



NETWORK MEETING



Wednesday 26th March 2025



9.00–15.00



Salford Community Stadium, 1 Stadium Way,
Eccles, Salford M30 7EY

WIFI:
AJ Bell Stadium Guest
AJBellStadium!!

Welcome

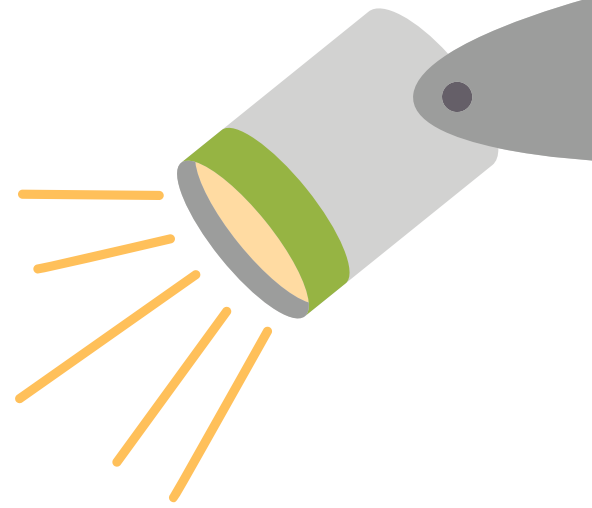
Mark Currie

Chair | GMLPN





60 SECOND SPOTLIGHT



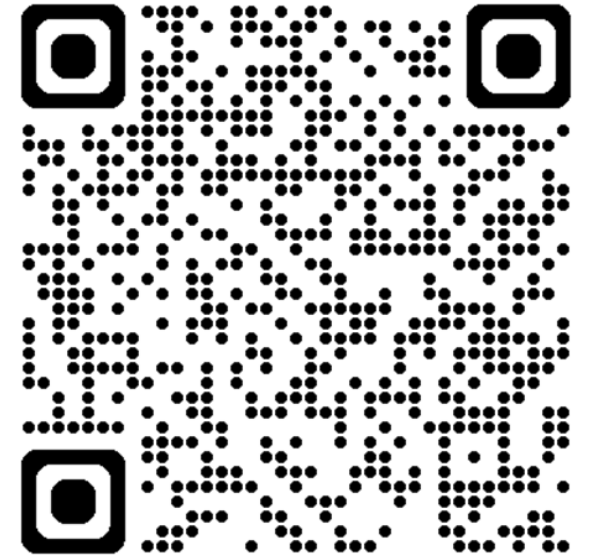
We're introducing the 60 Second Spotlight!

An opportunity for members to take the stage at today's Network Meeting, introduce themselves, pose a key question, or spark new partnerships.

Five members will have the opportunity to take part in the 60 Second Spotlight today!

Scan the QR code to enter the draw.

Only GMLPN Members can enter the draw



Exhibitors



#ITSOKAYTALK



**The Ai
Detective**



nqual.

