

Lancashire Apprenticeship Action Plan

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1. Introduction

Over the last few years there have been unprecedented and systematic changes to Apprenticeships. These changes have fundamentally changed which business are using Apprenticeship training to upskill their staff and what types of Apprenticeships they are using to do it.

The Government's reasons for changing the system are to improve the quality of Apprenticeships and to make Apprenticeship training more relevant, to meet the skills needs of employers. They also want to secure employer investment and sustainable funding for Apprenticeships to enable them to fund more Apprenticeships of a higher quality, to meet skills gaps and compete internationally.

The Reform Programme's overall vision is to create a world-class, sustainable Apprenticeship system offering large volumes of high quality employer-led Apprenticeship opportunities to a diverse range of individuals and to meet the skills needs of employers.

The immediate impact of the changes, that took effect from Spring 2017, resulted in a dip in Apprenticeship numbers across the country, and from 2016/17 to 2017/18 Lancashire has experienced a percentage decline in Apprenticeships number of 32.5% compared to 24% nationally. While systematic changes can settle in time it is certain that the Apprenticeship system has changed forever.

The Apprenticeship Action Plan is Lancashire's collective response to the impact of the reforms and aims to take action where we have local influence, to facilitate our way out of the dip, taking an approach that maximises the benefits of Apprenticeship training. This in turn will mean that Apprenticeship training contributes to businesses having the skilled and productive workforce they require to thrive.

This plan is therefore focussed on actions to grow a supply of high quality Apprenticeships opportunities and simultaneously creating demand for these opportunities. The fundamental aim is to ensure that businesses understand, value Apprenticeships and choose to offer Apprenticeship opportunities to their staff to give them the skilled workforce their business requires. If a business values the apprentice training route to develop their employee skills then it follows that an employee will value that route and choose it to gain the skills needed for their current role or a future role.

2. What is an Apprenticeship?

The first national Apprenticeship system of training was introduced in 1563! So it's unsurprising that, depending on someone's association with Apprenticeships, there is a varied understanding across the population of what an Apprenticeship is now.

- An Apprenticeship is a job that combines work with training.
- Apprentices can be new or existing employees.
- Apprenticeships are open to all people age 16 or over.
- They are available at a range of levels, from GCSE-equivalent (level 2) to degree-equivalent (levels 6 and 7).
- An Apprenticeship must last for at least 12 months.
- The apprentice must spend at least 20% of their paid hours doing off-the-job training.

3. Breadth of Apprenticeship Reforms

From spring 2017, the following significant changes have been made to the delivery of the Apprenticeship programme:

- Introduction of a 0.5% Apprenticeship levy for businesses with a pay bill of more than £3 million. Levy-paying businesses can use this money, plus a 10% government top-up, to pay for Apprenticeship training and assessment.
- Introduction of a 'co-investment' arrangement for businesses who do not pay the levy. As of April 2019 this has been reduced from 10% to 5% which they are required to pay towards the cost of training and assessing apprentices, with the government providing the other 95%.
- The ability for Levy payers to support Apprenticeships in other organisations for example, SME's in their supply chain, by transferring a percentage of their Apprenticeship funds to other employers. From April 2019 the rate available to transfer increased from 10% to 25% of the annual value of funds entering the Apprenticeship service account.
- The Education and Skills Funding Agency added to the funding rules the requirement for apprentices to spend at least 20% of their paid hours doing off-the-job training.
- The Institute for Apprenticeships (now the Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education) was established to ensure the quality, consistency and credibility of Apprenticeships, including helping employers to develop new Apprenticeship standards and approving the standards. The new Apprenticeship standards put employers in the driving seat as they are developed by groups of employers, making the Apprenticeships more relevant and therefore more attractive to employers.
- The launch of an online service which allows levy-paying businesses to access their funds, manage their Apprenticeships and pay their training providers. By November 2018, businesses had registered around 16,000 online accounts.

4. Apprenticeships are an opportunity

The opportunity for all businesses to use Apprenticeship training to meet their businesses skills needs is fantastic. The apprentice levy underspend is stark and since April 2019 businesses paying the levy have started to lose any unspent levy over two years old forever. We need to support these businesses so that they take an informed approach to maximising their levy including transferring it to other businesses. We also need to support businesses who do not pay the levy as there are many who once did take on apprentices who since the April 2017 reforms do not.

