

Salford Employment and Skills Strategy



2023-28

Partners
in Salford

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The organisations shown agree to work through the Salford Skills and Work Board to implement the priorities contained in this strategy. They will:

- nominate a member of senior leadership who will take responsibility for their contribution to the implementation of the strategy
- support and lead on strategy deliverables, tasks and milestones relevant to the role their organisation plays in supporting young people, adults and employers in Salford
- provide regular data and updates to the Board on progress in implementing the strategy.

Salford City Council



Foreword

Recent years have seen unprecedented change to Salford's economy and labour market. The city is now home to a vibrant economy that is leading growth in Greater Manchester. Salford's population has grown at a rate that nowhere else in northern England can match. A good number of our residents are now, on average, better qualified and better paid than at any point in recent decades.

However Salford remains a city beset by high levels of poverty and inequality, narrowing life chances for too many people. As the evidence base for this strategy shows, low educational attainment, high unemployment and high levels of economic inactivity mean that too many Salford residents cannot get jobs or cannot access good, well paid jobs. So the challenge in Salford is to better connect local people to the jobs and opportunities now being created in the city.

Salford's Employment and Skills Strategy 2023-28 has a pivotal role to play in ensuring that Salford residents can access the benefits of the city's growing labour market – getting their fair share through better

jobs and better incomes. Achieving this will help improve the quality of life for Salford residents, reducing poverty, narrowing inequalities and building a more inclusive economy that benefits more people.

No organisation, acting alone, can make the aims of this strategy a reality. This strategy has been developed by the Salford Skills and Work Board and a wider partnership of employers and education, training and employment support providers. As Chair of the Skills and Work Board, I look forward to working with my fellow board members to review our progress in delivering this strategy over the coming months and years.



Councillor Bill Hinds
Chair of the Salford Skills and Work Board





Introduction

The past decade has seen Salford emerge as one of the fastest growing places in the North of England. This change – driven by the regeneration of parts of the city and the related growth in the number of people and jobs – is creating opportunities at a pace and scale not seen in Salford for generations.

This Salford Employment and Skills Strategy 2023-28 sets out how partners in Salford plan to harness this opportunity to create a more inclusive labour market, helping more local people of working age share in the benefits of the city's growth. The strategy focuses on adults and young people aged 16 and above but it is not intended to be all-encompassing – instead it highlights the key challenges and opportunities that need to be addressed to grow a fairer economy, sharing wealth more widely across the city's communities in accordance with Salford's Inclusive and Green Economy Strategy.

No organisation, acting alone, can deliver on the objectives and priorities contained in this refreshed strategy. Concerted, collaborative action is required across the public, voluntary and private sectors to ensure that more local people and local employers share in the city's growth.

Much has changed since Salford's last Employment and Skills Strategy was published in 2017. Since then there have been two general elections and four different prime ministers; the UK left the EU; while the Covid-19 pandemic produced a seismic economic and social impact and its after-effects are still being felt by young people, adults and employers across the city. But despite all this, Salford's labour market has thrived - with more, better qualified residents and a wider range of well-paid jobs now located in the city.

This new strategy is intended to capitalise on the city's economic vitality so that more Salford residents are able to access the benefits of growth; and more employers are better able to access the skills they need to continue that growth. It outlines a clear set of objectives and related priorities for the next five years to 2028, all underpinned by a more detailed delivery plan covering the period between 2023 and 2025, beyond the next general election.

The labour market in Salford

The labour market is where people find work and where employers find workers. It is influenced by a wide range of factors, particularly the condition of the local and national economy.

Salford's labour market has seen rapid growth and change in recent years, defying the weak performance of the UK economy since the 2008 financial crisis. This has been characterised by:

A sharp increase in the number of working people living in Salford. Salford is one of the fastest-growing local authority districts in England and Wales. Census 2021 data shows that the city's population grew by 15.4% - 36,000 more residents – between 2011 and 2021, to reach 269,900. The percentage increase in Salford's population was 2.5 times higher than the national average (6.6%) and three times higher than the North West average. No other local authority in northern England grew by more than 10%. Growth was fastest among people aged between 25 and 40 – the number of people aged between 30 and 34 living in Salford grew by a 42% between 2011 and 2021. The proportion of Salford's population born outside the UK has also risen quickly, from 14% in 2011 (33,000 people) to 21% in 2021 (57,000 people).

