



Greater Manchester All Party Parliamentary Group

Chair Lucy Powell MP
Vice-Chairs Chris Green MP, Lord Goddard of Stockport, Ivan Lewis MP,
Baroness Morris of Bolton, Jim McMahon MP
Secretary Jonathan Reynolds MP
Treasurer Yasmin Qureshi MP



Greater Manchester APPG and APPG for London Joint Meeting

Skills, Education and Apprenticeships in City-Regions

Macmillan Room, Portcullis House, House of Commons

2-3pm, Wednesday 28th November 2018

DRAFT Non-verbatim Minutes

Welcome and Introduction

Bob Neill MP, Co-Chair, APPG for London, welcomed all attendees and remarked that he was looking forward to the meeting which would look at the implications of the budget for cities like London and Greater Manchester especially regards apprenticeships; what improvements to the skills system do cities such as Manchester and London need to better respond to the needs of residents and businesses; and how could further devolution to city regions help to meet the needs of residents and employers?

Skills, Apprenticeships and Education for City-Regions

Thaddaeus Brown, London Councils' Apprentice of the Year 2018 said that his experience as an apprentice had been very positive and he wished to thank Hackney Council for the opportunity and London Councils for the award.

He asked what makes a good apprenticeship? They are very good for those who are practical. However the best ones are those that allow the apprentice to explore the limits of the role – in his case he had not just been limited to design but had been able to express his interest in video and photography

He concluded by saying that he now understood a lot more about his own borough, that he had developed skills and now had employment on a freelance basis. He said he felt it is important that apprenticeships exist as they are an added opportunity so the choice is no longer just university or not. Apprenticeships are another route to reach one's potential.

Cllr Georgia Gould, Executive Member for Skills and Employment, London Councils, began by saying that the whole purpose of education and skills is about helping people achieve their potential.

She said that the economy in Camden was strong and growing but was not working for local residents including those with health and mental health needs. 1 in 3 young people leave school without pass grades for English. She wants to help people into work but for many internships are not possible. 560,000 across London that want work but are unemployed

Cllr Gould welcomed the devolution of the Adult Education Budget as supporting in work progression is very important but it is not enough when FE Colleges are facing cuts. There is a crucial role for local authorities as they know their residents – and can support community learning. If we had more devolution local authorities could look at providing 16-19 careers advice for example.

She concluded her remarks by lamenting the decline in apprenticeship starts which she said are at the lowest number per '000 in Camden despite some of the most successful businesses being sited in Camden and paying the levy.

Cllr Sean Fielding, Greater Manchester Combined Authority lead for Skills and Employment, began his remarks by explaining what Greater Manchester(GM) has delivered. He said that GM did get some money for apprenticeships – and numbers grew. It also has a 'working well' fund of £52m to support people into work. There is also the £92m AEB budget.

He said that GM councils know what residents want and it is not just about getting a job but also about quality of life/helping people all round. For example GM is an age friendly city region with excellent services for over 50s. The reality is that we need to prepare people as many will need to look for a new job at age 50 unlike his parents' generation who often had one job for life.

Cllr Fielding reported that devolution is not all about getting the cash – although GM had received £20m from the budget it didn't know it was getting - £10 m to support those in self employment, £7m for NEETs and £3m to meet digital skills gaps. GM has for example set up an Education Skills Advisory Panel in collaboration with the Government. Because health and social care is devolved in GM it is also able to take a whole system approach.

He concluded by stating that GM intends to maintain a close working relationship with the Government on this set of issues for which they will put the their differences to one side. It will be important to know what they are prioritising and for GM to engage to explain how a devolved approach can deliver those results. Meanwhile there remain concerns about barriers to the Adult Education Budget and a pressing need for the Government to promote parity of esteem for T levels with academic routes.

