

Lancashire Skills Board 22nd October 2015

Area Based Reviews (ABRs)

1) To cover.

- Context -National skills and employment policies (known and unknown)
- ABRs –The programme
- ABRs–Purpose of the reviews
- ABRs-Process and outcome
- ABRs-Role of governing bodies
- Lancashire (thoughts and questions)

2) Context National skills and employment policy (known) include.

- Significant reductions in public expenditure
- 40% reduction in Adult Skills Budget(outside of adult apprenticeships) in 2years to 2015/16
- A number of Colleges in financial difficulties
- Apprenticeship reform and 3 million in this parliament but key issues still to be decided on e.g. employer levy.
- FE Adult loans introduced
- Area Based Reviews
- ESF 2014-20 based on LEP boundaries
- Government deals with LEPs (round 1)and Combined Authorities including devolution of FE capital and local deals with cities

3) Context National skills and employment policy (unknown) include

- Spending review 2015-20(all budgets)
- Institutes of Technology (what are they?)
- Extension of FE loans?
- Apprenticeship reform -outcome of consultation on employer levy and how SME apprenticeships will be funded etc
- LEP/Combined Authority growth deals (round 2/3) and Lancashire position
- Future of Adult Skills Budget –policy, size and devolution

4) ABRs –The programme

- Around 40 to be completed by March 2017(6 announced so far)
- Full implementation by 2020
- Covering all areas of England

- Incorporating GFEs and 6th form Colleges
- Taking account of school 6th forms and other provision
- And including other providers where they agree

5) ABRs –The purpose

- Institutions financially viable, sustainable etc.
- An offer that meets each area's educational and economic needs
- Providers with strong reputations and greater specialisation
- Sufficient access to high quality and relevant education and training for all
- Provision which reflects changes in government funding priorities and future demand

6) ABRs –Process and outcome

- Defining an area and triggering a review
- Steering Group – membership, number and chair (and National Steering Group)
- Questionnaires and 2 day college visits
- Desk research
- Feasible options and recommendations
- Governing body discussions and decisions

7) ABRs –the role of Governing Bodies

- 'Governing bodies will be responsible for deciding whether to accept agreed recommendations in relation to the institutions'
- But
- 'Funders will only fund institutions delivering good quality and financially sustainable'

8) Lancashire (thoughts and questions)

- Defining the area recognising potential linkages with institutions outside of Lancashire
- Meeting local as well as Lancashire wide needs
- Specialisation/Institutes of Technology in the Lancashire context
- Keeping in touch with lessons from early ABRs
- Early engagement with Lancashire Colleges and others to explore and prepare now?