

LEP - Lancashire Skills and Employment Board

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 27th January, 2016 at 8.00 am at the Cabinet Room 'D' - The Henry Bolingbroke Room, County Hall, Preston.

Present:

Amanda Melton (Chair)

Mark Allanson	Lynne Livesey
Lindsay Campbell	Joanne Pickering
Steve Gray	Bev Robinson
Paul Holme	Andy Wood

Observers

Dean Langton - Strategic Director and Head of Paid Service, Pendle Borough Council.
Sharon Riding - Senior Operations Manager for the Combined District DWP.

In Attendance

Andrew Good - Head of Service Financial Management (Development and Schools) LCC.
Dr Michele Lawty-Jones - Skills Hub Director.
Lisa Moiser - Coordinator, Lancashire Skills Hub
Andy Walker, Head of Business Growth & Innovation, LCC
Holly Tween, Company Services Team, LCC

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that apologies for absence had been received from Graham Haworth and Cat Settle.

The Chair welcomed Sharon Riding, Senior Operations Manager for the Combined District DWP, as an observer, who replaces Alison Knight.

Dean Langton, from Pendle, was welcomed as an observer. It was agreed via email that Dean would attend as an observer whilst he is the nominated lead Chief Executive for skills and employment for the evolving Combined Authority and Devolution Deal.

Resolved: That Dean Langton be invited to attend future Skills and Employment Board meetings (observer status) whilst the lead for the evolving Combined Authority on skills and employment.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were given at this point in the meeting.

However, due to previously disclosed interests in organisations which had made bids for Growth Deal Skills Capital funding in rounds 1 and 2, Amanda Melton, Bev Robinson, Steve Gray, Lynne Livesey and Mark Allanson were all excluded from the discussions at item 13 of the agenda.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on the 10th December 2015

Lynne Livesey wished to amend the minutes to show that she had sent apologies to that meeting.

Resolved: That, subject to amendment as above, the minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2015 are confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising

Bev Robinson noted that the information requested to clarify the difference between Apprenticeships, Higher Level Apprenticeships and Degree Level Apprenticeships had been circulated to members of the Committee.

5. Lancashire Skills Hub Update

A report was presented to update the Committee on Lancashire Skills Hub activity since the last meeting.

In regards to the Area Based Review (ABR) it was noted that BIS had agreed that Lancashire would have an overarching Lancashire-wide steering group under Wave 4, with 2 sub-reviews. This was welcomed by the group but it was felt that the overarching steering group needed a clearly defined role and remit, and that the group should be prepared to engage at an executive level throughout the process.

It was also anticipated that the LEP would be required to produce a Visioning Document to guide the outcomes of the review. The template would be brought to the next meeting for discussion.

A preliminary design for the refreshed and rebranded website was presented to the Committee. It was suggested that links to social media be considered as a wider engagement strategy, and that a map of the structure of the Hub's networks be included. Lisa Moizer requested any further feedback to be sent to her.

It was noted that the first event on the Apprenticeship Levy would take place on 11 March, not 11 April as stated in the report at 7.1, and that all members had been invited.

Regarding the successful bid to the Careers and Enterprise Company for the Enterprise Adviser Network, the Committee were advised that Kay Vaughan had now been employed as the Enterprise Coordinator via the company Inspira.

Resolved:

1. That the updates set out in the report presented are noted.
2. That a copy of the Visioning Document template be brought to the next meeting for consideration
3. That feedback on the new website branding should be sent to Lisa Moizer.

6. Skills and Employment Strategic Framework

The final version of the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework was presented to the Committee.

Comments were as follows:

1. Targets need to be more tightly phrased
2. "Vocational Education" should be changed throughout the document to "Technical and Professional Education"
3. p4 "Technical and Professional Education" should be added to the diagram in the Impact/Target oval
4. p10 The final sentence on the page should be reworded; it was felt the current wording implied an acceptable level of failure
5. p20 That it should make clear whether the "graduates choosing to work in Lancashire" were working in graduate level employment or in any employment
6. The document should give some indication of how the skilled workforce would be engaged with in times of economic downturn / redundancy
7. The baselines need to feed through logically to the targets to ensure progress is measurable

There was a feeling that the data gave too much focus to large companies, and that there was a need to engage further with SMEs. A concern was also voiced regarding the apprenticeship levy and the impact this could have on Local Authorities who would need to consider safeguarding before placing young people with new employers, whilst ensuring quality levels remain high.

Michele agreed to incorporate these comments and circulate a further draft to the Committee before the next meeting. The target date for the final document to be put on the website was mid-February.

Resolved: That amendments be made in accordance with the comments above, and the amended draft be circulated to the Committee before the next meeting.

7. Combined Authority and Devolution Deal

Dean Langton gave a verbal update to the Committee.

Combined Authority

Particulars were agreed in December, to which all Lancashire councils except Wyre had agreed in principle, subject to public consultation on the proposals. The deadline for responses was 11 February. It was noted that Wyre would continue to have the opportunity to participate in the Combined Authority, but the leadership have taken the decision not to be involved at this stage.

The results of the consultation would be collated and reported to all councils in March/April, when councils would agree on the proposition to be made to Government. Work was ongoing to agree a draft constitution. The LEP would also be involved in these discussions.

