Item 12

ECONOMY, BUSINESS GROWTH & SKILLS
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: Friday 14th June 2019

Subject: GM Work & Skills Programme Update

Report of: Cllr Sean Fielding – Portfolio Lead for Education, Skills, Work & Apprenticeships

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide Scrutiny members with an update on the progress of key work and skills priorities in Greater Manchester and development work underway to refresh the skills and work plan, in light of the Independent Prosperity Review findings and the emerging Local Industrial Strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Scrutiny members are asked to:-

- Note progress made against current skills and work priorities in the programme highlight report.

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1. **Highlight report**

The highlight report in Appendix 1 provides a detailed overview of progress against all 10 current skills and work priorities. It is positive to see that there is good progress being made, but Members should note that there are risks identified in the following areas:

- Apprenticeships: due to national reforms (a presentation is embedded to show GM’s activity to increase uptake & quality)
- Working Well (Work & Health Programme)

Members should also note the significant development work in the following areas:

- **Priority 1**
  - UCAS Style Application platform has been procured with award notice being issued by 7th June and then entering into a 10 day stand still period. Key decision will be published.
  - Increase in the number of schools supported by BridgeGM
- **Priority 2**
  - Adult Education Budget procured activity has completed with award notices going to providers on the 7th June and then entering into a 10 day stand still period.
  - Key decision will be published.
- **Priority 7**
  - A final round of Skills Capital will be launched to complete the funding allocation: main focus on gaining full coverage of colleges across GM and any small estate issues.
- **Priority 8**
  - Latest welfare reform dashboard is available (circulated)
  - In work progression trial with DWP
- **Priority 9**
  - Working Well (Early Help) now live
  - 2 new Working Well services soon to be commissioned

2. **Refreshing skills and work priorities**

Greater Manchester has a strong and diverse population, with the assets and capabilities to support accelerated growth, play a leading role in contributing more to the UK economy and to delivering the Northern Powerhouse ambition. We pride ourselves on the exceptional talent of our residents and the strong community spirit that is visible across the region.

To successfully implement an industrial strategy, local areas need greater ability to drive skills in a more co-ordinated way that truly reflects local economic and individual need, and that is oblivious to artificial barriers and blockages that have been put in place by Government over the years. To
build the foundations for change, Greater Manchester over the medium term needs to develop a GM Work & Skills action plan, which underpins economic growth and crucially, the life journey of every resident – irrespective of their starting point.

2.1 Independent Prosperity Review – GM challenges

The challenges of the current system are all too obvious for everyone to see – a few statistics, reinforced by the Independent Prosperity Review (IPR), say it all:

- 11,800 children not ready to start school at age of 5. GM has not closed the gap with the UK average in the 10 years since the MIER
- The IPR showed that 42,000 pupils attend secondary schools in GM that are rated as inadequate or requiring improving (29% of GM schools compared to 22% nationally).
- 10,600 16 year olds don’t achieve GSCE English/maths and the resit pass rate is low at 22%
- By age 19, 63% of non-disadvantaged young people have a level 3 qualification compared to just 37% of disadvantaged young people
- In 2018 only 76% of jobs in GM pay the Real Living Wage, a fall of 2pp since 2017, with significant variation between districts. GM currently spends over £1bn on ‘in work tax credits’. For those who escape low pay, the vast majority have to move jobs rather than upskilling/progressing within an organisation
- Although GM has a record high employment rate, significant inequalities remain, both between districts and certain groups.
  - The employment rate for 50-64 year olds has been consistently below the national average by 4% points – 1 in 3 people in this age group are economically inactive, an age group which is expected to grow by 20% in GM over the next decade
  - The employment rate of people with a disability is only 49%, lagging 5 pp behind the national rate
  - The employment rate for ethnic minority groups is only 60%, again significantly lagging the national average
- Current skills gaps at L4 and 5 in key growth sectors will create significant barriers to improving productivity. Yet the number of apprenticeships has fallen substantially and employer investment in learning appears to be falling
- Far too many GM businesses compete on the basis of low wage/low skill/low productivity. The IPR demonstrates a problem with skills demand (utilisation) by employers as well as skills supply
2.2 Creating a GM education, skills & work system

