

Hello everyone,

Last month the Government delayed its Levelling Up White Paper - and with it its paper on the future of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) until later this month. We will bring you, hopefully, new details in next month's newsletter.

A leak of the report suggests that **Ministers plan sweeping changes to local government** as part of the whole levelling up agenda.

There has been some surprise in Universities that the **Government has sought to outsource the provision of the Turing Scheme to Capita**. The Turing Scheme is the new international student-exchange programme. Its predecessor - ERASMUS - had been run successfully for many years by the British Council.

As we all slowly return to work **the Government has sought to take action to mitigate workforce disruption caused by Omicron**. The government is also working with the public and private sector to develop plans to manage absences in order to ensure sectors are prepared and disruption is minimised.

So far, disruption caused by Omicron has been controlled in most parts of the public sector, but public sector leaders have been asked to test plans against worst case scenarios of workforce absence scenarios of 10%, 20% and 25%.

They have identified a range of mitigations, including identifying additional staff - such as volunteers in the public sector or former teachers in schools -prioritising service delivery and reducing bureaucracy.

Finally, let me wish you all a Happy New Year - and lets hope for a very different and very positive 2022.

Best wishes and stay safe

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(Please email me to subscribe and feel free to share the newsletter)

Marchmont Employment and Skills Observatory, IIB, University of Exeter

News



Ufi announce £1.5m of new grant funding

Applications to the VocTech Seed grant fund will open on January 12. Full details and pre-application workshops are available now.

VocTech Seed is our test bed where the first spark of an idea can be scoped and tested in the supportive environment that Ufi funding provides. The fund enables us to grant fund projects that are at a relatively early stage, helping to prototype ideas and work out the next steps necessary on the journey to long-term success. Grants are between £15,000 and £50,000 for projects lasting from three to 12 months.



Exeter's economy growth is predicted to outstrip Plymouth and Bristol in 2022

Exeter is predicted to be the South West's business superstar of 2022 with economic output increasing and the number of jobs growing - leaving Bristol and Plymouth well behind.

The newly published **UK Powerhouse report** says Devon's capital is expected to see output remain steady, at a predicted 3% by the end of 2022, maintaining the city's 8th place spot out of 50 British cities surveyed.

Exeter is also expected to see a significant improvement in jobs with 1.9% year-on-year growth, lifting the city from 22nd place in 2021 to 12th by the end of 2022.



Skills for every young person: The Financial Impact of Youth Unemployment

Last week the House of Lords Youth Unemployment Committee published an important new report – Skills for every young person.

The findings of the report make for grim reading. Today, 800,000 young people (which is 12.6% of 16 to 24-year-olds) are not in work, or in full-time study. Moreover, 631,000 are not in any form of education, employment or training and 475,000 are unemployed, of which 141,000 have been unemployed for at least six months.

Over the past ten years, funding per student aged 16 to 18 has fallen by 11% in real terms. Moreover, participation in adult skills and lifelong learning is at its lowest level in 23 years.



Levelling-up white paper delayed

The Government has confirmed that the levelling-up white paper will now be published in January 2022. The white paper, which was expected to be published before the end of 2021, will provide details about policies and funding to help increase economic growth across the UK. A decision on the future of LEPs is also expected to be included in the white paper.



The Wider Benefits of Adult Learning for Adult Social Care

The Campaign for Learning's report, Reforming Adult Social Care: Integrating Funding, Pay, Employment and Skills Policies in England, is based on seventeen contributions from experts in both the adult social care sector and the post-16 education, skills and employability sectors.

Three themes are common to most of the authors' contributions – the scale of the adult social care sector in England, the complexity of policy making for the sector, and the need for greater integration of funding, pay, employment and skills.



Ministers must act to prevent job losses as restrictions bite says TUC

TUC respond to the latest employment figures published by the Office for National Statistics, which show payroll employees up on pre-pandemic levels, but self-employment down by 759,000 and the level of real pay falling for six months since April,

LEP Latest

The HotSW LEP has launched an interactive clean growth dashboard to present an up-to-date picture of clean growth in the area and provide key information to help policy makers and business leaders determine the action that needs to be taken to meet net zero targets.

Released to coincide with the end of COP26, the dashboard features a comprehensive analysis of data collated from the LEP's partners and other organisations across the heart of the south west area.

The resulting indicators suggest that a major shift in pace and scale will be required to meet the region's clean growth targets.

New Publications and Reports

Unlock routes to employment for young people

Preparing young people for the world of work is not only critical to the UK's economic future but will benefit organisations by strengthening talent pipelines and improving workforce diversity. However, this latest CIPD research, Youth Employment in the UK 2021, found that many young people do not think they receive enough support while in education to prepare for their future careers.

The report revealed that more than half of graduates would have considered doing an apprenticeship instead of a degree, but just 1% of young people received support to apply for an apprenticeship while at school. Furthermore, fewer than one in three young people received careers advice at either school or college, with most help centred around academic options.

Events

Next steps for UK research and innovation

25 January (online)

This conference focuses on priorities for supporting research and innovation - and will be an opportunity to examine the issues in the context of the Government's Innovation Strategy, looking at its main elements and objectives, and issues for implementation.

Next steps for careers advice in England

26 January (online)

This conference will be an opportunity to discuss the Skills for Jobs White Paper and the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill and their implications for the careers landscape in England. There will also be wider discussion on the structure and organisation of careers advice, developing a long-term careers strategy in England, improving careers services in educational settings, and implementation of the Baker Clause.

The Further Education Management and Leadership Conference 2022

9 February

Hear how managers and leaders are pushing boundaries to enhance provisions and deliver excellence. This event will showcase best practice case studies covering key topics and challenges faced in further education including accessing funding, digital and blended learning, improving inclusivity, creating greener campuses, and collaborating with employers, universities, and other FE institutions. There will also be an opportunity to network with fellow leaders from colleges and adult education centres.

The National Graduate Employability Conference 2022

2 March

Hear the latest updates on graduate employability and the graduate job market from experts across higher education. Explore evidence-led strategies for improving graduate employability through selected case studies, including improving engagement with careers services, working to increase social mobility, and boosting student confidence. You will have the opportunity to network with senior colleagues from across the education sector, sharing strategies to improve graduate employability service delivery and improve engagement.

Made for Space 2022 - Conference

On the 30th and 31st March, you will be able to explore the latest innovations, technologies, and opportunities being adopted by the Space sector. The conference will focus on key emerging technologies and their alignment to the Government's National Space Strategy including Supply Chain, In-Space Remote Operations, Components and Materials, and wider "art-of-the-possible" technology development.