

## **CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON LEP - EMPLOYERS SKILLS AND EDUCATION BOARD – MEETING ON 11 OCTOBER 2017**

A list of those who attended the meeting and apologies received are at **Annex A**.

### **1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Paul Taylor welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Paul explained that Claire Hayward was unavoidably delayed by French air traffic strikes and Lynne Williams was in London so he had been asked by Claire to chair the meeting.

List of attendees and apologies received at Annex A.

### **2. MINUTES OF LAST EMPLOYERS' SKILLS AND EDUCATION BOARD AND MATTERS ARISING**

The minutes of the extended meeting on 6 September were noted and agreed.

Thanks to members who had completed their declarations of interest. If any member who has not done so to please send their declarations to Pat Jackson as soon as possible. **ACTION: BOARD MEMBERS**

### **3. FOLLOW-UP SINCE MEETING ON 6 SEPTEMBER**

#### **3.1 REPORT OF MEETING ON HOW TO CONTRIBUTE A SKILLS AND EDUCATION PERSPECTIVE TO TRANSPORT AND HOUSING STRATEGIES**

Paul Colman and Paul Taylor reported on the meeting held on 13 September with Mark Livesey and Roy Newton – note of meeting circulated with Board papers as Annex C. It was agreed that it would be helpful to invite Any Farrell (Warrington's Executive Director for Environment and Regeneration) to discuss the importance of Place in Cheshire and Warrington and the issues of shared interest with the Employers Skills and Education Board. **ACTION: PAT JACKSON**

It was noted that construction skills was one of the first T-levels that the Education Secretary, Justine Greening announced earlier in the day (others are digital and education/child care).

#### **3.2 COMMUNICATIONS HUB**

Jim Carroll reported on progress to date. Jim stressed the need to understand the scope of the communications strategy and the functionality of the communications hub in delivering the communication priorities to key groups of 'customers'.

Jim explained that a further meeting of the small Communications Hub working group (involving Jim, Lloyds Banking Group and South Cheshire Chamber) was due to take place immediately after the Board meeting. The meeting would review the feed-back from focus groups of employers and students and agree next steps.

### **3.3 PROGRESS ON PREPARING BUSINESS PLAN FOR PLEDGE**

Paul Colman explained that there had been a number of meetings to consider the development of a wider network of Pledges across Cheshire and Warrington. Work was in hand to develop a business plan for a sustainable business model that would need to be pump-primed for the first few years.

Paul agreed to keep Members in touch with developments and to circulate proposals as soon as possible. **ACTION: PAUL COLMAN**

### **3.4 SECTOR BASED WORK**

#### **3.4.1 ENERGY**

Margaret Cheshire said that some progress had been made but she was disappointed with the rate of progress. Margaret had prepared some narrative around how employers might work together on an apprenticeship programme. Margaret had sent the narrative to South Cheshire College and was now awaiting a response from the College, TTE and the University of Chester.

#### **3.4.2 LOGISTICS**

Neil Warren had been very pleased with the discussion around logistics at the extended meeting of the Employers Skills and Education Board on 12 September. He is working with Eddie Stobart's and is planning a further meeting to agree priorities for action. He has asked Paul Colman to help engage smaller businesses in the work and Paul Taylor also offered to help with this. **ACTION PAUL COLMAN AND PAUL TAYLOR**

#### **3.4.3 MANUFACTURING/ENGINEERING**

In the absence of Lynne Williams, a progress report was not available. Pat Jackson agreed to follow up with Lynne. **ACTION: PAT JACKSON**

James Richards reported that the Rail Industry Board that had been established in response to HS2 was preparing an action plan and priorities and this work could be linked to the work on manufacturing and engineering. There is also scope to link to the work at Reaseheath on agritech.

#### **3.4.4 FINANCIAL, PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

Jane Ingram explained that Lloyds Banking Group had been interested in pursuing a focus around digital skills – building on work they had already done with Google and other businesses. However, they are currently unable to commit to pursuing this until they had completed their current work in setting strategic priorities for the banking group's work on skills and education.

