

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND SKILLS COMMITTEE**Agenda Item**

Brighton & Hove City Council

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND SKILLS COMMITTEE**Agenda Item 76**

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	City Employment & Skills Plan and Area Review Update		
Date of Meeting:	7th March 2016		
Report of:	Nick Hibberd, Acting Executive Director, Environment, Development & Housing and Pinaki Ghoshal, Executive Director, Children's' Services		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Cheryl Finella and Rachel Carter	Tel: 29-1095 and 294921
	Email:	Cheryl.finella@brighton-hove.gov.uk rachel.carter@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE/**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 This report updates the Committee on progress to date on the development of the new City Employment & Skills Plan (2016-2020) and informs the Committee of the outcomes from the consultations, the emerging priorities and recommendations for action.
- 1.2 It also provides an update on the Sussex Area Review of post 16 provision and the aligned local review.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the Committee notes the emerging priorities and recommendations for action to be taken forward for the new City Employment & Skills Plan (2016-2020).
- 2.2 That this City Employment and Skills Plan is also being presented to the Economic Development and Culture Committee on March 10th 2016.
- 2.3 That the final City Employment & Skills Plan and a full report of the Sussex Area Review and local review will be presented to this committee on 6th June 2016.
- 2.4 That the Committee notes the developments contained in the Committee paper "Proposed changes and developments in the council's Youthwork Service.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 A report proposing the development of a new City Employment & Skills Plan (2016-2020) was agreed by the Children, Young Peoples & Skills Committee on the 20th July 2015 and noted by the Economic Development & Culture Committee on the 17th September 2015.

3.2 The new City Employment & Skills Plan is focused on the key priorities outlined below:

- Establishing an Employer Skills Task Force to provide the vital business leadership to support both the development and delivery of the new Plan;
- Exploring new delivery models for boosting the number of apprenticeship opportunities across the city and the Greater Brighton City Region, with a particular focus upon high quality skilled apprenticeships, for 16-24 year olds;
- Creating a step change in how the City Council and other public sector bodies creates apprenticeship opportunities as major employers;
- Exploring initiatives which aim to eliminate long-term youth unemployment in the city through new ways of working in partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the Skills Funding Agency and the private sector; and
- Supporting those marginalised from the labour market into jobs.

3.3 The City Employment & Skills Plan supports the delivery of both the *Economy & Jobs* and *Children & Young People* priorities of the City Council's Corporate Plan 2015-19.

3.4 An Invitation to Tender to develop the new Plan received interest from six bidders. The successful consultants, Rocket Science, were appointed in November 2015.

3.5 Following the initial approval by the Children, Young Peoples & Skills Committee (July 2015) and Economic Development & Culture Committee (September 2015) it was agreed that update reports would be presented to the two committees in March 2016.

3.6 The Plan will explore ways to support those who are most marginalised from the labour market. The council wishes to ensure that all disabled people and those from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Groups are able to compete for secure sustainable employment and career progression as effectively as non-disabled or non-BME residents. The council is therefore preparing two separate Invitations to Tender, as follows:

- Provide a set of practical recommendations to remove barriers so disabled people in the city are able to compete effectively for jobs; and
- Produce a set of proposals for interventions that will result in a tangible increase in the employment chances of BME communities currently facing discrimination in the labour market.

City Employment & Skills Plan – Emerging Priorities

3.7 The following emerging priorities for the city were identified based on 25 interviews with key stakeholders, an assessment of the labour market, trend analysis and comments at the first consultation event held in December 2015. As a result of the research and consultation three main themes have emerged, which are outlined below:

- **No one left behind:** those suffering disadvantage in the labour market (unemployment, low pay or lack of aspirations) are supported effectively to make the most of the economic opportunities available in the Greater Brighton City Region.
- **Learn to earn:** young people and those making career transitions are supported on their journey from learning to earning and can take advantage of the career, lifestyle and further education opportunities that the city has to offer. This is an issue for all ages, not just young people; and
- **Benefiting from growth:** key growth sectors such as Creative, Digital and IT along with core sectors such as Tourism and Hospitality which are critical to sustaining a healthy and vibrant city, can access employees with the right technical skills, aptitude and readiness for work.

