

EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS COMMITTEE

**MEETING TO BE HELD AT 2.00 PM ON THURSDAY, 13 JULY 2023
IN MEETING ROOM 1, WELLINGTON HOUSE, WELLINGTON STREET,
LEEDS LS1 1DE**

A G E N D A

Please note that this meeting will be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the Combined Authority's internet site. At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed. Generally, the public seating areas will not be filmed; however, by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting. If you have any queries regarding this, please contact Governance Services on 0113 251 7220.

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**
- 3. EXEMPT INFORMATION - POSSIBLE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**
- 4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 MARCH 2023**
(Pages 1 - 8)
- 5. CHAIR'S UPDATE**
- 6. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS**
(Pages 9 - 18)
- 7. INFLUENCING THE SYSTEM**
(Pages 19 - 24)
- 8. DEVOLVED ADULT SKILLS**
(Pages 25 - 68)
- 9. CURRENT AND FUTURE EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT ACTIVITY AT THE WEST YORKSHIRE LEVEL**

(Pages 69 - 84)

**10. DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OF REGIONALLY
COORDINATED CAREERS ACTIVITY**

(Pages 85 - 94)

11. SKILLS SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYERS

(Pages 95 - 108)

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'BSM' in a stylized, cursive font, with a horizontal line underneath.

**Managing Director
West Yorkshire Combined Authority**



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY, 23 MARCH 2023 AT WELLINGTON HOUSE,
LEEDS, LS1 2DE**

Present:

Councillor James Lewis (Chair)	Leeds City Council
Professor Shirley Congdon (Deputy Chair)	Private Sector (LEP Board)
Councillor Silvia Dacre	Calderdale Council
Councillor Jessica Lennox	Leeds City Council
Milton Brown	Private Sector Representative
Tim Craven	Private Sector Representative
Nav Chohan	Advisory Representative (West Yorkshire Skills Partnership)
Alex Miles	Advisory Representative (West Yorkshire Skills Partnership)

In attendance:

Jo Ledgard	DWP
Phillip Day	TUC
Frances Burkinshaw	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Michelle Burton	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Peter Glover	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Michelle Hunter	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Sonya Midgley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Phillipa Syers	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Philip Witcherley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Janette Woodcock	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

32. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors - Imran Khan (Bradford) Lynn Masterman (Wakefield), Graham Turner (Kirklees) and Andrew Waller (York). Private Sector Representatives - Mark Cowgill, Orlagh Hunt, Richard Mason, Liz Needleman, Claire Paxman, Michelle Chappell Dixon, Phil Lautman. Advisory Representatives - Tim Thornton (West Yorkshire Skills Partnership), David Cooper (Headteachers Network), Peter O'Brien (Higher Education), Colin Booth (Further Education), Mike Curtis (NHS), Sharon Riding (DWP) and Bill Adams (TUC).

33. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Members of the committee were asked to make decisions that related to Skills Bootcamps. In the interests of transparency, members with an interest in the delivery of Skills Bootcamps were asked to declare.

Cllr Silvia Dacre (Calderdale Council) declared an interest.

34. Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There was no exempt information requiring the exclusion of the press and public.

35. Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 January 2023

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2023 be approved.

36. Chair's Update

The Chair read out a statement regarding the pre-election period and advised members that the period commenced the day of this meeting.

Members noted that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Jeremy Hunt, delivered the Spring Budget, setting out measures to reduce inflation and debt and grow the economy. The budget featured a number of employment and skills measures, intended to support people to (re)-enter work, increase their working hours and extend their working lives.

The Chair requested that the Head of Employment and Skills Policy present the Budget Update as follows: -

Skills

- There would be £34.4m funding for an additional 8,000 Skills Bootcamps placements in 2024-25, to reskill in high value sectors such as construction and digital.
- The expansion of the Sector-Based Work Academy Programme (SWAPs) placements by 40,000 over 2023/24 and 2024/25, with £28.8m new funding to provide those who were currently out of work with the training and work experience they needed to secure careers in high-demand sectors.
- An extension of the government's support for Ukrainians who had arrived in the UK under the Ukraine Visa Schemes. Along with £11.5m to offer intensive English language courses and employment support to up to 10,000 individuals.

Work and Health

- The Health and Disability White Paper published on 15 March, set out plans to reform the welfare system and make it better to meet the needs of disabled people in the United Kingdom. This included removing the Work Capability Assessment (meaning that claimants

would now only have to undertake one health assessment rather than two) and support claimants to secure work without fear of losing their financial support.

- Pilot WorkWell Partnerships for delivering integrated work and health support in local areas. Linking JobCentres, health services and other local organisations to provide 'wraparound' health support for jobseekers, benefits claimants and those at risk of falling out of work because of their health condition.
- Introducing a Universal Support programme matching disabled and sick people who want to work with existing job vacancies, and ensure they are supported to succeed in work. Ambition to support 50,000 people annually with a £4,000 allocation per person
- New funding to expand an existing programme that provided tailored Work Coach support to help disabled people find suitable work.
- Expansion of the existing Individual Placement and Support scheme, which supported people with severe mental illness into employment.
- Introduction of employment advisors in Musculoskeletal Health services (MSK), helping individuals with MSK conditions to return to or remain in employment and scaling up MSK hubs in community settings so that more people could access treatment.
- Digitising the NHS Health Check to identify and prevent more cases of cardiovascular disease; and the introduction of world-leading free access for digital resources for management of mental health and MSK conditions on the NHS website and NHS app.
- Expansion of funding for the forthcoming SME subsidy pilot for occupational health services and bring forward two new consultations on how best to increase occupational health across UK employers.

Over 50s

- Enhanced digital midlife MOT offer and expansion of the Job Centre Plus midlife MOT offer, which provided in-person financial planning and awareness sessions for Universal Claimants (UC) aged over 50.
- Returnerships, this was a new offer targeted at the over-50s, which would bring together existing skills programmes, focusing on flexibility and previous experience to reduce training length. They would promote accelerated apprenticeships, Sector-Based Work Academy Programme placements and Skills Bootcamps to the over-50s.
- Pension Tax Changes to incentivise staying in/returning to work:
 - Increase to the Annual Allowance, limit on annual tax-relieved pension savings, from £40,000 to £60,000 from April 2023, and remove the Lifetime Allowance charge.
 - Increase to the Money Purchase Annual Allowance, a restriction of annual tax-relieved pension savings once an individual has flexibly accessed their pension saving, from £4,000 to £10,000.

Universal Credit (UC) Claimants

- Increase to the Administrative Earnings Threshold (AET), the minimum amount a person can earn without being asked to meet regularly with their Work Coach, from the equivalent of 15 to 18 hours of earnings at the National Living Wage for an individual claimant. The couples AET, where a second member of a household may not be asked to look for work if their partner is working, would be removed entirely.
- Expanding work search requirements to encourage over 700,000 lead carers of children on UC to look for work or increase their hours and would receive additional Work Coach support to do so.
- Strengthening the application of the UC sanctions regime.
- Extending the Youth Offer until 2028, maintaining job search support for young people who were Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) and expand eligibility for the Youth Offer to support young people on UC who were not currently searching for work, including young parents and carers.
- Expanding the Additional Jobcentre Support Pilot to test how intensive support for a period of two weeks can further support claimants, who remained unemployed after 13 and 26 weeks into their UC claim or on low earnings, into work.

Childcare

- Working parents would be able to access 30 hours of free childcare per week, for 38 weeks of the year, from when a child was 9 months old to commencing school. This would be rolled out in stages from April 2024.
- Uplift to the hourly rate paid to providers to deliver existing free hours offers (£204m of additional funding this year, £288m by 2024-25).
- Confirmed changes to the staff-to-child ratios for 2-year-olds, moving from 1:4 to 1:5.
- Start-up grants for new childminders, including for those who chose to register with a childminder agency.
- Local Authorities in England to receive £289m over two academic years, from September 2024, to set up 'wraparound' childcare in schools.
- Parents on UC would receive childcare support up-front when moving into work/increasing their hours, rather than in arrears.
- Increase of the U C childcare cap from £646 to £951 for one child and £1,108 to £1,630 for two children.

In addition to the workforce measures, the Chancellor also announced West Yorkshire as one of the places to get a new Investment Zone with £80m over 5 years. £35m flexible spend, split 40:60 between resource spending and capital spending.

Local Skills Improvement Plans

Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) were funded by the Department for Education (DfE) to provide an agreed set of actionable priorities that employers, providers, and stakeholders in a local area could get behind to drive change. They were led by employer representative organisations and in West Yorkshire this was Mid-Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce and West and North Yorkshire Chamber.

Martin Hathaway, Managing Director of Mid-Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce, and the nominated representative on the Employment and Skills Committee on behalf of the LSIP, gave a verbal update to the Committee.

Officers of the Combined Authority and Local Authorities are members of the (advisory) board of the LSIP. The Chamber has been made aware around concerns about the scope, timescales and coordinating messages to providers and business, including some escalation to DfE. A report on the LSIP's priorities is due to be submitted to DfE at the end of March. Chamber representatives have been invited to attend a Directors of Development meeting but are not available until the May meeting

In addition, The DfE had written to colleges inviting their applications for the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) to support the LSIP. Members were advised that applications were due before the timescales for the LSIF report.

In addition to the above, committee members discussed and provided comments which were duly noted by officers.

37. Green Jobs Taskforce

The Committee considered a progress report regarding the progress and next steps of the Mayor's Green Taskforce.

Over the last year the Mayor had led a Taskforce on green jobs and skills. As outlined in the submitted report, the Taskforce sought to bring together a range of experts from business, education and training to unlock the potential in West Yorkshire to develop the right skills needed to achieve our climate ambitions.

The Committee was presented with an overview of the Taskforce's work, along with its draft report and recommendations. Members discussed the report and the next steps to support the development of a robust action plan to deliver on the recommendations that would be overseen by the Employment and Skills Committee. It was anticipated that the draft report would be published in Summer 2023.

Members commented that this is a huge issue to be tackled as skills are needed to respond to demand but it is difficult to encourage people when funding is not forthcoming and there are limited funding resources within the region. It was felt it was a great opportunity to link to Climate work and maybe students could be invited to be involved.

It was highlighted that at the TUC Annual Conference, Green Jobs was on the agenda for discussion and all delegates were fully engaged.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the submitted report be noted.
- (ii) That the update on the work of the Green Jobs Taskforce and feedback from the Committee on the considerations and next steps be noted.

38. Adult Skills and Approval of Bootcamp Funding

The Committee received a progress report regarding the latest data on the challenges West Yorkshire faced in Adult Skills. They were provided with an overview of Combined Authority led provision which tackled these issues, as well as an outline of future activity on adult skills in the region. Members were also provided with the Adult Education Budget End of Year Report, which outlined the progress made in year 1 of devolution. Approval was also sought from members to extend the delivery period for the Department for Education (DfE) funded Bootcamps from September 2023 to September 2024 and to accept and spend an additional £3,649 for the next wave of delivery, as shown in Appendix 3 of the submitted report.

At the last meeting of the Committee, it was agreed that different employment and skills topics be considered, starting with the evidence base and current labour market information, current delivery activity and the next steps to address gaps and innovations prompted by the labour market intelligence and performance of current programmes and landscape.

The Head of Employment and Skills introduced the paper to members. Officers provided a summary of the labour market context and the end of year report for Adult Education Budget (AEB). This was followed by an outline of the recommendation for Skills Bootcamps.

It was questioned if there was already a programme in place for graduates and SME's as there needs to be a transition relationship in place. It was felt that businesses are concerned as to where they can obtain guidance.

Officers responded to say there is a pilot for 50 graduates.

It was noted that this would be a broad endorsement and will be followed by a workshop to work through the detail.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That comments from the Committee on the Adult Education Budget End of Year report be noted.
- (iii) That the following recommendations be approved by the Committee.

The change request to the Skills Bootcamps programme to accept and spend up to £3,649,369 from the Department of Education, increasing the total programme value to £7,338,369 and to extend the delivery timeframes from September 2023 to September 2024.

Future approvals be made in accordance with the assurance pathway set out in Appendix 2 of the submitted report. This would be subject to the scheme remaining within the tolerances outlined in the report.

- (iv) That the Committee approve the request to accept and spend 'Wave 4' funding for Skills Bootcamps and to extend the delivery timescales from September 2023 to September 2024.

39. Future Funding Priorities

Members considered a report seeking endorsement to proceed with the development of employment and skills packages for future funding and received an update on UKSPF Pillar 3 – People and Skills with further information to be brought to a future meeting of the Employment and Skills Committee.

It was reported that the next phase of support for Investment Priority 2 - Skills and Training for People would focus on digital and green skills and employer support. The submitted report provided an overview of the rationale and envisaged outcomes for the proposed skills packages across two key themes and skills interventions:

1. Workforce Development and Growth
 - a. Digital and green skills offer for businesses
 - b. Mayor's SME graduate pilot
 - c. Skills support for employers
2. Workforce for the Future
 - a. Digital Inclusion
 - b. Regional careers campaign
 - c. Green skills engagement with young people from primary age
 - d. Further education development fund
 - e. Digital Workforce for the future

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the development of employment and skills packages for future funding be endorsed.
- (iii) That the update on UKSPF Pillar 3 – People and Skills be noted.

40. Monitoring Indicators

The Committee considered a verbal report which presented the latest State of the Region monitoring indicators, relating to employment and skills, together with an analysis of more time timely labour market indicators.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the latest intelligence relating to employment and skills in West Yorkshire against the current performance of West Yorkshire against the State of the Region indicators be noted.



Report to: Employment and Skills Committee

Date: 13 July 2023

Subject: **Governance Arrangements**

Director: Alan Reiss, Chief Operating Officer

Author: Caroline Allen, Head of Legal and Governance Services

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To advise the Employment and Skills Committee of the governance arrangements approved by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (the Combined Authority) at the Annual Meeting on 22 June 2023 in respect of the Committee.

2. Information

- 2.1 At the Annual Meeting on the 22 June 2023 the Combined Authority resolved to appoint the Employment and Skills Committee on the **terms of reference** attached at **Appendix 1** to this report.
- 2.2 The **quorum** of the Committee is three voting members to include two Combined Authority Members or Local Authority co-optees.
- 2.3 The Combined Authority appointed Councillor James Lewis as Chair of the Committee and LEP Board Member Professor Shirley Congdon as Deputy Chair.
- 2.4 A table showing the Committee's membership is attached as **Appendix 2**, the table also sets out the voting arrangements across the different sectors of membership.

2.5 The Combined Authority also agreed meeting dates for the Committee as follows:

- 13 July 2023
- 19 October 2023
- 25 January 2024
- 28 March 2024

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

3.1 The terms of reference require this, and all committees, to promote tackling the climate emergency implications in its actions.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

4.1 The terms of reference require this, and all committees, to promote inclusive growth in its actions.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1 The terms of reference require this, and all other committees, to consider equality and diversity in its actions and decision making.

5.2 The diversity of the committee will be kept under review and steps will be taken, in future recruitment campaigns, to ensure as far as possible that the membership is representative of the population we serve.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

8.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

9.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

10.1 That the Committee notes the governance arrangements approved by the Combined Authority at the Annual Meeting on 22 June 2023.

11. Background Documents

11.1 There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1: Terms of Reference for the Employment and Skills Committee

Appendix 2: Membership Table

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Part 3

Section 2.3 - Terms of Reference

Employment and Skills Committee

The Employment and Skills Committee is authorised:

1. To carry out any Non-Mayoral Function¹ of the Combined Authority relating to **employment, skills² and adult education**, including:
 - a) progressing the elements of the vision and policy framework of the Combined Authority that fall within the remit of this committee, by:
 - approving, amending or revoking any policy, investment priorities, strategy or plan,³ or
 - delivering, monitoring and reviewing the outcomes and impact of any policy, investment priorities, strategy or plan.
 - b) progressing those elements of the Mayor's pledges that fall within the remit of this committee, ensuring alignment with the vision and policy framework of the Combined Authority where appropriate,
 - c) submitting bids for devolved and other funding,
 - e) working with key partners to:
 - develop and promote a shared understanding of and approach to the demand for employment and skills,
 - influence the provision of employment, education and training provision, and
 - develop and promote coherent strategies and policies.
 - f) delivering and overseeing any project or programme in accordance with

¹ Functions in this context are to be construed in a broad and inclusive fashion, and as including the exercise of the ancillary powers under Section 113A of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

² The Employment and Skills Committee is the Skills Advisory Panel for the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership

³ With the exception of any major policy, investment priorities, strategy or plan reserved to the Combined Authority - see further Section 2.2 of Part 3 of the Constitution - and subject to any direction by the Mayor that any decision on a policy, investment priorities, strategy or plan be referred to the Combined Authority for determination.

- the governance and assurance arrangements for administering the adult education and skills functions of the Adult Education Budget⁴, or
- the Leeds City Region Assurance Framework, including the following where authorised by a bespoke approval pathway and approval route for a scheme (after decision-point 2 only):
 - making a decision to progress the scheme^{5,6} or
 - making any recommendation to the Combined Authority⁷ or the Mayor⁸ about progressing the scheme, and
 - reviewing the scheme's impact.

with the **exception** of

- any function which requires a Statutory Consent⁹ where that consent has yet to be given¹⁰,
 - any matter related to a Non-Mayoral Function conferred by the 2021 Order, which the Mayor has directed should be referred to the Combined Authority for determination¹¹, and
 - any function which is reserved to the Combined Authority¹².
2. To advise the Combined Authority in respect of any Non-Mayoral Function which relates to, or impacts on employment, skills or adult education.

⁴ The Combined Authority has separately approved governance and assurance arrangements for adult education functions which reserve specified functions to the Combined Authority and delegate specified functions to the Chief Executive – see further the Leeds City Region Assurance Framework.

⁵ including determining change requests

⁶ with the exception of any decision which would result in a revised financial approval which exceeds the cumulative total of the financial approval and tolerance threshold agreed by the Combined Authority at decision point 2 (or decision point 3) by more than 25%, in which case the decision must be referred to the Combined Authority

⁷ or to any other committee or relevant officer with delegated authority to make the decision

⁸ The Mayor will determine any aspect of a scheme which is a Mayoral Function

⁹ These are specified functions conferred by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (Election of Mayor and Functions) Order 2021 - see further the Access to Information Rules in Part 4 of the Constitution

¹⁰ In relation to any function in respect of which a Statutory Consent has been given, the Committee must exercise their authority in accordance with the terms of any Statutory Consent

¹¹ The 2021 Order provides that these matters require the support of the Mayor.

¹² The functions reserved to the Combined Authority are set out in Section 2.2 of Part 3 of the Constitution, and include the approval of any major policy, investment priorities, strategy or plan, including the Adult Education Budget Strategy.

3. To advise the Mayor in respect of any Mayoral General Function¹³ which relates to, or impacts on employment, skills or adult education.
4. To liaise with the Business, Economy and Innovation Committee to secure jobs, skills and training and ensure good employment.
5. To promote, in collaboration with other committees,
 - equality and diversity,
 - inclusive growth,
 - tackling the climate emergency, and
 - the strategic alignment of the Combined Authority's policies, investment priorities, strategies and plans.
6. To respond to any report or recommendation from an overview and scrutiny committee¹⁴.

Document version control	
Municipal Year:	2023-24
Version:	1 - 23/24
Document approved by:	The Combined Authority
Date:	22 June 2023
To be of effect from:	22 June 2023

¹³ Mayoral General Functions are the functions of the Combined Authority which are exercisable only by the Mayor, other than PCC Functions. These are conferred by the 2021 Order (see further Table D in Section 3.1.1 of Part 3 of the Constitution), or other legislation.

