

## Skills East Sussex, Members Meeting

### Members Attending:

AC	Ana Christie	Sussex Chambers of Commerce
CB	Caroline Bragg	East Sussex County Council
CMK	Caroline McKiddie	East Sussex County Council
CT	Catherine Tipton (Chair)	East Sussex Highways
CW	Claire Walker	Sussex Learning Network
CWT	Clare Westbrey Tong	Sussex Downs College
DL	Deborah Lloyd	CXK
DS	Dan Shelley	Sussex Coast College Hastings
DST	David Stokes	Plumpton College
JH	James Harris	East Sussex County Council
JT	Jo Taylor	Heathfield Community College (Schools Representative)
LA	Louise Aitken	South East LEP
LW	Lee Wakefield	Speak Up Representative / SCDA
ME	Martin Ellis	Recruitment South East (Chair)
PM	Paul Mitchell	Sussex Council of Training Providers
ST	Sara Taylor	Eastbourne Borough Council

### Apologies:

BS	Becky Shaw	East Sussex County Council
CE	Christina Ewbank	Alliance of Chambers East Sussex
CIlr BS	CIlr Bob Standley	East Sussex County Council
CIlr DT	CIlr David Tutt	Eastbourne Borough Council
CIlr KF	CIlr Kim Forward	Hastings Borough Council
CIlr RS	CIlr Rupert Simmons	East Sussex County Council
GP	Graham Peters	Team East Sussex
KH	Karen Hucker	Bexhill College
NL	Nick Ludford	Plumpton College
PS	Penny Shimmin	Speak Up Representative / SCDA
SW	Sarah Williams	Sussex Learning Network
WE	Wayne Edmunds	Job Centre Plus DWP

### Secretariat:

HA	Holly Aquilina	East Sussex County Council
KT	Kane Tudor	East Sussex County Council
RF	Richard Freeman	Always Possible (SES Task Groups)

## 1. Welcome and minutes of last meeting

**1.1. CT** welcomed everyone to the meeting and took the meeting through the actions of the last meeting 05.07.17.

**1.2. CT** noted that **GP** was not in attendance to advise if Chris Brodie had been made aware of concerns raised at the last meeting, regarding the arrangements of European Social Fund (ESF) and The Big Lottery potentially making projects undeliverable. **JH** advised that he knew that **GP** had raised the issue with Chris Brodie (Chair of SELEP) and asked

him to make representations to government at a higher level. However the outcome of those discussions is not yet known.

**ACTION - Carried forward to next meeting for GP to report back to SES**

**1.3.** The meeting agreed to carry forward the actions in 9.15 below as **CE**, **PS** and **WE** were not in attendance.

**ACTION – CE and PS to discuss coordinating work on debt**

**ACTION – WE to send information on Hastings rough sleeper programme for KT to distribute**

**1.4.** The Board agreed that all other actions had been completed and minutes were approved.

## **2. Skills East Sussex Projects Update**

### **Enterprise Adviser Network**

**2.1. CB** advised that the Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN) was going well with 37 of 43 schools and colleges in East Sussex engaged with the EAN and 29 matched with an adviser. She advised that Wendy Gorham is now in post as the Enterprise Coordinator for the Hastings Opportunity Area and is fully funded by the C&EC.

**2.2. CB** further advised that the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Education (DofE), Jonathan Slater, visited Hastings last week, and was accompanied by the CEO of The Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC), Claudia Harris. They visited Marshall Tufflex, Enterprise Adviser Steve Baldry, where they also met teachers and Headteachers from ARK Helenswood and Claverham Community College as well as our Enterprise Adviser from GDK, Rob Lowes. **CB** noted that there was an hour for discussion, where we showcased our Enterprise Adviser Network and discussed challenges in terms of providing CEIAG and relevant learning space within the school curriculum.

### **Progress**

**2.3. KT** advised that Progress has now reached over 10,000 young people between the ages of 11 and 19, greatly exceeding original targets. The project will end in September and **KT** hopes to present an evaluation report at the November SES meeting.

