

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE JOBS AND SKILLS PORTFOLIO TO THE ECONOMY, SKILLS AND TRANSPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 16TH MARCH 2017

COUNCILLOR BRETT O'REILLY, CABINET MEMBER FOR JOBS AND SKILLS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This report summarises the achievements of the Jobs and Skills portfolio over the last year. It focuses on the actions contributing to the delivery of the strategic priorities reported to this Committee on 20th October 2016.

1.2. I will be happy to expand on aspects of this report at the meeting of the Committee on 16th March.

1.3. This report provides an update on activities undertaken during the period 2016/17 and the Council's priority - Jobs and Skills and my portfolio priorities of:

- **Closing the 'Jobs Gap'**
- **Closing the 'Skills Gap'**
- **Supporting inclusive growth, where no place, and no citizen is left behind**

1.4. Closing the jobs and skills gaps in Birmingham is vital to our economic performance – improving the quality of life for everyone that lives and works here, contributing to the vision of a great city to grow-up and succeed in.

1.5 **Achievements**

- Unemployment in Birmingham is at its lowest level since 2004.
- Number of Young People aged 18-24 years in Employment has risen again, as it has done since 2012
- Number of Young People aged 18-24 years in Education has risen again, as it has done since 2012
- Success with NEETs - Proportion of Young People aged 16-19 years, who are who are Not in Education, Employment or Training is now below Liverpool and Manchester
- There has been a big reduction in percentage of Looked after Children in Years 12 and 13, who are not in education, employment or training.

1.6 **Challenges**

- Unemployment in Birmingham remains unacceptably high
- There remains a concentration of unemployment in areas like East Birmingham
- Lack of recognised skills remains a major barrier to employment.

- 1.7 This annual report includes essential progress being made by the West Midlands Combined Authority in the field of employment and skills policy, specifically in the areas of:
- Devolution of the Adult Skills Budget
 - Co-design of the Work & Health Programme
 - Innovative Pilot for the hardest to help into employment.
- 1.8 Work has been accelerated in these areas to meet timescales associated with government department decision-making and commissioning timetables.
- 1.9 Close partnership working between local authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships, and providers of employment and skills activity is crucial to the success of the Combined Authority. Officers from the City Council have been providing their expertise to the development of employment support activity, based on local experiences of delivering many employment support programmes.

2. WORKING WITH THE WMCA

2.1. The West Midlands Combined Authority's (WMCA) Strategic Economic Plan identifies eight priority actions for Birmingham and the region, one of which is: "**Skills for growth and employment for all:** ensuring the skills needs of businesses are met and everybody can benefit from economic growth." The WMCA Employment & Skills Strategy, derived from that of the GBSLEP; is focusing on the needs and perspective of an individual whether they are in education, in work or out of work

- **Ignite** – targeting those in education and training to raise aspirations and ensure that the right advice and support is in place for young people to achieve their ambitions
- **Accelerate** – targeting those in work, to make skills and career progression – including to higher level vocational skills – the norm and support productivity increase
- **Re-Tune** – targeting unemployed people and those whose skills don't match labour market demand.

2.2. In December 2016, the Committee heard about the ongoing work to establish the **National College for High Speed Rail** (due to open in September), and the local HS2 Growth Strategy, both of which embody the key strategic principles set out above. Members were asked to note and champion the need, and vehicles being put in place, to offer Birmingham citizens the best possible opportunity to nurture and develop the necessary skills to meet the demand from employers required to build, run and maintain HS2 and furthermore; take advantage of access to employment sites and jobs from improved connectivity and complimentary regeneration plans at Curzon and Washwood Heath. The Council's Employment and Skills service is acting as the lead sponsor and accountable body for the (capital build) College. Some

285 school and college students have visited the site. Six university research projects have taken been supported and Wilmott Dixon have employed 9 people to date, as part of a range of social value commitments. Over 45% of project related spend is within a 10-mile radius of the site.

2.3. **The WMCA Productivity and Skills Commission** will use an evidence-based approach to identify the nature and scope of skills that we need to develop across the region to drive productivity and specify how we can close the skills gap at an accelerated pace. The Commission will:

- Take a **whole system** approach, recognising and harnessing the role of local communities, businesses and public services
- Identify the **key determinants of achievement** for local people in relation to education, employment and skills
- **Examine the current delivery and decision making** infrastructure to test the extent to which it supports the pace of change required
- Explore the extent to which increases in productivity achieved through greater automation and a shift in the **local industrial structure will affect demand for skills**, in terms of type and volume and outline the estimated timeframe for change.

