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**Report to:** Employment and Skills Panel

**Date:** 4 March 2020

**Subject:** **Digital Framework and analysis of local digital offer**

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## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To share the headline findings of an analysis of the current local digital skills offer, undertaken on behalf of the Leeds City Region Digital Board. The Panel are asked to consider the findings, together with the conclusions and recommendations highlighted by the Board.

## **2 Information**

- 2.1 The remit of the Digital Board is to advise the LEP Board and its Panels, including the Employment and Skills Panel. The Board provides oversight for the implementation of the Digital Framework across the five priority outcomes, ensuring connections are made between them.
- 2.2 The Digital Framework articulates the overall vision for the digital economy in the Leeds City Region, whilst setting out clear ambition statements and proposed interventions. One of the five strands / outcomes relates to “Digital skills for all – giving everyone access to the skills they need to thrive in the digital economy”.
- 2.3 The vision of the Digital Framework is recognised within the Local Industrial Strategy. Specifically, regarding skills, the ‘People’ foundation states ‘Act to boost basic, intermediate and advanced digital skills to support progression’ as one of its inclusive growth priorities.
- 2.3 At its meeting of the 25 November 2020, the Board discussed opportunities to strengthen the coordination of the local digital skills offer and the potential benefits of putting in place a Digital Skills Partnership for the City Region. Further to this discussion, the Digital Board requested that an analysis of the City Region’s current offer be prepared, to provide a basis for discussion around actions required to enhance the offer.

- 2.4 The results of the analysis were presented to the Digital Board at its 13 February 2020 meeting. The slide pack used for the presentation is appended to this paper.
- 2.5 In response to the presentation the Board asked officers to consider the following additional aspects of the digital skills landscape:
- Employer practice around the development of digital skills, including leading edge examples.
  - The role of code clubs and digital bootcamps in developing required digital skills.
  - The potential role of employer-endorsed courses and programmes in view of the barriers associated with formal accreditation.
  - Skills convergence, as different technologies become more closely integrated and the formal divisions between digital and other skills become less significant
  - Implications of future challenges in the labour market for digital skills, including automation.
- 2.6 Officers were also asked to undertake work on strategic thinking around digital workforce and skills issues as part of a wider strategy for the digital sector, including consideration of the following:
- An assessment of what's working and not working in terms of digital skills provision.
  - Proposals on how to increase the role of the employer voice in the digital skills landscape and to bring the wider digital community together.
  - Highlighting proposed priorities for action to provide the basis for a more focused role for the Board.
  - To review the potential added value of moving forward with a Digital Skills Partnership for the area.

### **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 consider and comment on the findings of the analysis work and the recommendations highlighted by the Digital Board.
- 7.2 The Panel is asked to support the areas of focus for future work identified by the Digital Board, as part of the overall package of skills policy work being undertaken by the LEP.

## **8 Background Documents**

None.

## **9 Appendices**

Analysis of digital offer slide pack