

**Name of meeting: Economy and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel**

**Date: 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

**Title of report: An Overview of Post 16 Skills , Training and Apprenticeships**

**Purpose of report:**

- To provide and update to the panel on activity related to Post 16 Employment and Skills activity in the district.
- To provide and present an overview of programmes being delivered directly by the LA.
- To provide and update on the Employment and Skills partnership, formed in November of 2022 to oversee the delivery of the districts Employment and skills plan, Aspire, Achieve, and Include.
- The report invites the Economy and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel for any comments, feedback, or areas they would like further information on in future session.

<b>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? Decisions having a particularly significant effect on a single ward may also be treated as if they were key decisions.</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>  If yes give the reason why
<b>Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)</u>?</b>	<b>No</b>  <b>Private Report/Private Appendix – Yes/No</b>
<b>The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?</b>	<b>No</b>  If no give the reason why not
<b>Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> &amp; name</b>  <b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</b>  <b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?</b>	<b>David Shepherd , Strategic Director , Growth and Regeneration 2/10/2023</b>  <b>N/A</b>  <b>N/A</b>

**Electoral wards affected: All**

**Ward councillors consulted: n/a**

**Public or private: Public**

**Has GDPR been considered? YES**

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 Our economy is changing rapidly. Making sure that people have the right skills to get a job and progress in work is key to economic growth through ensuring employers have access to people with the right skills.
- 1.2 Despite improvement in recent years in Kirklees our adult population have lower skills levels than the England average. 8.6% of Kirklees adults (23,200) have no qualifications – inline with the regional average (9%) and more than England (7%); qualifications lag the national average at NVQ Levels 1 to 3. At Level 4, just 34% of residents have a level 4 qualification or better, compared with 45 %% for England.
- 1.3 Low skill levels are one of the factors impacting on productivity and in turn wage levels. Gross weekly pay for Kirklees residents was -4.5 % of the English average in 2022 ; wages growth lagged that of England as a whole between 2015-2022.
- 1.4 The Adult Skills landscape is complex and made up of local, regional, and national policy and programmes with funding managed by at least nine Whitehall departments. In West Yorkshire the approach is a combination of Local and Regional. Local Authorities are closer to their communities. As the labour market fluctuates and behaves differently in each Local Authority this requires a flexible response to support individuals to retrain, upskill and progress towards employment or self-employment. Regional coordination provides the opportunity to build upon best practice from local 'hubs' and provides economies for scale.
- 1.5 Last year officers presented a report giving a top line introduction and overview of skills policy and programmes available in Kirklees for both businesses and individuals to support with skills development.
- 1.6 This report provides a more in-depth overview and update of the work of the Employment and Skills Service with the Local Authority. Additionally, it provides and update on the Employment and Skills partnership who have oversight for the Employment and Skills plan - 'Aspire, Achieve, Include'. The full plan can be found in Appendix A

## **2. Information required to take a decision.**

### *Headline Summary*

- 2.1** Despite the unemployment rate remaining steady at 4.4 % , other statistics are concerning. The employment rate the lowest in the region at 73 % and the economic inactive rate the highest at 27 %
- 2.2** Whilst Kirklees outperforms the regional average for percentage of young people achieving level 2 or 3 equivalent by aged 19 ( 81 % and 60 % ) we still lag behind in higher level skills in the adult population .
- 2.3** The Employment and Skills team continue to deliver at pace on projects and programmes we enter the final year of the delivery of ESF programmes although increased scrutiny from contract leads is proving challenging .
- 2.4** The Employment and Skills Partnership Boards oversees the agreed list of actions and priorities detailed in the districts Employment and Skills plan *Aspire* , *achieve*, and *include*. It will monitor the data on employment and skills and responds accordingly. The partnership first meeting took place in November 2022 and has met four times in the last year with good engagement and attendance.
- 2.5** The development of the LSIP has been led by the Chambers, with support from an advisory Board made up of members from the provider landscape, and the Local and Mayoral Combined Authority. The plan was approved by August of this year.

### *Current programmes - LA delivered / Accountable body*

- 2.6** A large number of programmes supporting Kirklees employers and people who live in Kirklees exist. This paper will give a top line summary those which the Local Authority Employment and Skills team are the accountable body for and actively delivering and monitoring for performance in Kirklees.
- 2.7** Consolidated figures for last financial years performance across programmes has been completed. A report summarising this can be found in Appendix B . Highlights includes number of individuals supported, number of employers supported, and value of money commissioned to delivery partners (primarily VCS).
- 2.8** For this years, all reported figures are consolidated and confirmed until the end of Q1 ( June 22 ) Any major variations in performance will be highlighted at Scrutiny panel.
- 2.9** Adult Community Learning - Performance of the last quarter remains strong with the programme on track to deliver all KPIs with over 900 learners enrolled on courses to date (end of June 22) and a pass rate of 98 %.