2.4. The **WMCA Combined Authority's Devolution Agreement** outlines two specific areas of devolution relating to employment and skills: An Adult Skills Budget; and Employment Support for the hardest to help.

2.5. The Adult Skills Budget, now known as the **Adult Education Budget (AEB)** combines all Skills Funding Agency participation and support funding (not including European Social Fund, Advanced Learner Loans and Apprenticeships). Its principal purpose is to engage adults and provide the skills and learning that they need to equip them for work, an apprenticeship or further learning. It also enables more tailored programmes of learning to be made available, which do not need to include a qualification, to help those furthest from learning or the workplace.

2.6. **AEB funds a number of statutory entitlements.** Responsibility for ensuring that statutory entitlements continue to be delivered is likely to be transferred to the Mayor. AEB funds activity in Further Education (FE) Colleges, Local Authority Adult & Community Learning services and, at a much smaller scale, through private training providers.

2.7 The WMCA is co-ordinating and working collaboratively with FE Colleges and Local Authority Adult & Community Learning services to analyse current provision and **develop a commissioning framework in preparation for**

full devolution of funding in 2018. They are also working closely with the Department for Education on the practicalities involved in devolving the funding to the region estimated to be approximately £100m.

- 2.8 The other key area of devolution involves **Employment Support for the hardest to help.** The WMCA Devolution Agreement states that the Combined Authority will work with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to co-design future employment support, from April, for the hardest-to-help claimants, many of whom are currently referred to the Work Programme and Work Choice.
- 2.9 The DWP will not be directly replacing the Work Programme or Work Choice contracts. Instead they will be commissioning a new programme called the **Work & Health Programme.** The Work & Health Programme is a much smaller programme than the Work Programme and is aimed at claimants with health conditions or disabilities and those unemployed for over two years. Those with a health issue or disability may volunteer for the programme at any time, but must be able to demonstrate that they require support over and above that which can be provided by Jobcentre Plus and that they will be able to secure employment within a reasonable period of time.
- 2.11 The Work & Health programme will cover all areas of England and Wales. The WMCA will have an enhanced role in the **co-design, procurement, and contract and performance management** of the programme. The contract package area that the WMCA will sit within will cover the entire the DWP's Central England area, although there will be a specific schedule relating to the WMCA. The programme is due to go live in Autumn 2017.
- 2.12 The Devolution Agreement also provides the Combined Authority with the opportunity to develop a business case for an **innovative pilot to support those who are hardest to help into employment.** The business case should set out the evidence to support the proposed pilot, cost and benefits and robust evaluation plans, to enable the proposal to be considered for funding at a later date, subject to Ministerial approval. Data sets are currently being gathered and analysed to identify which areas across the WMCA area would benefit most from the Innovative Pilot. The Programme is being designed on the basis of a 'saturation' model (Jobs Plus) designed to support those on low incomes, as well as, unemployed individuals and builds on local networks, positive social capital and community hubs.
- 2.13 Successful delivery will require locally tailored and delivered approaches, working in partnership with those who understand the needs of

Birmingham’s local communities. The Committee will receive reports in the next year to capture progress being made in conjunction with the WMCA.

Those in Employment are better qualified than those who are Workless

No qualifications lead to poor employability	In work = 8% Not in work = 27%
Higher qualifications provide much better prospects of sustained employment	NVQ3+ In work = 62% Not in work = 35%
Low skills lead to high unemployment	Birmingham rate - 6.2% Core City average - 3.9%
Birmingham citizens are not taking advantage of the jobs in the city	Employed residents in higher occupations - 42% Workers in higher occupations - 47%
Birmingham residents earn less per week than those who work in the city	Birmingham residents - £488 City workers - £539

3. EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

3.1 **Step Forward** has been initiated by this administration in a direct response to closing the Skills Gap agenda, recognising that many low skilled workers are in employment. Aligned to the WMCA and LEP strategies, Cabinet approved the Step Forward initiative in February, following a seal of approval from the GBSLEP Skills Board. Step Forward will launch on March 23rd to target those in work, to make skills and career progression – including to higher level vocational skills – the norm and to support productivity increase. The impact of Step Forward will be tracked by the re-established **Birmingham Employment and Skills Board**, which is due to hold its meeting with its new board members in mid-March and will meet at least 6 times per year, to help transform Birmingham into a ‘Skills City’.

