
Report to: Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership Board

Date: 27 March 2018

Subject: **Employment and Skills Panel update**

Director(s): Sue Cooke, Executive Head of Economic Services
Liz Hunter, Interim Director of Policy and Strategy

Author(s): Emma Longbottom & Christian Denison

1 Purpose of this report

1.1 To provide the LEP Board with a report on the work of the Employment and Skills Panel.

2 Information

Local Inclusive Industrial Strategy – Implications for Employment and Skills

2.1 To ensure that there is a strong employment and skills thread running through the Local Inclusive Industrial Strategy (LIIS) the policy and strategy team is undertaking a review of the Employment and Skills Plan. This is not intended to be a re-write of the current plan but to make sure that the priorities are still correct, identify whether there are any gaps, and how it can influence and feed into the LIIS work. This review will have the aim of ensuring that there is a strong base from which to make recommendations.

2.2 The policy and strategy team will:

- Analyse the current priorities with reference to the latest evidence, producing SWOT analyses to identify any gaps in our existing focus;
- Look at the linkages with other policy areas, including the productivity gap, and identify any new areas for action;
- Explore any new national initiatives that may influence policy at a local level;
- Examine how the analysis and gaps identified may change potential devolution proposals;
- Consult internally and externally on the findings; and
- Present final conclusions and recommendations to the ESP and LEP board.

2.3 An indicative timeline for the review is:

- Analysis and what this means for future policy, LIIS, Devolution asks – February - April
- External consultation – May - June
- Final Recommendations - August

National Careers Strategy

- 2.4 The Government's Careers Strategy was published on 4 December 2017. The strategy stresses the important links to Industrial Strategy and the new technical routes, and that having clear routes and information (including labour market information) is vital to helping career choices and ensuring the country has the right skills for the future.
- 2.5 The key aspect for many will be the adoption of the eight Gatsby Career Benchmarks of good practice¹. The Gatsby Foundation benchmarks play a central role in delivery of the careers and enterprise provision envisaged in the strategy. These have been widely endorsed and the Government expects all schools and colleges to use them, with Ofsted on hand to scrutinise.
- 2.6 The potential key opportunities for the region are:
- Confirmation that schools must give providers of technical education and apprenticeships the opportunity to talk to all pupils about jobs and courses they offer.
 - The new investment fund of £5 million to support the most disadvantaged pupils
 - The 20 "careers hubs" to be funded by government and supported by a coordinator from the CEC. Hub activities will be focused on groups of young people and areas most in need of targeted support, to help deliver improvements in social mobility.
 - Careers Leaders training funded for 500 schools and colleges.
 - All schools and colleges will have access to an Enterprise Adviser.
 - The CEC will work with LEPs to help Enterprise Coordinators in those areas with lowest uptake of STEM qualifications to make sure that STEM encounters are built into careers and enterprise plans.
 - Government will work closely with combined authorities to trial approaches that ensure local priorities directly inform the provision of careers advice.
 - Analysis of skills needs from Skills Advisory Panels (Leeds City Region is included in the phase one roll out of Skills Advisory Panels) will be used to inform support provided by careers leaders in schools and colleges.

Further Education Developments

¹ A stable careers programme; Learning from career and labour market information; Addressing the needs of each pupil; Linking curriculum learning to careers; Encounters with employers and employees; Experiences of workplaces; Encounters with further and higher education; Personal guidance.

- 2.7 Annual assessments of the financial health of colleges were published on 15 November, with two major West Yorkshire colleges, namely Bradford and Kirklees, affected by Notices to Improve.
- 2.8 Both colleges have met with the FE Commissioner and the reports are available [here](#).
- 2.9 Since November 2017, Ofsted inspections have taken place in the following FE colleges in the City Region:
- Bradford College - overall effectiveness graded as requires improvement
 - Selby College - overall effectiveness graded as good
 - Craven College - overall effectiveness graded as good
 - Leeds College of Building - overall effectiveness graded as requires improvement
 - Calderdale College - report yet to be published
 - Leeds City College - report yet to be published

