
Report to: Employment and Skills Panel

Date: 28 February 2019

Subject: **Delivery Agreements**

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Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Panel on the progress and recent review of the Delivery Agreements with the seven Further Education Colleges in West Yorkshire.
- 1.2 To seek delegated approval for sign-off of the formal review reports by the Chair of the Employment and Skills Panel in consultation with Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe, Merran McRae and Ben Still.
- 1.3 To seek the views of the Panel as to next steps and how the findings of the review should be used to influence future provision, particularly in skill shortage areas.

2 Information

- 2.1 During 2016/17 Delivery Agreements were developed and published for each of the seven Further Education Colleges in West Yorkshire, setting out individualised and measurable expectations of how Colleges have agreed to work towards the Combined Authority and LEP's priorities for the Leeds City Region. Delivery Agreements are intended to influence the full range of college provision and are an important next step in strengthening broader relationships with providers and influencing the curriculum offer to meet the needs of businesses and individuals.
- 2.2 Each College developed a commentary to be published alongside the Delivery Agreements, setting out the context for the baseline figures and the actions they would put in place to align city regional priorities.
- 2.3 Following interim reviews of Delivery Agreements in autumn 2017, formal review meetings look place with representatives from each college during

autumn/winter 2018. Representatives from the relevant local authorities and DWP were also present.

2.4 A report recording the outcomes and findings from the first formal review of the Delivery Agreements is planned to be published in spring 2019. The report will be presented in the format reflective of the published Delivery Agreements with a progress report for each college. It will also provide data analysis of progress towards objectives and a conclusions section reflecting the combined findings, comments and feedback from the seven colleges.

2.5 A separate report for each of the seven colleges will provide a data update against the original aspirations and narrative on the college progress against the actions set out in the original agreements.

2.6 Key themes from the reviews reflect that:

- Generally colleges are aiming to respond to the requirements of the Strategic Economic Plan and associated Employment and Skills Plan (2016 – 2020)
- There is good employer feedback on college performance with five of seven institutions achieving a satisfaction rating higher than the national average
- The impacts (positive and negative) of Apprenticeship Reforms are being handled slightly differently by each institution. This includes wide-ranging implications for businesses offering apprenticeships, learners accessing apprenticeships, income achieved by institutions from levy companies against institution aspirations and the decline of apprenticeship starts in LEP priority subject areas, with particularly low numbers of digital apprenticeships
- Some colleges have greater success getting learners into employment from apprenticeships than from other learning programmes, while for other colleges the reverse is the case
- Changes in curriculum planning to reflect Labour Market Information and employer feedback is taking place, with a particular focus on skills shortage and growth sector subject areas
- There are different approaches to careers advice and personal progression with some examples of good practice that could be adopted more widely
- Colleges are experiencing management issues in relation to frequently changing funding rules and opportunities
- A lack of retention of tutors especially in specialist areas such as English, maths and ICT/digital is a major concern, with a direct negative impact on colleges' ability to deliver courses in response to evidenced skills shortages
- Preparation for the new T Levels is being undertaken with some trepidation and hesitancy due to the unproven nature of the qualifications, their potential impact on apprenticeships and the heavy work-based element.

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 This work is being carried out by officers in the Employment and Skills and Research and Intelligence teams of the Combined Authority. Additional resources would be required were this approach to be rolled out beyond the seven FE Colleges in West Yorkshire.

6 External Consultees

6.1 Representatives from all seven further education establishments, the appropriate local authorities and DWP were involved in the review meetings.

7 Recommendations

7.1 The Panel is asked to note and comment on the progress and findings from the first formal review of Delivery Agreements and make recommendations as to the next steps.

7.2 The Panel is asked to delegate sign off of the report of the Delivery Agreement Reviews, once finalised, to the Chair of the Employment and Skills Panel in consultation with Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe, Merran McRae and Ben Still, prior to publication in the spring.

7.3 The Panel is asked to provide views of the Panel as to next steps and how the findings of the review should be used to influence future provision, particularly in skills shortage areas.

8 Background Documents

None.

9 Appendices

None.