In future, GM’s education, skills and work system will operate as ‘one system for all’ – from the young person who has no connections or role models, to the highly skilled worker looking to retrain; a clear line of sight to the opportunities in GM is everybody’s right, and will ensure that:

- **young people** leave education ready to succeed in the labour market with a balance of academic, technical and soft skills
- **adults** have access to the skills and support they need from entering employment at any level through to highly skilled careers and retraining
- **employers** have access to a system that is flexible, resilient and adaptable to meet their needs for drive the industrial future of GM in which companies compete on the basis of high productivity
- Residents are supported by a welfare system, under Universal Credit, that provides work for those who can, support for those who could, and care for those who can’t.

2.3 Developing a transformational plan

Following discussion at the Employment & Skills Advisory Panel (ESAP); GMCA have engaged the Learning and Work Institute (L&W) to facilitate the development of a transformational skills and work action plan for Greater Manchester. As part of the agreed process, we will be consulting with a range of stakeholders to ensure it reflects GM’s collective ambitions and maps out how it can be delivered both individually and collectively. The draft action plan will be presented for discussion at the next ESAP meeting in July, followed by further discussion with Scrutiny.

The action plan will focus on the key opportunities and areas where GM can make the most significant difference “big ticket actions” – helping to ensure that the education, skills and employment system enables everyone to reach their potential and employers have access to the skills they require. Areas of opportunity already identified include, but are not limited to:

- ensuring greater business engagement in the whole system, from careers to in-work progression;
- supporting institutions with their efforts to improve performance, ensuring more young people benefit from good or outstanding learning;
- identifying what more can be done at a national and local level to support those in work on low pay to progress in work;
- supporting employers to retain older workers and those with health problems;
- supporting more high quality apprenticeship opportunities with SMEs;
- securing employer commitments to provide high quality T Level industry placements;
- and boosting employer investment in retraining.
The focus of the consultation will be on the priorities for the action plan and what role different organisations can play in delivering them. We plan to cover the following questions to start the discussion with individuals:

- What opportunities are there to improve the how the employment and skills system in GM supports individuals and businesses?
- How effective is existing activity in each of the areas of opportunity identified? What needs to be done differently in order to deliver better outcomes?
- Who is likely to benefit from specific interventions? And what difference is it likely to make to individuals and businesses in Greater Manchester?
- What specific actions can partners take now to help deliver improvements?

2.4 Taking a sector approach for investment

Building on the sector approach for investment agreed by the GMCA earlier this year and supporting the Local Industrial Strategy focus on skills; particularly at the higher technical level; there is an opportunity to align and enhance investment in these areas.

Skills has been a priority for the GMCA over the past few years with devolution of Adult Education Budget and Skills Capital supporting improved quality and impact of provision.

As set out in the LIS; GM needs to focus activity to increase productivity and reduce skills gaps in certain occupations. Investment needs to be bespoke and bring together innovative solutions that include high quality equipment to enhance learning and respond to skills gaps.

In reviewing the Local Growth Fund there appears to be an opportunity to re-allocate some underspent money to develop a proposal for an investment pot for skills that will support the LIS sectors and also where appropriate bring this together with loans/equity sector investment funds to truly drive growth. Further details on this will be brought to a future scrutiny meeting. Any such proposal will also need to look at how we can add further value to such a funding pot via other sources of funding for skills in particular those targeting certain cohorts.
This report provides a brief overview of progress in delivering the 10 priorities identified in the GM Work & Skills Strategy & Priorities 2016 - 2019.

