



**Report of: East North East Area Leader / Head of Projects and Programmes
 (Employment & Skills)**

**Report to: Outer North East Community Committee - Alwoodley, Harewood,
 Wetherby**

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Date: 23rd March 2015

Subject: East North East Employment and Skills Plan

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Alwoodley, Harewood, Wetherby	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. The report introduces the East North East Employment and Skills Plan (**Appendix 1**) which sets out priorities for the East North East area as a whole and for the three specific Community Committee areas.
2. The report explains the purpose and structure of the East North East Employment and Skills Board.

Recommendations

The Outer North East Community Committee is asked to:

1. Consider and comment on the East North East Employment and Skills Plan attached at Appendix 1.
2. Note the updates provided in this report and agree to receive regular updates from the Employment and Skills Board.

1.0 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The report introduces the East North East (ENE) Employment and Skills Plan which sets out priorities for the ENE area as a whole and for the three specific Community Committee areas.
- 1.2 The report explains the purpose and structure of the ENE Employment and Skills Board.

2 Background information

- 2.1 In response to discussions at the ENE Area Leadership Team and Community Committees, colleagues from Employment & Skills, Children's Services, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Area Support Team have worked together to develop a draft ENE Employment & Skills Plan. The plan sets out priority actions for 2014/15 covering all ENE areas and other actions specific to the Community Committee areas.
- 2.2 The plan provides headline actions and aims to include actions and outcomes which are measurable so that the Area Leadership Team and Community Committees can clearly demonstrate progress, particularly before the end of the municipal year.
- 2.3 The plan reflects some of the main issues which have emerged through partnership discussions across all priority neighbourhoods. In addition, there are a growing number of issues which have been identified but which have not yet been refined into clear measurable actions that can be taken forward through to delivery at this stage. These will continue to be developed over the coming months and included as clear actions within the Plan once sufficient detail is agreed. These issues include improving communications, issues relating to ex-offenders, support for specific target groups, take up and quality of ESOL provision and increased volunteering.

3 Main Issues

Delivery mechanism

- 3.1 The Area Leadership Team has supported the development of an ENE Employment and Skills Board to drive forward the actions set out within the plan. Terms of Reference were agreed at the initial Board meeting on 22nd October 2014 and a further meeting took place on 8th January 2015 and a third meeting is scheduled for 18th March.
- 3.2 The Board is chaired by Councillor Ghulam Hussain, (Inner North East Employment, Skills and Welfare Community Champion) whilst Councillor Ron Grahame is deputy chair. Councillor Matthew Robinson represents the Outer North East Community Committee on the Board. Core members include senior officers from Employment and Skills, Children's Services, DWP and the Area Support Team. The Community Committee Champions for the three ENE Community Committees have a key role to play and have confirmed their commitment to the Board to support delivery of the Plan.

Appropriate stakeholder involvement is vital and wider membership will be considered against the priorities that need to be delivered, in consultation with the three Community Champions. The core membership includes those who have direct responsibility for delivering the plan, but it is clearly recognised that other partners will be invited as and when required, without duplicating other partnerships. To date colleagues from Leeds City College and Families First have attended Board meetings and this has provided a really useful input to discussions.

- 3.3 The Board model builds on previous work in South Leeds and the model is being replicated across the city which will enable more effective monitoring and reporting. Members are provided with Employment and Skills ward profile information to allow them to monitor the local position in relation to Employment and Skills data.
- 3.4 Regular updates against the action plan will be provided to the Area Leadership Team and Community Committees. The Plan has recently been updated following discussions at the January Board meeting. The main issues being focused on by the Board are set out below.

