

North Tyneside Health & Wellbeing Board Report Date: 23 March 2023

Title: Equally Well
Progress Update: Fair
Employment and Good
Work for All

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Responsible Lead:	John Sparkes, Director of Regeneration and Economic Development (Tel: 0191 643 1441)
Relevant Partnership Boards:	Economic Prosperity Sub-Committee Employability Partnership

1. Purpose: Progress Update: Creating fair employment and good work for all

This item relates to the 'creating fair employment and good work for all' theme of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, "Equally Well: A healthier, fairer future for North Tyneside 2021- 2025".

As outlined in 'Equally Well' good work improves health and wellbeing across people's lives, not only from an economic standpoint, but also in terms of quality of life.

This is a two-way relationship between work and health: good work is both a result and driver of good health, impacting on the lives of residents and their communities. The evidence is clear that poor health is linked to unemployment and poor-quality work. Closing employment gaps across North Tyneside can unlock prosperity and improve health and wellbeing.

North Tyneside Council's Employment and Skills service is made up of Connexions, Adult Learning, and Employability Projects. In conjunction with our NHS colleagues and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector (VCSE), there is a range of provision across North Tyneside that enables residents to gain the skills to take ownership of their future to secure good jobs with living wages.

North Tyneside's approach to 'creating fair employment and good work for all' is closely linked to the regeneration of the Borough, expanding the support available and encouraging developers and local employers to offer training and job opportunities.

Our Inclusive Economic Strategy, 'An Inclusive economy in North Tyneside' aims to create conditions for businesses to flourish, to nurture investment and support long-term

opportunities for growth, creating jobs that reflect a transforming economy. The Strategy ensures that economic opportunity, generated by the Boroughs assets, is accessible to all.

In addition, partnerships are closely linked in with the work of the North of Tyne Combined Authority, in particular the Inclusive Economy Board and the recently established Employability Strategy Group. This board brings together experts from across the skills, economic development, housing, and education sectors to help strengthen education, skills and employment interventions, improve local education and employment outcomes, and ensure devolution has a positive impact for all residents.

This briefing paper will be supplemented by a presentation at the Board meeting, which will give further detail about the multi-agency 'Working Well' programme.

2. Recommendation(s):

The Board is recommended to: -

- a) Be assured that the respective partnerships are making progress in delivering the actions for creating fair employment and good work for all.
- b) Provide any comments on any areas requiring further action;
- b) Request the respective partnerships submit further progress reports to the Board in relation to its implementation plan for next year, the delivery of those actions and their outcomes.

3. Progress update: Fair employment and good work for all

The following section outlines key activity from respective partners highlighting progress against the implementation plan (also see Appendix 1):

Working with business to increase the number of jobs opportunities, including apprenticeships, available to residents.

- The Inclusive Economic Growth team in the Council is responsible for leading on business support and engagement through a range of programmes. This includes attracting new businesses through proactive and reactive inward investment activity. They also support existing businesses to grow and flourish by unlocking routes to growth through access to finance, property requirements, access to skills, supply chain and routes to market. North Tyneside has been particularly successful in attracting new inward investment and jobs over the last decade and officers continue to promote the borough outside of the region through the Invest North Tyneside brand.
- The team support the 90 largest businesses in North Tyneside through a strategic account management programme to develop a strong relationship and support any evolving growth opportunities and mitigate any threats.
- The Council's Business Factory programme helps over 200 new businesses a year to start-up in North Tyneside and bespoke business consultancy services are provided to growing SMEs across the borough.
- A range of activities were delivered during National Apprenticeship Week 2023 including almost 600 young people and 30 businesses attending the annual Get Up and Go Apprenticeship Fair on 11th February 2023.

- Get into Courses delivered in partnership with local employers that provide employability training and guaranteed interviews for jobseekers. Companies supported include Sitel, Smulders, EE, BT, Accenture and key sectors including Digital, Customer Service, Retail, Schools, Early Years and Social Care.

