

To: **Overview and Scrutiny Commission**
27 February

Overview and Scrutiny Transition review

Statutory Scrutiny Officer

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To present the findings of the Education, Skills and Growth Overview and Scrutiny Panel's review into transition from education to employment to the Overview & Scrutiny Commission.
- 1.2 To provide the advice of the Statutory Scrutiny Officer (SSO).

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission considers whether to endorse the Education, Skills and Growth Overview and Scrutiny Panel's recommendations to Cabinet, as set out in the Panel report (attached as Appendix A) and paragraph 5.7 of this report, taking into account the comments of the Statutory Scrutiny Officer.**

3 Reasons for recommendation

- 3.1 The Education, Skills and Growth Scrutiny Panel concluded their findings based on the evidence considered and review that was undertaken. The review report is attached as Appendix A.

4 Alternative options considered

- 4.1 The commission could decide:
 - To endorse the recommendations to Cabinet as set out in the panel's report.
 - To endorse the recommendations in part.
 - To feedback comments to the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to be incorporated into the final report.
 - To ask for further work to be undertaken recognising that this would delay the panel's next piece of work.

5 Supporting information

- 5.1 It is the role of the SSO to advise the Council on any issues or concerns that may arise about the operation of the scrutiny function and the SSO may on occasion be required to make a determination about what the law says and how this should be applied to any particular situation. In carrying out this statutory role, there is a need to have a nuanced and meaningful understanding of the scrutiny function in order to

accurately make judgments about its operation when disagreements or other issues arise.

- 5.2 The SSO is responsible for ensuring that the scrutiny function is adequately resourced and that service departments and partners are contributing sufficiently to reviews to ensure that they are effective.
- 5.3 The SSO is also responsible for providing advice to the Commission and Cabinet on whether the recommendations within review reports are robust, taking account of resource, legal, climate change, equalities, health and wellbeing and strategic risk implications.
- 5.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission commissioned the Education, Skills and Growth Overview and Scrutiny panel to carry out a review into transition as part of the overview and scrutiny four-year work programme, which has been developed to track themes within the new Council Plan.
- 5.5 In support of this review, a broad range of witnesses gave evidence putting the panel in a good position to use this intelligence to frame the review and produce insightful recommendations.
- 5.6 The Panel was supported by a Governance and Scrutiny Officer who supported the panel to draw up the scope of the review and prepare an evidence pack of relevant information; to facilitate a number of panel sessions to interview a range of contributors; to draw out findings from the panel's investigation, and to prepare a review report. This involved in the region of 130 hours of scrutiny officer time and 4 hours 45 minutes of panel meetings.
- 5.7 The Commission will consider the panel's recommendations on 27 February 2025 with the aim to endorse them for referral to Cabinet. The reasons for making these recommendations are set out in the panel report. These recommendations are:
 1. The Cabinet invites the principal of Garth Hill College and local skills partners to develop a forum between head teachers, heads of sixth forms and sixth form careers leads. The goal of this forum is to facilitate collaboration and sharing of information and ideas relating to careers and opportunities for young people transitioning from education to employment.
Review in 6 months.
 2. If recommendation 1 is approved and implemented, and a forum is developed, the Elevate team should present an annual report to the forum highlighting destination data for those in years 12 and 13. This would highlight how many young people are Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) across the borough, to inform and develop ways to continue to reduce these numbers.
Review in 6 months.
 3. That the skills hub be supported to continue to increase engagement with local companies to provide greater numbers of apprenticeships to meet demand, specifically to increase the provision of level 1 and 2 apprenticeships to 150, based on the current need identified. That a performance update is published on a 6 monthly basis and also shared with the re-developed forum as per recommendation 1. This recommendation is dependent on the extension of the funding for the skills hub beyond March 2025.

Review in 12 months.

4. That the cabinet ensures communication to each school, relating to the value of developing and keeping an up-to-date register of companies offering work experience. They should ensure that schools are aware that [Learning to Work](#) can help manage placements for local schools. This recommendation can be monitored through feedback from the forum proposed in recommendation 1.
Review in 12 months

6 Commentary from Education, Skills and Growth Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chair, Councillor Jodie Watts

- 6.1 This review has highlighted many positive aspects of support for young people in the borough who are transitioning from education to employment. The panel took the opportunity to scrutinise the work undertaken by Elevate, the Virtual school, the careers hub, the Bracknell Forest skills hub and a secondary school within the borough and were impressed with the valuable careers support and guidance provided.
- 6.2 However, an important area that requires continued development is to increase engagement with local companies and improve the numbers of apprenticeships available to meet demand, specifically to increase the provision of levels 1 and 2 apprenticeships. We believe our recommendations within this report will help address this and further enhance the opportunities for young people in the borough so they can make good career choices after leaving school.

7 Consultation and other considerations

Legal Advice

- 7.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from the report.

Financial Advice

- 7.2 There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

Other consultation responses

- 7.3 There are no other consultation responses.

Equalities impact assessment

- 7.4 The review scope, activities and recommendations were all considered in the initial equalities screening attached at Appendix B.

Strategic risk management issues

- 7.5 There are no specific strategic risk management issues arising from the recommendations in this report.

Climate change and ecological impact

- 7.6 The recommendations in section 2 above are expected to:
Have no impact on emissions of CO₂.

Health & wellbeing considerations

- 7.7 The Council is committed to help create opportunities where people can succeed, be happy and feel safe.

Background Papers

None

Contacts for further information

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