



Lancashire Skills and Employment Board

Private and Confidential: No

Wednesday 4th May 2016

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 meeting.

Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note the up-date.

1. Growth Deal Skills Capital

- 1.1 A schedule of press releases for the Growth Deal Skills Capital round 1 projects has been developed with SKV, who are employed by the LEP to support communications – press release links have been provided in previous up-dates. A schedule for round 2 projects will also now be developed.
- 1.2 In regard to round 2, 6 projects were approved by the last meetings of the Employment and Skills Board & LEP Board. This is in addition to the 3 'fast-track' projects, reported previously, making 9 projects in total. The projects are currently with the Growth Deal programme team and grant funding agreements are in the process of being agreed.
- 1.3 A paper providing an overview of both rounds and alignment with the Lancashire Skills and Employment Strategic Framework will be provided under the main agenda item.

- 1.4 The toolkit for incorporating social value into the Growth Deal programme of projects continues to be developed and is now being piloted with a number of Growth Deal projects. Positive feedback has been received to-date and social value outcomes now feature within monitoring visits undertaken by the Growth Deal Programme team.
- 1.5 Balfour Beatty provided a presentation at the last Growth Deal Management Board articulating how they integrated social value outcomes in the Runshaw College round 1 project, this included employment of local staff, appointment of apprentices, work experience for College students and sourcing of contractors locally. A case study will be developed for the toolkit showcasing good practice.

2. Apprenticeship Growth Plan

- 2.1 The Lancashire Young Apprenticeship Ambassador Network (LYAAN) was successfully launched on Wednesday 21st April, in partnership with the Work Based Learning Forum and the Skills Funding Agency. 20 young people attended the event and they all signed up to be apprenticeship ambassadors.
- 2.2 The two key aims of the network are: 1. strengthening peer to peer promotion of apprenticeships; and 2. giving Lancashire young apprentices the opportunity to build relationships with fellow apprentices across the area. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities are being planned to support the apprentices, for example, presentation skills, to support them to provide sessions and activities in schools.
- 2.3 The network will meet again in July. In the meantime we (LYAAN, The Skills Hub and WBL Forum) will promote the network and work to increase the numbers of ambassadors. It is planned that by September there will be sufficient ambassadors to offer their services to an agreed number of schools in a controlled roll out.
- 2.4 See the press release for further information about the launch:
<http://www.lancashirelep.co.uk/news/archive/young-ambassadors-to-promote-apprenticeships-across-lancashire.aspx>

3. Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)

- 3.1 The LEP was successful in its bid to the Careers and Enterprise Company for an 'Enterprise Adviser Network'. The pilot project, which launched in January in Blackburn with Darwen and Burnley, aims to stimulate engagement between businesses and industry and schools to inspire young people and provide CEIAG. Essentially the project involves a funded Enterprise Coordinator, working with a network of Enterprise Advisers (strategic business volunteers) working with a network of schools to develop employer engagement strategies and plans. The activity aligns with the Skills and Employment Framework, which identifies CEIAG as a critical priority due to the fragmented and inconsistent offer which currently exists.

- 3.2 To date 18 schools have signed up to the network (against a target of 20), alongside 12 Enterprise Advisers – with more being interviewed. The Enterprise Advisers are from a range of businesses that mirror the skills and employment priority sectors, and 7 are SMEs and 5 large employers. The response from the HIVE business network and the Burnley Bondholders has been excellent; the businesses in the networks are keen to inspire young people and showcase the fantastic businesses in the locality with view to growing a future pipeline of talented young people.
- 3.3 It is hoped that the network can be expanded to further areas of Lancashire next academic year (from September 2016).
- 3.4 The next steering group, which oversees the Enterprise Adviser Network, the JCP Pathfinder with schools and the careers inspiration work with the National Careers Service takes place on Friday 6th May.

4. European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF)

- 4.1 In relation to the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) opt-in, the tender for young people at risk of or not in education, employment or training (NEET) was released in January. The call has now closed and evaluation of the tenders has been undertaken by the SFA. The applicant has been notified and we are currently in the 'stand still' period. We will inform people of the successful organisation, assuming no challenge, at the meeting. Further work has been undertaken in regard to 'Skills Support for the Workforce' and 'Skills Support for the Unemployed'; it is anticipated that both projects will be tendered shortly.
- 4.2 Resource has been built into the SFA projects for capacity building activity; activity plans will be agreed with the Skills and Employment Board.
- 4.3 The invitation to tender (ITT) for the project under the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) opt-in was released on Monday 14th March. This Provision is aimed at reducing worklessness, particularly in those wards across Lancashire that demonstrate the highest levels of out of work claimants. The Provision will provide tailored support through individual 'Key Workers' and an action plan for participants which will contain activities that will tackle barriers to employment. A briefing event was held on 22nd March at 2pm at County Hall with DWP; 17 people attended from 15 organisations. The briefing was welcomed by participants and received positive feedback. The ITT closes on the 22nd April. The Skills Hub has been nominated by the ESIF Committee to undertake the evaluation of tenders with DWP. It is anticipated that activity will commence in November 2016 (for 3 years).
- 4.4 Following the input at the last meeting in regard to future calls for directly matched ESF activity, recommendations from the Skills and Employment Board were presented to the ESIF Committee for their consideration. The recommendations, as detailed in the minutes, were supported by the ESIF Committee. Work has been undertaken to scope calls in relation to Active

Inclusion and Widening Participation/Outreach accordingly. We are awaiting confirmation of timescales from the DWP Managing Authority.

5 City Deal

- 5.1 A workshop is being held on Thursday 5th May with the City Deal Skills and Employment Steering Group members to agree metrics for the set of objectives identified in the Ekosgen research. These will feed into the overarching City Deal business plan and will be used to assess progress on a quarterly process. The objectives and metrics will be presented at the next meeting, with a progress up-date.
- 5.2 The CEIAG Task Force has met and is currently focusing on the City Deal stand at the UCLan Lancashire Science Festival. The stand will bring together a number of central Lancashire education/skills providers and employers who will engage with and speak to approx. 11,000 visitors expected at the Lancashire Science Festival about the City Deal and the career opportunities in Construction and related sectors.
- 5.3 The approach to establishing social value outcomes for the Growth Deal programme is now being considered for City Deal, as well as good practice established by Lancaster City Council in regard to planning and housing. A joint meeting was facilitated by South Ribble Council with Preston City Council and Chorley Council to consider embedding of social value outcomes into the planning process for housing developments; further developments will be reported in future up-dates.

6 North West Skills Leads Meeting

- 6.1 A further meeting of the North West Skills Leads took place on the 12th April, including colleagues from Manchester, Merseyside and Cumbria.

7 Service Level Agreements

- 7.1 To address a number of key needs identified in the Digital Skills sector research a request for quotation (RFQ) was launched for a Digital Skills Pipeline Pilot. The pilot's objective is to enhance the digital skills of young people and enable them to successfully progress into digital apprenticeships.
- 7.2 The successful organisation was The White Room with their programme Digital Advantage which has been piloted in Manchester since 2015. They are now looking to link up with Lancashire colleges, school sixth forms and WBL providers to deliver the pilot in academic year 2016/17. The Skills Hub have arranged for The White Room and Digital Lancashire to have a tour of T2000's new Cyber Security centre on 27 April.