

Education Skills and Employability Board

15 June 2021

Careers / Labour Market Intelligence

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| Is the paper exempt from the press and public? | No |
| Purpose of this report: | Discussion |
| Is this a Key Decision? | No |
| Has it been included on the Forward Plan? | No not a key decision |

Director Approving Submission of the Report:

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Report Author(s):

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Executive Summary:

This paper provides members with an update on activity relating to careers provision within South Yorkshire. It provides information on steps we are taking to merge two Careers and Enterprise Company funded hubs into a single Sheffield City Region (SCR) Combined Authority (CA) hub. This paper also presents for consideration some proposals for future development and enhancement of the Mayoral Combined Authority's (MCA's) approach into all-age careers service within South Yorkshire and the governance needed to support it.

What does this mean for businesses, people and places in South Yorkshire?

Businesses in South Yorkshire will have access to a talent pipeline of people looking for employment that can help ensure employers survive, adapt and thrive.

Businesses will have access to clearer communications and governance arrangements relating to careers activity in South Yorkshire.

People in South Yorkshire will be more informed on the local labour market, raising aspirations, and skills they need to either; progress in work, secure employment and or access further / higher education.

At **place** there will be an infrastructure for careers in communities across South Yorkshire that helps to reduce unemployment and drive economic improvement.

Recommendations:

That the board:

1. Note continued investment by the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) in South Yorkshire and the potential to use the opportunities of further CEC funding for 21/22, and also the move to a single Hub to renew and strengthen our focus on careers activity.
2. Note the continuation of the Opportunity Area in Doncaster and that the START platform provides a first step towards an all-age careers service.
3. Approve the recommendation to carry out scoping with partners.
4. Approve a proposal for the MCA to establish a Careers Operational Group to co-ordinate activity with partners across South Yorkshire.
5. Approve a proposal to apply for CEC Incubation Funding for a project with pupils and parents / carers.
6. Approve the recommendation to host a South Yorkshire Skills and Apprenticeship fair.
7. Note the Authority's work to develop relevant accessible Labour Market Intelligence (LMI).
8. Consider whether filling the gaps in Careers Education Information and Guidance (CEIAG) is a skills priority should further funding become available within the MCA.

Consideration by any other Board, Committee, Assurance or Advisory Panel

None

09 April 2021

1. Background

As part of its commitments to improve the supply of skills across South Yorkshire, the Authority made a commitment in its Strategic Economic Plan to design and deliver an all-age careers service. As a starting point for that work, this paper sets out some of the building blocks that are already in place in terms of careers provision and what we are doing to improve effectiveness.

Careers and Enterprise Company Hub

- 1.1 The Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) was established by government in 2015 to help link schools and colleges in England to employers, to increase young people's exposure to the world of work.
- 1.2 Since 2015, the CEC have been working, alongside LEPs, to build a network of enterprise advisors who are senior business volunteers that help schools and colleges to develop bespoke career plans based on the needs of their young people, whilst also helping them to make connections with employers, training providers and further / higher educational institutes.
- 1.3 The SCR Mayoral Combined Authority is funded by the CEC to deliver the enterprise adviser network throughout Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield. This is delivered in partnership with each of the local authorities through 8 co-funded Enterprise Co-ordinator posts.

- 1.4 Doncaster has also received funding from DfE through its Opportunity Area (OA) status and this has funded a careers hub for the borough. This has provided Doncaster with capacity to help local children and young people get the best start in life, no matter what their background, including raising aspirations, broadening horizons and working with employers to improve young people's access to the right advice and experiences.
- 1.5 CEC allocated funding for a South Yorkshire (SY) careers hub in 2020 and we are now working to bring the two hubs together to create a more joined up and coherent offer across South Yorkshire. This includes bringing together the work of the 'enterprise coordinators' across the four local authority areas.
- 1.6 Currently the Career Hub is working with 88 mainstream, SEND schools and FE colleges across the four South Yorkshire local authority areas. Performance of the Hub is measured through progress against the [Gatsby Benchmarks](#) (Appendix A). Unsurprisingly in the pandemic, progress on providing young people with experience in the workplace (benchmark 6) has slowed. We are also falling behind on ensuring each one of our schools has a stable careers programme in place (benchmark 1). The Hub will be putting in place a plan to improve performance and we will be backing that up with additional requirements in the Authority's funding agreement.

