

19 February 2010 Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board – 3 February 2010

At 3 February Overview and Scrutiny Management Board it was resolved that the following amended worklessness resolution be approved:

The Growth and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Panel discussed the issue of worklessness at two scrutiny meetings, namely 28 September 2009 and 7 December 2009 (G & P minutes 18 and 37). Several representatives from different organisations namely, Jobcentre Plus, Working Links, Plymouth Employment & Skills Board, Plymouth City Council and Devonport Regeneration Community Partnership, attended the September meeting and provided the Panel with presentations upon the high levels of worklessness in Plymouth and the importance of tackling the issue of worklessness together.

Representatives from different organisations and sectors of the Council, namely Strategic Housing, Social Inclusion, Recruitment and the Shekinah Mission, similarly attended the December meeting and informed the panel that programmes were currently in place to tackle worklessness; however it was important for this to continue and for Plymouth City Council to take a lead.

The main points to address were –

(i) Tackling Worklessness was essential to the City meeting the objectives set out in the Local Economic Strategy, Sustainable Community Strategy, Children & Young People's Plan as well as a range of other targets. Whilst it was recognised that Worklessness impacted on many aspects of the Council and partnership's work e.g. health, learning, etc., ultimately it demanded a lead service area and could best be addressed from a Strategic Economic Development perspective.

(ii) The present framework with central and local government and the third sector was too complicated. The emerging consensus in national policy, endorsed by Overview & Scrutiny, was that, operationally, Worklessness was best led by the Local Authority under the strategic direction of the Local Strategic Partnership.

(iii) The Children & Young People OSP will be aware of the Skills and NEETs agenda.

Resolved that Overview and Scrutiny Management Board be requested to approve the following –

- (a) **Recommendation:** That the Department for Development & Regeneration take on the ownership and leadership of the Worklessness agenda on behalf of the Council and that links across Plymouth City Council are accordingly established to a)

ensure the council's role is clearly understood and b) that, from an Economic Development perspective, skills development aligns with the economic drivers of the city and key sectors.

- (b) **Recommendation:** that Plymouth City Council take on a strategic leadership role.

- (c) **Recommendation:** That Human Resources work with the Assistant Director for Development & Regeneration (Economic Development) and his team to develop a strategy for Plymouth City Council recruitment under the Worklessness agenda and that the Corporate Management Team be requested to endorse this.

- (d) **Recommendation:** That Plymouth City Council review its Recruitment policies to become an exemplar employing body, by providing greater employment/work opportunities for disengaged groups e.g. young people, care leavers, young offenders and the longer term unemployed.