Strong growth in demand for labour from employers in Salford. Despite weak national economic growth and the impact of the pandemic, the number of employee jobs in Salford in the five years between 2016 and 2021 grew by 19%, more than four times faster than the national average. Almost 90% of these new jobs were full time roles. The

highest volumes of jobs in Salford (and some of its fastest growing sectors) are found in areas such as health, information and communication, and professional/scientific/technical services – sectors which tend to rely on well paid, highly skilled work. There has also been strong growth in employment within the city's increasingly vibrant cultural economy.

A profound shift in the pattern of work among Salford residents. In 2022 52% of working Salford residents were employed in highly skilled associate professional, professional or management roles – this is above the national average. The comparable figure for Salford in 2018 was 38%, well below the national average at the time. Meanwhile median incomes for working Salford residents in 2022 was £28,801 – level with the national average and 11% higher than the Greater Manchester average.

However this economic success story is contrasted by a very different picture for many Salford residents. Economic inactivity – people of working age who are not in work or not seeking work, usually due to a health condition – has risen sharply since the pandemic. Today 1 in 9 working age people in Salford are not in work, not seeking work, and in receipt of DWP benefits (usually due to health conditions). The number of Salford residents claiming these benefits is at its highest level since comparable records began in 1999. A higher than average proportion of these claimants in Salford are under 40, with decades of their working lives potentially ahead of them. Those affected are concentrated in Salford's deprived neighbourhoods. For



example, residents of Little Hulton are seven times more likely to claim Universal Credit (no work requirements) than those living in Boothstown and Ellenbrook, a couple of miles away.

Poor attainment by young people risks harming their ability to access the good jobs now being created in Salford.

Attainment of a level 3 qualification (such as an A Level, BTEC or T Level) by the age of 19 is a strong predictor of whether a young person will be able to gain the higher level skills required for many well paid jobs. Unfortunately in Salford, the proportion of young people aged 19 who hold a level 3 qualification is 15.3 percentage points below the national average. This gap is almost three times larger than the next Greater Manchester local authority. Salford ranks 149th out of 150 top tier local authorities in England against this important measure.

Other long-standing problems – such as in relation to low levels of self-employment and high numbers of residents with low or no qualifications – also remain.

The challenge for this strategy is to ensure that the welcome growth of Salford’s economy and labour market works to enhance opportunity and narrow inequalities within the city. For that to happen, this strategy must ensure that more young people, unemployed and economically inactive adults, and existing workers in low paid jobs, are able to get their fair share of Salford’s thriving economy.

Policy context

This Employment and Skills Strategy is an important addition to the Salford Way¹ – the city’s blueprint for building on its economic transformation to tackle inequalities. Within this sit a suite of strategies and plans, all focused on delivering a more inclusive, more equal Salford. They include:

- Salford’s Inclusive and Green Economy Strategy², which sets out a vision for a fairer and more inclusive local economy that delivers greater social and environmental justice, sharing wealth more widely across Salford’s communities.
- The Tackling Poverty Strategy, with its emphasis on preventing people falling into poverty, providing support to those in poverty, and campaigning for change in Government policy and practice.
- Salford’s Equalities and Inclusion Strategy, aimed at ensuring equal access to services, opportunities and representation.
- Strategies relating primarily to young people, such as the Salford NEET Reduction Strategy and the city’s Education Strategy.
- Strategies focused on key challenges and opportunities in the city – such as the the city’s Locality Plan (health and

wellbeing); its Digital Strategy; and Salford’s Culture, Creativity and Place Strategy (Suprema Lex).

- The recent commitment by Salford City Council to afford ‘protected characteristic’ status to cared for children and care experienced young people in all Equality Impact Assessments, alongside other characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010.

Salford’s Employment and Skills Strategy supports the delivery of these city-wide ambitions.

Arguably it is difficult for any of Salford’s key priorities relating to inequality, poverty and inclusion to be addressed without a significant contribution from a thriving local labour market.

