

## WEST OF ENGLAND JOINT COMMITTEE

19 JULY 2019

### REPORT SUMMARY SHEET

### EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS PLAN

#### Purpose

To provide an overview of the Employment and Skills Plan and the process that has taken place to support its development, and to seek approval of the Plan.

#### Summary

This report includes the following key information:

- \* The proposed vision and objectives as set out in the Employment and Skills Plan.
- \* The 10 initial actions that have been developed to help the region deliver on the vision and objectives in the plan.
- \* The governance arrangements that will be put in place to support delivery of the plan, specifically the development of our regional Skills Advisory Panel.
- \* Details of the partners that have played a central role in developing the detail of the plan.
- \* The public engagement process that has taken place to inform the plan.

#### Recommendation

Members of the Joint Committee are asked to approve the Employment & Skills Plan

**Contact officer:** Stephen Bashford

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**REPORT TO: WEST OF ENGLAND JOINT COMMITTEE**

**DATE: 19 JULY 2019**

**REPORT TITLE: EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PLAN**

**DIRECTOR: STEPHEN BASHFORD, HEAD OF BUSINESS & SKILLS**

**AUTHOR: RACHEL PYKETT**

### **Purpose of Report**

- 1 This report:
  - Provides an overview of the draft West of England Employment and Skills Plan.
  - Sets out the process that has been undertaken to develop the Plan.
  - Provides a summary of outcomes of recent public engagement on the Plan.

### **Recommendation**

- Joint Committee is asked to approve the Employment and Skills Plan.

### **Background / Issues for Consideration**

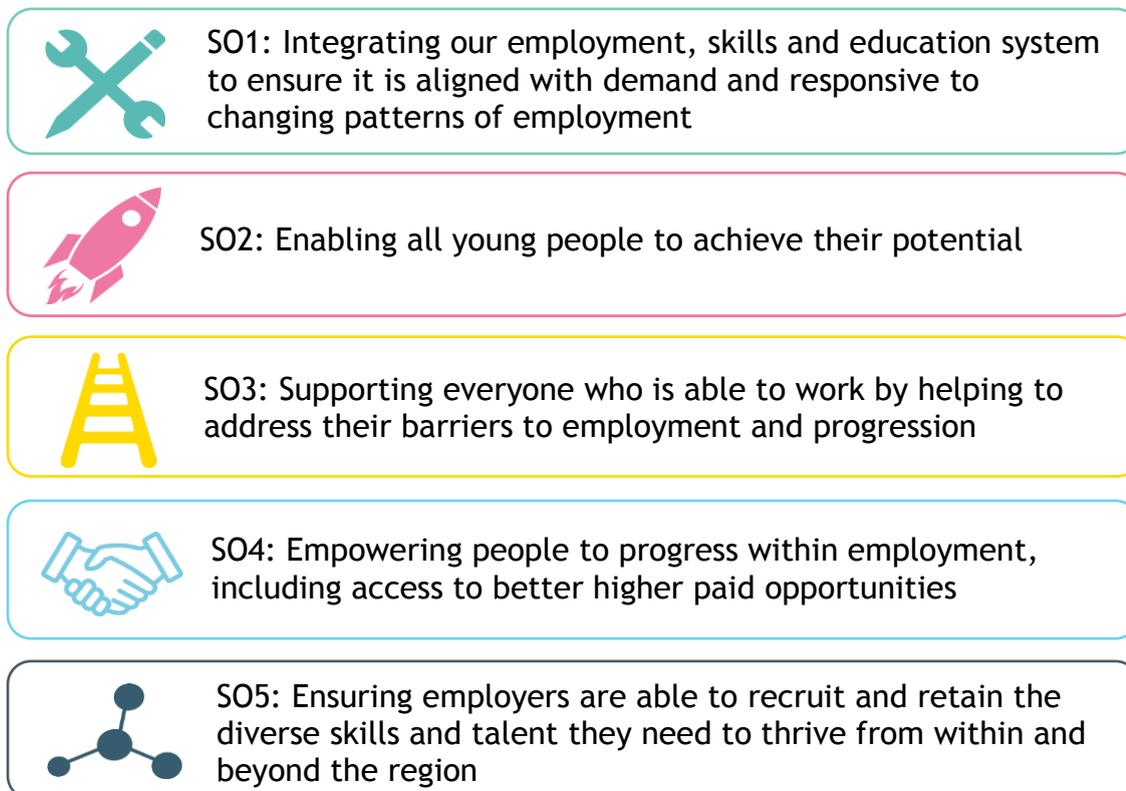
- 2 The development of a regional employment and skills plan was agreed as a priority in the WECA Business Plan. Delivery of appropriate employment and skills interventions also emerged as one of the key conclusions from the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) evidence base.
  - 2.1 The Plan therefore forms a key component of the LIS, ensuring our residents and businesses have access to the right support to enable them to contribute to and benefit from regional growth.
  - 2.3 The Plan provides an over-arching framework to help shape the development of employment and skills activities across the region. It sets a collective vision and shared objectives for delivery, reform and investment, acting to influence and catalyse action from both local and national partners where priorities align. These are set out at Figure 1.

## Figure 1: Employment and Skills Plan vision and strategic objectives

### Vision

*“By 2036, the West of England will be internationally recognised for its sustainable, inclusive and diverse economy, providing a high quality of life, prosperity and opportunities for all its residents. Our people will be skilled, healthy and able to access pathways of opportunity to achieve their potential. Our businesses will play an active role in shaping employment and skills provision across the region and they will be able to find the skills and talent they need to innovate, add greater value and thrive”*

### Strategic Objectives



- 2.4 The Plan has been built on a detailed understanding of our regional strengths and challenges, which are summarised in the plan and set out in greater detail in the supporting evidence base report.
- 2.5 The Plan includes initial proposals for taking forward our priorities in an action plan. This action plan will remain a living, breathing plan, able to respond to emerging opportunities and innovative proposals as they come forward. This is set out in the draft Employment and Skills Plan.
- 2.6 As highlighted in the Plan, there will be collective responsibility for delivering and resourcing actions identified. It is anticipated that actions will be funded through a variety of potential funding streams including any remaining European funds/successor programmes, the West of England Investment Fund, national delivery, devolved resources

and local resources. Whilst every effort has been made to identify potential funding streams to deliver the plan, as a long-term plan, other funding streams will emerge over time.

- 2.7 The Plan highlights that the Skills Advisory Panel (SAP) the region will shortly establish will provide expert oversight and direction to this work, providing skills advice to the LEP, Combined Authority and Joint Committee to support decision making.
- 2.8 The strategy has been developed by a range of partners across the region, representing a collective vision to underpin the decisions we take together to enhance employment and skills provision across the region.
- 2.9 The Plan builds on our collective experience, highlighting a range of existing employment and skills related activity both within the region and beyond that is having positive impact and that we should look to build on as we implement our regional plan. The actions above build on the firm foundations we have in the region.

## Consultation

- 3 As highlighted in section 2 of this report, the Employment and Skills Plan has been developed in collaboration with a wide range of partners and stakeholders across the region. Through the development process, consultation has taken place with:
  - The four Unitary Authorities across the region
  - The Local Enterprise Partnership Board
  - The regional FE Principals Group
  - The regional Skills Advisory Board
  - The Civil Society Partnership
  - A Skills Expert Group that was established to enable partners from across the groups detailed above (and more broadly – including our universities) to come together to help shape the plan.

Feedback from each of these groups has helped shape the draft plan.

- 3.1 The draft plan has been shared publicly, ensuring views from people across the region have been captured during the plan development process. The draft was available online between 6<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> June. During this time the Plan was viewed 777 times and was viewed over 3,500 times via Twitter and LinkedIn. Details of the Plan were included in a number of WECA newsletters, which were opened over 400 times.
- 3.2 An online questionnaire was published alongside the plan. This received 21 responses (with 3 further responses received via email). Respondents to the survey were broadly positive. Almost all respondents stated they agreed or strongly agreed with the priorities, vision, objectives and proposed actions set out in the plan.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 20 respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the plan's priorities, 19 with the vision, 19 with the objectives and 18 with the proposed actions.

3.3 Those who responded to the survey made a number of suggestions about developing the plan. Comments fell within a number of common themes, which are set out in the table below, along with detail on how these views will be reflected in the implementation of the plan.

**Figure 2: Themes emerging from public engagement**

Theme of comments	Response
Revisions to the Vision and Strategic Objectives	A number of minor revisions to the vision and SO's have been made to reflect views expressed during the engagement process
Suggestion for sector specific emphasis in relation to individual proposed actions	The plan does not take a sector focus. The requirements of different sectors will be considered in implementation planning
Strengthen emphasis on the needs of specific cohorts underrepresented in the labour market	A number of further priority groups have been highlighted in the plan, building on those included in the draft consulted on
Demonstrate how this Plan links to other strategies	A new section has been added to the plan, reflecting links between this plan and broader strategies in place across the region
Suggestion of greater emphasis on the spatial distribution of interventions, to address particular issues	The plan references the need to focus on the needs of individual communities. The detail of this will be develop through implementation planning
Greater recognition of the role of independent training providers	The role of independent training providers, along with a range of other providers, will be important in developing the plan, they will be important partners in implementation planning
Emphasis of the need for careers advice throughout all activity in the plan	Additional references to careers advice have been included in the plan, emphasising the lifelong nature of this activity
Support for specific successful projects	The potential to support existing projects will be considered through implementation planning

3.3 The Skills Expert Group met for a final time on 24<sup>th</sup> June to review the draft plan. Final revisions were discussed to strengthen the emphasis and focus of the drafting. The Expert Group agreed to add an additional action to the plan, ensuring there was a specific focus on

lifelong reskilling and retraining, reflecting the changing nature of the labour market where multiple careers over an individual's working life are becoming more common.

- 3.4 The draft plan attached reflects feedback that has been received throughout the drafting and development process.

### **Other Options Considered**

- 4 The Employment and Skills Plan was a recommendation of the WECA Business Plan signed off by Committee. No other options have been considered.

### **Risk Management/Assessment**

- 5 Risks associated with this plan will be in relation to the individual actions detailed. Risks will cover areas such as securing appropriate investment, engaging participants in individual programmes associated with the plan, and ensuring timely and high quality delivery of services.
- 5.1 Specific risks and proposed mitigating action will be identified as delivery plans for individual actions set out in the Employment and Skills Plan are developed.

### **Public Sector Equality Duties**

- 6 The public sector equality duty created under the Equality Act 2010 means that public authorities must have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
  - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 6.1 The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves:
- Removing or minimizing disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
  - Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
  - Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
- 6.2 The general equality duty therefore requires organisations to consider how they could positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations. It requires equality considerations to be reflected in the design of policies and the delivery of services, including policies, and for these issues to be kept under review.
- 6.3 Evidence that has informed the Employment and Skills Plan has identified specific demographic groups and communities where action is required encourage participation. As

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delivery plans are developed, we will continue to ensure we continue to focus on this issue.