¹⁴ That is, any overview and scrutiny committee of the Combined Authority (in accordance with Scrutiny Standing Orders in Part 4 of the Constitution) or of any Constituent Council

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APPENDIX 2 – Membership Table

	CA Members (Voting)	Local Authority Co-optees (Voting except for York co-optee)	LEP Board Members (Non-voting except where Deputy Chair)	Private Sector Representatives (and their sector) (Non-Voting)	Advisory Representatives – ex-officio (Non-Voting)
Employment and Skills Committee	James Lewis (Portfolio Holder)	Bradford: Imran Khan (L) Calderdale: Silvia Dacre (L) Kirklees: Graham Turner (L) Leeds: Eleanor Thompson (L) Wakefield: Michael Graham (L) York: Peter Kilbane (L)	Shirley Congdon (Higher Education)	Milton Brown (Creative Industries) Michelle Chappell Dixon (Construction) Mark Cowgill (Digital) Tim Craven (Digital) Orlagh Hunt (Financial Services) Phill Lautman (Social Care) Claire Paxman (Manufacturing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Yorkshire Skills Partnership; Chair (Nav Chohan) • West Yorkshire Skills Partnership; 2 Deputy Chairs (Tim Thornton and Alex Miles) • Leeds City Region Headteachers Network; Rep (David Cooper) • Higher Education Rep (Peter O'Brien) • Further Education Rep (Colin Booth) • Yorkshire & Humber NHS; Local Director Y&H (to be confirmed) • Department of Work and Pensions; Rep (Sharon Riding) • Voluntary and Community Sector Representative (tbc) • Trades Union Congress, Yorkshire & the Humber (Bill Adams) • WY LSIP representative (Martin Hathaway)
<p>Chair: James Lewis</p> <p>Deputy Chair: Shirley Congdon</p>					
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Report to: Employment and Skills Committee

Date: 13 July 2023

Subject: **Influencing the System**

Director: Phil Witcherley, Interim Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills and Culture

Author: Sonya Midgley, Policy Manager (Skills)

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1. To provide an update to the Committee on the developments of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) which has been submitted to DfE for approval by the Chambers of Commerce in West Yorkshire, with Secretary of State for Education expected to approve plans in mid July. To seek any comments and recommendations from the Committee on the LSIP and next steps.

2. Information

Context

- 2.1 The government's 2021 White Paper *Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth* suggests that the existing skills system is not delivering the skills that the country needs.
- 2.2 In setting out its case for change, the White Paper points to significant deficits of the higher technical skills in disciplines like engineering and health that are needed to build a green economy, meet the health care needs of an ageing population and raise productivity and international competitiveness. This is borne out in West Yorkshire by evidence of the acute prevalence of skill shortage vacancies for professional level roles in engineering, health and information technology.

- 2.3 Labour market projections also indicate that demand for technical roles will grow strongly into the future. For example, the occupational category of *Science, research, engineering and technology professionals* is expected to see the biggest net growth in employment in West Yorkshire between 2020 and 2035, with 26,000 extra jobs predicted and 58,000 total job openings over the period when replacement demands are taken into account. The White Paper calls for increased investment in these technical skills both nationally and locally.
- 2.4 According to the White Paper another important example of skills mismatch arising out of the operation of the wider skills system is under-utilisation of the skills that individuals have developed, suggesting that these skills are poorly aligned with the needs of employers and the economy. This was noted in the adult skills paper submitted to the last meeting of the Committee. According to the Employer Skills Survey, around 30% of employers in West Yorkshire indicate that they employ staff with skills and qualifications in advance of those needed for the job. In addition, large numbers of people with higher level qualifications are employed in administrative, caring, retail and elementary roles (including storage and hospitality occupations) which do not have a formal requirement for these qualifications.
- 2.5 The White Paper argues that colleges and independent training providers do not have enough support and incentive to offer the high-value training and education that is needed to access technical careers. The findings of the [Augar Review](#) suggest that the existing funding system encourages providers to put on cheaper and lower-value courses which can be filled easily rather than responding effectively to labour market needs. The White Paper also calls for better articulation of employer skills needs and current gaps in provision so that providers can work together to more effectively meet local economic needs.

Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs)

- 2.6 LSIPs were introduced as part of the Department for Education's 'Skills for Jobs' white paper in January 2021 and subsequently piloted during November 2021 – March 2022.
- 2.7 Only Employer Representative Bodies (ERBs) were eligible to lead pilots, with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and MCAs expected to support ERBs and build on the work undertaken as Skills Advisory Panels (SAPs). This included regular analysis and reporting on the regional labour market and was overseen by this Committee in West Yorkshire. There was no trailblazer pilot in West Yorkshire, West Yorkshire Combined Authority provided a letter of support for a West Yorkshire pilot led by the Chambers at the time.
- 2.8 The aim of LSIPs is to increase the voice of the employer in the skills system as a key stakeholder to identify current and future local skills needs. The LSIP will need to set out what employers, training providers and stakeholders can

do to support the delivery of training provision to meet current and future skills needs.

- 2.9 Following the pilots, DfE designated 38 ERBs to lead a three year local skills improvement plan to run to March 2025, with regular reviews to ensure their relevance. In West Yorkshire, the LSIP is being led by West and North Yorkshire Chamber, with Mid Yorkshire Chamber.
- 2.10 Changes to the law have been made to ensure that there is a duty to cooperate for providers of post-16 technical education and demonstrate how they are doing this through Accountability Agreements with DfE; Ofsted inspections, annual reports, review of performance and the Department's Performance Dashboard.
- 2.11 Accountability statements are a new requirement for funding for post-16 technical education providers which were needed to be submitted by May 2023 against the draft LSIP priorities agreed at the end of March 2023.
- 2.12 The development of the LSIP has been led by the Chambers, with support from an advisory Board made up of members from the provider landscape, local and the Mayoral Combined Authority. The group has met regularly to provide support, advice and guidance to the Chambers and development of the plan.
- 2.13 The Chair of this Committee invited a senior representative to join the Committee to support integration and alignment of the plan with wider strategic priorities and devolved delivery of skills programmes to ensure the best use of resources in the Region. At the last meeting, this Committee was updated on the business engagement activity and the development of the plan, including its key priority sectors:

- Health and Social Care
- Engineering and advanced manufacturing
- Financial and professional services
- Low Carbon
- Digital and Technology
- Creative Industries
- Education
- Construction
- Transport and Logistics

and cross-cutting themes:

- Net zero transition and sustainability
- Transferable skills
- Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)
- Leadership and management

- 2.14 The draft plan was submitted to DfE on 31 May and is currently being reviewed by the Department before it can be shared more widely. Feedback is expected by ERBs by mid June 2023 including any requirements for further information, evidence or clarification demonstrate alignment with the statutory guidance and that the LSIP is fit for purpose before re-submission. The Secretary of State will approve LSIPs by 21st July before they are published on gov.uk at the end of July or October dependent on any revisions required.
- 2.15 In line with the published guidance, officers of the Combined Authority were asked to provide a statement submitted with the LSIP to confirm their involvement with the development.

Local Skills Investment Fund (LSIF)

- 2.16 The LSIF is intended to enable FE providers to support the delivery of LSIPs in an area. £80m of funding is available for 2023/24 with a 50:50 capital and revenue split, with £85m (capital) available the following year at the national level. A maximum amount is available based on the size of the working population, current skills attainment levels and productivity level of the area. Regional proposals cannot exceed these values.

LSIP Area	Funding Ceiling		
	2023-24	2024-25	Total
West Yorkshire	£3,383,296	£3,594,752	£6,978,048

- 2.17 The funding is intended for new investment in facilities and equipment, fund the delivery of new courses and curriculum, support college leadership, governance and teaching especially at levels 3-5.
- 2.18 The fund is a two-stage process that includes an expression of interest from a lead applicant by 20 June, with further guidance expected for stage 2. Up to £100,000 funding mobilisation finding is available to support the development of the second stage. Where more than one EOI is submitted in an area, the endorsing ERB will be asked to resubmit a single application form.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1. There are no climate emergency implications arising from this report. Net zero transition and sustainability are a cross cutting theme of the LSIP and the Region may benefit from funding for green skills through the LSIF if the lead provider is successful in their application to DFE.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1. There are no inclusive growth implications directly arising from this report.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1. There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report. Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is a cross cutting theme of the LSIP and the Region may benefit from funding for interventions with improved EDI outcomes through the LSIF if the lead provider is successful in their application to DFE.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1. There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

- 8.1. There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

- 9.1. No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1. That the Committee notes the contents of this report.

11. Background Documents

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

None.

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Report to: Employment and Skills Committee

Date: 13 July 2023

Subject: **Devolved Adult Skills**

Director: Philip Witcherley, Interim Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills and Culture

Author: Philippa Myers, Adult Skills Manager

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this Report

1.1 To provide updates on the Combined Authority’s work on adult skills programmes and ask the Committee for a steer on work in this area going forward.

1.2 Specifically, the report:

- Updates the committee on Multiply Project’s progress and performance in year
- Outlines the findings and recommendations of our Adult Education Budget Community Learning Review and seeks comments on this.
- Allows the committee the opportunity to comment and endorse on the next steps for UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) funding, its alignment with the Employment and Skills Pipeline and UKSPF Local Investment Plan aims.

2. Information

Evidence Base

- 2.1 The adult skills paper submitted to the Committee at its [last meeting in March](#), provides an overview of the evidence base pertaining to adult skills. In the following section the focus is on more specific evidence relating to numeracy (linking to the report on Multiply) plus Community Learning (linking to the report on the Community Learning Review).

Numeracy

- 2.2 As noted in the adult skills paper submitted to the Committee at its last meeting, West Yorkshire faces a basic skills challenge on a significant scale and a deficit of numeracy skills is a key element of that. According to small area estimates based on the Skills for Life Survey, 746,000 adults (aged 16-64) in West Yorkshire (52% of the total) are equipped with skills at Entry Level and below in respect of numeracy.
- 2.3 The Multiply programme targets adults (aged 19+) who lack a maths / numeracy qualification at Level 2. Data from the Department for Education shows that 23% of young people reach the age of 19 without achieving a Level 2 (GCSE equivalent) in maths (higher than the England average of 20%), rising to 27% in Bradford.
- 2.4 This data also highlights significant issues around equality, diversity and inclusion linked to numeracy:
- Women are consistently more likely to achieve a Level 2 in Maths by age 19 than men (WY: 24% vs 21%)
 - Young people eligible for free school meals are more than twice as likely to lack a Level 2 in Maths by age 19 than those not eligible (18% vs 43%)
 - 57% of young people with a Special Educational Need (SEN) lack a Level 2 in Maths by age 19 – more than three times as high as those without SEN, rising to more than three quarters of those with Education Health Care Plan
 - There are big differences between ethnic groups with regard to attainment of Maths Level 2 by age 19. National figures show that nearly 80% of young people of Gypsy Roma heritage lack this qualification.
- 2.5 There is significant demand among the public for support to improve numeracy skills. According to [national survey data](#) a third of people (36%) say they would like to improve their maths and numeracy skills, with women more than twice as likely as men to be anxious about using maths and numbers. There are a range of motivations for wishing to improve numeracy:
- 29% of people who want to improve their numeracy skills cite better money management as a reason.
 - 26% of people who want to improve their numeracy skills cite helping children with homework as a reason.
 - One in four people would be deterred from applying for a job if it listed using numbers and data as a requirement.

COMMUNITY LEARNING

- 2.6 A key purpose of Community Learning is to widen participation in learning, particularly among disadvantaged people who are least likely to get involved in learning.
- 2.7 The Combined Authority's [AEB End of Year Report](#) found that 36% of local participants in Community Learning were residents of the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods nationally. In addition, 22% of Community Learning enrolments were for learners with no prior formal qualifications and 47% were for learners with either no formal qualifications or a qualification below full Level 2.
- 2.8 Local Authorities are key strategic and delivery partners and take different approaches to commissioning - Calderdale, Kirklees and Leeds successfully deliver with a range of grassroots, voluntary sector organisations providing a reach to more reluctant learners often with multiple barriers. 62% of learners engaging with Bradford Adult Learning were resident in the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods compared with 41% across all AEB delivery. 28% of learners on AEB provision with Wakefield Adult Learning have learning difficulties and disabilities well above the 17% across all AEB.
- 2.9 There is also evidence of progression. During 2021/22, 11% of learners who enrolled for a Community Learning course subsequently enrolled on an Adult Skills course during that year; this is equivalent to 1,400 learners in absolute terms.
- 2.10 Looking at the broader picture relating to learner participation, [National survey data](#) shows that a minority (42%) of adults are currently in learning or have taken part in learning in the last three years. Social grade is a key predictor of participation in learning. Almost twice as many adults in the DE grade¹ have not participated in learning since leaving full-time education when compared to those in the AB grade (37 per cent compared to 19 per cent). Working status is another key predictor. Whereas the participation rate of those working full-time is 52% and is 49% for people who work part-time, it is only 22% for those who are not working and not seeking work. Moreover, respondents who are not seeking work are the group most likely to have not taken part in learning since leaving full-time education (45%).
- 2.11 Another objective of Community Learning is to improve confidence and to promote willingness to engage in learning. This is because the evidence suggests that those who are furthest away from learning face dispositional barriers and may benefit from support to understand the value of learning and

¹ Grade DE: Semi-skilled & unskilled manual occupations, Unemployed and lowest grade occupations
Grade AB: Higher & intermediate managerial, administrative, professional occupations.

to increase their confidence to learn. National survey data indicates that almost three in ten adults (29 per cent) who have not recently taken part in learning also said that nothing is preventing them from doing so and they don't want to. In addition, 29% of this group indicated that that they feel too old to take part in learning, whilst 10% said they lack confidence.

- 2.12 The same survey data shows that learning provides benefits across a range of areas, including health and wellbeing and developing stronger communities, both of which are objectives of Community Learning. Thirty-five per cent of recent learners said that learning had benefited their health and wellbeing, 22% said that their confidence had improved and 13% that they are more understanding of other people and cultures.
- 2.13 An Adult Skills Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) is in development ahead of procurement of AEB providers to commence delivery in academic year 2024/25. The intention will be to bring funding streams together through a single DPS, ensuring that there is a streamlined offer to the residents of West Yorkshire. The Combined Authority is keen to ensure that a balance is struck between management of risk and funding innovative, niche and locally based providers to deliver training through AEB.

Multiply

- 2.14 Multiply is an adult numeracy programme, led by the Department for Education (DfE) as part of the £2.6bn UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). West Yorkshire Combined Authority has been given an allocation of £12.4m for Multiply across 3 financial years. The funding is to engage more adults with numeracy levels below level 2 (GCSE C/4 pass) in informal learning to boost their maths skills for life and work.
- 2.15 Following consultation, the West Yorkshire Investment Plan was approved in June 2022 and accepted by the Department for Education in August. The Investment Plan outlines 3 key streams of activity:
- Strand 1 - Individual engagement - £4.7 million
 - Strand 2 - Business focussed activity - £3 million
 - Strand 3 - Capacity building for the sector - £3.6 million
- 2.16 The project faced significant challenges in year 1, predominantly based on timescales for implementation alongside lags in data receipt from Department for Education. Just under 2,000 individuals were supported by the fund in around 4 months of project activity. This equates to 82% of the DfE target in terms of engaging with individuals and providing numeracy support. This equates to 58% of the financial profile being met.
- 2.17 A report on the progress and performance made in year 1 is provided in **Appendix 1**.

Community Learning Review 2022

- 2.18 Community Learning is funded through the devolved **Adult Education Budget (AEB)**. The overall AEB fund is £66.4 million for academic year 2022/23, and supports learners through a range of programmes and access points, supporting them to increase their skills, and connecting them to further learning and employment opportunities.
- 2.19 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) is committed to reaching into its most disadvantaged communities and breaking down barriers which traditionally make it difficult for residents to engage with the skills system.
- 2.20 Community Learning is seen as a crucial, flexible fund, which is instrumental in engaging with the hardest to reach communities and individual, who will benefit significantly from skills development. The Community Learning allocation for 2022/23 is £8.7 million per annum. This value was protected in the WY AEB Strategy (September 2020), pending review.
- 2.21 In 2022, West Yorkshire Combined Authority commissioned an independent consultant to undertake a review of the AEB funded Community Learning. The aim of the review was to:
- understand more fully the impact of the funding and provision in order to champion its use;
 - Identify areas of good practice; and
 - consider whether additional guidance and more consistent approaches might be introduced into the funding to improve the impact it has across the region.
- 2.22 The review found considerable good practice amongst West Yorkshire providers, supported by skilled practitioners with expertise in learner support and empowerment. There is a strong foundation of quality to delivery upon which to build. A key ambition for WYCA should be to support the partnership to understand its strengths and achieve a consistency of provision across West Yorkshire.
- 2.23 While there is clear evidence of good practice, there is inconsistency of application of the Funding guidance, in part, due to its lack of clarity and the ability to interpret against organisational priorities. Investment would be strengthened through more clarity on how Community Learning should be spent in West Yorkshire, with Local Authority voices forming a key strategic role in this.
- 2.24 The full report can be found at **Appendix A**. The report included 25 different recommendations.
- 2.25 The report and its findings have been shared with strategic stakeholders and delivery partners. Given the importance of the fund in meeting local community needs, Local Authorities have been central to consultation on the priorities and key actions needed to maintain the funds' flexibility while improving the impact of investment.

- 2.26 The report's 25 recommendations have been considered and simplified into four themes, with key actions to be taken. The table overleaf summarises the actions that are proposed for adoption in West Yorkshire, indicating where strategic and operational decision need to be taken to progress further.
- 2.27 Through the devolution of funds, the Combined Authority aims to continuously improve the impact of the investment of funding. This includes focussing the funds on disadvantaged areas and individuals most in need of support, and focussing on impact for residents. The actions below combined aim to make incremental improvements to the impact that this funding has on West Yorkshire residents and the economy.
- 2.28 Actions 16 and 17 require a strategic decision to be made regarding the use of funding and the commissioning process. While these decisions would be taken by the Combined Authority Board, Committee members are invited to give their views. These actions include moving towards a needs-based methodology to allocating Community Learning funding.
- 2.29 The UKSPF proportions of funding levels are recommended, which allocates 70% of funding based on population and 30% of the funding base on Productivity, Skills, Unemployment Rate, Population Density and Household Income.
- 2.30 The Employment and Skills Committee are asked to review all actions, providing comment and recommendations.

Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

- 2.31 Following recommendation at Employment and Skills Committee, the Combined Authority approved a 10% increase to the AEB formula funding rate in Feb 2022. As part of the rate increase, the Combined Authority approved the following: Strengthen the AEB funding rules to address 'cost-cutting' tactics employed by some providers and ensure that the rate increase is aligned to improved impact for learners, including wrap around support and achievement rate increases.
- 2.32 Recent audits undertaken by WYCA have found common practice where qualifications are delivered less than 50% of the recommended GLH. The audit has identified a systematic reduction, and not adjustment based on the learner's assessed needs and starting point. This isn't consistent with the ambition to fund quality learning through devolved arrangements.
- 2.33 A provider roundtable was held to discuss findings, gain a clearer picture in relation to data and understand the sector challenges, specifically understanding the programme design rationales for:
- Sector Based Work Academies (SWAPs)
 - Distance Learning

2.34 *Appendix 5 Guided Learning Hours - WYCA position and next steps* is a notification of the rule change following a provider consultation held in April. The recommendations have been discussed with LA adult skills colleagues as well as with providers, and officers have engaged with other MCAs to explore the approaches taken elsewhere.

2.35 Recommended actions for West Yorkshire

- Planned guided learning hours to be entered onto the national learner database
- Introduction of a traffic light tracking system where approval is required for delivery below 70% of GLH and reduction of funding when planned hours is below 50% of GLH
- Introduction of specific Sector Based Work Academy approved codes with set funding value piloted in 2023/24
- Removal of pure distance learning to be considered for introduction in 2024/25, following evaluation of the changes implemented and impact on range of provision.

