



Name of meeting: Cabinet

Date: 14th July 2022

Title of report: **Aspire , Achieve, and Include : Kirklees Employment and Skills Plan 2022 - 2025**

Purpose of report: To present Aspire , Achieve, and Include : Kirklees Employment and Skills Plan 2022 - 2025. To summarise its co-production and development and outline the priorities and associated actions . The report requests approval for the Council to adopt the plan and seeks delegated authority to progress with our key strategic partners with the implementation and planned delivery of activity.

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Yes More than 2 wards
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u>	Key Decision – Yes Private Report/Private Appendix – No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes If no give the reason, why not
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	David Shepherd , Strategic Director, Growth and Regeneration
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?	Not applicable
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	Not applicable
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Graham Turner , Portfolio Holder Growth and Regeneration.

Electoral wards affected: All

Ward councillors consulted: No

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes - no individuals identified in the report.

1. Summary

- 1.1 'Aspire, Achieve, Include' is the 2022-2025 Post-16 Employment and Skills Plan for Kirklees. It explains how the Local Authority, working closely with partners across the borough, will support and invest in the local employment and skills system over the next three years.
- 1.2 The plan proposes a series of new partnership-based actions, and a new collaborative approach to oversee the delivery of those actions. It provides an agreed list of actions and priorities, the details and delivery of which will then be worked on by local stakeholders.
- 1.3 The plan will contribute to the delivery and achievement of the Council Plan – in particular, the 'sustainable economy' and 'aspire and achieve' themes – and will play an important part in our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 1.4 The plan will also help us to maximise the opportunities arising from the UK Government's Levelling up White paper, Devolution, and the Mayoral pledge by highlighting priorities to be tackled by increased local investment and the co-design of local, regional and government programmes.
- 1.5 Aspire, Achieve, and Include does not exist in isolation, it sits alongside and builds upon the Our Kirklees Future Learning Strategy and Kirklees Economic Strategy. It is the key link between these key long term strategies allowing Kirklees to harness the economic benefits from the quality of learning Kirklees Futures will deliver and ensuring the Skilled and Ambitious people strand of the Kirklees Economic Strategy is achieved.
- 1.6 The Employment and Skills plan is designed to inform and work alongside the forthcoming employer lead Local Skills and Improvement Plan - a key document referenced in the Levelling up White paper as part of the mission to improve skills and Training and the ambition to put Local employers at the heart of skills provision.
- 1.7 Aspire, Achieve, and Include is also designed to align with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority investment priorities as detailed in the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy (2021 – 2024) which identifies Good Jobs and Skills and Training as key investment priorities. This is necessary in order to ensure we are well placed to maximise on any future funding opportunities which will present themselves as a result of the introduction of the UKSPF.

2. Information required to take a decision

Background

- 2.1** In 2020 work began on the production of a Post 16 Employment and Skills plan for Kirklees. The purpose of the commission was to support the development of a coherent employment and skills plan to support residents with access to employment and skills opportunities.
- 2.2** The plan builds upon a clear evidence base and sets out a partnership action plan that will help residents into work and ensures that businesses can access the skills they need now and in the future.
- 2.3** The development of the Employment and Skills plan involved the following activity :
- Working with EMSI to provide detailed insight into skills and labour market trends ensuring data led intelligence was utilised.
 - Employer Input - An online survey for employers to explore skills gaps , shortages, and attitudes to training.
 - Stakeholder input - An initial list of key stakeholders was provided. Each consultee was given the opportunity to contribute in person , by telephone or in writing . Group sessions were also facilitated when appropriate .
- 2.4** This information was then analysed, and a narrative produced that joins the different parts of the evidence base together to convey the salient messages clearly and concisely.
- 2.5** An initial draft plan was produced in October 2021 . Stakeholders were then reengaged to ascertain their thoughts and opinions on the draft document . This was an important step as many of the key stakeholders had changed and there was a need to re-establish relationships and partnerships .

High level Summary

- 2.6** The plan draws on feedback from over 250 local businesses and education providers as well as key stakeholder engagement.
- 2.7** It proposes a series of new partnership-based actions, a new partnerships group to oversee the delivery of those actions and explains how we will measure success.
- 2.8** The plan was produced with significant partner input and stakeholder engagement which led to the themes of **Aspire** , **Achieve** , and **Include** as the driving principles behind the plan.
- **Aspire:** we want our young people and adults to aim high, to be proud of where they are from and to take advantage of the many opportunities that exist in Kirklees, both now and in the future. We will ensure that the

necessary learning pathways, wraparound support, and opportunities to experience the world of work are in place to help them do that.

- **Achieve:** we want Kirklees to be a place where everyone can fulfil their potential in education, in work and in life. This means making good quality learning available to everyone, supporting people to progress or to retrain, and working with our businesses to invest in the development of the local workforce.
- **Include:** as our local economy grows and evolves, a wide range of new jobs and careers will become available. It recognises and seeks to tackle the challenges the Covid 19 Pandemic has highlighted regarding inequality and loneliness and the effect this has on residents' abilities to engage with and benefit from support. We are committed to ensuring that local people are in the best place to take advantage of these opportunities, regardless of their background or starting point.