### **Finance Implications, including economic impact assessment where appropriate**

- 7 There are no direct financial implications associated with the Employment and Skills Plan. However, the Plan does set a strategic framework against which future financial decisions will be taken. The financial implications of individual actions set out in the Plan will be detailed as delivery plans for each action are developed.

Advice given by: Malcolm Coe, Director of Investment and Corporate Services, WECA

### **Legal Implications**

- 8 There are no direct legal implications associated with the Employment and Skills Plan. However, the Plan does set a strategic framework against which future decisions will be taken. The legal implications of individual actions set out in the Plan will be detailed as delivery plans for each action are developed.

Advice given by: Shahzia Daya, Director Legal Services, WECA

### **Land/Property Implications**

- 9 There are no direct land or property implications associated with the Employment and Skills Plan. However, the Plan does set a strategic framework against which future decisions will be taken. The land and property implications of individual actions set out in the Plan will be detailed as delivery plans for each action are developed.

Advice given by: David Carter, Director of Infrastructure, WECA

### **Human Resources Implications**

- 10 There are no direct HR implications associated with the Employment and Skills Plan. However, the Plan does set a strategic framework against which future decisions will be taken. The HR implications of individual actions set out in the Plan will be detailed as delivery plans for each action are developed.

Advice given by: Alex Holly, Head of People and Assets, WECA

### **Appendices:**

Appendices to the report are:

Appendix 1 – The Draft Employment and Skills Plan

Appendix 2 – The evidence base report underpinning the plan: [https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/190320-Employment-and-Skills-Plan-Evidence-Base-June-2019-FINAL\\_compressed.pdf](https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/190320-Employment-and-Skills-Plan-Evidence-Base-June-2019-FINAL_compressed.pdf)

**West of England Combined Authority Contact:**

Any person seeking background information relating to this item should seek the assistance of the contact officer for the meeting who is Ian Hird / Tim Milgate on 0117 332 1486; or by writing to West of England Combined Authority, 3 Rivergate, Temple Way, Bristol BS1 6ER; email: [democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@westofengland-ca.gov.uk)

# EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS PLAN



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## Executive summary

This document sets out a long-term Employment and Skills Plan for the West of England. It draws on evidence of our regional strengths, opportunities and challenges and highlights the steps we will take to ensure the West of England continues to deliver the employment and skills opportunities that will enable people, communities and the region as a whole to thrive.

### Strategic ambition and objectives

At the heart of our plan is our vision for employment and skills within the West of England area, as set out below:

***“By 2036, the West of England will be internationally recognised for its sustainable, inclusive and diverse economy, providing a high quality of life, prosperity and opportunities for all its residents. Our people will be skilled, healthy and able to access pathways of opportunity to achieve their potential. Our businesses will play an active role in shaping employment and skills provision across the region and they will be able to find the skills and talent they need to innovate, add greater value and thrive”***

To deliver on our vision, the region, will pursue five strategic objectives.



**SO1: Integrating our employment, skills and education system to ensure it is aligned with demand and responsive to changing patterns of employment**



**SO2: Enabling all young people to achieve their potential**



**SO3: Supporting everyone who is able to work by helping to address their barriers to employment and progression**



**SO4: Empowering people to progress within employment, including access to better higher paid opportunities**



**SO5: Ensuring employers are able to recruit and retain the diverse skills and talent they need to thrive from within and beyond the region**

## Strategic actions

The table below sets out our strategic actions, many of which cut across more than one objective.

Strategic activities	SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5
<b>1. Work towards a more integrated regional skills function</b> To include intelligence, evidence based commissioning, co-ordination of provision and informed decision-making	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>2. Co-design activities which challenge and support our schools to improve outcomes and raise aspiration among young people</b>		✓			
<b>3. Enhance careers education, advice and guidance through expansion of the Careers Hub model</b> By co-designing a world class careers advice service that adds value to and complements the current CEC offer	✓	✓			✓
<b>4. Secure investment for a community grant scheme for projects targeting local need or specific hard to reach groups</b>	✓		✓	✓	
<b>5. Infrastructure to connect people to employment and skills opportunities</b> Align plans to ensure employment and skills opportunities are supported by infrastructure that links people to opportunities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>6. Support effective retraining opportunities across the region, ensuring residents and businesses are well-prepared for a changing labour market</b>			✓	✓	✓
<b>7. Develop Future Bright Plus</b> Build on successful parts of programme and expand remit based on mid-term evaluation	✓		✓	✓	✓
<b>8. Further development/re-boot of the Apprenticeship Hub</b> Focusing on brokerage (people and businesses) to maximise uptake and linked to the Growth Hub	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>9. Adult Education Budget Commissioning Strategy</b> Align commissioning strategy to the vision and objectives of the Employment and Skills Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>10. Develop initiatives to help employers plan for skills</b> e.g through development of anchor institutions network, Workforce for the Future and Enhanced Growth Hub offer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>11. Supporting key growth sectors and innovation 'ecosystem' i.e. through Global Centre of Innovation Excellence, Institute of Technology, Digital Skills</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## Understanding where we are now

This plan responds to a comprehensive review of the evidence about how our region currently performs, where we have strengths, and where we have challenges to address. The evidence base highlights a number of key issues which have informed our plans:

- Strong demand for high level skills - reflecting strong knowledge intensive sectors
- The increasingly digitally enabled employment and skills landscape that will continue to reshape the labour market within the region
- Skills gaps (lack proficiency in existing staff) are higher amongst lower skilled occupations
- Awareness and use of apprenticeships is low, despite opportunity to address shortages
- Our education pipeline is under-performing with educational achievement below average in both primary and secondary schools
- Significantly fewer young people from our area go on to study at a higher level
- The proportion of 16-17 year olds who are Not in Education, Employment or Training is higher than average
- Attainment and engagement in education amongst our disadvantaged children (including those with SEND and care leavers) is also significantly below average
- There remain 128,500 adults without a level 2 qualification
- There remain 47,800 people not in work who would like to be and there are significant inequalities in employment with disabled people, ethnic minorities and people with low skills less likely to be employed
- Low pay is an issue for 19% of the workforce, particularly those without qualifications

## How we will develop on this plan

A plan for each of the actions detailed in this document will be developed, ensuring we have clear delivery plans for each of the priorities we have identified. Alongside this, we will establish our regional Skills Advisory Panel, which will provide expert oversight and direction to this work and providing skills advice to the LEP and Combined Authority to support decision making.

This is a plan for the whole region, achieving the objectives set out in this document will rely on partners working together effectively to realise the potential of the people and places of the region.

## Delivering on our regional vision

This plan is one of the building blocks that will help the West of England deliver on our vision to drive clean and inclusive growth across the region.

The strategic objectives and actions set out in the Employment and Skills Plan are a coordinated set of activities. Individual actions will have impact across a range of our objectives and many will have significant interdependencies with one another. The Skills Advisory Panel that will play a significant role in overseeing the work to implement this plan will pay close attention to these interdependencies as the impact of the plan is monitored.

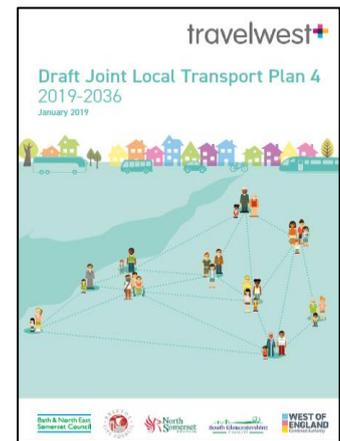
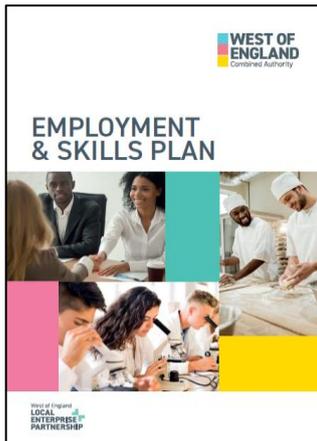
Our Employment and Skills Plan sits alongside a number of other regional strategies which, together, are delivering the framework through which decisions about the future of our region are being made.

Our Joint Spatial Plan sets out how the region will develop the housing, employment and infrastructure sites needed to help the region grow.

Our Joint Local Transport Plan sets out sets a vision to connect people and places, supporting sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

Our forthcoming Local Industrial Strategy sets out how the region will drive regional productivity though supporting residents to access opportunities, supporting businesses to adapt and grow, harnessing the research and commercial opportunity of innovative ideas, and ensuring we have the infrastructure needed to drive productivity growth. The links between our regional strategies, and those of a wide range of local partners (including health plans, strategies developed by local authorities across the region and those of skills providers), are well understood and the region is clear that we are delivering the ambition set within these documents as part of a single vision.

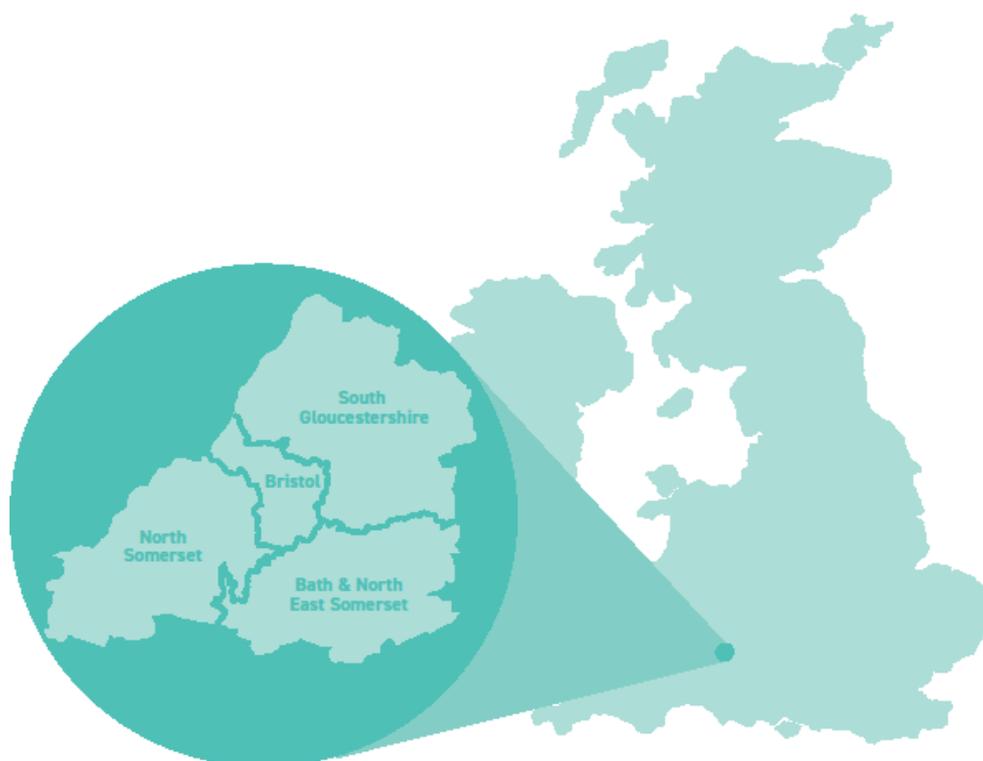
### Alignment of regional plans



## Introduction

This document sets out a long-term Employment and Skills Plan for the West of England. It is a key component of our Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) and aligns with our existing regional infrastructure plans. It recognises that without a focus on developing the skills and opportunities of our people, our ability to deliver on the ambitions of our Local Industrial Strategy will be compromised.

