



Children & Education Select Committee
28 November 2013

**Member Reference Group on Provision of Career Information,
Advice and Guidance to students in Surrey**

Purpose of the report: To recommend that the Children & Education Select Committee commissions a Member Reference Group to consider the Skills for the Future strand of the Public Service Transformation Programme, particularly proposals around future provision of Information, Advice and Guidance.

Introduction:

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 discussions with officers and external partners, the importance of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) in schools was highlighted as a crucial mechanism by which Young People's aspirations and opportunities could be aligned.
3. Despite hearing of many positive examples where secondary and post-secondary education providers were working creatively and in partnership with one another to provide robust and tailored IAG for students, there remained a sense that the quality and level of advice varied across the County and between different institutes.
4. The Committee subsequently agreed to further explore the provision of IAG in Surrey, with a particular focus on consistency.
5. Initial work by the Scrutiny team revealed that the provision of IAG in Surrey was already being explored as part of the Public Service Transformation Programme, with a specific strand of work (entitled "Skills for the Future") seeking to transform the education and training pathways for young people in Surrey aged 14 to 25 years. This includes proposals to "integrate, reform and localise IAG".
6. This document provides an overview of the Public Service Transformation Programme, the Skills for the Future strand and recommendation as to how the Children & Education Select Committee could input into the development of proposals.

Public Service Transformation Programme

7. The Chancellor's Budget Statement in March 2013 referenced the Government's four whole place community budget pilots and announced that further support would be provided for areas interested in developing the community budget approach through the creation of the Public Service Transformation Network.
8. The Leader of the County Council submitted an expression of interest on behalf of all key public sector partners in Surrey on 12 April 2013. This set out the Council's and partners' ambition to develop a community budget approach in Surrey and become involved in the Public Service Transformation Network. At the LGA Conference on 3 July 2013 the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government announced that Surrey had been successful and was one of nine areas that would receive support.
9. Officers were asked to develop outline business cases for each of the following strands:
 1. Emergency Services Collaboration
 2. Extending the Family Support Programme
 3. Dementia Friendly Surrey
 4. Better Use of Public Sector Assets
 5. **Skills for the Future (Appendix A)**
10. These outline business cases were considered by Cabinet in October and officers are now putting together full business cases for consideration in February 2014.

Skills for the Future Strand

11. The intention of the Skills for the Future Strand is to deliver a more efficient skills system and a better match between skills required by businesses and those of young people.
12. The provision of high quality, relevant and unbiased IAG is a key element of this vision, and the outline business case places an emphasis on 1 to 1 support, employer activity, opportunity fairs and relevant localised web-based media.
13. The document also acknowledges that the IAG received by Young People nationally has been widely criticised as being unsuitable and insufficient to prepare individuals for the world of work

Establishing a Member Reference Group

14. In October the Chairman and Vice-Chairman met with the Head of Commissioning and Development, the officer responsible for the Skills for the Future strand of the Public Service Transformation Programme.
15. It was agreed that given the Select Committee's interest in IAG provision, it would be sensible to establish a Member Reference Group to consider the proposals prior to their formal consideration by Cabinet on 28 February 2014.

- 16. A Member Reference Group is similar to a Task Group in that they consist of a small group of Members who look at an issue in-depth. Its role is to act as a consultee and input into policies currently being developed by the service.
- 16. It was acknowledged that the timing of the Member Reference Group's discussions would be crucial, as considering the proposals before they were sufficiently developed would not allow for robust scrutiny, whilst leaving it too late would limit the ability of members to influence the plans.

Recommendation:

- 17. That the Committee establish a Member Reference Group of up to 4 Members to input into the development of the Skills for the Future strand of the Public Service Transformation Programme.

Next steps:

- 18. If the Committee agree to proceed with a Member Reference Group, the Scrutiny team will make the necessary arrangements.

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Background papers: Minutes of the Children & Education Select Committee, 31 June 2013.

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