City Employment & Skills Plan – Recommendations for Action

3.8 A set of recommendations for action were produced under each of the emergent priorities and were discussed at the second consultation event held in January. Work is underway to refine these recommendations into actions that will sit within the CESP, which are outlined below.

3.9 **Putting employers at the heart of the plan:** The development of a City-wide employer brokerage model which engages with businesses, schools and providers to support the delivery of apprenticeship for young people and those adults in work. The model will also support all ages gain work experience, pre and in-work training and in-work progression etc. The brokerage model will build a database of employers and their needs that will generate vital intelligence about current and emerging recruitment and skill needs.

3.10 **Developing and improving the quality and capacity of our providers:** Recommend the development of a city 'kite mark' to provide assurance to individuals and employers that provision is good quality and that providers are signed-up to working through the brokerage model. This will help to deliver agreed standards of quality for effective referral and case management of the individual. It will include a support programme which helps providers to respond to changing funding arrangements such as apprenticeships and new funding opportunities from joint-working.

3.11 **Developing a 'Brighton' case management standard:** Recommends the development of a 'Brighton' approach to case management to ensure that people do not 'fall through the gaps' during their transition through different services and organisations. The aim is to help reduce duplication or conflict of the services/activities available to them. It will entail developing the skills and knowledge of front-line workers across key agencies and for them to commit to early intervention by them pooling resources and/or funding to help the individual.

3.12 Developing support for income and skills progression for the employed:

The establishment of a City-wide action plan will build on the findings of the Fairness Commission to support workers on low-incomes or facing skills and progression challenges and focus specifically on the following:

- Helping those individuals on low-incomes (below Living Wage and those where the Benefit Cap of £20,000 is insufficient);
- Improving the career progression of those in entry-level jobs through the organisation or sector to higher level jobs and pay; and
- Employers offering flexible working arrangements and support to part-time workers.

3.13 Development of an all-age and sector-based response: Recommend the development of an all-age and sector-based response to support key sectors: CDIT; Hospitality and Tourism; Retail; and the Public Sector in the City. This approach will bring together existing providers to provide a response that addresses skills gaps in these sectors and also work with employers to design relevant and high quality pre- and post-employment provision. It will deliver training programmes designed with employers to improve the quality of skills provision and help to ensure that investment into skills is better targeted and related to sector needs.

3.14 A Workforce development programme for small and micro-businesses:

Recommend a targeted programme for smaller businesses which provides tailored brokerage and support to build solutions around their specific recruitment needs. This will help support the small and micro-businesses in the City to build a workforce development solution around their individual business needs.

3.15 Details of the emerging priorities and how they link to the actions are in Appendix 1. Full details of the recommendations for action are in Appendix 2. In addition, Appendix 3 contains employment and skills data for Brighton & Hove.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 The do nothing approach represents risks for Brighton & Hove and its residents because of a number of factors which will impact on the labour market and skills and employment in the City including but not limited to; changes to the funding landscape for skills; the changes to benefits for under 25 year olds; the introduction of an Apprenticeship Levy in April 2017; high number of Employment Support Allowance claimants in the city etc.

4.2 Following the approval for a new City Employment & Skills Plan by the Children, Young Peoples & Skills Committee (July 2015), no alternative options were considered.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

5.1 The working group has engaged with key supply-side providers, public bodies, third sector partners and business representatives who were consulted throughout the development of the new Plan. Over 100 delegates attended the first consultation event in December 2015 looking at the key priorities for the Plan.

