
Report to: Employment and Skills Committee

Date: 29 October 2021

Subject: **Employment and Skills Programme Delivery**

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1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the progress of delivery of LEP and Combined Authority-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

- 2.1 Interest in the **Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Service** from pledging Employers continues to grow. Over £1.8 million has been pledged to date. The service has supported 189 apprentices and 40 businesses.
- 2.2 Digital explainer animations have been developed to target levy payers and training providers.
Training provider <https://vimeo.com/597799578/8cafbf0337>
Levy payers <https://vimeo.com/593198930/692ecea97f>,
- 2.3 There is still 3 months of delivery remaining on the ESF-funded **Employment Hubs**. The service continues to support as many people as possible and efforts are being made to reach people from all communities particularly as a response to the end of furlough and possible redundancies.
- 2.4 For Quarter 2 performance, as required/reported to DWP as part of the funding requirements (as at 1 July 2021):
- Engaged 4952 15-24 year-old participants against a Q2 2021 profile of 5843 (85%). Of these:
 - 1615 participants, against a profile of 707 (%), were recorded as being from ethnic minorities

- 993 participants declared they had disabilities against a target of 527 (188%)
- 1589 participants are recorded as having no basic skills qualifications against a target of 1269 (125%)
- Of the participants starting the programme 1418 have been supported with finding education/ training, employment or self-employment against a target of 2239 (63%).

2.5 A significant number of referrals have come from Jobcentre Plus and there are an increasing number of jobs fairs both actual and virtual. The Employment Hubs have been able to support people into hard to fill vacancies and Kickstart opportunities.

School Partnerships

2.6 The **School Partnership team** has continued to support **Enterprise Advisor Network** members (senior business people who volunteer to work with a nominated school to support their careers programmes). The team has launched new training to support business volunteers with over 50 taking up this opportunity in the first round.

Over the summer additional funding has been secured for two projects to start in the 2021 Academic year. The additional funding will enable the team to expand its services to target and support more of our most disadvantaged young people as well as carrying out thorough evaluation of the support/ project to create an evidence base of “what works” which will be shared nationally.

- Project One: “The Effective Transitions Fund” will support approximately 150 disadvantaged female students, over a 30 month period. The project will deliver a programme of targeted Careers activity to both the students themselves and their key influencer (parents and staff) to support them in achieving high quality post 16 destinations.
- Project Two: “The Hub Incubation Fund” is designed to test innovation within Careers Hubs with a view to test innovative practice that can be expanded and shared across the country. This Project is a small scale pilot working with 6 schools from the Leeds City Region Special Education Need and Disability (SEND) Careers Hub to establish alumni networks of former SEND students to support career activity using the alumni as positive role models.

2.7 **The Special Educational Needs and Disability Careers Hub (SEND)** is progressing well and has started to create a SEND specific virtual work experience to help reach young people who experience the greatest barriers to gaining experience of the workplace. In **Bradford Opportunity area (BOA)** was launched by the government in 2017 with an aim to understand and tackle the various challenges and barriers children and young people faced in the Bradford district) compass completions [compass is a self-assessment tool which evaluates careers activity] and percentage of institutions achieving encounters with employers is above national average, which is excellent

despite lockdown implications. A successful project working with Bradford Council has been completed enabling meaningful encounters of the world of work. Over 580 pupils were engaged at 5 schools, including a SEND specialist school and a Pupil Referral Unit.

- 2.8 The **Kirklees Careers Hub** continues to see success and an increase in reach from the new Parental Resources launched last year. Calderdale will join Kirklees Careers Hub, the SEND hub membership will increase and a Regional Hub will launch. This means 120 Schools and College will be part of a Careers Hub for 2021/22.

Careers

FutureGoals

- 2.9 To enable stakeholders and partners to make better use of the **annual labour market report**, an interactive platform has been developed to enhance the FutureGoals website and ensure everyone can access Labour Market Information. The interactive report is currently live and can be found here: [Our Region | Future Goals](#)

In September 2021 the FutureGoals website was relaunched. The site is now more user friendly, more accessible and has had additional resources added to it, including the [Buzz Quiz](#).

Over the course of a year between August 2020 and August 2021 the increase in users visiting the site has increased by 56%. A large part of this is due to campaign to relaunch the site and the range of resources we're promoting on the website.

Adult Training

Adult skills training Framework

- 2.10 Delivery will begin in late October for the Combined Authority's Gainshare funded Adult Skills Training Framework. The Framework will work with 5 lead suppliers who will deliver innovative and responsive employer-led training across the region to 4,500 individuals between October 2021 – April 2023.

The 5 lead suppliers are: West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges, West Yorkshire Learning Providers, Aspire-Igen (The Opportunity Group) and Leeds Trinity University representing the West Yorkshire Universities.

The training is designed to address skills shortages in the region through employer endorsed training and will be responsive and flexible to address the needs of employers and the needs of individuals looking to upskill or career change.

The framework is made up of funding lots including digital, health, construction and green skills, graduates and individuals who are at risk of

redundancy. The lots link specifically to the needs of the local labour market and support economic recovery. The framework could support employers who are facing difficulties attracting the right skills to and talent to their sector by shaping appropriate training provision.

An umbrella brand and marketing campaign will be designed to promote the training and create a consistent brand identity for adult skills programmes.

Reboot

- 2.11 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 and engineering and the fast-growing creative sector. Since its launch in November 2019, the programme has supported 720 individuals to upskill.

