

Report of the Strategic Director Children's Services to the meeting of the Executive to be held on Tuesday 10th September 2019

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Subject:

Bradford District Skills Plan

Summary statement:

This item is to present the final version of the Skills Plan, "People Skills Prosperity", for approval by the Executive and next steps.

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Portfolio:

Education, Employment and Skills

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Children's Services

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This item is to present the final version of the Skills Plan, “People Skills Prosperity” for approval. The paper includes the considerations that have shaped the development of the Plan and the next steps, subject to approval of the Plan by the Executive.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Further to the publication of the District’s Economic Strategy, “Pioneering, Confident and Connected”. This Plan, “People, Skills, Prosperity” sets out a local vision for the system and interventions to deliver the key employment and skills targets from the Strategy. In particular, the focus is that by 2030 we will: increase GVA by £4billion; support 20,000 more people into work; and up-skill 48,000 more residents to Level 3.
- 2.2 The development of the Plan reflects that all partners have a vital role in this system – the Council; employers; schools, training providers; central government including the DWP; the voluntary sector, the Local Enterprise Partnership. The input of these partners has been critical in shaping a plan and set of goals that are jointly owned and delivered. The recommendation to set up a new partnership Board reflects the continuation of this collaborative approach.
- 2.3 “People, Skills, Prosperity” sets out the context in Bradford and how the system needs to be better aligned and co-ordinated, and more user-friendly to prepare businesses and residents for the changing world of work, automation and AI, and the post-Brexit economy.
- 2.4 It is also crucial that the Plan reflects the context of the wider partnerships and geographies across the Leeds City Region that have a bearing on Bradford, our labour market and the working patterns of our residents.
- 2.5 The Plan has also been written to take account of the current and emerging policy direction. In particular we have aligned with the Future Ready Skills Commission being chaired by Cllr Hinchcliffe, and work across the Key Cities group through Cllr Khan’s role as portfolio holder for Skills and Education. This will enable Bradford to make a full contribution to on-going policy work and influence key policy discussions to meet our needs.
- 2.6 The key themes of the Plan are how we will improve our employment and skill levels through: building the skills employers seek; improving job quality in the district; and connecting our communities to good jobs and careers.
- 2.7 Members of the Executive received the ‘Consultation Draft’ of the Plan in February. The feedback received on that draft was largely positive and most partners recognised the themes and actions presented and could locate their organisations’ work in the Plan.
- 2.8 Upon the circulation of the ‘Consultation Draft’ we did, however, receive feedback on the presentation and complexity of the Plan, and as such this version has been edited to reflect those comments.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 Building on Success

- 3.1.1 We have a track record of strong and productive partnership working to improve employment and skills outcomes in the District. The Skills Plan is building on a range of interventions that have been delivered collaboratively, reflecting partners' common employment and skills ambitions.
- 3.1.2 In particular through the Get Bradford Working programme the Council and partners including Job Centre Plus, Leeds City Region, Incommunities, Aspire-igen, businesses, the University and our colleges have had significant success:
- overall 3,490 people have been supported by a range of partners into work;
 - 28 businesses sit on the Board of an Industrial Centres of Excellence (ICE);
 - in 2018/19, 8,668 young people benefitted from careers and technical education through the ICE approach; and
 - the SkillsHouse partnership has to date supported over 1,200 people into work across a range of sectors including Retail, Hospitality, Logistics and Care.
- 3.1.3 We have also made significant progress as a partnership in delivering the "joint approach to post-16 education" that was agreed following our post-16 review three years ago. This has been most notably in respect of re-shaping the provision on offer in the District which has led to the new Dixon's Sixth Form Academy and New College Bradford opening this September.

3.2 Devolution

- 3.2.1 The Plan is written to be a success within the context of the current employment and skills landscape. However it is anticipated that, although the geography is not yet known, there will be a skills devolution deal that covers Bradford during the life of this Plan.
- 3.2.2 Therefore the Plan has been designed so that proposed actions can be aligned with any future devolution to local levels.

3.3 Funding

- 3.3.1 Achieving our ambitions will also require sustained increased public revenue and capital investment. The cost of the provision to meet the Level 3 target alone will be significant not least as there is a gap at Level 1 and 2 to address as well.
- 3.3.2 At present there is no indication that additional revenue or capital funding is likely to be forthcoming in the immediate, or longer-term, future. There is however significant employment and skills funding already being spent in the District through DWP, Apprenticeships (Levy and non-Levy), Adult Education Budget, Community Learning, independent training providers and VCS partners.
- 3.3.2 How we work with our partners through the Plan to better utilise and maximise resources will therefore be critical.

3.4 Next Steps

- 3.4.1 It is the intention to formally launch “People, Skills, Prosperity” at an event in the Autumn, subject to the approval of the Plan by the Executive.
- 3.4.2 A number of the key actions are already being progressed through existing partnerships, in particular the work relating to ICE, Bradford Pathways and SkillsHouse.
- 3.4.3 A workshop with key partners has been booked on 30th September to develop the approach to Adult Education provision in line with the “Connecting our Communities” strand of work. A review of support for vulnerable learners is also planned for the Autumn.
- 3.4.4 It is also the intention that Employment and Skills Officers will promote the work of the plan through a series of key networks, further engaging partners and developing the associated work programme.
- 3.4.5 It is recommended that the Executive receive an update report on progress with the delivery of the Plan in September 2020.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

- 4.1 As is noted above, we believe that significant additional investment from central Government is required alongside additional private investment in workforce development.
- 4.2 We do, however, anticipate that a range of partners will co-invest resources with the Council in the delivery of the Priority Actions, as has been the case with the ICE District Partnership.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

- 5.1 There are no significant risks arising out of the implementation of the proposed recommendations.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

- 6.1 There are no legal issues arising from the implementation of the Plan.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

- 7.1.1 A key theme of the Plan, in particular but not exclusively in the “Connecting our Communities to Good Jobs and Careers” section, is the promotion of inclusive growth by ensuring those most disadvantaged in the labour market have the skills they need and access good jobs.
- 7.1.2 As such the Plan will aim to deliver against the Council’s specific ‘Employment and

Skills' Equality Objective for 2016-2020.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

7.2.1 None, the Plan seeks to create a system that will enable residents to access the skills that will be relevant to the future world of work and sustainable economic growth.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

None

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

None.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

None.

7.6 TRADE UNION

None.

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific ward or area implications, this is a district wide Plan.

7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)

Not applicable

7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

None.

7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

There are no data protection or information security issues arising from this report.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. OPTIONS

N/A

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the District Skills Plan as set out in Appendix 1 to Document “S” be approved for publication and formal launch.**
- (2) That a “Skills Board” is set up to draft and implement a partnership action plan to deliver People, Skills, Prosperity.**
- (3) That the Executive receive an update on progress in September 2020.**

11. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – “People Skills Prosperity”

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None