Delivering employability projects targeting support at the most disadvantaged groups

- A range of funded Employability projects are delivered by the Local Authority and VCSE organisations to support residents with multiple barriers to employment who require more intensive support. For example, YMCA North Tyneside in partnership with the Council deliver a Sector Based Work Academy in Hospitality and Catering. From classroom learning to hands-on training in a commercial kitchen, this authentic training environment has provided a smooth transition into employment for many of its participants, with some of them now preparing and serving food to the YMCA's Cafe customers while others are now employed in other roles across the organisation.
- The Phoenix Detached Youth Project run an employment and skills programme in partnership with the Joyce Trust and the Adult Learning Service. 6 trainees were supported from September 2021 to March 2022, learning hand skills in mainly joinery, and working towards their Level 1 in Construction. They attended Functional Skills doing their Maths and English needed to do an apprenticeship. During this time, they also prepared and worked towards their test for a C.S.C.S. construction safety card, PASMA Tower Scaffold, Level 1 diploma in construction, functional skills, Level 1 Health and Safety, and Health and Safety Awareness, of these 6 young people, 4 have secured apprenticeships.
- The Department of Work and Pensions commissioned the Restart project which supports long term unemployed into employment. Delivered by Reed in Partnership they have opened a base on Cobalt Business Park to support North Tyneside residents.

Launching 'Working Well North Tyneside'

- 'Working Well North Tyneside' began to provide a one-stop-shop from a new hub in North Shields in October 2022. The aim of 'Working Well' is to make it easier for residents to access employment and skills support, plus access other services and information from the hub. The delivery of 'Working Well' is led by North Tyneside Council and operates in partnership with the NHS, Department of Work and Pensions, and the local community and voluntary sector. As well as expert employment advice there is information on hand to address the wider barriers to employment including finance, debt, housing, and physical and mental health. Since opening over 1500 people have visited the Hub, which also offers a Warm Welcome to vulnerable residents.

Supporting residents over 50 years of age into employment

- A range of activity is underway to encourage residents over 50 years of age back into employment. The Department of Work and Pensions through its Jobcentre Plus Work Coaches are providing specific support to over 50s to encourage them to return to the labour market following a large increase in economic inactivity amongst over 50's following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Supporting digital skills development and digital champions training

- Local providers are supporting residents with digital confidence and skills including Age UK North Tyneside and VODA who are providing support through Digital Champions volunteers.
- North Tyneside Libraries, Cedarwood Trust and Working Well North Tyneside offer residents access to digital devices with support from Digital Champions.
- The Employment and Skills service has a Digital Outreach Coordinator who engages with the voluntary and community sector as well as small to medium employers around the borough to reach out to residents supporting development of digital literacy. Since commencing in 2020 the project has supported over 550 residents with digital skills training.

North Tyneside Care Academy

- The North Tyneside Care Academy was launched in February 2023, which is a partnership between all care providers in North Tyneside including the local authority, the NHS, social care providers, the voluntary sector and schools and colleges. The Care Academy is designed not only to recruit more staff into the sector by highlighting the range of training and development on offer, but it is also a retention tool for the existing workforce to showcase career progression opportunities, training sessions and more.

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

- Employment is one of the key pillars in the Trust's community promise which sets out exactly how they want to achieve a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of everyone who lives in the areas that they serve.

The Trust connects with schools across North Tyneside to promote health & care careers, including apprenticeships by attending careers fairs, employer engagement events such as mock interview events.

Working with partners the Trust runs employability workshops to promote different ways into careers and jobs. Many of the activities are linked to increasing opportunities to some of those groups furthest away from employment, including refugees and unemployed members of our community.

3.1. Challenges

There are specific barriers that some of our most economically inactive residents face in engaging with the labour market, particularly since the pandemic, and these residents require targeted support to move closer to, and access work e.g., residents with physical and mental health conditions, caring responsibilities, or transport costs.

Partners continue to work in conjunction with the North of Tyne Combined Authority to explore these barriers further and understand how to most effectively engage and support those who face such barriers.

4. Performance indicators

It is important to understand if our approach and strategic ambition is making a difference to reducing health inequalities.

