

EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PANEL

**MEETING TO BE HELD AT 10.00 AM ON FRIDAY, 19 JUNE 2020
AS A REMOTE MEETING TO BE LIVESTREAMED HERE:
[HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/CHANNEL/UCAZJNSGPQZZT41VIBN2
ZK9A/LIVE](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCAZJNSGPQZZT41VIBN2ZK9A/LIVE) (COPY AND PASTE THE LINK IN YOUR BROWSER)**

A G E N D A

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS**
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Signed:



**Managing Director
West Yorkshire Combined Authority**



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PANEL
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 4 MARCH 2020 AT ASPIRE-IGEN GROUP
LTD, OPPORTUNITY CENTRE, 21-27 CHEAPSIDE, BRADFORD,
BD1 4HR**

Present:

Rashik Parmar MBE (Chair)	IBM
Simon Barratt	Barog Games Lab
Martin Booth	Witt UK Gp
Councillor Ian Cuthbertson	City of York Council
Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe	Bradford Council
Nav Chohan (Advisory Representative)	Leeds City Region Skills Network
Mike Curtis (Advisory Representative)	NHS Yorkshire & Humber
Professor Margaret House (Advisory Representative)	Leeds City Region Skills Network
Dr Peter O'Brien (Advisory Representative)	Yorkshire Universities
Colin Booth (Advisory Representative)	Leeds City College

In attendance:

Michelle Burton	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Lindsey Daniels	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Peter Glover	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Sonya Midgley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Diana Towler	Department of Work and Pensions
Janette Woodcock	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Tina Williamson	Department of Work and Pensions

18. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence received from Cllr Darren Byford, Nick Bowen, Mark Roberts, Amanda Stainton, Alex Miles, Sam Alexander, Sue Soroczan and Merran McRae.

19. Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests

There were no items of disclosable pecuniary interests

20. Exempt Information - Exclusion of the press and public

There were no items on the agenda requiring the exclusion of the press and public.

21. Minutes of the meeting of the Employment and Skills Panel held on 27 November 2019

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2019 be agreed and signed by the Chair.

22. Chair's Update

The Chair welcomed members and attendees to the Aspire I-gen offices and thanked Caroline Harrison, CEO for opening the space for the meeting, following which Caroline said a few words about Aspire I-gen and the work that they do.

At the meeting on 16 January, the LEP Board agreed to change the geography so that from 31 March 2020 onwards, the LEP will formally cover the districts of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield and will continue to be known as the Leeds City Region.

The Board agreed to seek strong partnership arrangements with neighbouring LEP's and partner authorities (namely Barnsley, Craven, Harrogate, Selby and York to ensure that the Region's economic priorities continue to be delivered and future investment is aligned to create the greatest possible benefits to all.

23. Employment and Skills Programmes

The Panel was presented with a report to update on the progress of delivery of LEP-led employment and skills programmes in the Leeds City Region and was asked to note and comment on the progress of delivery

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That comments from the Panel be noted

24. Policy Updates

The Panel was presented with a report to update on policy items relating to employment and skills in the Leeds City Region clarifying the structure and

hierarchy of the planned policy work and was asked to consider the proposal for an Employment and Skills Plan. The Panel was also asked to consent on the ongoing overall approach.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the Panel consented to the ongoing overall approach to strategy and policy issues and the proposal for a revised Employment and Skills Plan.

25. Digital Framework and analysis of local digital offer

The Panel was presented with a report to share the headline findings on behalf of the Leeds City Region Digital Board and was asked to consider and comment on the findings of the analysis work and the recommendations highlighted by the Digital Board. The Panel was also asked to support the areas of focus for future work as part of the overall package of skills policy work being undertaken by the LEP.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the comments of the Panel and support for the areas of focus for future work be noted.

26. Adult Education Budget

The Panel was presented with a report to update on the purpose of the Adult Education Budget (AEB), the national funding priorities which determine its use and an overview of the current practice and impact in the Leeds City Region.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the comments of the Panel be noted

27. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Employment and Skills Panel will be held on 19 June 2020 which has been changed from 19 May 2020.

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Report to: Employment and Skills Panel

Date: 19 June 2020

Subject: **Economic Reporting**

Director: Alan Reiss, Director of Policy, Strategy and Communications

Author: James Hopton

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To provide an update on the latest economic and business intelligence for the Panel, and to update the Panel on the latest activity and intelligence around understanding the impact of Covid-19.

2. Information

Background

- 2.1 Since the outbreak of Covid-19 and the resulting lockdown, measures have been put in place to monitor the impact of the virus on the local economy. This has included the production of a weekly monitoring report, drawing together intelligence from the Growth Services' interactions with businesses along with intelligence from other data tools available to the LEP / Combined Authority, and published data. This report presents the latest assessment of that intelligence.
- 2.2 The Research & Intelligence team is also supporting work on recovery, by:
- undertaking analysis to identify areas, sectors and groups of society who may be more heavily affected by Covid-19
 - assessing the range of scenarios published by official institutions such as the Bank of England and Office for Budget Responsibility as well as other forecasters to understand potential impacts on the economy
 - commissioning further economic scenario work to understand the scale of potential impacts locally
 - undertaking primary research to understand the potential impact of measures such as social distancing on peoples' choices on issues such as public transport use and willingness to travel.

- 2.3 This work will feed into the development of a range of scenarios which will inform the organisation's policy response.

Impacts to date

- 2.4 Like the rest of the country, Leeds City Region has seen a significant fall in economic and other activity since the beginning of lockdown in March. In the early weeks of lockdown, footfall in Leeds city centre fell by 90% according to data from Leeds City Council, whilst data on MCard and concessionary fare passes showed a similar fall in movements across West Yorkshire.
- 2.5 The level of activity in the labour market also declined rapidly, with the number of vacancies advertised currently down 65% locally and 62% nationally compared to pre-lockdown. The largest reductions in vacancies have been in sales, HR and recruitment, hospitality and catering, and consultancy roles, showing that although shutdown sectors have been badly affected, wider swathes of the economy have also seen a significant reduction in hiring activity. Vacancies for social work and healthcare and nursing jobs have been relatively resilient. The number of new business bank accounts opened, a proxy for start-up activity, down by a similar amount in April.
- 2.6 There has also been an unprecedented increase in claims for unemployment benefits. In April 2020 there were 108,000 jobless claimants in Leeds City Region, with 87,900 claimants in West Yorkshire. Between March and April 2020, the count increased by 41,200 (+62%) across the City Region and by 30,800 (+54%) across West Yorkshire, lower than the increase seen nationally of 66%. The claimant rate (expressed as a proportion of adult residents) rose from 3.5% to 5.6% in the City Region and from 3.9% to 6.0% for West Yorkshire.
- 2.7 The monthly increase in the claimant count seen in April is largely unprecedented, though the consensus among analysts is that this would have been much higher had the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme CJRS to furlough staff not been in place. Although official data on the take up of the CJRS is not available at the local level, one million businesses have collectively furloughed 8.7m staff nationally. Analysis of an Office for National Statistics business survey (which suggested eight million jobs could be furloughed) suggested that if applied locally, around 293,000 and 387,000 workers could be furloughed in West Yorkshire and Leeds City Region respectively. Around 75% of businesses nationally have used the scheme. There were 216,100 people on Universal Credit in Leeds City Region in April 2020 and 167,800 in West Yorkshire. Leeds City Region saw a monthly increase of 60,000 (38%) between March and April 2020 and West Yorkshire an increase of 44,600 (36%), both slightly below the national average increase of 40%.
- 2.8 Existing businesses have faced significant challenges. An ONS survey of businesses nationally suggested that around 20% had temporarily ceased trading. Locally, there was a spike in business liquidations in March, up 65%

on the same period last year, but this fell sharply to below usual levels in April. Temporary changes to company insolvency practices introduced in response to COVID-19 may have helped limit liquidations.

- 2.9 However, businesses continue to face challenging financial conditions, with the number of companies with high risk credit ratings rising sharply. Businesses in the business administration and hospitality sectors are particularly overrepresented here.
- 2.10 The majority of contacts to the LEP's Growth Managers and business support gateway have focused on issues around access to finance and cash flow, with contacts from B2C sectors such as retail and hospitality most prevalent.
- 2.11 Local authorities in Leeds City Region have paid out £726m to 61,500 businesses under the Small Business Grants Fund (SBGF) scheme and the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Business Grants Fund (RHLCGF), according to data from BEIS. In West Yorkshire, £430m has been allocated to 37,000 businesses. In both areas, almost 80% of the funding has been allocated, in line with national activity.
- 2.12 Data from an ONS survey at regional level shows that four in five people in Yorkshire & Humber (82%) said they were worried or very worried about the impact of Covid-19 on their life. 29.5% of respondents in Yorkshire & Humber said their main worry was access to work, school or university, this is higher than in any other region. It is also higher than the proportion whose biggest concern was health, wellbeing or access to care.
- 2.13 16% of respondents in Yorkshire & Humber said their household finances had experienced a reduction in income in April. This is lower than in most regions and compares to 18% nationally, but there are no statistically significant variations across regions.

Potential future impacts

- 2.14 Most economic forecasters have provided an assessment of potential economic impacts at national level as a result of Covid-19. Most expect a sharp fall in 2020 followed by a recovery in 2021, though the scale of impact and timing of recovery is highly uncertain and heavily influenced by factors including the length of the lockdown.
- 2.15 The scenario developed by the Office for Budgetary Responsibility outlined a contraction in UK GDP of up to 35% in Q2, and 13% over the whole of 2020. NIESR forecast 15% drop in GDP in Q2 and just over 7% in 2020 as a whole. The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee has published its first assessment of potential economic impacts, suggesting GDP could fall by 25% in Q2, and by 14% in 2020.
- 2.16 There is more consensus on employment impacts, with those three national forecasts all suggesting unemployment could reach 9% or 10%.

2.17 At the local level, work is ongoing with Experian to develop a series of scenarios to understand local economic impacts for different trajectories. These scenarios will provide detailed local GVA and employment assessment by sector and support our recovery work. Initial higher-level forecasts by Oxford Economics suggest that the local impact in West Yorkshire may be slightly higher than the national forecasts.

2.18 Further work is ongoing understand current and potential future impacts in more detail, including surveys of households and businesses (the latter working with the Chambers of Commerce). This will provide further insight on the challenges facing key groups in ensuring activity can recover post-lockdown, and explore opportunities for future developments that can enhance the resilience of the economy and provide growth potential.

3. Clean Growth Implications

3.1 There are no clean growth implications directly arising from this report.

4. Financial Implications

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

5. Legal Implications

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

6. Staffing Implications

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

7. External Consultees

7.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

8. Recommendations

8.1 The Panel are asked to note the latest intelligence around the economic impacts of Covid-19 and consider how this relates to their work and future work plans.

9. Background Documents

None.

10. Appendices

Appendix A - Leeds City Region Covid-19 weekly monitor – 5th June 2020.

5th June 2020

Introduction

- This report presents the latest developments with regard to Covid-19 for Leeds City Region. It draws on a number of official and unofficial data sources to present the latest intelligence and is primarily focused on the economic impacts.
- It includes analysis of anecdotal evidence from interactions with businesses, and it is recognised that this analysis is based upon subjective views from those businesses which may or may not reflect the views of the wider business community.
- Where available, data is presented for Leeds City Region (covering Barnsley, Bradford, Calderdale, Craven, Harrogate, Kirklees, Leeds, Selby, Wakefield and York). Other geographies are used where data is not available at that level. In some cases, data is presented for a single authority or area. In those instances, further data is being sought to enable more comprehensive analysis of other areas. Please send any data to contribute for analysis or any comments on this report to Research@westyorks-ca.gov.uk.

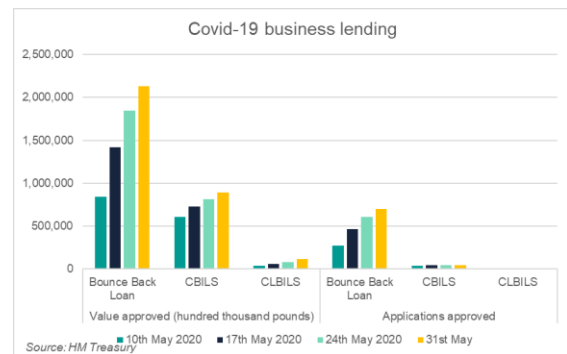
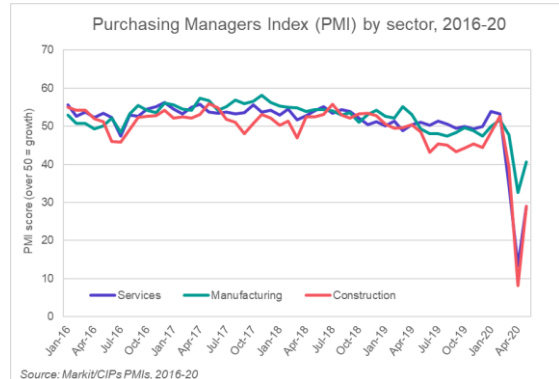
Key local insights

- **Disparities in the health impacts** of Covid-19 have been highlighted by a review by Public Health England this week, which found high risks for people from BAME backgrounds, people living in urban and deprived areas, and those working in certain occupations. This highlights the increased risk for some groups particularly as the lockdown eases.
- However, even with restrictions easing, the **pace of the restart may be gradual** with the ONS Business Impacts of Coronavirus Survey showing almost half of firms who have closed temporarily are unsure when they will restart operations. A further 31% don't expect to open for at least another month.
- As local businesses restart operations, some, particularly larger employers, are actively considering the **implications of reduced transport capacity on their workforce** and are exploring how they can ensure staff get to work safely.
- Local business engagement identified some businesses reporting **an improvement in trading conditions, with some reporting higher than usual demand** – perhaps as a result of competitors not yet resuming operations.
- This is borne out by the PMI surveys, which **whilst still showing a sharp decline in activity did report signs of increasing demand** as lockdown begins to ease. The falls in activity were still at historic levels however, with the services survey also showing the second fastest fall in employment in the survey's history.
- The number of **businesses being liquidated in Leeds City Region has dropped to a very low level**, reflecting temporary measures instigated to prevent liquidations as a result of Covid-19. Whilst positive, this likely does not fully reflect the underlying health of many businesses and will continue to be monitored closely, particularly as the temporary safeguards are removed.
- There was also a **slight upturn in the number of job vacancies** being posted in Leeds City Region, with York and Craven seeing the fastest increases in the week to 24th May. Nonetheless, the level of vacancies in all districts remains well below the level seen when the lockdown was introduced.

Latest headlines and trends

Main national economic developments

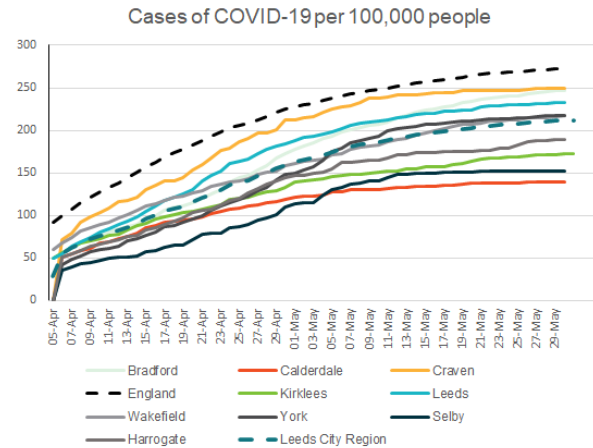
- The Markit/CIPS PMI surveys **showed a further sharp fall in activity in May**, though the pace of decline did slow from April. The manufacturing index rose to 40.7 in May, up from 32.6 in April (a reading of less than 50 indicates contraction). This is still the seventh lowest reading in the survey's history, with output, employment and new orders all contracting. Some firms did however report that there were signs of demand increasing as lockdown restrictions began to ease in the UK and abroad.
- The picture was similar in the services sector. 54% of companies reported a further deterioration from April, with 13% reporting improvement. As with manufacturing, companies reported signs of increasing demand, driven in part by the return of activity in the construction sector later in the month. However, employment fell at the second fastest pace in the survey's 24 year history.
- Construction companies also reported a slowing pace of decline in May, but the index was still at its second lowest level since 2009. The sector reported significant supply chain disruptions and lengthening lead times, with some sourcing alternative suppliers and increased costs.
- **25% of manufacturing firms are considering redundancies** in the next 6 -months with almost 30% of firms indicating that they will make between 26% and 50% of staff redundant, according to a survey by manufacturing body MakeUK. The highest rates of companies confirming they intend to make redundancies are the metal products (41%) and motor vehicle (31%) sectors.
- In terms of short-term confidence measured by firms expecting to reach 75-100% of pre-covid operating levels by 2021 Yorkshire & Humber manufacturers have the lowest confidence levels at 50% compared to the highest in the south-east & London at 71%. 40% of manufacturers think it will take longer than 12 months to return to normal trading conditions.
- The number of **workers furloughed increased by 300,000 to 8.7m** in the week to May 31st, according to HMRC, with 1.1 million employers using the scheme. Claims totalling £17.5bn have been made so far, though the rate of uptake of the scheme is slowing. 2.5 million self-employed people have used the income support scheme, claiming a total of £7.2bn as of May 31st.
- The number of **applications for Bounce Back loans also appears to be slowing**, with 104,000 new applications in the week to May 31st, compared to 187,600 the week before. 699,400 businesses with loans totalling £21.1bn have now been approved through the scheme, with 80% of applications approved. 51% of CBILS applications worth £8.92bn have been approved.
- **Households have repaid £7.4bn of consumer credit** in April, double the record repayments made in March, according to the Bank of England, with those who are able seeking to reduce debts and increase saving whilst consumer spending is low.
- **Average house prices dropped by 1.7% in the UK in May**, according to data from Nationwide building society. Prices were still 1.8% higher than a year ago. The Office for National Statistics have suspended their official house price index since March due to a lack of transaction volumes. The number of approved mortgages fell by 80% compared to February, to just 15,800 in April according to the Bank of England.
- In the period from 16 March to 26 May 2020, the **DWP received almost 2.9m individual declarations to Universal Credit**. The number of daily individual declarations peaked in late-March / early-April at around 100,000, following the Chancellor's announcement on additional support for the self-employed. Since then, they have steadily declined to an average level of around 15,000 per day in the latest week for which we have data, still above pre-crisis levels.
- The latest Business Impacts of Coronavirus Survey from ONS (18-26 May) found that **almost half (46%) of businesses who had temporarily closed were still not sure when they would reopen**. 31% expect it to be more than 4 weeks until they restart operations, with 10% starting in 2 – 4 weeks and 14% within the next two weeks.



Developments in Leeds City Region

Number of Covid-19 cases per 100,000 people in the wider Leeds City Region area

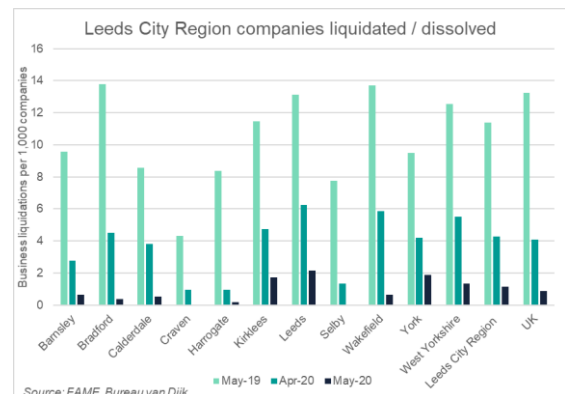
The NHS releases daily information on the number of Covid-19 cases by Lower Tier Local Authority. Over April and into May the Covid-19 growth rate has continued to slow down. Currently the last seven-day average growth stands at 0.1% nationally. The growth rate in West Yorkshire and the wider Leeds City Region is currently 0.3%, with Bradford having the highest growth figures at 0.5% and Calderdale having the lowest growth figures of 0.1%.



Across England there have been 272.4 cases per 100,000 people. Across the Leeds City Region there is 211.7 cases pre 100,000 with all local authorities having a lower rate than the England Figure. Craven has had the highest rate to date with 249.9 cases per 100,000 followed closely by Bradford and Leeds with 248 and 232.5 cases per 100,000 respectively.

Business and economic impacts

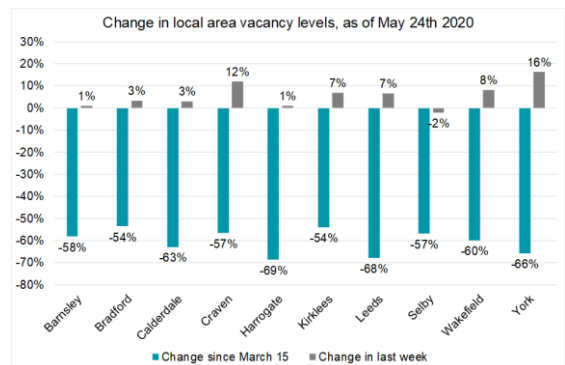
The number of business liquidations in Leeds City Region fell to 148 in May (124 in West Yorkshire), according to Bureau van Dijk's FAME business database. This is down 73% on April in Leeds City Region (76% in West Yorkshire) and down by almost 90% in both areas compared to May 2019. The fall in company liquidations to unusually low levels reflects changes in company insolvency processes enacted temporarily to mitigate the impacts of Covid-19.



Liquidations have fallen across all districts, in some cases to zero in May. Nationally, 0.9 companies per 1,000 were liquidated, compared to 1.2 in Leeds City Region and 1.3 in West Yorkshire, though it was highest in Leeds (2.1) and York (1.9)

Labour market trends

According to an analysis of postings to the Adzuna job site undertaken by the Institute of Employment Studies, the number of online job postings in most districts of Leeds City Region saw a slight recovery in the week to 24th May. York and Craven saw the biggest weekly increases of 16% and 12% respectively. Nonetheless, the level of vacancies in all districts remains well below the level seen when the lockdown was introduced, the extent of the decline ranging from 54% to 69%.

