

- Present:** Councillor Bob Bushell (*in the Chair*)
- Councillors:** Kathleen Brothwell, Sue Burke, Thomas Dyer, Jane Loffhagen, Helena Mair, Lucinda Preston, Tony Speakman and Naomi Tweddle
- Also in Attendance:** Farhan Ahmed, Richard Locke-Wheaton, Metcalfe and Mark Taylor
- Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Chris Burke and Councillor Gill Clayton-Hewson

20. Confirmation of Minutes - 7 November 2017

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2018 be confirmed.

21. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

22. Introduction from the Chair

The Chair welcomed the following external representatives to the meeting:

- Graham Metcalfe – DWP
- Richard Locke-Wheaton – Linkage Community Trust
- Mark Taylor – Lincoln College
- Farhan Ahmed – Lincoln University

23. Introduction from Jay Wilkinson - Labour Market and Key Case Studies

Jay Wilkinson, Strategic Development Project Manager delivered a presentation on Inclusive Growth and covered the following topics:-

- The outcome of the data about the Labour Market in Lincoln.
- Key case studies across the country in regards to Inclusive Growth.
 - In light of the Bristol City Fund case study, an opportunity was discussed to convene partners to identify synergies in investment priorities in the city.
 - In light of the Newcastle Skills House case study, an opportunity to explore the businesses case of The Network and its target age groups was discussed.

Question: Was there a big gap between the lowest and highest salaries?

Response: Around £50,000 per annum. The quality would have been poor if everyone was involved which was why it measured by average.

Question: With regards to the Nottingham Transport Case Study, what did they do specifically to improve it?

Response: More services at different times of the day to cater for the people working late and generally making the service more accessible, particularly the trams.

Question: With regards to economic activity, did it include people who were retired?

Response: Yes.

Question: Could the Poverty Strategy be introduced into it?

Response: Yes, there was definitely a link.

Question: How were European qualifications assessed? Was there a way of seeing what contribution European people had brought?

Response: The NVQ levels should be internationally comparable. Local authorities had been carrying out some work trying to gain an understanding of the current landscapes of European population within the county. In terms of Brexit, the implications were being investigated.

Question: Why was the average salary improving? What was the reason?

Response: It was not detailed why it was improving, it just identified that it was. It would be an interesting topic to discuss at the next meeting.

Question: why was the network age limited but ours wasn't?

Response: It had been limited from 16-24 years because there was a gap within the service provision in Lincoln. Other areas required greater focus upon more than age.

24. Intelligence from Key Businesses

Graham Metcalfe, Local Partnership Manager at the DWP (Department for Work and Pensions):-

- Explained that people who were in full time education were disqualified from claiming an out of work benefit if they were already receiving any other kind of benefit entitlement.
- Advised that the DWP offered part time courses to provide more career opportunities. They could be varied or amended to ensure that the correct information was given and received.
- Stated that in regards to accessing training, there was a customer base of 10,000. Six thousand people received support allowance and over half were on benefits.
- Highlighted that the partnership with the City of Lincoln Council had helped in terms of eligibility as a lot of services had been visited in one place. The DWP would also look for opportunities to use their facilities for interviews.
- Further advised that there had been suggestions around regeneration in the Lincoln area in regards to construction training. In the past, of the 60 students that had completed the training, 65% of them gained employment. Planning applications and Section 106 agreements would benefit local businesses. Tesco successfully filled 100 vacancies through this process.

Invited Members' questions and comments.

Question: In regards to the Section 106 agreement helping businesses gain employment, was this an idea or was it already in place?

Response: Tesco had been successful in employing people this way. If the DWP were shown the details they could look to do something similar.

Question: In regards to the Section 106, was it happening at other local authorities?

Response: If it was to take place over a wider area local residents could benefit.

Question: Were employers willing to take on ex-offenders?

Response: They were the hardest people to place. If there was a skills gap it could be possible. Employers such as Siemens were known to be sympathetic towards this.

