



LEP – Sub Committee

LEP - Skills and Employment Advisory Panel

Private and Confidential: No

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

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Executive Summary

This paper provides an overview of activity since the last formal committee meeting.

Recommendation

The committee are asked to note the update.

Background and Advice

The update from the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub and partners is structured against the strategic themes and priorities outlined in the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework 2021 and provides an update on activity since the last committee meeting.

	Future Workforce: working with education and business to establish a talent pipeline and future workforce that meets the current and future demands of the local labour market.
Priority 1	Careers Hub: Excellent careers provision underpinned by Labour Market Intelligence (LMI)
<p>Careers Hub and Enterprise Adviser Network Engagement of schools and colleges has remained high with both Enterprise Coordinators and matched Enterprise Advisers. The strong relationships the team have developed with Careers Leaders is sited as a strength by the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC), with Lancashire achieving the highest percentage of Compass evaluations nationally, with a 98% completion rate at the end of last term.</p>	



Several schools and colleges have seen reductions in their Benchmark 5 and 6 scores during this period, the self-isolation of students has resulted in either employer encounters being postponed or the percentage of young people benefiting from the encounter reducing significantly. It was however pleasing to see that a small number of schools returned to face-to-face work experience at the end of the academic year with many schools planning to offer face to face work experience during the 2021/22 academic year.

Performance against targets has been impacted due to COVID-19, however due to the innovative approach through the Lancashire Careers Hub and commitment of employers and Careers Leaders, performance has remained in line or above national averages. The work undertaken to enable virtual encounters and experiences has contributed significantly to performance, and more importantly, in boosting the aspirations of young people and breaking myths regarding labour market buoyancy. The final position at the end of 2021/22 is detailed below:

	Benchmark 1 Performance		Benchmark 5 Performance		Benchmark 6 Performance	
	Target (July 2020)	July 2021	Target (July 2020)	July 2021	Target (July 2020)	July 2021
Careers Hub Wave 1 (Blackpool, Burnley, Pendle)	90	82.8	75	69	100% partial achievement	100
Careers Hub Wave 3 (Blackburn with Darwen and all other Lancashire areas)	75	69.7	65	63.9	100% partial achievement	95.9
Blackpool Opportunity Area	50	80	75	73	100% partial achievement	93

The average across the 8 Benchmarks for Wave 1 was 5.2 (target of 5), against a national average of 4.2. The average across the 8 Benchmarks for Wave 3 was 4.8 (target of 4), against a national average of 4.1. This was for 154 schools and colleges.

Four Enterprise Coordinators and one new Employer Engagement Enterprise Coordinator were recruited over the summer, following the departure of 4 team members last academic year and in the summer due to promotions and the creation of the new role focused on employer engagement. The new members commenced their induction in September.

Lancashire has now achieved full coverage as a Careers Hub, with all eligible 156 Secondary, SEND, Alternative Provision and Colleges engaged, following the engagement of the final two. All have signed their MoUs for the 2021/22 academic year in line with the deadline set by CEC.

Work continues to develop the technical education section of the Start in Lancashire platform. New videos are being prepared with Coca Cola UK, BP, Eric Wright Construction and Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Trust, where the recruiters within the organisations talk about who and why they recruit from different learning routes – A Levels/Graduates, vocational courses, T Levels and Apprenticeships.



A presentation will be provided at the meeting about the priorities for the coming year.

Effective Transitions Project

Lancashire Careers Hub has been successful in securing funding from JP Morgan through the Careers and Enterprise Company for a two and a half year ‘Effective Transitions’ project. The aim of the project is to identify and work with social-economically disadvantaged young people from the deprived areas of Lancashire that have a history of high NEET figures, to test activities which aim to improve aspirations, attitudes to learning and transition from secondary education to Post 16 provision.

The project aims to test the effectiveness of Extended Work Experience and Engagement Coaching on aspirations and transition with 105 young people identified by 7 targeted schools across Lancashire. A procurement process has been launched to appoint providers and discussions are underway with schools in the target areas, as agreed with the Local Education Authorities. The Post-16 Officers Group will act as the Steering Group for the project. A national launch will take place early November with CEC, with activity due to commence in January 2022.

One of 10 projects across the country, the evaluation of the project will feed into a wider piece, which aims to influence policy and provision regarding young people at risk of NEET.