There is a vast amount of support available for businesses regarding Apprenticeships, the main two aims are to support businesses to be fully informed to make the decision that using Apprenticeship training is right for their skills needs, and then to support businesses through the process to take on an apprentice. We want to ensure that awareness of this support is far reaching and that as many organisations as possible who work with businesses know of the raft of support and can easily direct or refer a business to it.

Since the introduction of the reforms there are many businesses in Lancashire using Apprenticeship training to great effect and some of the people in those businesses have become Lancashire Apprenticeship Ambassadors. In Lancashire we want to increase the number of people in businesses who are willing to be Ambassadors so that they can share their practises and the positive impact apprentices have had on business, in terms of the bottom line, productivity and innovation.

Likewise there is an imperative to give young people and adult's accurate information about being an apprentice so that they can make informed choices about whether an Apprenticeship is the right choice for them to gain skills or the right choice for members of their families. But beyond giving facts we need to utilise our businesses and Apprenticeship Ambassadors to inspire people with their Apprenticeship opportunities, Apprenticeship stories and what being an apprentices has meant to their life and career.

5. Positive impact of Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a great investment. They provide staff with an opportunity to learn a whole role, on-the-job, supported by businesses and by a training partner. They can bring the newest ideas and innovations into the working of a company and can help generate an extremely loyal workforce.

Business impact¹

96% of employers using apprenticeships say their business has benefited

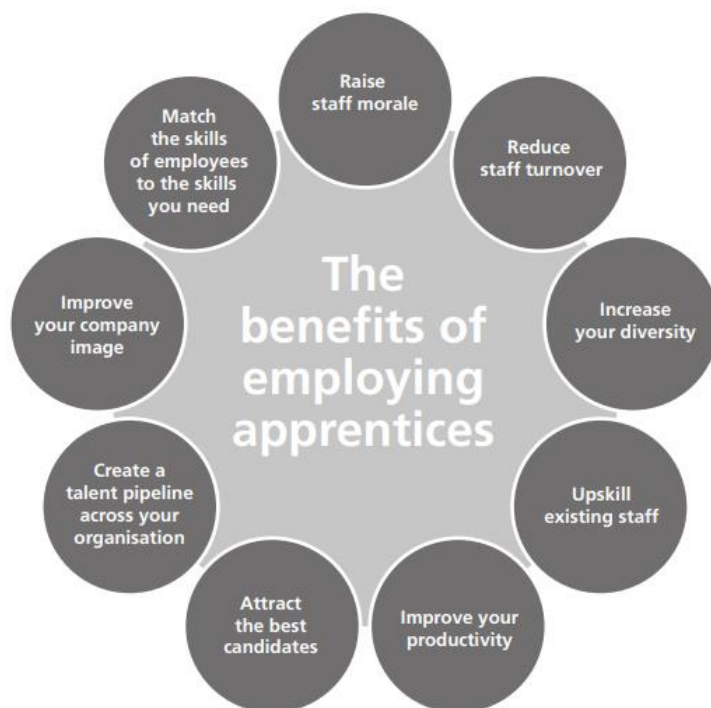
86% of employers using apprenticeships helped develop relevant skills for the organisation and to fill skills gaps

78% of employers using apprenticeships say they increase overall productivity

74% of employers say that apprentices improved products or service quality

69% of employers using apprenticeships say they improve staff retention

25% of consumers are willing to pay more for products from a business that employs apprentices



In spring 2019 the Learning and Work Institute, undertook a wide ranging desk based research exercise into the Economic Returns to Apprenticeships, and it found that:

- Businesses gain from having invested in Apprenticeships. The types of benefits suggested by the studies reviewed included: increased profitability, higher levels of skills within firms allowing greater capacity for innovation and knowledge transfer, and savings in recruitment costs.
- Businesses experience increased retention rates (above 85%).
- Estimate of the wage return for a Level 2 apprentice is estimated at 12% and for Level 3 apprentice is estimated at 16%.
- Apprenticeships appear to provide a double bonus to individuals by increasing both their wages and their chances of being in employment.

¹ Taken from: [Achieving the benefits of Apprenticeships, A guide for employers](#), published by the National Apprenticeship Service, 2018

- Having an educated and literate population increases participation in democratic institutions and social cohesion, as well as encourages investment in capital equipment and R&D.
- Increased GVA.

6. Key Issues

Key issues listed below which have arisen from the introduction of the Apprenticeship reforms have had, and are continuing to have, a substantial impact on the Apprenticeship programme and cannot be directly influenced at a local level.

