

LEP - Lancashire Skills and Employment Board

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 27th July, 2016 at 8.30 am
at the Training 2000 Limited, Room 5, Hutchinson Building, Furthergate
Business Park, Harwood Street, Blackburn,**

Present:

Amanda Melton (Chair)

Lindsay Campbell
Steve Gray
Graham Haworth
Paul Holme

Lynne Livesey
Joanne Pickering
Bev Robinson
Andy Wood

Observers

Dean Langton - Strategic Director and Head of Paid Service, Pendle Borough Council.
Jill Johnson – in place of Sharon Riding - District External Relationship Manager, Cumbria
and Lancashire District.

Also in Attendance

Dr Michele Lawty-Jones - Skills Hub Director.
Lisa Moizer - Coordinator, Lancashire Skills Hub.
Sharon Montgomerie, Democratic Services, Lancashire County Council.
Joan Costello Smith – Preston College
Kay Vaughan, Enterprise Coordinator, the Lancashire Enterprise Adviser Network

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were presented on behalf of Mark Allanson.

2. Declarations of Interest

No formal declarations were made under this item.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on the 15th June 2016.

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on the 15th June, 2016, are confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising

Michele Lawty-Jones reported that she had met with Governor Services at Lancashire County Council and would be producing an article for their Newsletter

about Lancashire Labour Market Information and inviting school Governors to a number of workshops.

5. European Social Fund targeting young people at risk of and NEET.

a) Steering Group and Strategic Partnerships

Michele Lawty-Jones informed the meeting that delivery had commenced on the Skills Funding Agency European Social Fund opt-in project for young people at risk of and NEET. The successful consortium consisted of Lancashire Colleges, private sector providers and a range of Lancashire based third sector organisations with Preston College acting as the Lead Accountable Body (LAB).

Joan Costello Smith from Preston's College was welcomed to the meeting as its representative and reported that as part of the capacity building fund, a former employee of the Learning and Skills Council and Blackburn with Darwen Council had been appointed as Strategic Partnerships Manager and would be deployed to the Skills and Employment Hub.

Michele also advised that the Building Better Opportunities Big Lottery opt in project was due to commence in September. The overarching steering group for both projects had met and the Board was asked to approve the draft Terms of Reference as set out in the report.

Resolved: That the Terms of Reference of the Lancashire Youth Steering Group, as set out in the report presented, is approved.

b) Lancashire Moving On Project

Joan Costello Smith reported that the collaborative project would run until March 2018 and was aimed at positively impacting on a minimum of 2,539 young people in Lancashire who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET.

She informed the meeting that Preston's College had subcontracted to 23 providers and that contracts were in place for them all. All paper and electronic systems were in place and it was expected that there would be no problems with data transfer. Joan advised that one ILR had been completed already, even though there were no starts yet, and emphasised that the project was paid on deliverables and outcomes and drew attention to the breakdown set out in the report (page 14).

She added that the original profiles from partners showed an over commitment and one of the ways of dealing with that was to only contract in phases, the first being until July 2017.

In the future reports would be created by the LAB working with the Lancashire Employment and Skills Executive Partnership (LESEP) and would be presented initially to the Youth Steering Group before being reported to the Skills and Employment Board and the ESIF Committee. Bev Robinson sought clarity

around the rules regarding subcontracting and whether there were measures in place to ensure that monies remained in Lancashire and Joan confirmed that they would as the project would only support Lancashire Learners.

A query was also raised about management fees and what percentage of that would be returned by LESEP and Preston College in order to provide capacity building.

Steve Gray asked who would be independently scrutinising and overseeing Preston College and Michele drew attention to the fact that the College had to periodically report to the Youth Steering Group and the Skills and Employment Board who would provide scrutiny.

The Chair highlighted that as the new Strategic Partnerships Manager would be seconded to the Hub and report to the Steering Group they would provide scrutiny outside of Preston's College's own management. Joan added that LESEP would perform a similar function and Michele added that the Skills Funding Agency also had a monitoring role for the project.

However, the point was made that as Preston's College would be the legal employer for the Strategic Partnerships Manager the role understandably could not be considered to be a wholly neutral or independent one. Given the concerns expressed around effective independent scrutiny of the project, and with the agreement of the Chair, it was agreed that a diagram would be presented to a future meeting of the Board on how governance can be assured.

