



CONFIDENTIAL

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP (BLEP) SKILLS ADVISORY PANEL (SAP) MEETING

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 22 January 2020, 9am–12pm at Buckinghamshire College Group, Oxford Road, Aylesbury HP21 8PD

- Present: Heather Dean, Buckinghamshire Business First (Chairing) (HD)
Cllr Anita Cranmer, Buckinghamshire County Council (AC)
Imelda Goldsboro, DWP (IG)
Gill Harding, Buckinghamshire County Council (GH)
Ian Harper, Buckinghamshire New University (IH)
Katie Higginson, Community Impact Bucks (KH)
Jo Meloni, The Misbourne School (JM)
Karen Mitchell, Buckinghamshire College Group (Part meeting) (KM)
Sandra Reynolds, Adviza (SR)
Mark Warrilow, HS2/Construction Sector Group Lead (MW)
Sally White, SYLO Associates (SW)

- Apologies: Dave Oxley, McAfee/Digital Sector Group Lead
Allan Potter, Adviza
John Spoerry, University of Buckingham
Sarah Stevens, Sylo Associates
Mark Wood, Reaction Engines/Space Sector Lead
Dena Read, Department for Education
Ailie Smith, Creative Media Skills/Creative Industries Sector Group Lead
Nick Braisby, Buckinghamshire New University

- In Attendance: Ian Barham, BLEP Partnerships Manager (IB)
Catherine Godward, BLEP SAP Research Co-ordinator (CG)
Marina Jackson, BLEP Under 19 Skills Manager (MJ)
Paddy Patterson, BLEP Apprenticeships Manager (PP)
Sarah Fraser, BLEP (SF)

ACTION

1 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 30 OCTOBER 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2019 were agreed as an accurate record.

1.1 Matters arising

Adviza project – carried forward - There has been a good response to the project aimed at female returners to work; the outcome will be a qualification and guaranteed job interview. Adviza to forward further information.

SR

Terms of reference – HD/PP to circulate the final Terms of Reference for the SAP.

HD/PP

2 SKILLS WORKSHOP (Presentation attached)

CG provided a recap on the results of the skills research to date and facilitated a workshop session identifying the best routes to filling skills gaps/shortages (workshop output also attached).

CG undertook to confirm where Social Worker occupations sit within Priorities/Risk Level.

CG thanked those present and outlined the enormous value of having access to the thought leadership of the combined SAP group.

The next steps with regards to the skills research were outlined as being:

- Collation of ideas arising from the workshop sessions at the Sector Action Group/SAP meetings.
- Gaining agreement from SAP members on the actions/interventions that can happen immediately to address skills gaps/shortages, those actions/ interventions that will need to be delayed, and the actions that will provide the greatest outcomes.
- Publication of the Skills Action Plan and delivery of actions therein.

3 SECTOR LEADS UPDATE – Key messages

3.1 Construction – Mark Warrilow

- The CITB has indicated it wishes to develop the existing Construction Sector Action Group into a Construction Employer Group with widened membership.
- A skills workshop (similar to the SAP meeting) was facilitated at the Construction Group meeting, identifying the highest priority skills areas.
- Apprenticeship Week will be taking place 3-7 February; Flannery Plant are working with MJ on an Open Doors type event on 4 March; and AVDC are running a number of construction-related training events/training programmes, as are Buckinghamshire College Group.
- The CITB has released a call to bid for additional money for skills funding training (many areas around the country not having spent their initial funding) which is available to subsidise IOSH and IEMA training at Buckinghamshire College Group – MW/PP to forward further information.

3.2 Sector Action Groups

HD provided an update on the work of the Sector Action Groups, which will be expanding to include business support related items ensuring operationalisation of the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS).

3.3 Creative Industries & Media Sector Action Group – Heather Dean

- The Creative Sector Action Group met in January.
- The membership of the group is being widened to include representation from businesses across the county in the sector.
- Pinewood Studios have announced significant additional support for the coming year for the Open Doors event initiated by the Sector Action Group 2 years ago, with the aim of it being the biggest careers event across Europe for the Creative Industries sector. The event is scheduled to be held on 19 September (recognising this is close to the start of the new school term).

