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# **Jobs for All Scrutiny Commission Report**

**February 2018**

**Commission Members:**

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## **Jobs for All Scrutiny Commission**

### Chair's Foreword

We are fortunate that in Lambeth unemployment is now relatively low. But there are still a significant number of residents who are unemployed and in many cases have been for a long time. And no matter what the percentage unemployment rate is, for someone who is not working and wants to work, that person is 100 per cent unemployed.

Many of these individuals face barriers, often multiple barriers to employment. They may have disabilities or mental health issues, they may be older residents, they may be single parents or ex-offenders, they may have poor English or face other difficulties.

So the Council is quite rightly concentrating on helping these residents into work.

And work is important. Unemployed people have higher rates of physical and mental health problems; take more medication and use more medical services; and have a shorter life expectancy.

Work also gives opportunities for personal development, a sense of identity and opportunities for socialising. And of course individuals need opportunities to earn money and increase their financial resilience.

The council has already done much to help the unemployed in the borough. For example, the council's job brokerage service Lambeth Working has matched many unemployed residents to jobs; there has been a drive to provide apprenticeships especially via large outsourcing contracts; employment opportunities have been provided for care leavers through the Steps to Success programme.

But we wanted to see what more the council and other bodies could do.

People with multiple barriers to working often need support to help them into employment, it often needs to be individual one-to-one support and it often has to continue for long periods of time. The commission decided to focus on the provision of this support.

One of the pleasures of running this commission has been hearing about the excellent work of some of the brilliant organisations in the borough which support residents into work, including Mosaic Clubhouse, the Camden Society, First Step Trust, Evolve and Bounce Back. Between them they work with people with mental health or drug and alcohol issues, ex-offenders, young homeless and vulnerable people and people with disabilities. And it was inspiring to hear from residents who have been supported by these organisations and have overcome debilitating barriers to work.

I want to thank all those who've kindly given up their time to help the commission, from voluntary organisations, statutory bodies and the Council. I must also record thanks to my fellow members of the commission, and to our Lead Scrutiny Officer Elaine Carter who has organised the work of the commission with great skill.

It is vital that as the majority of our residents take advantage of the economic opportunities available in the heart of London, no-one is left behind. The council should be judged partly on how well it makes this the case, and that is why we have proposed a clear target for reducing long-term unemployment. I hope that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, members of the Commission, other councillors and concerned residents will be monitoring progress against this target and in implementing the Commission's recommendations over the coming months and years.

**Cllr Matt Parr**

Vice-Chair of Scrutiny for Jobs, Homes and Investment

## List of Recommendations

- **The Council as Employer**

The Council should lead by example and be a good employer of those who face barriers to employment. It should also seek to share good practice with other local employers.

Specifically:

### **Recommendation 1**

In line with the findings of the Equalities Commission the Council should look at how it might recruit individuals who are further away from the labour market ensuring that the appropriate support is put in place for them to secure and sustain themselves in work.

### **Recommendation 2**

The council should ensure Steps to Success is being implemented with annual reports to the Children's Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

- **The Council as Purchaser**

### **Recommendation 3**

There should be a coherent Social Value Strategy which includes guidance for commissioners and procurement on what outcomes the Council expects from purchasing, with links to relevant strategies and helpful information such as lists of cohorts we are trying to assist, and organisations which can be involved.

### **Recommendation 4**

Delivery of Social Value (SV) must be tracked to ensure suppliers are complying, through a Council-wide, systematic mechanism.

### **Recommendation 5**

Procurement and commissioning processes should where appropriate give suppliers the option of subcontracting delivery of apprenticeships and supported employment to social enterprises (SEs).

### **Recommendation 6**

Procurers should consider the importance of supply chains and subcontractors in large contracts; officers should investigate whether social value requirements can be placed on subcontractors as well as the primary contractor.

### **Recommendation 7**

Where procurement delivers lower cost than expected, consideration should be given to diverting the available funds to directly support SV outcomes; it is recognised that these decisions would need made through the Medium Term Financial Strategy and financial planning process of the council.

### **Recommendation 8**

Council priorities for employment and skills should include access to a wide range of potential opportunities for our residents targeting those identified in the Equalities Commission and we should consider how to promote the range of opportunities available to

these priority groups.

### **Recommendation 9**

The Council should review its contracts register to identify possible contract opportunities that could be used to deliver employment support to disadvantaged groups. Procurement teams should be advised of any available options for the use of providers of employment support provision to facilitate a wider range of targeted social value outcomes.

### **Recommendation 10**

The Council should benchmark against other Local Authority areas in relation to best practice within Procurement strategies focusing on Social Value impacts, for example reviewing the City of London Procurement Strategy specifically in relation to how social enterprises could be targeted for contracts.

### **Recommendation 11**

If the Council commissions Social Enterprises to deliver employment support it needs to consider whether there is a need for the contract to be for extended periods of time with evaluation of outcomes suitably constructed.

### **Recommendation 12**

Council should develop a KPI (key performance indicator) for measuring the local multiplier effect of its procurement contracts based on LM3 (Local Multiplier 3). There should be an overall target for increasing the local multiplier for the Borough, and the Social Value Strategy should include methods of achieving this increase.

### **Recommendation 13**

The Procurement Strategy should show how contracts are being packaged, sized and advertised so as to enable small and medium sized enterprise (SMEs) and Social Enterprises to bid for them or to become part of the supply chain.

### **Recommendation 14**

There should be a progress review on the NEF Consulting/Numbers for Good: Lambeth Supported Employment and Social Enterprise Model (March 2016).

### **• The Council as Influencer**

#### **Recommendation 15**

The Council should, wherever possible, through contacts developed by its employment support services and other means, support public and private sector employers to develop opportunities for disadvantaged residents, for example:

- The Council should have a lead role in overseeing the development of good practice in the delivery of the Apprenticeship levy;
- The Council should inform employers of the benefits of recruiting from more disadvantaged groups and refer them to sources of information and support in order to encourage them to consider it. Including occasional awareness raising events.

#### **Recommendation 16**

The Council should, along with partners including through Lambeth First, support the Mayor of London's promotion of the 'Good Work Standard'.

**Recommendation 17**

The Council should consider how to promote the availability of all employment and skills provision to residents and businesses using digital and offline platforms, and networks such as the BIDs.

**Recommendation 18**

The Council should discuss with the BID network ways in which they can inform member employers of the benefits of recruiting from more disadvantaged groups including, for example, holding open days where employers can meet a range of employment support providers.

**Recommendation 19**

The Council should support the development of capacity in the Voluntary and Community Sector, for example by facilitating relationships with the business community and developing guidance to support employers to develop their employment support offer including how to make recruitment processes accessible.

**Recommendation 20**

The Council should engage with community leadership groups to develop our understanding of the specific barriers faced by their members; this should focus on those communities identified within the Equalities Commission recommendations.

- **The Council as Housing Provider**

**Recommendation 21**

The Work Wise programme for tenants should consider modifying its objectives and reporting to ensure it supports those groups identified by the Equalities Commission as being particularly in need.

- **The Council as Planning Authority**

**Recommendation 22**

The revised Employment and Skills Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is currently going through the required approval processes; when the final SPD is adopted then the Council should monitor and review its impact on the employment and skills development of disadvantaged groups.