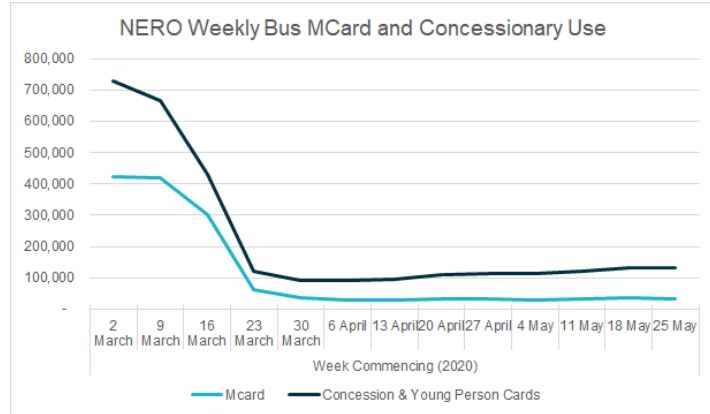


Nationally, the level of postings has fallen by 60% since week ending 15th March but it saw a small increase of 5% in the week to 24th May, suggesting a very modest recovery in hiring activity.

Bus MCard and Concessionary Use

For the week beginning Monday 25th May 2020, the combined level of MCard and concessionary fare use shows a **reduction of 86%** against the week beginning 2nd March 2020, and no significant change against the previous week.

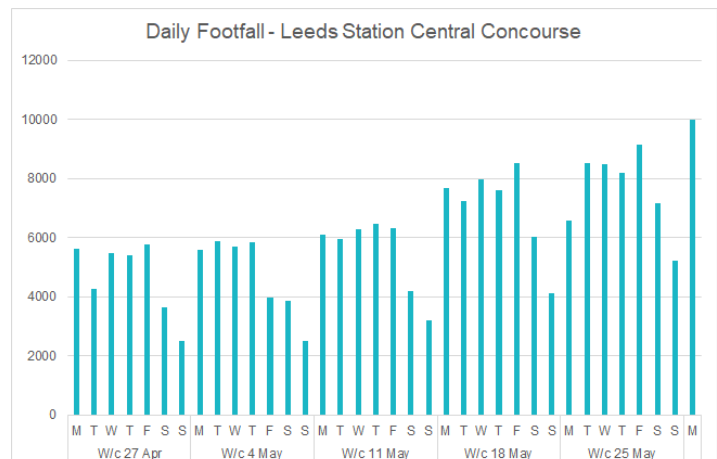
Source: WYCA NERO Reports



Leeds Station Footfall

Data from Network Rail shows total daily footfall levels on Leeds Station Central Concourse. For the week beginning Monday 25^h May 2020, this shows a **reduction of 92%** against the week beginning 2nd March 2020, **an increase of 8%** against the previous week.

Source: Network Rail / Station Capacity Team stationcapacity@networkrail.co.uk



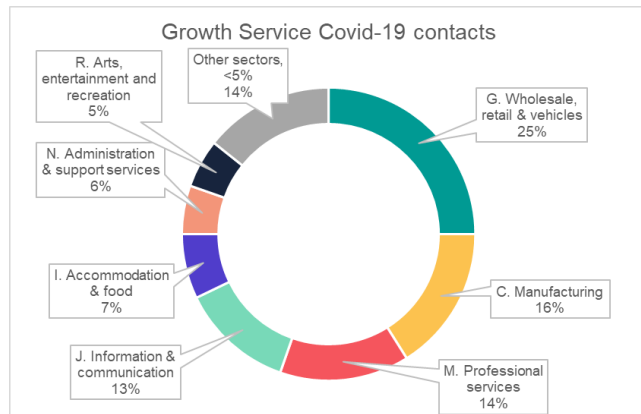
Business and stakeholder intelligence

This section summarises key issues emerging from interactions with businesses and other stakeholders in Leeds City Region. Whilst much of this is anecdotal, the below draws out key themes and issues from those conversations. However, it is recognised that this analysis is based upon subjective views from relatively small numbers of businesses which may or may not reflect the views of the wider business community.

Metrics on enquiries

The LEP and its Growth Managers spoke to 77 businesses this week, with fewer interactions reported than at any point since lockdown began. Website hits were also down significantly. Both may be related to half term holidays.

Given relatively small numbers, the scope for analysis is relatively limited. However, a quarter of the companies for which sector information was available are in wholesale, retail and motor trades. 16% were in manufacturing and 14% were in professional services.



Business and workforce activity

About a quarter of this week's interactions focused on trading conditions. Some of these reported an upturn in activity over the past week as more of the economy reopens – this is particularly true for manufacturers and their suppliers. Some report unusually high levels of demand, potentially as other suppliers are not yet trading, though others report a more subdued picture. Those in, or supplying, the hospitality sector are more uncertain about the short- and medium-term outlook.

Wider engagement work suggests large office occupiers across the country may be reviewing their footprint requirements post-Covid and future ways of working. The impact on Leeds City Region businesses and any potential North shoring opportunities are still to be understood.

Resuming operations

As part of their future planning some large employers are looking to explore options to ensure they can get their staff to work safely without overwhelming the public transport system.

Some businesses have also expressed concern about the impact the new track and trace measures could have on operations if a significant proportion of the workforce are required to self-isolate, even if the workplace has stringent measures in place.

Investment and funding

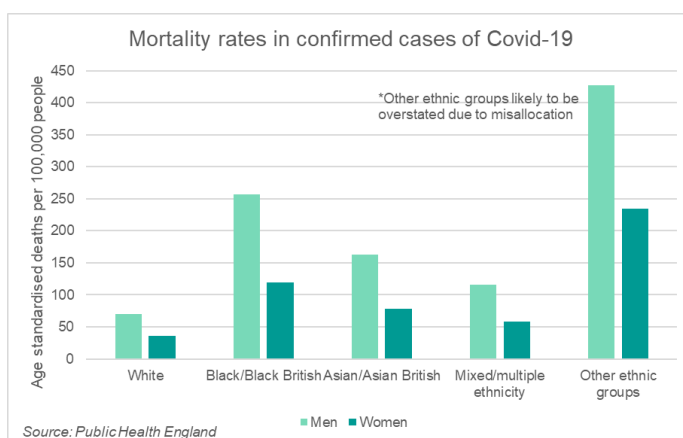
About half of queries this week related to finance issues, with a number of queries about support via the discretionary grants. Cash flow remains a key concern for many businesses with two reporting being unsuccessful accessing CBILS (one on two occasions), and one successfully accessing a bounce back loan.

Local insight and analysis

Disparities in the risk and outcomes of COVID-19 (Public Health England)

[Analysis by Public Health England \(PHE\)](#) has identified disparities in the groups most at risk of Covid-19. PHE has reviewed available data and developed a model to estimate all cause excess mortality in the population. They find that Covid-19 has “replicated existing health inequalities and, in some cases, has increased them”. Age is the factor with the largest disparity, with people diagnosed with Covid-19 who were 80 or older were seventy times more likely to die than those under 40. Males are more likely to be at risk than females, as are people living in the most deprived areas compared to the least deprived, reflecting ONS analysis reported in previous weeks’ briefings.

The report also found significant differences in impacts by ethnicity. Whilst all cause mortality is higher for all groups so far this year, it is almost twice as high as usual for white males, almost three times higher for Asian males and almost four times higher for black males. All-cause mortality is 1.6 times higher for white females, 2.4 times higher for those of Asian ethnicity and three times higher for black females.



After accounting for the effect of sex, age, deprivation and region, people of

Bangladeshi ethnicity had around twice the risk of death than people of White British ethnicity. People of Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Other Asian, Caribbean and Other Black ethnicity had between 10 and 50% higher risk of death when compared to people of White British ethnicity. The report notes that “the relationship between ethnicity and health is complex and likely to be the result of a combination of factors” with people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups more likely to also have other elevated risk factors, such as living in urban and/or deprived areas, residing in overcrowded households and working in occupations that expose them to higher risk.

This analysis did not control for comorbidities, obesity or occupation. Other evidence has shown that when comorbidities are included, the difference in risk of death among hospitalised patients is greatly reduced.

As well as ethnicity, the report found that there had been an increase in deaths in 2020 in certain occupations over and above the increase seen in the general population. For three occupations the relative increase in deaths in 2020 was significantly higher than in previous years: Caring Personal Services (1.8 times usual deaths), Elementary Security Occupations (2.3), and Road Transport Drivers (2.5). Within these groups, nursing auxiliaries and assistants (2.5), security guards (2.6) and taxi drivers and chauffeurs (2.5) were most affected.

Apprenticeship starts

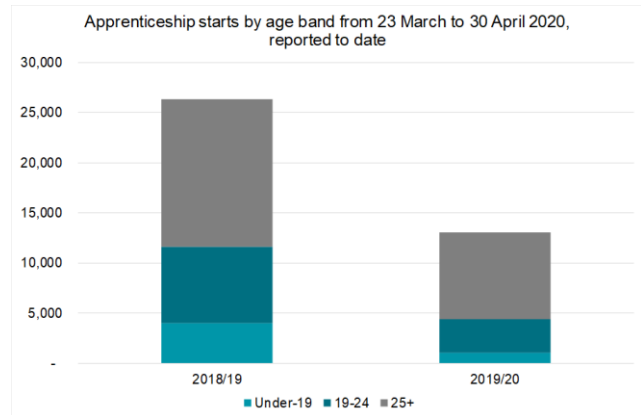
Recently released data show that the number of apprenticeship starts at national level halved (51% fall) in the initial period of lockdown (23 March to the end of April) as compared with the same period of 2019.

Starts for under-19s were particularly hard hit, falling by three quarters (74%) on the previous year, whereas starts for people aged 25+ fell 42%.

The fall reflects the fact that Covid-19 has resulted in the closure of colleges and some employers are unable to start or continue apprenticeships as planned. The Department for Education also highlight that the figures may be subject to underreporting by training providers and employers.

Intermediate apprenticeships saw the steepest decline in starts of 70%, compared with 53% for Advanced apprenticeships but a fall of only 2% for higher apprenticeships.

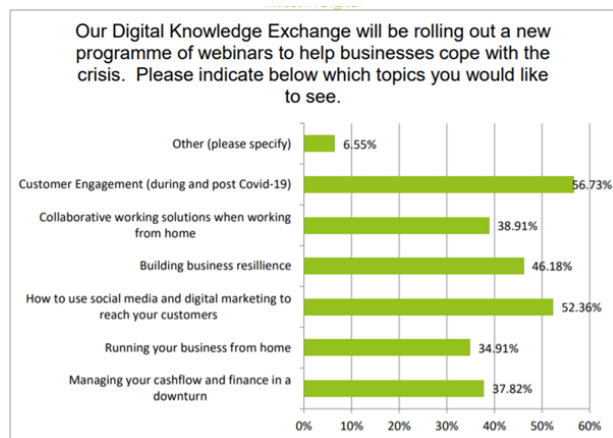
In absolute terms, Health, Public Services and Care saw the biggest contraction in starts, of 3,700 (-46%) but the biggest proportionate falls were for Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies (-74%), followed by Construction (-72%) and Retail and Commercial Enterprise (-72%).



Digital Enterprise Survey

Digital Enterprise launched a business survey in March 2020 to determine how businesses in Leeds City Region had been affected by the pandemic, which ran for 8 weeks. Includes 12 questions and received 350 responses.

The need for businesses to embrace digital transformation has become a priority for many firms as a result of the pandemic – requiring a need to fundamentally revise business models and modes of operation (using cloud based technologies and platforms) in order to operate flexibly and to build business resilience.



Just over 67% of respondents indicated that they had the necessary IT/digital equipment to work from home. Fewer firms reported their staff had the necessary equipment to work from home (just under 45%). A quarter of respondents indicated that employees were reliant on their own personal equipment or slower/older hardware.

Over half of businesses intend to spend up to £5,00 in digital equipment, with a higher proportion of larger firms planning on spending more. Most of the expenditure will go towards laptops/monitors/peripheral equipment, as well as greater web presence.

Businesses are very keen to access knowledge and information which will help develop their business, particularly around business resilience, engaging customers, managing cashflow and running a business from home. The Covid-19 emergency has made the delivery of traditional business support and engagement very difficult. As such learning through webinars and other engaging media will likely continue to grow in importance to engage businesses.

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Report to: Employment and Skills Panel

Date: 19 June 2020

Subject: **Covid-19 Immediate response**

Director(s): Brian Archer, Director of Economic Services

Author(s): Michelle Burton, Head of Employment and Skills

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Panel on activity underway to support businesses and individuals in the short-term.
- 1.2 Seek approval from the Panel for the continued delivery and development of products and services in response to the COVID-19 crisis, and for input to wider recovery work.
- 1.3 Due to the fast-moving nature of this agenda item, verbal updates will also be given at the meeting.

2 Information

Background

- 2.1 The full implications of COVID-19 on the region and its economy are still to be understood. However, it is already clear that it will have a significant long-term impact. At a city region level, work is taking place both to support the immediate response and to begin to develop what might be required in recovery.
- 2.2 Although it is too soon to define what will happen to the economy over the coming months, our response work and recovery planning to date has responded to significant evidence and intelligence gathered on a number of important issues being collected and collated in a weekly published monitoring report. Key issues raised to date include:
 - Cash flow and immediate access to finance
 - Implications for employment, self-employment and the skills system
 - Lockdown issues related to output and activity

- Supply chains and particularly the need for PPE and other medical equipment and services
- Pressures for the transport system and on town/city centres

2.3 This work is being overseen by a new West Yorkshire Economic Recovery Board, which is a working group of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (CA) and brings together the region's local authority leaders with representatives from key partnerships and stakeholders. At their first meeting on 30 April 2020, the Board agreed a strategic vision for recovery with three priorities:

1. developing resilient and thriving businesses, boosted by innovation, high skills and entrepreneurialism;
2. developing an inclusive economy that provides people with a decent standard of living;
3. promoting environmental sustainability in all parts of the region.

2.4 A second meeting was held in May where it was agreed that Employment and Skills is a key strand of the recovery strategy, and Members of the Panel will have opportunities to feed into the work of the Recovery Board.

Response to COVID-19

2.5 Government launched a post-16 provider relief scheme in April 2020 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esfa-post-16-provider-relief-scheme/esfa-post-16-provider-relief-scheme-covid-19-response-policy-document>. Independent training providers are crucial to apprenticeship and AEB delivery and also to develop the skills that people from all backgrounds need to access work and develop in employment. The provider relief scheme is intended to provide the immediate support that the vast majority of AEB and apprenticeship providers need to survive in the short-term. However, that the current situation is still extremely challenging for the sector and despite the intervention, we remain concerned about apprenticeship providers in the medium/longer term.

An increase in apprentice redundancies is anticipated as the furlough scheme comes to an end as well as the possibility of a continued and sustained fall in demand for apprentices from employers in many sectors. As well as removing an important route to access (and progress in) employment, this will threaten the survival of apprenticeship providers.

Officers have been, and continue to be in regular contact with West Yorkshire Learning Providers (WLYP) as the situation develops, to look at opportunities to ensure that apprentice redundancies over the coming months and longer term a lack of demand for apprentices from employers are minimised.

2.6 Despite the economic turmoil and redundancies being caused by Covid-19, there remain a wide range of job vacancies available within Leeds City Region in sectors like social care which has long faced challenges recruiting and in businesses that are striving to keep up with the new demands and

challenges brought to them since the global pandemic hit the UK in February 2020.

In response to this, the existing ESF funded Employment Hub programme delivered by the LEP/Combined Authority along with LA partners, has been swiftly adapted to match jobseekers to opportunities across the region and expand its support for businesses. In April, the service re-launched to offer new job seekers and businesses **free impartial** support with employment brokerage.

A range of support packages have been adapted to respond to the new employment needs of both individuals and businesses here in Leeds City Region.

Job seekers can access the following support:

- One-to-one careers support
- Be matched to local job vacancies
- Speak to a careers adviser who understands the employment needs of the job seekers local area

Businesses can access the following support:

- Find new employees through the Employment Hub talent matching service
- Access support for employees who are at risk of or facing redundancy
- Gain support to hire a new apprentice

More information and online enquiry forms can be found for businesses at the-lep.com/employment-hub and job seekers at futuregoals.co.uk/careers-support

At the time of writing (9 June), we have received enquiries from 193 individuals and 16 businesses. We expect this position will fluctuate as the situation prolongs, particularly in relation to redundancy support if/when the furlough package ends.

- 2.7 The Combined Authority's adult re-training programme, [re]boot, is part-funded through European Social Fund (ESF). [re]boot enables working adults (post 18) the chance to upskill, gain new skills/qualifications and improve their employment options particularly within key regional sectors, focused on construction, digital, manufacturing & engineering and the fast growing creative sector.

In response to COVID-19 partners have so far developed five different and imaginative online courses that will be promoted to individuals who are currently being furloughed or looking for an opportunity to re-train. All courses are delivered through West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges and Leeds Trinity University. Courses launched on FutureGoals from week commencing 11th May and are being promoted through an online marketing campaign.

New offers include:

- Digital Data Analysis Incorporating an Introduction to Coding
- Digital Marketing: How to Use Metrics and Analytics
- Boosting Digital Productivity – Collaborative Technology Skills.
- Introduction to Web Development

- 2.8 A series of at-home learning careers resources have been developed, aimed at students aged 11-18. The resources draw on robust labour market information and focus on the most in demand skills that employers in the region are looking for. The resources are due to be launched in phases between 8th May – 29th June 2020 and will be promoted through the 180 EAN schools and college network as well as through a targeted marketing and social media campaign.

FutureGoals Spotlight learning resource, developed in partnership with Burberry, have also been adapted to respond to the current remote working situation, by adapting all learning resources to be digital editable PDFs, alongside updated teacher guidance on how students can learn about the breadth of the creative industry in our region from home.

<https://futuregoals.co.uk/spotlight/>

- 2.9 The Schools partnership team hold termly Headteacher Advisory Network meetings for the region. In light of the current situation an extraordinary meeting was held. It is intended that this group will meet more regularly for the rest of the academic year with a key focus on the support and wellbeing of all pupils. The team is working virtually with schools, colleges and business to plan careers and destination support creatively for students.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 The activity currently being carried out is being delivered using existing resources. Funding would be required to carry out additional activity.

4 Legal Implications

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

5 Staffing Implications

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

6 External Consultees

- 6.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

7 Recommendations

7.1 The Panel is asked to note and comment on the approach, particularly on longer-term planning for recovery.

8 Background Documents

None.

9 Appendices

None

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Report to: Employment and Skills Panel

Date: 19 June 2020

Subject: **Employment and Skills Programmes**

Director(s): Brian Archer, Director of Economic Services

Author(s): Michelle Burton, Head of Employment and Skills

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Panel on the progress of delivery of LEP-led employment and skills programmes in the Leeds City Region.

2 Information

School Partnerships

- 2.1 The **Enterprise Adviser Network** and the Combined Authority's Schools Partnership team are engaged with 185 (92%) of secondary schools and colleges. From April 2019 to March 2020 the network has delivered over 256,042 employer encounters and 25,474 employer encounters for pupil premium learners, 18,606 of whom have had at least two employer encounters as part of the network. Despite this good performance to date, the next quarter is going to be somewhat different in the light of Covid-19 as schools and colleges are closed, other than for families of key workers.
- 2.2 Targeted activity in **Bradford Opportunity Area** is ahead of profile for employer encounters with schools and colleges. Between January – March 2020, 13,286 employer encounters were delivered in Bradford. Combined with the overall figures this represents 93% of the 3-year target for encounters achieved by August 2020.
- 2.3 15 schools have been active in their grant funded **Raising Aspirations** pilot projects (BRP-funded). However, timescales have had to be amended due to the closure of the schools and colleges linked to COVID 19. This has meant an extension agreed to the end date of these projects and consequently the independent evaluation timelines adjusted. It is likely the new end date will be March 2021.

- 2.4 Due to the extenuating circumstances of Covid-19 and the official closure of schools on the 20th of March 2020, for the **Kirklees Careers Hub** this has meant a lower number of Compass ^[1] submissions completed by hub members which has affected progress shown.
- 2.5 There has been a slight increase in hub schools achieving more encounters with employers and employees (Gatsby Benchmark 5). There are now 5 schools within the hub that are fully achieving 7 of the 8 benchmarks, with an aspiration for all 8 achieved, depending on updated stance from CEC of tracking of 3 years destination data. In January through to March some Governor Briefings took place supporting the priority to seek further opportunities to engage stakeholders and senior leaders around the importance of Careers. Unfortunately, due to school closures many of the planned hub events scheduled in March, were cancelled.
- 2.6 Positive progression can be seen from the compass results submitted for **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)** Hub from January 2020 – March for most Benchmarks. Encounters with employers and experiences of the workplace has continued to increase. Again, some Hub members have been unable to submit a Compass assessment due to the extenuating circumstances of the Covid-19 crisis.
- ^[1]2.7 Compass is a self-assessment tool for schools to track progress towards the Gatsby benchmarks of good careers guidance

Careers

FutureGoals

- 2.8 A targeted marketing campaign has been promoting the campaign and by the end of the financial year the <https://futuregoals.co.uk/> website reached over 2 million adults, young people and educators. The website has evolved and now has specific resources based on the different audiences which means a more targeted and structured approach can be taken ensuring that we are addressing the needs of individuals audiences and programmes.
- 2.9 In response to Covid-19 the FutureGoals website has added an additional function which allows individuals to register their interest for additional careers support. Contact forms are shared with Local Authorities who are providing support to individuals through the ESF funded Employment Hub programme. A targeted marketing campaign has helped to drive traffic to the website which has led to 125 individual enquiries and referrals to the regional Employment Hubs. The campaign has also reached 33,000 individuals through social media.
- 2.10 A series of at-home learning careers resources have been developed, aimed at students aged 11-18. These resources will be accompanied by guidance to support teachers and parents to use them with young people. The resources are based on robust labour market information and focus on the most in demand skills that employers in the region are looking for. The resources are due to be launched in phases between 8th May – 29th June 2020 and will be

promoted to the 180 schools and college Enterprise Adviser Network as well as through a targeted marketing and social media campaign.

