

Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 5 March 2024

Present:

Councillor Johns – in the Chair

Councillors Benham, Hussain, Iqbal, Northwood, I Robinson, Shilton Godwin and Taylor

Also present:

Councillor Bridges, Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People

Councillor Hacking, Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure

John Thornhill, Chief Executive, LTE Group

Rachel Curry, Principal, Manchester College and Group Deputy Chief Executive Officer, LTE Group

Mark Hughes, Group CEO, The Growth Company

Victoria Braddock, Managing Director, Marketing Manchester

Janine Smith, Director of Business Growth, Business Growth Hub

David Hilton, Business Development Director, MIDAS

Jonathan Ebbs, Project Manager, Build a Business and Business and IP Centres

Apologies:

Councillor Richards

ERSC/24/13 Minutes

Decision

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2024 be approved as a correct record.

ERSC/24/14 Work and Skills Strategy 2022-2027 Update

The Committee received a report of the Director of Inclusive Growth which provided a progress update and the next steps for the delivery of the strategy's five key themes.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Contextual information;
- Headline achievements;
- Case studies;
- Challenges; and
- Measuring success.

Key points and queries that arose from the Committee's discussions included:

- To welcome the focus on giving the most vulnerable residents access to the best quality work and skills training, support and funding;

- Concern that the level of Shared Prosperity Funding available was significantly lower than the funding which it had replaced;
- Concern that there were frequent new initiatives, advising that consistent, well-known programmes were needed so that people knew where to go to access training and support;
- Concern about people who had dropped out of the labour market;
- Digital inclusion including suggesting that the Committee might want to consider a report on this at a future meeting;
- Whether there were any sectors with large skills gaps which would particularly benefit from investment; and
- The increase in young people who were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and work to address this.

The Director of Inclusive Economy clarified that the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) matched the European element of the previous European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and European Social Fund (ESF) programmes, which was 50% of the total previous funding levels, advising that there was an issue concerning both the level of funding and its longevity. She recognised a Member's comments about the range of different initiatives announced by the Government to address economic inactivity, each aimed at slightly different cohorts and with slightly different offers, and acknowledged that this could be confusing for both frontline staff and people who could benefit from these programmes. She informed Members that Manchester had been recognised as the most digitally inclusive city in the country due to the number of digital access hubs per 100,000 digitally excluded residents. She drew Members' attention to the Digital Exclusion Index which had been considered at a previous Committee meeting and outlined how Libraries and the Work and Skills Team had been working together to improve digital inclusion. In response to the question about skills gaps, she advised that digital, construction, education, health and social care were sectors which her service worked closely with to address skill shortages. She reported that the biggest group in the city in terms of economic inactivity was higher education students, who were not a primary area of concern; however, the next two groups were people with caring responsibilities, largely women, and people with underlying health conditions and she drew Members' attention to information in the report on initiatives to support these groups into work. In response to a question about the increase in the number of young people who were NEET, she reported that the total number of 16- to 18-year-olds in the city had increased significantly, resulting in increased pressure for post-16 places and young people who were most vulnerable to becoming NEET being unable to secure college places. She informed Members that Greater Manchester had secured additional SPF investment for intensive work with young people who had not secured a place in education or training.

The Work and Skills Lead informed Members how education providers in the city changed their curriculum to match demand for skills and about National Skills Fund Bootcamp funding, which had targeted areas such as digital skills and green skills.

The Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure informed the Committee that the Council's Work and Skills activity included a focus on net zero targets, in particular the Green Skills Plan, and highlighted that the Environment, Climate

Change and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Committee would be considering a report on Housing Retrofit, including Green Skills, at its next meeting.

Decisions:

1. To note progress on the themes of the Work and Skills Strategy delivery.
2. To request that a future report include information on skills matching and the data behind that, including reference to the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).
3. To receive a report on the Digital Strategy, with particular reference to digital inclusion.

