

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD</b>
<b>Date:</b>	18 January 2024
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	James Mallion, Assistant Director of Public Health
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>WORK &amp; SKILLS UPDATE</b>
<b>Report Summary:</b>	This report provides an overview of the progress made against the Health & Wellbeing Board priority around Work & Skills. This includes an update on work, which sits with the Inclusive Growth Board; some of the existing support programmes and good practice already in place in Tameside, including further detail of the Pathways into Employment Forum which is led by the hospital; and early findings of the Work & Skills Needs Assessment, due to be finalised in March 2024.
<b>Recommendations:</b>	The Health & Wellbeing Board note the contents of the report.
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	This report updates on the Work & Skills priority of the Health & Wellbeing Board, which is an ongoing work stream, aligned to the area of focus around 'helping people to get into, and stay in good work', from the Health & Wellbeing Strategy for Tameside. This priority aligns closely to the overarching vision of the Tameside Corporate plan, for Tameside to be 'a place where everyone can achieve their hopes and ambitions'. This is particularly supportive of the priority to 'give everyone the opportunity to learn and earn'.
<b>Policy Implications:</b>	This report provides updates around ongoing work programmes. The Work & Skills needs assessment will produce a series of recommendations, which will be brought back to the March 2024 Health & Wellbeing Board meeting for agreement and sign off for publication. Some of these recommendations may have policy implications in terms of new policies or approaches, which may be needed to better address the issues identified. No other direct policy implications arising from this report.
<b>Financial Implications:</b>	There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.
<b>(Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer &amp; Chief Finance Officer)</b>	Any related Council expenditure will be financed via existing Directorate revenue budgets.
<b>Legal Implications:</b>	It is important that regular updates are received on the Council's priorities to ensure that investment and resources are achieving the desired outcomes.
<b>(Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)</b>	
<b>Risk Management:</b>	This report has committed to the finalised Work & Skills needs assessment being completed and brought back to the March 2024 Health & Wellbeing Board meeting for sign off. There is a risk if this deadline were not met. In order to ensure that this is delivered upon, external resource (PS Research) has been commissioned to support this work, with a clear service level agreement and project plan in place for completion of the report to this deadline. The other risk highlighted in this report is the non-recurrent nature of the external funding, which supports delivery of programmes such as the Routes to Work and In Work Progression programmes. Work is

underway to identify ongoing funding for these programmes, to ensure continued service delivery.

**Access to Information:**

All papers relating to this report can be obtained by contacting: James Mallion, Assistant Director of Public Health.

**Background Information:**

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting James Mallion, Assistant Director of Public Health



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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 During late 2022 work was done with members of the Tameside Health & Wellbeing Board to set out the role of the Board, including having a clear set of ambitions with a Health & Wellbeing Board Charter and setting priorities for upcoming work.
- 1.2 The three priorities set for the Board to focus on are Poverty, Work & Skills and Healthy Places. Over the last year, a range of work has taken place to improve how the Health & Wellbeing Board can tackle these issues as a partnership.
- 1.3 In September 2023, the new Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy and Locality Plan for Tameside was also published, *Building Back Fairer Stronger Together 2023-2028*. This included one of the six areas of focus to “Help people get into, and stay in good work”. This sets out a series of commitments in the strategy to support a healthy workforce in Tameside and the positive relationship between good work and good health. This highlights the importance of the joint work between the Health & Wellbeing Board and the Inclusive Growth Board for Tameside, as well as committing to specific objectives.
- 1.4 This report provides an update on early progress against these objectives, particularly the initial findings of the Work & Skills needs assessment, which is in progress, and highlights some of the work already taking place in Tameside.