Apprenticeship Grant for Employers - AGE

- 2.10 The original devolved Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE) offered grants to employers for apprentices between 1 August 2015 and July 2017.
- 2.11 Achievements of the programme:
- 3,834 grants have been awarded to 2,924 SMEs to a value of £6,520,800;
 - For 2,204 (75%) businesses receiving the grant, it was their first apprentice;
 - Grants were awarded in relation to 2,633 (69%) 16 to 18 year olds and 1,201 (31%) 19 to 24 year olds.
- 2.12 Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and Department for Education (DfE) have given approval to utilise any unallocated funds from the original programme to support a further apprenticeship grant programme. The new AGE programme, which has taken on board recommendations from the evaluation, will target businesses with fewer than 50 employees in key sectors, who have not had an apprentice before. It is anticipated that the grant criteria and application process will be launched in summer 2018.

Raising the Bar on High Level Skills

- 2.13 Go Higher West Yorkshire (the partnership of universities) is about to launch a campaign to promote their higher and degree apprenticeship offer. The campaign will be supported by a website for central information and contacts which will go live during National Apprenticeship Week 2018; <https://www.apprenticesgohigher.co.uk/>.
- 2.14 The Employment and Skills Team continues to work with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) through Go Higher to ensure gaps in provision, particularly

at Higher and Degree Apprenticeship level, are being addressed and that provision is accessible by businesses and individuals.

Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN)

- 2.15 The Enterprise in Education team is currently working with 150 secondary schools and colleges and 136 Enterprise Advisors (senior leader from business), who are matched on a 1:1 basis with senior leaders in secondary schools and colleges to build employer engagement plans.
- 2.16 Over 16,836 employer encounters have been delivered this year through the EAN against an annual target of 16,000. In addition, 6,361 disadvantaged students have received one employer encounter, and 2,408 have had two employer encounters against a target of 6,000. In total 23,197 employer encounters have been delivered through the EAN this year.

Futuregoals - careers campaign

- 2.17 A high profile careers campaign targeted at young people and their key influencers launched week commencing 26 February, a week before National Careers & Apprenticeship weeks.
- 2.18 Futuregoals aims to be inspirational; building a sense of pride in the place our young people live and learn, and directional; bringing together the best of careers and enterprise learning tools based on the economy of Leeds City Region.
- 2.19 The campaign, which is forecasted to reach 940,000 individuals and is hoped to top one million, is designed around a series of six inspirational images and messaging. The development of these assets has been in full consultation with a range of young people of different ages, social economic backgrounds and ethnicity.
- 2.20 The campaign will be visible in each local area of the City Region and at locations and within 500 metres of secondary schools and colleges including bus stops, poster pillar and social media pop up advertising where fixed advertising is not available.
- 2.21 A microsite <http://futuregoals.the-lep.com> will also host further information for individuals, teachers and other practitioners including 'Top 10' guides, assembly, video and teaching and learning resources.

Labour Market Information

- 2.22 The Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and Combined Authority produce a labour market analysis to an annual cycle, with an initial overview provided to Employment and Skills Panel in June and a full report published in September. The purpose of the analysis is to inform strategy and policy

development within the LEP / Combined Authority but also to contribute to a better informed local labour market.

2.23 Much of the data that inform the report are produced on an annual basis or less frequently. The availability of “real-time” data relating to online job postings offers the opportunity to review on a continuous basis detailed trends in the level and profile of demand in the local labour market. At the ESP in March the Panel received a presentation based on this information, the conclusions were:

- Demand for labour is consistently strong across priority skill areas and occupational areas contained within them
- Digital demand is dominated by developer jobs and a requirement for a range of core digital technical skills, mostly developer-related – reflects division of labour and specialised nature of developer roles?
- Strong demand for candidates familiar with specific programming languages but also for individuals who understand broader principles
- Profile of construction demand shows important cross-over with engineering – civil engineers most in-demand occupation and engineering skills key within skill requirements
- Mechanical engineer is foremost occupation within engineering and manufacturing
- In contrast to digital construction and engineering employers are both looking for a combination of core technical skills plus business and other more generic skills.

2.24 This kind of analysis can be used in a range of contexts and is likely to be an important evidence source for the emerging Skills Advisory Panel.