Quality of provision is high and has been acknowledged by WYCA as an exemplar performer.

**2.10** Employment Kirklees - Stage One of the employment Kirklees programme is in delivery with Paddock Community trust and C+K careers both working with individuals who are in insecure employment or looking to progress their careers. Demand has been very strong in the over 25 elements of the programme.

Programme	Actual	Profile	Variance
Emp West plus 25	148	95	53
Emp West 15 to 25	35	55	-20
Total	183	150	33

Market engagement for Stage 2 of the programme has taken place with over 30 organisations attending the sessions.

Mayoral Pilot programmes are still in development.

*Aspire, Achieve and Include: Employment and Skills Plan 2022 -2025*

**2.11** Kirklees Apprenticeship for All / Apprenticeship Levy Transfer / Kirklees apprenticeship grant -The ESF funded Kirklees apprenticeship for ALL programme is working at pace to meet its contractual targets as we progress into the final 6 months of delivery.

Programme	Actual	Profile	Variance
AFA	1117	1080	37
Total	183	150	33

Additional scrutiny from DWP is causing significant challenges with the programme as we respond to asks for additional information at short notice.

Apprenticeship Levy Transfer is continuing to gain momentum to date £ 91 K of Kirklees council apprenticeship levy has been committed for transferring to Kirklees SMEs this will cover the training costs associated with apprenticeships . Additionally working with the Combined Authority, the employer engagement team have facilitated the transfer of a further 236kof Levy from large employers to fund 28 apprenticeships based in the Kirklees district.

Across the district 71 new apprenticeship starts have been supported by the Kirklees Apprenticeship grants - a total value of £ 177 K . The grant is now reopened, and this figure is expected to increase.

**2.12** Local supported Employment Initiative - The DWP Local Supported Employment programme is a joint programme between Employment & Skills alongside REAL employment who are delivering the service to residents.

Outcome	Actual	Profile	Variance
On programme	39	34	5
Into work	3	0	3

As REAL have delivered a supported employment offer to the residents of Kirklees for a number of years, the Kirklees programme is offering support to the other LAs delivering this programme and have delivered a presentation to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority officers .

**2.13** Multiply - After the successful implementation and completion of year 1 of the programme where Kirklees delivered 2 /3 of the regional community strand outputs year 2 has continued at pace .

Programme	Actual	Profile	Variance
Multiply	316	150	166

Attention has now turned to measuring the impact of last year's provision and setting up accurate tracking and monitoring beyond the ask of DfE .

The appointment of delivery partner for the employer strand of Multiply programme has been completed . This commissioning led by WYCA is a regional approach with Calderdale College and Realise training being successful . We are working with both organisations to ensure successful implementation in Kirklees.

**2.14** UKSPF programmes - Digital Hubs / PACE / ESOL

Implementation of these programmes was delayed by 3 weeks as we awaited the decision on the credible plan submitted by WYCA. All programmes are now in or have recently completed the commissioning stages and a verbal update can be given at the scrutiny meeting .

**2.15** Works Better Enhanced / Works Better 15 to25 Positive minds / YEP 2  
The ESF funded Works Better suite of programmes to support those out of work are now in the final 6 months of delivery . Performance figures are below – all projects are within the agreed project tolerance.

Programme	Actual	Profile	Variance
WBE	4354	4534	-180
Positive minds	876	950	-74
YEP 2	1095	1000	95

The Positive Minds programme has now completed delivery and we are pleased to report that we have reach the contractually required Outputs for

number on programme. Attention has now turned to transitioning participants onto other programmes to ensure continuous support.

The remaining programmes are all on track to achieve the top line outputs required however there are some sub targets where underperformance is risk , most notably the unemployed to inactive ratio . This is not unexpected due to the fact the targets are based on national figures and were committed to pre pandemic and there is little flexibility from DWP in this area.

Financial performance remains strong and external claims will be maximised ensuring the maximum amount of grant funding is achieved.

**2.16** Regional programmes - Skills for Growth /Skills Connect / Skills Bootcamps - The Skill Connect Screen Yorkshire programme from the previous 4 cohorts from the past 3 years, 21% of participants were from the Kirklees region. This has increased going from 8-9% in the first two cohorts, to 15% and 24% in the latest two cohorts. Participants from Kirklees have gone on to have long-term contracts working with production companies, have continued their education both at University and more long-term Craft Courses, they have also worked on both factual tv shows and films across the region.

Additionally last financial year, 13% of Skills Bootcamp participants were from Kirklees and I'm pleased that to date, this has increased to 18%.

