



## **Lancashire Skills and Employment Board**

**Private and Confidential: No**

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2016

### **Up-date from the Lancashire Skills Hub**

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#### **Executive Summary**

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

#### **Recommendation**

The Committee is asked to note the up-date.

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

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 Since the last up-date, additional schools have engaged with the network in Burnley and Blackburn with Darwen, taking the number to 20 (against a target of 20); 20 corresponding Enterprise Advisers from local businesses have also now been recruited. The response from the HIVE business network and the Burnley Bondholders has been excellent.

- 1.3 Formal confirmation of grant funding for next academic year has now been received. Match funding is currently being sought to enable the network to be expanded to 60 schools across Lancashire from September 2016.
- 1.4 The JCP Pathfinder with schools has now started, and an Employment Adviser recruited, Fabian Wallbank. Fabian is working closely with our Enterprise Coordinator, Kay Vaughan, so that activity is coordinated in schools. The pathfinder is also focused in Burnley and Blackburn with Darwen, but it is intended that it will also extend across Lancashire next academic year.
- 1.5 A local event is being planned in July with partners to celebrate the early successes of the Enterprise Adviser Network, collaborative working and to formally launch the JCP Pathfinder.
- 1.6 Kay is also delivering a workshop at the national Careers and Enterprise Company network later in June, focusing on good practice in regard to employer engagement – recognising good practice in Lancashire.
- 1.7 Six Labour Market Information (LMI) workshops have been delivered across Lancashire (Blackburn College, Blackpool & Fylde College, UCLan in Burnley, Lancaster University, UCLan in Preston and Edge Hill University in Ormskirk), in partnership with the National Careers Service (NCS). The workshops, led by Andrew Heydeman, our Careers Inspiration Coordinator, were based on our sector skills studies, and emphasised future opportunities in the Lancashire labour market, apprenticeship reforms and showcased HE facilities at each of the locations. The workshops were targeted at schools, Colleges and careers professionals.
- 1.8 In total, seventy five people attended, with approximately 80% of these attendees either school or College staff, or independent Careers Advisers working within Lancashire schools. Over 80% of attendees gave the workshops the highest possible rating of "Very useful" and many were interested in further information. The NCS are working with the hub to further develop fact sheets and resource packs, using infographics, as well as planning further workshops (for example, targeting Governors and parents).

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

- 2.1 The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) opt-in project for young people at risk of or not in education, employment or training (NEET) is now being contracted. An event with the SFA was attended outlining the contracting process. The SFA will be arranging a meeting with the accountable body, Preston's College, and the Skills Hub in due course. In the interim, a meeting has been held with Preston's College, the accountable body for the local consortium, to discuss the NEET Coordinator role which will be deployed to the Skills Hub and to set

a date for the first steering group. It is intended that the steering group will span both the SFA NEET project and also the project co-financed by the Big Lottery under 'Building Better Opportunities' (BBO) which targets NEETs who are disadvantaged and further from the job market to ensure complementarity and strategic alignment. It is hoped that a plan for the capacity building funds which form part of the SFA project will be presented at the next Skills and Employment Board for sign off.

- 2.2 The tenders for the other two SFA co-financed projects have also been released - 'Skills Support for the Workforce' and 'Skills Support for the Unemployed'. The former closed on the 6<sup>th</sup> June and the latter closes on the 4<sup>th</sup> July. Both projects also involve coordinators (which will be deployed to the Skills Hub) and capacity building funds to aid strategic alignment and innovation, as per the NEET project.
- 2.3 The invitation to tender (ITT) for the project co-financed by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) closed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April. The Skills Hub has been nominated by the ESIF Committee to undertake the evaluation of tenders with DWP. Lisa undertook training and contributed to the scoring – the outcome is awaited. It is anticipated that activity will commence in November 2016 (for 3 years).
- 2.4 The call under BBO for projects addressing 'Digital Inclusion' has now closed and applications are with the Big Lottery.
- 2.5 As per the previous up-date and our recommendations to the ESIF Committee, work has been undertaken to scope calls in relation to Active Inclusion and Widening Participation/Outreach. The tenders have now been formally launched by the managing agent and the closing date for applications is the 19<sup>th</sup> July. These projects require match locally.

### **3. City Deal**

- 3.1 A workshop was held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May with the City Deal Skills and Employment Steering Group members to discuss and agree metrics for the set of objectives identified in the Ekosgen research. These will feed into the overarching City Deal business plan and will be used to assess progress on a quarterly process. We hoped to present the objectives and metrics at the meeting but further work is required to ensure that data is available to measure progress. The objectives and metrics will be presented at the next meeting, with a progress up-date.

### **4. Northwest Aerospace Alliance (NWAA) Annual Conference**

- 4.1 A key note presentation was delivered at the NWAA annual conference in relation to skills challenges in the industry and good practice in Lancashire.

This provided an opportunity to present key statistics from the sector skills study and, in particular, the challenge in regard to replacement demand and the need to promote the industry through effective engagement with schools and Colleges, and to highlight the role of apprenticeships in tackling this issue. The changing nature of the workforce was also discussed, focusing on automation, human-robot collaboration, big data and cyber systems. Discussion with Aircelle / Safran Nacelles resulted, with an invite to tour the factory, and we have been approached to provide editorial for 'The Manufacturer' publication in regard to skills challenges in the sector.

## **5. North West Skills Leads Meeting**

- 5.1 A further meeting of the North West Skills Leads took place on the 7<sup>th</sup> June, including colleagues from Manchester, Merseyside and Cumbria. Experiences in regard to the Area Based Reviews were shared, both in terms of process, lessons learnt and recommendations. Greater Manchester have led the development of a strategy relating to HS2 and HS3 and skills implications – a meeting will be taking place shortly to discuss skills for the broader rail industry and aspirations in the Northwest.

## **6. Digital Advantage**

- 6.1 The White Room has been procured to undertake the supply of digital skills pipeline pilot, which has been named 'Digital Advantage'. The pilot aims to enhance the digital skills of young people while in their final year of study and enable them to successfully progress into digital apprenticeships. The pilot commenced in May 2016.
- 6.2 The White Room have so far successfully signed up six schools and colleges across Lancashire and have meetings arranged with another four (against a target of 10). They will deliver the pilot to young people in academic year 2016/17
- 6.3 They are also looking to link up with apprenticeship providers who offer digital apprenticeships to offer to the young people at the end of the programme and have so far met with T2000 and Blackburn College. The Skills Hub also arranged for The White Room and Digital Lancashire to have a tour of T2000's new Cyber Security centre on 27 April.
- 6.4 Digital Advantage is working closely with Digital Lancashire and their members to gauge and stimulate demand for apprenticeships and recruit trainer/mentors and master-classes from Digital Lancashire employers.

## **7. Growth Deal Skills Capital**

- 7.1 Further to the up-date at the last meeting on the projects that were successful under round 2, the Growth Deal Programme Team are working closely with applicants to progress the Grant Funding Agreements (GFAs). Of the 9 projects approved in April, 2 have now got signed Grant Funding Agreements and are live (Myerscough College –Food and Farming Innovation and Technology Centre and Runshaw College – Enhancing IT Infrastructure). The remaining 7 are being progressed, and it is hoped that the GFAs will be signed later this month.