- 2.11 The FutureGoals Spotlight learning resources <https://futuregoals.co.uk/spotlight/>, developed in partnership with Burberry, have also been adapted to respond to the current remote working / home-schooling situation, by adapting all learning resources to be digital editable PDFs, alongside updated teacher guidance on how students can learn about the breadth of the creative industry in our region from home.
- 2.12 To date the spotlight resources have been shared across the Leeds city Region and have been downloaded by 151 teachers. The spotlight resources were launched at the National careers Guidance Show where a seminar was delivered in partnership with Burberry to educators and careers professionals. The show was attended by 450 careers professionals and educators who visited stands. FutureGoals exhibited at the event with an interactive stand where resources were shared with local educators and influencers.

[re]boot

- 2.13 The Combined Authority's adult re-training programme, [re]boot, is part-funded through European Social Fund (ESF) and gives adults the chance to upskill, gain new skills/qualifications and improve their employment options particularly within key regional sectors, focused on construction, digital, manufacturing & engineering and the fast growing creative sector. Since its launch in November, the programme has supported 130 individuals.
- 2.14 There are some concerns about performance and we are working closely with the contractor to address this. To ensure we meet contractual targets and learner numbers a procurement process will take place to procure an additional sub-contractor. This is intended ensure a level of sustainability, flexibility and quicker response times in a fast-changing adult training landscape.
- 2.15 In the next quarter the [re]boot programme will include a range of online digital courses aimed specifically at furloughed workers and those looking to retrain, progress in work or start their own business. A targeted marketing campaign will include social media and digital radio advertising as well as traditional media. This will help individuals engage with the campaign and apply for courses as well as access information about jobs in the city region through the FutureGoals adult-facing pages. www.futuregoals.co.uk/reboot

Apprenticeships and Employment

- 2.16 The **Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE)** programme closed in November for new applications. The final applications in the system were processed by end of March 2020. A final evaluation report of the five-year programme is currently being prepared.
- 2.17 The Apprenticeship **Levy Transfer Service** was launched on 1 November 2019. Prior to Covid19 discussions were progressing well with several large national businesses who are interested in transferring some of their Levy

funds. Governance and approval arrangements within larger organisations means that decisions are not made quickly and decisions in the pipeline have got caught up and delayed as businesses have had to prioritise activity around businesses survival and changes to work patterns.

- 2.18 As we move towards the main summer recruitment period for apprenticeships, we know from national reports that apprenticeship starts have understandably suffered a massive decline in the current climate. However, we have been approached by several training providers for Levy Transfer support. We will therefore continue to pursue pledges from Levy companies although our original ambitions of securing £3m pledges may not be realised.
- 2.19 The link below to the Levy Transfer Services webpages, provides access to the online registration form for training providers to request support from the matching service on behalf of businesses.
<https://www.the-lep.com/business-support/skills-and-training/apprenticeship-levy-support/>
- 2.20 The £9m part-ESF funded **LCR Employment Hub** programme, launched in January 2019, is being delivered in partnership with Local Authorities and will support over 6,000 young people aged 15-24 to access apprenticeships and employment. We are now well into year two of delivery. At the end of quarter one (March 2020) in year two of delivery we have:
- Engaged 2363 15-24-year-old participants against a profile of 2501 (94%). Of these:
 - 653, against a profile of 293 (223%), were recorded as being from ethnic minorities
 - 536 declared they had disabilities against a target of 225 (238%)
 - Of the participants starting the programme 513 have been supported with finding education/ training, employment or self-employment against a target of 774 (66%) and have
 - Engaged with 1490 businesses against a target of 1948 (76%).
- 2.21 Although initial engagements for the programme are strong, key results of people into employment and further learning are proving more challenging to achieve within programme timescales and particularly with the impact of Covid-19, which began to have an impact from mid-February. The LCR Employment Hub programme has been refocused in order to respond to COVID19 and provide a complementary offer to the LEP Business Service. (see agenda item 7 for more detail)

Delivery Agreements

- 2.22 Reviews with the seven West Yorkshire FE institutions were scheduled to take place during March when performance for academic year 2018/19 was to be reviewed. Three of the seven reviews had taken place just before Covid-19 restrictions were imposed. The review programme has therefore been delayed allowing colleges to concentrate on providing learning support to students. Once we have received the full data set reports will be produced

based on achievements with a written response from each college, however the report will not be as comprehensive as in 2019. A review of Delivery Agreement content and ambitions will be addressed as part of the development and proposals for the devolved AEB programme.

Skills for Business

- 2.23 As previously reported, the Combined Authority submitted a bid to the Managing Agent for European Social Fund to deliver a Skills for Growth programme which will support businesses to engage with the full breadth of the education system, from primary schools to universities. The approval decision letter was received on the 30th March with allowance for alteration of the programme timeline due to the Covid-19 situation. The timeline is being altered to commence in September 2020 and complete August 2023. Recruitment of staff has started.

Work Wellness

2.24 The Work Wellness project in Calderdale has now come to an end. The project was funded for a period of 12 months at a cost of £23,975.40 which funded the salary for a part-time Work Wellness adviser based in a doctor's surgery in a deprived area of Calderdale. The purpose of the project was the test the effectiveness of non-clinical interventions in supporting individuals to remain in work or transfer to suitable alternative employment. Due to its pilot nature, the project had a modest target to support positive outcomes for 10 individuals.

2.25 Similarly to a pilot delivered in parallel at a surgery in York, this project has dramatically outperformed against its targets. In total, the project supported 31 people to return to work with the 12 months of the programme.

- A total of 344 clients were supported by wellness support, making up 876 appointments.
- 62% of the clients seen were still in work with 78% claiming a benefit, in most cases Universal Credit.
- The pilot showed a significant drop in the need for a repeated intervention, only 40 clients required a follow up meeting with a GP representing a 88.4% resolution rate. This is a significant cost and time reduction for the surgery.
- The cost per intervention was around £13 per hour compared to a GP (around £100 per hour), therefore the programme resulted in significant savings for the surgery.
- There was a knock-on reduction in the need for intervention by other services including social services, crisis incidents, police call outs, ambulance and A&E attendances/admissions into hospital, pharmacy cost, housing and poverty, school interventions.

2.26 At a previous panel meeting, other successful approaches to social prescribing were mentioned. These examples, as well as the work in Calderdale and York will feed into the development of the refreshed Employment and Skills Plan and the Inclusive Growth Framework.

3 Financial Implications

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

4 Legal Implications

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

5 Staffing Implications

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

6 External Consultees

6.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

7 Recommendations

7.1 The Panel is asked to note and comment on the progress of delivery of employment and skills programmes in the Leeds City Region.

8 Background Documents

None.

9 Appendices

None

Report to: Employment and Skills Panel

Date: 19 June 2020

Subject: **Employment and Skills Plan**

Director(s): Alan Reiss, Director Policy, Strategy and Communications

Author(s): Sonya Midgley

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Panel on the workplan to refresh the Employment and Skills plan.
- 1.2 A presentation on the key elements of the refreshed plan will be given, and the Panel is asked to comment in order to inform the development of the plan.

2 Information

- 2.1 The current Employment and Skills Plan runs until the end of this year. Since it was written significant progress has been achieved. There have also been significant change and uncertainty in the skills landscape, including devolution of the Adult Education Budget (AEB), the economic impact of Covid-19 and the impact of the UK's exit from the European Union.
- 2.2 The Panel agreed at its last meeting to refresh the Employment and Skills Plan, and agreed to consider the following to fulfil its duties as a Skills Advisory Panel (SAP):
- Proposals from the Future-Ready Skills Commission
 - Business Plan priorities from employment and skills programmes
 - Framework for proposed Employment and Skills Plan
 - Forward workplan for consultation on Employment and Skills Plan
 - Economic Recovery / Covid-19 response
 - Labour Market Intelligence
- 2.3 In line with the new Strategic Economic Framework (SEF) that is due to replace the Strategic Economic Plan, the refreshed Employment and Skills Plan will need to remain dynamic and flexible to both address the current and

future skills needs. It will also need to consider how it contributes to the Combined Authority's four priorities;

- Boosting Productivity
- Enabling Inclusive Growth
- Delivering 21st Century Transport
- Tackling the Climate Emergency

2.4 The refreshed plan will also need to take into account the ambitious devolution deal agreed for West Yorkshire including devolution of Adult Education Budget, and government consideration of the findings of the Future-Ready Skills Commission, as well as recognition of the well-regarded Delivery Agreements in place across the City Region. A full list of the skills elements of the devolution deal are included in the document at Appendix A.

2.5 The refreshed Employment and Skills plan will therefore set out the City Region's vision and ambitions in relation to its priorities, as well as the actions that we and our partners can take over the next five years, to 2025.

2.6 The refreshed plan will cover the geography of West Yorkshire, while also having regard for programmes and projects that involve partnership work across the functional economic area of the region, in particular European-funded projects with delivery in York and North Yorkshire.

2.7 A consultation based on the existing priorities and proposed emerging themes will take place over Summer. Feedback will be used to inform the update of the plan and will be shared for discussion at the Employment and Skills Panel meeting in September. The plan will be published in early 2021.

2.8 Current themes and priorities in the existing Skills Plan includes:

- Raising the Bar on High Level Skills
- More and Better Apprenticeships
- Great Education Connected to Business
- Employability, Accessing Jobs, and Realising Potential
- Building Workforce Skills and Attracting Talent

Many of these continue to be a priority for the region, despite the progress that has been made over the last four years.

2.9 It will be also be necessary to consider both short- and long-term priorities for the Region, and also incorporate plans being developed to support recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic alongside an ambitious five-year vision.

2.10 The proposed timescales and plans for the refresh are as follows:

- Stage 1: Scoping and appraising current priorities (May – July 2020)
- Stage 2: Consultation with key stakeholders and partners, and open consultation (July – September 2020)
- Stage 3: Preparation and sign-off of the refreshed plan (October – December 2020)

- 2.11 An appraisal of the priorities in the existing Employment and Skills Plan has been undertaken and is included at Appendix A. The first part of the document details the strategic work undertaken on the employment and skills agenda, including the commitments secured in the devolution deal. This is followed by examples of Combined Authority and partner programmes and projects. The list is not exhaustive but has been collated with input from key partners ahead of a full consultation programme. The second part of Appendix A details the full list of priorities from the current plan and a current position statement.
- 2.12 Slides summarising the work of the employment and plan skills refresh is included at Appendix B and will be presented at the meeting.
- 2.13 The Panel is asked to consider the following questions:
- Is there anything else that should be considered as part of the scope?
 - Does the vision statement capture the ambition for employment and skills in the City Region?
 - What are the key priorities that must be included in the plan?
 - What are the key elements that must be included in the plan?
 - How do we ensure the relevant priorities for the SEF are addressed in the Employment and Skills Plan?

3 Financial Implications

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

4 Legal Implications

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

5 Staffing Implications

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

6 External Consultees

- 6.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

7 Recommendations

- 7.1 The Panel is asked to note and comment on approach to refreshing the Employment and Skills Plan.
- 7.2 The Panel is asked to comment on key elements and priorities for a revised Employment and Skills Plan.

8 Background Documents

None

9 Appendices

Presentation

Appendix A – Review of priorities from Employment and Skills Plan 2016-2020

Appendix B – Presentation on refreshed Employment and Skills Plan

APPENDIX A - REVIEW OF SKILLS PLAN 2016 -2020 PRIORITIES

The following paper collates the assessment of current progress against the priorities described in the current Employment and Skills Plan. They include Combined Authority and examples of partner projects and programmes which continue to be collated with key partners and through consultation. This is an ongoing piece of work and the following are included as examples. A full list of priorities is included in the table at the end of the document.

The Panel are asked to consider the following questions in relation to the priorities:

- How far does this remain a priority?
- Which priorities need to change?
- Are there any key areas for employment and skills that are not captured in the current priorities, and what are they?

What we are doing to meet the priorities of the Employment and Skills Plan (2016-2020)

1. The Devolution deal has secured a number of strategic priorities including:

- **Adult Education Budget (AEB) Devolution Implementation** is underway, with an internal project board undertaking technical and capacity preparation, while policy and delivery staff consult on and develop the **AEB Strategy** with key stakeholders. This AEB Strategy will shape commissioning and help to ensure this devolved budget better meets our regional needs and aspirations. The draft SSP (due for consultation from end May) has identified the following draft priorities:
 - Increase the supply of skills to support key sectors in West Yorkshire
 - Improve West Yorkshire's resilience by identifying and delivering the skills needed for the future
 - Making learning more inclusive to support disadvantaged residents and widen the pool of talent for business
 - Support the unemployed to gain and sustain employment
 - Unlock progression opportunities and career adaptability through skills, particularly for those on low wages and with insecure work
- Finalising the recommendations of the **Future-Ready Skills Commission** and its findings on a post-16 skills system, which Government have committed to considering www.future

- Opportunities for local alignment of ongoing reform to the **post-16 technical education** including T-levels and National Skills Fund.
- Maximising the investment in **apprenticeships** including convening employers to increase the number of apprenticeships available, including via levy transfers.
- Responding to Government requests to inform the future development of the **National Skills Fund** and remaining engaged on the **National Retraining Scheme**
- West Yorkshire and Government will continue to work together to **prioritise support for under-represented groups** in the labour market (including women, people from BAME groups, and those with a disability or health condition). This includes a government committed to working with the Region on strategic priorities in relation to people including how to provide the targeted support needed for people who are furthest away from the labour market, and those in low pay who need support to stay in work and progress.
- Collaboration on design of local **careers** and enterprise interventions, for all ages.
- There is recognition from government that **future investment** is required in the college estate to make sure they are up to standard.
- To deliver these high-level priorities, we have in place **Delivery Agreements** with all West Yorkshire FE Colleges to link their delivery and curriculum planning to the region's skills priorities. This will be extended as a minimum to all AEB grant recipients and could be included for all AEB provider recipients (grants and procured).

2. The following areas include current CA/LEP delivery programmes and projects:

Careers and retraining

- **The [re]boot programme** offers individuals over the age of 18 the chance to upskill, gain new skills/qualifications and enter employment within the shortage sectors of Digital and Creative, Engineering and Manufacturing, and Construction and Infrastructure. The programme particularly targets potential career changers and unemployed and /under-employed graduates in Leeds City Region. The programme offers innovative and flexible delivery through a strategic partnership with delivery partners. Businesses from across the region have the opportunity to engage with the project to co-develop and influence course content to ensure that training addresses skills gaps and meets business needs.

<https://futuregoals.co.uk/reboot/>

- **#futuregoals** is an all age careers platform and campaign that showcases jobs and careers in a range of sectors. Resources have been created with a range of employers for adults, students and teachers including curriculum resources for the classroom. www.futuregoals.co.uk

Education offer

- **Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN)** Through the EAN, we are working closely with 185 secondary schools and colleges to improve the destinations of young people, particularly those that are most disadvantaged. This includes enhanced and targeted activity in Bradford and Kirklees as well with institutions with high SEND pupils through Careers Hubs.

Since September 2018 our Enterprise network has recruited and trained over 230 business leaders as Enterprise Advisers, helped create 169 employer engagement strategies with schools and colleges. In the last five years we have reached over 863,000 students across Leeds City Region. <https://www.the-lep.com/skills/engage-with-education/>

- **Raising Aspiration fund** this pilot fund has enabled 18 secondary schools to create employer co-designed provision. The project has reached reaching over 4,000 pupils - over of third of whom from disadvantaged backgrounds. <https://futuregoals.co.uk/raising-aspirations/>
- **Careers Hubs** funding has been matched with national Careers and Enterprise Funding to develop best practice and support skills development with employers, secondary schools, careers providers, colleges and universities.
 - The Leeds City Region SEND Careers Hub was established in September 2019 and consists of 29 member schools and colleges across Calderdale, Leeds, Wakefield and York. The SEND Careers Hub supports schools and colleges to run a targeted programme of careers activity, which focuses preparation for transition, measuring the quality and impact of meaningful encounters with employers, and making informed careers choices.
 - The Kirklees Careers Hub is one of 20 national Hubs established in September 2018. The 35 members of the Hub have access to a central Hub fund and work with partners to explore initiatives around parental engagement, CEIAG-based teacher CPD and enhancing student encounters with FE, HE and Apprenticeship providers.

- The **Skills for Growth** programme enables small and medium enterprises to access education providers in a simple one stop approach with localised delivery.

Employment Offer

- The **LCR Employment Hub** programme is delivered in partnership with Local Authorities and will support over 6,000 young people aged 15-24 to access additional learning, apprenticeships and/or employment and engage over 3,000 businesses to support their workforce development including talent matching to job and apprenticeship vacancies. <https://www.the-lep.com/business-support/skills-and-training/employment-hub/>
- The **Apprenticeship Levy Support service** helps levy paying businesses to either use their levy funds to recruit their own apprentice or transfer their unspent levy to other businesses seeking apprenticeship funding <https://www.the-lep.com/business-support/skills-and-training/apprenticeship-levy-support/>

3. The following include examples of partners current delivery activities:

Bradford Council

- **University of Bradford Virtual STEM Hub** <https://www.bradford.ac.uk/life-sciences/virtual-stemm-hub/> - Opportunity Area funding to support this and engagement around this.
- **Bradford CTE approach** - Bradford district's Careers and Technical Education is delivered through Bradford Pathways and Industrial Centres of Excellence (ICE). It is an all-age approach to ensure that our children and young people gain knowledge, skills and competencies so they are well equipped to make a successful transition into the world of work and enjoy a successful career. <https://www.bradford.gov.uk/education-and-skills/training-and-development/careers-and-technical-education/>
- **SkillsHouse** works to address recruitment needs sourcing training to enable unemployed people to access current vacancies.
- The Health and Social Care Economic Partnership's **One Workforce** programme is working to address recruitment into health and social care and this year will focus on retention and career development in the sector.

- [Beyond Bronte](#) programme tackling lack of diversity in creative industries.
- [Bradford for Everyone](#) – Integration Area Programme: Our vision is ‘of a place where everyone feels that they belong, are understood, feel safe and are able to fully participate in the opportunities the District offers.’
- **Connexions** Bradford Digital - <https://virtualconnexionsbradford.co.uk/>

Go Higher West Yorkshire (GHWY)

- Office for Students-funded Degree Apprenticeships Development Fund (**DADF**) project ‘**Driving Social Mobility through Degree Apprenticeships in West Yorkshire**’ delivered by Leeds Trinity University in partnership with Go Higher West Yorkshire; funded element 09/2017-03/2018 with outputs in the 2018/19 academic year.
Bringing together HE providers and employers to design degree apprenticeship curricula to meet needs.
<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/skills-and-employment/degree-apprenticeships/degree-apprenticeships-for-providers/the-degree-apprenticeship-development-fund/>
- Office for Students-funded ‘Uni Connect programme’ (formerly National Collaborative Outreach Programme [NCOP]) delivered by Go Higher West Yorkshire. Duration 01/2017 to 07/2021. Targeting young people (Y9-13) in specific wards in West Yorkshire where progression to HE is much lower than GCSE attainment would predict, to support informed choices about HE.
<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/uni-connect/>
This includes the GHWY Community Grants Programme, run at various times between 2018-2021. Grants are awarded to relevant community organisations to work with parents/carers in local communities in West Yorkshire to raise aspirations and understanding of HE with parents/carers in targeted local communities.
- Through Uni Connect, ongoing **GHWY/ENGIE Housing Project**, aimed Year 9-10 students, which raises awareness HE opportunities and careers in construction and the built environment. An interactive project which involves students completing tasks relating to the construction/housing sector. See [link](#) for blog and film of project.

West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges

- **Let’s Talk Real Skills** programme focuses of the development of courses in key skill shortage sectors by collaborating with businesses
- **Progression from Low Pay** (previously More Skills Better Jobs) delivers training programmes for low paid, low skilled workforce. The object is to promote social mobility and business resilience by training current workforce.
- **Higher Performing Workplaces** offers training that is designed to help SMEs grow by developing internal talent.

- **Reach Higher** strives to widen participation by offering funded courses to engage new participants onto higher level courses.
- **The Skills Service** offers support for businesses to train and upskill employees
- **Delivery agreements** with seven West Yorkshire colleges setting out individualised and measurable expectations of how colleges have agreed to work toward Leeds City Region skills priorities in partnership with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership.

TABLE OF PRIORITIES FROM CURRENT EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PLAN

The Panel are asked to consider the following questions in relation to the priorities:

- How far does this remain a priority?
- Which priorities need to change?
- Are there any key areas for employment and skills that are not captured in the current priorities, and what are they?