Work is ongoing with WYCA officers to increase the Local Authorities input into both the design of these courses , the deliver, and the marketing to ensure they are contributing towards the skills needs of the district .

*Aspire Achieve and Include*

**2.17** Adopted by Cabinet '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. See Appendix B for a copy of the plan

**2.18** It details a series of partnership-based actions and explains how we will measure success and is overseen by a partnership board which has 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.

**2.19** 'Aspire , Achieve, and Include' is 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 and the Combined Authority Employment and Skills framework. This is necessary in order to

ensure we are well placed to maximise on any future funding opportunities which will present themselves via the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy.

**2.20** The Employment and Skills partnership boards oversees the agreed list of actions and priorities. It will monitor the data on employment and skills and respond accordingly . The partnership also oversees local and regional provision - monitoring performance and seeking to exert strategic influence and direction to ensure all provision has the impact required.

**2.21** The Partnership has met four times in the last year with good engagement and attendance from partners.

**2.22** Four subgroups have been identified and are working on the delivery of related actions.

- Empowering of Young people – Apprenticeship / Pre-Apprenticeship focus.
- Digital Inclusion – focus on skills development and gaps in provision.
- Employment Kirklees – overseeing funding allocation and deliver of the Employment West Yorkshire programme contribution towards Supporting our Communities to Learn and Progress.
- Send Employment Forum - Aims to increase the number of supporting internships and supported employment opportunities in Kirklees and providing oversight and challenge to the Local Supported employment contract detailed in 2.12.

The partnership has also had significant input into the TRU Social value ask for Kirklees and is working with partners on the developing outcomes from Cultural heart and other major infrastructure projects .

*LSIPs ( Local Skills Improvement Plans ) and LSIFS ( Local Skills improvement Funds )*

**2.23** Local Skills improvement plans( LSIPS ) are part of a suite of reforms launched in DfE’s “Skills for Jobs” White Paper that aim to put employers more firmly at the heart of the skills system.

**2.24** Led by designated Employer Representative Bodies , LSIPs will set out a clear articulation of employers’ skills needs and the priority changes required in a local area to help ensure post-16 technical education and skills provision is more responsive and flexible in meeting local labour market skills needs. The product will be a report setting out those key priorities, but the process to develop the report, i.e., bringing together employers and providers to understand skills needs and provision, is as important as the report itself.

**2.25** In December 2022 the Chamber of Commerce received their funding agreement. The development of the LSIP has been led by the Chambers, with support from an advisory Board made up of members from the provider landscape, local and the Mayoral Combined Authority. The group has met regularly to provide support, advice and guidance to the Chambers and development of the plan.

**2.26** The West Yorkshire plan was published in August 2023 a copy can be viewed in Appendix C.

**2.27** The LSIF ( Local Skills improvement fund ) is intended to enable FE providers to support the delivery of LSIPs in an area. £80m of funding is available for 2023/24 with a 50:50 capital and revenue split, with £85m (capital) available the following year at the national level. A maximum amount is available based on the size of the working population, current skills attainment levels and productivity level of the area. Regional proposals cannot exceed these values:

LSIP Area	Funding Ceiling		
	2023-24	2024-25	Total
West Yorkshire	£3,383,296	£3,594,752	£6,978,048

The funding is intended for new investment in facilities and equipment, fund the delivery of new courses and curriculum, support college leadership, governance and teaching especially at levels 3-5.

In West Yorkshire the Lead organisation is the West Yorkshire Consortium of College, with Kirklees College working closely with them and submitted bids to access funding to develop there engineering and manufacturing offer to increase the use of digital technologies making it more relevant for industry .

### *UKSPF Pillar 3 - People and Skills*

**2.28** The WYCA led sounding group for Pillar 3 of the UKSPF took place on the 28th of June and presented the broad principles and ideas agreed at the LGPS.

Employment West Yorkshire	£4m	Named project in the UKSPF LIP - existing programme working with 5 partner councils using gainshare funding that will be substituted in year 3 with UKSPF – under the principle that gainshare is the funder of last resort
Work and Health Programme	£4m	Open Call for Projects
Community Grants Programme	£4m	Open Call for Projects
Youth Unemployment Programme	£2m	Open Call for Projects
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>£14m</b>	



**2.29** General feedback was that the broad areas where correct however there was concern that the calls and values were prohibitive to smaller localised organisation who would be best placed to deliver support. There was also feedback that the potential for duplication was large and needed to be avoided at all costs .

**2.30** This feedback was repeat at the WYCA E & S committee and officers are now working with WYCA officers to help flex the calls and build on the detail.