ERSC/24/15 The LTE Group Update: Strategy and Performance

The Committee received a report of John Thornhill, Chief Executive, LTE Group and Rachel Curry, Principal of Manchester College and Group Deputy CEO which provided strategy and policy updates from the LTE Group and an update from one organisation within the Group, The Manchester College.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- LTE Group strategy and policy including:
 - Pay;
 - Prison education and resettlement;
 - Devolution and skills; and
 - National Apprenticeship policy; and
- An update from The Manchester College including:
 - An overview of the College's engagement with Ofsted and the quality of provision;
 - An update on the College's student cohort;
 - College Vision 2027 Strategy, Curriculum Strategy, including T level update, and engagement with employers;
 - Learner outcomes performance 2022/23;
 - Progress of the College's Estates Strategy and associated carbon reduction; and
 - The post-16 population increase and the growing crisis in the city through lack of places for technical and vocational education from 2023 for the next decade.

Key points and queries that arose from the Committee's discussions included:

- Welcoming the achievements of the LTE Group and The Manchester College;
- Recognising major challenges with Further Education funding;
- Requesting more detail on work to address climate change and environmental issues in future reports;
- What the new Education Inspection Framework would consist of and how the college was preparing for an Ofsted inspection;

- Noting that the majority of students, both aged 16-18 and adults, were male and querying why this might be;
- Whether there were any vacancies at the college and if this would cause any issues for the next academic year;
- Whether the LTE Group expected any changes to the Apprentice Levy in the government's budget announcements on 6 March;
- How reform to the Apprentice Levy would benefit the college;
- The devolution qualification (MBACC);
- What the LTE Group and Manchester College would change if they had a magic wand; and
- What the revenue ask of government would be.

The Principal, Manchester College and Group Deputy Chief Executive Officer, LTE Group emphasised that The Manchester College was a diverse and inclusive institution with around 6000 students aged between 16 and 18-years-old and 6000 adult students. She highlighted that 79% of young people and 74% of adults enrolled at The Manchester College came from deprived areas and free breakfast for all students and staff had been introduced in the last academic year following concerns over the volume of students experiencing challenging personal circumstances and food poverty. She stated that care-experienced young people made up 6% of the 16-18-year-old student population at the college and 30% of students had a declared learning difficulty or disability with 10% of students having an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in place, supported by the Council who the college had a strong relationship with. She explained that the college had retained a significant focus on high-quality technical education and T-Levels continued to be delivered, on which there were currently 335 students with numbers expected to treble as the government defunded the previous BTEC qualification.

The Principal, Manchester College and Group Deputy Chief Executive Officer, LTE Group informed the committee that high outcomes for students continued to be delivered and the college was particularly proud of its achievement rates among high-needs students; those entitled to Free School Meals; care leavers; and in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses. She stated that phase two of the college's Estates Strategy was underway to extend the city campus, which would provide facilities for students in Business and Professional Studies and was progressing well and expected to open to students in September 2025.

She acknowledged challenges with capacity, reporting that there had been an increase in the number of applications and enrolments to the college, with a waiting list currently in place. She highlighted that this indicated a clear view amongst young people as to what they wanted to study, and she welcomed the demand for T-Level courses. It was stated that a review was underway which could introduce short-term measures to modestly increase the amount of available teaching space and outreach work was undertaken with organisations such as Manchester Art Gallery and Band on the Wall who provided classroom space, but this was limited and did not compensate for the space needed.

She also stated that there were interdependencies between post-16 capacity and government policy, such as the requirement for students who did not receive a high GCSE grade in English and Maths to continue studying these subjects within a

college setting. She stated that this required an additional 22 English and Maths classes at the college this year and an additional 6 GCSE teachers had been recruited to facilitate this. She explained that there was a sector-wide challenge in the recruitment of teachers within Further Education, particularly for English; Maths; Health and Social Care; Media; and Construction. The committee was advised that the Further Education sector lagged behind the Schools sector with regard to average funding for teachers and the Principal, Manchester College and Group Deputy Chief Executive Officer, LTE Group explained that there had been changes to terms and conditions for teachers, including increased annual leave; a reduction in the working week; and an improved pay offer, in order to be an attractive employer to prospective candidates.

The Chief Executive, LTE Group commended the Council's Work and Skills team, the Economy and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee and the Work and Skills Board and stated that their work had been instrumental in the LTE Group's achievements since 2019. He acknowledged some challenges moving forward but stated that he was confident that the partnership with the Council would help to address these issues.

He highlighted that the performance of The Manchester College was within the top 10% nationally and emphasised the need to continue offering a high-quality programme for students. He recognised challenges arising from government funding shortfalls and requested the committee's help in lobbying for this. He noted that school place planning was managed differently to further education and technical vocation places and that further education settings were typically asked to provide match funding when bidding for government capital grants. He explained that a bid had been made in 2023, in conjunction with the Council, and some funding was offered by government but there were stipulations in place for the college to provide match funding, which it was unable to allocate in the short-term given previous expenditure.

