

Glasgow and Clyde Valley Cabinet

Report by Councillor Eddie McAvoy, South Lanarkshire Council

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SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT PORTFOLIO

Purpose of Report:

To ask Cabinet to progress activity in relation to the Skills and Employment Portfolio as detailed in the report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Cabinet

- (1) note the contents of the report;
- (2) agree to the scope of activity and proposed timescales for progress reporting as set out in the report; and
- (3) consider the additional resource implications.

1. Background

- 1.1 At the January meeting of the City Deal Cabinet, Leaders agreed the creation of three portfolios under the following themes:-
- Connectivity – North Lanarkshire Council
 - Enterprise – Renfrewshire Council
 - Skills and Employment – South Lanarkshire Council
- 1.2 The Cabinet approved the appointment of portfolio holders from the three Local Authorities outlined with the broad role and remit summarised as:
- Responding on behalf of the Cabinet to announcements that relate to this policy area
 - Leading conversations on behalf of the Cabinet with government and organisations that can support the development of City Deal policy
 - Representing the Cabinet at meetings of the GV Economic Leadership Board and championing the portfolio within the wider City Deal programme.
- 1.3 The Cabinet also agreed that further reports would come back to it on a work plan for each. Support is now being sought from Leaders to progress activity in relation to the Skills and Employment Portfolio as outlined below.

2. Skills and Employment Portfolio

- 2.1 Cllr McAvoy convened an exploratory meeting on 13th May 2015 with key partner agencies on the development of the Skills and Employment Portfolio within the City Deal programme. Its purpose was to consider the key issues within this theme and potential areas for joint action over the programme period. Those attending included the District Manager from DWP (Glasgow, Lanarkshire and East Dunbartonshire), the Regional Head from Skills Development Scotland, a senior Civil Servant from the Scottish Government and David Coyne from the PMO.

- 2.2 It was agreed that an overarching objective for the City Deal Skills and Employment partnership would be:

‘To ensure the overall investment in the City Deal programme delivers the maximum benefits possible in terms of employment opportunities and enhanced skills for the residents of the area, particularly those furthest from the labour market and experiencing disadvantage.’

- 2.3 It was recognised that the key partners and the eight Councils are already engaged in national and local structures around skills and employment and that any work under City Deal would need to ensure added value. The significant infrastructure investment in infrastructure projects of £1.13bn in itself will present real opportunities across the City Region.

- 2.4 The meeting agreed the following draft remit:

- To co-ordinate effective core services in support of City Deal objectives
- To identify opportunities for innovative employment and skills services linked to wider City Deal plans and investment
- To identify potential additional resources to support delivery of City Deal related services
- To engage proactively with employers to identify the potential for additional jobs
- To identify improved intelligence on the operation of the City Deal labour market
- To monitor outcomes from relevant partner investments and service delivery and to provide appropriate annual reports to the City Deal Cabinet
- To review current, and where appropriate commission new research, to improve understanding of the labour market (including the needs of employers) to influence policy and practice resulting in improved employment and skills outcomes for the area

2.5 Key considerations which may impact on the work of the group include the outcome from the Smith Commission in relation to the devolution of DWP powers and resources, the roll out of Universal Credit, the new Scottish Government's Fair Work agenda, the opportunities arising from any additional EU and SG funding, the implementation of the Developing Scotland's Young Workforce Strategy and the need to address poverty and social inclusion as a key component of the wider aim of City Deal.

Skills and Employment related policy and bodies:

UK Public Policy

Department of Work and Pensions

Public Policy for Scotland

Scottish Government

Skills Development Scotland

Scottish Funding Council

Local Stakeholders

Community Planning Partnerships

Local Employability Partnerships

Further Education Colleges

Higher Education Institutions

Training Providers

Chambers of Commerce

Federation of Small Businesses

3. Proposal to develop the Skills and Employment Portfolio

3.1 The following initial actions are proposed:

- Meeting with the Cabinet Secretary for Fair Work, Employment and Skills to seek views on Scottish Government policy innovations which would support City Deal ambitions.

- Engagement with the HE and FE sectors
- Engagement of local authority representatives from each Council to develop our approach to maximise the benefits in skills and employment from the infrastructure investment and ensuring we effectively manage our employer engagement in a co-ordinated way to maximise opportunities.
- Review the applicability of key areas of research, including the Regional Skills Assessment and Skills Investment Plans undertaken by SDS together with relevant studies undertaken for the Clyde Valley Community Planning Partnership, such as that related to Youth Employment.

3.2 It is proposed that a progress report be prepared for Cabinet in December 2015. It should be noted that additional officer support will be required to source and analyse relevant research, prepare briefings, write reports and set up meetings as required.

4. Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:-

- (1) note the contents of the report;
- (2) agree to the scope of activity and proposed timescales for progress reporting as set out in the report; and
- (3) consider the additional resource implications.