Question: What cross boundary opportunities were there for ex-offenders?

Response: The DWP provided a pre-release service however not everyone who had been released from prison resided in Lincoln.

Question: where had the short courses taken place and had it helped?

Response: Yes, it had put people in a better position for employment.

Question: Did the Job Centre let people know about career opportunities?

Response: The Job Centre ran sessions to make people aware of what was available.

Richard Locke-Wheaton, Employment Services Team Leader at the Linkage Trust:-

- Explained that Linkage Trust was a Lincoln based charity that supported people with learning disabilities.
- Advised that as an organisation it aimed to build a personalised package through 1:1 training and try to match an employer to their needs.
- Highlighted the challenges that an individual would face when applying for a job which were:
 - Applications not being accessible online.
 - Job specifications being too wide so it was difficult to understand the skills needed.
 - Lack of confidence/ability.
 - Transport.
 - Lack of general support.

Invited Members' questions and comments.

Question: What educational work had Linkage Trust been involved in?

Response: From a student concept, an educational brief would be carried out. Tick box exercises had been stopped and it was more without building a generic skill set to help secure employment.

Question: Where did clients get referred from?

Response: Residential care or referrals from parents and the DWP.

Mark Taylor, Lincoln College:

- Explained that Lincoln College offered a range of qualifications. The majority were vocational. There were also short, long and evening courses available.
- Advised that courses were measured through achievement levels and needed to be relevant to the employer.
- Stated that the annual planning process of courses that were delivered at the College ran from November to March. It was reviewed by the success rates and popularity of the courses.
- Highlighted that the College utilised their resources over the summer period for other training needs.
- Informed that the college provided a variety of tools to identify learning difficulties as well advice and guidance.

Invited Members questions and comments.

Question: Did the College provide courses for people with childcare commitments?

Response: Online courses were an option. The College was trying to broaden the scope to allow people the option of doing an online course. The College had been liaising with nursery businesses in regards to childcare issues.

Question: Were there college courses available for European residents to improve English speaking?

Response: Not at the moment however if the individual was registered on the College system, it would be able to contact them about opportunities.

Question: Did the College do anything to alleviate transport issues?

Response: It had been involved with an organisations called Vision Drive, which supported students to access the city.

Question: Were apprenticeships welcomed?

Response: Yes. 1500 people of various ages had been taken on this year.

Question: Were the students male or female?

Response: Predominately male.

Farhan Ahmed, Lincoln University:

- Explained that the University tried to ensure that students had an input in the types of the programmes that were delivered.
- Stated that the University was keen for students to stay in Lincoln once they had graduated and had been trying to engage with them to ensure that.
- Advised that apprenticeships with the Police and the Lincoln Co-op were now in operation.
- Reported that the University were trying to engage with students in summer so they remained on campus over 12 months.
- Explained that they were looking to introduce courses for disabilities in the near future.

- Informed that the University offered students with mental health problems the opportunity to visit earlier than the rest of the students and be allocated a key worker. It ensured that they felt comfortable with the transition.
- Highlighted that work-based distance learning programmes such as On Campus RAF Training were a huge success.
- Advised that the University also offered short courses (weekend, evening and online) for people who were employed but wanted to gain further qualifications and increase their salaries.

Question: With regards to early accessibility for students before start, had it been utilised?

Response: 103 people turned up to the open day which was an exceptional turn out.

25. Summary and Discussion

Members had nothing further to raise following the presentations.

26. Community Leadership Work Programmes

Members discussed the content of the work programme.

RESOLVED that the work programme be agreed subject to the following amendments:

1. The following agenda items be removed:
 - Charity Sellers and Street Traders
 - Lincoln Prison
 - Murder Rate in Lincoln
 - Pay Rates in Lincoln
 - Street Surfaces
 - Unitary Authority

Other agenda items be amended as follows:

- Inequality to Health Inequality
- Living Wage to Transport and Inclusive Growth

27. Scrutiny Annual Report 2016/17

RESOLVED that the report be noted.