

## Update on Selected Risk for Review

Risk title and description	Previous score (Feb 2016)	Direction of travel	Current score (June 2016)	Target score and date
<p><b>Skills for Work</b> If the city residents do not have the appropriate skills that employers require then they will be unable to access the jobs and opportunities available resulting in high rates of unemployment and increased demand on Council services.</p> <p>Risk owner: Tim Johnson (Keren Jones) Cabinet Member: Cllr John Reynolds</p>	15 Red		15 Red	10* Amber March 2017

### Background

- 1.1 This briefing note provides a further update on Strategic Risk 2 – Skills for Work and sets out the work that has taken place since December 2015 by the council and partners to mitigate the risk. The first update was provided in December 2015 and provided information on
- The establishment of the independent Skills and Employment Commission
  - The report and findings from the commission (link to report)
  - Progress on the development of the Skills and Employment action plan (link to action plan)
  - Priority areas for partnership action locally, sub regionally and regionally
- 1.2 This report provides detail on the activity at both city and regional level since January 2016, which is intended to improve resident skills levels and job readiness, support economic growth and reduce demand on public services. This includes a mix of existing activity and new activity which is currently being developed in response to the recommendations of the Skills and Employment Commission and is part of the delivery of the Skills and Employment action plan.

### Skills and Employment action plan

- 2.1 The Skills and Employment action plan has been developed with partners following the report from the Skills and Employment Commission.

The following are the key city programmes for 2016/17 (see appendix 1 for full action plan). Performance on these programmes will be monitored by Employment and Skills Board with regular updates and reports also going to the Economic Growth Board.

- **Programme 1, the City Work Place:** aims to improve the support given to businesses to help them recruit, grow and retain skilled local people, resulting in more jobs and more successful enterprise.
- **Programme 2, the City Work Box:** aims to create a virtual system that makes it easier for local people to obtain information, advice and guidance, resulting in more local people accessing local employment and progressing in the workplace.
- **Programme 3, the Learning City:** initially aims to create a dynamic learning environment across the city centre, with strong connections into local communities. This is the first step in putting learning at the heart of our city's overall development.

### Local city development and delivery

- 3.1 It should be noted that there is a considerable amount of development and capacity building work going on alongside *business as usual* for skills, employment and enterprise. This year we are setting up new ways of working which are much more partnership focused and which will lead to a clearer better coordinated local skills and employment system.

### Wolverhampton Workbox

- 4.1 Work has started on the development of the Wolverhampton Workbox. The Workbox will be a fully functioning, interactive website which will act as an infrastructure to provide local people, businesses and providers direct access to information, advice on training, employment and job opportunities. The website will act as a single front door to tailored, customised skills support, and improved access to jobs.
- 4.2 Partner and resident consultation on the design of the site is on-going and presentations have been made to the Economic Growth Board and the Skills and Employment Board and useful feedback was received and is being used to shape the further development.
- 4.3 The launch is planned for later in 2016 and the new site expects to achieve approximately 35,000 hits with at least 60% of those being new users in its first year of operation (based on the Telford Job Box best practice model). Additionally the website will have user functionality enabling self-assessments and tracking of progress, therefore increases in the numbers of return users and those creating accounts will be a key indicator of success.
- 4.4 Businesses will be able to post job vacancies on the website and work has begun to identify early adopters who will sign up to post their vacancies. It is expected that as the website develops momentum more businesses will sign up to the workbox.
- 4.5 The work box alongside the local job brokerage aims to support 600 new people into employment within the first year of operation.

- 4.6 Behind the site we will be building a new people Client Relationship Management (CRM) system which will allow us over time to track and target skills and employment activity and events and to monitor the effectiveness of local service provision.

### Scaling up on local recruitment

- 5.1 The Skills for Growth Team have achieved considerable success at enabling businesses to recruit locally. This kind of work focuses mainly on entry level, low skill vacancies but can be a very successful tool for addressing unemployment as well as a successful way of encouraging local and incoming businesses to recruit locally.
- 5.2 The table below shows that between January 2016 and May 2016 the Skills for Growth team enabled 187 residents to access jobs in local businesses.

Employers supported	No of Jobs	Outcome	Number of Wolverhampton Residents into work
Airspace	78	72% Wolves residents (56/78 staff appointed to date)	56
Sunbeam	67	100% roles Wolves residents	67
Slater's Ales	15	14/15 roles wolves residents	14
Ovivo	20	On-going linked with Uni and College for project manager roles	On-going
Kaspa's	15	25 roles- 100% wolves into work	25
Blooms	5	On-going apprenticeships and roles	1 to date but on-going
15 Care companies	90	On going	To be tracked
The Island House	30	Will fully open Sept 2016	On-going
Plastic Bottle Factory	30	Over 25 local residents into work	25
<b>Total</b>			<b>187</b>

### Improving capacity

- 6.1 Work is on-going to improve local job brokerage capacity and effectiveness in order to increase the number of local residents benefitting from the jobs growth in the city. A new partnership is being established between the council, Jobcentre Plus and local training partners to target much greater numbers into employment through a more coordinated

approach with partners and employers. This initiative will capitalize on the increase in new jobs to the city and provide additional capacity to respond.

