

CARDIFF CAPITAL REGION CITY DEAL JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23 September 2019

Developing a Skilled Workforce and Tackling Unemployment

Reason for this Report

1. To provide an update on the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal's skills initiatives as requested in Appendix A.

Background

2. Regional Cabinet received a report containing the Cardiff Capital Region (CCR) Graduate Scheme as a strand of activity of the wider Skills for the Future programme on the 12th of February 2018. Regional Cabinet accepted the report's recommendation and agreed to commit officer time to develop the business case for the Skills for the Future programme.
3. On the 17th of December 2018, Regional Cabinet agreed to allocate £175,000 from the Wider Investment Fund to deliver a one-year pilot of the Cardiff Capital Region Graduate Scheme in partnership with the four universities in the Cardiff Capital Region.
4. The Industrial and Economic Growth Plan was approved by regional Cabinet on the 18th of February 2019. In conjunction with additional stakeholder engagement and strategic advisory services provided by the National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts (Nesta), it set out means of optimising the impact of the other facets of the Skills for the Future programme to achieve two mutually supportive objectives of boosting competitiveness and tackling inequalities to deliver sustainable and inclusive growth.
5. Core sets of recommendations from Nesta include:
 - Seizing near-term opportunities to target specific areas of demand for skills.
 - Investing in a more intelligent labour market in the longer-term.

Issues

Seizing near-term opportunities to target specific areas of demand for skills.

6. Since launching in April 2019, the Cardiff Capital Region Graduate Scheme has engaged over 140 businesses, sifted over 300 applicants on behalf of employers and hosted numerous assessment centres. The scheme has delivered graduate starts, upskilled employees and graduate placements. The first cohort event was held on the 16th of September 2019. Two more cohorts are scheduled over the course of the one-year pilot and an update report is scheduled to be taken to Regional Cabinet on the 9th of December 2019.
7. Engagement is being undertaken with employers from the compound semi-conductor sector and its wider supply chain in addition to other priority sectors from the Industrial and Economic Growth Plan. The aim of such engagement is to explore potential for the creation of high-value jobs, training solutions that meet the needs of industry and pathways to identify how young people across the region can access any emerging opportunities.
8. A proposal for a Youth Regional Cabinet is being developed in partnership with youth forums and school engagement teams in the region to allow young people to influence and shape City Deal investments. This is scheduled to be taken to Regional Cabinet on the 9th of December 2019.
9. Regional Transport Authority received a report on a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) on the 1st of August 2019 that sets out means of maximising the number of training and work opportunities through the CCRCD Metro Plus scheme while also contributing towards well-being targets, digital and transport goals.
10. The City Deal is supporting pupils from the region to attend a STEM event at the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst on the 27th of September 2019. The event is being delivered in partnership with large engineering firms to inspire years 7, 8, 9 to consider the broad range of careers available in STEM employment.

A More Intelligent Labour Market

11. The City Deal Office is working with the Regional Skills Partnership and recruitment firms in the region to enhance the breadth and depth of labour market information available and obtain a more comprehensive picture of the region's economy.
12. As outlined in the Resource and Restructure Report that regional cabinet approved on the 18th of February 2019, the City Deal office is developing capacity to convert such labour market information into labour market intelligence through PhD Data Scientists that will be sourced and match-funded from the KES studentship scheme. This will augment regional capacity for live data curation, support and analysis to inform the available evidence base and investment project appraisals.

The following background papers have been taken into account:-

- Skills for the Future report 12th February 2018
- Cardiff Capital Region Graduate Scheme report 17th of December 2018
- The Industrial and Economic Growth Plan 18th February 2019

- Resource and Restructure Report 18th February 2019
- Cardiff Capital Region Transport Authority – Item 4 (Common assessment framework) – Thursday 1st August 2019

13. Recommendations

It is recommended that Members note the report and provide comment in relation to Cardiff Capital Region City Deal's skills initiatives

Appendix A – Scrutiny Report Request

<p>Skills Partnership - Developing a Skilled Workforce and Tackling Unemployment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A key part of the CCRCDD remit is to add 5% to GVA for the region, increase productivity and promote equality of outcomes so that the benefit of growth is shared more equally within the population. This will not be possible without developing a skilled workforce and tackling unemployment. How will this be achieved? • Education – How are CCRCDD liaising with schools, colleges and universities to ensure that students are aware of the potential opportunities and apprenticeships available to them • <i>(Skills Partnership Business Plan? - What are targets? Expected outcomes? Etc.)</i>
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