3.2 A key tool for implementing Step Forward will be the implementation of the new **Apprenticeship Levy** effective from 1st April. Apprenticeships are for all-ages and the levy will provide enhancements to individuals living in disadvantaged areas. It will fund high level skills attainment and Degree Apprentices for some sectors. The Levy will give employers added incentives to recruit young people aged 16-18 years. 100% of training costs will be paid to employers with fewer than 50 employees. In Birmingham, this accounts for 95.9% of its businesses base (38,200 business units). Employers will also be encouraged to employ 19-24 year olds with an Education and Health Care Plan.

3.3 The City Council is a levy payer and the strategy for the **Birmingham Apprenticeships Programme** should ensure that the work of Council’s

Employment and Skills service is aligned and dovetails into creating pre-apprenticeship pathways to available opportunities - delivering our Corporate Parenting responsibilities and maximising opportunities for disadvantaged communities and vulnerable groups. Apprenticeships will help Birmingham tackle its youth unemployment priorities and help deliver an annual stretch target of 14,000 apprenticeships starts, per year. Performance figures and data are being analysed for the period 2015/16, allowing for the verification of data.

- 3.4 Good engagement has been achieved in Erdington, Northfield, Hodge Hill and Yardley Districts, where local partnerships have used local plans in creating the momentum to tackle, and prioritise, issues within their distinctive Districts and neighbourhoods. Erdington Works is leading the charge with major employers in their area to develop a multi-faceted '**Ladders of Opportunity**' initiative, following a successful business breakfast and jobs fair held at JLR's Castle Bromwich plant, in September last year. Some **2,435** 18-24 year olds have been supported through the locally- focused (East and West Birmingham) **Destination Work** project, resulting in a range of positive outputs, including 855 sustained job starts.
- 3.5 The Council's **Devolved Youth Fund** has engaged 908 young people, through **18 local projects in Districts**. Rapid Response included an element for small scale interventions under £10,000, linked to District Jobs and Skills Plans. To date, **163** young people have secured employment, and the project is due to be completed by the end of March 2017. Delivered by the Careers and Youth Offending Services, the Birmingham Youth Promise Mentoring Support's impact on youngsters Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs), 12 months on reported:
- The October 2016 figure for 16 to 18-year-old young people in care/care leavers who are NEET is **13%**. This represented a **10%** improvement on the same time last year (source: Virtual School)
 - The performance KPI of engaging young offenders into EET increased from around 62% to above **70%**. This represented an improvement of some **8%** compared to the same time the previous year (source: Birmingham YOS)
 - YPMS has contributed to both the overall city-wide and local ward reductions in numbers of NEET young people. The 2015/16 Department for Education (DfE) count was the best figure Birmingham has ever achieved (source: BCC – CCIS database).
- 3.6 The **Birmingham Jobs Fund** is part way through its fourth operational year. The Fund has directly supported 4,083 16-24 year olds secure jobs and apprenticeships. The programme is expected to achieve its target of 1,000 job entries this year with 669 achieved by early February and a further 50 applications awaiting approvals and processing at the time of compiling this report. Analysis of total performance and take-up by **District** ranks Hodge Hill (608) in first place followed by Erdington (551), Ladywood

(487) and Northfield (415). Washwood Heath (186) ranks as the top performing **ward** for job starts, followed by Sparkbrook (173), Tyburn (172) and Kingstanding (171).