This strategy builds on the previous Salford Employment and Skills Strategy 2017-20, which resulted in significant improvements in areas such as the quality and availability of careers advice and guidance for young people; improvements in support for young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET); enhanced ESOL support and access to digital training for adults; the launch of the Salford Living Wage City Action Plan and the creation of early career pathways through Salford Futures, Kickstart and Build Salford.

¹ <https://www.salford.gov.uk/your-council/the-salford-way/>

² <https://www.salford.gov.uk/your-council/the-salford-way/inclusive-and-green-economy-strategy/>



The Employment and Skills Strategy's objectives and priorities also reflect an economic and policy context that governs how partners in Salford work to improve outcomes for local people and employers. Salford plays a pivotal role in Greater Manchester's economy and labour market and benefits from Greater Manchester's dedicated flexibilities in relation to education, skills and employment support, as well as (uniquely in England) opportunities linked to health devolution.

As many Salford residents work elsewhere in Greater Manchester as work in Salford itself. Organisations within the city work closely with key city region organisations – such as Greater Manchester Chamber (the employer representative body designated by the Secretary of State for Education to produce Greater Manchester Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)) and Greater Manchester Combined Authority.

Salford's strategies are well aligned with The Greater Manchester Strategy 2021-31, which sets out the city region's ambitions to become a greener, fairer and more prosperous place. Devolution has meant greater Greater Manchester influence over key areas such as transport (reflected in the 2040 Transport Strategy), health (via the Greater Manchester Integrated Care Partnership) and also skills (most clearly in relation to Adult Education Budget, to date).

But the overwhelming majority of funding and policy priorities in relation to education, training, welfare and employment support are decided not in Salford or even (despite devolution) in Greater Manchester, but in Whitehall. Over recent years Government policy has focused on areas such as:

- major reform to welfare, most clearly via the rollout of Universal Credit
- a focus on improving the quality and profile of post-16 and post-18 technical education, creating new alternatives to A Levels and Bachelor's degrees
- rising investment in apprenticeships and a diversification of apprenticeships into a much wider range of occupations
- growing employer leadership over the development of qualifications and increasingly, investment in the skills system
- compared to previous years, relatively modest investment in employment support programmes with an emphasis on building capacity within Jobcentre Plus to support claimants
- limited devolution of funding and accountability to GMCA, focused primarily on adult skills and some employment support activity
- a lack of connectivity at national level in inter-related policy and programmes/interventions across education, skills, work and health, which can lead to missed opportunities about the most appropriate way to deliver the right support.

With another general election on the horizon there may be more change ahead. It is in this context that the Employment and Skills Strategy has been developed – built to a five year timeframe with a flexible delivery plan, which can adapt as the operating environment changes, driving implementation of the strategy.

Building the strategy

Extensive work was undertaken to build the evidence base for the refreshed Salford Employment and Skills Strategy, focused on three phases of activity:

1. **Data and intelligence:** A thorough review of available data was undertaken to establish the key facts about the labour market in Salford. This included information about Salford's population, its workforce, its employers as well as extensive analysis of current employment support, education and training provision. Information and emerging findings from this work were collated into an Insight Report, which provides the underpinning evidence base for this strategy.
2. **Sharing and engaging:** Equipped with the findings from the Insight Report, an extensive programme of engagement was undertaken with individuals and organisations across Salford. These sessions – with young people, voluntary sector organisations, employers and providers of employment support, education and training services – shared the emerging findings of desk-based data and intelligence review, discussed how Salford's labour market has evolved in recent years, and sought to identify key challenges and opportunities that require addressing via the refreshed strategy.
3. **Developing and refining:** With extensive feedback gathered via the engagement phase, work began to develop the objectives, priorities and supporting delivery plan. Earlier iterations were refined with extensive input from the Salford Work and Skills Board – the key leadership group responsible for not just developing the strategy, but also the leadership and management of its implementation.