For the purpose of this report the following RAG categories will be used:
- Progressing to plan
- Progressing with some risks / issues identified
- Not progressing to plan

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<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
<th>SUMMARY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Careers &amp; Participation Strategy</td>
<td>Careers &amp; Employability</td>
<td>The Bridge GM Careers Hub is designed to help young people develop relationships and connections with employers and businesses as well as being inspired to consider a wide range of employment opportunities. The Hub launched in October 2018. The implementation progress of the Gatsby Benchmarks in all 36 Hub schools is positive and performance is demonstrating how beneficial being part of the Hub is for schools. This progress is contributing towards the development of pan GM model for improvement in Careers through stakeholder collaboration. There is also a focus on evaluation practice, capturing learnings from the Hub schools. Development of the UCAS style application platform, one of the Mayor’s manifesto commitments, is making good progress. Procurement is underway with the supplier expected to be appointed in June. Following this, a period of stakeholder engagement, content development and communication will take place over summer. The new system will be launched in autumn 2019.</td>
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• Discussions are also taking place around alignment of the system with the GM Opportunity Pass scheme.

Technical Education Reforms

• All GM Colleges have an expressed interest in becoming a 2021 provider of T-Levels with the outcome to be announced in June.
• The Gatsby pilot project has developed an employer Masterclass programme for College teaching staff, aligned to the next wave of T-Levels.
• GMCA are in discussions to define a vision for technical education as part of the new Local Industrial Strategy including the role that employers can play in delivering this.

NEET

• Following a budget announcement of £7m as part of the Treasury skills pilots, a business case is in development with DfE to scope out a new programme to be delivered in GM by the Prince’s Trust. The aim of this will be to develop and test a range of new and innovative approaches to supporting young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET.

ESF NEET and CEIAG

• ESF contracts, managed by ESFA supporting NEET (operated by Career Connect) and CEIAG (Growth Company) concluded in March 2019. 4,725 individuals were supported with 51% achieving a progression into employment, education or apprenticeship / traineeship. CEIAG supported 6,247 young people with a progression rate of 48%.

• A new NEET contract commenced in April 2019 after ESFA appointed the Growth Company to deliver the service until July
2021 with if performance is strong the potential to extend until 2023.

**Hidden Talent**

- Hidden Talent, delivered by GMCVO and co-funded by GMCA and the Lottery has launched to support young people (18 – 24) that are out of work and not claiming any benefits.
- This project is a 2 year programme, providing a legacy of the successful Talent Match project

**Bridge Enterprise Adviser Network**

- 170 GM schools and colleges are now signed up to the Enterprise Adviser Network
- Over 800 businesses are working with Bridge GM supporting all activity across Bridge GM
- 121 Enterprise Advisers (EA) have been matched and are working directly with schools and colleges, enabling business leaders to work strategically with schools and colleges to guide and influence the development and implementation of an effective and innovative careers and employer engagement plan.
- To date (May 2019) GM’s young people have experienced 402,316 quality encounters with an employer.
- The ‘Mayoral ‘Meet your Future’ work shadowing programme launched on 24th April 2019 and will deliver 1000 work shadowing experiences for young people. This will include both direct work shadowing or ‘work place safaris’.
- 57 businesses have so far committed to the campaign, and there will be 200 opportunities created for young people by July 2019.
- The ‘Meet your Future’ Speed Networking event is taking place on 6th and 7th June 2019. 48 schools are signed up, and their students in years 9 and 10 will have the chance to network with businesses professionals across Greater Manchester. This will create a further 4560 employer encounters for young people.