- i. Adequate Apprenticeship standards are not in place and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IATE) need to be lobbied to accelerate the approval of new standards required by businesses in Lancashire.
- ii. There is a lack of End Point Assessment provision and organisations able to undertake them. The IATE need to be lobbied to accelerate the introduction of new organisations and provision.
- iii. Businesses have said that they want greater flexibility in how they can use their Apprenticeship levy funding, beyond Apprenticeship training.
- iv. The 5% 'co-investment' arrangement for businesses who do not pay the levy replaced previous payment arrangements where businesses incurred no cost for some Apprenticeship training.
- v. The tightening up and additional audit requirements attached to the funding rules regarding the 20% off-the-job training requirement has impacted certain businesses in certain sectors and they have responded to research stating that these are not suitable for their business model.
- vi. Functional Skills Maths/English is not included within the 20% off the job requirement; the low funding rate of these qualifications in comparison with classroom-based equivalents; the requirement for apprentices studying Level 1 Functional Skills qualifications and to sit Level 2 Functional Skills tests; are all problematic.
- vii. HM Treasury has allocated the Department for Education a fixed annual budget for the programme. The average cost of training an apprentice under the new standards is around £9,000 approximately double what was originally expected, making more likely that the programme will overspend in the future.
- viii. Review the requirement for the public sector to have 2.3 % of their headcount as apprentices, the target needs to be based on FTE not headcount.
- ix. Lack of robustness, consistency and regularity of Apprenticeship data to enable local areas to measure the impact of local incentives to support the increase in Apprenticeships meeting business need.
- x. Changes to the funding attached to certain level 2 provision, for example level 2 Administrator, is making it unviable for Apprenticeship training providers to deliver.
- xi. There is uncertainty regarding the expansion of the Digital Apprenticeship Service to include non-paying businesses. There has been a lack of communication and clarity

about how the arrangements will work in practise. The feedback from levy paying businesses regarding the service means it is anticipated that there will be an unacceptable administrative burden on smaller businesses which is predicted to impact their engagement with the Apprenticeship programme or the Apprenticeship training providers will be forced to pick up the burden.

We will lobby through appropriate channels with this list of key issues which have been agreed with partners in Lancashire. This agreed approach will evidence the extent of the issue beyond a single organisation or group of organisations, and therefore will strengthen Lancashire lobbying voice through each specific channel.

7. Technical Education Reform

Lancashire published a Technical Education Vision in 2018², to create a consensus around its ambition for its Technical Education system and support the development of Technical Education in Lancashire. The vision spans the breadth of the Technical Education system, including Apprenticeships, the introduction of T Levels and higher level technical provision.

This Apprenticeship Action Plan details how stakeholders in Lancashire will work together to achieve the objectives in the Technical Education Vision which are allied to the Apprenticeship technical education route, and thereby contribute to the Vision's outcomes.

8. Development of the Apprenticeship Action Plan

The Skills and Employment Advisory Panel has worked in partnership with the Lancashire Leaders Group to establish a task and finish group whose aim was to review the reduction in Apprenticeship starts in Lancashire, the impact of the Apprenticeship Reforms and establish examples of good practice in relation to use of the Apprenticeship Levy. The outcome has been that the group has produced this action plan focussed on actions that will have local impact and influence and which includes relevant Key Performance Indicators to measure the impact of taking forward the actions in the plan to achieve its objectives.

The Apprenticeship Action Group comprises a number of key representatives from the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub, the Lancashire Leaders, local colleges, local training providers, local authorities and organisations delivering European Social Fund projects aimed at upskilling employees. It was agreed that these members represented the appropriate people to design, develop, deliver and share a plan which aims to support the growth of Apprenticeships across the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership area.

You can find a list of the members of the Task and Finish Group in Annex A.

² [Lancashire Technical Education Vision](#), Lancashire Enterprise Partnership, 2018

9. Evidence Base

An evidence base was created from a broad range of national and local research and data. A key component of the data compiled was data purchased which enables identification of business workplaces where Apprentices are employed. This data has been cross referenced against the database provided to Lancashire Enterprise Partnership by the Department for Education (DfE) which shows Apprenticeship numbers, levels, qualifications etc.

Research has contributed to the evidence base.

