

**South East LEP Skills Advisory Group Meeting  
13<sup>th</sup> March 2018  
Park Crescent conference Centre, London**

# Minutes and Actions

## Attending

Louise Aitken (LA), South East LEP  
 Jacqueline Bradley (JB), (new member for Thurrock / adult learning)  
 Carol Anson-Higgs (CAH), Essex Provider Network  
 Holly Aquilina (HA), East Sussex CC  
 Allan Baille (AB), Kent County Council  
 Lucy Dresne (LD), University of Kent (*new HE member*)  
 Viki Faulkner (VF), University of Brighton  
 Angela O'Donoghue (AoD), South Essex College  
 Michael Ratcliffe (MR) Kent Association of Training Organisations  
 Graham Razey (GR), Canterbury and East Kent College (**CHAIR**)

## Apologies

Caroline Betts, Essex County Council  
 Simon Cook, Mid Kent College  
 Martin Hall, Medway Council  
 Debbie Leach, HM Prison Service  
 Paul Mitchell, Sussex Council of Training Providers  
 Brin Martin, Southend Council  
 Dan Shelly, Sussex Coast College

AGENDA ITEM / NOTES	ACTION/ PAPER
<b>Minutes of last meeting (9<sup>th</sup> January 2018)</b>	
<p>Minutes were agreed by members. Outstanding actions were discussed:</p> <p><b>ACTION: All members to provide feedback on the Opportunities South East pilot site</b>            LA noted that she had fed back comments to the developers on the site (such as hosting careers videos and tools) and they are utilising this to create a list of what the site should include. Additionally, LA will invite the developers to an engagement event being held for Growth Hub colleagues (detailed below) to ensure the portal links effectively to the skills portals. The portal hasn't yet been launched in Thurrock.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Update on apprenticeship levy local authority proposal</b>            LA colleagues confirmed that they are using their 10% of the levy to support key sectors, such as health, care, engineering and construction. It was agreed that once these have run for some time, it would be useful to review whether a SELEP wide proposal would be worthwhile, utilising experience to date.</p> <p><b>ACTION: LA to share programme for Growth Hub training / engagement day</b></p>	

<p>LA shared a draft programme with members which includes updates for Growth Hub colleagues on areas such as the apprenticeship levy, Careers Enterprise network and skills portal. Members agreed that this would be useful particularly to help with the awareness of SMEs of the levy.</p> <p>GR suggested that it would be useful to offer tips for engaging with local providers also. Members agreed that it would be useful to explore how to ensure the dialogue continues with the Growth Hubs.</p> <p><b>ACTION: LA to set up working group for LEP Sector Support Fund proposal around training of professionals (volunteers sought)</b> LA confirmed that she had liaised with Simon Cook who had fed in ideas to the proposal. A meeting had also been held the previous week with Essex college Principals to explore this. This will enable a proposal to be developed. Emerging ideas include a shared tutor, technology to support conference training and a recruitment campaign that changes perceptions of the sector.</p> <p><b>ACTION: LA to explore the potential for an ESF call around virtual reality and to get feedback on the Essex ESB project</b> LA confirmed that she'd not yet heard back from the DWP as to the eligibility but that it looks as though it should be possible based on the criteria.</p> <p><b>ACTION: LA to draft letter to ESFA and Skills Minister re non-levy allocations with input from colleagues on employer examples</b> Members had received a copy of the letter sent with the response from the ESFA. Members agreed that the response wasn't satisfactory so a further letter should be sent. It was also agreed that this should particularly focus on the fact that the issues outlined hadn't provided an employer led system.</p>	<p><b>ACTION:</b> LA to share final programme for Growth Hub training day when available</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> LA to share proposal re training and recruiting of professionals when ready</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> LA to write follow up letter to ESFA / Skills Minister re non-levy allocations</p>
<b>Group Terms of reference and LEP Accountability Framework</b>	
<p>LA outlined that all LEPs worked to a LEP Accountability Framework to ensure compliance and transparency. This includes areas such as declarations of interest and terms of reference. The government had undertaken a 'deep dive' into SELEP the previous week looking at the SELEP Accountability Framework, structures and processes.</p> <p>To this end, LA had circulated the terms of reference for the Skills Advisory Group and asked that members have a look at these. These also set out the role of members, such as cascading information to their networks. Members should declare an interest where appropriate but as the group is advisory rather than decision making, written registers of interest are not required.</p> <p>The terms of reference can be viewed at <a href="http://www.southeastlep.com/images/uploads/resources/Skills_Advisory_Group_TO_R.pdf">http://www.southeastlep.com/images/uploads/resources/Skills_Advisory_Group_TO_R.pdf</a></p>	
<b>DfE responses to SELEP</b>	
<p><i>Non-Levy procurement letter</i> As outlined above, a response letter will be sent to the ESFA / Skills Minister.</p>	<p><b>ACTION:</b> LA to draft letter to ESFA and Skills Minister re</p>

