

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Date of meeting:	08 September 2021
Title of Report:	Skills4Plymouth and Kickstart Scheme
Lead Member:	Councillor David Downie (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills, Children and Young People)
Lead Strategic Director:	Alison Botham (Director for Childrens Services)
Author:	Tina Brinkworth
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Your Reference:	AB.MZ.TB.08092021.1
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

Purpose of Report

To provide a Skills update to the Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- Skills 4 Plymouth
- Skills Launchpad Plymouth
- Kickstart Scheme
- NEETs (Young people not in education, employment or training)

Recommendations and Reasons

For the Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive the report for information and consideration.

Alternative options considered and rejected

Not applicable - report is for information only

Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Plymouth Plan

Policy HEA2: Delivering the best outcomes for children, young people and families.

Policy GRO2: Delivering skills and talent development

Corporate Plan: A Growing City

Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

There are no implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan arising from this advisory report.

Financial Risks:

There are a high number of people furloughed and unemployed in the city. The DWP funding is for two years for the provision of a co-ordinator post. There is a high volume of need with over 10K people visiting the site already. However, there are targets to meet to help 1,000 people into employment, training or volunteering opportunities. Application for more funding to bridge gap or ease pressure has been applied for and would increase capacity through use of DWP work coaches and a IAG position in OCSW. Awaiting outcome of additional bid.

Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

No direct carbon/environmental issues identified

Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.

Appendices

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Background papers:

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Sign off:

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Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Ming Zhang											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 25/08/2021											
Cabinet Member approval: Cllr Downie approved by email.											
Date approved: 20/08/2021											

Skills4Plymouth

Plymouth is home to a thriving and established advanced manufacturing, marine, and defence industry, and to a young and fast-growing digital and creative sector. It is a place with enormous potential in its distinctive natural and cultural assets, its businesses, and its people. The city has seen significant regeneration and the benefits are beginning to show, and will enable our businesses and our people to thrive in a changing, data-driven economy that ensures that economic benefits are felt by everyone and supports the city's carbon neutrality (by 2030).

With a population of 263,100, a real economic output of £5.23 billion and 104,000 FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) jobs, Plymouth is the most significant urban agglomeration on the South West peninsula. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a damaging impact on the city's labour market, exacerbating long-standing issues of youth and long-term unemployment.

Skills 4 Plymouth is an ambitious five year plan that has been co-designed with local employers and businesses, skills providers and wider stakeholders. Designed to make sure people have the right skills now and in the future to get a job and progress in work, and employers have people with the right skills they need for recovery and growth.

- People have the right skills they need now and in the future to get a job
- Employers and individuals invest in skills and lifelong learning
- Employers have people with the right skills they need for recovery and growth

The short-term skills recovery actions have been developed and delivered under the Resurgam programme, established during the Covid-19 pandemic to enable the city to recover and build back better. The medium to long-term skills actions align to the Plymouth Strategic Plan and aligns to Bright Futures and education plans.

Skills 4 Plymouth's key aim is to close the skills gaps and skills shortages that have been holding Plymouth back economically. As a city, we do not have enough engineers, technicians, construction workers, health, social care, hospitality, tourism or retail professionals, to meet the demand of our local businesses. Employers report recruiting difficulties in these areas as a key constraint and redressing this is critical to improving productivity, competitiveness and growth.

We also recognise that social enterprises are a vital partner in our city's economy, they address social needs, strengthen communities and create a fairer, more inclusive economy.