Objectives and priorities

This refreshed Salford Employment and Skills Strategy identifies four key objectives, from which a total of 17 priorities have been developed, all focused on shaping service delivery and influencing future funding and policy. The objectives are consistent with those identified in the previous Employment and Skills Strategy, as follows:

- **Objective 1:** Young people in Salford achieving and progressing in their careers
- **Objective 2:** More adults in Salford entering and staying in good work
- **Objective 3:** More working residents progressing in their careers
- **Objective 4:** Employers in Salford better able to access and develop skills for growth

In developing the priorities and underpinning implementation plan, a number of common themes are clear that span most, if not all areas of the strategy. They include:

- **The importance of lifelong learning** in enabling working age residents from all walks of life to maximise their potential.
- **The need for many interventions to focus in Salford's deprived areas,** where need is highest and opportunities at their lowest.



- **Improving the connection between employers and education and training providers,** to equip more local people with the skills employers seek now and in future.
- **That good work should be central to the city's future growth** – built on fair pay, job security, effective employee voice, development opportunities and a good work/life balance.
- **Environmental challenges** will, over time, require an adaptation to learning, particularly within occupations where new regulation and technology will require new skills sets.

Details about each objective and linked priorities are outlined over the next few pages.

Objective 1: Young people in Salford achieving and progressing in their careers

If inequalities are to be narrowed, more young people in Salford will need to be able to access well paid work.

The data tells a challenging story. Young people's attainment is not keeping pace with other places or with the growth in demand for skilled labour in Salford. Large attainment gaps between Salford and regional and national averages are established by the end of key stage 2 which do not narrow by age 19. This means that, compared to the national average, each year around 330 fewer 19 year olds living in Salford get the level 3 qualifications that are usually required to go on to the higher levels of study required for many well-paid jobs. Persistent low school attendance – exacerbated by the pandemic – risks perpetuating this pattern of low attainment. Consequently, weak level 3 attainment means that entry rates to higher education by young people in Salford are below average.

Youth unemployment in Salford is above average, as is economic inactivity among young people. In common with other areas, outcomes for care leavers are well below those of other young people. And though there has been good progress in reducing NEETs, levels remain above average and a significant increase in population risks a significant rise in the number of NEETs.

From the perspective of employers, the rapid growth in the population of young people creates an opportunity to create a larger pipeline of skilled, early career talent. However consultations with young people and service providers described issues with

aspiration, careers advice and guidance and from some young people, a sense that the good jobs now available in Salford 'are not for them'. This is despite good progress being made in Salford in improving the advice and guidance services available to young people, as seen in the strong performance of Salford schools in meeting the key Gatsby service benchmarks.

Four priorities have been developed in response:

1. **To build on improvements in careers advice to drive more relevant, employer-led activities**, with an emphasis on employer-led careers inspiration to improve awareness of good local jobs and the routes young people can take to access them. This is not simply about more or better resources/ activity but about building the capacity and capability of the careers system that enables our schools, colleges, youth employment services and employers to offer relevant, accessible and inspiring support to every young person in Salford.
2. **Diversifying the pathways available to well paid, high skilled occupations in Salford** to include more technical education routes that do not rely on the traditional A level / Bachelor's degree path. The new Greater Manchester Institute of Technology, based at the University of Salford, has a key role to play in working with local schools, the college and employers to support more local people to gain the higher technical skills that are in high demand in our economy. There will also be



opportunities to capitalise on plans for a Greater Manchester Baccalaureate (the MBacc) as part of the GM ambitions around an integrated technical education, skills and work city-region.

3. **Strengthening the support available to improve young people’s attendance, attainment and progression**, noting challenges with engagement and mental wellbeing. A focus on enhancing young people’s resilience will be enabled via support for staff working in post-16 settings to improve advice, support and signposting to self-help resources, as well as the integration of good mental wellbeing into curriculum design and delivery.
4. **Targeted activity to improve young people’s engagement in education, employment and training** via a fuller suite of support for NEETs, those at risk of becoming NEET, neurodiverse, care experienced and low attenders, including via devolved UK Shared Prosperity Fund resources.

KPIs

The KPIs, benchmarked to Greater Manchester and national averages where available, that we will use to track progress within this objective will include:

1. The percentage of 19 year olds in Salford who gain a level 3 qualification.
2. The number and percentage of young people aged 16-18 who are NEET, including care leavers.
3. The number of young people and young adults in Salford accessing T Level (Level 3) and HTQ (level 4-5) programmes.
4. The number and percentage of 16-18 year olds resident in Salford who start an apprenticeship.
5. City and neighbourhood-level participation in higher education, as shown in OfS TUNDRA data.

