**London Anchor Institutions’ Network (LAIN) Hiring & Skills Working Group**

**Minutes**

**09:30 – 11:30 GMT, 14 October 2022**

Meeting convened in-person at London Councils and via Teams

**Co-Chairs:** Janet Gardner (Waltham Forest College) & Karima Khandker (Thames Water).

**Attendees (In-Person):**

Rosemary Oduntan Oke (LBBD), Gemma Cullen (GLA), Darren De Souza (London Higher), Suzie Alavi (GLA), James Lloyd (TfL), Representatives from Trackworks (Mary Ball, Gary, Ethan and Andrew), Beth Wheaton (GLA), Souraya Ali (GLA), Shehreen Najam (GLA),

**Attendees (via Teams):**

Forogh Rehmani (GLA), Gemma Cook (London City Airport), Alison May (London Borough of Lambeth), Claire Southwood (NHS), Dianna Neal (London Councils), Anna Kyprianou (Middlesex University), Jade Blackburn (Waltham Forest College)

**Apologies:**

Michelle Cuomo-Boorer (GLA), Alison May (London Borough of Lambeth), Jemma Water (Lloyds Bank), Emma May (Work Avenue), Matt Simmons (Metropolitan Police Service), Mark Hilton (London First), Paul Marshall (University of East London), Sam Gurney (Trades Union Congress), Jenny King (Prince’s Trust), Tess Lanning (London Borough of Barking & Dagenham), Mary Vine-Morris (AoC), Victoria Sterman (Resource Centre), Alexia Nazarian (Bloomberg Associates), David Steeds (DWP), Dr Kate Daubney (University of London), Rebecca Baker (Film London), Claire Churchill (NHS), Andrew Pace (UK Power Network), Bridget Ackeifi (Bloomberg Associates)

**Discussion:**

1. **Introduction:**

* Karima and Janet introduced themselves as the co-chairs.
* Karima briefly outlined the agenda items.
* Karima led a round of introduction of the attendees. The attendees briefly spoke about their roles and their organisations.
* Gemma Cook from London City Airport (LCA) was welcomed into the group who has newly joined the Hiring and Skills working group, after LCA became the latest signatory to the London Anchor Institutions Charter.
* Karima congratulated Souraya in her new role that has been set up within the GLA to support the Anchor Institutions Programme across all the working groups.
* Souraya emphasised that the establishment of the new team supporting the Anchor Institutions Programme demonstrates the commitment of the Mayor to the longevity of the Anchor Programme, and that the ethos is now no longer just about recovery, but resilience.

1. **Sharing best practice in reducing barriers to recruitment**

Case Study 1 – Waltham Forest College Programme with Trackworks

* Janet Introduced Waltham Forest College’s programme with Trackworks.
* Mary was invited from Waltham Forest College to speak about how the programme was designed. The programme is developed by Waltham Forest College in collaboration with the probation service and Job Centre Plus and is focused on being as diverse and inclusive as possible.
* Mary stated that the idea behind this programme is to assist and support everyone back into full time employment. The programme is designed in collaboration with the employer, in order to fill essential skills gaps, where there is an ageing workforce and recruitment need in the rail track maintenance industry. It is a fast track programme which allows the employee to move directly into employment. The programme is about accessing employment in the rail industry involving a 5-week training programme offering a Level 2 NVQ in engineering.
* 105 participants have taken part in this programme and have had 94% success rate to date. The programme starts with a 5-week course as an entry point which is followed up with an on-going training with the employer on site. The first cohort from this programme is still employed in work, and has supported people who are homeless people into jobs.
* Three trainees (Gary, Ethan and Andrew) from this programme attended the meeting and were invited to share their experience. Janet and Karima jointly welcomed and thanked the trainees for attending the meeting and for volunteering to share their experiences. The specific points made by the three trainees included and reflected the following aspects of the programme:
* The programme had a transformational effect. It didn’t just provide them with job, but it led them to build a career.
* They all had experience with the criminal justice system, and felt that rhe programme helped them think about their future.
* The programme encouraged employers to give people a chance and not judge the employees on their past activities and history, especially mistakes the trainees felt that had been made in their young age that had led people to get stuck in the system where there have been no opportunities for them to grow into a career.
* Emphasis was made on the fact that people change and evolve and hence should be given a chance to enter the job market.
* It was mentioned that Waltham Forest College provides pastoral support around the programme, and there is a strong support available for people before starting the programme, alongside the technical training.
* Janet emphasised that many employers had preconceived ideas about working with the probation service and that Waltham Forest College had looked beyond this and ran this programme. The programme provides an opportunity to reach out to pockets of communities that have not been considered before. From the employers point of view, this programme provides them with a skilled workforce.
* Janet thanked the trainees for sharing their experiences and thanked Mary for developing this programme.

