

Maidstone Borough Council

Economic & Commercial Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 22 April 2014

Employability & Worklessness Projects Update

Report of: Sam Bailey, Research and Performance Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 At the meeting on 24 September 2013 the Committee considered an update from the Skills and Employability Officer on the Employability and Worklessness Projects that were currently underway.
- 1.2 The committee requested that the Skills and Employability Officer give an update to the Committee at the end of the financial year.
- 1.3 Shortly after the September update the Skills and Employability Officer left Maidstone Borough Council. The post was transferred to the Economic Development Department of the Council. The post was vacant until March 2014.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to consider the update that will be given from John Foster, Economic Development Manager, and Abi Lewis, Economic Development Officer, and make recommendations accordingly.

3. Employability and Skills Projects

- 3.1 A copy of the report to Committee that was submitted by the Skills and Employability Officer on 24 September 2014 can be found in **Appendix A**.
- 3.2 In the verbal update given by the Skills and Employability Officer to the committee, it was explained that the following projects were being progressed:
 - Offering Council Work Experience placements to people not in employment, education or training;
 - A mentoring scheme to provide support, including CV advice and practice interviews, to provide ongoing support for those not in employment, education or training;
 - Visiting local businesses to generate interest in the scheme; and
 - Working with local businesses to identify their needs and help them access government initiatives and funding to take on people who are not in education, employment or training.

- 3.3 As the post that is responsible for Skills and Employability has been vacant for six months, the Committee might want to consider what progress has been made on these projects in the interim.
- 3.4 The responsibility for Skills and Employability has now been passed to the Economic Development Department. The Committee may want to consider whether this will change the priorities and projects for the role.

4. Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 4.1 The Committee will consider reports that deliver against the following Council priority:
- 'For Maidstone to have a growing economy.'
- 4.2 The Strategic Plan sets the Council's key objectives for the medium term and has a range of objectives which support the delivery of the Council's priorities. Actions to deliver these key objectives may therefore include work that the Committee will consider over the next year.

5. Background Documents

- 5.1 Appendix A: Report of Skills and Employability Officer 24/09/13