Skills Advisory Panels

2.25 Skills Advisory Panels are part of the Government’s ambition to work closely with local areas on meeting existing and emerging national and local skills needs. Department for Education (DfE) wants to look at what provision there is in terms of advisory panels/boards across different areas, look at what works and the information that is used. The aim is for areas to produce analysis that both local areas, and central government can use.

2.26 DfE wants the analysis to look at:

- Demand: What skills are in demand in the labour market now and in the future. This is to inform decisions locally (e.g. what courses providers offer or what careers advisors recommend) and to identify trends nationally.
- Skills issues: Whether the skills system is adequately meeting local demand or whether there are persistent problems that may require a policy response – e.g. skills shortages, weak skills demand. This is to inform both local and national policy.

2.27 The City Region has an effective Employment and Skills Panel, and produces detailed labour market information – DfE recognises this. This presents an

opportunity to raise our regional profile within DfE and further the case on how local labour market information can lead to local interventions to address skills shortages in key areas.

- 2.28 Officers are currently in discussion with DfE on the best way to design the process and analysis.

Career Learning Pilot

- 2.29 The Leeds City Region is one of five areas that have been selected by DfE to be part of the Career Learning Pilot, the outcomes of which will be used to design the national retraining scheme. The pilot will be two stage testing: what engagement activity will encourage adults currently in employment or re-entering employment who have a level 2 qualification, to consider their next career/learning steps at level 3 and above; and what level of funding subsidy (25%, 75% or 100%) will encourage individuals to pay for their learning. The subsidy will be passed by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) directly to local providers.
- 2.30 As part of the pilot, a list has been provided from central government of the courses that will be eligible for a subsidy as part of the programme of which 15-25 can be chosen for the area. Eligible qualifications must be available for funding through Advanced Learner Loans, delivered by a provider who has the facility to administer these loans and must take less than 12 months to complete.
- 2.31 For the pilot in Leeds City Region qualifications proposed link to key growth sectors (manufacturing and engineering, construction and digital), along with leadership and management qualifications and progression opportunities for health and social care.
- 2.32 Officers have developed a costed delivery plan for the pilot, which was submitted to DfE at the end of February. It is envisaged that outreach work will commence in March 2018 and subsidised training in September 2018.

Sector Activity

- 2.33 To support the promotion of digital careers in the region the Combined Authority has held workshops across the region to discuss how opportunities within the sector could be promoted to encourage individuals to apply for roles and re-train where appropriate. The findings of these workshops will be used to shape a campaign aimed at promoting the opportunities in the digital sector within the City Region. The campaign will be launched in spring 2018.
- 2.34 A full application has been submitted by the Combined Authority for the ESIF Career Development Fund to develop “[re]boot”, a scheme to support individuals to retrain and move into digital and engineering careers. Assessment by the managing authority is awaited and following this delivery is expected to begin in spring/summer 2018.

- 2.35 The West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges has now received a contract from the managing authority to deliver the continuation of the Skills Service, which will be funded through European Social Fund until 2020. It is envisaged that delivery will commence in May 2018. In the interim, the Skills Service Advisors have been maintaining the Skills Service offer and providing a comprehensive training and skills planning service to support businesses to identify skills gaps and skills development needs linked to business growth objectives, including apprenticeship support.

Social Prescribing Pilot – Work Wellness Service

- 2.36 The Social Prescribing Pilot – The Work Wellness Service, officially launched in February 2018 within two GP surgeries in York. The two surgeries are located within adjoining Holgate and Guildhall wards. The pilot will run for one year.
- 2.37 The service is being delivered by a Work Wellness Advisor who receives referrals directly from GPs. The surgeries involved have demonstrated their commitment by integrating this post fully into their practice, including room space and access to patient records. Reception staff are also proactively supporting the pilot by recommending a review of ‘Fit Notes’ issued to consider any potential referrals.
- 2.38 The aim of the project is to see a minimum of 10 people in target demographics (50+ and in-work) and to enable them to remain in work or return to the workplace, if already within a period of sickness absence. Support will also be provided to individuals, where appropriate, to find suitable alternative employment.

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 External Consultees

- 5.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The LEP Board is asked to note and endorse the contents of the ESP report.

7 Background Documents

None.

8 Appendices

None