- 3.7 In 2017/18 the Birmingham Jobs Fund will form part of the European-funded **Youth Promise Plus Project** providing an integrated package of targeted support to engage 16,610 NEET young people aged 16-29 years. It will place 7,558 into positive destinations – employment, self-employment, fulltime education, training or apprenticeships. Some 3,910 young people have already been engaged on the project, which is being delivered by a collaborative partnership working with a range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations. Signatories to the **Business Charter for Social Responsibility** are being engaged to support and supply opportunities for work experience, apprenticeships and jobs linked to young people on Youth Promise Plus. Due to complete in July 2018, the project is operating against a backdrop of tight DWP and EU guidelines, which is limiting programme entry for many young people. Representation is being made at the highest levels locally, regionally and nationally, with an intention to escalate matters further, to ensure the total investment for the sub-region can be effectively deployed.
- 3.8 The Council is leading the GBSLEP's **Construction sector skills** effort, through a joint investment plan with the Construction Industry Training Board. To date, the programme has supported 168 job entries in the construction sector and worked with 36 construction SMEs to support the acquisition of industry-led higher level skills in leadership and management. 56 people gained their first job within the construction sector as apprentices. South and City College Birmingham were commissioned by the Council and Kier Construction to support 8 care leavers and ex-offenders with sector-based employability skills. 50% of the group have been offered employment and relinquished their NEET status and welfare dependency, as a result. Employers delivering the Repairs and Maintenance, Gas and Capital Investment Contract have joined the rank of businesses working with the Council to capture jobs and skills opportunities.
- 3.9 **Cog** is connecting (children in education) and young people NEET, to work experience, traineeships, apprenticeships, jobs and employers, through its online digital platform. The platform enables access to, and connectivity with, the Birmingham Youth Promise. The Employability Skills Award for careers advisers and teachers in schools is available to schools free of charge, through this process. Active promotion of Cog is now required to accelerate the progress against milestones drawing on marketing and communications expertise.

4. POST 16 EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING

- 4.1 Birmingham Apprenticeships** - The challenge for councils and other public sector bodies is to ensure that current apprenticeship frameworks are suitable for 21st century public servant roles. This needs to be addressed through the Apprenticeship levy. There is an opportunity to develop standards and training, which specifically respond inclusively to the needs of Birmingham's economy and promote long term sustainability of local Apprenticeships.
- 4.2 The City Council alone will create over 300 Apprenticeships in a variety of roles, through a new **Apprenticeship Strategy**. This will involve innovative use of the Apprenticeship Levy to create new Apprenticeship opportunities and also guaranteed pre-apprenticeship training for Care Leavers. Some of these opportunities will be conversions from existing posts, while others will be newly created. Officers are exploring how these can support our work with young people, including those who have Special Education Needs & Disabilities (SEND), are Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) as well as, Children Leaving Care.
- 4.3 The 14-19 years Participation & Skills and Disabled Children's Social Care Teams arranged **work experience** for 17 SEND young people in various roles across the Council. The 10 week sessions gave the young people an opportunity to undertake specific tasks, as well as, experience of the general world of work. The impact of the project was assessed by Occupational Health, together with feedback from the young people and schools. The response was overwhelmingly positive. An Awards Ceremony was held for the young people to recognise their achievements. More opportunities are planned this year.
- 4.4 NEET Young People** - Birmingham's progress in reducing NEET and Not Known figures has recently been recognised by Ofsted. Reported NEET figures to the DfE for the City are now in line with the national average and our statistically comparative neighbours. Not Known figures are also dropping, currently constituting just over 6% of the cohort, as opposed to 11% in 2016. An officer' cross services NEET Action Group has been established to ensure this good work progresses, and continues to address the problems faced by young people, which can lead them to become NEET.
- 4.5 Post 16 Forum** - Following the Area Based Review, a Post 16 Forum has been established, chaired by a Head teacher. This forum brings together all the key partners and organisations involved in education, training and Apprenticeships post 16, with the aim of creating clearer pathways for young people; ensuring they receive appropriate and impartial advice concerning careers; and are studying in areas that will enable them to move onto employment or higher education as appropriate. The Forum has also established four sub-groups: Preparing SEND young people for

adulthood; apprenticeships; engaging parents; and promoting modern foreign languages.

