

AGENDA

Meeting Apprenticeships Advisory Group

Date Wednesday 4 September 2019

Time 2.00pm

**Place Room F, 169 Union Street,
London SE1 0LL**

Agendas and minutes of the meetings of this Group are published at <https://www.london.gov.uk/skills-for-londoners> (except in those cases where information may be exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act).

Meetings are not held in public and are only open to those invited to attend by the Chair.

Members:

Anthony Impey (Chair)

Carl Andersen

Jane Belfourd

Andre Burwood

Neil Coates

Nichola Hay

Mark Hilton

Ewart Keep

Harinder Matharu

Alison May

Clare McNeil

Michael Nathan

Dianna Neal

Mary Vine-Morris

Neil Weller

Nicholas Whitworth

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1 Introduction and apologies

2 Declarations of interest

Members to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests which they have in any of the items set out on the agenda and, where applicable, consider if they should withdraw from the discussion or the meeting.

3 Minutes from the previous meeting (pages 3 – 8)

Members are asked to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2019.

4 Actions arising from previous meetings (pages 9 – 10)

To be presented by: Megan Dunn, Senior Policy Officer, Skills & Employment.

5 Apprenticeships in London – GLA Economics (oral update)

To be presented by representatives from GLA Economics.

6 Apprenticeship action plan update (pages 11 – 20)

To be presented by: Megan Dunn, Senior Policy Officer, Skills & Employment.

7 Apprenticeship devolution (pages 21 – 24)

To be presented by: Megan Dunn, Senior Policy Officer, Skills & Employment.

8 Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Apprenticeships Advisory Group is scheduled for Thursday, 16 January 2020 at 2.00pm.

9 Any Other Business the Chair Considers Urgent

MINUTES

Meeting: Apprenticeships Advisory Group

Date: Tuesday 21 May 2019

Time: 10.00am

**Place: Room F, 169 Union Street,
London SE1 0LL**

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Members present:

Anthony Impey (Chair)
Andre Burwood
Neil Coates
Nichola Hay
Ewart Keep
Harinder Matharu
Alison May
Mary Vine-Morris

Also in attendance:

Spike van der Vliet-Firth

Officers in attendance:

Forogh Rahmani, Senior Manager, Strategy Policy and Relationships, Skills and Employment
Cameron Tait, Principal Policy Officer, Skills and Employment
Megan Dunn, Senior Policy Officer, Skills and Employment

1 Introduction and apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the first meeting of the Group and gave a background to the Skills for London Business Partnership.
- 1.2 Members agreed to their email addresses being shared amongst other members of the Group and supporting officers.
- 1.3 Apologies for absence were received from Carl Andersen, Jane Belfound, Mark Hilton, Clare McNeil, Dianna Neal, Rob Nitsch, Neil Weller and Michael Nathan.

2 Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3 Terms of reference

- 3.1 The terms of reference were presented to the Group to note.
- 3.2 A query was raised as to how the Apprenticeship Advisory Group was related to the Skills for Londoners Board. Clarification was offered, and it was agreed that the governance structure would be shared with the Group.
- 3.3 **RESOLVED:**
 - (a) **The terms of reference for the Apprenticeships Advisory Group were noted; and**
 - (b) **It was noted that Anthony Impey had been appointed to Chair the Group.**

4 Government's agenda and the Mayor's role

- 4.1 A presentation was given on the Mayor's powers in relation to apprenticeships. The presentation noted central government's responsibility for apprenticeships policy. It was noted that the GLA has no official responsibility but it does however have a 'general power of competence' and the Mayor can use his resources and soft powers to discharge it.
- 4.2 During the subsequent discussion, the following points were raised:
 - Funding
 - Members discussed the Mayor's ask to central government for devolution of the Apprenticeship Levy and the added complexity for national employers, while noting the need for flexibilities that work for London.

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21 May 2019
Minutes

- Concerns were raised over the upcoming Spending Review and the need to be mindful of consequences of the apprenticeship budget being in deficit in the financial year 2020/21 because levy-payers use the money they pay into the levy.
- Members discussed the current difficulties within the system, including the difficulty for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to serve non-levy businesses because of the thin spread of non-levy procurement. Subcontracting happens but is not ideal.
- Discussion covered the issue of non-levy funding running out, and how this changes the situation for employers and providers. Previous debates focused on where to utilise underspend.
- Concerns were raised about how this issue, combined with no further growth funding being awarded for non-levy providers, had created a barrier where individuals were going to college/providers whose allowance had run out, and the young person was being discouraged from taking on an apprenticeship.

