



**LEP – Sub Committee**

**LEP - Lancashire Skills and Employment Board**

**Private and Confidential: NO**

**Date:** Thursday, 2 March 2023

**Update from the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub and Partners**

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**Executive Summary**


This paper provides an overview of activity since the last formal committee meeting in December 2022.

**Recommendation**



The Lancashire Skills and Employment Board are asked to note the updates contained within the report.

**Background**


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. Key successes and risks are summarised, with a fuller update on the following pages.

Theme	Highlights - Successes	Risks
<b>Future Workforce</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- bid to Careers and Enterprise Company successful for Lancashire Teacher Encounters (of the workplace and apprenticeships)</li> <li>- LMI Board Games printed and distributed to schools, developed in partnership with the Cornerstone Employer group</li> <li>- sustained and improved progress against the Gatsby Benchmarks across the Careers Hub in schools and colleges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Funds committed by DfE to the CEC for Careers Hubs only until August 2023</li> <li>-ESF projects completing, withdrawing support for at risk / NEET young people. There will be limited support for those aged 16-18, such as The Prince’s Trust Teams, but much less than for the last six years. Feedback on UKSPF awaited – small number of Local Authorities intending on investing</li> </ul>




	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- sustained 3 year sponsorship of Create Education and Innovate Her by BAE Systems</li> <li>- securing of Cyber Local funds for projects aligned with the priorities of the National Cyber Force People and Skills Group</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Inclusive Workforce</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DfE have awarded the Lancashire Skills Hub £3m for Wave 4 of Skills Bootcamps</li> <li>- 20 asylum seekers enrolled onto Skills Bootcamps with one provider, with additional face to face support</li> <li>- COMF funds have been secured for the Digital Freedoms programme, which will enable digital devices and skills to be provided to 700-900 disadvantaged residents, so that residents are better able to engage digitally and remotely with health care services</li> <li>- Social Value outputs achieved through the Preston Western Distributor project</li> <li>- the Skills Hub attended a visit of the new DWP Director General to Pendle YES (Youth) Hub. There was discussion about loss of ESF funding and a willingness for DWP to fund specific interventions for those claiming Universal Credit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-ESF employability projects are due to close leaving minimal support for the rising number of inactive residents in Lancashire. Feedback on UKSPF awaited – several Local Authorities intending on investing</li> <li>-Skills Bootcamp recruitment for Wave 3 provision – movement of targets across providers to achieve 2022/23 target</li> </ul>
<p><b>Skilled &amp; Productive Workforce</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-23 Young Apprenticeship Grants awarded and young people employed</li> <li>- Lancashire (Apprenticeship) Levy Transfer Network successful in transferring £546,270 to 22 organisations</li> <li>- Multiply launched, provision commissioned, and delivery commencing</li> <li>- further funds secured for the Embrace Digital programme via the Rural Prosperity Fund, to boost digital skills of rural businesses</li> <li>- Leading Lancashire celebration with providers of the ESF project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ESF projects that support businesses will wind down over 2023 leaving a gap in provision. Feedback on UKSPF awaited – several Local Authorities intending on investing but from Year 3 (2024/25)</li> <li>- business engagement has proved difficult (covid recovery and economic climate). Reprofiles submitted for some projects which will reduce funds and outcomes – with unspent funds going back to government</li> <li>- Multiply delivery has started across Lancashire, however</li> </ul>



		there is only 2 months to deliver significant activity if Year 1 funds are to be maximised
<b>Informed Approach</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- sessions booked to provide 11 colleges with tailored LMI sessions to support their curriculum design, business planning and accountability agreements.</li><li>- 3 events to be delivered at the end of February to give Careers Professionals the latest Lancashire local Labour Market Intelligence, including findings from the recently published Food and Agriculture sector study, portal careers resources, and forecasting for low carbon jobs</li><li>- successful Lancashire Skills Pledge celebration with PR and social media coverage which has resulted in new employers signing up</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Chamber contribution agreed from LSIP to Lancashire Skills Hub to support with data purchases. The agreement is for the duration of their funding, though is less than it used to be from the DfE's Skills Advisory Panel grant</li></ul>



