

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

Minutes of meeting held on Friday 17 September 2021, from 10am, via Teams

Present:	Heather Dean, Buckinghamshire Business First	(HD)
	Shabnam Ali, Buckinghamshire Council	(SA)
	Ian Barham, BLEP Partnerships Manager	(IB)
	John Browning, Bucks Skills Hub	(JB)
	Ian Harper, Buckinghamshire New University	(IH)
	Katie Higginson, Community Impact Bucks	(KH)
	Marina Jackson, BLEP Under 19 Skills Manager	(MJ)
	Simon James, Buckinghamshire Council	(SJ)
	Bev Kelly, University of Buckingham	(BK)
	Karen Mitchell, Buckinghamshire College Group	(KM)
	James Moorhouse, Buckinghamshire LEP	(JM)
	Dave Oxley, McAfee/Digital Sector Group Lead (Part meeting)	(DO)
	Caroline Perkins, Buckinghamshire LEP	(CP)
	Allan Potter, Adviza	(AP)
	Kerry Senatore, Careers & Enterprise Company	(KS)
	Alix Simpson, Adviza	(AS)
	Paul Skitt, Flannery Plant (Construction Employer Group Chair)	(PS)
	Cllr Julie Ward, Buckinghamshire Council	(JW)
	Sally White, Sylo Beyond HR	(SW)
	Mark Wood, Reaction Engines/Space Sector Lead	(MW)
Apologies:	Professor Gavin Brooks, Buckinghamshire New University	
	Juliet Anderson, Bucks Health & Social Care Academy	
	Lucy Bowman, DWP	(LB)
	Emily Cashen, MHCLG	
	Cllr Anita Cranmer, Buckinghamshire Council	
	Sue Cross, Adviza	
	Kevin Hoctor, BEIS	
	Jo Meloni, The Misbourne School	
	Martina Porter, All Spring Media (Creative Sector Group Chair)	
	Claire Wardle, Health Education England	
In Attendance:	Sarah Fraser, BLEP	(SF)

ACTION

1 MINUTES

The Minutes from the meeting held on 2 July 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

1.1 Matters arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)

- 1.1.1 ➤ **Bid writing capacity** – HD confirmed Adrian Champney (Ngage/BBF) will be pulling together a sub group focussed on bid writing. Partners were asked to let HD/SF know if they would be interested in joining this sub group (KH/SW/AS indicated they would like to be included – IH/Juliet Anderson have previously indicated they wished to be involved).

ALL

- 1.1.2 ➤ **Apprenticeships** – KM reported she had met with Martina Porter to discuss apprenticeships/development of a proposal to Government around apprenticeships that responds to the requirements of the Skills White Paper. There is more work to be done on this front and further information will be shared as available.
- 1.1.3 ➤ **DWP Youth Hubs** - These are now open in High Wycombe and Chesham.
- 1.1.4 ➤ **East West Rail/South Central Institute of Technology** – The case for East West Rail and the Aylesbury spur continues to be made in Parliament by Rob Butler MP. It was confirmed the IoT will also form part of the County Deal discussions.
- 1.1.5 ➤ **Digital agenda** –BBF are planning an event at Silverstone in November on the digital agenda; invites will be forwarded when appropriate.
- 1.1.6 ➤ **DWP Skills & Jobs Fair** – Buckinghamshire New University Aylesbury Campus will be providing the venue for a DWP Skills & Jobs Fair on 25 October. More information available through Lucy Bowman. **It was suggested Lucy Bowman/IH contact BBF should wider publicity of this event be required.**

LB/IH

2 LOCAL SKILLS REPORT UPDATE (Presentation attached)

Further to the presentation provided, those present noted the tight timescales involved in updating the Local Skills Report prior to submission to DfE.

CP requested partners forward recommendations for employers to interview in order to undertake qualitative research, particularly engineering and digital companies that have experienced issues in recruiting staff (caroline.perkins@buckslep.co.uk) (Sally White/Mark indicated they could help in this regard). CP confirmed she is also very keen to speak to learning providers.

ALL

3 WORK READINESS – CURRENT DELIVERY AND FUTURE NEED (Presentation attached)

Noting that debate around ‘work readiness’ has been ongoing for many years and further to the presentation provided, the following comments were noted:

- Labour Market Intelligence collated/produced by BLEP Research team/Bucks Skills Hub is shared with schools in written form annually. Additionally, Skills Hub staff and the Enterprise Advisers ‘attached’ to all secondary schools via the Bucks Skills Hub deliver face to face presentations to staff and students throughout the year.
- Employers, recognising the issues around work readiness, are placing more importance on their own ‘on-boarding’ arrangements.
- It would be useful to share the intelligence gathered with apprenticeship providers to look at how they might ‘plug’ gaps identified in employee preparedness eg including soft skills within their technical programmes.
- It was suggested it might be useful to include a young person on the SAP to gain their perspective on some of the items under discussion. HD to discuss with Gavin Brooks.
- SJ/HD to meet to discuss the work being undertaken by the Bucks Skills Hub and to discuss further the possibility of a meeting with all secondary school Head Teachers on the subject of work readiness facilitated by Buckinghamshire Council.

