

Employment and Skills Board 19 October 2021

Attendees:

Board Members

- Al Kingsley (Chairman) – Group Managing Director – NetSupport
- Dr James Gazzard – Director of Continuing Education – University of Cambridge – Institute of Continuing Education
- Jane Paterson-Todd – Chief Executive – Cambridge Ahead
- Julia Nix – District Manager – Dept for Work & Pensions (DWP/ JCP)
- Martin Lawrence – Commercial Director – Stainless Metalcraft
- Professor Ross Renton – Principal – ARU Peterborough
- Vic Annells – CEO – Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce

CPCA Officers

- John T Hill - Director Business and Skills
- Felicity Miller - SRO Workforce Skills
- Parminder Singh Garcha - SRO AEB
- Amos Akinwale - AEB Programme Officer
- Laura Guymer - Strategic Careers Hub Lead
- Janet Warren Commissioner – Adult Education
- Elizabeth Hopkins – Senior Consultant

CCC Officers

- Tamar Oviatt-Ham - Democratic Services Officer - Cambridgeshire County Council
- Monika Balazs – Democratic Services Assistant – Cambridgeshire County Council
- Rachel Hallam - Senior Analyst – Research - Cambridgeshire County Council

Observers

- Councillor Lucy Nethsingha- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Sandy Cruickshank - Oxford to Cambridge Arc and East Anglia Team | Cities and Local Growth Unit

Part 1 – Governance Items

64. Welcome, Apologies and Introductions

Apologies received from:

- Claire London – Associate Director of Learning and Organisational Development, Learning and Organisational Development, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust
- Pat Carrington – Executive Principal – Assistant Director Skills and Employment – City College Peterborough, Cambridgeshire County Council, Peterborough City Council
- Joe Crossley – Chief Executive – Qube Learning Ltd.
- Neil Wood – Health & Wellbeing Programme Manager, Health & Wellbeing Team – Public Health England – East of England
- Bob Ensich – Area Director – Morgan Sindall
- Sharon Keogh – Head of Community Action – Kingsgate Community Church, Peterborough
- Stuart Searle – Managing Director – First – Mailing Co.
- Mark Robertson – Principal and CEO – Cambridge Regional College

Also not present:

- Dan Edwards – General Manager of Marshall Centre – Marshalls
- Rose Shisler – Stakeholder Engagement Programme Lead – Anglian Water
- Tony Jones – Chief Executive – One Nucleus
- Tracey Cox – Head of the East of England ESFA territorial team – Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA Standing Invite)
- Jane Thomas – Regional Lead, East of England – BT Group Plc

65. Minutes and Action log

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2021 were agreed for accuracy. The Action Log was noted.

66. Work Programme (Forward Agenda Plan)

The work programme was noted.

Part 2 – Delivery

67. AEB Commissioning Statement

Board Members received a report detailing the Combined Authority's Commissioning Statement for the Adult Education Budget.

During discussion Board Members:

- Discussed the role of the group in terms of feeding back from employers and providers to ensure that the focus was correct in terms of the commissioning themes and the green list. Officers agreed to feedback on the process for sharing and seeking feedback on the green list. **ACTION**
- Highlighted the need to seek feedback from employers on where there are skills shortages and how accessible the themes were particularly for younger people.
- Discussed the need to support employers through the apprenticeships process.
- Highlighted the issue that there was a people shortage as well as a skills shortage and that there was a real need to encourage school age children and give them clear career pathways.
- Suggested that there was also a need for clearer signposting to jobs through the Adult Learning Pathways. Officers highlighted the current signposting through the National Careers Service, through Community Networks and Employers.
- Discussed the need to increase apprenticeships and the issues around employers having the time and resources to facilitate them. Officers highlighted a third party company that took on the administration of apprenticeships for organisations to make the process smoother.
- Highlighted the research that was being carried out by Cambridge Ahead and the CPCA on Apprenticeships and understanding the barriers that organisations were facing and clarified that the finding would be fed back to the Board. **ACTION**
- Highlighted that attitudes had changes in relation to how people want to work and where they want to work since the pandemic and that one issue that needed to be focused on was why there are suddenly lulls in job take up, and what was happening in the market-place.

68. Developing a Post 16 Travel Offer

The Board received a report seeking views from the Board Members in order to develop a design and draw up a plan on how to implement the post-16 travel offer for young people aged 16-18 within the Combined Authority.

The report provided:

- Background information of the proposal.
- A summary of the initial conversations with the colleges.
- Information on the emerging proposals for the plan.