Steve Gray added that the Steering Group needed to put systems in place to track leavers and record where they go to, particularly if it was beyond education. Graham Haworth also asked that any monitoring report should detail what mitigation and action was being taken where project partners fall behind.

Resolved:

1. That the over commitment model adopted in line with an early bid for growth be noted,
2. That the initial reporting outline be noted,
3. That the Capacity Building Plan outline be approved, and
4. That a report be presented to a future meeting of the Board on how effective governance can be assured.

6. Update from the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub

Michele Lawty-Jones reported that the City Deal Information Advice and Guidance Taskforce had hosted a stand at the UCLan Science Fair. The stand had been a great success with many young people engaging with the Lego bridge building exercise. It was estimated that 660 young people and 70 schools had engaged with the stand during the 3 day Fair. Thanks were given to Lisa Moizer for co-ordinating partners at the stand and to Joanne Pickering for enabling the Hub to present at the Lancashire HR Forum.

Large copies of the diagram, Lancashire European Social Fund 2014-2016, which appeared in the report (page 26) were circulated at the meeting and Michele took the Board through the various projects contained within it. It was noted that dates for the evaluation panels for the two SFA projects not currently contracted were awaited.

It was reported that at the last ESIF Committee the implications of Brexit had been discussed. No formal position had been received from the Department for Work and Pensions though indications suggested that projects were likely to continue in line with the timeline of the Exit Programme. It was noted that clarity on the situation was awaited and further information would be shared with the Committee in due course.

The Board was informed that Sean McGrath at the County Council had started to look at the implications in relation to ERDF and ESF funding and would give a presentation to the next ESIF Committee. The Chair suggested that the Skills and Employment Board should request to also have sight of his findings.

Resolved:

1. That the report is noted, and
2. A request be made that a copy of the report currently being prepared by Sean McGrath for the next ESIF Committee to also be made available to the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board.

7. Presentation on the Lancashire Enterprise Adviser Network

The Chair welcomed Kay Vaughan, Enterprise Coordinator, who had been asked to attend to give a presentation on the Lancashire Enterprise Adviser Network, a copy of which is set out in the Minute Book.

During her presentation Kay informed the Board that the data suggested that young people in years 7–11 who had 4 or 5 good interactions with businesses during their time in high school, reduced the likelihood of them becoming NEET by 40% and increased their income earning potential by 16-18%.

The Chair thanked Kay for an informative presentation and for her work in developing a successful project in such a short space of time.

Resolved: That the contents of the presentation are noted.

8. Area Based Review - Update from the Working Group

Michele Lawty-Jones presented her report and advised that the Lancashire Area Based Review Working Group had met on Friday 8th July 2016 and that a copy of the Minutes from that meeting was set out in the report.

Resolved:

1. That the West Lancashire College be invited to be a member of the Steering Group to provide the full picture of provision in Lancashire.
2. That the Executive Director, Robin Newton-Syms of The Lancashire Colleges Group be invited to be a member of the Steering Group, and
3. That Paul Holme represent the Skills and Employment Board at the Steering Group, along with Dr Michele Lawty-Jones as senior officer.

9. Draft Apprenticeship Growth Plan

Lisa Moizer, Coordinator of the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub, presented her report which included the initial draft of the Apprenticeship Growth Plan 2016, which when completed would set out the benefits of apprenticeships to Lancashire, both to people and businesses, alongside unprecedented reforms to apprenticeships which had led to the creation of a growth plan for Lancashire.

The Chair thanked Lisa for the report and expressed the opinion that the Growth Plan was still very much a draft and she considered it required more work. Bev Robinson added she felt that the draft was embryonic in terms of its development.

Lisa reported that she would appreciate detailed feedback in order to ensure that the ambitions for Lancashire were well documented and represented in the Plan. She asked members of the Board to consider what would be an ambitious target for Lancashire and include that in any feedback, which could be emailed to her after the meeting, ideally by the end of the week commencing 1st August 2016. Lisa advised that she hoped to report back on the feedback received at the next meeting in September.

