

## **Working Plymouth**

**Wednesday 9 December 2015**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor Ricketts, in the Chair.

Councillor Murphy, Vice Chair.

Councillors Deacon, Fletcher, Hendy, Jarvis, Michael Leaves (substitute for Councillor Martin Leaves), Morris and Wheeler.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Ball, Martin Leaves and Storer.

Also in attendance: David Draffan (Assistant Director for Economic Development), Amanda Ratsey (Head of Economy, Enterprise and Employment), Patrick Knight (Economy and Employment Manager) and David Lea (Economic Development Officer), Ken Holder (Senior Apprentice Coordinator), Gill Peele (Lead Officer) and Helen Rickman (Democratic Support Officer).

The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 6.00 pm.

*Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.*

#### 74. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest in accordance with the code of conduct.

#### 75. **MINUTES**

Agreed that the minutes of 30 September 2015 and 14 October 2015 are an accurate record of both meetings.

#### 76. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

Members were advised that due to the scale of the agenda an Officer would not be in attendance to present the Skills Plan report however a report was attached for information.

#### 77. **1000 CLUB**

David Draffan (Assistant Director for Economic Development), Amanda Ratsey (Head of Economy, Enterprise and Employment), Patrick Knight (Economy and Employment Manager) and David Lea (Economic Development Officer) provided an update on the 1000 Club.

Members were advised that –

- (a) the 1000 Club was initially commissioned in 2012 as a response to the struggling economy to help tackle the high figures relating to youth unemployment and unemployment;
- (b) in 2012 the number of people claiming job seekers allowance was 33%, higher than the national average; the 1000 Club brought together lots of agencies and networks to create a one stop shop for business and opportunity;
- (c) opportunities relating to work experience, apprenticeships and employment were initially incredibly complex due to a raft of different initiatives, projects and Government agencies; it was considered that the 1000 Club initiative helped to support people navigating this area other than simple creating jobs;
- (d) plans were in place to approach companies in the local Business Improvement Districts (BID) to help increase the number of opportunities;
- (e) the scope of the 1000 Club had recently expanded to include those beyond the age of 18-24; those over 50 and ex-military personnel;
- (f) since the creation of the 1000 Club, several local authorities contacted Plymouth City Council to discuss the model and 'copy' it.

The main areas of questioning from Members related to the following:

- the procedure for businesses to sign up to the 1000 Club and the expectation of Members;
- the success of the club and if momentum had been lost;
- the recruitment of small/newly formed businesses;
- the expansion of the focus of the 1000 Club to include over 50s, ex-military personnel and veterans;
- future funding possibilities;
- the accuracy of reporting

The Chair thanked Officers for their attendance at the meeting.

Agreed to recommend to the Cooperative Scrutiny Board that the relevant Officers undertake the following with regards to the 1000 Club:

1. to take stock and assess where the progress of the 1000 Club scheme;
2. check the integrity of the data;
3. cleanse membership list and keep it alive;

4. check if members are receiving emails;
5. reach out to SMEs (small and medium sized enterprises) and consider who is missing from the list;
6. consider its role for the broader group, refocus and think through how it will work best;
7. consider implications for its expansion and institutional partners such as Royal British legion, Age UK;
8. recognise corporate covenant and support for Armed Forces;
9. check if using an external resource offers the best outcomes;
10. report back to Working Plymouth's March 2016 meeting with a progress report.

78. **SKILLS PLAN**

Members noted the written update on the Skills Plan.

79. **APPRENTICESHIPS**

Ken Holder (Senior Apprenticeship Co-ordinator) provided Members with an update on Plymouth City Council Apprenticeships.

Members were advised that –

- (a) the Council's Apprentice Scheme started in 2010 with four apprenticeships with the ambition of achieving 100 by 2014; this target was surpassed in 2013 and so far the Council had a 97% completion rate;
- (b) NVQ 2 (Year one) apprenticeships received £10,322; this was approximately 50% higher than the national wage for apprenticeships; NVQ 2, 3 and 4 earned between £12,926 and £15,070;
- (c) the Council had a high retention of apprentices across the 14 different work areas offered; there were currently 11 vacant posts;
- (d) the Council's Apprenticeship Scheme had achieved the National Large Employer Status in the South West and was included in the top 100 apprenticeships employers in the country.

The main areas of questioning from Members related to the following:

- the criteria for apprenticeships;
- the accuracy of completion rates and statistics, and the tracking of those that

did not complete the apprenticeship scheme;

- the high payment for those undertaking an apprenticeship balanced against the Council's severe budget pressures;
- the procurement of apprentices and the process;
- the impact of the EVRS (Enhanced Voluntary Redundancy Scheme) upon apprenticeships within the Council;
- comparative figures for apprenticeships within the regional/ public sector;
- apprenticeships standards and the effect of the Chancellors Autumn Statement upon apprenticeships;

The Chair thanked Ken for this attendance at the meeting.

Agreed that the following information is provided to Members:

1. information on what happened to the six apprentices who did not complete their course;
2. in relation to the graph on page 58 of the agenda showing the breakdown of 205 apprenticeships, what does 'substantive role' mean?
3. what is the procurement strategy and process?
4. for Ken Holder (Senior Apprentice Coordinator) to email Working Plymouth Members with his written report in response to the Chancellor's Autumn Statement upon the financial impacts on apprenticeships.

80. **TRACKING RESOLUTIONS AND UPDATE FROM THE CO-OPERATIVE SCRUTINY BOARD**

Members noted the tracking resolutions document and update from the Co-operative Scrutiny Board.

81. **WORK PROGRAMME**

Members noted the work programme for 2015/16.

82. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.