**Priority 2: Reforming the work & skills system to focus on outcomes not outputs**
| Develop Outcomes Framework | • As noted previously, GM’s Outcome Framework, together with a range of data and research projects, have informed the development of GM’s commissioning approach. The principles that are shaping both the GM procurement activity and the grant funding arrangements which will be agreed with colleges/LAs will have a strong focus on those improved outcomes for GM residents in terms of progression towards/within the labour market and/or further learning, rather than simply on outputs in terms of learning aims/qualifications. |
| Skills Advisory Panels | • It was announced in the November 2017 Budget GM would have one of the first wave of Skills Advisory Panels (SAPs). However, the GM model will be different to others around England in that it will reflect our integrated approach to skills and employment support and will play a more strategic role than simply performing an analytical function.  
  • GM’s ESAP brings together key education, skills & employment stakeholders in GM but - uniquely - also senior central government officials (the Director General for Further & Higher Education from DfE and the Director General of Policy for DWP are members, along with a representative of DCMS), as well as representatives from national bodies including trade unions, the Association of Colleges and Association of Education and Learning Providers.  
  • Commitment to refresh the Employment & Skills strategy alongside the LIS.  
  • Strong commitment from Government with regards to the publication of the Joint Local Industrial Strategy Statement  
  • Strong commitment via the budget of £20m for GM: GMCA working with Government on what this will look like and deliver. |
| AEB Devolution | • An MoU for 2019/2020 was signed in December 2019, developed jointly by DfE and the Mayoral Combined Authorities to provide additional assurances and clarity around ways of working following devolution in 2019/20.  
  • The commissioning exercise, including procurement, is nearing completion, with contract awards expected late May/early June.  
  • A total of 86 SAQ submissions were received, of which 36 providers advanced to full Invitation to Tender.  
  • Individual meetings have been taking place with GM’s nine FE colleges to discuss plan-led grant funding arrangements. Meetings are also taking place with LAs that have an AEB budget. |
GMCA Officers continue to work to establish the appropriate management processes, systems and resources required and will provide further updates at the earliest opportunity. These include:

- Definitions for what positive outcomes will look like for GM’s AEB
- Funding and performance management rules and processes, including RAG rating of providers and how under-performance will be managed / addressed (up to and including the possible circumstances for contract termination)
- Audit and assurance arrangements, including consideration of ESF compliance requirements in order to maximise match funding opportunities. ESFA has made an offer of limited but welcome audit activity and is proposing to enable CAs to access a framework of audit firms following completion of ESFA’s forthcoming audit services procurement exercise
- The CA has agreed to the retention of a small element of funding to support the management and assurance of the AEB, equivalent to around 1.6% of the budget.

ESFA has made an enhanced data service offer for 2019/20 which will help to address some of the practical considerations around data validation and management for the first year of devolution. Consideration is also being given to arrangements thereafter, as well as data sharing and other aspects of joint working between the devolved areas. In particular, GM will be working with Liverpool City Region to establish a Service Level Agreement to ensure practical and workable arrangements for learners in boundary areas who might travel to learn between the neighbouring CA areas.

**Priority 3: Developing GM’s work & skills infrastructure to meet the needs of the economy**

**Implementation of Area Based Review**

- We continue to work with colleges around developing a post-16 system that works for all residents
- Bolton College & Bolton HE have merged
- Stockport & Trafford FE have merged.

**Priority 4: Improving attainment from compulsory education**
### Education & Employability Board
- The Education & Employability Board has finalised its Terms of Reference to support GMS and the work of the Children’s Board; this has been shared previously.
- Priority work areas have been identified with a focus on improving quality for disadvantaged learners; link with Maths & HEI.

### Secondary School Performance
- The CA research team have carried out a research piece into secondary school performance data, it compares school attainment and quality, as well as pupil demographics across GM, to London and England. The research investigates the underlying reasons for particular groups of pupils attaining lower grades and recommends what stance should be taken by local policymakers to reduce variance and increase performance.
- The final report has been shared and the research is being fed into the work of the Education and Employability Board
- The Careers Hub is working with 36 schools & colleges to improve performance in Career Education.

### Priority 5: Strengthening Employer Engagement
- An important element of the framework above is the GM Employment Charter which is being co-designed with employers and stakeholders.
- Two consultations have been carried out, with views and evidence gathered about the contents and operation of the Charter.
- The model for the GM Good Employment Charter was agreed at the GMCA meeting on 1st March and work is now underway to prepare the Charter for implementation, with a view to launching it with employers in July
- Through the employer charter a ‘supporter’s network’ will be developed with the aim of bringing together a movement of employers who are interested in supporting the delivery of GMS ambitions.

### Priority 6: Growing the quality and quantity of Apprenticeships
- During the 2017 / 18 academic year there were 22,591 apprenticeship starts and 15,611 achievements. This is a 21% reduction in starts which compares favourably with national figures which saw a 24% drop. The proportion of both Higher level
apprentices and 16 – 24 year olds undertaking an apprenticeship increased during the year.
- During the first 6 months of the 18/19 academic year we have seen 11,500 apprenticeship starts, equivalent to the same period last year
- A visual resource setting out GM’s ambition for apprenticeships and key activity has been developed to ensure all partners are connected with the strategy.

