

Lancashire Skills and Employment Board

1.0 Area Based Review (ABR)

- 1.1 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 ensuring sufficient access to high quality and relevant education and training for all which reflects changes in Government funding priorities and future demand.
- 1.2 The review in Lancashire commences early October. The ABR was discussed at the LEP Board meeting in June and the principles agreed for the visioning document which is currently being produced by a working group to the Skills and Employment Board. The document will be presented at the first steering group to frame the economic and educational context of the review in Lancashire.

2.0 Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)

- 2.1 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 (business volunteers) and a network of schools to develop employer engagement strategies and plans.
- 2.2 Formal confirmation of grant funding for the next two academic years has now been received and match funding has been secured locally through Lancashire County Council. This will enable the network to be expanded to 60 schools across Lancashire from September 2016, and to 120 in September 2017. The current contract with Inspira, who employs our Enterprise Coordinators and oversees day-to-day delivery has been extended to the end of November, whilst an OJEU procurement process is launched to secure a delivery partner for the two years.
- 2.3 The JCP Pathfinder with schools is now fully operational. The pathfinder is also focused in Burnley and Blackburn with Darwen, to aid coordination and it is intended that it will also extend across Lancashire next academic year in parallel with the Enterprise Adviser Network.
- 2.4 A breakfast event, is being planned with partners to celebrate the early successes of the Enterprise Adviser Network, collaborative working and to formally launch the JCP Pathfinder and the roll out of the Enterprise Adviser Network in Lancashire. It will be hosted by Edwin Booth and the Chief

Executive of the Careers and Enterprise Company, Claudia Harris. The event will be held on the 30th September 2016 at the Dunkenhalgh Hotel.

- 2.5 The Careers and Enterprise Company are also launching a procurement exercise to contract mentoring providers across the Country to help establish a network of business mentors who will mentor young people in Years 8 and 9 who are at risk of disengaging. This is complementary to the ESF activity recently tendered, and is welcomed as an earlier intervention to support young people to reengage pre-GCSE. The Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub will be involved in the evaluation process, and have provided a slide for the prospectus about needs in Lancashire.

3. European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF)

- 3.1 The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) opt-in project for young people at risk of or not in education, employment or training (NEET) is now contracted and is in delivery. A steering group has been established to oversee the project (and the Big Lottery NEET project – see 3.3). The steering group reports to the Skills and Employment Board.
- 3.2 The tenders for the other two SFA co-financed projects have now closed – 'Employee Skills Support' and 'Access to Employment'; we are awaiting dates for evaluation panels from the SFA. The SFA are awaiting permission to contract.
- 3.3 The outcome of the invitation to tender (ITT) for the project co-financed by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will be confirmed in September, with view to the project commencing in November.
- 3.4 In relation to the Building Better Opportunities (Big Lottery) programme, the NEET project and activity targeted at 50+ will commence in September. The Disadvantaged project is at stage 2, as is the project addressing 'Digital Inclusion'.
- 3.5 Calls for stage 1 tenders relating to Active Inclusion and Widening Participation/Outreach were launched and closed on the 19th July. These projects require match locally. It is anticipated that the project submissions will be reviewed at the ESIF Committee in October, with a view to agreeing which applications should progress to stage 2 of the process.
- 3.6 As per previous recommendations to the ESIF Committee we are also progressing the development of specifications under 2.1 and 2.2, focusing on leadership and management and accelerating apprenticeships at higher level and degree. A workshop was held on the 18th July with a range of partners who had expressed interest in these areas of work to discuss their project ideas and encourage collaboration.
- 3.7 We are awaiting a formal position from DWP in regard to the implications of Brexit. At present it is 'business as usual' and procurement activity continues. There is a risk that the SFA projects (referenced under 3.2) will not be contracted soon enough to enable an 18 month delivery period (contracts are

until the end of March 2018); the SFA are continuing to lobby DWP and Government officials to enable evaluation and contracting to commence.

4.0 Growth Deal Skills Capital

- 4.1 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.