

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS COMMITTEE
HELD ON THURSDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2022 AT WELLINGTON HOUSE,
WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS LS1 2DE**

Present:

Councillor James Lewis (Chair)	Leeds City Council
Councillor Silvia Dacre	Calderdale Council
Councillor Jessica Lennox	Leeds City Council
Councillor Lynn Masterman	Wakefield Council
Milton Brown	Private Sector Representative
Bill Adams	Advisory Representative
Nav Chohan	Advisory Representative
Mike Curtis	Advisory Representative
Alex Miles	Advisory Representative
Sharon Riding	Advisory Representative
Tim Thornton	Advisory Representative

In attendance:

Brian Archer	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Michelle Burton	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Peter Glover	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Marianne Hewitt	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Sonya Midgley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Philip Witcherley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Janette Woodcock	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

12. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence received from Shirley Congdon, Deputy Chair, Cllr Imran Khan, Cllr Graham Turner, Martin Booth, Michelle Chappell-Dixon, Tim Craven, Orlagh Hunt, Phil Lautman, Richard Mason, Liz Needleman, Claire Paxman.

13. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

The Committee was asked to make recommendations related to the Adult Education Budget for decision by the Combined Authority and by the Chief Executive of the Combined Authority under his delegations by the Combined Authority Board. In the interests of transparency, all members of the Committee with an interest (including Local Authorities and Colleges) were asked to declare.

The following members declared an interest: -

Cllr James Lewis, Leeds City Council
Cllr Jessica Lennox, Leeds City Council
Cllr Silvia Dacre, Calderdale Council
Cllr Lynn Masterman, Wakefield Council
Nav Chohan

14. Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved:

That in accordance with paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Appendix A of Agenda item 7 on the grounds that they are likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information and for the reasons set out in the report that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

15. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 6 July 2022

At the last meeting the Committee asked the West Yorkshire Skills Partnership (WYSP) how it would ensure that the providers they put forward for membership on the Committee will be representative and diverse. The Chair of WYSP was not in attendance at the last meeting and was, therefore invited to give a verbal update to members of the Committee at the meeting held on 20 October 2022.

Nav Chohan (Chair of WYSP) informed the Committee that the West Yorkshire, West and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce, and the Mid-Yorkshire Chamber have been chosen to lead the Local Skills Improvement Plan and it is welcomed that they intend to work closely with West Yorkshire Combined Authority. At the last meeting, the Committee agreed to invite a representative of the LSIP to join. It was proposed, therefore, that the Chair writes to both Chambers with that offer. It may be that they are content for Tim Craven (TransUnion) do fulfil this role

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2022 be approved.

16. Evidence Report

The Committee considered a report and verbal update to present the latest position on the State of the Region monitoring indicators relating to employment and skills, together with an analysis of more timely labour market indicators and the analysis provided context for discussion

Members discussed the analysis and Officers responded to questions and noted the feedback from the Committee.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the comments of the Committee relating to the latest intelligence to employment and skills in West Yorkshire and the current performance of West Yorkshire against the State o the Region indicators be noted.

17. Update on Current Programmes

The Committee considered a report and verbal update on the progress of delivery of Combined Authority-led employment and skills programmes overseen by the Committee.

The main area of focus was the new fully funded courses for adults to re-train and upskill currently being promoted under the Skills Connect brand.

Since the papers were cleared, a grant agreement has been signed with the TUC Yorkshire and Humber for a pilot to test the effectiveness of the Union Learning model in stimulating demand for adult training in West Yorkshire. The model involves utilising trusted colleagues in the workplace to encourage upskilling particularly among people with low skill levels and in low paid work. This will be measured via referrals to AEB, L3 “free courses for jobs”, Skills Connect, Multiply, apprenticeships and other provision. The TUC will recruit a Skills Development Officer to deliver this work.

The Committee discussed and provided their comments on the progress of delivery.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That comments on the progress of delivery of employment and skills programmes in the Leeds City Region be noted.

18. Adult Education Budget

The Committee considered a report on progress with the Devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB). was provided with an update on the 2022/23 Responsiveness pot and the intended activity and was asked to discuss a request from providers for increased funding rates.

The Committee discussed a request from providers for an increase to the AEB funding rate and officers noted key concerns. The request centred around two main propositions and the Committee were provided with the following: -

1. The rate paid per qualification through AEB has not increased in 10 years
2. The rising costs of living crisis - affecting running costs, impeding recruitment and increasing the need for learner support

Analysis of Further Education College accounts showed that West Yorkshire

colleges vary from 7% to 21% dependency on AEB funding.

Officers thanked members for their feedback and will come back to the Committee with firm proposals based on discussion by members at the meeting including the impact on colleges

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That comments on the progress of the Devolved Education Budget be noted.
- (iii) That comments on the request for an increase to funding rates be noted.
- (iv) That Officers will come back to the Committee with firm proposals based on discussion by members at the meeting.

19. Multiply

The Committee considered a report and a verbal update on the progress with Multiply and was asked to appraise the next steps. Officers updated the Committee including governance arrangements.

Members discussed and provided officers with their concerns. Officers provided answers to questions and noted feedback from the Committee.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the progress with Multiply be noted.

20. Employment and Skills Future Investment and Delivery

The Committee considered a report on the development work for future employment and skills interventions in West Yorkshire and the progress on the Mayoral pledges. Over the course of the last 12 months, officers have been working with the Employment and Skills Committee, Local Authorities and wider partners to develop the future programme of delivery and skills.

On the Agenda for approval at the Combined Authority, due to meet following the Employment and Skills Committee meeting is the Employment West Yorkshire programme which this Committee endorsed at the meeting held on 1 September 2022.

Employment West Yorkshire will be delivered by Local Authorities and support

7,700 individuals towards, into and within work. This has been a huge piece of work with local authority and combined authority officers working together to provide a much-needed service in West Yorkshire to support with labour shortages and good work.

The next steps were presented by officers to the Committee for this work and in particular green jobs task force and interventions from the climate and environment action plan, digital skills interventions and a SME graduate programme.

The Committee discussed and was in support of the principles outlined in the papers for investment in Further Education.

The Committee was thanked by officers for their guidance and feedback received at the July meeting of the Employment and Skills Committee and a workshop is planned for December which will show what each intervention will look like.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That input from the Committee on the green jobs and skills interventions being developed through the Climate and Environment action plan be noted.
- (iii) That business cases for the interventions prioritised in the digital skills plan be endorsed.
- (iv) That work up of the business case for the Mayoral SME Graduate Scheme be endorsed.