

Hull and East Yorkshire LEP Employment & Skills Board  
Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023  
Paper A - Employment & Skills Manager's Report  
Chris Howell, Employment & Skills Manager

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1. This paper summarises the progress made by the HEY LEP Employment & Skills team since the last meeting of the Employment & Skills Board on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2023.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. The Board notes the progress made by the Employment & Skills team.
- 2.2. The Board approves the HEY LEP Employment & Skills Team's engagement with the Behavioural Insights Team and CIPD project Innovation Fund proposal as described in paragraph 3.11.3 of this report.

## **3. Report**

### **3.1. The HEY LEP Skills Network**

- 3.1.1. The next HEY LEP Skills Network will be held on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January (venue to be confirmed). It will be a joint HEY LEP and HEY LSIP event focussing on employability skills. The agenda will showcase existing work being done on Employability Skills and capture recent LSIP employer feedback which will be brought together in a series of workshops.

### **3.2. The HEY LEP Career Aspirations Group**

- 3.2.1. The Working Group held the fourth CPD event for careers advisers and employability professionals on November 7<sup>th</sup>. The session was focussed on the Net Zero sector and hosted by Aura. Centrica and Orsted, along with the University of Hull spoke about the growth of the sector and the emerging roles. The group had a chance to speak to a former apprentice about their route through the company and also hear the role the University is playing in research in this area. Once again, the feedback was overwhelmingly positive with a real appetite from attendees for more events in the future. The group plans to hold another two events this academic year on the themes of digital and manufacturing.
- 3.2.2. The LSIP team is engaged with the group and will utilise this forum to share wider information about their activity.

- 3.2.3. The group is now working on a refresh of the HEY LEP Employability Skills Passport Framework and has two focus groups to explore what a renewed version of the Passport Framework could look like. The group will discuss the feedback at the next meeting of the CAG group.

### **3.3. The HEY LEP Apprenticeship & Technical Education Group**

- 3.3.1 The next A &TE Working Group meeting will take place on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January. The meeting will focus on developing an action plan centred around the HEY LEP SAP commissioned research into apprenticeships which identified the following six key issues:

- Female participation in HEY which is behind both regional and national levels.
- The continued lack of learner and employer knowledge about technical education.
- Disadvantaged learners are less well supported by the current learning environment.
- Information gaps between learners, schools, training providers and employers. Apprenticeships in the region are focussed on Intermediate level courses.
- The funding available for apprenticeships and technical education is not fully understood by all local employers.

To support the delivery of outcomes for each of these themes the following group actions will also be taken forward:

- Case Study Development - Collaboration of providers ongoing to collate case studies of learners progressing into Apprenticeship and T levels and the impact they have had personally including the steps they took to secure the opportunities, with view to building a young apprenticeship ambassador network.
  - Gap analysis at HE level. The Working Group to consider exploring this issue further, i.e., to consider undertaking a project that investigates and assesses the gaps in HE apprenticeships. This would include evaluating the traditional HE provision available and looking at whether access to HE training is limited in any areas.
- 3.3.2 Exploring the development of a collaborative, targeted approach to contacting levy local paying businesses from the FAME database. This would enable partners and stakeholders to gain maximum benefit when engaging with employers and maximise the potential for reinvestment of local unspent levy funds. The group will also be electing a new Chair at the meeting.

### 3.4 The HEY LEP Talent Forum

- 3.4.1 Arrangements are being made for the next meeting of the group, with a further planning meeting to be held in January 2024, with a likely Forum meeting held early in February.
- 3.4.2 The planning will include a review of Forum members and a clear annual workplan to be confirmed.
- 3.4.3 Ideally these meetings will be held, where possible, in employer premises to help HR leaders become aware of the breadth of HEY assets in addition to their own sector specific knowledge and experience.

### 3.5 Devolution summary

- 3.5.1 The Hull and East Riding Devolution Deal proposal was officially signed by both local authority leaders, Cllr Mike Ross and Cllr Anne Handley on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

The Deal proposal describes the access to funding for the region and also includes several key messages on ambitions including;

- ‘Capitalising on Hull and East Yorkshire’s existing assets, including world leading digital infrastructure
  - Raising skills levels so that people can access more economic opportunities, and in turn reduce local levels of under-employment and narrow the local productivity gap.
  - Supporting innovation and business growth in Hull and East Yorkshire’s key sectors to enhance their competitiveness and increase productivity across the economy’.
- 3.5.2 Public consultation on the Deal proposal will open early in the new year where residents and the private sector will have their opportunity to comment on the content of the document. This will then be used to assess support prior to agreeing next steps with government.
  - 3.5.3 If the Deal progresses as planned, there will be local Mayoral elections in May 2025.
  - 3.5.4 The Deal proposal also includes reference to the resources made available to set up the Mayoral Office and help develop the approach.
  - 3.5.5 The Deal can be found here: [Hull and East Yorkshire devolution deal - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/hull-and-east-yorkshire-devolution-deal)
  - 3.5.6 The LEP’s consultation role will be working with the private sector community to understand the benefits of the proposal.

