



## Appendix B

### ABR Implementation Group

Lancashire College, Southport Road, Chorley

3:00 – 5:00pm, Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2017

### Notes

#### Present:

- Julia Coleman, Blackburn with Darwen Council
- Paul Holme, Lancashire Skills and Employment Board
- Stephen Jones, Education and Skills Funding Agency
- Dr Michele Lawty-Jones, Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub (Chair)
- Lisa Moizer, Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub
- Robin Newton-Syms, The Lancashire Colleges (TLC)

#### Apologies:

- Dean Langton, Shadow CA
- Ajay Sethi, Lancashire County Council
- Mike Taplin, Blackpool Borough Council

#### Agenda Item

##### 1. Welcome and Introductions

Michele welcomed the group and thanked them for their attendance.

##### 2. Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference had been approved by the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board, following consultation with The Lancashire Colleges and non-member institutions involved in the ABR. The final version was circulated to group members.

Michele indicated that the recommended Pennine Lancashire group had not yet formed and reasons for this were discussed. It was agreed that a holding message should be sent to the Pennine Lancashire Principals suggesting that this is reviewed in September with a view to establishing a group in the new academic year.

**Action:** Michele to send out a holding email to the relevant Principals.

**Michele**

##### 3. General update regarding the finalisation of the Lancashire ABR Report and publication

Stephen confirmed that comments from the ABR Steering Group members had been incorporated and that a standardisation process had been undertaken to ensure that the report reflected the national format for ABR reports. The final version has been circulated to the Steering Group. It was confirmed that the Skills Minister has approved the report and that a date for publication was currently being agreed. It is hoped that the report will be published before the Summer recess. It was confirmed that the minutes of the ABR Steering Group will be published, and timescales for this are still to be confirmed. An email will be circulated to members of the ABR Steering Group prior to publication.

**Action:** Stephen to confirm publication date once known.

**Stephen**

#### **4. Progress elsewhere in the country & learning points**

Stephen indicated that all reviews had been completed. The process had resulted in a significant number of mergers and a limited number of non-structural recommendations. Generally, implementation of non-structural recommendations did not seem to have the same impetus as the structural options.

Paul referenced the changes in policy since the initiation of the Area Based Reviews and the need to incorporate latest changes and thinking in the Collaborative Working Model – for example, the Post-16 Skills Plan and the development of T-Levels.

#### **5. Progress against the structural recommendations**

Stephen provided a brief up-date against each of the structural recommendations:

##### **Burnley College and Accrington & Rossendale College**

The target merger date of 1<sup>st</sup> May has not been achieved. Negotiations are ongoing with Transaction Unit. The Shadow Board for the merged institution is yet to agree a new target date, but as ministerial clearance will be required for funding from the restructuring facility, the merger is unlikely to take place before the end of the calendar year.

##### **Preston's College and UCLan**

The planned date for the merger of the two institutions is 1 August 2018. The recommendation is that of wholly owned subsidiary with FE designated status; an application to the agency is being submitted to trial the approach. The application is to be submitted in November / December.

##### **St Mary's College, Blackburn**

Initially, as per the Lancashire ABR Report, the College was required to submit a recommended structural option by the 20 April, however the college faced a number of challenges, and this date passed. The College was issued with a financial notice to improve by the ESFA, and subsequently a 'Requires Improvement' grading from Ofsted; as such, the Sixth Form College Commissioner has undertaken an intervention. A letter from the Minister will be issued in due course, and a sustainable solution is currently being sought.

##### **Blackburn College, Blackburn BC and Lancaster University Strategic Alliance**

This has now been formalised.

#### **6. Progress against the non-structural recommendations**

A Collaborative Working Model for TLC and draft action plan for the non-structural recommendations were circulated prior to the meeting. The plan was discussed and it was agreed that it was right to focus on activities that were not 'business as usual' for TLC (such as stimulating the sharing of good practice around quality) but that the activities should focus on areas that require collaboration with the LEP and the Local Authorities.

A number of questions were posed in the meeting including:

- Do we have the right activities in the plan?
- How would you prioritise?
- Which are the quick wins (e.g. CEIAG)?

**Action:** Stephen to enquire about the DfE IoT timetable and feedback to the group.

**Stephen**

**Action:** Group members to reflect on the non-structural recommendations action plan and feedback to Michele and Robin by Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July.

**All**

**Action:** Local Authorities to particularly look at the Inclusive Workforce quadrant and feedback by Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July.

**Local  
Authorities**

**Action:** Ajay to insert line in relation to the School Sixth Form recommendation by Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July.

**Ajay**

**7. Progress in relation to Schools with Sixth Forms**

Ajay was unable to attend. This agenda item was therefore deferred to the next meeting.

**8. Feedback to the Skills and Employment Board**

The next formal Skills and Employment Board is on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October.

It was agreed that the group would meet again prior to the meeting so that the action plan could be developed further and agreed by the Implementation Group - for review by the board at the October meeting.

**9. Frequency of meetings and future dates**

It was agreed that the group will meet bi-monthly, with the next meetings to be held in mid-September and then mid-November. The need for further meetings will be reviewed at the Skills and Employment Board in February 2018.