	<p><b>Future Workforce:</b> 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.</p>					
<p><b>Priority 1</b></p>	<p><b>Careers Hub: Excellent careers provision underpinned by Labour Market Intelligence (LMI)</b></p>					
<p><b>Lancashire Careers Hub</b></p> <p>The Careers Hub has secured funding from the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) to deliver 30 teacher encounters with employers. The one-day placements will be organised by EBP NW and enable teachers to spend one day with an employer to find out more about Apprenticeships as well as develop links from the workplace to curriculum.</p> <p>The LMI Board Games which were developed in conjunction with the Cornerstone Employers have now been distributed to all schools and launched this past term. The games are designed to give young people an understanding of their local labour market and the opportunities and pathways that are available to them in work and education, as well as future opportunities in Lancashire. Feedback has been excellent with one Alternative Provision Careers Leader stating: “I had an after-school session with a year 10 pupil so tried it out. It was easy to play, the clear format meant he understood it straightway. It worked really well and encouraged conversation on local opportunities and options.”</p> <p>Following the success of ‘Portal’ and the LMI Board Games, funding has been received to develop both resources for SEND Schools and Colleges. The resources will be available at the end of March and piloted during the summer term.</p> <p>The Careers Hub is working in collaboration with colleges to deliver sector-based workplace visits for schools. The main aims of these events are to enable school pupils to experience high quality workplace visits alongside sector-based workshops. The model builds on the successful LCC funded Food and Agriculture project in West Lancashire which enabled pupils to visit a range of employers and take part in sector-based activities at the college.</p> <p>The Cornerstone Employers are driving the integration of the CEC Employer Standards, focusing on the delivery of a structured, coordinated, and planned careers offer as an employer group. Influencing the school curriculum and working collaboratively to raise awareness of sector-based career opportunities are priorities. Business networks remain engaged in their partnership agreements, which have targets to engage members in the Lancashire Skills Pledge and the Careers Hub pledges.</p>						
	<table border="1"> <tr> <th colspan="2" data-bbox="798 1883 1396 1962"> <b>Careers Hub Total 2022/23 (Based on January CEC data)</b> </th> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="798 1962 1117 2027"> <p><b>Target %</b></p> </td> <td data-bbox="1117 1962 1396 2027"> <p><b>Actual %</b></p> </td> </tr> </table>		<b>Careers Hub Total 2022/23 (Based on January CEC data)</b>		<p><b>Target %</b></p>	<p><b>Actual %</b></p>
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<p><b>Target %</b></p>	<p><b>Actual %</b></p>					



<b>Enterprise Advisers matched to schools</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>96%</b>
<b>Gatsby BM 1 (Careers Plan)</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>83%</b>
<b>Gatsby BM 5 (Employer Encounters)</b>	<b>Sustained Progress Baseline July 22- 76%</b>	<b>82%</b>
<b>Gatsby BM 6 (Experiences of the Workplace)</b>	<b>Sustained Progress Baseline July 22- 50%</b>	<b>64%</b>
<b>Average BMs (against the 8)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6.10</b>

Performance against target in Lancashire continues to be above the national average, with further progress anticipated over the academic year to July 2023.

<b>Priority 2</b>	<b>Technical Education Vision: roll out of T levels &amp; progression pathways to higher technical qualifications</b>
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### **T Level Rollout**

The first dedicated T Level Day was celebrated as part of Apprenticeship Week, with events and social media from the Lancashire Colleges. From September 2023, 20 of the 22 T Levels available will be offered in Lancashire Colleges, with Animal Care also from 2024. The only one not planned to be offered yet is Accountancy – although Finance is offered.

### **Technical Education Vision**

The Technical Education Vision is currently being refreshed with a progress report, which will include a range of case studies collected from providers which highlights collaborative working with businesses. It is intended that the progress report be published shortly.

<b>Priority 3</b>	<b>Digital Workforce of the future</b>
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### **TeenTech Live**

TeenTech is currently being promoted to schools, who are signing up to both the online event and in-person events. The present focus is on recruiting the employer and university staff who can deliver activities. We have a number already committed including Oracle who have also pledged £5,000 to sponsor the event.

### **BAE Systems' sponsored programme with InnovateHer and Create Education**

BAE are committing to three-year agreements with InnovateHer and Create Education to continue the activity in Lancashire. This is excellent in terms of sustaining activities which inspire young people about digital, tech and cyber careers. More details on this will be released soon.



**CEC Hub Incubation Project: Digital Futures**

Digital Futures aims to assess the impact of high quality, locally tailored STEM related careers activities delivered at varying intensities and young females' subsequent interest in Computer Science GCSE and digital careers.

All activity with schools has been completed as of January 2023. The evaluation phase, led by CEC is now underway. Once this has been completed a feedback event will be planned to disseminate findings.

