
Report to: Employment and Skills Committee

Date: 29 October 2021

Subject: **Employment and Skills Committee Forward Plan**

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1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To propose a list of topics for a forward workplan for the Committee to July 2022 for discussion, comment and agreement.

2. Information

- 2.1 A proposed list of substantive topics is based upon areas identified as priorities in the region as set out in the Employment and Skills Framework and that support Mayoral pledges.
- 2.2 In June, the Mayor launched the new framework which has been developed closely with partners and stakeholders and overseen by the Employment and Skills Panel.
- 2.3 The vision statement for the Framework is *‘Our vision for West Yorkshire is to be a world-leading region where investment in skills training and education, and support for employers go hand in hand to create a diverse, inclusive and highly skilled workforce with good jobs, leading to sustained improvements in the quality of life for all’*
- 2.4 The Framework outlines five priorities for West Yorkshire, to deliver skilled people, good jobs and strong businesses:
- Quality technical education
 - Great education connected to business
 - Accessing and progressing in good work
 - Creating a culture of investment in workforce skills
 - Driving innovation and productivity through high level skills.

- 2.5 There are three themes cut across all priorities: inclusive growth, digital skills and net zero carbon.
- 2.6 The Framework was launched by the Mayor. The Mayor manifesto pledges commit and align with the priorities in the framework including boosting digital skills, spearheading green jobs and tackling disadvantage and promoting inclusion. A document mapping this alignment is appended for reference.
- 2.7 This Committee will have oversight for the development of mayoral pledges and the pipeline of projects that support them as outlined in Item 8 – Mayoral Pledge Development
- 2.8 Agreeing a forward plan and suggested topics supports the planning of agenda for future Committee meetings, including preparation of reports with input from a range of sources to support informed discussion and decision making by the Committee.
- 2.9 Alongside these key topics of interest, it is proposed that in order for the Committee to remain responsive to economic need and policy contexts, some standing items are on agenda for each meeting that will be able to accommodate the need for flexibility, these will include:
- Data monitoring and labour market performance
 - Employment and Skills programmes
 - Employment and Skills policy including mayoral pledge development
- 2.10 Additional proposed key areas of interest include:
- Green Skills and Jobs; development of future skills and jobs needed for a net zero carbon economy and ensure a just transition for jobs at risk from decarbonisation – focus on job creation in a growth sector and connecting those facing labour market disadvantage to the new employment opportunities
 - Review of the Future-Ready Skills Commission, its recommendations and next steps
 - Education/careers and employment support with a focus on prevention of youth unemployment and NEETs and supporting the skills needs of our most vulnerable communities.
 - Support older workers (over 50) back to work and to stay in work longer where recently made unemployed – targeting the 10,000 people aged 50-64 who are unemployed, and those who are at risk of redundancy.
 - Support growth in SMEs through provision of digital – addressing digital exclusion and ensuring open access for all to avoid further disadvantage and an increase of the digital divide.

- Address the low take up of STEM subjects – improving skills levels amongst key groups who do not traditionally take up STEM.
- Skills support for employers to encourage high performing workplace practices that make best use of skills within the workforce, address skills shortages, and support recruitment practice with a focus support progression into work for young people and graduates who have the fastest growth in claimant numbers.

2.11 In addition, a joint workshop with the Business, Economy and Innovation Committee to consider the annual labour market report will also be organised between Committee meetings.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

3.1 The work of the Green Jobs Taskforce and Gateway will provide 1,000 well paid, skilled green jobs for young people and will ensure that West Yorkshire's workforce has the talent pipeline and skills required to support the greening of our economy and to meet the CA's ambitious target of a net zero carbon economy by 2038.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

4.1 All reports prepare as part of the forward plan will consider Inclusive Growth and how employment and skills can improve outcomes for individuals

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1 All reports prepared for the forward plan will consider EDI as a core element to support evidence-based decision making

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising for this report

7. Legal Implications

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

8. Staffing Implications

8.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

9.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

10. Recommendations

- 10.1 The Committee is asked to consider the list and identify their preferences for future meetings.

11. Background Documents

None.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Employment and Skills Framework and Mayoral Pledges.