

Hull and East Yorkshire LEP

Employment & Skills Board – 27th February 2023

Paper C – Creating a healthy workforce through a partnership approach

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1. Summary

- 1.1 There have been numerous reports over the last 12 months identifying that the declining health of British people is stalling the nation's economic growth. Also, that the nation is in a situation for the first time, since the Industrial Revolution, where health and wellbeing are in retreat having been an accelerator of wellbeing for the last 200 years, health is now serving as a brake in the rise of wealth, growth and wellbeing of our citizens.
- 1.2 This report is to address how the HEY LEP with partners can best act to create a healthy workforce across Hull & East Yorkshire to assist in developing our economy.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The ESB are asked to approve the following recommendations.
 - To reconfirm its commitment to creating a healthy workforce as outlined in the HEY LEP Economic Growth and Workforce Wellbeing Strategy.
 - Recognise that there are many organisations and agencies working to create a healthy workforce across Hull & East Yorkshire and no one organisation leads on creating a healthy workforce.
 - To establish a task group to report to the next but one ESB meeting on how to create a 'healthy workforce' partnership to deliver on the strategic aims of the HEY LEP strategy.
 - The purpose of the task force is not to discuss what to do as that is in the strategy, but how a cross sector partnership can make the agreed actions in the strategy happen across Hull & East Yorkshire.

3. Report

3.1 **Background**

- 3.1.1 HEY LEP, Office for Health Improvement & Disparities (OHID) and Active Humber colleagues recently met to consider the following report - [Health and wellbeing are in retreat, stalling the UK's economy](#)
- 3.1.2 According to [The Health Foundation](#), economic activity in the UK has decreased by 700,000 people since before the pandemic. Around 300,000 50-69-year-olds are most at risk of never returning to work and out of 3.5m active 50-69-year-olds in Q2 of 2022, 1.6m self-reported ill health as their main reason for not working.

- 3.1.3 OHID Y&H additionally have been looking at how they support the LEPs in this ever-changing environment. HEY LEP colleagues have also been reviewing the [HEY Workforce](#) webpage and approach to consider what should be done next in 2023.
- 3.1.4 Active Humber and other Active Partnerships across England have been reviewing how they work with LEPs on healthy workforces and encouraging people to be more physically active to help them stay and / or return to the workforce. The national participation targets from Sport England targets indicate that the over 50s need to be a lot more active. The Humber is the second most inactive place in England and not being in paid employment is having a direct effect on those participation rates.
- 3.1.5 There were numerous actions and considerations arising from the meeting as follows:
- How we collectively best support the development of the HEY Workforce programme and other related HEY LEP workforce & skills priorities.
 - How we best collectively support the work of OHID in this area.
 - Making links with other interested parties in Hull & East Yorkshire as well as the wider regional forums.
 - Develop a type of pan-sector partnership and action plan to address this issue as the issue sits with not with one organisation but rather is a part of many organisations work.
- 3.1.6 The 3 partners agreed that this matter should be addressed by the HEY LEP Employment and Skills board as it falls under priority 3 of the HEY LEP strategy – A Skilled and Inclusive Economy.

Other actions arising from the meeting were:

- The need to map all the partners involved across H&EY involved in workplace health and recognise there is already a lot happening.
- OHID to outline some of the bodies they are aware of to start the process and then other partners to add further detail.
- Use of Data – there is lots on this and perhaps need some support from the University or other research partner to pull this together.
- There is a need to form some form of group to coordinate / bring together all the work in this area.
- This work does not sit solely with one partner and does require a multi-agency collaborative approach.
- A focus of any initial partnership should be more on supporting SMEs who traditionally find it hard for a variety of reasons to act in this area.
- The need to keep promoting and building the HEY Workforce resources – move towards a HEY Workforce version 2.0.

- The work whilst not exclusively is more focussed on those over 50 / and people who have a long-term health condition / disability than others in the workforce.
- Look to have some joint conference Summer /Autumn 2023 to build on the 2022 HEY LEP conference.
- The offer will whatever it will be, will be more digital than other means.
- The recognition that physical and mental health are so interrelated – look at what the Midland Engine has done on mental health at work.
- Further partnership working with the Humber & North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board to support mutual priorities.
- OHID & Active Humber to make the contacts with the relevant people in ERYC & HCC.
- HEY LEP to ensure this remains a topic area and discussion at the HEY LEP Talent Forum.
- Active Humber & OHID to feed in what they are seeing and learning from other areas in England.
- HEY LEP & OHID to make the links to the DWP.
- Use this report to the HEY LEP ESB to start the process as a multi-agency approach and a commitment from all involved to act in a collaborative way rather than expect the HEY LEP, OHID, AH to be the sole leader etc.