**DCMS (Department of Culture, Media, and Sport) Cybersecurity – Cyber Local Funding**

In December and January, the Lancashire Digital Skills Partnership (LDSP) ran a short process, in consultation with the LDSP Steering Group, to identify four projects to put forward to DCMS for consideration for funding from the Cyber Local funding programme. The process identified four priority areas and the proposals that have been successful to-date are:

1. **Cyber Fairy Tales** – building on the success of the Engineering Fairy Tales resources used in primary schools, STEMFirst are devising a cyber fairy tale resource that will be tested in a small number of primary schools in March and April. The resources will be based on a clever variation of the Hansel and Gretel story and will be an escape room type experience.
2. **Cyber Careers** – CompTIA will be scoping what careers information and guidance is available presently on cyber careers and specifically NCF careers. The project will make suggestions on options for next steps on how Lancashire can best present opportunities for cyber careers within and outside of NCF to Lancashire residents, building on existing resources. CompTIA have also asked them to scope feasibility and costs of a diagnostic tool that residents could enter skills, interests and experience to match towards a cyber career.
3. **TeenTech** – This event will have a cyber and digital theme and will be sponsored through this funding stream (alongside the Oracle funding).

**National Cyber Force (NCF) - People and Skills Workstream Group**

The stakeholder group continues to meet to develop a plan to accelerate the growth of a digital, tech and cyber talent pipeline which will meet the demands of NCF and the wider ecosystem, in line with the recently published LEP (Lancashire Enterprise Partnership) Digital Strategy, which is aligned with the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework. At the last meeting, which took place at GCHQ in Cheltenham, a number of task and finish groups were agreed to take forward identified priorities for the group. A more in-depth update will be provided at the committee meeting.

**Priority 4**

**Supporting Young People who are NEET (not in employment, education, or training) to reengage with learning and work**

**ESF Moving On Project and Invest in Youth**

The European Social Fund (ESF) Moving On project, accountable body Preston College, has now reached 5,457 young people, with 3,153 young people to-date in



positive destinations, with others still on programme. Characteristics of these learners show that 69% have low basic skills (below GCSE grade 4) and 61% have emotional or behavioural issues. The project has now stopped taking starts as the project is due to close in March – the project is completing activity with current participants.

Invest In Youth, accountable body Selnet, had supported 1,577 young people as of December 2022. The project targets 16-24 year olds who are hardest to reach and further away from the labour market; 512 have moved into positive destinations so far, which exceeds the targets for this project.

There will be less provision available to young people at risk of or NEET because of the closure of the ESF programme. The Skills Hub is working with the unitary and district councils to influence and map provision that will be funded via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) however NEET is not deemed a priority in every area. An update will be provided at the meeting as a meeting will be taking place with the authorities between the writing of this paper and the committee meeting.


### **Strategic Meetings**

The Lancashire Youth Steering Group and the Lancashire Post-16 Officers Group (with local authority representatives) continue to meet, sharing practice in NEET prevention and supporting local authorities to build NEET strategies, working with the Careers Hub and the Skills Hub. Team representatives are involved in strategic meetings in Blackpool which are a legacy of the Opportunity Area and will continue working under the new levelling up arrangements.

The team is also supporting the development of the Morecambe Bay Curriculum with a range of partners and will be supporting the embedding of Social Value, which will provide added value from the Eden Project through construction to live operating stages.

The Skills Hub attended a visit of the new DWP Director General to Pendle YES (Youth) Hub. There was discussion about loss of ESF funding and a willingness for DWP to fund specific interventions for those claiming Universal Credit.



	<p><b>Inclusive Workforce:</b> 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><b>Priority 1</b></p>	<p><b>Boost employability &amp; skills of unemployed &amp; inactive, &amp; support journey into work, particularly in disadvantaged areas</b></p>
<p><b>Strategic Partnership Manager – Adults</b> The Skills Hub has appointed a new Strategic Partnership Manager, Lauren Capstick following the promotion of Sara Gaskell to Skills Hub Manager. Lauren has a wealth of experience in partnership working in the skills and employment arena. The post continues to be funded via G4S through the Restart Programme and deployed to the Skills Hub.</p> <p><b>ESF</b> A few of the ESF projects will continue to take on starts until September 2023, supporting unemployed and economic inactive on their journey into work. Up to the end of December 2022 the projects had worked with almost 30,000 Lancashire residents out of which, to-date, approximately 30% have gone into a positive destination.</p> <p>As previously there is a risk to provision going forwards, as the ESF programme closes and the transition to UKSPF is undertaken. Mapping work is being undertaken with the unitary and district authorities – with some buying into pan-Lancashire projects, others commissioning locally and some not prioritising provision for economically inactive.</p> <p><b>Escalate</b> Escalate, the online referral tool, was launched shortly after the start of the ESF programme to enable referral agencies to effectively search live projects that support people into work. Whilst the system has been well-used, searches have dropped since October 2022, with 82 visits from referral agencies since 01/10/2022. The Skills Hub has started to work with partners to update their offers on the system and to encourage new offers to be added. This activity has several challenges including the introduction of the UKSPF and the lack of current details on the offers. Information will continue to be updated on the system and accumulate in a relaunch of the system once the UKSPF offers have been added.</p> <p><b>The Adult Skills Forum</b> The Adult Skills Forum continues to meet and has expanded in numbers to include those providers who were previously represented by lead bodies including Selnet for example. These partners have been included as some will be supporting a local SPF offer or intend to deliver inactivity/unemployment provision by self-funding their offer. All new partners are asked to update Escalate with their offers. The Adult Skills Forum partners are supporting the Economic Inactivity research (more details under Informed Approach) with the offer of venues where participants can be interviewed to inform the research.</p>	