### **3.6 The Humber Local Digital Skills Partnership (LDSP)**

- 3.6.1 The LDSP met on 6<sup>th</sup> December and included a presentation from Dr Dionysios Demetis from the University of Hull on Artificial Intelligence and its impacts on business. Colleagues from East Riding of Yorkshire Council also presented developments with their digital strategy.
- 3.6.2 In the period leading up to devolution, the primary focus of the group will be on partnership development with a view to establishing a new look digital partnership with a broader membership and wider terms of reference, going beyond skills alone and reflecting the digital ecosystem as set out in the recently completed HEY Digital Framework. Doing so will provide HEY stakeholders with the vehicle and framework around which they can collaborate and maximise future opportunities offered through new devolution arrangements.

### **3.7 The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) and the HEY Careers Hub**

- 3.7.1. The Team continue to work hard to support each of the 50 schools and colleges in the region. It is hoped this term will see further progress, particularly in the schools which are newer to the Careers Hub, as they are now receiving more support to develop and embed their strategic careers plans. The Team is working to help partners complete the termly self-evaluations at present and supporting all schools and colleges.
- 3.7.2. The Cornerstone Employer group is operating exceptionally well and is keen to grow and include more employers to support activity. At the most recent meeting, the group was attended by a new group of employers who wanted to find out more about what role they could play. Follow up conversations are now ongoing. The group is supporting a large amount of activity for schools.
- 3.7.3 The Hub continues to align its activity to the following five priorities as defined by the Careers and Enterprise Company in the Grant Offer Letter:
- Improve careers provision
  - Drive more high-quality employer experiences
  - Amplify vocational routes
  - Focus on disadvantaged
  - Connect careers provision to local economies.
- 3.7.4 The Careers Hub now has a dedicated Project Lead in post to support the delivery of an intensive targeted programme of careers activity focussed on careers in Health and Care, funded by the Integrated Health and Care Board. The Project Lead has already successfully onboarded several schools to the project and is developing a full delivery plan for activity.

- 3.7.5 The Hub is working with the National CEC team to explore the concept of a Net Zero focussed Beacon Careers hub with employers. The exploratory work is underway, and any progress will be reported in due course.
- 3.7.6 There is a large programme of activity being delivered by the Hub to schools at present, this includes the Student Voice Project, support around parental engagement, plans for activity in both National Careers Week and National Apprenticeship Week. All activities are being supported by employers.

### **3.8 The Quality in Careers Standard**

- 3.8.1 Schools and colleges continue to work towards the Quality in Careers Standard. Schools and colleges self-fund these assessments.
- 3.8.2 The Advisory Panel continues to oversee the Quality in Careers Standard and hold meetings for those schools and colleges having been assessed. Wilberforce College has recently had their report reviewed by the Panel and will receive the final report shortly. Bridlington School has also received their report for a successful assessment in this period.
- 3.8.3 The HEY LEP remains the only LEP in the country that has accrediting awarding authority for the Standard. We will be due for relicensing in Spring 2024, we are currently working with partners at C&K Careers to see if this is something they would like to continue working with us on.

### **3.9 Workforce Development Activity**

- 3.9.1 The Workforce Development Business Advisor (WDBA) continues to engage with SMEs and training providers throughout the Hull and East Yorkshire region and presented a bi-annual progress report update to the last Employment & Skills Board Meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> October.
- 3.9.2 The WDBA is continuing to support a local marine services company to source a Level 2 training apprenticeship provider in the North of England to deliver the Marine and Boatyard Operative L2 qualification. Currently there is no provision of this type currently being delivered anywhere in the North of England.

This also provides a potential opportunity for the group to act as a trailblazer in setting up a new industry occupational standard for a Level 3 progression qualification for the marine engineering and boatyard industry.