5. **HELP FOR YOUNG OFFENDERS**

- 5.1 Kier Construction (recently awarded house building contracts by the Council) have been encouraged by the Council's Employment team to offer **Construction Apprenticeships** opportunities for vulnerable Young Offenders and Care Leavers Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) cohort.
- 5.2 Some 14 young people were referred to the Kier Construction Apprenticeship scheme. Of these, 8 young people completed the Pre-Apprenticeship course & Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Preparation course. Subsequently:
- Four young people have passed their CSCS test
 - Three young people are re-taking their CSCS test
 - One young person has decided after completing the Pre-Apprenticeship course that Construction is not the right pathway
- 5.3 Four young offenders have been offered Apprenticeship employment (one offer has since been withdrawn because the young person was not successfully engaging in the college course aspect of the apprenticeship). Three young people who are still to pass their CSCS test, will then be offered a work placement, hopefully leading to the offer of an apprenticeship
- 5.4 **Youth Promise Plus (YPP)** Intervention workers are now embedded in the Care Leaver Teams, Youth Offending Teams and with the Police Offender manager teams. Referral route-ways have been established, cases are being assessed and engagement has begun.
- 5.5 The next phase of recruitment for the '**Known NEET**' contract will provide an additional staff that will be embedded in the 16-18 Looked After Children teams and Think Family teams and enhance further the staffing levels in the Care Leaver Teams. The '**Risk of Offending**' Lot is currently on an interim contract of 10 Intervention workers. This will be enhanced to the full complement of 20 Intervention workers from 1st April 2017.
- 5.6 City-wide NEET Panels in the Youth Offending Service commenced in February. These have been established to explore key barriers to engagement and provide a forum to identify solutions. These Panels will provide an opportunity to develop job-matching discussions with the YPP Employer Development Workers, to source appropriate employment opportunities matched to the aspirations of this group of young people.

6. SUPPORT FOR CARE LEAVERS

- 6.1 The Care Leavers Service has recruited a dedicated **Education, Employment and Training Officer for Care Leavers**, who started on 1st March 2017. This role will coordinate all strategic and operational activity to support Care Leavers to gain employment and training opportunities, as well as, to engage both internal and external partners to generate additional opportunities on a sustainable basis.
- 6.2 Staff are delivering an **Apprenticeship Programme in Public Health**, along with Public health colleagues. Some 15 young people will be starting over the next few weeks
- 6.3 Staff have formed an operational delivery group from across the Council to champion apprenticeship and work-based placements for Children in Care and Care Leavers. This group has a focus on the **Corporate Parenting agenda** and is beginning to hold council departments to the corporate parenting pledge, to act as parents for our children in care and leavers. When we ask for a placement for one of our children the only answer is “yes”
- 6.4 An event was held in August, for young people representing the Children in Care to showcase what the Council, as a willing employer, can offer, in terms of **Work Experience opportunities**. The event was attended by Members and representatives of partner organisations. As a result, we are hopeful that the number of Children in Care undertaking work experience will increase.
- 6.5 Much work is being done internally to work more closely with groups who support young people in Care to ensure they are having sight of and an opportunity to apply. **Cog** is now being used as a major source of information for opportunities, both within the Council and with other organisations.

7. YOUTH SERVICES

- 7.1 The Birmingham Youth Service has committed on average 50% of its youth worker time to delivering against the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) outcomes. Youth workers have been tasked with engaging with the ‘hardest to reach’ young people. This is a cohort of young people who are identified by the Careers Service because, after numerous attempts, they are not engaging in the opportunities available.
- 7.2 Youth Workers, through YEI, now have time to find, engage and begin to support the young people, who have multiple challenges and complex issues that are preventing them from moving into employment, education or training. Without this intensive support, there are potentially serious long term consequences for the individual and on-going costs for the Council and more generally public services.

7.3 An example of this intensive support is the help given to an 18 year old girl, who was extremely withdrawn, isolated from other young people, with low education achievement and would barely say a word. When we first met her, her mother did all the taking for her. Over several weeks of meeting on a weekly basis, which started with meetings her house and then gradually taking her out for walks, she began to communicate much more. After a period of time, she visited a Youth Centre to engage in an arts project, with a very small number of other young people. This was a real breakthrough, as she started to engage with members of staff and with the young people. We have also been working in different surroundings to increase her self-esteem and tackle some of her issues. Examples of this include: running anxiety workshops, attending job seeker meetings with her, helping her make telephone calls and also accompanying her for a mental health assessment. Following an intensive period of 6 months, she is now in education and we are continuing to provide support for her, but without creating dependency.