In discussion Board Members:

- Welcomed the proposals as transport links for post 16 education had historically been a key issue.
- Discussed green issues in relation to travel options and encouraging people to use public transport so there was a need for a wider strategy in terms of the availability of public transport routes across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
- Discussed the need post covid to encourage individuals back on to public transport and give them reassurance that antiviral measures were in place.

69. Careers Hub, and careers provision in the CPCA

Board Members received a [presentation](#) on the Careers Hub and careers provision within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The presentation provided:

- An overview of the project.
- An overview of the Careers Landscape
- A summary of the aims and objectives of the Careers and Enterprise Company's Virtual Careers Hub
- A guide to the outlook for the next 12 months and beyond.

During discussion Board Members:

- Queried what could be done in the short term in getting feedback from employers and getting the right stakeholders involved to deliver the provision. Officers clarified that there was a Cornerstone meeting taking place imminently which would drive the IT support around this to ensure that the employers had a voice and input and were at the heart of the process. Officers clarified that there was a good spread of sectors represented on the Cornerstone Group but welcomed further suggestions from the Board.
- Questioned whether there was a link between this piece of work and the local skills improvement plans that were being rolled out by the Chamber of Commerce in a number of areas. The Board Member from the Chamber of Commerce offered his support to officers to find out more about what was happening in these areas. **ACTION.** Officers also stated that they would be forming a steering group and that this would be an appropriate mechanism for capturing the employers voice.

70. Refresh of the Local Skills Report

Officers gave a brief update on the Local Skills Report which included the following points;

- The report was a requirement of the Combined Authorities funding for Skills that they received through the Department for Education for the Skills Advisory Panel.
- The document focuses on the Skills landscape in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough taking into account the Skills Strategy and action plan and focusses on some core performance indicators
- There was a need to refresh the local skills report and sent to government by 28 January 2022
- Requested any good case studies to include in the report from Board Members including case studies on the New University and what the Chamber of Commerce were doing to support people into work related training. **ACTION**

71. Overview of current activity at the Combined Authority in relation to skills

Officers agreed that due to time limitations in the meeting they would update the Board on this item via email. **ACTION**

Part 3 – Strategy

72. Employment and Skills Strategy and Action Plan

The Board received a [presentation](#) that gave an overview of CPCA Employment and Skills Strategy as of October 2021.

The presentation provided:

- An overview of the progress made.
- An overview of the logic model approach
- An overview of the outcome of the SWOT analysis and identified key challenges
- A guide to the outlook for the next 12 months and beyond.

During discussion Board Members:

- Discussed the short-term objectives highlighted in the presentation and commented that there were mitigations in place to address the cold spots including the establishment of the North Cambridgeshire Training Centre, but that it would take a longer period of time to address all of the cold spots identified.
- Commented on the SWOT analysis in terms of the pillars for life wide learning and that Peterborough and Fenland were shown as green, but that they were opposite in terms of career opportunity and skills, and that there was a need to reflect on how education was signposted in terms of level two and level three.

- Sought clarity on the position of the Kickstart and Restart Schemes. Officers explained that there would be a detailed action plan that sat alongside the strategy. Officers explained that the Restart Programme had Local Regional Boards and that there was CA representation on the East of England Board and the Boards linked up with recruitment firms and the DWP in terms of taking forward Kick Start and Restart and this would be featured in the detailed action plan.
- Discussed the importance of ensuring that progression within jobs as well as productivity increased as this was crucial in the stimulation of growth, and whether employers felt that there was enough support for them in this area. Officers highlighted Growth Works with Skills and the Digital Talent Platform. Officers explained that the aim of the platform was to clearly signpost. Officers clarified that there was still work to be done in this area, but it was hoped that the visibility of the platform would continue to grow and would be a go to resource.
- Queried what was being done to support those that were unable to use and access online resources and that this needed to be clearly highlighted within the strategy. Officers to follow up on this point.**ACTION**
- Discussed the long-term outcomes and highlighted the need to ensure the people could understand how their ambitions could be realised through learning and training would be the top priority alongside ensuring that employers could access a pipeline of skilled people.
- Highlighted the need to focus on blended provision for those that may not have access to digital platforms and to look at workplace learning

Part 4 – Date of Next Meeting and AOB

73. AOB

Officers sought recommendations from the current Board Members for new Members to join the Board and members agreed that they would put forward suggestions. **ACTION**

The next meeting of the Employment and Skills Board was confirmed as 14th December 2021.