

forward

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Falling through the cracks Roundtable: The report

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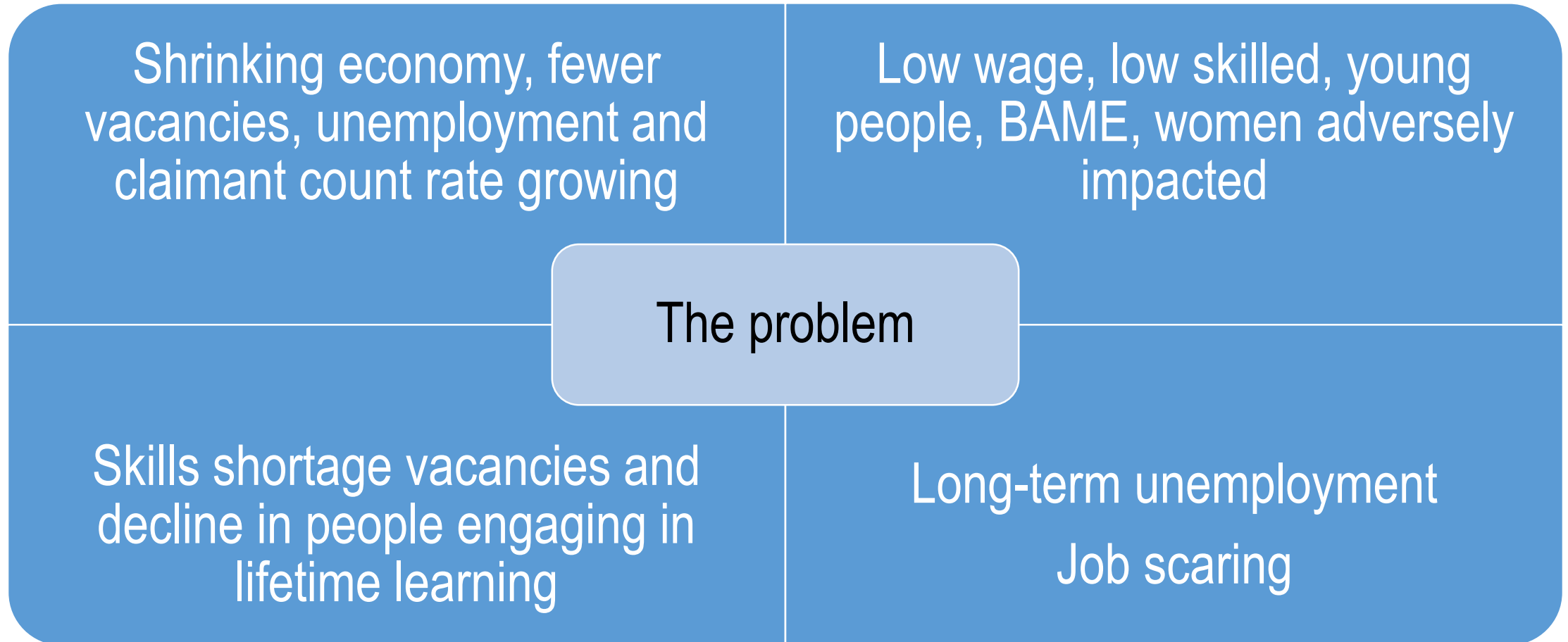
Forward Trust Employment Services



Roundtable discussion

- The Forward Trust believes that the economic impact of the Coronavirus could seriously damage the job, training and well-being prospects of the low-skilled, those in unstable work, the long-term unemployed, and those not in education or training. Is this belief shared by colleagues today?
- What can commissioners, providers and employers do to reduce and mitigate the economic and social impact on these groups?

The problem: Covid-19 related and others more structural



Asi Panditharatna, Divisional Director of Employment Services, Forward Trust

- We can see problems ahead, the number of employees on the payroll according to the ONS was down by 600,000 between April-May 2020, a 60% decline in vacancy levels nationally and 2.8 million on the universal credit claimant count. Apprenticeship starts saw a 87% decline for under 19 year olds in April 2020 compared to previous year.
- Key groups are at risk, including young people, women, ex offenders, the low skilled and those with disadvantage. McKinsey's 2020 work has highlighted that 50% of all jobs are at risk in occupations where people earn less than £10 per hour.
- Education levels matter, The Centre for London 2020 research highlights that people with Level 3+ qualifications working in London on average earn 24% more than their counterparts outside London. But 28% of Londoners are engaged in some form of learning compared to 45% of Londoners, 20 years ago. McKinsey's work also highlights that in the UK £21million workers lack basic digital skills. Also whilst we may see fewer jobs in a post Covid 19 labour market I do not believe Skills Shortage Vacancies will go away. So employers may still find it hard to fill certain vacancies because applicants may lack relevant skills, qualifications and experience.
- By 2021 Long term unemployment could rise to 1 million according to the Learning and Work institute. This is higher than the last recession and it can have a scarring affect on people, particularly the young.

