

**Name of meeting: ECONOMY AND NEIGHBOURHOODS SCRUTINY PANEL**

**Date: 5<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2020**

**Title of report: KIRKLEES LEARNING, SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT PLAN UPDATE**

**Purpose of report:**

- To update the Panel on the development of a Learning, Skills and Employment Plan for Kirklees and on some of the themes/issues that will be considered as the plan develops.

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
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u>	No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Karl Battersby 24 February 2020
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?	n/a
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	n/a
Cabinet member <a href="#">portfolio</a>	Cllr Peter McBride Cllr Carole Pattison

**Electoral wards affected: All**

**Ward councillors consulted: N/a**

**Public or private: Public**

**Has GDPR been considered? Yes, n/a**

**1. Summary**

**1.1 This report**

- reviews the background to the development of an all-age, Learning Skills and Employment Plan (LSEP) for Kirklees and sets out the objectives of the plan
- presents a snapshot of some of the learning, skills and employment issues/challenges that will be addressed as the plan is developed
- highlights the specific opportunities to develop career pathways for the construction sector to capitalise on the major infrastructure, housing and other projects proposed in Kirklees over the next decade
- sets out proposals for the involvement of the Scrutiny Panel in the development of the LSEP.

## 2. Information required to take a decision

### *Learning, Skills and Employment Plan*

2 The Council has commenced the development of an all-age, Learning Skills and Employment Plan for Kirklees, working with schools, Kirklees College, the University of Huddersfield and other key stakeholders. The LSEP will seek to build on and add value to existing plans and strategies, including the Children and Young People's Plan, the emerging Learning Plan; and the Adult and Community Learning Strategy. It will focus on strengthening the links between these plans and on improving pathways between different stages of learning and work.

2.1 The LSEP aims to develop a shared approach (with schools, Information, Advice and Guidance providers, the College/University and employers) to realise the following objectives:

- to help young people make more informed choices around learning and work;
- to support residents into fulfilling employment and incentivise their efforts to upskill;
- to develop clear pathways and progression routes between different stages of learning and work;
- to afford vocational and academic learning with equal weight and value and acknowledges the importance of community learning as a platform for engagement and progression;
- to ensure that business can access the skills they need now and in the future to improve their productivity;
- to strengthen opportunities for employers to inform curriculum development as well as help raise learner aspirations and provide effective work experience; and
- to build a sustainable local network of high quality learning and training providers.

### *Challenges and opportunities to be addressed through the LSEP*

2.2 Although educational attainment at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 is at or just below the England average, Kirklees has a high performing post-16 education system. The two main 6<sup>th</sup> form colleges are rated 'Outstanding' by OFSTED and Kirklees College is rated 'Good'. Outcomes for students – whether through A level, Apprenticeship, vocational or mixed routes – are in line with or above national averages and generally well above those of local comparators.

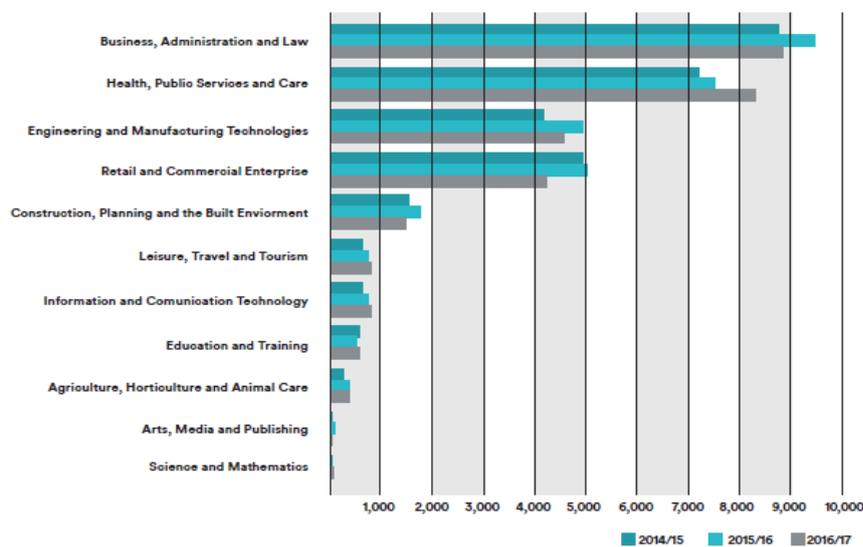


Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) 2018 and 2019

2.3 Kirklees's performance on young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) remains better than the regional average and that of neighbouring local authorities. For boys, some BAME groups and some white working class groups remain at higher risk of becoming NEET, but girls in general, and BAME girls in particular, tend to have lower rates of NEET and good rates of progression. The Council's continued investment in Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance, working with C&K Careers and other partners, remains a key strand of efforts to address this challenge.