### Supporting SME’s to engage with Apprenticeships
- The #SeeDifferent SME Apprentice Support offer was launched in March offering £3000 grants to 428 small businesses that haven’t previously engaged with apprenticeships via GM’s local authorities.
- As part of the above, the SEDA (Stimulating Employer Demand for Apprentices) project will provide workforce planning support and advice to 960 business.
- The project is overseen by a Governance Group with representation from 10 x LA’s, GMCC, The Growth Company, GMLPN and GMCA and aims to create over 700 new apprenticeship opportunities.

### Maximising the impact of Levy payers
- The Growth Co has been commissioned to develop a Levy Matchmaking Service facilitating the transfer of large (public and private sector) employers levy funds to smaller organisations. This will be launched in June

### GM Public Sector Apprenticeship Approach
- Over 5000 apprenticeship starts across GM since the introduction of the apprenticeship levy
- There are 42 apprenticeship providers approved to deliver to the public sector on the GM procurement framework
- A number of cross organisational collaborative programmes are in development including Revenues and Benefits, Data Analyst and Facilities Management.
- iDEA - a digital literacy programme developed by the Duke of York’s office was made available to public sector apprentices as
part of their development. This has now been rolled out to all apprentices with a target of 5000 sign ups..

- Working with both LA and NHS HR Director networks to ensure parity between organisations linked to terms and conditions, continuity of service and progression opportunities including a guaranteed job interview.
- Discussions continue with public sector partners linked to care leaver offers, and also developing and piloting flexible models of apprenticeship delivery and employment removing barriers for those that may not be in a position to work full time. E.g. development of a Clinical Coder apprenticeship programme for neuro-diverse individuals.

| Improve the quality of apprenticeships | • 3 CPD courses for providers employer engagement staff have been delivered to date (7 more to come) ensuring they are providing high quality, impartial advice to business
• 43/50 biggest apprenticeship providers (70% of starts) now rated good or outstanding by Ofsted |
| Remove barriers to apprenticeships | • BAME Apprenticeship Project / 5 Cities project has produced a report on the ethnicity gap in apprenticeships and an employer resource highlighting the benefits of a more diverse apprentice. A conference for employers was held on 19th November to further engage and encourage changes in practice.
• Work is underway with the GM Ageing Hub to promote apprenticeship opportunities for the over 50’s as a way of returning to work or re-skilling for a new career.
• GM Apprentice Transport Offer has been re-launched with an enhanced offer for apprentices.
• Fact sheet for flexible apprenticeship models has been created and will be shared initially with the public sector
• Ongoing conversations linked to care leavers and supporting those that wish to enter into an apprenticeship. |
| Provide information and advice about apprenticeships | • The GM Apprentice Ambassador network has been re-launched with an increased focus on the full range of potential apprentices and SME employers. In total at least 60 new ambassadors will be trained
• #SeeDifferent continues to promote, market and provide information about apprentices through the apprenticeship hub website (www.theapprenticeshiphub.co.uk) and social media |
channels. New case studies are in development to be more representative of GM’s apprenticeship population.

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<tr>
<th>Prioritise sectors with the highest skills needs</th>
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<tr>
<td>• A Health &amp; Social Care Sector strategic narrative and action plan has been drafted – summary attached</td>
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<td><img src="image" alt="HSCP one slide (002).pptx" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Funding agreed to support an additional 3 or 4 priority sectors to drive the creation of high quality apprenticeship opportunities meeting skills gaps within the sectors highlighted in the Local Industrial Strategy</td>
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### Priority 7: Developing higher level skills & ESF

