

**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE THAMES VALLEY
LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP (BTVLEP)**

SKILLS & EMPLOYABILITY BOARD MEETING

Minutes of a Meeting held from 10.10 to 11.50 on Tuesday 27th June 2017 at University Campus Aylesbury Vale, HP21 7QG.

Present: Mike Appleyard, Buckinghamshire County Council (MA)
Professor Rebecca Bunting, Buckinghamshire New University (RB), (Chair)
Max Hailey, Mix 96 (MH)
Alistair Lomax, University of Buckingham (AL)
Karen Mitchell, Aylesbury College (KM)
Gillian Quinton, Buckinghamshire County Council (GQ)
Alix Simpson Adviza (AS)(Standing in for Sue Gale)
John Spoerry, University of Buckingham (JS)
Graham Strachan, McAfee (GS)
Heather Dean, BBF (HD)
Ian Barham, BTVLEP (IB)

Apologies: Abigail Changer , Health Education Thames Valley (AC)
Tracy Duggan, SEMTA (TD)
Sue Gale, Adviza (SG)
Irene Hoare, SEAC Apprenticeship Management (IH)
Karimi Kihato, GE Healthcare (KK)
Sean Mackney, Buckinghamshire New University (SM)
Robert Preston, Misbourne School (RP)
Martin Reed, Thomas International (MR)

In attendance: Jackie Campbell, BTVLEP Skills Development Manager (JC)
Claire Griffiths, Minute Taker, Buckinghamshire County Council (CG)

MINUTES

ACTION

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The new Chair, RB, Vice Chancellor of Buckinghamshire New University, welcomed everyone to the Meeting and introductions were made around the table. RB said that she was happy to be able to host the Meeting at Buckinghamshire New University.

2. APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair reported that apologies had been received from Abigail Changer, Tracy Duggan, Sue Gale, Irene Hoare, Sean Mackney, Robert Preston and Martin Reed.

Unfortunately, Karimi Kihato had been taken ill in reception and was unable to attend the meeting

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3 CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

RB said that there was an extensive and interesting agenda for discussion.

RB said that the meeting would discuss the resulting support the successful Leading Places bid could bring to the draft Buckinghamshire skills strategy and programme of work and the terms of reference for the Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Apprenticeship Task Force. Recent progress on the Under 19 Skills Programme would be reviewed.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9th MAY 2017

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th May 2017 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING

JC referred to the first follow up item on page 2 of the Minutes of 9th May 2017 and reported the Headmaster of the Cottesloe school had agreed to participate in the Enterprise Advisor Network and that an Enterprise Advisor had been appointed to the school.

JC referred to the second action item on page 2 of the Minutes of 9th May 2017 and said that she would continue to explore the concept of a Bucks employers' milk round with SG of Adviza later in the year.

JC to progress with SG

6 REPORT ON SUCCESSFUL LEADING PLACES BID

GQ presented Paper BTVLEPSEB/17/11 to the Meeting. She explained that Leading Places was an innovative leadership development programme that supports councils, universities and other local institutions to develop collaborative responses to place-based priority challenges. Leading Places is directed and funded by the Local Government Association, Universities UK and the Higher Education Funding Council for England. The project stemmed from a growing recognition of the potential for councils and universities to actively collaborate in the civic and economic success of their areas.

GQ said that she, RB and JC had formed a sub team to prepare a bid to secure external facilitation to support BTVLEP's work on the draft Buckinghamshire Skills Strategy and in particular to help to ensure all the partners (including local authorities, partners, FE colleges and HE institutions), worked effectively together in the creation of an agreed skills strategy which would deliver results. Despite an extremely short bid time of two weeks, the bid was successful and Shared Intelligence had been appointed to facilitate the progress of the draft Skills Strategy until March 2018.

GQ asked members of the Board to consider which work streams, targets and key areas of implementation in the draft Skills Strategy they would like to focus on in order to make the best use of Shared Intelligence's expertise in the relatively short time period allocated. JC said that a workshop had been set up on 18th July to finalise the priorities for taking the project forward. Buckinghamshire County Council, Buckinghamshire New University, Buckingham University, Aylesbury and Wycombe College, Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership and Buckinghamshire Business First would attend the meeting. AS asked whether Adviza could attend and the Board agreed.

AL said that Buckingham University had scored top marks in all six categories of the recent TEF Assessment and were running very successful two year degree courses. The University was registering to deliver degree apprenticeships and to run alongside courses such as the Institute of Marketing qualification and qualifications for teaching and education. Funding would be difficult in the development period. JS said that he was responsible for employability at the University and was making contacts with small and medium organisations within Buckinghamshire. He considered that many students were brand focussed, for example if they wanted a job in accountancy they would look to the international accountancy firms such as PWC rather applying to work in the back office functions of large local employers. JS said that he was working hard to promote awareness of local opportunities. JC said that there had been considerable co-operation between local employers and schools with employers going into schools to talk to students about careers and local opportunities and running workshops and challenges. Once students knew about local companies they would review opportunities alongside those from better known bigger counterparts.

RB said that Buckingham New University was working to build capacity and funding for Apprenticeships and had secured funding to work towards provision of Level 8 Apprenticeship qualifications. RB said that the new Apprenticeship Levy would provide opportunities for FE and HE organisations and they would actively try to engage with employers to encourage them to make best use of the Apprenticeship Levy to develop new and existing staff. IB said that before the period of purdah leading up to the local and general elections, there had been discussions about whether levy payers could to transfer up to 10% of their levy payment to suppliers to allow them to develop their staff.