- 2.4 Attainment at A level remains in the top quartile nationally. Kirklees ranks 27<sup>th</sup> nationally for the % of students achieving AAB or higher grades at A level and 11<sup>th</sup> for average APS (A level points) per entry, well above the regional averages. It ranks in the top 10% nationally against a number of value-added or progress measures.
- 2.5 Despite this picture, some significant challenges remain. In the Early Years Foundation Stage (age 5) 69.7% of pupils achieve a good level of development but this remains below the national average of 71.9%. At Key Stage 1, almost two-thirds of pupils achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics and the gap to the national average is reducing. Childrens Services is working with schools and other partners to continue to drive improvements as there is a strong case to suggest that intervention at Early Years/Key Stage 1 can have a significant impact on individual learning outcomes later in life.
- 2.6 Progress into Level 3 (A level) qualifications, Level 3 BTECs, Apprenticeships and beyond is determined by prior GCSE scores, and in particular the requirement to achieve GCSE Grade 4 in English and Maths. Whilst Kirklees students demonstrate higher than average progress scores in both subjects at resit, 39.2% of Kirklees 19 year olds in 2018 had not achieved a Level 3 qualification.
- 2.7 Although Kirklees again outperforms the national average on this measure (the comparator for England as a whole is 42.8%), the recent Augar review of post-18 education highlights that the vast majority of young people in this position achieve no further qualifications. Addressing this issue be an important focus for the LSEP.
- 2.8 For those young people seeking work-based vocational training the range of pre-Apprenticeships and Apprenticeships available may be limited and performance is more variable. The number of Apprenticeship starts in Kirklees has fallen significantly from over 4,500 in 2015/16 to 3,200 in 2018/19. The graph below demonstrates Apprenticeships starts by subject area at Leeds City Region level:

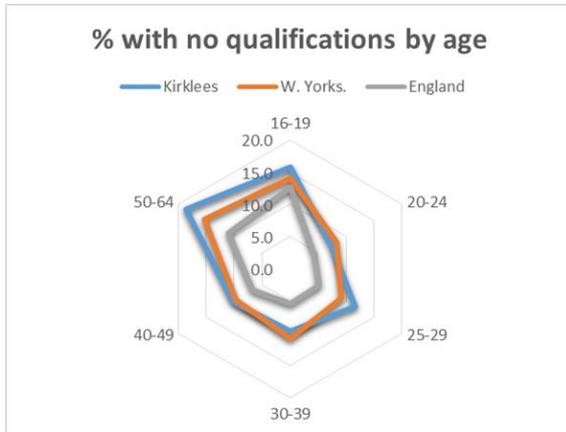
Trend in apprenticeship starts by subject area, Leeds City Region



Source: Department for Education.  
Note: Figures are provisional

- 2.9 In 2017, achievement rates by Kirklees College for Level 2 Apprenticeships (81.5% compared with the England average of 68.2%) and Level 3 (83.3% against 73.3%) were outstanding although the numbers of learners were comparatively low (360). The performance of some private sector Apprenticeships providers is not as strong and there are concerns about the predominance of Level 2 Apprenticeships which offer less long-term benefit to the learner or the economy.