The Plan covers the four unitary authority areas of the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area - Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.



The Plan provides an over-arching framework to help shape the development of employment and skills activities across the region. It sets a collective vision and shared priorities for delivery, reform and investment, acting to influence and catalyse action from both local and national partners where priorities align.

The Plan includes initial proposals for taking forward our priorities in an action plan. This action plan will remain a living, breathing plan, able to respond to emerging opportunities and innovative proposals as they come forward.

There will be collective responsibility for delivering and resourcing actions identified in the Plan. It is anticipated that actions will be funded through a variety of potential funding streams including any remaining European funds/successor programmes, the West of England Investment Fund, national delivery, devolved resources and local resources. Whilst every effort has been made to identify potential funding streams to deliver the plan, as a long-term plan, other funding streams will emerge over time.

The strategy has been developed by a range of partners across the region and is informed by a clear and robust evidence base.

## Context

Across the West of England we have an ambition to drive clean and inclusive growth. We want to ensure people can contribute to and benefit from the opportunities growth brings; and we are focused on helping grow our economy in ways that protect the climate and environment upon which we and future generations depend.

This plan contributes to that ambition, ensuring we are supporting the people, communities, and businesses of the region to thrive; and ensuring we are developing the skills that will enhance our capacity to grow our economy in ways that also protects our environment.

The West of England Employment and Skills Plan sits alongside, and is a key component of our Local Industrial Strategy (LIS). It recognises the distinctive strengths of our people and the places across the region.

This plan also sits alongside a range of broader strategic plans for our region, such as the Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) and Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP). We have developed all of these plans in partnership across the region, setting a collective direction and agreeing specific priorities to help our region develop. There are clear interdependencies between these strategies and the range of broader services delivered across our region. By working together, we are aligning and sequencing investment in ways that will deliver on the collective priorities of our plans: maximising the impact of our work.

This plan builds on strong foundations. Across the West of England Combined Authority and Local Enterprise Partnership, devolution and collective decision making has enabled:

- ✓ investment to deliver infrastructure to boost economic growth (including our £900m investment fund)
- ✓ the development of employment and skill programmes that are helping people tackle the barriers they face to progression in work, and helping develop the skills that the employers across our region need (including our Future Bright pilot and the devolved Adult Education Budget)
- ✓ a new relationship with Government, working in collaboration to design services that meet the needs of our region (such as the development of our West of England Careers Hub)

These and other initiatives have brought new ways of working. Across local and with national partners we have co-designed projects to meet the needs of people in our area. However, there is more to do; the current support landscape is confusing, characterised short-term, insecure funding with duplication as well as gaps in support. By working more closely together, we aim to develop an increasingly integrated system that is evidence based, easy to access, shaped by integrated commissioning and investment decisions, involves our local communities and delivers effectively across the area. This Employment and Skills Plan is therefore essential to guiding the development of our new system, providing a once in a generational opportunity to address social inclusion and inequality across our area.

## Understanding where we are now

### Overview

The West of England has a strong economy on which to build. The area benefits from above average levels of productivity, low rates of unemployment, a highly skilled workforce, good rates of pay and high quality jobs. Whilst growth is expected to continue, with the Joint Spatial Plan supporting the delivery of 82,500 new jobs by 2036, productivity growth has plateaued in recent years. Although many are able to benefit from these opportunities, there remain challenges to ensure that all residents can benefit from the West of England's economic growth, in particular people from disadvantaged groups, who are currently less likely to benefit. Equally, from an employer's perspective, recruitment is starting to become a challenge, in particular at higher skills levels - therefore ensuring this does not become a break on growth is also important.

### Summary of evidence

This part of the plan summarises the key findings from the evidence base to ensure our plan is grounded in an understanding of the issues facing the area. For full details, including sources, please see the separate evidence base document. This section also highlights some examples of regional activity which is already having an impact.

### Growth and productivity

The West of England is an economically successful region, where businesses start, grow and thrive. Growth has exceeded the national average over the past 15 years and productivity is the highest of all the core cities. The region is a net contributor to the UK economy. However, productivity growth has levelled off since the financial crisis, posing a real threat to future prosperity of our residents.

### Employer needs

The National Employer Skills Survey shows that employers in the West of England have **more vacancies and find it harder to recruit than the national average**, particularly for higher skilled occupations. Whilst 21% reported that they have **staff not fully proficient** (skills gaps) compared to 13% for England, 41% reported that they were **under-utilising staff** (compared to 34% for England), suggesting there is some mis-alignment of skills. However, whilst employers were more likely to be reporting **skills shortages in higher and mid-skilled occupations**, they were more likely to report **skills gaps (lack of proficiency within existing workforce) in service and labour intensive occupations** - highlighting the need to develop the skills required amongst people who work in these occupations as well as develop a pipeline of more highly skilled people. Of businesses identifying a need for skills in the next 12 months, the skills needs included basic skills, digital skills, operational skills as well as complex analytical skills. Local survey data found that the top 5 most important skills needed within a business were: communication, team working, customer service, problem solving and numeracy and analytical, although specific skills needs varied by sector and role.

Of those reporting skills gaps, 19% indicated that this had a major impact on their business. Whilst 74% have trained staff over the last 12 months (compared to 66% for England), only 39% had a budget for training. The most significant **barriers to providing more training were staff time away (57%) and lack of funds/expense (51%)**.

### What is already being done - Case Study: Skills West

Skills West is a 'one stop' free, impartial skills advice service, offering solutions to the skills needs of local businesses. A team of experienced skills advisors provide:

- advice on new apprenticeship standards and funding, covering 90% of training costs
- help to identify skills and training needs
- advice on the best training solutions for your business
- access to relevant training providers
- guidance on how to attract and retain the best people
- advice on how to raise the profile of your employment opportunities

This service is a partnership between Business West, the Western Training Provider Network and local and national training providers. The project is funded through the European Social Fund and Education & Skills Funding Agency and commissioned by the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership.

### Skills for innovation

The West of England benefits from an established *innovation cluster*, centred around growth in the high tech and digital sectors, cultural and creative industries, aerospace and advanced engineering and financial and business services. There are c.334,000 people employed in Knowledge Intensive Businesses and Services within the West of England accounting for 55% of employment. The area has benefited from both enterprise growth and significant inward investment in these areas from multi-nationals as well as companies relocating from London. Alongside this, the area's four universities are a key component of the cluster, supplying graduate level skills, developing knowledge content, investing in innovation facilities as well as collaborative ventures and spin outs. Boosting the *pipeline of specialist and generic high level skills is vital to sustaining the growth of this cluster*, in particular the mix of *Science, Technology, Arts, Engineering and Maths skills (STEAM)*.

Research also shows that the workforce in this knowledge intensive cluster lacks diversity, with women, ethnic minorities and disabled people under-represented, providing a clear opportunity to address the skills shortage highlighted.

Whilst use of apprenticeships is a recognised route into the engineering sectors, they are less commonly used in the other areas, with *low awareness and understanding of apprenticeships* amongst employers, suggesting this is an opportunity for further development. The introduction of T-levels and an increasing focus on technical skills, also presents an opportunity to address the demand for technical skills.

### What is already being done - case study: Institutes of Technology

In April 2019, the Government announced that Weston College of Further and Higher Education would be one of 12 Institutes of Technology to be set up in England. Institutes of Technology will be:

*'prestigious and high quality employer-led institution delivering higher level technical education with a clear route to high skilled employment IoTs will be a new type of institution, tailored to focus on the specific technical skills needs in their area. They will be created through innovative collaborations between employers and FE and HE providers; harnessing the teaching expertise of HE and FE, research expertise of HE, and industry knowledge and expertise from employers.'*

## Future skills

Globalisation, technological progress and demographic change are having a profound impact on labour markets, affecting both the quantity and quality of jobs that are available, as well as how and by whom they are carried out. Research by the OECD, suggests that across OECD countries:

- *Orders of industrial robots have tripped over the last decade* and are projected to increase rapidly
- The *risk of automation is real, nearly half of all jobs will be transformed with technology*, with 14% of jobs completed automated and 32% changing significantly. However, whilst technological progress will make some occupations obsolete, it also creates new jobs
- However, *many adults do not have the right skills for emerging jobs*, with 6 out of 10 adults lacking basic ICT skills or having no computer expertise
- The share of highly -skilled jobs has increased by 25% over the last 2 decades and whilst low skilled jobs have also increased, *the share of middle-skilled jobs has decreased*
- Adult benefitting from training are currently more likely to be high skilled, in jobs with a low risk of automation and in full time employment. The OECD recommends that *adult training should be better targeted at those with low skills, in jobs with a higher risk of automation and whose employment status is less secure*

## Occupations

25% of employed people work in ‘professional’ occupations, followed by ‘associate professional and technical’ occupations (16.5%). *Employment in these higher level occupations has grown significantly since 2004*, following global trends. Over the same time period, there are fewer people working in ‘administrative and secretarial’ occupations (7.9%), ‘sales and customer service’ occupations (7%) and ‘Process, plant and machine operatives’ (5.4%). There remain *significant gender differences by occupation*, with *fewer women working as ‘managers, directors and senior officials’*, ‘skilled trades’, or ‘plant, process or machine operatives’ and fewer men working in ‘administrative and secretarial roles’ and ‘caring, leisure and other service’ occupations. There were also different occupational profiles by ethnicity, with *fewer people from ethnic minorities employed in ‘associate professional and technical’ occupations and more in ‘caring leisure and other occupations’*.

### What is already being done - Stepping Up

The Stepping Up programme aims to unlock potential and develop talent while ensuring a fair representation of BAME, disabled people and women in positions of leadership. In its first year, Stepping Up recruited over 40 participants and secured engagement from over 50 partner organisations. The interim evaluation highlighted early success, with 50% of participants securing promotion and 20% applying to become magistrates. From 2019, with bursary support from WECA, the scope has been extended to include people with other protected characteristics (women, Disabled people, LGBT+, etc.) and to cover the entire West of England region

## Nature of employment

73.1% of people work full time, compared to 75.1% in England. Full time working is lowest in B&NES and North Somerset. It is particularly low amongst women (55.9%) and in particular older women (46.9%). **Whilst part time working provides increased flexibility, many part time roles tend to be lower paid and in lower paid sectors.**

5.6% are in **non-permanent employment**, which is slightly higher than the average for England at 4.6%. Whilst for some, working part time and in zero hours contracts suits their personal circumstances, for others it is not a choice. Therefore **increasing the full time, permanent opportunities or quality of part time opportunities would help provide people with increased security and incomes.**

The **median hourly workplace pay is slightly higher** in the West of England than the England averages, across both part time and full time jobs and by gender, a positive position. However, as is the case nationally, the data also reveals **inequalities between PT/FT workers and male/female wages**. Workplace pay is lowest in North Somerset. In terms of residential wages, people living in South Gloucestershire were paid the lowest. **Despite the higher than average pay, in absolute terms, c.100,000 jobs are paid below the real living wage (as defined by the Living Wage Foundation) (19%).** National research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that jobs that are low paid and insecure, do not offer a stepping stone to a better job, but trap people in poverty, with 5/6 people in low paid work failing to escape low pay over 10 years.

