



## **Lancashire Skills and Employment Board**

**Private and Confidential: No**

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016

### **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 up-date.

## **Lancashire Skills and Employment Board**

### **1 Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework**

- 1.1 The final draft of the Lancashire Skills and Employment Framework was endorsed by the LEP Board on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2015 for consultation. The framework, underpinned by a robust evidence base, sets out the skills and employment strategic priorities for Lancashire.
- 1.2 Following consultation with Local Authorities, employers and providers via 'Skills & Employment Conversation' events, the Youth Council, and through attendance at a variety of meetings, feedback has been collated and the framework amended. The amended version was reviewed at the last committee meeting and comments provided during and after the meeting. Comments have been incorporated into the final version.

- 1.3 The final version of the framework is on the LEP website: <http://www.lancashirelep.co.uk/lep-priorities/skills-employment/skills-and-employment-strategic-framework-2016-2021.aspx> alongside the evidence base: <http://www.lancashirelep.co.uk/lep-priorities/skills-employment/evidence-base.aspx> . Work will continue to tweak the output measures. The framework will be reviewed and refreshed annually.

## **2. Growth Deal Skills Capital**

- 2.1 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. Since the last committee meeting, further press releases were publicised for the 'Energy HQ' at Blackpool and Fylde College: <http://www.blackpoolgazette.co.uk/news/community/community-news/energy-college-gets-go-ahead-from-council-1-7729427>  
[http://www.thebusinessdesk.com/northwest/news/731227-green-light-for-10m-energy-hq.html?news\\_section=4150](http://www.thebusinessdesk.com/northwest/news/731227-green-light-for-10m-energy-hq.html?news_section=4150)  
<http://www.lancashirebusinessview.co.uk/lancashire-energy-hq-gets-green-light-65197/>  
<http://www.placenorthwest.co.uk/news/blackpool-airport-set-for-10m-energy-hq/>
- 2.2 Round 2 is underway. To-date 3 projects have been approved by the Employment and Skills Board & LEP Board using the 'fast-track' process: Farming & Food Innovation and Technology Centre at Myerscough College; a Digital Technology Hub at Edge Hill University and an IT Infrastructure project at Runshaw College. The projects are currently with the Growth Deal programme team and grant funding agreements are in the process of being agreed. A further 6 projects will be considered at the Skills and Employment Board on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March under Part II of the agenda, with recommendations to be presented to the LEP Board in April.
- 2.3 A toolkit for incorporating social value into the Growth Deal programme of projects has been developed and is now being piloted with a number of Growth Deal projects. Positive feedback has been received to-date.

## **3. Apprenticeship Growth Plan**

- 3.1 An Apprenticeship Growth Plan is being created with the Skills Funding Agency.
- 3.2 A key element which has been agreed with the SFA is a series of three events in 2016 to support employers impacted by the Apprenticeship Levy. The first event, which was an introduction to the levy and the implications, targeting larger public and private sector employers in Lancashire likely to be affected by the levy, took place on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March. The event was attended by 64 delegates from both private and public sector (approximately 2/3 private), and received positive evaluations. Evaluations (completed by 50% of participants) all indicated that they would find further events useful. The next event will

take place in June/July and will focus on strategic workforce planning and the opportunity to engage with higher level and degree apprenticeships.

- 3.3 The Lancashire Young Apprenticeship Ambassador Network has signed up its first 4 ambassadors and another 8 have also expressed an interest. The two key aims of the network are: 1. strengthening peer to peer promotion of apprenticeships; and 2. giving Lancashire young apprentices an opportunity to build relationships with fellow apprentices across the area. Working closely with the WBL Forum we will be formally launching the network in the spring and would welcome any young apprentices (including apprentices that have recently completed) interested in joining. Frankie Heggarty, one of our first ambassadors from Forbes Solicitors, gave an excellent presentation at the Apprenticeship Levy Event referenced in 3.2.

#### **4. Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)**

- 4.1 The LEP was successful in its bid to the Careers and Enterprise Company for an 'Enterprise Adviser Network'. The pilot project, which launched in January in Blackburn with Darwen and Burnley, aims to stimulate engagement between businesses and industry and schools to inspire young people and provide CEIAG. Essentially the project involves a funded Enterprise Coordinator, working with a network of Enterprise Advisers (strategic business volunteers) working with a network of schools to develop employer engagement strategies and plans. The activity aligns with the Skills and Employment Framework, which identifies CEIAG as a critical priority due to the fragmented and inconsistent offer which currently exists.
- 4.2 The HIVE business network and the Burnley Bondholders are working proactively with us to match local businesses with local schools and Colleges. The businesses in the networks are keen to inspire young people and showcase the fantastic businesses in the locality with view to growing a future pipeline of talented young people.
- 4.3 Excellent feedback has been received from the Careers and Enterprise Company on activity to-date, who visited Lancashire in February to undertake a review and attend two roundtable events with local partners.
- 4.4 It is hoped that the network can be expanded to further areas of Lancashire next academic year (from September 2016).
- 4.5 Lancashire has also been confirmed as a pathfinder area for DWP and JCP with 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.

- 4.6 A steering group has been established and met early March 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 reports to the Skills and Employment Board and is chaired by the Director of the Lancashire Skills Hub.

## **5. European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF)**

- 5.1 In relation to the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) opt-in, the tender for young people at risk of or not in education, employment or training (NEET) was released in January. The call has now closed and the SFA is evaluating the bids. Work is underway in regard to 'Skills Support for the Workforce', with view to a second tender being released in April. This will be followed by 'Skills Support for the Unemployed'.
- 5.2 The invitation to tender (ITT) for the project under the DWP opt-in was released on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March. This Provision is aimed at reducing the worklessness of disadvantaged people, particularly in those wards across Lancashire that demonstrate the highest levels of out of work claimants. The Provision will provide tailored support through individual 'Key Workers' and an action plan for participants which will contain activities that will tackle barriers to employment. A briefing event will be held on March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2pm at County Hall – details are on the LEP website: <http://www.lancashirelep.co.uk/the-lancashire-offer/funding-and-business-support/european-structural-and-investment-funds.aspx> .
- 5.3 Further information in regard to ESIF will be provided in a presentation at the committee meeting under a dedicated agenda item.

## **6 Veterans returning to Lancashire**

- 6.1 Connections have been created with Fulwood Barracks and the Northwest Transition Group, who support service leavers to secure work on leaving the forces. A presentation was given at the Transition Service Delivery Group meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March highlighting the work of the LEP and replacement demand and growth in the Lancashire economy. A significant number of service leavers have excellent transferable skills for civilian roles.
- 6.2 A dinner is being planned by the Brigadier with view to generating a collective conversation with LEPs across the northwest, building on the relationships forming in Lancashire.

## **7 City Deal – CEIAG Taskforce**

- 7.1 With the aim of promoting the City Deal and the training and employment opportunities it will bring for the future and inclusive workforce, the taskforce have met 3 times. A successful collaborative proposal was pulled together to acquire joint sponsorship between the City Deal and the LEP for an activity space at the UCLan Lancashire Science Festival with City Deal as the key theme. The City Deal theme will be underpinned with Traineeships and Apprenticeships, as a route to a career created through the City Deal.
- 7.2 Further to the Lancashire Science Festival the taskforce are collaborating to create a calendar of events to identify synergies with related events/promotions to promote the City Deal. This includes a focus on summer events aimed at informing young people, completing education, of the City Deal and the career opportunities it brings.