Objective 2: More adults in Salford entering and staying in good work

Salford is far from alone in seeing a significant increase in the number of working age residents claiming benefits due to ill-health related economic inactivity. But high and rising levels of claimants risk creating a difficult long term legacy – evidence suggests that once people claim a benefit such as Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit (no work requirements), only a small minority of claimants are able to move back into work. Services focused on supporting this cohort to re-enter employment can be costly with relatively modest success rates owing to the complexity of the barriers to work faced by many claimants.

Government is turning its attention to reducing economic inactivity but the proposed interventions are not at a significant scale and participation by claimants in voluntary programmes is likely to be low. Planned changes to the Work Capability Assessment may, in time, bring more people back into regular contact with Jobcentre Plus services.

Salford has the opportunity to bring employment and health services closer together to better prevent and address health-related economic inactivity. Salford's employers support a growing number of jobs in the city, but this is concentrated in a few areas that, for some residents, are not readily accessible. With long term unemployment and economic inactivity consistently rising in Salford, six priorities have been identified:

- 1. Flexibilities should be sought in the welfare system to improve work incentives.** Feedback from some claimants and service providers highlighted that claimants often feel they have 'more to lose than gain' by attempting to re-enter work. Flexibilities such as the Universal Credit taper rate, permitted work rules, and the minimum income floor for the self-employed should be lobbied for via GMCA, although such requests are unlikely to be granted in the short term.
- 2. Support for those in work but affected by ill health should be enhanced,** to reduce the flow of working age people in Salford becoming economically inactive. Led by public health, a package of measures comprising greater use of social prescribing, self-help resources and other pre-clinical intervention measures can be targeted on those in receipt of GP Fit Notes or subject to repeat work absences.
- 3. A new support pathway for recently inactive residents who have left work can be designed** with NHS primary care and DWP input to enable faster, better interventions that support more people to re-enter work quickly, rather than face delays which can see their health conditions deteriorate.



4. Options should be explored to trial new mainstream funded employment support provision

for economically inactive residents including in relation to neurodiverse residents and care-experienced adults (who have been in care at any stage in their life) - working with DWP to build on government policy intent to develop new support programmes focused on reducing economic inactivity.

5. The gap in self-employment support for residents with significant barriers to work should be addressed.

Salford has a low self employment rate and existing programmes disincentivise providers from working with individuals who have more complex needs.

6. A partnership with DWP in Salford will be fostered

to agree annual priorities for investment (informed by this strategy's evidence base and Jobcentre Plus feedback), specify service requirements and procure provision to address gaps in support to local jobseekers, and monitor the impact to inform future joint annual priorities.

KPIs

The KPIs, benchmarked to Greater Manchester and national averages where available, that we will use to track progress within this objective will include:

1. The number of residents that are unemployed (claiming Job Seekers Allowance and unemployed elements of Universal Credit)
2. The percentage of working age residents that are economically inactive (annual population survey)
3. The number of residents claiming Employment and Support Allowance (support group) and Universal Credit (no work requirements)
4. The percentage of working age residents that are self employed
5. The number of Universal Credit claimants who have been 'searching for work' for over one year

Objective 3: More working residents progressing in their careers

Most working age people in Salford are already in work and recent years have seen a significant shift towards higher skilled, better paid work.

Partners in Salford want to continue that trend by enabling more local people in low paid work to progress to better paid roles. At a time when employers continue to report high vacancy levels, there is an opportunity to help more local people get the skills needed to access better paid work by aligning funding flexibilities and employer needs.

Four priorities have been identified in support of this objective, as follows:

1. **Support the implementation of Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) priorities in Salford**, by working with providers and employers to clarify the latter's skills needs and adjust post-16 and post-18 programmes in Salford in response. The LSIP has established a strong evidence base of employer skills needs but its impact will be minimal unless employers and providers are able to work more closely together to equip local people with the skills employers seek.
2. **Develop an ESOL strategy for Salford, with a focus on access and referral.** Demographic growth and international migration has pushed up demand for ESOL provision. Partners in Salford report a wide range of ESOL needs among many recent arrivals and though the scale of ESOL provision is reported to be broadly adequate, the

mix and balance of provision may need adjustment to better meet need and enable people in Salford to reach their full potential.