### **Open Doors**

**2.4. KT** advised that Open Doors 2017 has opened for bookings, and guidance and booking information had been sent to schools and colleges. Over 25 employers have been engaged to provide visits as part of the project.

**2.5. KT** advised that Open Doors provides schools the opportunity to take students to visit businesses and other employer sites across the county. It is hoped that students taking

part in these visits will be inspired to pursue learning or seek a career in the sectors they encounter in East Sussex. There is also substantive evidence that employer engagements reduce the chance of NEET, improve attainment at school and raise aspirations.

Open Doors visits usually include:

- A talk on what the company does
- A tour where they speak to different staff members about what they do and the pathways young people could take to work in that role, and
- An activity or demonstration based on what the company does

### **ACTION – KT to share Open Doors Guidance Documents with SES Board**

## **3. Policy and Funding**

### **NCOP**

**3.1. CW** introduced herself as a Project Manager working at the Sussex Learning Network (SLN).

**3.2. CW** explained that the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) was launched by the Higher Education Funding Council England (HEFCE), in response to government targets for increasing the number of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds going to University. The Sussex Learning Network is managing the fund for Sussex Universities and other partners.

**CW** noted that some of the projects in East Sussex that will receive NCOP funding as part of the bigger programme are:

- 2 transition Workers for the Youth Employability Service (YES), will be funded to support young people with their transition from school to college, and college to university/higher education
- Development of the Aspire database
- SCTP Apprenticeships in Sussex (AIS), Apprenticeship and Higher Education Awareness Sessions in schools
- Funding for the Big Bang in Eastbourne

**3.3. CW** also noted that additional money for schools for staff time, to help access these funded programmes has been ring fenced. She noted that NCOP hopes to reach 8000 young people across Sussex.

### **ACTION – CW to share target number of young people to be reached in East Sussex via NCOP funding**

**3.4. CW** noted that they have submitted their mid-year report to HEFCE and believe they will meet or exceed their targets. This is important as there is a chance that further funds to fund projects until 2020 may be provided by HEFCE if successful at this early juncture.

- 3.5. CW** advised that NCOP communications will start over the next few weeks, and that they will be holding a small event with partners and stakeholders as a soft launch.
- 3.6. HA** asked if **CW** could provide a summary of NCOP to be circulated to SES. **CW** agreed to do so.

**ACTION – CW to provide a list of NCOP projects in East Sussex to KT for circulation to SES**

#### **T - Levels**

- 3.7. HA** presented a paper on the government plans for the implementation of T-Levels. She drew the meetings attention to the shell diagram, which can be found here: <http://feweeek.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/T-Level-routes.jpg>

**HA** noted that there are fifteen routes for T-Levels and that they will be rolled out between 2020 and 2022. She suggested that it was important that SES starts to consider which of these routes are priorities for East Sussex. The government have set aside £150 million to implement them and for equipment. She asked whether it was possible to influence where this funding went, and whether East Sussex could access funding for trailblazing any of the routes.

- 3.8. HA** noted that the main stumbling block will be the requirement for all students to complete three months of meaningful, sector specific, work experience. She noted that we needed to consider how we can persuade our employers to provide this level of intervention, without an immediate direct benefit to them, and noted that we needed to start the process of informing and engaging them now.

#### **Coast 2 Capital (C2C) / European Social Fund (ESF)**

- 3.9. CWT** suggested that SES bid for the C2C ESF leadership and management for SME's training contract. **DSt** noted that Plumpton were preparing a bid, and were happy to work with **CWT** and other SES partners on this. **AC** noted that there was also traineeship funding available, and that she would be keen to support any bids relating to leadership and management.

**ACTION – DSt to discuss C2C bid with CWT, DS and AC. HA suggested that they focus on Sector Task Group identified needs (Construction and Digital and Creative businesses)**

- 3.10. CWT** updated the meeting on the bid for ESF funding to support NEET young people. They have successfully passed the first round and need to prepare their round two application for mid-November.

