

## **LEP - Lancashire Skills and Employment Board**

### **Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 21st November, 2018 at 8.00 am at the Committee Room 'B' (The Diamond Jubilee Room) - County Hall, Preston**

#### **Present:**

Joanne Pickering - Chair

Gareth Lindsay

Lynne Livesey

#### **Observer**

Chris Hebblethwaite, District External Relationship Manager, Department for Work and Pensions

Dean Langton, Chief Executive, Pendle Borough Council

Ruth England, Head teacher, Shuttleworth College

Andrew Dewhurst, Director, Affilius Group

Councillor Mark Townsend, Leader of Burnley Council

#### **In Attendance**

Sara Gaskell, Strategic Partnership Manager (Adults), Lancashire Skills Hub

Tracy Heyes, Strategic Partnerships Manager (Employers), Lancashire Skills Hub

Ryan Hyde, Business Support Officer, Lancashire County Council

Mike Neville, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Lancashire County Council

Dr Michele Lawty-Jones, Skill Hub Director, Lancashire County Council

Janet Jackson, Strategic Partnership Manager (Young People), Lancashire Skills Hub

Martin Hill, City Deal Skills and Employment Coordinator, Lancashire County Council

Kerry Harrison, Digital Skills Coordinator, Lancashire County Council

Paul Faulkner, Local Democracy Reporter, Lancashire Post

#### **1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were noted from Amanda Melton, Bev Robinson, Mark Allanson and Lindsay Campbell.

It was noted that Paul Holme had now resigned from the Committee. The Committee noted their thanks to Paul for his service to the Committee and wished him well for the future.

#### **2. Declaration of Interests**

Gareth Lindsay declared an interest in item 12 – European Social Funds (ESF) – Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Opt-In Projects – Performance Report as his organisation, North Lancs Training Group, was involved in the delivery consortium for this project.

It was agreed that Gareth could remain and take part in any voting, if required.

### **3. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2018**

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2018 are approved as an accurate record and duly signed by the Chair.

### **4. Matters Arising**

The Committee was informed that, following the meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2018, the Education and Skills Funding Agency had requested that the resolution regarding item 9 'European Social Funds (ESF) – Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Opt-In' be amended in order to clarify that the Committee was required to sign off the plans to release the funds for the plans from the ESFA to providers.

**Resolved:** That the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board:

1. Approve the changes to the Capacity Building/Engagement Activity Plans, subject to maintaining the original amount of allocated funding to Mental Health and Complex Barriers Specialist Awareness to enable release of the funds to the providers.
2. Note the allocations for the 2019-21 programme and extensions to the current projects.

### **5. Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub Update**

Dr Michele Lawty-Jones, Director of the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub, presented a report which provided the Committee with an update on activity by Hub since the last meeting.

An additional recommendation was presented to the Committee to put forward a formal request to the Education Skills Funding Agency to have an observer on the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board.

It was suggested that the Committee should work in partnership with Lancashire Leaders in order to review the provision of apprenticeships in greater detail and establish examples of good practice for apprenticeships. The establishment of a Task and Finish group on the subject of apprenticeships to report to the next meeting of the Committee was subsequently proposed.

**Resolved:** That the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board:

1. Note the updates set out in the report.
2. Agree to put forward a formal request to the Education Skills Funding Agency to nominate an observer to serve on the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board.
3. Agree to establish a Task and Finish Group on the subject of apprenticeships (consisting of Gareth Lindsay, employer ambassadors and local authority leaders) to report to the meeting of the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019.

## 6. City Deal Skills and Employment Report

Martin Hill, City Deal Skills and Employment Coordinator, presented a report providing an overview of the information submitted by the City Deal Skills and Employment Steering Group.

It was emphasised that the performance is mainly in line with the targets for each of the key performance indicators. It was noted that, while there was a decline in the increased number of apprenticeship starts in all subjects, there had been a significant increase in the number of construction apprenticeships.

The increase in number of Job Seekers Allowance and Universal Credit claimants was accredited to changes in the classification of unemployment. It was noted that, while some areas of Lancashire had been very successful, other areas had not and it was reported that action would be taken to improve delivery in certain Districts.

**Resolved:** That the contents of the report are noted.

## 8. Careers Information Advice and Guidance for Adults

It was agreed that Item 8 would be considered before Item 7.

Sara Gaskell, Strategic Partnership Manager (Adults), Lancashire Skills Hub, and Tracy Heyes, Strategic Partnerships Manager (Employers), Lancashire Skills Hub, presented a report which provided the Committee with an overview of the policy context for careers information advice and guidance for adults, as attached.

The Careers Strategy was highlighted as being a key document, with the aim being for it to support local industrial strategies so that careers advice is well positioned to provide support tailored to the needs of different areas. The National Careers Service would be one of the key delivery partners. The main target groups would include adults aged 18-24 who are not in education, employment, or training, single parents, and adults over 50 who are not in employment.

