MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GM SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT PARTNERSHIP,
HELD ON TUESDAY 17 OCTOBER AT TRAFFORD TOWN HALL

PRESENT:

Cllr Sean Anstee  GM Combined Authority
Cllr Abdul Jabbar  GM Combined Authority
Cllr Jenny Bullen  GM Combined Authority
Mark Currie  GM Learning Provider Network
Alex Whinnom  GMCVO
Marie Graham  GMCVO
Nick Mellor  Job Centre Plus
Pat McDonagh  GM Unions
Mike Blackburn  GM LEP
Justin Kelly  Siemens
Alison ?
(for Cathy Starbuck)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Gemma Marsh  GM Combined Authority
Nicola McLeod  GM Combined Authority
Emma Stonier  GM Combined Authority

SEP/17/21 INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed members of the Skills and Employment Partnership (SEP) to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Vicky Beer, Theresa Grant, Clive Memmott, Derek O'Toole, Cathy Starbuck, Simon Nokes and Mat Ainsworth.

SEP/17/22 CHAIR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND URGENT BUSINESS

There were no Chair’s announcements or urgent business.

SEP/17/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

SEP/17/24 MINUTES AND ACTIONS

The minutes of the Skills and Employment Partnership, held on 21 July 2017, were submitted for approval.

RESOLVED/:
That the minutes of the Skills and Employment Partnership held on 21 July 2017 be approved as an accurate record.

SEP/17/25 CAREERS AND PARTICPATION – PRESENTATION

Nicola McLeod, Principal Skills Manager, Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) gave a presentation regarding the Greater Manchester Careers and Participation work.

The key items highlighted were;

- 2013 City Deal which provided £6m of investment in Skills including £2m Apprenticeship Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG);
- 3 broad pillars to the strategic plan for Greater Manchester; raising the prestige of careers, building the capacity of staff in schools and embedding employer engagement in education;
- Impact of the investment which included; more than 160 schools working towards a quality mark in careers through Inspiring IAG; 70 schools implementing leadership programmes with 60 leaders and 70 careers coordinators trained and £100k investment in Employer Engagement which had worked with 24 schools and 24 businesses by the end of 2016;
- This then developed into the Careers and Participation Strategy following from the 3 year investment period (2013-2016);
- The four key strands of the Careers and Participation Strategy, which built on knowledge gained from the City Deal; reducing youth unemployment, enhancing the scope and quality of Careers and Employability provision, supporting the system for technical education reform and improving achievement and skills in Maths, English and digital;
- Governance is provided by the Participation, Policy and Performance Advisory Group which feeds into GMCA Skills and Employment governance structures and the Careers and Employability Advisory Group which feeds into the newly formed Education and Employability Board, as well as the Skills and Employment Partnership;
- The Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) themes under this have been developed into 5 priority themes; employer engagement, high quality CEIAG provision, clarity and coherence of the offer, creating an evidence base and Labour Market Information; and
- Expected impact of the work which included; more young people leaving school prepared for work and further study, school leaders and teachers are well informed about career opportunities available to young people and able to support careers and employability provision to the highest quality, more young people advancing into intermediate and advanced level skills areas linked to Greater Manchester’s growth sectors and the development of a robust engagement strategy between education and business.

Comments and questions from the Partnership included;

- Welcomed the commitment to improving CEIAG within Greater Manchester and noted the opportunities arising from this work to shape discussions with the Department for Education (DfE);
Feedback received from schools is that the programme was positive, however the Partnership also noted that clear measurable outcomes regarding the impact would be useful;

Highlighted that the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) should have a role in this as champions and advocates for this work;

Job Centre Plus highlighted that they had a support for schools function which could be useful to link into this work. It was agreed for a further discussion regarding this to take place outside of the meeting;

Funding cuts to careers advice services were highlighted alongside short term contracts. Within this context direct marketing of apprenticeships to young people, for example through social media and/or employers, was noted as being a possible alternative route to raise awareness;

Identified pathways for vulnerable young people, such as care leavers and young offenders, should be considered. It was confirmed that schools hold overall responsibility for providing this support however impact and what can be implemented in relation to carrying out more work with these groups needs to be captured;

Support should also be considered for on the job training and supporting career aspirations for those in work;

Achievements of engaging with schools should be publicised more widely to demonstrate the good work taking place;

Whether consideration had been given to engaging with Social Enterprises and raising the awareness of these with young people;

That Labour Market Information could include reference to Labour Market opportunities, highlighting brands/jobs available and career pathways to these roles;

A question was asked about what businesses were involved in the network and whether this was a targeted approach or was those willing to contribute. It was confirmed that different business sectors and business sizes were represented in the network;

How outcomes of investment in apprenticeships were measured alongside sectors invested in should be considered. It was noted that there had been an increase in expressions of interest in apprenticeships, within UCAS systems, and that there was evidence of an increased awareness of apprenticeships in pupils, teachers and parents. Capturing whether this increased interest has led to pathways to apprenticeships being taken up was noted as being harder to quantify. The Partnership highlighted that the impact of investment should be quantified to ensure it can be measured and schools are able to quality benchmark this for the future;

Greater Manchester Apprenticeship data over the past few months since the introduction of the apprenticeship levy was highlighted, as there had been an increase in numbers for 16-18 and decrease in apprenticeship take up post 25. It was noted as being too early to assess the impact of the levy across Greater Manchester;

Support for young people not in education or training is also needed, the potential of reaching this cohort through the voluntary and community sector was highlighted; and

Thought should be given to increasing the pace of this work across Greater Manchester to ensure it reaches as many young people as possible.