RB said that the local universities would continue to compete with each other for students – for example Buckingham University, Buckinghamshire New University, Reading University and Cranfield all had business schools. However it was important to identify the skills requirements within Buckinghamshire and to analyse any skills gaps to ensure FE and HE organisations were able to deliver the skills required by employers. Employers could be attracted to invest in Buckinghamshire if they were confident that they would be able recruit a skilled workforce. KM said that it was also important to identify ladders to success. She wanted her students to be able to progress beyond a Level 3 qualification, possibly into HE.

MA said that young people who were considering working in Buckinghamshire would want to be sure that they could secure affordable places to live. He had been talking to district councils about a new approach to housing. IB said there had been discussion on housing near the enterprise zone.

It was agreed that the focus for the support from Shared Intelligence would be to achieve:-

- Skills provision and pathway mapping
- Defined progress routes for students linked to potential work opportunities in Buckinghamshire (for example the three Enterprise Zones)
- A plan for how opportunities for FE, HE and employment within Buckinghamshire can best be advertised and made known to students and potential employees within Buckinghamshire and beyond.

7 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE REGIONAL APPRENTICESHIP TASKFORCE - BTVLEPSEB/17/12

JC presented Paper BTVLEPSEB/17/12 to the Board. She said that the LEP had agreed to create a Regional Apprenticeship Taskforce to ensure businesses and organisations in the BTVLEP area maximise the benefits of apprenticeships, boost the growth and competitiveness of priority sectors and enterprise zones and ensure high levels of employer engagement with apprenticeships. JC had worked with Sean Mackney to prepare the Draft Terms of Reference for the BTVLEP Regional Apprenticeship Task Force which were set out in Appendix One of paper BTVLEPSEB/17/12.

The members of the Board made the following comments:-

- HD considered it might be prudent to define the term “Regional”. It was agreed that the “Regional” would be replaced by “Buckinghamshire and Thames Valley”.
- In Paragraph 4 of Section A “ and private providers” should be added after “providers”
- GQ asked for a new Paragraph 10 to be added to Section A – “To identify and share best practice”.
- In Section B, a retail association and a representative from education should be added to the list of employers for the major sectors of the region.
- In Section B, private providers of education should be added to the list of providers of apprenticeship training and Business Support Organisations

HD said that she had recently attended a meeting where it was estimated that one million employees in the retail industry would lose their jobs in the next few years because of the changing nature of shopping and in particular due to increases in internet shopping, automation and cost rises such as increased business rates. HD said that it will be necessary to re-skill redundant employees from the retail sector. Their transferrable skills will be in customer service and they might wish to consider social care jobs where there is a shortage. This could become urgent but

Buckinghamshire may not be as severely affected as other areas of the country. HD considered that it would be sensible to approach large retail employers to investigate the scale of the problem.

8. UNDER 19 SKILLS UPDATE – PAPER BTVLEPSEB/17/13

JC presented paper BTVLEPSEB/17/13 to the Board which set out the under 19 skills update to June 2017. She said that up to half term in the third term of the academic year 2016/2017, there had been 39,610 encounters between students and employers supported or facilitated by the Skills Hub and the Enterprise Adviser network. Research had shown that 4 such encounters in a student's school career could make a difference to his or her prospects but JC said that the Enterprise Advisers aimed for one encounter per pupil per term.

JC reported that Sir Thomas Freemantle school and Chesham Grammar had still not been recruited to the Enterprise Adviser programme. Chesham Grammar was using OppsinBucks but did not have an Enterprise Adviser. GQ and MA said that they would talk to Chesham Grammar and an approach could be made through the Director of Education. AL and JS said that they would talk to Sir Thomas Freemantle school. 32 schools now had Enterprise Advisers and JC hoped that the remaining 4 schools would have Enterprise Advisers before the end of July.

JC said that she would be working with Buckinghamshire Business First to increase business listings on OppsinBucks

JC said that she was finding it difficult to generate work experience opportunities for WANNABE. IB asked whether a target of 300 was realistic. GS said that he thought that work experience opportunities had been created outside the WANNABE notice board process. JC confirmed that WANNABE was a notice board and work opportunity placements posted were not brokered with full health and safety visits and risk assessments. JC said that she was working with the Careers and Enterprise Company on their new 'Passport For Life' project which would include ways in which employers could record that a student has undertaken work experience and other skills development opportunities and activities. HD questioned whether that would be useful to employers who she felt would ask questions at interview and take up references. JC said she would look at the WANNABE targets and report back at the next Meeting.

JC said that the Buckinghamshire skills show on Thursday 12th October would be for handpicked groups who would not normally be able to access employers. The show on Saturday was for students who had more parental support.

GQ to progress with Chesham Grammar. AL and JS to speak to Thomas Freemantle

JC to look at WANNABE targets

9. SKILLS BROKERAGE UPDATE - PAPER BTVLEPSEB/17/14

JC presented the progress report to the board, including updated performance against targets from activity in the week since the report was written. Adviza are working in partnership with Buckinghamshire Business First to deliver the Virtual Adviser Skills Diagnostic Tool aspect of the project. While performance is falling short of targets, the recent increased uptake illustrated how the programme was gathering momentum now all was set up and the team fully recruited.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on 12th September 2017 at a venue to be announced.

The Meeting closed at 11.50.