## **2. INCLUSIVE GROWTH BOARD**

- 2.1 Tameside’s Inclusive Growth Board continues to meet as an active forum to engage local businesses and stakeholders to deliver on the priorities in the Inclusive Growth Strategy.
- 2.2 Members of the Inclusive Growth Board have received the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy and Locality Plan and this was discussed at a recent meeting of the Board in November 2023. There was strong support for the priorities and areas of focus within the strategy. Some ongoing challenges were highlighted including an increase in post-16 college students with mental health issues, which additional support has been put in place for. Proposals around the upcoming Work & Skills needs assessment have also been discussed with Inclusive Growth Board members and updates will continue to be reported there.
- 2.3 There are a number of sub-groups sat under the Inclusive Growth Board, which deliver on a range of areas around supporting job growth and helping people get into good work. The Business Support sub-group is leading a growing programme of business engagement, including a joint approach between the council, Business Growth Hub, GM Chamber of Commerce and MIDAS. The GM Business Growth Hub have been working closely with the Employment & Skills team at the Council resulting in a growing number of businesses in Tameside receiving support and assistance, and from April to June 2023 Tameside saw the highest level of engagement from local businesses in Greater Manchester. This will continue to strengthen the links between local businesses and the support available for them such as collaboration and opportunities such as the GM Good Employment Charter.
- 2.4 The Tameside Means Business Network recently ran a Net Zero Festival, which brought local organisations together to support each other in reducing carbon emissions. This was held at Global Grooves’ Centre for Carnival Arts at The Vale in Mossley and had nearly 70 businesses in attendance. This event aimed to enable peer-to-peer support between businesses and encourage them to be part of the positive changes around achieving net carbon zero, as per the Greater Manchester goal of being carbon neutral by 2038. The network also holds regular ‘Tameside Talks Business’ events which are mainly attended by small businesses, start-ups and community interest companies. These are further opportunities for local businesses to collaborate and consider how they deliver good jobs within Tameside.

2.5 The Employment & Skills team also continue to deliver support programmes including Routes to Work and In Work Progression, which deliver a range of holistic improvements to the lives of the individuals they work with. These programmes are particularly beneficial to help people gain further skills and employment opportunities, but a range of other benefits to their wellbeing have also been seen as a result of these programmes. There continues to be a risk to ongoing delivery, with these programmes being grant funded. Work is ongoing with central government to try to gain clarity on decisions around continued funding.

### 3. EXAMPLE OF EXISTING PRACTICE – PATHWAYS INTO EMPLOYMENT FORUM

3.1 One example of existing good practice to support people into work is the Pathways into Employment Forum, which is run by Tameside Hospital. The forum is a network of local public and third sector organisations across Tameside, who work collaboratively to reduce unemployment and supply people with the right skills and support to work in the health and care sector.

3.2 This forum recognises the importance of people being in work, both from a local economy perspective, and to support the health and wellbeing of individuals. There is also a focus on the need to provide additional support to certain groups across the community who are more likely to experience unemployment, which includes people without formal qualifications; those who are looking after family; people living with an illness or disability; and those aged 18-21. The forum facilitates access to the employment opportunities within the local health and care sector, which is a large local employer.

3.3 There are four key areas of action which the Pathways into Employment Forum focuses on:

- **ATTRACTION** – Attracting more people into health and care roles through a combination of newsletters about entry level roles; role profiles; reviews of essential criteria; apprenticeships; and promotion via social media.
- **SELECTION** – Supporting people through selection processes for roles using work trials & experience; guidance for candidates; reasonable adjustment and recruitment training for managers; and improved uptake of the guaranteed interview scheme.
- **CHECKS** – Employment checks guidance for candidates and keeping in touch guidance for managers.
- **PROGRESSION** – Career pathways made clear for entry-level roles.

3.4 To date, the forum has taken action within the hospital to remove barriers within the recruitment process, particularly around entry-level roles. As a result, there have been a number of successes with increases in the number of active volunteers gaining experience within Tameside Hospital, and a number of people being supported through recruitment and gaining roles within the hospital. This includes five individuals from the Routes to Work programme being recruited to roles within the hospital. These are people who have the skills needed for the roles, but who faced additional barriers including learning disabilities, mental illness and autism, which meant that adjustments to the recruitment process helped them to secure the roles.

3.5 Going forward, there is ongoing leadership from Tameside Hospital, holding monthly meetings of the forum and plans to expand this out and do more engagement. The membership of the forum currently includes key local partners and recruiting managers from within the hospital. This is under review to expand membership of the group. The forum is also planning to engage with more residents from under-represented communities across the health and care workforce, to improve their access to employment, including outreach such as attending community events and careers fairs.

