

# Subject: Economy Committee Work Programme

**Report to: Economy Committee**

**Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat**

**Date: 15 October 2015**

**This report will be considered in public**

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 The Committee receives a report monitoring the progress of its work programme at each meeting.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair, writes to the Mayor to formally invite him to a future meeting of the Committee, or for Committee Members to meet with him on a date of his choosing.**
- 2.2 **That the Committee agrees to use its November meeting slot to continue its investigation into London's changing economy.**
- 2.3 **That the Committee agrees to use its December meeting slot to conduct a manufacturing site visit.**
- 2.4 **That the Committee agrees to use its January 2016 meeting to discuss the issue of childcare.**
- 2.5 **That the Committee agrees for officers to scope how the Committee might use its February 2016 meeting to explore the issues of low income households.**

## 3. Background

- 3.1 The topics listed below have been agreed as priorities for the Committee's work programme during 2015/16:
- **Mayoral programmes and commitments on economic issues.** The Committee will continue to scrutinise the Mayor's economic programmes and commitments, including those related to apprenticeships, the London Living Wage and job creation.
  - **The role of the third sector in employment and skills programmes.** The report will be published shortly.

- **Digital economy.** The Committee has explored how the tech skills gap is impacting the growth of London's Digital sector, and the opportunities which expanding tech skills could bring for young Londoners. Please see agenda item 7 for more information.
- **London's flexible labour market.** The Committee will explore the changing nature of London's economy and labour market and the impact of the changes for London's employers and employees.
- **Food poverty.** The Committee will continue to follow up on the Assembly's previous work on food poverty in the capital. The Committee will be holding an informal event in January 2016 (date tbc).

3.2 Other issues that may be included in the work programme include childcare and manufacturing. The Committee has also published its final report on the risks to the London economy from climate change.

## 4. Issues for Consideration

### 4.1 *Mayoral commitments*

The Committee has already agreed that it should scrutinise the Mayor's key economic commitments, including those related to apprenticeships, the London Living Wage and job creation. The Committee would be very keen to discuss the Mayor's reflections on his work in these areas and what lessons learnt he would pass onto his successor.

Officers have made informal enquiries to the Mayor's office to explore whether the Mayor is able to attend a Committee meeting before the end of the Assembly term. Unfortunately, the Mayor has so far been unable to commit to attending a meeting.

Accordingly, it is recommended that the Chair, in consultation with the Deputy Chair, writes to the Mayor to formally invite him to a future meeting of the Committee, or for Committee Members to meet with him on a date of his choosing.

### 4.2 *Manufacturing site visit*

There are both long-standing manufacturing businesses in the capital, as well as more recent businesses with potential to expand. The Committee would visit manufacturing businesses in the capital to better understand their potential, the challenges which they might face and any opportunities for the Mayor to support this sector.

### 4.3 *Childcare*

London boroughs currently have a statutory duty to secure free part time early education, for the 40 per cent most disadvantaged two year olds for 15 hours per week for 38 weeks of the year (or 570 hours per year). Also, all three and four year olds in England receive 15 hours of free early education each week for 38 weeks of the year (570 hours per year). The Government is extending this entitlement for working parents of three and four year olds to 30 hours each week through the Childcare Bill. This should be fully in place by 2017. The Government has also been consulting on how to increase the hourly funding rates paid to childcare providers in different parts of the country.

London Councils is working to support London boroughs to ensure places are available for eligible children in London, ensure public recognition of how local government has achieved this and lobby Government for support to overcome challenges in the capital.

London boroughs are facing significant challenges to secure places in the capital due to:

- limited places available across the London childcare market;
- central government funding not reflect the hourly cost of part-time childcare in London;
- lack of flexibility within the offer to meet the differing needs of children.

The Committee last reviewed the issue of childcare and parental employment in 2013.<sup>1</sup> The Committee would use a meeting to explore progress on, and challenges to, delivering childcare entitlements in the capital.

#### 4.4 *Low income households*

The Government is pursuing multiple reforms to the welfare system, which particularly affect low income households, both those in and out of work, as well as introducing the National Living Wage. Officers would scope how the Committee could use its February meeting slot to explore the impact of such reforms on household incomes in London. Officers would set out a meeting scope as part of the Work Programme paper for the committee's November meeting.

- 4.5 Topics for discussion at later meetings will be proposed for agreement by the Committee during the course of the year. This table will be updated in subsequent reports to the Committee.

Meeting Date	Main discussion
18 June 2015	Role of the third sector in employment and skills programmes
14 July 2015	Role of the third sector in employment and skills programmes
10 September 2015	Informal site visit to explore London's digital economy
15 October 2015	London's changing economy – Productive, Flexible, Inclusive?
24 November 2015	London's changing economy – Productive, Flexible, Inclusive?
08 December 2015	Informal manufacturing site visit
January 2016 (date tbc)	Informal food poverty event
21 January 2016	Childcare
24 February 2016	Support for low income households (subject to future agreement)
15 March 2016	To be decided

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor-assembly/london-assembly/publications/parental-employment-in-london>

## 5. Legal Implications

5.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in this report.

## 6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

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### List of appendices to this report:

None

<b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985</b>
List of Background Papers: none
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