- 3.9.3 As previously reported, the WDBA facilitated the transfer of unspent apprenticeship levy from a large multi-national company to a local SME to support a Level 3 Digital Marketing Apprentice. The pledged

levy transfer funding support has now been successfully gifted to the receiving company. The young person has now started their professional training and development with the Hull Business Training Centre. To promote this fabulous opportunity the WDBA has been in discussions with all the parties involved with regard to coordinating opportunities to produce a 'good news' article, to raise wider SME awareness of the importance, value and benefits of utilising unspent levy funds to support their business growth and development.

In addition, the WDBA is pleased to report that as a result of the above work, the above gifting company have also conveyed their interest and future commitment in wanting to continue to offer levy transfer support in the long term to local SME businesses that meet with their industry requirements.

- 3.9.4 Through the WDBA's work with a local professional Rugby League Club and a training solutions company, further unspent apprenticeship levy has been transferred. The Rugby League club has successfully obtained levy transfer funding to fund 8 Level 5 'Leadership and Management' Apprenticeships to start in January 2024, generating much-needed professional development training opportunities along with a significant cost saving.

As we move further forward into December, the WDBA will be coordinating all parties involved to produce a press release article in respect of promoting this positive opportunity and in raising SME awareness of the benefits of utilising unspent levy funds to support their business growth and development.

- 3.9.5 As a result of the successful 'Apprenticeships, Traineeships and Internship an 'A to Z' guide event, which was held as part of Humber Business Week 2023, the WDBA will be working with the HEY Growth Hub and Employment & Skills Teams to plan a second event. The purpose of this event will be to continue to raise awareness of the different types of employment and work-based initiatives that owners, leaders and managers of small businesses across all sectors, who had little or no knowledge of apprenticeships and other workforce development options, can benefit from. Once again, it is hoped that this will be again co-delivered in partnership. Details to follow once times and venue have been confirmed and agreed.

### **3.10 Equality & Diversity**

- 3.10.1 The HEY LEP continues to develop the LEP's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion.

### **3.11 Stakeholder collaboration, support and partnership working**

- 3.11.1 The HEY LEP Employment & Skills Manager continues to contribute to the development of the HEY LSIP through involvement in the LSIP Board and attended the most recent meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> November.
- 3.11.2 The Employment & Skills Manager continues to support the work of the HEY Local Skills Improvement Fund steering group and attended the most recent meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> November.
- 3.11.3 The Employment & Skills team have received confirmation that the proposal submitted to the government's Innovation Fund along with the CIPD and the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT,) has been successful. The project will see joint activity between the HEY LEP Workforce Development function and Growth Hub collaborating with the CIPD to bring free of charge professional HR support to SMEs in Hull & East Yorkshire to support them with recruitment, retention and health & wellbeing. At the time of writing, the HEY LEP has a notional funding allocation sufficient to meet the cost of employing 1 x FTE for 18 months to deliver the project and associated programme reporting requirements in addition to other project related activity. A detailed budget, activity and deliverables will be developed when funding allocations are confirmed.
- 3.11.4 The team are working with the CIPD to organise a symposium on how growing the talent pool and recruiting a more diverse workforce can assist in meeting business needs and maximise productivity. The event will take place on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> February at the Mercure Hotel, Willerby, starting at 8:30am.
- 3.11.5 The Employment & Skills Manager met with representatives of the University of Leeds who are undertaking research into the impact of digital and technological advances in the warehousing and logistics sector and has offered to support the work, sharing learning and outcomes locally.
- 3.11.6 The Employment & Skills Manager continues to support the work of the Humber & North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board contributing to the ICB Workforce Board, Breakthrough programme and other employment & skills related activity.

### **3.12 Wider stakeholder engagement for the reporting period**

- 3.12.1. Since the previous meeting of the Employment & Skills Board, the Employment & Skills team have met with several key stakeholders to either introduce the work of the HEY LEP or to continue to explore areas of potential collaboration on employment and skills related aims and objectives. These include:

- Andrew Jackson HR Forum
- Behavioural Insights Team
- C4Di
- CIPD National Policy Team
- Careers & Enterprise Company
- Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT)
- Department for Education (DfE)
- Department for Work and Pensions
- HEY LSIP Board
- Hull Post-16 Education Partnership
- Hull City Council, Culture, Place and City Centre Team
- Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
- Humber Principals Group
- Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE)
- Local Digital Skills Partnership Network
- National LEP Network
- National Careers Service
- University of Hull
- Youth Futures Steering Group
- Yorkshire and Humber Apprenticeship Ambassador Network