

<b>Subject:</b>	Recovery strategy for jobs and employment
<b>Reason for briefing note:</b>	To provide update to members
<b>Responsible officer(s):</b>	Steph James, Service Lead for Economic Growth
<b>Senior leader sponsor:</b>	Chris Joyce, Head of Infrastructure, Sustainability & Economic Growth
<b>Date:</b>	28/09/21

## SUMMARY

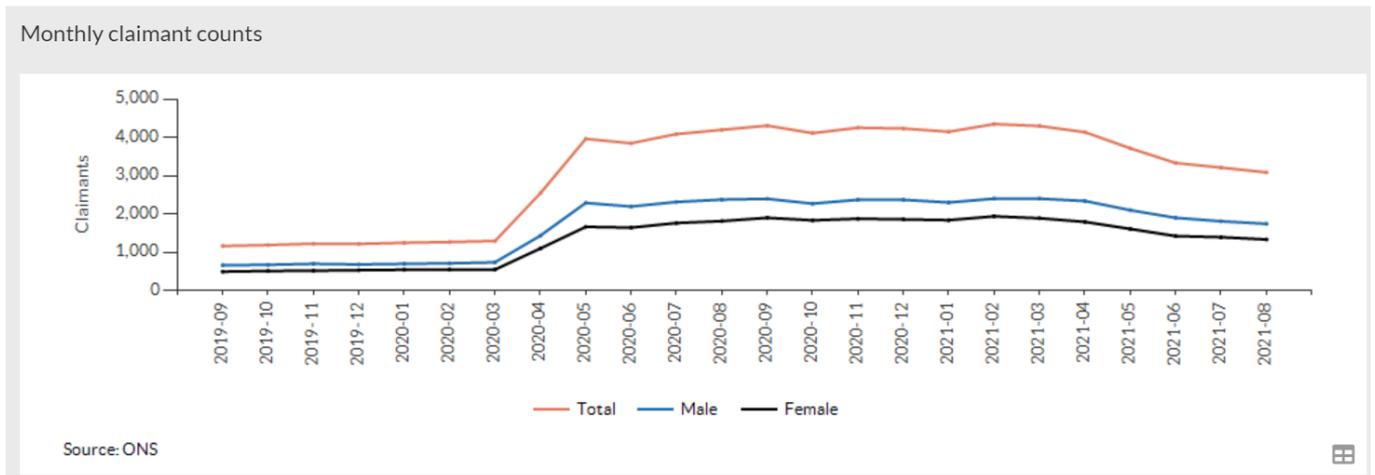
- 1.1 The RBWM Support and Recovery Strategy was adopted by Cabinet in September 2020.
- 1.2 The strategy sets out our approach to recovery at a Borough level to support our residents and businesses to empower communities to thrive, create great places and build lasting partnerships with our businesses.
- 1.3 The strategy has a theme of 'empowering our communities to thrive' which includes a strand of work around developing a skills and education offer for people to grow.

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The borough strategy is based on creating the right environment for communities and businesses to recover. This means providing a strategic framework to support people, places and partnerships that will bring lasting success.



- 2.1 Employment, skills and training has been identified as a key area of focus in order to ensure local residents have access to opportunities and that businesses have their needs met in terms of have access to pool of employees with the right skills.
- 2.2 The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted local employment and as a result the number of claimants in RBWM rose to a peak in February 2021 with 4350 claimants. The current number of claimants is 3090 (August 2021), this is a reduction of 29%. The current claimant count represents 3.3% which although lower than the national average is still a 142% increase on pre-pandemic levels. The table below shows the monthly claimant counts.



- 2.3 5200 jobs in RBWM (8%) were furloughed according to June 2021 data. This is lower than national average due to the large number of jobs in the borough that could be carried out from home. The furlough scheme will come to an end in September and may result in increased unemployment.
- 2.3 Recruitment into certain sectors has been challenging since the economy reopened with the hospitality sector currently finding recruitment very difficult with high numbers of vacancies.

### 3 KEY IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The team is working with partners such as DWP, Fedcap, housing providers, businesses, education providers and other agencies to coordinate the employment, skills and training offer in the borough to provide residents who need help with clear information and signposting

### 4 DETAILS

- 4.1 The RBWM Economic Growth Team was formed during lock down and consists of the borough's town management, visitor management team, museum team and a newly appointed economic development officer whose remit includes the coordination of the jobs skills and training offer in the borough.

## **5 RISKS**

- 5.1 Without a coordinated effort across the council and working with partner agencies residents looking for employment and or training may find it hard to navigate the various help available and miss out on opportunities.

## **6 NEXT STEPS**

- 6.1 Members to receive further update once a work programme has been developed.