**Recommendation 23**

Where industrial development sites are brought forward, or where meanwhile sites or other currently unused properties or pieces of land are identified, the Council should look for opportunities to help self-employed residents take advantage of them. The Council should ensure that Planning, Inclusion and Business Development functions work closely together to achieve this.

- **The Council as leader of Partnerships**

**Recommendation 24**

The Council, working through Lambeth First and other partnerships, should encourage partner organisations and suppliers to recognise the value of recruiting from disadvantaged

groups and should provide information as to the help available from employment support providers to employers.

#### **Recommendation 25**

Council should work with Lambeth Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) through the Health and Wellbeing Board to investigate the benefits of providing employment advice at GP surgeries, and enabling doctors to refer patients to employment support services. This should take into consideration the work undertaken in Islington.

#### **Recommendation 26**

The Council, working in partnership with DWP, should ensure that when job seekers being helped by Employment and Skills experience difficulty in obtaining identification documents, a protocol exists whereby assistance can be obtained from DWP

- **Improving our Practice**

#### **Recommendation 27**

Council priorities for employment and skills should include access to a wide range of potential opportunities for our residents targeting those groups identified in the Equalities Commission. The council should set out clearly what its employment and skills support offer is and we should consider how to promote the range of opportunities available to these priority groups. The Council should continue to review, evaluate and develop all its employment support programmes to develop good practice and support the Equalities Commission recommendations.

#### **Recommendation 28**

The Council should ensure that at our libraries and other locations where internet access is available, support is available to help residents – especially those who are digitally excluded or who have learning difficulties or mental health issues – to carry out online job applications. This should be tested through mystery shopping.

#### **Recommendation 29**

The Council should continue to review, evaluate and develop all its employment support programmes to develop good practice and support the Equalities Commission recommendations. Information on initiatives should be made available to elected members.

#### **Recommendation 30**

The Council, working with Job Centre Plus (JCP) should help graduates of employment schemes such as Pathways to Employment to provide peer support to each other through a network of former service users. This could be facilitated via an online forum and / or offline activities such as drop-in sessions.

- **The Council as Developer / Landowner / Property Owner**

#### **Recommendation 31**

In circumstances where the Council carries out developments on land which it owns which result in commercial spaces or employment / self-employment opportunities, efforts should be made to encourage participation by groups identified by the Equalities Commission as being particularly in need.

- **Conclusion**

**Recommendation 32**

The council should commit to focus on the employment support needs of those priority groups of residents highlighted within the Equalities Commission who are long-term unemployed or at risk of being so. This will include people with mental and physical health conditions, people with learning difficulties and learning disabilities, residents from our most excluded minority ethnic groups, older residents aged 50+yrs, our young people leaving care and young people at risk of being out of education, training and employment. Through coordinating, facilitating and delivering a range of support interventions over the next four years the council will enable the employment of 1500 residents who face multiple barriers to entering employment thus improving their wellbeing, economic and social situation and quality of life.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Jobs for All Scrutiny Commission was set up in response to a dedicated Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting looking at jobs and job creation in Lambeth. The meeting explored through different perspectives – local employers, council partners, individuals seeking employment, and agencies helping people into work - the extent to which Lambeth and its partners are maximising local employment opportunities and what more might be done to get Lambeth residents into good quality, sustainable jobs.
- 1.2 What became clear at that session, and in follow up on issues, is that whilst Lambeth has a skilled residential population and a high employment rate there are sharp disparities in the labour market for different groups. In particular a range of ‘cohort’ groups find it much more difficult to find work and have serious barriers to employment and so require more intensive and personalised support. This was emphasised in research commissioned by the council in 2016 which found that *“many long term unemployed residents will not be able to enter the labour market without first accessing some form of supported employment”*.<sup>1</sup>
- 1.3 The scrutiny enquiry has sought to assess council policy relating to helping people furthest from the labour market into work and to identify opportunities that might expand or augment the range of support available. The commission has particularly explored the role of a range of individualised employment support interventions. One example of this is Supported Employment for people with mental health conditions/learning disabilities, a model based on an individualised place and train intervention proven to have positive outcomes for this client group.
- 1.4 The commission presents this report with the aim of making recommendations that will contribute to the work already being undertaken by the council and its partners and identifies what commission members perceive as potential additional social and economic benefit opportunities arising from the council’s procurement, commissioning and regeneration activity as well as its local leadership role.
- 1.5 In tandem with submitting this report the commission endorses the concomitant recommendations by the Equalities Commission and specifically those headed **Supported transitions into work for those furthest away from the job market.**

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<sup>1</sup> NEF Consulting/Numbers for Good: Lambeth Supported Employment and Social Enterprise Model (March 2016)

## 2. Background

Unemployment in Lambeth has fallen to a historically low level. Our economy is providing unprecedented opportunities, and those people who are able to do so are entering work. But some residents find it far harder to work. Some have health, financial and childcare issues as well as a lack of skills, experience or confidence. Residents with disabilities are also less likely to be in employment.

We will increase the range of supported employment opportunities available for the long-term unemployed and those people with complex needs, and work with social enterprises to help them to do this.

**Lambeth Investment and Opportunity Strategy**  
**Ensuring we all share in the benefits of economic growth**

2.1 The Investment and Opportunity Strategy agreed at Cabinet in June 2015 set out the council's strategy to economic growth. It observed that Lambeth has seen significant growth in the number of jobs in the borough in the last ten years (growing by around 11%) but also recognised that some people feel excluded from the growth and regeneration that has taken place so far, and the strategy aimed to link economic growth more explicitly with benefits to local communities. Part of that strategy included a focus on those who find it harder to work.

2.2 The following statistics provide a context for the work of commission and its focus on those who are furthest from the labour market:

- *There are 218,300 economically active people in Lambeth. Of those, the vast majority (207,300) are in employment and 10,600 are unemployed.<sup>2</sup>*
- *There were 1,045 Lambeth residents who have been claiming Job Seekers Allowance for over two years in April 2016 (the highest in London)*
- *Long-term unemployed residents are likely to have some health issues particularly mental health issues. Approximately 44,000 or 18% of Lambeth residents aged 16-74 were likely to have common mental health disorders.*
- *The local disability employment gap remains significant: only 49% of disabled residents aged 16-64 were in work in 2015/16, compared to 84% of residents who are not disabled.*
- *Lambeth has seen a decline to just 1.5% in numbers of adults with learning disabilities in paid employment. This places Lambeth 140<sup>th</sup> nationally.*
- *There is variation in the nature of unemployment by age. Lambeth has the third highest number of unemployment-benefit claimants aged 50-64 in London and the fifth highest rate of claimants in this age group. (2017/18 Q4 Performance report).*

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<sup>2</sup> Nomis/Labour Market Profile for Lambeth (Oct 2016 – Sept 2017)  
<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157253/report.aspx#tabempunemp>

- *The youth claimant rate in Lambeth is above average: there were 755 18-24 year olds in Lambeth claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed in September 2016 – equal to 2.7% of residents in that age group, compared to 2.3% for London and 2.7% for England.*
- *The youth employment rate is marginally below the London average (45% in Lambeth compared to 46% for London and 54% for England).*
- *46% of care leavers are NEET [not in employment, education or training] – September 2017.*
- *Lambeth has 29,500 economically inactive residents, 6,300 of whom ‘want a job’.*
- *Welfare reforms will have a particular effect on these individuals as government policy looks to move more people off benefits and into work.*

2.3 The Borough Plan, and also the recent Equalities Commission, address the role that employment and an inclusive economy plays in reducing inequality in Lambeth. Amongst other outcomes the Borough Plan sets a five year ambition that by 2021 Lambeth will narrow the gap in employment rates for young people (aged 25 and under), people with mental health issues, disability, from black African, black Caribbean and Portuguese groups, residents aged 50+, and the general population. The Borough Plan also highlights the need to increase the opportunities available to those people needing support to access and sustain work, particularly Looked After Children and people with mental health issues.