UKSPF

2.36 Pillar 3 of UKSPF funding for interventions to support People and Skills will commence delivery from April 2024. A paper for consultation based on the Employment and Skills pipeline was taken to the Local Partnership Group as the advisory Board to UKSPF on 15 June 2023. This was followed by a sounding group held online on 28 June 2023 on the proposals including adult skills. A verbal update on both meetings will be shared at the Committee.

2.37 A Local Investment Plan for UKSPF has been agreed with government. In line with the priorities of this Committee it was agreed that the focus would be on work and health, support for individuals furthest from the labour market. The focus of this funding is to remove barriers to work, this may include skills support.

2.38 The current proposals include a c.£4m community grants call split between two themes of work and health and support for those furthest from the labour market.

2.39 Given the strategic commissioning role of the CA in the adult skills landscape, officers will work closely to ensure complementarity of any new provision with the current adult skills landscape wherever possible, and in particular through CA commissioned activity.

Creative

2.40 There are several offers available in the creative space under the Skills Connect (gainshare) and Skills Bootcamp (DFE-funded) programmes commissioned by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. The Department for Education has approved additional flexibilities, and there is an intention to utilise 30% of our funding outside of the core areas of Digital and Technical

provision to deliver creative and cultural provision, in recognition of the rapid growth of this sector in West Yorkshire.

- 2.41 A procurement exercise is scheduled in July 2023 to procure specific Skills Bootcamps to deliver training within the creative and cultural sector, ready for delivery from September 2023. This will support up to 175 individuals to upskill in the creative and cultural sector and access new employment opportunities.
- 2.42 Delivery is currently underway on a Skills Bootcamp in Virtual and Augmented Reality. This course will support 75 individuals to upskill within Virtual Production, transforming traditional filmmaking methods by combining real-time digital elements with physical production. This is currently being delivered by the Academy of Live Technology and a case study video is currently in production, demonstrating the success of the programme.
- 2.43 The programme is also contributing to the part funding of film production and screenplay writing training on a drama series, with filming due to start in Quarter 2 of financial year 2023. This is in partnership with Bradford Council. Officers of the Combined Authority are also working with the Piece Hall in Calderdale to fund training to support individuals to access training in the live events sector, working in partnership with Live Nation and the Piece Hall.
- 2.44 In April/May, the LEEDS23 WOW Barn project provided skills training for women, girls and non-binary people in construction, arts and crafts, events management and curation (final evaluation report pending).
- 2.45 Delivery is about to commence on the newest iteration of the Mayor's Screen Diversity Programme, helping individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds to access opportunities in the creative and cultural sector. Two cohorts are planned, with the first due to start from July 2023.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1. Skills development is a critical component in tackling the climate emergency implications. Each adult skills programme provided by the Combined Authority, and the majority commissioned nationally provide a level of support in increasing green skills. Locally, the Green Jobs Taskforce will inform programme development.
- 3.2 The decision and discussion topics of this paper do not pose any immediate change to climate change curriculum or programmes.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1. All adult skills programmes aim to support those residents who have a skills deficit and need to access learning opportunities to progress them towards further learning, employment or a better way of life. Through delegated and devolved funding, we specifically target investment of funds towards

disadvantaged areas and underrepresented groups where the skills deficit is most pronounced

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1. As per 4.1, all adult skills programmes aim to support those residents who have a skills deficit and/or tackle economic challenges. The range of programmes frequently support underrepresented groups through training provision.
- 5.2. All programmes have an Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment with relevant actions identified. Proportionate uptake amongst demographics is closely monitored, with targeted action taken to address any identified imbalance. Community Learning in particular, is aimed to outreach in communities who do not traditionally engage with learning and support their further progression in life, work and learning.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. The Multiplier year report outlines that £1.4 million funding that was allocated to West Yorkshire, but was unspent due to implementation challenges. The Combined Authority continues to push DfE to reallocate the underspend back into West Yorkshire, and will be looking to secure growth in year 2 to counterbalance the loss of investment.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1. There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

- 8.1. There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

- 9.1. No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1. That the Committee comment on and recommend the actions proposed following the Community Learning review.
- 10.2. That the Committee notes the Multiplier programme year 1 performance.

11. Background Documents

[West Yorkshire AEB Strategy \(September 2020\)](#)

12. Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Multiply End of Year 1 Report
- Appendix 2 – [Community Learning Review 2022](#)
- Appendix 3 – Community Learning Action Plan 2023
- Appendix 4 – Adult Skills Case Studies
- Appendix 5 – [Guided Learning Hours – WYCA position and next steps](#)

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Appendix 1 – Multiply Year 1 Update

Context

- 2.1 Multiply is an adult numeracy programme, led by the Department for Education (DfE) as part of the £2.6bn UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). West Yorkshire Combined Authority has been given an allocation of £12.4m for Multiply across 3 financial years. The funding is to engage more adults with numeracy levels below level 2 (GCSE C/4 pass) in informal learning to boost their maths skills for life and work.
- 2.2 The Investment Plan was approved in June 2022 and has been accepted by the Department for Education. The Investment Plan outlines 3 key streams of activity:

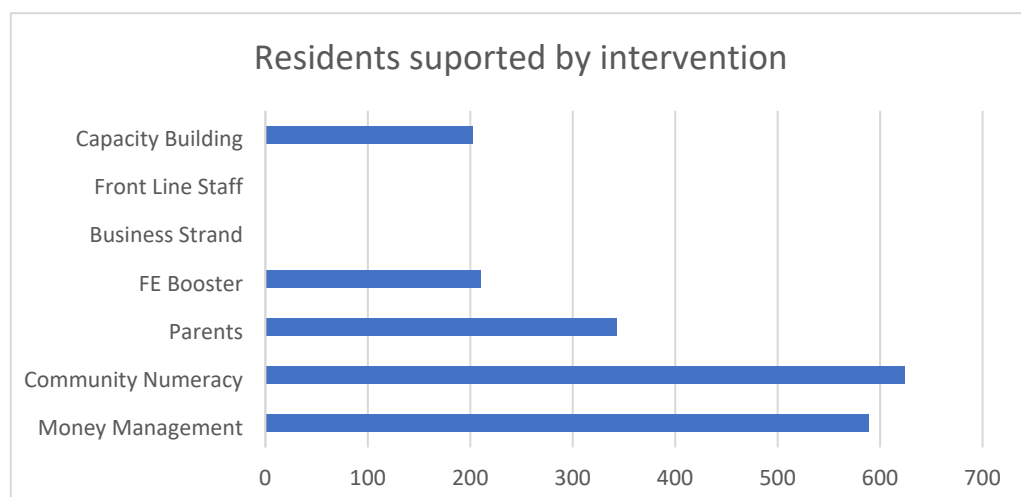
Strand 1 - Individual engagement - £4.7 million

Strand 2 - Business focussed activity - £3 million

Strand 3 - Capacity building for the sector - £3.6 million

Summary of Year 1 delivery against profile

- 2.3 In year 1, 82% of the DfE target was met in terms of engaging with individuals and providing numeracy support. This equates to 58% of the financial profile being met.
- 2.4 As part of commissioning, delivery partners planned to deliver more outputs than the DfE contracted to Combined Authority, hence there is a variance between partner profiles and the DfE target. This demonstrates value for money in commissioning and will be positive in terms of the number of residents supported for overall project value, but has impacted on the proportion of funds we have been able to retain in Year 1.
- 2.5 The table below shows the success rates of each individual strand against partner profile and DfE profile. The data is subject to change when final reconciliation takes place at R10 by end of June, giving delivery partners



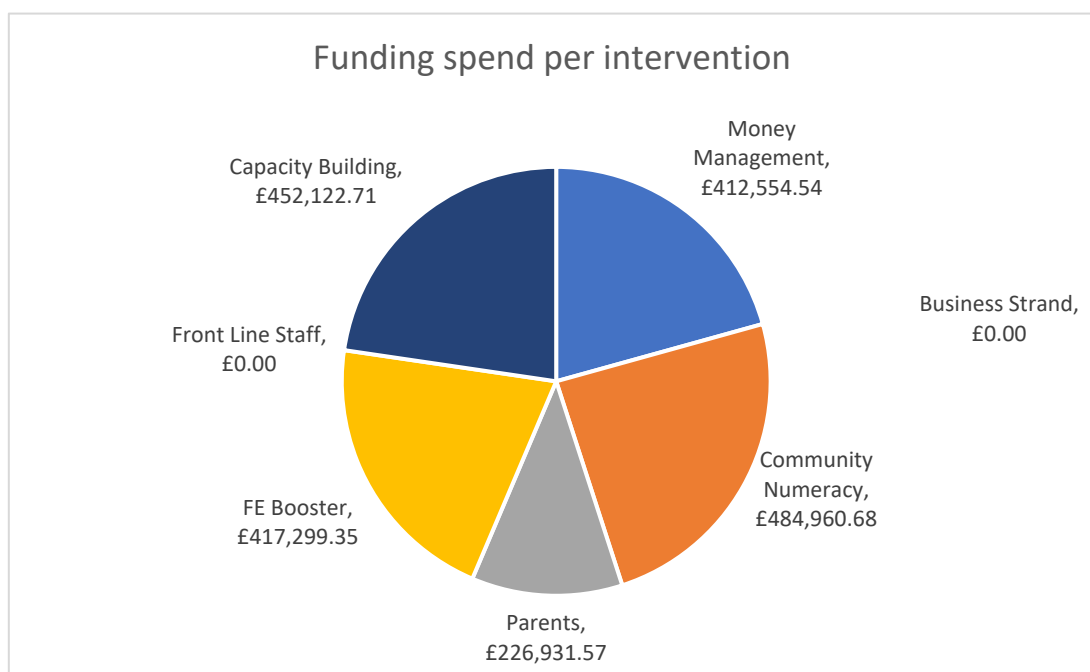
sufficient time to finalise the claim.

Year 1 Progress	Profiles			Actual Performance (ILR data) ¹				
	DFE Profiled Learners	Partners Profiled Targets	Profiled Budget	Learners on ILR	% To DfE target	% to Partners Profile	Cash Value per ILR	% to DfE investment plan profile
Money Management	607	782	£546,586	589	97%	75%	£412,554.54	75%
Community Numeracy	808	863	£559,687	624	77%	72%	£484,960.68	87%
Parents	546	588	£383,431	343	63%	58%	£226,931.57	59%
FE Booster	100	205	£401,574	210	210%	102%	£417,299.35	104%
Business Strand	100	0	£550,000	0	0%	N/A	£0.00	0%
Front Line Staff	200	0	£500,000	0	0%	N/A	£0.00	0%
Capacity Building	50	203	£470,000	203	406%	100%	£452,122.71	96%
Total	2411	2641	£3,411,278.00	1969	82%	75%	£1,993,868.86	58%

2.6 As detailed in earlier reports, the Business Focussed strand and the Frontline staff capacity building work will be commissioned for delivery in Year 2, hence are not reporting engagement or funding usage at this point.

2.7 More detail regarding participation, including area breakdown and demographic of participants, is provided in Appendix 1 and 2

Progress to date on individual strands



Strand 1

¹ The **Individualised Learner Record (ILR)** is the primary data collection for further education and work-based learning in England. It is requested from learning providers and the data is used to monitor policy implementation and the performance of the organisations that are allocated funding.

- 2.8 Local Authorities are leading on the **Community Focused** strand (£3.7 million). Delivery is complete for year 1 (as above), with plans now focused on year 2 delivery with delivery profiles being reviewed. Community Numeracy programmes that provide support with household budgeting, cooking on a budget, or embedding numeracy within employability or vocational study to the most disadvantaged residents have proved the most successful in terms of engagement. Parent focussed interventions have proved the most challenging to recruit to.
- 2.9 The **FE Booster programmes** have exceeded both the DfE and partner profiled targets for Year 1 in terms of participation. Learner quotes and case studies are being collected to demonstrate some of the impact of the programmes.

Strand 2

- 2.10 The **Business Training** (£2 million) package was endorsed by the LPG at the meeting in November 2022. The tender specification was re-published on 10th March and closed on 18th April 2023. The tender was split into two lots with delivery partners being able to apply for both lots:
- Business Training (£1,450,000 million) – Lot 1 received 12 responses
 - Numeracy Champions (£1 million) – Lot 2 received 9 responses
- 2.11 Applications have been assessed, moderated and the outcome has been approved in line with delegations. The top scoring providers will be contracted:
- Calderdale College (Business Training and Numeracy Champions)
 - National Numeracy (Numeracy Champions)
 - Realise Learning and Employment (Business Training and Numeracy Champions)
- 2.12 Both Calderdale College and Realise Training applied to deliver with a partnership model, therefore widening the opportunity of delivery with a range of training providers and partners who can deliver at a hyper-local level, enabling targeting of the right learners to engage with Multiply

Strand 3

- 2.13 **Capacity building for vocational and community tutors** (£1,150 million) has been successfully delivered for year 1 with overall success being 406% engagement against DfE profile and a cash spend of 96% against profile.
- 2.14 **Capacity Building vocational and community tutors** (£650,000) is planned for years 2 and 3, and therefore yet to be commissioned. Consultation will take place with the Local Authorities and their delivery partners, and with the FE

Colleges to gather information on how to best utilise this fund to further enhance delivery.

- 2.15 **Capacity Building for front line staff** (£1.8 million) specification is currently being developed following consultation with potential delivery partners and key stakeholders. It is expected that the specification will be published via open and competitive tender 19th June with 'go live' date early September.

Department for Education (DfE) Updates

- 2.16 The Annual Assurance letter and financial report for year 1 have been returned to the DfE as per deadline (10th May 2023). Defrayed monies have been reported through the annual financial report however it has been explained and agreed with DfE that reconciliation of year 1 actual spend cannot take place until end of quarter 1 (June 2023) due the lag between providers uploading data, DfE sharing with the CA , and our compliance checks to verify accuracy
- 2.17 The DfE have confirmed that there will be no rollover of year 1 funds however there will be growth opportunities in year 2. The process of applying for growth has not yet been published by the DfE. DfE are permitting some flexibility in the financial and engagement profiles for year 2 , which should support our delivery in being responsive to resident and business need. Any significant changes to the West Yorkshire delivery plans will be brought to the LPG for recommendation.
- 2.18 The Multiply national digital platform has been 'paused' by the DfE with no confirmation as to the future plans or next steps for the digital platform. It has not been confirmed if the platform is no longer to be developed, and if so, how the money top-sliced from local allocations for the platform will be reallocated.
- 2.19 Random Control Trials (RCTs) for Multiply are being implemented by DfE. The opportunity to take part in the RCT's has been explored, but concerns have been raised on the additional burden to providers. The current priority is establishing the support across the region and to ensure that all learners who engage in Multiply have fair and equitable access to numeracy training to support them in life and work.
- 2.20 An MCA best practice roundtable is being facilitated by DfE in July to consolidate lessons learnt to date and to discuss the sustainability of the Multiply programme.

Comms and Marketing

- 2.21 The Multiply webpage is now live with the ability for individuals or business to complete an expression of interest (EOI) form to access Multiply training. These EOI's are then directed to delivery partners based on training needs and delivery partner offer.

2.22 Further marketing has included:

- Bus side advertising deployed on 65 buses in West Yorkshire with buses in Bradford, Calderdale, Leeds, Kirklees and Wakefield districts. Advertising targeting both businesses and individuals, with the campaign lasting throughout May 2023.
- Radio advertising launched on 29 May 2023 for 3 weeks with two 30 second adverts targeting businesses and individuals on Pulse 1 (average of 138,000 daily listeners across West Yorkshire).
- Animations are currently in development to be used in online and social media marketing
- Future Marketing plans include use of the big screens in Bradford and Leeds as well as other digital display screens across West Yorkshire, targeted social media advertising and use of the Combined Authority's social media channels.

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West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA)
Adult & Community Learning (ACL) Review 2022

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) is committed to reaching into its most disadvantaged communities and breaking down barriers which traditionally make it difficult for residents to engage with the skills system. Community Learning is seen as a crucial, flexible fund, instrumental in engaging with learners who are the hardest to reach but who benefit significantly once engaged.
- 1.2 The aim of the review is to:
 - Understand more fully the impact of the funding and provision in order to champion its use.
 - Identify areas of good practice.
 - Consider whether additional guidance and more consistent approaches might be introduced into the funding to improve the impact it has across the region.
- 1.3 The decision by the WYCA to commission this report is both timely and necessary. Community Learning has an integral role in lifelong learning which is rightly sitting front and centre if the levelling up commitments made by Government are to be met.
- 1.4 The review has found considerable good practice amongst West Yorkshire providers, supported by skilled practitioners with expertise in engagement, learner support and empowerment. There is a strong foundation of quality provision upon which to build. A key ambition for WYCA should be to support good partnership working, understand its strengths and achieve a consistency of provision across West Yorkshire.
- 1.5 While there is clear evidence of good practice, there is some inconsistency in applying the Funding Guidance. In part, due to a lack of clarity and the ability to interpret it against individual organisational priorities. Investment decisions would be strengthened by providing more clarity on how Community Learning funding should be spent in West Yorkshire, with Local Authorities and other key stakeholder having a key strategic role.

Overall Recommendations

- 1.6 In order to improve the impact of Community Learning in West Yorkshire and fully demonstrate this impact to stakeholders. WYCA should be clearer in defining what it wants its Community Learning funding to support. In addition to providing opportunities for residents with complex lives, facing multiple barriers, it should define:
 - The role of first steps learning.
 - Support for health and well-being.
 - Life-long learning and the role of fees.
 - The role of regulated and non-regulated provision.
- 1.7 WYCA should consider how it can better align the funding available to the needs of learners and consider moving away from the historical approach in allocating funding, to one which better represents the needs of learners across the region.

2. Context

- 2.1 Residents in local communities should have access to high quality provision with providers working collaboratively using local networks to support regional priorities. Underpinned with access to good quality impartial advice and guidance.
- 2.2 Historically there was evidence that some learners can 'cycle' around Adult Community Learning (ACL) programmes without progressing nearer to the world of work or into further learning. This report will review whether that is the case in West Yorkshire.
- 2.3 Community Learning improves health and well-being, providing opportunities for more residents to find employment and/or become active members in their local communities.
- 2.4 The last two years have been an incredibly difficult time for the residents of West Yorkshire, with some finding their lives fundamentally changed due to the global pandemic. The hope that there would be opportunities in the next couple of years to build back their resilience has been impeded by the current cost-of-living crisis. History tells us that those who will face the most challenges, as recession bites, are residents in the regions most disadvantaged communities, on benefits or in low paid jobs.
- 2.5 The resilience, professionalism, and passion of the people who support and deliver Community Learning across West Yorkshire should be applauded. They continue to enable:
 - Learners with complex lives, living in some of the most disadvantaged communities, to access learning which changes lives.
 - Provide access to skills training, enabling people to progress into volunteering, further learning, or a job.
- 2.6 We are grateful to the individuals who have actively engaged with the review, sharing their insight knowledge and expertise. This has provided an opportunity to better understand the essential role that locally accessible high quality Community Learning provision has on the individuals who access it and the wider society who benefit from that engagement.

Monica Was made redundant after 14 years, after attending an Employability course at Manygates and progressing onto a Confidence and Resilience Workshop, she worked with Mark from the 'Step-Up' team on interview preparation. Feeling confident and very positive, Monica decided to apply for a job at Wakefield Council and was successful. She is currently a Project Administrator for ESOL Integration, combining her passion for working in customer service and helping speakers of other languages find employment.