<p><i>Institutes of Technology</i></p> <p>LA noted that contrary to initial advice from the DfE and guidance, the more recent criteria stated that bids should be LEP wide. LA had emailed the DfE querying this and had circulated the response to members. Given that some partners who were planning to bid had now pulled out due to this, it was agreed that a more formal letter should be sent to DfE noting concerns. Positively, there is a LEP wide bid going forward however.</p>	<p><b>ACTION:</b> LA to draft letter to DfE regarding IoTs</p>
<b>ESF Contracts performance</b>	
<p>LA had prepared an overview of ESF contracts in terms of current performance. This was shared confidentially as some figures hadn't been verified and had a considerable time-lag.</p> <p>Members noted that it would be useful to have more information on definitions used, such as 'closer to work' and 'progression into education'. LA will therefore produce an updated version of information.</p> <p>Colleagues asked if there was further information on where exactly Big lottery projects are taking place. These are described at the following links which includes maps  <a href="http://www.southeastlep.com/images/uploads/resources/ESF_Overview_for_SELEP_Area_May_2017.pdf">http://www.southeastlep.com/images/uploads/resources/ESF Overview for SELEP Area May 2017.pdf</a> .</p>	<p><b>ACTION:</b> LA to update ESF performance paper with definitions and outline of contracts</p>
<b>Industrial Strategy and Careers Strategy</b>	
<p><i>Skills Advisory Panels:</i> GR noted that Skills Advisory Panels were outlined in the Industrial Strategy and it was important to ensure a LEP wide employer voice in skills discussions. To this end, the Skills Board (employer) chairs will meet in May. There are some pilot panels across the country with government stating that they will work with existing structures (such as the skills boards). A LEP wide approach is required though colleagues agreed much will need to take place at federated level.</p> <p>The format of SAG was discussed and ensuring that this appropriate. HA suggested a standing item could be for feedback from skills boards to ensure two way communications (LA attends skills boards to give LEP updates), which it was agreed would be useful.</p> <p>AoD suggested that when the skills strategy action plan is agreed, some LEP wide working groups (i.e. apprenticeships, upskilling, adult retraining) would be positive.</p> <p><i>Construction Sector Deal:</i> LA noted that she had spoken to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) regarding the potential to link in with the construction sector deal, given the size of the sector across SELEP. It is likely this will be a national deal, given the importance of construction in most areas and a proposal will be shared by BEIS in March / April. There have been some delays due to Carillion. LEPs are seen as key partners and key to delivery.</p> <p><i>Local Digital Partnerships:</i> LA noted that she had spoken to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on a cross governmental initiative looking at digital partnerships. This will look at all aspects of digital skills, from assisting with basic skills to those such as coding and programming. There is potential for SELEP to be one of</p>	<p><b>ACTION:</b> New standing item for skills board headline updates at SAG (from secretariat representatives)</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> LA to provide update about construction sector deal and local digital partnerships when available</p>

<p>the pilot LEP areas taking this forward and members agreed that this would be positive. A meeting is proposed with the Chair and Digital lead of the Essex ESB initially, with a view to rolling out to Kent and East Sussex also.</p>	
<b>SELEP Skills Strategy and Action Plan</b>	
<p>GR outlined that further comments had been received on the latest version of the strategy. LA will therefore finalise the document early in April. This will be a designed version which will go out to partners as completed. Ahead of seeking the sign off of the strategic board, LA will also send to each federated board with an overview of how their feedback has been incorporated and seeking a quote to include.</p> <p>LA noted that additionally, the district tables had been completed and sector reports were underway, with a data tool being purchased to enable the regular production of such information for the SELEP website.</p> <p>LA had circulated a draft action plan but it was agreed that this could be prepared when the strategy is updated. The action plan will be a working document for SAG, with only the updated strategy to be circulated.</p>	<p><b>ACTION:</b> Finalised, designed strategy to be produced for April</p>
<b>Date of next meeting: 13.30, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2018</b>	