

LEP - Lancashire Skills and Employment Advisory Panel

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 3rd March 2021 at 8.00am via Zoom

Present

Amanda Melton (Chair)

Mark Allanson	Lynne Livesey
Lindsay Campbell	Nicola Mortimer
Peter Caney	Kate Quinn
Neil Conlon	Bev Robinson
Ruth England	Dr Lis Smith
Edwina Grant OBE	Stephen Sykes
Dean Langton	Liz Tapner
Gareth Lindsay	Councillor Mark Townsend

Observers

Stephen Jones, Head of FE Territorial Team, ESFA
Heather Murray, Senior Partnership Manager Lancashire, DWP
Katherine O'Connor, BEIS
Carla Passarello, DWP

In Attendance

Sara Gaskell, Strategic Partnerships Manager, Lancashire Skills Hub
Dr Michele Lawty-Jones, Skills Hub Director, Lancashire County Council
Lisa Moizer, Skills Hub Coordinator, Lancashire Skills Hub
Joseph Mount, Skills and Economic Intelligence Officer, Lancashire Skills Hub
Holly Tween, Democratic Services Officer, Lancashire County Council

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair, Amanda Melton, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Sarah Kemp.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2020

It was noted that on page 3 it should read NEET instead of NEED.

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting held on 11th of November 2020 are confirmed as an accurate record, with the emendation above.

4. Matters Arising

Ruth and Edwina gave an update on NEET, and the development of a post 16 recovery plan supporting transition from high school into colleges. Many organisations were involved, and top tier local authorities were working with The Lancashire Colleges. It was commented that there was often a perception that using alternative provision was a failure, which needs to be challenged. There may also be funding shortfalls to be addressed, and a need to ensure that the alternative provision is meaningful and drives pupils' level of achievement.

It was commented that a number of Universities were putting together a programme of additional support and tuition recognising the transition need.

5. Up-date from the Lancashire Skills & Employment Hub and partners

Michele Lawty-Jones, Skills Hub Director, presented the report (circulated) updating on the work of the Lancashire Skills Hub. She particularly highlighted the following:

- An additional 24 new Enterprise Advisers had been recruited to the Careers Hub and the network of schools and colleges had grown from 131 to 154. A campaign to attract additional Enterprise Advisers was being run in tandem with the national Careers and Enterprise Company Rewrite the Story campaign
- Technical education vision - the first stage bid for the Lancashire Institute of Technology was submitted to DfE by the lead institution Blackpool and the Fylde College, the college had been invited to a webinar to hear about the next stage
- Teen Tech Festival Lancashire - it had been delivered virtually and 37 schools and 684 young people had joined the sessions so far
- Digital Careers Videos - a series of short films of local business people talking about their careers in a range of digital roles had been produced
- The application made to the European Social Fund (ESF) national reserve fund under investment priority 1.1, aimed at boosting labour market mobility, had been successful and a new call worth £4.750m opened for applications in February 2021. The deadline was 12 April.
- The Skills Hub had worked in collaboration with the NHS, Lancashire Adult Learning, People Plus and referral organisations to support the recruitment of clerical and administration staff for the mass vaccination centres in January. 121 people had successfully been offered employment to date.
- The Digital Freedom 50+ Lancashire project, administered by Selnet, had supplied 320 digital devices and connectivity to digitally excluded over 50s across Lancashire
- A refreshed Apprenticeship Action Plan had been produced with the

shared aim of enabling the Apprenticeship system to meet the needs of the Lancashire economy. A meeting was planned in March with key partners to agree the draft plan and collective actions.