A Project Change Request has been submitted to the funding manager – DWP – to address the training delivery lost through the pandemic. To maximise the offer to learners a request has been put in to ask for a three-month extension to the contract with delivery being extended from 31st December to March 31st, 2022. The extension will give the programme the chance to make up for time lost when face to face training could not be delivered and achieve the maximum number of outputs up until March.

Planned monthly marketing campaigns are taking place between Oct and December to target those affected by the end of furlough, careers starters and the 50+. The [re]boot courses and content are accessed on the FutureGoals website [\[re\]boot courses](#).

In Aug - Sept, the [re]boot page received 1,371 page views; 7.2% of all website traffic. The Combined Authority created a targeted marketing campaign to encourage greater participation of women in training programmes. This generated over 3,000 website visits to the FutureGoals [re]boot page that were 100% female, with a high demographic of 25–34-year-olds.

Digital bootcamps

- 2.12 The Department for Education (DfE) funded **Digital and Technical Skills Bootcamp Pilot** went live in January 2021 and had a further extension to continue delivery until the end of July 2021. Throughout the seven months, thirteen digital and technical bootcamps were delivered and were influenced by employers to address skills shortage needs. The Pilot also tested delivery models in a small, directed way to develop innovative and highly responsive courses that link directly to the local digital and technical economy. Provision was not bound by existing accreditation and offered the flexibility to meet needs of employers directly, building on the success of existing programmes and relationships.

The bootcamps supported individuals from underrepresented groups such as BAME, women and those unemployed due to COVID-19 or those looking to upskill. At the close of the reporting period for the Bootcamps delivered in January – March 2021, 53.4% of participants for whom it was appropriate had a job interview with an employer and 64.3% of participants secured positive career progression* as a result of skills acquired through their Bootcamp.

- 2.13 At the end of August, the Combined Authority submitted a proposal to DfE to extend provision and increase the value of the contract by £650,000.00 to deliver a further series of Bootcamps between October 2021 – March 2022. The DfE have awarded the funding which will support a further 250 individuals. The extension to the contract is currently going through the CA's project approval process.

**This includes becoming or continuing to be self-employed, a new role with current or new employer or continuing in current role with additional responsibilities and progression prospects.*

Delivery Agreements

- 2.14 Plans are in place to refresh/renew Delivery Agreements as reflected in the AEB strategy during autumn/winter 2021. Consideration will be given in development to how new Delivery Agreements will complement new review and reporting requirements of the FE sector around how they are working with and responding to business skills needs and other proposed activities within the Skills Bill including the proposals for Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) and any recommendations from the current pilot programmes.

Skills for Business

- 2.15 The ESF funded [Skills for Growth](#) programme is on track to meet its business engagement targets. The projects/activities with education providers remain limited due to ongoing Covid restrictions on events. Business Partnership Advisers are working closely with SMEs to address skills gaps and recruitment needs, with particular demand for internships, placements and graduate recruitment. Businesses are also being referred to other support programmes, for example, the Employment Hub, the LEP Growth Service, and the Enterprise Adviser Network, to provide bespoke support based on businesses' immediate and longer term needs.
- 2.16 Performance up to the end Q3, as required/reported to DWP as part of the funding requirements (as at 30 September 2021):
- 154 (target 144) businesses have completed an Education Engagement Plan and are planning to work with a local college or university
 - 54 (target 76) projects have been completed with a college or university
 - 376 (target 304) individuals from a college or university have participated in a project

- 2.17 The team is working closely with Trade and Investment colleagues to support new businesses in the region. Graduate recruitment and training/upskilling management are key requirements when discussing establishing a business in the region. There is high demand for high level digital skills and manufacturing.
- 2.18 The **Entrepreneurial Package of Support** is a three-step “ladder” of enterprise support intended to increase the numbers of people considering self-employment/enterprise, particularly from groups underrepresented among start-ups.

The steps of the ladder will be

- Pre-startup support – marketing campaign, workshops, school programme
 - Start-up support of all new enterprises including social enterprises, cooperatives, and all sectors (including those not traditionally supported by the LEP due to funding restrictions such as retail and hospitality)
 - Support for innovative entrepreneurs – providing intensive support for individuals with the potential to become successful innovative entrepreneurs and / or businesses.
- 2.19 The Employment and Skills team will deliver the pre-startup support which will include:
- **A regional campaign** raising awareness of enterprise opportunities particularly targeting demographics including graduates, women and communities that may be less likely to consider starting their own business.
 - **A series of free workshops** (delivered one to many at different locations around the region and virtually), covering subjects including: idea development, , market research, networking
 - **A young people’s enterprise awareness programme** delivered in primary and secondary schools and colleges with practical experiences.
- 2.20 Officers from Calderdale and Kirklees are assisting with the procurement of the pre-startup programme and have approved providers for the regional campaign and workshop delivery. The schools programme will be procured by the end of the year.
- 2.21 The programme will launch on the 3rd November with an online event for partners and providers. The Mayor and Sir Roger Marsh will launch the programme and support community-based activities across the region to engage underrepresented groups including women, ethnic minorities and people who identify as disabled.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

- 3.1 There are no climate emergency implications directly arising from this report.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

- 4.1 Schools engagement activity specifically targets cohorts of young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 5.1 Programmes will actively engage with BAME individuals from the across the region and groups considered to be disadvantaged in the labour market and in specific sectors.

6. Financial Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

- 8.1 Recruitment of a number of key posts is currently underway to support Employment and Skills programme delivery and compliance.

9. External Consultees

- 9.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 The Panel is asked to note and comment on the progress of delivery of employment and skills programmes in the Leeds City Region.

11. Background Documents

None.

12. Appendices

Digital Skills Plan