ENE Employment & Skills Plan Priorities

- 4.1 This section of the report highlights some of the priorities of the Employment & Skills Plan. It should be noted that the Board raised concerns relating to the significant budget cuts to Children's Services which will impact on the current Integrated Advice and Guidance services. The Board agreed that partners should be encouraged to comment on the Council's budget consultation and express their concerns. In addition, the Chair asked the group to consider in the light of budget cuts, whether there was any duplication between services being offered by the Council and DWP. The Board will work together to prevent any duplication and it was suggested that it would be useful to map current support provision and the impact of the proposed budget cuts.
- 4.2 Leeds Pathways – work is in progress to increase the number of people accessing the website www.leeds.gov.uk/pathways including the development of area specific pages and promoting schools involvement. It is suggested that a link to Leeds Pathways is included from the Community Committee's Facebook page. However, it should be noted that the Leeds Pathways budget forms part of the reducing Connexions budget and therefore development may be curtailed.
- 4.3 Head Start Programme – there has been a focus on increasing the number of employers taking on a Head Start work placement. Within Outer North East, 1 business has been engaged on the Head Start programme - npower. Wetherby Business Association has also engaged on the programme. To date, the Council has been the main provider of placement opportunities along with larger employers including Premier Inn, Harvey Nichols and Keepmoat. The Chair of the Employment and Skills Board has requested targeted business engagement across the ENE to maximise the support from local employers on this programme. This has been picked up through Employment Leeds.
- 4.4 Leeds Apprenticeship Hub and Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) - A new telemarketing company has recently been procured to support the Leeds

Apprenticeship Hub and the team has agreed to use this company to target and promote opportunities to small businesses. 10 businesses have been taken on through the Leeds Apprenticeship Hub and ATA.

- 4.5 Community Learning – the current focus is on encouraging under-represented groups to engage in the Community Learning Programme, particularly men and those with mental health problems. The issue of learners disclosing their mental health problems is also proving challenging e.g. young people commencing courses and not disclosing their mental health issues until they are 8 weeks into a 10 week course. The Council has recently bid for funding from the Skills Funding Agency to pilot a Mental Health Community Learning Programme. Working in partnership with Community Links, the pilot will include community learning as part of an integrated package of support for people with mild to moderate mental health in the City and, help to train learning providers to be able to meet the specific needs of this target group. The Council will know whether the bid is successful by the end of March 2015.
- 4.6 School / Employer engagement – this work is being led by the Education Business Partnership, working with high schools across ENE. Many learners are already engaged with the programme but the aim is to increase this. Children’s Services are launching the ‘Moving On’ programme to improve the transition between primary and secondary school. Within Outer North East, Boston Spa and Wetherby schools are currently engaged in the programme.
- 4.6 Intensive support through Job Centre Plus Social Justice Team – Numbers of customers being supported through the JCP Social Justice Team have increased. The increased numbers being engaged are encouraging, however the challenge is now to ensure sustained progression.

5.0 Consultation and Engagement

- 5.1 The East North East Employment and Skills Board ensures consultation on the Employment and Skills Plan with relevant stakeholders including elected Members, Council officers and partner agencies.

6.0 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 6.1 There are no specific equality or diversity issues relating to the East North East Employment and Skills Plan or Board. However the Plan aims to enhance opportunities for those furthest from the labour market to access employment and skills support.

7.0 Council policies and City Priorities

- 7.1 Addressing poverty and deprivation is a key priority for the Council. The establishment of the ENE Employment and Skills Board and implementation of the ENE Employment and Skills Plan supports the Council’s City Priorities Plan as it aims to create more jobs, improve skills and support the sustainable growth of the Leeds economy.
- 7.2 The ENE Board and Plan also support the Council’s four ‘propositions’ approach to tackling poverty, agreed by the Executive Board in June 2013. These are: the need to provide accessible and integrated services, the need

to help people out of financial hardship, the need to help people into work and the need to be responsive to the needs of local communities

8.0 Resources and value for money

8.1 The proposals set out in this report seek to provide longer term solutions to worklessness and skills shortages within the ENE area. There may be specific implications for the Inner East Community Committee's Wellbeing fund to support additional employment and skills provision. However, many of the proposals within the Employment and Skills Plan aim to make more efficient and effective use of existing funding streams.

9.0 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

9.1 There are no specific legal, access to information or call-in implications arising from this report.

10.0 Risk Management

10.1 The main risk to the delivery and success of the ENE Employment and Skills Plan relates to demand and capacity to meet demand. The Board has agreed to only include actions in the first instance which are deliverable and measurable so that the ENE Employment and Skills Plan is a meaningful and useful document.

11.0 Conclusions

11.0 The report outlines the rationale for the establishment of an ENE Employment and Skills Plan. It introduces the ENE Employment and Skills Plan and highlights some of the key actions agreed as priorities.

12.0 Recommendations

12.1 The Outer North East Community Committee is asked to:

- a) Consider and comment on the East North East Employment and Skills Plan attached at Appendix 1.
- b) Note the updates provided in this report and agree to receive regular updates from the Employment and Skills Board.

Background documents

None.