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**Report to:** Employment and Skills Panel

**Date:** 19 June 2020

**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

### 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 20<sup>th</sup> of March 2020, for the **Kirklees Careers Hub** this has meant a lower number of Compass <sup>[1]</sup> 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.
- <sup>[1]</sup>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 8<sup>th</sup> May – 29<sup>th</sup> 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](http://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 30<sup>th</sup> 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