March Chosen Charity



Scan here to donate

Your money could fund

£325

A Mental Health First Aid
two day training course

£225

A Suicide ASIST two day
training course

£125

A half day Mental Health
Awareness training
session

£640

One of our mindfulness
co-ordinators to deliver an
8-week MBSR course



SCAN ME

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Sharon Weetman

Principal – Education, Skills & Work

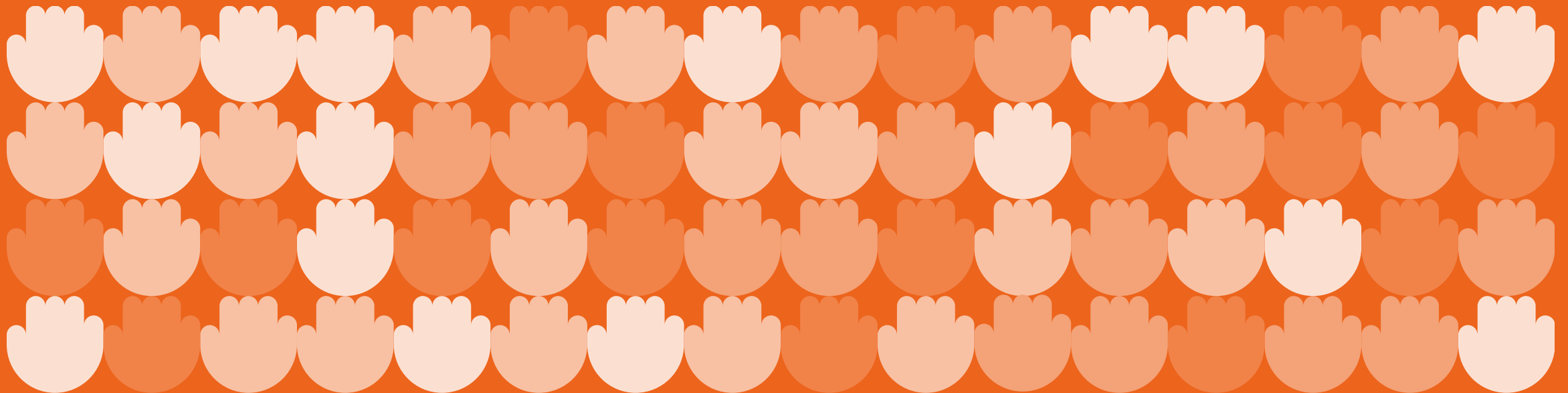
Sharon Kelly

Senior Principal Skills Manger

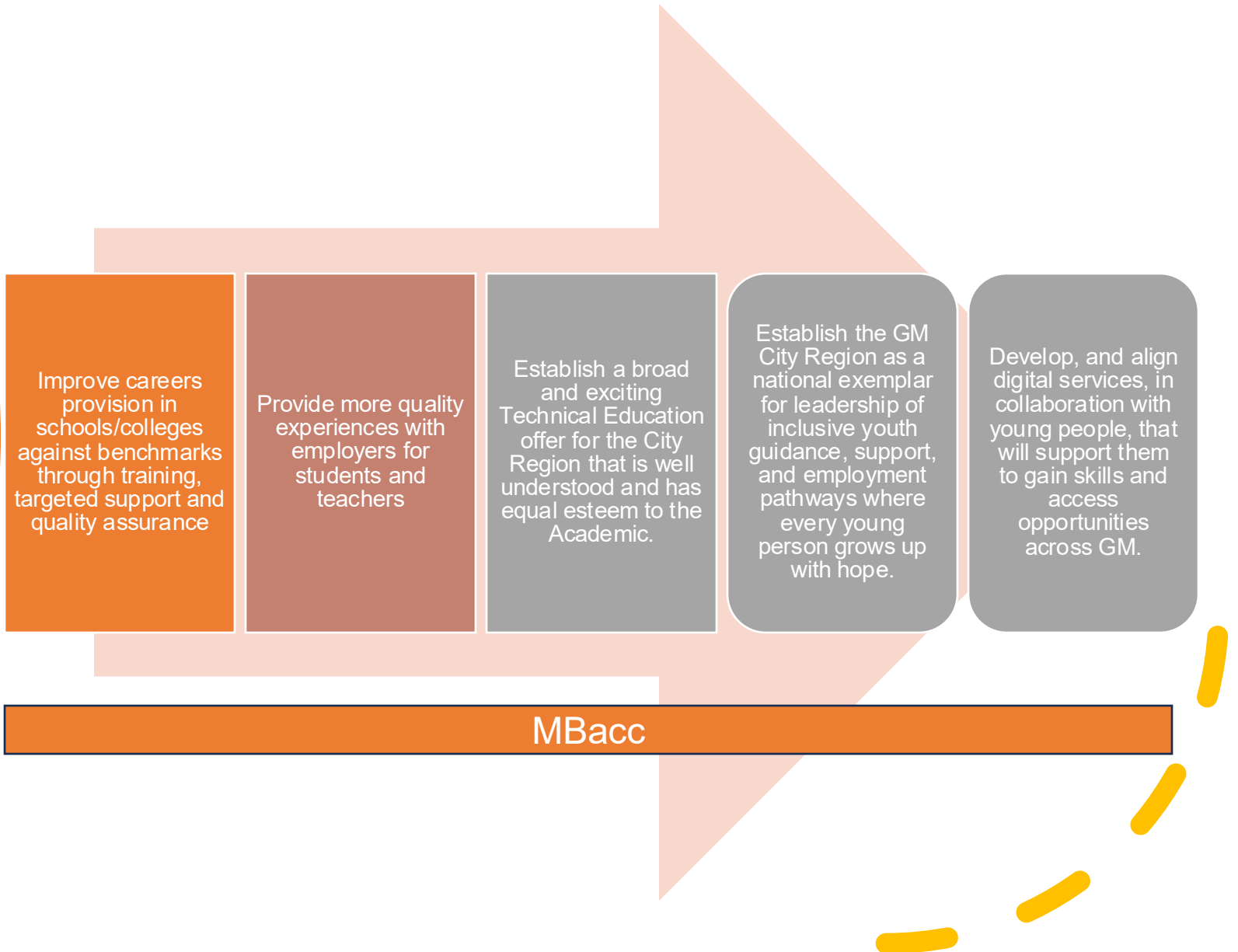


GMCA Update – Youth Employment & Technical Education

Sharon Weetman – Principal Manager – Education, Work and Skills



Our Youth Employment & Opportunities Framework



Technical Pathways & Apprenticeships

- Respond to **sufficiency challenges**.
- **Create a strong all age career strategy** to ensure employers, learners & providers have clear line of sight to the Labour Market with high quality co-ordinated careers education
- **Stimulating demand for T-Levels and apprenticeships in SMEs**
- Aligning with **GM's LSIP** to shape provision
- Providing a **clear and inclusive pathway for young people** studying T-Levels and other technical provision to progress onto apprenticeships at 16/18 as part of the Greater Manchester Baccalaureate.
- Connecting young people to provision using **Provider Access Legislation** as a lever.

How do we work more closely with the network to test and implement the GM model?



Youth Census 2025

- Opens 31st March 2025
- Young People aged 11-30
- Last year we had low response rates from Apprentices and T Level Learners
- “Your Say Week” – planned in GM during Festival week

Can you promote to your learners, employees, family members?

Can you give your employees and learners an hour to complete – and help them?



The Festival of Tech Ed: 30th June – 4th July



MYF for every Gateway - 100k young people

College taster events - 15k young people

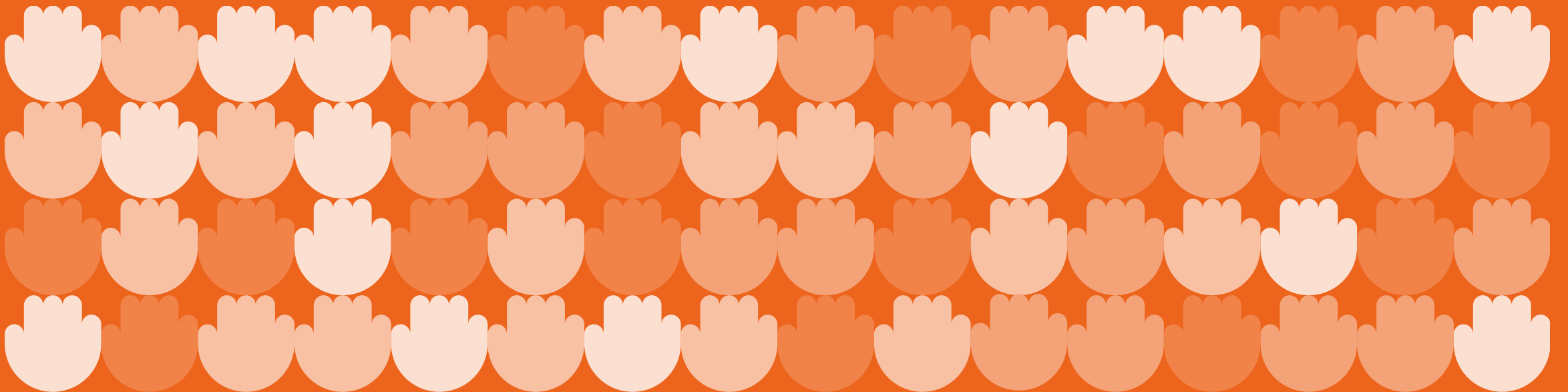
ITP webinar - X yp (to be confirmed)

Listening events - (for discussion)

What are you/can you do during the week? How can we help connect you?

GMCA Update – Get Britain Working Plan

Sharon Kelly – Senior Principal Skills Manager – Adult Skills



Get GM Working Plan



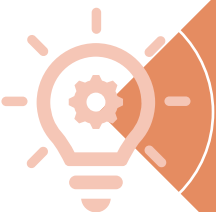
Whole system approach to tackling **labour market participation (employment, unemployment and economic inactivity)** and **progression at work (earnings and job quality)** to achieve an **80% employment rate/grow the economy (GM 70.9%)**



Local areas must draw from **across the local system** to develop a local plan of action and agree how partners will work together to review progress against their plan and outcome indicators such as the local employment rate. **Need to work collectively, not just about MCA led programmes** but all provision across all partners. Links to the **LSIP** and other plans.



Draft guidance has been shared by DWP. The plan is to cover a 10-year period and needs to outline priority actions for the next 18-24 months alongside steps towards achieving longer-term objectives. The plan needs to be published by September 2025 and is to be reviewed frequently (suggested annually).



