

BUSINESS SKILLS AND TRAINING REVIEW

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide Scrutiny members with the opportunity to hear from the portfolio holder for education and skills at Buckinghamshire County Council, Cllr Mike Appleyard. During the skills discussion at the last meeting on 25th March, it was felt that there was a disconnect between the education system locally and the needs of employers, especially around preparing school leavers for work and making them aware of alternative training and career options..
- 1.2 To question the Councillor on aspects of concern which were raised during the meeting and were contained within the letter sent by the Cllr Pearl Lewis, as Chair of AVDC's scrutiny committee.

2. Recommendation

That Scrutiny Committee is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the comments of the Buckinghamshire County Council and make any appropriate recommendations for action
- 2.2 Consider inviting the Councillor back to update the Scrutiny Committee on progress made within 6 months

3. Summary

- 3.1 See letter attached

AYLESBURY VALE DISTRICT COUNCIL



Councillor Pearl Lewis LUFFIELD ABBEY WARD

Address: 1 Bristle Hill, Buckingham, Bucks MK18 1EZ
Telephone: 07752149939
Email: plewis@aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk
Website: www.pearllewis.yourcllr.com www.aylesburyvaledc.gov.uk

Dear Cllr Appleyard

As chair of AVDC's Economy and Business Development Scrutiny Committee, I would like to invite you to our next meeting on 4th June at 1830 at the Gateway offices.

Our Committee has been considering the issue of what businesses need in terms of skills and what stakeholders and educational institutions are doing to respond to the needs of businesses.

At our last meeting on 25th March, we had representation from Heather Dean representing Bucks Thames Valley LEP and BBF and other partners from the College, Arla, the University Technical College and Aylesbury Training Group.

During the ensuing debate and from previous discussions, it became evident that businesses felt that some school leavers were not suitably 'work ready' and some also lacked basic skills. Members were also keen to hear what the County and schools were doing to prepare schoolchildren with disabilities to be able to follow a career.

Members expressed disappointment that there was seemingly such a wide disconnect between education and employment and welcomed any initiative that would redress the balance. Other issues of concern were as follows:

- Members expressed an interest on knowing more about what can be done to tackle the 30% of young people that had no interest in participating in any training and what schools could do, at a lower level to encourage participation.
- Schools that pushed pupils towards university rather than promoting alternative and equal route towards NVQ training or alternatives to the grammar school system, such as the University Technical College or apprenticeships. Consequently, it was felt that the area was producing a number of students that graduated with a degree in a diverse subject that did little to enhance their work ready skills or attractiveness to potential employers. Members were of the opinion that Bucks County Council Education should be asked to give their opinions/reasons as to why the education system was working in this way.
- Schools and employers should also be encouraged to spread the message to parents that young people can benefit from NVQ/Diploma qualifications or apprenticeship training.
- Availability of apprenticeships needed to be made more accessible and better exposure given to encourage young people to take up the training being offered.

We would appreciate your response and acknowledge that there are elections pending

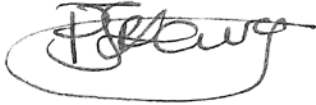


INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



on 2nd May. Nevertheless we wanted to allow you due notice as we would like to hear from the respective portfolio holder and officer at the County Council. I look forward to hearing from you and am happy to elucidate further if you need.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pearl Lewis', enclosed within a hand-drawn oval.

Cllr Pearl Lewis
Chair of the Economy and Business Development Scrutiny Committee

cc. Cllr Valerie Letheren, Ms Sue Imbriano



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