### What is already being done - case study: Future Bright



**FUTURE BRIGHT** ■ Support  
▲ Advice  
▶ Skills

Future Bright is a £4m regional initiative funded by the DWP to help people across the Combined Authority area to develop their skills, increase their income and progress their career. Future Bright offers participants a 3-6 month programme of support to increase confidence, practical advice to help overcome barriers, tailored skills and training and funding for training or career development costs. As well as supporting individuals, the programme works alongside employers to help businesses and employees realise their full potential. The programme is managed by the West of England Combined Authority and delivered by Bristol, B&NES and South Gloucestershire Councils. Whilst it is due to close in 2020, partners were keen to learn from progress so far and see the existing scheme extended beyond 2020 and potentially cover a broader cohort of people.

## Population

The population of the West of England is **growing faster than the England average**. Crucially, this includes **growth in working age cohorts**, but this is driven by growth in Bristol, which is the only authority area where growth in the working age population outstrips the aging population. The **65+ population is expected to grow by 24%** between 2017-2030 and with an increasing retirement age, **supporting older workers** who need or wish to remain in work will become increasingly important. Research by AgeUK found that older workers are both more likely to be made redundant than their younger colleagues and once unemployed, are unemployed for longer.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [AgeUK, Older Workers At High Redundancy Risk](#)

Migration, both internal and international is an important element of this growth, but with long term international migration falling, the ***West of England may not be able to rely on international workers to the same extent as previously.*** As well as economic migrants, parts of the West of England are increasingly diverse. For example in Bristol there are now at least 45 religions, at least 187 countries of birth and at least 91 main languages spoken and recent data on school pupils shows that the % of pupils who are not 'White British' has increased from 31% in 2011 to 37% in 2018. Many migrants, including ***refugees and asylum seekers, require ESOL and other support to overcome barriers to work and social integration.***

## Health

The ***health of people in the West of England varies considerably*** across the region and between the most and least deprived areas. On average, people in South Gloucestershire and B&NES have higher life expectancy than the national average, people in North Somerset are similar to the national average and men in Bristol have a lower life expectancy. ***Bristol performs below the England average for a large number of health indicators. All four unitary areas show health inequalities,*** where there is a difference in life expectancy between the most and least deprived wards. For women, the gap is smallest in Bath and North East Somerset at 3.7 years and largest in North Somerset at 7.9 years. For men, the gap is smallest in South Gloucestershire at 6.2 years and largest in North Somerset at 9.9 years. Research by Public Health England shows that ill-health amongst people of working ages is both costly for business and the economy.

Evidence shows that ***people with long term illnesses and disabilities are more likely to be unemployed or inactive than their peers who are not.*** In addition, over 11,000 individuals are claiming a carer's allowance, of which  $\frac{3}{4}$  were women. ***Being a carer can limit the amount of time someone can undertake payed work,*** impacting on their personal income. Research by Public Health England shows that improving the health of the workforce can improve productivity and reduce staff turnover. The research highlights that with 24% of sickness absences nationally caused by musculoskeletal conditions and 11% by mental health issues, including work-related stress, there is scope to reduce these absences by introducing workplace interventions.

### What is already being done - case study: Get Well, Get On

**Get Well, Get on,** provides support to people who are in work, at risk of falling out of work and who are on sick leave but are still employed with mental ill health and/or muscular skeletal conditions. **Get well, Get on,** is part of a wider 'Thrive Bristol' initiative to create a whole city approach to mental health and well-being.

## Deprivation

***Deprivation levels vary across the area,*** with 16% of Local Super Output Areas in Bristol falling into the most deprived 10% in England, 6.7% in North Somerset and 1% in B&NES. South Gloucestershire does not have any LSOAs falling within the most deprived in England. Overall, local authorities are also ranked from the most deprived to the least deprived. On this basis, Bristol falls into the lower quartile of local authorities, North Somerset, the 3<sup>rd</sup> quartile and South Gloucestershire and B&NES fall into the top quartile (i.e. least deprived authorities).

### What is already being done - case study: Workzone Plus



The employment and economy programme is a two year project starting in March 2018. The project will expand on learning from the delivery of the Work Zone pilot to develop a new innovative employment and enterprise project tailored to Horfield and Lockleaze. This will plug gaps in local provision and develop a service that reflects the needs of the community. The project uses S.106 funds to support employment, training and enterprise outcomes among 375 residents.

### Unemployment and inactivity

Whilst the *unemployment rate is better than the England average*, in absolute terms, there remain **20,500 people currently unemployed (16-64)**. The unemployment rate is higher amongst 16-24 year olds, young men, disabled people, people from ethnic minority communities, people with low skills levels, learning difficulties and people from Bristol. As of April 2019, 13,995 people (16+) were claiming unemployment related benefits and at ward level the claimant rate varies, *demonstrating geographical pockets of unemployment*. At the same time, there are 133,000 16-64 year olds that are economically inactive - a high proportion of which are retired, students or not involved in the labour market out of choice. However, *approximately 27,300 'want a job'*. Of the inactive population, 26,700 were inactive due to long term illness. Rates of inactivity increased amongst the two groups at both ends of the age spectrum (the young: 16-19 year olds, 20-24 year and older people: 50-64 year olds and 65+). Bringing together those who are unemployed and those who are inactive but want to work means *there are approx. 47,800 people wanting to work*. Our experience of supporting individuals back to work tells us that many *people experience complex barriers to work* including housing, mental health, drug and alcohol problems, debt, health, childcare, transport, etc. and therefore support programmes must take this into account.

The Joint Local Transport Plan highlights that there are *limitations to public transport connectivity*, with gaps in the commercial bus network, including links to deprived areas and employment sites - *creating barriers to employment for individuals and skills shortages for employers*.

### What is already being done - case study: West of England Works



The West of England Works project is an exciting partnership which aims to help unemployed and economically inactive people in the West of England find employment. Led by Weston College, the partnership includes a range of voluntary and community organisations based in Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire, and Bath and North East Somerset. It will support at least 1537 young people and adults into gaining employment through a community-based support programme. Between them the partners have specialist skills in working with those from a BME background, NEETS, carers, ex-offenders, those with disabilities or long term health issues and those with a history of substance misuse. The project is part of the Building Better Opportunities programme, and has received £6 million of funding from the Big Lottery Fund and the European Social Fund.

## Qualifications

**Overall the working age population in the West of England is well qualified**, with 46% having an NVQ level 4 or above qualification, compared to 39% for England. However, whilst the West of England has a lower proportion without an NVQ level 2 qualification, **in absolute terms, there are 133,000 people without a level 2**. The evidence indicates that whilst the West of England is successful in attracting highly skilled individuals into the area, it is less successful at producing its own highly skilled people - resulting in inequalities as research shows that people without a level 2, are more likely to be trapped in low skilled/low paid employment or unemployment. The proportion of people without a Level 2 is significantly **higher amongst 50-64 year olds and slightly higher among men**, reflecting national trends. Skills levels were lowest in B&NES.

### What is already being done - case study: Adult Education Budget

Devolution of the Adult Education Budget from 2019/2020 will provide an opportunity to vary criteria for funding adult skills to reflect the needs of our area, rather than national priorities

### What is already being done - case study: Encouraging residents to return to learning. South Gloucestershire Community Learning as part of Learning Communities West

Community Learning is a valuable service in South Gloucestershire, encouraging residents to develop their knowledge and return to learning in local easy to access venues. The diverse and inclusive range of learners who attend a wide variety of courses benefit from well qualified tutors who are supportive and the mix of learner ages also encourages peer to peer support within classes. The service provides accredited courses as part of the offer along with other social courses to develop learners' skills, improve mental health and well-being and build the confidence to progress further in life and work. A family learning offer is also included which provides opportunities for parents to develop their own skills to help their children at school. South Gloucestershire Community Learning worked with over 900 learners in the academic year 2017/8.

There are community learning services and offers in venues across the West of England area offering similar programmes. The service is funded through sources such as AEB and courses are mostly free for residents who are 19+ with qualifications below level 2.

## Schools

Educational attainment in schools (as measured at KS2, KS4 and KS5) is slightly below the national average for all young people (except in B&NES), but **significantly below the national average for disadvantaged children** (at all three stages). At GCSE, performance in English is lower than the national average in all districts except North Somerset, whilst for maths, performance was lower than the national average in Bristol, and South Gloucestershire. Attainment matters, as research by the CBI in 2017 found that **educational attainment at 16 is the single most important driver of productivity differences across the UK**, reflecting the fact that young people coming through the education system are the future workforce and young people without qualifications are more likely to be trapped in low skill/low wage employment.

### What is already being done - case study: educational partnerships

Across all four unitary authorities, educational partnerships have been established to support improvements in schools and other education providers through collaboration and partnership working.

### Careers advice

Research by the Careers and Enterprise Company has found that 55/90 of our schools and colleges were using the Gatsby Benchmarks in 2017/2018. The West of England had an Average benchmark of 2.462, just higher than the National average of 2.457. Overall, the West of England is ranked 19<sup>th</sup> of the 38 LEPs by performance on Gatsby Benchmarks.

### What is already being done - case study: Careers Enterprise Company provision



In 2018, the West of England LEP area was selected by the Careers and Enterprise Company to participate in a national pilot of *Careers Hubs*. Our *Careers Hub* works with 25 schools and colleges from across the area to ensure schools and colleges are supported to improve careers opportunities and work experiences for young people. Our *Careers Hub* is part of a broader *Enterprise Advisor Network*, co-funded by the Careers and Enterprise Company to work with schools to build career plans and make connections to local employers through a team of volunteer 'Enterprise Advisors' from the business community. Whilst we value the *Careers Hub* and *Enterprise Advisor Network*, early feedback indicates that the service needs to be extended to reach more schools and provide schools with support for direct delivery.

More broadly, young people leaving education at KS5 in the West of England were ***much less likely to go to higher education provision or top 1/3 higher education institutions***. Research by the Office for students shows that there is a very local geographical dimension to this, with some areas having some of the highest rates of participation in the country and some the lowest. These areas with low participation have been targeted by the NCOP initiatives to improve participation (see below).

Approximately 80,000 students study in the West of England's four universities (excluding any studying higher education courses in the area's FE colleges), attracting talent from across the UK and the world. These findings, suggest that West of England's highly skilled workforce has been largely supplied by migration into the area, rather than grown from the indigenous population.