2.4 Arising from the commission’s discussions with those engaged in models of supported employment and social enterprise, with Job Centre Plus and with job brokerage, it is clear that some people often need to be supported over long periods of time and potentially over a number of years both before they secure employment and when they are in that job. Accordingly and in the context of delivering the Borough Plan priorities for Inclusive Growth and to Reduce Inequalities a continued robust focus is needed on measures to help adults with complex needs move into and progress in work.

2.5 One way of approaching the options available to the Council to support and promote employment for those furthest from the labour market is to consider opportunities within the various roles the Council carries out. The Council is variously an employer; a provider of services; a contractor; a purchaser with access to supply chains; and a planning authority. It plays a leading role in key public partnerships such as the Health and Wellbeing Board and Safer Lambeth and is an influencer of businesses, organisations and individuals.

2.6 Arising from its review and within the framework of some innovative and good practice already underway in discrete areas, the commission considers the council should expand and upscale the range of support available to those furthest from the jobs market. But the precursor to delivering on this requires critical challenge on three questions:

- the extent to which the authority is maximising the opportunities which exist within all activities;

- whether there is effective join up, cohesion and understanding across the organisation and across our partnerships in promoting, championing and securing employment outcome benefits;
- whether in all instances the council is assured that all due obligations are being received.

### **3. Method of Review**

- 3.1 The commission comprises Cllr Matt Parr (Chair) and Cllr Fred Cowell. Cllrs Claire Holland and Daniel Adilypour were both initially members of the commission but stood down on being appointed to executive positions. In their stead, Cllr Mary Atkins was latterly appointed to the commission.
- 3.2 The commission sought written and documentary evidence as well as interviewing a variety of 'witnesses'. The Assistant Director, Welfare, Employment and Skills prepared briefing information for the commission and attended the first meeting to answer members questions, and was also involved in subsequent sessions as invited.
- 3.3 During its review commission members met with a range of charity and social enterprise organisations which deliver supported employment and provide training and employment opportunities for disadvantaged people in Lambeth. Models of delivery (and ethos) vary – covering for example supported short-term job placements in commercial organisations and which may transition into permanent jobs, to social enterprise operating a commercial trading arm in which clients work to prepare them for work and are supported in their work readiness.
- 3.4 Sessions were held in a variety of settings to understand the perspective and challenges for different providers as well as the discrete issues for the different cohort groups with which each charity/social enterprise works:
- Mosaic Clubhouse: supports people who are living with a mental health condition
  - Camden Society: services for people with disabilities
  - First Step Trust: people with mental health issues or other disadvantages including drug and alcohol recovery problems or a history of offending
  - Evolve Housing + Support: housing and support to vulnerable and/or homeless young people and young parents in Lambeth
  - Bounce Back Lambeth: training and employment for ex-offenders
  - Tree Shepherd: social enterprise working for disadvantaged people and communities
- 3.5 A consistent and common theme from the discussions with Social Enterprises is that they can get people to the stage where they are ready to go into work – what are needed are the circumstances and relationships to open up those work placements and job opportunities and access to a greater numbers of receptive employers.
- 3.6 At Mosaic Clubhouse, a charity which supports people with mental health issues using a co- production model, the commission met with Clubhouse members who had experienced supported employment. From the discussions the commission gained some insight into the importance of individuals being able to gradually increase their hours of work as they become adjusted to work, and the difficulties sometimes presented by the benefits system.
- 3.7 The commission also heard from the providers of two government-funded but locally led and commissioned employment planning and support services: (1) Pathways to

Employment (claimants on Job Seekers Allowance – JSA – for more than 13 weeks) and (2) Working Capital (Employment Support Allowance – ESA – claimants). Both tailor 'back to work' plans for residents with particular requirements or expectations, such as single parents, 18-24 year olds, the fifty-plus age group, and those with mental health issues, with the aim to support their journey back into permanent employment.

- 3.8 The commission also met with representatives of Job Centre Plus both in the context of JCP being co-partners with the council in the two local programmes (Pathways to Employment & Working Capital) and as the government agency for providing services to people attempting to find employment and to those requiring financial provision.
- 3.9 The commission chair met with the Chief Executive of Brixton Business Improvement District (BID) to understand the level of engagement BIDs have with council/partnership employment initiatives and discuss opportunities for further cascading into local business.
- 3.10 To flag and follow up on the headline issues evolving from its work, the commission met with the Deputy Leader of the Council (Finance and Resources) and the Cabinet Member for Planning, Regeneration and Jobs, as well as the Head of Procurement, Head of Economic Inclusion and Head of Policy and Communications.
- 3.11 Set out below are the headline findings and recommendations of the Jobs for All Scrutiny Commission. The findings have been drafted in the context of the various activities and roles of the council and the recommendations focus on the associated opportunities to support and promote employment particularly for those Lambeth residents whose circumstances place them furthest from the labour market.

## 4. Findings and Recommendations

### • The Council as Employer

4.1 The council has already achieved some successes in pushing the agenda of helping those furthest from the labour market. For example recent discussions with procurement and commissioners have highlighted a number of relevant opportunities through direct employment in the Council. This includes up to 19 part-time seasonal park attendant roles. These posts will be open to priority groups through Lambeth Working, with some posts open to residents with complex health conditions via local Supported Employment providers.

4.2 The council has also initiated Steps to Success, a programme which focusses on the council's care leavers and through which working with partners and other employers aims to create employment opportunities for care leavers as a specific cohort among disadvantaged groups, including direct opportunities within the council's workforce (along with improvements in the way that the council's services are brought together to support care leavers). This is still relatively early days and so the commission is not yet informed on the roll out and success of the programme but suggests there is a future role for scrutiny in seeking assurance on the delivery of Steps to Success and employment outcomes for our looked after children and embedding learning going forward. (Arising from its monitoring visit in April 2017, OFSTED wrote that: *Too many care leavers are not in education, employment or training. The numbers supported into employment or apprenticeships through the 'steps to success' programme are low. However, this is a positive development for young people who are difficult to engage*). The statistics for Lambeth's care leavers who are in employment, education or training are at 54% (Sept 2017) which is slightly below the target of 60%, though in line or above that of our statistical neighbours. Young people leaving care are in a unique circumstance, having to make the transition to adulthood more quickly, at a younger age and with less support than the majority of their peers. As a corporate parent for these young people the council must do all it can to secure them the best future possible.

4.3 Reflecting the positive change in overall unemployment levels in Lambeth but acknowledging the greater challenges for some local people/cohort groups in getting into work, Lambeth Working - the council's directly delivered employment support function set up in 2013 as a dedicated job brokerage service - is now refocussing to deliver activities more on disadvantaged residents rather than providing recruitment and support to employers. However the discussions the commission has had with officers indicate that the council's employment and skills team is not yet capturing all new jobs that are coming up through council commissioning and procurement lines. It was suggested to the commission that it might be possible to include a clause in council contracts that jobs should be advertised on the council's employment and skills team portal so that opportunities could be pushed towards local people and those on supported programmes. And more specifically that it might be possible to hold such jobs for a discrete period e.g. 48 hours so people who have been marginalised from work might have an initial opportunity to be identified and to apply.