HD

SJ/HD

Current work readiness provision:

- **Bucks College Group**, Karen Mitchell:
 - Bucks College Group provides every student that attends a course with some level of work readiness preparation.
 - T Levels in Health & Social Care and Digital have started this year and students are provided with work placements.

- Many employers have come forward to offer placements, but analysis is needed into what is working well; evaluations have been/are being requested from employers and everyone taking part in a placement.
 - Students are also provided with career/progression guidance.
 - It is expected that apprentices are gaining work experience/readiness through being “on the job” 4 days per week; although students on industry placements are all provided with an induction but there is an expectation employers will play their part.
- **Buckinghamshire New University**, Ian Harper – BNU currently provides a post graduate certificate at subsidised level.
- **University of Buckingham**, Bev Kelly:
- The ‘Enterprise for All’ programme for all students provides support for the soft skills needed to provide work readiness; there is a very high level of uptake for this programme.
 - The University of Buckingham has signed up for “Live Alumni”, a process through LinkedIn to track progress for employers. IH to investigate BNU subscribing to this service: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/livealumni/>.
- **Adviza**, Allan Potter – ‘Building Futures’ provides a soft skills programme and Adviza has worked to develop an integrated project for the Health and Social Care sector with Bucks College Group and Bucks NHS Trust that has proved to be successful for small cohorts.
- **Community Impact Bucks**, Katie Higginson – Focus has been on supporting return to work for people that have been on long term sickness working closely with The Clare Foundation and Buckinghamshire Council.
- **Careers & Enterprise Company**, Kerry Senatore – Pinewood supported project to bring maths to life for young people: <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/news/pinewood-studios-helps-to-transform-careers-education-for-tens-of-thousands-of-students/> This is a great example of a nationwide project facilitated by the Bucks Skills Hub. There is an enormous range of material on the CEC resource directory that has been relaunched. **HD/JB/MJ to ensure this links directly to Bucks Skills Hub website resources.**

IH

HD/JB/MJ

Alix Simpson and Allan Potter provided a presentation on the Skill Up Bucks programme (attached). The focus of this programme is to support SMEs grow their own talent, particularly in the fields of STEM. This programme is available for all adults.

The Adviza team is keen to work with all SAP partners to help deliver the impact of this programme across Buckinghamshire to complement the partnerships established through the bid development process.

4 PARTNER UPDATES

4.1 Bucks Skills Hub

- MJ provided an update on the plans in development for the 2022 Bucks Skills Show which is due to take place at Westcott in March 2022.
- All SEND schools in Bucks are now involved as part of the Careers Hub.

- 4.2 Buckinghamshire Council
- Buckinghamshire Council is actively recruiting through the Kickstart programme and the new Graduate Placement Scheme. Additional focus will be on the work for providing support for Prison Leavers.
- 4.3 Community Impact Bucks
- KH reported there is an opportunity to support corporate social responsibility and the Education Services Grant programme for businesses as part of Trustees week in November. **HD to ensure this is publicised through BBF's newsletter.**
- 4.4 Buckinghamshire Business First
- Buckinghamshire Business First is currently delivering Peer Network programmes which support the leadership and management skills of employers and their senior executives. BBF is still recruiting for the programme and a request was made for all partners to spread the word as the courses are receiving excellent feedback.
- 5 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS (10am-12pm)**
- **2021** - 12 November (Venue/Virtual TBC following discussion with Chair)
 - **2022** – 21 January, 18 March, 13 May, 8 July, 16 September, 18 November
- 6 **SUMMARY ACTIONS**
- **Bid writing capacity** – All partners to let HD/SF know if they wish to be involved in the Bid Writing Sub Group. **ALL**
 - **DWP Skills & Jobs Fair** – Lucy Bowman/Ian Harper to contact BBF if they wished for assistance in publicising etc the Skills & Jobs Fair taking place at Buckinghamshire New University Aylesbury Campus on 25 October. **LB/IH**
 - **Local Skills Report update** – Partners to contact Caroline Perkins with recommendations for employers to interview as qualitative research, particularly engineering and digital companies that have experienced issues in recruiting staff. **ALL**
 - **SAP membership** – HD to discuss with Gavin Brooks the inclusion of a young person/apprentice on the SAP to gain their perspective on items discussed. **HD**
 - **Bucks Skills Hub briefing** - SJ/HD to meet to discuss the work being undertaken by the Bucks Skills Hub and to discuss further the possibility of a meeting with all secondary school Head Teachers on the subject of work readiness facilitated by Buckinghamshire Council. **SJ/HD**
 - **LinkedIn** - IH to investigate BNU subscribing to the “Live Alumni” service: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/livealumni/>. **IH**
 - **Careers & Enterprise Company** – HD/JB/MJ to ensure live links between CEC resource directory and the Bucks Skills Hub website. **HD/JB/MJ**
 - **Trustees' Week** (November) - HD to ensure this is publicised in BBF's newsletter. **HD**
 - **Peer Network** – Partners to share info through their networks on the Peer Network programme being delivered through BBF. **ALL**

The meeting closed at 11.49am.