

**South East LEP Skills Advisory Group Meeting
8th May 2018**

Park Crescent conference Centre, London

Minutes and Actions

Attending

Louise Aitken (LA), South East LEP
 Carol Anson-Higgs (CAH), Essex Provider Network
 Holly Aquilina (HA), East Sussex CC
 Allan Baillie (AB), Kent County Council
 Caroline Betts (CB), Essex County Council
 Simon Cook (SC), Mid Kent College
 Jackie Fotheringham, University of Kent (*new member*)
 Debbie Leach (DL), HM Prison Service
 Paul Mitchell (PM), Sussex Council of Training Providers
 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

Sue Baxter, University of Brighton
 Jacqueline Bradley, Thurrock Council / Adult Learning
 Martin Hall, Medway Council
 Brin Martin, Southend Council
 Dan Shelley, Sussex Coast College

AGENDA ITEM / NOTES	ACTION/ PAPER
Minutes of last meeting (9th January 2018)	
<p>Minutes were agreed by members.</p> <p>Most actions from the last meeting were to be discussed through the meeting agenda. Additional actions were discussed:</p> <p>ACTION: LA to share final programme for Growth Hub skills session when available LA shared the agenda (9th May) and noted that the link to register had been circulated. Over 60 people were due to attend, with speakers including the National Apprenticeship Service, Careers Enterprise Company, Cornwall and Isle of Scilly LEP and Department for Work and Pensions.</p> <p>Post meeting note: The event was well received and prompted useful discussions. Presentations and meeting notes will be shared.</p>	

Skills Strategy	
<p>LA shared some printed copies of the designed draft skills strategy, which was also circulated electronically after the meeting.</p> <p>The designed draft will be shared with federated boards noting how their feedback has been incorporated and inviting final, substantive comments. The intention is to finalise this month, along with supporting reports and evidence base such as the district tables.</p> <p>Post meeting note: The strategy will require final sign off at the LEP Board on 29th June following which it will be published.</p> <p>Colleagues agreed that a formal launch in the summer would be very positive and GR suggested that this could be held at one of the skills capital projects. Members agreed this would be a good opportunity to showcase a facility also. LA will therefore explore potential venues.</p> <p>CB asked whether the LEP is also producing an Energy Strategy and whether it would be possible to engage with this also. LA confirmed that a strategy is being developed in collaboration with Coast to Capital and Enterprise M3, with engagement workshops happening currently. Jo Simmons in the LEP Secretariat team is leading on this for SELEP. Further information is available at http://www.southeastlep.com/activities/energy-south2east</p>	<p>ACTION: LA to circulate designed draft strategy and finalise with supporting documents for LEP website</p> <p>ACTION: LA to look into venues and dates for formal launch of Skills Strategy</p>
SELEP Response to the Department for Education (DfE) / Skills Minister	
<p>LA outlined that further to a letter being sent to the Skills Minister raising concerns about non-levy procurement, a response email had been received. Members agreed at the March meeting that this was not satisfactory and a follow up letter was therefore sent from the LEP Chair and Vice Chairs. LA had circulated this with the agenda but confirmed that a response hadn't yet been received.</p> <p>HA confirmed that Skills East Sussex had also sent a follow up letter but not yet received a response. HA suggested that a further letter could be sent, signed by all employer task groups. Members agreed that this would be worth exploring.</p>	<p>ACTION: LA to circulate response to DfE letter when received</p> <p>ACTION: HA to explore a letter signed by local employer groups</p>
European Social Funding (ESF)	
<p>LA noted that further to queries about contract outputs at the previous meeting, a document with definitions of outputs had been circulated to members. Performance information for the various contracts is still awaited and LA will produce a headline report when this is available.</p> <p>LA informed the group that the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) had advised (as stated to the ESIF Committee) that there was a window for ESF calls to go out in May 2018. However, this had since changed and the DWP were unable to give any specific timeframes.</p> <p>The amount remaining to allocate to remaining calls will depend on current contracts being extended (including DWP and ESFA). Extensions should have match funding so are a positive option if the contract is performing well and also offer continuity and a</p>	<p>ACTION: LA to produce headline report on ESF contract performance (when available)</p> <p>ACTION: LA to explore best route for raising concerns at ESF call delays</p>

more long-term approach. Future calls will require 50% match funding. Members agreed that the delays were concerning, especially with so much information gathered on calls. SN suggested it could be worth sending a letter or raising at ESIF Committee. LA confirmed she would explore this.

With regard to themes for future calls these are as follows (due to be verified by DWP):

- Support for unemployed people into key sectors (including health, care, construction)
- Wheels to work supporting people in rural areas with transport barriers to access jobs and training
- Digital skills support for unemployed people
- Innovative solutions to support NEET / young people into work and training
- Community Grants programme to support grass roots initiatives
- Leadership and management for SMEs (cross sector)
- Apprenticeship support for SMEs
- Supporting individuals in entry level jobs to upskill and progress (cross sector)
- Upskilling the workforce in health and care
- A skills portal for the south east
- Virtual reality and digital to showcase local growth sectors
- Internships and returnships for key sectors
- Industry work placements, CPD, training and recruitment support for tutors in key sectors

Further to the Growth Hub skills session on 9th May, there are some additional areas for consideration:

- Supporting disabled people into and in work (if not duplication of national initiatives)
- Support with getting into an apprenticeship (or industry qualification) - such as functional skills for those without 5 A-C / similar

ACTION: LA to inform members when ESF deadlines are confirmed

ACTION: All to provide any supporting evidence for areas of focus / let LA know if any areas of need missing


Industrial Strategy opportunities update

Local Digital Partnerships – LA had updated members previously with regard to this Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) led initiative. This is cross departmental and will look at all aspects of digital need from basic skills for unemployed people to advanced skills such as virtual reality and artificial intelligence. As outlined in the government’s Industrial Strategy the aim is for Digital Partnerships to be aligned with Skills Advisory Panels.