The Chief Executive, LTE Group stated that there had been positive work to provide year-on-year investment to meet population growth but reiterated previous comments regarding the challenges arising from government policy. He also emphasised the time and research undertaken by applicants in choosing The Manchester College and the dissatisfaction that capacity issues caused applicants when they could not be allocated a place. He also explained that the LTE Group modelled the future place gap on the number of people enrolling on technical education courses and were currently working to the lowest-case scenario as it did not include adult students or those from other areas of Greater Manchester and he stated that the scale of the challenge was significant.

He explained that the establishment of a Joint Senior Working Group consisting of political advisors, officers, the Chamber of Commerce and the LTE Group, as recommended in the report, would help to address the stakeholder challenges in delivery.

In response to members' queries, the Principal, Manchester College and Group Deputy Chief Executive Officer, LTE Group suggested that a future report include a deep dive into Green Skills and how climate change and environmental issues were addressed on all courses.

The Principal, Manchester College and Group Deputy Chief Executive Officer, LTE Group confirmed that an Ofsted inspection was expected imminently. She stated that a full review of the quality of provision had been undertaken over the last year and this had mimicked the same methodology used by Ofsted, including a deep review of the curriculum offer and engaging with students. This had resulted in an understanding of strengths and areas for improvement and staff were supported to be able to articulate these. She acknowledged the pressure associated with Ofsted inspections and stated that the college was encouraged by the changes to Ofsted's approach.

The committee was informed that the balance between male and female students amongst the 16- to 18-year-old cohort was largely even and a majority of adult students were male. This could be attributed to a higher proportion of male refugees arriving in Manchester and enrolling at the college and the majority of these undertook ESOL courses.

The Principal, Manchester College and Group Deputy Chief Executive Officer, LTE Group confirmed that there were vacancies at the college, and these were being filled with agency staff. She stated that vacancies impacted the quality of education in some departments where it was difficult to recruit, although it was noted that the college offered teacher training courses and were reaching out to those who had completed their course but might wish to return to teach. An example of this was in construction. She highlighted that the biggest difficulties in recruitment were in English and Maths, as the college competed with schools to attract candidates. The college would also be recruiting Specialist Practitioners, who would be given a higher rate of pay, and the Principal, Manchester College and Group Deputy Chief Executive Officer, LTE Group recognised the fantastic work of all teachers.

The Chief Executive, LTE Group explained that a significant review had been undertaken with the Department for Education (DfE) which indicated a decrease in the number of people undertaking teacher training. He stated that conversations with the Executive team at LTE Group and with the Council's Work and Skills team had been undertaken to discuss the possibility of developing an academy to train Further Education teachers and the rationale for adding teaching to the Local Skills Improvement Plan. An update on these strategic, long-term trends could be provided in the next update to the committee.

In response to a query regarding the UK apprentice model and levy, the Chief Executive, LTE Group stated that work had recently concluded to assess this nationally and he explained that the apprentice levy was developed prior to Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic when free movement of labour and the ability to upskill European workers was more common. He stated that some sectors, such as health and social care, were struggling to make the apprentice model work because staffing challenges restricted capacity to provide time for training to employees. He explained that a number of suggestions had been made to the DfE's policy team, such as the ability to use the levy to fund backfilling the role of the apprentice whilst they were studying or in training and to apply an increase based on Consumer Price Index (CPI) rates to the minimum apprentice wage. He also suggested the need for the Treasury and the DfE to accurately distribute the levy fund as there was a perception

that the amount of revenue raised by the levy was not being fully cascaded to the DfE for distribution to providers.

In response to queries regarding devolution, the Chief Executive, LTE Group advised that the report in front of members included a link to a report which had been shared with the two main political parties at their conferences and others and highlighted the positive opportunities that devolution would bring to Manchester. He stated that there appeared to be some stark differences regionally in the way that devolution worked, and he emphasised a need for regional flexibility but with a consistent national approach. He explained that the LTE Group was hugely supportive of any measure, such as the MBACC, that allowed greater choice and pathways for school leavers, but he highlighted that there were currently bigger priorities in the city.

The Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure reiterated the challenges in capacity for post-16 education and stated that he, the Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People and officers had developed a closer working relationship between the Strategic Education Partnership and the Work and Skills Board to ensure that pathways and any issues were widely shared and understood.

The Executive Member for Early Years, Children and Young People stated that he had recently joined the Board of the LTE Group and commended the professionalism of this governing body. He echoed comments about partnership working and capacity issues.

Decisions:

That the committee

1. notes the very strong performance of the Manchester College, its ongoing support for a wider “eco system” with the city and the growing importance of the College locally for young people and parents in terms of their first choice;
2. notes the key involvement of Manchester City Council in the timely disposal of the Shena Simon site to allow the new extension at our city centre campus to open on time and ease some of the capacity issues;
3. has considered the issues in the report and supports efforts to ensure that the urgency and serious nature set out are better understood by city stakeholders;
4. supports the creation of a Manchester task force across the LTE Group, Council officers, elected members and business representatives to develop the analysis, agree communications to residents, schools and communities and to continue escalating post-16 capacity concerns to GMCA and government;
5. notes the national work LTE Group are undertaking on apprenticeships and will add the shared learning on this to the items to be scheduled for the next municipal year;

6. notes that an update on Green Skills work in all courses will be included in a future update report on the LTE Group.

ERSC/24/16 Manchester Adult Education Service Update

The Committee received a report of the Director of Inclusive Economy and Head of MAES which provided information on MAES performance in 2022/23 and the skills challenges in the city.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Current projects;
- New programmes;
- Performance and funding 2022/23;
- Enrolment/recruitment term 1 (September to December 2023);
- Quality of education;
- ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and ESOL Advice Service; and
- Priorities for the current academic year.

Key points and queries that arose from the Committee's discussions included:

- Commending the Carbon Literacy training provided by MAES, which a member had recently attended;
- Why Ofsted identified learners' understanding of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism and how it applied to them in their personal lives and at work as an area for improvement, and how would this be improved upon;
- How asylum seekers were supported through MAES;
- What more could be done to support ESOL learners and to increase provisions;
- Why the number of learners had dropped in 2023/24;
- What other metrics were used to indicate performance and outcomes;
- What safeguarding measures were in place to prevent abuse of learners; and
- Noting that the Service Improvement Plan included assigning responsibility to a specific member of staff in the High Needs team to meet with learners and parents and carers at key points, and querying what these key points were.

The Head of MAES stated that the service focused its efforts on reaching those furthest from education, providing routes into education and providing opportunities to understand the different options available to them. He explained that MAES provided a range of courses, such as ESOL, English and Maths, and community learning and there had been great achievement in high-level provision, particularly in Level 3 courses where uptake had doubled year-on-year. He acknowledged recruitment challenges and explained that teacher education was provided at Level 3 to encourage residents to view teaching as a viable career and that the service had participated in the 'Routes into Teaching' programme in the previous academic year with other service providers across the city. He stated that the teacher education

programme continued to be developed to enable continued service delivery for residents.

The Head of MAES highlighted that the service had been awarded a 'Good' rating by Ofsted, which was a welcome achievement, and time would be spent between now and the next inspection to understand the aspirations of residents and how the service's provisions could continue to evolve to meet these needs.

In response to members' queries, the Area Adult Education Manager explained that MAES had already identified learners' understanding of the risks associated with radicalisation and extremism on its Service Improvement Plan and work was already underway on this. She stated that many learners were part-time and attended one session a week which made it difficult to embed into the curriculum, but this would be done in a way which still allowed the service to meet the needs of learners through learning materials and critical thinking skills.

The Area Adult Education Manager explained that, in partnership with the ESOL Advice Service, MAES had been working with hotels where asylum seekers were housed in the city to undertake assessments for asylum seekers to begin ESOL courses. She advised that funding was in place for asylum seekers who had been in the UK for more than 6 months to enrol onto an ESOL course, but she noted challenges when asylum seekers were relocated elsewhere in Greater Manchester, although efforts were made to transfer learners to other providers. She acknowledged that relocation impacted retention rates, and this was a common theme across other providers in Manchester.

The Resource and Performance Manager, MAES highlighted that ESOL enrolment in the first term of 2023/24 was under 100% for the first time and he attributed this to the amount of people who had withdrawn and re-enrolled in a course as a result of being moved around Home Office accommodation.

