

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 21st March 2016

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, People & Economy

PORTFOLIO: Economic Development

SUBJECT: People and Economy Quarterly Policy Update

WARDS: All

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To inform the Board of recent national policy announcements relevant to employment, learning and skills.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

2.1 **That the report is noted.**

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 A number of policy, legislation, consultation and guidance documents, are issued by government departments and agencies that have varying degrees of relevance to issues on the employment, learning and skills agenda and related topics.

3.2 A brief summary of key announcements is provided in this report along with observations of local relevance, where appropriate, so the Board can consider whether to initiate more detailed scrutiny and/or report to a future meeting.

4.0 NEW POLICY, STRATEGY, STATUTORY GUIDANCE & GENERAL INFORMATION

4.1 [Guidance: 16 to 19 study programmes: advice on planning and provision](#)

Updated departmental advice to include more information on using work experience as an alternative to a substantial qualification, and on supporting students at the end of their programme.

4.2 [Jobcentre Plus support rolled out to schools](#)

Government scheme to provide expert employment support to young people.

4.3 [National living wage: employee survey](#)

A survey of employees about their views of the national living wage.

4.4 [Policy paper: Digital skills for the UK economy](#)

Ecorys UK were commissioned to produce a research paper by the Departments for Culture Media and Sport, and Business Innovation and Skills.

- 4.5 **Apprenticeship standards in development**
All occupations approved by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) to develop an apprenticeship standard.
- 4.6 **Evaluating youth social action**
This report shows that young people develop skills for employment and adulthood through taking part in social action initiatives.
- 4.7 **September Guarantee: education and training for young people**
Details of the September Guarantee, which requires local authorities to find education and training places for 16- and 17-year-olds.
- 4.8 **Government vows to make UK best in Europe for innovation and IP**
The UK IPO today launched a five year strategy setting out government plans to boost British innovation and the UK's creative sector.
- 4.9 **Ministers call on public sector to open doors to apprentices**
Government launching consultation on commitment to make 2.3% of workers in large public sector bodies apprentices.
- 4.10 **Open consultation: Public sector apprenticeship targets**
We're seeking your views on which public bodies in England should be set targets on the number of apprentices working for them.
- 4.11 **Pioneering LinkedIn project to change the face of recruitment in Manchester**
The Minister for the Cabinet Office, Matt Hancock, saw first hand how a new scheme will change recruitment across the Northern Powerhouse.
- 4.12 **National minimum wage: final government evidence to the Low Pay Commission 2016**
Sets out the government's evidence and analysis to the Low Pay Commission on national minimum wage policy.
- 4.13 **Pledge-o-meter and Events Map live for National Apprenticeship Week 2016**
An online tool for businesses to share their apprenticeship and traineeship pledges in the run up to National Apprenticeship Week is now live.
- 4.14 **Extended Sunday trading due in the autumn**
The government is to hand local authorities the power to extend Sunday opening hours.
- 4.15 **Policy paper: Devolving Sunday trading rules: Enterprise Bill factsheet**
Outlines the measures that will be included in the Enterprise Bill.
- 4.16 **Poor basic literacy and numeracy: effect on employers**
Evidence from employers on the effect of poor basic skills in the workplace.
- 4.17 **Employers facing talent poverty as skills shortages rise 130% in four years**
New research shows that the modest economic growth of the past four years has been met by an unprecedented shortage of skills, leaving thousands of vacancies unfilled.

- 4.18 **State of the Nation report, and Social Mobility Index**
Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission published its [State of the Nation report](#), and its [Social Mobility Index](#). The Commission is an advisory non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Education, the Cabinet Office and the Department for Work and Pensions. The Social Mobility Index compares the chances that a child from a disadvantaged background will do well at school and get a good job across local authorities in England.
- 4.19 **OECD Report Building Skills for All: A Review of England**
A new [report for the OECD](#) has found that there are an estimated 9 million working age adults in England with low literacy or numeracy skills or both ('low basic skills'): more than a quarter of adults aged 16-65
- 4.20 **LGIU Briefing: Cities and Local Government Devolution Act – Briefings Roundup**
Following the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act receiving Royal Assent, signalling a significant shift in local government's powers and its relationship with the centre, the LGIU have rounded up recent briefings.
- 4.21 **Apprenticeships: Vision for 2020**
Plan for how the Government will increase the quality and quantity of apprenticeships, achieving 3 million apprenticeships by 2020.
- 4.22 **Reviewing post-16 education and training institutions: area reviews (waves 1 and 2)**
This policy statement Reviewing Post-16 Education and Training Institutions sets out the Government's approach to facilitating a restructuring of the further education sector. This will be done through a series of area based reviews of provision. The second wave includes details of the local authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) covered by the relevant review. The area reviews in wave 1 began in September to November 2015, those in wave 2 are due to begin early in 2016.
- 4.23 **State of the Nation 2015**
The third annual 'State of the nation' report from the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission.
- 4.24 **Higher and degree apprenticeships**
Provides information for young people on the opportunities, progression and benefits of doing a higher or degree apprenticeship
- 4.25 **A parent's guide to apprenticeships**
Information for parents about the benefits of apprenticeships and the opportunities they provide
- 4.26 **Further education: impact of skills and training on the unemployed**
This research estimates the economic benefits to unemployed individuals from achieving further education qualifications.
- 4.27 **Progression into higher education for disadvantaged and under-represented groups**
Study looking at factors relating to higher education progression other than prior educational attainment.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The varied range of issues covered in this report potentially present a number of challenges and opportunities across a number of the Council's current priorities. Where appropriate a more detailed analysis of the information and relevance to the council will take place.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report is for information and there are no direct implications at this time.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 There are no immediate risks directly relating to the information in the report.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 None identified.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

- 9.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

10.0 FURTHER INFORMATION

- 10.1 If members would a more detailed analysis of any of the issues mentioned in this report, or paper copy of any of the documents referred to, the should contact; Debbie Houghton Principal Policy Officer at debbie.houghton@halton.gov.uk or 0151 511 8231