



# Report to the Joint Executive Committee

Meeting Date – 9th September 2024

Key Decision – No

Public/Private – Public

Portfolio – Cllr Mark Fryer, Leader Cumberland Council and Cllr Jonathan Brook,  
Leader Westmorland and Furness Council

Directorate – Place, Sustainable Growth and Transport

Lead Officer – Cath Dutton, Strategic Careers Lead

**Title – Careers and Enterprise Programme Update – Cumbria Careers Hub**

## **Brief Summary:**

This report provides the first update on the Careers and Enterprise Grant funded programme – **Cumbria Careers Hub to the JEC**

## **Recommendations:**

**For the reasons set out in this report, the Joint Executive Committee is recommended to:**

1. Note progress against the Grant Offer Letter for academic year 2023 – 24
2. Note and comment on the Strategic Priorities for 2024 – 2025
3. Note and comment on the intention to create an All-Age Career Strategy for Cumbria aligned to the Future Economic Strategy for Cumbria

## **1. Background**

1.1. Cumbria Careers Hub is funded by the Department of Education through the Careers and Enterprise Company (the LEP has received funding since 2020 to deliver careers and enterprise activity on behalf of the Careers and Enterprise Company, for each academic year).

1.2. Cumbria Careers Hub is responsible for supporting the delivery of the careers guidance programme from Year 7 to year 13 in Secondary Schools, Special Education Needs Schools (including Section 41 independently funded schools) and Pupil Referral Units and the four Further Education Colleges in Cumbria. This equates to 53 Institutions. Funding is allocated each academic year and this year, starts on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024. The programme employs a team of 3.7 staff on fixed-term contracts to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025. The programme requires up to £70,000 match funding to contribute 50% funding towards staff salaries.

### 1.3 Progress Against the Grant Offer Letter 2023/24

The table below outlines the targets within the main CEC contract and the performance against each of these.

<b>Grant Offer Letter Activity</b>	<b>2023/24 Target</b>	<b>Progress as at 19.08.2024</b>
<b>Number of eligible schools</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Number of Enterprise Advisers (EA) in Post</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>% of Institutions receiving EA support</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>Institutions upgraded to Compass+ Software programme</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>Compass Returns (reporting achievement against Gatsby Benchmarks)</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Institutions achieving at least 3 Gatsby Benchmarks</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Institutions achieving Gatsby Benchmark 1</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>86.06%</b>
<b>Institutions achieving all 8 Gatsby Benchmarks*</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Average Performance against Gatsby Benchmarks against all Careers Hubs</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>5.6</b>
<b>% of Future Skills Questionnaires completed*</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>15%</b>

1.4 The table identifies that several targets have been overachieved, but two targets were not achieved. In recognition of this, additional plans are being developed to ensure these are achieved during the next academic year.

1.5 One noticeable achievement is that 86.06% of Cumbria's Institutions have achieved Gatsby Benchmark (GBM) 1, which is an increase from 72.5% at the start of this academic

year. The eight Gatsby Benchmarks serve as a framework for world-class careers provision and have been adopted as part of the Government's Careers Strategy. The GBM focus in 2024/25 will be in moving more institutions through to achievement of all 8 GBMs as currently 18% have achieved this, with 8% having achieved 7 GBMs.

BMs	Institutions	% of total
2	1	2%
3	1	2%
4	12	24%
5	11	22%
6	13	25%
7	4	8%
8	9	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>100%</b>

1.6 Turning to targets that have yet to be met, additional support has been provided to all schools to encourage them to complete the Future Skills Questionnaire (FSQ). This target has not been achieved, mainly due to a lack of access to IT in schools to enable the students to complete the questionnaire outside of normal teaching time. The introduction of no mobile phones in schools has also impacted on completion of the questionnaires. At this year's Careers Conference in June, the Careers Team ran a workshop detailing how the FSQ data could help with their careers planning and 73% of respondents found this workshop very helpful and plan to use the FSQ next year. With reference to 20% of the Institutions achieving all 8 GBMs, the main blocker here is a financial and time resource in schools and colleges. The cost of providing 1:1 Guidance to all pupils can range from £2,500 to £10,000 per annum and given the other financial challenges Cumbria's schools and colleges are facing now, this is unfortunately not a priority. In 24/25 a working group will be established to review this and look a potential solution in academic year 25/26.

## Key Project Outcomes for 2023/24 Academic Year

### *Experiences of the Workplace*

1.7 This academic year the team has focused on improving different aspects of experience of the workplace by delivering several projects, which included:

- Project 1 - A focused project in partnership with Inspira delivered with a school in Carlisle (23 students) to identify the barriers that some young people face when applying for work experience. This is now complete, and the next steps are to take the learning from this project and roll it out across Cumbria. Of the 23 students, all at risk of

being Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), that had not secured work experience, 16 successfully completed work experience as a result of this intervention. 5 students completed a Careers Week in school and 2 refused to take part in the Careers Week. One work experience placement led to the offer of part-time work and an apprenticeship on completion of Year 11, which is significant given that this student was at risk of becoming NEET on leaving school.