- 5.2 A second consultation event took place in January 2016 to gather feedback on the recommendations for action, which was also well-attended (70 delegates) and received positive feedback.
- 5.3 During the consultation period, over 25 in-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders and an additional online survey was completed by over 170 respondents.
- 5.4 The development of the new Plan is taking account of the work of the Fairness Commission to ensure that there is alignment with its work. The Fairness Commission has prioritised access to employment & training as an issue to be addressed. Rocket Science presented the emerging priorities for the Plan to the Commission on 20th January 2016.

Employer Skills Task Force

- 5.5 Establishing an Employer Skills Task Force is an integral part of the development of the Plan to ensure that the city's major employers are central to its development.
- 5.6 In September 2015 following consultation between the council and the local business community, a new Employer Skills Task Force (ESTF) was formed. The ESTF's remit was to consider how the number of apprenticeships can be increased locally; how those who have not worked for some time can be supported back into work; and, how more businesses can be encouraged to engage with schools as a way of helping to build and grow a pipeline of local talent able to enter work and learning with a greater understanding of the local job and career opportunities in different sectors.
- 5.7 Zac Toumazi, Chief Executive of Sussex Cricket Ltd, was appointed as Chair of the Task Force supported by Deputy Chairs Gary Peters, Founder and Chief Executive of Lovelocaljobs.com, and Charlotte Blant, CEO at Youthforce. The ESTF is a time-limited group; it met five times between September 2015 and January 2016.
- 5.8 Members included businesses, schools, training providers, the two universities and other representatives. By seeking to address the local challenges, stakeholders from across the Greater Brighton City Region (Adur & Worthing, Lewes and Mid-Sussex) were invited to be involved in recognition that these local economies are inter-linked and that joint working will reap benefits for all.
- 5.9 The Employer Skills Task Force will be making recommendations which will be revealed later this month along with a call to action for the City's employers to get involved.
- 5.10 Brighton & Hove City Council as a large employer in the City is a member of the Task Force and currently has 39 apprentices and is in the process of recruiting seven more. The council has been working with City College Brighton and launched an apprenticeship offer to staff working at the council to take up apprenticeships and has received 25 applications.

- 5.11 The council also supports contractors in delivering elements of their Employment & Training Strategies and City College by brokering opportunities for college students to access apprenticeship placements with contractors on major projects in the city.
- 5.12 There are a number of apprenticeship opportunities arising from new and major developments in the pipeline in Brighton & Hove, including the i360 which is expected to create 169 permanent jobs and the Aparthotel, which will create around 30 jobs. The 3Ts Royal Sussex Hospital redevelopment is expected to create 50 apprenticeship starts by 2020 and offer a wide ranging programme of engagement with schools, colleges etc.
- 5.13 In addition, the council has run and supported city wide events to promote apprenticeships. In March 2016 it is supporting the Sussex Chamber of Commerce to organise a Your Future Careers Fair, for all schools and colleges to send students who have an interest in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) subjects. This event will have a focus on apprenticeships.

6.0 UPDATE ON THE SUSSEX AREA REVIEW (SAR)

- 6.1 The Sussex Area Review has extended its consultation until the end of April 2016 for the following reasons:
- Revised rules on academisation opportunities for 6th form colleges won't be published until mid-February 2016; and
 - Further clarity on the rules detailing funding and support for any restructuring proposals by colleges is not yet available.
- 6.2 The local review, which is aligned to the SAR, is continuing its consultation with schools and colleges exploring opportunities for collaboration with regard to its existing provision. It is also connecting with the Employer Skills Taskforce, identifying skills gaps, the impact on curriculum and challenges that are being faced. It will be making recommendations for consideration by the schools and colleges governing bodies.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Committee is asked to note the progress update for the development of the City Employment & Skills Plan.
- 7.2 Committee is asked to note the identified skills and employment needs in the city and how the proposed actions will address those needs over the life of the plan, as outlined in this report and summarized below:
- A city-wide employer brokerage model which engages with businesses, schools and providers to support the delivery of apprenticeships, work experience, pre and in-work training etc;
 - A 'kite mark/quality standard' to provide assurance to individuals and employers that provision is good quality;

