

Item No.	Classification: Open	Date: December 15 2009	Meeting Name: Executive
Report title:		Southwark's Enterprise and Employment Strategy	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Scrutiny Sub-Committee A	

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the executive considers the comments of the strategic director of regeneration and neighbourhoods in response to the recommendations of scrutiny sub-committee A. (The scrutiny report attached as appendix 1) and agrees to provide a written response to overview & scrutiny committee within two months.

BACKGROUND

2. Scrutiny sub-committee A undertook a review of Southwark's Employment and Enterprise Strategies which is led by the council's Economic Development Team, working alongside the Southwark Alliance Employment and Skills Partnership and Enterprise Partnership. The overview & scrutiny committee prioritized this topic for review as members were aware that the Southwark's Employment Strategy was launched in 2002, reviewed in 2005 and was due for review again in 2009. The report was agreed by overview & scrutiny committee on September 14 2009.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

3. The response from the strategic director of regeneration and neighbourhoods to scrutiny's recommendations is set out below:

Recommendation	Officer response
1. That the sub-committee is pleased to note the considerable improvements made in the numbers of people into work and the number of businesses in Southwark since the introduction of the first employment and enterprise strategies in 2002.	The current recession is impacting on the local economy. The Council has increased its investment to support for residents and businesses in 2009-10
2. The sub-committee agreed that recent economic conditions have presented a more challenging environment for supporting residents into work. It agrees that the review of the strategies is timely and hopes that the following recommendations can be incorporated.	The Employment and Enterprise Strategies are currently being reviewed
3. The sub-committee notes the successful implementation of the Southwark Work programme	The SW programme continues to perform well

<p>and supports continuation of this programme and its objectives providing support for those furthest to the labour market.</p>	<p>and has seen a marked increase in terms of both numbers of people visiting the office for advice and also registering on the programme.</p>
<p>4. The sub-committee feels that there is a lack of awareness across Council Services of the support available to help people find work, it believes there is potential for front line services in particular to offer more support. It would support further work to raise awareness amongst frontline staff and to encourage more referrals and advice. It felt that housing offices present an excellent opportunity for this.</p>	<p>To support the Housing Department's Trailblazer status, a Southwark Works employment Information Advice and Guidance adviser is now located within the Housing Options Centre Housing providers in Southwark are engaging with the strategy review and are identifying opportunities for their frontline services to support people into work or training.</p>
<p>5. The sub-committee noted the good work that has been undertaken with regard to apprenticeships and work placements and would like to see council departments do more to support this agenda.</p>	<p>Organisation Development continue to manage the Councils successful apprentice programme, Organisation Development, Economic Development and Procurement are working together to embed local economic benefits into council contracting, these include apprenticeship places..</p>
<p>6. In order to avert delays in the take up of work placements, the sub-committee recommends that the council look to manage its relevant internal processes for obtaining CRB checks as effectively as possible.</p>	<p>This has been noted and solutions will be explored.</p>
<p>7. The sub-committee supports the council's activities to achieve economic benefits from regeneration programmes and its programme of investment in local shopping parades in deprived areas.</p>	<p>Consultation stage will be implemented on all 24 sites through the councils Improving Local Retail Environments programme January 2010.</p>
<p>8. The sub-committee was concerned about the very high numbers of people on incapacity benefit, it noted that the recent introduction¹ locally of the "pathways to work" programme which will target resources at this group. It recommends that this activity is kept under close review.</p>	<p>Number of IB claimants is gradually reducing; 13,300 in Q1 08/09, 12,290 in Q1 09/10 (latest data). Increased provision has been made available for people with mental health</p>

	issues through the PCT's Improving Access to Psychological Treatment as part of the Southwark Works programme. The DWP's Pathways to Work programme has supported 330 people into work so far this year across the Lambeth, Southwark and Wandsworth district (est. 40% Southwark).
9. The sub-committee notes the high numbers of Southwark residents with low or no skills or qualifications. It would like to see greater provision for ESOL and related support, particularly at pre-entry level 1 and below and recommends that the Learning and Skills Council should be encouraged to make more resources available in the borough to support this project.	New Approach to ESOL recommendation report has been produced to support the business case for resources to support key ESOL needs for Southwark residents through the Skills Funding Agency (replacing part of the LSC from April 2010)

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Scrutiny Sub-Committee A - minutes and reports	Scrutiny Team Tooley Street London SE1 2TZ	Fitzroy Williams Scrutiny project assistant Tel: 020 7525 7102

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Southwark's Enterprise And Employment Strategy – Report of Scrutiny Sub-Committee A.

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Shelley Burke, Head of Overview & Scrutiny	
Report Author	Fitzroy Williams, Scrutiny Project Assistant.	
Version	Final	
Dated	November 18 2009	
Key Decision?	No	
Consultation with other officers / directorates / Executive member		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included

Strategic Director of Communities, Law & Governance	No	
Finance Director	No	
Strategic Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods	Yes	Yes