In the interim, the Weave network of digital and creative businesses based around Macclesfield are developing priorities for digital skills within their network and it might also be useful to connect this work with Phil Atkinson and Daresbury Laboratories. Members suggested that other Digital networks existed in Cheshire and Warrington and might also be included in the work. Pat Jackson agreed to explore potential links and explore whether Weave might attend the extended meeting of the Board on 9 November. **ACTION: PAT JACKSON**

### **3.4.5 LIFE SCIENCES AND CHEMICALS**

No further work had been progressed with these sectors although there might be scope to build some work around key businesses, including the bio hub in Macclesfield. Jenny Clucas agreed to follow up with Pat Jackson. **ACTION: JENNY CLUCAS**

### **4 DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY IN CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON**

Pat Jackson outlined the proposed approach set out in Annex D and D1 (circulated with the papers for the meeting).

In the subsequent discussion the following points were made:

- The Institute of Technology model should not be exclusive, but work had to start on the key sectors identified by the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).
- The generic skills issues for all the six sectors identified in the SEP are based around STEM, digital and employability skills. Literacy, numeracy and core mathematical skills are key foundations that also need to be in place.
- Training providers in Cheshire and Warrington need to develop a more coherent and high-quality curriculum offer which delivers individuals with capabilities to work, not necessarily specific competencies that can be developed on the job. Unfortunately, qualifications do not necessarily assess levels of capability.
- James Richards queried the level of commitment from employers to lead the sector based work. He stressed the need to build on the good practice currently being developed with the energy sector.
- Members were keen to progress the development of an Institute of Technology. It should focus on improving productivity and developing a more coherent curriculum offer through closer partnership working between employers and training providers.
- As a next step the extended meeting of the Employers Skills and Education Board in November should focus on developing a better idea around what an Institute of Technology might look like and how it would work. **ACTION: PAT JACKSON**

### **5. DRAFT SKILLS AND EDUCATION PLAN**

Meredydd David commented that he could not support the third bullet point 'ask' about ring fencing some of the money allocated to fund work placements. He noted that Reaseheath is currently involved with a group of 21 colleges piloting work on placements.

Jo Tipa commented that she had found the plan easy to follow. She welcomed the introduction of T-level qualifications but was concerned around the capacity of smaller businesses to respond to the request for more good quality work placements.

As a next step the draft Skills and Education Plan would be prepared for publication and presented again at the next meeting of the Employers Skills and Education Board and the next LEP Board on 8 November.

## **6. European Social Fund (ESF) – Next Bidding Round**

Paul Colman explained the background to the next bidding round which was expected to start towards the end of November. A briefing meeting for potential applicants was being held on 17 October and Paul Taylor had agreed to say a few words about the way the ESF funds were expected to address the strategic priorities set by the Employers' Skills and Education Board. Paul Colman agreed to circulate a draft of the ESF call for projects as soon as it is published. **ACTION: PAUL COLMAN**

## **7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **7.1 CAREERS FAIRS**

Paul Colman thanked Members for their response to his letter requesting support for careers fairs planned over the next few months.

### **7.2 INTO WORK BOARD**

Pat Jackson reported that an 'Into Work Board' had been established, chaired by Steven Broomhead. Pat agreed to circulate the draft terms of reference of the Board – attached at Annex B.

## **8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Next meetings:

- 8 November (13.30 to 15.30 hrs) t.b.c.
- 6 December (14.00 to 16.00 hrs) at Warrington and Vale Royal College

**Attended by:-**

- Paul Taylor (Taylor Business Park) – Chair
- Neil Warren (Jungheinrich)
- James Richards (Network Rail)
- Paul Colman (South Cheshire College)
- Julia Teale representing Lynne Williams (Bentley Motors)
- Dame Pat Bacon (Health Sector)
- Phil Atkinson (Daresbury)
- Jim Carroll (Mobica)
- Margaret Cheshire (Essar Oils)
- Meredydd David (Reaseheath College)
- Jane Ingram (Halifax/Lloyds Banking Group)
- Jo Tipa (nuclear Skills)
- Jenny Clucas (Cogent)
- Eilis Rattigan (Waters)
- Mark Livesey (LEP)
- Pat Jackson

**Apologies**

- Clare Hayward (Chair)
- Fraser Kearney (Cheshire and Warrington Growth Hub)
- Mark Roach (Grosvenor)