Aim of the report

2.7 The aim of the report is to:

- Improve the understanding of WYCA on the positive impact of Community Learning provision.
- Inform committees and stakeholders of its role in supporting inclusive growth.
- Consider investment levels across areas.
- Provide a set of recommendations for the WYCA to consider.

Themes arising during the review.

2.8 A suite of themes came through the review, and these provide the structure and inform the recommendations in this report:

- Strategy and Planning.
- Delivery and learners supported.
- Engagement.
- Value for Money.
- Importance of Learner Voice.

2.9 The review was underpinned by the current Community Learning approach enabling learners to:

- Develop confidence, motivation, and resilience irrespective of age or background.
- Progress towards formal learning or employment.
- Improve their health and well-being and develop stronger communities.

Sarah moved to the UK in 2016 from France having provided customer services in the hotel industry. Although looking for work since 2017 she found it difficult to get interviews and then there was lockdown. Having lost her confidence, she was pleased in April 2022 when through contacts at her daughter's school, she was signposted to Learning Partnerships and enrolled on a four-week intensive NHS Customer Service and You course. "As part of the course, I was invited to an interview and was successful. I am finally where I want to be and am really excited about starting a new career."

3. Description of the work undertaken

3.1 The work undertaken to support the review included background reading and desktop research, some of which influenced the approach to the review. Discussions then took place with all of the 13 providers who currently deliver Community Learning provision. Where possible this was held face-to-face, otherwise via a Teams meeting. All were given the opportunity to provide additional information, insight or share best practice. Whilst grateful to them all, the level of engagement was not consistent across the region, so, there is a risk that some providers may feel that they are not as well represented as others in this report.

3.2 In addition, a Teams meeting was held with some regional sub-contractors and learner voice was informed by meeting learners currently on Community Learning provision.

4. Strategic Planning

Summary

- 4.1 Community Learning funding is allocated to five Local Authorities and five Further Education Colleges with a footprint exclusively focused on West Yorkshire. Three regional providers choose which areas of the region and learners they support.
- 4.2 Annual planning and formal scrutiny take place in all providers. Providers recognise that flexibilities within Community Learning enable them to be responsive with good examples of networking and partnerships coming together to develop provision to meet learners needs or local demand.
- 4.3 Three of the providers subcontract elements of their provision. All the providers use learner voice to inform the curriculum and tell the story of the impact Community Learning provision has on individuals, communities, and society more widely.
- 4.4 All providers annually review the Community Learning funding available, with a focus on securing key resources e.g., staffing and premises. There are limited examples of benchmarking or detailed costings associated with different courses and delivery methods, making it difficult to see the rationale underpinning some of the courses offered.
- 4.5 All providers reach out internally and/or externally accessing additional resources known as Pound Plus contributions. The costs associated with the contributions made e.g., finance, marketing, colleagues in the migration or housing departments, student services and volunteers are in some areas not fully understood.
- 4.6 Access to local premises is either made available free of charge or in some cases a small charge is made. In some areas, access to premises is more limited than pre-pandemic.
- 4.7 There is a clear rationale underpinning curriculum planning: ‘the needs of the learner’. Most of the funding is spent on targeted provision in disadvantaged communities, supporting individuals with the most complex and challenging lives: deciding to ‘go where no one else goes’. This is reflected in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) table below.

Indices of Multiple Deprivation	1 - 3	4 -6	7-10
% Learners accessing Provision	64%	19%	17%

- 4.8 Historically, collecting of data and the ability to then use it to show the impact the provision has on individuals, communities and wider society has been challenging. The Department for Education has recently announced changes on how data for Community Learning should be reported for the nationally managed Adult Education Budget. WYCA will require additional information in addition to the DfE changes, if the ‘real story’ of the positive impact Community Learning provision has, is to be told.

Recommendations

- Building on the excellent collaborative partnerships and networks in place. Providers should share best practice on how they secure additional Pound Plus contributions, consider how to better understand the full cost of delivering Community Learning provision.
- To enable a 'golden thread' to be developed, WYCA working with providers should agree a common and consistent set of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for Community Learning provision.
- WYCA should consider defining a single set of Community Learning data requirements aligned to the that collected for Adult Education Budget provision.
- Working with providers, WYCA should review the changes proposed by the Department of Education and where helpful to do so, develop a core set of West Yorkshire Data Reporting Standards.

Allocations

- 4.9 A proportion of the national Adult Education Budget has been devolved to WYCA, including an amount historically known within the Further Education Sector as Community Learning, this funding is not ring-fenced. Initial allocations were decided by the Learning and Skills Council, then continued by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and inherited by WYCA.
- 4.10 There is widespread recognition that the current levels of Community Learning funding do not reflect current demographics, population, or learner need. However, changing the way in which the funding is currently allocated requires careful consideration. Continuation of the current approach, whilst not recommended in the long term, was a sensible approach to take in advance of a review.
- 4.11 Government has reviewed the way in which funding should be allocated to 'places'. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund¹ is being allocated using a different blended approach which '*ensures that all places get an allocation that allows for significant continuity with European Union structural funds*':
- within the continuity model that maintains European Union structural fund distributions, 70% is allocated on a per capita basis, within each region based on Local Authority population size.
 - 30% of the allocation uses the same needs-based index previously used to identify UK Community Renewal Fund places: Productivity, Skills, Unemployment Rate, Population Density and Household Income.
- 4.12 The current Community Learning funding is £8.47m and is allocated as shown in the table below. Regional providers deliver £1.3m of Community Learning activity and choose where within the region the provision is delivered. There are two Further Education Colleges that do not receive Community Learning funding: Leeds College of Building and Calderdale College.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-allocations-methodology/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-allocations-methodology-note>

4.13 Applying the UK SPF approach to allocating the funding based only on geography is shown in the table below.

Area	Current CL Allocation	CL allocated on SPF formula	Difference
Bradford	£ 1,386,656	£ 2,140,383	753,727
Calderdale	£ 870,227	£ 780,740	(89,487)
Kirklees	£ 999,732	£ 1,645,197	645,465
Leeds	£ 2,600,950	£ 2,653,194	52,244
Wakefield	£ 1,289,872	£ 1,253,895	(35,977)
Provision delivered across the region	£ 1,325,972		
	£ 8,473,409	£ 8,473,409	£ 1,325,972

Recommendations

WYCA should consider:

- Adopting the UK SPF allocation methodology, and its associated proportions, to allocating Community Learning funding, recognising a need for transitional arrangements.
- If additional or a redistribution of the funding would be needed to support adoption.
- Requiring the three Regional Providers to work with the relevant Local Authority and College(s) to only deliver provision to learners where the UK SPF methodology highlights a shortfall in the availability of provision in their local area.
- Reallocating provision to existing West Yorkshire based grant holders, where there is a business case based on need to do so.
- Whether it is fully utilising its West Yorkshire grant provider base.

5. Delivery and learners supported.

- 5.1 Community Learning providers across the region are all rated Good by Ofsted. Providers are ambitious for their learners, delivering courses empowering them to gain skills which enable them to progress into further learning, volunteering, or employment.
- 5.2 Providers are finding engaging learners more difficult, with a reticence in some local communities for learners to actively participate, not just in learning but in normal day-to-day activities. Initial assessment is taking longer, and providers are developing new courses to meet learner needs e.g., a self-defence course for women. New courses will continue to be needed, however, it is important that costs are not incurred in developing courses which might already be available elsewhere in the region.
- 5.3 Delivery due to the Cost-of-Living crisis is challenging, with more learners asking for support and providers now spending more of their funding removing barriers to learning e.g. travel, childcare.

5.4 The Community Learning funding supported over 13,000 learners in 2021/22 with a wide range of backgrounds and ages. A few examples of the types of courses offered are:

- English for Life and Work: developing confidence in reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
- Information Technology for Beginners: how to use a computer safely, how to access the internet and how to shop.
- Engaging with your Child to Bring Books Alive: reading is a large part of learning, and this course shows parents and carers how to get the most out of reading time.
- Pilates for Beginners: to improve mental health and well-being.
- Financial Awareness – Money Matters: learners gain new skills, improve confidence, and enable them to better support themselves and their families. Share knowledge with the wider community.
- Creative Courses: including - Pottery, Sewing, Drawing and Painting, Jewellery Making and ‘Upcycle your Wardrobe’. Which can lead to self-employment and improve mental health and well-being.
- Introduction to Working as a Carer: course explores what is involved in being a carer in a variety of settings.
- Learn Achieve Believe Employability: a short course to develop a belief in oneself. gain several transferable skills, such as communication, teamwork, and goal setting. First steps to a more positive future.

5.5 Historically some learners on Community Learning provision, undertook multiple short aims known as ‘revolving door provision’. It was not focused on enabling them to progress with many remaining on Community Learning provision for a long time. The 2021/22 evidence shows that is not the case across the region, with learners undertaking an average of two funded activities, reflecting the policy intent of providing first steps learning followed by progression onto more formal learning, employment or volunteering.

Employment Status

5.6 The table below shows the funding supporting different cohorts of learners.

In paid employment	23%	£	1,921,661
Not in paid employment, looking for work and available	31%	£	2,576,875
Not in paid employment, not looking for work and/or not	33%	£	2,770,308
Not known / not provided	13%	£	1,131,156
Total	100%	£	8,400,000

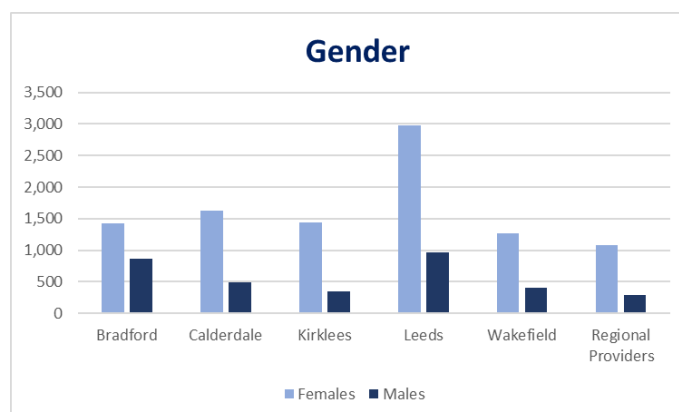
5.7 Based on the limited data available it would appear that on average:

- Local Authorities support more employed learners.
- FE Colleges support learners looking for work or those who are economically inactive.

Maria enrolled on ‘How Schools Work’ because she was a stay-at-home mum who was considering a return to work as a Teaching Assistant and wanted to explore working in a primary school. Maria felt she needed to know more about schools before gaining voluntary or paid employment. ‘This course has given me the confidence to apply for the role as Teaching Assistant. Because of this course I was able to talk about Safeguarding and other considerations when working in a school. I knew how to act as a visitor in a classroom. This course came at the perfect time for me.’ Maria applied and got the job.

5.8 Latest census data shows that the working age (16-64) population of West Yorkshire is 49% Male and 51% Female.

5.9 These proportions are not reflected in the learners accessing Community Learning provision. Where 75% of the provision is accessed by females. Raising a question about the suitability of the current offer in engaging male residents.



Age Profile

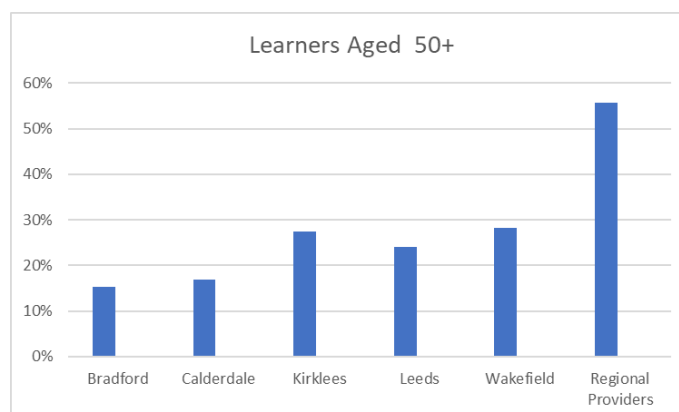
5.10 Of the learners participating, providers in different areas focus on particular age cohorts.

19 – 24	25 – 35	36 – 50	51 – 65	66+
10%	26%	36%	19%	9%

5.11 The underpinning data shows that:

- Bradford focus provision on those under 35.
- Calderdale c.80% on those aged 25-50.
- Kirklees, Wakefield and Leeds support around 65% aged 25-50.

5.12 The offer to learners aged 50+ is shown in the table below.



Recommendations

- Providers to consider if the offer to engage male learners onto Community Learning provision is as effective as it could be.
- WYCA should work with providers to better understand the changing demographic needs to ensure that older residents who want to work, can access provision which will help them start to gain the skills needed to reskill or get a job.
- Building on that information, WYCA to consider whether Community Learning is the right funding stream for certain types of life-long learning provision.

Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LLDD)

- 5.13 Learners who consider they have a learning difficulty and/or disability and/or health problem accounted for 22% of the learners on Community Learning provision, (24% for England). It should be noted that the FE Colleges have lower volumes of LLDD learners than Local Authorities which may be representative of the different learners they support.
- 5.14 There are genuine concerns that the Cost-of-Living crisis has a more detrimental effect on LLDD learners due to the increased living costs they incur e.g., travel, heating and lighting, dietary needs. There is a concern that some LLDD learners are struggling to engage in provision where there is a need for them to have a support worker with them.

Jenny uses a wheelchair and has some learning difficulties, she attended a felt making class with her support worker prior to lockdown. As extremely clinically vulnerable, Jenny went into an extended period of isolation. When the classes went on-line, she initially struggled, then with support, was able to join the class. Jenny was initially very nervous, her IT skills improved quickly, and her cheerfulness and positivity shone through. As her felting and confidence grew, Jenny got her mum to join the on-line class and was helping her mum and others with their felting and IT skills. The opportunity to attend and succeed in a mainstream class impacted strongly on Jenny's self-belief and she progressed on to other on-line courses during lockdown, reducing her isolation.

Recommendation

- WYCA and providers ensure that the offer to LLDD learners is kept under review, to ensure that as broad and accessible an offer as possible is available.

Ethnicity

5.15 West Yorkshire has a diverse population represented in the table below showing the main ethnicity of learners accessing Community Learning provision in 2021/22.

ACL Ethnicity	WY %	UK %
Asian/Asian British	28%	13%
Black learners	10%	7%
Learners from mixed multiple ethnic groups	4%	3%
Other non-white	2%	6%
White	57%	71%

Prior Attainment

- 5.16 Learners with no qualifications or pre-entry level account for around 52% of Community Learning activity.
- 5.17 British and Irish learners hold the highest levels of qualifications at Level 4 and above of approximately 20%. The level is approximately 10% for a range of other ethnic learners e.g., White Caribbean, Indian and Asian.
- 5.18 Providers state many reasons as to why people with high level qualifications are accessing Community Learning provision. A change in circumstance e.g., no longer a carer, becoming a carer, recovering from addiction or abuse, arriving as a refugee, engaging in life-long learning activities supporting their emotional health and well-being.

Local Fee Remission

- 5.19 Building on the Prior Attainment information, different Fee Remission policies apply across the region. They are developed and implemented by providers with many choosing to waive or reduce fees because they believe, in the current economic climate, learners see the fee as a barrier and so would choose not to engage in learning.
- 5.20 A 'free' sewing class visited as part of the review was providing women with dressmaking skills. Gaining these skills will enable them to make rather than buy clothes, so minimising the cost of new clothes. Finding the money to pay for a course would have been challenging and so charging a fee would have been a barrier to them starting the course.
- 5.21 Another 'free' creative textiles course visited as part of the review supported confidence building and health and well-being. The learners had a range of different circumstances: employed; retired; carers and people who had been self-isolating for prolonged periods of time. Some learners on the course said they were really surprised that the course and materials were free and would have been happy to pay for the course.

Recommendations

- WYCA, working with providers, should consider if learners with higher levels of qualifications are accessing provision which could be provided and funded through a different route.
- WYCA, working with providers, consider if the current Fee Remission Policies support the policy intent, that those learners who can pay, do.

Julie “I had surgery in 2019 and then was in lock down, self-isolating alone for over a year. I had been outgoing, but I was now very worried and anxious. I enrolled on a ceramic course which was a hobby I had enjoyed 20 years ago. Although very nervous on my first day by the end of the course they had helped me feel like myself again. I feel so empowered, and I am excited to return in January for the advanced course.”

English for Speakers of Other Languages, English, and maths

- 5.22 Strong examples were given of providers being responsive to emerging needs of residents through flexible use of the funding.
- 5.23 For example: providers in 2021/22 supported new learners from the Ukraine and Afghanistan with Government funding made available directly to Local Authorities. The need was greater than the funding available and so Community Learning providers stepped in offering a range of non-accredited ESOL provision. There was a challenge in recruiting and retaining ESOL tutors, with shortages reported locally. Providers developed provision which enabled people to access health care, housing, and employment, with specific courses linked to sectors, e.g. ESOL for the NHS.
- 5.24 English and maths are often ‘hidden treasures’ or ‘taught by stealth’ in community learning provision:
- Taught in a cooking class by reading the recipe and measuring out the ingredients.
 - A sewing class teaches them by using a tape measure a pattern and writing up individual learner plans.

Recommendations

- WYCA to consider reviewing the funding rules to clarify the Community Learning role in relation to pre-ESOL provision, English and maths, regulated and non-regulated provision.
- WYCA continue to advocate to government for funding to be available to enable residents whose first language is not English to access good quality provision enabling them to become active members of their local communities.

Richard Initially Richard could not read or write. Within 7 weeks of starting his first course and working hard, he was able to read basic sentences and had developed the confidence to put himself forward for a problem-solving workshop. His tutor said, ‘I am proud of Richard because of his commitment and willingness to learn. I believe that he will be able to achieve a qualification sooner than we had predicted.’

6. Engagement

The Role of Outreach

- 6.1 The review highlighted that some of the providers, including subcontractors, have not fully costed the role of outreach activity, in relation to Community Learning provision. Engagement activity is undertaken by people with different skills and job titles.
- 6.2 Outreach work should be recognised as a specific role in Community Learning provision, 'because without the work they do no-one would progress because they would all still be at home or hiding in corners'. There is a genuine sense that 'once through the door, the possibilities for the future are endless'.
- 6.3 It is the investment in that initial engagement which carries the greatest value, and yet appears to be under resourced. The job is more demanding, the initial engagement is taking more time and it could be the first time the learner has spoken to anyone in months. With some taking the opportunity to share their personal experiences, which can have been very challenging.
- 6.4 It is common to find that any previous engagement with learning was as a child and is likely to have been a negative experience. Community Learning provides positive experiences empowering learners, by providing information and advice, so they can start to take decisions and make choices. Taking control of their learning and working with their tutor to gain the skills needed to progress into further learning, volunteering or a job.
- 6.5 Learners with multiple barriers benefit immensely from the opportunity to engage face-to-face which enables them to build trust and confidence more quickly.
- 6.6 Learners often take up opportunities which have been recommended by family or friends. Using traditional marketing methods is key to engaging this cohort of learners e.g., flyers in surgeries or supermarkets, advertising on buses or in bus shelters or providing information in the post.

Recommendations

- WYCA should work with interested providers to understand the outreach role, drawing on best practice and how the roles are funded.
- WYCA should review the role of marketing and learner engagement activity.

Impartial Information Advice and Guidance (IIAG)

- 6.7 There are varied examples across the region: ACL Gateways, Specialist Career Advisers or directly commissioning external professionals. Providers demonstrated lots of good practice, but no single coherent approach.
- 6.8 The impartiality aspect of the offer is crucial, and more easily recognised where the service is provided externally. There are examples of it being delivered very effectively with providers ambitious about what can be achieved by the learner.
- 6.9 The IAG offer should enable learners to make informed decisions about learning and work based on their needs and previous experience. Recognising the capacity they have to engage e.g. being a carer, having a young family, working long hours. Each learner must have a personalised approach and not simply the option to choose from a list of pre-determined outcomes.

