

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY**  
**Employment and**  
**Skills Recovery Plan**  
**2021-2023**

## INTRODUCTION

**We have developed the 2021-2023 City Employment and Skills Recovery Plan in response to the current and emerging impact on employment and skills in the city caused by:**

- the Coronavirus pandemic
- the end of the transitional arrangements with the EU
- the extensive policy reforms to the further and higher education landscape and the Plan for Jobs announced by the government in July 2020.

These support the council's corporate plan and its commitment to inclusive growth. It remains our ambition to ensure that residents are supported effectively to make the most of the economic opportunity that the city and its wider partnerships can offer.

The priorities of the previous City Employment and Skills Plan (2016-2020) remain core values underpinning the new plan. They include 'no-one left behind' and supporting 'learn to earn' transitions.

The Brighton and Hove Economic Strategy continues to provide the evidence base for employment and the narrative for the city's economic priorities. This is supplemented with additional intelligence and information from stakeholders in relation to the implications and impact of the pandemic.



## A FLEXIBLE AND RESPONSIVE PLAN

**The scale of the pandemic has meant that most of the city's employers and workers have been affected in some way since restrictions were introduced. Many have been impacted in a significant way, either through redundancy, business closure or insolvency. Locally, the Visitor Economy Sector has been significantly affected, and regionally the Aviation Sector and its supply chain.**

In March 2020, as part of its financial support for business, the government introduced the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (Furlough) and the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme. According to government data, these schemes have been well utilised by the city's employers and self-employed residents. Both schemes have been extended into 2021.

The impact of the pandemic on unemployment in the city was swift. Across all age groups the increase in unemployment was high, increasing from

5,820 in February 2020 to 14,510 (September 2020).

The young have been disproportionately impacted, with an 180% increase in unemployment for 18-24 year olds at the peak.

The young are particularly vulnerable due to their lack of experience in work. Unemployment can have a long-term impact on individuals (and their families) irrespective of age, and appropriate levels of support will need to be provided to all of the age groups affected.



At the time of writing (February 2021), the pandemic is still causing considerable disruption with a further national lockdown in place. The end of free movement of workers, and the impact of the new points based immigration system following the UK's departure from the EU, is unclear. A greater reliance on domestic

recruitment and re-training to support sectors that have previously relied on overseas workers is likely. It is anticipated that following the relaxation of restrictions, pent up demand will provide opportunities in the accommodation and hospitality sector, particularly if the trend for staycations remains during 2021.



**This recovery plan is not static. It will continue to evolve over the next two years in order to:**

- **respond flexibly to emerging local priorities deliver regional projects funded through the LEP's Smarter, Greener, Stronger and Skills 360 Board's Skills Strategy and Action Plan**
- **implement and monitor national reforms and interventions introduced to aid economic recovery, increase productivity and close skills gaps.**

Employment and skills is interwoven in every aspect of society. The impact of an imbalance between supply and demand manifests on many levels. These include unemployment, under-employment, and jobs that are hard to fill. This can be due to a lack of the level of skill required, or in the extreme, a shortage of specific occupations nationally.

At the other end of the spectrum are roles that have historically been considered not desirable by those seeking work.

**Responding to these challenges is complex and dependent on many factors. These include:**

- inward investment
- funding
- qualifications and provision that delivers the knowledge and skills needed
- information, advice and guidance that help people, whatever the stage in their lives, to make the right decisions about their career
- offering appropriate opportunities for residents who are facing disadvantage in accessing education or work.

It is not possible for this plan to include every action or initiative that will contribute to job creation, upskilling and reskilling of the city's current and future workforce. Every education provider and employer will develop a recovery plan based on their own economic priorities. However, there is a strong spirit of collaboration in the city to align these priorities and recognition as to the benefits of doing so. Ultimately, local recovery is dependent on the retention and creation of jobs, and the alignment of labour demand with skills supply.

Prior to the pandemic the education sector was already preparing for structural reforms to transform post-16 technical education. The sector was also anticipating higher education reforms to further align post-18 education in response to the evolution in skills and knowledge that employers need.

These reforms, together with the policy interventions cascading from the new Plan for Jobs, mean that the scope and rate of change anticipated through the life of this plan is unprecedented. Announced by the government in July 2020, the 'Plan for Jobs', focuses on supporting, protecting, and creating jobs, in response to the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic. These interventions will support people to find jobs and gain the skills they need to get jobs, including targeted support for young people.

In acknowledging the complexity of the landscape, the role of the council is to lead this practical local plan. It will need to utilise intelligence from the Local Enterprise

Partnership, in its capacity of Skills Advisory Panel. This will facilitate a shared understanding of what needs to be achieved in order for the city to benefit from the national investment in innovation, education, skills and employment initiatives.

