



LEAPING ACROSS THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

STOCKPORT
TOWN OF
CULTURE

DIGIFEST

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DigiKnow

Digital for Work and Skills in Stockport

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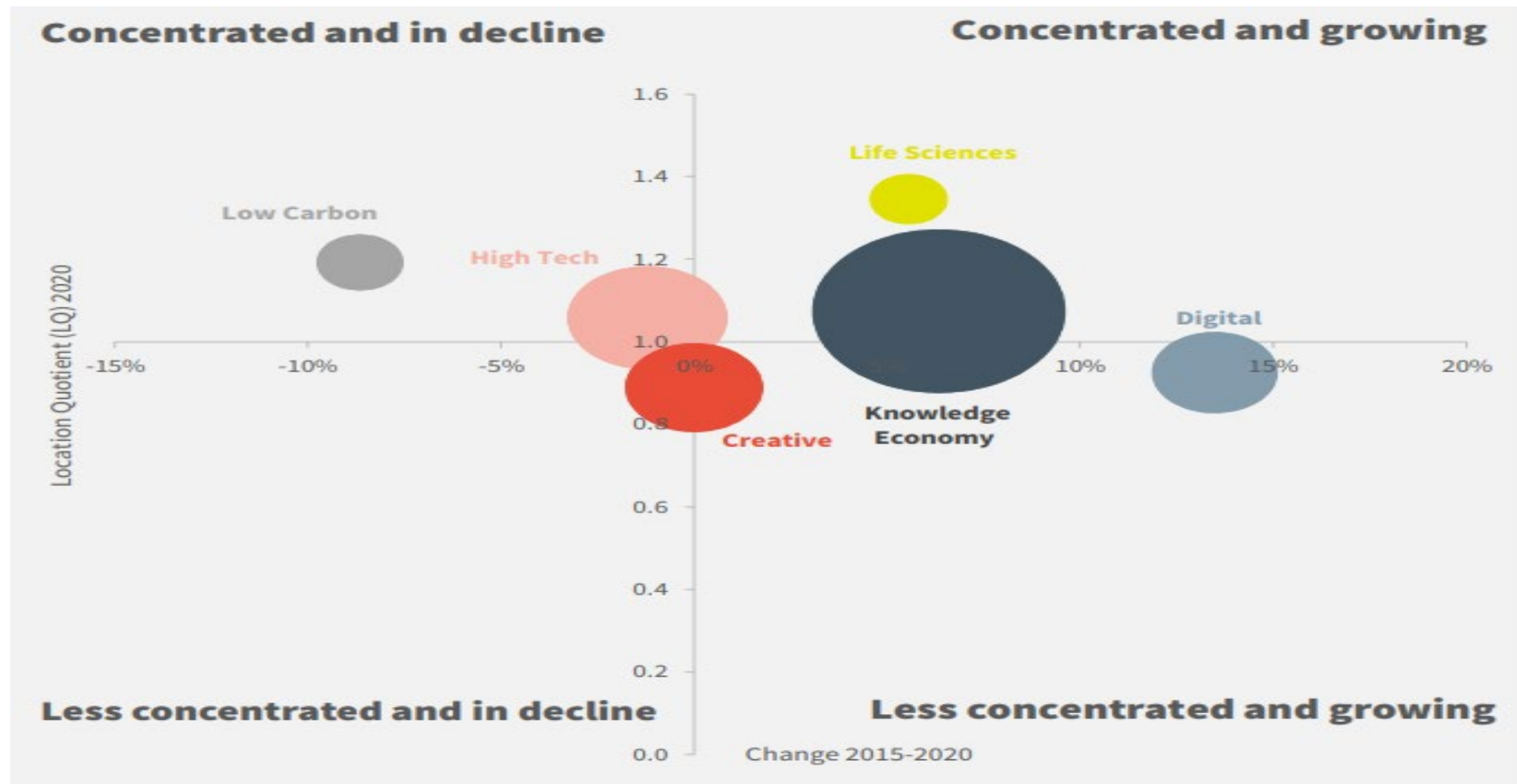


Exploring the significance of digital skills in the workplace context and how they are shaping the workforce landscape in Stockport

- Stockport boasts a diverse and dynamic workforce across various industries.
- From traditional sectors like manufacturing and retail to emerging fields such as tech startups and digital marketing, Stockport's economy is evolving.
- However, this evolution brings the need for upskilling and adapting to digital tools and technologies.



Stockport's future local economy and business mix





Importance of Digital Skills

- In today's digital age, proficiency in digital skills is no longer optional but essential.
- Digital skills encompass a wide range of abilities, including basic computer literacy, coding, data analysis, digital marketing, and more.
- These skills not only enhance employability but also contribute to productivity and innovation in the workplace.



Information from GM Chamber Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)

- “there is no one digital (ICT) sector because “digital” is an integral part of all sectors”
- Labour demand in the sector (information & communication) remains high compared to key sectors like construction, manufacturing, or logistics
- However, vacancy data reveals that the number of advertised vacancies has declined since 2022



Information from GM Chamber Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)

- High demand for essential digital skills in GM.
- The demand for this set of skills is not specific to the digital sector alone, but cuts across all other sectors in GM.
- It encompasses skills around computer literacy and the ability to use software packages like Microsoft Word and Outlook.
- Reports have cited that 75% of job openings at all levels require digital skills.



Digital Divide

- Despite the growing importance of digital skills, there exists a digital divide, particularly in underserved communities.
- Access to technology and quality digital education remains a challenge for many individuals in Stockport.
- Bridging this gap is crucial to ensure equitable access to opportunities in the digital economy.



Importance of Digital Inclusion for Businesses

- Digital inclusion is crucial for businesses to reach a broader customer base.
- It fosters innovation and drives economic growth by tapping into diverse talent pools.
- It enhances employee productivity and engagement by providing necessary digital skills.



Challenges to Digital Inclusion

- Lack of access to technology and broadband in underserved communities.
- Digital skills gap, where many individuals lack the necessary skills to fully participate in the digital economy.
- Affordability barriers preventing individuals from purchasing necessary devices or internet plans.



How Businesses Can Support Digital Inclusion

- Partnering with community organizations to provide access to technology and internet in underserved areas.
- Offering digital skills training programs for employees and the broader community.
- Providing subsidies or discounts for digital products and services to make them more accessible.



Initiatives to address digital skills needs

- The LSIP recommends that new courses in areas such as cloud computing, data analysis and software development, which were identified as high priorities in the LSIP, are also considered.
- When building cybersecurity and AI pathways too, it will be important to have modules that teach topics like programming languages and basics of cloud computing, as they are becoming increasingly relevant to this sector.
- Starting Point offer training and support for digital skills as well as training digital champions.
- Community Computers offer quality, affordable or free devices, across Greater Manchester to those on a low-income who are struggling to access a suitable device.



Conclusion

- In conclusion, digital skills are the currency of the future workplace, and Stockport is taking proactive steps to equip its workforce with these essential skills.
- By investing in digital education and fostering collaboration, we can build a more resilient and inclusive economy for all residents of Stockport.
- Digital inclusion is not just a social responsibility but also a strategic imperative for businesses.
- By supporting digital inclusion efforts, businesses can drive innovation, foster economic growth, and create a more equitable society.