4.4 Ultimately the council as an employer has to model the example that it might seek from

our partners, other public sector organisations and from commercial and business organisations.

### **Recommendations**

The Council should lead by example and be a good employer of those who face barriers to employment. It should also seek to share good practice with other local employers.

Specifically:

- 1) In line with the findings of the Equalities Commission the Council should look at how it might recruit individuals who are further away from the labour market ensuring that the appropriate support is put in place for them to secure and sustain themselves in work.
- 2) The council should ensure Steps to Success is being implemented with annual reports to the Children's Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

#### **• The Council as Purchaser**

4.5 In 2015/16 the council spent £550m with 3,716 commercial suppliers; there were 317 contracts over £100,000 on the Contracts Register. In 2016/17 council spend was £608m with 3,923 suppliers and there were 305 contracts over £100,000 on the Register. As a significant procurer of goods and services the council's purchasing spend provides a major opportunity to achieve a wide range of positive outcomes.

4.6 The commission recognises the budget constraints and value for money requirements under which the council operates. However to meet aspirations to improve the life chances of those residents least able to take advantage of the opportunities offered by growth in the borough there is a need to grow the number of supported employment and other opportunities by direct employment, through procurement and commissioning activities, and utilising planning powers; and by influencing partners and others to do the same.

4.7 A new Procurement Policy was agreed at Cabinet in November 2016 and which was developed to support Lambeth's Borough Plan and the Social Value Policy. Throughout its investigations the commission has sought to clarify the council's approach to seeking obligations around social value, determining when requirements should be sought or imposed, and leveraging (employment) opportunities through council commissioning and procurement and supply chains. It would appear to the commission that there is a lack of consistent approach, creating uncertainty. It is not yet clear to the commission what the social value policy is (various iterations exist) nor seemingly a comprehensive understanding across the organisation of when social value might or should be applied in our commissioning/contracting/purchasing arrangements.

4.8 Whilst the commission heard that social value through procurement is already being delivered and the key example of this is through the London Living Wage, the commission considers there needs to be a clear policy framework/charter that sets out the rationale and economic business case for seeking employment, skills and supply chain benefits. More effective operational procedures must evolve to provide consistency of approach and empower officers with the knowledge which will enable them to identify employment

and skills opportunities at the earliest stage.

4.9 The commission would wish to flag the progressive procurement policy adopted by Manchester City Council which has played a pioneering role in reinvesting spend back into the local economy for the benefit of residents and local business, and is at the forefront of best practice around social value. Manchester commissioned a baseline analysis of its procurement spend during 2008/9 financial year to understand the existing contribution to the Manchester economy and explore the extent to which the top 300 suppliers re-spend back in the Manchester economy on Manchester based suppliers and resident employees of their own. Over the subsequent six years and through ethical progressive procurement policies linking procurement to economic development and influencing the supply chain to enhance their social value, the city council has increased by 21% the proportion of total procurement spend with organisations based in and around the local area; increased spend with Small and Medium Sized Enterprise (MEs) to 43%; and seen re-spend through supply chains re-invested back into the Manchester economy increase from 25p in the £1 in 2008/09, to 43p in the £1 in 2015/16. The key findings, changes and impacts are set out in the report *The Power of Procurement II: The policy and practice of Manchester City Council – 10 years on* published by the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) in 2017. In addition to the direct financial benefits, CLES also assessed a significant contribution made by the top 300 suppliers through the creation of apprenticeships; employment opportunities for 'hard to reach' individuals; jobs; and contributions to voluntary and community sector activities.

<https://cles.org.uk/publications/the-power-of-procurement-2/>

4.10 Procurement accordingly can be used as a means, for example, of stimulating local businesses and Small to Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs), creating jobs and apprenticeships and changing the behaviour of suppliers.

4.11 Lambeth of course already places some obligations on providers when buying goods or services. But crucially there is need for robust monitoring of the delivery of contractual enhancements - social value and added value requirements but also s106 obligations - and whether contractual commitments and agreements on associated training and employment issues (apprenticeships, supported employment etc.) are being delivered. This is to ensure not only effective delivery of all opportunities as agreed but also to assess the success of the policy framework.

4.12 Contract delivery and monitoring is largely devolved to departments and service managers and there appears no corporate measure on levels of compliance. Accordingly there is potentially a need for a register or similar to record where obligations have been imposed on applicant/provider/contractor; a robust arrangement for monitoring compliance and delivery; and where obligations have not been fulfilled robust challenge and to be advised why not. It is also important to be clear on what and how it is expected that a contractor will deliver on its employment obligations – a contractor as employer may deliver at minimum level and if circumstances change might not re-introduce the role e.g. if an apprentice /supported employee leaves the position s/he may not be replaced by a new starter. Where obligations are not being delivered there should be interventions to resolve this.

4.13 The commission heard from social enterprises that there are a range of commercial

organisations with whom there is very pro-active engagement with job placements and on- going in-work support provided by social enterprise to ensure individuals in jobs or placements can cope and are thriving. These include Mosaic and Pret a Manger; First Step Trust and Halfords; Camden Society and Marks & Spencer. But the commission also heard that social enterprises have struggled to develop links into some of Lambeth's key contractors and open up the social value element.

- 4.14 Additionally it may not always be relevant or appropriate for contractors to directly deliver employment requirements but, in seeking to address Borough Plan priorities for reducing inequality in employment rates, this could be through a contractor-social enterprise arrangement where the latter has the skills and capacity to work with individuals who have complex needs and takes on the contractors' responsibilities. It has been suggested to the commission that it might be appropriate to ask some of the council's larger contractors to fund third sector/social enterprise partners to provide and support placements or apprentices. For example, the City of London Corporation as part of its Responsible Procurement Strategy supplies a list of social enterprise with whom its suppliers are encouraged to work.
- 4.15 Where people have sporadic symptoms or may not have the ability to maintain a regular schedule this can be sustained or supported by a charity or social enterprise over a longer term than may be sustained by a business. The need for support over extended periods, perhaps with gradual increases in the number of hours worked and in the amount of responsibility taken, has been a constant theme of contributors.
- 4.16 The council commissioned NEF Consulting/Numbers for Good to develop a model where social enterprises are helped – with appropriate infrastructure – to provide supported employment opportunities for Lambeth residents. Its report *Lambeth Supported Employment and Social Enterprise Model* (March 2016) set out a comprehensive overview of the supported employment landscape in Lambeth. It reviewed the range of provision for discrete cohorts with a focus on six social enterprises operating in Lambeth – Carpet Cleaning Care; Mosaic Clubhouse; Southside Rehabilitation Association; Status Employment; First Step Trust; Tree Shepherd - and identified three models of interventions. *(It should be noted that most of the social enterprises reviewed supported people with mental health conditions ranging from acute to less acute).* These are cited below to provide understanding of the different local models which are in play and supporting residents.
- a) Comprehensive social support: to help people with serious mental health issues recover, stabilize their situation and improve their wellbeing. Although not focused on getting people into employment, these organisations offer an early stage support that is essential to enable people with mental health issues to start thinking about education and employment and start building their basic personal skills without which any progress into work would be impossible.
  - b) Transition Job Placements: these are generally part time job placements, remunerated under the Permitted Work Scheme, which allows beneficiaries to keep receiving benefits while on limited employment. The length of these placement varies (from 6 months to several years). Some social enterprise have developed commercial activities and provide transitional job placements in those trading arms. Others partner with public and private employers to offer transitional job placements in

mainstream work environments.