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<th>ESF</th>
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<td>• ESFA on behalf of GM, have awarded contracts for four further contracts – NEET participation, Community Grants, Skills Support for the Workforce and Skills Support for the Unemployed. These contracts started delivery in April 2019 and will run until July 2021 (with potential to extend until 2023). GMCA and GM Local Leads met with appointed providers in March and April to support the building of delivery plans. The first ESF Community Grants bidding round, managed by the Workers Educational Association (WEA) will be open to applications from 12th June.</td>
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<td>• Big Lottery Fund are seeking LEP approvals to extend for their Building Better Opportunities contract for a further two years until 2021. Further details are expected shortly.</td>
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<td>• GM has developed a £42m ESF PA2 Skills for Growth co-financing bid with match funding provided by GM’s devolved AEB programme. The ESF Managing Authority (DWP) are currently appraising the bid with the view that GM will shape and undertake contract procurement during the second half of 2019 with programmes starting in April 2020 and last for up to three years.</td>
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GM will also look to scope out and develop a potential ESF co-financed programme focused on young people (c£8-10m available).

If all above proposals are agreed then GM will have committed nearly all of its £162.8m allocation. The ESF MA intends to establish a national Reserve Fund based on LEP / national CFO allocations not committed by the end of 2019.

Skills Capital

- Round 1 and 2 commissioning has now taken place with a total of 8 projects being taken forward.
- 3 projects were successful in Round 1, Tameside College, Stockport and Trafford College Group and Bury College. Tameside and Stockport have commenced construction and are making significant progress. Bury College paused their project but have recently submitted a request to re-commence (May 19)
- 5 Projects have been taken forward for approval in Round 2. Wigan and Leigh (x2), Bolton College, LTE Group and Oldham College (pending CA approval.
- Round 3 of the funding will see the completion of the 17-21 Skills Capital programme and a prospectus is currently being written to be launched in 2019.

A Local Growth Fund Programme Manager is now in place and management of the LGF pot as a whole is now being brought together with enhanced working relationships between the Core Investment Team, Work & Skills and TfGM.

- Post project monitoring has now been put in place for all completed Skills Capital projects with evaluations and impact assessments being drafted for all projects. These will include the 8 projects mentioned above and 5 projects from the 2014 SFA rounds. There are a total of 13 Skills Capital Projects to report on.

Digital Skills

- Implementation of action plan for inclusion, skills and talent progressing.
- Digital Talent: GMCA has now launched an exciting new programme to get young people excited about digital skills and build sustainable connections between education and the digital
industry. The programme will be delivered via two strands. **Go Digital**; delivered by the White Room, Hive and Innovate Her will deliver activities to excite young people at KS3 about digital opportunities and build their skills outside the formal curriculum. Specific focus on providing additional support for Y8 girls. **Digital Futures**; delivered by Manchester Digital will provide a programme of strategic industry led support to schools. The computer science curriculum will be brought to life with industry led briefs and careers insight provided for teachers, young people and their influencers.

- **Digital Bootcamps**: GMCA was awarded £3m in the budget for a pilot with DCMS to improve digital skills in the city region. It will see employers and training providers developing bespoke short courses to support individuals into specialist digital roles. This will be an employer-led pilot, with a minimum of 20 employers participating, the approach is currently being shaped with industry.

- **Digital Inclusion**: GMCA is currently working with localities to design ways to support excluded residents to develop digital skills and confidence for life and work. The objective is to put in place a digital inclusion initiative (*Get GM Digital*) that is GM wide but locally tailored and delivered. A key element of this work will be leveraging the Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award (iDEA) as a free tool to support residents to gain digital skills – Wigan, Stockport, Tameside & Bury are all rolling it out.

- **Lloyds Digital Academy**: GMCA have worked with Lloyds to support the launch and implementation of their digital academy, which aims to close the basic digital skills gap through face-to-face and online training. Face-to-Face sessions are currently available in Manchester, Oldham, Stockport and Salford with plans for wider roll out soon.