#### **HEFCE Catalyst Fund**

- 3.11. CW** advised that HEFCE have announced a £200,000 catalyst fund to support the pillars of the government's industrial strategy. She informed that Board that The University of Chichester are bidding to explore developing new provision around the Health and Social Care sector. This will initially involve a feasibility study, but will lead to course development.

**3.12. CB** asked if any discussions had been held with employers. **CW** advised that there had been discussion in West Sussex and Hampshire, and with Health Education England in East Sussex.

**3.13. HA** stressed the need to ensure links to East Sussex Better Together and align with their Workforce Development Strategy, and with Health Education England and Skills for Care.

## **4. SES Sector Task Groups Update**

**4.1. RF** presented a paper on the work of the SES Task Groups:

### **Construction**

**4.2. RF** noted that the Construction group contains both large and small employers. He noted that smaller employers are working hard to get other SME's to buy in to the work the group is doing particularly around promoting the benefits of Apprenticeships. Both CDS Electrical and G M Monk are holding business to business coffee mornings to this purpose.

**4.3. RF** noted that the group feels that Social Charter commitments around skills development are not being adhered to under ESCC Procurement by contractors. Construction businesses feel that those offering significant skills commitments in tenders are still being ignored in favour of cheaper contractors. An ESCC Procurement Officer, Ian Roadnight, is attending the next meeting of the group to discuss this with them.

### **Creative and Digital**

**4.4. RF** advised that the group has been successful in bidding to Artswork for the CEP and schools investment fund to deliver a series of interventions in schools to promote creative thinking and practice.

**4.5. CWT** noted that she attended the last meeting of the Creative and Digital Task Group, and found it very useful. She has since met with East Sussex Music and The Towner Gallery about planning a bid to the Arts Council.

### **Land Based**

**4.6. RF** noted that Plumpton College will be hosting the South East Work Experience Conference run by Fair Train. As this is one of only four run in the country this is a coup for the group who influenced this outcome.

**4.7. RF** noted that at the last meeting **Cllr RS** requested that fisheries be properly represented on the group. **RF** has been speaking to Hastings Borough Council and Eastbourne Town Council about fisheries representatives, and hopes to have a fisheries representative at the next meeting.

### **Engineering / STEM**

**4.8. RF** advised that the Engineering / STEM group met earlier this week, and is looking forward to STEAMfest 2018.

**4.9. RF** noted that a large issue for the group is the difficulty in hiring engineering teachers in further and higher education. He explained that there are not enough experienced engineers involved in teaching, as they can earn higher salaries by working in the industry itself where there are shortages. This is an issue that the group intends to explore possibly through some funding applications.

**4.10. DS** noted that Sussex Coast, Sussex Downs and SIGTA deliver the majority of engineering provision. He explained that they are getting together to look at provision across the county, and how they can grow their offer to employers.

#### **4.11. Health and Social Care**

**4.12. HA** advised that she met with Health Education England and ESBT for a second time to look at how Skills East Sussex could support the work of the ESBT Workforce team. They agreed that the ESBT Workforce Strategy identifies the needs of the sector in terms of new roles and future vacancies, but doesn't touch upon CEIAG or course development and delivery. HEE would like to work with SES in January to focus on CEIAG provision in East Sussex and course delivery/development. The group welcomed this proposal and suggested a Health and Social Care focused meeting for the January SES. **DS** requested that the ESBT Workforce Strategy is shared with SES beforehand, so that members can prepare for the meeting.

**ACTION – HA agreed that this would be done.**

**4.13. PM** noted that SCTP members have tried to engage with ESBT but have been unable to. **DS** added that if ESBT shared their strategy, they would be able to offer courses in their curriculum offer to support their objectives. **HA** said that this would be the purpose of the January meeting and **DS** confirmed that this would fit with curriculum planning for the following year.

