

CHILDREN & EDUCATION SELECT COMMITTEE

Item under consideration: Increasing the Employability of Young People in Surrey

Date Considered: 31 July 2013

1. At its meeting on 31 July 2013 the Children & Education Select Committee considered how Surrey County Council was working with partners to increase the employability of young people.
2. During the course of the meeting, Members of the Committee examined how Surrey was working to meet the requirements of the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA), how it was commissioning opportunities for young people that aligned with their aspirations, and how it was helping young people overcome barriers to Education, Training and Employment (ETE), and tackling worklessness in families.
3. The discussions were informed by a wide variety of witnesses, including representatives from secondary and post-secondary educational institutes, commissioned providers and Surrey County Council Officers.
4. The Select Committee heard that during 2011/12, 57% of young people who were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) also had some form of Special Education Need (SEN). Whilst Members acknowledged the positive work currently undertaken to support these individuals progress into participation in ETE after Year 11, concern was raised that the implementation of Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCP) as part of the Children's & Families Bill would disadvantage those that, whilst not eligible for a combined plan, still required focused intervention.
5. The Select Committee was informed that provisions in the Children & Families Bill meant that additional funding for students on School Action and School Action Plus would no longer be available to schools. It was recognised by officers that this presented a significant challenge in terms of young people who were at risk of becoming NEET, as a large majority were currently supported through School Action and School Action Plus arrangements.
6. The Committee therefore made the following recommendation:
 - (a) **That Cabinet consider how students who are unlikely to be eligible for a combined plan will be supported following the introduction of Education, Health & Care Plans (EHCP) and the cessation of School Action and School Action Plus, so as not to jeopardise their chances of post-16 participation in Education, Training and Employment.**
7. Despite this concern, the Committee supported the direction of travel detailed in the Council's Employability Plan and, whilst acknowledging the challenges and financial pressures ahead, congratulated officers and partners on the work so far.

Dr Zully Grant-Duff
Chairman of the Children & Education Select Committee

This page is intentionally left blank