



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Agenda Item No: 3.2

Employment and Skills Strategy - Update

To:	Skills Committee
Meeting Date:	13 September 2021
Public report:	Yes
Lead Member:	Councillor Lucy Nethsingha, Chair of the Skills Committee
From:	Fliiss Miller, Senior Responsible Officer – Workforce Skills
Key decision:	No
Forward Plan ref:	N/A
Recommendations:	The Skills Committee is recommended to: a) Note the progress undertaken to develop the Employment and Skills Strategy and direction to complete the final Strategy
Voting arrangements:	A simple majority of all Members

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to inform the Skills Committee of the progress made on the development of the Employment and Skills Strategy.

2. Background

- 2.1 At the Skills Committee on 14 June 2021 the Skills Committee agreed to the approach to develop the new Employment and Skills Strategy for the Combined Authority. This paper provides an update of the progress made and also sets out the next steps to complete the strategy.
- 2.2 The first round of engagement sessions has been completed. Five workshops were held in July. These workshops included focused sessions with the Business Board and the Local Economic Recovery Group and the Skills Committee and Employment and Skills Board. In addition, three open sessions were held. These sessions included representatives from business, regional government departments, the third sector, FE colleges and independent training providers, schools and professional and representative bodies.
- 2.3 The Senior Responsible Officer also attended other established groups informing them of the process being undertaken, including but not limited to – The NEET Strategy Steering Group, Cambridge Ahead Skills Board, Fenland District Council Executive meeting.
- 2.4 In addition to the workshop sessions the Open Call for evidence was open for one month. This was widely circulated through both political and non-political channels. The Open Call was also promoted through Social Media channels. The Combined Authority received 25 responses.

3. Next Steps

- 3.1 The draft strategy is attached in Appendix 1. This outlines the key emerging themes which include:
- **A person-centered approach**, strategic focus on priority occupations *as well as* sectors
 - **Strong data and information to inform decision making**, with a customer behaviour perspective
 - **Co-ordinated place-based action areas**, to engage all stakeholders in addressing multiple/complex issues
 - **A regional curriculum**, with learning and training aligned to local job opportunities and careers
 - **A dual-track system**, anticipating long-term needs *and* responding with agility in the short-term
- 3.2 The Senior Responsible Officer for Workforce Skills met with the incoming Chief Executive of the Combined Authority on 16 August to discuss the draft strategy, the incoming Chief Executive was content with the process and requested to be kept informed of progress.

- 3.3 It is proposed that a further eight engagement sessions are held to discuss and seek feedback on the draft strategy; individual sessions with the Local Authorities in the Combined Authority, the Skills Committee and Employment and Skills Board and with representatives from the regional Youth Advisory Boards.
- 3.4 This feedback will be incorporated into the final Employment and Skills Strategy that will be brought to the November meeting of the Skills Committee for final approval.

Significant Implications

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report, the individual projects and programmes needed to implement the Skills Strategy will be addressed as they are brought forward following completion of the strategy.

5. Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no significant legal implications arising from this report.

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix 1 - Employment and Skills Strategy – Progress Update