### What is already being done - case study: National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP)

NCOP brings together 29 partnerships of universities, colleges and other local partners to deliver outreach programmes to young people in years 9 to 13. Their work is focused on local areas where higher education participation is lower than might be expected given the GCSE results of the young people who live there. There are two NCOP partnerships in the West of England:

- **Future Quest**, which has taken a dual-programme approach designed to inspire, instil confidence, and develop young people's skills in preparation for higher education and
- The **Wessex Inspiration Network (WIN)** which is working directly with schools and colleges to engage with students. WIN higher education advisers are based in a number of partner institutions to facilitate an ongoing programme of activities, aimed at both students and parents, which demonstrate the benefits that can be gained from studying at higher education level.

### Young people at risk of disengagement

Across the West of England, 6.6% of 16 and 17 year olds were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), with **higher than average levels seen in Bristol (8.8%) and North Somerset (6.1%)**. NEET levels were significantly higher for young people with **Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)** in Bristol (14%) and B&NES (10.9%). In 2018, there were 1,245 looked after children in the West of England area, 52% of which were from Bristol, which has a higher than average rate of looked after children. Approximately 37% of care leavers were NEET. National research has shown that the following groups are at greater risk of becoming NEET:

- Young parents
- Those permanently excluded or suspended from school
- Those who had not achieved 5+ A\*-C GCSE grades
- Those who were eligible for Free School meals
- Those with a disability
- Those who had been NEET before
- Those supervised by a youth offending team
- Those with fewer than 3 months post 16 education
- Those with responsibilities as a carer

Studies have shown that time spent as NEET can have a detrimental effect on physical and mental health, and increase the likelihood of unemployment, low wages or low quality of work later on in life. However, preventing disengagement at an earlier age and before young people become NEET is often more effective.

### What is already being done - case study: Achieving Aspirations Pilot

The achieving aspirations pilot in North Somerset aims to support care leavers into employment through specialist work and careers coaching. This includes recruitment of a dedicated employer engagement lead to support the programme. The programme aims to support 65 care leavers.

## Adult skills

There were approximately 26,000 enrolments onto adult skills courses in 2017/18. Whilst females are more likely to enrol onto an Adult Education Course, in-year achievement rates are higher for males. The achievement gap between male and female learners is 4% for the West of England, with the largest gap in B&NES at 8%. 27% of learners were from BAME backgrounds, rising to 45% in Bristol. Whilst the evidence shows an achievement gap between white students and BAME students of 4%, this appears to be reducing, with overall in-year achievement rates increasing in both white and BAME groups.

In 2017/18 almost half the learning aims (47% in West of England) were started by learners that were not employed and were looking for work. Learners that were employed or self-employed and working a low numbers of hours were less likely to enrol for Adult Education than those working 20 hours or more a week. In 2017/18 half the learning aims were started by learners that either had no qualifications or were qualified or below level 2. With almost half the learning aims (46%) in the subject area 'Preparation for Life and Work'.

## Apprenticeships

The overall number of enrolments onto apprenticeships has decreased over the past three years, potentially due to a lack of business awareness. Enrolments are the highest for level 2 qualifications but have decreased over the last 3 years; level 4 enrolments are increasing but remain the smallest proportion of enrolments. Achievement rate for the 2017/18 cohort is similar across all levels. The highest rate was for level 4+ apprenticeships (69%) and lowest for Level 2 (64%).

There are large variations in the gender split depending on the sector of the apprenticeship and it is recognised that more needs to be done to attract females into certain sectors. BAME learners make up 8% of all learners across the West of England, again there is a recognition that more needs to be done to attract individuals from a BAME background into apprenticeships, particularly in certain sectors.

In terms of apprenticeships to support innovation (i.e. in Science, and Mathematics, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies and Information and Communication Technology) there were a total of 2,310 learners in 2017/18. These learners were predominately male (89%), except for science and maths where there were more female learners (78%), however it only has a small proportion of learners compared to the other sectors.

From an employer perspective, **64.9% of businesses in the West of England have not used apprenticeships in their businesses** and awareness of apprenticeship reforms, funding or new standards was also low.

### What is already being done - case study: Apprenticeship Hub

Apprenticeship Hub West is an online hub that provides information about apprenticeships to employers, potential apprentices, parents and skills. This includes:

- Information about apprenticeships, including levels
- How to employ/become an apprentice
- The role of training providers
- The apprenticeship Levy
- Links to wider information, resources, advice and guidance
- News and live vacancies

### What is already being done - Case Study: B&NES Social Value Act

Through the adoption of the Social Value Act in B&NES Councils procurement practices, it has been able to ensure a range of Targeted, Recruitment & Training (TR&T) opportunities have been delivered through its procurement and commissioning process. To date a range of high value procurement exercises have been able to deliver a range of outcomes including 2,000 training weeks for apprentices and traineeships being delivered on the Councils flagship regeneration scheme, Bath Quays North. TR&T outcomes are also delivered through the Council's development management process, through their S106 policies, where a range of work experience, apprenticeships and employment opportunities are delivered on development sites of over 10 residential dwellings and 10,000 sqft of commercial accommodation.

### Conclusions and policy direction

There is a strong demand for skills and high level skills in particular, reflecting the large proportion of knowledge intensive businesses in the area. However, skills gaps (where existing staff lack proficiency) is higher amongst lower skilled occupations. Both skills shortages and gaps have an impact on the productivity and growth potential of our businesses, therefore the evidence points to **a need for interventions to a) develop the skills of people in lower skilled occupations and b) develop a pipeline of talent to supply our innovative, high skilled economy.** Employers have a key role to play in developing their workforce and whilst our employers are more likely to train their staff, there is still scope for improvement. Awareness and use of apprenticeships is low, despite their value in addressing skills shortages and skills gaps - indicating the **need for further interventions to boost apprenticeship take-up**, as well as increase diversity.

Our population is well qualified, with significantly more people qualified to degree level than the national average. However, our education pipeline is under-performing with educational achievement below average in both primary and secondary schools. **This points to a need for interventions to improve educational attainment for young people.** Significantly fewer young people from our area go on to study at a higher level and NEET levels are above average, suggesting **further work is required to raise aspirations and progression.** Attainment and engagement in education amongst our disadvantaged children (including those with SEND and care leavers) is also significantly below average - **suggesting that there needs to be a special focus on our most disadvantaged young people.** Amongst adults, there remain 128,500 people without a level 2 qualification, with implications for their employment prospects, life chances and productivity in work. Helping people to secure their **first level 2 qualification (in particular in Maths, English and digital skills) is therefore important for both productivity and social inclusion.**

Whilst our unemployment rate is lower than average, there remain 47,800 people not in work who would like to be. The evidence base shows there are significant **inequalities in employment** with disabled people, ethnic minorities and people with low skills less likely to be employed. Therefore, **interventions to help people overcome their barriers to employment and promote workforce diversity are therefore required.** Wages in the West of England are also better than average, however, **low pay is an issue for 19% of the workforce**, particularly those without qualifications, **indicating the need for interventions to help people progress in work.**

The SWOT analysis overleaf summarises the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats facing the West of England area.

## SWOT analysis

### Strengths

Working age population growing, reflecting attractiveness of area  
 Higher than average employment rate (79.1% vs 75.4%)  
 Better than average wages and high value job opportunities  
 Highly qualified workforce (48.9% qualified to L4+ vs 39% for England)  
 Broad, diverse workforce  
 High quality and diverse job opportunities from supportive business environment  
 Employers more likely to train  
 Four universities and HE provision within FE colleges  
 Established innovation cluster  
 Partnership working and local relationships  
 Strong voluntary and community sector

### Weaknesses

Some employers struggling to recruit and facing skills gaps  
 47,800 people not currently in work who want to be  
 Low pay an issue, particularly for part-time workers  
 Wage and occupational inequality and in work mobility  
 133,000 people without a L2 qualification  
 Educational attainment in schools, particularly for disadvantaged children  
 NEET levels in parts of the area and for SEND and Children in Care/Care Leavers  
 Lower than average progression to Higher level learning  
 Low awareness of apprenticeships  
 Geographical inequalities and deprivation  
 Variable quality careers advice  
 Health inequalities and barriers to work  
 Growing polarisation of work  
 Under-utilisation of staff

### SWOT

### Opportunities

WECA control of the Adult Education Budget providing opportunity to influence skills provision  
 Expansion of Future Bright providing opportunity for more people to benefit  
 Range of high quality employment and skills provision providing opportunities to scale up, co-design and integrate  
 Institute of Technology bid providing opportunity to address technical skills deficits  
 Introduction of T-Levels providing opportunity to address technical skills deficits  
 Development of Skills Advisory Panel providing opportunity to improve alignment between supply and demand challenges  
 Anchor Institutions providing opportunity to utilise purchasing power and lead  
 Combined Authority status providing opportunity to influence national policy  
 Development of new interventions to create progression pathways  
 Careers Hub and Enterprise Advisor Network established

### Threats

Long term labour market trends, hollowing out middle of labour market  
 Growing inequalities and poverty  
 Exclusion acting as a drag on productivity  
 International migration slowing  
 Rising welfare costs and demands on the public purse  
 Lack of community engagement with employment and skills services  
 Plateauing productivity growth  
 Ageing population and workforce a threat if insufficient support provided to help older workers remain part of the workforce

## Strategic ambition

At the heart of our plan is our vision for employment and skills within the West of England area, as set out below:

*“By 2036, the West of England will be internationally recognised for its sustainable, inclusive and diverse economy, providing a high quality of life, prosperity and opportunities for all its residents. Our people will be skilled, healthy and able to access pathways of opportunity to achieve their potential. Our businesses will play an active role in shaping employment and skills provision and will be able to find the skills and talent they need to innovate, add greater value and thrive”*

## Mission

The mission for the region is to:

*Work together to build confidence, capacity and capability in our people, businesses and organisations, to help accelerate sustainable, inclusive growth in the West of England*

## Strategic objectives

To deliver on our vision, the region, will pursue five strategic objectives. Our objectives, set out below, have clear interdependencies and the action we take to deliver on each of them will have broader impact:



**SO1: Integrating our employment, skills and education system to ensure it is aligned with demand and responsive to changing patterns of employment**



**SO2: Enabling all young people to achieve their potential**



**SO3: Supporting everyone who is able to work by helping to address their barriers to employment and progression?**



**SO4: Empowering people to progress within employment, including access to better higher paid opportunities**



**SO5: Ensuring employers are able to recruit and retain the diverse skills and talent they need to thrive from within and beyond the region**

