



Powys Public Service Board Scrutiny Committee

Scrutiny Observations to the Lead Officer and Chair of Powys PSB regarding progress on Step 6:

The Public Service Board Scrutiny Committee met on the 3rd October 2019 and received a presentation on Step 6:

- Develop a holistic approach to skills and lifelong learning, which offers a range of formal and informal opportunities, including apprenticeships and traineeships

The Public Service Board Scrutiny Committee thank Jayne Bevan, Strategic Business and Programme Manager for attending scrutiny on behalf of the Step Lead Dr Caroline Turner.

Scrutiny make the following observations:

The Committee heard that as it would not be possible to fulfil this step in isolation the Learning and Skills Partnership Board had set up a multi-agency group Positive Pathways Powys which was attended by partners including the Cambrian Training Company, Powys County Council, NPTC, a number of Secondary School representatives, Careers Wales and PAVO. The absence of Powys Teaching Health Board (PTHB) was queried as representatives from PTHB were aware that the organisation was undertaking a considerable amount on training and workforce planning. It appeared that the PTHB had been invited to attend this group but had not taken up the invitation. Scrutiny Members also observed that other PSB Members would have employment needs which went beyond what might be traditionally expected for example, the Fire Service also needed ICT staff, administrators and mechanics and not just Fire Fighters.

The Committee were given details of the successful Careers Festival held annually in the Showground where pupils from years 9,10 and 12 from Powys schools were invited to attend with subsidised transport provided. Requests from a small number of out of county providers (local authority schools in Ceredigion and Bedstone College in Shropshire) to attend had been accepted but these were offered the quieter time slots and did not receive subsidised transport. However, it was noted that young people attending out of county sixth form provision had not been invited to attend.

It was noted that as the Careers Festival attracted secondary students from across the county there was an ideal opportunity for the PSB to undertake engagement with this age group should this be needed.

The Committee heard that an Adult Learning Partnership had also been created involving providers such as Libraries, NPTC and Aberystwyth University but that it was acknowledged that further work was needed in this area.

The Committee heard that links were being made with the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership (RLSP) under the Mid Wales Growth Deal. At present the RLSP only includes providers and the local authority but it will be necessary to include private sector members.

The Committee drew attention to the difficulties faced by young people accessing education, apprenticeships and employment which links to Step 3. Whilst some young people had access to family or business transport this was not the case for all young people and was a barrier to taking up opportunities.

The Committee were advised that a Skills and Employability Strategy had been drafted in response to the skills shortages identified by partners.

Recommended that:

- The Step Lead examine the membership of the various multi-agency groups working towards this Step to ensure all appropriate partners are invited and encouraged to attend to gain maximum value from joint working
- That consideration is given to providing an opportunity for Powys learners who attend out of county sixth form provision to attend the Careers Festival
- That the PSB take the opportunity to engage with young people at the Careers Festival if engagement is needed at that time
- That the further work acknowledged as necessary in relation to the Adult Community Learning Partnership is defined together with a timeframe for implementation
- That the links with the Regional Learning and Skills Partnership as part of Step 10 (delegated to the Mid Wales Growth Deal) are supported
- That the Step 3 Lead is advised of the need for young people to have the transport opportunities to access education, training and employment.
- That consideration is given to joining the current separate but related workstreams relating to workforce undertaken by the PSB and RPB
- That the Scrutiny Committee be given an opportunity to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of the draft Skills and Employability Strategy.

Membership of the Public Service Board Scrutiny Committee on 3rd October 2019: Neil Evans (Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service) (Chair), Angela Davies (Powys County Council), Trish Buchan (Powys Teaching Health Board), Owen James (Powys Teaching Health Board), Ian Rowat (Brecon Beacons National Park), County Councillor A Williams (Powys County Council) and Ruth Parry-Wright (PAVO).