

Devolved Skills System in London: Principles for Joint Working between the GLA and London's sub-regional partnerships

City Hall and the London boroughs are committed to working together – through London Councils and the sub-regional partnerships - to prepare for and deliver skills devolution.

This includes committing to a series of principles for joint working, building on those currently established including through the approach to the London Area Review earlier last year.

Recognising that there is still a lot of uncertainty about the exact nature of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) devolution deal on offer from government, the GLA and London's boroughs have agreed to work together to secure the best outcomes for London as a whole through:

- **Governance and influence:** we agree to the principle of joint governance over a devolved skills system, whilst recognising that the exact form of this governance can only be agreed once the roles, functions and responsibilities to be transferred by government to the Mayor are clear. In the meantime, the Deputy Mayor and Sub-Regional Lead Members for skills will meet collectively on a regular basis to ensure that London's sub-regions have the opportunity to influence and inform transition planning, strategy development and delivery of a devolved skills system.
- **Joint early strategic input** at political and officer level to the London Skills Strategy, Adult Education Budget Funding Policy Statement and Adult Education Budget Commissioning Strategy will ensure that both regional and sub-regional needs and priorities are effectively represented in these strategies.
- **Employer engagement:** the GLA and the sub-regional partnerships will ensure that employers are engaged at all levels across London, to develop a granular understanding of their needs and ensure that skills provision under a devolved system is responsive to those needs.
- **Monitoring provider performance:** we agree that the GLA and sub-regional partnerships will each have a role in monitoring provider performance. We will work together to determine our respective roles in provider performance management to ensure that both regional and sub-regional priorities are being met. It is expected that these monitoring mechanisms will, in future, inform the commissioning of a devolved skills system.
- **Skills for Londoners capital funding:** will in future be informed by the London Skills Strategy and therefore need to align with regional, sub-regional and local skills and economic development priorities. A Skills for Londoners Capital Fund sub-group is being set up to provide a strategic steer on the programme and proposals. London Councils will provide representation on this group on behalf of London's boroughs and sub-regional partnerships.

As more details emerge from government about the specifics of the proposed AEB devolution deal, including the readiness conditions, the detail of the statutory responsibilities, functions and powers that will transfer from the Secretary of State to the Mayor and those that will continue to be held by government, we are committed to formulating joint governance arrangements and formalising principles for joint working through a Memorandum of Understanding.

In the meantime, we have already begun putting these partnership principles into practice as follows:

1. London Skills Strategy development

The GLA has set out a timetable of activities (as below) to develop the London Skills Strategy working closely with the sub-regional partnerships (SRPs) at officer and political level. This joint work has already begun, and will continue through all stages of the strategy development including agreeing and running joint consultation activity.

4 April	Strategy workshop with the SRPs to discuss draft framework
4 April	Feedback incorporated. Draft Taskforce paper shared w/ SRPs for comment
26 April	Meeting of Deputy Mayor with SRP Skills Leaders
27 April	Present draft strategy framework to first meeting of SfL Taskforce
Late May	Meeting 1: London Skills Strategy Task & Finish Group incl. SRPs
May-June	Stage 1 consultation incl. with SfL Stakeholder Advisory Group
June-July	Undertake opinion research (agreed with SRPs)
Early July	Meeting 2: London Skills Strategy Task & Finish Group incl. SRPs
Mid-July	Present update to second meeting of SfL Taskforce
August	Officers prepare draft strategy
Early Sept	Meeting 3: London Skills Strategy Task & Finish Group incl. SRPs
Mid Sept	Deputy Mayor & SRP Skills Leaders sub-group review draft strategy
Early Oct	Present update to third meeting of SfL Taskforce
Oct-Nov	Stage 2. Consultation including events in each sub-region
Early Dec	Meeting 4: London Skills Strategy Task & Finish Group incl. SRPs
Dec	Final draft strategy circulated to Task & Finish Group incl. SRPs
Late Jan	Present final draft for endorsement to SfL Taskforce
Feb-March	Mayoral approval of final strategy

2. Preparations for devolution of the Adult Education Budget

The GLA, London Councils and the sub-regional partnerships have planned a series of workshops during June and July with skills providers to help understand the current systems and operations in place to administer the Adult Education Budget (AEB).

Information gathered during these sessions will help the GLA with its preparations for managing the programme of activity relating to the Mayor's role in assuming responsibility for AEB from 2019/20. It will also shape thinking towards the development of the AEB Skills Funding Statement and Commissioning Strategy, where relevant.

The GLA and sub-regional partnerships will also continue to meet separately to reflect on the learning from these sessions and to develop plans for the devolved AEB commissioning cycle, including the role that the sub-regional partnerships and London boroughs will play in this process.