



GM LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

SUBJECT: Employer Engagement Framework

DATE: 13 November 2017

FROM: Simon Nokes GMCA

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report outlines the key priorities of the GM Employer Engagement Framework and sets out the 5 priorities and agreed areas for **immediate focus activity** within each priority over the next 6 months; these are set out in paragraph 2.4 and are accompanied by an action and implementation plan in Annex A.

RECOMMENDATIONS

LEP Members are asked to note and discuss the employer engagement action and implementation plan.

GMCA CONTACT OFFICERS

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Employer engagement is part of the core business of GMCA and its partners. The overarching purpose of employer engagement is to help employers grow and invest in Greater Manchester and to connect our residents to the resulting jobs opportunities and growth.
- 1.2 In line with this, the GM Work & Skills Strategy prioritises 'strengthening employer engagement' by working with the LEP, employers and business groups to develop an approach that genuinely puts employers at the heart of the system and leverages their contribution and commitment to support the opportunities highlighted in the employer engagement framework, which in turn helps deliver against the Greater Manchester Strategy.
- 1.3 The framework has been designed to ensure that employers across GM have access to, and ownership in developing, an adaptable resilient local workforce with the skills they need to thrive now as well as a work-ready talent pool to draw upon for the future. The GM work and skills infrastructure therefore needs to provide the support and pathways that

will deliver a system with the needs of employers, and individuals, at its heart.

- 1.4 It is crucial that GM employers are encouraged & supported to use their practices and supply chain to promote 'good work' with a focus on healthy workplaces as well as investing in developing their workforce to improve productivity. The GM public sector is a major employer in its own right with significant supply chains and has a key role to play in leading by example. The GMCA HR & OD team, are undertaking a piece of work looking at ensuring that GMCA is a good employer, for example embedding healthy work practices.
- 1.5 The framework therefore recognises priority three within the Greater Manchester Strategy; 'good jobs with opportunities for people to progress and develop'. In line with the GM Mayor's manifesto commitment we want to develop a Good GM Employers Charter that will be co-designed by local employers (from the public, private & voluntary sector), employees and other organisations/individuals with an interest in employment and workplaces. The charter is an important part of the framework and it is therefore particularly crucial that it is co-designed by employers from right across GM.
- 1.6 The process for the development of the charter will run as follows:
 -) The public engagement process will launch early in the New Year, via a call for evidence we will be inviting views from all interested parties on what should be included in the charter
 -) There will also a number of engagement events which other organisations have agreed to run for us. Local Authorities are actively encouraged to host discussions with local employers & stakeholders.
- 1.7 GMCA recognises that local authorities across GM have already successfully put in place local deals/charters/pledges to work with the business community to deliver responsible economic growth and recognise good employment practices. In developing a GM wide charter we are committed to building upon and adding value to the good practice that exists in local areas.
- 1.8 This process also recognises that this is about the public and private sector working together to promote and deliver on the Greater Manchester Strategy. This is much enthusiasm, commitment and great work already going on in this space and this framework should harness and grow that support.

2. EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK – PRIORITIES

- 2.1 After a thorough consultation with a wide range of partners across GM (including local authorities and the wider public sector, business organisations and individual businesses and education & training providers) it was identified that existing and new employer engagement activity is making a significant contribution to inclusive growth, as well as the commitment that many businesses provide (particularly through their

corporate social responsibility) that GMCA are not always sighted on. We therefore need to harness this energy, resource and goodwill and both address barriers to engagement and facilitate active businesses to do even more. This is why we are developing a coordinated approach to reach the scale required to meet GM's needs.

2.2 The consultation we have already undertaken highlighted five key priority areas where it was felt that specific and strategic engagement / commitment from employers was needed in order to ensure that GM achieves its full potential. Employers also fed back that they wanted the public sector to make the landscape simpler and more coordinated so that it is easier for them to get involved.

