



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Skills Committee Minutes

Meeting: Monday 17 January 2022

Venue: Multi-Function Room, New Shire Hall, Cambridgeshire County Council

Time: 10.00am - 12.00pm

Present:

Cllr Lucy Nethsingha - Chair and Member for Cambridgeshire County Council

Cllr Lynne Ayres - Peterborough City Council

Cllr Lis Every - East Cambridgeshire District Council

Cllr Jon Neish - Huntingdonshire District Council

Cllr Chris Seaton - Fenland District Council

Cllr Niamh Sweeney - Cambridge City Council

Cllr Eileen Wilson - South Cambridgeshire District Council

Apologies: None

Part 1 - Governance Items

38. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest and Announcements

No apologies received or declarations of interest made.

39. Minutes of the Skills Committee meeting on 10 November 2021 and Actions

The minutes of the meeting on 10 November 2021 were approved as an accurate record.

The action log was noted.

40. Public Questions

Questions received from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were taken at the relevant items on the agenda.

41. Skills Committee Agenda Plan

It was resolved to note the agenda plan.

42. Combined Authority Forward Plan

It was resolved to note the Forward Plan.

Part 2 – Recommendations to the Combined Authority Board

43. Peterborough University – Phase Three Business Case

The Committee received a report detailing the Business Case for the University of Peterborough Phase Three project and sought approval from the Committee to recommend the actions arising to the Combined Authority Board.

In particular, the presenting officer highlighted:

- The recommendations to Combined Authority Board, set out in the report, were to deliver the legal and contractual framework of phase three of the University.
- The University had two main aims, to increase the skills of local people, to increase the highly skilled employment opportunity and was a Mayoral Priority in the Combined Authorities Business Plan. The University was a key intervention in the Local Industrial Strategy and the Skills Strategy, to address the current disconnect between work and qualification.
- Main aim for the University expansion was to consolidate and build on the phases of the University that had already been approved. Phases One and Two were currently underway, and Phase One was on track to be completed in July 2022 and would open the first teaching building to its first students in September 2022. It would provide space for around 2000 students, rising to 3000 by 2025.
- The curriculum of the University was focused on Health, Social Care, Education, Management, Finance and Law.
- Phase two of the University was the Peterborough Research and Innovation Incubator, which was currently under construction. Completion was forecast for December 2022.
- Requesting to go ahead with Phase three of the University. The key feature of the phase was to increase the student numbers to around 4,700 from 2024. Phase three comprised of a Living Lab, a new Science Centre for Peterborough with public space for exhibitions to inspire young people into STEM sectors.

- Adjustments were required to the ProPCo1 Legal arrangements. The funding for phase three was detailed in section three of the report. Phase three was due to be delivered in 2024 and the additional funding required changes to the shareholder agreement which in turn had an impact on the CPCA position as a majority shareholder. A mutually agreed position had tentatively been agreed and work by lawyers to finalise the position was due to start imminently and the target was to finalise the position by February to meet the timeline of the Levelling Up Funding.

Discussing the report Members:

- Queried the benefit cost ratio and why the original building fell from 10 to 6.7. Officers stated that the benefits cost ratio was significantly high and positive even though it had dropped from phase one. Officers explained that the reason for the drop was because there were now two buildings and the quantitative measures were due to the fact that there were two investments and two sets of costs associated with the University rather than one set as in phase one. Officers highlighted that the benefits cost ratio was the quantitative measure, there was a qualitative aspect that had not been measured but had been indicated and noted. Officers explained that they would follow up on the details of the benefits cost ratio and feed back to Members. **ACTION**
- Sought clarity on whether counsels opinion been obtained for the planning of phase three, which was referred to in the business case. Officers stated that the planning aspect of the approval had just gone into consultation and were expecting the full application to be put to the council by the middle of the year. The Director of Business and Skills stated that the counsels legal opinion was sought in relation to the original plan which was to apply for outline planning for the full campus before the authority might be granted detailed planning for phase three and counsel advised that that would not be necessary and the authority were now applying for detailed planning for phase three in parallel with getting outline planning for the whole campus.
- Questioned whether the work schedule was on track to meet the deadline for the Levelling Up Funding. Officers stated that if the Committee and Board consented to the delegated authorities set out in the report then it would be possible to instruct a consultant to start work on the building designs by the end of February and complete the structure of the building by March 2024 and there was a robust programme in place that would allow the authority to meet the deadline.
- Highlighted that the deadline for applications for the University were at the end of the month and queried how applications were going for phase one. Officers explained that Anglia Ruskin University had two open days and they had been overwhelmingly received and supported and the early signs where they were estimating 12,000 applications. Officers stated that the more detailed analysis would be obtained from UCAS following the application deadline of 26 January.