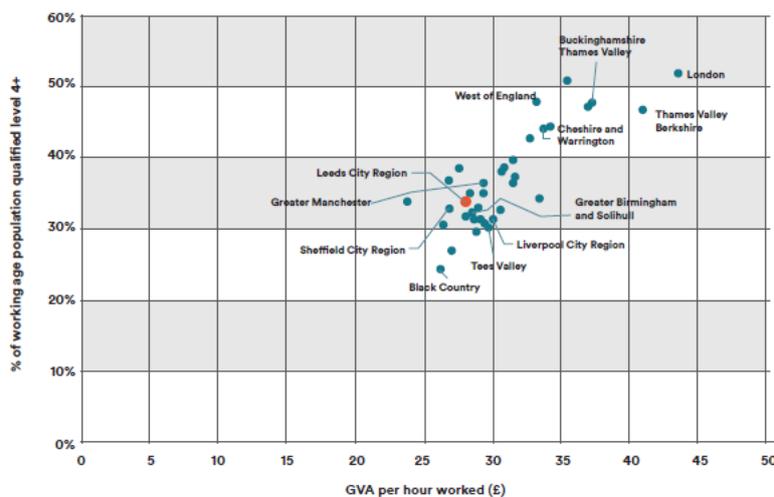
- 2.10 Employers report significant challenges arising from the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy – both for those larger firms who are in scope for the levy and SMEs who are not but for whom provision may be limited by the availability of funding. Improving both access to and the quality of Apprenticeships for Kirklees learners and employers will be an important focus for the LSEP.
- 2.11 The proportion of those aged 16-64 who have no or very low level qualifications remains a significant challenge. Between January and December 2018 there were 28,100 people with no qualifications, representing 10.4% of the working age population (compared with the England average of 7.6%). Whilst the number has fallen in absolute terms since 2011, Kirklees has remained stubbornly above the England average.



% with no qualifications by age, Kirklees, West Yorkshire and England

- 2.12 Re-engaging adults with learning may be challenging and requires a long-term approach, particularly where they have had a negative experience of school. This remains a focus of the Council’s adult and community learning programme which, working with community-based delivery partners, aims to achieve learner progression towards more formal learning. In this context working collaboratively with Kirklees College to build effective, supportive progression routes remains a continued priority.
- 2.13 At the other end of the qualifications spectrum, there is strong evidence linking productivity and the supply of high level skills in local labour markets. In Kirklees, Gross Value Added (GVA) per head was £18,827 in 2018; it was £50,547 for London. In Kirklees 33.1% of the working age population is educated to Level 4 (degree level) compared with 53.1% for London.

High level skills and productivity by LEP area

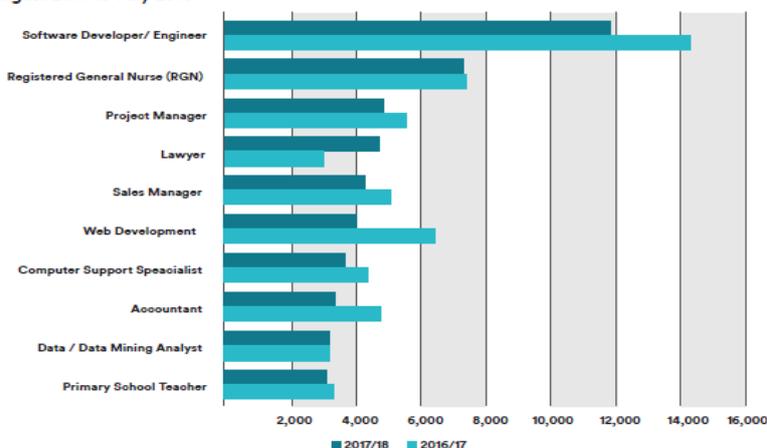


Source: Annual Population Survey; ONS LEP level estimates of productivity

- 2.14 The presence of high level skills can support effective use of technology within businesses and increase the focus on product/process innovation; it can support the acceleration of more productive business models; and help to attract inward investment which in turn supports technology transfer and good practice.

- 2.15 Research by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority/Leeds City Region LEP highlights a number of changes in the demand for labour across the city region. The research identifies growth in demand for both high skilled occupations (e.g. high level scientific, engineering and technology roles, professional and associate professional occupations) as well as in lower paid caring roles including childcare, adult care and nursing assistant roles. This is considered likely to persist in the short-to-medium term.

Top occupations in greatest demand overall based on volume of job postings, Leeds City Region, August 2017 to July 2018



Source: Labour Insight

Note: Analysis limited to jobs classified to SOC major groups 1-3

- 2.16 Digital occupations occupied four of the top ten occupations based on online job postings across the City Region. The research also highlighted demand for other key skills including project management, accountancy and legal skills.
- 2.17 The LSEP will draw together research on employer demand for skills in the Kirklees labour market, utilising both existing data and primary research with employers to develop a clear picture of current and future recruitment plans, skills gaps within the existing workforce and future/anticipated skills shortages. This will highlight both generic skills and sector-specific skills to support future programming by FE/HE and other providers.