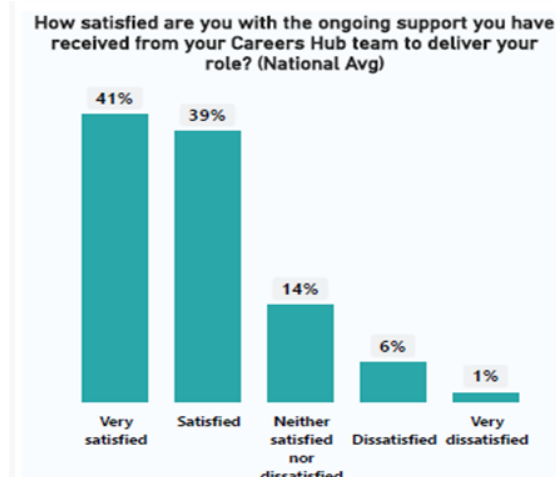
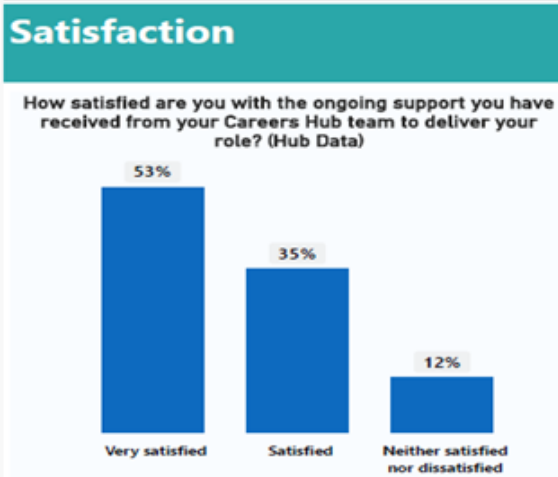
- Project 2 - The Hub worked with 8 employers at Kingmoor Park to develop their work experience offer. In total 12 students secured placements at a range of businesses, of those, one has been offered a paid summer job and another has an offer of a level 3 apprenticeship when he gets his GCSE results in August.
- Project 3 - Queen Elizabeth Studio is working with the Careers Hub to develop resources for all schools, which will encourage teachers across the school to use education visits and residentials as an additional way of promoting careers in those sectors. The resources will include guidance notes and checklists to support teachers and make it easy for them to adopt this approach as a part of their normal teaching role, which will highlight additional places of work to young people.

### 1.8 **Enterprise Adviser Network**

Our volunteer Enterprise Advisers (EAs) work with schools and colleges to provide 'real time' insight and to help demystify the world of work and improve connectivity to employers.

Each year, the CEC send out a survey to measure impact and gain insight into the volunteer network – our EAs comment on what they feel has gone well, what could be improved and how they have worked with their school or college. The results from the 2024 survey told us:

- Our EAs improve the quality of careers education and their impact increases the longer they spend in role.
- Their apprenticeship outreach work is leading to uptake.
- There are business, personal and wider economic benefits from EA engagement.
- Cumbria's EA role satisfaction and impact is above national average (Cumbria 'Very satisfied/Satisfied' – 88% compared to National average 'Very Satisfied/Satisfied' – 80%):



We also know that impact of EAs in Cumbria, when compared to National average, is high:



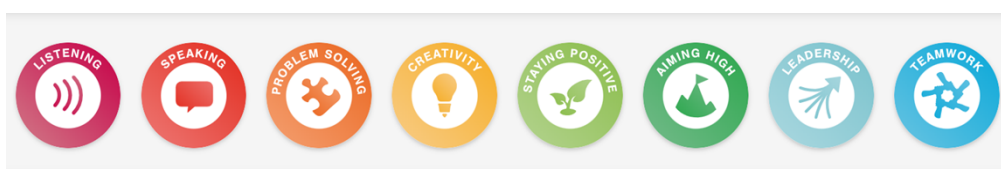
### **Additional Developmental Activity**

1.9 Long-term systemic change in careers education and guidance - The Careers Hub trained teachers on the University of Cumbria's Initial Teacher Training Programme about the importance of embedding careers guidance into the curriculum and the importance of preparing young people for the world of work. The University has invited the Careers Hub to deliver the workshops again in January. The Hub has confirmed with One Cumbria and Teach First that the team will deliver a similar development programme on their Initial Teacher Training programme and the Early Careers Teachers (recently qualified teachers on their 2 year induction programme in a school). This will ensure that new teachers entering education are aware of the importance of careers guidance as part of their role, which should help to deliver the systemic change that is needed.

1.10 [Cumbria Careers Day](#) was launched on 6 March 2024, as part of National Careers Week to raise awareness of the breadth of career opportunities available to young people in Cumbria. Over 100 organisations supported Cumbria Careers Day and it has been agreed that this will take place again on 5 March 2025. The ambition is to ensure both Councils are engaged and an increased number of businesses and third sector organisations join in to promote Cumbria Careers Day.