Purpose: to be used by the GM system to: **develop shared understanding of issues, manage and align current provision, set longer term direction/strategy for future investments targeting EI and wider labour market challenges, identify collective action, support better integration**

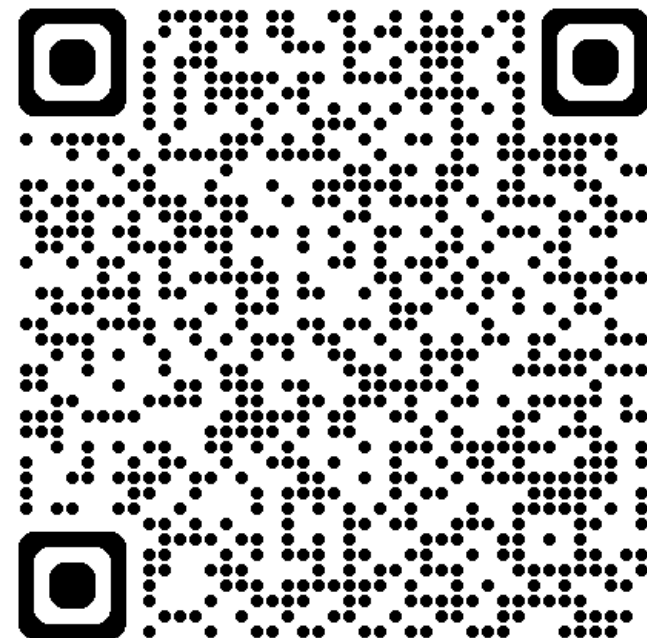
Engagement

GMLPN Get GM Working Plan Roundtable

Thursday 10th April

2.00pm-3.30pm

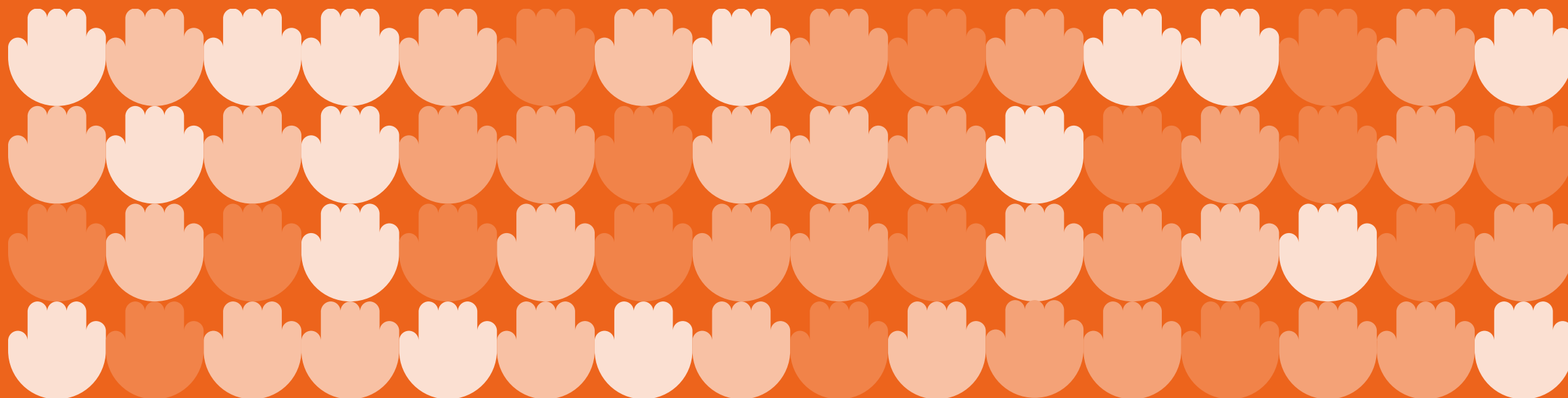
Book your place >>

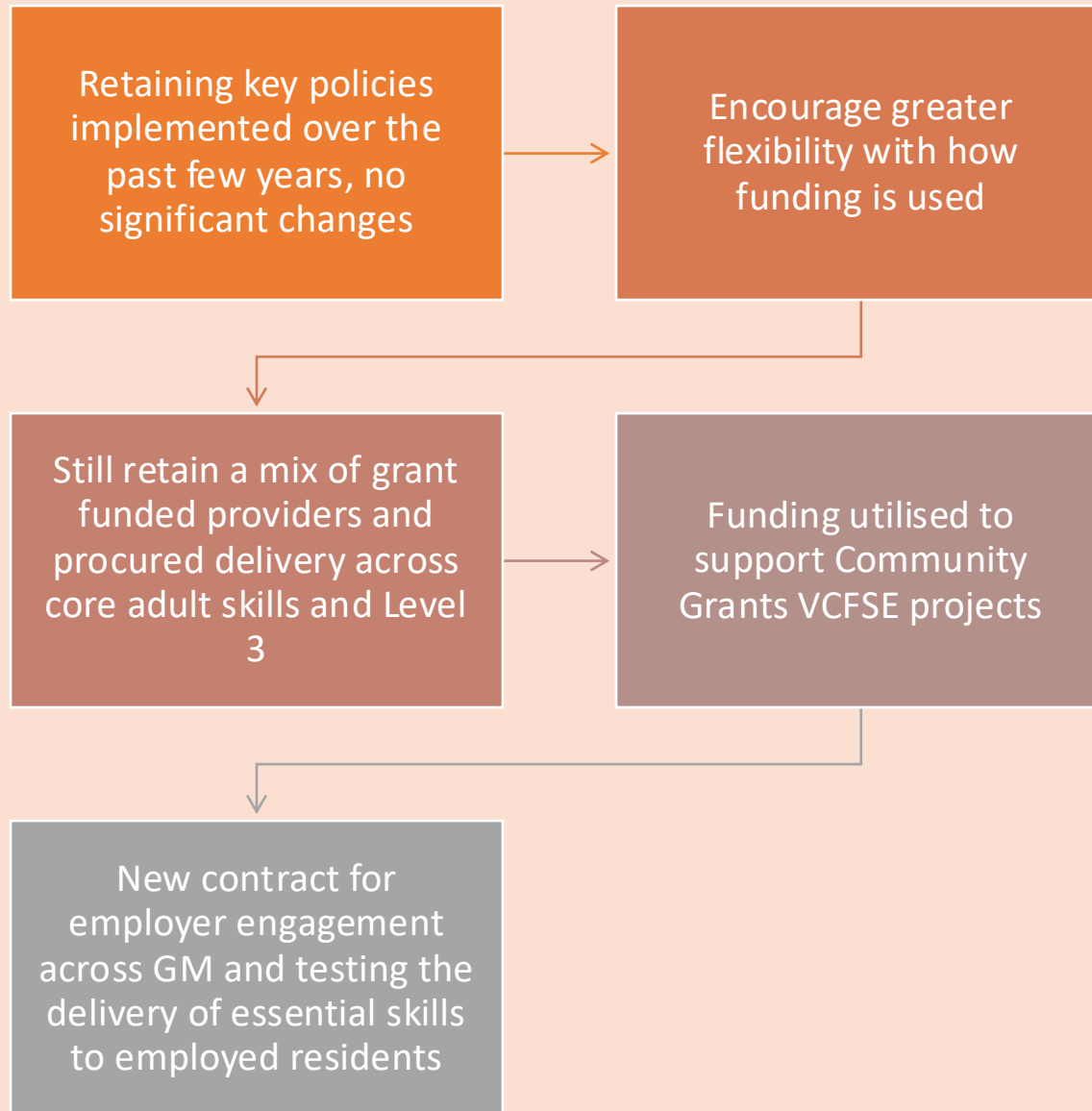


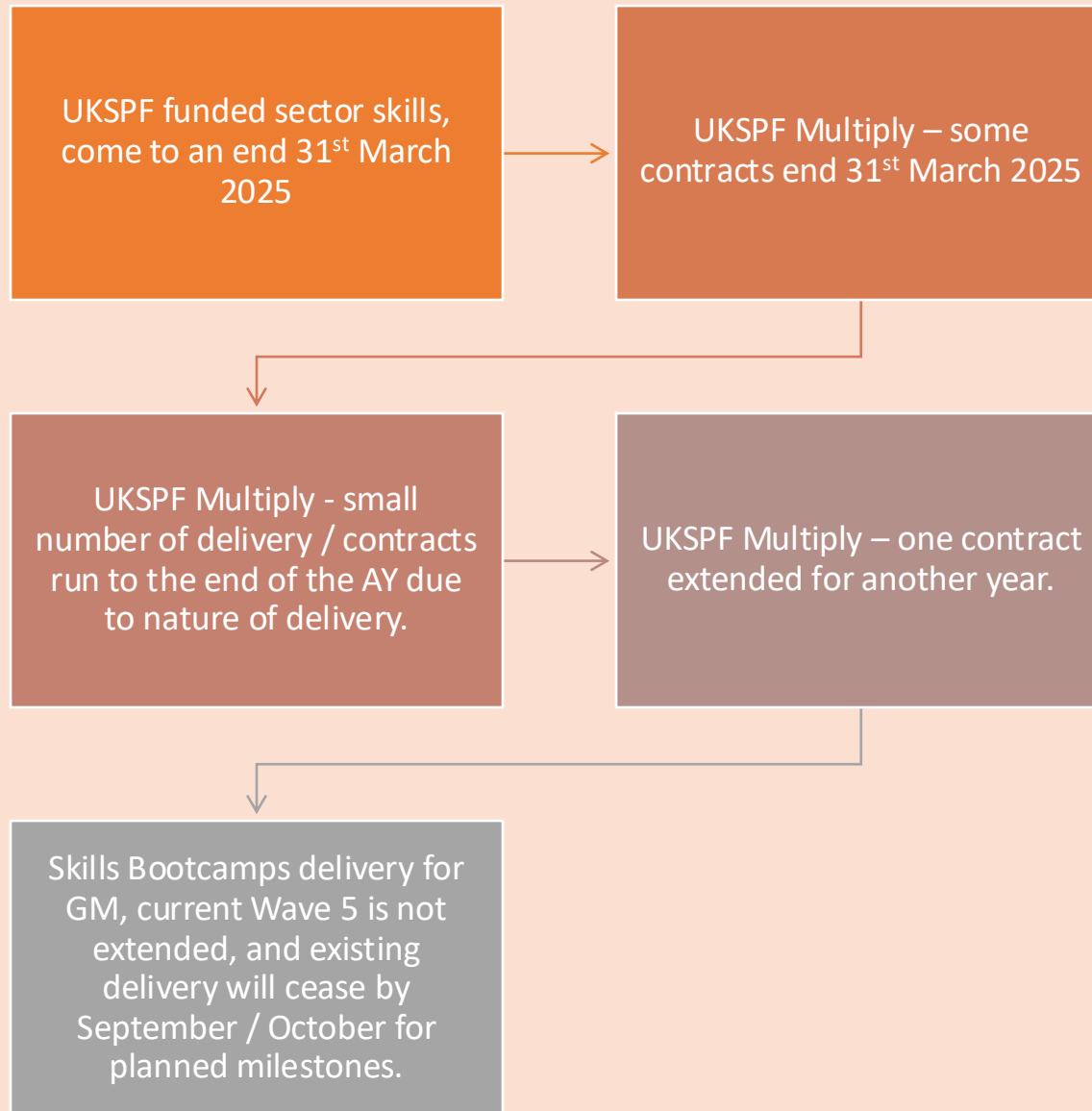
[Get GM Working Plan Roundtable Tickets, Thu, Apr 10, 2025 at 2:00 PM | Eventbrite](#)

GMCA Update – Adult Skills

Sharon Kelly – Senior Principal Skills Manager – Adult Skills







GMCA Adult Skills March Report



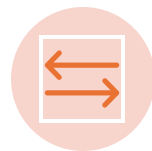
Update on the achievements and performance of GM's devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB) for the previous academic year 2023/24,



Key developments and progress of the core Adult Skills (formerly AEB) for the current academic year 2024/25,



Sets out priorities and plans, including funding allocations for grant funded and contracted delivery for the next academic year 2025/26, and



Sets out proposed direction of travel for Integrated Settlement - bringing together skills & work

- **Important Key Decisions**

- Approve the proposed indicative allocations for grant funded and procured providers for 2025/26 academic with a financial value of £95.4million
- Approve to grant delegated authority to the GMCA Treasurer etc for any decisions relating to commissioning etc.
- Mayoral approval for indicative allocations for grant funded LAs and Adult Skills LA Grant Programme

Key achievements 2023/24 academic year

Level 3

Significant success in driving Level 3 attainment, with over 5,000 residents achieving Level 3 qualifications in 2023/2024, up from 655 in 2019/2020

Overachieved the Free Courses for Jobs allocations and target in preparation for integrated settlement – target was 80% spend of £6.7m, GM achieved 106% spend, balance was covered by existing funding / reserves

Economically inactive

Over 8,000 economically inactive residents engaged with adult skills delivery, helping them prepare and / or re-enter the workforce.

