

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PANEL
HELD ON THURSDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER 2019 AT COMMITTEE ROOM
A, WELLINGTON HOUSE, 40-50 WELLINGTON STREET, LEEDS**

Present:

Rashik Parmar MBE (Chair)	IBM
Councillor Imran Khan	Bradford Council
Councillor Patrick Mulligan	North Yorkshire County Council
Councillor Adam Wilkinson	Calderdale Council
Councillor Michael Graham	Wakefield Council
Nav Chohan (Advisory Representative)	Leeds City Region Skills Network
Professor Margaret House (Advisory Representative)	Leeds City Region Skills Network
Alex Miles (Advisory Representative)	West Yorkshire Learning Providers

In attendance:

Henry Rigg	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Catherine Lunn	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Peter Glover	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Sonya Midgley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
David Shepherd	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Jonathan Skinner	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Ben Kearns	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe, Councillor Cuthbertson, Councillor McBride, Councillor Khan, Councillor Pryor Amanda Stainton, Mark Roberts, Martin Booth, Sam Alexander, Glynn Robinson and Simon Barratt.

2. Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests

There were no pecuniary interests declared by members at the meeting.

3. Exempt Information - Exclusion of the press and public

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

4. Minutes of the meeting of the Employment and Skills Panel held on 30 May 2019

Resolved: That the minutes of the Employment and Skills Panel held on 30 May 2019 be approved and signed by the Chair.

5. Chair's update

The Chair provided an update on actions from the previous meeting and notified panel members that the draft policy statement on careers had been amended to reflect the Panel's comments and recirculated.

The Chair also notified members regarding the Convention of the North which, in partnership with NP11, would host an event with Education and Skills on the agenda.

6. Governance Arrangements - Terms of Reference, Quorum and Membership

The Panel noted the Governance arrangements which were approved at the annual meeting of the Combined Authority.

Resolved: That the Governance arrangements be noted

7. Employment and Skills Services

The Panel considered a report to update on the progress of delivery of LEP-led Employment and Skills Programme in the Leeds City Region.

The Panel noted that 16 projects had been awarded through the Raising Aspirations grant fund for schools. Members also noted that a new approach to supporting businesses is being developed in response to a shortage of apprenticeship funding for non-levy organisations.

The Panel noted the evaluation of the Work Wellness service attached at appendix 1 and discussed the initial findings. It was felt that the pilot demonstrated a good level of participation and a creative way to facilitate social prescribing. Further work was necessary to ensure that the pilot could be scaled up and the Panel noted that the findings would also be considered by the Inclusive Growth and Public Policy Panel.

Panel members discussed a recent 'agile squad' where SMEs had been invited to review the Combined Authority's skills offer to businesses. The Panel discussed the feedback which had been provided and discussed the ways in which the employment and skills offer could be better promoted and made more accessible.

Resolved:

- (i) That the delivery of the employment and skills programme be noted.

- (ii) That the Panels comments on the impact and lessons from the Work Wellness pilot be noted and referred to the Inclusive Growth and Public Policy Panel.

8. Strategic Insight:

(a) Labour Market Information

The Panel was provided with an update on progress on the LEP's labour market intelligence programme for 2019/20.

The Panel discussed the findings and noted that the Leeds City Region was in the low skills equilibrium quadrant with a low supply and a low demand for skills and less of a chance that business would look to upgrade the skill of their employees.

Members discussed ways to address the structural challenge in the region and the aim to move towards a high supply and high demand for skills. One suggestion revolved around promoting demand by improving the standard of businesses in the region as well as the importance of job creation through inward investment.

The Panel also discussed issues around inclusion and the necessity to ensure that all areas of the region benefitted from upskilling. Members also raised the need for a targeted approach to areas of the City Region.

Panel members reflected on the changing profile of apprentices and the fact that the average age of apprentices had increased and apprenticeships had become more skilled.

Feedback from the Panel was to be incorporated into the final report prior to its publication in October.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the Panel's comments and suggestions be noted.

(b) Local Industrial Strategy

The Panel was provided with an update on the development of the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) and the emerging draft priorities.

The Panel noted the upcoming milestones for the Local Industrial strategy with drafting and testing to take place in October / November and submitted to Government in December 2019.

Members discussed the emerging draft priorities and the importance of regional distinctiveness. The Panel also noted the need to address the grand challenges which had been identified by Government.

Panel members discussed the challenges involved in the people aspect of the LIS including early years education, boosting the progression of women in the workplace, and improving the use of the apprenticeship levy. Members also discussed the importance the role that the voluntary sector could play in this strand of the LIS and the importance of inclusivity. Members were informed that the document was a work in progress and to get in touch with officers if they had any further comments.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the Panel's comments and suggestions be noted.

9. Talent Development

(c) Channel 4 / Digital Sector

The Panel was provided with a progress report on the Channel 4 project and subsequent delivery outlining the Combined Authority and LEP's increased support for the creative and digital sector through both the Creative Industries Opportunity Programme and the Digital Inward Investment Fund.

Members were asked to write down their ideas regarding the opportunities around Channel 4 for officers to collate and these would be fed back at a later date.

Resolved:

- (i) That the progress on the delivery following the Channel 4 Investment decision be noted.
- (ii) That the progress on the Digital Inward Investment Fund be noted.

(d) Skills Commission and Policy Insight

The Panel was provided with an update of the Future-Ready Skills Commission.

The Panel discussed the main areas under the Commission's scope:

technical education, careers information and inspiration and workforce skills.

The Panel noted that the Commission was due to move into a phase of defining the key principles of a Future-Ready Skills System before publishing an interim report in October, and final report in late Spring 2020. Members discussed the importance of getting the priorities right as well as the role that the Skills Commission would play in the Local Industrial Strategy.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report to be noted.
- (ii) That the comments and feedback of the Panel noted.

(e) Work Programme

The Panel was presented with a report setting out a proposed forward agenda plan for the Employment and Skills Panel and was asked to consider the suitability of the forward programme and make amendments

It was suggested that the forward plan could be shared with members who were absent to ensure that their input could be considered.

Resolved: That the panel agreed the forward agenda plan.

10. Date of the Next Meeting - 27 November 2019