In response to a query regarding how wait times for ESOL courses could be reduced, the Area Adult Education Manager stated that the average wait time for a place on an ESOL course was 3 months. She explained that some learners had specific requirements with regard to the location and schedule of a course and the service had been running ESOL fairs in conjunction with the ESOL Advice Service for those on the waiting list to signpost to other providers and volunteering opportunities. She also highlighted the availability of free online materials and Talk English clubs, which were informal volunteer-run groups in libraries and community venues.

The Resource and Performance Manager, MAES explained that the number of individuals had decreased but the amount of learning had increased as learners accessed different strands of MAES, particularly English, Maths or a vocation. He also emphasised that the trajectory of enrolments was increasing.

With regard to the metrics used to measure outcomes, the Head of MAES explained that this was not limited solely to achievement and qualification rates. He stated that the Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPRA) approach was used to measure softer outcomes and more detail on this could be included in the next annual update.

The Area Adult Education Manager highlighted the strong emphasis on safeguarding within the service and explained that all staff were able to access signposting information for learners where required. Staff could report a cause for concern which would be picked up by the safeguarding team, who would advise the member of staff on how to help the learner or could liaise directly with the learner to provide pastoral support. She advised that the majority of cause for concern reports related to housing, mental health and domestic abuse and links with organisations who could help with these issues had been developed. Invitations were also extended to organisations to visit the learning centres and raise awareness of the support available. The committee was also informed that safeguarding measures were in place for learners who had an EHCP.

The Head of MAES also advised that detailed analysis of progression data was undertaken and measured learners who progressed into further education, higher education and employment. This data would be circulated to the committee following the meeting.

The Executive Member for Skills, Employment and Leisure commended the work of MAES and stated that he had visited every learning centre in the last 12 months. He had also met with the Ofsted Inspector and welcomed the findings and the caring culture within the service. He also emphasised the increase in students on high-level courses and the specialist programmes on offer.

Decisions:

That the report be noted.

ERSC/24/17 Support for Business

The Committee received a report of the Director of Inclusive Growth which provided an update on the support offered by the Manchester Growth Company and the Manchester City Council to support businesses in Manchester to set up and grow.

Key points and themes within the report included:

- Contextual information;
- Business support programmes that were previously funded under ERDF; and
- An update and summary of the newly funded business support services provided by GC Business Growth Hub and the Manchester Library Service's Business and Intellectual Property Centre - Build a Business Service, funded under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Key points and queries that arose from the Committee's discussions included:

- Commending the work of The Growth Company;
- Noting the return on investment for the Build a Business scheme, and querying the usual level return on investment expected from these types of schemes;

- What could be done to support businesses whilst the UK's general economy was in a technical recession;
- If any changes to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund were expected in the Chancellor's Budget announcements on 6 March;
- How decisions were made as to how much investment to provide a start-up;
- Requesting that social value be quantified in a future report;
- How to ensure that support initiatives effectively reached and empowered communities facing historic disadvantage, helped to eradicate issues such as child poverty and closed the gap in economic inactivity while fostering a truly inclusive city;
- The impact of delays in funding after the end of UKSPF in March 2025;
- Whether there were routes into and signposting for businesses involved with The Growth Company to become a Manchester Living Wage employer;
- Welcoming the focus on cooperatives, and querying what this could look like in practice; and
- What the Greater Manchester Strategy for the Visitor Economy 2024-2030 might look like.

The Group CEO, The Growth Company informed the committee that The Growth Company was a social enterprise which had been operating for 30 years and was the principal organisation delivering business support, investment and promotion across Greater Manchester. He stated the organisation was involved in GMCA's governance architecture and there were five councillors on the company's board, including the Leader of Manchester City Council. He explained that the work of The Growth Company focused on promoting successful and resilient businesses; creating good and inclusive employment opportunities; and working toward environmental sustainability within businesses and he recognised the interdependencies between businesses, the health and wellbeing of residents and the delivery of high-quality services.

The committee was also informed that 75% of businesses that worked with The Growth Company had seen increased productivity, that around 40% of participants on The Growth Company's programmes were from diverse ethnic communities and that 40% of participants were female. The Group CEO, The Growth Company stated that the organisation was responsible for 90% of European Regional Development Fund and all activities were subject to independent evaluation. He highlighted that the ERDF had now ended and that this had been replaced by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, which he stated had some benefits such as less restriction on who could be supported in the economy.

