



<b>Report to:</b>	Employment and Skills Committee
<b>Date:</b>	19 October 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>All Age Careers</b>
<b>Director:</b>	Felix Kumi-Ampofo, Director Inclusive Economy, Skills, and Culture
<b>Author:</b>	Anika Gilbert, Policy Officer Employment & Skills, Danielle Choma, Schools Partnership Manager

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

## 1. Purpose of this Report

- 1.1. To update the Committee and seek members' comments on the co-development of the West Yorkshire All Age Careers Blueprint and present the evidence base captured in the interim report.
- 1.2. To update the Committee on current delivery of careers activity led by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

## 2. Information

### Context

- 2.1. Effective careers education, information, advice and guidance [CEIAG] promotes engagement with learning and improves the functioning of the education and training system. It can contribute to increasing students' engagement and success by clarifying the relevance of subjects to future opportunities. To make the most of opportunities to better connect a range of services for local residents a radical shift in how services are designed and commissioned is required to ensure that all citizens for West Yorkshire can

thrive in the future world of work across the employment and skills landscape of which careers is a critical, but not isolated, component. A deep dive evidence review is provided in Appendix 3. Highlights are included below to demonstrate the rationale for the All-Age Careers Blueprint.

2.2 There are a range of socio-economic issues in West Yorkshire which could be addressed through a high-quality careers support offer, including:

- The proportion of people who have no or low qualifications.
- The increasing, and higher than nationally, prevalence of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- Existing gender stereotyping and distinct patterns of occupational segregation by gender.
- Under-representation of some ethnic groups with regard to some learning pathways and in some occupational segments

In an ever increasingly dynamic labour market where careers are no longer linear, careers support can also contribute to more effective matching of skills demand and supply by ensuring that individuals have access to rich, meaningful and relevant information about available career opportunities and the skills and learning pathways that provide access to them. In this way, careers support can help to minimise skills mismatches, reduce skill shortage vacancies and offset under-utilisation of skills.

Finally, careers support facilitates social inclusion and social mobility; for example, by helping young people to develop the career management skills, social capital and networks for career success, by assisting unemployed people and labour market returners to re-engage with the world of work and by facilitating investment in skills and career development by people with low level qualifications or who are in low-paid work.

### **West Yorkshire All Age Careers Blueprint**

2.3 With West Yorkshire's Local Authority partners, the Combined Authority is currently in the process of co-producing an All-Age Careers Blueprint with partners and key stakeholders, building on and complimenting the principles of the [Work Local model](#). A previous update has been provided to [Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> July](#); setting out the three main drivers for the project, which are summarised below:

1. Based on the rationale summarised above, careers support raises the aspirations and career readiness of individuals with a direct link to productivity growth and increased employment participation. The All-Age Career Blueprint therefore has a direct link into the delivery of Mission 1 of the West Yorkshire Plan – 'A prosperous West Yorkshire, enabled by an inclusive economy with well-paid jobs' and the career element of the Employment and Skills Framework.



2. To co-design a place-based model of good quality careers provision that is delivered at the level closest to individuals, to allow flexibility to focus on improve career outcomes for disadvantaged groups which are distinct in each area.
  3. To support conversations with Government to unlock further skills and employment related powers and funding, based on the Greater Manchester and West Midland Combined Authority Trailblazer Deals setting a precedent for devolved career and wider employment and skills provision.
- 2.4 The Institute for Employment Studies (IES), working collaboratively with the International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS), has been commissioned to lead the development of the West Yorkshire All Age Careers Blueprint.
- 2.5 The first phase of the project was focussed on creating an evidence base across West Yorkshire to identify key opportunities and challenges and provide valuable context for wide stakeholder engagement.
- 2.6 IES and iCeGS have synthesised the available evidence on best practice in careers guidance, who accesses services and who does not, and the current policy landscape, as well as analysis of regional labour market data. The Combined Authority and LA partners also undertook a light-touch mapping exercise to get a better understanding of the current, regional career provider landscape. 40 submissions were received from career providers in response to an online survey.
- 2.7 IES also hosted and facilitated a Theory of Change workshop with lead skills officers from Local Authorities, business, education and career providers to develop an initial overview of the existing career landscape, articulate ambitions for future ambitions and think about possible mechanisms for change. A selection of comments from the discussion can be seen below:

<b>Target Groups</b>	<p><i>“All, regardless of employment status”</i></p> <p><i>“Variety of age and circumstance, proactively focussed on groups who could be classed as disadvantaged [...]”</i></p> <p><i>“Young people with SEND / EHCP”</i></p> <p><i>“Adults”</i></p> <p><i>“Work with schools to improve performance towards career benchmarks”</i></p> <p><i>“Support for businesses [to offer] future careers opportunities in their organisation”</i></p>
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<b>Impact</b>	<i>"Clearer understanding of routes into the career of choice"</i>
	<i>"Non-stereotyped decisions [...]"</i>
	<i>"It needs to be open for all at any point in their lives, not targeted for certain groups or at specific times"</i>
	<i>"Educational provision which has a link to the need of the economy to grow"</i>
	<i>"Employers recruit locally and can source their needs with confidence from local talent pool"</i>
	<i>"Normalising the use of career advice and guidance [...]"</i>
<b>Outcomes</b>	<i>"More people in good work"</i>
	<i>"Greater workforce diversity"</i>
	<i>"Improved retention in post16 &amp; adult learning [...]"</i>
	<i>"Improved labour market status for most disadvantaged groups"</i>
	<i>"Job satisfaction and enjoying what you do [...]"</i>
	<i>"Less skills shortages reported as a barrier to economic growth"</i>
	<i>"Opportunities for people to move throughout their life and career"</i>
<b>Input / Activities</b>	<i>"Digital resources"</i>
	<i>"More engaging awareness activities (for all ages)"</i>
	<i>"Marketing of services [...]"</i>
	<i>"Capacity building – network of quality, independent careers advisers to deliver support"</i>
	<i>"Support for job seekers / career changers to be able to articulate skills and experience"</i>



<p><b>Change Mechanism</b></p>	<p><i>“Co-design with providers, employers and clients locally, based on data”</i></p> <p><i>“Greater sharing of information, opportunities and programmes, cross referrals and more working together”</i></p> <p><i>“Funding and good partnerships”</i></p> <p><i>“Build on existing infrastructure / best practice”</i></p> <p><i>“Employers”</i></p>
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2.8 Wider consultation co-designed with LA partners and with key stakeholders, including employers, is planned to take place over autumn. Specifically, the following activity is planned:

- 15, virtual, in-depth stakeholder interviews with representatives of the education, training and career support providers, national parties as well as an extended session with senior skills officers from each of the five Local Authorities, led by IES.
- Public Consultation via YourVoice, supported by IES, led by the CA.
- Employer consultation via an online survey, supported by IES, led by the CA.
- Virtual stakeholder workshop to refine recommendations, led by IES.
- Virtual expert panel discussion with CEIAG experts to challenge and validate findings, led by IES.
- Stakeholder engagement with wider public sector partners and employment, skill and career boards and providers.

A more in-depth presentation on the interim findings will be available at the meeting and Member feedback will be invaluable in shaping this blueprint.

### **Delivery Updates**

#### **2.9 Schools partnerships activity**

The Combined Authority is part-funded by the Careers and Enterprise Company as part of a national network of Careers Hubs. The West Yorkshire Careers Hub aims to support all 180+ secondary schools and colleges in its network to make progress towards the

Gatsby benchmarks of good careers guidance, ultimately improving young people's destinations, particularly the most disadvantaged. So far in this financial year 59 schools have made measurable improvements.

Through the Careers Hub, the following targeted activity has taken place since the last Committee meeting:

- The 'Apprenticeship and Technical Education Pilot Project' aimed to support employers to mentor students to increase their knowledge about apprenticeship and technical education options. The project has now completed its final stage of delivery. The 42 students from year 10, 12 and 13 [from Leeds, Bradford and Wakefield Schools] involved increased their knowledge of apprenticeships and their confidence in applying. However, although the project increased awareness of technical education, students were not as confident in their deeper understanding of technical options (e.g. T Levels, HQTs). Employers involved have provided positive feedback and felt more confident in informing students about apprenticeships and technical education after receiving training. The provider, Amazing Apprenticeships, who are supporting the upscaling of this project, also received positive feedback. (ATEP Evaluation Report attached as Appendix 1)
- The Effective Transitions Fund recently enabled a group of girls in year 11 to engage with regional employers. "We Are IVE" was commissioned to deliver a series of tailored, in person workplace visits for the Education and Training Foundation students to West Yorkshire anchor businesses including Leeds Bradford Airport, KPMG and Burberry. Evaluation is currently underway. Additional funding has been offered to the Combined Authority by The Careers and Enterprise Company for a shorter-term intervention targeted at an additional 150 disadvantaged young people over the next 6 months.
- West Yorkshire's Enterprise Advisors (EAs - business volunteers recruited via the Careers Hub) continue to be key to supporting the region's schools and colleges. After identifying a shortage of volunteers to support SEND (Special educational needs and disabilities) and PRU (pupil referral unit) schools within the regional Careers Hub, a "SEND EA Recruitment Campaign" was developed and delivered to recruit additional advisors. The campaign targeted social media, internal organisation communications channels and in-person recruitment events and has been highly successful. With over 200 enquires received
- Working with Local Authority partners, the Careers Hub has been looking at destination data for year 11 and 12. Some areas have seen a significant increase in young people not in education, employment or training employment (NEETS) and where their destination is not known. The Careers and Enterprise company has launched a national

fund to support system wide development to help reduce NEET figures. The Combined Authority's application, covering and working with Leeds and Bradford Local Authorities, has been successful with an award of £100,000.

### FutureGoals

- The Futuregoals site is an all-age careers platform intended to inspire and inform people of all ages about the career opportunities in the West Yorkshire region. It also provides a route to engagement with employment and skills provision. Since the last meeting, there has been a significant increase in the monthly reach achieved by the FutureGoals site. This has increased to 675,225 in August 2023, compared to 185,421 and 310,839 in June 2023 and July 2023 respectively. This increase is a reflection of an increase in social media campaigns including the employer side of the Skills Bootcamp Activity, Employment Support as well as Skills Connect campaigns all gaining traction and building on the gradual increase in reach in July 2023.

### **3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications**

- 3.1. A career support system, rooted in local economic information is also responsive to changing economic needs, including emerging requirements around green skills and businesses transitioning towards a net-zero carbon economy.

### **4. Inclusive Growth Implications**

- 4.1. The Future Ready Skills Commission found that, careers support is not just important because it contributes to individual motivation, career readiness and employability but that these improvements in individual capability lead to the improved operation of the labour market, and greater social mobility and inclusion. There is then a direct link to productivity growth, higher pay and increased employment participation.
- 4.2. In addition, career inspiration, starting at primary school age, has been shown to impact social mobility and counteract the early formation of stereotypes about occupations, careers and pathways. Children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds benefitting the most from support.
- 4.3. The West Yorkshire All Age Career Blueprint will also support inclusive economic growth by placing a particular focus on those groups that face disadvantage through envisaging a regional career system that supports social mobility.

### **5. Equality and Diversity Implications**

- 5.1. A comprehensive, yet simple, quality support offer to start, progress and change a career, which is rooted in local economic information and provision, is particularly important for those people facing disadvantage and/or do not have other available

support in this area and those businesses that are experiencing difficulties recruiting or retaining skilled staff and those industries that face significant change due to economic change, e.g. through automation or a shift towards a net-zero carbon economy.

5.2 A priority for the West Yorkshire All Age Career Blueprint is to create a system that works for all ages, from primary school level to retirement age, with a particular focus on transition points.

5.3 The blueprint will also consider how careers education, information, advice and guidance can help address longstanding skills and employment gaps based on gender, ethnicity and ability as well as how to reach groups from disadvantaged backgrounds.

## **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. There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

## **9. External Consultees**

9.1. Comprehensive and robust consultation with stakeholders is planned to support the development of the West Yorkshire all Age Careers Blueprints, including: Local and Combined Authority colleagues, education and training providers, CEIAG and employment support providers, employers and members of the public.

## **10. Recommendations**

10.1. To update the Committee and seek their comments on the development of the West Yorkshire All Age Careers Blueprint & present the evidence base captured in the interim report.

10.2 To update the Committee on current delivery of careers activity led by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

## **11. Background Documents**

Employment & Skills Committee, 13 July 2023: [Development and delivery of regionally coordinated careers activity](#)

## **12. Appendices**



Appendix 1 – [Evidence Deep Dive](#)

Appendix 2 – [West Yorkshire All Age Careers Blueprint – Draft Interim Report](#)

Appendix 3 – [ATEP Programme Evaluation](#)