Opportunity Area

- 1.7 As a condition of the fourth and recently announced fifth year of Opportunity Area funding for the programme, DfE explicitly asked that all OAs develop plans to work with other areas in similar demographic circumstances and to share good practice with them. Twinning funds have been ringfenced by the OA for this activity.
- 1.8 A key strand of the activity that has supported the Careers Hub in Doncaster has been the development of an online careers service, 'Start Doncaster' developed and delivered by U-Explore. This is the enhancement of an existing platform but tailored with content relevant to Doncaster, including:
 - Doncaster labour market information
 - Details of key employers in Doncaster
 - Interviews with Doncaster apprentices and learners.

Doncaster MBC has partnered with the Opportunity Area to expand the original U-Explore proposition for an online platform focused on young people so that it will now include content that will be targeted at supporting adults into work and further learning. This project has been identified for Twinning funds and the four South Yorkshire local authorities have agreed to contribute to the cost of the service so that it can be enhanced and made available to residents across South Yorkshire. Further information on the twinning work of Doncaster Opportunity Area programme is detailed in Appendix B.

Labour Market Information (LMI)

- 1.9 Good quality, accessible Labour Market Information (LMI) is key to successful careers advice and the impact of the pandemic illustrates how important the currency of LMI is. Feedback from careers leaders in schools suggests that they do not have access to up to date Labour Market Information and struggle to understand how to interpret it. The Authority has access to regular updates and we are seeking ways to understand the formats needed to effectively present the data to various audiences and support careers advisers so that it can be embedded into careers programmes. In addition to schools delivering LMI as part of their careers guidance services, other stakeholders also need to be considered for example: HEPP (Higher Education Progression Partnership), DWP (Department for Work and Pensions), Local Authorities and Chambers of Commerce.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Whilst there is an abundance of enthusiasm from stakeholders and delivery partners on careers, we risk losing some of the impact because action is unfocused and uncoordinated. If we are to improve the performance and impact of careers advice we need to secure better strategic alignment with the MCA's priorities and greater co-ordination to help us close gaps and avoid duplication.
- 2.2 There is a need for an effective monitoring system to be in place that will track careers activity across South Yorkshire and improve the impact of CEC work against the Combined Authority's ambitions as set out within the authority's Strategic Economic Plan and the Recovery Action Plan.
- 2.3 Whilst the roll out of an online careers website for all residents is a welcome development, we need to acknowledge that this is a tool to aid careers and personal guidance discussions between practitioners and residents of South Yorkshire and not a standalone service. Many residents, particularly those who have been employed and are looking for help to support a career-change, will need personalised support to consider upskilling / reskilling needs as part of a package of careers advice. Some elements of that service are in train, such as the proposed Skills Swap advisers supported through DWP's Flexible Support Funding which the Combined Authority is applying for currently. However, the offer is unlikely to be enough to reach those residents who most need help and support but who are least likely to know how to access what they need from the current system.
- 2.4 The Combined Authority's levers are limited in this sphere; beyond making better use of CEC funding through the Careers Hub, there is no identified funding for developing an all age careers service. Our key levers for change are our ability to coordinate and influence other partners. Board members will want to be aware that local authorities are collaborating to support development of the regional START online platform. Board members are invited to consider whether developing a case to secure funding to close the gaps in our careers offer should be a priority for any future MCA funding that becomes available for skills and employment.

3. Recommended Proposals and Options

- 3.1 As detailed in the Authority's Strategic Economic Plan, 'we will deliver an all-age careers service that meets the needs of our people and industry and enable our people to access training, upskill or reskill and progress in work'. In order to do this we need better strategic alignment with the MCA's priorities and better co-ordination across partners.

We recommend that Board members support the Authority by approving establishment of an Operational Careers Group that would provide oversight and co-ordination in working with partners across the region. The group would be set up and led by MCA officials and would report through them to the ESE Board for decisions.

Do members support this?

- 3.2 It is recommended that members support the authority to undertake a scoping exercise, alongside the Career Hubs that will engage key stakeholders to help understand the breadth of Careers related groups and activity in South Yorkshire and to also understand what an all-age careers service could / should look like. The scoping exercise will include understanding challenges faced in local communities and workplaces specifically around work progression and in work poverty. It will provide the authority with the information needed to inform programme development.

Do members support this?

It is intended that the scoping exercise, in addition to providing an overview of careers activity, will also provide the opportunity for analysis to understand gaps in provision which will help to shape and drive new projects.

- 3.3 The CEC has also invited MCAs and LEPs to submit proposals to run one of a series of developmental projects supported with Incubation Funding. Working with key partners, including Sheffield Hallam University and the Higher Education Progression Partnership, we are developing a proposal focused on improving the reach of careers advice to pupils through their parents and carers. The proposal so far has had positive feedback from CEC. If successful, it would result in £100k funding to be spent in 2021/22.

Do members support further work on this application?