Priority 2

Technical Education Vision: roll out of T levels & progression pathways to higher technical qualifications

Gatsby Foundation Routes Ready Project

The Gatsby Foundation funded T Level Project with the Skills Hub completes at the end of December. It is pleasing to report that agreement has been reached with The Lancashire Colleges and the Gatsby Foundation to support continuation of the T Level Routeway Networks for two years, giving sustainability to activity initiated through the project.

During this last term of the project, further CPD (Continuing Professional Development) has been developed and funded, including:

- 90 minute sessions for careers professionals working in schools, giving high level content details of T Levels to increase their confidence when talking with parents/carers and young people about T Levels and how they sit within the full post-16 education and training offer.
- 4 session courses in consultative sales and employer relationship development techniques, for business development staff working in colleges.
- 2 session courses in managing and expanding employer relationships with young people on placement, for subject tutors working in colleges.

The team has contributed to the range of evaluative activities organised by the Gatsby Foundation as the project closes. This has included sharing of case studies and contributing to evidence gathering about the effectiveness of local area agencies (LEPs and MCAs in this instance) taking a co-ordinating role in supporting the roll out of policy, led by international organisation, FSG.

T Level Recruitment by Lancashire Colleges

Over 300 young people have started T Level courses in Lancashire this year, more than doubling last year’s number as roll-out continues. Six colleges are now delivering T Levels with more routeways and colleges rolling out through to 2023. The offer currently includes digital, education and childcare, construction, health and science.



Higher Technical Education

Delivery of the higher technical education qualifications newly approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) begins in 2022, with digital being the first routeway to be offered.

The outcome of the second stage application for funding for the Institutes of Technology (IoT), including Lancashire's, is awaited, with an expectation of announcement of successful bids before Christmas. The IoT will focus on higher technical education developed to meet and anticipate local market needs.

Priority 3

Digital Workforce of the future

TeenTech

The second Lancashire TeenTech Festival is set to take place between Feb-May 2022, with many schools now registering interest following initial communication. The programme of activity will include:

- Six Innovation Workshops on topics including: sustainable transport, game design, future technology (Robotics, AR/VR, Internet of Things), Health Tech, Environment and big data, and animation
- Build Your Future programme (TeenTech project with Ove Arup Foundation – extra opportunity, funded separately, focused on understanding cities of the future through fun, interactive and engaging live sessions and challenges set by industry experts)
- Easter Holiday Workshops – a week of additional game design workshops as well as rebroadcasting the innovation workshops
- City of Tomorrow aimed at 8–13-year-olds who become designers, engineers and technologists to create their own City of Tomorrow, creating model buildings from recycled materials. In addition to the build days, TeenTech will offer Smart Skills Sessions to primary schools to support students to develop their digital, media and data literacy skills.

Cyber Girls First

Building on the success of the event in Blackpool last academic year, a second online event is planned for 24th November for schools in the Lancaster and Morecambe area. Alongside the same national speakers including CTO from Downing Street, Oracle, JP Morgan, Colt Technology, we will have a range of local inspirational female speakers. Two further events are also in the planning stages for young people in the Blackpool area.

InnovateHer and Create Education

BAE Systems have invested £300,000 in a programme with InnovateHer and Create Education that aims to inspire 7,500 young people across Lancashire about careers in the digital and tech sector. The programme was launched earlier this month in collaboration with the Lancashire Digital Skills Partnership and the Careers Hub. InnovateHer aims to inspire females and non-binary to boost diversity in Lancashire's digital workforce, providing a mix of online education and interaction with role models, with Create Education providing 3D printers and practical training around additive manufacturing. Together the programmes will offer activities to 70 schools across Lancashire.



Hub Incubation Project: Digital Futures

The Careers Hub and Lancashire Digital Skills Partnership have secured research and evaluation funds through CEC under their Hub Incubation programme which is aimed at testing and evaluating the impact of careers activities.

The project in Lancashire, Digital Futures aims to increase the take-up of Computer Science GCSE amongst girls through the delivery of high quality, locally tailored STEM related careers activities delivered at varying intensities, which will in turn increase the number of young females entering the digital workforce.

The eight participating schools have been selected from those delivering high quality GCSE Computer Science provision with low uptake amongst girls. A comprehensive teacher CPD programme, utilising the local NCCE Computing Hub provision as well as training from providers delivering activities, will complement the activity with young people and will be tailored to the needs of the individual schools, increasing capacity to deliver GCSE Computer Science and adapting KS3 delivery to encourage participation and engagement of female pupils.