Residents supported

Over 54,000 residents participated in nearly 130,000 adult skills-funded courses, with more than 109,000 courses completed successfully

Adult Skills Local Authority Grant Programme provided additional support to 26,000 residents, helping alleviate barriers like digital exclusion and access to ESOL services

Funding for 2025/2026 – Integrated Settlement

Key points:

- Integrated Settlement brings together three adults skills funding streams & programmes under one approach (AEB; FCFJ & SB)
 - In 2024/2025 GM received directly £112million, however does not include national Skills Bootcamp delivery taking place in GM
 - Funding included in the Integrated Settlement = £108million for 2025/2026 – 3.58% reduction on what we receive
 - Integrated Settlement provides greater freedoms and reduces the ‘shackles’ of different funding streams with differing rules, eligibility and structures.
 - Finalising agreement of outcomes and outputs as part of the Integrated Settlement Outcomes Framework which will drive the focus towards supporting residents to improve skills level and move closer and into work
-

Allocations for 2025/26

Grant Funded Provision

Who does this effect:
9 FE Colleges

5 Local Authorities

2 Sixth form colleges

- + Sets a new baseline for GM instead of continuing to fund at 2017/18 levels.
- + Recognised all grant-funded providers that increased learner demand.
- + Funding considers rising delivery costs (e.g., 2.2%).
- A few grant-funded skills providers will see a small reduction due to lower performance in 2023/24.

Procured provision

Who does this effect:

13 skills providers, majority of which are GM based

- + Based on actual performance from the previous year.
- + Offers skills providers a chance to engage with GMCA and help shape future adult skills design.
- + Allows GMCA to review past and current delivery to create a stronger skills offer, connected to employment support and technical education, without limiting learner choice in 2025/26.
- + GMCA is reviewing the sectoral and higher skills offer and therefore additional activity will be procured during the early part of 2025/2026.
- While based on 2023/24 performance, it doesn't account for improvements made by procured providers in the current academic year and some providers will see a reduction

Level 3 & Sectoral focus provision

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All grant funded providers and
8 skills providers

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Funding allocations impact

- Takes into account the new funding envelope
 - GMCA will review a significant volume of delivery to align with outcomes of the Integrated Settlement Outcomes Framework and align closer to delivering a skills offer to support GM's economy
 - Recommendations and current commitments means the level of funding is not sufficient, hence the need to utilise CA reserves (established due to impact on delivery by the pandemic).
 - Aims to reduce any significant 'gaps' in the learning offer as much as possible.
-

Focus for GM will be progressing residents and learners e.g. those with no/low prior attainment to achieve Level 1 +, up to Level 3

Additional focus will be job outcomes not just qualifications for adult skills delivery

GMCA will work with ALL providers to capture outcomes in a clearer way

Adult Skills in GM





Integrated Settlement - Employment & skills

GM is backing UKG's plan to Get Britain working, targeting an increase in the employment rate from 75% to 80% nationally. In GM, the baseline rate is lower at c.71%; matching UKG's target equates to an additional 150,000 GM residents progressing towards, into and within work over the life of the parliament

Reducing economic inactivity and enabling Growth through the targeting the right support at the right time and in the right place

More people entering, sustaining and progressing in work - and good work, not just any work - building on the principles of Working Well/Live Well

Expanding the Integrated Settlement, and taking a more responsive approach to skills, work and health in the round and breaking down siloes- supporting both inactivity / unemployment but also in work progression and maintaining work as outcomes

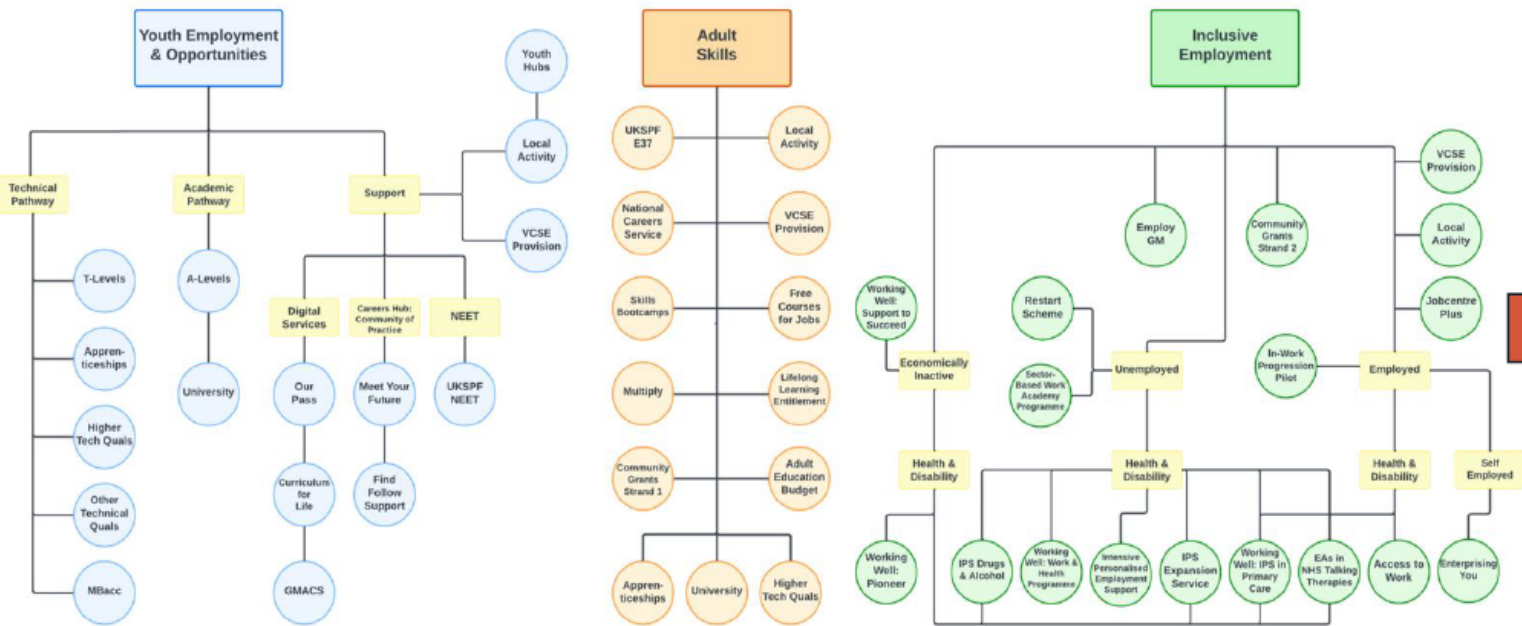
3-year ambition: Move from complex programme landscape to person & place focused

Move away from programmes,
process & outputs



Move towards people,
pathways & outcomes

Greater Manchester Education, Work and Skills Offer – Complexity of the Landscape



Underpinned
by strong
employer
engagement
& enhancing
equalities-
place &
person
centred

Remove barriers to move residents
closer to work and learning (Live
Well)

Support residents/YP to enter and
sustain in 'good work' through clear
pathways
(Skills for work & growth)

Support residents/YP to progress
and upskill
(Skills for work & growth)

GMCA asks of providers and stakeholders

Recent work undertaken to evidence non provision spending:

- * Spend on supporting learners including financial hardship
- * Delivery which supports confidence building; mental wellbeing etc.
- * Activity which is focused on CEIAG; employment support etc.