RAISING THE BAR ON HIGH LEVEL SKILLS

	PRIORITY	HOW FAR IS THIS A PRIORITY FOR 2021 – 2025?	WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE / WHAT IS NOT CAPTURED?
HL1	Design and deliver a programme of activity to address a deficit of STEM skills, particularly Maths	An effective pipeline of STEM skills remains a key priority. The area faces acute, long-standing shortages of STEM skills, with serious implications for its ability to attract inward investment, address infrastructure development needs and drive forward the digital economy. These same STEM skills are also essential to promoting clean growth and tackling the climate emergency.	Need to raise awareness of the importance of STEM skills to the Clean Growth agenda, particularly among young people.
HL2	Ensure that provision addresses current and future labour market requirements, including identifying high level skills gaps and shortages	The pace of change in the labour market is accelerating and subject to sharp disruptions, such as automation and Covid-19. This means that the role of intelligence in informing curriculum strategy is more important than ever.	Skills Advisory Panel now has a formal remit in setting out local skills priorities with a view to influencing provision. Alongside this, should also extend the role of Delivery Agreements as a mechanism for promoting

		The risk of not making this link are reflected in the large number of local workers whose skills are under-utilised I.e. their skills are not matched to local labour market needs.	dialogue with learning providers around curriculum strategy.
HL3	Attract, develop and retain high level skills and capabilities to drive productivity and innovation within the region	Productivity and innovation are core pillars of the LEPs Local Industrial Strategy, e.g. to drive productivity across the region through improved skills. Also aligns to inclusive growth objectives to ensure that people have the opportunity to learn, contribute, progress in good jobs. The evidence suggests that the availability of high quality job opportunities is the key determinant of whether skilled individuals are retained or attracted to a local area, demonstrating the importance of interventions on the demand (I.e. to create high quality job opportunities) as well as the supply-side in addressing low-skills equilibrium.	
HL4	Raise aspiration among all ages and communities to progress into higher level learning	Unequal participation in learning with average attainment gap between pupil premium pupils and their peers around 18.1 months. Disadvantaged young people are less likely to start an apprenticeship. Professional	

		<p>occupations are twice as likely to undertake workplace training than manual occupations.</p> <p>Action in this area is key to addressing the area's deficit of higher level skills, meeting growing demand for skills at this level and supporting inclusive growth and social mobility. Disadvantaged pupils are less likely to enter higher education via traditional routes and there is little evidence that the gap with other pupils, in terms of entry rates, is narrowing. Meanwhile access to HE for mature students via part-time routes is in sharp decline.</p>	
HL5	<p>Develop and simplify technical routes into higher level learning and employment to address existing and future skill requirements</p>	<p>Action is required to enhance apprenticeships as a route for higher level learning. The available subject range of higher apprenticeships remains limited, limiting our ability to address skills needs in priority areas. In addition, the disadvantaged are less likely to participate in apprenticeships at this level.</p> <p>Take-up of technical routes, such as Foundation Degrees, has seen significant decline in recent years due to changes to funding.</p> <p>Lack of parity in funding for technical routes at a national level</p>	<p>Ensuring that suitable progression routes are available locally for those undertaking T-Levels will a high priority.</p>

MORE AND BETTER APPRENTICESHIPS

	PRIORITY	HOW FAR IS THIS A PRIORITY FOR 2021 – 2025?	WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE / WHAT IS NOT CAPTURED?
AP1	Support businesses to understand and make the most of apprenticeships, particularly in the context of the apprenticeship levy and reforms	The introduction of the reforms has led to considerable disruption of the apprenticeship landscape and a sharp decline in apprenticeship starts. There is a continuing need to help employers who pay the levy to make the most of it in terms of investing in the skills of their workers. There is also a need for a mechanism for levy transfer: bringing together employers who have surplus levy with SMEs who wish to recruit apprentices.	
AP2	Support people to access traineeships and apprenticeships as a pathway into rewarding careers	YP take up of appshps is in decline, appshps as route for progression is in decline There is strong evidence that apprenticeships are effective in meeting the skill needs of business and promoting productivity, whilst at the same time enhancing the pay and progression of individuals. Awareness of the opportunities available through	There has been a change in policy in respect of traineeships, which are no longer considered a priority.

		apprenticeships remains poor among young people and their parents.	
AP3	Increase take-up and provision of apprenticeships (particularly advanced, higher and degree apprenticeships)	See above. Increasing the number and range of opportunities available is likely to be important as part of the Covid-19 recovery plan.	

DRAFT

GREAT EDUCATION CONNECTED TO BUSINESS

	PRIORITY	HOW FAR IS THIS A PRIORITY FOR 2021 – 2025?	WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE / WHAT IS NOT CAPTURED?
ED1	Produce high quality labour market information (LMI) and forecasting of future employment opportunities		
ED2	Improve the relevance of learning in schools, colleges and universities to increase attainment and employability	Over 70 per cent of schools and colleges report that pupils are more career ready and have better employability skills, as a result of being part of the Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN). Employers continue to report a lack of preparedness for the workplace.	
ED3	Ensure that careers information advice and guidance is impartial, based on robust LMI and targeted at parents and teachers as well as pupils		
ED4	Increase meaningful engagement between businesses and students in schools, colleges and universities		

EMPLOYABILITY, ACCESSING JOBS AND REALISING POTENTIAL

	PRIORITY	HOW FAR IS THIS A PRIORITY FOR 2021 – 2025?	WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE / WHAT IS NOT CAPTURED?
EM1	Shape programmes to help unemployed, young people and adults to move into work, sustain and progress in employment	Claimant unemployment in the area has seen a significant increase over the last year and is forecast to grow from its current rate of around 4% to more than 10% during the course of 2020, due to the loss of tens of thousands of jobs as a result of Covid-19. An element of structural unemployment is expected as workers from affected sectors need to retrain for new opportunities. It seems likely that young people will fare particularly badly: they tend to be employed in “shut-down” sectors and in the last recession their unemployment rate grew three times faster than that of older people. There is also a risk that people may fall into a “low pay, no pay” cycle as they struggle to sustain employment.	Greater emphasis needs to be placed on young people and the challenges they face in transitioning into the workforce. This needs to be reflected in a separate, dedicated priority.
EM2	Forecast labour market opportunities and shape support for people to access pipeline of new job opportunities, particularly in growth sectors	Patterns of growth in the labour market are expected to be reshaped by Covid-19 as well as longer-term trends like automation. This means that intelligence about current and future opportunities will be essential, in order to inform employment support and careers information and advice.	

EM3	Equip people with the skills needed to progress in work including low paid workers and those in receipt of in-work benefits	<p>Strong link to AEB, LIS and FRSC – key priority to enhance skills, improve access to opportunities. See also, inclusive growth.</p> <p>The number of people falling below the threshold for the “Real Living Wage” has been reducing in recent years but the number of jobs affected remains substantial. Many of the workers in these jobs are poorly-qualified and lack access to job-related training. Moreover, the Covid-19 crisis has prompted a massive increase in the number of people claiming Universal Credit to offset reduced incomes from employment. This is likely to generate growth in demand for reskilling in order to facilitate career mobility. This is in addition to the need for skills development to enable workers to progress within their existing career path.</p>	
EM4	Maximise positive connections between health, jobs and prosperity and address barriers to work to help individuals to meet their economic potential	<p>More than a fifth of the area’s workforce have a disability or a long-term health problem. The overall employment rate for this group is far below that of people who are not affected by such issues. However, the higher the level of qualifications / skills held, the narrower the employment rate gap. In addition, older workers who drop out of</p>	

		employment as a result of health issues often drop out of the labour force permanently. This is an area where employment support can enable the individual to remain connected to the world of work.	
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BUILDING WORKFORCE SKILLS AND ATTRACTING TALENT

	PRIORITY	HOW FAR IS THIS A PRIORITY FOR 2020 – 2024?	WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE / WHAT IS NOT CAPTURED?
TAL1	Ensure that training provision and facilities meet current and future needs of businesses, individuals and the wider economy	In recent years further education colleges in the area have seen significant investment in their estate and facilities through the Skills Capital fund. However, this follows years of under-investment and therefore significant weaknesses remain, which constrain skills development, particularly in technical skill areas associated with fast-moving technological developments.	
TAL2	Reduce skills shortages facing businesses in growth sectors by growing and attracting talent	Skills shortages and gaps have remained persistent. Skill shortages affecting higher level occupations, particularly in the STEM field, together with skilled trades occupations are a significant drag on key sectors of the economy. Skills gaps remain widespread across the workforce, with deficits of soft skills and digital skills commonplace. These issues hinder productivity growth and economic resilience.	
TAL3	Increase proportion of businesses of all sizes and sectors in Leeds City Region training their staff	There is no evidence to show that workforce development activity is on the increase; conversely there is evidence to suggest that the number of people	

		participating in job-related training is in long-term decline. Many employers acknowledge that they under-invest in training relative to the skills needs of their business. There is still a need to promote an active talent management culture among local businesses.	
TAL4	Develop leadership and innovation skills for business growth	Leadership skills are key to creating more innovative and more productive businesses. Too often skills and innovation are seen in isolation – we can be more effective by looking at these together. Management skills gaps, where managers lack full proficiency in their role, are widespread.	

DRAFT

**Employment
and Skills Plan
Refresh**

Overview and context



Draft Strategic Economic Framework

LEEDS CITY REGION STRATEGIC ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK

OUR VISION

To be a globally recognised, thriving and happy region with talented people, superb environment and clean, integrated transport.

OUR PRIORITIES

BOOSTING PRODUCTIVITY

Helping businesses to grow and bringing new investment into the region to drive economic growth and create good jobs.

ENABLING INCLUSIVE GROWTH

Enabling as many people as possible to contribute to, and benefit from, economic growth in our communities and towns.

DELIVERING 21ST CENTURY TRANSPORT

Creating efficient transport infrastructure to connect our communities, making it easier to get to work, do business and connect with each other.

TACKLING THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Growing our economy while cutting emissions and caring for our environment.

OUR POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

Employment and Skills	Digital	Energy	Innovation	Connectivity	Green and Blue Infrastructure	Housing and Regeneration	Active Travel
Spatial Planning	Bus	Business Growth	Future Mobility	Flooding	Culture	Rail	Local Industrial Strategy

PARTNERSHIP PLANS AND STRATEGIES

MONITORING AND IMPACT

Future-Ready Skills Commission

10 things that need to change

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1 Careers information needs to be relevant to the local labour market and empower individuals to make informed decisions



2 Employment and skills should be integrated within local housing, transport and environment strategies



3 The local approach to skills, employment and health needs to be joined up to support progression to work



4 The skills offer for businesses needs to be simplified through coordination at the level of functional economic areas



5 Investment in technical education and skills should be increased to sustainable levels



6 Greater collaboration is needed in order to spread good workplace practices to improve business performance and productivity



7 The learning offer should be simplified and made more affordable, with the right level of finance that removes barriers to access and supports progression in learning



8 Employers need to be motivated to train and re-train staff and support progression at all levels, including those in lower paid work to gain higher level skills



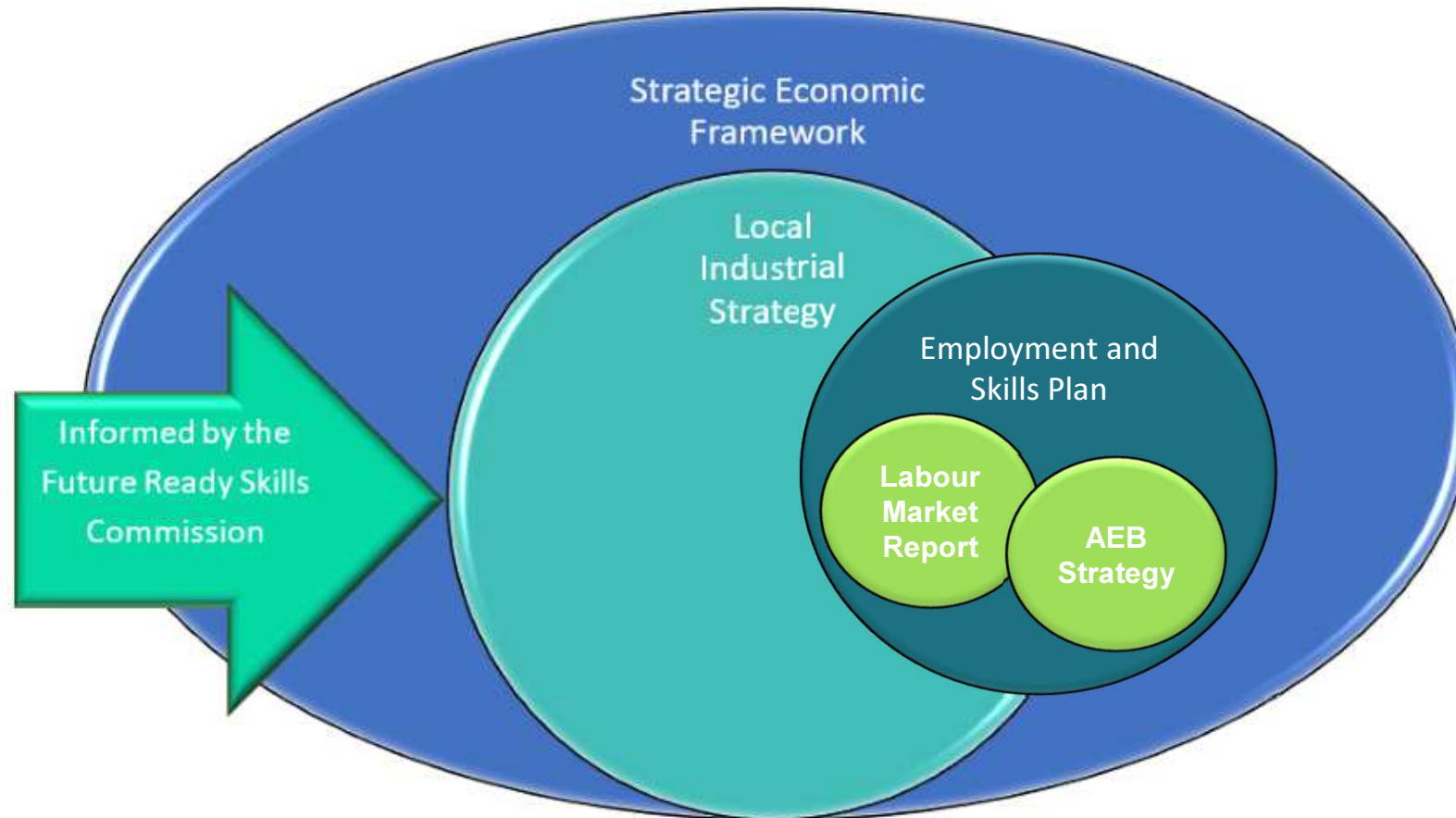
9 Local areas should have strengthened responsibilities for planning the provision of technical education and training so that it is responsive to local economic priorities



10 Employers need greater influence over the design and delivery of technical training to ensure it is responsive to local economic priorities

The Strategy Landscape and Interactions

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Employment and Skills Plan (2016- 2020)

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Other Policies & Strategies

- **Local Industrial Strategy**; The LIS foundations with the most implications for Employment and Skills sit within Business Environment, Ideas and People
- **Culture Framework** (draft) – priorities include employment and skills
- **Labour Market Information report**
- **Skills Commission** blueprint and recommendations
- **Inclusive Growth Framework** (draft) priorities: well-being, connectivity, skills and good work
- **Digital Framework**

**Employment
and Skills Plan
Refresh**

Scope

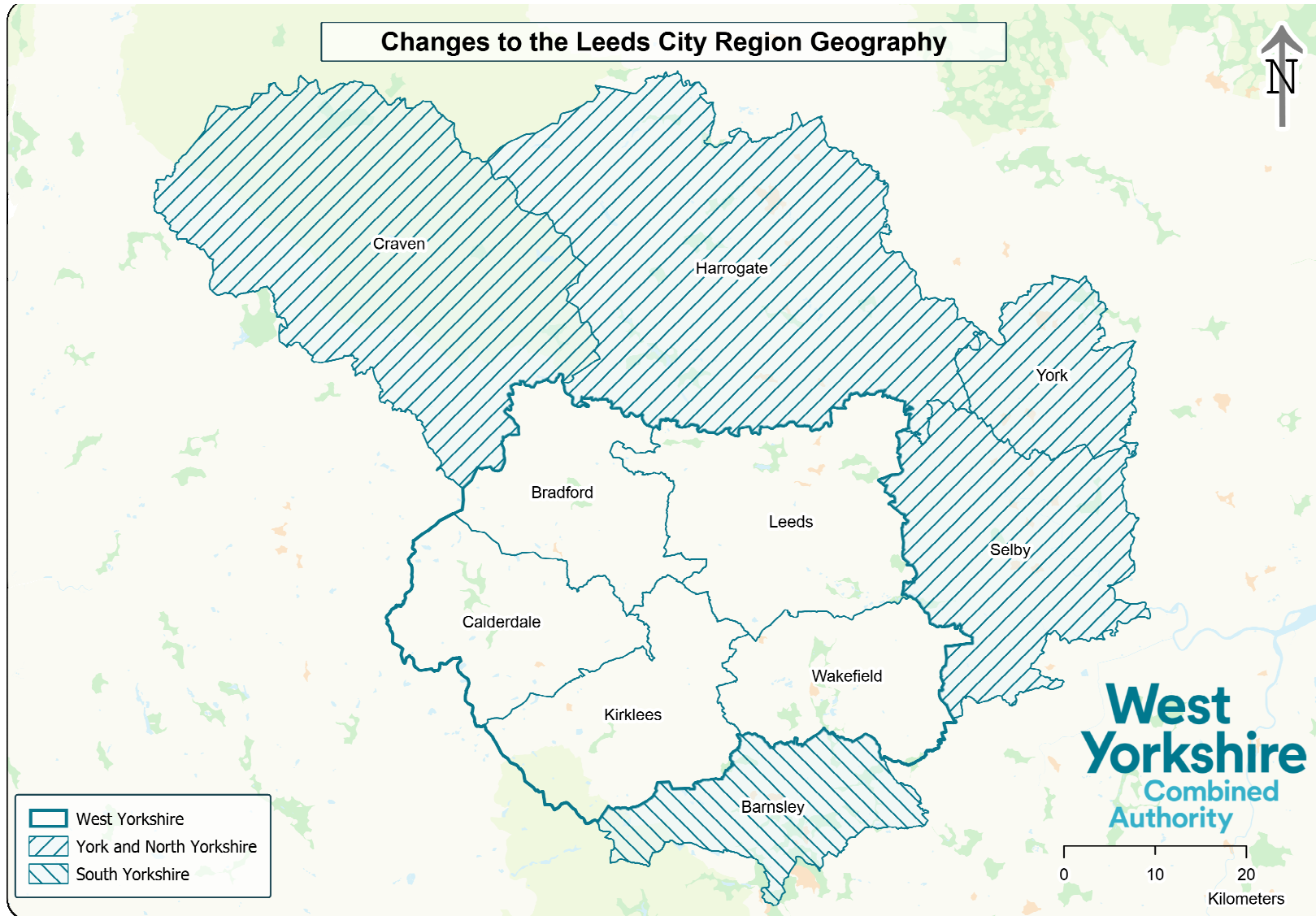


Scope of the Refresh

- The current Employment and Skills Plan is due to be refreshed and is widely used by partners and stakeholders to align priorities.
- Devolution of AEB budget (from 2021/22) requires a strategy, which has been submitted to DfE and is in consultation.
- The Employment and Skills plan is due to published in late 2020.
- The following principles are to be considered, the plan should:
 - Be strategic and practical in content and design
 - Last 5 years (which is in line with Skills Commission proposals).
 - Be flexible, allowing for changes and subsequent plans to align
 - Be practical, allowing stakeholders and partners to plan priorities and delivery
 - Embed the priorities of the Strategic Economic Framework (SEF) and other key policies, for example Inclusive Growth and Climate Emergency priorities
 - Be bold and ambitious outlining the actions required to meet the vision and support the case for further devolution
 - Ensure that collaborative partnership work continues across the functional economic area of the region with minimal impact on the delivery of core projects

Geography

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**Employment
and Skills Plan
Refresh**

Vision



Where We Want To Be

West Yorkshire is the largest labour market in the Northern Powerhouse, with strengths in manufacturing, financial and professional services, digital and healthcare technology. Our diverse, rich cultural heritage and geography makes West Yorkshire one of the country's best places to live, study and work.

Nonetheless, our productivity lags the rest of the UK and we need to address a lack of skills in parts of our workforce, and a high incidence of low-paid, low-skilled employment.

Our vision for West Yorkshire is to be a region where everyone can aspire to live full, healthy lives with greater earning power through better, more flexible skills; a fair, progressive employment market; and the right support and guidance to help people achieve their personal ambitions.

We want skilled, productive people, with access to world-class training and learning opportunities that take them to the next step in their careers. We need successful employers that provide good quality jobs and who invest in their workforce.

With greater local powers over the education and skills systems secured through the ambitious West Yorkshire devolution deal, we will be better able to direct resources where employers need them and help people to develop skills that benefit themselves and the local economy.

What Does Success Look Like?

By the end of the period covered by the employment and skills plan, we want West Yorkshire to have:

- A productive, resilient and innovative economy that offers a high standard of living and is based on a highly skilled, diverse and flexible workforce.
- Stronger relationships between employers and training providers with good quality skills and training opportunities that reflect the unique needs of our labour market.
- Closed the attainment gap for disadvantaged learners, so that all communities are able to access and progress in learning, and experience the economic benefits
- Universal access to a widely used and valued, high-quality careers information and support service, and for people to understand how to access their entitlements in relation to careers guidance and training.