Digital Advantage

Digital Advantage continues to be jointly funded by Lancashire County Council and Future U – Lancashire’s Uni Connect Programme. The 2021/22 programme will focus on delivering digital skills with industry experts to 70 young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND), care-experienced students and young carers, in schools, colleges and in alternative provision settings across Lancashire.

Priority 4


Supporting Young People who are NEET to reengage with learning and work

The Skills Hub has been lobbying government for some time to support an increase in Traineeship provision in certain parts of Lancashire for young people aged 16-18. An opportunity has now been launched for those providers without a current 16-18 funding contract to apply to become Traineeship providers – work has been undertaken to raise the profile of the opportunity and discussions undertaken with several interested parties in Lancashire.

Youth hubs are now successfully open in most parts of Lancashire and the team has been working with DWP and local authority colleagues to facilitate partnership working with a range of providers for young people.

The team is anticipating a call for applicants for a grant from the Youth Futures Fund (YFF), following a presentation to the LEP Network Skills Leads. YFF are seeking organisations to co-ordinate local partners initially to identify and articulate specific local needs for supporting disadvantaged groups of young people aged 16-24 into work. Potential solutions would emerge from this research which could then be tested over three years with additional funding. The team is preparing by undertaking research into potential target groups and localities needing support and determining which partners are also considering the opportunity.



	<p>Inclusive Workforce: supporting unemployed and inactive residents into sustainable employment, driving up digital skills and embedding social value to 'level up' areas of Lancashire and accelerate inclusive growth.</p>
<p>Priority 1</p>	<p>Boost employability & skills of unemployed & inactive, & support journey into work, particularly in disadvantaged areas</p>
<p>ESF projects Within the ESF programme several projects deliver employability support to unemployed and inactive adults. Data is collected on starts, priority groups and progression into positive destinations. This data is used to identify areas of concern, which are then addressed at the Adult Skills Forum and within project steering groups. Current data shows a positive position against targets.</p> <p>The Adult Skills Forum The Adult Skills Forum is reviewing the latest unemployment data, highlighting the top 5 most affected wards in each local authority area. Wards with claimant count rates above the Lancashire average (5.3% as of September 21) will be discussed, and partners will look to ensure that there is employability support being offered to progress people into work.</p> <p>Escalate, the on-line referral tool continues to support referral agencies, with 274 searches logged from 1st July until 25th October 2021.</p> <p>Plan for Jobs JETS is currently delivered by Ingeus, an active member of the Adult Skills Forum. This project aims to support people who have been unemployed for less than 12 months. The project is performing well and is on target for starts and has progressed 50% of those who have completed into work. Restart is being delivered across the Northwest contract package area, led by the prime contractor G4S and their supply chain partners. In Lancashire, all supply chain partners have delivered presentations at the Adult Skills Forum, updating the members of their offer and wider introductions to mainstream partners have been facilitated.</p> <p>A wider overview of the impact of the Plan for Jobs provision led by Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in Lancashire will be provided at the meeting.</p> <p>Refugee Support A dedicated working group has been facilitated by the Skills Hub, which has brought together partners to support refugees with labour market integration. In partnership with Lancashire County Council's Resettlement team, four drop-in sessions have been agreed and further work is ongoing regarding needs and support requirements.</p>	
<p>Priority 2</p>	<p>Sector specific initiatives targeted at areas with labour market demand</p>
<p>Sector Based Work Academies Working in partnership with DWP and Marketing Lancashire, a dedicated Hospitality recruitment line has been set up to support the large number of Hospitality venues who need staff. To date, nine businesses have benefited from four Sector Skills Work Academy programmes, with 78 of 102 vacancies having been filled. Sector Based Work Academy Programmes have also been set up to support recruitment in Manufacturing, Care and Administration.</p>	



Lancashire Skills Pledge

Several businesses have pledged through the Lancashire Skills Pledge to employ people who are out of work. These employers are contacted by a member of the Skills Hub team and referred to the most appropriate project.

Fast Track Fund/ Skills Bootcamps

The Department for Education (DfE) announced the winners of the national procurement process for Skills Bootcamps in late July 2021. All the bidders that the Skills Hub supported were successful, as well as some other bids from local and national providers. The Lancashire Digital Skills Partnership has worked with the National Careers Service to produce a single prospectus for Lancashire residents to consolidate what is on offer as there is over 25 different bootcamps available locally. The prospectus and the bootcamps on offer are consolidated on the [LDSP pages of the website](#).

The evaluation of the Lancashire pilots will be discussed at the meeting and the further roll out of Skills Bootcamps.