3.4 Space Sector Action Group

- The Space Sector Action Group, centred on Westcott and probably the most developed of the Sector Action Group boards, met in January.
- A 10-year plan is being drafted for Westcott with the intention of developing a disruptive innovation site. These plans will include significant development and a pool of talent will be required to attract businesses to the site.

3.5 Med Tech/High Tech Sector Action Groups

- Development of these 2 groups has paused pending further discussion.
- SAP members were asked to let HD know of any High Tech businesses that may be interested in feeding into this group, which will link with networks already clustered around Silverstone.

ALL

4 **PARTNER UPDATES**4.1 Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC)

- Significant change is taking place linked to unitary discussions and consideration is being given to how skills will fit within the new authority, which has the ambition of making Buckinghamshire “the best place to live, work and raise a family”.
- The new unitary will have economic growth/housing as key priorities and, within this, providing affordable housing, particularly for key workers. The council will also be supporting the movement to start addressing climate change.
- The new unitary will be lobbying MPs to provide additional funding to support skills development within the county, continuing to address the impression Buckinghamshire is an affluent county with little deprivation and little need for support.
- BCC is working with PP to establish an Apprenticeship Levy brokerage pilot.
- BCC is working with MJ to promote the work of Enterprise Advisers.

4.2 DWP

- DWP’s focus is people that need access to benefits with the emphasis on harder to support groups, providing access to work experience opportunities and improving access to apprenticeships. Much of this work involves engaging with primary care networks/GPs etc to try and promote the use of Disability Employment Advisers.
- DWP is also undertaking a lot of work to reduce reoffending rates with HMP, Ministry of Justice and employers, promoting employment opportunities for prisoners/prison leavers.

4.3 Community Impact Bucks

- CIB are reviewing the organisation’s strategies for providing support to charities and social enterprises, and also considering how best to support/ advertise volunteering opportunities.
- The CIB is working on its annual “State of the Sector” report which will be available in March.
- Work is underway to establish how the sector might work more strategically, co-ordinating activity to better effect.

4.4 Buckinghamshire New University, Aylesbury Campus

- 530 degree level apprenticeship students have now been recruited.
- Buckinghamshire New University will be running a degree level apprenticeship for Thames Valley Police from June 2020 and will be recruiting 19 people per month for the next 3 years. The university has worked with the Buckinghamshire College Group to encourage applications from the Community Service course.

4.5 Buckinghamshire Skills Hub

- **Gatsby Benchmarks:**
 - The Skills Hub is working with Buckinghamshire schools (38 + 10 SEN schools) on achieving the 8 Gatsby benchmarks. Schools in Buckinghamshire currently

achieve an average of 4.3 vs a national average of 3.6. Schools with a Careers Hub average 5.2 in Buckinghamshire vs the national average of 4.4.

- Work continues with schools to ensure plans are robust and achievement against the Gatsby benchmarks improve over the coming year.
- **Enterprise Advisers** – Buckinghamshire now has 46 Enterprise Advisers, with further Advisers still required for Dr Challoner’s High, Wycombe High, the Royal Grammar, the Royal Latin and Burnham Grammar.
- **Events** - The Skills team are working with schools to look at how events can link with the curriculum and careers advice. Events planned include: a further STEM Roller event; a Big Bang STEM event; a Schools Sales Challenge (the final being held at Silverstone in March); and the first Schools Roadshow with young people visiting employers in July.
- **Calendar of events** - It was agreed to share the Skills Hub’s calendar of events with the SAP members.
- CG undertook to share Government feedback on Skills Advisory Panels.
- BBF are scoping out how to improve the Skills website (and the BBF website) in order to provide clearer information and greater support.

