

GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 27 November 2024

Subject: Technical Education, Work and Skills Update

Report of: Councillor Eamonn O'Brien, Portfolio Lead for Technical Education, Work & Skills and Gemma Marsh, Director of Education, Work & Skills, GMCA

Purpose:

Developing an inclusive integrated technical education, skills and work system that connects residents, localities, providers, and businesses to build a strong, resilient, modern Greater Manchester economy that works for everyone is the central ambition of this portfolio area. This report and accompanying slides provide the GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee with an update on the current priority areas further enabled by the latest devolution deal for Greater Manchester.

Recommendations:

The GMCA Overview & Scrutiny Committee is requested to note the background and provide comments on the future activity.

The Committee is specifically asked to consider the following questions –

- 1. Employment Support:** From your experience locally: How can we reach and engage more people? What do you do now that you could build on? What could you do differently?
- 2. Greater Manchester Baccalaureate:** How would you like to be kept updated about your areas? Are there priorities in your locality that the Greater Manchester Baccalaureate can help with? What are the opportunities that the Greater Manchester Baccalaureate presents?

Contact Officer:

Gemma Marsh, Director – Education, Work & Skills, GMCA

1. Background

This presentation provides an overview of the current landscape in relation to technical education, work and skills with specific references to current activity, key achievements, priorities, mayoral commitments, key deliverables and the future roadmap for our children and young people.

It sets out the principles and approach across the development and design of activity and policy- recognising that there is not a one size fits all in terms of need & activity across GM.

The slides then go on to two specific focus areas:

The Greater Manchester Baccalaureate (MBacc) is the vehicle through which we will achieve an integrated technical education city-region, ensuring that technical education connects more directly to the local economy and the labour market in a place. It brings sharp focus on the young people and acknowledges the key actors in the system who can enable a simpler journey for young people. It is about maintaining a relentless and unapologetic focus on the journey our young people take, rather than focusing on 'the system'.

In terms of employment support, it starts to set out the ambition to support 150,000 residents into/closer to the labour markets over the lifetime of this Parliament. This will maximise the benefits of devolution of employment support and supporting the development of Live Well.

As GM moves into further devolution and the integrated settlement there is a real opportunity to ensure that funding is working as hard as possible and avoids duplication caused by the many programmes that GM has experienced over the past few years.

GM is building on a strong base in terms of employment and skills provision - the slides outline some key achievements over the past few years.

2. Focus on the future

Supporting 150,000 residents into/closer to good work.

Our Vision- 150,000 residents support into or closer to the labour market through an integrated employment, skills & health offer- enabling local delivery- co-designed provision- avoiding confusion- no wrong door- outcome focused- benefit blind.

Greater Manchester is ready to pioneer a new way of providing everyday support to our residents to help them manage the pressures of life, live as well as they can and find good work. This will be achieved through:

- Placing Local Government and Public Services on a more sustainable footing – The effective delivery of Live Well enabled by joining up local services where GM has devolved or local responsibility will be key to achieving a reduction in complex and costly demand, greater efficiency across public services and a reduction in pressures on local government finances.
- For example, GM Live Well will scale up and build upon the successful impact of social prescribing and local approaches which reduce demand on the health system by wrapping social and clinical support around people's needs
- Mayoral commitment to bring together the services, partners, resources, etc that tackle multiple disadvantage and complex barriers in ways that help to move residents towards and into work through a LiveWell model. GM will develop the first Work, Health & Skills Plan

- Greater Manchester backing the Government's plan to Get Britain working, targeting an increase in the employment rate from 75% to 80%. This equates to an additional 150,000 GM residents moving into work over the life of the parliament
- Reducing economic inactivity and enabling Growth through the targeting the right support at the right time and in the right place
- More people to entering, sustaining and progressing in work - and good work, not just any work - building on the principles of Working Well
- Expanding the Integrated Settlement, and taking a more responsive approach to skills, work and health in the round and breaking down siloes- supporting both inactivity but also in work progression and maintaining work as outcomes

Working Well and our adult skills offers are just one element of how residents can Live Well, but a critical element to ensure the full picture can be achieved. Sitting alongside other public services such as health, housing, financial advice, etc, and with some early steps towards implementing a different model, it has the potential to transform the resident experience in their local area.

The Greater Manchester Baccalaureate

GM has committed to developing an education, skills and work system that not only supports productivity and inclusive economic growth, but which prepares every young person for the future and builds their hopes and aspirations.

In May 2023, it published proposals for a new approach to how this could be achieved in a discussion paper, [Towards an Integrated Technical Education, Skills and Work City-Region: Starting the Conversation](#). GMCA have had constructive debates around the challenges and opportunities the vision presents, and on how best to take it forward. GMCA has been approached by partners who want to work to help young people have a clear line of sight to the attractive careers in Greater Manchester. And, in co-ordination with Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, a newly formed [Employer Integration Board](#) representing a powerhouse of businesses committed to sharing sector insight with a view to changing the local skills system, ensuring the continued growth of Greater Manchester.

GM is now ready to take the next steps together on taking this chance to rebuild the education system so it works for all our young people.

There are young people growing up in Greater Manchester who can see the obvious signs of our thriving economy, but not the way to a job within it. As parents and carers, businesses and educators are all striving to help our young people thrive in learning, life and to become active players in our vibrant and diverse economy. But GM knows that the pathways to doing this are unclear to young people, and they often don't have a line of sight to being able to get on to the attractive careers in our area.

We have an opportunity to make our system better for young people in Greater Manchester, smoothing the way for them to step into the futures that they want.

The slides reference this is a journey. From September 2024, different parts of our technical education system – young people, parents and carers, schools, colleges and employers – will be trying out new approaches and using new tools to see how they can make MBacc work for them.