Lancashire based:

- Effective Employer Engagement Action Research Project, Eunoia Associates, August 2018, commissioned by Lancashire Work Based Learning Executive Forum (LWBLEF)
- Apprenticeship qualitative research with businesses, Learndirect, Autumn 2018
- Lancashire Work Based Learning Executive Forum member's survey, January 2019 - members were asked to comment on impact of the reforms and on their barriers to offering Apprenticeships.
- Lancashire's Local Authorities Apprenticeship survey, conducted by Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub, January 2019 – this was completed by all 15 local authorities in Lancashire and they were asked about their Apprenticeship take up, use of levy funds and response to the 2.3% target.

National:

- Flex for success, Employers perspective on the Apprenticeship Levy, City & Guild and ILM report, January 2019
- The Apprenticeships programme, National Audit Office, March 2019

Data analysis and key findings:

Data analysis has been conducted by the group to identify Key Performance Indicator measures, gain a baseline report and to determine if there is any relationship between a number of datasets and Apprenticeship starts.

- Public sector 2.3% target - data was analysed to show that if all public sector bodies who have reported their Apprenticeship numbers in Lancashire were to meet their 2.3% target that would result in an additional 943 Apprenticeships per annum.
- Up until the last quarter of the 2017/18 academic year, just before the introduction of the Apprenticeship reforms on 6th April 2017, Lancashire was performing 5% above the national picture in regards to Apprenticeship starts. However the final quarter results in 2017/18 brought Lancashire's overall starts down significantly more than the national percentage drop, 8.5% below the national percentage starts. It is widely reported that there was a push by providers to encourage employers to start their apprentices before the introduction of the reforms and analysis shows that Lancashire have been severely impacted by this.

- Bluesheep data has been purchased and has identified 427 Lancashire businesses who have had 10 or more increases and decreases of Apprenticeship numbers. This data has been initially analysed by sector and by levy payer.

Key findings in reviewing relevant datasets against the reduction in Apprenticeship starts in the 16-18 cohort between 2016/17 and 2017/18.

- 16-18 year old population data shows that the cohort has reduced by 2.7% (-1384) between 2017 and 2018 however Apprenticeship starts for the same group have reduced by 14.3% (-643).
- Looking further to see if young people have made different choices as a result of fewer Apprenticeship opportunities in the same period, participation data shows that participation numbers across other education and employment options had also dropped across the board by 3.6% (894), therefore Apprenticeships appear to have been adversely impacted.
- We analysed further data to see if the 643 young people who were not able to take up an Apprenticeship opportunity became Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET). In Blackpool and Lancashire the percentage of young people who were NEET decreased and in Blackburn there was no change. Unfortunately this data is not robust due to the number of young people whose activities are not known, which varies substantially across Lancashire's local authority areas, and could therefore easily mask what has happened to those young people who in the past would have started an Apprenticeship.
- In relation to young people in the 16-18 age group, it needs to be highlighted there has been a decrease in the supply of Apprenticeships. This is due to the reduction in funding a level 2 Apprenticeships now draws down (see 'Key Issues' section above). For some young people a level 2 Apprenticeship is their first step on their Apprenticeship journey and this funding change has resulted in a decrease in the number of Apprenticeship employment opportunities for them.

10. The Apprenticeship Action Plan

The evidence base has enabled the Action Group to determine the priority issues for Lancashire, in the context of a joint partnership approach and taking into consideration of the level of resources available.

The plan is underpinned by a number of key objectives, plus a set of outcomes for the plan as a whole. The plan is broken down into the lead for the objective and the themes and objectives articulate the priorities for Lancashire.

The purpose of the plan is to:-

- Increase the number, range and quality of Apprenticeships and encourage greater levels of provision at higher and degree level, reaching more employers in sectors with high replacement demand and growth.
- Influence public sector organisations in relation to Apprenticeship take up

- Address issues/barriers of local providers and employers to support Apprenticeship growth

We will also promote social inclusion, social cohesion, and equality and diversity by ensuring that it is a common thread through all our activities and the activities of the wider partners who will contribute to this action plan.

The plan will be reviewed and the progress on the actions and the Key Performance Indicators will be reported to the Lancashire Skills and Employment Advisory Panel and the Lancashire Leaders annually.

To ensure the Apprenticeship plan links with the priorities of Lancashire we have aligned the plan to our strategic priorities, ensuring that activity meets the needs of the priorities and links to our Technical Education Vision and aligns to the four quadrants in the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework, see the table below.

