

Headline briefing for Overview and Scrutiny

Cllr Goldberg, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Social Inclusion and Sustainability

I have been asked by the Chair to provide a headline briefing to members of Overview and Scrutiny committee, and specifically to give an outline of the lead responsibilities.

The role is very light on service delivery so there is very little which can be directly measured in terms of outputs and while a significant part of the role covers my work on Sustainability and Carbon Reduction and this is a central plank of our economic development strategy – I have been told that this is not something the committee would like to explore tonight.

So in a nutshell what is the challenge?

Currently Haringey enjoys the third lowest level of job density at just 0.44 jobs per resident. While there are very few boroughs which have a higher than 1 job per resident, this does go some way to explain why we experience poor economic resilience and higher levels of unemployment.

I am very clear that the primary task of the role is to make sure we deliver a fully employed Haringey. This means tackling worklessness.

There are therefore two key elements to our challenge – which is about identifying the right interventions on both the supply and demand side of the labour market. In plain speaking this means making sure we have the people with the skills and talent to compete for the jobs both in Haringey and more importantly the rest of London, and making sure that Haringey itself is a provider of opportunities that is less reliant on the public sector opportunities.

On the demand side we are therefore looking at issues of business support, identify sectors we wish to target (a micro-industrial strategy of sorts eg design, greentech, fashion and textile), removing barriers to doing business (eg local regulation), high street regeneration and support, protecting and growing employment land (a planning issue). Without these we risk becoming a dormitory borough – and there is little evidence to suggest that stadium led regeneration schemes on their own deliver the kind of economic change we want to see. In particular is the need to ensure we provide the right mix of job opportunities which means something more than the retail, construction and hospitality jobs we are likely to see with the current plans.

On the supply side there are two fundamental key issues. We are unlikely to be able to create the quantity of jobs in Haringey to clear unemployment alone and even if we could it would be unrealistic to expect every single one of those jobs to go to a Haringey resident. We therefore need to ensure our residents and most critically our young people have the right skills to compete not just for jobs in Haringey but in the rest of London too.

This means looking at primarily our post-16 offer, which includes the Adult Learning Service, the FE and sixth form, the UTC that is offering and we are working to deliver further choice. It should be noted that the largest provider of post-16 opportunities is also out of borough in the form of City and Islington College and this is informative itself of the way we need to approach the challenge. Finally I am keen to ensure we identify and promote apprenticeship opportunities which a good pathway to secure employment.