



## **Lancashire Skills and Employment Board**

**Private and Confidential: No**

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### **Up-date from the Lancashire Skills Hub**

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#### **Executive Summary**

This paper provides an overview of the Lancashire Skills Hub activity since the last board meeting.

#### **Recommendation**

The Board are asked to note the up-date.

## **1 Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework**

- 1.1 The final draft of our Lancashire Skills and Employment Framework was endorsed by the LEP Board on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2015 for consultation. The framework sets out the skills and employment strategic priorities for Lancashire.
- 1.2 Meetings have been held with the majority of Local Authority and Unitary Authority Chief Executives as part of the consultation process (2 remaining of the 14). A positive response has been received from those seen to-date.
- 1.3 Two consultation events (branded 'The Lancashire Skills and Employment Conversation') have taken place at the Samlesbury Hotel – one with the 'supply side' (providers, the third sector and partners), and the other with employers. Together, the events attracted over 100 people.
- 1.4 Employers were enthusiastic about the framework and prioritised the need for effective careers information, advice and guidance to inspire our next generation, improving the attractiveness of Lancashire to attract professionals and to retain graduates, engaging more employers in skills and in particular

apprenticeships, leadership and management capacity and employability skills. These priorities were mirrored in the provider event – which was reassuring and reinforced the findings of our studies.

- 1.5 A number of network meetings have also provided an opportunity for consultation. A presentation and discussion was additionally held with the Youth Council who reaffirmed the fragmentation of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance, describing the provision in Schools as a 'postcode lottery'. The Youth Council also confirmed that apprenticeships are presented as a second choice to academic routes through Sixth Form / College. A presentation was delivered at a Lancashire Careers Inspiration Event run by the National Careers Service. The event was attended by 61 stakeholders with an interest in CEIAG and was another opportunity for consultation.
- 1.5 Feedback from the meetings and events will be collated, with view to amending the framework and producing a final version to be endorsed at the January board meeting.
- 1.6 The evidence base and the executive summaries are now available on the LEP website: <http://www.lancashirelep.co.uk/lep-priorities/skills-employment/evidence-base.aspx> . The link and a 'thank you' was circulated to all attendees of the consultation events.
- 1.7 As part of the consultation stakeholders were asked to express an interest in being a member of a Sector Skills Development Partnerships. The partnerships will implement an agreed action plan within each priority sector. Now that the consultation has come to an end the first meetings are being scheduled and where appropriate will be an extension of existing groups/networks.

## **2. Growth Deal Skills Capital**

- 2.1 The deadline for expressions of interest for the second round of funding has now passed. In total, we received 10 expressions of interest (EOI). These will be reviewed under Part 2 of the meeting and recommendations will be made to the LEP Board on the 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015 in regard to which projects should proceed to full business case.
- 2.2 A schedule of press releases for the Growth Deal Skills Capital round 1 projects is being developed with SKV, who are employed by the LEP to support communications.

To-date two press releases have been issued, one focusing on the Runshaw Science Engineering Innovation Centre (<http://www.lep.co.uk/news/education/multi-million-pound-science-block-nearing-completion-1-7577674>) and one on Engineering and Manufacturing Centre at Training 2000.

[\(http://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/14105860.Blackburn\\_youngsters\\_to\\_be\\_trained\\_in\\_new\\_apprenticeships/\)](http://www.lancashiretelegraph.co.uk/news/14105860.Blackburn_youngsters_to_be_trained_in_new_apprenticeships/).

### **3. City Deal**

3.1 A further City Deal Skills and Employment Steering Group has been held, and feedback was provided on the draft skills and employment study and action plan. The plan is in its final draft and will be presented to the City Deal Executive and Stewardship Group in January 2016 for approval. The plan maps to the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework.

3.2 The plan identifies 4 key areas of action:

- 1) Providing a workforce for the new economy, particularly the priority sectors; including a large cohort of young and well qualified workers attractive to incoming employers.
- 2) Providing a workforce for the construction industry which will deliver the infrastructure, commercial and residential development set out in the City Deal, addressing the challenge of delivering a marked increase in new housing development.
- 3) Maximising the training and employment opportunities available for both young people and older people from construction activity, using procurement processes to deliver a higher level of industry engagement and increase social value for public sector construction expenditure.
- 4) Providing training and skills support which helps to secure new inward investment and company expansion in the City Deal area.

3.3 An IAG (Information, Advice and Guidance) Taskforce is being launched, bringing together Preston's College, Runshaw College, UCLan, Calico and South Ribble Borough Council to promote construction opportunities to young people.

3.4 A presentation was provided at the City Deal Investor and Development Forum on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2015, encouraging employers to engage with skills provision, including apprenticeships, undergraduate placements and graduate recruitment, and to engage with the IAG Taskforce to engage younger people in the breadth of the construction industry.

### **4. Social Value**

4.1 A sub-group of the Growth Deal Management Board has met to discuss the development of a toolkit for incorporating social value into the Growth Deal programme of projects.

4.2 A list of contents has been developed with a list of potential outcomes, and, as agreed at the Skills and Employment Board in October, the anticipated

social value outcomes align with the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework and the identified priorities.

- 4.3 The draft will be shared with the Growth Deal Management Board at the next meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2015, with view to sharing with the Skills and Employment Board at the January meeting.