- Queried the curriculum for phase one of the University as originally it was around engineering and STEM science subjects but that this was not the case anymore and sought clarity on how phase one and phase two would work together if the objective was to retain the students in Peterborough to increase their skills. Officers explained that the current curriculum in phase one of the University had some aspects of STEM, including Engineering and Agritech and Environment as well as Creative Arts and Sciences, Health, Education and Social Care. Officers explained that phase three would build on what was already available with further STEM courses and enhancing the phase one curriculum. Officers stated the building and curriculum was based on a net-zero strategy, which was the ethos of the University.
- Questioned if the Combined Authority was confident that the costs of the scheme could be met with ever increasing costs. The Director of Business and Skills stated that there had been supply chain impacts due to covid and leaving the European Union. He explained that on phase one they had gone through their contingency budget quite quickly and officers had done some value engineering on the building and hoped to get the contingency back up to £500k in the next management meeting. He clarified the building in phase two had been shrunk as they were laying order right at the peak of the covid pandemic and the exit of the European Union and the supply chains were struggling, but that this had not affected any of the outcomes. He stated that on phase three the design consultants have shrunk the size of the building by 8% to meet the likely costs of the supply chain increases but again this would not affect the outcomes.
- Welcomed that the outreach work that was ongoing to encourage students from surrounding areas and that the University would not just be Peterborough focused. The Director of Business and Skills explained that it was very much a regional university especially in relation to the courses and the business this would support.
- Queried how students would be transported to the University from across the region in particular rural areas and whether there was ongoing work in relation to providing students with accessible transport options. Officers stated that they were looking to provide a pathway for Fenland and surrounding areas and there needed to be a creation of a pipeline to attract students from Fenland and rural areas and provide them with accessible transport and this was something that colleagues in the transport team at the Combined Authority had been looking at in collaboration with Peterborough City Council who were refreshing their Transport Strategy. The Director of Business and Skills stated that a bid was being created to the Mayors Gainshare working with transport colleagues around bus passes and subsidised bus travel for Higher and Further Education. There was also a strong relationship being built with the College of West Anglia (CWA) and there was potential within

Fenlands Levelling Up Fund to work with CWA to give students a foundation year in Wisbech and then finishing their degrees off in Peterborough.

- Sought clarity on what progress had been made to recruit academic staff to the University. Officers explained that Anglia Ruskin University had provided a dedicated team to work on the University and this included five Executive posts. Officers explained that there was ongoing recruitment to posts at the University.

The Chair brought the debate to a close by highlighting the rapid progress that was being made on the University and requested that the Committee visit the University in the Autumn. She requested that the Committee be kept up to date with progress on applications and on broader discussions in relation to transport links. **ACTION**

It was resolved unanimously to recommend that the Combined Authority Board:

1. Approve the University of Peterborough Phase three Business Case
2. Approve the use of option a) in section 4.2, to use the existing special purpose vehicle Peterborough HE Property Company Ltd (Prop Co 1), for the delivery of Phase three of the University Programme, as the owner and developer of the second teaching building.
3. Consent, as shareholder, to modification of the Shareholders Agreement relating to Peterborough HE Property Company Ltd (Prop Co 1), on such terms as the Chief Executive of the CPCA in consultation with the Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer), and the Chief Finance Officer (s73 Officer) may agree, to include at a minimum the maintenance by the CPCA of the drag along rights, described at paragraph 4.2 of this report and in order to reflect the share allotments as noted in paragraph 3 below.
4. Consent, as shareholder, to Peterborough HE Property Company Ltd (Prop Co 1):
 - a) Issuing the following shares:
 - i. To Peterborough City Council, shares to the value of £20m (in consideration of it investing £20m of Levelling Up Fund (LUF) funding)
 - ii. To CPCA, shares to the value of £2m (in consideration of it investing £2m of Local Growth Fund funding)
 - iii. To Anglia Ruskin University, shares to the value of £4m in consideration of it investing £4m)

and note that the share issue should be completed by 31 March 2022.

