

MAYOR OF LONDON

Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb AM

Chair, Economy Committee
City Hall
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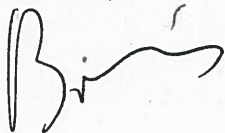
Dear Jenny

Thank you for your letter of 28 October 2014 inviting me to provide a response to the recommendations to the London Assembly Economy Committee's report 'Trained in London: Creating more apprentices to support the London Economy'.

While I am pleased to hear that the Committee shares my vision of increasing the number of apprentices in the capital, I am very disappointed at your report's unfairly negative description of the impact that my London Apprenticeship Campaign has had. Rather than London "falling behind" as the report argues, the capital has seen apprenticeship starts grow at a faster rate than other regions since 2010, more than doubling the number starting only four years ago. The dip in the most recent numbers is part of a national trend and the age category where numbers have decreased is predominately among the over 25s, rather than younger people. This is also all in the context of increased employment numbers, including for young people, and the lowest claimant count on record.

Please find enclosed my response to the report's recommendations.

Yours ever,



Boris Johnson
Mayor of London

Enc.

Cc: Kit Malthouse AM, Deputy Mayor for Business and Enterprise and Deputy Chair, London Enterprise Panel
Harvey McGrath, Deputy Chair, London Enterprise Panel

Specific Responses to the Recommendations of the London Assembly Economy Committee's report on apprenticeships in London

Recommendation	Response
1) The LEP should set out an Apprenticeship Action Plan (AAP) that brings together all the Mayoral initiatives in one document.	The LEP/GLA will produce an Apprenticeship Action Plan, bringing together all the Mayoral initiatives by Spring 2015.
2) The AAP needs to have measures tailored for different sectors and different sizes of businesses. To inform the AAP, the LEP should seek to establish why some sectors generate more apprenticeships per 100 employees than others (e.g. business against tourism and ICT) and whether there is a need for targeted initiatives for working with large firms to boost apprenticeship starts to levels typically seen in competitor countries. Retail and tourism are two areas where the LEP should assess why apprenticeship levels are below the London average. The LEP should also establish whether large firms' use of interns or graduate trainee programmes may be impeding their use of apprenticeships.	The LEP/GLA's Apprenticeship Action Plan will include planned activity to engage with different sectors of London's economy, including small businesses and sectors such as retail, tourism and hospitality. In addition the LEP/GLA will commission two pieces of research around the evidence base for apprenticeship levels in different sectors in London's economy and examine the impact of London firm's use of internships aiming to do this by Spring 2015. However, it is key that the plan remains flexible.
3) The AAP needs to be based on a detailed assessment of the impact of government reforms. The LEP should therefore collate data from the London Trailblazers on how the first stage of the reform process is affecting the market, with findings used to inform the Apprenticeship Action Plan.	The LEP/GLA will continue to engage with government over the Trailblazer programme, and liaise through Transport for London and the Metropolitan Police Service both of which are involved in Trailblazers, to understand and monitor the potential impact of the government's reforms.
4) To inform the AAP the LEP should commission a survey of SMEs to identify any issues that have arisen following implementation of the government reforms which are preventing them taking on new or repeat apprenticeships. The LEP should assess the demand and perceived value of the Mayor supporting the establishment of a peer learning hub.	Following the implementation of the government's funding and standards reforms the LEP/GLA will assess the need for any further survey work of businesses and whether additional learning tools are required.
5) The AAP should set out the total amount of GLA and Government funding available to resume the uplift of the AGE and the timescale over which it is available. The Plan should also set out what conditions will apply to accessing the grant and whether businesses that have already accessed it once will be allowed to access it again.	The GLA and Skills Funding Agency have published information on the funding, timescale and conditions placed upon the AGE uplift to be available from January 2015. This will be included in the AAP.
6) The AAP should set out initial proposals for an enhanced role for the Mayor in supporting the development of a pan-London careers advice service for young people. There should be a clear timetable and enough detail to provide enough material for an effective consultation.	The GLA and LEP are currently undertaking a review of careers services in London and are planning to present proposals for a Careers Offer in London by summer 2015.
7) The AAP should also set out more developing proposals for engaging with the Higher Education sector, especially the Russell Group, to ensure that more Higher-level apprenticeships are offered in London universities.	The LEP/GLA has persuaded government to release additional funding to support Higher Apprenticeship provision in London. We will review whether more measures are needed, to best benefit young Londoners.