6.10 IAG should be embedded in different ways, from the first conversation about what Community Learning provision is, then weaved throughout the time the learner is with the provider and in some cases after the learner has left. The skill is in continually tailoring it to meet the needs of the learner, building on what has gone before, always with an eye on where they are going next.

Recommendations

- WYCA, working with providers, should consider embedding some of the approaches e.g., improving progression pathways between first steps community learning and college provision.
- A best practice model should be agreed to support continuing professional development for staff.

Collaborative working

6.11 There were good examples of collaborative arrangements working within and across the region, with a couple of strong examples between Local Authorities and Colleges, who had agreed their individual roles, responsibilities, and priorities. Making the skills system easier to navigate for the learner as the offer from each provider was well articulated and the progression pathways to further learning, volunteering or employment were clear.

6.12 There are a range of forums or groups enabling a wide range of stakeholders to engage on what provision should be delivered, including strategic partners, learner voice and tutors/volunteers. Forums review the courses on offer, taking account of learner voice and tutor feedback to consider whether any changes or improvements can be made, to improve progression and achievement.

6.13 The expertise of staff involved in Community Learning provision alongside the strategic buy-in to it across the region are invaluable in supporting the successful delivery of provision. There are examples of high value, high trust relationships including those with sub-contractors some of which have been built over a number of years.

Recommendation

- WYCA should build on the work done by providers to ensure the offer is easy for the learner to navigate with an emphasis on mapping clear progression pathways and developing case studies showing the impact when this is done well.

M's story M started on a Phonics course and attended a session on Impartial Information Advice and Guidance, where they discussed a course called Make the Most of You. It focused on motivation, confidence, and well-being. In a 1-1 Careers session, they discussed how to become a Teaching Assistant. An ESOL course was found as the first step, with a programme to include PREVENT training and safeguarding which will help achieve their goal in the longer term.

7. Value for Money

- 7.1 Value for Money is not the best term for recognising the impact of this provision. It is more closely aligned to social value and social return on investment. Every provider was interested in helping develop an approach to better enable that story to be told.
- 7.2 Community Learning provision is better understood when delivery and impact can be witnessed in person. The further away you are from the learner the more difficult it is to understand the transformational impact it has. Not only on those who engage with it but on families, communities, and wider society.
- 7.3 The positive impact, irrespective of age or cultural background, is known to contribute to improving: social mobility, social justice and reducing inequality. Gaining basic skills helps people access other opportunities that, prior to engaging with Community Learning provision, they felt were out of their reach.
- 7.4 Some providers within the region are already looking to show the impact of investing in Community Learning provision. Proper Job has been able to evidence £26 return for every £1 invested in their provision. Kirklees Council use £13.70 per hour as the Pound Plus return on their Volunteering programme.
- 7.5 A few examples of addition research which can be drawn upon are shown below.

Activity	Evidence Source	Cost
Starts on provision reducing the number of visits to their General Practitioner.	www.kingsfund.org.uk/audio-video/key-facts-figures-nhs	The average 9-minute GP consultation costs £39.23.
ACL providing delivering family literacy & numeracy type provision.	The economic case for investing in the prevention of mental health conditions in the UK	£15.80 in long-term savings for every £1 spent.
Providing support to people with Mental Health Issues	I services report on the Unit Costs of Health and Social Care 2020 https://www.pssru.ac.uk	£43 per client attendance

Recommendation

- WYCA should draw together interested parties building on the work already being done by providers in the region, to develop a wider set of metrics to demonstrate the social and economic value and impact of Community Learning provision.



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Appendix 3 – Community Learning Action Plan

Theme	Action		Type of action			
			Funding rule change	Strategic Change	Best Practice	WYCA to implement/ audit
Clarity on what/who should be funded	1	Community Learning clearly supports an individual and their motivation to learn Judgement on an individual basis on their circumstance rather than the course content.			✓	✓
	2	Regulated provision should not be funded unless specifically approved	✓			
	3	ESOL - should not duplicate funded aims, but should be about wider integration, practical application and practice of language skills, confidence building	✓			
	4	Health & wellbeing - this is an individual circumstance/need which makes someone eligible for CL. Clear progression plan would be needed as part of ILP	✓			
	5	Outreach should be funded under CL. Commissioning into areas of deprivation with providers with the reach into deprived communities. Funding is available to engage and deliver in the community: incl e.g. room hire and/or key worker and/or commissioning models	✓			
	6	Providers continue to set fee policies as per existing rules, and must follow them. Those who can afford are expected to pay				✓
	7	Adoption of DfE changes (where not otherwise specified) - Re-categorisation to 7 themes (reported via ILR)	✓			

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employment status to be recorded on ILR - Fee collection to be reported on ILR - New learning aims can be adopted for 23/24: WYCA seeking to retain 'old aims' also to support transition 				
Demonstrating impact	8	<p>Improve data collection on the ILR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 23/24 planned destination data is expected - 24/25 planned destination is mandatory 	✓			
	9	Actual destination data: Further discussions with providers in autumn 23, with implementation plans for 24/25				✓
	10	Best practice sharing from providers who demonstrate clear impact			✓	
	11	Remove references to 'pound plus'	✓			
	12	Develop measures which focus on SROI/ social value that can be adopted by all CL providers across WY. Co-designed with providers.				✓
Local shaping of priorities	13	CL provider planning meetings to be facilitated (where not already in place)				✓
	14	Delivery Plans developed utilising LA intelligence				
	15	LAs continue to shape the local needs for CL, reviewed termly and shared with CL providers				✓
	16	<p>Allocations - moving to needs based methodology is recommended. This follows the ambitions outlined in the WY AEB Strategy (September 2020) to move away from historic allocations and focus on current need. (covered in page 7 and 8 of the review)</p> <p>Options:</p> <p>a) Do nothing</p>		✓		

		<p>b) Agree the need to move to needs based funding model and replace historic allocations. Establish a working group to determine a methodology (for proposal at the CA)</p> <p>c) Adopt UKSPF %s fully – reduce Calderdale and Wakefield WY grant provider allocations; top up Leeds, Bradford and Kirklees</p> <p>d) Move towards UKSPF %s, while protecting WY grant provider allocations – will require a £125k top up of CL funds for WY. This will allow a ‘top up’ for Leeds, Bradford and Kirklees without reducing the financial allocation for Calderdale and Wakefield.</p>				
	17	<p>Use of out of area providers should be further reviewed in terms of contribution to strategic aims. (covered in page 7 and 8 of the review)</p> <p>Proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 23/24 – out of area providers develop delivery plans with LAs to meet community gaps and are given clear geographic parameters (if UKSPF methodology is adopted as per action 16) - Ongoing assessment re: success of this model, including performance against clarified rules - Review grant management process for 24/25. <p>Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Model continues b) Grant funding redistributed to WY grant holders c) Blended option where additional provider support is retained for LAs in geographies where the provider base is more limited 		✓		
Celebrating and sharing great practice	18	<p>Provider conference/webinars/roundtables to share and further develop consistent excellent practice in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progression Pathways • Successful initiatives/multi agency working • Male Participation • LLDD provision and support 			✓	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging with the VCSOs • IAG models – impartial 				
	19	WYCA to support wider marketing and communication around adult skills				✓

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Appendix 4

Adult Skills Case Studies

Learner A's academic journey started with a Keighley College adult and community English course for parents at her children's school, St Mary's Primary. Before then she had little confidence in her abilities, but all that changed.

"The English course was amazing. It allowed me to meet new people and gain so much confidence. The programme also opened up fantastic opportunities I could explore."

Learner A enrolled on the Foundation Degree in Supporting Teaching and Learning, she was very nervous about this and doubted her abilities but still volunteered as a teaching assistant in ESOL classes for two years. She has now completed her degree and gained employment as a teaching assistant.

Learner B was new to the area, felt low and lacked confidence. Enrolled onto the Reading Friends course through Kirklees Adult Learning. **"I loved the Reading Friends course as I met new people and took on board new ideas and skills"**

She became a volunteer and enjoyed supporting children with their reading in her local school.

"Thanks to the confidence that the adult learning courses gave me and the advice from careers, I felt prepared as a volunteer, and it gave me a new confidence and purpose. I am over the moon that I have now secured a Teaching Assistant job as I couldn't have done this without the courses and the opportunity to volunteer"

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Report to: Employment and Skills Committee

Date: 13 July 2023

Subject: **Current and Future Employment Support activity at the West Yorkshire level**

Director: Phil Witcherley, Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills and Culture

Author: Sonya Midgley, Policy Manager (Skills) and Anna Myers, Employment Support Manager

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1. To update the Committee on developments and performance of employment support services coordinated at the regional level.
- 1.2. To seek advice on the alignment of UKSPF calls for funding against the Employment and Skills pipeline and SPF programme aims
- 1.3. To seek endorsement of the development of an Employment Support blueprint for West Yorkshire

2. Information

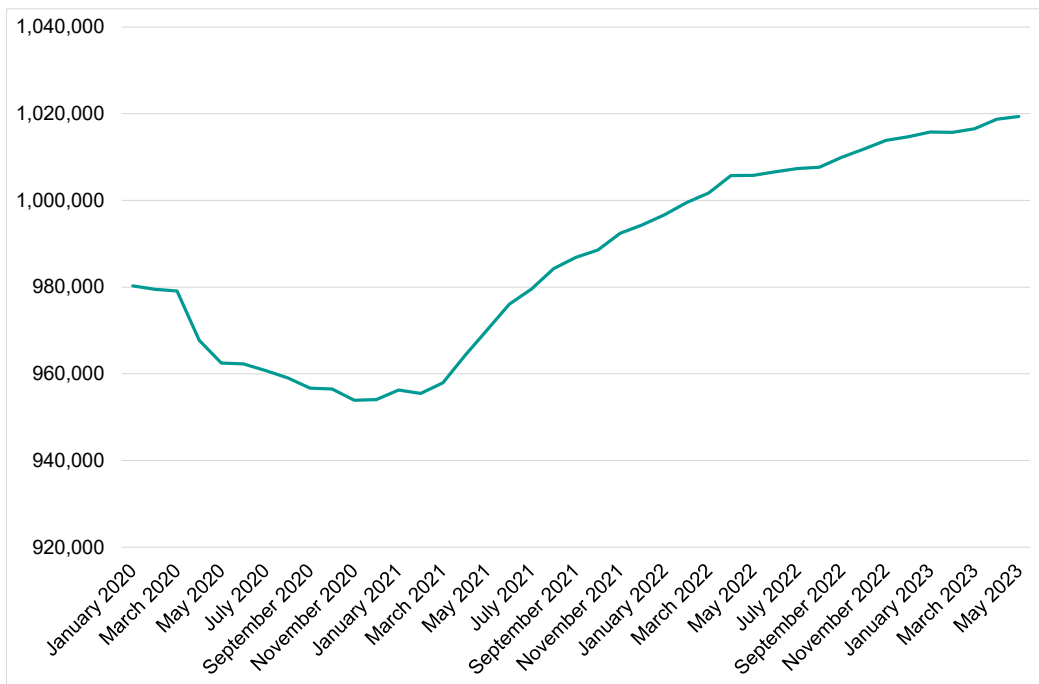
Evidence Base

- 2.1 Overall, labour market conditions in West Yorkshire are strong with growing employment and a high level of vacancies, although the situation varies markedly at local authority level. Nonetheless, the region faces structural challenges arising out of high levels of economic inactivity, particularly for groups who are disadvantaged in the labour market. In addition, the claimant

count remains above pre-pandemic level and is on an upward trend. Labour market prospects remain uncertain. In addition, recent changes in economic trends point to a risk of an increase in demand for employment support services.

2.2 Real-time information on the count of payrolled employees point to a continued upward trend in employment in West Yorkshire and nationally. Based on data for May 2023, the count of employees is 40,000 or 4% higher in West Yorkshire than before the pandemic (February 2020) and 14,000 (1%) higher than a year previously.

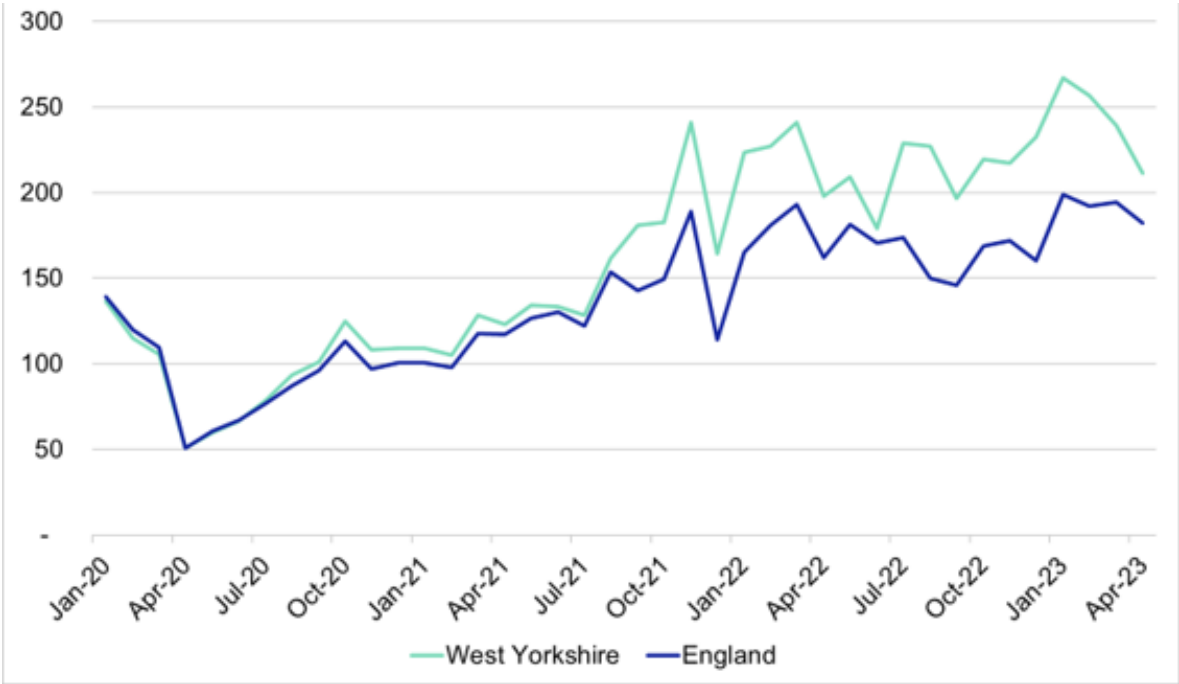
Figure: Trend in count of payrolled employees, West Yorkshire



Source: Pay As You Earn Real Time Information from HM Revenue and Customs

2.3 Recruitment demand in West Yorkshire has been stronger than nationally since the pandemic. The monthly volume of online job postings in West Yorkshire in May 2023 was 122% higher than in January 2020, whereas the equivalent national growth figure was only 51%. The monthly count of job postings peaked in late 2022 and was followed by several consecutive months of decline before rebounding in May 2023. Although demand is still at high level in historic terms it seems likely that it will continue to soften in future with further falls in vacancy volumes.

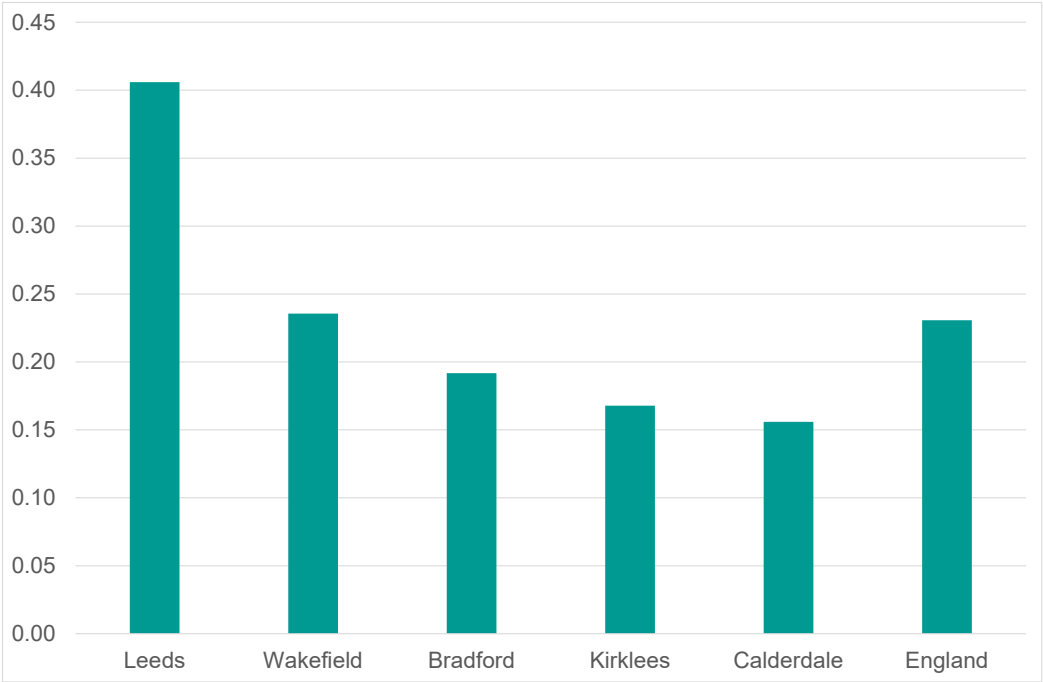
Figure: Trend in monthly count of online job postings (index: average of 2019=100)



Source: Lightcast

2.4 Leeds has the strongest labour market in West Yorkshire. The ratio of vacancies (online job postings) to working age population in Leeds (at 0.41) is nearly twice the national average and is one of the highest in England. Elsewhere in West Yorkshire the ratio ranges from 0.16 in Calderdale to 0.25 in Wakefield. The ratio of unemployed claimants to vacancies (online job postings) is also very low in Leeds at 1.1, compared with the national average of 1.69. This indicates that Leeds has a tight labour market, although this is offset by large inbound commuting from other parts of West Yorkshire and also from York and North Yorkshire. In contrast, the ratio of claimants to vacancies in Bradford is around 3, showing that there are more unemployed people competing for each opportunity.