- b) Agreeing revisions to the Development Management Agreement to extend the delivery specification in relation to the project management and delivery services and associated support services to relate also to phase three.
 - c) Entering into a land transfer with Peterborough City Council to acquire the Phase three land and then enter into an agreement for lease, and lease with ARU Peterborough in respect of the Phase three Building, and such consequential and other ancillary agreements on such terms as the Chief Executive of the CPCA in consultation with the Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer), and the Chief Finance Officer (s73 Officer) may agree.
 - d) Adopting a revised Business Plan, including such changes as are necessary to reflect the construction works and agreement for lease, and lease to ARU-Peterborough of the Phase 3 building in addition to the Phase one building.
5. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive of the CPCA in consultation with the Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer), and the Chief Finance Officer (s73 Officer) to agree:
- a) such changes to the Collaboration Agreement providing that changes to the delivery obligations (and respective timings) are made as described in 5.2 of this report.
 - b) In respect of the Collaboration Agreement, such changes in respect of increased target for student numbers, the curriculum model, and the site and building plan as described in paragraph 5.2 of this report.
 - c) The Development Management Agreement, such changes in respect of the provision of programme management services to Propco1, related to the Phase 3 construction project, are made as described in 5.2 of this report.
 - d) and to create or modify any such other documents as the Chief Legal Officer (Monitoring Officer) advises are necessary to give effect to the recommendations.

44. Health and Care Sector Work Academy

The Committee received a report detailing the performance outcome of the Health and Care Sector Work Academy (HCSWA) and was invited to recommend that the Combined Authority Board approve the new profile spend.

In particular, the presenting officers highlighted:

- The pilot did not reach the target numbers in the original contract period and the Department for Work and Pensions had agreed to an extension of the pilot to March 2023.

- City College Peterborough were the lead partner for the academy and the Executive Principal was now leading on the project and officers were working closely with the college to meet the revised targets.
- City College Peterborough had recently employed into a new position, to lead on the work of the academy and there was already engagement with a number of wider delivery partners to ensure that the targets could be met.

Discussing the report Members:

- Highlighted that key factor of the success of the new Integrated Care Partnership in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough was staffing and this was a key part of the process.
- Noted that there had been some investment in facilities and queried where the facilities were. Officers explained that the facilities were in City College Peterborough's campus in the city. Officers stated that the Mayor had opened the centre and that they had received really good feedback on the facilities from students and local employers.
- Highlighted that there was a theme in the other papers received at the Committee were there was supply but not the demand for courses. Members sought clarity on how demand would be created, as there was a malaise post covid in some areas for returning to work and mindsets needed to be changed. Members also queried who was leading on the Health and Care Sector Work Academy Programme, pulling all the threads together. Officers explained that they were working very closely with the Department for Work and Pensions to look at referrals and using different engagement approaches including looking at sub-contracting with a number of new providers who were already engaged in the health and care sector, who already had strong recruitment. Officers stated that Pat Carrington was the lead on behalf of the City College Peterborough and that Fliss Miller was the lead at the Combined Authority.
- Noted that the academy started in January 2018 and was due to run until January 2021. Members queried whether there had been any problems in the first two years of the academy, which was pre-covid. The Director of Business and Skills stated that the Academy was slow to start in 2019-20, and this was a result of City College Peterborough having significant problems engaging with employers. He stated that City College Peterborough were predominantly an adult and community learning focused provider and in the early days of the Academy, before the establishment of Growth Works with Skills, they had found it difficult to engage with employers. He explained since the establishment of Growth Works with Skills in January 2021, and City College Peterborough establishing through Opportunity Peterborough, relationships with employers had been developed. He also stated that recently the Director of North-West Anglia Health Trust had reached out as

there was a significant issue with supply of skills and sought to be involved with the Academy and work with the hospitals in their area.

- Queried whether it was just City College Peterborough involved in the first two years of the Academy or if other colleges were involved and whether any independent providers were used. The Director of Business and Skills explained that it was solely City College Peterborough at the beginning. Officers explained that delivery would be broadened out and the college network would be involved along with independent training providers. City College Peterborough would remain the lead.

In bringing the debate to a close, the Chair welcomed the refresh of the project and highlighted that there was a real need to not waste the extra time given on the project. She requested an update report at the next meeting and asked that Pat Carrington attend to update the Committee and answer any questions. **ACTION**

She also requested an update in the report to next Committee on feedback on why participants were starting the courses and not carrying on to completion as reflected in the table in the report. **ACTION**

It was resolved unanimously to recommend that the Combined Authority Board:

- a) Approve the new profiled spend in accordance with the approved extension of the innovative employment pilot on recruitment and progression in the Health and Care Sector.
- b) Note the performance of the Health and Care Sector Work Academy to date.

45. Employment and Skills Strategy & Action Plan

The Committee was invited to approve the final version of the Employment and Skills Strategy.

The Committee received six questions from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on this report. The written responses were read out and can be found at appendix 1 of the minutes.

