

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PANEL
HELD ON MONDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2017 AT COMMITTEE ROOM A,
WELLINGTON HOUSE, 40-50 WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS**

Present:

Julie Colley	Avalon Group
Peter Duffy	Peter Duffy Limited
Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe	Bradford Council
Tom Keeney	BT
Councillor Cliff Lunn	North Yorkshire County Council
Karen Milner	Paths and Progress
Beverley Parrish	Parrish Environmental Consulting Ltd
Councillor Mohammed Rafique	Leeds City Council
Glynn Robinson	BJSS
Councillor Carol Runciman	City of York Council
Amanda Stainton	Portakabin
Councillor Daniel Sutherland	Calderdale Council
Professor Margaret House (Advisory Representative)	LCR Skills Network
Ian Billyard (Advisory Representative)	LCR Skills Network
Nick Bowen (Advisory Representative)	LCR Headteachers Network
Mark Roberts (Advisory Representative)	Beer Hawk Ltd
Diana Towler	Department of Work and Pensions
Mike Denby	Wakefield Council

In attendance:

Sue Cooke	WYCA
Peter Glover	WYCA
Emma Longbottom	WYCA
Jonathan Skinner	WYCA
Catherine Lunn	WYCA
Sonya Midgley	WYCA
Janette Woodcock	WYCA

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Sue Soroczan and Merran McRae.

2. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Ian Billyard disclosed an other interest as he is a member of West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges.

3. Notes of the cancelled meeting of the Employment and Skills Panel, 1 September 2017

This meeting was not quorate therefore these notes were not submitted.

4. Exempt information - Exclusion of the press and public

There were no items on the agenda requiring exclusion of the press and public.

5. Chair's update

The Chair announced that this would be her final meeting of the Employment and Skills Panel. Rashik Parmar will take over as Chair of the Panel from January 2018.

The Panel thanked the Chair for her hard work and celebrated some of the achievements that have taken place during her tenure. In appreciation the Chair was presented with a gift.

The Chair informed the Panel of the sad death of Professor Mike Campbell, a former Panel member. The Chair and Panel members expressed their condolences and paid tribute to his commitment, achievements and tireless efforts whilst involved with the Panel. He will be sadly missed, the 2017 labour market information report has been dedicated to his memory.

The Chair also updated on other changes to the membership of the Panel. Don Brearley, will be retiring at the end of the year and has therefore resigned from the Panel. The Skills Network will nominate a new Deputy Chair in due course who will join the Panel.

The Chair welcomed Mark Roberts who following a recruitment campaign for new private sector membership will be joining the Panel.

The Chair informed the Panel that following annual assessments of the financial health of colleges, which were published on 15 November, two major West Yorkshire colleges (Bradford and Kirklees have been affected by Notices to improve. The FE Commissioner has met with both colleges but it is too early to assess the impact, further details will be provided at a future meeting.

The Chair provided an update on the progress of the Skills Capital programme. New or refurbished facilities have now been completed and opened in seven colleges, with construction now underway on the three remaining capital projects. The call for projects, which was announced at the last Panel, led to 17 submissions for Skills Capital, which totalled funding asks of £81m to deliver £145m projects. At this time

we do not have any further Skills Capital funding available, these projects will form a project pipeline for any future funding.

6. Employment and Skills policy

(a) Potential Impacts of Brexit on the Leeds City Region

Panel members were provided with an overview of the potential impact of Brexit on the Leeds City Region and a summary of the impact of Brexit on the local labour market. The analysis was based on qualitative research undertaken with 30 businesses in the City Region, together with results from the Leeds City Region Survey (a telephone survey of 2,368 businesses).

The LCR Business Survey found that among those businesses who employ migrant workers around two-fifths consider it a concern should the UK's departure from the EU affect their ability to recruit migrant workers from the EU.

Agricultural and manufacturing businesses were most likely to say they would be affected if access to EU migrant workers was reduced with sectors employing lower proportions of EU Migrants, such as education, digital and wholesale, much less likely to express concern.

Due to the relative uncertainty around the outcome of Brexit negotiations, most businesses were adopting an iterative "wait and see" approach with very few having taken steps so far.

