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**Report to:** Employment and Skills Panel

**Date:** 28 February 2019

**Subject:** **Employment and Skills Programmes**

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## **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**

### Apprenticeships

- 2.1 As reported at the November 2018 Employment and Skills Panel, take-up of the Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE) has been lower than on previous grant schemes. The Panel therefore proposed a number of changes that were endorsed by the LEP Board at their meeting on 23 January 2019. These changes are intended to increase take-up of the apprenticeship grant by businesses. The revised grant criteria were launched in mid-February and will be reviewed after three months to assess their impact on take up and employer participation in apprenticeships.
- 2.2 The value of the core grant has been increased from £1,500 to £2,000 to provide a greater incentive for businesses to offer apprenticeship opportunities, the eligibility has been expanded to include businesses with 249 or fewer employees (previously 50) and to include all recognised apprenticeship frameworks and standards (previously in limited sector subject areas).
- 2.3 These changes are highlighted in red in the table below.

| <b>GRANT CRITERIA (1.8.18 – 31.1.19)</b>  | <b>REVISED GRANT CRITERIA FROM 1 FEBRUARY 2019</b>  |
|---|---|
| <b>Core grant - £1,500</b>  | <b>Proposed grant – £2,000</b>  |
| Business must have 50 or fewer employees  | Business must have 249 or fewer employees   |
| Business has never offered apprenticeships before   | Business has never offered apprenticeships before   |
| Businesses must be based within the Local Authority areas of WY and York  | Businesses must be based within the Local Authority areas of WY and York  |
| The apprentice must be aged 19-24   | The apprentice must be aged 19-24   |
| The business must be paying the apprentice the National Minimum Wage for the age of the apprentice  | The business must be paying the apprentice the National Minimum Wage for the age of the apprentice                                    |
| Apprentices must be following a recognised standard or framework relating to our key priority sectors / skills gaps in Manufacturing & Engineering, Construction, planning & the built environment and IT / Digital | Apprentices must be following an apprenticeship framework or standard as recognised by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) |
| <b>Top up grant - £500</b>  | <b>Top up grant - £500</b>  |
| Additional top up grant of £500 on offer if the apprenticeship is at level 4 or above   | Additional top up grant of £500 on offer if the apprenticeship is at level 4 or above   |

### Leeds City Region Employment Hub

2.4 The Combined Authority have received in principle approval to manage this European Social Funded programme which will be operational until 31 December 2021. Delivering through Local Authority partners, C&K Careers and Leeds Beckett University, the Employment Hub will offer:

- Enhanced centralised careers, information, advice and guidance.
- Intensive support of young people in preparation for employment (including apprenticeships), further learning or self-employment.
- Establishment of local Hubs in 6 Local Authority areas (Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, Wakefield and York (incorporating Craven, Harrogate and Selby) who will provide a business engagement and talent matching service, particularly in relation to creation of new apprenticeship opportunities (building on the success and learning of the original City Deal wave 1 Apprenticeship Hub programme).

2.5 The project will support 15 to 24 year olds and businesses of any size with a particular focus on engaging with businesses who have never had apprentices

before. The approach to delivery will be through a localised delivery model which will build on, enhance and complement other existing activity, so that the programme that will respond to local need. At local level the teams will engage with local training providers to engage and signpost learners to appropriate provision.

- 2.6 A briefing event for providers and local partners will take place on 1 March <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/west-yorkshire-combined-authority-partner-briefing-tickets-55958453240>

### Skills Capital

- 2.7 An update on the Skills Capital programme was included in the papers for the December panel meeting. Since then:

- **Leeds College of Building** – Leeds College of Building took possession of the Ground Floor on the Hunslet Road Phase II site in December 2018 allowing teaching and learning to commence. The building will be fully occupied by spring 2019. North Street refurbishment works commenced in January 2019 which is part of the overall project.
- **Leeds City College** – construction continues on the Quarry Hill campus which will open to students in September 2019. The College will then commence works refurbishment works on its Park Lane Campus as part of the overall project. The College held an ‘Unveiling the Vision for Quarry Hill Campus’ event on the 24 January 2019 which was well attended by local stakeholders.
- **Kirklees College** - The Dewsbury Leaning Quarter involves key buildings in the heart of Dewsbury. The newly built Springfield Centre opened to students on the 3rd September 2018. It is an ultra-modern, purpose built facility that hosts courses that are aimed predominantly at 16-18 year olds. The second element is the refurbishment of iconic Pioneer House. Kirklees Council is undertaking landlord works, prior to Kirklees College undertaking fit-out works. The building is expected to open in 2020.

### Enterprise in Education

- 2.8 The **Enterprise Adviser Network** and the Combined Authority’s Enterprise Coordinators are currently engaged with 175 (86%) secondary schools and colleges. The network has delivered over 134,000 employer encounters and 37,771 employer encounters for pupil premium learners, 9,238 of whom have had at least two employer encounters as part of the network.
- 2.9 A **Raising Aspirations Pilot** will soon be launched for schools and colleges with high numbers of disadvantaged pupils and / or with an intake of pupils from the most deprived wards of the Leeds City Region. The pilot aims to

support an increase in activity to raise aspirations amongst disadvantaged pupils by strengthening engagement with employers, widening pupils' experiences of jobs beyond their home communities and engagement with young role models working in priority sectors, including apprentices. The pilot aims to:

- support the Combined Authority's ambition to give extra support to the most disadvantaged learners to increase aspirations and promote social mobility.
- support secondary schools and colleges to achieve good careers education and demonstrate progress towards Gatsby benchmark 5 (encounters with employers and employees) and Gatsby benchmark 6 (experiences of workplaces).
- pilot a grant scheme that allows schools flexibility to tailor innovative solutions for employer engagement, according to the need of their students, to raise aspirations.

2.10 Colleges, secondary schools or a consortia of secondary schools will be able to apply for grants ranging from £7,000 to £50,000. Projects should support an increase in activity to raise aspirations amongst disadvantaged pupils by strengthening engagement with employers, widening pupils' experiences of jobs beyond their home communities or engagement with young role models working in priority sectors. An evaluation of the pilot will also be undertaken, and the pilot will culminate in a best practice workshop.

2.11 The Careers and Enterprise Company has announced a bidding round for a new wave of **Careers Hubs** for LEPs and Combined Authorities to bid in to. The Combined Authority has already successfully secured a first round Hub in Kirklees. Applications are to be submitted to the Careers and Enterprise Company by 22 February, with awards being made in April 2019 for Careers Hubs to be delivered from September 2019 – July 2020. An application will be submitted for a pan-regional hub to support young people with special educational needs and disabilities to develop a better understanding of careers opportunities and routes into employment and to have meaningful interactions with employers.

2.12 The **#futuregoals** careers campaign and activity aims to raise awareness of careers opportunities in skills shortage and high growth sectors. The next phase of the campaign commences at the end of February. Young people are the primary target audience for the marketing campaign, with parents/carers and teachers as the secondary audience, using the relevant social media channels for age profiles.

2.13 The campaign will include local employed people sharing their own career stories through a series of self-filmed videos which will be shared across the LEP social channels. Local influencers/bloggers/vloggers ("Social Media Celebrities") will also be recruited to share the campaign content or share their own career stories, experiences and top tips with their fans and followers on Instagram and YouTube. This approach will maximise the reach of the

campaign, tapping into wider networks that wouldn't normally be reached through LEP channels. This approach also gives the campaign more credibility as young people are more likely to trust or be influenced by their peers and social media icons.

- 2.14 A careers inspiration booklet will also be created and distributed directly to all schools, colleges and other centres throughout the region at the end of March that can be used with young people and parents. The booklet will highlight the opportunities for young people to develop the skills needed for employment and raise awareness of the careers in our region.
- 2.15 A creative industries careers toolkit for young people and parents is in development, supported by Burberry Foundation, and will be part of the piloting of the national Creative Sector toolkit's Creative Careers Programme, led by Creative & Cultural Skills and Screen Skills. The launch of this work will take place in early March at Burberry Business Services, Leeds.