**4.14. JH** noted that Adult Social Care and Health have been focused on integrating their work, and advised that we would confirm details of the ESBT- SES meeting.

#### **General Discussion**

**4.15. RF** noted that the Visitor Economy task group will be set up in November.

**4.16. ME** noted that there was a lot of work to be done on raising the profile of the SES Task Groups and the work of the Enterprise Adviser Network. Not enough people in the private sector are aware or engaged with them.

**4.17. JH** asked how we could do this, and **ME** suggested this is done through **LinkedIn** and increased networking. **AC** noted that Sussex Chambers of Commerce would be happy to support with this, and that SES are welcome to submit articles for their publications.

### **5. SELEP Update**

## SELEP Skills Strategy

**5.1. LA** delivered a presentation on the new SELEP Skills Strategy and Evidence Base. **LA** noted that in addition to the strategy, **HA** is working with SELEP on a report looking at the impact of the potential impact of Brexit.

**LA** noted that the skills evidence base that supports the Strategy includes a list of infrastructure developments which lacks any East Sussex examples.

### **ACTION – JH to rectify and supply examples to LA**

**5.2. JH** asked what SELEP's end goal was with the skills strategy, and if it was about securing funding. **LA** confirmed that part of the strategy was about helping to secure funding for the area; we want to be in the best place possible with more influence on funding decisions and directions.

**5.3. LA** explained that the draft Strategy would be circulated to SES members after the next meeting of the SELEP Skills Advisory Group in October.

**5.4. LA** provided details of a portal (one stop shop) for skills being trialled by Thurrock.  
<https://opportunitiesoutheast.co.uk/>

**5.5. LA** advised that there is going to be a SELEP wide meeting of all Enterprise Coordinators to share best practice.

**5.6. LA** outlined the process that had happened to brainstorm new ESF project ideas and said that a list of possible specifications would be circulated to SAG for approval later in the year.

**5.7. CWT** asked **LA** about match funding for ESF, and asked if there was any lobbying SELEP could do about the match funding requirements. **LA** Noted that DWP are waiting to hear from the ESFA if they have anything they can use as match funding, but there is a possibility big lottery or even apprenticeship levy funds could be used.

**5.8. DS** noted that he has been asking the ESFA for over a year about match funding, and that it should not be a difficult question to answer. **CMK** suggested that matched money that has not been spent could be used if the ESFA agreed. **LA** advised that the ESFA had previously said this money would come back, but are now not guaranteeing this. **DS** noted that we could explore using the Hastings Opportunity Area funding as match.

## **6. Curriculum Plans 2017/18 and development of 2018/19 plans**

### **Plumpton College**

**6.1. DSt** presented Plumpton College's curriculum plan for the 2017/18 academic year.

**6.2. CMK** asked about the Level 4 provision funded by NCOP. **DSt** advised that it was not on the plan as it was still in development. He explained the need to update the curriculum to reflect technological changes in the land based industry in time for next year.

**6.3. JH** asked if this would be shared with the task groups, **RF** advised that he would be sharing curriculum plans from this meeting with the task groups in October.

**6.4. DS** asked about the provision of butchery, and that Sussex Coast had considered running this to support small butchers in the wider Hastings area. He suggested that perhaps Plumpton could deliver from Sussex Coast to make these courses more accessible to students from the Hastings area. **DS** and **DSt** agreed to speak about this.

**6.5.** The Board endorsed the Plumpton Plan.

### **Heathercroft Training Academy**

**6.6. PM** explained that he includes the minutes and communications of SES in his SCTP newsletter, and regularly speaks about the importance of SES to SCTP members. After reading the previous minutes, Heathercroft, who support over 300 learners, asked if they could also have their plans approved. The group endorsed the Heathercroft curriculum plan.

**6.7.** The meeting discussed the possibility that all SCTP members could ask for plans to be endorsed by SES, and how to respond. Members did not want to exclude training providers but were concerned about overload.