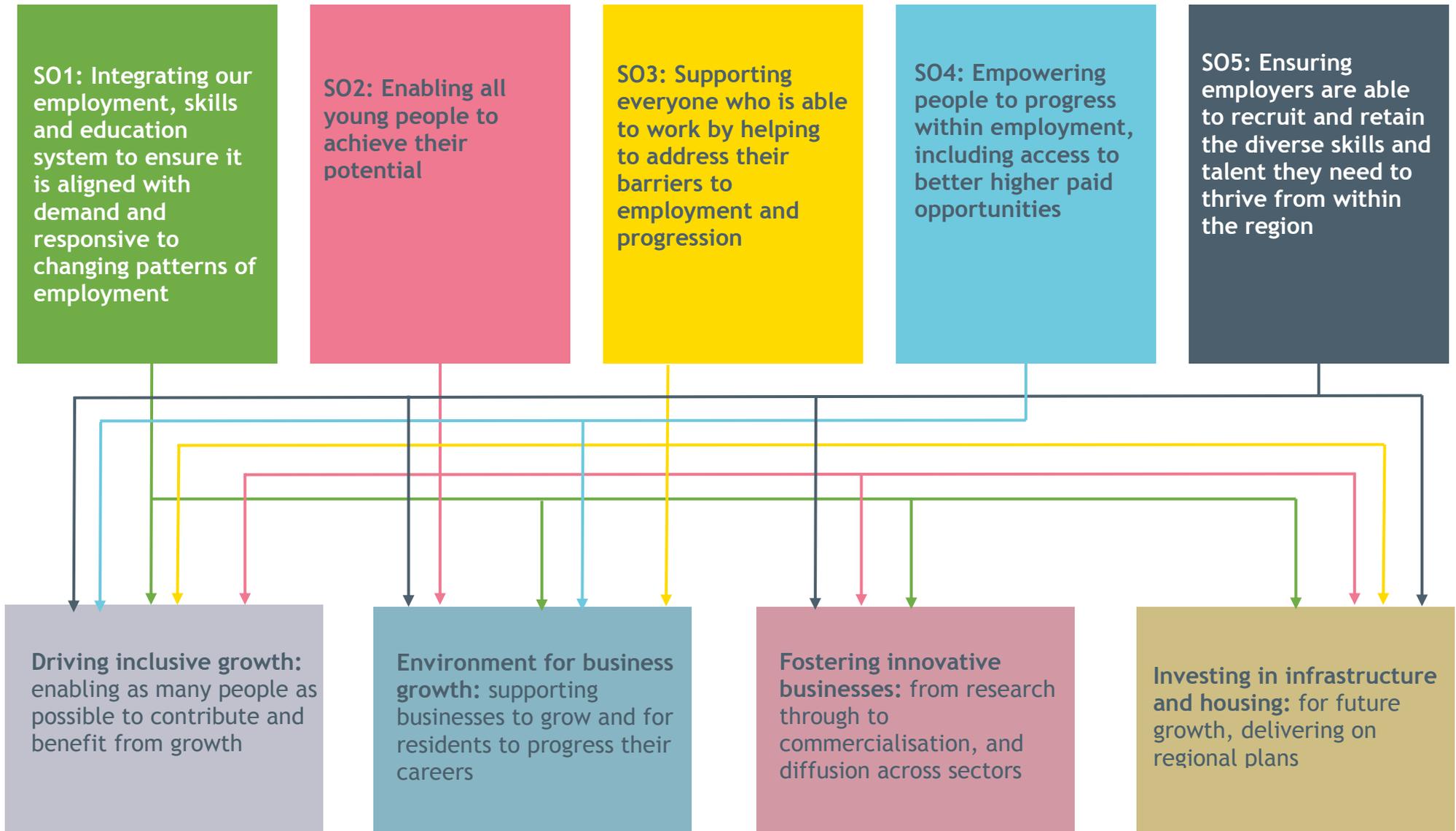
## Aligning with emerging Local Industrial Strategy Priorities

The strategic objectives for our Employment and Skills plan align with the priorities that have emerged for our Local Industrial Strategy. This Plan should be seen as a key component of the LIS:

- Ensuring our region is developing the skills we need to deliver on our LIS ambitions, linking residents to opportunities and promoting **inclusive growth** in all that we do.
- Ensuring employers across the region are able to access the skills they need both now and in the future, **helping businesses grow**.
- Ensuring there is a strong talent pipeline of high skilled people able to contribute to continued growth in the high value specialised sectors that are a key part of our regional economy, **ensuring we remain a region where innovation flourishes**.
- Ensuring the region has the skills required to **deliver on our infrastructure ambitions** while also supporting clean growth. For example, through this plan, we will explore opportunities to promote **clean construction and retrofit skills** required to help drive clean growth opportunities across the region. Clean building methods are becoming an increasingly prevalent element of the architecture, design and building sectors. As a region, we need to develop the skills that will enable us to meet future regional needs. By focusing on this issue, we can lead the way in developing the skills and innovative design and building techniques that will have global reach.

As the diagram below shows, each area of this plan will enable progress in delivering our LIS ambitions.

### Alignment of the West of England Employment and Skills Plan and Local Industrial Strategy



## Measuring success

We will measure success by monitoring progress against a range of outcomes. As set out below, we aim to drive improvements in educational attainment; increase the proportion of people gaining qualifications at all levels; support ability to progress in employment and increase wages; and support employers find the skills they need to grow.

We will monitor progress against these indicators and ensure all interventions developed as part of this plan are focused on delivering against these outcomes.

A broader range of indicators will also be monitored (set out in Appendix 2) to help us track the impact of our plan across the region.

Indicator	SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5
Increase the proportion of 16-18 year olds in education, employment or training (into EET)	✓	✓			
Increase the educational attainment among young people	✓	✓			✓
Increase the proportion of young people (KS5) progressing to any sustained education destination	✓	✓			✓
Increase the proportion of young people (KS5) progressing to higher education destinations	✓	✓			✓
Reduce the number of people who are unemployed or inactive but wish to work	✓		✓		
Significantly increase the proportion of people with Level 2+ qualifications	✓		✓	✓	✓
Increase the proportion of people with Level 3+ qualifications	✓		✓	✓	✓
Increase the proportion of people with Level 4+ qualifications	✓			✓	✓
Decrease the proportion of people earning less than the Living Wage	✓			✓	
Increase median earnings	✓		✓	✓	
Increase the proportion of employees supported by their employer to receive training	✓			✓	✓
Reduce the number of employers with Hard to Fill Vacancies	✓				✓
Significantly increase take up apprenticeships	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Increase GVA/hour worked	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

We will monitor progress against these outcomes on an annual basis, as part of a broader monitoring and evaluation plan. This will include proposals to better understand and measure the impact of our interventions on the outcomes above.

## Strategic objectives in detail

In this part of the plan we set out some more detail about our strategic objectives, why they are important, priority areas within these and what we plan to do next to achieve these objectives.



**SO1: Integrating our employment, skills and education system to ensure it is aligned with demand and responsive to changing patterns of employment**

### Why is this important?

- Misalignment of supply and demand of current skills and employment landscape
- Technological and digital advances are expected to disrupt the world of work, our system must be responsive
- Funding and delivery models are fragmented, leading to duplication, gaps and confusion for learners and employers

### Priority areas/groups:

- Identification of duplication, gaps and conflicts in the system
- Identify opportunities for freedoms and flexibilities to encourage greater impact
- Intelligence to align funding, strategic priorities and investment decisions
- Ensuring provision aligns with employer and employee needs
- Ensuring provision is intelligence led, informing national and regional decision making
- Ensuring provision is accessible and flexible to ensure optimum take-up and impact

### What are we already doing?

We have good examples of intelligence led decision making and co-design of strategic responses that we can build on, including the development of our Future Bright programme, LEP investment in skills capital projects and the current development of our Adult Education commissioning model.

Our success in securing a devolution deal gives us the opportunity from 2019/20 to directly control how the Adult Education Budget is used in our area and our aspirations are to use this more effectively to target delivery where we need it the most, through evidence based commissioning. We are working across the region to bring together all AEB funded providers and other key stakeholders to share best practice, co-ordinate local planning, and provide opportunities for peer support and challenge.

We have strong partnerships in place that can be built on as we look to further integrate our work. For example, the western training provider network (WTPN) works closely with WECA, the four unitary authorities and other stakeholders to improve the skills system and accessibility of training and education programmes for the regions residents. Formed in

2004, members of the network include local and national independent training providers, local colleges, a university and training support businesses. Member organisations deliver the vast majority of all apprenticeships regionally, adult education budget skills programmes and other training initiatives. They meet regularly to share best practice as peers, put on events and recently took part in a European social fund programme aimed at improving the skills system. The network is an excellent example of competing education organisations working together to improve the skills system of the region.

### What can we learn from others - case study: Leeds City Region Skills Network

The Leeds City Region Skills Network represents colleges, universities, private and voluntary sector skills providers from across the Leeds City Region. The partnership works together to meet the needs of employers and the city region economy and includes fourteen further education colleges, nine universities and numerous private and voluntary sector skills providers, delivering a wide range of training to suit employer needs. A key part of this unique collaboration is a signed commitment with the LEP to working together in the form of a Skills Partnership Agreement.

### What are we going to do next?

Work towards a more integrated regional skills function able to support national and regional engagement including:

- A **Labour market Intelligence Function (LMI)** tasked with providing an assessment of current trends, forecasting of future need/opportunity (including by sector and occupation), and evaluating the impact of interventions to inform future commissioning and co-design
- An evidence based **commissioning function**, covering funding opportunities, including the Adult Education Budget
- An impartial **co-ordination function** to ensure alignment of provision (e.g. Post 16 places) investment (in skills capital and other areas) and decision-making

### Linkages

The actions in this objective to develop a more integrated regional skills function will cut across and support all other strategic objectives.



## S02: Enabling all young people to achieve their potential

### Why is this important?

- Educational attainment at school age, especially for disadvantaged groups, is below average
- NEET levels are higher than average, especially amongst disadvantaged groups
- There is strong evidence that good school outcomes and careers information deliver lifelong impacts
- With expected growth in high skilled jobs in the area, our young people need the skills to be able to access these opportunities
- Progression to Higher Education is below average

### Priority areas/groups:

- Improving educational attainment (age 5-18), particularly for disadvantaged groups
- Development of skills with a strong employability and enterprise link, with a focus on skills requirements of the future
- Preventing young people from becoming NEET
- Ensuring disadvantaged young people are supported to achieve their potential, including outcomes for young people with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities
- Raising aspirations of all young people and their parents through effective careers education advice and guidance
- Ensuring young people within the region have the opportunity to progress to Further and Higher Education as well as apprenticeship and technical routes to higher skilled jobs

### What are we already doing?

The LEP and its partners have made progress in this area, with a number of key initiatives that we can build on at a local, regional and national level including:

- ✓ Learning/schools partnerships across our region
- ✓ Careers Hub and Enterprise Advisor Network (which includes dedicated resource focused on support for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)
- ✓ Projects providing young people with ‘experience of work’ at a local and regional level
- ✓ National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) projects promoting progression to higher education

- ✓ Local initiatives targeting particular disadvantaged groups including care leavers
- ✓ ESF projects targeting NEETs and those at risk of NEET
- ✓ Apprenticeship initiatives

However, there is limited integration between the various projects, with some duplication of services as well as gaps (geographically and thematically), creating confusion for young people, schools and the business community. Equally, short term funding opportunities create insecurity for providers and are led by the needs of the funder, rather than the end-user.

