

LEP - Lancashire Skills and Employment Board

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 15th June, 2016 at 8.30 am
at the Farringtons - Nelson and Colne College, Scotland Road,
Barrowford, Nelson, BB9 7YT**

Present:

Amanda Melton (Chair)

Mark Allanson
Steve Gray
Paul Holme

Lynne Livesey
Bev Robinson

Observers

Dean Langton - Strategic Director and Head of Paid Service, Pendle Borough Council.
Sharon Riding - District External Relationship Manager, Cumbria and Lancashire District.

Also in Attendance

Andrew Good, Head of Service Financial Management (Development and Schools),
Lancashire County Council.

Martin Kelly, Director of Economic Development, Lancashire County Council.

Dr Michele Lawty-Jones - Skills Hub Director.

Lisa Moizer - Coordinator, Lancashire Skills Hub.

Mike Neville, Company Services Team, Lancashire County Council.

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a brief presentation about Nelson and Colne College.

Apologies were presented on behalf of Joanne Pickering, Lyndsay Campbell, Andy Wood and Graham Haworth.

2. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made under this item.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 4th May 2016

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on the 4th May, 2016, are confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. Matters Arising

Michele Lawty-Jones referred to the presentation and discussion at the last meeting regarding the economic impact of Lancashire training providers and informed the meeting that she had received the final report from Regeneris, following comments from the Committee members. The final report will be inserted into the evidence base on the LEP website.

It was also noted that information regarding the number of vacancies in Lancashire and employment rates was being collated with support from DWP and would be presented to a future meeting for consideration.

Resolved: That the updates set out above are noted.

5. Update from the Lancashire Skills Hub

Michele Lawty-Jones updated the Committee on activity by the Skills Hub since the last meeting including the following:

- Six Labour Market Information workshops, based on the sector skills studies, and emphasising future opportunities in the Lancashire labour market, apprenticeship reforms and showcasing HE facilities, had been held across the County. The workshops had been well attended with many of attendees rating them highly and expressing an interest in receiving further information. The National Careers Service would continue to work with the Hub to develop fact sheets and resource packs as well as planning further workshops.
- The Enterprise Adviser Network pilot project to stimulate engagement between businesses, industry and schools in order to inspire young people and provide CEIAG continued to develop with additional schools engaging with the network of Enterprise Advisers in Burnley and Blackburn with Darwen. The Committee noted that it was important that Colleges are engaged in any future roll out of the project to ensure that it complements any existing CEIAG activity.
- It was reported that a workshop had been held with the National Careers Service (with regard to the adult information, advice and guidance provision) with Lancashire providers to discuss alignment with the Skills and Employment Strategic Framework and localised key performance indicators. Proposals were agreed in relation to targeting priority groups and geography. In considering the proposals the committee recognised that more work needed to be done to unlock the potential of low skilled workers and it was agreed that Michele would discuss this with the NCS. It was noted that Universal Credit also focussed on supporting in work progression, providing work coaches to improve opportunities for those in work to develop their potential.
- The Skills Funding Agency project for young people at risk of or not in education, employment or training was in the process of being contracted and

discussions were underway with regard to the NEET Coordinator that would be deployed to the Skills Hub. It was reported that the NEET Coordinator would act as the Chair of a Steering Group which would coordinate both the SFA project and the Big Lottery funded 'Building Better Opportunities' project aimed at NEETs who are disadvantaged and further from the job market.

- Tenders were also being evaluated in relation to the SFA opt-in 'Skills Support for the Workforce' (now named Employee Skills Support) and a date for an evaluation panel, where representatives from the Hub will observe, was awaited. 'Skills Support for the Unemployed' (now named 'Access to Employment' by the SFA) had been launched and closes in early July.

With regard to ESIF it was recognised that there was a limited timeframe for institutions to ensure they had sufficient resources in place to deliver the contract at a time when the delivery mechanism was experiencing a period of change and this was likely to impact on effective delivery.

Resolved:

1. That the report is noted
2. That Committee is kept informed of developments in relation to future Labour Market Information workshops.
3. That the Enterprise Coordinator, Kay Vaughan, be invited to attend the next meeting and give a presentation on the work to date and future roll out of the Enterprise Adviser Network and also the JCP Pathfinder into Schools.
4. That a report is presented to the next meeting to update the Committee on progress in relation to the SFA project on NEETs and the Big Lottery funded 'Building Better Opportunities' project.

6. Skills Partnerships

Lisa Moizer reported that the Skills Partnerships had developed out of studies into the seven priority sectors for Lancashire which were identified by the LEP and the Committee as either being high GVA or high employment sectors.

However, when implementing the Partnerships it had been found that a single model was not appropriate for each sector and so a variety of arrangements had been developed in order for public/private sectors to engage. In considering the report the Committee noted that it was important to engage with SMEs and benefit from their breadth of knowledge/experience. It was also suggested that links should be forged with the Chambers of Trade, Boost, Federation of Small Businesses and the Lancashire HR Employers Framework.

The Committee recognised it would be necessary for Partnerships to demonstrate tangible projects based around profitability and market growth so that the private sector would see the benefits of engagement. It was also suggested that the model Terms of Reference for the Partnerships needed to be revised and given more focus on delivery.

Each Partnership also needed to have a clear understanding of the framework within which it operated as certain sectors, such as Digital, involved a wide range of skills which would apply across different sectors. In order to be effective it was proposed that each Partnership would need to identify and separate generic skills from specialisms/behaviours and also consider national/local needs.