Priority 3 Raise digital inclusion

Kerry Harrison, lead for the Lancashire Digital Skills Partnership is actively supporting Digital Inclusion focused strategy groups in Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool. Digital support is included in the offer for the Refugee Resettlement Programme, with several partners offering courses.

Priority 4 Embed social value in commissioning, procurement and planning processes

Social Value

As previously reported in May of this year, the Growth Deal programme has continued to generate Social Value across the Skills Hub thematic areas leveraged through the Growth Deal project funding agreements. As of the end of the last reporting period, ending March 2021 the programme had generated £31.1m.



One notable example is The Lancaster Campus Teaching Hub which has successfully secured a strong, reliable and measurable commitment to Social Value that covers a range of thematic areas including an 'Inclusive Workforce', 'Future Workforce', a 'Skilled and Productive Workforce' and 'Community Benefits'.

The key achievements of the project and their supply chain partners include:

- The project provided opportunities for a total of 16 apprentices through the construction phase of the project across a wide range of trades
- The project delivered a total of 79 training courses providing workforce development opportunities for 16 employees totalling to 1103 training hours
- Work placements were provided for 11 students from Lancaster and Morecambe College
- A total of £4.45 million was spent with local Lancashire based businesses, representing 55% of construction spend, which was retained within the local economy
- 2 'Meet the Builder' sessions for students from Lancaster and Morecombe College
- Nursery School visit to view the diggers alongside school engagement activity delivered to support the local community

In addition to delivering a range of local economic benefits the project also delivered additional sustainability and environmental benefits both in the construction phase and on into the operational phase including:

- Materials – all timber used certified under the Forest Stewardship Council, all carpets from at least 57% recycled material with 100% of paints supplied with an Environmental Product Declaration
- Waste – at least 90% of construction waste was recycled or diverted from landfill with recycling bins provided throughout the building



- Renewable energy – 50 square metre of solar panels fitted to the roof generating clean electricity.


This approach is also generating positive results across several City Deal projects including the Preston Western Distribution project and the D'urton Lane residential development. The Skills Hub continue to work Wilmott Dixon and L&Q/Trafford Housing Trust, to develop and deliver an ambitious social value programme for the D'Urton Lane development.

In addition to a range of positive outputs already generated on the project which include:

- 4 Local Employment Opportunities
- 2 Weeks Work Placement
- 6 Careers Information Sessions
- 207 Pupils Engaged
- 7 Apprenticeship Opportunities
- Series of Preston College Masterclasses

The project team are working with an extensive range of local partners to realise their social value offering including Preston's College, Inspira, Preston City Council, DWP, Calico, Procure Plus.

On the community front the project team are currently working with the Intact Community Centre to build a Sensory Garden and install fencing and Trafford Housing Trust have established a longer-term partnership to support the centre going forward.

	<p>Skilled & Productive Workforce: working with business to drive up skills in Lancashire's workforce to boost productivity, in-line with the needs of Lancashire's growth pillars.</p>
<p>Priority 1</p>	<p>Technical Education Vision: Apprenticeships aligned with business needs, alongside growth in higher level and degree Apprenticeships</p>
<p>Apprenticeship Action Plan</p> <p>The Skills Hub have been promoting the Lancashire Apprenticeship Service to different audiences including face to face with Lancashire's businesses community, business intermediaries, the Health and Social Care sector, at business expos, and through the Boost Growth Hub and partners.</p> <p>The Lancashire Apprenticeship service is made up of several projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lancashire Skills Pledge – Take on an Apprentice with wraparound business support • Lancashire Apprenticeship Ambassador Network • Lancashire Engaging Apprenticeships Programme (LEAP) • Lancashire Levy Transfer Network • Apprenticeship Grants <p>The projects are led and delivered by a collaboration of organisations in Lancashire who offer funded support to businesses to recruit Apprentices and support Apprentices to complete and progress. Partners include the Lancashire Work Based Learning Forum, UCLan and Inspira.</p>	



The Employer Apprenticeship Toolkit has been refreshed and published alongside an information leaflet to help businesses who have taken on young people through Kickstart placements to support progression to Apprenticeships.

Part of the Lancashire Apprenticeship Service is the Lancashire Levy Transfer Network. Since its launch in June of this year the network has transferred £44,000 of levy to date. This money has directly funded Apprentices in Lancashire.