8. CAREERS SERVICE

8.1 As part of Birmingham's Youth Promise there are a number of careers initiatives identified via the Jobs and Skills agenda for young people. These are in addition to the existing core responsibility to deliver an impartial Careers Information Advice and Guidance service to young people Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET). Details of the extra activities are as follows:

8.2 Delivery of quality assurance and audit support for schools, in relation to quality of Careers Education Information and Guidance (CEIAG) - **£80k**

- The purpose behind this was to gain a picture of progress schools were making in meeting their statutory responsibilities to secure impartial careers information advice and guidance. To scope broader CEIAG provision in schools-identify good practice/areas for development/common concerns and barriers and to see how the Council could support schools to improve
- This has led to 83 schools (90% of Birmingham schools) becoming engaged in the process in one format or another - including Maintained schools, Academies, Independent, Grammar, Special schools and Free schools. All the schools are engaged on an interested and voluntary basis. Two of the schools are Solihull Schools to whom Birmingham Careers Service deliver a costed service. The Careers Service is also working with Birmingham Virtual School to see how the audit can be used within their unique structure.
- The audit of CEIAG has been well received. The Schools have welcomed the opportunity to have a dialogue with the Council and to have someone who can offer professional, free, face to face advice and support. Those Schools involved to date are keen to benchmark against the statutory requirements and see its value for Ofsted Plus preparation for undertaking a Quality in Careers award.

8.3 Commissioning and procurement of Intensive Mentoring support for three cohorts of NEET young people - **£50k** (plus £190k per annum to commission provision)

- Youth Promise Mentoring Support (YPMS) was developed in response to the City Council's commitment to provide specialist education, employment and training mentoring that will support vulnerable young people who are NEET, to engage and progress into and sustain education, employment or training.
- The sum of £190k was allocated to fund identified providers to deliver against the Youth Promise Intensive Mentoring work. Provision of Intensive Mentoring is therefore available for cohorts of young people from the 'Looked After', 'Youth Offending' and 'Additional Behavioural Needs' cohorts. This will be an integral part of the delivery of the Youth Employment Initiative.
- During the first year of YPMS, a total of 460 young people have been referred by the linked services to YPMS providers. So far, 327 of the most vulnerable young people have received additional support that would not be available to them without YPMS. This number exceeds the anticipated target by 73%.
- The October 2016 figure for 16 to 18-year-old young people In Care or Care Leavers who are NEET is 13%. This represents a 10% improvement on the same time last year (source: Virtual School)
- The performance KPI of Engaging Young Offenders into Education, Employment or Training has increased from around 62% to above 70%. This represents an improvement of some 8% compared to the same time last year (source: Birmingham YOS)
- YPMS has contributed to both the overall city wide and local ward reductions in numbers of NEET young people. The 2015/16 DfE count was the best figure Birmingham has ever achieved (source: BCC – CCIS database).

8.4 Tracking of defined 'Not Known' cohort of Young People, aged 16-19, once all other avenues have been exhausted - **£80k**

- There has been a reduction in the 'Not Known' figure for 16-19 year olds from 17.3%, as at 31st January 2015 (at the start of the 3 years) down to approx. 6.2%, as of 31st January 2017. (Changes to the reporting requirements has slightly changed in this cohort.)
- The Tracking has also contributed to the lowest NEET figure the Authority has reported on (5.2% for 2015/16) which compared very favourably to all other Core Cities.
- The figure for 2016/17 is still to be finalised, but for 16-19-year-old NEET it will be approx. 4.3%. Although reporting for Councils has now

changed, in line with the DfE guidance and looks at 16-18 year olds - currently this stands at around 3% (again currently awaiting ratification by the DfE).

8.5 Supporting identified Vulnerable Group clients within the NEET cohort, (including Learning Difficulty or Disability, older NEETs and Youth Offenders) - **£50k.**

- The above funding has led to Birmingham Careers Service supporting delivery of Special Educational Needs Assessment and Review (SENAR) in relation to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) conversions being a success
- Management and coordination of above delivery
- Management and coordination of careers guidance work and closer relationships with looked youth offending service
- Management of external contracts, service level agreements, partnership agreements with schools, umbrella sexual health contract plus the related YEI / YPP activity that has developed throughout the year.

8.6 All of the above activities will cease at the end of March 2017, due to the ending of the Youth Promise funding and associated resources that it funds.

9. ADULT EDUCATION

9.1 Headline data from the **2015/16 Academic Year** shows that for the 24,677 learners enrolled the overall achievement rate was 93%. On academic programmes where formal qualifications are taken there were 8,866 learners and an achievement rate of 85%, which is 1% above the average for similar providers. The achievement rate for 16 –18 year olds was 83%, which is 9% above the average for similar providers. Young learners made up 1% of the overall provision with 318 learners.

