

South East LEP Growth Hub Skills Engagement Session NOTES

Questions during presentations and Q&A Panel with speakers

Q: Is there existing support for people who may have barriers to work?

A: There are a number of ESF projects delivering across the LEP supporting people. Further information is at

http://www.southeastlep.com/images/uploads/resources/ESF_Overview_for_SELEP_Area_May_2017.pdf and

http://www.southeastlep.com/images/uploads/resources/SELEP_brochure_%28ESF_and_Skills_Capital%29.pdf

Additionally, there is increasing government focus and initiatives such as ‘Disability Confident’ which employers are encouraged to sign up to

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign>). Local events to raise awareness of this and support on offer would be positive and have worked well in Cornwall.

Q: The entry requirement for apprenticeships (five GCSEs at A*-C) is a barrier to many. Is this being addressed?

A: This has been raised elsewhere and is something government are looking at. There could be a role for ESF, in bridging the gap (such as functional skills).

Q: Are the government aware that some young people don’t take up apprenticeships because they impact on their parents benefits?

This has been raised elsewhere so can be fed back. Universal Credit may also help to address this barrier.

Q: Are there any metrics on numbers of businesses transferring the levy in the SELEP area? (Laurence will look into this query)

Q: In building a LEP wide approach, it would be useful to build on local good practice. For example in Kent there is a very successful programme supporting people with disabilities into employment. Are there plans to do so?

Yes definitely, we’d be keen to build on any best practice (*SELEP / Kent CC are following up on this*).

Next steps include a meeting with SELEP / DWP and local Job Centre Plus colleagues to map out what’s already happening and raise awareness of existing initiatives. For example, BASE (The British Association of Supported Employment) which has business ambassadors (<https://www.base-uk.org/>)

Building on the Cornwall experience, it’s useful to capture what’s already happening and showcase best practice. An event around this could prove useful and celebrating even small things that are happening in employment. Many employers have workplace support.

Q: Are there statistics on numbers of people in our geography with disabilities?

A: Figures from November 2016 (www.nomisweb.co.uk) for benefit claimants show 132,000 people claiming Employment Support Allowance and Incapacity Benefits (therefore unable to work) and 22,690 are disabled (looking for work). Universal Credit has changed the information available on benefit claimants.

Figures for economic inactivity show that the economic activity rate for 16-64 year olds who are disabled is 59.4% in the south east compared to 85.1% for those who not core disabled.

Further analysis will be carried out to help inform this work.

Q: Why are T-Levels only for the 15 routeways?

A: They originated from the recommendations made in the 2016 Sainsbury's review of post 16 vocational training and they are mirrored by the Institute for Apprenticeship's occupational maps on the apprenticeship side. In the same way some of the old frameworks had lots of pathways,(Engineering/Construction) its much the same with the routeways, with some being by their nature more wide ranging from others in terms of job roles – Engineering compared to Hair & Beauty for example

Q: Where do English & Maths A-C fit with T-Levels? What support is available?

A: English & Maths are generally not pre-requisites to going onto a T-level (unless specified), however, again much the same as an apprenticeship they are to be done whilst on programme if required – at L2 and the provider would support the learner to complete these – and the ESFA would fund much in the same way they do currently with apprenticeships

Q: Regarding work placements and T-levels – does this have to be with a single employer or could it be multiple employers?

This will be determined by policy decisions that will come after various models have been tested through the pilots

Q: What support is offered to learners regarding travel patterns?

A: Again something that will be tested in the pilots and very dependent on distances involved. The learner will be supported by school/college/provider/employer in some form or another but this is to be confirmed. This is also an area of focus for ESF.

Q: Much of the focus on apprenticeships is for young people. Are there plans to market to adults given that the levy makes this a viable option?

A: Yes, there is likely to be promotion and local networks can raise awareness of this also. The Fuller Working Lives (supporting employees aged 50+ to access training support) initiative can also help to raise awareness.

WORKSHOP FEEDBACK (key areas of priority and focus)

Workshop 1

- Funding to support 16-18 year olds with work readiness, confidence building, functional skills and next steps (Summer school).

Workshop 2

- Ensuring employers are aware of the range of options, not only apprenticeships
- Funding for short courses to assist employers where appropriate
- Supporting unemployed people into work

- Supporting people in low skilled / entry level jobs to progress

Workshop 3

- Year 8 projects in south Essex have been positive and it would be good to expand on these. There is often a focus on year 9 but this enables early engagement with young people regarding job opportunities in their area
- Innovative practice to engage people in growth sectors, such as virtual reality is welcome

Workshop 4

- Ensuring the employer voice in what growth means to them and what their requirements are now and in the future

Workshop 5

- Enterprise in schools is important. Might there be an opportunity for Local Growth Hubs to support such training in schools and offer advice and support?

Workshop 6

- Simplifying the landscape is welcome so the Skills portal would be very beneficial.
- Shortage of tutors across growth sectors – useful to raise awareness of this and engage employers in teaching industry skills

Workshop 7

- Ensuring simplification and join up through initiatives such as the skills portal
- Encouraging joint working with government departments

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