

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PANEL
HELD ON TUESDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2021 AT HELD AS A REMOTE
MEETING.**

Present:

Rashik Parmar MBE (Chair)	IBM EMEA
Martin Booth	Witt UK Gp
Mark Cowgill	Exa Networks
Orlagh Hunt	Yorkshire Building Society
Richard Mason	
Liz Needleman	BT
Claire Paxman	Paxman Coolers
Glynn Robinson	BJSS
Councillor Susan Hinchcliffe	Bradford Council
Councillor Peter McBride	Kirklees Council
Colin Booth (Advisory Representative)	Leeds City College
Nav Chohan (Advisory Representative)	Leeds City Region Skills Network
Alex Miles (Advisory Representative)	West Yorkshire Learning Providers
Dr Peter O'Brien (Advisory Representative)	Yorkshire Universities
Tim Thornton (Advisory Representative)	LCR Skills Network

In attendance:

Sandy Needham	Chamber of Commerce
Sophie Collins	West Yorkshsire Combined Authority
Peter Glover	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Michelle Hunter	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Catherine Lunn	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Sonya Midgley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Alan Reiss	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Ben Still	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Ian Smyth	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Mark Temple	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Janette Woodcock	West Yorkshire Combined Authority

61. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Peter McBride, Councillor Ian Cuthberton and Councillor Patrick Mulligan.

62. Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests

There were no items of disclosable pecuniary interests.

63. Exempt Information - Exclusion of the press and public

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

64. Minutes of the meeting of the Employment and Skills Panel held on 25 November 2020

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2020 be agreed and signed by the Chair.

65. Chair's update

The Chair welcomed Sandy Needham as a guest to the meeting representing Chamber of Commerce and gave an update to the Panel on the following:

LEP Board 20 January 2021

Skills was a big topic, including discussion on qualifications and their recognition follow EU Exit and an overview is included in Agenda Item 6. The LEP Board also endorsed the inclusive Growth Framework which will be an Agenda Item at the next meeting of the Panel on 18 May. It was agreed that Inclusive Growth in the same way Clean Growth is now will be a cross-cutting theme so each report now considers contributions to the Agenda as a central assurance mechanism that is part of all panels.

LEP Board 24 February 2021

The Skills Framework is an Agenda item at the meeting and a verbal update is to be presented on the White Paper.

Advisory Member

A proposal to add TUC as an advisory member to this panel is being taken to the next CA Board in March – if approved, a representative will be invited to join the Panel from the next meeting in May.

66. Economic Recovery and Response

The Panel considered a report to update on developments around economic recovery and European Union Exit, including the West Yorkshire Economic Recovery Plan, the delivery and development of products and services in response, and the additional £13.5 million prioritised by the Combined Authority for employment and skills and the progress on devolved budgets and programmes.

The Panel was asked to note the latest update around the economic impacts of COVID-19 and progress on the delivery and development of the response to the crisis, including on the economic recovery plan.

Since the last meeting of the Panel, West Yorkshire have seen the end of a period of national restrictions in November. West Yorkshire was placed into Tier 3 (Very High) restrictions over the December and New Year period and entered Tier 4 (Stay at Home) on 6 January 2021 as part of a national lockdown that included the closure of school buildings to most students. Additional mandatory business closures included non-essential retail and leisure and sports facilities.

Although it is still highly uncertain what will happen to the economy over the coming months, response work and recovery planning to date has responded to evidence and intelligence on the key issues.

Resolved: That the contents of the report be noted

67. Devolved Programmes Update

The Panel considered a report on the devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB) preparation and next steps and the LDSP programme and next steps and was asked to note the progress.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That the progress and next steps for the devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB) be noted
- (III) That the progress and next steps for the LDSP programme be noted.

68. L3 Entitlements /Lifetime Skills Guarantee

The Panel considered a report on Level 3 (L3) entitlements and was asked to review the analysis of take up and propose additional qualifications for submission for inclusion on the published Department for Education (DfE) list.

The new level 3 entitlement will allow adults of any age to achieve a qualification in an area valued by employers from April 21 2021. The funding will be delegated to MCAs, and in West Yorkshire that will be from 21 September 2021.

The Panel was presented with an overview of the entitlement and current take up in West Yorkshire, and an outline of the next steps ahead of a discussion.

The Panel discussed

- Is there scope to offer more of the DfE L3 qualifications locally?

- Are there other qualifications not on the DfE list that are valuable and should be put forward for inclusion?

The Panel also felt the following qualifications were missing from:

- Skills based IT
- Teaching
- Green Energy
- Engineering and Manufacturing

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report and presentation be noted.
- (ii) That the proposals and views of the Panel for additional L3 qualifications for submission to DfE be noted.

69. FE Reform `Skills for Jobs`

Sandy Needham representing Chamber of Commerce was invited as a guest to speak to the Panel and Agenda Item 9 was discussed as the first item before Agenda Item 6.

The Panel considered a report to update on the White Paper published on 21 January setting out 35 reforms across 5 areas on FE Reform 'Skills for Jobs' and was asked to comment on the next steps proposed for West Yorkshire.

Panel members were asked to consider the following questions:

- How can we build on our existing strengths and work together in West Yorkshire to support implementation of the trailblazer pilots?
- How do we ensure that all sectors and sizes of employers are represented in pilots?
- What are the successful elements of a trailblazer pilot and how can we build on what is already in place?
- How will LSIPs align with the strategic economic priorities identified in the SEF and Employment and Skills Plan?

It was noted that Panel members considered the questions and provided feedback.

The Chair thanked Sandy for her time in attending the meeting.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report be noted.
- (ii) That Officers continue conversations with senior government officials to

support implementation of the trailblazer pilots be recommended.

70. Local Skills Report

The Panel considered a report to update on the process for producing the Local Skills Report which highlighted the opportunity for Panel members and partners to contribute to the content of the report and the arrangements to sign-off of the report.

The Panel was also presented with an overview of the draft report as Skills Advisory Panels have been asked by the Department for Education (DfE) to submit a local skills report by the end of March.

The Panel was asked to consider the next steps of the report, which will be circulated to members ahead of publication by end of March.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report and verbal update be noted.
- (ii) That the process, timescales and next steps for production and publication of the report be noted.

71. Employment and Skills Plan Refresh

The Panel considered a report on the final stage of the Employment and Skills Plan refresh and a presentation was shared at the meeting to cover the key elements and design proposals for the framework.

Business Innovation and Growth Panel and Employment and Skills Panel held a joint workshop on 21 January 2021 building on the work of ESP and to finalise the priorities of the refreshed plan.

In recognition of the progress that has been achieved and to give flexibility to develop detailed plans it is proposed that the plan becomes a framework that sets out the strategic priorities for employment and skills.

The panel was asked to endorse the framework and next steps for publication.

Resolved:

- (i) That the contents of the report and presentation be noted.
- (ii) That the framework and next steps for publication be endorsed.

72. Employment and Skills Programmes

The Panel considered a report to update on the progress of delivery of LEP-led employment and skills programmes in the Leeds City Region and how they

have been adapted to support COVID-19.

Resolved: That the contents of the report be noted.