9.2 Of the 24,677 learners 73% were female, 17% declared a disability (against a Birmingham average of 7%), 21% were Asian Pakistani, 32% White-British, 6% Bangladeshi and 7% Black African.

9.3 Adult Education served residents in the following Districts; of the 24,677 people in learning 9% were from Edgbaston, 7% from Erdington, 18% from Hall Green, 14% from Hodge Hill, 12% from Ladywood, 7% from Northfield, 5% from Perry Barr, 8% from Selly Oak, 3% from Sutton and 9% from Yardley.

9.4 There were 4,418 responses to a survey that recorded actual destinations for learners. Of these 7% gained part-time or full-time employment, 5% took up voluntary work, 10% progressed to further study and 10% started to look for work.

- 9.5 Progress and changes for the **2016/17 Academic Year** include the opening of two new centres: Erdington Adult Education Centre and Brasshouse Languages at the Library of Birmingham. Enrolment numbers would suggest a healthy start for both centres. Overall enrolments show a good start to the year with a committed intention to grow provision in key priority areas; both geographic and demographic.
- 9.6 To support our work to remove barriers to citizens reaching their potential, we have engaged new subcontractors to deliver **Careers, Information, Advice and Guidance**, combined with a health screening tool aimed at bringing people distant from the labour market, with mental health and other well-being issues, into learning. The same providers are also offering engagement learning activities, as a first step into learning. The success of these subcontracts will be measured by the number of people going on to more formal learning opportunities with Adult Education or other providers.
- 9.7 For 16 – 18-year-old NEETs we have entered a subcontract arrangement with Premier Training College (a subsidiary of Thought of Others, who run Springhill School). They will deliver up to 20 full study programmes in **Children’s and Young People’s Workforce** (CYPW) qualifications for learners who want to develop a career as a childminder, youth worker, or nursery nurse.
- 9.8 Adult Education continue to work with the Youth Service and the Library Service to offered more integrated opportunities, such as, a project with the Youth Service to engage young NEET learners.

10. BUSINESS & ENTERPRISE SUPPORT

- 10.1 The £33m ERDF funded **Business Growth Programme** has been available since July 2016 and is designed to support business growth and related job creation. This is based on previously successful City Council business support activity. The Programme provides grant aid to eligible Small & Medium-size Enterprises (SMEs) to support their growth plans and stimulate the creation of new jobs. The Business Growth Programme involves working across three Local Enterprise Partnership areas: Greater Birmingham & Solihull, Stoke & Staffordshire and The Marches and offers grant aid to match SME investment across a range of growth-related projects.
- 10.2 Performance over 6 months:
- 168 applications
 - 98 applications approved
 - £2.5m of grant funding awarded
 - £4.9m of private sector investment generating
 - Creating 319 new jobs

- 79 of applications approved are within the GBSLEP area.

10.3 The £4m **Supplier Excellence Programme** is the new industry-led programme, which seeks to grow skill levels within existing SME supply chain companies across priority growth sectors, significantly transforming business expertise, capability and capacity embedding tools to improve workforce performance and business competitiveness. It will offer funding of £1k to a maximum of £18k towards accredited and bespoke training.

10.4 The training will be provided by accredited, experienced and industry approved providers selected by the SMEs. It can be delivered over 1 day or up to 12 months depending on the course duration, level and mode of delivery. It will be aimed at upskilling, increasing staff retention, enabling future workforce progression and grow the skills of 1,500 individual beneficiaries. The Programme will run from 1st April 2017 and run to 31st December 2019.

10.5 In September 2016 Birmingham was declared the winner of the coveted '**Most Enterprising Place in Britain award**'. The **Enterprising Britain Awards** are part of the national drive to increase entrepreneurial activity in the UK. The judging panel were looking for evidence of originality, Impact on the local or wider economy, Improvement of local stakeholder relations and Transferability.

10.6 Birmingham City Councils £93m **Business Support Package** excelled in all these categories by delivering a market-led portfolio of business enterprise activities across six West Midland Local Enterprise Partnership areas. The Programme successfully improved entrepreneurial confidence, encouraged investment, attracted and retained entrepreneurs and created new job opportunities. So far this has resulted in:

- 1,000 business enterprises helped to grow
- 4,300 jobs created and safeguarded
- private sector investment of £87m generated
- Gross Value Added increase of £500m.