## Plan for Jobs

**The Jets** (Job Entry Targeted Support) programme started in 2020 in response to COVID 19, supporting participants who required a light touch support to gain employment. The project has performed well. Currently the programme in Lancashire has placed 6,142 participants into work. The project is ending in March 2023.

**WHP** (Work and Health Programme) is targeted at claimants with health conditions and/or disabilities and was originally a 5-year programme which commenced in 2017, however a further 2 years extension has been agreed with DWP (Department for Work and Pensions). Currently the programme in Lancashire has placed 4,344 participants into work. In the last month they have placed 80 participants across Lancashire into employment. They are now looking at self-referrals to complement those referred from Job Centre Plus.

Since the start of the **Restart** programme in April 2021, there have been 11,329 referrals made from DWP with 79% of these progressing into starts (8,968). The highest number of referrals have been received from Blackburn, Blackpool, Preston, Nelson, and Burnley JCP offices.

There have been 3,076 overall (2695 initial) Job Starts (34%) and 1,428 sustainable Job Outcomes (15%) to-date. Partners are noting that, since the eligibility onto the contract has widened, some participants who are further away from the labour market are taking longer to progress into sustainable employment. To note the prime, G4S has consistently achieved all DWP Customer Service Standards and are the first lead body nationally to achieve green consistently.



Priority 2	Sector specific initiatives targeted at areas with labour market demand
<p><b>Health Care Roadshow Number 3</b></p> <p>The Lancashire Skills Hub team have been working to support the Care sector with a further Health Care Road show planned to take place in Preston on the 7th of March. Care providers and the NHS will be present at the event to advertise their vacancies, offer interviews and where possible make offers of employment to those attending. Restart, ESF providers and DWP colleagues will be signposting residents to the event.</p> <p><b>Skills Bootcamps</b></p> <p>The Skills Hub was successful in securing funds from the DfE for wave 4 (budget year 2023/24). The DfE have granted £2.1 million (70%) in the interim with a further £900,000 to be allocated once the DfE have received their full funding allocation, which brings the total amount awarded to £3 million for Wave 4. A Grant Offer Letter (GOL) for the lower amount has been received and it is anticipated that the revised offer will be sent within the next month, prior to the evaluation and awarding of contracts. Funds will be allocated via contract extensions with existing providers who are performing well and through an open procurement process.</p> <p>Two Engagement events were held, one face to face and one on-line, to launch the Invitation to Tender (ITT) for prospective providers for 23/24. The priority areas for Lancashire for this wave were shared at the last meeting and have been put into Lots: Digital, Creative and Technology, Green Skills, Construction, Health Care, Logistics and Other. The deadline for tenders is the 14<sup>th</sup> March 2023, with view to awarding contracts towards the end of April.</p> <p>In terms of progress against Wave 3, four providers are confident that they will achieve their profiled learner starts, with two behind target. The starts have been distributed to the other four providers. One of the providers has enrolled 20 asylum seekers onto their bootcamps, who are benefiting from extra face to face sessions to assist with any language barriers. A breakdown of the characteristics of the learners is provided below, in-line with the request for further information from committee members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>7% participants are over 50</li><li>48% white British</li><li>50% BAME</li><li>2% preferred not to say</li><li>23% female</li><li>74% male</li><li>41% stated that they were in employment and looking to upskill</li><li>40% unemployed</li><li>4% had not been working due to caring/long term sick</li><li>25% of those not working were claiming Universal credit</li><li>7% self-employed</li><li>2% were retired</li></ul>	



45% were L5 and below  
42% were level 6 and above  
5% chose not to declare

**Pre-Bootcamp – Tech Discovery**

In April, a pre-bootcamp programme designed to explain the different types of digital roles available in the tech sector and beyond will be trialled with CompTIA. This four-week course will help participants gain a short CompTIA qualification as well as experience careers talks from local tech talent on their roles. It will be targeted at underrepresented groups such as women and ethnic minority groups and will give participants the underlying knowledge needed and confidence to make an informed choice on other bootcamp provision or seek introductory roles in Tech. It builds on an early iteration of this programme piloted during the Fast Track project with GMCA.