**Employment
and Skills Plan
Refresh**

Review of priorities



Where are we now: labour market strengths

- **Productivity** – increasing, but at a level lower than the national average and with growth trajectories below national levels since the crash of 2008.
- **Labour market** – strong performance in recent years but with early signs of a downturn in employment, with disadvantaged groups continuing to face the greatest risk of exclusion from and progression in employment.
- **Sector base** - one of the most diverse economies in the UK, closely mirroring the industrial structure of the UK, making it more resilient to sector shocks.
- **Largest employers and number of employees** – the retail (95,000) and hospitality (70,000) sectors are large, although the health sector (140,000) is the largest in absolute terms.
- **Skills supply** – strong base of intermediate skills (L3)

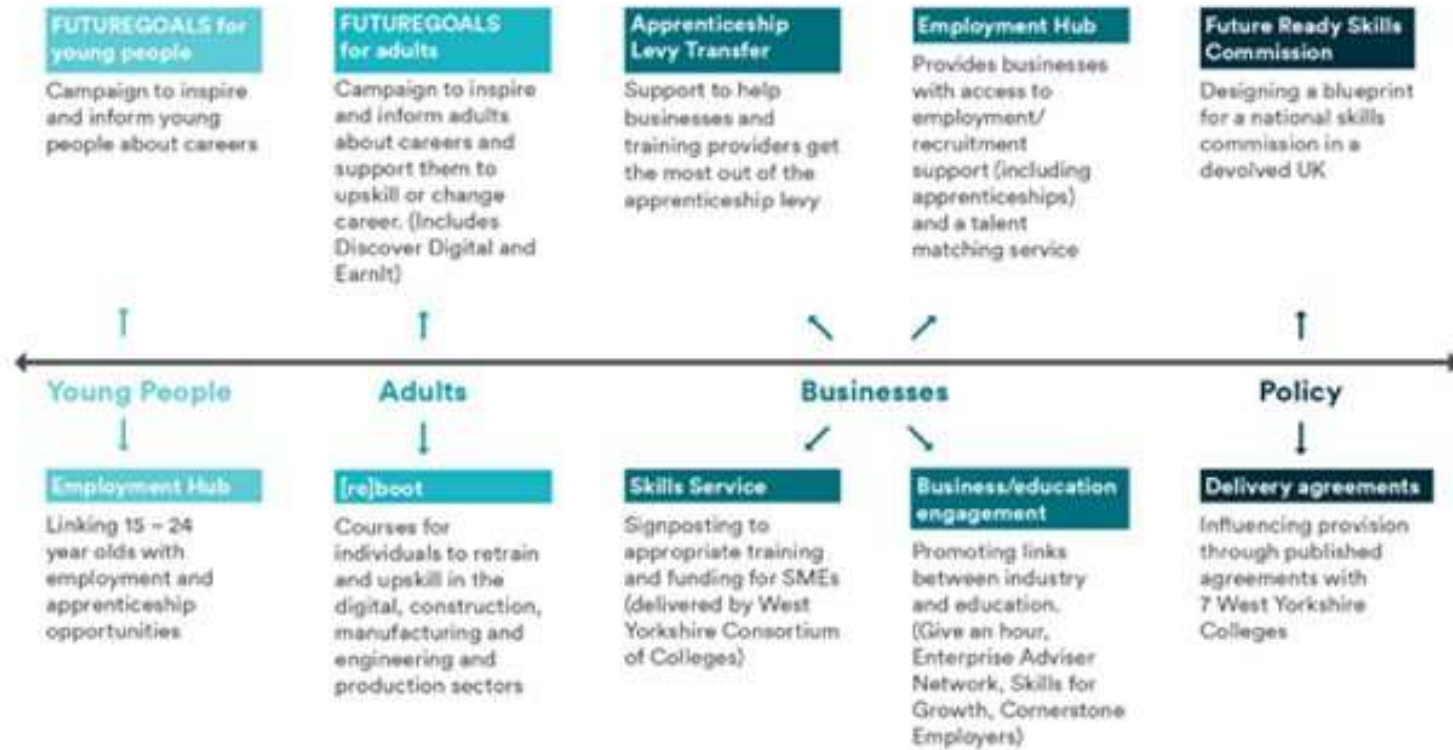
Where are we now – partnership strengths

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- World class universities
- Delivery agreements with West Yorkshire colleges
- Joint venture with West Yorkshire Colleges Consortium working with Leeds City Region LEP to address region's skills priorities
- Investment through skills capital funding into 10 major infrastructure projects to world class training facilities to deliver skills needed in the region including:
 - Process manufacturing centre, Kirklees
 - Quarry Hill, healthcare and life sciences, Leeds
 - Advance Skills and Innovation Centre, Wakefield
- Strong strategic relationships with employers
- Established Skills Advisory Panel / Employment and Skills Panel
- Devolution deal, including Adult Education
- Future-Ready Skills Commission

Where are we now – delivery strengths

Leeds City Region employment and skills offer



Where are we now – labour market challenges

- **Skills levels** - are below the national average (at level 4+). There is significant over-representation of people with low / no qualifications in West Yorkshire and large numbers without basic literacy and numeracy.
- **Skills Supply** - Around two-thirds of employers expect future upskilling needs. Many report they are unable to find the skills they need, yet the majority of employers under-invest in skills. Only 9% of employers demonstrate high performing workplace practices.
- **Skills deprivation** - West Yorkshire has more than twice its “fair share” of neighbourhoods that are among the most acutely deprived in terms of adult skills.
- **Unemployment** - West Yorkshire’s unemployment rate is above the national average. The claimant count (the number of jobless people claiming benefits) has been on an upward trend for some time.

Where are we now – delivery challenges

- There is a competition for limited national funding, with national adult skills budget in sharp decline
- Nationally, the skills system is under-funded and highly centralised which leaves no flexibility for providers to respond to regional labour market skills needs or economic shocks
- Short term funding for specific issues prohibits a holistic approach to the skills system
- The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the economy, which requires rapid rethinking of policy and support programmes to manage its impact, which will be unquantifiable until after the lockdown exit is realised and prolonged.

Key questions

- Is there anything else that should be considered as part of the scope?
- Does the vision statement capture the ambition for employment and skills in our City Region?
- What are the key priorities that must be included in the plan?
- What are the key elements that must be included in the plan?
- How do we ensure the relevant priorities for the SEF are addressed in the Employment and Skills Plan?

Process and next steps

The proposed timescales and plans for the refresh are:

- **Stage 1:** Scoping and appraising current priorities (May – July 2020)
- **Stage 2:** Consultation with key stakeholders and partners, and open consultation (July – September 2020)
- **Stage 3:** Preparation and sign-off of the refreshed plan (October – December 2020)

Report to: Employment and Skills Panel

Date: 19 June 2020

Subject: **Devolution of the Adult Education Budget**

Director: Alan Reiss, Director of Policy, Strategy and Communications

Author: Katie McLean

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To update the Panel of the plans for the Combined Authority to receive devolved powers and manage the devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB) from 2021.

2. Information

- 2.1 At the last meet of the Panel, members received a paper setting out the purpose and function of AEB. The Department for Education (DfE) funds AEB and it is currently administered by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) in non-devolved areas.
- 2.2 In the Budget delivered on 11 March, the Chancellor confirmed devolution of Adult Education powers and the AEB to allow West Yorkshire to shape local skills provision to respond to local needs. The principle purpose of the AEB is to engage adults and provide them with the skills needed for entering and sustaining work, an apprenticeship, or other further learning. This will enable the Combined Authority to be able to procure based against its own assessment of strategic needs and directly influence provision through its performance management structures.
- 2.3 Taking on these devolved powers is clearly a significant opportunity for the region. It is however a new function for the Combined Authority which has previously had no formal influence over AEB planning or delivery. Work is therefore underway to ensure that the required infrastructure is in place to properly administer the significant amounts of new funding and powers. These powers and functions will incorporate responsibility for commissioning, administering and assuring the fund.

- 2.4 The ESFA estimates that circa £63 million of AEB funding is spent in West Yorkshire which will be devolved to the Combined Authority from August 2021. Based on 2018/19 data, approximately 80% of the AEB budget is utilised by colleges and local authorities through grant funding (including out of area providers), with the remaining 20% contracted to independent training providers.
- 2.5 An internal Project Board has been convened in order to prepare for the devolution of AEB from Government to the Combined Authority as part of the West Yorkshire devolution deal, and manage the steps necessary to secure this funding effectively.
- 2.6 To enable successful devolution of AEB, Government requires assurances that the Combined Authority is organisationally and strategically prepared to manage the programme from the academic year 2021/22. To demonstrate this readiness, the following were submitted to the DfE:
- A letter from the Managing Director setting out what measures the Combined Authority will put in place in order to be ready to deliver AEB;
 - A draft AEB Strategy (previously referred to as the 'Strategic Skills Plan'), which has been developed with the input of ESP;
 - A self-assessment of readiness conditions setting out how the organisation will practically support the devolution of AEB alongside evidence, including the governance framework and operating principles; internal Audit Committee awareness; compliance with the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014; procurement and contracting plans and processes; and draft technical guidance documents; and
 - A list of additional requirements we require from DfE in order to arrive at satisfactory position, such as data requests or information support.
- 2.7 The draft AEB Strategy has been out for public consultation since 26 May and this will close on 12 July. This document sets out how the Combined Authority will exercise the statutory functions of AEB and deliver better skills outcomes for the residents of West Yorkshire. A copy of the draft AEB Strategy is set out at **appendix one**. Consultation questions are attached as **appendix two**.
- 2.8 The Combined Authority will receive a paper setting out on work underway to deliver AEB across West Yorkshire at its meeting on June 25.
- 2.9 The AEB Strategy forms a key part of the Combined Authority's Strategic Economic Framework, alongside the work of the Future Ready Skills Commission, the Employment and Skills Plan and the Local Industrial Strategy. These ambitious strategies that have been developed in collaboration with communities and decision makers across West Yorkshire, and together will help the region unlock and achieve its full potential.
- 2.10 The AEB Strategy will be reviewed following consultation, with a final version shared with ESP (in its function as the Skills Advisory Panel) and the Combined Authority for endorsement and ratification so that delivery can progress. Commissioning is planned to begin on 1 October 2020 in order to meet the readiness timescales.

2.11 Combined Authority officers have consulted with and will continue to work closely with the other Mayoral Combined Authorities, the Department for Education and the Educational and Skills Funding Agency, to ensure there is a consistency with core national strategies while we develop our approach to meet local needs and ambitions.

3. Clean Growth Implications

3.1 There are no clean growth implications directly arising from this report.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 Additional funding of £63 million is to be provided to the Combined Authority. Resource requirements are to be identified once the funding rules and assurance framework to be applied have been determined.

5. Legal Implications

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

6. Staffing Implications

6.1 Resourcing requirements have been identified and a recruitment exercise is underway to appoint a AEB Manager to lead the implementation of AEB from August 2021.

7. External Consultees

7.1 External consultation on the AEB Strategy is ongoing, the results of which will be shared with the Panel ahead of seeking endorsement and ratification from the Combined Authority.

8. Recommendations

8.1 That the Panel notes the contents of this report.

9. Background Documents

None.

10. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft AEB Strategy

Appendix 2 – Consultation questionnaire

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Adult Education Budget Strategy

Draft for Consultation

May 2020

Adult Education Budget Strategy

Draft for Consultation

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Background and Context

This document sets out the Adult Education Budget (AEB) Strategy for the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. It highlights strengths, opportunities and challenges across the region and sets out key priorities for the devolved AEB to ensure it supports the West Yorkshire Combined Authority’s Strategic Vision.

West Yorkshire Combined Authority

We want our region to be recognised globally as a place with a strong, successful economy where everyone can build great businesses, careers and lives supported by world-class transport, housing and digital connectivity.

Our Priorities



Boosting productivity



Supporting clean growth



Enabling inclusive growth



Delivering 21st century transport

We will achieve this by planning and delivering economic and transport schemes and programmes across the region in partnership with the public and private sectors – focusing on the areas of work which will make the biggest difference. Partnership is fundamental to everything we do.

The Combined Authority and LEP work closely with one another and with councils across the region to ensure our policies, services and capital infrastructure projects meet the needs of communities and help us to deliver local priorities. We also work closely with the private sector through the LEP to develop, shape and deliver policies that meet the needs of employers in the region.

Our Area

Leeds City Region is the economic, cultural and geographic heart of Yorkshire and an essential component of the Northern Powerhouse. Lying at the centre of the UK, within one hour’s drive of 7 million people, it comprises 1.6% of the land area of England.

The region is a vibrant, internationally significant economy, with output of £55bn and a population of over 2.3 million people across the local authority areas of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield.



With a workforce of 1.1 million people and 90,000 businesses, West Yorkshire is the UK's largest regional finance centre and contains more manufacturing jobs than anywhere in the north.

The West Yorkshire economy

The following points provide a brief overview of the key features of the West Yorkshire economy, as set out in more detail in our Local Industrial Strategy evidence base. Overall, the local economy's diversity prevents an over-reliance on any particular sector but there are significant challenges around productivity and low wages linked to a range of factors including a deficit of high level skills and innovation. West Yorkshire's strengths in the health sector are likely to prove a key asset.

Productivity – increasing, but at a level lower than the national average and with growth trajectories below national levels since the crash of 2008.

Labour market – strong performance in recent years but with early signs of a downturn in employment, with disadvantaged groups continuing to face the greatest risk of exclusion from employment.

Sector base - one of the most diverse economies in the UK, closely mirroring the industrial structure of the UK, making it more resilient to sector shocks.

Largest employers – retail (95,000), hospitality (70,000), are large although health is the largest in absolute terms (140,000).

The Adult Education Budget

The principal purpose of the AEB is to engage adults and provide them with the skills needed for entering and sustaining work, an apprenticeship/traineeship, or other further learning. The funding pays specifically for learning programmes (predominantly qualifications) and provides an element of learner support funding for those with learning difficulties and disabilities. It is currently administered and governed through Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) regulations.

It provides funding for programmes of learning up to Level 2 (GCSE level equivalent) and some Level 3 qualifications (A level equivalent), dependent on eligibility. It does not fund all Level 3 learning, or programmes at Level 4 and above as these are funded through Advanced Learner Loans or Higher Education (HE) funding.

AEB also encompasses a range of statutory entitlements for learners, including the right to fully funded provision for basic English and maths qualifications and, depending on the resident's age and employment status, an entitlement to a first Level 2 and/or Level 3 qualification. From August 2020, this will also include an entitlement to basic Digital skills.

The Devolution of Adult Education Budget

In England, devolution is the transfer of accountability, power and funding from national to local government.

Since 2014, through a number of devolution deals (an agreement between government and local areas in England), powers, budgets and responsibilities have been passed down from central government to new directly-elected mayors in eight regions across England: Tees Valley, Greater Manchester, Liverpool City Region, Sheffield City Region, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, West Midlands Combined Authority, North of Tyne and Greater London Authority

In March 2020, West Yorkshire agreed an ambitious devolution deal with Government. The agreement, which is the biggest ever of its kind, unlocks more than £1.8 billion in investment to drive up living standards through better transport, improved skills and stronger businesses, while tackling the climate emergency. This includes control of the £63m annual Adult Education Budget for West Yorkshire to closer align spending on skills to the opportunities and needs in the local economy.

In addition to significant funding, the deal gives West Yorkshire far greater decision-making powers allowing the region to set its own priorities including ensuring a vibrant future for its towns and rural areas while securing the economic success of its cities.

Becoming a devolved mayoral area will be critical in ensuring West Yorkshire is in the best place to access to future funding and powers. The Government is increasing focus on mayoral combined authorities as its primary route for supporting regional economic development.

West Yorkshire will adopt the model of a directly elected Mayor over the Combined Authority's area, with the first Mayoral election in May 2021. The Mayor will have an initial three-year term. From 2024, Mayoral terms will last four years.

We have consulted with and will continue to work closely with the other Mayoral Combined Authorities, the Department for Education and the Educational and Skills Funding Agency, to ensure there is a consistency with core national strategies while we develop our approach to meet local needs and ambitions.

This AEB Strategy has been developed in order to ensure we are ready to deliver the Adult Education Budget on the 1 August 2021, and timescales have necessitated its development prior to the election of the West Yorkshire Mayor. It builds on our existing strategies and the needs of our area, providing a clear foundation upon which we can build the skills of people and businesses within West Yorkshire.

Our Strategic Vision

The Adult Education Budget (AEB) Strategy forms a key part of the Combined Authority's Strategic Economic Framework, alongside the Leeds City Region Local Industrial Strategy, a long-term plan to boost productivity, skills and jobs. The Strategic Economic Framework (SEF) brings together the full range of policies and strategies that have been developed in collaboration with communities and decision makers across West Yorkshire, and together will help the region unlock and achieve its full potential.

The SEF also contains our Leeds City Region Employment and Skills Plan which focuses on Skilled People, Better Jobs, spanning 2016-2020. Much has changed in the timespan of this strategy: Brexit has been proposed and agreed; a Climate Emergency has been declared, with West Yorkshire aiming for net zero emissions by 2038; digital technology and AI continue to revolutionise the world of work; a devolution deal has been agreed for West Yorkshire, which affords us more control and accountability for adult skills delivery.

The long term social and economic impact of Covid-19 is currently unknown, but looks likely to impact most severely on those already facing the challenges posed by precarious employment.

All of these factors impact on workforce skills needs in helping our economy recover from the recent shock and prepare for future opportunities.

Future Ready Skills Commission

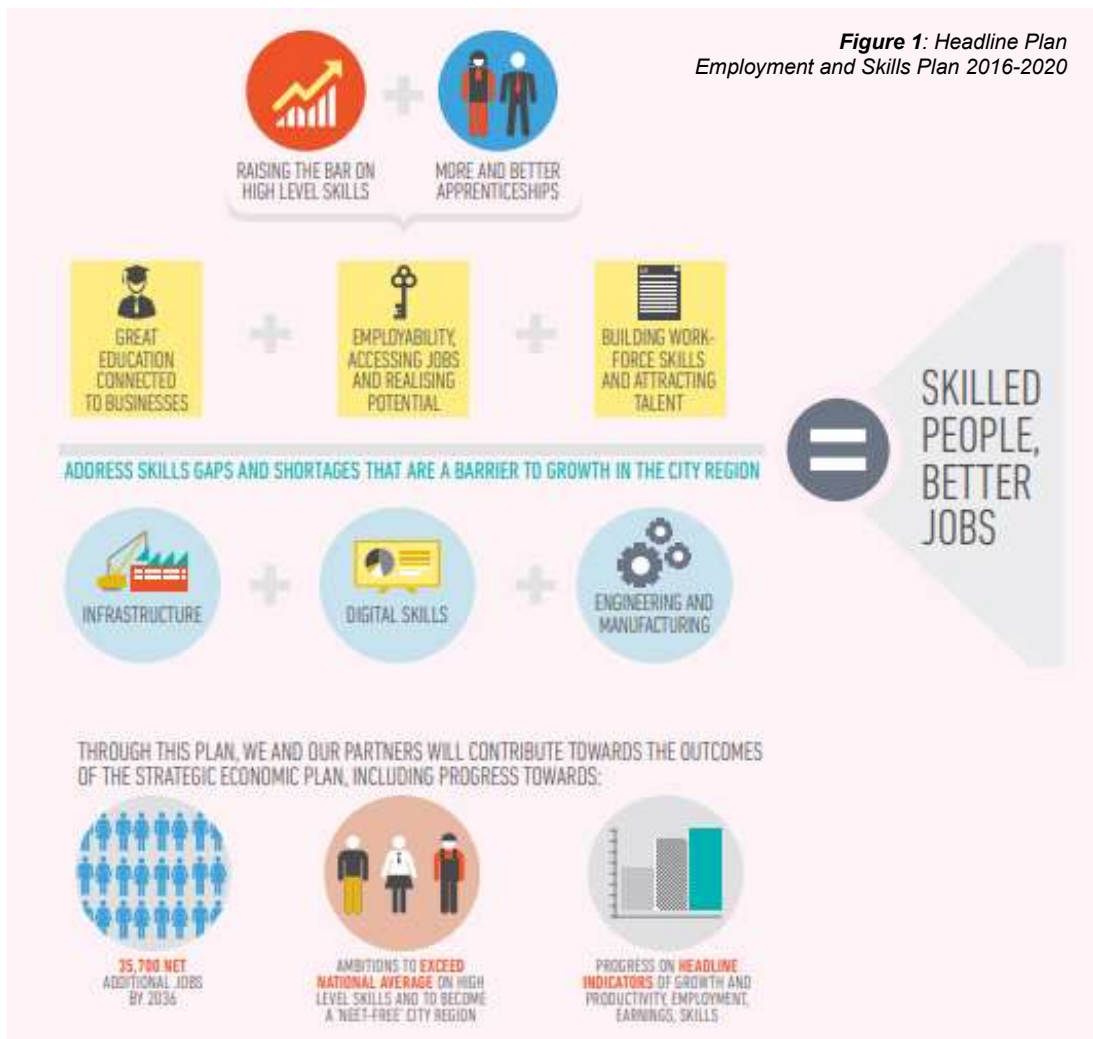
The Leeds City Region is currently leading national thinking with its own ambitious Future Ready Skills Commission. The Commission is an independent body made up of experts and leading thinkers from business, education, local government and think tanks.

The Commission calls for a simplified skills system across the UK, unfettered by national silos and responsive to local economic needs and demands, exploring how greater devolution can deliver this, ensuring that local people are properly equipped for the jobs of the 21st century.

The Commission will publish recommendations in Autumn 2020, with a view to piloting the system changes needed in Leeds City Region to benefit our people and businesses.

The Combined Authority is already embedding the learning and emerging recommendations into its thinking on Adult Education Budget usage, and how we can make positive changes to improve the impact on our local communities.

Our current Employment and Skills Plan is outlined in figure 1. The plan is due to be refreshed this year alongside the publication of the Leeds City Region Local Industrial Strategy.



Priorities for Adult Education Budget

The Adult Education Budget is one of many ways in which adult training is funded and skills are developed: its principal purpose is to engage adults and provide them with skills and learning needed for work, an apprenticeship and/or further learning.

The refreshed Employment and Skills Plan will outline the activities and funds that will address wider skills priorities such as higher levels skills and inclusive growth.

Within the context of the above strategies, we have defined the following priorities for the Adult Education budget in West Yorkshire:

1. Increase the supply of skills to support key sectors in West Yorkshire
2. Improve West Yorkshire's resilience by identifying and delivering the skills needed for the future
3. Making learning more inclusive to support disadvantaged residents and widen the pool of talent for business
4. Support the unemployed to gain and sustain employment
5. Unlock progression opportunities and career adaptability through skills, particularly for those on low wages and with insecure work

West Yorkshire: Needs and Opportunities

Our Challenges

West Yorkshire has a large and diverse economy. However, it faces challenges of low productivity and pay, linked to a range of issues, including a deficit of skills and innovation.