**STEM & HS2**

- Programme Manager in place focusing on STEM & HS2 skills pipeline.
- Priority is to develop a framework of STEM activity across GM improving life chances & business productivity. Key stakeholders across GM have already been mobilised to support including; The Science and Industry Museum, CITB, STEM Learning and the HS2 Growth Groups in Manchester & Wigan.
- Work packages will be developed around two main areas. The first will address the immediate need to develop a pipeline of skills for HS2 but also support other large infrastructure and construction
projects across GM. The second will aim to develop STEM Capital in the city region including; improving STEM education, increasing visibility of STEM in the community, and increasing engagement of employers from STEM related industries with educators and young people across GM.

| GM Institute of Technology | • GM’s Stage 1 application was not successful in progressing to Stage 2, with feedback on the application received from DfE in early June.  
• This work will align with the activity outlined in section 2.4 of the report and the outcomes and next steps of the LIS. |
| --- | --- |
| Graduate Retention | • After the end of the 2016/17 academic year the proportion of graduates who remained in GM six months after completing their degree was 44%. This represents a slight increase on previous years: typically just under 40% of GM graduates stay in the city region post-graduation. Almost all the graduates in question were in employment (42%) rather than undertaking further study  
• Report on Graduate Migration in GM now available. |

**Priority 8: Redesigning universal support provision**

| Develop a GM approach to managing welfare reform that delivers job progression and addresses low pay | • The GM Welfare Reform and Universal Credit Working Group of LAs and DWP continues to meet quarterly to share information, best practice and issues; and identify areas for partnership working. Citizens Advice attended the last meeting to discuss delivery of the Universal Credit ‘Help to Claim’ service across GM.  
• The GM Welfare Reform Dashboard monitors the latest data on welfare reform and the UC roll out across GM. This is updated quarterly and additional intelligence is being explored with various partners including housing providers and Citizens Advice.  
• A strategic welfare reform meeting took place on Feb 27th with senior managers from key GM services. Discussion from this and the GM working group has informed development of a number of workstreams.  
• As a first step, an approach is being developed with the GM PSR team to gain a greater understanding of the issues and gaps in provision, and where there is potential to improve how services work together, by working with a few LAs to |
undertake detailed case study analysis of some individuals who are affected by welfare reforms. We are also planning to test some small scale projects in existing placed based teams, for example proactively engaging people who are not claiming benefits that they are entitled to.

| Develop and implement a world class jobs and progression service with Jobcentre Plus | Two trials are being developed in GM with the DWP Policy Team which will support the national DWP four year strategy to build an evidence base around in-work progression, and which align with GM objectives to develop a progression service. The trial proposals are for delivery at Tameside One and the JCP Employer Suite, and are being developed by Tameside Council, GMCA and Jobcentre Plus. Business cases are being finalised for DWP and if successful, delivery should begin later this year. |

| Priority 9: Developing specialist support for hard to reach groups |

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<th>WW Pilot &amp; Expansion</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Overview</strong></td>
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<td>Quarterly Working Well brochure produced, which contains headline performance data, key learnings from the programme and participant case studies</td>
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<tr>
<th>Key developments</th>
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<tr>
<td>• The next Working Well Annual Report will be published in summer.</td>
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<th>Working Well (Work &amp; Health Programme)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Overview</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The devolved GM Working Well Work &amp; Health Programme commenced delivery in January 2018. The programme provides employment support provision to GM residents to find sustainable employment, in particular those who have a disability, the long-term unemployed and specific disadvantaged groups.</td>
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<th>Performance</th>
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<td>• The programme has achieved 93% of its gross referral expectation. However, 19% of all referrals are individuals that have been...</td>
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referred to the programme more than once. When looking at individuals referred (people) rather than referrals (gross) programme referrals are only 75% of target.

- Referral to start conversion rate (based on unique/Individual referrals) is 99% of its 75% target (i.e. 74% of individuals start the programme).
- 341 GM residents have reached the first Earnings Outcome threshold, against a target of 419 (81%). 225 of these have been validated against ESF/contractual requirements with 86% qualifying for the Higher Earnings Outcome threshold.
- A Performance Action Plan is in place to drive performance improvement. The action plan is reviewed on a fortnightly basis and is supporting/evidencing improvement across KPI’s.

