

Inclusive Growth Review – Summary of findings

1. Background

This report summarises some of the findings of Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee's review into inclusive growth. The review culminates with its fourth meeting on 03 April 2018, focusing on reviewing findings to date and agreeing recommendations to Executive.

- The first meeting took place on 07 November 2017 and included an external representative from the University of Lincoln, and an internal representative from the city council's Revenues and Benefits Service. This meeting provided background to the topic of inclusive growth, and provided information on the labour market and business sectors in Lincoln.
- The second meeting took place on 09 January 2018 and included external representatives from the Department of Works and Pensions; Lincoln College; Linkage Community Trust; and University of Lincoln. At this meeting, Members explored the 'supply side' of inclusive growth, which included challenges and opportunities relating to the labour market.
- The third meeting took place on 06 March 2018 and included external representatives from the Education Business Partnership; the Bailgate Guild; Voluntary Centre Services; and Tesco. During this review, Members considered the 'demand side' of inclusive growth, which included the challenges faced by businesses; and opportunities for people to progress once in employment.
- In addition, the Lincoln Growth Conference, held on 16 March 2018, included a workshop with businesses on the topic of inclusive growth. The key findings from this workshop are included in this report to feed into discussions on 03 April 2018.

2. Feedback from the Lincoln Growth Conference

The Lincoln Growth Conference attracted a wide range of partners and businesses in the city. It was an opportunity to showcase the pace and scale of improvements happening across Lincoln by a range of partners, including the city council. It also provided the chance to engage with businesses and other organisations on topics important to the city.

Delegates split into four workshops. One of these workshops focused on inclusive growth where a number of private sector; public sector; and voluntary sector partners attended. The workshop focused on three questions, the key findings are below;

Workshop question: What are peoples' views of Lincoln?

- Many employers are looking to recruit young people to form the workforce of tomorrow.
- Some employees find it difficult to progress in employment as they do not have the right 'on the job' experience job specifications require.
- There is a significant amount of support in the city for people to access employment, but there appears less provision for people to up-skill and re-train.
- Many people return to Lincoln when they have children, to access childcare and support from friends and families. This trend is growing.

- Raising a family can cause a potential three year career break as childcare vouchers do not start until the third year. This can cause career stagnation.
- A lot of young people are 'tech savvy' which can provide them with transferrable skills to employment, although there was a perception some young people may struggle with softer skills e.g. communication skills.

Workshop question: How will sectors change in the city in the short and long term?

- More business services are moving online.
- There will be less traditional roles in the future. As the service industry continues to grow, people will need to become increasingly customer focused. Therefore, social skills are key.
- Many work patterns are likely to move away from being 9am-5pm as the economy expands to meet increased consumer expectations.
- There will be pressure on all sectors to become more productive.
- Peoples' lifestyles are changing, and the pressure to find childcare in particular is a challenge. To attract the right employees and talent, jobs will need to become increasingly flexible.
- People can no longer expect to do the same job their whole life. The job they enter the labour market with may no longer exist by the time they reach the end of their careers. This places pressure on employees to regularly re-train and re-skill.
- Small and medium sized enterprises make up a significant proportion of businesses, and support a large number of employees. Their margins are tight, and so anything to support their long term sustainability will have a direct impact on supporting employment.

Workshop question: Where and how does the workforce need to upskill to meet this change?

- More technical skills will be needed in the future as the economy moves towards higher skilled and more technologically advanced sectors.
- There will be a greater need for programming and online marketing skills.
- STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) skills are particularly important moving forwards, and students will need to be incentivised to access these courses to generate the right skills to grow these sectors.
- Given the pace and scale of the change in job types over time, people will need to be able to continually re-train and learn new skills. This will need appropriate support infrastructure in place.
- A lot of businesses in Lincoln are small, and some may not have the skillsets required to weather different economic climates and develop their business models accordingly. Very tight margins can make investment in skills development difficult.
- Large businesses often have well-established and sustainable supply chains. Larger businesses should take the lead in establishing sustainable supply chains that small and medium sized enterprises can benefit from.