Theme leads have agreed that measuring performance and understanding if the actions outlined above are reducing inequalities is an area of work for further action.

It is recommended that the Board agree that theme leads present a revised set of indicators to accompany the refreshed implementation plan in Year 2 at the June Health and Wellbeing Board.

5. Community engagement

North Tyneside Healthwatch on behalf of North Tyneside's Health and Wellbeing Board gathered views from residents and organisations about the implementation plan, with the findings reported to the November 2022 meeting.

The Healthwatch Consultation highlighted:

- The issue of in work poverty being a real issue for many families, particularly with increasing demands on household budgets due to the increase in the cost of living.
- Difficulty in juggling work with other commitments e.g., caring for children or dependents and the need for flexible working patterns.
- Respondents agree with the aim of 'good work' but felt pressure to 'take any job, not a good job or a job that was right for me'.
- Additional support to address barriers for particular groups to enter/stay in employment e.g. carers, long-term unemployed, women returning to work after raising children, disabled residents and those with other physical and mental health needs.

The Employability Partnership continuously engage with residents, employers, and business across North Tyneside and through the work of the North of Tyne Combined Authority to understand the employment and training needs of residents. The Partnership will take on board the findings from the Healthwatch consultation, alongside wider engagement work when refreshing the implementation plan in Year 2.

Working Well Consultation

A wide range of partners were involved in activities over the summer 2022 to consult and raise awareness of the Working Well brand to explain what services would be available. The events included:

- Awareness raising and promotion of the approach of Working Well:
 - 11th, 13th, 14th April
 - 19th - 22nd April
- Pre-launch resident consultation and advice:
 - 16-18th May
 - 20th May
 - 23rd-27th May
- Promoting Working Well at the Active North Tyneside Summer events:
 - 29th July - Springfield Park
 - 5th August - Richardson Dees
 - 12th August - Churchill Playing Fields
 - 19th August - Northumberland Park
- Careers Information Event for Young People on Friday 5th August 2022
- Ukrainian Jobs Fair on Wednesday 31st August 2022

The events were well attended and feedback from residents was positive. A key message that came from the consultation was the need for greater visibility and promotion of services. Comments from residents included:

- 'We didn't know the services existed.'
- 'Wish I'd known about it sooner'.
- 'I wouldn't seek out the support but will use it now I know it is there'.
- 'It will be great to have services in one place. I've been sent from one provider to another, been here, there and everywhere and still not received the help I needed'.

6. Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Progress: Implementation plan

7. Contact officers:

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8. Background information:

The following background documents have been used in the compilation of this report and are available from the author: -

[Inclusive Economy Strategy overview](#)
[North of Tyne Strategic Skills Plan – 'Opportunity for All'](#)
[North of Tyne Employability Plan](#)

COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

9 Finance and other resources

Any financial implications arising from the delivery of the implementation plan to delivery Equally Well, North Tyneside's Health and Well Being Strategy will be met from existing budgets.

10 Legal

The Board has a duty under Section 195 of the Health & Social Care Act 2012 to encourage partners to work closely together and in an integrated manner for the purpose of advancing the health and wellbeing of the people in the area.

11 Human rights

There are no human rights implications directly arising from this report.

12 Equalities and diversity

There are no equalities and diversity implications directly arising from this report.

13 Risk management

There is a risk that despite the considerable effort for joint action by the Health and Wellbeing Board, partners may not improve the inequalities in health seen in North Tyneside.

The health inequalities that existed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic have subsequently been amplified and more recently it is also widely acknowledged that the current rise in the cost of living is likely to have a disproportionate impact on some of our communities in North Tyneside.

A corporate risk has been identified for this scenario with a mitigation report was presented at the Audit Committee in November 2022, and this risk will continue to be monitored with regular reporting.

14 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications directly arising from this report.

SIGN OFF

Chair/Deputy Chair of the Board	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Director of Public Health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Interim Director of Children's Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Interim Director of Adult Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Director of Healthwatch North Tyneside	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Integrated Care Board Director of Place	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>