- Case management approach to ensure that people do not ‘fall through the gaps’ during their transition between different agencies and providers;
- City-wide action plan which will build on the findings of the Fairness Commission to support workers on low-incomes or facing skills and progression challenges;
- Development of an all-age and sector-based response to support key sectors (CDIT, Hospitality and Tourism, Retail and Public Sector) and bring together existing providers to address skills gaps in these sectors and deliver training programmes with employers to meet their needs; and
- A targeted programme for small and microbusinesses which provides tailored brokerage and support around their specific recruitment needs.

7.3 The report will consider new governance models to oversee delivery of the Plan.

7.4 Committee is asked to note the next steps:

- Final City Employment & Skills Plan (2016-2020) report will be prepared by June 2016 once the recommendations from the Fairness Commission have been considered and when the outcome of the Sussex Area Review has reported back;
- Final Plan will go to Full Council for approval; and
- Implement the recommendations for action over the lifetime of the plan for monitoring by the council.

7.5 Committee is asked to note that the final City Employment & Skills Plan and a full report of the Sussex Area Review and local review will be presented to this committee on 6th June 2016.

8 FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

8.1 There are no direct financial implications associated to the recommendations in this report.

8.2 A budget of £0.035m was identified for development of the City Employment & Skills Plan and to support the evaluation and appraisal of any new service delivery models arising from the review of the plan. £0.030m was identified from the City Regeneration Investment Fund reserve and £0.005m from the existing revenue budget within the City Regeneration service. The development of the new plan is being project managed by the Economic Development Team within the City Regeneration service.

8.3 Costs associated with the delivery of the actions set out in the plan will be assessed within relevant future reports of business cases to seek appropriate approval and will be subject to available funding.

Finance Officer Consulted: Steve Bedford

Date: 15/02/16

Legal Implications:

- 8.4 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report. The final City Employment & Skills Plan will need to consider the legal implications of the actions and initiatives proposed within it before they are presented back to committee for final approval.

Lawyer Consulted:

Oliver Asha

Date: 22/02/16

Equalities Implications:

- 8.5 The Plan's main aim is to tackle unemployment and underemployment and thereby help to address inequality. The consultants are identifying any equalities implications concerning the Plan or its outcomes and an Equalities Impact Assessment will be developed alongside the skills Plan and the Plan will take into account recommendations from the Fairness Commission

Sustainability Implications:

- 8.6 The plan will complement the strategic objectives in the council's Economic Strategy. These include tackling barriers to employment, supporting the low carbon economy and growth of the CDIT sector. In addition, it will link to the work being undertaken by the Greater Brighton Economic Board. The plan will also link to the emerging Coast to Capital ESIF (Economic Structural & Investment Fund) projects. Improving the job prospects of the resident workforce will improve economic sustainability.

Any Other Significant Implications

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 8.7 Studies have repeatedly linked unemployment to rising crime and the deterioration of health. Labour market policies can play a role in reducing crime rates and reducing unemployment in the city should have a positive impact on reducing levels of crime.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 8.8 Measures will be put in place to monitor and manage any risks.

Public Health Implications:

- 8.9 The Office of National Statistics (ONS) measures national wellbeing and established that economically inactive people have lower levels of wellbeing than those in employment and that even being under-employed is detrimental to wellbeing. The 2015 Public Health report focuses on equalities impacts and that information from this document will help inform strategies to address equalities in the delivery of the plan. The plan will aim to have a positive impact on those residents in the city that are unemployed or under-employed.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 8.10 The new plan supports the delivery of both the Economy & Jobs and Children & Young People priorities of the City Council's Corporate Plan 2015-2019. The plan is being written at a time when Local Authorities are facing significant cuts to their budgets and, at the same time, the implications of welfare reform are becoming unknown, with growing numbers of residents being detrimentally financially affected. The interventions in the plan will potentially help reduce the financial burden on the Local Authority.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Summary of Emerging Priorities
2. CESP actions for discussion
3. Brighton Story