3. Findings from Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee

Throughout the review, a number of challenges and opportunities to inclusive growth have been identified. These have related to;

Supply side (e.g. people and the labour market)

- Inclusive growth can particularly benefit women, young people, and vulnerable groups.

- Skills development and access to free or affordable development opportunities is important to help people into work, but also help those already in work upskill and progress into higher quality employment.
- There is a challenge around the regularity and routes of transport services for people accessing work (e.g. staff in the night time economy); and students accessing education.
- There has been a significant drop in the number of young people engaging in work experience since it has become non-mandatory.
- The National Citizens Service programmes offer an opportunity for young people to gain skills and experience in communication; team work; and project work.

Demand side (e.g. businesses, organisations, and the economy)

- Inclusive growth is important to economic growth, as it brings more people into the economy, thereby improving productivity.
- It can help generate innovation and the creation of new business start-ups.
- There is an opportunity to explore what role planning could play in encouraging developers to promote local employment opportunities.
- Case studies from other parts of the country, such as the Bristol City Fund (and the opportunity to convene partners in Lincoln) and Bradford's Skills House (and the opportunity to review The Network) provide good models for supporting inclusive growth.
- The Education Business Partnership mentoring programme provides opportunities for businesses to engage with young people and schools to support practical skills development.
- Small and medium sized enterprises play an important role in the growing economy, but do not always possess the right business planning; marketing; and other skills needed to meet a range of challenges. These are often skills larger organisations take for granted, but small organisations may not have the resources to invest in.
- There is a need for shared learning amongst the business community in Lincoln to support the sustainability of small businesses in the future.

4. [Emerging recommendations discussed to date](#)

Throughout the review, through questioning representatives and subsequent discussions, a number of potential recommendations have been touched upon by Committee. These have been collated and included below to help aid discussion.

Supply side policies

- Work with The Network to:
 - Establish referral mechanisms with the Lincolnshire Move Partnership which together can offer resources to a broader range of Lincoln residents; and consider this in light of time limited funding for existing projects (e.g. Lincolnshire Move Partnership is funded by 2014-2020 European Social Fund programme);
 - Identify any partnership or referral opportunities with Linkage Community Trust;
 - Identify how the key sectors important to the city are targeted and engaged with;
 - Identify opportunities The Network and Lincolnshire Move Partnership may have in re-skilling and re-training employees to meet future shifts in employment.
- Continue to support the Living Wage; and promote the city council's Corporate Social Responsibility Charter when it launches in summer 2018.

- Consider the remit of the Employability Courses project to identify its flexibility to re-skill and re-train employees. If not possible, seek out funding opportunities to enable this.
- Engage with the Education Business Partnership to identify ways to promote their mentoring and National Citizens Service programmes.
- Continue to support work experience placements at the city council as a way for young people to gain practical 'hands on' experience.
- Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee workplan to consider reviews into (a) the challenges surrounding transport to work and education; and (b) the coverage and availability of advice and support to people accessing help such as Personal Independence Payments (PIP).

Demand side policies

- Convene partners in the city to identify similarities in investment priorities and explore potential opportunities to pool or coordinate resources.
- For the findings of Community Leadership Scrutiny Committee regarding the importance of inclusive growth to be considered when developing growth strategies in the future. This includes the importance of sustainable supply chains for small and medium sized enterprises.
- For future industrial strategies to consider the growing need for flexible working patterns in the development of utilities infrastructure e.g. broadband infrastructure.
- DWP and Planning Services to explore if there are any opportunities available to encourage local employment.
- Acting in our role as a community leader; explore the potential and appetite for training or advising small and medium sized businesses using the skills and knowledge already in the city council and/or partner organisations.
 - Also keep in touch with BG University regarding Loric (Lincolnshire Open Research and Innovation Centre) which aims to develop into an observatory of shared learning for the business community, and actively signpost businesses to this resource as the scheme develops overtime.
 - Promote and signpost to opportunities for employees to up-skill and re-train.