MJ
CG

4.6 Apprenticeship Levy Pilot

- The new pilot brokerage model, developed in conjunction with BCC, to share the apprenticeship levy is now ready to go live.
- Funds will be repurposed through BCC’s supply chains to sponsor companies to take on apprentices.
- Assuming clear outcomes are demonstrated through this scheme by the end of March, the pilot will be extended to other apprenticeship levy paying organisations.
- PP will forward information as this becomes available.

PP

4.7 Sylo Associates

- Sylo will be running free skills events for businesses, which will include an event on recruitment retention.
- The organisation will also continue to promote the continued sharing/ brokeraged sharing of the apprenticeship levy.

4.8 HS2

- The Oakervee Review is expected imminently.
- Phase 1 main works contractors are now moving to build phase.
- Building companies have started recruitment for workers.
- Eiffage have appointed a main earthworks contractor.

4.9 Adviza

- CEC interactive parent workshops, helping parents understand the different options open to young people.
- CEC/LAC - Funding for Morrisby and one to one support for any young people in care in schools.
- CEC/SEND – It is hoped to get the first lot of students on work experience post February half term.
- Prince’s Trust has reStarted and recruitment has gone well. Referrals will be accepted up until Friday 31st January.
- The next Team starts on 11th May and recruitment is ongoing. Partners are asked to forward details of NEETs aged 16–25 who may be interested.

ALL

- Adviza are keen to invite partner agencies in to add value to young people's experience, helping their next steps beyond Team. Approaches from corporate companies interested in working in partnership to support young people are also welcome (eg McAfee work with Adviza on the Aylesbury Team to run MOCK interviews with the young people).
- Building Futures results: 647 participants supported: 127 moved into education: 124 moved into employment: 85 economically inactive moved into job search.
- Apprenticeship Week, 3rd-7th Feb: Wycombe FM and Adviza are preparing interviews/articles to promote Apprenticeship week.
- "Time to Talk" event is being held on 6th Feb to support mental health awareness at the Healthy Living Centre 10am-12pm. Mix 96 will be covering the event which is open to agencies and the community.
- Permanent Secretary, Peter Schofield, is visiting the Employment FM project on 12th Feb. An employability/community project delivered by Building Futures and Wycombe FM. **It was agreed it would be useful for the Permanent Secretary to visit the Careers Hub as part of his visit – SR/IB/MJ to liaise.**
- New Lone Parents course starts in local Family Centres on 17th Feb.
- Returners Fund results: 32 carers reached: 15 carers completed training: 13 carers who have gained SIA certificate: 1 carer who has moved into work. Two courses have now been completed and certificates have been gained in the last few weeks, with interviews lined up for those who passed. Four more courses planned by the end of the July.

SR/IB/MJ

4.10 Buckinghamshire LEP

- Oxfordshire County Council has asked for case studies to support outcomes being achieved across the Arc; the Apprenticeship Brokerage model with BCC will be one such case study.
- Greater emphasis needs to be given to promoting the work of the Skills Advisory Panels across the Arc.
- The Arc Universities Group are undertaking a number of pieces of work including looking at skills retention in the area, looking at key strengths across the Arc geography and establishing a test bed for innovation.
- BBF will be running the second Business Festival in the first week of March. A full schedule of events (including the LEP AGM on 6 March 2020 at AVDC offices) will be published shortly.

4.11 Misbourne School

- Visitors from the British Council in Spain will be visiting a couple of Buckinghamshire schools, reviewing the Careers programme in place in the county and looking at what can be learned from the Careers Hubs in place.

5 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

- Weds 6 May 2020, 10am-12pm, (sector leads pre-meet 9am), Aylesbury Campus, Buckinghamshire New University. **Partners are encouraged to send agenda items to Heather Dean.**
- Weds 22 July 2020, 10am-12pm, venue tbc (sector leads pre-meet 9am)
- Weds 18 November 2020, 10am-12pm, venue tbc (sector leads pre-meet 9am)

The meeting closed at 12.25pm.