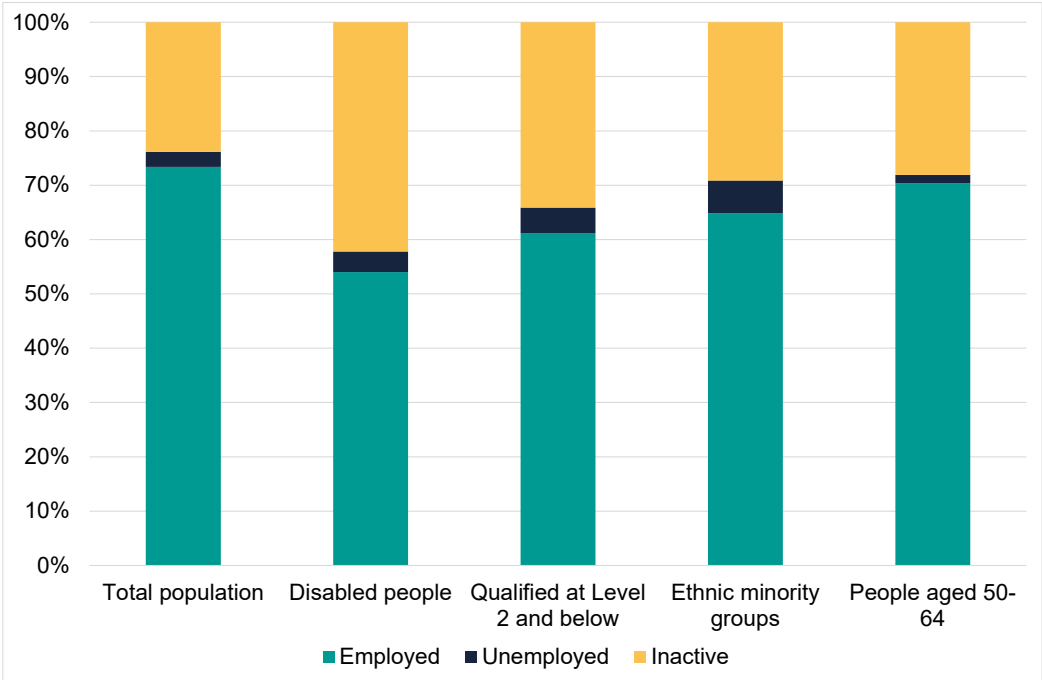
Figure Ratio of vacancies (online job postings) versus working age population by local authority



Source: Lightcast and ONS Population Estimates (2021)

- 2.5 West Yorkshire’s overall employment rate (the proportion of working age people in employment) is below the national average, with a gap of 3 percentage points (76% versus 79%). This gap is due to higher economic inactivity among working age people in West Yorkshire. Whilst the proportion of people who are unemployed is similar to the national average, the proportion who are inactive in West Yorkshire is 24%, 3 points higher than nationally. Leeds’ performance is similar to the national average in terms of its employment rate and inactivity rate, whereas Kirklees has the lowest employment rate in West Yorkshire (73%) and the highest inactivity rate (27%).
- 2.6 Disadvantaged groups in West Yorkshire have below average employment rates and this is mostly due to relatively high economic inactivity. For example, the employment rate among disabled people is only 54%, 19 percentage points lower than the overall average employment rate for West Yorkshire. The inactivity rate among disabled people is 42% compared with the overall average of 24%. Similar employment rate deficits (combined with high economic inactivity) also affect some ethnic minority groups, people qualified below Level 2 and older people aged 50 to 64.

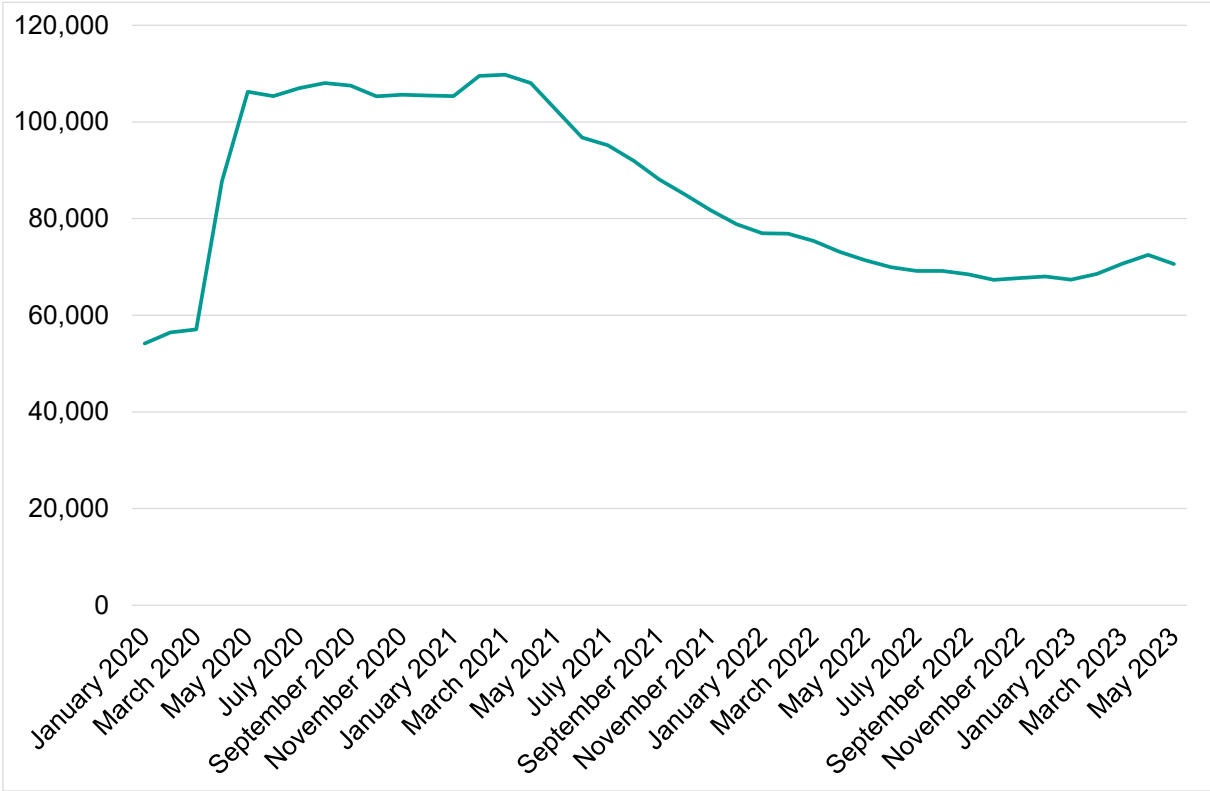
Figure: Employment, unemployment and economic inactivity for selected disadvantaged groups (2022)



Source: Annual Population Survey, January to December 2012

- 2.7 The number of older people aged 50 and above who are economically inactive in West Yorkshire has grown significantly since the pandemic (between 2019 and 2022) by 33,000 or 7%. Among those aged 50-64 inactivity has grown by 17%. Data for Yorkshire and the Humber show that the number of people aged 50-64 who are inactive due to long-term sickness increased by more than a quarter (27%) between 2019 and 2022. Across all age groups, 25% of West Yorkshire’s 347,000 economically inactive people of working age are inactive due to long-term sickness.
- 2.8 The claimant count – the official count of people who are claiming benefits primarily because they are unemployed has been on an upward trend in West Yorkshire and nationally since October 2022, before seeing a fall of 3% between April and May 2023. This follows a long period of steady decline starting in early 2021 coinciding with the lifting of lockdown restrictions. The level of claimant unemployment in West Yorkshire is now (as of May 2023) 70,585, 25% higher than pre-pandemic level (February 2020). The claimant rate (claimant count as a percentage of the working age population) is higher in West Yorkshire than nationally, at 4.8% versus 3.8%. At local authority level the rate ranges from 3.6% in Wakefield to 6.6% in Bradford.

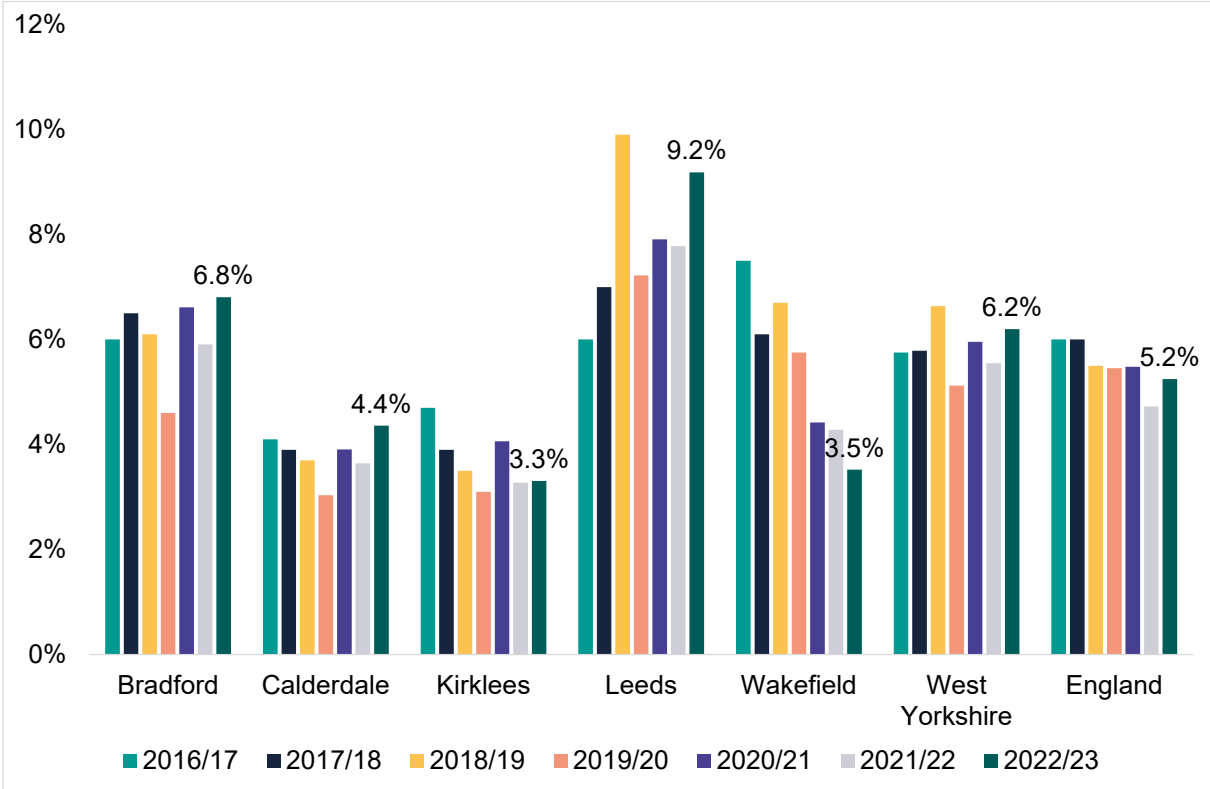
Figure: Trend in claimant count, West Yorkshire



Source: NOMIS

- 2.9 There is also a substantial number of benefit claimants who are in a job. As of March 2023, 85,000 people on Universal Credit in West Yorkshire were in employment, 35% of the total number of claimants. This demonstrates that a large number of people in work have earnings that are not sufficient to meet their needs.
- 2.10 The latest figures show that there are around 3,500 young people in West Yorkshire who are not in education, employment or training (or whose status is unknown). The prevalence of NEETs is higher in West Yorkshire than nationally: as a proportion of the total cohort of 16 and 17-year olds the figures are 6.2% and 5.2% respectively. There is wide variation at local authority level, ranging from 3.3% in Kirklees to 9.2% in Leeds. The number and proportion of young people NEET and not known in West Yorkshire increased for the second successive year in 2022/23. The number increased by 420 or 14%, whilst the proportion of the cohort increased by 0.6 percentage points, from 5.5% to 6.2% (figures appear inconsistent due to rounding). Four out of five local authorities saw an increase in their number of NEETs in 2022/23, although the growth in Kirklees was marginal in absolute terms. Wakefield was the only local authority where the count of NEETs fell.

Figure: Trend in proportion of 16- and 17-year-olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) or whose activity is not known



Source: National Client Caseload Information System (NCCIS)

Current Activity

Collaborative project between DWP and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority

- 2.11 Over the past six months officers from DWP and the CA have been collaborating on a joint action plan to identify where there are opportunities to collaborate and align agendas. This has included co-location and visits.
- 2.12 This project has enabled closer working and sharing of local intelligence on key areas of interest, including gaps in adult skills provision where adult education has been used flexibly to meet demand and support for the new DWP focus on the voluntary in-work progression programme to support claimants to increase their earnings and hours of employment.
- 2.13 Co-location has allowed officers to gain insight into ways of working and delivery of offers, including the partnership work started with the Combined and Local Authorities and DWP on the development of a West Yorkshire Youth Hub blueprint model. Each organisation has recognised the service to unemployed and inactive young people that Youth Hubs can provide to support removal of barriers to work and have committed to collaborating on an operating model for

West Yorkshire that will demonstrate best practice in service design and delivery.

- 2.14 Work Well Partnerships were announced in the Spring Budget. The aim of the programme is to improve integration between employment and health support through a 3 year pilot targeting individuals in and out of work requiring “low intensity” work and health support, clinical and non-clinical. To test the model it is likely a range of local partners will be sought. In developing UKSPF funded work and health interventions, identified for development in the pipeline, it will be important to ensure complementarity with any pilots that re commissioned nationally as well as embedding any learning from evaluations from previous programmes.
- 2.15 Universal Support also announced in the Spring Budget and is based on supported employment/”place and train” approach based and US model of individual placement support. The evidence suggests that this model is successful for cohorts such as prison leavers and people with disabilities. It is likely that this programme will move towards delivery and build on the Local Support for Employment pilots that Local Authorities have been delivering. There is some potential for overlap with UKSPF commissioned activities that will need to be considered in design of commissioning.

Employment Hub 2 close:

- 2.16 The Employment Hub 2 programme (funded through gainshare from April 2021 to March 2023), which was delivered by Local Authorities across West Yorkshire has successfully improved employment opportunities for individuals in the region by providing Employment Support and Information, Advice and Guidance.
- 2.17 The programme committed to supporting 5,500 individuals over two years and overachieved by 1,899. A total of 6,954 individuals across West Yorkshire have received support to gain work, re-skill or up-skill.
- 2.18 Over 50% of individuals engaged are from an ethnic minority background and 21% with a disability. The successful delivery has enabled us to continue an Employment Support offer through our successor programme Employment West Yorkshire.

Employment West Yorkshire launch:

- 2.19 Employment West Yorkshire (April 2023 – March 2025) has been developed

- and is delivered in partnership - with our five Local Authorities. The delivery model ensures that the partnership can provide a flexible and responsive service supporting the needs of their communities.

- 2.20 The programme will provide inclusive support to 7,700 people of all ages to access support and advice to move them closer to, access or return to the labour market and obtain skills to allow for progression towards work or in work.
- 2.21 The employment team in Calderdale supported Sniffers Pet Care with their recruitment recently which resulted in unemployed participant Andrew securing sustained employment. Please see Appendix 1 for a case study video highlighting this story.

Future delivery

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

- 2.22 The Local Investment Plan (LIP) for UKSPF outlines the investment priorities and acknowledged that there is a need to break cycles of deprivation and support people to progress towards work. One of the key challenges to be addressed locally was the need to ensure more people are ready for work in our region, and promoting work as a good option for better health, wealth and well-being. The LIP also recognised the growing need for green and digital skills in the region, and the potential to invest in a regional community grants programme.
- 2.23 A number of calls for projects are being developed to support individuals towards employment. These calls have been prioritised in line with the discussions and Employment and Skills pipeline overseen by this Committee. The following proposals have been shared wider with a sounding group made up of a range of providers and interested parties held on 28 June.

Programme Area	UKSPF	Proposed Route to Market
Employment West Yorkshire	c. £4m	Via existing programme working with the 5 partner councils
Call 1 - Work and Health Programme	Est £4m	Open Call

Call 2 – Community Grants Programme	Est £4m split; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £2m (work and health theme) • £2m (support for those furthest from the labour market) 	Open Call
Call 3 – Youth Unemployment	£2m	Open Call

- 2.24 Employment West Yorkshire is a named programme in the Local Investment Plan approved by Government. The programme began delivery in April 2023 and is being delivered by the five Local Authorities and coordinated by West Yorkshire Combined Authority. It aims to support 7,700 individuals through a universal employment support programme towards and within work. This is a vitally important programme that allows geographical coverage for universal employment support providing an essential coordination role in the complicated landscape and enables reach to those furthest from the labour market to access the skills and employment support needed to progress.
- 2.25 Last Summer, the Combined Authority approved £12m gainshare funding towards this programme and committed to using UKSPF funding during the second year of delivery provided the funding was suitable for the programme design and where it helped deliver the UKSPF interventions, outputs and outcomes.
- 2.25 A review has been undertaken with Local Authority partners to consider the total amount of UK SPF funding that could be used towards the Employment West Yorkshire programmes. A range of between £1.4m to £6.67m of UKSPF funding to support the second year of delivery has been considered.
- 2.26 The final amount of funding is currently being finalised and is expected to be around £4m. Subsequently, a change request to the funding sources via the Combined Authority's Assurance Framework ready for an April 2024 delivery start date and year 2 of Employment West Yorkshire delivery.
- 2.27 A proposal to support youth unemployment in line with the pipeline priorities endorsed and overseen by this Committee is also included. Young People not in education, employment or training (NEETs) remains higher in West Yorkshire than in the UK, with some areas demonstrating an increase in numbers. Youth unemployment is also steadily increasing across West Yorkshire.

- 2.28 The Combined Authority in partnership with the five Local Authorities and working closely with DWP are designing a model for Youth Hubs as a place where young people (aged 18-24) are able to access a range of services to support their wellbeing and support them to gain skills and towards employment. The above proposals for UKSPF include £2m to be used to secure a partnership with a provider that can work with partners to support a pilot to deliver the blueprint through across West Yorkshire to support young people to help them gain skills, develop confidence to gain work and increase employer contact.
- 2.29 Similarly, a proposal for a call to address multiple barriers to employment within households in line with Committee's investment pipeline priorities has also been consulted on with stakeholders. This proposal is based on best practice, community and multi-agency models to support those furthest from the labour market towards work and to tackle stubborn cycles of inactivity through holistic support working with families.
- 2.30 Finally, a community grants programme across two themes in the table above are intended to address pipeline priorities through delivery by the voluntary and community sector closest to the communities they serve.

Gainshare funding, Investment Priority 2

- 2.31 As part of a business case for employment and skills interventions developed with the oversight of this Committee and approved by the Combined Authority in June 2023 there is provision for new interventions to address the priorities for employment support.
- 2.32 The Workforce Development and Growth package will encourage and influence those that are (statistically) less likely to enter digital and green employment. Those from non-white backgrounds, women and people with disabilities to consider digital and green skills employment* (WPI Economics Research, 2022).
- 2.33 The offer will support businesses to develop skills to upskill, retain and attract talent as well as embed positive work cultures and increase diversity with a key focus on supporting businesses to develop the skills they need to 'become net-zero' and digitise.

Trailblazer devolution deals

- 2.34 The below table illustrates additional powers granted through the Trailblazer deals announced in Greater Manchester and West Midlands in alongside the Spring Budget 2023, in relation to employment support.

Greater Manchester (GMCA)	West Midlands (WMCA)
<p>A co-design approach to all future contracted employment support programmes, consideration of potential employment support pilots and commitments to explore data sharing, supported by a new joint board: Joint Strategy and Oversight Board.</p> <p>The board will be made up of senior GMCA officers and UKG officials with the authority to consider evidence, make advisory recommendations and engage in discussions proactively, to ensure that DWP, Jobcentre Plus activity and Greater Manchester activity works together to improve client outcomes.</p>	<p>A co-design approach to all future contracted employment support programmes and commitments to explore data sharing, supported by a new joint board: Regional Labour Market Partnership Board, which builds on the current collaborative structure that is already in place.</p> <p>The board will oversee the development and implementation of a strategy to tackle regional labour market challenges and move people back into the labour market and into work. This board will include senior representation from DWP.</p>

- 2.35 There are similarities in both deals to formalise arrangements for co-designing of local employment support. With a variance in the wording of the GMCA deal, whereby the government commits to working with GMCA to consider the feasibility and potential scope of employment support pilots. DWP and GMCA to work together to jointly scope potential GMCA-led employment support pilots that focus on using national employment and health levers alongside devolved local funding (the Adult Education Budget and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund).

