

Lancashire Skills and Employment Board

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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 Committee.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note the up-date

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

- 1.1 The expansion of the Lancashire Enterprise Adviser Network is underway. Two Enterprise Coordinators have been appointed by Inspira, to work alongside Kay Vaughan; Kay will continue to continue to work with the schools and businesses in Blackburn with Darwen and Burnley, and Andrew Heydeman, who joins us from the National Careers Service, will initiate activity in Blackpool, Morecambe and Preston, with Penny Heys expanding coverage across East Lancashire to Pendle, Hyndburn and Rossendale.
- 1.2 A Celebration Event was held on Friday 30th September at the Dunkenhalgh Hotel. The event attracted 84 attendees, including schools and businesses in the pilot area and the roll-out areas, as well as key stakeholders and partners. The event was introduced by Edwin Booth, Chair of the LEP, and included a range of inspirational inputs, including 2 Head Teachers, a business (Herbert Parkinson) and a student, as well as an input from Claudia Harris, Chief

Executive of the Careers and Enterprise Company. Edwin and Claudia also presented Certificates of Recognition to the Enterprise Advisers from the businesses – recognising their voluntary contribution to the network. Feedback from the event was extremely positive.

- 1.3 The Careers and Enterprise Company have launched 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. Lisa has been involved in the evaluation process.
- 1.4 A range of infographic labour market information (LMI) resources are being produced in partnership with the National Careers Service - to bring the sector studies alive. The resources will be shared with teachers, tutors, careers professionals, parents and young people, to help young people make informed choices about their future. The resources will complement the LMI workshops being delivered with the NCS.

2. European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF)

- 2.1 The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) opt-in project for 'Employee Skills Support' has been awarded to Learndirect. Learndirect will provide an input at the committee meeting.
- 2.2 The tenders for the remaining SFA co-financed project has now closed – 'Access to Employment' and an evaluation panel date has been set by the SFA. It is hoped that activity will be contracted by the end of October.
- 2.3 The Strategic Partnerships Manager (NEET), Janet Jackson, took up post on 22 August 2016. Following meetings with strategic partners, sharing the purpose of the role and researching the expectations of the role from partners, a number of themes are emerging: facilitating referrals and progressions, data sharing, targeting wards and vulnerable groups (e.g. Looked After Children and Care Leavers), and maximising impact of capacity building money. In relation to the latter, a CPD conference targeting delivery staff from both the SFA and Big Lottery Building Better Opportunities (BBO) projects is being planned for the early 2017. The BBO project is due to commence mid to late October.
- 2.4 The SFA NEET project has commenced, as reported at the last meeting and a full update on performance and progress will be provided at the next meeting. In terms of quarter one (June to August 2016), performance against profile is at 65%. The lead accountable body, Preston's College indicated that performance has not commenced as quickly as anticipated across the full network of delivery partners due to the first quarter falling in the summer period (although a number of the non-traditional providers have performed

well, as has Blackpool and the Fylde College). It is anticipated that the performance tolerance threshold (85%) will be reached and exceeded by the end of the next quarter (September to November 2016). Training is being provided to ensure that paperwork and evidence is accurate and compliant, and to ensure that activity is compliant with ESF regulations; the training will help to ensure that paperwork, data and evidence is accurate and submitted in a timely manner to meet SFA deadlines. District level forums are being established to support collaboration and local targeting, working with the Strategic Partnerships Manager.

- 2.5 The outcome of the invitation to tender (ITT) for the project co-financed by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has now been formally confirmed and G4S have been awarded the contract; a meeting with the successful organisation and DWP will be organised in November.
- 2.6 The call for stage 1 tenders relating to Active Inclusion and Widening Participation/Outreach closed on the 19th July. These projects require match locally. 7 applications were received for the former; 6 are advancing to stage 2. In relation to the latter, 1 application was received, but was rejected by DWP as it did not meet the Gateway criteria. It is hoped that the call can be re-issued following further clarity in relation to future project calls.
- 2.7 As per previous recommendations to the ESIF Committee we were 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. Whilst the draft specifications were submitted to DWP within the agreed timescales, the calls were not issued by DWP – it has been indicated that these will not be released in the short-term pending clarity in regard to Brexit.
- 2.8 Sean McGrath will be attending the meeting to provide an update in relation to Brexit, implications and risks for Lancashire activity, and will reference 2.6 and 2.7.