As LA had previously informed members, a DCMS and LEP meeting was held with Essex ESB’s Chair and Digital Sector lead and secretariat support. DCMS invited partners to submit a proposal for how a partnership could work locally which would mean the South East LEP being one of the first pilots nationally. This proposal was submitted in May with a response awaited. If successful, the intention would be to start with the Essex ESB and roll out across the LEP area working with Skills East Sussex and Kent and Medway Skills Commission.

Members asked what resource / funding this would secure. LA noted that there would likely be a DCMS colleague based locally to take work forward and linking to other government departments as well as digital corporates. AoD noted that it would be important to link in with the Thames Estuary Creative Corridor work also.

ACTION: LA to inform members when outcome of proposal to be a Digital skills Partnership is known

<p><i>National Retraining Scheme for Construction</i> – LA had received some preliminary information from the Construction and Industry Training Board about a funding round to be launched soon. With official information not yet published, key aspects were <u>expected</u> to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £24 million over two years, to be spent by 2020 • Creating 20 mobile learning hubs nationally • Support for upskilling, work experience, unemployed people, entry to apprenticeships • Focus on home building and supporting live construction projects • Bids to be employer led but where tackling specific issues such as reaching the unemployed, should involve other organisations also <p>LA noted that this aligned well to the skills strategy and fact that construction is the biggest sector across the LEP, seeing the biggest growth. It might be positive to encourage relevant partners to join forces and submit a LEP wide bid.</p> <p>Colleagues noted that some local bids were being explored and some of the terms looked potentially unfavourable such as assets created by the funding being retained by CITB.</p> <p>LA noted that once details are available, they will be shared with the LEP’s housing group and networks.</p>	<p>ACTION: LA / ALL to share details on National Retraining Scheme for Construction when received</p>
SELEP Sector Support Funding	
<p><i>(NB AoD chaired the meeting part way through this item onwards to enable GR to attend another meeting)</i></p> <p>LA noted that members had agreed at previous meetings that an area of focus for the LEP Sector Support funding should be to address the shortage of tutors aligned to growth sectors. This has continued to be raised as a barrier across the LEP. To this end, LA shared the attached slides outlining the issues and emerging ideas.</p> <p>Colleagues agreed that a high profile marketing campaign could be a positive way to approach the issue and to challenge misconceptions about teaching. This could also focus on some of the positives such as less commuting time and holidays. It could also convey the wide range of opportunities from private providers to college and adult learning.</p> <p>Some of the barriers to solutions were noted as being:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared tutors already in some areas (i.e. South Essex College and PROCAT) but needs to work geographically • Getting people from industry can be challenging if people are called back to their employment due to big projects or deadlines • Members agreed this could be addressed by building up a bank of individual technical expertise so as not to put too much pressure on time <p>GR noted that the DfE were aware of this barrier and exploring solutions. A letter has gone out to all Principals and potentially the DfE are working on a solution. Colleagues asked whether this was an issue nationally and LA confirmed other neighbouring LEPs had flagged this also. HA asked whether a national campaign might therefore be appropriate. Members agreed that some of the issues specific to the</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Tutor recruitment and training options.¶</p> </div> <p>ACTION: All to inform LA of existing best practice, initiatives and supporting information for proposal</p> <p>ACTION: LA to start drafting proposal to Sector Support fund and to confirm eligibility of ESF in</p>

<p>south (higher cost of living, availability of competing jobs) warranted a local campaign. LA will raise this with the national LEP network at a meeting this month also however.</p> <p>LA will start developing a proposal for the LEP Sector Support funding. Final guidance for this funding is due to be released soon.</p>	<p>longer-term</p>
Local Skills Board Headline Update	
<p>Essex Employment and Skills Board (CB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding a virtual reality project to showcase and raise awareness of the logistics sector (as demonstrated to SAG) • Recently launched an a jobs guide for adults alongside an existing guide for young people • Exploring tutor recruitment challenges locally building on a previous ‘Golden Hello’ programme supporting recruitment and upskilling • Working with Chelmsford Prison on virtual reality packages to support training • Working with the Ministry of Defence to support people into growth sectors • Refreshing the Essex Skills Evidence Base • More at https://www.essexsb.co.uk/ <p>Skills East Sussex (HA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College curriculums being signed off by the board currently • Working with Health Education England, NHS and local colleges on Health and Care HEFCE funding to support level 2 upwards • Continuing to lobby about the lack of construction apprenticeship training due to the non-levy procurement outcomes • Engineering learning campaign being explored • Visitor economy campaign for chefs due to current shortage • Land based group looking at working with small food produce • Across all task groups, joining up with the Enterprise Adviser groups and schools, producing career guides / posters for schools • Open Doors 2018 currently being worked on (schools going into local companies) • More at https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/business/eastsussex/selep/ses/ses/ <p>Kent and Medway Skills Commission (AB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills Commission conference being held on 5th June, with local Sector Guilds attending. There will be updates from DFE, from BEIS on the Industrial Strategy and an overview of the skills picture in Kent. There will also be a focus on degree apprenticeships and Mid Kent work with the army. AB extended an invitation to all members. • Kent and Medway hospitality Guild linking members with at least one school each • Some Guilds are more active than others and this is partly due to support and resource to take work forward. AB is exploring increased support. • Exploring a ‘sector conversation’ with land-based industry to drive forward activity • Interreg bid submitted which would support the Engineering Guild 	
Date of next meeting: Tuesday 10th July, 13.30-16.00	