The Group CEO, The Growth Company acknowledged heightened geopolitical tensions across the world and stated that businesses were having to operate in this context. He highlighted, however, that this was having minimal impact in Manchester and Greater Manchester where visitor and hotel occupancy numbers remained at a good level and where international events, such as the MTV European Music Awards, continued to be held.

In response to queries regarding the Build a Business scheme, the Project Manager, Build a Business explained that it was a difficult project to start post-pandemic and given the rigidity of the ERDF requirements. He stated that engagement with

participants had now increased, and this had been made easier by the shift to UKSPF. He highlighted that the return on investment for the Business and IP Centre was much higher, with £6.63 generated from every £1 invested. The Work and Skills Lead explained that over 2000 new businesses had been supported through the Build a Business scheme and this had delivered over £17k of Gross Value Added (GVA).

The Director of Business Growth, Business Growth Hub emphasised the importance of supporting entrepreneurs and start-up businesses and stated that return on investment in start-ups was often similar to that of the Build a Business scheme.

In response to queries regarding UKSPF, the Group CEO, The Growth Company advised that this was due to end in March 2025 and that the organisation was looking at how to increase dialogue with the Civil Service to lobby for an extension and how the GM devolution and single settlement might help. He explained that the majority of The Growth Company's funding came from GMCA, with some received directly from central government, and was made up of retained business rates and UKSPF. He stated the current model could carry over for one year from 2026 as there would be some form of extension to UKSPF and the retained business rates scheme was likely to continue. There was also a possibility that discussions on the GM single settlement could accelerate, which would absorb the UKSPF, and there would be an option for funding to be received solely from the single settlement.

He also stated that there were no expectations of what might be announced in the Chancellor's Budget.

The Group CEO, The Growth Company stated that Greater Manchester had some amazing and ambitious companies but that many organisations were being cautious in any decision-making. He stated that a definitive General Election result would help to resolve this.

The Group CEO, The Growth Company informed members that the decision on how much money to invest in start-up companies was made by Commissioners as The Growth Company were in receipt of grants and contracts from external sources, such as regional and national government. He stated that The Growth Company worked with partners to collate funding strands to make it easier for clients and there was a wide range of returns on investment across the Build a Business project.

With regards to the Real Living Wage, the committee was informed that The Growth Company and other services automatically referred businesses to the Employment Charter. The Group CEO, The Growth Company explained that paying the Real Living Wage was an ambition of the Employment Charter but stated that there might be some challenges in companies retaining their Real Living Wage Employer accreditation from April when a 10% uplift came into force.

It was reiterated that The Growth Company saw Manchester being an inclusive city as one of its key mandates and several programmes were undertaken to directly focus on attracting people into the labour market and helping to upskill the workforce. The committee was also advised of work with partners and outreach approaches and The Growth Company's diverse reach was reiterated.

In response to a query regarding cooperatives, the Director of Business Growth, Business Growth Hub informed members that there was a specialist team providing dedicated support to cooperatives on either a 1:1 basis for bespoke needs or cohort programmes made up of a range of businesses experiencing similar challenges. This work included addressing particular needs, creating awareness of routes to funding, commercialisation and governance structures. She also stated that an element of UKSPF was allocated to work with social enterprises and cooperatives, which had been tendered and awarded to two organisations.

The Managing Director, Marketing Manchester explained that her organisation's Tourism Director was leading on the Greater Manchester Strategy for the Visitor Economy 2024-2030 and extensive consultation had been undertaken with the Council's leadership and the lead consultant for the Cultural Strategy. She stated that a Visitor Economy Leaders Group had been established to consult on the strategy and this dovetailed into the national Visitor Economy Strategy through Visit England and the Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) status that Manchester had been awarded.

Decisions:

That the committee

1. notes the report, and
2. requests a report on business support for marginalised communities be included on the committee's work programme for the next municipal year.

[Councillor Johns declared a personal interest due to having written on the subject of employment charters.]

ERSC/24/18 Overview Report

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report contained key decisions within the Committee's remit, responses to previous recommendations and the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to approve.

The Chair noted that this was the last meeting of the municipal year and placed on record his thanks to members and officers for their work. He also wished those up for election in May good luck.

Decision:

That the Committee note the report and agree the work programme.