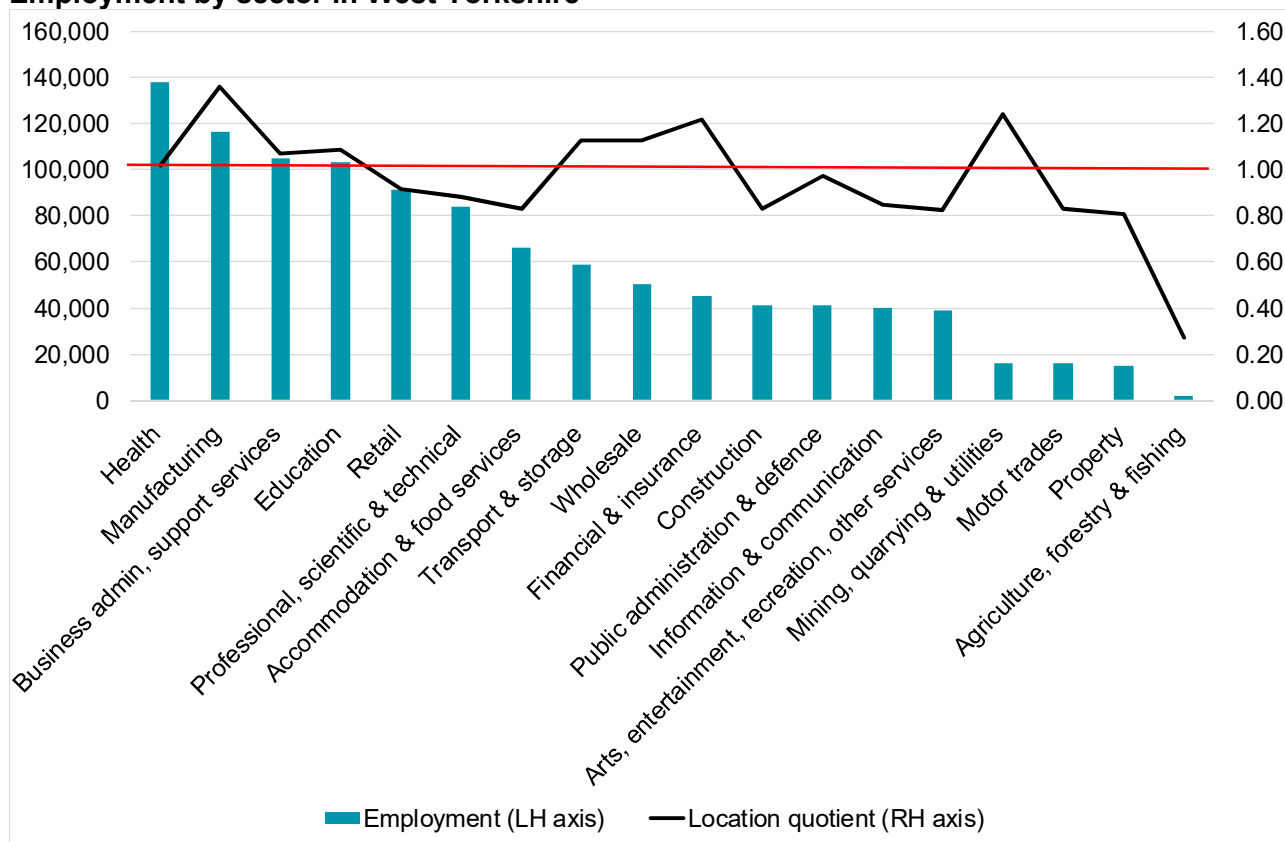
- It is difficult at present to assess the opportunities and challenges that are likely to arise for the West Yorkshire economy because of the uncertainty stemming from Covid-19. Almost 2,000 businesses were dissolved in March 2020 alone and a dramatic increase in redundancies is anticipated in the near future, followed by a challenging employment landscape. The Combined Authority will be undertaking an ongoing review of the evidence as part of economic recovery planning.
- Prospects for labour and skills demand in the medium and longer-term are highly uncertain at the present time. However, it is likely that AEB will have a key role to play in meeting increased demand for skilled workers in the health and social care sector, for example. Meanwhile, sectors currently under lockdown, including hospitality and large parts of retail, are likely to be radically reshaped by the crisis in terms of working practices etc. In addition, manufacturing and other sectors may be affected by changes in the pattern of global trade and consumer demand as well as a continued shift to automated processes. AEB will need to support reskilling and serve to mitigate the threat of growth in long-term, structural unemployment.
- Unemployment in West Yorkshire could increase from 51,000 to more than 100,000 during 2020 if national forecasts, which predict an increase in the unemployment rate to 10%, prove to be accurate. This would have major implications for the focus of AEB provision. Many of the people who become jobless as a result of the Covid-19 crisis could require support with reskilling as the pattern of labour demand changes.
- However, longer-term, underlying issues will remain important in spite of the current crisis and AEB has a key role to play, for example, in meeting demand for care workers, supporting progression to the growing number of higher skilled jobs, tackling persistent skill shortages and ensuring that everyone has basic digital skills.
- There are a range of supply side issues that are particularly pertinent to AEB. Firstly, there is a significant over-representation of people with low / no qualifications in West Yorkshire who are disadvantaged in the labour market. Almost 400,000 people, 26% of the working age population, fall into this category. However, among the unemployed and inactive this proportion rises to 40%.
- Alongside this West Yorkshire has large numbers of people who lack basic literacy and numeracy.
- Pockets of acute deprivation are also linked to a lack of skills. West Yorkshire has more than twice its “fair share” of neighbourhoods that are among the most acutely deprived in terms of adult skills. Bradford and Wakefield are particularly badly affected. This highlights the importance of targeted outreach through AEB.

- The proportion of adults who lack full English language proficiency is above the national average in England and is particularly high in Bradford.
- West Yorkshire’s unemployment rate is above the national average. The claimant count (the number of jobless people claiming benefits) has been on an upward trend for some time. The number of people who are unemployed is expected to increase very substantially as a result of Covid-19.

Key facts

Employment base

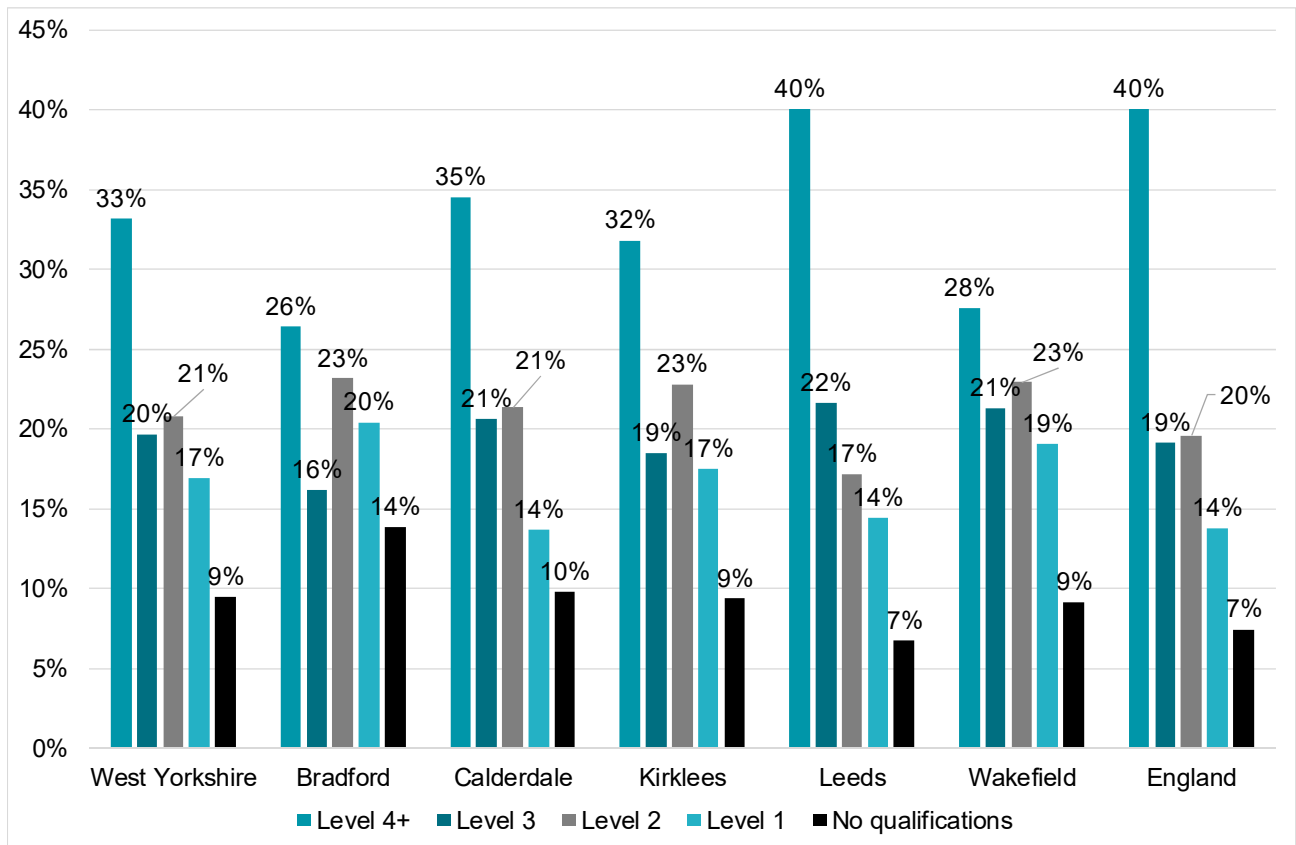
Employment by sector in West Yorkshire



Health is the largest employer in absolute terms (140,000) followed by business administration / support, manufacturing, retail and professional services. Manufacturing and finance are particular strengths of the local economy (as reflected in their location quotients which compare each sector’s share of employment at a local level with the respective national average share). The fastest growing is the digital sector (including activities such as computer programming) and areas of professional services (such as legal and management consultancy) but also retail, hospitality and transport.

West Yorkshire skills profile

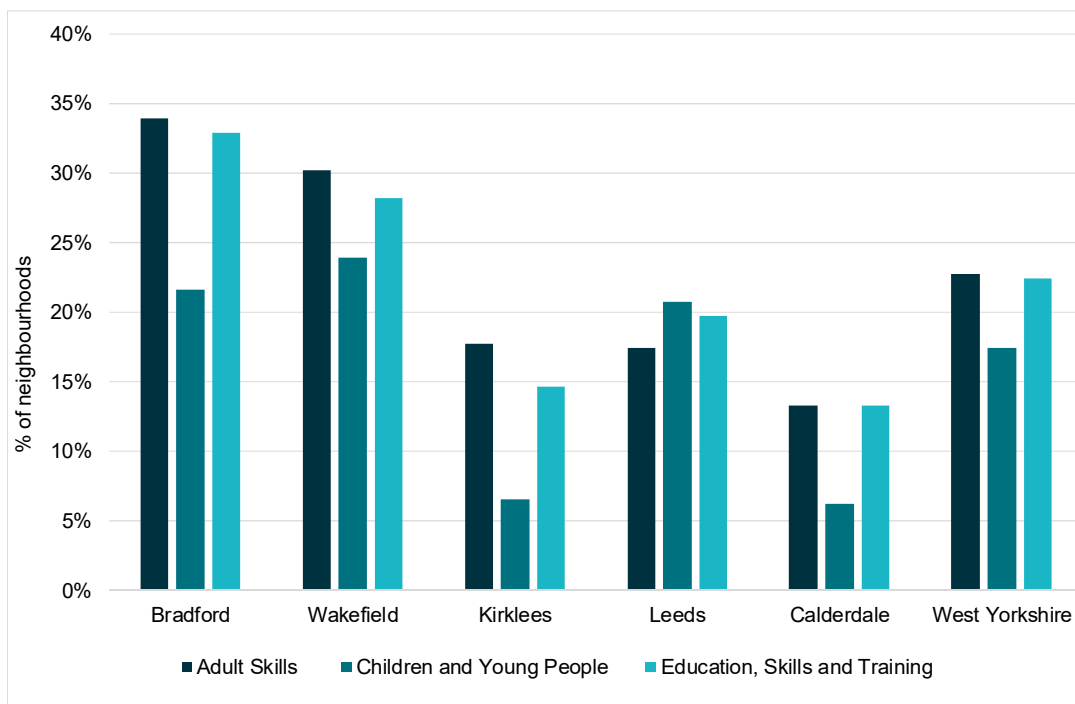
Profile of working age population by level of highest qualification held



Almost one-in-10 of the West Yorkshire working age population (9%) lack any formal qualifications (137,000 people in absolute terms). When people holding a qualification at below level 2 are included, the proportion increases to 26% (or 382,000 people).

West Yorkshire deprivation

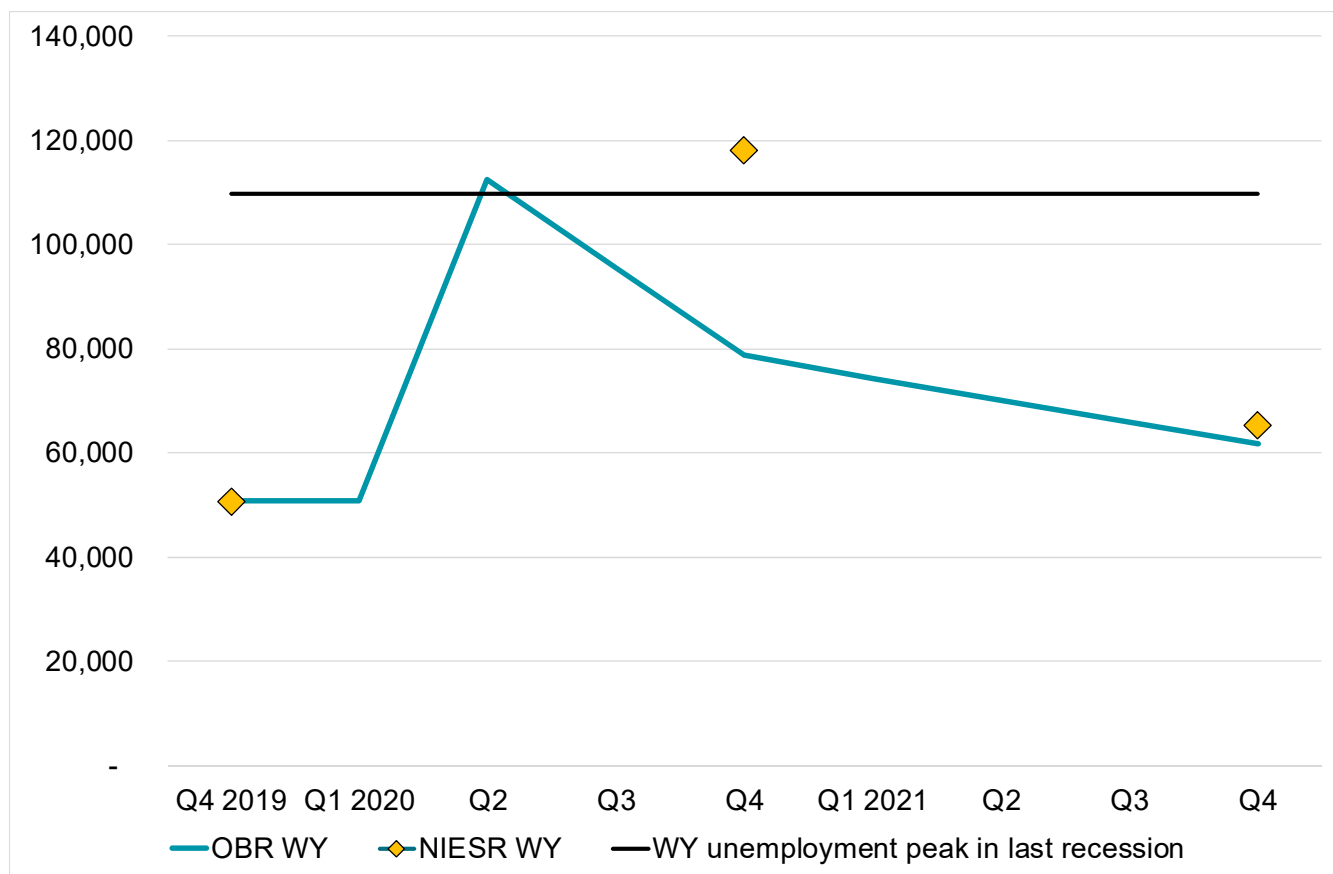
Proportion of neighbourhoods in 10% most deprived nationally by domain



23% of West Yorkshire neighbourhoods fall into the most deprived decile nationally in terms of adult skills deprivation – more than twice the fair share. However, this proportion rises to around a third for Bradford and around 30% for Wakefield.

Potential impact of Covid-19 on unemployment

West Yorkshire unemployment forecast based on Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) and National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) scenarios



If OBR forecasts are borne out locally the level of unemployment in West Yorkshire could increase from 51,000 in Q4 2019 to 112,000 in Q2 2020, remaining well above pre-crisis levels at the end of 2021.

Current AEB performance

This section provides supporting evidence around the level and profile of current AEB-funded provision.

Education and training context

- The proportions of adults in West Yorkshire studying for a qualification (9%) or enrolled on an education course (7%) are both small - but similar to the national average in both cases. However, the prevalence of job-related training has been consistently below the national average in West Yorkshire in recent years.
- West Yorkshire adults with low prior attainment (no qualifications or qualified below level 2) are much less likely to be studying for a qualification, enrolled on a course or receiving job-related training than higher skilled adults.
- Workers in lower-paid / lower-skilled occupations in West Yorkshire are less likely to receive job-related training. For example, people employed in professional occupations are more than 3 times as likely as process, plant and machines operatives to receive training.

Funding overview

- ESFA estimates that West Yorkshire's baseline figure for AEB funding for 2017/18 academic year was £63m.
- The latest data available, for 2018/19 academic year, shows that £51m of Skills formula funding was drawn down for West Yorkshire learners; meanwhile West Yorkshire providers received more than £7m in grant allocations for Community Learning.
- Based on data for 2018/19 academic year, 80% of AEB Skills funding was allocated to grant-funded providers with the remainder allocated through procurement.
- It is estimated that approximately 38% of Skills funding was used to meet statutory learner entitlements in 2018/19 (excluding entitlements for the unemployed).

The provider base

- The provider base catering for AEB-funded learners in West Yorkshire is large, with 268 organisations involved as prime contractors in 2018/19. The funding value for most providers was small, however, with a median value of £15,000.
- Around £9m (18%) of total Skills funding was used for subcontracting in 2018/19, a reduction on the figure for 2017/18. However, there is apparent scope for further rationalisation of sub-contracted provision.
- Around £17.5m of funding was routed through out-of-area providers in 2018/19 of which 51% went to grant providers located outside West Yorkshire. The majority (61%) of funding to out-of-area providers was ultimately sub-contracted.
- £4.1m of provision was delivered via distance learning, primarily to employed learners and with a strong focus on health and social care aims.

Profile of provision

- Basic skills provision accounted for £18.3m of Education and Training funding and 36% of all learners participating via this strand. Maths was the largest element by volume of learners but ESOL was the largest area by value.
- The vast majority of AEB-funded learners pursued lower level learning in 2018/19; either below level 2 or at level 2 via the Education and Training strand; or at an unassigned level via Community Learning.

- AEB-funded provision is narrowly concentrated in subject terms, with the major focus being on *Preparation for Life and Work, Health and Social Care, Administration* and, in the case of Community Learning, *Arts, Media and Publishing*. Around 30% of participants on Community Learning were pursuing an aim linked specifically to Preparing for Work.
- Participation on digital courses has fallen by a quarter since 2016/17, which is significant in view of the forthcoming introduction of the digital entitlement.

Profile of learners

- Approximately 65,000 West Yorkshire learners were supported by AEB funding in 2018/19 – 44,000 through the Education and Training strand and 21,000 through Community Learning.
- Around 40% of AEB-funded learners were unemployed and actively seeking and available for work in 2018/19.
- AEB-funded provision appears to be effective in engaging with groups that are disadvantaged in the labour market, with strong representation of women, disabled people, people from ethnic minority groups and people with low prior attainment.

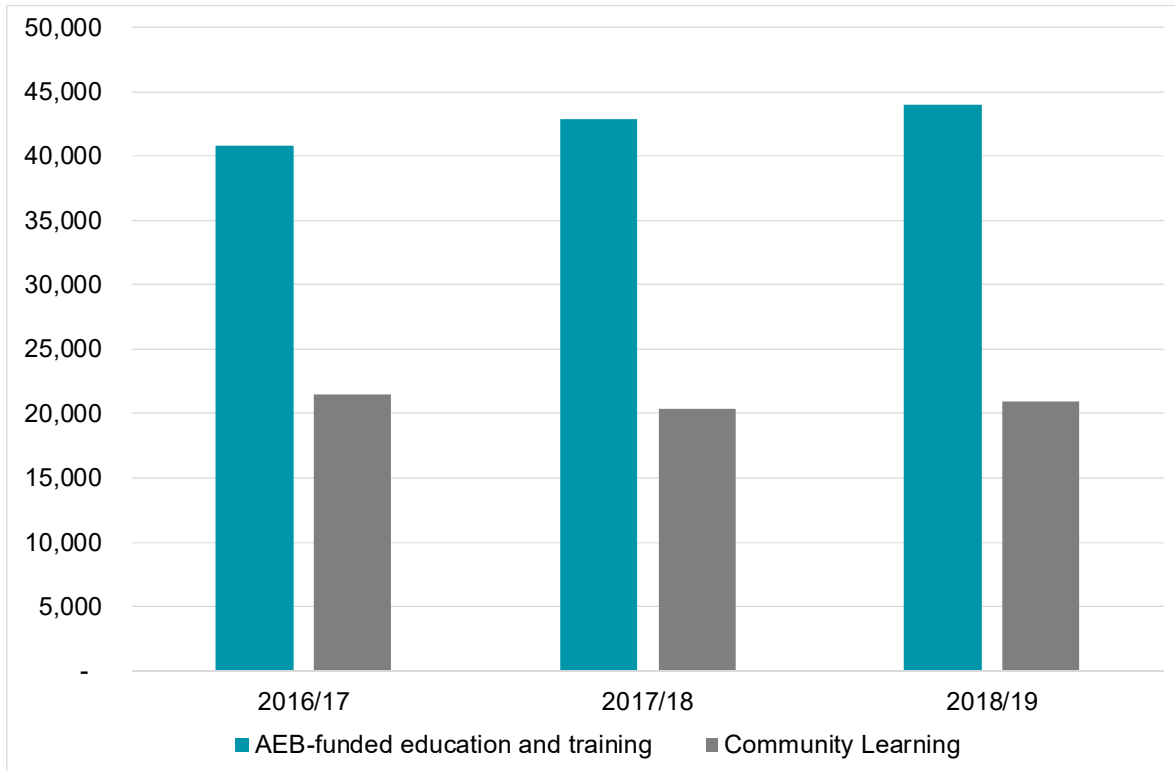
Outcomes

- 19+ Education and Training overall achievement rates for all five West Yorkshire districts are similar to the national average. Among the West Yorkshire-based grant-funded institutions 19+ overall achievement rates range from 78% to 98% (relative to the national average of 89%)
- Figures from the Outcome-based Success Measures dataset for West Yorkshire show that the majority of districts fall slightly below the national average in terms of sustained positive destination rates, whilst pay outcomes are variable, with two districts above the national average but others well below.