Key Issues – Young people	Ambition	Challenges	Interventions	What is needed?
<p>Council’s commitment to reduce youth unemployment to zero Lack of apprenticeship take-up (falling behind other areas) which has dipped in recent years Disparate and uncoordinated apprenticeship offer to both employers and young people, some mismatch in provision and perception of poor quality Careers and IAG offer seen as not fit for purpose, although lots of initiatives and active group operating for young people. Greater issue for adults Employers reporting Brighton young people are not ready for work</p>	<p>There is a clear set of ambitions emerging from stakeholders (eg ESTF): The development of an apprenticeship brokerage/training organisation to be the intermediary between employers, providers and schools. Structure to be determined.</p>	<p>Apprenticeship funding, structure and provision going through radical shake up in next 18 months nationally - new engagement platforms, frameworks and standards being introduced. Is now the right time as it could add greater confusion, and much is subject to change? Potentially little influence through devolution asks (ie over the use of the levy) Need for improved employer engagement to extend beyond apprenticeship offer Financial and management commitment needed beyond three years – reputational/sustainability risk</p>	<p>Develop an apprenticeship offer to focus on sectors that are underserved and trail-blaze new frameworks in the GB area. With other public sector partners prepare for 2017 with a GB public sector apprenticeship offer (ie across LA, NHS, Univs) Existing infrastructure needs to prepare for changes – opportunity to re-engineer provision and sector focus through targeted support and area review. Focus on college provision where numbers are greater and develop a local accreditation/quality standard Develop a broader provider/engagement standard and brand in preparation for plugging gaps in local delivery of 2020 vision and building on Employer Pledges</p>	<p>1. Managing employer demand effectively A transformational approach to working with employers through establishing a single point of access, route to information for employers. This could be scaled across the GB area and focused on brokering a range of employer interactions (for both young people and adults) - engaging and signposting employers to schools/colleges/providers – collecting insight into recruitment/skills needs and experience; identifying business support needs and signposting/referring on. 2. Driving and improving supply side quality and behaviours – building resilient skills provision Need to drive up quality in engagement and delivery across all providers. Development of a local standard/kitemark supported by capacity building to be used as a local guarantee of service/delivery and a pre-requisite for commissioning and contracting.</p>

<p>(not unusual, but particularly striking among B&H employers)</p>	<p>Development of a coordinated City-wide skills and careers offer which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Creates and embeds better links between employers/schools, young people /local residents b) Improves information on vocational pathways and c) Supports the delivery of vocational skills and qualifications linked to employer needs 	<p>Careers and IAG challenges are not unique to Brighton, but dealt with differently across GB (how to gain consensus for initiatives across the region). National Careers Service and Careers and Enterprise Company bedding in</p> <p>Ability to influence devolution deal</p> <p>Competition for young people causes tensions (not always in their best interests); Initiatives subject to short term funding</p>	<p>17 year old guarantee will enable access to young people with careers information – opportunity here to drive, assess and improve quality of provision and materials</p> <p>A focus on driving careers information related to opportunities in the GB area</p> <p>Improved employer engagement and connectivity linked to work experience, apprenticeships and vocational support could be transformational</p>	<p>3. Communications strategy</p> <p>Coherent and area focused communications campaign targeting all residents about work and skills opportunities/ pathways. 1000 in a 1000 days is good publicity, but quality is what really matters</p>
---	--	--	--	--