**Priority 3**

**Raise digital inclusion**

**Digital Freedoms**

The Skills Hub has been successful in securing £200,000 of COMF (COVID Outbreak Management Funding) from Lancashire County Council to build on the successful Digital Freedoms 50+ project with a focus this time on access to health care information, so that residents are better able to engage digitally and remotely with health care services. Selnet will again take the lead for this work in partnership with the LDSP and libraries. The project will begin imminently and will start by building the network of local community and voluntary sector groups who will identify those in need, deliver the gifted device and give the necessary skills support. We are aiming to support between 700-900 people in the LCC area. The library team will be working with the Good Things Foundation's Databank to supplement the data costs of the programme using the National Data Bank.

**Priority 4**

**Embed social value in commissioning, procurement and planning processes**

**Preston Western Distributor – end of Year 3 update**

The Preston Western Distributor (PWD) project has generated local social and economic benefits for both businesses and people through supply chain, employment and training opportunities through Social Value commitments. In summary, at the end of year 3, the project had generated the following outputs:

- £75m cumulative spend with suppliers within 25 miles of the project.
- 58% local labour utilisation on site
- A total of ten apprentices have worked on the project
- T-Level curriculum support and work placements for 11 Preston College students
- School engagement activities delivered at Our Lady’s Catholic High School
- £30,250 in donations to residents and organisations
- £40,189 in charitable fundraising in total across the project
- The project has provided opportunities for 18 ex-military members of the team



- The project has created employment opportunities for 3 individuals categorised as not in education, employment or training (NEET)

The project is now beginning to come an end with the PWD due to open in Spring 2023. As such the project team has begun to reduce and no further social value commitments have been made. They will continue to support existing engaged schools with mentoring and Mock Interviews in Quarter 1 of 2023.

### **D'Urton Lane Development Social Value Programme**

The Skills Hub continues to work with Wilmott Dixon and L&Q/Trafford Housing Trust, to deliver the social value programme for the D'Urton Lane development. The programme will deliver 248 new 2, 3 and 4-bedroom homes in Preston

To date the project has generated a wide range of positive social value outcomes for the local community including:

- 13 new jobs created across steel fixing, joinery, labouring, gatekeeping, cleaning, document control, engineering, trainee management, and groundworks
- 4 Kickstart positions created for Preston based NEETs
- 141 apprentice/ trainee weeks across Quantity Surveying, Groundworks and Brickwork
- 17 work experience weeks for Veterans, Graduates, Colleges Students & NEETs
- 22 Construction Careers Information, Advice & Guidance sessions provided to 298 young local people, including sessions with Preston Muslim High School for Girls
- 2 Social Enterprises contracted as part of the project Supply Chain (Recycling Lives and Footprints)

There is still circa 18 months remaining on the programme and it is anticipated that Wilmott Dixon will continue to deliver a strong range of activities to support social value.

### **Future Activity**

A two-stage workshop was recently held focusing on identifying and planning for the Social Value benefits that can be leveraged from the South Lancaster Growth Catalyst scheme. The session concluded with a social value benefits prioritisation process with a range of stakeholders feeding into the discussion.



	<p><b>Skilled &amp; Productive Workforce:</b> 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><b>Priority 1</b></p>	<p><b>Technical Education Vision: Apprenticeships aligned with business needs, alongside growth in higher level and degree Apprenticeships</b></p>
<p><b>Lancashire Young Apprenticeships Grants</b> At the beginning of 2023, the LCC funded Young Apprenticeship Grants were extended from solely advanced manufacturing to other sectors including digital, media, PR and marketing. The grant is a £3,000 incentive to recruit Apprentices who are 16-24 years old.</p> <p>To date twenty-three young people have been employed, and fourteen businesses financially supported through the grant. In addition to those fourteen employers, the Skills Hub is engaged with another thirty businesses to help educate and promote the use of apprenticeships for specific roles. These discussions will continue with more grant awards in due course.</p> <p><b>Additional NWAAN Funding</b> The Northwest Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network have provided five grants to complement the scheme, which have been issued to four Lancashire businesses to either employ career changers or to upskill older employees.</p> <p><b>The Lancashire Apprenticeship Action Plan</b> The plan is due for a refresh in 2023. The Skills Hub will bring together partners to firstly review the data, conduct a SWOT analysis, identify the highlights and then formulate a refreshed plan. The Data Cube is now available for the end of the contract year and will be used to support this activity. A highlight of the existing plan is the establishment of the Lancashire Levy Transfer Network which has been successful in transferring £546,270 to 22 organisations to support over 60 Apprentices.</p> <p>The Skills Hub took part in a Lancashire Business View roundtable regarding the benefits of Apprenticeships to businesses and provided an article for the January/February magazine, as part of the build-up to National Apprenticeship Week.</p>	
<p><b>Priority 2</b></p>	<p><b>Reskilling &amp; Upskilling the current workforce – with focus on digital skills to support technology adoption and the growth pillars</b></p>



### ESF Provision

The Skills Hub continues to work with providers to ensure that employer facing provision meets the current and future needs of businesses. From the start of the ESF provision until the end of December 2022 the projects had engaged with over 3,700 Businesses and supported/upskilled over 22,500 employees. Evaluations of projects are currently being undertaken.

