

**TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**ECONOMIC REGENERATION ADVISORY BOARD**

**07 September 2016**

**Report of the Chief Executive**

**Part 1- Public**

**Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)**

**1 WORK READINESS AND CAREERS ADVICE**

**This report provides some additional background to support the presentation by Mike Rayner, Participation and Progression Manager for West Kent at Kent County Council and to aid subsequent discussion on how the Advisory Board (or a sub-group of it) might add value to this agenda.**

**1.1 Background**

1.1.1 The issue of work readiness, or the lack of it, amongst some school leavers and job seekers has come up in numerous meetings with local businesses over the past 12 months. In simple terms, the feedback received from local businesses has been that:

- Careers advice from some schools does not give a good idea of the real options open to students, with some sectors are seen by advisors as only offering careers for unsuccessful students only and a disproportionate emphasis on getting young people into University.
- Numerous applicants simply have not got the softer skills (not punctual, don't come in some days, not dressed properly) required to flourish in the workplace. Employers aren't necessarily looking for the finished article but they do need someone that can be moulded into a role.

1.1.2 Our own experiences have been supported by the Workforce Skills Evidence Base (September 2015), which was commissioned by the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership.

1.1.3 With the above in mind, Mike Rayner, Participation and Progression Manager for West Kent at Kent County Council has been invited by the Chairman to provide a short presentation on the provision of careers advice, some of the key challenges faced and current initiatives to improve work readiness.

## **1.2 Potential Interventions**

- 1.2.1 In order to aid discussion, a draft Skills Action Plan has been produced (Appendix 1) that incorporates some initiatives that could help support efforts to improve work readiness. This plan is scheduled to be presented to the Tonbridge & Malling Local Strategic Partnership on 16 September 2016.
- 1.2.2 It is suggested, subject to further discussion, that the Advisory Board (or a smaller sub-group of it) might wish to investigate skills and work readiness issues further in more detail via consultation with other partners and then report back to the Board on their findings.

## **1.3 Legal Implications**

- 1.3.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations**

- 1.4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

## **1.5 Risk Assessment**

- 1.5.1 Not applicable.

## **1.6 Equality Impact Assessment**

- 1.7.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

## **1.7 Recommendations**

- 1.7.1 That, subject to discussion, the Advisory Board establishes a working group to explore work readiness and skills issues in greater depth.

The Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and the Chief Executive confirm that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.

Background papers:

None

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