



Lancashire Skills and Employment Board

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Up-date from the Lancashire Skills Hub

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Executive Summary

This paper provides an overview of the Lancashire Skills Hub activity since the last board meeting.

Recommendation

The Board are asked to note the update.

1 Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework

1.1 The final draft of our Lancashire Skills and Employment framework was endorsed by the LEP Board on Tuesday 6th October for consultation. The framework sets out the skills and employment strategic priorities for Lancashire.

1.2 Following consultation with Local Authorities, employers and providers via the 'Skills & Employment Conversation' events, the Youth Council, and through attendance at a variety of meetings (see the last up-date for detail), feedback has been collated and the framework amended. The final version of the framework will be presented at the meeting for comment and approval.

2. Growth Deal Skills Capital

2.1 An up-date on Round 1 and Round 2 is provided under the main items of business.

- 2.2 A schedule of press releases for the Growth Deal Skills Capital round 1 projects has been developed with SKV, who are employed by the LEP to support communications. Two further press releases have been issued (in addition to the Runshaw College and Training 2000 releases featured in the last up-date), one focusing on Nelson and Colne College's Engineering Innovation Centre (http://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/14193206.IN_PICTURES_2m_state_of_the_art_college_centre_set_to_open_in_East_Lancashire/) and one on the Nautical College Maritime Engineering Centre (<http://www.lancashirelep.co.uk/news/archive/groundworks-start-on-new-marine-engineering-centre.aspx>).

3. Social Value

- 3.1 As per the previous up-date a sub-group of the Growth Deal Management Board has met to discuss the development of a toolkit for incorporating social value into the Growth Deal programme of projects. The draft is provided under the main items of business for comment.

4. Area Based Review (ABR)

- 4.1 The ABRs, driven by Government and the FE Commissioner, will review the College infrastructure across England with view to delivering institutions which are financially viable, sustainable, resilient and efficient with an offer that meets each area's educational and economic needs. This includes focusing on specialisms and the development of an Institute of Technology (IoT) in each LEP area, and ensuring sufficient access to high quality and relevant education and training for all which reflects changes in Government funding priorities and future demand.
- 4.2 Prior to Christmas it was announced by BIS that Lancashire would be split into two areas – Lancashire (Pennine) and Lancashire (Coastal), with the former in Wave 3 (starting Spring 2016) and the latter Wave 4 (Coastal). The announcement was made with no local discussion.
- 4.3 The decision was challenged by the LEP, referencing the fact that the LEP (and allied strategies and plans) is Lancashire wide, and that the evolving Combined Authority is also Lancashire wide. As a result BIS have agreed to bring the two reviews together under Wave 4 – with 2 sub-reviews but with an overarching Lancashire-wide steering group led locally.
- 4.4 It is anticipated, as per current reviews, that the LEP will be required to produce a visioning document to help guide the outcomes of the review. The template will be brought to the next meeting of the board for discussion.

5 Sector Skills Development Partnerships

- 5.1 Progress in regards to forming Sector Skills Development Partnerships (SSPD) where appropriate in each of the seven priority sectors has begun.
- 5.2 Discussions with board members and stakeholders involved with Energy and Environment Technologies (EET) and Visitor Economy (VE) have taken place to determine whether or not existing groups could take ownership of the action plan resulting from the sector reports commissioned. While there are existing groups they do not have a Lancashire wide view and therefore a Lancashire LEP wide group will be formed.
- 5.3 Activity stipulated in the service level agreements with the North West Aerospace Alliance (NWAA), Northwest Automotive Alliance (NAA) and Digital Lancashire will support creation of the SSDP for the Advanced Manufacturing and Digital sectors respectively.
- 5.4 With support of board members a plan of action has been created to engage with established networks supporting employers in the Financial and Professional Services (F&PS), with a view to further understanding the key issues for the employers. This is in response to poor engagement of FPS employers in the commissioned sector report.
- 5.5 The City Deal 'Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance' (CEIAG) Taskforce has been formed to address CEIAG, as it was identified as a high priority in the City Deal study. The group has met once and is due to meet again on the 3rd February.
- 5.6 A chair has been agreed for Health and Social Care (H&SC) partnership and a date for the first meeting has been agreed.