Employment Support Blueprint

- 2.36 To support the policy development and position in West Yorkshire on a blueprint for Employment Support, early work has begun on an **Employment Support Blueprint** for the region. This work will be overseen by the Employment and Skills Committee and as a core document as part of the Employment and Skills Framework. The Blueprint will:
- Set out the current context and challenges related to Employment Support in West Yorkshire (as a devolved region)
 - Develop critical thinking about possible system improvements to Employment Support.
 - Determine clear roles and opportunities for improvement and change, as part of any future devolution in this area, in order to be appropriately

placed to meet future requests and opportunities through central government

- 2.37 The Blueprint is being developed by a project team formed of internal CA staff and Local Authority Skills Officers, providing key insight into Employment Support delivery at a Local Authority level. As part of the work a full consultation programme will be undertaken to ensure a wide range of input from stakeholders from across the region, to inform the Blueprint development.
- 2.38 The Blueprint will support the Combined Authority and its partners to establish key policy positions with regards to its role in the regional employment & skills landscape, as well as identify opportunities for partnership working with commissioning bodies through central government.
- 2.39 The Blueprint will examine different stages of the employment support system: finding/accessing employment, maintaining employment and progressing in employment. At each stage of the employment support system, the Blueprint will examine:
- Existing barriers and inefficiencies
 - An ideal 'vision' of how the system could/should work, and which outcomes should be seen
 - What mechanisms can help to contribute to this ideal vision
 - How success can be measured
- 2.40 Within this, the final document will:
- Present the West Yorkshire Combined Authority as a 'thought leader' with regards to Employment Support provision and activity
 - Make a clear case for devolved employment support mechanisms as an integral part of the Employment & Skills landscape
 - Establish policy position to better serve residents and businesses in the region, through providing programmes and services that offer better access to high-quality employment and support individual's personal ambitions
- 2.41 As outlined at 2.13 and 2.28 above, an early opportunity has been identified amongst partners to develop a blueprint for youth engagement / Youth Hubs. This will be a key part of the Employment Support Blueprint.
- 2.42 If agreed, the Employment Support blueprint will move into a research phase over Summer 2023, with consultation/development sessions expected to take place with key stakeholders over Autumn 2023. This will allow for the establishment of key asks/themes related to devolved powers and funding of

Employment Support prior to the report's full publication, in a timely manner that anticipates a general election in 2024.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

3.1. There are no climate emergency implications directly arising from this report.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

4.1. There are no inclusive growth implications directly arising from this report.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1. There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

7.1. There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

8.1. There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

9.1. No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

10.1 That committee members note the ongoing collaboration between DWP and West Yorkshire Combined Authority, and the opportunities this relationship presents with regards to better supporting service users accessing employment support provision across the region.

10.2 That committee members note the continued intention to use an allocation of UK Shared Prosperity Funding to fund the second year of delivery of Employment West Yorkshire, in order to allow the programme to continue in providing vital employment support across Local Authority areas.

10.3 That members endorse the approach to UKSPF commissioning.

- 10.4 That members agree to officers beginning to develop an Employment Support Blueprint for West Yorkshire for discussion with this committee in the Autumn, which will allow residents to be better served through employment support services.
- 10.5 That members consider and recommend any key stakeholders to be consulted during the development of the Employment Support Blueprint. A draft Blueprint will come back to Employment and Skills Committee at a later date.

11. Background Documents

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – [Employment West Yorkshire – Sniffers Pet Care Case Study Video](#)

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Report to: Employment and Skills Committee

Date: 13 July 2023

Subject: **Development and delivery of regionally coordinated careers activity**

Director: Phil Witcherley, Interim Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills and Culture

Author: Danielle Choma, Schools Partnership Manager

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 To update the Committee on development and performance of careers support activity coordinated at the regional level.
- 1.2 In particular, to make the Committee aware of the offer of funding from the Careers and Enterprise Company in regard to supporting primary schools, and to seek their views.
- 1.3. To seek endorsement of the development of a West Yorkshire All Age Careers Blueprint.

2. Information

Context

- 2.1 Effective careers education, information, advice and guidance supports individuals to thrive, supports businesses in meeting skills and labour demands and supports social mobility. There are three main rationales for the delivery of effective careers support¹:

¹ Hooley, T., Dodds, V. (2015) The Economic Benefits of Career Guidance. London: Careers England.

- It promotes engagement with learning and improves the functioning of the education and training system. For example, careers support in schools contributes to increasing students' engagement and success by clarifying the relevance of subjects to future opportunities.
- It contributes to the effective operation of the labour market, most notably by improving the alignment between people's skills and career aspirations and the needs of employers.
- It facilitates social inclusion and social mobility; for example, by helping young people to develop the career management skills, social capital and networks for career success, by assisting unemployed people and labour market returners to re-engage with the world of work and by facilitating investment in skills and career development by people in low-paid work.

- 2.2 The benefits of careers support are well documented. Effective careers guidance contributes to productivity through improved matching of supply and demand in the labour market. It supports this by enabling individuals to develop human capital in line with the needs of employers and the wider economy and it equips individuals with the capability to actively seek out opportunities where their human capital is most effectively and productively utilised².
- 2.3 The value of the economic benefits of guidance can be significant. A recent evaluation found that for every £1 invested in the National Careers Service: Careers Yorkshire and the Humber £9 is returned in fiscal benefits to the Treasury and the wider economy. This arises from the cost savings in payments of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) and other benefits, as well as the additional income to the Treasury accrued from income tax payments from those adults newly employed who had received careers guidance³.
- 2.4 Early intervention on careers is important. The early years of a child's life are a key time in the formation of their attitudes and expectations. Children start to rule career options in or out at an early age and girls and boys hold stereotypical views about male and female careers by age 7⁴. This is important because employment patterns are strongly shaped by gender stereotypes. For example, females comprise only 2% of employment in the following occupations: Construction and building trades; Vehicle trades; Elementary construction occupations; and Metal forming, welding and related trades. Conversely, females account for 97% employment in Veterinary nurse roles and 93% of employment in Secretarial roles. This pattern of segregation is also reflected in take-up of learning opportunities. For example in West Yorkshire in 2021/22 academic year, females accounted for 83% of total apprenticeship starts in *Health, public services and care* but females starts were in a small minority for *Construction* (7%), *Engineering and Manufacturing* (9%). This pattern of segregation and stereotyping constrains the range of

² Hughes, D. (2004) Investing in Career: Prosperity for Citizens, Windfalls for Government. Winchester: The Guidance Council.

³ DMH Associates (2018) Productivity and the Economic Benefits: National Careers Service - Careers Yorkshire and the Humber.

⁴ Nick Chambers, et al. (2018). Drawing the Future. London: Education and Employers Taskforce.

opportunities available to individuals and limits the scope of the talent pool from which employers can recruit.

- 2.5 Work experience and work inspiration are important ways in which the world of business can engage with education. These activities play a key role in supporting an effective transition into the world of work for young people and other groups by helping individuals to understand and meet the requirements of employers. Work inspiration involves businesses providing advice and support to students about the workplace and their industry and enables individuals to broaden their perspectives and develop aspirations regarding future career paths. By contributing to improved career-readiness and employability these activities have a positive influence on local labour supply. Evidence from the Education and Employers Taskforce shows that young adults who experience contacts with employers whilst at school are less likely to become Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), and can expect, when in full-time employment, to earn more than peers who had no such exposure⁵. There is an important equality, diversity and inclusion aspect to this: where a pupil is from (socially, economically, and geographically) influences their access to, and interaction with, employers and the wider business community⁶.
- 2.6 The Employer Skills Survey examines the extent to which employers at a local level engage in work experience and work inspiration activities. Although most employers consider that relevant work experience is an important factor in recruitment decisions, a minority actually offer work experience placements. The survey finds that 36% of employers in Leeds City Region offer work experience placements of any kind, similar to the England average of 35%. Employers are most likely to offer placements for school pupils (18%), followed by people at college (14%) and then by people at university (11%). Around 29% of employers provided some kind of education placement. Only 4% of employers participated in a placement targeting the unemployed. A much smaller proportion, 11%, offer work inspiration activities in West Yorkshire than offer work experience; this is similar to the national average.

Careers support services & Future Goals

- 2.7 This quarter has seen the beginning of changes to FutureGoals with a user experience project commencing. This project will be done in phases, the first phase involves data collection through analysing google analytics, heat mapping and a stakeholder and provider survey to understand the use of the site and the learner journey. This coupled with an internal steering group and 1-2-1 group feedback sessions, from a range of audiences, will provide robust data regarding the navigational changes required to the site and the content updates needed.
- 2.8 Work is continuing to take place to prepare for the launch of an adult skills campaign planned to commence from October 2023. This will demonstrate the

⁵ Mann, A. (2012). It's Who You Meet: Why Employer Contacts at School Make a Difference to the Employment Prospects of Young Adults. London: Education and Employers Taskforce.

⁶ Ibid

breadth of the skills and employment offers available for adults within West Yorkshire. FutureGoals will be an integral part of this campaign and where relevant, will provide the “call to action” for individuals who are interested in upskilling or employment support.

- 2.9 The Combined Authority’s School Partnerships team works closely with over 180 secondary schools and colleges with activity co-funded by the Careers and Enterprise Company.
- 2.10 Over the last quarter, the roll-out of the new West Yorkshire Careers Hub has continued, supporting schools and colleges to improve their performance towards the Gatsby benchmarks of good careers guidance, and working closely with Local Authorities. This has included:
- Convening a Head Teacher advisory board to provide insight and steer over the regional approach,
 - Delivery of advanced practice CPD sessions for careers leaders in regard to Provider Access Legislation (PAL)
 - Recruitment of new business volunteers (Enterprise Advisers)
 - Evolving the model to ensure that business volunteers benefit from being part of a Hub, including through delivery of a comprehensive CPD package for all EAs and business volunteers, with a successful EA CPD session in April.
- 2.11 Delivery commenced on the Teacher Encounters Project - a CPD programme for teachers of English, Maths, and Science. The aim of the project is to enable teachers to consider how their subject fits with the world of work and to consider effective ways to include careers education into their schemes of work. The CPD consists of two virtual twilight sessions that will run either side of a half day workplace visit. To date, we have successfully completed 4 waves of the project with Lucy Zodion and Maths teachers, Burberry and Science teachers, PWC and KPMG both with English teachers. We also have a further 2 confirmed with Jet 2 and Maths teachers and Enfinium with science teachers.
- 2.12 Through the Apprenticeship and Technical Education Project, support is being provided to employers to guide students on their apprenticeship journey, mentor and engage with students.

Careers In Primary Schools Proposal

- 2.13 The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) has been awarded a £2.6 million contract from the Department for Education to deliver a career-related learning programme. The aim is to provide primary school teachers with support and training to deliver career-related learning.
- 2.14 Of the £2.6m, CEC has made an offer of £32,000 to be awarded as a grant to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and with a requirement for match funding. The funding must be used to engage 120 primary schools in Leeds, Wakefield, Bradford and Kirklees only, by September 2024. The programme would need to include the following:

- In each Primary School a nominated leader must complete blended CPD via Teacher First (30hrs)
- Recruit employers for each school and deliver a programme by September 2024
- Support schools with programmatic and evaluation queries – make sure everything is recorded on the CEC database via West Yorkshire Careers Hub tracking system.

2.15 Consultation with LA officers suggests that the CPD offer to primary schools would be positive and there is a strong case for a focus on careers education at the primary level. However, there is concern that the resource offered isn't sufficient to engage or support the required number of schools. The Committee is asked for their views.

West Yorkshire All Age Careers Blueprint

- 2.16 Quality careers education, inspiration, information and guidance underpin many fundamental decisions that individuals make at key life points that can transform opportunities. Career support contributes to an individual's motivation, career readiness and resilience, employability and capital, with a direct link to productivity growth and increased employment participation ([Future Ready Skills Commission](#)). This applies to young people while in and leaving school / education and also to older age groups looking to progress or change their careers.
- 2.17 Building on the findings from the Future Ready Skills Commission and driving the career element of the current Employment and Skills Framework, and working with our Local Authority partners, the Combined Authority is in the early stages of developing an All Age Careers Blueprint for West Yorkshire.
- 2.18 In addition to internal motivators, the Careers Blueprint will also design a place-based model of good quality careers provision that is locally relevant for the benefit of individuals and businesses, with a particular focus on improving career outcomes for disadvantaged groups. This will address a current, fragmented system which is centrally driven, and made up of many disparate funding sources with responsibilities lying with numerous government departments and arm's length bodies.
- 2.19 With precedents set for wider devolution and 'trailblazer' deals, the West Yorkshire Combined Authority is in a prime position to work with Government to unlock further skills and employment powers and funding, including for careers support. A summary of career related asks from Greater Manchester (GM) and West Midlands (WM) Combined Authority can be seen below:

Greater Manchester	West Midlands
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a place-based approach to careers education and develop governance arrangements for the delivery of careers services in GM. • Establish GMCA as the central convener of careers provision in the city region. • Commitment to work with providers of publicly funded services to inform future priorities. • Commitment to work with GMCA to shape design of future careers provision for all ages in the region to reflect local priorities. • Pilot an innovative approach to responding to the career's priorities for young people through a new fund. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a strong joint governance board to provide oversight of post-16 technical education, to include careers within its purpose. • The board will have responsibility to develop an all-age careers strategy for WM. • Establish WMCA as the central convener of careers provision in the city region.

2.20 Officers are in the process of commissioning a neutral expert without vested interest to work with the Combined Authority and Local Authority partners to develop the blueprint. Included in the scope was the following:

- Desk-based research including:
 - Mapping existing careers provision on offer in West Yorkshire;
 - Identify best and emerging practice;
 - Review existing policy around careers education and support;
 - To articulate what will be achieved through the implementation of an effective, all age careers system on a West Yorkshire level;
 - Identify labour market challenges in West Yorkshire in collaboration with the WYCA Research & Intelligence Team;
- Stakeholder consultation, with key groups of individuals, including those from disadvantaged groups, businesses and education/training/careers support providers:
 - To analyse opportunities and challenges for key stakeholder groups,
 - To identify the key opportunities to simplify the system, including setting out how devolving powers and responsibilities for careers could improve outcomes for government, individuals and key stakeholders.
 - Identify future ways of working, in design and delivery, making the best use of digital technology.

- To consider how regional and local data can support evidenced, quality provision.
- 2.21 Members of this Committee will be invited to take part in the consultation sessions. Interim findings will be presented to the Employment and Skills Committee in early autumn.
- 2.22 The Committee is asked to endorse the development of the West Yorkshire All Age Careers Blueprint.

Future Delivery

- 2.23 As part of the Employment and Skills pipeline and interventions that have been through assurance and endorsed by the Combined Authority in June, there is provision for programme delivery through the Workforce for the Future skills package including Digital Skills, Green Skills and Skills Support for Business (designed).
- 2.24 Building on the success of existing regional career inspiration and support programmes, the Workforce for the Future skills package includes interventions to support digital inclusion, regional careers engagement and inspiration for people of all ages, as well as a green skills further education development fund.
- 2.25 The programme is seeking to inspire people of all ages through online marketing campaigns, the development of resources and delivery of careers workshops in primary and secondary schools. Aimed at individuals, toolkits and engagement activities, which may include employers, are primary examples. The objective of the programme is to showcase careers within the region ensuring that individuals acquire a good understanding of opportunities and labour market demand for skills, in particular for digital and low carbon sectors.
- 2.26 For example, as part of the Digital Workforce for the Future package of interventions, prioritised for development by the Committee, consultation options for delivery are currently underway with Local Authority partners and teachers. This commissioned programme will aim to inspire school-aged children across West Yorkshire to engage with digital literacy and/or careers, with a focus on underrepresented-in-tech groups. The options include incentivised teaching and learning responsibilities for digital, video-coding courses to be used in PHSE lessons, and Digital Badges.
- 2.27 The ambition is to test new methods of delivery that complement existing careers and skills offers. Throughout the delivery period continuous evaluation will take place providing evidence of what could be scaled up.
- 2.28 Careers interventions delivered through this programme will be implemented from September 2023 and will be delivered until March 2025.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1. A career support system, rooted in local economic information is also responsive to changing economic needs, including emerging requirements around green skills and businesses transitioning towards a net-zero carbon economy.
- 3.2. Future interventions address the climate emergency, inspiring individuals to consider green careers and supporting educators to deliver informed advice and guidance with the knowledge and confidence required to meet our net zero ambitions. Employers will also support both educators and individuals, providing steer on skills required to meet their current and future demand.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1. The Future Ready Skills Commission found that, careers support is not just important because it contributes to individual motivation, career readiness and employability but that these improvements in individual capability lead to the improved operation of the labour market, and greater social mobility and inclusion. There is then a direct link to productivity growth, higher pay and increased employment participation.
- 4.2. In addition, career inspiration, starting at primary school age, has been shown to impact social mobility and counteract the early formation of stereotypes about occupations, careers and pathways. Children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds benefitting the most from support. [[Starting Early](#)]
- 4.3. The West Yorkshire All Age Career Blueprint will also support inclusive economic growth by placing a particular focus on those groups that face disadvantage through envisaging a regional career system that supports social mobility.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1. A comprehensive, yet simple, quality support offer to start, progress and change a career, which is rooted in local economic information and provision, is particularly important for those people facing disadvantage and/or do not have other available support in this area and those businesses that are experiencing difficulties recruiting or retaining skilled staff and those industries that face significant change due to economic change, e.g. through automation or a shift towards a net-zero carbon economy.
- 5.2. A priority for the West Yorkshire All Age Career Blueprint is to create a system that works for all ages, from primary school level to retirement age, with a particular focus on transition points.
- 5.3. The blueprint will also consider how careers education, information, advice and guidance can help address longstanding skills and employment gaps based on gender, ethnicity and ability as well as how to reach groups from disadvantaged backgrounds.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report. The funding for interventions outlined in the future delivery section have been developed through the assurance process in line with the indicative gainshare funding allocations made by the Combined Authority against Investment Priorities in the West Yorkshire Investment Plan in February 2023.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1. There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

- 8.1. There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

- 9.1. No external consultations have been undertaken yet as part of the West Yorkshire Careers Blueprint, however a comprehensive and robust stakeholder consultation plan will be developed, including Local Authority and Combined Authority colleagues, education and training providers, career advice and support providers, employers and service users.
- 9.2. A wide range of consultations have taken place as part of the development of the business case including:
- Local Authority Strategic Skills Officers (September 2022, December 2022, January 2023, March 2023, April 2023) – regular group of senior skills officers have met and developed the proposals
 - 1-2-1s between LA SSOs and WYCA’s Programme Development Lead for Employment and Skills (March 2023)
 - Employer Voice Workshops (including ESC and BEIC members) (July 2022)
 - Climate and environment leads within Local Authorities (October 2022)
 - Recommendations task and finish meetings – Green Jobs Taskforce (August-December 2022)
 - Local Digital Skills Partnership workstreams and board (May 2022)
 - Go Higher West Yorkshire Board (Jan 2023)
 - West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges (Jan 2023)
 - Business Communications Group (Jan 2023)
 - West Yorkshire businesses (Feb 2023)
 - Yorkshire Learning Providers (Feb 2023)
 - Digital Inclusion leads within Local Authorities (January and February 2023)
 - Mayor Tracy Brabin (across 2022)
 - LEP Chair (across 2022)
 - CEO of the LEP via LEP Board engagement (2022)
 - Combined Authority (Feb 2023)

10. Recommendations

- 10.1. To note the update provided to the Committee on developments and performance of careers support services coordinated at the regional level.
- 10.2. To provide views with regards to the Careers & Enterprise Company's award to deliver a career related learning programme aimed at primary schools.
- 10.3. To seek endorsement of the development of a West Yorkshire All Age Careers Blueprint.

11. Background Documents

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

None.