2.3 The five priorities are:

-) **Priority 1:** Businesses engage with schools and colleges inspiring young people and adults to raise aspirations, explore careers and gain meaningful experience of the world of work
-) **Priority 2:** Employers are able to invest in developing their workforce (including via Apprenticeships) and work with GM to ensure the skills offer meets their needs
-) **Priority 3:** Businesses are supported to connect unemployed GM residents (particularly those with long-term health conditions) to the job opportunities they create and support them to stay in work
-) **Priority 4:** Businesses are able to create and maintain healthy GM workplaces which support workers to thrive, reduce sickness absence and improve productivity
-) **Priority 5:** Businesses will use their procurement power and supply chains to deliver social value.

For each of the priorities there is an ask of business, a support offer for business from the GMCA and its partners as well as a role for the GM public sector to lead by example as major employers themselves.

2.4 At the meeting in July, Leaders were presented with and agreed these 5 priorities and agreed areas for **immediate focus activity** within each priority over the next 6 months. These were as follows:

-) **Priority 1 focus activity:** scale and further develop an offer that gives every young person an encounter with an employer and high quality experiences of the world of work each year that they are in compulsory education e.g. mentoring, inspirational talks; ensure all young people gain first-hand experience of the workplace; ensure a simple engagement and information platform for businesses and schools
-) **Priority 2 focus activity:** development of a GM Public Sector Apprenticeship Programme and put in place actions to maximise the apprenticeship levy for the GM economy and provide opportunities for our residents
-) **Priority 3 focus activity:** ensuring the engagement of employers with Jobcentre Plus and GM commissioned programmes;

develop an offer of work experience with Jobcentre Plus for people making a new claim for benefits (linked to GM Working Well Early Help initiative)

) **Priority 4 focus activity:** support development of Good GM Employers Charter

) **Priority 5 focus activity:** embed the GMCA social value policy in employer engagement activity and enhance current monitoring arrangements.

2.5 It has been agreed that an action plan would be developed for each of the priorities, detailing key actions, leads and partners for delivery of the immediate focus areas over the next 6 months. The action plan is attached at Annex A.

3. NEXT STEPS

3.1 Policy leads for each of the five key priorities have been appointed and will monitor and feedback on progress against the actions within their priorities.

Annex A. Employer Engagement Framework – Action Plan

GM Employer Engagement Framework – Action & Implementation Plan to 28 th February 2018					
No	Action	Owner	Start (w/c)	End (w/c)	Comments
Priority 1: Businesses engage with schools and colleges, inspiring young people and adults to raise expectations, explore careers and gain meaningful experiences of the world of work					
1	Develop a simple toolkit for employers to register their interest in becoming involved and learn more about Connect, Commit, Sustain and the five strands of activity they can get involved in. This will be through an online tool ' Bridge GM '	Nicola McLeod	04/09/17	30/11/17	BridgeGM is likely to launch end November 17.
2	Develop a call to action , setting out our ambition and support offer to business and supporting them to connect with Bridge GM and the team of Enterprise Coordinators	Nicola McLeod / Enterprise Coordinators	25/09/17	30/11/17	
3	Connect with a network of employers & employees to support them to choose to engage in a level of activity that is right for them.	Enterprise Coordinators	25/09/17	01/01/18	
4	Continue to scale up GM Enterprise Adviser Network so that 150 GM schools can benefit from regular strategic engagement with employers	Nicola McLeod	04/09/17	29/01/18	
5	Develop a partnership agreement with work experience providers that supports them to underpin GM's ambition to scale up first-hand experiences of the world of work	Nicola McLeod	02/10/17	27/11/17	
6	Refresh the membership of the GM Careers and Employability Advisory Group to ensure it offers the strategic direction that will continue to drive up high quality careers provision and embed employability within schools and colleges across GM	Nicola McLeod	04/09/17	25/09/17	This is the advisory group which serves both the Skills & Employment Partnership & Education & Employability Board.
Priority 2: Employers invest in developing their workforce (including via Apprenticeships) and work with GM to ensure the skills offer meets their needs					
Theme 1: Develop and deliver a high quality GM Public Sector Apprenticeship Approach for Local Authorities, Health Trusts, Police, Fire and other GM public services					
7a	Develop a common provider procurement approach emphasising added value for delivery from GM's highest quality providers	Nic Hutchins	26/09/17	01/01/18	Initial procurement to take place in Sept / Oct with mini-competitions beginning Dec / Jan