- c) Permanent Job Placements: providing support into permanent positions by facilitating job search and matching between candidates and employers through partnership with a network of public and private employers.

4.17 Based on its research NEFC/NfG presented various options that the council could roll out and estimates of potential outcomes, costs and other resource requirements. The commission understands that a stakeholder workshop was held to follow up on the report and potential next steps (28 June 2016). It may be timely for a progress review to be sought.

4.18 A key issue in the commission's discussions with the social enterprises that provide commercial services to public sector markets – and also flagged in the NEF report - is that there is a need for the council and other public sector procurers to provide greater access to public sector contracts, and by extension to private sector contracts in their supply chains.

4.19 There are challenges around how social enterprises get to hear about relevant or appropriate opportunities and their difficulties in navigating the system. There is also a need to make it practical for social enterprises that operate commercial arms (such as First Step Trust and Bounce Back) to bid for contracts. Whilst the commission was advised that the three-year procurement plan is on the council website it was not clear from discussions with social enterprise that this information is cascaded in a way to make them aware of forthcoming opportunities, nor that relationships into the council were sufficiently strong for commissioners to work with social enterprise to help them understand how they might bid and win council contracts.

4.20 The commission would wish to highlight the very positive example of the Lambeth Council and SLaM Carpet Cleaning contract. Competing with established cleaning companies, 'Clean and Care' in 2012 won a 5 year contract to clean Lambeth's libraries and day centre buildings, and it has since diversified to provide office, upholstery and domestic cleaning services. The team is predominately made up of individuals with complex needs, experiencing a combination of mental health problems, disability and social exclusion. Over the 5 year contract 31 Lambeth residents have been members of the workforce. For a lot of the team this has been their first opportunity to work and earn for over 15 years.

4.21 Using a transitional job placement model (enabling individuals to develop and build their work habits (timeliness, reliability) and in-work relationships (with managers, colleagues and clients), the reported workforce outcomes since 2011 are that:

- six members of the team have started paid work;
- two have entered full time employment and are off benefits;
- four individuals are undertaking work placements and accredited courses to help them move closer to the job market in their chosen field, for example hospitality, healthcare and finance;
- a further two are attending local colleges on a part time basis.

4.22 As well as providing paid work for members of the work crew, the project actively

supports participants with their vocational aspirations and partnerships have been developed with community organisations to facilitate leisure and volunteering opportunities for members of the workforce. The project considers it now has the insight and capacity to scale up significantly and its aspiration is to expand this innovative work. The commission supports this aspiration, and hopes there will be further conversations between Carpet Cleaning Care, as they are now known, and the Councils Procurement team.

### **Recommendations**

- 3) There should be a coherent Social Value Strategy which includes guidance for commissioners and procurement on what outcomes the Council expects from purchasing, with links to relevant strategies and helpful information such as lists of cohorts we are trying to assist, and organisations which can be involved.
- 4) Delivery of Social Value (SV) must be tracked to ensure suppliers are complying, through a Council-wide, systematic mechanism.
- 5) Procurement and commissioning processes should where appropriate give suppliers the option of subcontracting delivery of apprenticeships and supported employment to social enterprises (SEs).
- 6) Procurers should consider the importance of supply chains and subcontractors in large contracts; officers should investigate whether social value requirements can be placed on subcontractors as well as the primary contractor.
- 7) Where procurement delivers lower cost than expected, consideration should be given to diverting the available funds to directly support SV outcomes; it is recognised that these decisions would need made through the Medium Term Financial Strategy and financial planning process of the council.
- 8) Council priorities for employment and skills should include access to a wide range of potential opportunities for our residents targeting those identified in the Equalities Commission and we should consider how to promote the range of opportunities available to these priority groups.
- 9) The Council should review its contracts register to identify possible contract opportunities that could be used to deliver employment support to disadvantaged groups. Procurement teams should be advised of any available options for the use of providers of employment support provision to facilitate a wider range of targeted social value outcomes.
- 10) The Council should benchmark against other Local Authority areas in relation to best practice within Procurement strategies focusing on Social Value impacts, for example reviewing the City of London Procurement Strategy specifically in relation to how social enterprises could be targeted for contracts.
- 11) If the Council commissions Social Enterprises to deliver employment support it needs to consider whether there is a need for the contract to be for extended periods of time with evaluation of outcomes suitably constructed.

- 12) Council should develop a KPI (key performance indicator) for measuring the local multiplier effect of its procurement contracts based on LM3 (Local Multiplier 3). There should be an overall target for increasing the local multiplier for the Borough, and the Social Value Strategy should include methods of achieving this increase.
- 13) The Procurement Strategy should show how contracts are being packaged, sized and advertised so as to enable small and medium sized enterprise (SMEs) and Social Enterprises to bid for them or to become part of the supply chain.
- 14) There should be a progress review on the NEF Consulting/Numbers for Good: Lambeth Supported Employment and Social Enterprise Model (March 2016).

- **The Council as Influencer**

- 4.23 The challenge for individuals who are out of the labour market and the agencies that support them into work is the opportunity for work experience and the first steps into work.
- 4.24 Evolve Housing advised that for people furthest from the job market it is often too big a step into mainline employment which tends to have high demands and structure - employability support is more successful with those furthest from the job market when it spans from informal engagement working up to accreditation and work placements.
- 4.25 The Camden Society explained that for their clients the challenges are the nature of the jobs and the multi-tasking that this can involve which can be hard for someone with a learning disability. They need to be able to access the employer and discuss how discrete aspects of roles might be altered: if they can get people into jobs they will provide ongoing support to the employee and also to the employer.
- 4.26 Similarly Mosaic Clubhouse explained their approach to 'carving' relatively complex activities into simple tasks which their members could accomplish as a first step. The commission also heard that there can sometimes be cultural issues which mean that opportunities to transition into work are not always accessed.
- 4.27 Some cohort groups also have specific challenges around application processes and the on- line process which is predominately the first step to submitting a job application (notwithstanding access to I.T. which is discussed further below). It was flagged for example that when people with a learning or physical disability apply for a job they often have to go through the same process as mainstream applicants, that is complete the application on line and answer written questions, sometimes with a time limited factor. But clients may have difficulties with this process and need more time to understand the questions and provide answers. Some employers will make adjustments when they understand the situation and a practical arrangement is to establish a work trial so the applicant can better show their abilities. But there is a need to get through H.R. barriers in the first place – employers may have a telephone number for clients with additional needs to contact but this is often a standard call line and no awareness of what arrangements might be offered or made. In securing a job or a work placement for an individual a social enterprise can do a lot of pre-work with the employer and

support/advocate on behalf of the individual and help them until they are feeling confident in the role. The critical issue for social enterprise is a need for a greater numbers of receptive employers, and they perceive a role for the council firstly in helping to develop the links to employers and secondly a wider education role in spreading understanding that people want to work and are able to work but need the opportunities to help them do so.