3. **Develop a lifelong learning strategy for Salford** that will include actions to enable more local people to capitalise on adult learning to enter and move forward in their careers, including new types of publicly funded programmes such as Government's 'Skills Bootcamps', level 3 'Free Courses for Jobs', and the planned new Lifelong Loan Entitlement.
4. **Large local employers to model best practice in staff recruitment, development and retention.** Feedback has highlighted opportunities for Salford employers to adopt more innovative methods for filling vacancies and retaining talent, benefitting local people – particularly for current or potential staff with caring responsibilities. Led by employers, this work could be informed by recent GMCA Foundational Economy innovation activity and may include (for example) more widespread adoption of flexible recruitment methods that minimise barriers to job entry; stronger OD strategies that improve workforce development and progression; and potentially a shared apprenticeship scheme among large employers in the area.



KPIs

The KPIs, benchmarked to Greater Manchester and national averages where available, that we will use to track progress within this objective will include:

1. The number of DfE adult learning aim enrolments and achievement by Salford residents at level 3
2. The number of apprenticeship starts by adults in Salford at level 3 and above
3. ESOL learning aim enrolments by Salford residents
4. The number of local employers signing up to the Salford City Mayor's Employment Standards Charter / Greater Manchester Good Employment Charter.

Objective 4: Employers in Salford better able to access and develop skills for growth

While vacancy levels in the UK labour market have fallen from their summer 2022 peak, employers in Salford continue to report difficulties filling posts, raising the cost of doing business and impacting on productivity. For many employers the primary solution to this has been to significantly increase salaries – effective in many cases, but not financially sustainable for employers in the long run.

Consultations with employers also found a level of uncertainty about the nature and extent of the programmes and agencies working in Salford around business growth, employment support, skills and training. The three priorities outlined below aim to not only improve the advice and support available to employers to recruit talented local people with the skills businesses need; they also aim to help more employers retain and develop more staff, better meeting skills needs. The priorities are as follows:

- 1. Increase the scale and scope of employer relationship with further education (FE), higher education (HE) and independent training providers in Salford.** This priority is of pivotal importance to enabling more local people to access good jobs. FE and HE providers in Salford already work with many employers, however feedback gathered through this project indicates that recent chronic skills shortages have not prompted an increase in employers engaging with the organisations that are funded by the Government to prepare young people and adults for the labour market. As part of this, there is scope to improve the coordination of services that seek to work with employers, to provide greater clarity to employers. For example, there is scope for business support providers to better identify and then communicate employer skills needs to FE, HE and independent training providers in Salford, helping to bridge skills demand and promote deeper partnerships between employers and providers.
- 2. Improve employer capacity to support good employee health,** helping more employers to retain skilled workers, while reducing the number of people who move from work into economic inactivity. A package of advice and guidance to employers – promoted by business support and engagement activities – could assist, along with an exploration of whether occupational health services used by larger local employers could also accommodate SMEs, who often lack access to such resources.
- 3. Strengthen the approach of large employers to deliver social value from major contracts that benefit local people.** Significant work has been undertaken by Salford City Council to ensure that its use of public funding generates jobs, training and work experience for Salford residents. Build Salford – helping young people in Salford get a pathway into construction – is a good example of what can be achieved when the council, college, developers and employers work together to deliver social value. There is scope to expand the scale of this activity and extend it into new sectors (such as digital and health) using similar models.



KPIs

The KPIs, benchmarked to Greater Manchester and national averages where available, that we will use to track progress within this objective will include:

1. Gather and monitor referrals by business support providers of employers with recruitment and staff development needs to HE, FE and independent training providers in Salford.
2. Baseline and track employer relationships with key FE, HE and independent training providers, including investment in training and recruitment of people completing learning programmes
3. Baseline and track contractor commitments to employment and training outcomes via social value clauses, and then monitor delivery by contractors against these commitments (including in relation to the number of local people trained and employed via Build Salford and similar projects).

