

Employment and Skills Board 21 February 2023

Attendees:

Board Members

- Al Kingsley (Chairman) - Group Managing Director - NetSupport
- Dr Pat Carrington - Executive Principal Assistant Director Skills and Employment, City College Peterborough, Cambridgeshire County Council Peterborough City Council
- Jane Paterson-Todd - Chief Executive - Cambridge Ahead
- Julia Nix - District Manager - Department for Work & Pensions (DWP/ JCP)
- Mark Robertson - Principal and CEO - Cambridge Regional College
- Dr James Gazzard – Director of Continuing Education – University of Cambridge – Institute of Continuing Education
- Prof Ross Renton – Principal – ARU Peterborough
- Vic Annells – Chief Executive – Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce
- Martin Lawrence -

CPCA Officers

- Felicity Miller - SRO Workforce Skills
- Parminder Singh Garcha - SRO AEB
- Laura Guymer - Interim Programme Manager
- Janet Warren Commissioner – Adult Education
- Alexis McLeod
- Jo Morley
- Robert Fox

Other Officers

- Tamar Oviatt-Ham – Democratic Services Officer – Cambridgeshire County Council
- Pete Milsom – UCAS
- Laura Ruaux – Chamber of Commerce
- Clare Cassidy - PWC
- Colin Marshall - PWC
- Hannah Whale - PWC

Part 1 – Governance Items

90. Welcome, Apologies and Introductions

Apologies received from: Rachel Hallam - Senior Analyst: Research - Cambridgeshire County Council

No apologies received from:

- Stuart Searle - Managing Director - First Mailing Co.
- Dan Edwards - General Manager of Marshall Centre, Marshalls
- Tony Jones - Chief Executive - One Nucleus
- Joe Crossley - Chief Executive - Qube Learning Ltd.
- Sharon Keogh - Head of Community Action - Kingsgate Community Church, Peterborough
- Annette Nott – Senior Manager – East of England Further Education Directorate – Midlands and East Territorial Team

91. Minutes and Action log

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2022 were agreed for accuracy. The Action Log was noted.

92. Work Programme (Forward Agenda Plan)

The work programme was discussed at the end of the meeting.

Part 2 – Delivery

93. UCAS - Changes to the System and Inclusion of Apprenticeships

Board Members received a verbal update on changes to the UCAS system, including the incorporation of apprenticeships.

The presenting officer highlighted:

- 2 years ago, apprenticeship project given resource and money.
- The driver for the project was to make apprenticeships just as much an aspirational choice as an undergraduate course.
- 1 million people register for a hub account at UCAS, 50% were interested in apprenticeships.
- Wanted to provide the same journey for applying for apprenticeships as applying for an undergraduate degree.

- UCAS well placed to do this with a line into schools and with 4,500 advisors.
- The DfE had committed to work with UCAS to get all apprenticeship vacancies onto UCAS dot.com.
- Work was underway to integrate the career finding tool by the Autumn of 2023 and there was a target of having a UCAS application process for apprenticeships by Autumn 2024.
- Have already developed a career finder jobs board and have employer profiles. In the process of developing an employer interface as a self serve platform.
- Agreed to share slides with the Board that gave further details on the project.

During discussion Board Members:

- Questioned the challenges in timings in relation to applications for apprenticeships as this would differ from the applications timeline for undergraduate degrees. Officers explained that they would be advising through the UCAS steering group that were possible recruitment for apprenticeships should be in line with the academic cycle but that applications could be made throughout the year.
- Queried how it was envisaged that this new process would have a positive impact on the take up of apprenticeships. Officers explained that the aim was to increase parental buy in, in order to address misconceptions and stigmas in relation to apprenticeships. Officers stated that there were currently no targets set but that they were working with the national apprenticeships service and had buy in from large employers.
- Sought clarity on whether all levels of apprenticeships would be made available through UCAS. Officers stated that the UCAS website already provided information on apprenticeships at all levels.
- Requested an update on the project at a future board meeting. ACTION. Officers explained that there were some [slides](#) to accompany the update and they would be circulated to the Board. ACTION

The Board noted the update.

94. Primary Careers Pilot – Update and input into shaping teacher encounters with employers

Board Members received a verbal update on the Primary Careers Pilot.

The presenting officer highlighted:

- The service was an all-age careers service but currently there was no funding source for those in primary education.
- The CA were taking part in one of the four trailblazers as part of the pilot which was a £2.6 million programme.
- The CA looked to recruit 75 primary schools on to a careers programme.
- There would be a number of different workshops for schools over the next 4-5 months.
- Work was ongoing in relation to working with employers and creating networks.
- Launch pad days had been organised with Form the Future.

