

Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Acting Executive Director for Place

Report to:	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Date:	15 January 2019
Subject:	DfE/GLLEP Career Learning Pilot: Cost and Outreach Pilots

Summary:

This paper provides an update on the Career Learning Pilot that Lincolnshire was invited to participate in by the Department for Education.

Actions Required:

Members of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee are invited to consider and comment on the Career Learning Pilot: Cost and Outreach Pilot activity in Lincolnshire.

1. Background

In preparation for the introduction of a National Retraining Scheme the Department for Education is testing what works in getting more adults into learning that will enhance their careers. Their evidence base is limited and they want to understand the role of skills and learning in adult career development.

Greater Lincolnshire was invited to help the Department for Education understand what works, particularly in a rural area like ours. We know that there will be more job vacancies than school leavers over the next ten year or so, and we already know a lot about what works to engage adults and implement training schemes locally for the benefit of individuals and employers.

National research shows that raising skills levels is an important way to increase productivity, and people with a Level 3 qualification (the equivalent level to A Levels) can earn 10% more than those without. However not all skills provision will inevitably result in higher earnings. Furthermore participation in formal training by adults in the workforce (at all education levels) has been declining in the UK since around 2002.

The Greater Lincolnshire LEP was one of five LEPs invited to participate in this Career Learning Cost and Outreach Pilot. All 5 areas were testing ways to reach working adults, how the National Careers Service offer could be flexed, and the

effect of making courses cheaper by offering subsidies to motivate adults into taking up training. (25%, 75% and 100% subsidy).

Subsidies for Qualifications

In preparation for the adult engagement activity, the LEP was asked to choose 25 Level 3 qualifications for subsidy that employers in the local area would benefit if adults gained. Employer engagement events were held in Spalding and Market Rasen, and backed up the employer evidence that we already held. During this stage of the pilot a number of limitations were placed on the activity, particularly in terms of the duration of a qualification.

Subsidies were made available to all College and Providers across Greater Lincolnshire able to deliver the relevant qualification. However the *promotion* of the subsidies only took place in the designated outreach areas of Grimsby, Cleethorpes, Louth, Skegness, Boston and Spalding. This allows the researchers (The Learning and Work Institute) to test whether or not the subsidy alone makes a difference to the take up of a qualification.

Outreach activity

Greater Lincolnshire focused on several sectors: agri-food, engineering, visitor economy, construction, health and social care, and low paid adults.

From our consultation events, and existing evidence, there we believe that working adults in East Lindsey and South Holland are less likely to engage in learning than in Boston and Grimsby, due to the distance to the nearest main College campus. We were keen to test whether or not adults are more likely to engage in learning opportunities are visible.

Other Wave 1 Pilot areas focused on:

Stoke on Trent:

- Sectors – engineering, digital and tourism
- Focus on adults returning to work
- Supporting small and micro businesses seeking to upskill employees
- Outreach methods to focus on existing contact details for adults, for example through schools and health services included using existing networks,

West Midlands:

- Sectors – construction, engineering and digital
- Focus on adults in precarious employment, those living in the Black Country and those on in-work Universal Credit (UC)
- Outreach methods – Unionlearn careers advice, job centre plus advice, offers with key employers

Devon and Somerset:

- Sectors – construction, engineering, digital, health and social care
- Focus on women returning to work, 24-35 year olds, over 50s and adults on in-work Universal Credit (UC)
- Outreach methods – employer taster sessions, shadowing, National Careers Service advice in the workplace

Leeds:

- Sectors – construction, engineering and manufacturing, digital, health and social care
- Focus on low paid adults particularly in the gig economy (ie where temporary positions are common and organizations contract with independent workers for short-term engagements)
- Outreach methods – Unionlearn and National Careers Service advice in the workplace
- Subsidised transport costs to college available through the pilot

Greater Lincolnshire's Outreach Activity:

A suite of marketing messages and materials for use within the community and via social media were developed. These made use of Behavioral Insights research. Working with locally based partners (Grimsby Institute, First College and Boston College), a number of Learning Engagement Leads were created who would be responsible for raising awareness of learning opportunities.

Alongside this, a new free local adult careers service telephone number was made available within the pilot area.

Outreach activity commenced on 6th August and completed in December. Around 90 pop up activities took place in various places in the pilot area, including supermarkets, markets, leisure centers, libraries and shopping centres.

The aim of the outreach activity was to target working adults and engage them in conversation to raise awareness of training opportunities and the benefits of achieving higher level qualifications connected to future earning potential and job prospects. Where members of the public showed an interest in learning opportunities they were directed to the local adult careers service telephone number.

Alongside the pop up activities Learning Engagement Leads distributed leaflets and posters with the intention of flooding the pilot area with this awareness raising information.

A series of social media campaigns took place in September and October, again, to raise awareness of the value of undertaking learning alongside work and details of the Adult Careers Service telephone number.

Data from the outreach activity has been submitted to the Learning and Work Institute, which will be combined with results from the other pilot areas to help inform the next stages of the new National Retraining Scheme.

Evaluation and Learning

The Learning and Work Institute has evaluated the first part of the pilot, including the initial set up. This has allowed us and local partners to provide in-depth feedback to DfE on what worked well and what didn't, and to help them understand our local area better. For example we have helped DfE understand that working adults in coastal communities are less likely to engage in training during August and employers are very unlikely to release them for training. We have helped DfE understand that working adults in some of the market towns that our pilot focused on do not regularly (or ever) come into contact with learning opportunities. We have also helped DfE understand local businesses better particularly in terms of their size and capacity to engage.

2. Conclusion

The final results of the pilot work will be known later this year, when DfE will analyse numbers across the pilot areas who have taken up learning as a result of subsidies, as a result of additional marketing or because there has been improved information about sectors.

The LEP and the Council already has a great deal of experience and we have been able to help DfE understand what works locally, both in terms of dispersed populations, and business need.

3. Consultation

a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

No

b) Risks and Impact Analysis

n/a

4. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Clare Hughes, Skills Manager, Greater Lincolnshire LEP.