### What can we learn from others - case study: North East LEP's Education Challenge

The 'Next Generation Learning' project is part of the North East LEP's Education Challenge, which aims to reduce the gap between the region's best and lowest performing secondary schools and improve social mobility in young people. The education challenge will support teachers, schools, governors and leaders to integrate careers learning into the curriculum to ensure those entering the workforce in the future have the skill level to support our diverse economy and are fully aware of the progression routes available to make this happen.

## What are we going to do next?

- **Co-design activities which challenge and support our schools to improve outcomes and raise aspiration among young people**
- **Developing proposals for transition Programmes, Family Learning Programmes, and School Improvement models to:**
  - Prevent disengagement at key transition points such as primary to secondary, Year 8-9 and KS4/KS5
  - **Improving engagement and preventing NEET**
    - **Raise attainment and progress levels in Maths, English and Digital skills in particular**
    - **Improving engagement, attainment and progression of disadvantaged young people**
- **Enhance careers education, advice and guidance through expansion of the Careers Hub model**
  - Expanding the West of England Careers Hub by co-designing a world class careers advice service that adds value to and complements the current CEC offer to include:
    - **Integrated and early career insights and pathway support for young people**
    - **Improving parental engagement, communication and support**
    - **Meaningful employer inspiration and contributions**
    - **Promotion of a wide range of routes to access further and higher education and higher level skills and other routes of progressing such as apprenticeships**
    - **Delivers entrepreneurship and employability skills**

## Linkages

Strategic actions to support this objective are not constrained to this strategic objective. For instance, under strategic objective 1, the improved co-ordination function will map and co-ordinate post 16 provision across the area, to ensure all young people can access good quality post 16 provision wherever they live. Similarly, actions under strategic objective 5 will engage employers in the education and skills system to provide opportunities for young people.



## SO3: Supporting everyone who is able to work by helping to address their barriers to employment

### Why is this important?

- 47,800 people not working in the region would like to do so. Addressing their barriers to employment would improve quality of life and reduce costs of existing benefit payments
- Access to employment can be affected by race, gender, disability, age, where you live and other factors. Supporting certain groups or locations could help address this
- Barriers to work can be complex and solutions often need to be tailored, but common barriers include low skills (including basic skills), health issues (including mental health), transport, language and childcare as well as social issues such as housing, drug and alcohol misuse and other complex needs

### Priority areas/groups:

- Supporting people with low level or no formal skills
- Supporting older workers who may need to reskill or upskill
- Focusing action in areas with higher levels of deprivation
- Supporting people with complex barriers to education, employment and training
- Supporting people from diverse backgrounds
- Ensuring employers recognise the value of a diverse, skilled and active workforce and can create opportunities for all

### What are we already doing?

There is a range of locally developed provision for people facing complex barriers to employment including:

- ✓ Locally developed programmes of support for people facing multiple/complex barriers, or serving disadvantaged/deprived communities where the Voluntary and Community sector often plays a central role
- ✓ ESF provision including 'West of England Works', a £6m ESF project delivered by the VCSE sector and 'Support for the Unemployed'. Successor arrangements are not yet determined
- ✓ Initiatives such as Ways2Work in Bristol, which links together the various support agencies in Bristol
- ✓ Community learning initiatives
- ✓ The national work and health programme is also working in this space

Whilst these models can be built on, there is limited integration between the various projects, with some duplication of services as well as gaps (geographically and thematically), creating confusion for individuals, providers of support and the business community. Equally, short term funding opportunities create insecurity for providers and are led by the needs of the funder, rather than the end-user.

**What can we learn from others - Case Study: Manchester Working Well Pilot -** Pioneered a new approach to unemployment support through the Working Well programme. This programme started as a pilot supporting 5,000 people who had been out of work for a sustained period addressing their barriers to employment. Each participant had a dedicated key-worker and access to a bespoke package of support, giving them access to the right support, at the right time to address their specific barriers to work. This programme has grown from its initial pilot and the principles underpinning Working Well now apply to the broader approach to employment and skills reform being taken forward in Greater Manchester.

### **What are we going to do next?**

#### **Secure investment for a Community Grant Scheme for projects targeting local need or specific hard to reach groups**

Building on the evidence base function, secure investment for a Community Grant Scheme that is accessible to local partners and organisations (including VCSE sector, FE, and others) to facilitate projects responding to specific local, community needs or opportunities, focusing in particular on areas and communities facing higher levels of deprivation and gaps in provision.

#### **Infrastructure to connect people to employment and skills opportunities**

Align investment and development plans across the region to ensure employment and skills opportunities are supported by infrastructure -both physical and digital - that links people to these opportunities

#### **Support effective retraining opportunities to support enhanced productivity growth across the region**

Whilst the West of England is a prosperous city-region, productivity has flatlined, and there is a skills shortage impeding growth in sectors including advanced-manufacturing, construction and creative & digital sectors. A significantly enhanced and digitally enabled workforce, will help address the challenges posed by new disruptive product developments. Working with Government, we will support the development of the National Retraining Scheme, helping local people respond to the changing labour market, redirect their careers and secure better jobs.

### **Linkages**

Strategic actions to support this objective, are not constrained to this objective. For instance under strategic objective 1, co-ordination activity will ensure local interventions align with national programmes led by DWP. Under strategic objective 4, flexibilities in the adult education budget will allow us to help people obtain the skills they need to obtain work and progress in work and the future development of Future Bright may include actions to develop a 'Good Employer Standard' that will help to create an environment where employers value a diverse workforce.



## SO4: Empowering people to progress within employment, including access to better higher paid opportunities

### Why is this important?

- 19% of people are paid below the real living wage with implications for child poverty
- Low pay and insecure jobs can leave people stuck in poverty and reliant on benefits
- Pay and occupational profiles are not equal, with women, disabled people, people from BME groups less likely to benefit from higher pay and higher level occupations
- There is evidence of under employment and Failure of employers to take-up modern management practices can limit progression opportunities for employees

### Priority areas/groups:

- People in low paid/insecure employment
- People without a level 2 qualification, as well as level 3 and level 4 skills required for progression
- People working part-time and self-employed
- People working in low skilled jobs who are under-employed
- People with other barriers to progression, including Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, mental health, childcare and transport
- Supporting people from diverse backgrounds and ensuring employers recognise the value of a diverse workforce
- Supporting employers to address skills gaps and fully utilise their workforce through modern management practices

### What are we already doing?

The LEP and its partners have made significant progress in this area, with a number of key initiatives at a local, regional and national level including:

- ✓ Future Bright, a £4m regional initiative funded by the DWP to help people develop their skills, increase their income and progress their career
- ✓ Local provision for particular groups (e.g. ethnic minorities, women, ill-health)
- ✓ Community learning models
- ✓ Devolution of the Adult Education Budget will allow us to target provision at areas of greatest need
- ✓ Adoption of Social Value Act into procurement practices
- ✓ A strong business support system including the Growth Hub
- ✓ Inward investment that provides opportunities for a diverse workforce to progress

### **What can we learn from others - Case Study: Mayor of London's Good Work Standard**

The Mayor of London's Good Work Standard aims to improve employment in the capital with four areas of activity: Fair pay and conditions, workplace wellbeing, skills and progression and diversity and recruitment. Recognising that not all employers will be able to meet the same standards in every area, the GLA has established three levels of activity across those four areas: Foundation - the basics; achievement - possible for everyone; and excellence - more challenging but exemplary practice. The GLA plans to roll-out the Standard by Spring 2019, with an extensive period of testing from January 2019.

### **What can we learn from elsewhere - Case Study: Leeds Planning Obligations Framework**

Leeds City Council enabled 2,395 people to secure a job through employment and skills obligations agreed with developers and service providers in the city through a planning obligations framework. Whilst initially aimed at people from deprived communities, a review by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that this was not achieved consistently and that if poverty reduction was the aim, the programme would be better targeted at individuals furthest from the labour market with specific needs, rather than places within the city. As a result, it is now targeted at young people under the age of 15 as first-time entrants to the labour market, particularly those identified as BME, leaving care and those with learning difficulties as well as adults with a disability or with a long term health condition looking to move into or return to work.

## **What are we going to do next?**

### **Develop Future Bright**

Build on successful parts of programme and expand remit based on mid-term evaluation. Potentially to include:

- Reskilling to address the 'hollowing out' (linked to new National Retraining Scheme and AEB)
- Mental health in the workplace (Thrive model)
- 'Good Employer Standard'
- Development of childcare reforms
- Promotion of a range of routes, including apprenticeship, linked to the Apprenticeship Hub

### **Adult Education Budget Commissioning Strategy**

Develop a regional AEB commissioning strategy that aligns with the objective and vision set out in this plan, ensuring future provision drives a range of improved outcomes (skills and broader) for residents and aligns with employer needs.

## **Linkages**

Strategic actions to support this objective are not constrained to this strategic objective. For example, under strategic objective 5, actions to further develop the apprenticeship Hub will help individuals progress from low to high skills through an apprenticeship escalator, and work with employers will maximise the impact and purchasing power of anchor institutions, as well as support SMEs to develop the workforce for the future.



## S05: Ensuring employers are able to recruit and retain the diverse skills and talent they need to thrive from within and beyond the region

### Why is this important

- Some employers are finding it hard to recruit staff to help them grow and others have workforces that lack the skills they need for the future
- Employers play a key role in workforce development, but there is scope to increase training and development, which evidence shows is ‘good for business’
- There are gaps in the skills pipeline to support our growing innovation sector (e.g. STEAM skills)
- Our clean growth and infrastructure ambitions will require growth in certain skills
- Skills pipelines, such as apprenticeships are under-utilised
- Some groups are under-represented in the workforce, providing an opportunity to address the shortages
- Improving the health of our workforce can improve productivity and reduce staff turnover
- A culture of lifelong learning and continuous professional development will enable to the workforce to adapt to future skills requirements

### Priority areas/groups:

- Development of skills to support a diverse, clean and innovative economy with opportunities for progression and growth
- Increasing awareness among employers and individuals of the range of skills development pathways (e.g. apprenticeships and T-levels) to increase engagement in these routes from both employers and individuals
- Increasing Continuous Professional Development activity amongst employers and the self-employed
- Increasing employer engagement with schools, colleges and communities
- Increasing workforce diversity and helping businesses recognise positive impact on driving business growth
- Improving workforce health

### What progress have we already made in this area?

The LEP and its partners have made significant progress in this area, with a number of key initiatives that can be built on including:

- ✓ Skills Capital investment projects and projects including the Global Centre of Innovation Excellence, Workforce for the Future and WIDGET (a DCMS funded project to help women enter digital jobs) that are already in development or advanced
- ✓ The Apprenticeship Hub and Apprenticeship Diversity Hub in Bristol
- ✓ The Growth Hub and business support systems which are in place and supporting businesses of all sizes

- ✓ A range of employer engagement activity through ESF, ERDF and other local services including advice days, jobs fairs and on-line portals, as well as work to engage employers through 'pledge schemes'

However, there is limited integration between the various projects, with some duplication of services as well as gaps (geographically and thematically), creating confusion for businesses. Equally, short term funding opportunities, led by funder requirements leads to insecurity for providers.

