

MEETING:
Barnet Partnership Board

Date:
18 November

REPORT OF:
Leader of the Council

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE OF REPORT:
To update the Barnet Partnership Board (BPB) on the Council's work with partners across West London to promote employment, skills and growth across the sub-region

INPUT REQUESTED FROM BARNET PARTNERSHIP BOARD:
To note the work being undertaken across West London

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Overview

1. This paper describes the work underway with partners across West London (Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hillingdon and Hounslow) to promote employment, skills and growth across the sub-region. The programme brings together a number of different national and London-wide initiatives to create a coherent set of 'asks' and 'offers' for West London. These initiatives include:
 - A City Deal for London
 - Whole Place Community Budgets
 - The Public Service Transformation Network
2. The West London Alliance (WLA), a partnership of the six West London Councils, has worked with businesses representatives, Further and Higher Education institutions, Job Centre Plus, the Voluntary and Community Sector and other local partners to identify five workstreams:
 - (i) Tackling youth unemployment
 - (ii) Tackling persistent and long-term unemployment
 - (iii) Addressing the 'skills mismatch'
 - (iv) Supporting new businesses
 - (v) Supporting business growth

Each workstream is led by a different Council, with Barnet taking a lead on work stream (v) Supporting business growth.
3. These workstreams are underpinned by work to develop an overarching economic vision for West London and to understand housing delivery and infrastructure needs across the area.
4. The West London Jobs, Skills and Growth programme fits into the timeframe for the Priorities and Spending Review, and will feed into the development of PSR proposals.

A City Deal for London

5. The Government's 'City Deals' programme devolves agreed powers and freedoms to cities in return for commitments to delivery growth. They are already in place in a number of areas, including Birmingham, Greater Manchester, Newcastle, Leeds, Sheffield and Liverpool. Many of these deals allow for the retention of a larger share of business rates – to be reinvested in growth and infrastructure – as well as flexibility to borrow against forecast future revenue streams.
6. In London, discussions between London Councils and the GLA have begun, with the ambition to develop a set of 'asks' of Government for further devolution of funding and powers in line with the City Deal model. The focus is around driving growth, employment and competitiveness, building in a range of freedoms, incentives for investment and mechanisms for sharing the proceeds of growth. The 'ask' of Government is being developed around three policy areas:
 - Devolution to improve welfare into work, skills and employment programmes (along with the associated funding from Whitehall);
 - Potential changes in the national housing investment policy, in return for a more co-ordinated London-wide 'offer' addressing cash, consent and capacity in the building industry; and
 - The recommendations of the London Finance Commissioning in relation to transport and infrastructure.
7. As part of this process to develop a City Deal for London, a number of sub-regions are developing their own growth-based proposals to feed into the process coordinated by the GLA London Councils. In Westminster, for example, plans are being developed for a 'West End City Deal' that allows for a greater proportion of business rates and the benefits of tourism to be retained and reinvested.

Whole Place Community Budgets & the Public Service Transformation Network

8. 'Whole Place Community Budgets' involve local partners working together to identify all funding streams associated with a particular issue or problem, and then co-designing proposals to re-focus this funding to deliver better outcomes at lower cost.
9. In addition to unlocking the potential benefits of efficiencies and better outcomes through a Community Budgets model, there are other incentives for councils, other public services, and the business and voluntary/community sectors working collaboratively to design and deliver services. Whitehall has made significant resources available to support integration and joint working at the sub-regional level. Chief among these pots are the Single Local Growth Fund (worth £10 billion over 5 years from 2015), the £3.8 billion set aside for health and social care integration and an additional £200 million to expand the Troubled Families programme. The Greater London Authority will also have access to significant resource, including £9bn of capital expenditure and financial power by 2020. Whitehall is clearly setting its stall out that collaboration and integration at the local level is the way forward, and incentivising Local Economic Partnerships to drive this.
10. In April, the WLA submitted an Expression of Interest to be included in the next round of Whole Place Community Budget pilot areas to be supported by the Government. On 3 July, Eric Pickles announced that the WLA had been invited to participate in a Public Service Transformation Network (PSTN) which has been set up to provide

support from Government and enable shared learning in the application of place based budget approaches.

11. As a first step, the PTSN invited each of the nine new Community Budget areas to complete a 'Joint Statement of Intent' (JSI) as a public statement of the partnerships intentions.

WLA growth deal - proposals and priority work streams

12. The priority work streams for the WLAs growth programme that have been identified - and will be taken forward as business cases for intervention - relate to the drivers for growth, including skills and employment and business growth. Taking a 'whole public sector view' forms the basis of the Community Budgets approach. It has therefore been essential to involve partners and providers in the development of the WLA work streams from the outset.

