
SCRUTINY PANEL B
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 MAY 2013

Present: Councillors Dr Paffey, Baillie, Furnell, L Harris, Kaur, and Turner

Apologies: Councillor Jeffery

3. **APOLOGIES AND CHANGES IN PANEL MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY)**

It was noted that Councillor L Harris has replaced Councillor Norris as a member of the Panel.

4. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

RESOLVED that Councillor Kaur be elected as Vice-Chair of the Panel.

5. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 25th April 2013 be approved and signed as a correct record.

6. **APPRENTICESHIPS INQUIRY: MEETING 2: EMPLOYERS' PERSPECTIVE**

The Panel considered the report of the Head of Communities, Change and Partnership, reviewing employer experiences of apprenticeships; recruitment; training; and support.

Ian Smith, Employer Account Manager from the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) outlined their experience with dealing with the employers:-

- Large employers (250+ staff) have access to a dedicated account manager – however these managers cover a wide area.
- Target those employers not currently engaged
- Small and medium size businesses have access to reactive telephone support based in Bristol for this area.
- Currently have a 1 year fixed posted dedicated to 16-18 year old recruitment. As numbers, nationally, are down in this age range.
- Work closely with many of the training providers, local authorities and other agencies.
- Live vacancies report for Southampton was circulated
- National apprenticeship week
- Explained different levels of apprenticeships, from traineeships, for those youngsters that need extra support, to higher level apprentices.
- Work closely with Council to target employers in the City, however more could probably be done.
- Support for disadvantaged youngsters.
- Pre-apprenticeship scheme, based on a level 2, which it was hoped would allow the youngsters to move onto a full apprenticeship.
- Work closely in partnership with the Wheatsheaf Trust, plus the Rainbow Project.
- Placements where the hope was always for permanent employment to be offered.

- Ensuring that the message was getting out to the employers of all sizes. Need to look at other avenues on how to reach the employers and the best time to hold events for them.
- Colleges need to be flexible with the course times that they offer to ensure they fit with the needs of the employer.

Anthony Dimmick, from Barratt Homes, outlined how they were working with the SCC Employment and Skills Plans:-

- Working with the Southampton City Council has been very successful and they were now trying as a company to roll out the same system with other authorities.
- Role of community liaison.
- Look at the number of youngsters that start schemes and actually successfully finish them.
- Issues surrounding 16-18 year olds and insurance, especially on building sites.
- Transport issues for youngsters as their placements move as the sites change.
- Helping youngsters maximise what they have. Many do not fit the dictated criteria but were still able to engage.
- Example of Employment Skills Plan for Hinkler Parade

Anita Esser, from University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust, outlined apprenticeship recruitment issues faced by them as a large employer. A handout was circulated on the areas covered:-

- Training provider.
- They employ over 8000 staff in the areas that they offer apprenticeship schemes in.
- Cover many areas, not just Health. e.g. administration; call centres; engineering.
- Work hard on partnerships with High Education providers.
- Provide support to move staff on but need to support further.
- Try to recruit to substantive posts where possible, rather than just bringing in apprentices in addition to the staffing levels.
- Areas within Trust that have an aging workforce, such as estates management, that need new qualified staff.
- Many of their apprentices were in the 20-30 age range, with very few 16-18 year olds – felt that this was a cultural issue within the NHS about being too young to be in a clinical role. Currently investigating traineeship/ cadetship at BTEC level to run a pilot to be able to place more within this age group.
- Many levels of apprenticeship from basic up to the higher levels, with a bespoke foundation degree course to allow access/ progression onto the nursing degree.

Mark Burnett and Debbie van Coller, from SCC gave details of the apprenticeship recruitment with Housing Services within SCC:-

- Currently have 13 apprentices and were looking to take on more.
- Open day being held for invited young people who had expressed an interest in future apprenticeships.
- Work with the local colleges – need further work on ensuring they get the appropriate feedback.
- Involved with the schools however would like to extend this and promote apprenticeships further. And also target children at a younger age.

- Concerns that there was a perception by many children, parents and schools that apprenticeships are second class option in comparison to attending 6th form. Need to make them aware that qualifications would be gained on an apprenticeship.
- Had only be offering trade areas however were keen to move into other areas. e.g. Housing officers. Have worked with colleges to find appropriate courses close by. City College have organised a course to start in September.
- Rainbow project – pre-apprenticeship scheme for those that do not hold the necessary qualifications to start an apprenticeship and or maybe have other issues.
- Redbridge School currently have 13 pupils out of mainstream lessons involved in trade work. Positive benefits. Many other pupils want to join the scheme.
- Careers advise needs to be improved. Information provided needs to cover what was available and how it was delivered.

Russell Chisard, training manager from Wessex Regional Care outlined the experience they had with recruiting apprentices:-

- Business was to provide support living, and although in some units they have 4 to 5 staff, there were other areas where they only have 1 or 2 staff so there has been the issue of not being able to work alone until they were 18 years old.
- Although lots of interest was expressed, they only interviewed 2 candidates. Appointment was working out well. Started working in November with college course commencing in February. In house training was also taking place.

David Pollard, a member of the Central Southampton branch of the Federation of Small Businesses, and also had a regional role for Education, gave an overview of issues for small business:-

- Many business very small and often work from home offices, however over half of apprentices were employed by small businesses.
- Keen to encourage more small businesses to become involved.
- Importance of building links between employers and schools.
- Many events around the region within the next 12 months with NAS to get the message across. Found the best way was face to face.
- Need to promote the completion of apprenticeships in the same way people graduate from University.
- Need to ensure the schools were part of the process. Get the governors involved.
- Funding available was an “attention grabber” however felt that it was not the major factor in businesses making the decision to have an apprentice.
- Business find that there were many factors they needed to address when they have their first apprentice, such as insurance; and on the job training, however the second time around it was much easier for them.

SCRUTINY PANEL B
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 JUNE 2013

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.