

Report To: EDUCATION ATTAINMENT IMPROVEMENT BOARD

Date: 15 January 2019

Reporting Officer: David Berry, Head of Employment and Skills

Subject: LEVEL 3 POST 16 PERFORMANCE

Report Summary: This summary report sets out an overview of Level 3 post 16 performance in Tameside. Tameside has good performance and levels of participation though also faces challenges across the life course.

Recommendations: That the board note the content of the report.

Links to Sustainable Community Strategy: The report supports three elements of the Community Strategy - Prosperous, Learning and Supportive Tameside.

Policy Implications: Effective performance at Level 3 supports economic growth.

Financial Implications: There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.
(Authorised by the Section 151 Officer)

Legal Implications: Understanding the data used by Ofsted is always vitally important to schools and colleges in preparing for inspection. For post-16 inspections, Level 3 Value Added and have recently been the primary references for this data. It is also useful data for the Council in determining what focused action needs to be taken to support the economy and population health and wellbeing – with jobs being one of the most significant health determinant.
(Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

Risk Management: High quality Level 3 institutions and provision is essential for increased skill levels and economic growth

Access to Information: The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting David Berry, Head of Employment and Skills.



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The overall picture of Level 3 performance (equivalent to A-Level) is improving in Tameside with high quality institutions and an increasing number of residents participating in learning. This summary report provides an overview of performance and sets out next steps to continue our progression as part of a vibrant economy for Tameside. Our approach is to view skills as a continuum throughout the life course.
- 1.2 Level 3 provision includes a range of elements including academic, vocational and apprenticeships.

2. ECONOMIC CONTEXT

- 2.1 Improving skill levels is vital to Tameside's economic growth and population health and wellbeing. Tameside currently has challenges at all levels of skills for our adult working age population set out in table 1 below.

Skill level	% of Tameside population	% of England population
No qualification	10.9	7.7
Level 2+	69.1	74.7
Level 3+	46.1	57.2
Level 4+	26.2	38.6

- 2.2 The importance of achieving outcomes in education up to the age of 16 and effective basic skills provision (entry and Levels 1 and 2) by providers such as Adult Community Education will support the foundation of a higher skilled population.
- 2.3 Skill levels can be linked to levels of both pay and productivity, Tameside workers earn an average of £479 per week compared to the North West average of £514. With the advent of the Government's welfare reform programme including Universal Credit it is essential that Tameside residents who are in work are supported to raise their earnings.
- 2.4 Tameside currently has an unemployment rate of 4.7% compared to the UK rate of 4.2%. Economic inactivity levels in Tameside of 23.4% are also above the UK average of 21.6%. Unemployment has fallen steadily across the UK although it should be noted that quality employment including jobs paid at or above the real living wage or requiring higher level skills are essential to developing a vibrant economy.
- 2.5 In 2017 29.4% of Tameside's 18 year olds gained entry to university slightly lower when compared to the England average of 32.6%. The growth of degree apprenticeships provides alternative options to academic study. It is important that Tameside residents' aspirations are raised and matched to broaden our higher level skill base.
- 2.6 In 2018 96.7% of Tameside's year 11 cohort continued to participate in further education or training. This is positive performance supported by good quality careers advice. Participation rates need to be understood in the context of outcomes and transition into well paid employment.
- 2.7 The combination of low qualification levels, low pay and above average unemployment is a challenge to Tameside's economic growth.

3. PERFORMANCE AT LEVEL 3

- 3.1 Tameside's A-Level performance in 2017 is comparable to England with an average grade of C. Tameside's average points score is 29.89 slightly lower than 31.14 for England. Participation in A-Levels is increased to 934 students in 2016/17 from 774 in 2014/15. Tameside's increases in A-level students is marginally better than the national trend. The future of local provision is strong with both Tameside College and Ashton Sixth Form College rated as 'Good' by Ofsted. High quality teaching and learning is essential to improve learning outcomes.
- 3.2 Tameside's Tech Level 'vocational' performance in 2017 at Level 3 is positive with a 34.19 average point score, higher than the England average of 32.26. Tameside's Applied General 'vocational' performance was 38.62 also higher than the England average of 35.72. The number of students participating in vocational qualifications has increased to 758 in 2016/17 from 681 in 2015/16.
- 3.3 Level 3 Apprenticeship achievement rates are improving at a better rate in Tameside than in England. 610 Level 3 apprenticeships were achieved in 2017/18 compared to 560 in 2016/17, an improvement of 0.68% compared to 0.34% in England. The advent of the National Apprenticeship Levy in 2017 has had a negative impact on the overall number of apprenticeships nationally and within Greater Manchester seeing an overall drop to 28,190 in 2017 from 30,380 in 2016.

4. FUTURE PROVISION AND NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 The development of the Vision Tameside campus will provide further high quality skills facilities and provision for the Borough. This includes the development of an Advanced Skills Centre alongside Clarendon College, Advanced Technologies Centre and also new Skills Construction Centre in 2020.
- 4.2 The Tameside Learner Provider Network was relaunched in 2016 and has grown into a strong strategic and operational network of providers to support the development of new and quality provision. The network now provides an opportunity to lead a multi- agency approach to the local skills agenda identifying gaps and supporting shared solutions to provision.
- 4.3 As set out in this report there are some core strengths in Tameside's Level 3 provision which can be further strengthened through the pursuit of the following activity as part of a wider strategy for a vibrant economy to be developed in early 2019.
- Raise educational performance pre Level 3 and through the life course
 - Improve the quality and availability of Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)
 - Realise the potential of the Vision Tameside Campus
 - Develop a stronger Level 4 (degree equivalent) offer in Tameside building on Vision Tameside
 - Ensure the development of the Greater Manchester Institute of Technology (with a likely focus on industrial digitisation) supports and enhances Tameside's existing skills offer
 - Ensure the Devolution of Adult Education Budget to Greater Manchester supports residents to gain basic skills essential for progression into employment or higher level learning
 - Continue to develop of a Strategy for a Vibrant Economy including a clear and ambitious action plan for Skills.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 It is recommended that the Board note the content of the report.