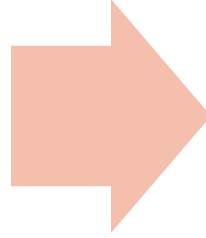
GMCA is keen to develop new ways of delivering skills provision – focus on what impact it will have for residents and employers

Plans to work with all providers to understand what delivery works well and best, what hasn't worked in the past and why

What can we change – greater flexibility, fewer 'shackles' as set by national policy e.g. Free Courses for Jobs used a national list of qualifications

New for Adult Skills for 2025/2026

Funding Rules



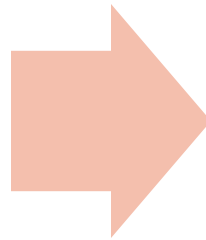
Provider Guidance
& Handbooks

Reviewing delivery



What has impact for
residents and our
economy

Focus on key sectors &
occupations



Stronger focus on relevant
qualifications etc.

QUESTIONS

DWP / JCP

Molly Salford-Brown

Kelsey Hardman

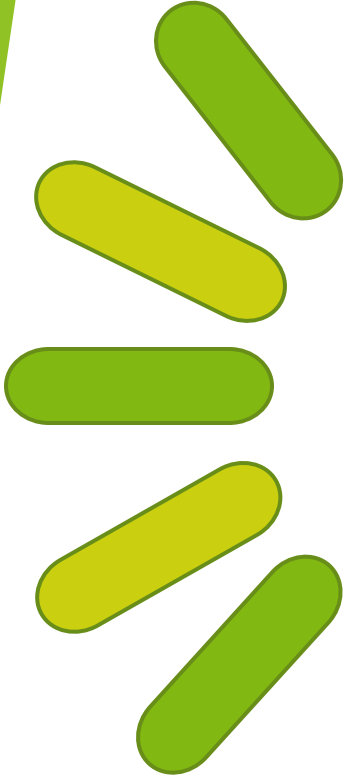
Cath Taylor



Department
for Work &
Pensions

jobcentreplus

GMLPN 
Greater Manchester
Learning Provider Network



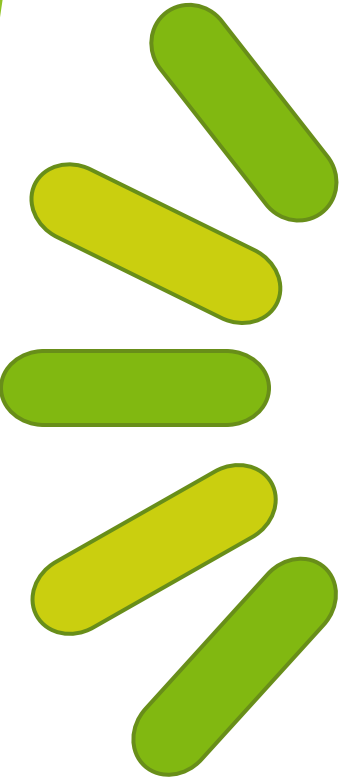
GMLPN Network Meeting

26 March 2025



Department
for Work &
Pensions

jobcentreplus



Some context...

Is DWP your
recruitment
partner of choice....

DWP to be part of
your HR
Department....

Contact from many
partners to the
same employer
with their offers....

RECRUITMENT SERVICE

Supporting Employers: A recruitment, tailored and advice service

jobcentreplus

Employer Advisors: Your Local Experts...

- ▶ Pre-screen candidates for the employer
- ▶ Use of Jobcentre Plus facilities
- ▶ Invitations into our regular career fairs and events
- ▶ Promote your vacancies on our internal platform
- ▶ Our work coaches will job match to your vacancies
- ▶ 'Find a Job' Service

▶ [How Jobcentre Plus can help you recruit](#)



Department
for Work &
Pensions



SECTOR BASED WORK ACADEMY PROGRAMMES

Recruit a workforce with the right skillset for your business

jobcentreplus

SWAPS have 3 main components:

1. ***Pre-Employment Training***

Jobcentre Plus will work with employers, colleges and training providers to design the content of sector-specific training.

2. ***Work Experience Placement***

Training can be combined with work experience if this is the best way to deliver the SWAP.

3. ***Guaranteed Job Interview***

You can select the most appropriate candidates for the job, after they have successfully completed a SWAP.



Department
for Work &
Pensions

SWAP | SECTOR-BASED
WORK ACADEMY
PROGRAMME

MENTORING CIRCLES

- ▶ Mentoring Circles are employer-led coaching sessions for young people **aged 16-24 years old**, giving them an opportunity to build on their employability skills.
- ▶ The main aim is to support our young people in moving closer to employment by raising aspirations and fostering a can-do approach. by:
 - Increasing Confidence
 - Inspiring Motivation
 - and Job Search Skills



WORK EXPERIENCE

- ▶ Open to Jobcentre Plus Claimants of **any** age.
- ▶ Helps Jobseekers build their skills and confidence.
- ▶ Placements last between 2-8 weeks.
- ▶ You can select participants with our help.
- ▶ There is **no** direct cost to the employer.
- ▶ Work Experience does not replace your usual recruitment process.

WORK TRIAL

- ▶ A short unpaid period of work, **following** a job interview.
- ▶ A way for you and the applicant to see if the job is a good fit.
- ▶ **No** direct cost to the employer.



DISABILITY CONFIDENT & ACCESS TO WORK

Supporting people with health conditions and disabilities.

jobcentreplus

The Disability Confident Scheme helps employers recruit, retain great people, and to:

- ▶ Challenge attitudes and increase understanding of disability
- ▶ Draw from the widest possible pool of talent
- ▶ Secure high-quality staff who are skilled, loyal and hard working
- ▶ Improve employee morale and commitment by demonstrating fair treatment



 [Disability Confident](#)

ACCESS TO WORK

Recruiting and retaining people who need extra support

- Hire disabled people with the skills they need
- Retain employees who develop a disability or physical / mental health condition



Access to Work
Making work possible

Next steps...

- ▶ How can we make a difference together?
- ▶ How do we target large and strategic employers with a GM Wide offer?

Contact us on... ES.INFO@DWP.GOV.UK

GMLPN Update

Charlotte Jones

Operations/ Project Manager

Chloe Ramsden

Partnership Manager



Exchanges

Opportunity for GMLPN Members to come together, share best practice, discuss challenges and collaborate with like-minded peers.