- 4.28 The session with programme leads for Pathways to Employment and Working Capital discussed the jobs that might be achieved for people furthest from the jobs market and the pay levels. For many this is a good first step job to getting lives back on track and addressing for example the health issues or that circumstances that may have reduced employment options. (In discussions with Job Centre Plus (JCP) and support into work the pathway was explained as *A job: A better job: A career*). In particular the client group is changing – the numbers on Job Seekers Allowance have dropped and greater numbers are on Employment Support Allowance (this key client group includes people with mental health needs and disabilities). About half of clients who have successfully gone into jobs through the programmes have entered employment in health, social care and hospitality. Whilst the borough has seen an active building and regeneration programme in recent years, it was explained to the commission that the construction trade will not be an avenue for numbers of clients such as those with health issues and accordingly there is a segmentation of work appropriate for different cohort groups.
- 4.29 The commission heard that young people often prove a cohort with whom JCP finds it difficult to engage and the commission discussed that there is a need to make it easier for young people to find out about the options that are available to them. The commission heard briefly about the new Careers Cluster Programme supported by the council and JCP which facilitates a careers guidance and employment support offer in Lambeth Schools. The provision is demand-led by each school and is still in its early stages so is too early for tracking outcomes, learning and evaluation. It is also understood that Lambeth Special Schools with Post 16 provision, Lambeth College and Roots & Shoots have formed a SEND [Special Educational Needs & Disabilities] cluster, supported by the British Association for Supported Employment to ensure that a range of Supported Internships in a range of areas of industries/business will be available to young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan and who want to move into employment and need extra support to do so. These are welcome developments. The commission has not focused on specific issues around young people and employment and this potentially requires further engagement with the Young Lambeth Co-op. The commission further notes there are recommendations in the Equalities Commission report that focus on the role of schools in supporting young people into education and training.
- 4.30 The commission however heard that many clients are presenting with a lack of soft skills particularly if they are young or have been out of work for a long time – poor communication skills and in-work skills were cited and in particular poor timekeeping: employers may overlook a specific skill set and can provide training but they want people who will turn up, and be on time.
- 4.31 For some clients/cohorts, for example carers or people with disabilities, employment within an environment that requires a level of structure or a traditional work setting will never be practical. Individuals wish to work but need a situation that suits their

circumstances, for example one that allows them to work from home. Accordingly there is a need to offer different structures of support, with opportunities for business enterprise and self-employment. Tree Shepherd for example has been running a Disability Enterprise Project in Croydon. This is a group in particular which struggles with conventional employment and there has been an overwhelming level of interest and demand. The cost of the scheme has been met through Direct Payments.

- 4.32 Lambeth has a vibrant enterprise culture as well as a number of significant employers. Whilst it is recognised that the Working Capital/Pathway to Employment cohort and individuals with complex needs will not easily access mainstream employment, the commission considers that there are pertinent opportunities arising from local enterprise for some individuals but that the links are perhaps missing across some headline agencies which might create access to those opportunities and bring interested parties together.
- 4.33 The discussion with Brixton BID indicated that there is little awareness of, or join-up with, Lambeth Working and JCP, whereas these should be able to link businesses with social enterprises as avenues for staff recruitment and enable BIDs and member businesses to promote employment of local residents with barriers to employment. Many of the BIDs member businesses are very small, so they will need support to take advantage of these opportunities, and others like the Apprenticeship Levy. It should be noted that there have been successes where small local businesses have sought to provide opportunities, for example in Pop Brixton business have provided placements. These were unpaid, but unpaid working experience can be extremely valuable to individuals who need to accustom themselves to working routines and populate a CV.
- 4.34 The BIDs in Lambeth meet together every three months and this is potentially a forum for cascading information about/a presentation from Lambeth Working and the cohorts it is seeking to support; it might also provide a forum for practical introductions between BIDs/businesses and those social enterprises/charities seeking to site people in local placements with a clear understanding of what the employer might expect and the support available. At Mosaic Clubhouse for example the commission heard that individuals are matched to a placement opportunity and that people are supported into and through the job (*dedicated placement management*) and regular contact is maintained during the placement. It may be that three people are trained up to do the job and a member of Mosaic's staff will also learn the role so that there is guaranteed cover if any absence. The employer will not lose out if there are any problems or issues arising.
- 4.35 Consideration might also be given to acknowledging and signposting employers who are pro- active in supporting employment opportunities for clients from various disadvantaged cohorts, as there is for the disabled ("Disability Confident").

### **Recommendations**

- 15) The Council should, wherever possible, through contacts developed by its employment support services and other means, support public and private sector employers to develop opportunities for disadvantaged residents, for example:
- The Council should have a lead role in overseeing the development of good practice in the delivery of the Apprenticeship levy

- The Council should inform employers of the benefits of recruiting from more disadvantaged groups and refer them to sources of information and support in order to encourage them to consider it. Including occasional awareness raising events.

- 16) The Council should, along with partners including through Lambeth First, support the Mayor of London's promotion of the 'Good Work Standard'.
- 17) The Council should consider how to promote the availability of all employment and skills provision to residents and businesses using digital and offline platforms, and networks such as the BIDs.
- 18) The Council should discuss with the BID network ways in which they can inform member employers of the benefits of recruiting from more disadvantaged groups including, for example, holding open days where employers can meet a range of employment support providers.
- 19) The Council should support the development of capacity in the Voluntary and Community Sector, for example by facilitating relationships with the business community and developing guidance to support employers to develop their employment support offer including how to make recruitment processes accessible.
- 20) The Council should engage with community leadership groups to develop our understanding of the specific barriers faced by their members; this should focus on those communities identified within the Equalities Commission recommendations.

- **The Council as Housing Provider**

- 4.36 The Council is obviously a significant social housing provider and has a duty as well as interest in promoting employment of tenants. According to global innovation foundation Nesta, rates of worklessness and poverty are much higher among social housing tenants. 3.5 million adults living in social housing are out of work: that is 56%, compared with 25% in private housing (owned or rented). Children living in social rented housing in England are four times more likely to be living in poverty than children in other forms of housing.
- 4.37 According to recent research by the National Housing Federation, two thirds of housing associations already provide employment and skills support to tenants, or are planning to introduce such services. Lambeth Housing provides such support, and has had significant success with its Workwise programme.
- 4.38 Workwise is a partnership between Lambeth Housing Services and homelessness prevention charity St Mungo's. It is an employment, training and advice project that supports Lambeth tenants who are affected by the impact of Welfare Reform and are therefore at risk of losing their tenancies and becoming homeless. Workwise provides tailored support to equip tenants with the skills, knowledge and confidence to get into work or move closer to employment, thereby helping to manage the shortfall in rent/housing benefit and sustain their tenancies. The programme's first six month review reported that Workwise initially aimed to work with 150 tenants over the duration of the 2016/17 contract. However demand for employment support by tenants has been high and the team had already engaged with 131 tenants by 31st October 2016. The published report can be

found at

<https://housingmanagement.lambeth.gov.uk/news/workwise-works-for-residents-at-risk-- 2107/>

### **Recommendations**

21) The Work Wise programme for tenants should consider modifying its objectives and reporting to ensure it supports those groups identified by the Equalities Commission as being particularly in need.