As previously there is a risk to provision going forwards, as the ESF programme closes and the transition to UKSPF is undertaken, particularly as People and Skills activity aimed at businesses is only eligible from Year 3 (2024/25) - the last year of the current UKSPF programme.

### Multiply

Multiply is the DfE funded programme, which forms part of the UKSPF, which aims to improve the numeracy skills of adults with less than a Level 2 (GCSE) equivalent in Maths. On the 18th of January, the Skills Hub Team facilitated a successful stakeholders engagement event to launch the Multiply offer across Lancashire, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool. Over 60 people attended and offered to actively support the promotion of Multiply within their networks. LCC have supplied a Communications Toolkit to support this activity.

The first Lancashire wide Community of Practice event was held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023 with 22 Multiply Partners from across the 14 districts in attendance. The group explored the successes and challenges around recruitment and delivery, with an emphasis on maximising the delivery of Multiply this financial year.

The Skills Hub is overseeing delivery in the LCC area, with support from the External Investment team. Delivery partners include: WEA (Community Grants programme), Inspira, PHX Training and The Lancashire College group (with Preston College as accountable body). Partners have been extremely busy recruiting, setting up processes and systems, developing provision and undertaking recruitment activity. The first-year target is challenging – with Investment Plans being signed off by DfE in September, and grants awarded in October. DfE have indicated that funds cannot be rolled forward year on year during the three-year programme.

Forecasts provided against the grant funding agreements for 2022/23 indicated a £417,478 underspend and 282 less outputs. The difference in the main is attributed to The Lancashire College group due to challenges regarding setting up the systems, recruitment of staff and initiating delivery. However, funds of £77,036 have been reallocated to WEA with an agreed target of 116 outputs for the voluntary and community projects, reducing the underspend. The current forecasts are provided below:

	Target	Sept-Dec 22 Actual/ Committed	Jan-Mar 23 Forecasts from Providers	Target	Difference
<b>Starts</b>	2,602	103	2,333	2,436	-166
<b>Costs</b>	£1,554,203	£296,445	£917,316	£1,213,760	- £340,442
<b>Admin</b>	£177,360	£103,790	£73,570	£177,360	£0



LCC are investing funds in a Marketing Campaign due to go live in the next couple of weeks, which complements the National Multiply Campaign. This includes a range of activities from bus stop displays, radio, social media and business engagement through activity with Lancashire Business View.

**Embrace Digital Lancashire**

Following on from the success of this programme funded by the Community Renewal Fund, further funding has been found from the Rural Prosperity Fund to continue the training and one-to-one offer. This time it is focused on supporting business in rural locations. Further details can be found here: <https://emmavgray.co.uk/embrace-digital-lancashire-rural/>

**Lancashire Cyber Alliance (LCA)**

The second in a series of networking events organised by the LDSP and partners took place in January at the AMRC NW, Samlesbury. The theme for this event was Cyber Security in Manufacturing with the speakers including Deyrick Allen (MD at IoT Horizon based in Rossendale) and Rich Grant (MD at Milliamp based in Lancaster). Zain Javed (Mitigate Cyber based in Lancaster) and Kerry Harrison (Lead for the LDSP) hosted the event. The morning was well attended despite the snow and ice and received excellent feedback from attendees. The next event takes place on the 20<sup>th</sup> April at a location to be confirmed in the East Lancashire area and bookings can be made [here](#).

**Priority 3**

**Leadership & Management capacity in SMEs**

A celebration event for ‘Leading Lancashire’ was hosted by UCLan in December, accountable body for the project, which was funded via ESF. The project aimed to boost leadership and management skills across the Growth Pillars, with a focus on succession planning and supporting more women to progress to senior roles. Dr Michele Lawty-Jones spoke at the event, which also included input from the providers. The consortium of providers included UCLan, Edge Hill University, Blackburn College, Myerscough College, Preston College, Burnley College, East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce and the Skills Construction Centre, and together they provided leadership and management provision to over 2,700 learners, of which 60% were female. It was a pleasure to hear about how the programme has built the confidence, skills and resilience of our future leaders, and how the providers have worked collaboratively, shared good practice and adopted creative and innovative approaches to delivery during the pandemic.