7b	Ensure bespoke learning elements with a GM focus for all public sector apprentices e.g. e-learning modules linked to the GM political landscape, working in the public sector, etc.	Nic Hutchins	06/11/17	25/12/17	
7c	Develop and commission delivery of flagship Apprenticeship programmes such as Data Analyst, Operational Delivery Officer, School Leadership and Adult Care for cross-organisational cohorts of learners	Nic Hutchins	01/01/18	29/01/18	First flagships launched
7d	Enable common approaches for apprenticeship recruitment and positive messaging about career development via apprenticeships within greater.jobs	Nic Hutchins	06/11/17	25/12/17	
Theme 2: Develop and implement Levy paying employer engagement and support plan					
8a	Produce a visual tool that promotes key GM Apprenticeship messages providing a consistent approach to be communicated by providers, intermediary bodies and key stakeholders to engage Levy paying employers emphasising the opportunities that high quality apprenticeships bring for new and existing staff within their business	Nic Hutchins	04/12/17	18/12/17	
8b	Define and implement GM Quality Criteria for Apprentice Employers (feeding into the Mayor's Good Employer Charter) that recognises high quality Apprenticeship roles, apprentice friendly employment practice, fair contracts / terms & conditions, workplace learning support, positive role models, etc.	Nic Hutchins	04/09/17	26/02/18	
8c	Develop a resource toolkit and events to create a more population proportional and representative range of Apprenticeship starts through NAS Diversity Hub pilot	Nic Hutchins / NAS	16/10/2017	11/12/17	This around removing demographic barriers to accessing apprenticeships
Priority 3: Businesses connect unemployed GM residents (particularly those with long-term health conditions) to the job opportunities they create and support them to stay in work					
Theme 1: Deepen the engagement between employers and JCP and GM commissioned programmes					
9	Work with Centre for Ageing Better to deliver employer summit on age friendly workplaces.	Mat Ainsworth / Ageing Hub	04/09/17	30/11/17	
10	Commission and Launch Work & Health Programme	Mat Ainsworth	04/09/17	29/01/18	

11	Recruit Small Employer Advisor Board	JCP	04/09/17	30/11/17	
12	Develop a GM programme plan for supported employment (engaging with business)	Mat Ainsworth / HSCP	04/09/17	30/11/17	
Theme 2: Engage with employers to develop an early help service for people with physical/mental health conditions who are at risk of falling of falling out of employment or are newly unemployed					
13	Stakeholder events with local employers (Growth Company & CIPD)	Jenny / Michelle	01/07/17	30/11/17	
14	Locality stakeholder events with businesses and local employers	GM Local Leads	04/09/17	30/11/17	
15	Survey to businesses to understand their needs in relation to helping people with health conditions remain in work	Jenny / Michelle	04/09/17	30/11/17	
16	Ongoing dialogue with employers who are keen / willing to test the Early Help Service	Jenny / Michelle	30/10/17	Ongoing	
Priority 4: Businesses will create and maintain healthy GM workplaces, which support workers to thrive, reduce sickness absence and improve productivity					
17	Launch the public consultation process for development of the Good GM Employer's Charter -	Adele R / John W	02/10/17	Jan 18	
18	Stakeholder events to co-design the Charter with business, public sector and broader stakeholders	Adele R / John W	02/10/17	Feb 18	
19	Draw up Charter and underpinning offer for employers	Adele R / John W	15/01/18	Late Spring	
Priority 5: Businesses will use their procurement power and supply chains to deliver social value					
20	Ensure that social value is embedded as a key element of the GM Work & Health Programme and that delivery of provider commitments are robustly monitored.	Mat Ainsworth	04/09/17	Ongoing	
21	Following the conclusion of the employment charter consultation produce a visual tool that promotes to employers the business case for social value. Providing a consistent set of messages used by providers, business organisations and stakeholders.	Adele R	01/01/18	12/02/18	