- **Quality**
 - Navigate & Bolton College – personal development
 - Impact of recent DfE announcements on Quality
 - Ofsted Consultation
- **SEND**
 - Oldham College – inclusivity bingo & assistive technology
 - Forward Planning for the Future SEND cohort – Rochdale Council



Exchanges

- Coming up:
 - **Safeguarding** – 3rd April
 - Claire Little | North West Prevent Coordinator, DfE
 - **Mental Health & Wellbeing** – 24th April
 - Andy's Man Club
 - **FE Recruitment & Workforce** – 8th May
 - Coyne Recruitment
 - DfE – FE Teacher Recruitment Team

Call to Action

If you are interested in being a volunteer chair for any of the Exchanges, please get in touch:

charlotte.j@gmlpn.co.uk

Lobbying – GMLPN Priorities

- FE Recruitment, Retention and Workforce
- Funding Issues
- Functional Skills
- Post-16 Sufficiency / NEET Provision

Making further education fit for the future – Education Select Committee Inquiry

GMLPN Collective Response Submitted

Responded and provided evidence to:

- The assessment system
- Driving better standards in further education; the quality and consistency of provision and outcomes
- Post-16 numeracy and literacy, including GCSE Resits
- Funding for further education, including whether the additional £300 million announced by the Chancellor in last year's Budget is sufficient and how it should be distributed.
- Workforce pressures, including college teachers' pay and the recruitment and retention of staff in all further education settings.
- Quality of facilities and capital investment strategy.
- The role of Skills England in meeting the Government's industrial strategy and boosting economic growth.
- Current challenges for apprenticeships, including employer engagement, funding issues, and apprentice pay.
- The role of devolution in addressing regional skills needs and apprenticeships
- The difficulties facing further education students, including mental health issues and access to mental health support, and cost of living pressures.
- The specific barriers to accessing and pursuing further education for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and children and young people in care across specialist and mainstream settings.

GMLPN response will be shared with all members.

Ofsted Consultation

GMLPN Response to date

- Four roundtables with members
 - Apprenticeships
 - Adult Learning Programmes
 - Education Programmes for Young People
 - Provision for Learners with High Needs
- Currently collating feedback ahead of 28th April deadline

Ofsted Consultation

Apprenticeship Roundtable

complicated
ambiguity
overly complicated
needed
optimistic
complex
wide
unclear
complicated
fantastic
useful
positive

Young People Roundtable

cautious
complicated
unsure
large
good
complicated
interesting
ambitious
quick
confusing
intricate

High Needs Roundtable

inclusive
confusing
complex
finally
stay the same
broad
overwhelming

Adult Roundtable

needed
unclear
interesting
complex
still reflecting
positive
challenging
unfinished

Ofsted Consultation

Feedback has included

- The process feels rushed – plans for inspections to start in Autumn
- Language isn't right – e.g. “all learners”
- How will commissioners (CA / DfE) use the grades / a combination of the grades
- Data needs to be used in context
- Wellbeing implications / increase in pressure for senior leaders
- ITPs work hard to meet local skills needs but will continue to not be graded
- Welcome inclusion being inspected throughout – but may mean some providers may be more risk adverse to supporting particular cohorts
- Proposal is achievement focused – as opposed to progress
- Report cards feel complex for FE Colleges and Large/Complex ITPs (up to 20 grades)

Ofsted Consultation

Next Steps

If you've not yet had opportunity to feedback to GMLPN get in touch:

charlotte.j@gmlpn.co.uk

Call to Action

Examples and case studies to include in the GMLPN response:

- Impact of the proposed changes
- What are the unintended consequences

E-mail: charlotte.j@gmlpn.co.uk

NI Increase – ITP Impact

- Initial survey with ITP members to understand the impact
 - Increased costs (in line with other funding restraints and cost increases)
 - Potential decrease in staffing and cuts in other areas
 - Provision available may be impacted
- DfE currently looking into – waiting on a response from Sarah Tulk
- Joint lobbying with GM Chamber

GM Skills Awards 2025



HEADLINE SPONSOR:



THE AWARDS

- Apprentice of the Year (Level 2-3)
- Apprentice of the Year (Level 4, 5, 6, 7)
- 16-19 Learner of the Year
- Adult Learner of the Year
- Shining Star of the Year
- Unsung Hero of the Year
- Team of the Year
- SME of the Year
- Large Employer of the Year
- Community Initiative of the Year
- Outstanding Innovation of the Year
- Partnership Project of the Year

Almost
300
nominations!

Independent Judging – 17th-31st March
Shortlists Announced – w/c 7th April
Awards Evening – 3rd July 2025

Learner Involvement



This is opportunity designed to help learners develop their confidence, enhance their portfolios, and gain valuable real-world experience in a professional event setting!

We would love to hear from you if who have learners interested in participating.

Please register your interest by e-mailing hello@gm-skillsawards.co.uk by **Wednesday 30th April, 5pm** (Extended Deadline)

Type of support	Overview	Approx. timings
Music Performance	Provide entertainment during the welcome reception	6pm-6.45pm
Dance Performance	Deliver an engaging performance during the dinner	Between 8.30pm-9.30pm
Event Support & Coordination	Assist with event logistics, guest coordination, and general support throughout the evening	6pm-12am (TBC – this can be flexible)

Sponsors



HEADLINE SPONSOR:



Coyne
Recruitment.



Joined in 2024

mesma



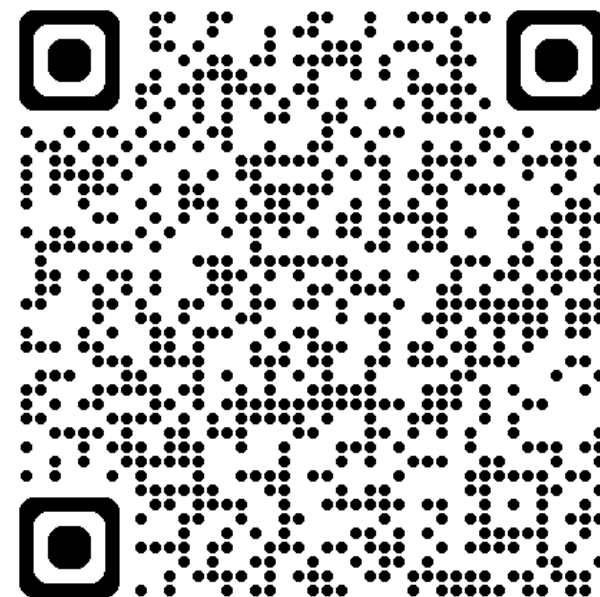
Tickets Live!

GM
SKILLS
AWARDS 2025

HEADLINE SPONSOR:



Book today!



