

## **AGENDA ITEM 8**

### **REPORT TO THE TEES VALLEY COMBINED AUTHORITY CABINET**

**23 NOVEMBER 2017**

### **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS**

### **PORTFOLIO: EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS**

## **EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS STRATEGY**

### **SUMMARY**

This report presents the proposed Education, Employment and Skills Strategy for the period 2017-2021, for further consultation.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Combined Authority Cabinet:

- i. Consider and comment on the strategy content
- ii. Agree that the document should be published for consultation, including further discussion with partners.

### **DETAIL**

1. The Education, Employment and Skills strategy; “Inspiring Our Future, the Tees Valley plan to build the skills we need for a modern economy” is attached as a separate document. It has been produced to provide a framework for future intervention and delivery by the Combined Authority and its partners. The development of this strategy has been informed by the Education, Employment and Skills Partnership Board and wider stakeholders. This includes the discussions held at the two strategic events hosted by the Board in June 2017. The strategy takes notice and builds upon the devolution deal, national and local policy direction and significant statistical analysis.
2. There are significant challenges in the Education, Employment and skills system in Tees Valley that include:
  - a. Skills shortages across most of our key sectors;
  - b. Too low numbers of learners choosing and achieving good grades in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths subjects;

- c. 69% of our secondary schools are graded Good or Outstanding compared to 79% nationally;
  - d. Higher levels of unemployment compared to national averages-Tees Valley 4% compared to 1.9% nationally;
  - e. Youth unemployment (18-24) is more than double the national average;
  - f. Under-employment remains high creating a mismatch between the skills that residents have and those that businesses require.
3. The anticipated economic growth provides optimism that there will be significant job growth in Tees Valley both in terms of new jobs created and replacement demand for changes in the existing workforce. The strategy proposes six work streams that will provide a range of service improvements that will increase local people's awareness and access to these jobs.
  4. There are also significant strengths that Tees Valley has that we can build upon which include:
    - a. School performance is improving, on average;
    - b. Employment levels are rising at a rate higher than the national average;
    - c. More people are gaining higher level qualifications;
    - d. There are strong partnerships between businesses, Local Authorities, stakeholders and the Combined Authority.
  5. The creation of the Mayoral Combined Authority and the ongoing work with national government departments around devolution creates an opportunity to challenge and support national policy to benefit Tees Valley, including the planned skills funding devolution and delivering the Routes to Work pilot to support those most distant from the labour market to gain work.
  6. There are 6 key strands of work within the strategy that include:
    - a. Supporting educational innovation and collaboration;
    - b. Developing a skills system for business growth;
    - c. Supporting people most distant from the labour market;
    - d. Improving Careers Education for all;
    - e. Business challenge and workforce planning;
    - f. Enhancing the Higher Education role.
  7. A cross cutting theme will be Research, Evaluation and Analysis that will be integral to achieving success. This work will centre upon ensuring our work is evidence based, that we develop robust data to inform our current and future strategy, evidence improvement and outcomes achieved. An ambitious and objective programme of evaluation will be procured to objectively assess our progress against national and local benchmarks.
  8. The Education, Employment and Skills Partnership Board will create relevant work streams to take the key strands of work forward and host regular partnership events to ensure wider engagement.

### **Finalising the Strategy**

9. The development of the strategy has been informed by many partners. But in order to ensure that it remains relevant, ambitious and strategic it is planned to regularly review the document and update relevant data.
10. This initial strategy will be available for wider consultation on the Combined Authority's website until 5<sup>th</sup> January, and will be sent to key partners for comment,

alongside the consultation period for the budget. Comments received will be considered, and a final document will be presented to Cabinet in February.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

11. The financial implications are incorporated into the wider Combined Authority's Investment Plan and are within the allocated budget. Additional opportunities for increasing access to national funding streams will be considered as they emerge.
12. The revenue and capital funding allocations are within the TVCA Medium Term Financial Plan.
13. The increased work to deliver the strategy will require further consideration of staffing requirements. These will be managed within the proposed Combined Authority budget.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

14. There are no immediate legal implications from approving this strategy.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

15. Publication of the Education, Employment and Skills strategy is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.
16. Further development of the detailed delivery of the key strands of work will have risk assessments carried out as part of their ongoing implementation.

## **CONSULTATION**

17. Consultation and engagement has been with Local Authority officers, Chief Executives and Leaders, the Education, Employment and Skills Partnership Board and will be available to stakeholders and the public until 5<sup>th</sup> January for further consultation.

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