Key facts

Learner volumes

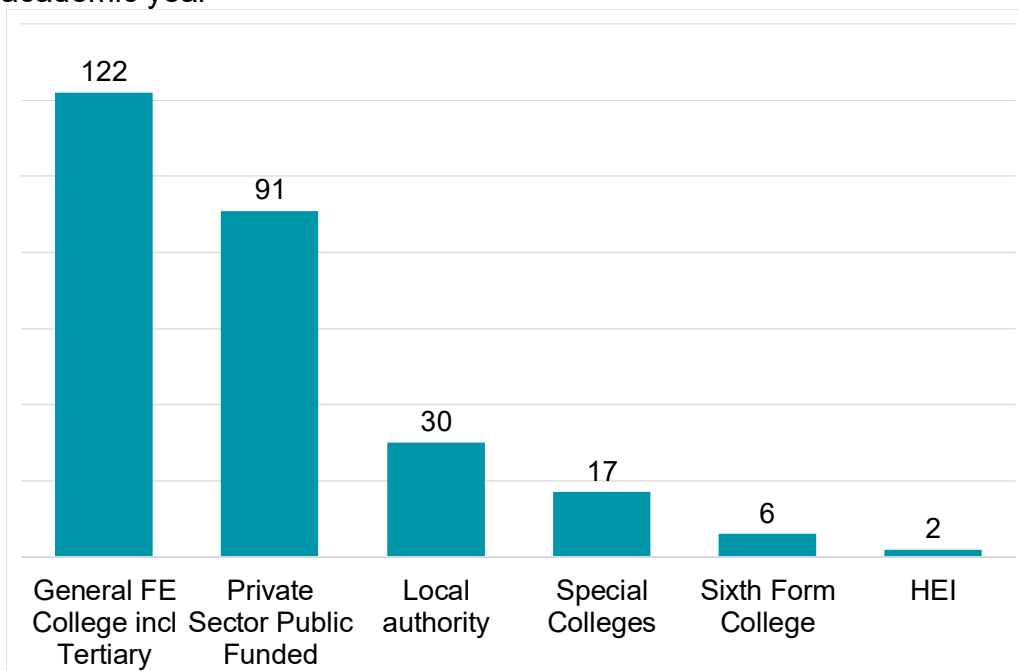
Trend in participation in AEB-funded provision in West Yorkshire



In 2018/19 academic year 43,970 individual learners participated in AEB-funded Education and Training provision, with a further 20,930 learners participating in Community Learning. This gives a total participation figure of 64,900 learners. The level of participation in West Yorkshire has remained fairly stable over the last three years.

Provider base

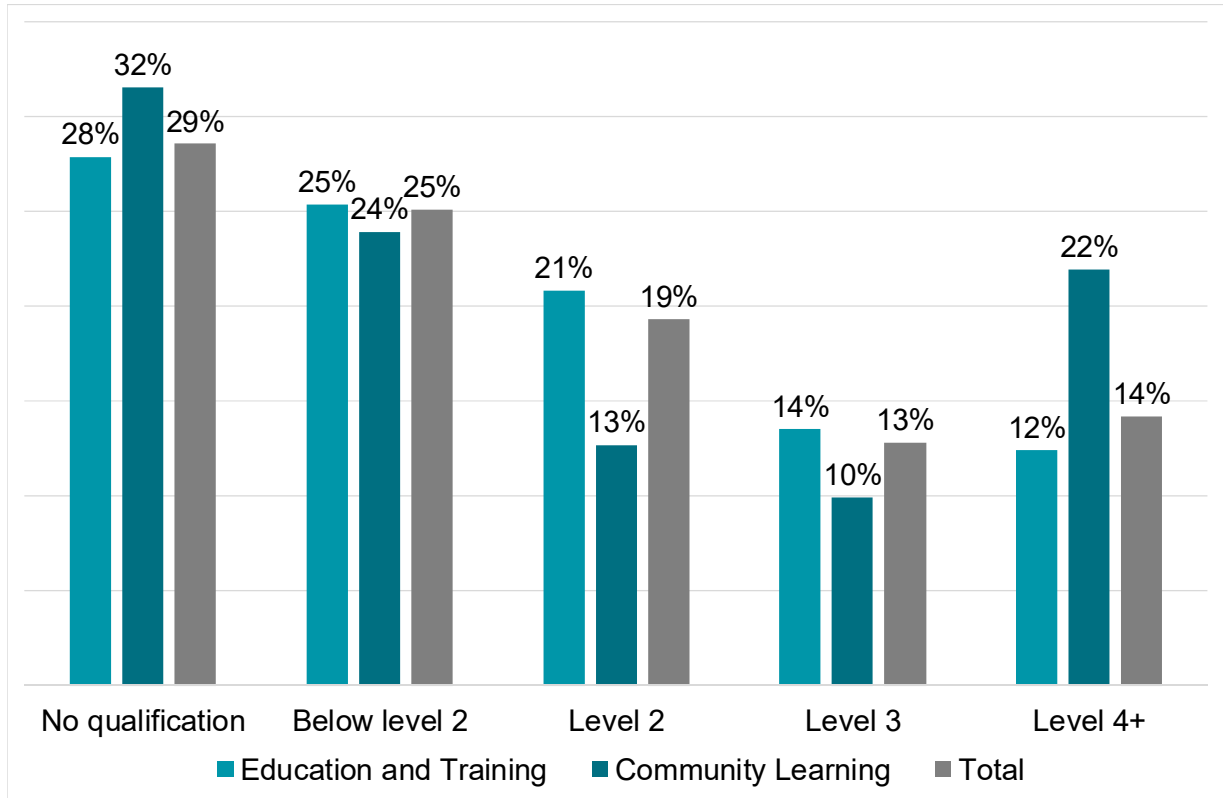
Number of providers delivering to AEB-funded learners in West Yorkshire by provider type, 2018/19 academic year



268 providers were involved in AEB delivery in West Yorkshire in 2018/19 - 248 in the delivery of Education and Training provision and 50 in the delivery of Community Learning, with 30 delivering both types of provision. The vast majority of providers (93%) were based outside West Yorkshire.

Learner profile

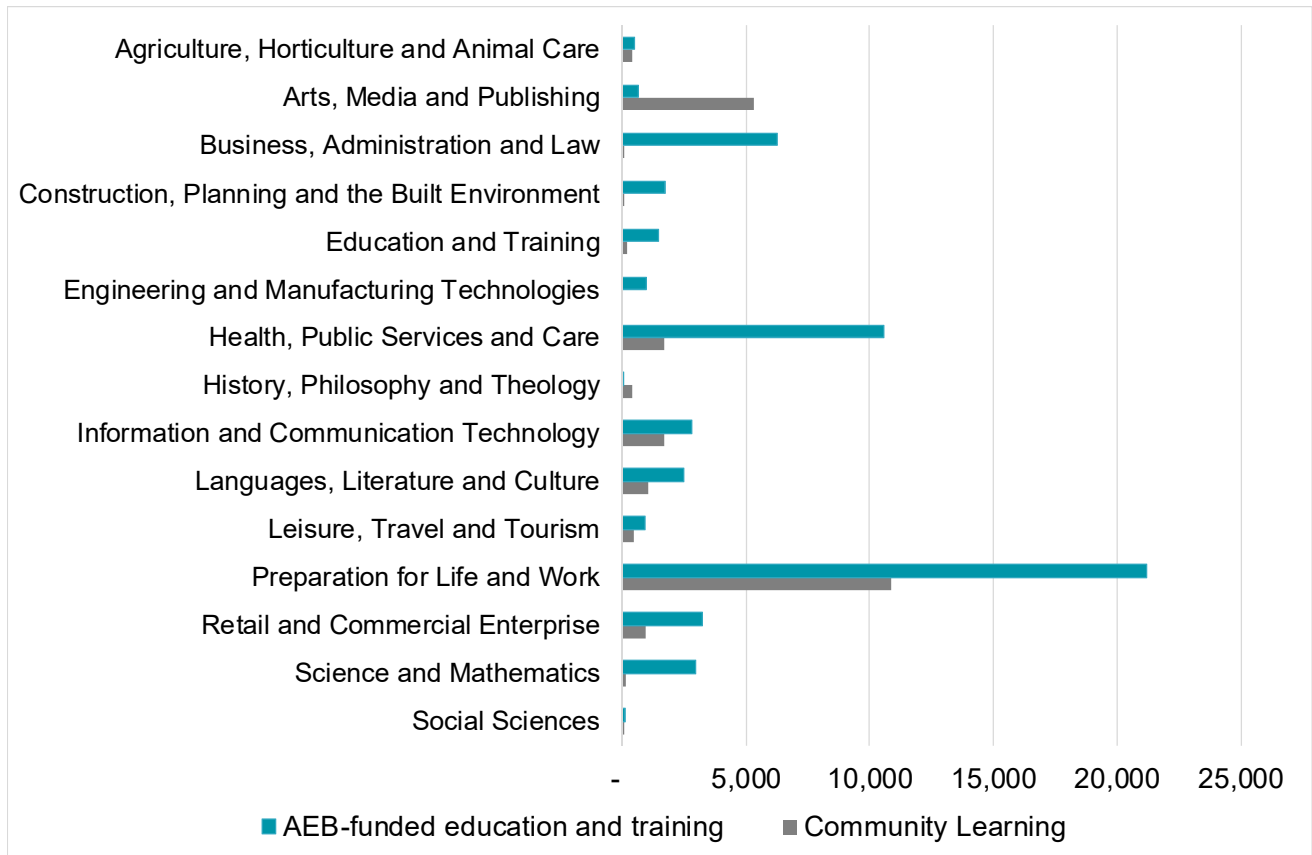
Profile of learners by level of prior attainment, 2018/19 academic year



A majority of learners (54%) held no qualifications or were qualified below level 2 in 2018/19. 14% had prior attainment at level 4, rising to 22% for Community Learning participants.

Profile of provision

Participation by Sector Subject Area and strand, 2018/19 academic year



Source: ESFA Localities Cube

Preparation for Life and Work is the largest subject area for both Community Learning and Education and Training, accounting for more than half (52%) of Community Learning participation and 48% of Education and Training learners. Other key subjects included *Health and Social Care, Administration and Arts, Media and Publishing (Community Learning)*.

Our Strategic Approach to AEB

The Combined Authority has built extensive collaborative partnerships with colleges, Universities, training providers, employers, community organisations and Local Authorities in developing partnership programmes that tackle skills gaps and address disadvantage across and within the districts. The devolution of AEB allows us to build on these relationships and improve the impact of the funding spent in West Yorkshire.

Our approach is informed by extensive analysis of the full academic year data for 17/18 and 18/19, stakeholder and provider engagement, learning from other Mayoral Combined Authorities on their own implementation experience, and our broader knowledge and activity within the wider skills landscape. As we take on the responsibility for and management of the Adult Education Budget delivery, our performance management strategy and access to delivery data will deepen our understanding of the impact, and further inform our approach.

The devolved Adult Education Budget will enable us to:

- Make the skills system more responsive and accessible through stronger local influence with all training providers
- Focus on our 'place', and ensure the right training and support offers are made to fill the skills gaps which are most prevalent locally
- Deliver a more efficient system by focussing on quality of provision and the impact it has on learners
- Make sure learning opportunities are joined up to local progression opportunities in life and work
- Work closely in partnership with providers to bring together planning of the wider skills and post-16 education system

Skills System: Local and National alignment

We are clear that the Adult Education Budget is a cornerstone of investment in the adult skills system. We must be cautious to avoid overstretching an already oversubscribed budget, but our commissioning must be underpinned by the ability to flexibly respond to constantly changing economic needs and challenges.

In commissioning the Adult Education Budget, we will consider its delivery alongside the wider investment in skills which continues to be managed by the Department for Education and Education and Skills Funding Agency: Careers services, Apprenticeships, Higher Education, Adult Learner Loans, Traineeships, Offender learning.

We welcome the Government's commitment in the devolution agreement to seek our views on the forthcoming National Skills Fund, to engage with us on the Future Ready Skills Commission priorities and to explore opportunities for the alignment of local and national programmes in the post-16 skills agenda. All of these funds play a role in Employer and Individual investment in skills.

We look forward to engaging with national and regional colleagues to ensure these funds, along with the planned UK Shared Prosperity Fund, align to create a comprehensive skills offer truly focussed on local needs and challenges: tackling inequality and disadvantage while driving prosperity and opportunity. We see Adult Education Budget as investment in

skills foundations: providing outreach in communities, first step and progressive learning to build careers.

Local Knowledge and impact

Outside of their delivery function for Adult Education Budget, our Local Authorities are key strategic partners in increasing the impact of this Funding through devolution. They have a key leadership role in place-shaping and the investment of public funds, alongside specific responsibilities in Education and Training. Local Authorities have a unique insight into local need, funding usage and the impact of Adult Education Budget within their area. The Combined Authority intends to make the most of its Local Authority partners' expertise and experience to ensure delivery meets local needs, and proposes the following:

- We will work closely with our Local Authority colleagues in developing the Commissioning plan. The Evidence base will be produced at a Local Authority level, to consider current usage against area priorities: alongside the West Yorkshire Strategic Priorities, Adult Education Budget has a clear role in supporting the aims of Local Authority Employment and Skills Plans.
- Experienced Local Authority colleagues with a strategic or policy role will be involved in the procurement process to help assess provider offers against local need.
- Once commissioned, Local Authorities will also be invited to relevant Performance Management meetings, developing the strategic partnership approach across the region, upon which we can build a better network for learner support and progression.

It is our intention to develop partnership boards in each district to ensure that provision is delivering the AEB Strategy and contributing to wider West Yorkshire and Local Authority strategies. These partnership boards will be open to all AEB deliverers, allowing stakeholders and providers to meet regularly to discuss new provision, emerging needs, ensure that delivery is evolving and routed towards community requirements and identified gaps, and avoiding duplication. We will explore how these boards link effectively into the existing Local Authority Employment and Skills Boards so as not to duplicate efforts.

We are keenly aware that allocations to areas are based on historical use, and therefore provider behaviour, as opposed to being defined by area needs. We will seek to address this over time, while remaining cautious not to disrupt provider stability or learner choice. This will need constant monitoring as the economic circumstances and therefore needs change within areas.

Throughout the implementation years we will monitor the effectiveness of all providers against their delivery plans and the alignment to area needs and Employment and Skills Plans. As outlined below, we will retain in-year responsiveness funds to allow us to respond flexibly to address emerging needs and changes to the labour market. We will utilise data analysis, performance management, growth requests and future procurement rounds to continually evaluate and align the total funding allocation against strategic priorities and the balance of district needs.

Stability in the System

While we have ambition to improve the impact Adult Education Budget has in our area, we are mindful of need to first fully understand the current impact, and moreover to maintain a level of stability within the provider base, ensuring that commissioning decisions do not

inadvertently close off skills opportunities for learners. This is particularly pertinent given the shocks being felt within the skills and training sector during the Covid-19 pandemic, and still evolving impact on West Yorkshire businesses and communities.

We will maintain stability in the system in the following ways:

- Continuing to fund the statutory requirements which provide adults with skills that are core to their employability and personal development:
 - First full qualification at level 2 for individuals aged 19 to 23
 - First full qualification at level 3 for individuals aged 19 to 23
 - English and maths, up to and including level 2, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have not previously attained a GCSE grade A* - C or grade 4, or higher
 - The new digital skills entitlement up to and including level 2, for individuals aged 19 and over (from August 2020). Furthermore, we will work with providers as this digital entitlement embeds to analyse uptake and ensure it impacts on local skills levels
- Around a third of AEB formula Funding is currently used to support statutory entitlements in West Yorkshire, this is likely to increase as the digital entitlement comes online
- Continue to prioritise funding for:

Currently, just over 65% of AEB formula funding is used to support learners in West Yorkshire who are not in work. We anticipate this to rise following the impact of Covid-19

 - Unemployed eligibility: prioritising funding to unemployed individuals to undertake learning programmes up to Level 2 which support them to move into work
 - Low wage eligibility: similarly, prioritising funding for those earning less than £16,009.50 to develop new skills up to Level 2, helping them to sustain work and progress

We will work with our provider base to understand the barriers to accessing work which these people face and help to develop programmes which meet individual and employer needs across West Yorkshire.

- Establish grant agreements and commission contracts for a year, with the option to extend for further years subject to funding and performance.
- Maintain consistent rules and funding availabilities for Learners with Special Education Needs and / or Disabilities (SEND), expecting providers to make appropriate assessments and ensure provision is accessible to all West Yorkshire residents.

Over time the Combined Authority, under direction of the Mayor, will develop further freedoms and flexibilities afforded by devolution and respond to the ever-changing circumstances within our local economy. Throughout the first few years of implementation, we will work strategically with key partners to build a robust evidence base to improve the targeting of funds.

Annual reviews will be undertaken of our funding rules, rates and eligibilities, with due consideration of evolving ESFA and MCA policy. We will consult with the provider base on

suggested changes to the rules, to understand any unforeseen impacts prior to implementation.

Principles for commissioning

Our core set of commissioning principles will:

- Seek to align Adult Education Budget expenditure with the residents and places that are most in need, and/or that will see the greatest impact from investment in skills
- Focus on learner outcomes and their opportunities for progression as the key 'intent' for all delivery
- Balance the need for the funds to unlock inclusive growth while improving productivity across West Yorkshire
- Throughout the initial years of implementation, support the core readiness conditions of the AEB devolution deal and provide stability within the system
- Increase the effectiveness of fund management, by developing a localised strategic partnership approach across the delivery network and wider skills system
- Engage with training providers to understand their offer, and their potential to improve skills delivery across West Yorkshire
- Ensure contracting processes are transparent and fair, facilitating the involvement of the broadest range of suppliers, including subcontracting and consortia building, where appropriate
- Minimise levels of bureaucracy that would impact on learner choice and provider delivery by considering efficiency and practical approaches to commissioning, partnership management and cross-border agreements
- Incorporate learning from the existing evidence base, alongside consultation with stakeholders, employers, providers and learners to highlight areas where funds could be better invested to benefit all

Expectation of provider values and behaviour

The Combined Authority has a clear strategic leadership role with regard to the local skills system, in ensuring that skills investment is driven by employer needs and the current and future profile of labour market opportunities.

Through localised contract management and by building on West Yorkshire's existing partnership and networks, we aim to develop effective, high trust relationships with providers, delivering positive long-term impact for West Yorkshire learners.

- Key values and behaviours that should underpin the delivery network: To develop a place-based curriculum offer and wrap-around support with a clear focus on learner progression.
- Strive to deliver Outstanding provision that puts the needs of learners and employers at the centre of delivery
- Work with partners and stakeholders in a positive and effective way, sharing best practice and improving the impact of skills system across West Yorkshire
- Communicate openly and transparently with stakeholders, learners and partners
- Develop approaches and partnerships which support adults to progress and prosper within their communities and employment

- Subcontract with integrity and ensuring that positive outcomes for learners and employers is at the heart of all arrangements

Funding arrangements

Route 1 Grant Allocations – West Yorkshire	Route 2 Grant Allocations - Leeds City Region	Route 3 Contract for Services
<p>We will ‘roll-over’ Grant Agreements with providers who hold an existing Grant agreement with ESFA and meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are wholly or mainly funded by the public purse • Have an established place-based approach that supports West Yorkshire’s strategic ambitions • Have a head office in West Yorkshire <p>We will grant fund these providers at the same proportion as 2017/18, which reflects the allocation we are being devolved. The stability of AEB over the recent years should help to minimise the risk of disruption to learners, ensure the continuity of learning provision in the core entitlements and minimise any destabilisation in the West Yorkshire post-16 provider base.</p>	<p>In the initial years of implementation, the Combined Authority will continue to support Grant providers from the wider Leeds City Region that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are wholly or mainly funded by the public purse • Have an established place-based approach that supports West Yorkshire’s strategic ambitions • Deliver significant volumes of activity within West Yorkshire and support existing travel to learn patterns • Have a head office in Leeds City Region <p>This reduces the need for cross-border agreements and supports learner choice.</p> <p>Grant providers from the wider Leeds City Region will not receive continued funding for their subcontracted provision to West Yorkshire residents.</p>	<p>The remaining AEB funds will be procured through competitive tendering processes.</p> <p>The majority will be procured through a commissioning round commencing in Autumn 2020, focusing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering legal entitlements • Supporting the unemployed to progress into ‘good’ jobs • Supporting in-work progression of those on low wages • Upskilling employed adults to progress in the workplace • Test pilots to address skill gaps and/or trial new learning methods <p>A Responsiveness Pot will be retained for commissioning specific initiatives from August 2021, ensuring that West Yorkshire’s skills delivery remains flexible and can respond to economic shocks and opportunities as they arise</p> <p>Contracts for Services will be issued for one year (AY 2021/22), with the option to extend for further years. The extension will be subject to provider performance, skills policy and funding availability.</p>

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Irrespective of route:

- Providers will develop an Annual Delivery Plan for year 1, including expected volumes of learners by sector and district, profile of delivery across the year and all planned subcontracting arrangements.
- Providers with a significant contract value will be expected to co-develop a Delivery Agreement with the Combined Authority that demonstrates their commitment to West Yorkshire's Strategic Aims.
- Growth requests will be available for Year 2, subject to funding availability and provider performance.
- A 3% tolerance¹ will not be available on allocations however, we will look to support growth requests in year where possible.

Cross border learners

Maintaining learner choice and the access to appropriate provision is paramount in the successful devolution of Adult Education Budget.

Out of Area Grant providers

In the initial years of implementation, the Combined Authority will continue to support Grant providers from the wider Leeds City Region that support travel-to-learn patterns and/or deliver directly into West Yorkshire Communities. Through partner and learner consultation we will seek to further understand travel-to-learn patterns and consider whether transport services or place-based solutions could provide a more appropriate solution. The continuation of these agreements seeks to minimise the need to establish new bureaucratic processes and supports learner choice to travel outside of West Yorkshire for their education and training.

Grant providers from the wider Leeds City Region (and the rest of England) will not receive continued funding for their subcontracted provision to West Yorkshire residents. This funding will be reallocated into the procurement allocation, recognising that the funding is ultimately delivered by independent training providers.

In 18/19 Grant Agreements accounted for 80% of Adult Education Budget Expenditure in West Yorkshire (including out of area providers).