#### 4. WORK & SKILLS NEEDS ASSESSMENT – SCOPE AND INITIAL FINDINGS

- 4.1 An objective within the “Help people get into, and stay in good work” area of focus in the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy and Locality Plan is to produce a needs assessment on Work & Skills in Tameside during 2024. This work has commenced with an organisation called PS Research commissioned to lead this, working alongside the Population Health and Employment & Skills teams in the Council. The needs assessment will be completed for sign-off and publication at the March 2024 Health & Wellbeing Board meeting. The scope of the work has been agreed and some initial analysis and findings have been produced.
- 4.2 Analysis of national data demonstrates the importance of improving access to good work and skills in Tameside. According to data from the Health Foundation, local authorities with lower economic inactivity rates or higher employment rates have higher healthy life expectancy on average. Data also indicates that economic inactivity has increased nationally, partly due to an increase in working-age people reporting long-term health conditions, including increases in mental health issues and musculoskeletal problems. Also, people in poor health are less likely to remain in employment and more likely to move into temporary or lower paid work. The quality of work is also important as evidence shows that being in low-quality work can be just as bad for health as unemployment.
- 4.3 The scope of the needs assessment will look at work and skills through a health and wellbeing lens. This will include examining the cycle of poverty, low-quality work and poor health, which is seen in Tameside. This will include looking at the impact of unemployment and poverty on health; the impact of low-quality work on health; and vice versa, the impact of poor health on employment and economic development.



- 4.4 The needs assessment also highlights existing key health challenges in Tameside, which contribute to the relationship between poor health, low-quality work, unemployment and poverty. These include the gap in life expectancy compared to the national average; the high rates of obesity and smoking, which drive the level of long term conditions; the high rate of residents living with a disability or limiting long-term illness; and higher prevalence of mental health disorders.
- 4.5 Initial analysis of a wide range of data and information sources has focussed on several key areas. Some interim findings for further analysis and exploration have been included below:
- Deprivation is relatively uniform across Tameside, meaning not many parts of the borough are in the most deprived areas nationally, but overall the borough has quite high, broad levels of deprivation – particularly around health and crime related measures.
  - Women face particular inequalities around employment, pay, life expectancy and disabilities in Tameside.

- Tameside faces challenges around adult education and skills – Tameside neighbourhoods are twice as likely to be in the most deprived 10% of areas nationally for adults skills compared to children & young people’s education.
- In Tameside, a higher proportion of those who are economically inactive are classified as ‘long-term sick’ (34%) compared to the national average (27%).
- Job density in Tameside (the proportion of jobs available compared to the number of working age residents) is significantly lower than the NW and national average with 57 jobs per 100 working-age residents in Tameside compared to around 85 jobs per 100 nationally.
- Low proportion of people working in managerial or professional roles, and a high proportion of night-time workers (linked to poorer health outcomes and lower pay) in Tameside.
- A low level of formal qualifications in Tameside with more than a fifth (22%) of Tameside adults (16+) having no qualifications, higher than the national average (18%). Tameside residents are also much less likely to be more highly qualified with under a quarter (24%) of residents having a degree or equivalent, compared to one third of those aged 16+ across England (34%).
- There are high levels of digital exclusion in Tameside which is linked to lower income, lower levels of education and a low proportion of job roles in the ‘information & communication’ sector.
- There are lower levels of qualifications across most age groups in Tameside, compared to other areas
- Low pay is a particular issue in Tameside with low median annual pay and a high proportion of roles paying below the living wage. Resident pay is higher than workplace-based pay in Tameside, indicating that many residents travel outside of the borough to work for better pay.
- Despite house prices being lower in Tameside compared to the rest of the NW, they are less affordable for residents than in other areas, due to low pay for residents.

4.6 These initial findings will be further developed to explore the extent of some of these issues across Tameside. There will also be work to consider what programmes and services are already in place across the borough; and qualitative work will also take place to engage with people within Tameside to understand what some of these issues mean for local people. This will then provide insight into some of the gaps in what is currently in place. This will also highlight what further work is needed in order to make the most of opportunities and address some of the challenges in Tameside to improve the situation around work and skills, with a view to improving people’s long term health outcomes.

4.7 The Work & Skills needs assessment will continue to be developed and the final version, with a set of key recommendations for partners across Tameside will be brought to the March 2024 meeting of the Health & Wellbeing Board.

## **5. NEXT STEPS**

5.1 This report has highlighted some of the work currently taking place to address the priority in the Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy and Locality Plan for Tameside around ‘Helping people get into, and stay in good work’.

5.2 Development of the Work & Skills needs assessment will continue, with the final version due to be brought back to the March 2024 Health & Wellbeing Board meeting, for approval and publication.

5.3 The growing partnership working and engagement at the Inclusive Growth Board will continue, as well as further work around supported employment programmes, such as the Pathways into Employment Forum, Routes to Work and In Work Progression programmes.

Relevant recommendations on this ongoing work will be included in the findings of the work & skills needs assessment.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 As per the front of the report.