3.2 HEY LEP strategy

3.2.1 The HEY LEP strategy make specific recommendation around creating a healthy workforce - [HEY-LEP-Economic-Growth-Workforce-Wellbeing-Strategy](#) and the relevant can be found at pages 72 and 73.

3.2.2 The strategy states.

Good health and wellbeing are essential to successful, sustainable workplaces. From a business perspective, greater health and wellbeing among the workforce is associated with higher productivity due to fewer days lost because of sickness, illness, lower absenteeism, presenteeism and reduced costs.

For the wider economy, health and wellbeing can increase production capacity through greater economic activity rates i.e., more people are able to work. The economic cost of ill health on the UK's economy is estimated at £100 billion each year. The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities have estimated that that the cost for the HEY region is around £872 million per annum.

The HEY LEP acknowledges the impressive work already taking place by local authorities, Public Health bodies, the VCSE sector and other partners concerning health and wellbeing in its broadest sense. The LEP will support and promote this through its own strategies and programmes of work, linking

with existing initiatives and adding value wherever possible. This element of the strategy is about how the LEP will work with employers and stakeholders to improve workplace wellbeing.

Employers have a pivotal role to play in creating healthy and inclusive workplaces, but often lack the time, resources, or expertise to take the right steps especially among SMEs which make up the majority of the Hull and East Yorkshire employer base.

The region needs more employers to adopt good work policies and practises that support employee health and wellbeing in its widest sense.

The HEY LEP will facilitate this by bringing together the various tools and resources already made available via government and relevant professional bodies and by supporting programmes such as the new Employability Wellbeing Service, funded by ESF across Hull and East Yorkshire.

3.2.3 Appendix one of this report lists the 10 recommendations.

3.3 Present system

3.3.1 There are many agencies and organisations that have a role in creating a healthy workforce and that the existing system whilst not perfect achieves a lot through taking a partnership approach.

3.3.2 As this does not exist It would be useful to create ‘a map’ of all those involved to understand existing roles / responsibilities / partnerships etc. and how best to engage with them to take this forward. There is nothing more frustrating than finding one partner is doing something that is already been done and or ‘stepping on other organisations toes’.

3.3.3 This paper does not attempt to list all the present partners involved but to illustrate the complexity of the present situation. Below are listed just a few of the key partners involved:

- HEY LEP
- OHID
- DWP
- Humber & North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
- Hull City Council
- East Riding of Yorkshire Council
- Federation of Small Businesses
- VCSE groups
- Active Humber

APPENDIX 1

Key HEY LEP activities to improve the health and wellbeing of the workforce.

- a) Engage with partners involved with levelling up health outcomes and health inequalities providing links between employers and business in the HEY LEP region and anchor organisations delivering health and wellbeing programmes such as Live Well, Work Well
- b) Work with the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, the HEY LEP Talent Forum, and other partners to establish a suitable target to increase workforce health and wellbeing.
- c) Raise awareness of health and wellbeing with employers via a sustained campaign and engagement promoting good employment and HR practices to promote social mobility and enhance productivity.
- d) Work with stakeholders to develop and promote the benefits of health and wellbeing across employment settings.
- e) Promote new and existing ESF funded programmes such as the Employability Wellbeing Service and 50 plus initiatives and other employer resources including the Midlife MOT, financial well-being, and Active Humber's Active Employee Toolkit Example Good Employment Charter CIPD Resources
- f) Develop the HEY Workforce brand and website to bring together the various tools and resources available to employers from a diversity of sources.
- g) Explore the creation of a local Good Work Charter for Hull and East Yorkshire
- h) Encourage employers to adopt holistic approaches to employee wellbeing including physical and mental health and other wider aspects of wellbeing including financial wellbeing and access to appropriate services.
- i) Recognising the importance of arts, sport and cultural activities in wellbeing, work with a range of partners aligning strategic priorities and maximising access for all

APPENDIX 2

Useful reports

- 1 [Returning to the workplace – the motivations and barriers for people aged 50 years and over, Great Britain - Office for National Statistics](#)
- 2 [Understanding ‘Early Exiters’: The case for a healthy ageing workforce strategy.](#)