#### *Construction sector*

- 2.18 The next decade or more will see an unparalleled period of investment in Kirklees road, rail and broadband infrastructure, including a number of major highways schemes; the Transpennine Upgrade, expected to see investment of up to £1bn in improving rail infrastructure between Huddersfield and Dewsbury; roll out of full fibre broadband via CityFibre; delivery of 31,000 new homes over the period to 2031; and transformational town centre regeneration programmes in Huddersfield and Dewsbury through Blueprint schemes for both centres.
- 2.19 These exciting opportunities will emerge during a period of significant skills and recruitment challenges for the construction and engineering sectors. Major projects like Crossrail and HS2 are acting as significant 'magnets' for skills and expertise and the longer-term impacts for the sector of the UK's departure from the European Union remain unclear.
- 2.20 The Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) highlight the need to recruit 10,000 new workers in Yorkshire and the Humber alone to meet forecast demand to 2023. Failure to address this challenge will create the dual risk that the Council, Network Rail and other partners may not have access to the workforce required to deliver these projects; and that local residents and businesses may not benefit from this investment.
- 2.21 In this context, the Council is working with CITB, Kirklees College and other partners to develop a more strategic and joined up approach to construction skills and employment in Kirklees. The opportunities include:

- reviewing our approach to working with young people to raise awareness of the range of opportunities across the construction sector and the career pathways available

- identifying opportunities across our project pipeline, rather than on a project-by-project basis, to create high quality Apprenticeships and other training/employment opportunities
- effective use of the Council's procurement process to optimise social value through major contracts
- ensuring there are clear pathways in place for young people (including Traineeships and Level 3 Apprenticeships) and adults seeking to work in the sector.

#### *Next steps for the LSEP*

- 2.22 The research phase of the LSEP project has now commenced and the strategy development phase of the work is expected to commence in early May. It is anticipated that the LSEP will be completed in draft and presented to Cabinet for consideration by September 2020.
- 2.23 There are opportunities for further involvement of the Scrutiny Panel as part of the process of developing the LSEP. This will include a more detailed presentation of the issues, opportunities and emerging priorities at a subsequent meeting.

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

#### **Working with People**

- 3.1 The LSEP is focused on improving outcomes for people and will make a direct contribution to two of the Council's key Corporate Plan outcomes – Aspire and Achieve and Sustainable Economy. The development of the LSEP will be underpinned by effective engagement with learners and employers to shape the content of the strategy.

#### **Working with Partners**

- 3.2 The LSEP will be developed with the Council's key stakeholders including Kirklees Schools; Kirklees College; the University of Huddersfield; C&K Careers; key employers and a range of other partners. The aim will be to build a shared vision, objectives and actions that all partners can endorse and can play an active role in implementing.

#### **Place-based Working**

- 3.3 The development of the LSEP will be informed by engagement with learners, employers and other stakeholders across Kirklees reflecting both communities of interest and communities of place.

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

- 3.4 Development of the LSEP will acknowledge that traditional forms of learning (face to face on a one to many basis) are already changing with online and self-directed learning forming an increasing part of provision. The LSEP will consider how future delivery may be impacted by climate change and both the opportunities and challenges that may result.

#### **Improving Outcomes for Children**

- 3.5 The LSEP will be an all-age learning, skills and employment plan for Kirklees. Building on and adding value to the Children and Young People's Plan, Learning Strategy and other relevant strategies/plans, the LSEP will have a strong focus on improving outcomes for children.

#### **Other (e.g. Legal/Financial or Human Resources)**

- 3.6 The development of the LSEP will be managed through existing staff resource within the Business and Skills team. Implementation of the LSEP may result in a requirement for additional resource when the strategy is finalised and delivery arrangements have been agreed.

## **4 Consultees and their opinions**

4.1 There will be extensive stakeholder engagement to develop the LSEP. Stakeholders have not been consulted in the development of this report.

## **5 Officer recommendations and reasons**

5.1 The Panel is invited to review the contents of the report, and consider:

- the issues, challenges and opportunities that should be included within the initial research phase of the Learning, Skills and Employment Plan
- future engagement of the Panel in the development of the LSEP.

## **6 Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations**

6.1 The Portfolio Holders have been consulted on the report.

## **7 Contact officer**

Chris Duffill  
Head of Business and Skills  
[chris.duffill@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:chris.duffill@kirklees.gov.uk)  
01484 221000 ext: 72354

## **8 Background Papers and History of Decisions**

**N/a**

## **9 Service Director responsible**

Angela Blake  
Service Director- Economy and Skills  
[angela.blake@kirklees.gov.uk](mailto:angela.blake@kirklees.gov.uk)  
01484 221000 ext: 71076