The Panel was asked to consider these issues and what should the main role of WYCA be in this area and the potential impact of Brexit on Leeds City Region labour market.

The Panel discussed what steps can be taken at this stage to develop a local strategic response to the labour market issues arising out of Brexit and how to ensure local businesses and individuals can access clear information and advice about the implications for their businesses including timescales for the continuation of EU funding.

Resolved: That the findings on the potential impact and issues of Brexit on the Leeds City Region were noted and once further information is available a paper will be brought to the Panel for consideration.

(b) Potential Impacts of Automation on the Leeds City Region

Members asked at the previous meeting for a discussion around the potential impacts of Automation on the Leeds City Region labour market

The Panel were provided with an overview of the potential impact of Automation on the Leeds City Region Economy and views were sought

regarding how the findings should be integrated into the work of WYCA including the potential devolution discussion.

The presentation contained analysis applied by Frey and Osbourne (The future of Employment: 'How susceptible are jobs to automation', 2013) to City Region employment data to assess the susceptibility to automation of local jobs. The work by Frey and Osbourne and related analysis found that 35% of current jobs in the UK are at high risk of computerisation over the next 20 years.

Based on the Frey and Osbourne's analysis, employment in the City Region has a significant susceptibility to automation, in line with the level estimated for the UK. However, susceptibility is much higher in some sectors and occupations than in others. With some exceptions higher skilled jobs are expected to be the most resistant to automation, along with caring occupations. Routine clerical and manual roles will continue to be the most susceptible to automation, together with sales roles (such as checkout operators).

Forecast pattern of automation has implications for inclusive growth – further decline of middle skilled clerical and manual roles narrows progression routes for those without a degree while negative impact on some service intensive roles with higher levels of employment could further reduce opportunities for low skilled.

The Panel discussed and raised the worrying outlook in terms of jobs, that the skills challenge is urgent and the Government need to invest in skills now. Education and life skills are important and it was felt the approach was to watch and understand trends, understanding how quickly technologies progress in some industries more than others and how to get people back into work.

Resolved: That the findings of the potential impact of Automation on the Leeds City Region were considered and noted.

(c) Budget and Devolution

The Panel was updated on Autumn Budget proposals the devolution asks for Employment and Skills. An oral update was provided on the Industrial Strategy. The Panel were asked to consider challenges outlined in the update and the potential responses on the following key questions:

- The main challenges to focus on
- What are the barriers in individual sectors/organisations that prevent action being taken?
- Are the potential responses realistic?
- How could these responses help unlock the growth potential of the region.

- Given the current situation in funding and devolution, should/could business be taking more of a lead in any of these areas.
- What action could be taken to help achieve this?

The Panel discussed the above and the confirmation from the Department of Education that they would like to work with the Leeds City Region to deliver a set of Career Learning Pilots which will be crucial to informing the development of a National Retraining Scheme, as announced by the Chancellor at his Autumn Budget to help realise the Government's ambitions for an adult education system that helps people upskill and reskill throughout their working lives.

The Department of Education also invited Leeds City Region to take part in a pilot to develop Skills Advisory Panels, these will complement the Employment and Skills Panel and current LMI processes

Resolved:

- (i) That the potential devolution asks were considered and noted.
- (ii) That future developments were noted.
- (iii) That details regarding the new Government Strategy be brought to the next meeting.
- (iv) That further information relating to the development of the Career Learning Pilot and Skills Advisory Panels be brought to the next meeting.

(d) HS2 and Supply Chain Growth Strategy

The Panel was provided with a summary of the HS2 Skills and Supply Chain Growth Strategy and were asked to give their views on how this should be progressed.

Funding was secured from Government to develop a Leeds City Region Growth Strategy. Arup have worked with Colleagues at Leeds City Council to engage and consult with partners on the content of the strategy. The draft strategy was submitted to Government in October 2017 and feedback is awaited.

The LCR HS2 Skills and Supply Chain Growth Strategy details how the Leeds City Region is proposing to truly accelerate its development as a national and international centre of excellence for skills and supply chain expertise in High Speed and Light Rail in the UK, achieving a position of global competitiveness and driving the UK's industrial strategy.