RESOLVED:

1. To note the presentation; and
2. For GMCA and GMCVO to discuss role of Social Enterprises;
3. For GMCA and Job Centre Plus to discuss support for schools function; and
4. To provide the Partnership with an update on quantitative/qualitative metric outcomes once fully developed.

SEP/17/26 WORK AND HEALTH UPDATE - WIDER AGENDA

Mat Ainsworth was unable to attend this meeting so it was agreed a more detailed update would be provided to the next meeting of the Partnership. The Working Well (Work & Health) programme contract award was due imminently and would be followed by a mobilisation period before the programme started receiving referrals.

A Member asked whether the Working Well programmes would support people in work but not on benefits. The Partnership were informed that within the 4 pillars of the Working Well programme it was envisioned that the programme would pick up people who may otherwise not receive support. The comments about supporting people who were out of work but not on benefits would also be highlighted to staff working on the Working Well programmes. A question was also asked about how health fitted into the Early Help proposal. It was confirmed this had been set out in the Work and Health report received by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) in June. Additionally the different funding of both programmes was highlighted.

RESOLVED/-

1. To receive a more detailed update at the meeting taking place 23 January 2018.

SEP/17/27 LIFE READINESS – VERBAL UPDATE

The Partnership received a verbal update regarding Life Readiness. This is a Mayoral priority and is being looked at by the Greater Manchester Reform Board, which the Mayor Chairs. Life Readiness was highlighted as covering key transition points in life from age 5 to becoming a young adult.

The work was in the scoping stage so was unable to be shared currently, however the Partnership were asked for their comments on a proposed age range of 5 – 25 years old. A whole system approach was being looked into which would encompass transport, housing, health and homelessness.

The Partnership had the following questions/comments;

- The Hidden Talent report had highlighted that people often fell out of sight between 18-20 and this seemed to be an important age in terms of transition;
- A Member highlighted the Harlem Model (looking at a child through all the communities in which they operate) which had been piloted in some schools. The University of Manchester had evaluated this and identified positive outcomes so this may be something the Reform Board could look at as part of their work;
- Clear/smarter commissioning across Greater Manchester was supported as being a route to improving life readiness;
- Building resilience within young people was noted as also being important for life readiness;
• Discussion about what ‘good’ development looks like in Greater Manchester and techniques for people to cope with adverse scenarios could be looked at;
• Members asked why it was proposed to begin at age 5; this had been proposed as early years covers the 0-5 age group;
• Other drivers/factors which interact around young people, for example; developmental milestones, institutional transition points (education and health services) and reaction to external events should all be considered;
• That a dip in performance for some young people in the transition from primary school to secondary school should be looked at and considered as part of the life-readiness work; and
• Levers available within Greater Manchester were noted as something which could be included within this work to assist with improving the system.

RESOLVED/-

1. To note the update.

SEP/17/28 HIGHLIGHT REPORT

The Partnership received a report which provided an overview of progress in delivering the 10 priorities identified in the Greater Manchester Work and Skills Strategy and Priorities 2016 – 2019.

Members asked about priority 4: Improving attainment from compulsory education and whether there was any further work taking place regarding this. It was confirmed that this was currently feeding into the other priorities and that at this time there was no specific programme of actions relating to this priority.

Members requested that future highlight reports included the detail of the plan so it is clearer what the programme status is being assessed against.

RESOLVED/-

1. To note the report; and
2. To receive detail of the work plan in the next report.

SEP/17/29 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were 3 items of other business;

i. Institute of Technology

The GMCA has received a paper regarding this and a delivery board has been appointed. A business case was currently being developed for Greater Manchester. A one page Expression of Interest (EOI) will be submitted to the Department for Education shortly and it is expected there will be an announcement before the end of 2017. The EOI will be shared with the Skills and Employment Partnership once it has been submitted.
ii. Skills Capital

An Expression of Interest form for applications has been launched and the GMCA has committed to two rounds of funding. A moderation meeting will be taking place shortly which will be evaluating the bids received.

iii. Apprenticeship Ambassador Programme

A Member informed the Partnership about the apprenticeship ambassador programme in which young people go back into schools to talk about their experiences of apprenticeships. It was noted that 350 people had taken part in this over the last 4 years. Funding for this programme has ran out and alternative sources of funding are being looked into. It was agreed that the evaluation report into this programme would be circulated to the Partnership to see if there were any alternative options for funding. The Chair also noted the fact there were a number of schemes in operation across Greater Manchester which have positive impacts, and that this would need to be looked at within this wider context.

RESOLVED/-

1. To receive a copy of the Institute of Technology EOI once submitted.

SEP/17/30 FUTURE MEETING DATES

Tuesday 23rd January 10:00-12:00pm, Meeting Room 12, Trafford Town Hall