**6.8. CT** suggested that we could ask Colleges and Training Providers to complete a pro forma, **HA** added that we should review these once a year in the spring or summer and not on a rolling basis. **DS** suggested that only those organisations that are prime ESFA contractors should be able to seek endorsement. The group agreed this.

**6.9. CT** said that they have software at East Sussex Highways that could be used to monitor curriculum plan content and to map gaps in provision. All welcomed this offer.

**ACTION - CT and HA will agree a method for managing approvals.**

## **7. Apprenticeships East Sussex**

**7.1. CB** directed members to the three papers on Apprenticeships East Sussex (AES), the terms of reference and action plans for 2016/17 and 2017/18. She noted that with all the disruption to apprenticeship provision, AES is increasingly focusing on lobbying and identifying weaknesses in the system.

**7.2. CB** noted that the new action plan 2017/18 contains similar targets to the 2016/17 plan, with the addition of a few key pieces of work:

- Target females in recruitment for new Construction Management Degree Apprenticeship
- Challenge Skills East Sussex sector task groups to identify activities that address gender imbalance and increase representation from under-represented groups in activities.



- Training providers and universities to work collectively to identify areas where Higher Apprenticeships can be grown, and improve progression of learners to higher level apprenticeship pathways
- Provide training for employers on how to engage and support young apprentices in the work place to ensure higher retention and success rates for young entrants.
- Engage with employers, particularly SMEs, to ensure they are aware of changes to the Apprenticeship system as a result of the Reforms and Levy. Target communications through Sussex Chambers, FSB, ACES and other key local business networks.

**7.3.** The Board endorsed the AES Action Plan 2017/18.

## **8. SES Partner Updates**

**8.1. CMK** advised that she would update the meeting on attainment at the next meeting in November.

**8.2. CW** noted that the SLN are developing a new SLN Strategy and that SES would be invited to comment on its content.

## **9. Skills Summit 2018**

**9.1. HA** mentioned that in a previous SES meeting partners had mooted the idea of a Skills Summit. She asked whether this was still a consideration and if so, what format partners would wish this to take. **CT** asked the meeting if they had any suggestions on what this summit could include.

**9.2. DS** noted that as the Engineering / STEM group chair, he was concerned with the lack of awareness local employers had of the many changes that have started or will be implemented over the next few years; apprenticeship reforms, apprenticeship levy, T-Levels.

**9.3. CWT** echoed **DS's** comments and noted that Sussex Skills Solutions are seeing employers speak of increasing complexity. **PM** noted that he raised this issue at AES, and noted that we could even have an event just for raising the awareness of employers to these changes.

**9.4. AC** and **ME** agreed that employers were confused about apprenticeships. They noted that businesses want stability and need to know how these changes will affect them. **CB** added that they are also facing uncertainty over Brexit.

**9.5. RF** noted that it was important that we show employers and that they know we are open for innovative new ideas in apprenticeships and training.

**9.6. CT** thanked the meeting for their comments and noted that we may seek to form a working group on the Skills Summit, but that a policy and development focused meeting, to support employer engagement seemed to be the emerging theme.

## **10. AOB and DONM**

- 10.1. DS** noted that from today the DofE are inviting expressions of interest for organisations wanting to become an institute of technology.
- 10.2. DSt** noted that he has been working with Coast to Capital LEP (C2C) on a few issues, and there are real opportunities for C2C, SES and SELEP to team up and lobby government.
- 10.3. HA** noted that there is a possible opportunity for someone to take on the training contract for Lewes prison. **DL** noted that there was a webinar next week. **LA** advised that prisons are really keen to work with local providers.

**Action – HA to support a SES partnership to move forward on this.**

*The next meeting will take place on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2017, from 14:00 to 16:00 at County Hall, Lewes. This will be a visitor economy focused meeting for the first section, and the second will be a standard SES meeting.*