10.7 This prestigious award reflects entrepreneurial flair, excellence, leadership across the region and partnership working at its best. As winners, we will be able to use the title of '**Most Enterprising Place in Britain**' on any official marketing and publicity materials for a 12-month period.

11. COUNCIL APPRENTICESHIPS & WORK EXPERIENCE

11.1 The Council has a track record of providing in-house work experience opportunities for young people (aged 14-25) and the unemployed (aged 18-25). To build on this, we have been developing a career pathway model which will/does give opportunity for many students to enter paid employment.

- 11.2 We have been steadily growing interest in the use of **Apprentices within the Council** over the last 12 months. Historically 'new start' numbers have not exceeded 30 in any given year, but 2015/2016 has seen this number increase to 52 'new starts' (41 external appointments; 11 existing staff).
- 11.3 To accommodate the Apprenticeship Levy, which comes into force from 1st April 2017, we are developing a new Apprenticeship Strategy. This will enable us to meet the Public Sector target of 2.3% (circa 390 apprentice new starts) and, as far as practical, to ensure we get best value from our Levy contribution, which will be over £2m.
- 11.4 **Council Trainees** - The Council has engaged with South & City College, to work with young people who have repeatedly struggled to secure an apprenticeship, or those who were facing barriers such as physical or mental disabilities. In October 2016, nine candidates were recruited, one of whom withdrew. The remaining eight completed a 10 week programme, which offered three days practical experience in the workplace and one day a week in College focusing on attaining their Functional Skills, where necessary, plus developing employability skills. HR staff worked closely with operational managers, to provide support. They also worked with the young people to provide practical guidance with CV writing; completing application form and how to structure / develop interview techniques for success.
- 11.5 Of the eight trainees: two have gained employment externally; two have secured an apprenticeship with the Council; one is awaiting interview with the Council; one has applications submitted with the council and external organisation; one is waiting for an apprenticeship role to be advertised in the next few weeks; and the final trainee is being supported to secure an apprenticeship with the NHS.
- 11.6 **Council Interns** - Interns are being used more widely across the council to help support service areas by undertaking short projects to help with implementation of new ideas and initiatives. During 2015/16 we have supported 19 undergraduates/graduates in gaining valuable personal development.
- 11.7 **Work Experience for Students** - The Work experience programme is growing organically depending upon business needs and opportunities. The Council continues to support local students from all Birmingham schools, colleges and universities with quality work experience opportunities across a number of our Service Areas. During 2015/16, some 163 pupils and students were supported.
- 11.8 **Work Experience for SEND Students** - A pilot scheme has been launched to provide students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities between the ages of 14 – 25 with an opportunity to undertake a work placement. These Placements were designed with young people in mind and were provided mainly over a ten week period – one day per week. A total of 17

students were placed in a variety of roles across our service areas from April 2016.

11.9 A celebration event was held in the Banqueting Suite on 20th July 2016, attended by the student, their parents or carers, school representative, hosting managers and the steering group. I had the opportunity to provide certificates and give special acknowledgement to the achievements of the young people.

11.10 **Work Experience for the Unemployed** - As a Council, we have pledged to provide 200 work experience placements for the long-term unemployed in association with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in the year ending 31 March 2016. This is a 100% improvement target over the number of placements completed during the inaugural year ending 31st March 2015.

12. CONCLUSIONS

12.1 Much has been achieved against the priorities that I identified and the targets that I set at the beginning of the year. There has been good progress in comparison to the Core Cities, particularly in relation to the way we have supported young people not in employment, education or training. However, we cannot be complacent. Much still needs to be done to address the jobs and skills gaps in Birmingham in an inclusive way, not least in tailoring government programmes to fit local needs. There also remains the problem of how we fund these vital services in the future.

12.2 I would like to thank the Members of the Economy, Skills and Transport Overview & Scrutiny Committee for their support and guidance during this difficult year. I would also like to thank the staff of the City Council, particularly in the Economy and Place Directorates, for their continuing commitment. In these exceptionally uncertain times they have ensured the delivery of the achievements of the Jobs and Skills portfolio, for the benefit of the people of Birmingham.

Councillor Brett O'Reilly
Cabinet Member for Jobs and Skills

March 2017