- 6.2 The Skills for Growth team will engage with employers across Wolverhampton's 3 growth corridors (Northern, Central and Southern). Employer engagement will provide clear directions for the content and quality of training to be provided. This will be designed and delivered by local training partners. Referrals to the jobs will come from a wide range of local partners including JCP, Wolverhampton Learning Platform (7 Voluntary sector providers) Jobs and training opportunities will be advertised on the Workbox site
- 6.3 In 14/15 the council's Economic Inclusion team supported 87 residents into employment. Our targets for 16/17 using the new model of job brokerage is to achieve a minimum of 600 residents into employment through the new brokerage. The brokerage is going live in September 2016 and we will launch more formally in the spring of 2017 when it is fully operational.
- 6.4 Once established we would expect this brokerage resource provided by the council to be moving approximately 600 people into employment each year. These will be mainly unemployed or low skilled residents who need additional support and training.

### **Growing higher level skills through Apprenticeships**

- 7.1 Apprenticeships are going through significant national policy and funding changes. This is making access for businesses even more difficult and poses a risk to the city. Take up in Wolverhampton is already low and there is a need for an improved focus on the relevance of the curriculum and the quality of the offer.
- 7.2 The team have worked with partners to establish a City Apprenticeships partnership. The group will include the University, the college, Black Country Apprenticeships group, Connexions and Talent match.
- 7.3 This group has been agreed by the Skills and Employment Board and will do the following over 2016/17
  - Deliver joined up marketing and events to promote apprenticeships to employers, residents, young people, parents, schools, careers advisers etc.
  - Improve coordination of delivery – work together to simplify and coordinate the offer to business across the city
  - Simplify the offer for all age groups (using the Workbox) and improve access through better traineeships and pre-apprenticeships provision
  - Access funding and opportunities – work together and position ourselves to maximise funding and development opportunities.
  - Higher Apprenticeships - Expand the higher apprenticeships offer and develop pathways between levels for target sectors
  - Supply skills for growth - enable and support jobs and growth in the three development corridors and wider functional economic area
  - Capitalise on the apprenticeships levy Understand how we collectively might capitalise on the apprenticeships levy to benefit local business and people and develop the LA scheme as an example of good practice

- 7.4 We hope this work will mitigate against the risk of reduced employer engagement in apprenticeships, secure existing levels of delivery and over time, improve take up, relevance and quality.

### **Business intelligence and labour market information**

- 8.1 Our Business Engagement programme is intelligence led, focusing on market and local growth trends and innovation which will inform and shape recruitment and training initiatives. By building a positive relationship with businesses the team is able to identify current employment and training needs, as well as gaining an understanding of growth opportunities.
- 8.2 In practical terms the team captures information on current job vacancies and employment needs of employers whilst also gaining an understanding of the future skills needs of the wider economy that will enable early and constructive dialogue with partners and providers.

### **Sub regional and regional working**

#### **Black Country**

- 9.1 City economic development staff are working actively at local, sub regional and regional level. This kind of multiple level working is essential to ensure that the city's priorities and needs are reflected in sub regional and regional policy and programme development and resource allocation.
- 9.2 The Black Country skills and employment officer group has been recently re-established. This group will work to ensure that there is a coherent skills and employment offer developed across the Black Country. It will seek to maximize funding and development opportunities in response to Black Country LEP priorities and present a coherent position Black Country position within the Combined Authority.

#### **West Midlands Combined Authority**

- 10.1 The creation of the West Midlands Combined Authority and the prospect of future devolution of skills and employment funding present a real opportunity for the city. Economic Developments officers are representing Wolverhampton at Combined Authority level on skills and employment issues.
- 10.2 We have officer level representation on the Skills and Employment Working group (Angela McKeever, Head of Skills); the Health and Work group (Sue Lindup – Economic Inclusion manager) and on the Skills devolution group (Sue Knottenbelt – head of Adult Learning). Officers are working collaboratively across the region to ensure that Wolverhampton's needs and priorities are reflected in programmes and resourcing.
- 10.3 An internal council coordination group has also been established to help the council support and monitor its involvement across a range of West Midlands Combined Authority programmes and working groups. These include Skills and Productivity; Land; Health and Well-being; etc

## Major programmes

### Impact – ESF Youth Employment Initiative

- 11.1 Wolverhampton will benefit from a major European Social Fund (ESF) and Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) funded skills and employment support programme targeting vulnerable young people. The aim of the project is to support the sustainable integration into the labour market of young people (aged 16-29), not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- 11.2 Black Country Partners include Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (the accountable body), Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council and Wolverhampton Voluntary Sector Council (as accountable body for Big Lottery funded Talent Match).
- 11.3 The funding package is £51m comprising £17m ESF, £17m YEI, with £17m match funding from partners which includes £8m Lottery (Talent Match).
- 11.4 This will be done by supporting them into the “Journey to Employment” so that those furthest from the job market can gain the skills that will bring them closer to the job market. Funding will be available for training or activities needed for them to move forward – anything from 1 day to 6 months and several different things if needed. Programme delivery will run until July 2018. 10 new Key Workers have now been recruited for Wolverhampton – based in a range of agencies including Wolverhampton Homes, Early Intervention, Youth Offending and Looked After Children Teams, Jobcentre Plus and Connexions.
- 3342 young Wolverhampton residents will be engaged with this programme
  - 1237 receiving customised support
  - 920 supported into employment, education and training.

### The Assurance Framework

12.1 Assurances on the effective management of this strategic risk include:

- Regular updates to the Strategic Executive Board
- Review by the Wolverhampton Skills Commission 2014/15
- Scrutiny review of Employability and Skills in Wolverhampton 2014/15
- Various employment and qualification performance indicators
- Regular updates to the Wolverhampton Skills and Employment Board