Many existing Combined Authorities had elected a Mayor, and the Lancashire Leaders were considering electing a Mayor to demonstrate strong civic leadership and give assurance to Government of accountable governance.

Devolution Deal

The devolution deal would provide extra resources to the Combined Authority. The Leaders had met in January to consider the deal which had 5 main themes: skills; housing; transport; prosperous economies; and public sector reform.

It was noted that a set of priorities from the Skills and Employment Board had fed into the discussions with Leaders, but had not yet been worked up in any more detail.

In response to a question, Dean advised the Committee that although there was no set timescale for the proposal, the deals were linked to Government fiscal announcements and it was recommended that proposals should be put to Government as soon as possible to ensure Lancashire received a suitable share of resources.

Resolved:

1. That the update be noted
2. That the item be brought back to the next meeting of the Committee

The Committee agreed to take item 12 as the next item of business and the meeting moved into Part II.

12. Science and Innovation Audits

(Not for publication – exempt information as defined in paragraph 41 (Information provided in confidence relating to contracts) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information).

A report was presented to the Committee on Science and Innovation Audits (SIA).

The LEP was developing an Expression of Interest to run a BIS endorsed

Science and Innovation Audit. As there was a strong alignment between Lancashire and Sheffield it would be a joint SIA bid. The deadline for Expressions of Interest was 29 January 2016.

Work was also ongoing with the Smart Specialisation Hub to develop a local innovation strategy.

It was noted that although there was no funding attached, the SIA carried resources from BIS around research and would help position future bids, particularly around science investments.

Resolved: That the updates set out in the report presented are noted.

The meeting then returned to Part I.

8. Growth Deal Skills Capital - Round 1 Update, Round 2 Overview and Social Value Update

A report was presented to the Committee on the Growth Deal Skills Capital rounds 1 and 2.

£12.6m remained in the budget for round 2, and 10 Expressions of Interest (EOI) had been received totalling £8.92m.

It was highlighted that the smaller number of EOIs received for round 2 compared to round 1 may be due to tighter criteria, the Area Based Review of the College infrastructure, or the tight spending deadlines.

Regarding the unallocated funding, the LEP Board had agreed to retain the money to support the outcomes of the Area Based Review. It had also been agreed that a proportion of the unallocated funds may be used to support priority LEP schemes that need funding now, with a view to this money being paid back into the Area Based Review budget.

It was requested that the report be amended on p42 to remove "National College for Oil & Gas" from the list of Round 1 schemes, as Energy HQ was not associated with this organisation.

A working group had been established through the Growth Deal Management Board, who had worked with the Lancashire Skills Hub and LCC officers to develop a Social Value toolkit. The Committee were invited to send any comments on the draft toolkit to Michele Lawty-Jones.

Resolved:

1. That the updates set out in the report presented are noted
2. That the report be amended to remove "National College for Oil & Gas" from p42
3. That any comments on the Social Value toolkit should be emailed to Michele Lawty-Jones

9. City Deal Skills and Employment Study / Plan

A report was presented to the Committee on the City Deal Skills and Employment Study / Plan.

It was noted that two reports have been produced and presented to the City Deal Executive and Stewardship Board on 08 January, who agreed that the Skills and Employment Steering Group should continue to oversee the implementation of the plan and report progress to the City Deal Executive as well as the Skills and Employment Board.

Resolved:

1. That the reports and actions from the City deals skills and employment study are noted
2. That the Skills and Employment Steering Group should report progress to the City Deal Executive and the Skills and Employment Board.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

11. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee would be held at 8.00am on 23 March 2016 in Cabinet Room 'C' – Duke of Lancaster Room at County Hall, Preston.

Amanda Melton, Bev Robinson, Mark Allanson and Steve Gray all left the meeting at this point as they represented organisations which had submitted bids for Growth Deal Skills Capital Funding in Round 2. Lynne Livesey left the room as she represented UCLan and the University was unable to comment on applications from other providers. Dean Langton also left the meeting at this point, and Sharon Riding had already left due to another commitment.

Joanne Pickering took over as the Chair for the next item of business.

13. Growth Deal Skills Capital - Round 2 - Appraisal of revised EOIs and fast-track Business Cases

(Not for publication – exempt information as defined in paragraph 41 (Information provided in confidence relating to contracts) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information).

Joanne Pickering declared an interest in the decision relating to the Lancashire Adult Learning College. She left the room when this was discussed, and Paul Holme took over the chair for this item only.

It was reported that the LEP had agreed all the recommendations from the Committee for the last round of Growth Deal Skills Capital. The Expressions of Interest (EOI) from round 2 had been appraised and recommendations had been made as set out in the report. The Committee considered the three fast track projects and the resubmitted EOIs and agreed recommendations to the LEP Board.

Resolved:

1. That the fast track applications for Edge Hill University, Myerscough College and Runshaw College, as set out in the papers circulated to the Committee, are recommended for approval to the LEP Board.
2. That the resubmitted EOIs from Blackpool and the Fylde College, and Lancashire County Council, as set out in the papers circulated to the Committee, are recommended for progression to full business case, subject to the specific points raised in the appraisal being addressed in the business case.
3. That details of the individual recommended projects and associated conditions referred to in points 1 and 2 above are presented to the LEP Board on the 02 February 2016 for determination.