**Priority 4**

**Healthy Workplaces**

The ESF funded ‘Building Blocks’ project, part of the Business Health Matters initiative, aims to support the mental health and wellbeing of the employees in Lancashire businesses. The project delivers basic skills training, Level 2 and Level 3 Workplace Health Champion qualifications to employees in SMEs across Lancashire and is one of the programmes continuing into 2023. As of end of December 2022, 124 employers had engaged in the programme, with 316 employees benefiting from training. A You-Tube video is available for businesses to



find out about the programme: [Workplace Health Champions \(ESF\) - Business Health Matters](#)

As reported at the last meeting a project change request has been submitted for this project to reduce the outputs and funding and the outcome of this is still awaited from the DWP Managing Authority, due to the challenge in recruiting businesses to the programme.





**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.

### **Evidence Base**

The open-source Evidence Base page on the Skills Hub website has received more than 1,350 visits, from the start of December 2022 until mid-February 2023. The pages have been redesigned to make the online evidence dashboard front and centre, and previous publications have been categorised into new "Reports" and "Archive" tabs. The evidence base will continue to evolve in line with stakeholder feedback over the coming months. The Evidence Base page can be viewed here: <https://www.lancashireskillshub.co.uk/our-people/evidence-base/>

### **Cambridge Econometrics Local Economy Forecasting Model (LEFM)**

To support the development of Lancashire 2050, and due to the fast-changing economic situation nationally, the Lancashire Skills Hub invested in a refresh of the forecasting data which has been analysed and supplied to all Local Authority Economic Development teams. This refresh has been completed, with additional layers of analysis created to understand how recent economic developments are projected to change Lancashire's growth prospects through to 2050. The revised scenario reflects a stronger than expected labour market recovery and shows employment higher by 2036 than was previously expected, but growth in Gross Value Added (GVA, the size of the economy) to be 2 percentage points lower by 2036 than was previously forecasted.

It is likely that the fast-changing macroeconomic situation both nationally and globally will create need for a further refresh of the forecasting scenario, particularly considering downgraded growth projections for the UK economy, potential changes to fiscal policy, and further increasing interest rates.

### **Food and Agriculture Sector Study and Careers Professional LMI Sessions**

The Lancashire Skills Hub's Food and Agriculture Sector Study has now been completed by AMION, been graphically designed, and now published on the Lancashire Skills Hub's evidence base page online. The report can be viewed here: <https://www.lancashireskillshub.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Lancashire-Food-Agriculture-LMI-study-Final-Report-2022.pdf>

The Skills Hub Skills and Economic Intelligence Analyst, Joseph Mount, will be running several sessions across Lancashire with Careers Professionals to disseminate the findings of the Food and Agriculture report, providing the key LMI that can be used to demonstrate the exciting opportunities in the Food and Agriculture sector in Lancashire now and in the future.

As well as summarising the findings from the research, delegates will also get a wider offering of LMI from the latest data on the economy in Lancashire, other



research such as Low Carbon jobs in Lancashire, and will demonstrate the new Portal careers resources and animations.

At the time of writing, more than 70 careers professionals from a range of organisations have signed up to attend one of three sessions across Lancashire between the 24<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2023.

### **The Lancashire Colleges: College Curriculum Data Sessions**

The Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub will be delivering 11 sessions for FE Colleges in Lancashire to inform them of the latest Labour Market Information (LMI) for their travel to work area (TTWA).

These will be 90-minute online sessions, and the sessions will be framed around a dashboard of the latest LMI that has been designed in consultation with colleges. The consultation ensures that these sessions are as useful as possible for curriculum design and will also assist colleges with their accountability agreements. The sessions will help evidence FE Colleges are gearing curriculum towards local skills needs, as evidenced through Labour Market Information provided by the Lancashire Skills and Employment Hub. As well as LMI, the sessions will contain signposting to relevant resources, such as the National Careers Service, and the Lancashire Local Skills Improvement Plan. The sessions with colleges will take place during the week commencing the 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

One of these sessions has already taken place with Blackburn College, and they played a part in helping to design the data pack for these sessions. Feedback indicates that these sessions were useful for the college and the LMI was well received.

### **Economic Inactivity Research**

Funds have been secured from the three top tier authorities to fund the research into the growth in Economic Inactivity across Lancashire. A three-quote process has been undertaken and Think UK / 50 Degrees were successful. A project initiation meeting has taken place and a Steering Group has been established and the project has launched.