Priority 2

Reskilling & Upskilling the current workforce – with focus on digital skills to support technology adoption and the growth pillars

Reskill and upskill the Lancashire workforce

The range of skills offers to the Lancashire businesses has expanded. The Skills Hub, working with the Employer Skills Forum has developed a support document to help employers understand the funded programmes available to them, so they can decide which would be best suited to their business. This is accessible through the Project Directory on the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub website;

<https://www.lancashireskillshub.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Lancashire-Employer-Facing-Offer-Updated-draft-October-2021-002-2-Copy.pdf>

The existing ESF programmes have continued to adapt where relevant to meet changing needs of Lancashire businesses. For example, the Skills Support for the Workforce programme has developed the digital skills offer, in-line with feedback and intelligence from employers. The project also includes a focus on low carbon skills provision.

Redundancy Task Force

The Redundancy Task Force continues to meet. It was envisaged that there would be a significant increase in demand for support for businesses and their employees as furlough came to an end, however this has not materialised, and anecdotal feedback suggests that most employees have gone back to work. Data regarding claimants continues to be monitored to review impact.

Priority 3

Leadership & Management capacity in SMEs

Within the ESIF programme a number of the projects deliver training focused on leadership and management including Team Leading, Leadership and Management qualifications and other provision to support Leaders and Managers in their roles. Further information about these programmes can be found in the support document referenced above.

Priority 4

Healthy Workplaces

The Building Blocks project part of the Business Health Matters Portfolio of projects has now been launched. Supported by ESF funding, the Workplace Health Champion Training project aims to train 5,000 Workplace Health Champions in SMEs across Lancashire to boost health and well-being in the workplace and improve productivity.



Informed Approach: taking an evidence-based approach to identifying the skills and employment issues facing Lancashire's businesses and industries, prioritising and influencing locally and nationally, and working with partners to identify best practice.

Skills Advisory Panels – Local Skills Report

The Skills Advisory Panel Programme Team in DfE have updated Local Skills Report guidance in light of the Local Skills Improvement Plan trailblazer announcements. It has been agreed that due to Lancashire having a Local Skills Improvement Plan trailblazer, the awaited publication of the Greater Lancashire Plan, and the impending Government policy announcements, the Lancashire SAP will update the Labour Market Information annexe and Case Studies but will not refresh the Local Skills Report. This will be reviewed in spring 2022.

Evidence Base

The Evidence Base page on the Skills Hub website, which is open source, now includes an interactive data dashboard for partners, in addition to the LMI Toolkit. The page has received over 2,035 visits, from the start of the 1st April 2021 until 1st October 2021, compared to 1,484 views in the same period last year, showing the value and impact of the new approach. The evidence base will continue to evolve in line with partners and stakeholder feedback, utilising the SAP grant. The Evidence Base page can be viewed here: <https://www.lancshireskillshub.co.uk/our-people/evidence-base/>

Data Intelligence Stakeholder Briefings

Joseph Mount, Skills and Economic Intelligence Officer, has held stakeholder data intelligence briefings with a variety of stakeholders including FE Colleges, Sixth Forms, Universities, Local Authorities, ESF contract deliverers across the LEP area to provide analytical insight into their respective Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs), business base, skills base, demand for skills, and sector forecasts. This information has been well received by all involved. Key organisations were able to take away their own bespoke interactive data dashboard to refer to and explore insights further with colleagues.

A stakeholder survey is now being devised to understand how the evidence base is valued, how it is being used, and what impact the data has had to informing stakeholder delivery plans, bids and curriculum.