Report to: Employment and Skills Committee

Date: 13 July 2023

Subject: **Skills Support for Employment**

Director: Phil Witcherley, Interim Director of Inclusive Economy, Skills and Culture

Author: Michelle Hunter, Development Lead

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this Report

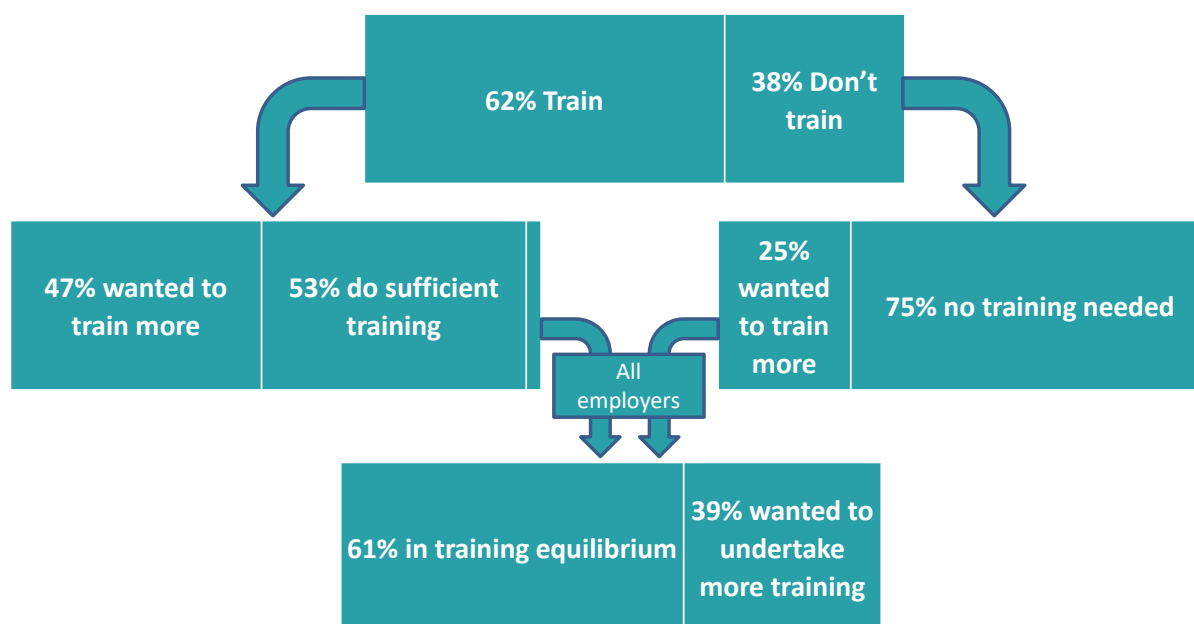
- 1.1 To update the committee on the relevant economic context for West Yorkshire.
- 1.2 To provide committee members with an update on the delivery of programmes to support employers to upskill and create a talent pipeline.
- 1.3 To update the committee on the new Workforce Development and Growth programme including Skills for Business interventions.

2. Economic Context

- 2.1 Employer investment in workforce development is crucial to developing the skills that the West Yorkshire economy needs. It is estimated that employers in the region invest £1.6bn per annum in training their staff when wage costs are included.
- 2.2 The Employer Skills Survey 2019 shows that less than two-thirds (62%) of employers in West Yorkshire provide any kind of training to their staff, similar

to the England average of 61%. At the same time 61% of staff receive training, the same proportion as the national average. In assessing whether enough training is being undertaken by local employers it is important to view training behaviour in the context of business need for training. Among the 38% of local establishments who do not train, a majority (75%) say that no training is needed but a significant minority (the remaining 25%) say that they would have liked to have done some training. Among those employers who would like to more training the chief barriers are an inability to spare staff time for training (55% of employers in this category) and a lack of funds for training (51%), followed by a lack of time to organise training (18%).

Figure: Training equilibrium summary, West Yorkshire



Source: Employer Skills Survey

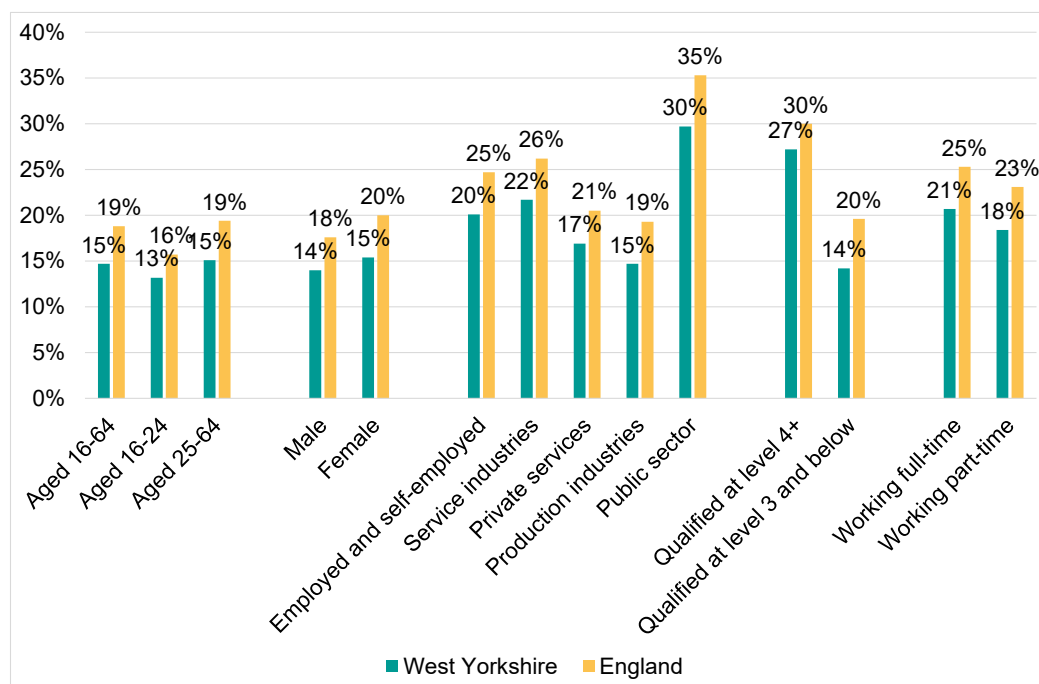
- 2.3 Employers face continued labour shortages, which means that development of existing staff is all the more important in meeting skill requirements. Around a quarter of all vacancies in West Yorkshire are estimated to be skill shortage vacancies, meaning that employers face a lack of candidates with the required skills to do the job. This proportion is much higher for some technical roles.
- 2.4 According to the Employer Skills Survey around two-thirds of employers in West Yorkshire expect that at least some of their staff will need to acquire new skills or knowledge in the year ahead. The main drivers of this need are the introduction of new working practices, the development of new products and services, the introduction of new technologies or equipment and new legislative or regulatory requirements.
- 2.5 Moreover, 15% of employers in West Yorkshire report that they have one or more skills gaps - instances of existing staff lacking full proficiency to do their jobs. There are approximately 51,000 gaps, equivalent to 5% of total

employment in the region. Many skills gaps are due to a deficit of practical skills among workers, including job-specific skills and operational skills, such as knowledge of the organisation's products and services. Complex analytical skills, such as problem solving, plus digital skills at a variety of levels, as well as basic skills (functional literacy and numeracy) are also in deficit for many staff. A lack of the required "soft" skills is common across the workforce, including "self-management" skills such as time management and managing own feelings, plus team working and persuading / influencing others. Skills gaps affecting managers are widespread and have important implications for business performance. The skills that typically need improving include core management skills, complex problem-solving skills, as well as operational skills.

2.6 Looking at individual access to training, data from the Annual Population Survey for 2022 shows that local workers are less likely to undertake job-related training than nationally, with 20% of people of working age receiving training in the previous 13-week period compared with the national average of 25%. Some workforce groups are significantly less likely to undertake job-related training than others, with a potential impact on prospects for pay and progression. Arguably, people who could most benefit from skills development are least likely to be provided with access to it, which has key implications for equality, diversity and inclusion.

- Workers in the production industries are less likely to participate than their counterparts in the service industries; in particular, people employed in the public sector are the group most likely by far to receive job-related training.
- Young people (aged 16-24), both nationally and locally, are somewhat less likely to participate in job-related training than people aged 25 and over.
- Workers who are already qualified to a high level (level 4+) are considerably more likely to receive training than their less qualified colleagues (those qualified at level 3 and below).
- Part-time workers are less likely than full-time workers to receive job-related training.
- Finally, females are slightly more likely than males to receive training, but to a large extent this reflects their strong representation in public sector employment.

Figure: Proportion of people receiving job-related training in previous 13 weeks by labour market group



Source: Annual Population Survey, October 2020 to September 2021

3. Current delivery

Skills for Growth programme

- 3.1 The Skills for Growth programme is a part-ESF funded business facing service that aims to connect small and medium-sized businesses to training opportunities and skilled employees. Activity on the programme commenced in September 2020 and will end in August 2023, with financial completion by December 2023.
- 3.2 The programme has exceeded targets for business engagement and number of participants engaged. To date, it has supported 661 businesses to connect with education and training providers, access talent from across the region and upskill/reskill staff.
- 3.3 Performance up to the end of Q4 (March 2023), as reported to DWP as part of the funding requirements:
 - Number of supported micro, small and medium sized enterprises: 360 (against a target of 344) 105%. Broken down by Local Authority areas as follows, Bradford 37, Calderdale 39, Kirklees 76, Leeds 81, Wakefield 33, North Yorkshire 94.

- Number of small and medium sized enterprises successfully completing projects (which increase employer engagement; and/or the number of people progressing into or within skills provision): 243 (against a target of 247) 98%. Broken down by Local Authority areas as follows, Bradford 16, Calderdale 24, Kirklees 51, Leeds 71, Wakefield 29 and North Yorkshire 51.
- Total number of participants: 2840 (against a target of 1509) 188%.

3.4 Businesses across all sectors have identified recruitment, including graduate recruitment, as a challenge. Engagement with Yorkshire Universities and careers leaders in the universities have enabled the team to put together a package of support for the summer term including a Big Futures in Small Business event for careers leaders, internship opportunities and Leeds Manufacturing Festival webinars.

3.5 Businesses supported through the scheme include manufacturing employer, [Parker Howley & Co.](#), located in Mirfield, Kirklees. The company was referred to the programme by the Growth Manager at Kirklees Council as it was looking to develop in-house digital marketing capacity in order to grow the business. The business was supported by the programme to recruit a Social Media and Marketing Executive via the graduate internship programme at Leeds Beckett University.

Levy Transfer service

3.6 The West Yorkshire Levy Transfer Service is a free transfer service to support businesses to transfer up to 25% of their unspent apprenticeship levy to smaller businesses taking on apprentices. A transfer covers 100% of the training costs of the apprenticeship standard and avoids smaller businesses paying the 5% contribution towards the training.

Since its launch in 2019, the Levy Transfer Service has achieved the following:

- Received £4.7m of pledges from 18 different levy-paying businesses who weren't fully utilising their levy funds.
- Funded 505 apprenticeships (£2.9m) across West Yorkshire and York
- Supported 132 businesses across West Yorkshire and York, of which 41% are located within the bottom 20% most deprived areas.

Enterprise West Yorkshire

- 3.7 The £6m Enterprise WY programme has been in delivery since late 2021 and provides a package of enterprise support.
- 3.8 The new 'Be the Boss' campaign launched in April 2023. The campaign raises awareness of setting up your own business as a career choice (as part of the workstream one **Exploring Enterprise** activity). A key focus of the activity was to realign the customer journey to ensure that the programme is accessible to underrepresented groups (such as women, ethnic minorities and people who identify as having a disability).
- 3.9 To date, the campaign has been successfully delivered across ad vans, bus stations and digitally (including Instagram, twitter and TikTok). The overall campaign has a target of reaching 100,000 individuals. The interim results of the paid social media results between 24 April – 21 May 2023 are as follows:
- Total reach: 186,258
 - Total clicks: 6,182
- 3.10 This has resulted in 184 new sign ups to the Exploring Enterprise course between the months of April – March 2023. Learners are being supported from underrepresented groups and the project is exceeding its EDI targets:
- Females: 70% (against a target of 50%)
 - Individuals from an ethnic minority: 33% (against a target of 30%)
 - Those who self-identify as having a disability: 11% (against a target of 10%)

Future delivery

3.11 Workforce Development and Growth

Following the last Employment and Skills Committee in March, approval was given by Combined Authority on 22nd June for a Workforce Development and Growth skills package that will enhance and build on a wide range of activity including a programme of skills support for employers - this includes:

- **Digital and green skills offers for businesses** - including support for job creation, aligned to the mayoral pledge to create 1,000 green jobs for young people.
- **Mayor's SME graduate pilot programme** – a programme designed to increase the uptake of employment within employers by graduates in West Yorkshire.

- **Regional skills support for employers** – an impartial support service for businesses aligning to region wide business support and skills offers including a skills funding offer.
- 3.12 The Workforce Development and Growth is a £7.5m package, made up of £6m from gainshare funding and £1.5m local skills funding. Alternative funding sources will be considered where possible and suitable.
- 3.13 The main objective of the package is to create a flexible and responsive programme of offers that connect businesses to region-wide opportunities whilst maintaining both a local and regional access point to support.

High-level objectives include the following:

- Engage 10,000 businesses to interact with skills and training opportunities.
 - Support a minimum of 150 and a maximum of 600 SMEs to access skills funding to develop skills and training for their workforce.
- 3.14 The programme will support businesses to develop skills to upskill, retain and attract talent as well as embed positive work cultures and increase diversity with a key focus on supporting businesses to develop the skills they need to 'become net-zero' and digitise.
- 3.15 The programme will provide impartial advice to businesses to connect them with skills programmes and align with region-wide business support offers.
- 3.16 Building on the success of the current Skills for Growth programme, the Mayor's SME Graduate Pilot Programme and Regional Skills Support for Employers will similarly utilise a team of advisors to support business to access the training and support required to fulfil skilled roles and upskill current staff in green and digital. Advisers will be locally based, complementing Local Authority offers and wider business support.
- 3.17 Upon delivery, access points and effective triaging will be considered against region wide programmes such as Employment West Yorkshire, Enterprise West Yorkshire, and wider businesses support and adult skills programmes.
- 3.18 Skills funding will be available through this offer, with a proposal that this is allocated for businesses whose primary barrier to accessing training is time and finances, especially in the cost of doing business crisis. In order to encourage West Yorkshire SMEs to upskill their staff, this funding aims to overcome these barriers, specifically supporting businesses to upskill to become more digitally capable and green. Additionally, in the medium to long-

term, businesses will adopt practices that increase resilience and encourage sustainable processes.

- 3.19 As a result of these interventions employers will benefit from a more productive and resilient workforce and in turn, individuals will gain transferable skills and experience.
- 3.20 The Workforce Development and Growth package will aim to encourage and influence those that are (statistically) less likely to enter digital and green employment. Those from non-white backgrounds, women and people with disabilities to consider digital and green skills employment* (WPI Economics Research, 2022).

4. Next Steps

4.1 Workforce Development and Growth package timeline:

- Approved by Combined Authority Board in June 2023
- Initiate implementation, starting in September 2023.
- Full implementation by January 2024.
- Fully funded programme until March 2026.

4.2 Committee Members will be invited to attend a workshop over summer to support the development of programmes.

4.3 On an ongoing basis, in tandem with the entire programme, this work package will undergo consultation and engagement with stakeholders, ensuring that it continues to be fit for purpose and can fully realise outcomes.

4.4 Evaluation will also be continuous, flexing delivery to suit a volatile employment and skills market is a crucial success indicator.

5. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

5.1. The interventions in this report are designed to address the employment and skills needs identified to address climate emergency implications.

6. Inclusive Growth Implications

6.1. All delivery linked to programmes will be aligned to inclusive growth, procured suppliers commissioned to delivery activity through the programme will be

required to demonstrate a commitment to implementing social value objectives throughout the life of the programme and projects.

7. Equality and Diversity Implications

7.1. The programmes will follow existing business support, enterprise and skills programmes and develop EDI targets based on benchmarks from predecessor schemes.

8. Financial Implications

8.1. There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

9. Legal Implications

9.1. Ethical and legal considerations, rules and regulations, and timescales within which the project must be delivered have all been considered and deliberated upon.

10. Staffing Implications

10.1. There are no staffing implications arising directly from this paper.

11. External Consultees

11.1. Employment and Skills Committee, local authority and wider stakeholders have been consulted on the proposals in this paper

12. Recommendations

12.1 This report seeks questions and feedback.

12.2 This report seeks committee endorsement of this approach.

13. Background Documents

13.1 There are no background documents referenced in this report.

14. Appendices

Appendix 1 – [Programme breakdown](#)

Appendix 2 – [Draft Green Jobs Taskforce Recommendations](#)

Digital Skills, Green Skills and Skills Support for Business

Programme

Workforce Development and Growth

Workforce for the Future

Skills Packages

Digital and green skills offers for businesses

Mayors SME graduate pilot programme

Regional Skills Support for Employers

Digital Inclusion

Regional Careers Engagement and Inspiration for people of all ages

Green Skills Further Education Development Fund

Projects

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Inspire

To inspire and inform young people, from key stages 1 & 2 onwards, about opportunities and career pathways within the green economy.



Support

Support education and training providers to build a curriculum that responds effectively to the needs of businesses transitioning to a net-zero carbon economy; including building capacity to attract, develop and retain expert staff.



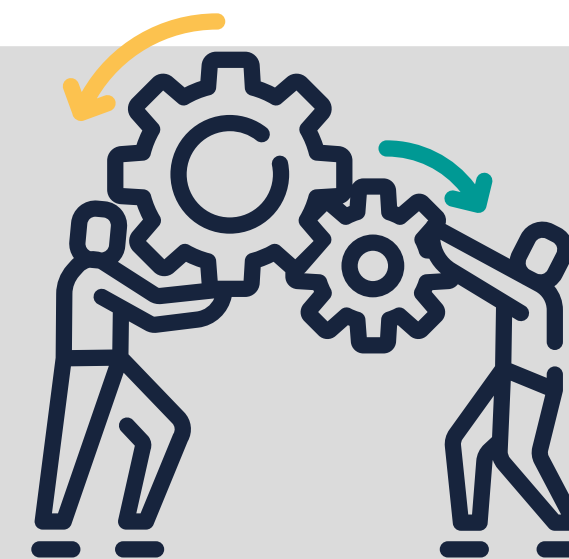
Facilitate

Facilitate easy access to green skills and job information, career pathways and job opportunities for young people and adults to make informed decisions.



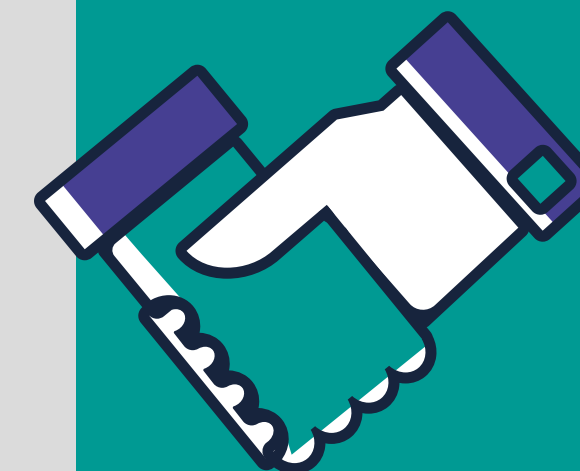
Equality, diversity and inclusion

Any interventions put forward must have ambitious targets addressing Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI); particularly around attracting more women and people from Black, Asian ethnic minority (BAME) backgrounds towards careers within the green economy and the workforce most exposed by a transition to net-zero.



Enable

Enable businesses to access support to decarbonise and attract, develop and retain talent to enable a just transition.



Embed

Embed engagement of the target group when designing initiatives e.g. young people for the development of careers, education, information advice and guidance (CEIAG); workforce for reskilling/upskilling initiatives to support decarbonisation.



Strengthen

Strengthen current and potential West Yorkshire specialisms to stimulate demand and create green jobs, exploring opportunities in manufacturing, green finance and retrofit in the first instance.

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