



London Borough of Enfield

Title of Report:	Employment and Skills, funding and addressing skills gaps.
Report to:	Regeneration & Economic Development Scrutiny Panel Scrutiny Panel
Date of Report briefing:	March 26 th 2024
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Chinelo Anyanwu, Member for Public Spaces, Culture and Local Economy
Directors:	Brett Leahy, Director of Planning and Growth
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Ward(s) affected:	All

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide background on the Council's existing skills and employment offer, clarify how skills and employment provision is funded and explain how it is utilised to address sectoral skills gaps.

Background

2. In October 2021, the Council received a match-funded grant from London Councils to deliver a European Social Fund project designed to tackle economic inactivity through employment and training interventions.
3. The project delivery team has been bannered as the STEPs programme, which is the Councils flagship employment and skills offer. The European Social Fund was used to develop this offer between January 2022 – December 2023. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) has allowed the STEPs offer to continue beyond December 2023, with the UKSPF grant running until the end of March 2025.

4. Since receiving the UKSPF grant, the Council has developed a skills and employment offer through its Inclusive Growth and Skills Service. This expanded offer has been developed solely through grant awards.
5. The key objectives of the skills and employment team are:
 - To conduct a needs assessment of local employers to address skills gaps in priority sectors.
 - To develop an offer which provides support to priority cohorts in the borough.
 - To actively support residents furthest from the labour market into identifying and sustaining employment.
 - To signpost residents to local, regional, and national provision.
 - To set, monitor and report on section 106 employment and training obligations, and to leverage these obligations to support residents into employment.
6. To achieve these aims, the service must:
 - Develop an in-house local offer to strategically tie in with the Council Plan, forthcoming Inclusive Growth and Skills Strategy and other priority areas such as welfare advice, business support, inward investment, section 106 and planning gains, education, public health, and adult social care.
 - Identify and access external funding opportunities that benefit the borough.
 - Engage with key regional and national stakeholders such as the GLA, London Councils, local employers, local colleges, Local London, DWP, DHSC, DLUHC and the voluntary and community sector.
 - Work with other local provision to ensure the impact of skills and employment investment is properly demonstrated.
 - Undertake continuous improvement to ensure the service reaches a level of best-in-class.
 - Work closely with internal services including post-16 provision, the Learning Disability Service and Mental Health Commissioners to ensure support is joined-up across the Council.
 - Support the development of an Inclusive Growth and Skills Board to formalise partnership working, promote the service and develop cross-service capacity building.

Local Offer

7. There are a number of services across the Council which provide skills and employment interventions, and other services which are commissioned by the Council to deliver targeted support. The services are listed below:
 - **STEPS:** STEPs are the Council's borough brokerage team funded by UK Shared Prosperity Fund, offering frontline support to residents suffering from long-term unemployment or economic inactivity. Residents are offered free 1-2-1 support, information, advice, and guidance and coached through an employment and training pathway.

- **Section 106:** The team is responsible for setting, monitoring, and reporting on section 106 employment and training obligations.
- **Thrive into Work:** Thrive into Work is a £3.5million investment in health and work combined support commissioned by Enfield and Haringey. Thrive into Work supports residents of Enfield that are 16+ and suffer from a primary care need.
- **North Central London Health and Social Care Academy:** HSC Academy is a GLA-funded programme designed to support unemployed residents in Enfield, Haringey, Barnet, Camden and Islington into accessing employment opportunities in the health and social care sectors.
- **Skills Bootcamp:** Enfield has delivered two skills bootcamps following a £150k grant from the GLA to support unemployed Enfield residents into accessing entry level roles in the construction sector.
- **Let's Talk Employment:** Let's Talk Employment is a service commissioned by the Integrated Care Board to offer employment and training guidance through the Talking Therapies service operated out of Enfield Chase Hospital.

Successes to date

8. 542 residents enrolled onto the STEPs programme between September 2022 and December 2023. Over 40 job outcomes and 100 education/training outcomes secured through STEPs interventions
9. 54 residents have been upskilled through the GLA-funded skills bootcamp, co-designed with local employers to address their skills gaps
10. 86 residents are currently enrolled onto the Health and Social Care Academy, with 5 recently moving into roles with local care providers and North Middlesex Hospital
11. Over 400 job-seekers attended a recruitment event in October 2023 held in the heart of Edmonton Green, with large employers in attendance including NHS, London Fire Brigade, Amazon and Tesco
12. The forthcoming follow-up recruitment event has reached capacity with registrations, with all 800 tickets reserved within two and with two weeks to spare, and will offer opportunities to residents across a range of sectors including construction, film/tv sector, distribution, logistics, health and care.
13. The STEPs team has over-performed on the first month of reporting for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund contract, by enrolling more participants with STEPs and other wraparound keyworker services than the forecasted delivery.
14. The performance of the Health and Social Care Academy and the Construction Skills Bootcamps are green shoots of a new service that are beginning to have a real impact on addressing skills gaps in key sectors

for the local economy. Working with public sector anchor institutions is especially important as they provide sustainable, well-paid employment and move residents off often unsustainable zero-hour contracts.

15. The STEPs Team are not exclusively bringing opportunities to residents, they are addressing wider economic inactivity and the health of the workforce by identifying hard-to-reach groups and signposting them to keyworker services and health related employment support.

Future workstreams on addressing skills gaps

16. The Inclusive Growth and Skills Service is tapping into sub-regional provision to address gaps in the health and care sector through the Health and Social Care Academy, the care providers forum and engagement with Barnet and Southgate College. However, there is scope to evolve this in a local health and social care academy, focussed on addressing skills gaps in Enfield's health and care sectors.
17. The Inclusive Growth and Skills Service is in the process of developing a construction sector forum to better utilise the Meridian Water Skills Academy. This forum will bring together the College of Northeast London, employment and training providers and employers with section 106 obligations to develop a core curriculum offer that will match the phasing of major developments in Enfield. The first construction sector forum intends to meet before the end of May 2024.
18. The Creative Industries Hub based in Waltham Forest is supporting the creative sector across the sub-region of Waltham Forest, Enfield and Haringey and a similar workstream is taking place in Barnet. The film/tv cluster in Brent Cross, Hertfordshire and the Upper Lee Valley is an opportunity for the borough to support residents into opportunities in this sector. Enfield is already a partner of the Creative Industries Hub, which is to be extended beyond its initial run until March 2024. There is an opportunity to expand the reach of the hub and to focus more clearly on the film/tv sector.
19. The Inclusive Growth and Skills Service will submit a bid for Wave 5 of the GLA-funded Skills Bootcamps, there is an opportunity to offer a green skills bootcamp in partnership with the Capital Projects Team in Housing and Regeneration to support with heat pump installation and retrofitting of the housing stock, although this is at the concept stage.
20. The Council has an opportunity to form an apprenticeship levy transfer scheme to support SMEs in addressing their own skills gaps by offering surplus levy to businesses in Enfield to upskill existing staff.

Relevance to Council Plans and Strategies

21. **An economy that works for everyone:** UKSPF funding will equip the borough to work alongside a range of local employers to offer opportunities to unemployed residents and shift them into economic activity.

22. **Thriving children and young people:** the decrease in age to allow 16-year-olds and above to enrol on the programme will allow young people to access the free employment and training support that they could not access under the European Structural Investment Fund.

Conclusion

23. The Inclusive Growth and Skills Service has developed a local offer for residents and has begun utilising funding to address priority sector skills gaps. Our successes are many, but the service now needs to focus on the delivery of strategic forums and Council policies to identify new avenues into funding and supporting sectors considered key to the economic growth of the borough.

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