### What can we learn from others - case study: Liverpool City Region's Apprenticeship Hub

Liverpool City Region's Apprenticeship Hub is funded by ESF through the Education and Skills Funding Agency with the aim of increasing awareness, number and quality of apprenticeships available to regional residents by co-ordinating activities, making apprenticeships work for businesses and individuals. The team provide support to employers, individuals and schools and has an ambassador network.

### What do we need to do next?

#### Further development/re-boot of the existing Apprenticeship Hub to:

- Provide an impartial brokerage/advice service matching employers with apprentices/wider provision and providing impartial, timely and accurate advice linked to the Growth Hub
- Work with employers, colleges and training providers to ensure there are apprenticeship opportunities that help people to progress in their careers
- In the longer term work with employers to develop local standards, providing an apprenticeship escalators from low to high skills
- Work with Government to maximise the value of Levy underspend in driving regional ambitions

#### Develop initiatives to help employers plan for skills through

- Ensuring employers from a range of sectors and business sizes are heard in planning forums
- Maximising the impact of **Anchor Institutions** and key employers (through good practice, use of Levy/Levy sharing, influencing supply chains, planning and investment)
- Supporting SMEs and self-employed people through the **Workforce for the Future** project (ESF) and an enhanced **Growth Hub** offer

#### Supporting key Growth Sectors and Innovation 'ecosystem'

- Investment to ensure steady pipeline of talent/skills to support our competitive advantages e.g. Global Centre of Innovation Excellence, emerging Digital Engineering Innovation Centre (NCC) and Bristol Digital Talent Institute at Temple Quarter; Bath Working Well Talent Institute; Foundations for Creative careers and Talent Bridge)
- Maximise the value of **Institute of Technology**
- Addressing **Digital Diversity** through Women into Digital Jobs, Employment or Training (**WIDJET**).

### **Linkages**

Strategic actions to support this objective are not constrained to this strategic objective. For example, under strategic objective 1, actions to work towards a more integrated regional skills function will create a system that is better aligned to the needs of employers. Similarly, actions under strategic objective 2 will help ensure the workforce of the future has skills and qualifications needed by employers in the future. Actions under strategic objective 3 will bring more people into employment, addressing skills shortages today.

## Strategic actions

Our strategic actions and their relationship with our strategic objectives are highlighted below:

Strategic Activities	SO1	SO2	SO3	SO4	SO5
<b>12. Work towards a more integrated regional skills function</b> To include intelligence, evidence based commissioning, co-ordination of provision and informed decision-making	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>13. Co-design activities which challenge and support our schools to improve outcomes and raise aspiration among young people</b>		✓			
<b>14. Enhance careers education, advice and guidance through expansion of the Careers Hub model</b> By co-designing a world class careers advice service that adds value to and complements the current CEC offer	✓	✓			✓
<b>15. Secure investment for a community grant scheme for projects targeting local need or specific hard to reach groups</b>	✓		✓	✓	
<b>16. Infrastructure to connect people to employment and skills opportunities</b> Align plans to ensure employment and skills opportunities are supported by infrastructure that links people to opportunities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>17. Support effective retraining opportunities across the region, ensuring residents and businesses are well-prepared for a changing labour market</b>			✓	✓	✓
<b>18. Develop Future Bright Plus</b> Build on successful parts of programme and expand remit based on mid-term evaluation	✓		✓	✓	✓
<b>19. Further development/re-boot of the Apprenticeship Hub</b> Focusing on brokerage (people and businesses) to maximise uptake and linked to the Growth Hub	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>20. Adult Education Budget Commissioning Strategy</b> Align commissioning strategy to the vision and objectives of the Employment and Skills Plan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>21. Develop initiatives to help employers plan for skills</b> e.g through development of anchor institutions network, Workforce for the Future and Enhanced Growth Hub offer	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>22. Supporting key growth sectors and innovation 'ecosystem' i.e. through Global Centre of Innovation Excellence, Institute of Technology, Digital Skills</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

## Delivery and governance

The implementation of this employment and skills plan will be overseen by the Skills Advisory Panel. The Skills Advisory Panel's role is to:

- Provide strong leadership in the local area, engaging with employers and providers and providing skills advice to the LEP and Combined Authority
- Develop a clear understanding of current and future skills needs and local labour market
- Build on high quality analysis to develop a clear approach to addressing skills and employment challenges in the local area, including future skills challenges
- Understand the wider dependence in the local area and link (e.g. transport) to link them to the employment and skills plan
- Act as co-ordinator of local skills providers
- Work closely with careers advisory services
- Raise the profile of apprenticeships with local employers
- Advise where skills and labour market resource should be directed to support local employers and residents
- Sharing analysis and best practice

In taking forward the implementation of this employment and skills plan, we will prepare a separate delivery plan identifying the next steps required to take forward planned activities, resources required and milestones. The development of the delivery plan will be overseen by the SAP and progress against it monitored on a regular basis. The delivery plan will be a live document, updated as and when necessary to include new opportunities to take forward the employment and skills plan.

This employment and skills plan set out our strategic aspirations. These actions may be resourced through a number of routes including:

- The West of England Investment Fund
- Remaining ESIF funding
- UK Shared Prosperity Funds
- Local Growth Fund
- LEP Capacity Funds
- National Funding through DWP, DfE etc.
- Combining and pooling local resources
- Other funds yet to be announced

Our delivery plan will set out how we propose to resource the strategic actions identified in this plan, although it may not be possible to fund all the actions immediately.

As well as the strategic actions listed in this plan, we also hope that this plan will influence the resources and spending of both local and national partners when delivering activity in the West of England - encouraging partners to deliver against these regionally agreed priorities through their own initiatives from neighbourhood schemes to national projects.

## Appendix 1: Monitoring framework

The table below sets out the full range of indicators that we will be monitoring, with those shaded indicators representing our 'headline' indicators:

Indicator/Ambition	Baseline Position and source data	S01	S02	S03	S04	S05
Increase the proportion of 16-18 year olds in education, employment or training (into EET)	6.6% of 16 and 17 year olds were not in education, employment or training at the end of 2017 (Source: DfE)	✓	✓			
Increase educational attainment of all young people	The average attainment 8 score was 46.2 for all pupils in 2017/18 (Source: DfE)	✓	✓			
Increase the proportion of young people progressing to any sustained education destination	53% of students from progressed to a sustained education destination after key stage 5 (state funded mainstream schools and colleges) in 2016/2017 (Source: DfE)	✓	✓			
Increase the proportion of young people (KS5) progressing to higher education destinations	41% of students progress to Higher Education (level 4 and above) after key stage 5 (stage funded mainstream schools and colleges) in 2016/17 (Source: DfE)	✓	✓			
Increase educational attainment of disadvantaged young people	The average attainment 8 score was 34.3 for disadvantaged pupils in 2017/18 (Source: DfE)	✓	✓			
Reduction in the proportion of sessions lost due to unauthorised absence	1.3% of sessions were missed due to unauthorised absence in state funded primary, secondary and special schools in 2017/2018 (Source: DfE)	✓	✓			
Reduction in the number of children excluded from school	4,359 pupils had one or more fixed period exclusion in 2016/17 (Source: DfE)	✓	✓			
Proportion of schools and colleges using Gatsby benchmarking model	58% schools used the Gatsby benchmarks at the end of March 2019(Source: Careers and Enterprise Company)	✓	✓			
Average number of Gatsby benchmarks achieved in schools and colleges	The average number of Gatsby benchmarks achieved was 2.46/8 at the end of March 2019 (Source: Careers and Enterprise Company)	✓	✓			
Reduce the number of people who are unemployed or inactive but wish to work	In Dec 2018 there were 20,500 people unemployed in the West of England and 27,300 who were inactive who wanted a job, therefore 47,800 in this group (Source: Annual Population Survey)	✓		✓		✓
Increase the proportion of people with Level 2+ qualifications	In Dec 2018, 18.2% (133,000) of 16-64 year olds did not have a Level 2 qualification (Source: Annual Population Survey)	✓		✓	✓	✓
Reduce proportion of people with no qualifications	In Dec 2018, 3.9% (28,600) of 16-64 year olds did not have any qualifications (Source: Annual Population Survey)	✓		✓	✓	✓

Increase the employment rate amongst disabled people	In Dec 2018, the employment rate for people aged 16-64 with Equality Act core or work limiting disability was 65.1%, compared to 84.1% for people not meeting this criteria (Source: Annual Population Survey)	✓		✓		✓
Increase the employment rate of older workers	In December 2018, the employment rate for 50 - 64 year olds was 76% and 44.3% for 50+ (Source: Annual Population Survey)	✓		✓		✓
Increase the proportion of women in senior occupational roles	In December 2018, 5.8% of women in employment were employed as 'managers, directors and senior officials', compared with 13.1% of men in employment (Source: Annual Population Survey)	✓			✓	✓
Decrease the proportion of people earning less than the Real Living Wage (as defined by Living Wage Foundation)	19% of workers received less than the Real Living Wage (gross hourly pay, total workers, workplace analysis) in 2018. (Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, <a href="https://www.livingwage.org.uk/calculation">https://www.livingwage.org.uk/calculation</a> )	✓			✓	
Increase median wage levels	In 2018, the median gross hourly pay was £13.30 (Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings)	✓			✓	
Increase the proportion of people with Level 3+ qualifications	In Dec 2018, 66.5% of 16-64 year olds had a Level 3 or higher qualification (Source: Annual Population Survey)	✓			✓	✓
Increase the proportion of people with Level 4+ qualifications	In Dec 2018, 46.3% of 16-64 year olds had a Level 3 or higher qualification (Source: Annual Population Survey)	✓			✓	✓
Reduce the number of employers with Hard to Fill Vacancies	In 2017, 13% of establishments had at least one vacancy that was hard to fill (Source: Employer Skills Survey)	✓				✓
Increase in number of employers engaged with education	In 2016, 13% of employers in the West of England offered work inspiration in the previous 12 months and 38% had someone in on work experience in the previous 12 months (Source: Employer Perspectives Survey)	✓	✓			✓
Increase proportion of staff trained by employers	In 2017, 66.09% of staff received training from their employer (Source: Employer Skills Survey)	✓			✓	✓
Increase number of people achieving apprenticeships	In 2017/19 7,590 people completed an apprenticeship in WECA (Source: SFA, Statistical First Release)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Increase proportion of women taking apprenticeships in the following sectors: Science and Mathematics, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies and ICT	In 2017/18, 13% of apprentices taking these subjects were women (Source: SFA, Statistical First Release)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Increase GVA/hour worked	In 2017, the GVA per hour worked was £33.7 in the West of England (Source: ONS)	✓			✓	✓