Case Study 2 – Meeting the Mayor’s Good Work Standard (GWS)

* Janet gave an introduction on Waltham Forest College working towards the GWS.
* Janet invited Jade (HR Director from Waltham Forest College) to speak about the processes they followed to meet the GWS, what the college did to support the GWS and what they hoped other anchors could look at if they are not able to adopt all of the standards and what can do they do to work towards GWS.
* Jade presented and shared some sides reflecting 4 pillars to setting out the GWS. She spoke about the achievements and ways to set out the GWS. Waltham Forest College is the third largest employer in the borough. They felt they had a duty to be a responsible employer in the local area, and that this would benefit staff attraction and retention.
* It was stated that to achieve GWS, senior leadership were bought in to make it easier for them to take things forward.
* Challenges around GWS for the Waltham Forest College included getting buy-in from finance. Jade set out the costs and return of investment, from which the college was able to see that the costs were relatively minimal, compared with the benefits. Benefits included saving ‘hidden costs’ by retaining staff, improving engagement and attendance, and reducing the recruitment need.
* Lambeth have achieved ‘excellence’ GWS accreditation and are happy to share tips with other hiring and skills working group members if they would like to take pointers on setting up GWS for their organisation. They emphasised that this is really important for employers in the current labour market, where employers are competing for staff.
* A discussion took place on how employers in the group can spread the work about GWS. It was advised to encourage organisations to spread the word to their supply chains, and networks they are a part of, e.g. HR networks.
* Janet emphasised to the group to encourage all anchors and contractors and employers they work with to work towards the GWS.
* It was discussed that social and corporate responsibilities play an important part.

1. **Discussion on the metrics table**

* Karima thanked all the members who completed the metrics table.
* Karima reminded those members who had not completed the table to fill it out and she also mentioned that it is not compulsory to fill out all of the fields but to complete only those fields that are relevant to their organisation.
* Alison shared Lambeth Council’s metrics template with the working group.
* A discussion took place around levy transfer. London City Airport welcomed more support on this and were signposted to the LPC.
* James shared this link : <https://www.thelpc.uk/> to help members with transfer levy.

1. **Final discussion around capturing stories and case studies**

* Karima mentioned that the Mayor is hosting a conference In January 2023, will provide a great opportunity to share stories and to create video footage to showcase the work of the group and the case studies that have been shared. This will add value on the impact that the anchors are having.
* Souraya emphasised that the stories are powerful to use to inspire and to use the content to celebrate the achievements of our colleagues. It can be used to cross promote each others work. We have a newsletter which is growing but it goes only so far hence there is a need to expand on sharing stories and content.
* It was discussed that we want to use all other channels to share our learning.
* James pointed out the importance of identifying who the target audience is for this. Different comms are required for Londoners, existing members of the Anchor network and wider employers who we want to engage with.

**Actions:**

* Members who have not completed their templates have been requested to complete them in the next 2 weeks.
* GLA will develop a proposal on how we use the anchors website and other platforms to capture case studies, videos and guidance, segmenting the content of their discussion for different audiences (including those within the Anchors network, Londoners and participants in the programmes, employers outside of the network).

**Next meeting:**

Online meeting on 12 December 2022.