

REPORT TO: Employment, Learning, Skills and Community Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 25th June 2018

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Enterprise, Communities and Resources

PORTFOLIO: Economic Development

SUBJECT: Policy Update – Employment Learning and Skills

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To inform the Board of recent national policy announcements relevant to the Employment, Learning and Skills Policy Performance Board.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

2.1 **That the report is noted.**

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 A number of policy, legislation, consultation and guidance documents, are issued by government departments and agencies that have varying degrees of relevance to issues on the employment, learning and skills and Community agenda and related topics.

3.2 The information provided is not intended to be in-depth but provides a brief summary of key announcements along with observations of local relevance, where appropriate. The Board can then consider whether to initiate more detailed scrutiny and/or report to a future meeting. Members are invited to view the following pages on the Government's web site: www.gov.uk/government/policies/employment

3.3 The report should be considered alongside the 'key developments' and 'emerging issues' that are set out in the Quarterly Performance Report.

3.4 This report covers the period from February 2018 to May 2018.

1) **Government Review to see how employers are improving ethnic minority progression in the workplace.**

The Government Commissioned research in February into what steps employers have taken to remove barriers to workplace progression for ethnic minorities.

2) **£20m announced in May to investigate the development of a low cost, low carbon hydrogen economy.**

The £20 million Hydrogen Supply Programme will look to address this by significantly reducing the high cost of producing large volumes of low carbon hydrogen, so that the technology can become a competitive, clean energy supply of the future.

3) **£300m from the Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund. Competitive fund announced to ensure that the UK leads the world in healthy ageing.**

The fund is designed to help develop technologies and industries that can help the UK prepare for the challenge of an ageing society. Part of the funding will develop new products and services which will help people live in their homes longer, tackle loneliness and increase independence.

4) **Creative Industries Sector Deal launched**

Funding is being set aside to help businesses in the Cultural and Creative Industries grow and thrive. Funding is also being allocated to enable towns and cities to invest in cultural and cultural initiatives.

5) **New support for young care leavers starting an apprenticeship.**

Recently announced, a scheme to support care leavers who choose to start an apprenticeship will receive a bursary to help to transition into the workplace.

6) **Tackling Ethnic Disparities in Youth Unemployment.**

In March the Government launched a £90m programme to address ethnic disparities in youth unemployment. This relates to a previous report to this Committee which highlighted the differences in outcomes facing young people in different parts of the UK.

7) **Employers invited to join new T Level panels.**

Businesses are being invited to work with the Government to develop the new T Level qualifications (T Levels are new courses on a par with A Levels and offer a choice to young people between technical and academic education post 16).

The Department for Education wants business representatives to step-up and help design the new qualifications in T Level routes which will be delivered from 2022 in:

- agriculture, environmental and animal care
- business and administration
- hair and beauty
- creative and design
- catering and hospitality

8) **New Enterprise Allowance**

The Government has relaunched the New Enterprise Allowance. Unemployed residents can apply through the Job Centre to obtain a mentor who can provide advice and support to individuals looking to set up in business. Once a Business Plan has been approved, individuals can apply for a weekly allowance of up to £1,274 for 26 weeks, as well as a loan to help with business startup costs. Further details can be found at www.gov.uk/moving-from-benefits-to-work.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The varied range of issues covered in this report potentially present a number of challenges and opportunities across a number of the Council's current priorities. Where appropriate a more detailed analysis of the information and relevance to the council will take place.

4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 There are no immediate risks directly relating to the information in the report.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 6.1 None

7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

- 7.1 None under the meaning of the Act.