#### • **The Council as Planning Authority**

4.39 As Planning Authority the Council can impose conditions on development to promote its desired outcomes, as long as these are consistent with planning law. A major advance in structuring this activity was the agreement of the Employment and Skills Supplementary Planning Document. This for example stipulated that there should be one supported employment position per 2500 sq. metres of new development.

4.40 As discussed above, not all individuals wishing to work will be able to sustain a job in a traditionally structured employment environment but could operate in the employment sector when conditions suit their personal circumstances for example through self-enterprise. The council might wish to therefore consider whether there are discrete opportunities to facilitate people starting up their own business. Issues flagged to the committee include making it easier for people work from home by making leases more permissive and a general policy that more overtly encourages enterprise (for example catering and cooking from home) rather than excluding as a principle and allowing by exception. It was also suggested there is a need to be more active in helping people to find space in the places that the council has control of (such as garage spaces) rather than disposing of such assets, although in fact many previously unused garages have already been brought back into use - as garages. The LJ: Works project in Coldharbour Ward is an example where the Council **has** used a space of which it has control to provide opportunities for self-employed residents, and has provided a significant amount of investment to bring this about.

### **Recommendations**

22) The revised Employment and Skills Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is currently going through the required approval processes; when the final SPD is adopted then the Council should monitor and review its impact on the employment and skills development of disadvantaged groups.

23) Where industrial development sites are brought forward, or where meanwhile sites or other currently unused properties or pieces of land are identified, the Council should look for opportunities to help self-employed residents take advantage of them. The Council should ensure that Planning, Inclusion and Business Development functions work closely together to achieve this.

- **The Council as leader of Partnerships**

4.41 In conjunction with its visit to Streatham JCP the commission visited the co-located Living Well Network Hub. Based on the third floor at Crown House, the Hub is the front door into community based mental health support in Lambeth with a number of partner and community organisations working from it to co-ordinate different aspects of support including health and referral into mental health services such as IAPT, but also practical support around housing and benefits recognising that individuals experiencing mental ill health often have problems such as debt, housing issues etc. [The Hub provides a first response/triage, working with clients for a limited time rather than providing on-going support for those with severe mental health problems].

4.42 The commission heard from JCP that there had initially been some misgivings from mental health service users and practitioners about co-locating the Hub with JCP as an unemployment/back to work service, this had in fact panned out extremely well. Clients might have only a limited time with their GP and be signed off work for a few weeks; and being signed off can mean that individuals are left without support and a relevant pathway. It might be that other help can be given but is not being prescribed or clients are not signposted to opportunities including help getting back into work. A return to, or entry into employment, can aid recovery not only in re-establishing a person's self-worth, it gives them a routine and structure around which to lead their lives. But employers must be sensitive and flexible with employees to make sure they fully recover.

4.43 Arising from the co-location at Streatham JCP staff can get advice and support from the Hub in their work with clients, and they can refer clients upstairs to the Hub for support. The Hub has trained over 400 JCP staff in south London on indications of mental health needs.

4.44 Unfortunately the closure of Brixton JCP (arising from end of lease) means that space currently used by the Hub at Streatham is needed to accommodate staff relocating from Brixton. It is understood that the future arrangement is likely to be Hubs around the borough however there is concern about losing the co-location. The commission considers this is an issue the Health and Wellbeing Board should consider.

4.45 Another potential integration of health and employment services which the Commission has considered is the possibility of providing employment support at GP surgeries. This has been trialed in Islington, with employment clinics at 5 surgeries, and doctors being enabled to refer patients for employment advice. The Commission believes the progress of this trial should be investigated by the Health and Wellbeing Board, which should decide whether this would be a useful model for Lambeth.

4.46 A key cohort facing difficulties getting into work is the 50+ age group, and this cohort often have multiple barriers. It is this age group who are largely referred to Pathways to Employment as long term JCP claimants. The commission heard that 'Step Ahead' is a specific JCP programme for 50+ and a JCP partnership manager works with employers to open up opportunities for this age group. Major barriers in finding helpful employers for the cohort is that their skills are rusty and they lack confidence. JCP runs workshops around fitting into the job market and exploring the skills and techniques needed to

search for work in today's technology driven environment: jobs are often advertised via social media (twitter, Facebook) rather than on websites or traditional methods - in discussions with Brixton BID it was considered unlikely that employers would use JCP to seek/advertise for staff - and clients may lack the skills to create an on-line footprint e.g. Linked In.

4.47 High Trees Community Development Trust has three years funding from Battersea Power Station Foundation to support over 50's in Lambeth and Wandsworth into employment. At the end of September 2017 High Trees will be launching a new Employment Programme for over 50s who are not currently employed or are in low paid employment. Citing Nomis Labour Market profiles, High Trees notes that in Lambeth and Wandsworth alone there are currently over 2,800 over 50s unemployed and looking for work, almost half of which have been out of work for over one year. The over 50s resident population in both boroughs has the highest proportion of out of work benefit claimants compared with other age-grouped claimants. Whilst unemployment is one of the largest issues for the over 50s, in a time where they will be required to work for longer, the potential for this demographic to actively engage and benefit from the economic development happening across the two boroughs is at a high. Over the next 15 years the redevelopment of Nine Elms is expecting to deliver around 22,000 jobs during the construction phase and additional 25,000 permanent jobs, with a focus on employing both Lambeth and Wandsworth residents. Recognising that there is no one size fits all model, High Trees will deliver a fluid programme of bespoke support for each individual which includes life coaching and skills development.

4.48 The commission heard that a deterrent for individuals seeking to up-skill and get back into the labour market is the impact on benefits. For example the commission heard at Mosaic Clubhouse that the charity provides on-site education – basic writing, I.T., math skills - and many people then need to go to college to get more advanced learning/training. However a key problem is that people cannot sign on and do courses (e.g. NVQs), they need to be available for work and if they make themselves ineligible for work will lose money: if a course requires them to be at college 2/3 days a week they cannot get JSA. The commission discussed this with JCP and was advised that under Universal Credit this will depend on the type of benefit and the individuals' journey into employment but there are many opportunities to take up training and not lose benefits. There will be an open avenue to exploring options – clients will be asked about the value of the course or learning they wish to undertake and how it will enable them to get a job or build their skill set, and JCP work coaches will support an individual to make a business case as needed. Even Mosaic Clubhouse, who provide benefits advice, expressed a need to achieve greater understanding of the new benefits regime. Accordingly the commission flags this issue as a need to address perceptions and clarify mutual understanding of what flexibility might be on offer around learning and training and on- going access to benefits.

4.49 Conversations with JCP/Department of Work and Pensions revealed that some residents experience difficulties in obtaining identification documents which they need to apply for jobs or take up employment. This may be either because of cost or because of the individual's circumstances. The Commission believes the Council should take action to remove this barrier to employment.

### **Recommendations**

- 24) The Council, working through Lambeth First and other partnerships, should encourage partner organisations and suppliers to recognise the value of recruiting from disadvantaged groups and should provide information as to the help available from employment support providers to employers.
- 25) Council should work with Lambeth Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) through the Health and Wellbeing Board to investigate the benefits of providing employment advice at GP surgeries, and enabling doctors to refer patients to employment support services. This should take into consideration the work undertaken in Islington.
- 26) The Council, working in partnership with DWP, should ensure that when job seekers being helped by Employment and Skills experience difficulty in obtaining identification documents, a protocol exists whereby assistance can be obtained from DWP.