1.11 The [Parent and Carer Engagement Strategy](#) was launched this academic year and a new micro site will be available in September for employers to share with their employees, who are parents. The aim is to support parents in work to help their children make the best career decisions. BAE Systems Submarines and Sellafield Ltd. have both agreed to pilot this programme and the intention is to roll it out across the county in the 2024/25 academic year.

1.12 The Local Skills Improvement Plan highlighted that almost all employers felt that many young people were not 'career ready' when leaving school. To address this, the Careers Hub has worked with Providers, Employers, schools and colleges to deliver the Essential Skills Project. Employability skills is often referred to as core, soft, key, transferrable, essential etc. when being delivered to young people from Primary through to Post 16 education. This project will adopt the [Skills Builder Framework](#) using the following 8 essential skills.



The project outcome will be a consistent use of language from Primary to employment describing the essential skills needed to be successful in college, at university or employment. Essential skills development will be built into the curriculum so that it becomes second nature for young people to understand and achieve. This will be launched at the Chamber of Commerce Conference 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2024.

### **Careers Conference**

1.13 The Cumbria Careers Conference took place on 27 June at North Lakes Hotel and 75 delegates attended including Career Leaders, Cornerstone Employers, Enterprise Advisers and Partners. It was a successful day with excellent satisfaction scores. All attendees were asked to complete a commitment form based on what they had heard on the day and to outline short and long-term actions. 79% of respondents said they were highly likely to make it a priority to attend the conference next year and 21% said they were somewhat likely to make it a priority. The commitments made by Career Leaders will be built into their action plans for 2024/25 and include Parent and Carer Engagements, Creating an Employer Engagement Strategy and using the Future Skills Questionnaire.

### **Teacher Encounters Project**

1.14 70% of teachers are not confident talking about careers linked to their subject area to young people (Sutton Trust). To address this the Careers Hub has continued to deliver Teacher Encounter projects this academic year, with the main Teacher Encounter event delivered in partnership with the health and social care sector. This was a successful event

with 14 teachers in attendance. In addition to the main event, Kimberley Clark and Cumbria Tourism in partnership with Farlam Hall have also delivered Teacher Encounter twilight sessions engaging with a further 20 teachers.

### **Strategic Priorities for 2024/25 Academic Year**

1.15 The Department for Education and Careers and Enterprise Company have confirmed that the strategic priorities for the next academic year will remain the same as this year, namely:

**Priority 1:** Improve careers provision in schools and colleges against the Gatsby Benchmarks through support, training for the education workforce and quality assurance

**Priority 2:** Provide more high-quality experiences with employers for students and teachers – with a focus on current ‘cold spots’

**Priority 3:** Amplify apprenticeships, technical and vocational routes – including supporting the implementation of the Provider Access Legislation (PAL)

**Priority 4:** Target interventions for economically disadvantaged young people (Free School Meals (FSM)) and those who face barriers (SEND, PRU, Rural, Home Educated)

**Priority 5:** Connect careers provision in schools and colleges to the needs of local economies (as articulated through Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs))

1.16 At the Careers Hub strategic planning meeting that took place in June the Careers Hub Strategy Group and Cornerstone Employers came together to discuss the Careers Hub Strategy for 2024/25 and agreed the following:

- The Strategy should be a Careers Strategy for Cumbria rather than a Careers Hub Strategy
- It should be a three-year strategy to enable long-term vision, intent and impact and avoid the stop start approach created by annual funding cycles
- The strategy should be an all-age careers strategy that supports the delivery of the economic strategy for Cumbria currently being drafted.

1.17 The Careers Hub will submit a delivery plan for 2024-25 to the Careers and Enterprise Company as required by the Grant Offer Letter no later than the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024.

1.18 The Careers Hub will work with Partners and Stakeholders to develop an all-age Careers Strategy for Cumbria that is aligned to the Economic Strategies for both Councils and the Economic Strategy for Cumbria.

## **2. Proposals**

This paper is for information and therefore no proposals are being made.

## **3. Alternative options considered**

N/A

## **4. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

This report has been provided to update the Joint Executive Committee on progress against the 2023/24 Careers and Enterprise Programme and plans for delivering the 2024/25 programme.

### **Contribution to the Council's Plan Priorities –**

Cumbria Careers Hub's programme of delivery will help to support inclusive economic growth across Cumbria. The delivery plan for 2024-25 supports both Council Plans with regard to ensuring access to high quality education, where children and young are equipped with relevant tools, skills and aspiration to pursue the life they want to live and to access a varied choice of local employment opportunities that contribute to local economic growth.

### **Relevant Risks and explain how risks can be mitigated –**

There is a small risk regarding the timescale of novation of the contract from CLEP, potentially causing delays to the start of programme delivery (1<sup>st</sup> September 2024); however, this is in progress.

### **Consultation / Engagement –**

N/A

### **Legal –**

N/A

### **Finance –**

Cumberland Council has confirmed the required match funding for programme delivery in 2024/25.

### **Information Governance –**

N/A

### **Impact Assessments –**

N/A

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**Background papers:**

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government Act 1972 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

**Appendices attached to report:**

None