Steve Gray sought clarification about how the employer voice would be assured in this process. Dean Langton suggested there may be a role here for Vision Boards in Lancashire (private sector led groups, normally one per district committed to development in the area). Dean went on to express his disappointment about apprenticeships being absent in existing plans for devolution elsewhere in the Country and wondered whether there might be merit in having District Council representation and perspective, in order to bring the issue to the fore. These suggestions were welcomed by the Board.

Resolved:

1. That members of the Board send any feedback regarding the draft Apprenticeship Growth Plan, 2016, to Lisa Moizer ahead of the 1st August 2016.
2. That the draft Growth Plan be shared with partners for their input.

3. That an updated version of the draft Growth Plan be presented to the next meeting for further consideration.
4. That a final version of the draft Growth Plan, once approved by the Committee, be submitted to the LEP Board for their endorsement, buy in and approval before December 2016.

10. City Deal Metrics

Michele Lawty-Jones presented a report seeking the views of the Committee on the draft metrics and set of objectives which would feed into the overarching City Deal business plan to be considered by the City Deal Executive and Stewardship Board at the end of August.

She reported that job outcomes had to be reported to government, and a commitment of 20,000 jobs had been made over a ten year period within the City Deal Area. A comment was made that it would be helpful in terms of committed job outcomes to take into account the impact of austerity.

Bev Robinson reminded the Committee that the partner list was narrow because it was based upon geography (as defined by the City Deal area), and not upon expertise. In providing feedback the following points were made by members of the Committee:

- Apprenticeship targets needed to take into account the impact of the apprenticeship levy, which may reduce affordability for employers and therefore the attractiveness of apprenticeships. The limitations and assumptions section needed to contain information which takes this into account.
- It may be helpful in the current financial climate to re-frame what constitutes a successful outcome, for example a successful outcome might be an employer sustaining and protecting existing jobs rather than creating new ones.
- Whilst City Deal is about job creation, it should also be about safeguarding jobs for the future.

Resolved: That the comments of the Committee as set out above are noted and taken into consideration when developing the overarching City Deal business plan to be considered by the City Deal Executive and Stewardship Board at the end of August.

11. Policy Update (incorporating the Post 16 Skills Plan)

Michelle presented a report in relation to the Post 16 Skills Plan White Paper and how the Government intended to introduce 15 new technical education routes to replace the current post 16 classroom based vocational offer.

In addition Paul Holme provided an overview and insight into various changes being introduced by Government in relation to policy and funding which the Committee considered in the light of the result of the Referendum result for the UK to leave the European Union.

- Apprenticeship Reform and the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy from April 2017
- Adult Education Budget and reductions expected within the next two years
- FE Loans
- Medium and Longer Term Reform of Vocational Education and the Post 16 Skills Plan

Resolved: That the report be noted.

12. Combined Authority & Skills and Employment Board

Dean Langton provided a verbal update and reported he had attended the meeting which took place on 11th July 2016. He advised that the application to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had been submitted and it was now proposed that the Combined Authority would come into existence in April 2017.

Dean advised that work on the Devolution Deal had slowed and the development of a Lancashire Plan would take place around the five themes. The Committee considered how the Combined Authority and the LEP proposed to work together and Michele Lawty-Jones suggested that the Committee would need to consider how it might need to adapt in the future to take account of that relationship.

Resolved: That the report be noted, and the appointment of Member Leads within the Combined Authority be discussed at the next meeting.

13. ESIF Committee representation.

The Committee considered the Terms of Reference of the ESIF Partnership and the role of the Chair who was the current nominee on the Partnership.

Resolved: That Paul Holme attend future meetings of the ESIF Partnership as the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board representative if the Chair is unavailable.

14. Reporting to the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership.

The Chair advised that Paul Holme's appointment would be reported at the next meeting of the LEP Board and the role of the Enterprise Advisors would also be highlighted.

15. Any Other Business

The Board was advised of a celebration event taking place in relation to the Enterprise Adviser Network on 13th September 2016 at the Dunkenhalgh Hotel where Claudia Harris, CEO of the Careers Enterprise Company, would be a guest speaker and Edwin Booth would introduce the event.

16. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would take place 8.00am on Wednesday 7th September 2016 in Cabinet Room 'D' – the Henry Bolingbroke Room at County Hall, Preston.