In particular, the presenting officers highlighted:

- The actions identified in the strategy itself were being incorporated into a more comprehensive action plan that was currently in development and would be shared and agreed once the strategy was approved at the Combined Authority Board.

Discussing the report Members:

- Acknowledged that the level of knowledge in relation to skills at district level was greater than what had been available a few years ago and that there was now a different and better way of working. There was greater collaboration between Districts and the Combined Authority including regular meetings.
- Questioned what the process was for the action plan and what the timeline would be. Officers explained that an implementation structure would be created to take the action plan forward and the Combined Authority would be seeking representation from all constituent local authorities to set up a working group to take forward the implementation process.
- Highlighted that T levels were mentioned in relation to Peterborough and that the only college that was approved to deliver T Levels at present was City College Peterborough and queried whether other colleges were looking to be approved to deliver T levels in the future. The Director of Business and Skills explained that there were no other colleges approved to deliver T Levels at the moment in Peterborough, as a number of colleges were awaiting OFSTED inspections that had been delayed because of the covid pandemic. He explained that it was hoped that over the next two years more colleges in the Combined Authority area would be rated as 'good' in order that they could then roll-out T Levels.

It was resolved unanimously to recommend that the Combined Authority Board:

- a) Approve the Employment and Skills Strategy.
- b) To note that the Employment and Skills Strategy will be incorporated in the wider Economic Growth and Skills Strategy; due to be published in March 2022.

46. Growth Works Management Review – January 2022

The Committee considered the Growth Works non-financial performance report.

The Committee received a question from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on this report and the written response can be found at appendix 1 of the minutes.

In particular, the presenting officers highlighted:

- The report covered up until 31 October 2021 and officers were currently reviewing year one which was up until 31 December 2021. 17 out of 19 outcomes would be met or exceeded
- Growth Works had produced a Net Promoter Score which was a client survey. The first had been carried out in December and the next would take place at the end of March.
- Business challenges cited by companies were in relation to people and talent

- Inward Investments were performing well and specifically highlighted the success of CMR and their relocation to the CPCA area.
- Skills Service performance covered the highest performing year for the CEC contract and the launch of the Careers Hub in September 2021.
- Capital Grants and Equity: Equity was running slightly behind target but were confident in meeting the target in Quarter 1 of year 2.
- Launching a Performance and Intelligence Portal for Growth Works and were looking for some Members to go on to a user forum to get training on using the portal.

Discussing the report Members:

- Queried whether there would be any geographical data on where the companies were that were engaging with Growth Works. Officers explained that geographical information would be contained in the next report to Committee, and it would be available on the Performance and Intelligence Portal at a glance.
- Questioned when the next report was due at Committee. Officers clarified that they would report to Committee on a quarterly basis.

It was resolved by unanimously to:

Note the Growth Works programme performance up to 31 October 2021.

Part 3 – Programme Delivery

47. Adult Education Budget Annual Return and Evaluation

The Committee received a report detailing the second submission of the Adult Education Budget (AOB) Statutory Annual Return to the Department for Education (DfE) and to note the report's contents.

The Committee received four questions from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on this report. The written responses were read out and can be found at Appendix 1 of the minutes.

In particular, the presenting officers highlighted:

- there was 9% increase in enrolments overall and a 20% increase in spend.
- Independent evaluation of AEB was undertaken annually by Cambridgeshire Insights and this was included in Appendix B. This included quantitative analysis of provider data and qualitative research through an anonymised survey completed by AEB providers, a learner survey and interviews with

stakeholders. The evaluation reported on the local funding flexibilities that were implemented by the Combined Authority, although it stated that it was too soon to report on the impact. The Provider survey showed that overall they valued the funding flexibilities and the relationship with the Combined Authority. The stakeholder survey showed a greater appetite for collaborative working. Most providers were satisfied with the support they received from the Combined Authority. In the learner survey, 79% of learners stated that they were motivated to take up learning for health reasons and saw improvement in their health as an outcome.

- Appendix C to the AEB report, was requested by Business Board to spotlight the impact of upskilling on employees in the sub region and had been tabled at the Business Board on 9 January 2022. This showed there were insufficient level 3 enrolments, although some progress to increase this has been made in the 2020/21 academic year. Enrolments in some of the Combined Authority's growth and foundational sectors had been low.
- Members had previously requested further analysis of district-level 'cold spots' for adult education. Cambridgeshire Insights had completed the first phase of this analysis using 2019/20 AEB participation data. Following a request at the Combined Authority Board in November 2021, this was being shared earlier, to inform commissioning conversations with providers and to proactively take feedback from members and stakeholders. However, the next phase of 'cold spot' analysis would be updated with 2020/21 AEB participation data and to include other adult funding streams, for consideration at Skills Committee in March 2022.