FUTURE WORKFORCE	SKILLED & PRODUCTIVE WORKFORCE
<p>Continue to drive the Apprenticeship focus of the Careers and Enterprise Company and Inspira, through the Enterprise Adviser Network to embed Apprenticeships in school and college careers plans across Lancashire.</p> <p>Continue the increase in Apprenticeship Ambassadors undertaking activities to inspire and influence young people, parents and teachers.</p> <p>Apprenticeship Support & Knowledge for Schools Project (ASK Project).</p>	<p>Encourage businesses to give full consideration to how Apprenticeship training can support their workforce development plans.</p> <p>Ensure that any businesses interested in Apprenticeships are fully informed and supported making the process as clear and straightforward as possible, using the Skills Pledge process where possible.</p> <p>Lancashire Leaders to make a public pledge that the Local Authorities in the Lancashire LEP area commit to meet the 2.3% target, setting the example and influencing the broader public sector to follow suit.</p> <p>Work with partners to identify existing priority sector networks/groups and negotiate presenting a sector specific Apprenticeship input at these events.</p> <p>Continue the increase in Apprenticeship Ambassadors undertaking activities to influence businesses to take on Apprentices.</p>
INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE	INFORMED APPROACH
<p>Review the Apprenticeship knowledge of those organisations delivering initiatives and projects that engage with the 'Inclusive Workforce'. Local Authorities to support their looked after children and care leavers team, supporting young people into Apprenticeships.</p>	<p>Maintain the evidence base to enable the Apprenticeship action to remain relevant and continue to meet the needs of Lancashire's businesses. A joined up approach to lobbying on the issues that are most important to Lancashire stakeholders.</p>

11. Key Performance Indicators

Overall Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

1. To see an increase in engagement with Apprenticeship by 427 Lancashire employers.
2. To see progress against the Local Authority 2.3% target across Lancashire.
3. Increased engagement of Lancashire young people with Apprenticeships.

Identified Issues	Data to measure impact	KPI
<p>i. Levy payers in the majority of cases are not spending their full levy and do not plan to spend their full levy in the future.</p>	<p>Apprenticeship starts of the of 99 levy payers identified through the Bluesheep data, tracked annually through the Datacube.</p> <p>Tracking the businesses which have signed up to the Apprenticeship Skills Pledge who have been identified as levy payers.</p>	1
<p>ii. Lancashire's Public Sector organisations in the majority of cases in 2017/18 did not spend their full levy and/or meeting their 2.3% target.</p>	<p>2.3% target will be tracked annually, through the Government's published data. (2017/18 was published Nov 19)</p> <p>The Lancashire Leaders have agreed to provide their Apprenticeship numbers annually (as not all are required to report to the Government) and the value unspent levy that has been return to central Government per annum.</p>	2
<p>iii. Analysis of the first cut of Bluesheep data has identified that there are employers who have bucked the overarching downward trend and grown their Apprenticeships in sectors that are a priority to Lancashire. If these 'Apprenticeship champions' are not engaged in some way with promoting Apprenticeships in Lancashire then we are missing a significant opportunity.</p>	<p>Apprenticeship starts of the 72 'Apprenticeship champions' identified through the Bluesheep data, tracked annually through the Datacube.</p>	1
<p>iv. Analysis of the first cut of Bluesheep data has identified that there are employers who were 'historical Apprenticeship champions' (10 or more starts in a year) who now deliver fewer Apprenticeships or none at all.</p>	<p>Apprenticeship stars of the 208 'historical Apprenticeship champions' identified through the Bluesheep data.</p>	1
<p>v. Analysis of the first cut of Bluesheep data has identified that overall Apprenticeship numbers between 16/17 and 17/18 have decreased in each of Lancashire's priority sectors.</p> <p>vi.</p>	<p>Apprenticeship starts by sector of the 427 workplaces identified through the Bluesheep data overall and split by sector.</p>	1

vii.	Lancashire Providers, through the Eunoia research, have highlighted that there is a continuous sustained effort required to ensure comprehensive careers advice, improve Apprenticeship advocacy in schools, and support parental knowledge, understanding and to work with employers to develop attractive Apprenticeship vacancies.	Apprenticeship Skills and Knowledge (ASK) engagement data. <i>ASK - LWBLEF is still awaiting to know (delays by ESFA) if the Lead, BL Training has been successful in the next contracting round for ASK for the NW LWBLEF are a subcontractor for Lancashire. Expected to be notified by 31st May 2019.</i> <i>Gatsby Benchmark 7 - Awaiting the Careers Enterprise Company response to the request for relevant data for this KPI.</i>	3
viii.	Recommendations from Eunoia Research.	Refresh of current ambassadors and target a minimum of 3 events for each to be engaged with.	3
ix.	Lancashire has dropped 5 places from 12 to 7 in the LEP rankings of Apprenticeship starts as a % of the working age population.	This analysis can be conducted annually and tracked year and year, but is reliant on the Government publishing the data. The report for 2017/18 was published Nov 19.	1, 2 and 3