### **Cross Cutting Tools**

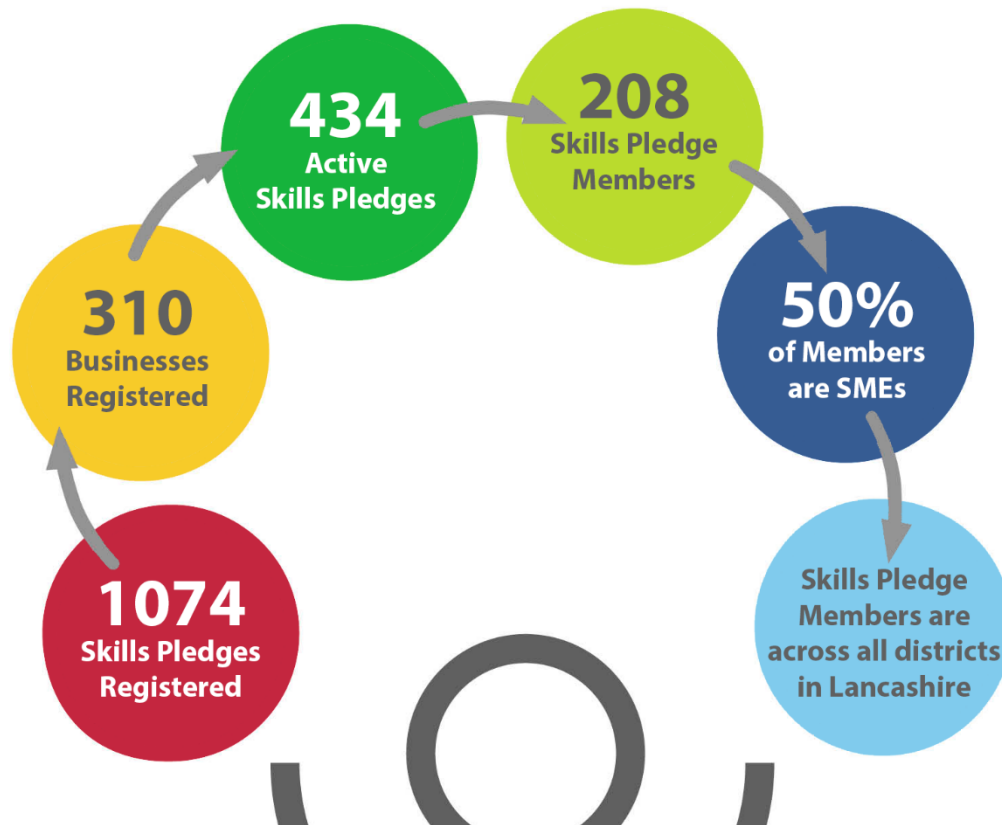
#### **Skills Pledge**

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 Skills Pledge annual celebration took place at County Hall on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December. The event included speeches from Cllr Karen Buckley, leader of Fylde Borough Council regarding Lancashire 2050 and Debbie Francis, chair of the LEP. 56 business attended, with an audience of approximately 80 people – the businesses present proudly received their certificate from Debbie. The celebration included the launch of a new university pledge – for businesses to pledge to host a student placement or internship, or to get involved in wider



university initiatives. UCLan are acting as the central Pledge Partner to manage pledges, working with Lancaster University and Edge Hill University to bring pledges to fruition. Multiply was also referenced as part of the 'upskilling your workforce' pledge. The social media coverage has resulted in new registrations, and existing businesses committing to further pledges.



Since the last update, the Lancashire Skills Pledge has continued to grow across all metrics, with the number of businesses registering up 15% to 310. The 310 businesses registered their interest in 1,074 pledges.

The number of active skills pledges has increased from 399 to 434 pledges, and there are now 208 Skills Pledge Members, an increase of 8.3% since the last update.

Considering individual pledges, the most common is 'Give an Hour', which 158 Pledge Members pledge to, an increase of 8.9% since the last update. Take on an Apprentice has 82 pledges – up 5% since the last update, though Be an Enterprise Adviser is now the second most popular pledge with 83 pledges. Of those Active Pledges, around 60% are pledges from Pledge Members who were already undertaking these kinds of activities and are now able to receive recognition for this via the Skills Pledge.

[www.SkillsforWork.info](http://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. The furlough has been replaced with 'working and want to learn new skills or upskill' and content of the website is reviewed to ensure that it remains current. As of



the 9th of February 2023, the website has had over 22,600 views, a growth of 2.7% since November 2022. There were 122 new views to the 16-24 page. There have also been over 3,600 external links clicked through to support on partner sites.

**Twitter**

Since September 2022, the Lancashire Skills Hub Twitter profile has gained 40 new followers, with a total of 3,443 followers. Since November 2022, this twitter profile has created almost 30,000 impressions.

**List of Background Papers**

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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N/A		
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Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A