**To be successful this plan will require:**

- **Implementation of the national policy drivers announced by the government – for example, its 'Plan for Jobs' – at a local level.**
- **Stakeholder participation and collaboration – with the council, employers, training providers, further education, universities, LEP, business and education networks and the third sector all working together to address priorities**
- **Governance and accountability – monitoring and reporting, supportively challenging, and managing risks detrimental to recovery.**

The action plan, identifies objectives, actions and outcomes. These will be delivered collaboratively by stakeholders working together to address the priorities in this plan. The impact on stakeholders of the educational reforms and the policy interventions announced by the government to aid recovery, cannot be underestimated, particularly as limited resources are available to support delivery.

Brighton & Hove is the most successful coastal city in the UK. It has a strong knowledge economy, an entrepreneurial workforce and high business start-up rates. With the right conditions, this will underpin economic recovery.

The city benefits from a strong collaborative ethos through formal and informal networks. It also has good partnerships with education, businesses and the third sector.

## OBJECTIVES

The following objectives have been identified as essential to recovery.

### PRIORITY OBJECTIVE – Digital Inclusion

Digital exclusion is caused by low pay or poverty. It affects residents who are already socially and economically disadvantaged, further deepening existing inequalities. It prevents access to education, learning, health, income benefits, employment and causes isolation and loneliness.

Decreasing digital exclusion and increasing digital inclusion across the city is a priority objective which cuts across the 9 objectives. Digital inclusion measures should be embedded in the action plans as they are further developed with progress reported regularly.

#### Objective 1

Interventions supporting young people into education, training, work and apprenticeships that lead to a decline of NEETs and youth unemployment in the city and address

- Local employer participation with the Kickstart Scheme and creation of meaningful opportunities – resulting in young people moving into sustainable work
- Local implementation of the expanded youth offer
- Establish a physical and virtual Youth Employment Hub in the city
- Creation of new high quality Traineeship opportunities in the city aligned to occupational standards – to support progression into apprenticeships and sector specific jobs

#### Objective 2

Local delivery of National Careers Service and Job Centre Plus interventions that support people into work, lead to a decline of unemployment in the city and support sector skills gaps

- Deliver high quality careers, information, advice and guidance to the unemployed and economically inactive seeking employment, utilising labour market information to respond to local sector demand
- Deliver a sector-based skills academy offer that responds to local employer demand for skills
- Maximise the city's use of the Flexible Support Fund to fund projects or interventions that move people closer to employment
- Enhance local workforce capacity to support delivery

### Objective 3

High quality apprenticeships that meet employer skills requirements and provide progression pathways for residents

- Continue to promote interventions that lead to an increase of high quality apprenticeships in the city
- Collaboration with providers and businesses to plan for future skills needs

### Objective 4

Accredited Adult Learning Programmes that meet employer skills requirements and provide progression pathways for residents

- Providers to work together to effectively utilise the Adult Education Accredited Learning Budget. This will ensure a varied and relevant curriculum offer with strong progression routes and pathways and for learners
- Make the new level 3 offer available, varied and accessible to residents in the city and delivered by local providers (where possible)
- Seek opportunities to introduce skills bootcamp programmes

### Objective 5

Access funds that facilitate the delivery of employment and skills interventions in the city, and deliver projects that support the Grow Back Greener Strategy

- Development and delivery of Decarbonisation Academy Pilot project in partnership with Coast to Capital LEP
- Deliver social housing decarbonisation retrofit programmes for homes and buildings at scale, working with LEP, academics and leading community sector providers
- Deliver public sector decarbonisation to fund energy efficiency and low carbon heat upgrade measures (subject to successful funding bid)

### Objective 6

Implement T-Levels and Further and Higher Education reforms in the city

- Ensure the infrastructure is in place to deliver T-Levels in the city by September 2023, when T Levels become a mainstream offer for eligible 16-19 providers (note roll out to all providers from September 2024)
- Engage with and respond to Department of Education consultation Level 2 and 3 curriculum reviews
- Be an early adopter of Higher Technical Qualifications.

### Objective 7

Effective support is in place to address barriers for residents who are facing inequality in accessing the labour market. Including but not limited to age, race, disability, health or homelessness/ insecure housing, digital poverty

It is acknowledged that residents can face significant, multiple and complex barriers which impact upon their ability to access and sustain employment. In response to this, the action plan supporting this objective will be further developed in consultation with stakeholders

- Make progress in supporting all age groups with a disability to access pathways to employment and sustain paid work
- Ensure appropriate provision and pathways for residents who are homeless or in supported accommodation
- Ensure appropriate community learning provision pathways for residents requiring first step confidence building pathways, digital, maths, English and family learning
- Make progress in supporting BAME residents to access pathways to employment and sustain paid work, including appropriate provision and pathways for ESOL learners

### Objective 8

A varied career education and experience of the world of work offer is available to all young people in the city

- Supporting all young people in education to find out about and gain more experience of the world of work – in order to make informed choices about their future education and career choices

### Objective 9

Ensure effective oversight and monitoring of funding streams which provide employability related support and services

- Identify the impact on local services of the cessation of significant funding streams, including EU ESF Funding, and take mitigating action.

Governance is provided by the Adult Learning and Skills Partnership