[GM Skills Awards 2025 Tickets, Thu, Jul 3, 2025 at 6:00 PM](#)



Tackling the NEET Challenge across GM

Confirmed speakers include:

- Anna Dawe | GMColleges / Wigan & Leigh College
- Sharon Weetman | Greater Manchester Combined Authority
- Andy Turner | Rochdale Borough Council
- Anthony Turner | Manchester City Council
- Katrina Berwick | Bolton Council
- Roman Dibden | RISE UP
- Donna Graham | Positive Steps

● SAVE THE DATE

Tackling the NEET Challenge **Across GM**

Join us for a collaborative event dedicated to addressing the NEET challenge across Greater Manchester.

This is an opportunity for NEET providers, schools, local authorities, and key stakeholders to connect, explore progression routes, and discuss funding barriers and identify potential solutions.



20th May 2025



9AM-3.30PM



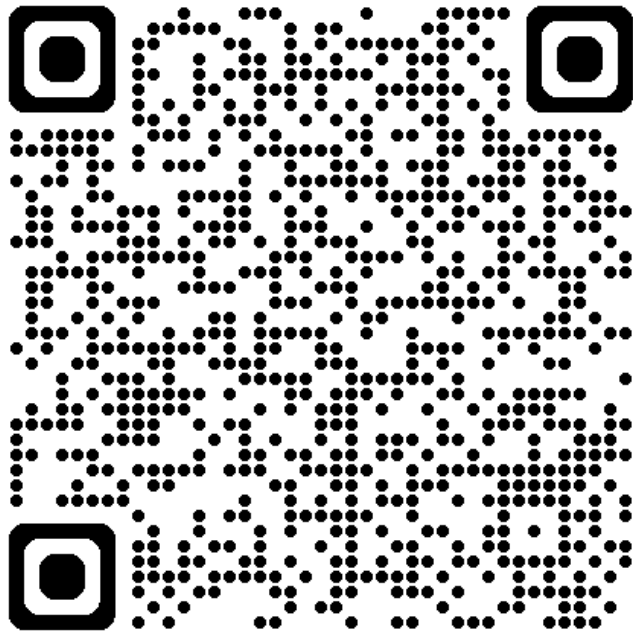
Mantra Learning,
Middleton, M24 1RU

SAVE THE DATE

GMLPN
Greater Manchester
Learning Provider Network

Tackling the NEET Challenge across GM

Book your place!



Places are limited to 2 per organisation

● SAVE THE DATE

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20th May 2025



9AM-3.30PM



Mantra Learning,
Middleton, M24 1RU

SAVE THE DATE

GMLPN
Greater Manchester
Learning Provider Network

Welcome!



Part of the
Enginuity Group

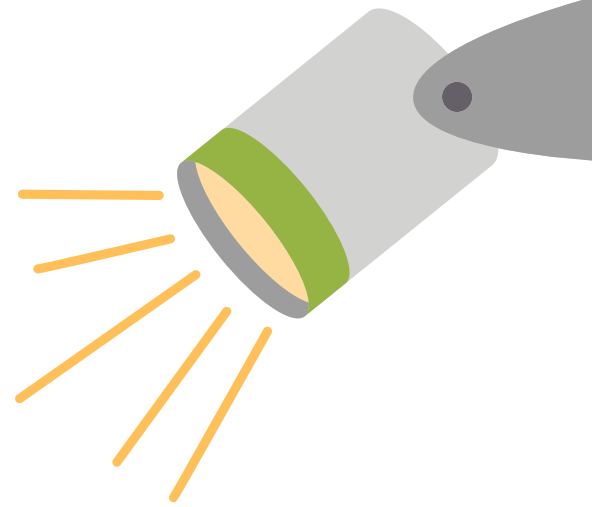


MarCommEd





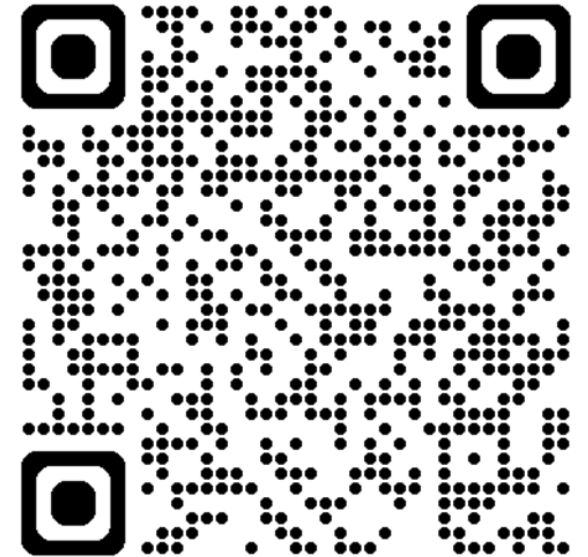
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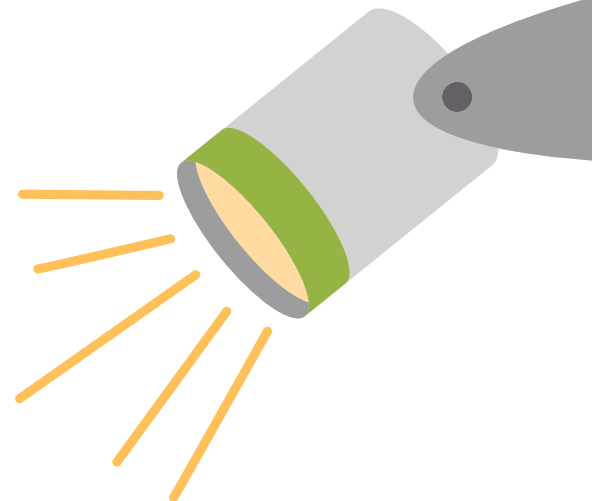




NETWORK MEETING

Lunch and Networking!





60 SECOND SPOTLIGHT

Department for Education

John Myers

Head of Funding Delivery, Growth & Skills Levy



Department
for Education





Panel Discussion

Panel Discussion



Daniel Wells
NowSkills



David Redden
NCFE



Sarah Boyd
Wigan & Leigh
College



Steve Taylor
Jet2.com

Chaired by Andy Turner, GMLPN Advisory Board Member

Key Dates

- **Safeguarding Exchange** (Ada) – 3rd April
- **Mental Health & Wellbeing Exchange** (Bolton College) – 24th April
- **FE Recruitment & Workforce Exchange** (Mantra) – 8th May
- **Online Member KIT** – 15th May
- **NEET Event** (Mantra) – 20th May
- **Network Meeting** (Venue TBC) – 18th June
- **GM Skills Awards 2025** – 3rd July
- **Network Meeting** (Venue TBC) – 17th September
- **Network Meeting** (Venue TBC) – 3rd December



NETWORK MEETING



Wednesday 26th March 2025



9.00–15.00



Salford Community Stadium, 1 Stadium Way,
Eccles, Salford M30 7EY