
Report to: Employment and Skills Panel

Date: 14 September 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 and how they have been adapted to support COVID-19.

2 Information

Apprenticeships and Employment

Leeds City Region Employment Hub

- 2.1 COVID-19 has had a major impact on delivery and performance of the **Employment Hub** programme in the last quarter. Despite an increase in enquiries from people anticipating redundancy or leaving education, the main target group for programme, those furthest from the labour market pre COVID-19, are requiring a lot of hand holding and support and are not ready to move onto their next steps of further learning or employment. Engagement with businesses on recruitment has also been impacted. A reconciliation of achievements has been undertaken which reflects that achievements at the end of quarter two (June 2020) in year two of delivery include:

- Engaged 2820 15-24-year-old participants against a profile of 3054 (92%). Of these:
 - 850 participants, against a profile of 367 (232%), were recorded as being from ethnic minorities
 - 627 participants declared they had disabilities against a target of 281 (223%)
 - 887 participants are recorded as having no basic skills qualifications against a target of 654 (136%)

- Of the participants starting the programme 433 have been supported with finding education/ training, employment or self-employment against a target of 1085 (40%)
- 1807 businesses engaged against a target of 2450 (74%).

As part of the Combined Authority response to COVID-19 we repurposed the Employment Hub to provide a ‘one stop shop’ for job seekers of any age and employers recruiting or making redundancies. At the time of writing we had supported 331 individuals and 33 businesses. We expect these figures to increase in the next two quarters as we anticipate the easing of furlough and projected increase in redundancies, the summer school/college leavers and the introduction of various programmes, schemes and incentives announced by the Chancellor in July. We are not yet able to assess the impact these will have on the workload and achievements of the Employment Hub programme.

Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Service

- 2.2 During the last quarter we have seen an increase in interest in the **Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Service** from both pledging organisations and training providers/businesses seeking transfers. We are currently in negotiations with ten organisations seeking to pledge funds, which if agreed will move us towards our £3m target. Once we have pledges we will launch a marketing campaign to showcase those pledging companies supporting apprenticeships, and in the current climate the impact the levy transfer can have on economic recovery, and a second strand to encourage receiving organisations to apply for the transfers. This will mean that apprenticeship training fees will be covered 100% by the transferring company.

The Levy Transfer Services webpages provide access to the registration form for training providers to request support on behalf of businesses.

www.the-lep.com/business-support/skills-and-training/apprenticeship-levy-support/

School Partnerships

- 2.3 The **Enterprise Adviser Network** has become a virtual network during this period. Due to school and college closures, employer encounter activity has not been possible, with no change to previously reported figures.
- 2.4 Similarly, planned targeted activity with employers in the **Bradford Opportunity Area** has not been possible. However progress against target remains strong with 93% achieved (134,789 employer engagements). A focus for next academic year will be to co-develop virtual encounters and work experience with the support of strategic employer partners (“Cornerstones”).
- 2.5 An extension has been agreed with recipients of **Raising Aspirations** (BRP-funded) grants for schools, due to the recent disruption to schools, with project outcomes due to be achieved by March 2021. Interim feedback from external evaluators shows that the projects are having a positive impact on pupils.

- 2.6 The **Kirklees Careers Hub** has delivered a number of events via virtual platforms including:
- Preparing for Ofsted - CPD. Delivered to 29 Careers Leaders and SLT from schools and colleges. The event was delivered in collaboration Calderdale and Kirklees Careers (C&K).
 - A Virtual Kirklees Careers Hub CEIAG Network Meeting.
 - Teacher CPD delivered to Careers Leaders and SLT supported by a Cornerstone employer and the Advanced Mathematics Support Programme.

Due to closures not all schools were able to submit a final Compass return. A drop in results is anticipated next academic year as schools' ability to complete work experience and work encounters with businesses will remain extremely limited.

- 2.7 Compass¹ submissions were low for the final term results submitted for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). Through the SEND Hub, a Lead School (The Lighthouse) will support others to help with overall progress towards targets and share good practise on a theme of *Increasing Employer Engagement and Improving Destinations*.

Careers

FutureGoals

- 2.8 A targeted marketing campaign has been promoting the campaign and by the end of the financial year the [FutureGoals](#) website reached over 2 million adults, young people and educators. The website has evolved and now has specific resources based on the different audiences, meaning a more targeted and structured approach can be taken.
- 2.9 Improvements have been made to the [FutureGoals education and training](#) page to support young people predominantly aged 16-19 in our region who may be at risk/already are NEET (not in education, employment or training). This includes links to local support including the Employment Hubs, National Careers Service exam helpline and The Prince's Trust as well as information about colleges, sixth forms, FE, universities and apprenticeships in our region and information if the young person wishes to get a job or start their own business. We are launching a targeted marketing campaign to promote this to young people, parents and stakeholders throughout August and September.
- 2.10 In response to COVID-19 the FutureGoals website has added a function which allows individuals to register their interest for additional careers support via the Employment Hubs. A targeted marketing campaign has led to 325 individual enquiries and referrals to the Employment Hubs. The campaign has also reached 106,104 individuals through social media.

¹ A self-assessment tool for schools to track progress towards the Gatsby benchmarks of good careers guidance

2.11 [FutureGoals Remote](#) launched between May and July in response to COVID-19. The resources are a series of brand new free interactive activities to help young people develop employability skills from home during the lockdown. The activities feature in-demand skills identified by employers in the latest Leeds City Region [Labour Market Information Report](#), including digital, communication, problem solving and creative skills, and are designed to help young people to develop their employability and careers awareness. The FutureGoals Remote webpage has had 2,115 visits since launch and 584 downloads of the resources.

[re]boot (www.futuregoals.co.uk/reboot)

2.12 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 over 200 individuals.

Following a re-profile of outputs, procurement is underway to appoint an additional provider/s with delivery intended to start in October.

As a response to COVID-19 we have been granted an easement allowing small numbers of unemployed individuals onto [re]boot courses who have become unemployed. Interest will be monitored over the next quarter.

During the restrictions we have undertaken targeted marketing to promote [re]boot to graduates, furloughed staff, and more recently those unemployed through COVID-19. The [re]boot web page has had 6,707 unique views and the social media campaigns have reached 142,556 people since May.

Delivery Agreements

2.13 A full programme of review meetings with Colleges based on 2018/19 performance had just begun when lockdown began and so reviews have not taken place. It has been agreed that a report highlighting assessment and analysis of available data will be produced later in the year. The Delivery Agreements will then be reviewed and rewritten to reflect the wider role they will play in shaping future provision including Adult Education Budget priorities.

Skills for Business

- 2.14 The **Skills for Growth** programme, supporting businesses to engage with the full breadth of the education system from primary schools to universities, will start in September. A team of ten have been recruited, who will work closely with the local authorities' business facing teams to engage a wide range of businesses to connect with our education offer.
- 2.15 The business engagement teams are working closely with the West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges (WYCC) to engage businesses in the **Higher Performing Workplaces Programme** which they have been able convert to

an online offer. The programme aims to support business resilience and is well placed to support EU transition; providing training for staff in international trade and management practices.

3. Clean Growth Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial 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 is asked to note and comment on the progress of delivery of employment and skills programmes in the Leeds City Region.

9. Background Documents

None.

10. Appendices

None.