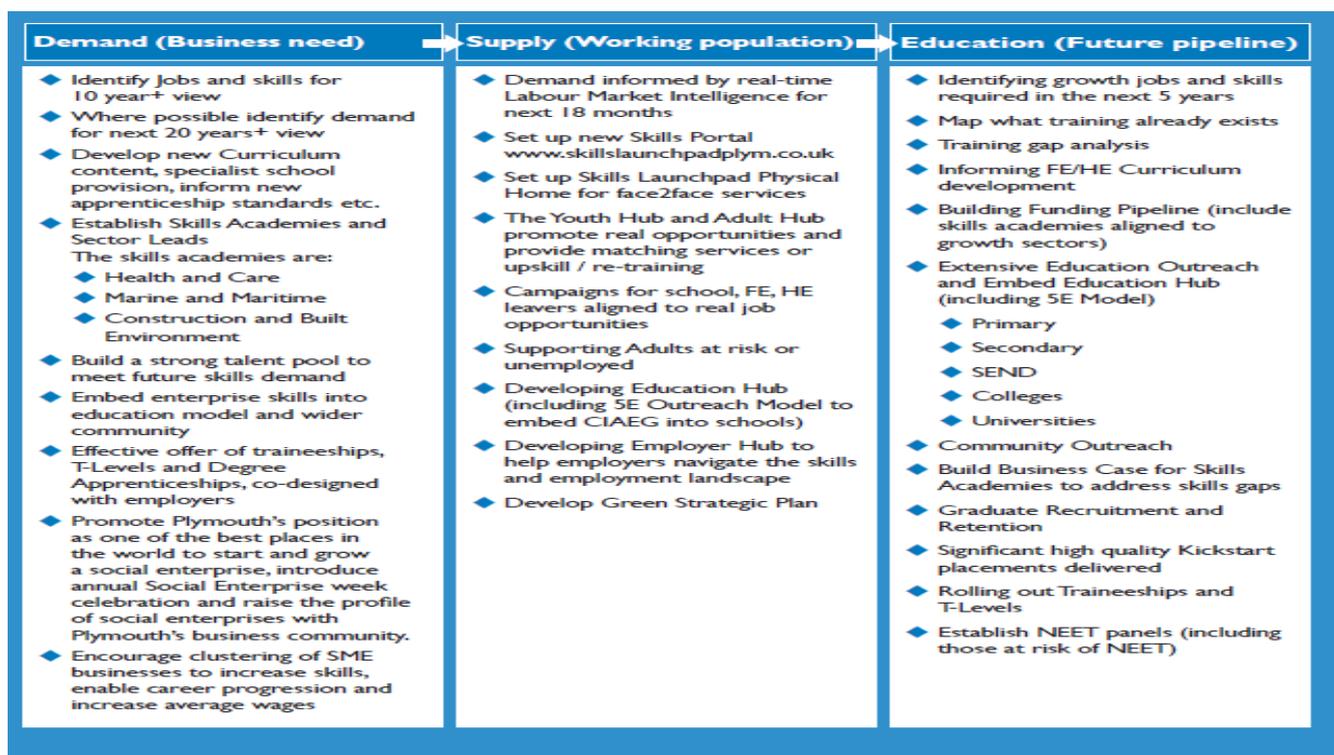
Skills 4 Plymouth is demand led and demand informed by real time labour market intelligence. By putting our employers at the heart of defining local skills needs and developing responsive Post 16 skills provision, we will ensure that the provision of technical education and training aligns to what employers want and need.

Skills Vision: An outstanding skills system, which drives high aspirations and attainment, and meets the needs of employers and individuals across all ages and across all communities.

A responsive skills system that meets the demands of employers, increases the number of highly skilled jobs and improves educational performance:

- Where residents and workers access skills, jobs and support (on their doorstep) to thrive in Plymouth

- That works for all groups of people, across all communities, where every individual can access the training or learning they need to enter into and progress in a productive job that they value, supporting inclusive growth and prosperity
- Where employers can secure growth and increased productivity through access to a more diverse and better skilled workforce
- Where Educators and providers become more responsive through access to information about the labour market and local needs to improve the quality and relevance of the education and training they offer and inspire all stages of education
- Which is a simplified, responsive city-wide skills system and shares best practice and innovation
- Which provides a clear plan and measures outcomes and progress
- Which attracts a fair share of skills funding investment



Skills Launchpad

Launched in August 2020, Skills Launchpad Plymouth is the city's one-stop-shop for skills, training, education, careers and jobs www.skillslaunchpadplym.co.uk

Working in collaboration with local stakeholders and partners including alignment with DWP, Skills Launchpad Plymouth provides an ethical door to help local people in and around the city to access independent information, advice and guidance. We are supporting those who are facing redundancy, on furlough leave or considering career changes through the [Adult Hub](#), and offering targeted support for our young people including those with additional needs through the [Youth Hub](#). We are helping people in and around Plymouth a chance to be better informed, to gain the skills they need through re-training, up-skilling, access to impartial careers advice and to become work ready in order to help them into meaningful employment, minimising the risk of them becoming NEET or unemployed.

Further developments planned for Skills Launchpad Plymouth will enable local employers to better navigate the complex skills and employment landscape through the new Employer Hub and to deliver careers informed curriculum relevant resources and engagement with children and young people through the new Education Hub.

This fully coordinated, impartial approach is the first time the city has drawn together all resources and puts both the Individual and the Employer at the heart of this innovative skills support framework.

Key headlines at August 2021:

- Skills Launchpad Plymouth has attracted over 13,000 unique users by August 2021
- Over 100 self-referrals in first three week of going live with new sign up functionality January 2021, with over 500 local people now signed up as a Member of Skills Launchpad Plymouth
- We are facilitating prioritised individual Skills Action Plans through the Youth Hub and Adult Hub to support transition into employment, education and training – utilising new delivery space supported by Barclays Bank (operating within Covid restrictions)
- Feedback and testimonials from end users and partners has been very positive
- Recognised by DWP Director General for Work and Health Services as leading innovation nationally and watching Skills Launchpad with interest
- Dedicated Youth Hub Coordinator (started February 2021), Adult Hub Coordinator (started May 2021) and 2 x Community Lead Coordinators (starting August and September 2021) each recruited for 2 year fixed period
- Recruited the first PCC Kickstarter - Skills Launchpad receptionist (full time one year placement starting August 2021)
- Physical space created through in-kind supported by Barclays Bank – soft launch April 2021 and limited delivery capacity due to Covid-19 restrictions, full launch September 2021 with expanded delivery
- Skills Launchpad Plymouth outreach events underway including Exam Results Week
- Referrals and Outcomes (both Youth Hub and Adult Hub):
 - Number of people referred for additional support = 59
 - Number of people transitioned into education, training and/ or pre-employment support = 60
 - Number of people transitioned into employment = 15
 - Number of in Care/ Care Leavers supported = 25