Implementing the Employment and Skills Strategy

The Salford Employment and Skills Strategy 2023-28 is a partnership document requiring leadership from organisations across the city's Skills and Work Board to enable successful implementation.

Dialogue with key partners and stakeholders in Salford undertaken in the development of this strategy has stimulated interest in how different organisations can best work together to improve labour market outcomes.

The strategy represents an opportunity to clearly establish the Skills and Work Board as a leader and driver of activity. Its delivery plan (see pages 21-22 for a summary) assigns roles to a wide range of organisations in delivering activity in support of the strategy's priorities.

Almost all investment in employment and skills services in Salford is by providers who are accountable to organisations not located in Salford such as DfE, DWP and GMCA. Therefore it is of critical importance that the Skills and Work Board establishes clear lines of communication and support with the leaders of its member organisations, to ensure that plans agreed via this strategy are implemented effectively.

To that end, it is proposed that the Board should focus on a rotating set of strategy priorities over the next two years, to enable clear prioritisation and a clarity of mission.



Delivery Plan

A summary of the draft implementation plan for the Employment and Skills Strategy is set out below. It describes which member organisation at the Salford Skills and Work Board is responsible for leading activity to deliver on each priority. A more detailed version of the implementation plan, setting out tasks and milestones, is in development.

Milestones, Deliverables and Tasks	Skills and Work Board Lead	Support
1. Young people in Salford achieving and progressing in their careers		
1.1 Develop system capacity and leadership to drive more relevant, employer-led careers activity that better meets the needs of young people	SCC - S&W	CEC, University, College, B&I, GMCA
1.2 Diversify pathways to key occupations via technical education	College	SCC, University, IoT, CEC, Career Connect, GMCA
1.3 Enhance the mental wellbeing support available to young people to improve attendance, attainment and progression	SCC - Childrens	VCSE organisations, NHS ICS, College
1.4 Targeted activity to improve the engagement of young people in education, employment and training	SCC - S&W	GMCA
2. More adults in Salford entering and staying in good work		
2.1 Seek pilot flexibility in permitted work / minimum income / UC taper rate to improve work incentives	GMCA	SCC - S&W
2.2 Enhance support for those in work but sick – pre-clinical service, guidance, self-help, social prescribing	SCC - S&W	Jobcentre Plus, NHS ICS, VCSE organisations

Milestones, Deliverables and Tasks	Skills and Work Board Lead	Support
2.3 Design and pilot an improved pathway for newly inactive residents who have left work	SCC - S&W	JCP, NHS ICS and ICB, GMCA
2.4 Explore options to trial new mainstream-funded employment support provision for inactive and neurodiverse residents	SCC - S&W	GMCA, DWP
2.5 Address the gap in support for self employment among residents with more significant barriers to work	SCC - Business and Investent	Employer Networks, DWP, Business Growth Hub
2.6 Agree shared priorities for investment via DWP Flexible Support Fund provision to plug gaps in provision	JCP	SCC - S&W
3. More working residents progressing in their careers		
3.1 Support the response to LSIP priorities by providers and employers (maximising local resident benefit)	College	SCC - S&W, B&I, UoS, IoT, GM Chamber
3.2 Develop an ESOL strategy for Salford, focus on access and referral	SCC - S&W	VCSE organisations, College, GMCA
3.3 Develop a lifelong learning strategy for Salford, capitalising on new types of learning programme	SCC - S&W	VCSE organisations, College, University, GMCA
3.4 Large local employers to model good practice in staff recruitment, development and retention	SCC – Business and Investment	VCSE organisations, ICS
4. Employers in Salford better able to access and develop skills for growth		
4.1 Strengthen the approach of large local employers to social value for local benefit	SCC - S&W	SCC B&I, all S&W Board employers
4.2 Improve employer capacity to deal with employee health – SME occ health, advice and guidance, RoI	SCC – Public Health	VCSE organisations, NHS ICB/ICS, SCC B&I
4.3 Increase the scale and scope of employer relationships with FE, HE and independent training providers in Salford	SCC - S&W	Growth Company, SCC B&I, College, IoT, University