2.9 The plan is structured around four priority areas with an agreed list of actions and priorities which will be working on in collaboration with our partners :

- **Empowering our Young People** - The actions in this priority area are designed to help the young people of Kirklees – regardless of their personal circumstances or background – find good quality employment and progress in work.
- **Digital Inclusion** - Employers in Kirklees tell us that skills gaps in IT and digital competencies are more prominent than any other type of skills gap, impacting on both competitiveness and growth.
- **Supporting our communities to Learn and Progress** - Kirklees has a high-quality employment and skills offer that engages residents from disadvantaged groups and reconnects them with the labour market. We know that this kind of provision has a multitude of benefits for learners and for the economy. It can improve health and wellbeing, raise aspirations and achievement, and make people more employable. It can also increase the supply of skills to support our key sectors, reduce the number of residents without any formal qualifications and increase the number qualified to higher levels.
- **Skills for the Future** - We know that different industry sectors will recover from the effects of the pandemic at different rates. Construction, IT, professional services, and green technologies are likely to show strong growth. Health and social care sector remain a priority and will continue to employ many local people .A large number of jobs are also at risk of automation. But with challenge comes opportunity and we are committed to ensuring that our people can obtain the skills and attributes they need to succeed and thrive.

Employment & Skills Partnership Board

- 2.10** The plan recommends the formation of an Employment & Skills Partnership Board to oversee the delivery of this plan. The partnership board will have representation from further and higher education, work-based learning, employers from sectors of local strategic significance, business representative organisations, the voluntary sector, the local authority, and local government agencies.
- 2.11** A non-LA chair would be appointed with all secretariate provided by The Employment and Skills team of Kirklees Council. A suggested membership list is provided in Appendix B.
- 2.12** The partnership board will oversee the agreed list of actions and priorities, and develop the details and delivery plans and measures of success.
- 2.13** An initial meeting will be scheduled for .Followed initially by 6 weekly meeting to begin work on the production of more detailed action plans and agree timelines for specific actions . These meetings will then revert to quarterly to monitor progress and will consider the sustainability of the actions in this strategy, especially those supported by short term funding.

Cost breakdown

- 2.14** There are no specific costs identified in the Employment and Skills plan , however adoption of its principles and goals may mean future investment. The commitment to collaboration We will actively seek opportunities for external sources of funding wherever possible.

3. Implications for the Council

Working with People

- 3.1** Aspire , Achieve, and Include builds on the council's collaborative and restorative approach and reflects its shared outcomes. It will contribute to the delivery and achievement of the Council Plan – in particular, the 'sustainable economy' and 'aspire and achieve' themes – and will play an important part in our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3.2** As a local authority we are ambitious for the place and the people who live and work within our district. Making sure that people have the skills to get a job and progress in work and employers have people with the right skills they need for growth is a key priority .

Working with Partners

- 3.3** From its inception, Aspire , Achieve, and Include has been co-produced and developed through collaboration and engagement with Stakeholders
- 3.4** A new Employment and Skills Partnership Board will be established to oversee the delivery of this plan. The Board will have representation from Further and Higher Education, Work-based learning providers, Employers (from sectors of local strategic significance), Business representative organisations, the Voluntary Sector, the Local Authority, and Local Government Agencies.

Place Based Working

- 3.5** Where Kirklees residents live shapes their experiences and outcomes and has an impact on their personal economic and social circumstances. Places and neighbourhoods are important and influential to both everyday experience and to longer-term outcomes for individuals including their health, economic footprint, and employability.
- 3.6** Analysis of data, alongside local intelligence, has informed the discussions that shape Aspire , Achieve, and Include . Transparent sharing of data will continue to enable all partners to be responsive to the changing demographics and their changing needs within Kirklees, and our internal place-based analysis will shape future interventions.
- 3.7** Our understanding of Place will continue to influence the way we collaborate with partners, providing the aspiration and challenge to local people, appropriate to their needs.

Climate Change and Air Quality

- 3.8** The recommendations contained within this Cabinet Report and the appended Employment and Skill plan do not directly impact on the climate and air quality. However, many of the key priorities and actions contribute towards a cleaner and greener future for the people of Kirklees.

Improving outcomes for children

- 3.9** The recommendations contained within this Cabinet Report and the appended Employment and Skill plan do not directly impact on improving outcomes for Children . However, many of the key priorities and actions contribute indirectly towards improving outcomes of Children in Kirklees.

Other (e.g. Legal/Financial or Human Resources) Consultees and their opinions

3.10 There are no direct legal implications in adoption of the plan

3.11 The development of a detailed delivery plan to support the priorities and actions will have implications for future commissioning however as this is partnership document it is likely that this will be beyond the LA itself .

4. Next steps and timelines

4.1 Upon endorsement by Cabinet .An initial meeting of the Employment and Skills Partnership Board will be arranged, and terms of reference agreed.

4.2 Work will begin immediately on the development of detailed actions plans against each of the priority areas and identified actions.

5. . Officer recommendations and reasons

That cabinet note the report and formally adopt Aspire , Achieve and Include as our Employment and Skills plan 2022 - 2025.

That Cabinet delegate authority to the Director of Growth and Regeneration and the Service Director for Skills and Regeneration, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Growth and Regeneration to take forward the implementation of the plan .

Cabinet agrees to receive regular progress reports on the delivery of the plan.

Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder supports the endorsement of 'Aspire, Achieve, Include' the Post 16 Employment and Skills plan for Kirklees. Our economy is changing rapidly, this poses both challenges and opportunities for Kirklees. Making sure that people have the skills to get a job and progress in work and employers have people with the right skills they need for growth is a key priority. 'Aspire, Achieve, include' explains how the council, collaborating closely with partners across the borough, will support and invest in the local employment and skills system over the next three years. This will ensure we are well placed to support the Mayoral Combined Authority with the delivery of its Employment and Skills related Mayoral pledges and maximise the opportunities arising from the UK Governments Levelling up White paper and its ambition to put local employers at the heart of skills provision.

Contact officer

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Background Papers and History of Decisions

Kirklees Economic Strategy

Our Kirklees Futures :Our Approach to Learning (Kirklees Council , September 2021)

West Yorkshire Investment Strategy 2021 - 2024

Levelling Up the United Kingdom White Paper - DLUHC, February 2022

Service Director responsible

Edward Highfield - Service Director Growth and Regeneration