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**SCRUTINY PANEL B**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 June 2013**

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**Present:** Councillors Dr Paffey (Chair), Kaur, L Harris, Jeffery and Turner

**Apologies:** Councillors Baillie and Furnell

7. **APPRENTICESHIPS INQUIRY: MEETING 3: PROVIDERS PERSPECTIVE**

The Panel considered the report of the Head of Communities, Change and Partnerships reviewing apprenticeship training provision and feedback from local providers.

Ian Smith, National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) outlined local apprenticeship training arrangements:-

- Previously areas had been allocated budgets, but there was now a single budget so that it could be targeted to the growth areas.
- Annually there was a fixed sum for 16-18 year olds and then the remainder was for 19+.
- Each provider was checked quarterly to ensure they were still performing, rather than just being given all the funding at the beginning regardless of the outcome.
- Each provider had a relationship manager as a contact point.
- Most apprentices working within Southampton either attend City College or Totton College.
- It was necessary to go out of the City for some specialist areas. However most courses, where ever they were, cover only general areas and sometimes are not appropriate for individual placements that were specialist areas.
- Need to look at whether the apprenticeships offered were matching the need.

Claire Sutton, from SETA and also representing the Association of Learning Providers Hampshire and IOW updated the Panel on the Apprenticeship provider network (ALPHIE):-

- Support network covering 36 providers.
- Looking at ways to promote apprenticeships to all stakeholders.
- Many apprenticeships can have 40 applications where others have none.
- Need to see what the local labour market looks like.
- Currently employers were very confused about the number of different types of qualifications that student could leave education with and what they were equivalent to.
- In 2007 - 77.8% in college and 8.8% in employment or training, in 2013 – 89.3% in college and 2.6% in employment or training – Concerns that problem is just being transferred for the 2 years that the young people were in further education.
- Looking at reasons why they do not want to apply at 16 years old.
- Want to ensure the providers were offering the training that was required.
- Concerned that the schools were not engaged enough.
- Reluctance to loose employers to other providers.

- Do send apprentices to other providers if they were not able to meet their training needs – example of Esso. City College said that they currently had 168 students who were not their apprentices.
- Working on what the employers want and this then benefitted the learner.
- ALPHIE map what the providers do.
- ALPHIE gives employers more apprentices and gives more choice to the young people. If provider can not meet the need then they were able to refer to another provider within the network.
- Need to engage those employers who were not currently using apprentices – needed help from other agencies to help get the information about these employers.
- Problems have been created since the changes to careers advice at school. Felt this would become more of an issue once the school leaving age was increase.

Ruth Evan, Headteacher, Cantell Maths and Computing College outlined the issues relating to careers guidance within schools:-

- Each school was now responsible for deciding how much or little careers guidance they provided. This was largely decided on budget restraints.
- An Ofsted pilot project for 14-19 years had shown a key concern about careers advice.
- Some schools link together for advice but there was no formal network and no process for liaising with providers.
- Careers fairs and events cost time and money and schools have issues with balancing priorities.
- Concerned that most schools would be asking their pupils about college rather than discussing apprenticeships.
- Suggestion that NAS could do a series of workshops to inform school staff about apprenticeships. There would be no cost, just time and travel, although it was appreciated that there many competing demands.

Claire Brook, Brockenhurst College and Helen Mason and Kelly Simmonds, Southampton City College gave details of local apprenticeship training provision and coverage across the sectors:-

- Similar issues with regards to careers advice as the schools.
- Brockenhurst were currently looking at the whole issue at the moments and giving the tools to the students to enable them to make the correct decisions themselves, rather than being told what to do.
- Event at Solent University, giving students the details and tools on where to access information in order to get them onto the right course. It was hoped that some of this could be used by the colleges.
- Schools and colleges were committed to working together – 14 to 19 group.
- Teachers need to be trained on careers/ future options. This information should start to be given as early as possible in primary school.
- ALPHIE were organising 2 hour careers advisors sessions, across the County. There was a need ensure that they have resources to take away with them that they can then use.
- Numbers at City College have dropped but the quality and success rate has improved.
- Now look more closely about the right apprentice being on the right programme and with the right employer, to ensure success.

- City College believed it was best for the students not to go straight into an apprenticeship from school as they often needed more time to be ready for the workplace.
- Details of the Studio School which was for 14 – 19 year olds. Opening in September 2013.
- Career advice would be part of the curriculum at the Studio School.
- Raised issue of grants taking 13 weeks after placement start to be given, and could be an issue if the grant is refused.
- Need to give the students employability skills – CVs, interview skills, how to approach employers.
- Concerned that academic pupils were not encourage to take part in work experience, as it was assumed they would just go onto college.

Ian Henser, Solent Education Business Partnership, set out the issues facing apprenticeship progression by young people and adults:-

- Currently already do work with junior schools.
- Previous had run professional development placements for teachers; however this had stopped as schools were unable to release teachers from school.
- Work with schools, but each school decided how many hours they can afford to have. Varies a lot.
- Need to ensure Heads were more aware of apprenticeships.
- Many stakeholders do not know where to get information from.
- Work experience was a good way to encourage employers into thinking about taking on an apprentice.
- They undertake health and safety checks for work experience placements and at this point always take the opportunity to discuss apprenticeships with the employer
- Agree that there was an issue that schools promoting college but not apprenticeships. They need to be looking at apprenticeships as access to a career.