Key Issues – ESA/Low Pay	Ambition	Challenges	Opportunities	What is needed?
<p>Over 13,000 residents on Employment Support Allowance, of which 70% are over 50 and over 50% report their primary condition as mental health Living Wage appears to be having impact, but effect of benefit cap to £20,000 means 650 households affected as Universal Credit is rolled out and costs of housing increase in the City Lots of provision but very disconnected, duplicated and often short term, offered by a range of providers/services that do not necessarily connect and are likely to be interacting with same individuals/households Focus on getting into work or pathways to work – little support</p>	<p>There is less of a consensus on ambition to address this priority owing to its size and complexity. We suggest that ambition focuses on the c1500 who are WRAG (key clients of the new Work and Health Programme) Improving access to the labour market for those who face the greatest disadvantage and challenge focusing on those on work related benefits (ESA etc)</p>	<p>New Work and Health programme replacing Work Programme – significantly reduced investment will require a different model and access to other funding and support to make it work locally This will require integrated working within the council and across local partners Cohort facing real barriers need ‘client friendly’ employers to offer work experience and greater investment/quality of pre-placement support to demonstrate how this cohort can be as dependable a recruit as a graduate for entry level jobs</p>	<p>City deal offers opportunities to influence the Work and Health Programme Could the council become a direct deliverer/provider on the new programme as a way of corralling, developing and managing support - building on its work around troubled families and welfare reform and adult health and social care priorities? Opportunity to use employer engagement model more widely to support this group and create group of cohort friendly employers through the emerging Employer Pledge</p>	<p>4) Strategic level commitment and support to the Work and Health Programme This will include: clear roles and responsibilities (dependent on council’s position) on approach to local delivery; a programme of capacity building with key staff across all the agencies working with the cohort to understand issues and responses; a single common assessment framework and client tracking system; the development of a senior level working group and case management to bring together different agencies to resolve issues collectively. 5) Development of City-wide low income and progression strategy and action plan Lead the development of a strategy and action</p>
	<p>Developing complementary packages of support to those who need to increase their household income, targeted approach to Universal Credit roll out via Jobcentre Plus</p>	<p>Perceptions of JCP moving from ‘sanctioning’ to coaching, UC is an offer but might be met with scepticism from both clients and providers Lack of funding available for those in work and reticence to access loans will</p>	<p>Access to individuals and households through network of community based providers/organisations Using flexibilities around the Adult Skills Budget and accessing other funding through ESIF and other pots to develop a Brighton skills and income</p>	

<p>currently in work or for progression on vocational pathways or to improve income levels ‘Job-blocking’ by graduates is impacting on access to entry-level jobs for those furthest from labour market</p>	<p>Developing and extending the current IAG offer to all ages and supporting access to different levels within vocational pathways through higher level skills training and development</p>	<p>hinder access to training and upskilling Navigating the system will be a challenge and identifying those who need support, but who do not meet UC criteria and are not in the system. Focus on UC limit masks issues around broader affordability issues re: housing in the City. Is £21k enough for a family to live on?</p>	<p>escalator programme to support those in low-wage, part time work. Providing further training opportunities, short work based training/certification.</p>	<p>plan with partners to agree a city-wide approach to supporting low-income residents building on the success of the Living Wage and outcomes from the Fairness Commission.</p>
---	---	--	---	--

