

Director: Sue Cooke, Executive Head of Economic Services
Author: Michelle Burton, Dixie Potter



Report to: Employment and Skills Panel
Date: 1 September 2017
Subject: Employability, Accessing Jobs and Realising Potential

1 Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- Consult the Panel on the work to progress the priorities and actions in the “Employability, Accessing Jobs and Realising Potential” priority of the Employment and Skills Plan;
- Seek Panel endorsement for the proposed approach to carry out a small pilot regarding ‘social prescribing’, focussing on over 50’s.

2 Advisory Group Report

2.1 The meeting of the advisory group scheduled for August was cancelled as the majority of members were unavailable.

2.2 At its next meeting, the group will receive more information on Jobcentre Plus’s new Personal Support Package and will consider the implications of the 2017/18 labour market analysis for this priority area.

3 Work and Health Pilot

3.1 At its meeting in May 2017, the advisory group recommended that the final phase of the Headstart project should focus on piloting activity to support individuals aged 50 or over experiencing mental health issues to remain in work. This group has been identified as experiencing particular barriers to accessing and remaining in employment. The outcome of this pilot would be shared with stakeholders to inform the direction of employment policy development in Leeds City Region.

3.2 An exercise has been carried out to identify areas where a pilot could be carried out and a number of options have been considered. The recommended approach is to work with City of York Council to pilot a “50+ social prescribing service”, working with GPs, individuals and businesses to find the best way to remain in work, using both clinical and non-clinical intervention. Delivery will be via a Learning and Work Assessor within the GP surgery, enabling GPs to refer at the time of need. The aim of

the project is to test the approach and assess whether it does enable individuals to remain in work and save GP time and resource.

- 3.3 A partnership with City of York Council is recommended because existing relationships have already been established with a GP surgery ensuring a smooth transition, a project management team is in place within the Council to deliver the pilot project, and there isn't any activity currently taking place so additionality can be demonstrated.

4 In-Work Progression

- 4.1 The LEP published a report in July 2017 exploring approaches to progression from low pay. The report is available to view here <http://www.the-lep.com/LEP/media/New/Enterprise%20Advisers/Report-Progression-from-low-pay-in-Leeds-City-Region.pdf> and shows that a sector-based approach to support could help to address in-work poverty in the City Region. The report concluded that a sector-based approach provided a logical and tailored point of entry through which to support businesses to improve staff progression and, in turn, address low pay and in-work poverty.

- 4.2 At the annual LCR Skills Network conference, a £2m European Social Funded project "More Skills, Better Jobs" was launched. This project will be delivered by the West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges with the aim of tackling in-work poverty through skills development. The project will pilot approaches to in-work progression and will implement sectoral approaches, targeting individuals who don't traditionally engage with training as well as engaging with employers directly.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 The Panel is asked to note the update on in-work progression and Headstart, and to give their views on the proposed approach to piloting 'social prescribing', focussing on over 50's.