Kickstart Scheme

Led by DWP as part of the Government's Plan for Jobs, the Kickstart Scheme is a £2 billion fund to create thousands of high quality work placements for young people. The programme will run until December 2021, more information can be found here:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/kickstart-scheme

The £2 billion has been allocated to fund employers to create 6-month job placements for 16 to 24 year olds at risk of long-term unemployment and young people are paid 25 hours by the Government at minimum wage, numbers are unlimited numbers within budget. Employers from all industries and across the private, public and voluntary sectors have been encouraged to get involved, however these placements must not replace existing or planned vacancies, or cause existing employees or contractors to lose or reduce their employment.

Each application should include how you will help the participants to develop their skills and experience, including support:

1. To look for long-term work, including career advice and setting goals.
2. With CV and interview preparations.
3. For the participant with basic skills, such as attendance, timekeeping and teamwork.

Employers will receive funding:

- 100% of the relevant National Minimum Wage for 25 hours a week.
- Associated employer National Insurance contributions.
- Employer minimum auto-enrolment pension contributions.

On confirmation of job start, the employer will be paid £1,500 per placement to support overhead costs, this can be used for things like:

- Setup costs
- Support
- Training
- Onboarding

There will also be extra funding to support young people to build upon their experience and help them move into sustained employment after they have completed their Kickstart scheme (details are not yet available).

Key headliners:

- At 21 July 2021, 50,000 Total Kickstart placements had started nationally, 3,400 in the South-West region. Localised data not available
- We are currently in the process of recruiting the first Kickstarter into PCC working as part of the Skills Launchpad Plymouth team
- There is a monthly PCC Kickstart Task and Finish Group established in the city to help resolve local issues, share good practice and coordinate promotion
- There is monthly HoSWLEP Kickstart meeting established to share good practice

NEETS

Statutory duty

Local authorities have broad duties to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education or training.

Specifically these are:

1. To secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people in their area who are over compulsory school age but under 19 or aged 19 to 25 and for whom an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is maintained.
2. To make available to all young people aged 13-19 and to those between 20 and 25 with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), support that will encourage, enable or assist them to participate in education or training under Section 68 of ESA 2008.

Current position

In June 2021 there were 234 young people age 16 to 17 NEET, this represents 4.3% (significantly higher than the SW 3.2% and national average 3%) in comparison with 4.7% in the previous year. There were a further 130 (2.4%) young people with unknown status, against 2.2% at the same point in 2020. Latest available national combined NEET and Not Known figures, from June 2021, show Plymouth at 6.8% NEET/Not known with England at 4.9%, national data identifies Bristol at 7.3%, Portsmouth 5.8% and Southampton 8.4%.

Young people in vulnerable groups often face a range of additional pressures or difficulties maintaining participation in learning. Latest figures, for 16 -18 year old NEETs, identify 70 with special educational needs and disabilities, 21 in care, and 12 care leavers. Resources are specifically targeted to provide additional support for these groups of vulnerable young people.

Transition into Education, Employment and Training Contract

The work of the transitions contract, delivered by CSW Group Ltd, supports young people in vulnerable groups to secure places Post-16. It works alongside the work of school careers advisers in delivering the September Guarantee of offering places to all 16 and 17 year olds. Careers advice is further supplemented by Careers Enterprise Company activities such as school based advisers and local secondary schools have linked Enterprise Advisers from industry. The flexible approach of the transition contract in supporting multi-agency work through the contract has enabled CSW to respond to the changing needs of schools and families throughout the Covid-19 crisis including:

- Telephone welfare checks for any students that schools/tutors are concerned about
- Offering specific timed availability to those young people who are home educating so that they can speak to a dedicated advisor
- Contacting all Year 11 and Year 12 whose destination was an apprenticeship to check on their plans, see whether their offer has been confirmed, whether advice on alternative provision is required

To support this we have set up Plymouth's new NEET Taskforce to work alongside CSW Group, taking a coherent joined-up approach to reduce the number of NEETs in the city, fully aligning efforts with the Skills Launchpad Plymouth Youth Hub delivery and inclusive growth agenda. The Taskforce is underpinned by five now established NEET Panels that meet regularly to discuss cases via a multiagency forum to help transition young people into education, employment or training focused on:

- Care Leavers

- Young Carers
- Young Parents
- Those with SEND
- Young Offenders