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**Report to:** Employment and Skills Panel

**Date:** 1 June 2018

**Subject:** **Building Workforce Skills and Attracting Talent**

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## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To consult the Panel on the work to progress the priorities and actions in the “Building Workforce Skills and Attracting Talent” priority of the Employment and Skills Plan.

## **2 Information**

### **Advisory Group Report**

- 2.1 The group was scheduled to meet on 27 April, however the meeting was cancelled due to the number of apologies received.

### **Digital Skills Campaign**

- 2.2 To support the promotion of digital careers in the region the Combined Authority has developed a campaign aimed at promoting the opportunities in the digital sector within the City Region.
- 2.3 The Discover Digital campaign is aimed at adults across the region, with the primary audience being graduates and career changers. The aim of the campaign is to inspire individuals into digital roles, to promote digital skills across our key industry sectors and to demystify digital careers.
- 2.4 The campaign will direct individuals to the LEPs [discoverdigital.org.uk](http://discoverdigital.org.uk) website; an engaging platform to find out information from businesses and organisations across the region. Information will also be provided regarding the types of digital roles that exist within each company, the skills needed to gain employment and the personal attributes employers look for. Inspirational case studies will be a central feature of the website.

2.5 The campaign will launch on social media at the end of June and it is envisaged to run for six months initially. There are currently 16 businesses engaged in the website development, including large companies and local SME's. It is planned that this will develop further and more employers will be included. Attached at appendix 1 are images which will be used for social media and outdoor advertising.

### **Skills Service**

2.6 As previously reported, the delivery of the LEP Skills Service will now be undertaken by West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges through European funding. The new service commences on 1 June 2018 and will be officially launched at the LCR Skills Network Conference on 12 June. A summary of the new service is provided below.

2.7 Providing a unique offer to business the Skills Service will incentivise employers to train their staff through a package of support which builds on good practice and lessons learned, unlocking the potential of the skills system for businesses in Leeds City Region by

- Matching employer contributions with provision of financial incentives to support the costs of bespoke, accredited & non accredited training grant funding towards the cost of learning for employees
- A fully integrated model that aligns with other ESIF/non ESIF funding, products & services to ensure maximum support to employers avoiding displacement & duplication (alignment to Growth Service and Apprenticeship Hubs)
- A responsive model aggregating employer demand for skills
- Specific interventions to support female employees & those who will gain level 3 and as well as employed individuals who are disadvantaged in the workplace.
- Specific training initiatives to meet large-scale infrastructure capital projects e.g. HS2/Inward Investment. support will only be provided where there is no current support in place for HS2

2.8 The enhanced ESIF Skills Service will remain 'employer led, but will provide a fully integrated model that aligns with other funding streams, products and services to ensure maximisation of support to employers by building a 'Portfolio' of wider support remaining flexible and responsive to policy change and impacts e.g. Brexit.

2.9 Through aggregating demand, the project will increase reach and breadth in the market to priority sectors with shared skills needs, commissioning training provision in areas of market failure or where future skills gaps are prevalent and take up needs incentivising. As a result the impact of the collaborative service will ensure

- SMEs access support for training linked to their growth ambitions & upskilling their workforce
- Incentivise SMEs to invest in skills of their workforce

- A parity of average number of days training per year by LCR businesses to meet UK average.
- A reduction in the number of repeat approaches to business

2.10 The project will undertake the following specific activities:

- Provide a portfolio of skills solutions, with a key priority on upskilling & closing the employment gap at Level 4 in priority areas, i.e. IT & Software skills (coding) digital & construction
- Target key occupations & industries forecast for growth & highest GVA adding sectors to remedy skills gaps / shortage areas to meet current & projected market demand across the Leeds City Region, including leadership & management competencies
- Deliver an inclusive & tested brokerage service designed to meet full service requirements & output indicators
- Respond to regional context & local development need, targeting key areas to drive upwards in-work skills & progression opportunities, including priority participants (i.e. employed females) through rigorous & persistent communications, marketing, LMI analysis, review & evaluation.
- Piloting suitable future models of delivery in advance of the 'devolved skills budget' aligned to Adult Education budgets in FE Colleges within the Leeds City Region
- Use labour market intelligence to underpin the service offer and process design throughout the project; the promulgation of MI will inform project decision making & assure continued strategic alignment & fit with local, regional & national policy & priorities.

2.11 This is a partnership programme that delivers collaboration between FE, the Leeds City Region LEP, public & private providers and private sector employers to address the specific needs of both individuals and employers. The WYCC Joint Venture will act as lead in the delivery of the Skills Service with the LEP as partner, ensuing LEP strategic is intrinsic alongside other strategic relationships that have been established and will play an integral part in the growth of the programme. The project will be delivered across the Leeds City Region focusing on the priority sectors of:

- Hospitality & Tourism
- Medical Technology
- Fintech & Business
- Transport & Logistics
- Manufacturing & Engineering
- Creative & Digital
- Construction, Low carbon & Environmental technology

### **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 Staffing Implications**

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

## **6 External Consultees**

6.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

## **7 Recommendations**

7.1 Panel Members are asked to note and comment on the progress against the “Building Workforce Skills and Attracting Talent” priority of the Employment and Skills Plan.

## **8 Background Documents**

None.

## **9 Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Discover Digital