#### **• Improving our Practice**

- 4.50 A fundamental need is for individuals to have basic IT capabilities and access to I.T so they can complete on-line applications. This is not just a factor for those seeking employment but is associated with the increasing use of digital platforms including the roll out of Universal Credit.
- 4.51 The commission was advised that Digi-buddies is running and will continue in its present form until September 2017 – there are four sessions per week at different locations in the borough – but consideration is being given to future status. Digi-buddies was set up primarily with the intention of helping to mitigate the impact of Universal Credit – people need to make and manage their Universal Credit claim on line – and Universal Credit is being significantly scaled up in Lambeth from December 2017 by the Department of Work and Pensions. Accordingly it is important that Lambeth has the right provision in place. Funding to pay for Digi-buddies comes from the DWP which sets criteria which have to be met.
- 4.52 The commission's report has touched on the refocus of Lambeth Working and its transition to a new service. Lambeth Working has been the Council's directly delivered employment support function since 2013 when it was set up as a dedicated job brokerage service. The service was designed to match high numbers of unemployed residents with high volume vacancies, particularly in the construction industry. Since that time unemployment levels have reduced significantly and those residents who are unable to find work independently are still out of work face significant and complex barriers to accessing work. Moreover, work in the construction industry is often not appropriate for this disadvantaged group, many, or most of whom have health problems.
- 4.53 A change in programme funding, and an analysis of outcomes for clients who have been placed in work and apprenticeships by Lambeth Working, has led to the development of a new service from April 2017 better focused around intensive individual support for those who need it (for example support to care leavers is a key group) and allowed the service to move some of the functions previously delivered through a face

to face brokerage service to be delivered through a new website. The portal will provide access to services for residents, employers and employment providers and will act as a single front door for residents to register – completion of a quick questionnaire will establish whether they are eligible for face to face support or are relatively self-sufficient. The website will allow for a skills matching profile to be set up which will automatically provide a 'light touch' matching of residents to opportunities and allow for alerts to be sent.

4.54 In reconfiguring the service the commission considers that there must be a high profile awareness raising campaign – including to elected members – to increase public familiarity and understanding of the role of council's employment and skills team and reach the client base it is seeking to support. In commencing its enquiries the commission membership had not found a great general awareness of Lambeth Working and a limited or difficult to find on- line presence. Refocussing activities to those who are potentially is positive but it must be determined whether a service initially driven by on-line access is not disengaging that client base whom already might lack I.T confidence and skills. Accordingly the commission would wish to be assured that the new service is designed in conjunction with clients in those cohorts who are facing barriers into work and that the function and its accessibility is subsequently mystery shopped and validated by cohorts.

4.55 One of the recurrent themes identified by the Commission has been the need for long term support for many of those who are moving into employment despite facing significant barriers. One way of their receiving support is from others who have had similar experiences. The Pathways to Employment Evaluation Report (para 4.2) mentions that at the focus group which was run, there were requests for a network of former service users. The Commission believes this is something which the Council or JCP could facilitate.

### **Recommendations**

27) Council priorities for employment and skills should include access to a wide range of potential opportunities for our residents targeting those groups identified in the Equalities Commission. The council should set out clearly what its employment and skills support offer is and we should consider how to promote the range of opportunities available to these priority groups. The Council should continue to review, evaluate and develop all its employment support programmes to develop good practice and support the Equalities Commission recommendations.

28) The Council should ensure that at our libraries and other locations where internet access is available, support is available to help residents – especially those who are digitally excluded or who have learning difficulties or mental health issues – to carry out online job applications. This should be tested through mystery shopping.

29) The Council should continue to review, evaluate and develop all its employment support programmes to develop good practice and support the Equalities Commission recommendations. Information on initiatives should be made available to elected members.

30) The Council, working with Job Centre Plus (JCP) should help graduates of employment schemes such as Pathways to Employment to provide peer support to each other through a network of former service users. This could be facilitated via an online forum and / or offline activities such as drop-in sessions.

- **The Council as Developer / Landowner / Property Owner**

4.56 In regeneration or development situations where the council is a land owner it has additional powers to drive its desired outcomes compared to its being only the planning authority. In developments such as LJ Works, Pop Brixton and Waterloo Library we have tried to prioritise local residents when allocating space. Those responsible for allocation decisions could consider how to ensure those in cohorts which face barriers to employment and self-employment can be given opportunities.

**Recommendation**

31) In circumstances where the Council carries out developments on land which it owns which result in commercial spaces or employment / self-employment opportunities, efforts should be made to encourage participation by groups identified by the Equalities Commission as being particularly in need.

## 5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The evidence base shows significant inequalities in the employment rates for people over 50 and under 25, ethnic minority groups, people experiencing mental health conditions, and disabled people, particularly those with learning disabilities. Health inequalities are particularly acute in Lambeth with 27.3% of economic inactivity attributable to long term sickness against 16.5% in London and 21.9% per cent nationally (*Nomis Labour Market statistics*). The same statistics record that there are 6,300 economically inactive residents who 'want a job'.
- 5.2 The interplay of personal barriers, often for people with protected characteristics, leads to multifaceted disadvantage. These people are furthest from the labour market and are likely to need more focused and targeted support, perhaps over a longer period of time, to help them into work.
- 5.3 The Jobs for All Scrutiny Commission was set up to assess policy relating to helping those furthest from the labour market into work and to identify any enhancements. In particular the commission sought to investigate whether the mechanisms the council is using, and intends to use, to increase the supply of supported employment opportunities for unemployed residents with more complex needs are sufficient and appropriate.
- 5.4 The commission's enquiries found there are pockets of excellent practice but these are not always well aligned. There is some lack of clarity in policy and guidance, and join-up across council services is not sufficiently coherent to make the most of potential opportunities arising from our spend as a local authority. The commission is also not sufficiently assured that expectations from our contracting requirements are always being delivered. The commission also believes that as a key local influencer the council is in a strong position to lead by example in supporting our disadvantaged residents into work and in pro-actively bringing together partner organisations, voluntary sector/social enterprise and local business to build relationships and promote a range of work opportunities available to priority groups.
- 5.5 The commission has made a number of recommendations which it hopes the council will adopt. We would like to make one more: the commission believes it is time for the council to make a clear statement that it is committed to having a meaningful positive impact on the employment outcomes for our most disadvantaged groups of residents. While we know that we have above London average levels of employment (Lambeth 82.5% and London 73.7%) and economic activity (Lambeth 86.9% and London 78.1%), we also know that this masks issues of unemployment and economic exclusion with a higher than (London) average number of people on JSA (4,110 people) and health related benefits (12,350); moreover we know that these inequalities disproportionately affect some of our most excluded groups of residents.

### **Recommendation**

32) The council should commit to focus on the employment support needs of those priority groups of residents highlighted within the Equalities Commission who are long-term unemployed or at risk of being so. This will include people with mental and physical health conditions, people with learning difficulties and learning disabilities, residents from our most excluded minority ethnic groups, older residents aged 50+yrs, our

young people leaving care and young people at risk of being out of education, training and employment. Through coordinating, facilitating and delivering a range of support interventions over the next four years the council will enable the employment of 1500 residents who face multiple barriers to entering employment thus improving their wellbeing, economic and social situation and quality of life.