- The requirement to publish a Local Skills Report by the end of this financial year still remains. As there was significant crossover between the contents of the published Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework 2021 and the Local Skills Report, the Skills Hub and the Skills Advisory Panel team in DfE were discussing a pragmatic way forward to bring the two documents together into one.
- The partner data pack was an online interactive data dashboard which builds on the provision of the LMI Toolkit. It will be updated six times a year and was circulated to around 150 stakeholders
- The Skills for Work microsite was launched in July 2020 to enable Lancashire residents to access support if furloughed, facing redundancy, looking for work or 16-25. The website had so far received 14,600 views.
- Over the last 12 months the number of Lancashire Skills Pledge members had grown from 26 to 75 businesses, despite little promotion due to the pandemic
- This week was national careers week and 21 nominated careers champions from across the country would be showcased on social media by the Careers and Enterprise Company, including committee member Peter Caney, from BAE. The committee passed on their thanks to Peter for spearheading BAE's role as a cornerstone employer for the Lancashire Careers Hub.

Committee Members were requested to help spread the word on the various schemes and projects.

The committee agreed that the new structure for the update report was helpful.

Resolved: That the update be noted, and the new report structure be adopted

6. Skills for Jobs White Paper

The committee considered the report, circulated, outlining the White Paper on Skills for Jobs, published in January 2021, and in discussion made the following comments:

- A goal for post 16 education was a national network of colleges that were appropriately invested in and aligned to the needs of the economy
- Behavioural change and increased effective collaboration was required in order to make an impact
- There was a need to ensure vocational offers connect with employers' demand, and that employers are invited to contribute to any discussion on skills demand
- More detail was needed around progression routes
- Further engagement would be welcomed with the health and social care sector, as key employers

Resolved: that the Skills and Employment Advisory Panel note the report, and a further update to be brought to a future meeting

7. **Fast Track Digital Workforce Fund and DfE Digital Skills Bootcamps**

Kerry Harrison, Lancashire Digital Skills Partnership Coordinator, presented the report (circulated) giving an overview of the Fast Track Digital Workforce Fund and the pilot DfE Digital Skills Bootcamps in Lancashire, and progress to date.

The Fast Track programme was created to investigate the success of intensive training programmes designed to fill specific roles in priority skill areas. The programme resulted in the pilot of the DfE Digital Skills Bootcamps, with Lancashire, DCMS and Greater Manchester Combined Authority influencing the shape of the National Skills Fund programme. The majority of Lancashire programmes were still in the delivery phase; employment numbers would be reported once this phase was complete.

Nicola Mortimer, Milliamp Technologies, reported on the Tech Lancaster Bootcamp, run solely by electronic based companies in Lancaster who had struggled to find relevant training for the sector. Six companies had worked together to create a 12 week training course, including 4 weeks of practical training, after which participants who successfully complete the course would be awarded an industry recognised IPC accreditation. The course had been oversubscribed, and feedback had been very encouraging. An application had been made to Lot 2 of the DfE Invitation to Tender, to further extend the course.

Resolved: that the update be noted

8. **Employment in Lancashire**

Sara Gaskell, Strategic Partnerships Manager, presented the report (circulated) on employment in Lancashire following the government's 'Plan for Jobs' announcements.

Discussion followed, and the following comments were made:

- Many varied jobs are available in the health sector, and a more structured pipeline is needed to target people into roles across the sector
- Employers need to consider what they are offering in terms of flexible, modern ways of working, to become attractive to people seeking work
- There was a greater need for employers to consider support mechanisms for new employees, particularly those who had been out of work for some time
- Some new ways of working had been trialled during the lockdown period and had given rise to innovative ways of working and engagement which could continue

Resolved: that the report be noted

9. Reporting to the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership

It was noted that Steve Fogg had stood down as the Chair of the LEP Board, and recruitment was underway.

Resolved: that feedback would be taken to the LEP Board around emphasising employer engagement, and the Skills White Paper consultation.

10. Any Other Business

It was Lis Smith's last meeting, and committee wished to place on record their thanks and best wishes to Lis.

11. Date of Next Meeting

An informal meeting was scheduled for 8.00am on 28 April 2021.

The next formal meeting was scheduled for 8.00am on 26 May 2021.