Discussing the report Members:

- Highlighted that there needed to be more help locally to focus provision and did not have the infrastructure locally, to put bids together and how this could be supported through the Combined Authority. Officers stated that the cold spot analysis was the first part of addressing some of the infrastructure issues in terms of provision. Officers explained that there were some good examples of where the Combined Authority had enabled bids, for example the Levelling Up Fund University Phase three bid and the work on Skill Bootcamps. There was work to build on these successes and provide further support to access funding and bids.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) approve the Adult Education Budget (AEB) Statutory Annual Return for submission to the Department for Education (DfE) for the 2020/21 academic year
- b) note the Independent Evaluation of the second year of AEB devolution, note the findings from the AEB Outcomes and Impact report requested by the Business Board

- c) note the early findings from the AEB cold spot analysis.

48. Local Skills Report Refresh

The Committee considered a report that provided information on the refreshed Local Skills Report that would be published by the 28 January 2022.

In particular, the presenting officers highlighted:

- The Employment and Skills Board (Skills Advisory Panel) had approved the report for publication, and it was still awaiting the section on the Adult Education Budget which officers would supply before the publishing deadline.
- Skills advisory panels would probably not be funded going forward due to the roll out of Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs)

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the paper that provides an update on the Local Skills Report

49. Digital Skills Bootcamps Update

The Committee received a report that provided an update on the delivery of Digital Skills Bootcamps within the East of England area.

In particular, the presenting officers highlighted:

- There was a significant delay in the notification of the award. The original schedule by DfE was for successful bidders to be informed of the outcome in March/April 2021. The contract was awarded in June 2021.
- The first cohort of learners started in September 2021. To date there had been 193 enrolments on 4 programmes.
- Cambridge Regional College (CRC) had requested that their contract for delivery be reduced. Officers were in contract negotiations with the DfE and an Independent Training Provider to see whether 300 learners could be transferred from CRC to a new provider.
- The DfE had agreed to extend the duration for the current contract until end April 2022. Officers had also been asked to submit a proposal to extend the wave two contract for a further twelve months which had been submitted. Officers awaited the outcome in the next couple of weeks. In addition, officers had also been asked to put together a proposal for wave 3 bootcamps and this would be a lot wider than the digital bootcamps and would cover construction, several technical pathways including green. The Combined Authority would move to grant funding for bootcamps for April 2022 - March

2023. Officers were currently working with providers and employers to look at what the need would be in the region.

In discussing the report Members:

- Queried whether the take up had been affected because the colleges were open in the daytime and not the evening and wondered whether other areas were struggling with take up in relation to Skills Bootcamps. Officers stated that the Combined Authority had recently appointed an officer who had worked at establishing Bootcamps in Liverpool. Officers highlighted that the wave two contract was very late in being awarded, and there was no run up time to onboard learners and work with employers. Officers explained that colleges had struggled across the country. Independent Training providers had led on Bootcamps because of their delivery model, they were able to mobilise faster than colleges. Officers stated that there was mixed take up particularly in construction but that they were confident that the Combined Authority would hit 90-100% of its target for the year.
- Queried whether the unemployed were able to attend an adult education course without losing their benefits. Officers to update members following the meeting. **ACTION**

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Note the paper providing an update on the contract for Skills Bootcamps, Wave 2.

50. Budget & Performance Report

The Committee received a report detailing the Budget & Performance Report within the Skills Committee remit.

In particular, the presenting officers highlighted:

- Expenditure: AEB devolution £912,000 underspend was highlighted back in September. The Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) programme started in September and majority of the spend was in relation to staffing. There was a delay in getting the programmes set up.
- Income – all of the income had been received as expected.

In discussing the report:

- The Chair sought clarity on whether officers were confident that the underspend would be addressed over the next few months or would the underspend be sustained going forwards and whether the Committee needed to have discussions to address this.. The Director of Business and Skills stated that there was currently a substantial underspend in AEB and this was noted at the last Committee meeting. He explained that officers were tasked with undertaking a deep dive review with an action plan to address the

underspends and what would be done this and the in next financial year and also what could be transferred across and this would be presented to Committee in March. **ACTION**

It was resolved by unanimously to:

- a) Note the update and financial position relating to the revenue funding lines within the Skills Committee remit.

Part 4 – Date of the next meeting

51. It was resolved to:

Note the date of the next meeting as 16 March 2022.