Resolved:

1. That the comments of the Committee, as set out above, are taken into consideration when developing Skills Partnerships.
2. That a further report, including a revised model Terms of Reference for Skills Partnerships, is presented to a future meeting to update the Committee on progress.

7. Combined Authority and Devolution Update

Dean Langton informed the meeting that discussions between local authorities in Lancashire were continuing and it was proposed to establish a Shadow Combined Authority in July 2016 which would operate ahead of the Combined Authority becoming fully operational in April 2017.

With regard to Devolution a 'Lancashire Plan' was being formulated in relation to planned developments within the five key themes of the Devolution 'ask' for the next 10-15 years that would build upon the Lancashire Strategic Economic Plan. It was noted that the skills element of the 'ask' was based around the ABR, the Adult Education Budget and the Walking and Health Programme.

The Committee noted that when considering the 'ask' the evolving Combined Authority and Lancashire LEP had shown interest in early years provision, school attainment and education performance and its impact on future employment. In discussing attainment the Committee noted that there were a number of contributing factors including education, housing, employment and families and it was agreed that this would be an area which the Combined Authority would likely prioritise in the future.

Resolved: That the updates regarding the Lancashire Combined Authority and Devolution Deal are noted.

8. Higher Education White Paper

When considering the report on the key points of the Higher Education White Paper which had been published by the Government in May, 2016 the Committee made the following comments.

- a) While the simplified regulatory environment proposed in the White Paper could lead to an increase in the number of providers wishing to achieve Degree Awarding Powers or call themselves a University it was felt that the four existing Universities in Lancashire, together with the existing provision in

surrounding areas, was sufficient.

- b) Concern was expressed about the possible dilution of provision and its impact on graduate retention in Lancashire. It was suggested that new providers may well appear in major Cities focussing on professional services in easily resourced areas where cross subsidy exists.
- c) Maintaining quality teaching provision was vital and it was noted that the White Paper proposed to introduce a 'Teaching Excellence Framework' to address the variability in teaching quality.
- d) A range of affordable and flexible routes into HE was crucial.
- e) The relationship between FE and HE had become strained in the past with some Universities distancing themselves from Colleges. It was suggested that in the future institutions will need to form closer working relationships.
- f) The market for part time courses had been greatly reduced as many employers had withdrawn funding for education/training in order to concentrate resources elsewhere.

Resolved:

- 1. That the comments of the Committee as set out above are noted.
- 2. That a further report be presented to a future meeting to update the Committee on developments and to include statistical information about student numbers and retention rates for Lancashire.

9. Area Based Review and Growth Deal

Michele Lawty-Jones updated the Committee on the work of the Area Based Review (ABR) Working Group, the draft principles that would underpin the LEP 'skills conclusion' and the Growth Deal 3 recommendations considered by the LEP Board on the 14th June 2016.

It was reported that since the last meeting of the Working Group the Joint Area Review Development Unit had confirmed that there would be a single ABR for Lancashire.

Michele reported that the matrix of principles set out in the report had been presented to the LEP Board which was supportive of the proposals. The Committee noted that the framework was consistent with the national process and it was suggested that the Working Group should learn from the experience of areas such as Manchester and Liverpool which had already been through the process.

With regard to Growth Deal 3 it was noted that the focus would be on capital investment linked to national/local objectives and based on what had been agreed at the Committee in May 2016 the LEP Board had been recommended to agree that an amount of funding (£15k) be requested to support the outcomes of

the ABR, which would add to the residual amount from Growth Deal 2. It was noted that the pipeline of projects included requests for investment in STEM related equipment; health related infrastructure; construction skills; incubation, innovation and research facilities; international equine facilities; and a centre of excellence in arboriculture. The Committee was also keen to commission activity which addressed skills shortages in the digital technology arena, and review availability of provision aligned to the chemical industry to ensure a pipeline for growth at the Hillhouse Enterprise Zone.

Resolved:

1. That the report and the update from the LEP Board on the 14th June, 2016, is noted.
2. That the Committee be kept informed of developments in relation to ABR and Growth Deal 3.

10. Proposed 2017 Programme of Meetings

Mike Neville reported that using the existing programme of meetings as a starting point and having consulted colleagues at the Lancashire Skills Hub and members of the Committee a proposed programme of meetings up to the end of 2017 had been developed.

Resolved: That the programme of meetings for 2017, as set out below, is approved with meetings to be arranged at County Hall or alternate locations across the County, starting at 8am or 8.30am depending on the venue.

Wednesday 7th June 2017
Wednesday 26th July 2017
Thursday 7th September 2017
Wednesday 18th October 2017
Wednesday 29th November 2017

11. Any Other Business

The Chair informed the meeting that she attended the ESIF Committee and would like to nominate a colleague from Nelson and Colne College to attend if she was unavailable. The Committee considered the request and it was agreed that a member of the Committee should attend future meetings of the ESIF Committee if the Chair was unavailable if a member was willing to undertake this role.

In order that consideration could be given to the matter it was suggested that a report be presented to the next meeting in relation to the composition and purpose of the ESIF Committee, including its current Terms of Reference.

Resolved: That a report be presented to the next meeting in connection with the composition and purpose of the ESIF Committee, including its current Terms of Reference, so that consideration can be given to appointing a member of the

Skills and Employment Board to attend future meetings if the Chair is unavailable.

12. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next scheduled meeting would be held at 8.30am on the 27th July, 2016, in Room 5 in the Hutchinson Building at Training 2000 Limited, Furthergate Business Park, Harwood Street, Blackburn.