

Thriving Sub-Committee

Tuesday, 12 November 2024

Present: Councillor B Pickard (Chair)
Councillors R O'Keefe, J Bartoli, Louise Bell, B Clark,
C Gray, N Huscroft, J Kirwin, A Newman, J Walker
and L McMullen

Apologies: Councillors Linda Bell

TS46/24 Appointment of Substitute Members

Councillor A McMullen was in attendance as a substitute for Councillor Carl Johnson.

Councillor L McMullen was in attendance as a substitute for Councillor Linda Bell.

TS47/24 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations reported.

TS48/24 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the sub-committee held on 15 October 2024 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

TS49/24 Adult Skills and Business

A report was received and a presentation given to members with information on the Authority's Business Support and Adult Skills programmes, giving an opportunity to discuss performance, challenges and current / future activities.

Officers queried that since leaving the EU how the transitional UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) measured up to previous EU funding. Officers confirmed

that while there was not as much direct funding available, this had led to increased efficiency, redesign and refocusing of finance as well as more joined up working. Officers were not aware of any projects that had stopped due to this change in funding sources.

The Senior Manager of Employment & Skills explained how the Adult skills Fund (ASF) had devolved to NECA meaning that the Authority could now target training for local businesses to residents and address challenges like social isolation, health and wellbeing and cost of living. The 'Get Into' courses were highlighted, training co-designed with employers that have specific vacancies with guaranteed interviews and high levels of progression into employment.

Members were also shown case studies of those benefiting from access to skills, and the different routes that were open to residents. Commitments to Apprenticeships for different age groups, bootcamp programmes and workforce upskilling were also detailed. Assisting with the identification of training needs with businesses was seen as a valuable way to assist business into success and to get people back into work.

A member asked where the skills shortages were based, in terms of business size. Officers confirmed that they would ensure this breakdown was shared with the members.

A suggestion was made if there had been a skills diagnostic for the Authority's workforce, and officers stated that they would commit to doing this.

In response to a query about adults with learning needs and how that cohort was being serviced with skills training, officers explained there were specific programmes (Ignite, Explore and Release) to assist different age groups with placements, living skills and internships.

Officers confirmed that the Authority is linking with Employment Services to look into further opportunities for tailored support, after being asked if there was regular communication with the DWP and their services.

A question was asked about the funding splits for Adults skills in North Tyneside as a part of NECA, and if these figures could be shown to ensure that residents were being serviced in areas like sixth form provision. Officers confirmed that they

would ensure this data was sourced and shared with members.

Officers stated that in terms of measures and definitions of success for the Bootcamp projects, that the Authority was usually above national achievement rates and had strong Ofsted ratings as a skills provider.

TS50/24 Work Programme

Members were asked to make suggestions for future Work Programme items, and the Chair confirmed that 'Derelict Properties' should now be added to the Work Programme for the March meeting. Councillor O'Keefe was confirmed as Chair for this Task and Finish group, and meeting dates would be confirmed in the near future.

TS51/24 Date and Time of next meeting

28 Jan 2025 6.00pm