Digital Apprenticeship Service (DAS)

- Reservations were expressed about the effectiveness of the DAS, with members noting that it can be difficult for employers and young people to find what they want.
- There was consensus across the Group that this is not ideal as an interface and does not reflect its intended audience.
- The Group felt that the removal of the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) had a huge impact on support for independent training providers (ITPs) and colleges.
- It was felt by the Group that the GLA should take on a role of encouraging levy transfers, particularly given the Group's concerns about the DAS.

Transfers

- Providers and employers on the Group discussed their experiences of the Apprenticeship Levy. The Group identified difficulties in identifying training providers as a key concern for employers.
- The Group discussed options for central government to increase funding including more employers paying the levy, a higher percentage of the levy to be paid, and removing some levels or types of apprenticeship from levy eligibility.

4.3 RESOLVED:

The presentation and subsequent discussion were noted.

5 Apprenticeships Action Plan

5.1 The Apprenticeship Action Plan was presented to the Group. The presentation focussed on the Knowledge Hub, the Apprenticeship Pilot Programme, higher and degree-level apprenticeships, and the 5 Cities initiative.

5.2 A summary of the subsequent discussion is set out below:

Knowledge Hub

- GLA officers introduced the Knowledge Hub.
- Members asked about Knowledge Hub delivery timescales and reaffirmed the need for a central hub to find information, as there was currently no central repository for this information.
- GLA officers confirmed that the Knowledge Hub was currently in its feasibility phase and encouraged members to respond to the Knowledge Hub consultation.

Pilot Programme

- The Pilot Programme was introduced, including the London Progression Collaboration.
- The Group highlighted the need to work with providers with experience of engaging employers, and to consider how to make best use of the Mayor's platform and voice to ensure the programme was a success.
- Officers recognised the level of experience offered by providers and stated they were open to secondments from providers.
- Members recognised the challenge in London of increasing apprenticeship numbers, though any work to increase numbers should not be at the expense of the quality of those apprenticeships.
- The Group was clear that the GLA should think about the long-term sustainability of pilots and to consider how to mitigate the risks of the pilots not continuing past the initial funding.
- Officers agreed to share Knowledge Hub consultation with Group so that members could respond.
- The GLA would set up a pilot oversight Group to review the programme.
- Officers agreed to share details of the higher-level skills research specification.
- It was agreed that officers would investigate the current and previous roles of apprenticeship ambassadors within the GLA and information advice and guidance activities, and would provide an update at the next meeting.

5 Cities

- Officers introduced the 5 Cities work.
- The Group was given an overview of the London policy context on apprenticeship diversity, with the need to focus on increasing the number of apprenticeships overall, ensuring that diversity was considered as a key part of every element of the GLA's apprenticeships programme.
- The GLA will be holding a business roundtable with Department for Education (DfE) and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).
- The Group discussed the need to ensure that the GLA works with businesses, providers and schools to make sure there were more opportunities for Londoners.
- There was a recognition from the Group that some of the public sector has acute skills shortages, and the GLA should look at how it can support and learn from programmes in the public sector.
- Officers agreed to share the proposal for the 5 Cities work with the Group.

Lobbying

- Officers introduced the topics and areas on which the GLA was lobbying for change in the system.
- The Group would like the GLA to consider the re-introduction of some form of ambassador network as part of the lobbying asks.

5.3 RESOLVED:

- (a) The work outlined in the Apprenticeship Action Plan was endorsed;**
- (b) The Knowledge Hub consultation, Higher Level Skills research specification and 5 Cities proposal would be shared with the Group;**
- (c) The Pilot Oversight Group would be set up and a meeting arranged to review the programme; and**
- (d) Officers would take forward the coordination of apprenticeship ambassadors and information advice and guidance activities and an update would be brought to the next meeting of the Group.**

6 Skills and Employment Vision development

- 6.1 The GLA provided a background to the London Skills & Employment Vision and asked the Group for feedback on the apprenticeship questions.
- 6.2 There were concerns raised that the combination of skills shortages and the current political environment could create problems for London's employers. Members noted it was therefore important that employers, government, the

GLA and providers were focused on opening up opportunities for skills training, including for existing employees.

- 6.3 The Group felt that the greatest strength of the Mayor and the GLA was the ability to bring together and influence businesses.
- 6.4 The Group was keen that further flexibility be added to the Apprenticeship Levy, including being able to use the levy for shorter training programmes or being able to break down a full apprenticeship into modules.
- 6.5 Consensus emerged from the Group that 'opening talent pipelines' was a key area where the Mayor could deliver real change within the current apprenticeship system.

6.6 RESOLVED:

The presentation and subsequent discussion were noted.