During discussion Board Members:

- Queried how primary schools were being informed of the pilot and whether there was equity of access to the pilot. Officers explained that invites had been sent out to primary schools with follow up calls. Information had been also gone out through newsletters, press releases and included on social media. Officers were currently in the process of converting expressions of interests into sign-ups for the trial blazer. Officers explained that they also had a slot at the Regional Governors Conference. Officers explained that they would circulate the details on the pilot to the board. **ACTION**
- Highlighted the need to engage with young children at a much earlier stage in relation to careers and that there was work that needed to be done before hand to understand how best to engage. Officers explained that they would raise this point with the CEC.
- Queried whether primary education came on the radar from a University perspective. Officers explained that there was a new scholarship that had been developed to encourage women into engineering but that this needed to be established at a much earlier stage. The Chamber of Commerce representative stated that the Chamber of Commerce Committees would be happy to engage with the pilot.

- Highlighted that the British Antarctic Survey had in the past done some excellent road shows that had engaged at all levels.
- Explained that the WSC were running a Skills Escalator day at NCTC on 15th May and that all three primary schools in Chatteris were attending.

The Board noted the update.

95. Training Provider Forum

The Board received a verbal update regarding the Training Provider Forum.

The presenting officer highlighted:

- A new skills provider forum had been set up and the first meeting was in January.
- There would be four forum meetings a year in total, two for existing providers and two for new providers.
- There was a push to engage national providers that did not have a footprint in the region.

During discussion Board Members:

- Acknowledged that viability of some courses and turnaround times imposed by the DFE on the CA in terms of funding particularly in relation to bootcamps made the system extremely challenging in order encourage new providers. Officers explained that the introduction of the Dynamic Purchasing System at the CA would help towards making the system more straight forward.
- Queried how the CA could have programmes ready so it made it easier for employers to respond.

The Board noted the update.

96. Labour Market Insights

Board Members received a [presentation](#) on the labour market.

During discussion Board Members:

- Commented that businesses would be interested in the data presented and queried if the data could be made available more widely. Officers

agreed to make the data available on an external portal and agreed to circulate a link to board members for wider dissemination. **ACTION**

The Board noted the update.

97. Combined Authority Corporate Strategy

Board Members received a [presentation](#) on the corporate strategy of the Combined Authority.

The Board noted the update.

98. Local Skills Improvement Plan - Update and future engagement

The Board received a [presentation](#) that gave an overview of the Local Skills Improvement Plan.

The presentation covered the following points:

- Local Skills Improvement Plan outlined in the Skill for Jobs White Paper and subsequent Skills Bill.
- Originally 8 trailblazer areas in 2021/22.
- Rolled out nationally, led by Chamber of Commerce in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, supported by PwC.
- Resource support from the CPCA.
- Local Skills Improvement Fund allocated following the LSIP.
- DfE no longer funding Skill Advisory Panels (SAP).
- Purpose of session – Update on progress and allow for the opportunity to feedback on the findings, feed into the engagement process.
- The Engagement Process included a data collection activity and had engaged with 250 companies and had received 70 responses to the survey so far. Aimed to get 150 responses from employers and were surveying providers, third sector and local authorities. Were also running a number of workshops.
- Draft priorities would be published at the end of March and the LSIP approach would be published at the end of April.

During discussion Board Members:

- Queried who knew about the survey and highlighted the importance of maximising its visibility. Officers stated that they had been working with the Economic Development teams across the county to utilise their communication channels and had also utilised the connection through the network of business representative organisations. The Cambridge Ahead representative commented that they had encouraged their members to take part in the survey.
- Highlighted that the Peterborough Strategic Skills Partnership Board had discussed the LSIP in their last meeting and had two main questions, what was the governance for the LSIP and Local Authority elected members and Executives had not been contacted yet, how was is planned to engage with them? Officers explained that there was a planned mailing through the CA later this month and would include information for elected members. Officers also stated that the governance rested with the Chamber of Commerce who held the risk and liability. Board Members requested a short summary video of the LSIP as they felt that this would better support the communication approach and reach out to a wider audience. **ACTION**

99. Any Other Business

The Board requested the following items for future agendas:

- LSIP Update
- UCAS update
- Update on Workforce work by Cambridge Ahead hopefully by the next meeting.

The next meeting of the Employment and Skills Board was confirmed as 16 May 2023