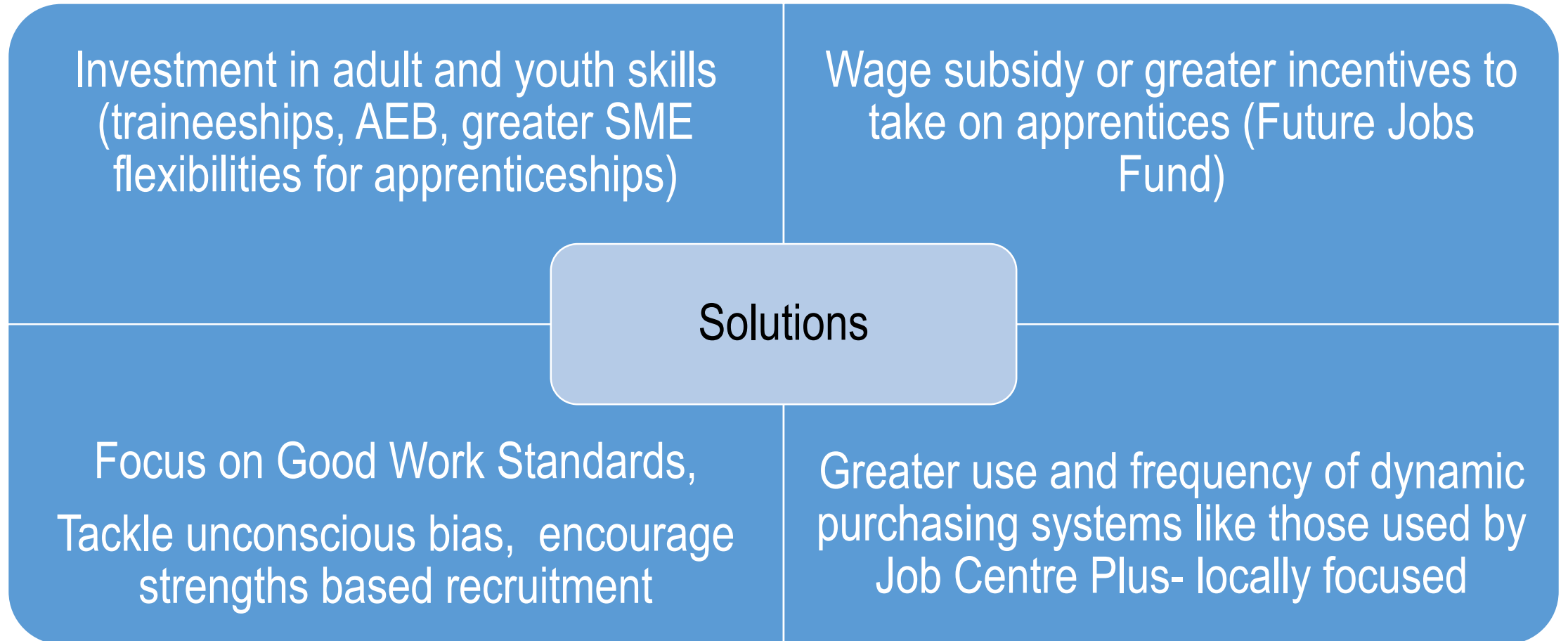
Stewart Segal: Chairperson of Youth Employment UK and a non-executive Director of Skills Training UK

- The labour market impact will be on mainly young people and those groups with existing disadvantage
- The action has to focus on jobs and also co-ordination between DWP and DfE
- We have to also consider the people on furlough who will be potentially unemployed as well
- We have existing programmes such as apprenticeships, adult education budget, the study programme, traineeships, ESF and devolved funding that provide the framework to deliver interventions to get people back into work or further training
- We need a blend of national, regional and local programmes
- It is important the Job Centre Plus are made aware of these other programmes
- The PM and Government have spoken about the apprenticeships guarantee and it will be interesting to see how this works. We should also focus on traineeships and also the Opportunity Guarantee
- <https://www.communitiesthatwork.co.uk/opportunity-guarantee/>

Anthony Impey, Serial Entrepreneur and Chair of the Skills Policy Unit, Federation of Small Business

- Many private enterprises are now building up record levels of debt that will not be sustainable. This could lead to further job losses in 2020
- The economy will take time to recover, but there will be fewer jobs, also technology will make us more productive and may impact on the types and volumes of jobs or roles available
- The current skills and education system has not been designed for what we face, so it was designed for more jobs than people
- Digital education and skills is essential, like English and Maths, also about digital life skills, thinking skills, problem solving and the etiquette in using technology
- More people will be working from home, for example in the City of London there 30-40% of workers may return to their work places but there will be 250,000 fewer people going into this part of London. Twitter has told staff that they can work from home "forever" if they wish as the company looks towards the future after the coronavirus pandemic.
- Employment may look different, so the rise of the Gig economy, people will need to adapt as well as we have more independent workers, perhaps more self employed, start ups, people working in a different way with larger employers. However the Gig economy should not exploit people, in particular the low skilled and people with disadvantaged by offering unstable work or poor work conditions
- Gig workers can be motivated by the number of hours they can work at a time that suits them and the type of work they can undertake. Contrary to popular belief, the gig economy is not just about Uber! There are many other platforms such as PeoplePerHour, Deliveroo, and many more which offer the ability for people to promote themselves and secure a range of work
- Transferable skills will also be important, people who have mid to high skills in the hospitality sector could be utilised in the care sector, we have seen examples of Airline staff volunteering in hospitals providing 'hospitality' to NHS staff on their break

What are the solutions?



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- Our new apprenticeships page <https://www.forwardtrust.org.uk/our-services/employment-services/apprenticeships/>
- More than My past <https://morethanmypast.org.uk/>