7 Date of next meeting

- 7.1 The next meeting of the Apprenticeships Advisory Group was scheduled for 4 September at 2.00pm.

8 Any Other Business the Chair Considers Urgent

- 8.1 The Chair asked members and officers to take forward the actions as listed below:
 - An update from GLA Economics on the state of apprenticeships in London to be brought a future meeting;
 - Members to log issues with the system and report them to GLA officers; and
 - Members were invited to suggest agenda items they would like to discuss at future meetings.

8.2 RESOLVED:

The actions outlined at 8.1 above were noted.

9 Close of Meeting

- 9.1 The meeting closed at 12:00pm

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Skills for Londoners Business Partnership Apprenticeships Advisory Group

Date of meeting: **4 September 2019**

Title of report: **Actions Arising from previous meetings**

To be presented by: **Megan Dunn, Senior Policy Officer, Skills & Employment**

Cleared by: **Michelle Cuomo Boorer, Assistant Director – Skills & Employment**

Classification **Public**

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report updates the Apprenticeships Advisory Group on actions arising from the previous meeting of the Group.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 The Apprenticeships Advisory Group is asked to **note** the update on actions arising from the previous meeting.

3 Actions arising from the meeting of 21 May 2019

Agenda Item	Action	Status
3. Terms of Reference	That the Skills for Londoners governance structure would be shared with the Group.	Complete. Circulated to the Group in July 2019.
5. Apprenticeships Action Plan	That the Knowledge Hub consultation, Higher Level Skills research specification and 5 Cities proposal would be shared with the Group.	The 5 cities funding has been approved by central government and planning for how it will be spent is beginning, and will be shared with the group in due course. An update on the Knowledge Hub and Higher Level Skills research will be provided at the meeting.
	That an Apprenticeships for Londoners Oversight Group would be set up	A request for members of the Advisory Group who

	and a meeting arranged to review the programme.	would be willing to form the oversight group was sent in May 2019. There was minimal interest in the Oversight Group, in part because of potential conflicts of interest. A representative of the Advisory group will sit on the London Progression Collaboration governance group, and the possibility of an Apprenticeships for Londoners Oversight Group will be revisited after tenders have been received.
	That officers would take forward the coordination of apprenticeship ambassadors and information advice and guidance activities and an update would be brought to the next meeting of the Group.	A verbal update will be given at the meeting, after sign off of the work plan.
8. Any Other Business the Chair Considers Urgent	That an update from GLA Economics on the state of apprenticeships in London would be brought a future meeting.	GLA Economics will provide an update at Agenda Item 5.
	Members to log issues with the system and report them to GLA officers.	Members should continue to log any issues.
	Members to suggest agenda items they would like to discuss at future meetings.	Input from members into future agenda items is welcomed on an ongoing basis.

4 Next Steps

4.1 Outlined elsewhere within this report.

Appendices:

- None.

Skills for Londoners Business Partnership Apprenticeships Advisory Group

Date of meeting: **4 September 2019**

Title of report: **Apprenticeship action plan**

To be presented by: **Megan Dunn, Senior Policy Officer, Skills & Employment**

Cleared by: **Michelle Cuomo Boorer, Assistant Director – Skills & Employment**

Classification: **Public cover report with Appendix A reserved from publication (contains information intended for publication at a later date)**

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the apprenticeship action plan, which covers the key areas of apprenticeship work for the GLA. A copy of the action plan is attached at Appendix A.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Apprenticeships Advisory Group are asked to:
- 2.1.1 **Note** the apprenticeship action plan, including status updates as outlined at Appendix A.

3 Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The apprenticeship action plan summarises the work of the GLA in this area, and provides both clarity on the work planned, and enables the Apprenticeships Advisory Group to advise on future actions.
- 3.2 The apprenticeship action plan will be regularly updated and brought to the Apprenticeship Advisory Group to keep the group informed.

4 Issues for consideration

- 4.1 The apprenticeship action plan is a working document, used to monitor ongoing work on apprenticeships within the GLA including in the following key areas:
- Research
 - The London Progression Collaboration
 - The Apprenticeship for Londoners programme
 - 5 cities

- 4.2 The main updates since the previous meeting are on:
- the progress of the London Progression Collaboration; and
 - the 5 cities project future activity.