#### Career Learning Pilot

- 2.16 The Career Learning Pilot is funded by the Department for Education and designed to test methods of outreach and subsidy for low skilled adults in work or close to the labour market. The outcomes of the pilot will be evaluated by the Learning and Work Institute and used by DfE to inform the design of the proposed National Re-training Scheme.
- 2.17 The subsidised learning offer as part of the pilot has now ended. The Combined Authority has delivered the 'Earnit' marketing campaign which has reached over 1 million individuals, with 5,617 accessing further information online. Outreach activity for the pilot has been delivered by Local Authorities who have used marketing materials and promoted the subsidy through local events and engagements with individuals including face to face and other outreach. The Information, Advice and Guidance offer (IAG) offer developed by National Careers Service (NCS) is being delivered through both this outreach activity and directly to pilot beneficiaries signposted to the service through the marketing campaign.

#### Social Prescribing Pilot

- 2.18 The York Work Wellness Service project has now completed. From an original target of 10, the programme has received 72 eligible referrals. 43 people have returned to work and a further 16 remain engaged in activity designed to enhance their chances of a positive outcome. The current rate of achievement shows 60% of those engaged have returned to work within a reasonable timescale. The remaining 16 will be tracked until the end of February when the final project figures will be produced.
- 2.19 The Work Wellness Service has launched this month in a deprived area of Halifax following the same principles as York, with a Work Wellness Service advisor based within a GP surgery. The pilot aims to explore the specific support and activities that can influence a successful return to work. A full

evaluation of both pilot sites is planned and the findings will be shared with the Panel once completed.

### Higher Level Learning

- 2.20 The agile group meeting held on 26 November to look at higher level institutions' approaches to businesses, their offer and barriers facing businesses attracted 23 delegates. A number of recommendations were made to the meeting of the Go Higher West Yorkshire Board in January to ensure that a coherent and accessible offer can be presented to businesses.

### Sector Skills

- 2.21 A round table discussion took place on in December 2018 to begin to discuss how education, the public sector and the independent production sector can work together to support increased demand for skills resulting from **Channel 4's** decision to locate its national headquarters in Leeds. A number of immediate next steps were identified, including:
1. A Board to be established early in 2019, including Channel 4 and a membership that reflects the diversity of the region
  2. A small industry working group to be held to explore the short term gaps (editing, camera-work, production) in more detail
  3. Continue to develop medium term pipeline of skills using the Screen Skills Diversity project as a test bed for ideas.
- 2.22 In the medium term, there are various areas to be explored, including how to most effectively bring education and industry together in a coordinated manner to address skills needs in the **independent TV production sector**:
- To ensure course and qualification development meets business needs,
  - Supporting the sector to make best use of higher and degree level apprenticeships including,
  - supporting the delivery of shared apprenticeships and work experience opportunities across a number of smaller businesses or shorter term projects,
  - Including meaningful business interactions in education and training, and encouraging educational institutions to make best use of business expertise,
  - Supporting people from diverse backgrounds and communities to access employment and reach their potential within the sector.
- 2.23 The **Discover Digital** campaign engages adults across the region, from graduates to career-changers, looking to retrain or upskill into a digital role and to improve their digital skills. The campaign provides a dedicated website to inspire career choices for individuals, where they can engage with businesses and training opportunities <https://discoverdigital.org.uk/>. Since its launch in August 2018, the website has reached over 100,000 people and has had 2,700 new visitors with over 15,000 individual page views across the site.

- 2.24 As previously reported, the Combined Authority submitted a full application to a competitive European funding call to develop a programme named **[re]boot** to individuals to re-train or upskill in order to access career opportunities in digital sectors, construction and engineering. The Funding Agreement has now been received from The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and delivery will commence in spring 2019.

### **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.