LEP Task and Finish – Business Engagement with Schools update March 2018

Background

The LEP task and finish group agreed to work on the following areas.

- Develop and lead a programme of advocacy and promotion of BridgeGM across the LEP to significantly increase the numbers of schools, colleges and business volunteers working to support young people;
- Building on the ‘Northern Star’ from the North West Education and Skills charter lead the strategic development and implementation of employability skills in all GM’s schools and colleges;
- Drive/advise the strategic direction of the Careers and Employability Advisory group to further develop the wider careers and employability agenda in schools and colleges.
- Advise and support the Greater Manchester College Group to develop high quality work placements as part of the Technical Education Reforms;
- Support the development of the Mayor’s Charter bringing the ‘business voice’ and acting as advocates for the charter within their own businesses and peers within the business community. (Working with the wider LEP and the Mayor’s Business Advisory Panel).

There is strong evidence for focusing attention on these areas across GM. This evidence shows that by focusing on careers and enterprise activity against a strong set of benchmarks then with some confidence we will expect to impact on:

- Young people’s ability to make career choices and decisions will lead to increased optimism about the future;
- It helps increase attainment;
- It increases the likelihood that a young person will enrol in a post-16 destination;
- It reduces NEET and unemployment;
- It can increase a young person’s earnings;
- It can reduce disengagement (this is often a combination of factors and take on different definitions. The following examples are a best proxy of measuring disengagement and include, absenteeism, poor attainment, drop out, poor progression, anti-social behaviour.)

Progress to date:

Clarity and purpose of Bridge GM has been redefined setting out the following:

‘Bridge GM is the Combined Authority and the LEP’s approach to growing the largest network of business, education and careers professionals to prepare and inspire Greater Manchester’s young people to be ready for the world of work through a world-class careers programme fit for the twenty first century.’

The LEP is now chairing the Careers and Employability Advisory Group to steer action to achieve the following targets:

- Every young person to have at least one encounter with a business in every year that they are in compulsory education
- Every young person to have a first-hand experience of the workplace by age 16 and again at 18*
- Every young person to experience a high quality careers programme in every year that they are in education and training
- Every young person to develop core skills through the curriculum and relate their curriculum to the labour market.

These targets have been set to support the Greater Manchester Strategy and align to priority two.
The Careers and Employability Advisory Group is made up of the LEP, Headteachers from secondary school, Principals from Post-16 and key businesses.

At the last meeting some specificity around actions were agreed around the following three strands:

**A dynamic network of business and education supporting young people (this is beyond the scope of the EAN as it is about increasing the numbers of employees going to Bridgegm.co.uk to volunteer to support education in a variety of ways not just EAN)**

- LEP/business led targeted engagement plan in each area of the sub-region connecting school leaders, employers and key local leads to network
- Business and School Leader Champions - connect Bridge GM to wider networks and individuals as part of a targeted programme and promote [www.bridgegm.co.uk](http://www.bridgegm.co.uk)
- Develop a toolkit that supports schools to build alumni into their careers plan

Early work has started to develop networks locally supported by Mo. Initially the work will begin in Oldham as part of the Opportunity Area push followed by Manchester as both are still in need of Enterprise Advisers. This will in turn encourage local business volunteers to connect with Bridge GM so that we can start to meet the targets area by area.

**Enhancing the curriculum offer in schools and colleges to bring the labour market to life** (To do this will require the roll-out of the EAN which excludes the NWBL Northern Star competencies but which could be an enhancement. See roll-out plan)

- Develop a Northern Star Programme which includes:
  - An experiences of the world of work
  - An encounter with an employer in every year
  - Encounters with business through the curriculum
  - Practical application of the Skills Charter Competencies

A proposal will be developed for the next Careers and Employability Advisory Group.

**Achieving a high quality school-led prestigious careers programme**

- Define what makes an excellent Careers Leader in GM
- Develop a high quality Careers Leader Programme of support for schools and colleges which may include innovative ways for employers and education leaders to work together to support schools to raise the prestige of Careers Leaders including CSR support/co-working/mentoring.

This strand of work was identified as the priority as without this the other two would not be as successful. GMCA and the GM Headteacher representative for the Careers and Enterprise Company have met to discuss an approach to developing a Careers Hub for GM led by Careers leaders. This hub will be to accelerate the best practice across GM schools to achieve the Gatsby Benchmarks for Good Careers Guidance. The leaders within this hub will also support those furthest away to from the benchmark to improve as part of a ‘community of practice’.

A proposal will be circulated to the Advisory Group members for input before the end of March.

**Support the Technical Pathways Pilot with Industry leads / champions and engagement (Health &Sciences / Digital / Engineering, Manufacturing &Construction)**

Finally, one of the agreed areas of work, not yet covered by the Careers and Employability Advisory Group is the technical education reforms. (In the long-term it will be). As part of a Local Area Led Programme funded by the
Gatsby Foundation GM is working with its colleges to support them to become ‘routes ready’. This means building capacity and a working model to the national technical education reforms around T levels.

The colleges have decided to look at developing capacity to become routes ready in Digital, Health and Science and Engineering and Manufacturing (possible construction too). In the agreed workplan, GMCA and Gatsby agreed that we would look for a LEP/Industry Champion in each of these areas to support the emerging routes readiness work as a figurehead and join the Careers and Employability Advisory Group.