By rationalising the number of Grant providers funded by West Yorkshire we aim to release potential savings of 19% (approximately £7.6 million based on 18/19 data) of funding to be used responsibly.

Grant providers outside the Leeds City Region will not have their agreement automatically renewed, but will have the opportunity to secure a contract for services through the competitive procurement process. Data would indicate that this approach would have minimal impact on the provider base, given the relative proportion to their overall grant. We are, however, engaging with the provider base throughout this consultation to understand if there are any unforeseen impacts.

Out of Area Learners

The Combined Authority will only have responsibility and funding to support West Yorkshire learners. Learners travelling into West Yorkshire from other regions will require the provider to have a national contract or grant agreement with ESFA, or the MCA in

¹ ESFA's national policy currently allows a 3% tolerance on underperformance and payment up to 3% for over-performance. Given the desire to maximise value for money and impact, alongside the limitations of the scale of the budget for West Yorkshire, we cannot guarantee over payment or commit to paying for under delivery.

which the learner is a resident. We are in discussions with Sheffield City Region to explore possibilities for cross-border agreements as they implement their own devolved budgets.

Proposed approach

Delivery Agreements

We are committed to joining up education and skills delivery across West Yorkshire. In addition to their AEB contract, we will co-develop Delivery Agreements with Grant holders and key contractors.

Delivery agreements are a two-way accord between the Combined Authority and Training Providers with aims and targets that align the wider skills provision in the area to our strategic aims, employer and community needs. We established Delivery Agreements with FE Colleges in 2016, considering them an important step in strengthening relationships with providers and influencing the curriculum offer to meet the needs of businesses and individuals.

Progress towards Delivery Agreements will be factored into performance management and future commissioning rounds. We will also conduct annual reviews of Delivery Agreements, whereby providers can highlight barriers to progress, actions they will take to respond and help inform the Combined Authority's future actions.

Subcontracting arrangements

The Combined Authority understands that subcontracting can play a critical role in providing outreach to communities, supporting non-traditional routes to learning, supporting the delivery of specialist and niche provision, and creating partnerships which benefit learner progression. Where approached strategically and with integrity, subcontracting can build capacity and support flexibilities across the sector.

However, analysis of subcontracted provision in 17/18 and 18/19 has highlighted some inefficient contracting practices that increase the value of management fees taken out of the learner focussed funding, duplication across providers, and that a minimal percentage of subcontracted delivery in West Yorkshire is considered specialist.

- The value of sub-contracted funding in 2018/19 was £9.0m, 18% of total formula funding.
- 144 provider organisations were active as subcontractors in West Yorkshire, of which only 24 were based in West Yorkshire.
- 45% of subcontracted funding was allocated to providers who were also working as prime contractors within West Yorkshire.

Acknowledging the benefits that subcontracting can provide, the Combined Authority wants to drive forward best practice in terms of the management of subcontracted provision and will include the following terms within all Grant Agreements and contracts:

- All subcontracted provision must be declared up front in Annual Delivery Plans, with a clear strategic rationale
- No additional subcontractors can be brought on board during the Academic year without prior approval from the Combined Authority

We seek to minimise management fees and focus funding towards the learners: no fees should exceed 20%.

The Combined Authority will closely monitor subcontracting activity throughout 2021/22 and 2022/23 to identify any subcontracted activity that would be more appropriate to be directly delivered by main providers.

New providers

While we welcome new approaches and may seek to widen the pool of specialist provision, it will be critical for all providers to demonstrate through the procurement process their approach to quality, any judgements made against their provision, their understanding of our Funding Rules and Formula and their capacity to engage with data submissions.

It is pivotal that the whole West Yorkshire delivery network has the capacity and capability to deliver from 01 August 2021. It may be that an arrangement with a Prime provider could support the capacity building and entry into the delivery market in the first instance.

Community Learning

The purpose of Community Learning is to develop the skills, confidence, motivation and resilience of adults of different ages and backgrounds in order to:

- progress towards formal learning or employment
- improve their health and well-being, including mental health
- develop stronger communities

We are committed to outreach into disadvantaged communities and breaking down the barriers adults can face in accessing 'traditional' modes of provision. We will continue to invest in Community Learning through our Grant Providers, and will work with providers to better understand, measure and therefore champion this function within the Adult Education Budget.

DfE's national analysis identifies that a significant proportion of learners cycle around Community Learning programmes without progressing. This is not necessarily a bad thing providing that provision is focused on maximising the potential of the individual, but we need to work closely with providers to understand the intent and impact of their provision, focussing on progression.

We will work with Local Authorities to encourage local collaboration on a district level, where providers and community organisations work together to reduce duplication, cultivate multi-agency approaches based on provider strengths and develop pathways for learner progression.

Career Pathways

For the Adult Education Budget to impact on those furthest from the labour market, we must develop better linkages and pathways of provision for the benefit of learners.

We must increase the focus on learner destination and progression, and ensure all provision is underpinned by strong Information, Advice and Guidance with clear local relevance and live opportunities that have clear line of sight to a job.

Sustained positive destination rates are below the national average in Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees and Wakefield

Qualification Eligibility

The ESFA's Hub contains details of eligible regulated qualifications, qualification components and non-regulated learning aims.

During 2021/22 and 2022/23, the Combined Authority will closely monitor the appropriateness and relevance of the eligible regulated qualifications, qualification components and non-regulated learning aims, with a view to the possibility of being able to fund provision not currently funded but which would have a strategic and economic benefit to West Yorkshire.

Test Pilots

The recent economic shock is likely to increase the call from our communities on the core functions of AEB, and we therefore anticipate that the majority of funding will be directed towards existing AEB functions: delivering legal entitlements; supporting the unemployed and those within the low wage pilot; and upskilling under-employed and low skilled adults to progress in the workplace.

That said, we are keen to explore flexibilities and new ways of working that could be expanded in future years. We will therefore include an opportunity to test and pilot initially small-scale new methods of delivery. For example, (but not limited to):

- Units and modules of Level 3 or 4, which support progression to higher levels skills in areas with gaps
- Qualifications desired by local employers which are not approved on the Hub
- Flexible delivery models which reflect changing attitudes and modes of learning

Test pilots will need to adapt to changing skills needs. We will not be prescriptive. We are looking to the sector for their expertise, ideas and potential solutions to skills gaps and challenge.

Responsiveness Pot

We need to ensure West Yorkshire's Adult Education budget provision remains agile in the ever changing economic picture and is in a position to quickly respond to shocks and new opportunities that arise. As such, a proportion of funding will be retained for responsive commissioning throughout 2021/22, as determined by the CA/LEPs Employment and Skills Panel. This pot would also have the potential to be used as match funding towards forthcoming government funds and/or utilised as growth funding for successful providers.

Level 2 entitlement for all

More than a quarter of the adult population is qualified below level 2 in West Yorkshire, almost 400,000 people

Level 2 qualifications provide a core basis for employability. To increase productivity in West Yorkshire we need to address the high number of adults who do not hold a level 2 qualification, in order to support them to progress further in the workplace.

The Combined Authority is minded to extend the entitlement for a Level 2 qualification to all ages, however we are conscious that this ambition must be balanced against the wider budget demands.

We are estimating costs and exploring ways and timings for extending this entitlement and will seek further views as part of the consultation on this document (May-June 2020).

Distance Learning

The Combined Authority recognises the value of distance learning for some learners, in that it offers flexibility and accessibility to learning around work and home life. Flexibilities are also important in terms of the pace of study and as such, distance learning has a key role to play in the delivery of adult skills and training that can lead to career advancements, development and attainment. The advantages of this method must be balanced alongside learner needs in terms of support and access to equipment - i.e. digital capabilities and resources.

The Combined Authority will work with providers to understand distance learning implementation in Delivery Plans and their intent, closely monitoring distance learning activity in order to evaluate how it is meeting the strategic and economic needs of West Yorkshire learners and employers.

AEB Priorities and Outcomes

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Priority	Objectives	AEB Specific Action	Outcome / Impact	Measures
Increase the supply of skills to support key sectors in West Yorkshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of people with basic employability skills (L2 &3) • Increase number of people with higher level skills • Provide skills for key sector – decrease skills shortages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide people with L2 & L3 qualification relevant to employment market • Encourage progression to higher levels skills through good IAG and careers support (progression planning) 	Businesses in WY can access people with the right skills to help their business flourish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevalence of skills gaps and shortages • Number of qualifiers by level and subject • Achievement rates by level and subject • Sustained positive destination rates • Pay outcomes • Progression to apprenticeships
Improve West Yorkshire's resilience by developing skills for the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills for climate emergency and changing economy • Boost basic and intermediate Digital Skills to support inclusion and workplace progression • Increase flexible methods of delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and widely promote the digital entitlement • Progression routes for digital career pathways • STEM and reskilling to support climate change agenda • Commission pilots with flexible modes • Resilience and career scoping underpins all delivery 	People have the skills needed to adapt to changing economy and business needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take-up of digital entitlement • Take-up of skills for green economy and climate emergency • Impact of flexibilities on take-up of provision
Make learning more inclusive to support disadvantaged residents and widen the pool of talent for business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase participation and skills levels from disadvantaged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to support Community Learning, developing the Community Learning 	People can access learning which opens up new opportunities to participate within the economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in learning by disadvantaged groups

	<p>communities and groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build confidence of lower skilled learners to engage and progress in learning 	<p>Trust model within Local Authorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide foundation skills (employability, resilience, confidence) that support people to progress in society • Encourage the use of the innovation code to develop fit for purpose programmes 	<p>Increased skills available from a larger and more diverse workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in Community Learning • Learner perceptions of impact of learning on their confidence, capability • Work with providers to develop progression measures for people remaining in learning
<p>Support the unemployed to gain and sustain employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase participation of people in 'good work' • Connect unemployment support with skills development, working with Jobcentres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide people with English, Maths, and digital skills needed for employment • Commissioning Sector Based Work Academies with clear line of sight to a job • Commission progression focussed employability skills programmes with flexible delivery (locations) to build confidence of participants 	<p>Reduced unemployment and Universal Credit Claimants</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation of unemployed in AEB-funded provision • Progression from learning into employment • Sustained positive outcome rates for benefit learners
<p>Unlock progression opportunities and career adaptability through skills, particularly for those on low wages and with insecure work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve career prospects of residents • Connect people to new job opportunities through increased skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission in-work training programmes to support progression • Ensure quality IAG 	<p>Reduced number of people in insecure and low-paid work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation of low-wage pilot learners in AEB-funded provision • Take-up of provision linked to key sectors

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commission re-training for people in sectors undergoing structural change• Commission programmes which address skills gaps and link to sectors of opportunity within the City Region		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evidence of career progression among people in low-paid employment• Sustained positive outcome rates for low-wage and wider employed learners• Pay outcomes
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Review and Evaluation

The AEB Strategy is a component part of West Yorkshire's Strategic Economic Framework and the Employment and Skills Plan. It will be reviewed after 3 years, allowing time for impact to be measured.

In advance of this, the AEB Strategy will have an interim review in Summer 2021 to ensure its priorities and ambitions support the newly elected Mayor's objectives.

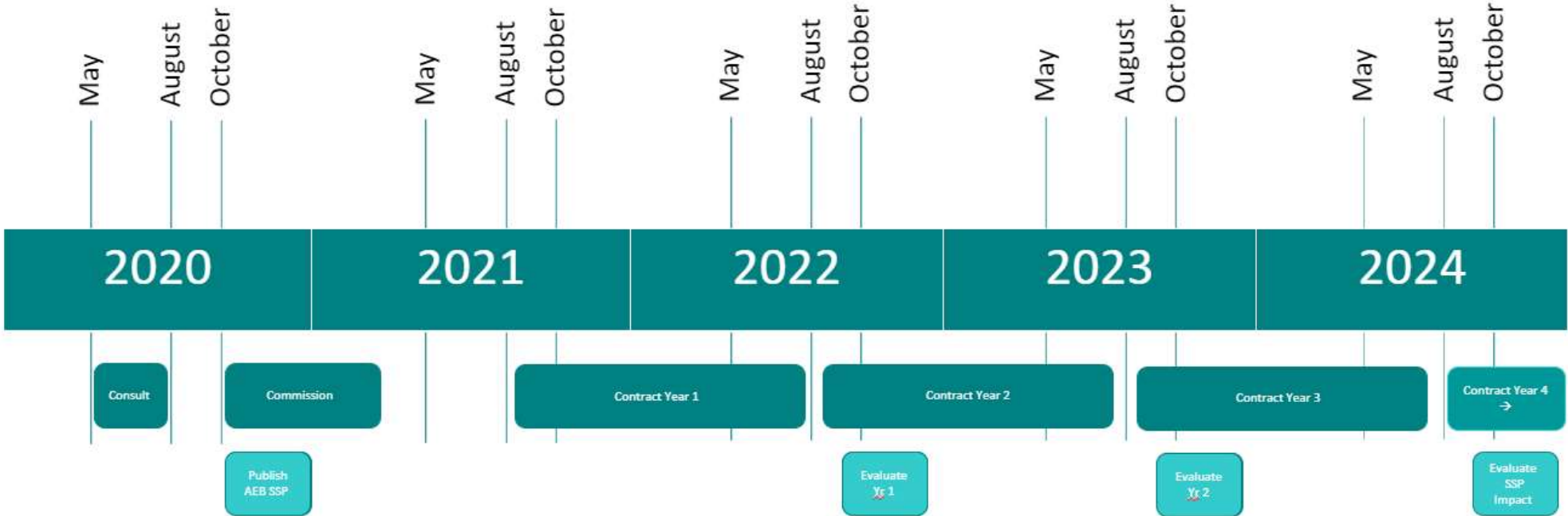
The Employment and Skills Panel (which acts as West Yorkshire's Skills Advisory Panel) will review progress towards delivering the objectives annually, collecting evidence from:

- Data impact measures (these will be baselined from the 19/20 data)
- Analysis of labour market information
- Changes in provider behaviour, including wider skills system delivery
- Case studies of learner and provider success

We will look to undertake independent evaluation of key values and impacts. The annual evaluation process will align with our publication of Labour Market Information data and will feed into Delivery Agreement reviews, ensuring that strategic oversight feeds into those practical performance reviews. Progress reports submitted to the Employment and Skills Panel will be publicly available.

A formal refresh of the AEB Strategy will be undertaken in 2024. This will draw on the progress measures available from three years of delivery. The review will be led by the Employment and Skills Panel and supported by stakeholder and public consultation.

Evaluation and Publication Timeline

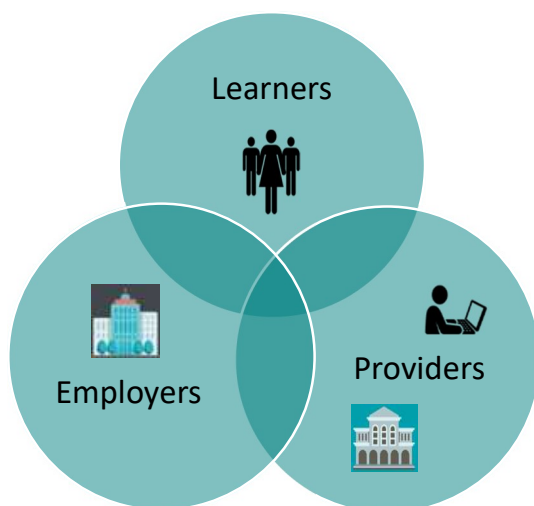


Stakeholder engagement and consultation

Key Stakeholders

The Adult Education Budget and the wider skills system are made up of three key groups of stakeholders:

- **Learners** are the primary beneficiaries of the Adult Education Budget, which exists to develop individual skills and prospects. They need to be able to access training that meets their immediate skills needs and encourages further learning to increase their skills. Training should be underpinned by strong Information, Advice and Guidance which equips adults with the information they need about the local labour market so that they can develop secure, well paid and rewarding careers, choosing the right training programmes for their future.



- **Employers** need access to appropriately skilled people who will drive forward their business. They are the key voice in charting the skills needs within West Yorkshire. Employers have a role in supporting learning within their organisation and in working with training providers to demand and shape their right training programmes. Not only do they need access to people with the right skills at the right time, they need to be able to provide in-work development opportunities to help staff advance to more responsible and better paid roles.

- **Providers** - training providers deliver skills to young people and adults through a range of programmes and funding schemes. We need to ensure that the systems we develop in West Yorkshire reduce bureaucracy and increase their access to local decision making, so that together we can improve the Skills System for the two key customer bases. Providers must be responsive to learner and employer needs in developing and evolving their training programmes, ensuring that the skills provided meet needs now and into the future.

Consultation

This Draft AEB Strategy has been developed with strategic input from the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership's Employment and Skills Panel, which includes representatives from Employers, Training Providers and Local Authorities. We would like

to thank the MCAs who have shared their learning, experience and good practice with us, which has helped to shape our approach.

We will consult openly on this Draft AEB Strategy throughout May-June 2021. We have developed a stakeholder map which includes the many Training Providers that operate across West Yorkshire, sector representative bodies, Local Authorities and wider skills sector stakeholders such as Careers services, Jobcentre Plus and Universities. We will consult with those who hold existing grant agreements and contracts for services with the ESFA, along with those who aspire to deliver within the system. We aim to work with stakeholders to review, refine and develop priorities for the Adult Education Budget learning over the short, medium and long term.

We will also hold focus groups with learners and employers, ensuring they are able to shape the service that they receive from the Adult Education Budget.

In July and August 2021 we will review and analyse responses, making the appropriate changes to the AEB Strategy before it is finalised and ratified by the Combined Authority. Assuming the Strategy is ratified in September, the AEB Strategy will be published in October when the commissioning process begins.

Find out more

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Adult Education Budget Strategy

Background

In March 2020, West Yorkshire agreed an ambitious devolution deal with the Government, which will see our region have a directly-elected mayor from May 2021. The agreement, which is the biggest ever of its kind, unlocks more than £1.8 billion in investment to drive up living standards through better transport, improved skills and stronger businesses, while tackling the climate emergency. This means that West Yorkshire will have control of the £63m annual Adult Education Budget (AEB) for the area thus enabling us to closer align spending on skills with the opportunities and needs in the local economy.

The AEB Strategy has been developed in order to ensure that we are ready to deliver the Adult Education Budget by 1 August 2021. The plan builds on our existing strategies and the needs of our area, providing a clear foundation upon which we can build the skills of people and businesses within West Yorkshire. The timescales set out by the government mean that it is necessary to develop the plan prior to the election of the West Yorkshire Mayor.

As part of our engagement activity and transparency around devolution across West Yorkshire we would like to invite you to provide feedback on the AEB Strategy by completing this survey.

This survey will be open from 25 May to 10 July 2020.

Before completing this survey it is essential that you read the AEB Strategy which can be [found here](#). It is also recommended that you have a copy of the plan available as you work through the survey.

About you

The following questions ask for a few details about you and your work. These questions are compulsory and will help us to make the best use of your feedback.

Q1 The information you provide will only be used in the manner described in our privacy policy which can be found by [clicking here](#). In addition to the information provided in the privacy policy, any information submitted via this particular survey will also be processed by SNAP surveys. Please tick the box below to confirm that you have read and understood this:

Q2 In what capacity are you completing this survey?

- A training provider
- A business (excluding training providers)
- A learner / potential learner
- Other

If other, please specify

Q3 *[If Q2 = training provider]* Which of the following applies to you?

- My organisation already has a direct AEB contract or grant agreement
- My organisation is an AEB subcontractor
- My organisation is not currently delivering AEB

Q4 *[If Q2 = training provider or business]* Name of your business or organisation:

Q5 *[If Q2 = training provider or business]* Your position within the business / organisation:

Q6 ¹¹² *[If Q2 = training provider or business]* Where does your business or organisation work? *(please tick all that apply)*

- Within West Yorkshire (Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, Wakefield)
- Within the wider Leeds City Region (Barnsley, Craven, Harrogate, Selby, York)
- Outside the Leeds City Region

Q7 We would like to contact you in the future regarding updates to this plan. Please tick the box below to confirm that you are happy for us to do this, then provide your name and email address in the relevant boxes.

Q8 *[If Q2 = training provider or business]* Name:

Q9 *[If Q2 = training provider or business]* Email address:

Q10 *[If Q2 = learner or other]* Name:

Q11 *[If Q2 = learner or other]* Email address:

The priorities

The following questions relate to the Priorities for Funding section of the AEB Strategy which can be found on **page 8**.

Q12 To what extent do you agree / disagree with each of the priorities for AEB funding?

Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree Unsure

Increase the supply of skills to support key sectors, particularly those identified in our Local Industrial Strategy in West Yorkshire

Improve West Yorkshire's resilience by delivering the skills needed for the future

Making learning more inclusive to support disadvantaged residents and widen the pool of talent for business

Support the unemployed to gain and sustain employment

Unlock progression opportunities and career adaptability through skills, particularly for those on low wages and with insecure work

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Q13 Are there any other priorities that you feel should be included?

- Yes
- No

Q14 *[If Q13 = yes]* Please describe and explain why you feel they should be paid for from within the AEB:

Challenges

The following questions relate to the Needs and Opportunities section of the AEB Strategy which can be found on **pages 9-11**.

Strive to deliver outstanding provision that puts the needs of learners and employers at the centre of delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work with partners and stakeholders in a positive and effective way, sharing best practice and improving the impact of skills system across West Yorkshire	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communicate openly and transparently with stakeholders, learners and partners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Develop approaches and partnerships which support adults to progress and prosper within their communities and employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Subcontract with integrity and ensuring that positive outcomes for learners and employers is at the heart of all arrangements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q20 For any of the above values and behaviours that you do not agree with, please explain why:

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Proposed approach

The following questions relate to the Proposed Approach section of the AEB Strategy which can be found on **pages 21-24**.

Q21 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the overall Proposed Approach?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Unsure

Q28 Do you have any comments relating to the priorities and outcomes matrix?

Review and evaluation

The following questions relate to the Review and Evaluation section of the AEB Strategy which can be found on **page 28**.

Q29 To what extent do you agree / disagree with each of the following:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure
The proposed process for review and evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The proposed timeline for review and evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q30 If you disagree with either the process or the timeline for review and evaluation, please explain why:

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