Further KPI's which cut across more than one identified issue

- Apprenticeship starts of the 427 Businesses identified through Bluesheep data measured year on year.
- Tracking the number of business signed up to the Lancashire Skills Pledge data who submit that they already have apprentices and the outcomes of those sign ups.
- Tracking business signed up to the Lancashire Skills Pledge data who submit they are interested in Taking on an Apprentices and the outcomes of those sign ups.
- Apprenticeship Ambassador active numbers in the network – target to increase Apprenticeship Ambassador Network by 10% by Dec 19.
- Tracking the number of business signed up to the Lancashire Skills Pledge data who submit that they already have an Apprenticeship Ambassador and the outcomes of those sign ups.

12. Annexes

Annex A - Members of the task and finish Apprenticeship Action Group

- Vanessa Carthy, Lancashire County Council
- Jennifer Clough, South Ribble Borough Council
- Raeleen Duthoit, Lancashire Work Based Learning Executive Forum
- Sara Gaskell, Lancashire Skills Hub
- Pam Goulding, Lancashire County Council
- Janette Healey, The Growth Company
- Dean Langton, Pendle Borough Council
- Dr Michele Lawty-Jones, Lancashire Skills Hub
- Gareth Lindsay, NLTG
- Lisa Moizer, Lancashire Skills Hub
- Mark Townsend, Burnley Borough Council

Annex B - Apprenticeship Action Plan Matrix

Identified issue and evidence to support	Recommendations			Next Steps (to be driven by LEAD)
	Lancashire Leaders (LL)	Lancashire Skills Hub (LSH)	Lancashire WBL Executive Forum (LWBLEF)	
<p>i. Levy payers in the majority of cases are not spending their full levy and do not plan to spend their full levy in the future, both locally and nationally.</p>	<p>Supported by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LL to engage with Levy Payers where their Local Authority has a relationship with them, to ensure that levy payers can communicate their issues, utilise resource and/or engage with events. 	<p>LEAD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that any businesses interested in apprenticeships are fully informed and supported making the process as clear and straightforward as possible, using the Skills Pledge process where possible. Communicate with Levy Payers to address the key issues identified in the evidence base and offer solutions. Organise an event for Levy Payers and work with LWBLEF to monitor the impact of the referrals that occur off the back of the event. 	<p>Supported by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a smooth process of transition for levy payers to be supported by the LWBLEF, so that businesses can be efficiently handed over to the relevant providers to begin a detailed apprenticeship discussion. Feedback loop to be created so that providers inform the LWBLEF of the result of those referrals which is then fed back to the LSH so that the impact can be tracked against performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand and acknowledge local activity and established networking groups to ensure that any further activity adds value in the Lancashire setting. Produce and distribute a Lancashire Employers' Apprenticeship Toolkit through partners and to intermediaries engaged with businesses to assist all employers.
<p>ii. Lancashire's Public Sector organisations in the majority of cases in 2017/18 did not spend their full levy and/or meet their 2.3% target (Lancashire Local Authority survey).</p>	<p>LEAD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lancashire Leaders to make a public pledge that the Local Authorities in the Lancashire LEP area commit to meet the 2.3% target, setting the example and influencing the broader public sector to follow suit. Establish good practice in the transfer of levy funds in Lancashire to supply chain organisations. Encourage all public sector organisations to become Lancashire Employer Ambassadors and allow their Apprentices to become Ambassadors and to contribute to the creation of Apprenticeship case studies. Lancashire Public Sector organisations to continue to lobby, through the Local Government Association issues associated with the reforms, for example the delay in release of Apprenticeship Standards and confirmation of End Point Assessments, and calls to utilise locally levy underspend. 	<p>Supported by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and amplify the PR campaign to announce the Local Authority's commitment to the 2.3% target, through partners to achieve the maximum attention. Support the delivery of a Public Sector Event. Monitor the impact on additional Apprenticeship starts which can be tracked through the Government's published data. 	<p>Supported by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a smooth process of transition for levy payers to be supported by the LWBLEF so that businesses can be efficiently handed over to the relevant providers to begin an Apprenticeship discussion. Feedback loop to be created so that providers inform the LWBLEF of the result of those referrals which is then fed back to the LSH so that the impact can be tracked against performance. Work with partners to support the Public Sector to join the Apprenticeship Ambassador network as Employer Ambassadors and encourage them to sign their Apprentices up to become Apprenticeship Ambassadors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a PR campaign to announce the Local Authority's commitment to the 2.3% target. Organise an event for Lancashire Public Sector organisations using the influence the LL have with key public sector partners to bring them to the table. Invite well performing organisations which are diverse in size and nature to present at the event to share their best practise, South Ribble Council and Lancashire County Council have volunteered. Use findings from the Lancashire wide Local Authority Apprenticeship survey (which was undertaken by the Action Group) to inform the event agenda to address key issues identified and offer solutions. LWBLEF to produce case studies for those willing to contribute. LWBLEF to hold an Apprenticeship Ambassador networking event and invite public sector organisations to the meeting to find out more.