13. In July, a West London Partner Forum was held in order to scope the programme. The event was attended by nearly 50 West London organisations, businesses and public agencies. A number of outline work streams were developed. During August, this 'long list' was refined into five priority work streams as set out below.

<p>Work stream 1: Young People, especially those at risk of being NEETs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on young people aged 14-24 not in education, employment or training. • Aim to simplify the 'customer journey' through - mapping current service provision in detail; identifying gaps and best practice; and co-designing the business case to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of services to provide quality and consistent information, advice and guidance available to anyone who falls into the age range who falls within the NEETs category. • Key partners include: Connexions, Job Centre Plus, Skills Funding Agency, Education Funding Agency, Schools, Colleges, Training Providers and employers.
<p>Work stream 2: Long Term Adult unemployed, with a particular focus on those being supported into work sustaining that employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on adults who have been out of work for significant periods or are at risk of being so. • Work stream will consider the 'offer' for people not yet on the DWP Work Programme but identified as potential candidates; improving the outcomes of those on the Work Programme and ensuring partners address the needs of those who come off the Programme (where there is currently a lack of support). • Key partners include: Job Centre Plus, Public Health England, DCLG, Dept for Business, Innovation and Skills (local hubs), G15 group, private training providers, Colleges, Housing Associations, and employers.
<p>Work stream 3: Addressing Skills Mismatch – with a focus on learners making the right choices and simplifying skills provision for employers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on learners and employers – with the aim of ensuring that (1) learners are able to make informed choices about pathways into, and progression in, employment and (2) employers get people with the skills they require to support business productivity and growth, ultimately leading to the creation of more jobs and increased GVA. • Colleges and other training providers will be key in terms of the range of courses they offer, which in turn should be informed by learner, employer and future market demand. • Key partners include: Job Centre Plus, Colleges and other training providers, UK Commission for Employment and Skills, Federation of Small Businesses, GLA/LEP, Skills Funding Agency, Information, Advice and Guidance providers, National

Citizen Service, Universities, CBI, and Connexions.

Work stream 4: Support for business start-ups – with a focus on improving accessibility to quality advice and support

- The proposal is to ensure that there is ‘no wrong door’ for start-ups looking for business advice and support.
- ‘Start-ups’ will include those wanting to start a business or new / young businesses already trading. The proposal is to improve the provision of / access to information, advice and guidance. While this will primarily focus on business related topics (access to finance and premises, home working, business planning, regulatory requirements, employing staff / payroll, health & safety, market research) it may also need to include signposting to other support services i.e. child care, health.
- The customer group could include home workers, lifestyle businesses, young people, women returners, professionals wanting to start-up on their own, people with disabilities, BMEs, etc.
- **Key partners include:** West London Business, Federation of Small Businesses, Harrow Business, Universities.

Work stream 5: Supporting Businesses to grow - with a focus on those that would make significant contributions to employment and GVA growth

- The proposal is to target businesses who are trading and ‘ready to grow’ but who are often prevented from so doing through a variety of ‘deficiencies’ which might include access to finance; market knowledge or other expertise; appropriate move on premises; access to supply and value chains; IP support; a skilled workforce; or their knowledge of Planning or public sector contract requirements.
- **Key partners include:** West London Business, Federation of Small Businesses, local business groups, Universities.

14. Currently, work is progressing to co-design proposals to take forward these workstreams, with a view to completing draft business cases by 20 December, and final proposals by 31 March 2014.

Links to the Barnet ‘Priorities and Spending Review’

15. Encouraging business growth and tackling worklessness are key strands of Barnet’s ‘Priorities and Spending Review’, which will develop proposals for how the council will live within its means and mitigate a forecast budget gap of £70m over the period 2015 – 2020. The Barnet PSR will conclude next summer and the key milestones in the process mirror that of the WLA programme.

16. Council Officers – principally the Director for Place, Lead Commissioner for Enterprise and Regeneration and Assistant Director for Strategy – will ensure that the PSR and WLA programmes are aligned. They will also signpost workstream leads to relevant Barnet partners as appropriate. Through the development of Barnet’s PSR proposals and the wider WLA work streams, Officers will also advise on which initiatives are more appropriate to be commissioned at the borough level and which will provide greater benefit from being taken forward at the sub-regional level, through the WLA.

Conclusion

17. The Board is invited to note progress on developing the West London Jobs, Skills and Growth programme.