

## Tonbridge & Malling Skills Action Plan:

September 2016

Thematic Area	Description of Issue	What added value can TMBC and its partners deliver?	Lead	Timescale
<b>Tackling Perceptions</b>	A number of sectors such as the construction, manufacturing and care currently suffer from poor perceptions amongst young people, a number of which are incorrect or overly biased towards negative issues such as pay levels, hours of employment or the working environment.	Work directly with the embryonic KCC Guilds to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve level of business representation.</li> <li>• Have representatives from the T&amp;M borough on Guilds where possible</li> <li>• Support campaigns to boost awareness of reality of working in particular sectors – using social media/press releases/editorial in local papers.</li> </ul>	KCC Skills and Employability, TMBC and local businesses	Ongoing
<b>Careers Advice and Guidance</b>	<p>Linked to the above issue, many businesses feel that the careers advice from some schools does not give a good idea of the real options open to students. Particular issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some sectors are seen by advisors as only offering careers for unsuccessful students only.</li> <li>• Lack of engagement between schools and businesses in some instances.</li> <li>• Lack of promotion of all the pathways to employment – there appears to be a disproportionate emphasis on getting young people into University.</li> </ul>	Inclusion of discussion on careers advice and work readiness at the Economic Regeneration Advisory Board, with a view to establishing a focus on this topic.	TMBC in partnership with KCC Skills and Employability.	September 2016
		Support KCC Apprenticeship Campaigns which will target employers and young people: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TMBC to take on apprentices</li> <li>• Promotion of initiative to T&amp;M businesses</li> </ul>	KCC Skills and Employability, TMBC and local businesses	Ongoing
		Through the West Kent Partnership, work with the Kent Education Business Partnership on promoting and delivering a Skills Festival to enable West Kent schools the opportunity to find out first hand from local businesses, the careers opportunities that exist locally. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial contribution from TMBC of circa £250</li> <li>• Logistics Support through involvement in working groups</li> <li>• Promotion and Marketing Support</li> </ul>	Kent Education Business Partnership in partnership with KCC, West Kent Partnership, the 3 West Kent Local Authorities and local businesses.	October 2016
		Develop and build upon recent Jobs and Training Fair Programme to help link prospective employees with local businesses and to build awareness of employment and training opportunities locally. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial contribution from TMBC of circa £750 per annum</li> <li>• Logistics Support through involvement in working groups</li> <li>• Promotion and Marketing Support</li> </ul>	TMBC in partnership with JobCentre Plus and local businesses	Ongoing (West Kent Jobs and Training Fair – annually in <b>September &amp; Tonbridge Jobs and Training Fair annually in March)</b>
		Work with Jobs Clubs in the Borough to provide information on pathways to work in specific sectors in T&M. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supply information regarding new employment opportunities (such as new</li> </ul>	Circle Housing Russet and JobCentre Plus and local businesses	Ongoing

		employment sites/expanding businesses/inward investment)		
<b>Training Provision</b>	Whilst generic training provision is good at a local level, there are a number of examples of staff/apprentices having to travel some distance to access relevant skills centres or specific training courses.	HE Provision in West Kent – support research into building the case for expanding Higher Education provision in West Kent.	KCC and West Kent Partnership	November 2016
<b>Measures of Success</b>	Schools are measured on how many students get 5 or more A*-C grades and how many go to University. This is supported by a bias that many parents in West Kent have about not wanting their children to go into apprenticeships. However, there are some fantastic examples where students have gone into local businesses and have had very successful careers.	It was suggested that schools should be measured also on the % of students that go into employment in order to have a more balanced approach to what defines 'success'. As such, as a starting point it is suggested that the local MP be approached about flagging this issue up to the appropriate Ministers.	TMBC	October 2016
<b>Softer Skills</b>	Often when job opportunities are advertised, there are plenty of people that apply but in many instances the quality is lacking. 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.	Support the development of softer skills through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TMBC involvement with the local colleges and schools in 'Work Ready Interviews' Programmes</li> <li>• Put forward suggestion of interviews at the workplace rather than at colleges/schools.</li> </ul>	FE Colleges and KCC Skills and Employability	Ongoing annually (interviews Feb-March)
		Investigate the potential of a Pilot a scheme to work on softer skills along the lines of the ENGAGE (Tomorrows People) Programme - <a href="http://www.tomorrows-people.org.uk/adults">http://www.tomorrows-people.org.uk/adults</a>	KCC Skills and Employability in partnership with TMBC	September 2016