's Good Work Standards. The commission also notes that young people would benefit by more entry level jobs as part of the Southwark Works programme.

Recommendation 5 – That the Council within the next municipal year 2024-2025, review its progress on ring-fencing employment and work placement opportunities for residents of Southwark, with an aim to create more opportunities; and also review how more entry level jobs can be provided as part of the Southwark Works programme.

16. The commission gathered from the St. Giles report that definitions of Better Work in Southwark Works are very specific, such as better pay and more hours. The diverse needs of the residents' of the borough with regards to work-life balance, flexible working, reduced travel and childcare commitments, needs to be considered within these defined job progressions. The commission also notes that the tri-borough partnership with Lewisham and Lambeth was successful in finding better work, specific to the individual and their circumstances, however the work in this area paused during the pandemic.

Recommendation 6 – That the Cabinet review and revise the specific definition of job progressions within Southwark Works, with an aim to meet the varying needs of residents; and also review the progress of better work, delivered through the tri-borough partnership with Lewisham and Lambeth post-pandemic, within the municipal year 2024-2025.

17. The commission much appreciates the financial support provided to East Street Traders renovation project by the council. However it also notes that only, under £4800 out of the allocated £12,800 has been paid, the commission feels it's important that the current momentum (paragraph 7) in the project delivery continues, especially in light of the significant

progress being made. The commission also learnt that the project would also benefit from any additional council resources, who could share their ideas, experiences and lend support, especially in organising meetings and training for traders. The project team have had successful meetings, bringing together 100 out of 120 traders, to pool in their resources and work together, it is important that this continues.

Recommendation 7 – That the Cabinet with urgency consider increasing and expediting financial support to East Street Market renovation project in light of significant progress being made; and also that the council provide resources, monitor progress and provide support in kind to help with development of the project especially in organising meetings and training for traders.

18. It is for the cabinet to decide whether or not to accept the scrutiny commission's recommendations.
19. Overview and scrutiny procedure rule 15.3 requires the cabinet to consider and provide a written response to the report within two months.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission agenda and minutes- 19 July 2023	Southwark Council Website	Amit Alva Amit.alva@southwark.gov.uk
Link (please copy and paste into browser): https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=550&MIId=7666&Ver=4 (see item 6)		
Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission agenda and minutes- 19 October 2023	Southwark Council Website	Amit Alva Amit.alva@southwark.gov.uk
Link (please copy and paste into browser): https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=550&MIId=7667&Ver=4 (see item 7)		
Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission agenda and minutes- 5 December 2023	Southwark Council Website	Amit Alva Amit.alva@southwark.gov.uk
Link (please copy and paste into browser): https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=550&MIId=7668&Ver=4 (see item 5)		

Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission agenda and minutes- 30 January 2024	Southwark Council Website	Amit Alva Amit.alva@southwark.gov.uk
Link (please copy and paste into browser): https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=550&MIId=7669&Ver=4 (see item 5)		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
None	

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Member	Councillor Chloe Tomlinson, Chair, Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission		
Lead Officer	Everton Roberts, Head of Scrutiny		
Report Author	Amit Alva, Scrutiny Officer		
Version	Draft		
Dated	14 March 2024		
Key Decision?	No		
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER			
	Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
	Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance	No	No
	Strategic Director of Finance	No	No
	Cabinet Member	No	No
	Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		