Annex B - Apprenticeship Action Plan Matrix

Identified issue and evidence to support	Recommendations			Next Steps (to be driven by LEAD)
	Lancashire Leaders (LL)	Lancashire Skills Hub (LSH)	Lancashire WBL Executive Forum (LWBLEF)	
<p>iii. Analysis of the first cut of Bluesheep data has identified that there are employers who have bucked the overarching downward trend and grown their Apprenticeships in sectors that are a priority to Lancashire. If these 'Apprenticeship Champions' are not engaged in some way with promoting Apprenticeships in Lancashire then we are missing a significant opportunity.</p>	<p>Supported by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LL to communicate with champions where the Leaders have a relationship with them to encourage them to be an Employer Ambassador and allow their Apprentices to be Ambassadors. 	<p>LEAD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise LSH and partner's relationships with these employers where they exist, e.g. LAs, Chambers, and Growth Hub etc. and determine their current engagement with the skills and employment agenda. For those not engaged with the Apprenticeship agenda approach them through the organisation that has the most positive relationship with them, with the aim of influencing them to be formal active Ambassadors – including speaking to other businesses at events, sharing best practice, case studies etc. 	<p>Supported by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to support identified businesses to join the Ambassador network as Employer Ambassadors and encourage them to sign their Apprentices up to become Apprenticeship Ambassadors. Produce case studies for those willing to participate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSH to further mine the Bluesheep data to identify potential Apprenticeship Champions across all sectors. LWBLEF to produce case studies for those willing to contribute. Use the South Ribble Council's Apprenticeship Factory as a pilot to facilitate a project group of the best performing public and private sector organisations to develop Ambassador roles and activities.
<p>iv. Analysis of the first cut of Bluesheep data has identified that there are employers who were 'historical Apprenticeship Champions' (10 or more starts in a year) who now deliver fewer Apprenticeships or none at all.</p>	<p>Supported by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LL to communicate with historical champions where they have a relationship with them to encourage them to engage with relevant events, partners and/or resources. 	<p>LEAD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise LSH and partner's relationships with these employers where they exist, e.g. LAs, Chambers, Growth Hub etc. and determine their current engagement with the skills and employment agenda. For those not engaged with the Apprenticeship agenda, approach them through the organisation that has the most positive relationship with them, with the aim of encouraging them to engage with relevant events, partners and/or resources. 	<p>Supported by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a smooth process of transition for 'historical Apprenticeship Champions' to be supported by the LWBLEF, so that discussions can take place with their existing and/or new provider to begin an Apprenticeship discussion. Feedback loop to be created so that providers inform the LWBLEF of the result of discussions/referrals which is then fed back to the LSH so that the impact can be tracked against performance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSH to further mine the Bluesheep data to identify historical Apprenticeship Champions across all sectors. LWBLEF to work with LSH to produce tailored marketing and resources for this cohort of businesses, addressing any particular needs and barriers. These would be developed through feedback with the businesses.
<p>v. Analysis of the first cut of Bluesheep data has identified that overall Apprenticeship numbers between 16/17 and 17/18 have decreased in each of Lancashire's priority sectors.</p>	<p>Supported by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LL to embed Apprenticeships as a key priority in economic development events and activities, to promote Apprenticeships to businesses in their local economy. 	<p>LEAD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with partners to identify existing priority sector networks/groups and negotiate presenting a sector specific Apprenticeship input at these events. At these sector events utilise appropriate Apprenticeships Champions, so that the inputs are 	<p>Supported by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a smooth process of transition for businesses in priority sectors to be supported by the LWBLEF, so that discussions can take place with their existing and/or new provider to begin an Apprenticeship discussion. Feedback loop to be created so that providers inform the LWBLEF of the result of discussions/referrals which 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LWBLEF to work with LSH to produce tailored marketing and resources for this cohort of businesses, addressing any particular needs and barriers. These would be developed through feedback with the businesses.