### Working Well (Early Help)

#### Overview

The objective of the Working Well (Early Help programme) is to design and test an early intervention system available to Greater Manchester (GM) residents in work with health conditions or disabilities who are at risk of falling out of work, or are newly unemployed due to health issues or disability.

The outcomes the programme will test are whether the support provided enables a rapid and sustainable return to work, although there will be significant further learning captured in the evaluation process to inform financial sustainability modelling. The aim is to support more people with health conditions and disability to remain in the labour market, to support productivity and to reduce the flow of people who move onto long-term sickness and disability benefits.

The programme offers clients access to a dedicated caseworker, access to clinically qualified professionals with a wrap-around supporting digital offer. The programme started delivery in March 2019.

#### Performance

- The programme is broadly on track in terms of referral numbers, it was anticipated to receive 99 referrals up until April and figures demonstrate 95 referrals have been received between go live and April. Referral numbers have also been noted to be increasing throughout May.
The conversion numbers from referrals to programme starts has been lower than expected, so this is now being worked on in terms of appropriate referrals.

The programme is receiving referrals from all localities within GM, however the distribution of GP referrals is uneven between areas. The ratio of JCP referrals to GP referrals is higher than expected, so these areas for improvement are currently being addressed.

**Evaluation**

The evaluation for the Early Help programme will support the test and learn approach to delivery, whilst also providing evidence of what works and future sustainability. An evaluation framework for the Early Help programme has been developed with input from staff from GMCA, Manchester Metropolitan University, Learning & Work Institute and Joint Work & Health Unit. Funding for evaluation design has been provided by the Joint Work & Health Unit.

**Working Well (Care & Support)**

GMCA are working with the GM Health and Social Care Partnership to design and commission a new Working Well service to support people furthest from the labour market find work.

The Working Well Specialist Employment Service will comprise supported employment for people with a learning disability and autistic people and Individual Placement and Support for people with severe mental illness – both are evidence based service models that support people with complex disabilities and health needs access and sustain paid work in the open labour market.

The programme will be funded through the GM Mental Health Transformation Fund, ESF and the ten GM local authorities, and is expected to provide support to around 1300 people across the city region.

Procurement will commence in early summer 2019 and it is anticipated that service delivery will start in early 2020.

**Self-Employment**
Overview

- As part of the 2018 budget statement, GMCA has been awarded a grant of £10m by Treasury to support a pilot to test what form of Government support are most effective in increasing training levels for the self-employed workforce in GM.

- GM will work closely with the Federation of Small Businesses, DWP and local authority leads to support the development of a specification and subsequent commissioning process for the pilot.

- Business Case has been developed with DfE and is awaiting sign off from Treasury.

Over 50’s

Economy & Work

- Following an announcement in the 2017 autumn Budget, GM is working with Government via DWP and local Jobcentre managers and the Centre for Ageing better to develop and test new approaches to providing employment support for over 50s in GM. Following further negotiations with DWP to secure commitment to delivery of the programme, a partnership agreement is now being established to enable design and development of the new model of support to commence.

- Economy, Skills and Work task group, part of the GM Ageing Hub, meets quarterly, and brings together GM strategic, policy and research leaders, along with the Centre for Ageing Better, Business Growth Hub, JCP and National Careers Service. Priorities of this group are to work together to improve the opportunities for older workers to choose to stay in work, create more age-friendly businesses, and support those out-of-work to find appropriate work, training and other relevant opportunities.

- Delivery plan in place focused around three workstreams with activity including:
  
  o **In work support and business engagement**
    - National Careers Service Mid-life career reviews
    - Developing a GM approach to older apprenticeships
    - Supporting employers to be Age-friendly through development of a toolkit
    - Occupational health
  
  o **Employability**
    - Employability Pilot with DWP
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<tr>
<th>Priority 10: Ensuring GM commissioned programmes have a skills and work focus</th>
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<td><strong>Skills for Employment Pilot Programme (SfE)</strong></td>
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<td>• Both ESF and Local Growth Fund phases of the SfE Contract concluded in March 2019. Combined nearly 13,000 individuals started on the programme with 32% of these achieving an accredited qualification and 13% achieving a sustained employment outcome.</td>
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