Key issues – Workforce development	Ambition	Challenges	Opportunities	What is needed?
<p>Readiness for work in terms of attitude and behaviours is a key challenge - amplified for young people and the more disadvantaged but applies also to graduates</p> <p>Current provision is considered of variable quality and not necessarily linked to employer needs</p> <p>Competition for funding and accessing employers is creating confusion and resulting in disengagement of employers</p> <p>Employers lack the means to influence provision and are generally less likely to look to public agencies for solutions/support</p> <p>Graduates that choose to stay in Brighton are not moving into higher level jobs and opportunities available</p>	<p>Improving the current skills offer to ensure better alignment with employers' needs, by making better use of real time Labour Market Intelligence and skills forecasting</p> <p>Embed generic and resilience skills within programmes to manage the changing needs of the labour market – flexibility and work readiness</p>	<p>Limited funding available to support employers</p> <p>Difficulty in engaging employers to develop new types of course and curricula that meet their needs and the time taken to get these implemented</p> <p>Extent to which employers are willing to pay for training and support is unclear, but unlikely to engage if offer is incoherent, not timed well or unsustainable (stop/start)</p>	<p>The area has a strong foundation and examples of collaborative working with business to support growth and development through its hubs.</p> <p>Examples of work readiness development linked to internships and work within CDIT sector in place, although long term funding not secure</p> <p>Use of Adult Skills Budget and flexibilities through ESIF and other funding pots to develop sector focused (customised training) programmes</p>	<p>6) Improving sector based skills provision</p> <p>Development of an all-age and sector-based response to support apprenticeship take up as well as support individuals at pre-employment stage particularly for entry level jobs to enable them to be work and sector ready. Focus on agreed priority sectors, CDIT, hospitality/retail, public sector, where the City can make the greatest impact.</p> <p>7) Using intelligence and access to support workforce development in small and micro businesses (<10 staff)</p> <p>Extend the work of these academies to improve insight around curricula development and provide broader business support directly to the employer through recommendation (1). With a focus on supporting these smaller businesses which need support to grow but which find navigating and accessing support too distracting/challenging.</p>



CESP – Recommended Actions

This short paper sets out the six key actions linked together under a City Employability Service we are recommending for the new City Employment and Skills Plan. Importantly these resonate and align with the recommendations from the Employers Skills Task Force and emerging findings from the Fairness Commission, particularly in view of the evidence presented at the Employment and Skills session held on the 20th January.

Actions

1. **Putting employers at the heart of the plan** – we are proposing the development of a City-wide employer brokerage model, which enables a strategic engagement with businesses; supporting the exchange of apprenticeships, work experience, pre and in work training and engagement with schools and providers. This is to support all ages - in recognition of the need to focus on older working population and access to both employment and in-work progression. In addition the brokerage will build a database of employers and their needs that will generate vital intelligence about current and emerging recruitment and skill needs.
2. **Developing the quality and capacity of employment and skills providers** – we are recommending the development of a City kite mark and development programme which provides; a badge of assurance to both individuals and employers that provision is of a decent quality and that providers are signed up to working through the employer brokerage meeting standards of quality around engagement, effective referral, case management of the individual, delivery and joint working; a support programme which enables providers to respond to changing funding arrangements such as apprenticeships, Work and Health Programme and new funding opportunities emerging.
3. **Developing a City-wide integrated case management process** - we are recommending the development of integrated case management to ensure that individuals do not fall through the gaps as they transition through services and that there is greater coherence of the support for an individual so that one service/activity does not conflict with the other. This will include a programme of development and support for front-line workers and a commitment to early intervention and prevention.

- 4. Supporting income and skills progression for those in employment** – we are recommending the establishment of a City-wide action plan building on the findings of the Fairness Commission to support workers on low-incomes or facing skills and progression challenges. We feel that it will be important to nest this with the recommendations of the commission so that it has greatest traction, however through improved employer engagement and the development of better strategic relationships with business, this should integrate with the wider workforce development support proposed.
- 5. Development of an all-age and sector-based response** – we recommend the development of an all-age and sector-based response to support key sectors; CDIT, Hospitality and Tourism, Retail and Public Sector in the City. This approach will deliver training programmes designed with employers to improve the quality of skills provision and of sector-related employability skills at pre-employment/pre-apprenticeship through to in-work skills progression for all ages. This will enable investment into skills to be far better targeted and related to sector needs AND pool resources and funding, particularly around the Apprenticeship Levy for public sector employers.
- 6. Development of a workforce development support programme for small and micro-businesses <49 employees** – we are recommending a targeted programme for smaller businesses which provides tailored brokerage and support and builds solutions around their specific needs to support their recruitment, develops their leadership and management skills and in turn helps them to grow.