Q&A and Debate

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Lucy Powell MP, Chair, Greater Manchester All Party Parliamentary Group, invited questions and comments from those in attendance. A number of points were made including:

- Devolution seems to have slipped down the Government's agenda – it should be revived with a call for devolution of education to become part of the package
- Government needs to step up on T levels - need to be far clearer that they are equal and will have parity with more academic pursuits
- Apprenticeships should be aligned with college starts so a real choice offered between an apprenticeship and further study – in GM a UCAS like system has been commissioned by Mayor Andy Burnham
- Connexions was not perfect but a London wide carer service again would be beneficial for the city
- T levels need explaining especially to parents who exercise most influence over their children's choices
- Apprenticeship levy not working despite providing a massive opportunity – there needs to be far more flexibility allowed including part time apprenticeships
- In construction industry many people are working with lots of experience but no qualifications. We should support routes to proper qualifications to help individuals and make the sector more productive
- Reskilling is a huge issue especially for people experiencing redundancies.
- Need to challenge gender segregation in apprenticeships – only 2% in construction and 7% in engineering are female
- Social care is very low paid and mostly performed by women so part of solution is to improve pay but also ensure women go into STEM subject related jobs
- London First is working with NWBLT and happy to do more on career advice and transferrable scheme

Conclusions and Next Steps

Lucy Powell MP, Chair, Greater Manchester All Party Parliamentary Group, and **Bob Neill MP**, Co-Chair, APPG for London, ended the meeting by thanking all contributors for their insights. It is good to see London and Greater Manchester here together and sharing ideas, he said. He also praised the regions' joint agenda: regards education; accessing the shared prosperity fund for more skills funding ; and getting more employers to use apprenticeship. A joint letter emphasising a number of 'asks' common to both London and GM will be prepared by the Secretariat sent to the Government once all speeches and comments have been considered.

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ATTENDEES

- Bob Neill MP – MP for Bromley and Chair London APPG
- Lucy Powell MP – MP for Manchester Central and and Chair GM APPG
- Steve Reed MP – Croydon North
- Jim McMahon MP - Oldham
- Emma Dent Coad MP - Kensington
- Liz McInnes MP – Heywood and Middleton
- Lord Leslie Turnberg
- Lord Keith Bradley
- Cllr Sean Fielding
- Cllr Georgia Gould
- Cllr Assim Rashid – Rochdale Council
- Dianna Neal – London Councils
- Stephen King – London Councils
- Spike Vander Vliet-Firth – London Councils
- Gemma Kappala-Ramsamy – London Councils
- Mark Isherwood – Camden Council
- Dan Neary – Camden Council
- Mary Vine-Morris – AoC
- K Newcombe - Berkely Homes
- Neil Moore – Lloyds Banking Group
- Claire Tunley – City of London Corporation
- Philip Saunders – City of London Corporation
- Andy MacGregor- SEETEC
- Nick Beal – office of Steve Reed MP
- Simon Nokes – GMCA
- Ryan Gow – London Assembly
- Dr Jack Brown – Senior Researcher, Centre for London
- Jordan Cummins - Associate Director, CBI
- Hannah Gibson - Policy and Government Relations Advisor, CITB
- Stephen Greek - Senior Researcher, GLA Conservatives
- Mark Hilton - Executive Director, Policy, London First
- Abbie Langridge - Apprentice, CITB
- Amy Leppanen - Communications Officer, Centre for London
- Elena Magrini - Researcher, Centre for Cities
- Ed Richardson - Senior Policy Adviser, CBI
- Nicola Bardsley - SEETEC

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- Chris Havard – ENWL
- Sanmeet Kaur – Fawcett Society
- Suzanne King – Engineering UK
- Kevin Peel - Office of James Frith MP
- Will Pickering – UCU
- Ciaran Tully – NHF
- Steve Barwick - DevoConnect
- Gill Morris - DevoConnect

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This speaker and chair briefing has been prepared by DevoConnect who provide the secretariat function for the Greater Manchester All Party Parliamentary Group. If you have any questions, please get in touch via appggm@devoconnect.co.uk.