- 3.4 The authority has received an indicative funding offer from CEC for the 21/22 academic year but final figures have yet to be confirmed. We expect that the number of schools eligible to sign up to the Careers Hub will increase from 88 to 112 and so funding for the South Yorkshire Hub will increase in line with that expansion.

We expect a formal grant offer by the middle of June. The new grant contract from CEC will provide the authority with an opportunity to improve, develop and implement more robust measures to track outcomes at place against the ambitions set out in the Strategic Economic Plan and the Recovery Action Plan. 2020/21 financial spend against the CEC grant contract value is depicted in Appendix C.

Members to note that as there will be no ESE board until September 2021, the grant paper will be submitted to the MCA Board for approval.

- 3.5 The Careers Hub would like to make a recommendation to host a South Yorkshire Skills and Apprenticeship fair in the Autumn term of academic year 21/22, as supported by the Skills Advisory Network Group.

This would provide an opportunity for young people to develop their networks, whilst raising awareness and aspirations. It would allow businesses, and skills providers the opportunity to showcase the wealth of opportunities on offer across the region. Schools would be supported in achieving the targeted benchmarks by engaging their pupils with the network of organisations.

The Careers Hub's central hub fund would be used to fund this event with clear branding that is aligned to the Hub's offer for schools.

This would allow the profile of the Hub to be raised, demonstrating alignment to the MCA's vision of an all-age careers service set out within the SEP, providing opportunities to not just engage with schools but to a much wider audience.

Do members support this?

- 3.6 It is recommended that members support the authority to explore how the MCA's range of different LMI data, which is shared with local authorities and other colleagues can dovetail into the U-Explore online platform as well as provide user-friendly formats to be disseminated elsewhere.

Do members support this?

3.7 **Option 1**

Recommend that members support the proposals outlined in this paper to commence the MCA's work of an all-age careers service.

3.8 **Option 2**

Do nothing and leave the region to carry on delivering careers services as is.

3.9 **Option 2 Risks and Mitigations**

The MCA do not deliver on their ambition of delivering an all age careers service.

3.10 **Recommended Option**

Option 1

4. Consultation on Proposal

- 4.1 Stakeholders already engaged on the proposals set out within this paper include Career Hub leads, internal authority colleagues, and Doncaster's Opportunity Area lead.

- 4.2 Further consultation will be inclusive, ensuring engagement with SY Local Authorities, Chambers of Commerce, businesses, residents, CEIAG providers, Enterprise Coordinators, further/ higher education establishments and other key stakeholders identified upon analysis.

Stakeholder engagement will consist mainly of semi-structured interviews, focus groups and workshops.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 Resource is ready to be deployed once a board decision has been made. Initial scoping exercises undertaken will start to shape the timetable and accountability for this piece of work.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications and Advice

- 6.1 No funding currently exists for any additional costs incurred in the development of the Careers Hub. Further external funding or identification of internal budget will need to be identified for any additional costs identified.

7. Legal Implications and Advice

- 7.1 The Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield Combined Authority (Functions and Amendment) Order 2020 provides the MCA with specific functions and powers relating to education, skills and training. The MCA also has economic development powers. These functions/powers taken together will facilitate the MCA's proposals contained in this report.

8. Human Resources Implications and Advice

- 8.1 From 2021/22, the CEC will be funding a single Careers Hub in South Yorkshire, with the current Doncaster's Careers Hub becoming part of that wider team. In order to help the Hub join up effectively we would like the current Doncaster lead role to move from Doncaster Council into the MCA from September 2022. Our current expectation is that funding to cover the cost of this role will continue to be drawn down from CEC funds.

9. Equality and Diversity Implications and Advice

- 9.1 Will be positive for young people; a full EIA will be undertaken at a later stage.
- 9.2 Careers advice is critically important to young people in opening up their understanding of the world of work and helping them make good personal choices about their next steps into learning or work. The interventions described in this paper are designed to help schools meet the Gatsby benchmarks, acknowledged as the standard for good careers provision in schools. The measures will help reach young people in some of the most disadvantaged areas and so will support people from disadvantaged groups to move into work or further learning and progress.

10. Climate Change Implications and Advice

- 10.1 Not at this stage. To be developed once recommendations are developed.

11. Information and Communication Technology Implications and Advice

- 11.1 Not at this stage. To be developed once recommendations are developed.

12. Communications and Marketing Implications and Advice.

12.1 No immediate implications, but communications and marketing activity will be developed with partners as the service is aligned.

List of Appendices Included

- A Gatsby Benchmarks
- B Doncaster Opportunity Area Programme
- C Financial summary, CEC Contract

Background Papers

None