Annex B - Apprenticeship Action Plan Matrix

Identified issue and evidence to support	Recommendations			Next Steps (to be driven by LEAD)
	Lancashire Leaders (LL)	Lancashire Skills Hub (LSH)	Lancashire WBL Executive Forum (LWBLEF)	
		business led and have greatest impact.	is then fed back to the LSH so that the impact can be tracked against performance.	
vi. Lancashire Providers, through the Eunoia research, have highlighted that there is a continuous sustained effort required to ensure comprehensive careers advice, improve Apprenticeship advocacy in schools, and support parental knowledge, understanding and to work with employers to develop attractive Apprenticeship vacancies.	<p>Supported by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lancashire County Council's Apprenticeship team to support their looked after children and care leavers team, supporting young people into Apprenticeships. Unitary Authorities to do similar. Local Authorities to enable Apprentices to become Apprentice Ambassadors, who can talk in school and college about their story and experience to support the Enterprise Adviser Network and careers plans. 	<p>Supported by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSH to continue to drive the Apprenticeship focus of the Careers and Enterprise Company and Inspira, through the Enterprise Adviser Network to embed Apprenticeships in school and college careers plans across Lancashire. Review the Apprenticeship knowledge of those organisations delivering initiatives and projects that engage with the 'Inclusive Workforce'. 	<p>LEAD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprenticeship Ambassador Network. Apprenticeship Support & Knowledge for Schools Project (ASK Project). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LWBLEF to continue to recruit Employer Apprenticeship and Apprentice Ambassadors in both public and private sectors Currently 44 Apprenticeship Ambassadors and 30 Employer Apprenticeship Ambassadors, to increase by 10% by December 19 LWBLEF to undertake refresh of current ambassadors network and target a minimum of 3 events for each to be engaged with. <i>LWBLEF is still awaiting to know (delays by ESFA) if the Lead, BL Training has been successful in the next contracting round for ASK for the NW LWBLEF are a subcontractor for Lancashire. Expected to be notified by 31st May 2019.</i> LSH to work with schools through the Lancashire Enterprise Adviser Network (LEAN) to ensure that quality activities advocating Apprenticeship are embedded in all school plans to meet the Gatsby benchmarks. To include use of Local Authority Apprentice Ambassadors. LEAN to support Enterprise Advisers to raise their knowledge regarding Apprenticeships to support their role. If there is a need LSH to organise Apprenticeship advocacy events for organisations delivering initiatives and projects that engage with the 'Inclusive Workforce'. LCC and Unitary Authorities to support their looked after children

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Identified issue and evidence to support	Recommendations			Next Steps (to be driven by LEAD)
	Lancashire Leaders (LL)	Lancashire Skills Hub (LSH)	Lancashire WBL Executive Forum (LWBLEF)	
				<p>and care leavers teams to raise their knowledge regarding Apprenticeships to support their roles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Ribble Council's Apprenticeship Factory to develop IAG sessions for Parents and Teachers (Myth Busting).
vii. Recommendations from Eunoia Research.			<p>LEAD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share impact of recommendations carried out with the action group. • Share plans going forward to support the LWBLEF members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LWBLEF to include recommendations from Eunoia report in the 19-20 LWBLEF business plan being updated June 2019. Feedback to action group on the plans put forward and the actions taken. • Actions to be taken forward by the LWBLEF Employer and Skills sub group. Next meeting 22nd May 2019.
viii. Lancashire has dropped 5 places from 12 to 7 in the LEP rankings of apprenticeship starts as a % of the working age population.	<p>Supported by</p> <p>LL to work with the other Local Authorities to collectively lobby and share best practise.</p>	<p>LEAD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSH to work with the other 38 LEPs through the LEP Skills Network to collectively lobby and share best practise. 	<p>Supported by</p> <p>LWBLEF to work with the other membership and representative organisations to collectively lobby and share best practise.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate if the LEP areas with the best rankings have done anything specific to bolster Apprenticeship start numbers.