

LEP - Lancashire Skills and Employment Board

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 10th October, 2018 at 9.00 am at the Accrington and Rossendale College, Broad Oak Campus, Broad Oak Road, Accrington, BB5 2AW

Present

Amanda Melton

Gareth Lindsay
Lynne Livesey

Bev Robinson

Observer

Chris Hebblethwaite, District External Relationship Manager, Department for Work and Pensions

Councillor Mark Townsend, Leader of Burnley Council

In Attendance

Ryan Hyde, Business Support Officer, Lancashire County Council

Dr Michele Lawty-Jones, Skill Hub Director, Lancashire County Council

Andy Walker, Head of Service - Business Growth, Lancashire County Council

Sara Gaskell, Strategic Partnerships Manager (Adults), Lancashire Skills Hub

Janet Jackson, Strategic Partnership Manager (Young People), Lancashire Skills Hub

Ruth England, Head teacher, Shuttleworth College

Councillor Mark Townsend, Leader of Burnley Council

Paul Faulkner, Local Democracy Reporter, Lancashire Post

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair, Amanda Melton, welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies for absence were noted from Joanne Pickering, Paul Holme, Mark Allanson, Lindsay Campbell and Dean Langton (observer).

2. Declaration of Interests

Amanda Melton, Bev Robinson and Gareth Lindsay declared interests in item 9 – European Social Funds (ESF) – Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Opt-in as their respective organisations (Nelson and Colne College, Blackpool and the Fylde College, and North Lancs Training Group respectively) were involved in the delivery consortium for this project.

It was agreed that Amanda, Bev and Gareth could remain and take part in any voting, if required.

Amanda Melton also declared an interest in item 10 – Merger of Accrington and Rossendale College with Nelson and Colne College as her organisation was part of the proposed merger.

It was agreed that Amanda would leave the room for this item.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2018

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2018 were approved as an accurate record and duly signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising

It was confirmed that the amendment to the Terms of Reference to enable the appointment of a Head Teacher to the committee had been confirmed by the LEP Board. A nomination is to be made by the Blackpool, Blackburn with Darwen and Lancashire School Improvement Board at its next meeting on 1 November 2018.

DCMS funding has been secured for the Digital Skills Coordinator for the Local Digital Skills Partnership, following approval of the proposal from the Executive Committee of the LEP, and a grant funding offer received. A selection process is underway for the coordinator.

4. Up-date from the Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub

Dr Michele Lawty-Jones, Director of the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub, presented a report which provided the Committee with an update from the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub.

The Committee noted the establishment of the T Levels 'Routes Ready' project and the level of engagement of partners in the Route Ready Networks and Industry Placements workshop.

Whilst the Committee recognised that the governance structures proposed for Skills Advisory Panels reflect the current Skills and Employment Board arrangements locally, the Committee raised concerns, as have the LEP board and other LEPs, about capacity to take forward the proposed analytical toolkit.

Resolved: That the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board noted the update.

5. Careers Hub

Dr Michele Lawty-Jones and Ruth England, Head Teacher, Shuttleworth College, presented the Committee with an update on the Lancashire Careers Hub, as attached.

It was confirmed that the proposal to the Careers and Enterprise Company to secure a pilot Careers Hub in Lancashire, spanning Blackpool, Burnley and Pendle, was successful.

The Careers Hub aims to build on the strong foundations of the Lancashire Enterprise Adviser Network, which now involves 127 schools and colleges and 136 Enterprise Advisers (Business Volunteers). It was reported that 1256 employer encounters, involving thousands of young people, had taken place through the network in the last academic year.

It was emphasised that the Careers Hub aims to support the schools and colleges in the Hub to achieve all eight of the Gatsby Benchmarks by the end of the two year pilot. The Enterprise Adviser Network focuses on the two Benchmarks aligned to employer encounters and experiences of the workplace, and the Careers Hub will build on this

Building a 'community of practice' between the schools and colleges involved within the Careers Hub, as well as with employers, was emphasised as being fundamental to the success of the Careers Hub.

Committee Members asked about the likelihood of the scheme becoming sustainable in the longer term, rather than being limited until the end of the current funding in August 2020. It was stated that the Careers and Enterprise Company were raising the profile of the Enterprise Adviser Network and the Careers Hubs with MPs across the Country, to gain cross-party support for the Careers Strategy and the approach.

Resolved: The Lancashire Skills and Employment Board:

- (i) Congratulated the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub on securing funds for a Careers Pilot in Lancashire.
- (ii) Noted the update on the evolving model in Lancashire.

6. Lancashire Employer Skills Forum

The Committee were presented with a report that introduces the Lancashire Employer Skills Forum, including a set of Terms of Reference for the Forum for review by Committee Members.