4.3 Further detail is set out in the action plan at Appendix A.

5 Equality comments

- 5.1 Equality considerations are noted throughout the document.
- 5.2 When considering the number of BAME apprentices, as distinct from the proportion of BAME apprentices, it is important to recognise that London has historically low rates of apprentices, and that this number has fallen by 14% since the introduction of the apprenticeship levy. While this fall in apprenticeships is a lower percentage than the rest of the country, it is important that Londoners and London's business are making full use of apprenticeships and the opportunities they offer. The GLA has therefore taken the approach that in order to increase the number of BAME apprentices, the focus has to be increasing the overall number of apprentices, while giving active consideration to apprentice diversity.
- 5.3 Considerations on equality and diversity are given in a separate column throughout the action plan.

6 Legal Comments

- 6.1 Should any specific legal queries arise out of any of the activities above, the GLA will contact TfL Legal¹ to obtain advice.

7 Finance Comments

- 7.1 This proposal has no direct financial implications to the GLA.
- 7.2 Further consideration will be given following consultation with the Government in the coming months with regards to the Mayor's case for apprenticeship funding and policy to be devolved to London.

8 Next steps

- 8.1 Following consideration by the Apprenticeships Advisory Group, work will take place in line with the action plan. The plan will be brought to future meetings for the Apprenticeships Advisory Group to advise.

Timeline of key activities is included below:

Activity	Timeline
Delivery of feasibility stage of London Progression Collaboration begins	Completed
Delivery of feasibility stage of London Progression Collaboration ends	Completed

¹ TfL provide the GLA's legal service function under a GLA Group Shared Service arrangement.

Procurement of Apprenticeships for Londoners programmes	Ongoing
Delivery of London Progression Collaboration second stage begins (dependent on funding)	Completed
Delivery of Apprenticeships for Londoners begins	A revised timeline is currently being drawn up and will be reported to the Group once in place.
Delivery for Apprenticeships for Londoners ends	Autumn 2022
Delivery of London Progression Collaboration second stage ends	September 2021
Evaluation of pilots	Autumn 2022

Appendices:

- **Appendix A** – Apprenticeship action plan (*reserved from publication*)

Document is restricted.

**Skills for Londoners Business Partnership
Apprenticeships Advisory Group**

Date of meeting: **4 September 2019**

Title of report: **Apprenticeship devolution**

To be presented by: **Megan Dunn, Senior Policy Officer, Skills & Employment**

Cleared by: **Michelle Cuomo Boorer, Assistant Director – Skills & Employment**

Classification: **Public cover report with Appendix A reserved from publication (contains information intended for publication at a later date)**

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report asks the Apprenticeships Advisory Group to consider how the Mayor's devolution asks on apprenticeships could work in practice, to improve London's apprenticeship offer for the capital's businesses and Londoners.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Apprenticeships Advisory Group is asked to:
- 2.1.1 **Note** the Mayor's apprenticeship devolution asks and consider how these asks could work in practice to improve London's apprenticeship offer to businesses and Londoners; and
- 2.1.2 **Endorse** the proposal that the GLA takes forward this work, **noting** that progress will be reported back to the Group at its next meeting in January 2020.

3 Introduction and Background

- 3.1 The GLA has been calling for apprenticeship devolution for some time. The Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills met with Anne Milton MP, the previous Minister of State for Education and Skills, in June 2019 to discuss these asks, but no progress was made.
- 3.2 In September 2019, the Mayor will launch his 'Call for Action' document, which has been co-drafted with London Councils. This will make the case for central government to devolve powers to London government to oversee a holistic and well-funded skills and employment system in London.

- 3.3 The 'Call for Action' builds on previous devolution asks around apprenticeships, and an extract is set out at Appendix A (reserved).
- 3.4 Launching the Call for Action in September is an opportunity to influence the newly-led Government to engage in more meaningful conversations about skills devolution.

4 Issues for consideration

- 4.1 At the meeting the Group will be asked to consider what could be done differently with a devolved apprenticeship levy and policy to meet skills shortages.

5 Equality comments

- 5.1 Considerations of equality and diversity should be central to any consideration of policy change.
- 5.2 Apprenticeship devolution should consider how to support London's diverse communities in accessing apprenticeships.

6 Legal Comments

- 6.1 Should any specific legal queries arise out of any of the activities above, the GLA will contact TfL Legal¹ to obtain advice.

7 Financial Comments

- 7.1 This proposal has no direct financial implications to the GLA.
- 7.2 Further consideration will be given following consultation with the Government in the coming months with regards to the Mayor's case for apprenticeship funding and policy to be devolved to London.

8 Next steps

- 8.1 The Apprenticeship Advisory Group will be asked to consider the GLA's proposal to take forward this work at the next meeting of the Group.

Appendices

- **Appendix A** – Extract from the Mayor's *Call for Action (reserved from publication)*

¹ TfL provide the GLA's legal service function under a GLA Group Shared Service arrangement.

Document is restricted.

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