It was stated that there were 14 projects from within the European Social Fund delivering support, but that the Lancashire Skills Hub were seeking to work with others outside of the European Social Fund in order to improve the range of support provided.

It was suggested that a set of metrics of quality assurance be produced to provide the Committee with an understanding of what the support is expected to provide, which could also be used as a condition of funding. Concerns were raised about the potential exclusion of people with limited access to the internet from the support networks provided. However, it was stated that there were projects and plans in place to support these people. Geographical gaps in support were also being identified so that greater support could be provided.

**Resolved:** That the updates on the Careers Information Advice and Guidance for Adults are noted.

## 7. European Social Funds

Sean McGrath, External Investment/Funding, presented a report providing an overview of Lancashire's currently unallocated funds and informed the meeting that any uncommitted funding would form part of a National Reserve Fund.

Whether the projects under IP 2.1 could be match funded using the Apprenticeship Levy was queried and there were concerns about the amount of time required in order to determine this.

**Resolved:** That the Lancashire ESIF Committee be recommended to refer the proposals detailed in Table 1 in the report presented for submission to the DWP.

## 9. Technical Education Vision

Janet Jackson, Strategic Partnership Manager (Young People), Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub, presented a report which provided the Committee with an update on the Technical Education Vision.

It was reported that a key aim of the Vision was to ensure tutors in colleges are closer to the industry and can have a better understanding of it so that they can provide technical education which is more tailored to a career in the industry. The Committee noted that following the recent budget announcements by the national Government, employers will pay a rate of 5% of apprenticeship costs – down from 10% which was aimed at enabling more small businesses to encourage apprenticeships.

The Lancashire Technical Education Steering Group will provide updates to the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board through the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub Update report.

**Resolved:** That the update on the Technical Education Vision is noted.

## 10. LEP Review

*At this point, Graham Cowley, Director on the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Board, and Kathryn Molloy, Head of Service, LEP Coordination, joined the meeting in order to present item 10 – LEP Review.*

It was reported that the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership was undergoing a review in accordance with the Government publication of its Local Enterprise Partnership Review – Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships.

Board membership was highlighted as being a key aspect of the review, with two thirds of the Board Directors required to be from the private sector, and increased diversity of the Directors. As the Chair of the Board was also stepping down in December 2018, a consultancy process for a new chair of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership was also required.

It was reported that the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership would need to consider what it delivered directly, commissioned through other parties, and relied on other parties to deliver. However, it was emphasised that it was unlikely the role of the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board would change unless the Committee itself would like it to. It was suggested that this point be discussed

further at the informal meeting of the Committee on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019, and that Graham Cowley would be invited back to this meeting to provide a further update on the LEP Review.

**Resolved:**

1. That the update on the LEP Review is noted.
2. That the future role of the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board be discussed further at the informal meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019.
3. That the Committee be kept informed of further developments in relation to the LEP Review.

*At this point, Graham Cowley and Kathryn Molloy left the meeting.*

**11. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

At this point the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board approved that the meeting move into Part II, Private and Confidential, to consider the remaining report as it contained information defined as confidential or exempt in accordance with the relevant paragraph of Part I to schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as set out in the report. It was considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

At this point, Ruth England, Andrew Dewhurst and Paul Faulkner left the meeting.

**12. European Social Funds (ESF) - Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Opt-In Projects - Performance Report**

The Committee were presented with an overview of performance for each of the Education Skills Funding Agency Opt-In projects against their current ESFA profiles.

Concerns were raised about the projected underspend for the Moving On (NEET) Project, but it was noted that any unused funding should be able to go back into the LEP allocation.

The volume of actual take up of the skills support for redundancy was highlighted as being significantly lower than the profiled volume. However, this was due to the volume of redundancies in the Lancashire area being significantly lower than projected.

It was noted that geographical gaps for skills support for unemployed were being addressed having brokered partnership working in districts with lower engagement. It was also stated that the project has broken the £3 million mark.

**Resolved:** That the contents of the report are noted.

**13. Reporting to the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership**

The Committee noted that the written resolution – Appointment of 4 New Skills and Employment Board Members - Head Teacher, Digital, Manufacturing and

Construction on 15 November 2018 would be reported to the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership for formal approval.

The Committee agreed that the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership be made aware of the Technical Education Vision launch on Friday 30 November 2018.

**14. Any Other Business**

None.

**15. Date of Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next informal meeting of the Committee was scheduled to be held at 8.00am on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019. It was agreed that this would be scheduled to last for the entire morning, and would be at a venue to be confirmed.

The next formal meeting was scheduled to be held in Committee Room 'B' – The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston at 8.00am on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019.