It was stated that the Forum was set up to mirror the Adult Skills Forum, and as per the Lancashire Skills Escalator, will seek to simplify the ESF offer to businesses and facilitate collaboration between projects. This will include

developing a model focused on the lifecycle of a business, in relation to recruiting and inducting staff, upskilling employees and undertaking workforce planning.

Resolved: That the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board approved the Terms of Reference for the Lancashire Employer Skills Forum provided at Appendix 'A' of the report.

7. Innovation Strategy

Andy Walker, Head of Business Growth, Lancashire County Council, presented the Committee with the Innovation Plan for Lancashire, including strategic aims and objectives, as attached.

The Government and Local Enterprise Partnerships across the UK have identified productivity as a key priority. Concerns were raised about the difference in rates of productivity between Lancashire and the UK average.

Concerns were raised about how Lancashire proactively engages with the Fourth Industrial Revolution to ensure the local business base adopts new technologies and innovates. It was stated that one way this could be done was for Lancashire to focus on areas of niche expertise across the county and attract businesses specialising within this expertise to Lancashire.

It was also emphasised that retraining in other skills for people working in roles that are being made redundant is fundamental to how Lancashire reacts to the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

It was queried whether any actions are being taken regarding the degrees and apprenticeships offered in Lancashire to ensure that people taking them do not then need retraining within a matter of years and that the curriculum was fit for purpose from a digital perspective.

Resolved: The Lancashire Skills and Employment Board noted the Innovation Plan for Lancashire.

8. Exclusion of the Press and Public

At this point the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board approved that the meeting move into Part II, Private and Confidential, to consider the remaining report as it contained information defined as confidential or exempt in accordance with the relevant paragraph of Part I to schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as set out in the report. It was considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

At this point, Paul Faulkner and Ruth England left the meeting.

9. **European Social Funds (ESF) - Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) Opt-in**

Sara Gaskell, Strategic Partnership Manager (Adults), Lancashire Skills Hub, and Janet Jackson, Strategic Partnership Manager (Young People), Lancashire Skills Hub, presented a report which provided the Committee with an update on current project activity aligned with the ESFA Opt-in in Lancashire, and the procurement of new activity in Lancashire that will be contracted by the ESFA.

The Committee were specifically asked to review the Capacity Building/Engagement Activity Plans which had been updated to reflect the extension of the three current ESFA Opt-in projects until the end of March 2019. The Committee is required to sign off the plans to release the funds for the plans from the ESFA to providers.

Concerns were raised about the reduction to the budget for Mental Health and Complex Barriers Specialist Awareness. It was emphasised that this was due to funding for mental health coming from sources separate from the ESF, and work being carried out by separate parties, including research development completed by colleges in Lancashire. However, the Committee remained keen to ensure that the funding for mental health from the ESFA was not reduced.

Resolved: That the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board:

- (i) Approved the changes to the Capacity Building/Engagement Activity Plans, subject to maintaining the original amount of allocated funding to Mental Health and Complex Barriers Specialist Awareness.
- (ii) Noted the allocations for the 2019-21 programme and extensions to the current projects.

10. **Merger of Accrington and Rossendale College with Nelson and Colne College**

At this point Amanda Melton was asked to leave the room in order for the non-conflicted Committee Members to be provided with the update.

The Committee were provided with an update on the proposed merger of Accrington and Rossendale College with Nelson and Colne College, and a request to the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Limited Board and the Growth Deal Management Board for funding to support the proposed merger.

It was stated that the Growth Deal Management Board, at its meeting on 3 October 2018, agreed to:

- (i) Recommend to the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Limited Board, in principle, to approve a £500k contribution from the Lancashire Growth Deal programme, to the merger, subject to independent appraisal of the business case achieving the recognised thresholds for delivery on each of

the five cases.

- (ii) Ask Growth Deal Management Board colleagues from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to use their internal central government networks to provide further contextual information about the funding of this project.

Amanda Melton re-joined the meeting at this point.

11. Reporting to the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership

None.

12. Any Other Business

The Committee noted that Nelson and Colne College had recently achieved status as a Maths Centre of Excellence. The Centre was a collaboration with Runshaw College and the broader group of Lancashire Colleges.

13. Date of Next Meeting and 2019 programme

It was noted that the next formal meeting was scheduled to be held in Committee Room 'B' – The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston, at 8.00 a.m. on Wednesday 21 November 2018.

The Committee were also presented with the proposed 2019 programme of meetings to be approved.

Resolved: The Lancashire Skills and Employment Board approved the proposed 2019 programme of meetings.