## **5. Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015**

- 5.1 The Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015 was issued at the end of November. A number of key points are provided below:

- The apprenticeship levy was confirmed and will apply to employers with a pay bill in excess of £3m, and will be set at 0.5% of an employer's pay bill. It is unclear at present how many employers this will affect in Lancashire as we do not have data in regard to pay bills; there are 291 businesses in Lancashire with more than 200 employees. An event with the SFA is being planned for February/March 2015 to engage employers likely to be affected.
- An 'Institute for Apprenticeships' was announced – a new employer-led body which will set apprenticeships standards and ensure quality.
- Funding will be protected for the core adult skills budgets in cash terms, and will be better targeted at basic skills alongside high quality professional and technical education (with efficiencies being made through the Area Reviews and non-protected budgets). This includes the creation of the 5 National Colleges (which includes the 'Energy HQ' at Blackpool and Fylde College) and support for a new network of Institutes of Technology.
- Sixth Form Colleges will be given the opportunity to become academies, which may impact on the breadth of the Area Reviews.
- Tuition fee loans for 19-23 year olds at levels 3 and 4, and 19+ year olds for levels 5 and 6 will be expanded, to support the development of higher and technical skills. There will be a consultation on introducing maintenance loans for learners attending specialist, higher level providers, including the National Colleges.
- The age cap on new loans to postgraduates will be lifted from 2016-17 so they are available to all those under 60. Following a sharp decline in part-time students since 2008, part-time maintenance loans will be introduced from 2018-19 to support living costs. For STEM subjects, tuition fee loans will be extended to those doing a second degree from 2017-18.

Universities will continue to take more responsibility to widen participation, including collaborating on out-reach to reduce inequality in admissions.

- Reference was also made to a £20m competition to set up a new Institute of Coding that will train the next generation in higher level digital skills.
- Government re-iterated their commitment to the Growth Deal programme. 26 new Enterprise Zones have been identified including the Hillhouse Business Park on the Wyre Coast:  
<http://www.lancashirelep.co.uk/news/archive/greenlight-for-new-enterprise-zone-at-hillhouse-will-create-1,750-new-jobs.aspx> .

## **6. Private Sector Board Members**

- 6.1 Two of the three private sector board vacancies have now been filled. A third vacancy remains for a representative from either the health and social care sector or digital technology. Members of the Committee are asked to be mindful of the need to fill the remaining vacancy and to continue to make recommendations to Amanda and Michele.

## **7. UKTI visit**

- 7.1 The Lancashire Skills Hub supported an aerospace training and development visit for UKTI advisers from around the globe. The visit, organised by the LEP and the North West Aerospace Alliance, involved a range of presentations and a tour of the Enterprise Zone at Salmesbury, with presentations from the Skills Hubs, UCLan and Lancaster University showcasing the fantastic skills and innovation offer in Lancashire for companies wishing to locate in our region.

## **8. Logistics and Transport**

- 8.1 A roundtable event was hosted at Edge Hill University, in partnership with The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport and the North & West Lancashire Chamber of Commerce. A presentation was provided in regard to the growth of logistics and distribution in Lancashire through inward investment opportunities and the development of the Heysham/M6 link road and the port, and allied skills and employment challenges. Edge Hill are developing new areas of provision at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

## **9. Service Level Agreements (SLAs)**

- 9.1 Andy Walker has led the negotiation of the annual SLAs with the North West Aerospace Alliance (NWAA), Northwest Automotive Alliance (NAA) and

Digital Lancashire. Whilst focused on business support and the economic development agenda all 3 refer to skills, with activity aligned to the priorities identified in the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework. This includes workforce planning, stimulating apprenticeship growth and highlighting opportunities to our future workforce.

- 9.2 In addition, given the recurring theme of responding to digital skills shortages across sector studies, with LCC, we have identified a budget of up to £35,000 to identify and pilot responses which will raise awareness and prepare 16-18 year olds for work in digital roles and to identify and co-ordinate apprenticeship opportunities. A number of organisations have already approached the Skills Hub offering this type of service and it is intended test these as a competitive procurement process with a view to establishing a pilot, to run in the spring.

## **10. Marketing and Communications**

- 10.1 A review of the current websites aligned to the Lancashire Skills and Employment Board and the Lancashire Skills Hub have been reviewed. It has been agreed that high-level strategic information aligned to the board will remain on the LEP website, with a link to the current Skills Support for the Workforce website, which will morph into a website for the Lancashire Skills Hub. It is intended that the website will have content that is constant (i.e. not dependent upon public funding), with links to activities which may include ESIF projects and time limited initiatives. A further up-date will be provided at the next meeting.
- 10.2 Please continue to encourage organisations to link to our Lancashire Skills Hub twitter account - @LancsSkillsHub.

## **11. NW LEP's Skills and Employment Network**

- 11.1 Colleagues, from each of the five North West LEP areas, who have strategic roles in relation to the Skills and Employment agenda have met for the first time at the Lancashire Skills Hub in Chorley. We discussed our main areas of focus and the following key points came out of the discussion:
- The same tensions around ESIF funding were shared across the region.
  - One LEP area is producing a visioning document in advance of its Area Review to set out what the system should look like and what its key aims should be for the next 10/20 years. This maybe something we wish to emulate in Lancashire.
  - Devolution discussion regarding the resource and policy setting requirements to devolve the Adult Skills Budget to providers.

11.2 There was agreed from the group that we would continue to meet on a regular basis and that we would look to share best practise and collaborate where it makes sense to do so.