Cross cutting tools

Skills Pledge

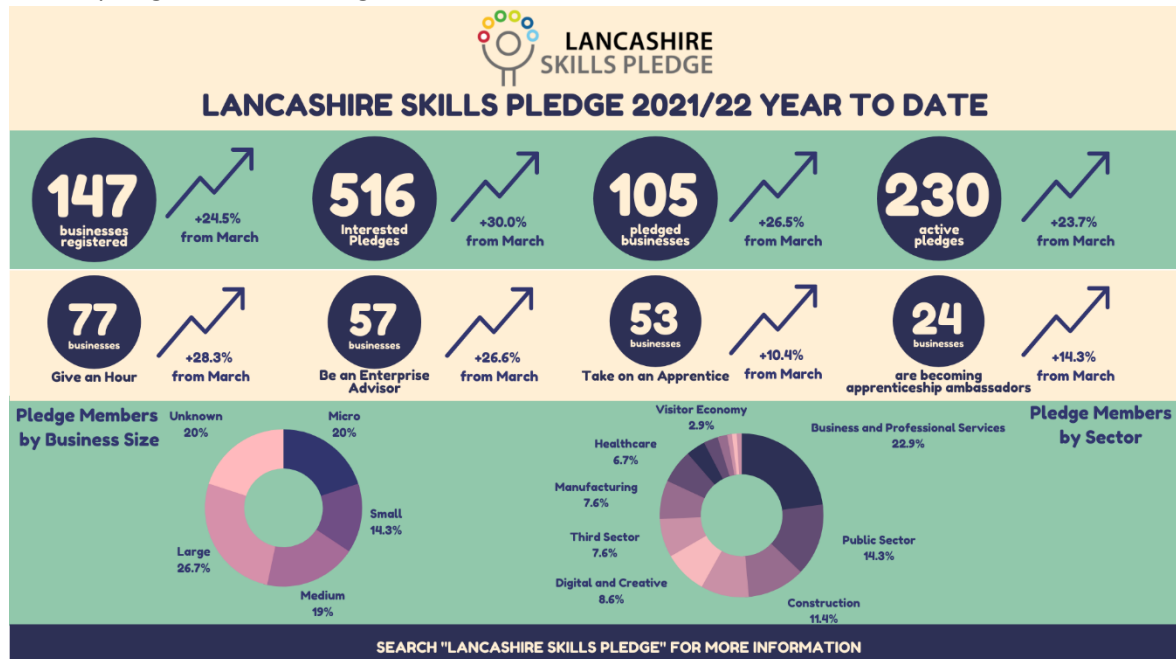
The Lancashire Skills Pledge provides businesses with one door to find out more about Lancashire's key skills and training initiatives. The Skills Pledge also provides recognition to businesses, private, public and third sector, who inspire, recruit and upskill the people of Lancashire.

The Lancashire Colleges became a Skill Pledge Partner in September and now manage the Work Experience and Industry Placements pledge which links to Lancashire's colleges.

Skills Pledge membership has increased by 26.5% to 105 businesses and the number of active pledges has grown to 230, an increase of over 23% since the end of March 2021. The "Be an Enterprise Advisor" pledge has grown strongly, and is now the second most popular pledge, after "Give an Hour".



Skills Pledge Members are well spread across the spectrum in terms of size of businesses, with 20% of pledge members being Micro SMEs.



www.SkillsforWork.info

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. As of the 1st October 2021, the website has received 17,565 views (an additional 2,000 since May 2021), with in excess of 5,600 views to the 16-24 page. There were also almost 3,000 external links clicked through to support on partner sites.

Twitter

As of 20th October 2021, Twitter followers had increased by 135 followers since May 2021, making our total number of followers 3,053.

Department for Digital Culture Media and Sport (DCMS): Evaluation of Local Digital Skills Partnerships

The DCMS have worked with Amion Consulting to evaluate the first six Local Digital Skills Partnerships. The paper was launched at the Leeds Digital Festival in September. The report is very positive about the benefits of a Local Digital Skills Partnership.

“The evaluation found that more digital skills activity had been delivered over a shorter time period in areas with a DSP when compared to three areas without a DCMS-funded Local DSP. Consultees also stated that the quality of delivery had been enhanced through greater involvement of businesses in steering activity taken forward by the Local DSPs.” The full report is available on-line: [Local DSP Evaluation report](#)

In addition, DCMS working with Steer, have also published an evaluation of the UK’s Regional Digital Ecosystems. The Lancashire Digital Skills Partnership and local businesses such as Miralis contributed to this work. The full report is available on-line: [Digital Ecosystems report.](#)



Fast Track Digital Workforce Fund

A full evaluation of the Fast Track Fund is yet to be published by DCMS, however the Lancashire Digital Skills Partnership has commissioned Amion Consulting to undertake a qualitative evaluation of the project with Lancashire employers and providers. The evaluation has supported the Skills Hub response to the DfE's consultation on the National Skills Fund. This document is shared in the papers of this meeting and will be discussed further on the agenda.

Lancashire Digital Economy Report 2021

LCC Digital Lead, Maya Ellis, has led on an inward investment focused piece of work that combines existing research, including that of the Lancashire Digital Skills Partnership, to showcase the digital sector in the county. This will become an annual piece of work funded by LCC.

This is the link to the press release regarding the publication

<https://investinlancashire.com/2021/10/04/lancashires-digital-dividend/> and a copy can be downloaded here: <https://investinlancashire.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/2021-Digital-Economy-Report-Download.pdf>

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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N/A

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A