The Panel was keen for opportunities to be shared across the wider region

and for all colleges and training providers to have the opportunity to be involved. They felt that it needed to be more explicit that all LCR was involved.

Resolved: That the update and Panel's views on HS2 Skills and Supply Chain Growth be noted.

7. Update on Employment and skills themes and advisory panels

(e) Cross-cutting themes: More and Better Apprenticeships and Raising the Bar on High Level Skills

The Panel was updated on the work to progress the priorities and actions in the cross-cutting themes in the Employment and Skills Plan: "More and Better Apprenticeships" and "Raising the Bar on High Level Skills" and were asked to comment on:

- The proposal from West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges to develop an Institute of Technology linked to the development of digital skills.
- The outline grant criteria for a future proposed apprenticeship for employers, which will be used if additional funding is secured.
- The proposed next steps in relation to the Delivery Agreement Preparation for AEB activity.
- The progress of activity against the More and Better Apprenticeships and Raising the Bar on High Level Skills priorities.

Members commented that they would like a more detailed report regarding the progress of the Absolute Apprenticeships programme as they were concerned regarding the performance.

Resolved :

- (i) That the proposal for a West Yorkshire based Institute of Technology on Digital skills be endorsed.
- (ii) That the outline grant criteria for a future proposed apprenticeship grant for employers be endorsed.
- (iii) That the proposed next steps in relation to the Delivery Agreement and preparation for AEB Activity be noted and endorsed.
- (iv) That the progress against the More and Better Apprenticeships and Raising the Bar on High Level Skills priorities be noted.

(f) Great education connected to business

The Panel was provided with an update on the work to progress the priorities and actions in the "Great Education Connected to Businesses" priority of the

Employment and Skills Plan.

The Panel was asked to note the update from the Advisory Group, support the progress of activity against the “Great Education Connected to Business” Priority and comment on the proposed Leeds City Region Careers Pledge. The Panel discussed the work to prioritise and the actions involved at Length and concluded that consideration needed to be given to how the Careers Pledge synergises with local District ambitions.

Resolved:

- (i) That the update be noted.
- (ii) That the progress of activity against the “Great Education Connected to Business” and the proposed Leeds City Careers Pledge be noted and supported.

(g) Building workforce skills and attracting talent

The panel was presented with a report on the work to progress the priorities and actions in the “Building Workforce Skills and Attracting Talent” priority of the Employment and Skills Plan.

The Advisory Group welcomed the support being given to businesses to make the most of apprenticeships in the context of the levy and were interested in the development around degree level apprenticeships. They commented that the introduction of the apprenticeship levy has given an opportunity for businesses to re-consider their recruitment practices. The Panel commented that there were district differences regarding the number of businesses supported and shared some best practices.

A verbal update was provided regarding the evaluation of the LEP Skills Service.

The Panel commented that there were district differences regarding the number of businesses supported and shared some best practice

Resolved:

- (i) That the update be noted.
- (ii) That the learning points from the Skills Service evaluation and how this could shape any future funding opportunities were considered and noted.
- (iii) That the progress of activity of activity against the “Building Workforce Skills and Attracting Talent” priority be noted.

(h) Employability, accessing jobs and realising potential

The Panel were consulted on the work to progress the priorities and actions in the “Employability. Accessing jobs and Realising Potential” priority of the Employment and Skills Plan.

The Panel was presented with the Advisory Group Report and Update on the final phase of the Headstart project, which will focus on piloting a social prescribing model working with GP surgeries.

A pilot programme is being developed with City Of York Council and some York based GP’s and will concentrate on encouraging clinical staff to ‘socially prescribe’ to non-clinical services, for example employment support and skills. The project is expected to launch in the New Year and an update will be provided on progress at the next Employment and Skills Panel Meeting in March 2018.

The Panel was also updated on the Work and Health Programme which forms part of the wider package of employment support for people with disabilities.

Resolved:

- (i) That the update be noted.
- (ii) That a report be presented to the Panel at the next meeting in March for discussion on Jobcentre Plus support programmes including Universal Credit.

8. Date of next meeting

Friday 2 March 2018 10:00 AM – Committee Room A, Wellington House, Leeds.