**2.31** At the time of writing this report the calls are not live, but it is envisaged they will be by mid-October.

#### *Other activity*

**2.32** Furniture Manufacturing E &S network -The second meeting of this group of key employers took place on 5th July 2023 . As agreed by the employers who attend the network the focus is on filling vacancies now . We were joined by the meeting by the National Bed Federation national lead who is keen to feed back the issues our employers are facing at a national level.

The Employment Kirklees team presented some information on Better off in work calculations to inform and educate the employers on how the universal credit system works and how to support employees who feel benefits are a barrier to them working more hours or increasing pay. This was extremely well received, and we have several requests to go into the workplace to support their employees with careers advice and carry out these individualised calculations for them.

Employers also agreed to share job description of the roles they are struggling to recruit for so we can design a skills-based programme to support resident into employment . The intention is to fund this by the Adult education and Skills Bootcamp budget .

**2.33** NHS workforce development programme – The Local Authority attends the regular meeting of Health and Social care partners workforce development group ( including all NHS partners, Locala and social care employers ) . The group have identified refugees as target group they would like to support as part of their current inclusive employment offer. We have engaged them with our migrating team and are supporting them in developing an employment offer.

The Princes Trust funding young person engagement programme is performing well with some successful outcomes in linking young people with disadvantage jobs in the sector - with health care assistant jobs in the NHS proving the most attractive.

**2.34** It is important to note this is not a complete list of all provision - research by the Local Government association has recently identified over 49 national programmes delivered across 9 Whitehall departments which state skills in their activity. As our ability to monitor and influence these is limited, we have not covered these for the purposes of this report.

### **3. Implications for the Council**

#### **3.1 Working with People**

Our skills work considers the impacts of people in everything it does. By its nature, we are seeking to ensure that the skills offer the district has will enable everyone who lives in Kirklees, regardless of their background to have a thriving future.

#### **3.2 Working with Partners**

We recognise that we cannot operate in isolation and that creating the conditions for local growth requires intense collaboration across the public, private and third sector. From its inception, Aspire, Achieve, and Include has been co-produced and developed through collaboration and engagement with Stakeholders. The Employment and Skills Partnership Board has been established to oversee the delivery of this plan and skills related programmes. The Board has 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.

#### **3.3 Place Based Working**

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.

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.

Our understanding of Place will continue to influence the way we work with partners, providing the aspiration and challenge to local people, appropriate to their needs.

#### **3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality**

The information 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.

The growth of the green economy and the need for individuals with the skills to support this transition is a growing theme of skills development and is reflected in project pipeline activity related to the mayoral pledges.

### **3.5 Improving outcomes for children**

The information contained within this 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 .

### **3.6 Financial Implications for the people living or working in Kirklees**

Low skill levels are one of the factors impacting on productivity and in turn wage levels. Gross weekly pay for Kirklees residents was -4.5 % of the English average in 2022 ; wages growth lagged that of England as a whole between 2015-2022. By improving skill levels of people who live and work in Kirklees there is the potential to increase gross weekly pay and contribute toward the shared outcome of Sustainable Economy

### **3.7 Other (e.g. Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)/Legal/Financial or Human Resources) Consultees and their opinions**

There are no direct legal/ financial implications in associated with this report .

## **4. Consultation**

N/A

## **5. Engagement**

N/A

## **6. Next steps and timelines**

The report invites the Economy and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel for any comments or feedback on content.

Work on Skills is ongoing and 2023 is a key year with the development of the Local Skills improvement plan and work of the Employment and Skills partnership continues.

Development of regional programmes detailed in the skills pipeline will commence to business case development at which point further information can be provided.

## **7. Officer recommendations and reasons**

The report invites the Economy and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Panel for any comments or feedback on content.

## **8. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations**

That the Committee notes content of the report and agrees to receive regular progress reports on the delivery of the employment and skills plan and Skills programmes.

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.

## **9. Contact officer**

Gillian Wallace, Head of Employment and Skills, 01484 221000,  
[gillian.wallace@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:gillian.wallace@kirklees.gov.uk)

## **10. Background Papers and History of Decisions**

**Kirklees Employment and Skills plan 2022 - 2025 - adopted June 2022.**  
**[Kirklees Economic Strategy - Kirklees Council 2019 - 2025](#) - Kirklees Council**  
**[Kirklees Economic Recovery Plan](#) - Kirklees Council 2020**  
**[Our Kirklees Futures :Our Approach to Learning 2019 - 2030 - Kirklees Council](#)**  
**[West Yorkshire Employment and Skills Framework](#)**  
**[West Yorkshire Investment Strategy 2021 - 2024](#) - West Yorkshire Combined Authority**  
**[Levelling Up the United Kingdom White Paper 2022](#)- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities**

## **11. Service Director responsible**

Edward Highfield , Service Director Skills and Regeneration