3. Growth Deal Skills Capital

- 3.1 Further to the up-date at the last meeting on the projects that were successful under round 2, the Growth Deal Programme Team have been working closely with applicants to progress the Grant Funding Agreements (GFAs). All 9 projects now have completed GFAs and are RAG rated green in relation to progress.
- 3.2 Three facilities have been launched since the last meeting. On Thursday 8th September 2016 the Digital Academy at Accrington and Rossendale launched, in partnership with Risual Education and Microsoft. On Friday 9th September the Advanced Manufacturing and Automation Centre (AMAC) was

launched at Training 2000. The facility was opened by Edwin Booth, Chair of the LEP and David Bailey, CEO of Northwest Aerospace Alliance. On Friday 23rd September, Edwin Booth also opened the new build Engineering and Innovation Centre at Runshaw College (Euxton Campus).

All events were well attended by businesses and local stakeholders and partners. A significant amount of PR was generated as a result of the events, for example:

http://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/14105860.Blackburn_youngsters_to_be_trained_in_new_apprenticeships/

<https://www.lancashirebusinessview.co.uk/edwin-booth-visits-new-world-class-science-engineering-facility-76281/>

<http://www.lancashireskillshub.co.uk/news/digital-academy-launches-accrington-rossendale-college/>

4. City Deal

- 4.1 Lisa Moizer and Dr Lis Smith, Chair of the City Deal Skills and Employment Steering Group and Principal of Preston's College, presented a paper to the City Deal Executive and Stewardship Board on Friday 30th September 2016. The paper summarised the work of the City Deal Skills and Employment Steering Group and the set of metrics that has been developed (previously approved by the Skills and Employment Board) and asked the Board to endorse the proposed employment and skills metrics.
- 4.2 Lisa and Lis received positive feedback from the Board regarding the work of the steering group in particular the Lancashire Science Festival and the Construction Hub partnership. The Board endorsed the employment and skills metrics.

5. Digital Advantage

- 5.1 The White Room are delivering a pilot called Digital Advantage, across schools and colleges in Lancashire which aims to enhance the digital skills of young people and enable them to successfully progress into digital apprenticeships.
- 5.2 The White Room have successfully signed up ten schools and colleges across Lancashire to work with at least 100 young people who will graduate from Digital Advantage in the 2017 summer term.
- 5.3 They are working closely with Digital Lancashire to engage Lancashire businesses in the pilot, for example Fat Media and i2i and Big Knows who will

deliver masterclasses to the students as well as offer them an interview for a digital apprenticeships when they graduate.

6. Lancashire Skills and Employment Website

- 6.1 The website is now live <http://www.lancashireskillshub.co.uk/>. There are some further additions, such as the complete suite of commissioned reports, which will be added shortly.
- 6.2 Thank you to all the members of the Board who contributed to the development of the website.

7. Apprenticeships

- 7.1 Michele was a judge for the Lancashire Business View (LBV) Young 'Uns Award – for both the Apprenticeship of the Year category and Construction and Property. Four shortlisted applicants made a pitch to the panel under each category; the calibre was extremely high. The awards will be presented at the Young 'Uns Awards dinner on Thursday 20th October 2016.
- 7.2 The hub is sponsoring the Northwest Regional Apprenticeship Awards, which takes place at St Helen's Rugby Club on Wednesday 12th October 2016.
- 7.3 A joint approach has been taken to raise awareness of apprenticeships and the apprenticeship levy with the Lancashire Work Based Learning Executive Forum and LBV. Three events, targeting employers, are taking place during October across Lancashire, one in East Lancashire, one in Central and one in the West of the County. At each event there will be an expert input on the levy followed by a panel debate – the panel will include Michele in the East and West, and Paul Holme at the Central event, alongside a provider representative and two businesses. The East Lancashire event took place on Wednesday 5th October and attracted 61 delegates; the panel discussion was lively, with good engagement from the employers who attended. An overview will be published in the LBV magazine, further publicising the levy and the support available.
- 7.4 Forbes Solicitors kindly provided free spaces on a networking training course to members of the Lancashire Young Apprenticeship Ambassador Network on Monday 10th October 2016, this builds on the presentation skills training that was provided by Nelson and Colne College in the summer. This is the start of what we hope will be a series of free CPD offers to the Ambassadors from training providers and employers. Further offers are welcomed!