6. Marketing and Communications

- 6.1 Lisa has met with Freshfields, the design agency who created the current Skills Support for the Workforce website, to initially scope the format of the website and its content. It has been agreed that they will morph the current website and logo into a Lancashire Skills Hub brand.
- 6.2 It is intended that the website will have content that is constant (i.e. not dependent upon public funding), with links to activities which may include ESIF projects and time limited initiatives.

7. Apprenticeship Growth Plan

- 7.1 An Apprenticeship Growth Plan is being created with the Skills Funding Agency.

- 7.2 This will bring together proposed actions resulting from the higher level vocational skills in Lancashire study (presented at the last committee meeting) with priorities and actions for apprenticeship growth in the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic framework.
- 7.3 A key element that has been agreed with the SFA is a series of three events in 2016 to support employers impacted by the Apprenticeship Levy. Board members have offered their support in the delivery of these events and all Board members have been invited to the first of these events on 11th April. The event on the 11th April is being funded by the SFA and will target larger public and private sector employers in Lancashire likely to be affected by the levy.

8. Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)

- 8.1 As per the CEIAG item at the last committee meeting, the LEP has been successful in its bid to the Careers and Enterprise Company for an Enterprise Adviser Network led by an Enterprise Co-ordinator. A pilot is planned from January – August focusing on Blackburn with Darwen and Burnley, working with the 2 business networks (HIVE and the Burnley Bondholders).
- 8.2 A procurement exercise has been undertaken to identify an organisation to work with the LEP and to employ the Enterprise Co-ordinator. Inspira were the successful organisation. A project initiation meeting has been held, the Enterprise Co-ordinator identified, and Inspira are starting to work with partners in the two pilot areas. A further up-date will be provided at the next meeting on how the pilot is evolving.
- 8.3 The Careers and Enterprise Company will be visiting Lancashire on Wednesday 17th February to discuss the pilot and future activity. It should be noted that an announcement was made by David Cameron last week in regard to further funding being directed via the Careers and Enterprise Company to drive mentoring for young people in schools. It is thus expected that further activity will develop with the company beyond the short-term pilot.
- 8.4 Further to the CEIAG item at the last committee meeting, Lancashire has now been confirmed as a pathfinder area for DWP and JCP and the deployment of Job Centre Plus staff to work collaboratively in schools to improve the knowledge of opportunities within the local labour market and employability skills, targeting young people at risk of NEET. The pathfinder will focus on the pilot areas for the Enterprise Adviser Network, in the short-term, to test the model and enable a co-ordinated approach with the schools involved.
- 8.5 As agreed at the last meeting, a steering group will be established to oversee the Enterprise Adviser Network and the JCP Pathfinder, as well as the Careers Inspiration work with the National Careers Service, with view to drawing in more CEIAG providers to encourage co-ordination and collaboration across Lancashire. The steering group will report to the Skills

and Employment Board and will be chaired by the Director of the Lancashire Skills Hub.

9. European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF)

- 9.1 The first tender for young people at risk of or not in education, employment or training (NEET) was released by the Skills Funding Agency earlier in the month – details of which were circulated via email to committee members.
- 9.2 Work is underway with the SFA in regard to 'Skills Support for the Workforce', with view to a second tender being released towards the end of February (it was originally anticipated that this would be December, so slippage). This will be followed by 'Skills Support for the Unemployed'.
- 9.3 As previously reported all projects will complete in March 2018 due to uncertainties about the SFA's ability to co-finance beyond 2017/18 academic year.
- 9.4 A number of workshops are now scheduled which will bring together partners with project ideas that are targeted at same client group or where there are similarities in activity. The workshops aim to facilitate collaboration, with view to developing project ideas.
- 9.5 A date is being arranged for an ESIF working group of Skills and Employment Board members to review recommendations in relation to directly funded projects which align to the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework. This will be with 'non-conflicted' members of the board.