

Minister Joe McHugh T.D.,
Minister for Education and Skills,
Department of Education and Skills,
Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1,
D01 RC96.

29th January 2019

Dear Minister Joe McHugh,

I am writing to you regarding the outcomes and recommendations from the Dublin City Apprenticeship Summit which Dublin City Council hosted in City Hall on Wednesday 21st November 2018.

The Summit Series is an initiative of the Economic Development and Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) of Dublin City Council aimed at highlighting and encouraging discussion around the relevant issues facing the City.

The Apprenticeship Summit was informed by research carried out by the Economic Development Office, facilitated a sharing of ideas between the leading stakeholders in the Apprenticeship arena on the current status and possible future direction of apprenticeships. 13 speakers from higher and further education bodies, business groups, academia, industry, employee bodies and SOLAS contributed.

As a follow up to the Summit, the Economic Development Office produced an Outcomes Report outlining the contributions and key points from each of the contributions. This report was disseminated to all who attended the Summit and is attached for your information.

Following on from the Summit, the Economic Development and Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee advocates the following issues which emerged as key areas to be addressed; -

- 1) Arrangements need to be in place for apprentices who are made redundant prior to the completion of their apprenticeship to enable the certainty around the completion of their qualifications.
- 2) Promotion of apprenticeships in schools to change the perception that apprenticeships are low skilled or low paid. Apprenticeship fairs in second level institutions, support of Ireland Skills Live Event and a web portal should be considered.
- 3) Training of teachers in schools regarding the benefits of the Apprenticeship System. In the first instance for career guidance teachers but ultimately for all teachers.
- 4) Support for SMEs who employ apprentices, particularly in the initial years, needs to be addressed. This could be in the form of flexible apprenticeship sharing arrangements as well as financial support or tax credits.
- 5) Examine how the formal education portion of the training is delivered to better suit both the apprentices and their employers.
- 6) Examine the minimum educational requirements which may be proving a barrier in some cases.
- 7) Examine the financial costs and related supports to the apprentices including training fees, insurance etc.
- 8) Encourage government, both local and national, to expand the breath of apprenticeships on offer and embrace and develop new types.

- 9) Address the reasons why certain sectors of society are under-represented. These include those with disabilities, long term unemployed or disengaged from the labour market, immigrants and women.
- 10) Provide comprehensive data on the outcomes for apprentices to inform stakeholders and direct targeted policy.

I look forward to hearing your responses to the issues outlined above and would be happy to provide any further information you may seek to help in this regard.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr. Deirdre Heney
Chair, Economic Development & Enterprise Strategic Policy Committee
Dublin City Council