Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority

Employment and Skills Strategy Implementation Plan

This document is a draft in progress provided as an update to the Skills Committee and not for broad circulation, June 2022

Metro Dynamics

DRAFT - not for circulation

Contents

1 Introduction 1
2 Where we want to be 4
3 How we will get there 8
4 When we will get there 14
5 Monitoring our progress 15

DRAFT - not for circulation

1 Introduction

Employment and Skills Strategy

In January 2022 Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) published an updated Employment and Skills Strategy. Developed over the second half of 2021 in collaboration with stakeholders across the six local authority areas, the strategy builds on the 2019 Skills Strategy by providing an updated vision for skills and employment in the area, and what this means for each of the groups interacting with the skills ecosystem - people, employers, providers and place leaders.

Figure 1. CPCA Vision for Employment & Skills

A successful, globally competitive economy offering high-skilled, well-paid, good quality jobs, delivering increased productivity and prosperity to support strong, sustainable and healthy communities and enabled by an inclusive, world-class local skills system that matches the needs of our employers, learners and communities.

In which…

People experience fulfilment and good physical and mental health with productive, quality working lives. They drive their own learning and career journeys and feel confident to enter and re-enter the labour market over the course of their lives. They can access support and learning to meet their personal and work ambitions when and how they need.

Employers are providing good quality jobs; have the skills they need in their staff and can recruit the right person for the right job. They understand their skills needs and their inputs shape an agile, responsive skills system that delivers a regional pipeline of talent, matched to job opportunities to support strong businesses and enable business growth.

Providers work collaboratively across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in an integrated education and skills system to deliver learning, qualifications, careers education and support to enable people to enter the labour market in the ways that suit individual's needs and ambitions.

Place leaders secure outcomes for the whole place, convening and supporting collaboration between employers and the integrated skills system, as well as linking into other local services for people across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to lead healthy lives and fulfilling careers.

DRAFT - not for circulation

These vision statements are underpinned by series of short-term priorities and longer-term outcomes categorised under the four strategic themes:

Figure 2. Core themes for employment and skills

Pre-work learning and formal education

People can access learning and experiences during formal education that provide a strong foundation for labour market entry and future working lives.

Employer access to talent

Employers both drive and consume a dynamic market of skills provision, which shapes the current and future workforce.

Life-wide and lifelong learning

People are aware of their learning needs and opportunities and are able to access provision that enables their development.

Support into and between work

Coordinated support is available for those who need additional assistance to transition into or between work.

This Document

The development of this Implementation Plan signals a key milestone in realising the vision for employment and skills. The plan is the vehicle that enables the transition of the strategy from an articulation of evidence and aspirations for our skills system, into a live process; providing a practical road map for realistic and achievable delivery.

The purpose of the implementation plan is to guide the first five years of strategy delivery and to cement a shared understanding of what is to be delivered, how, when and by who in order to realise longer term strategic ambitions. In reiterating the objectives for the region's employment and skills pathways, the implementation plan also acts as a call to action for local employers and anchor organisations to work collaboratively and constructively to generate meaningful impact.

DRAFT - not for circulation

The document is split into four key sections:

- **Where we want to be**: a brief reiteration of the objectives of the Employment and Skills Strategy and alignment with the local and national strategic context.
- **How we will get there**: identification of the key actors within Cambridge and Peterborough's skill system and their role in supporting the successful delivery of the strategy, as well as a review of the current and planned initiatives that contribute to short term priorities and long-term outcomes and an action plan for addressing gaps in implementation.
- **When we will get there:** a timeline of activity and milestone reviews of implementation progress.
- **Monitoring our progress:** an outline of measures of success and our approach to monitoring and evaluation.

DRAFT - not for circulation

2 Where we want to be

Outcomes and strategic priorities

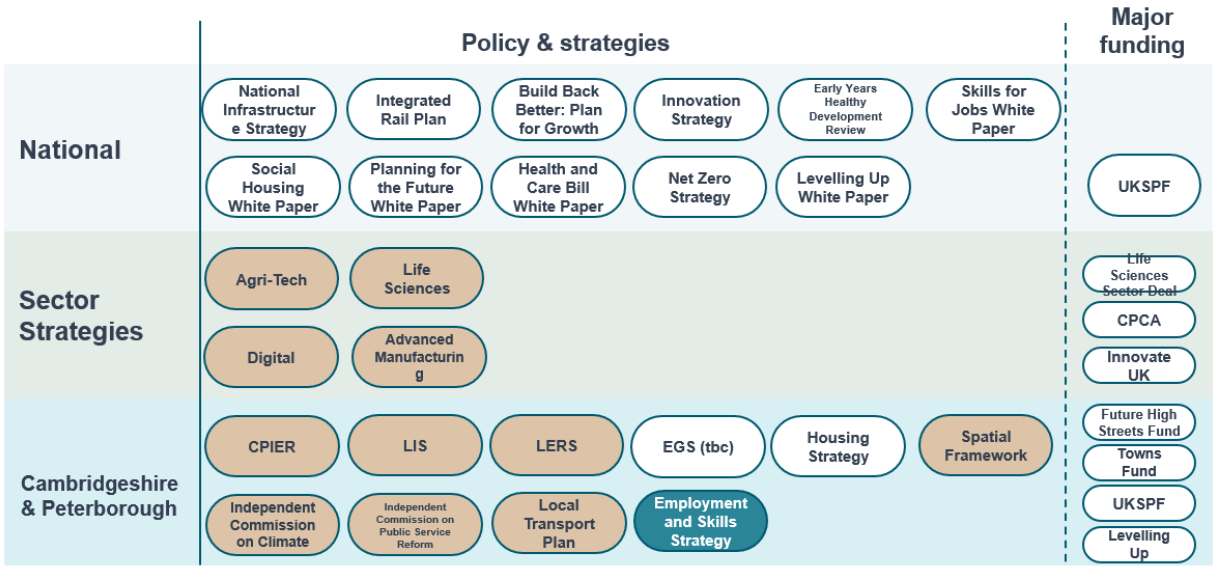
Employment and Skills Strategy

The vision for the skills system in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough is a long-term project. The starting point is ensuring that short-term strategic priorities are approached as a step in the right direction towards longer-term change. With this in mind, the strategy sets out a series of long-term outcomes and short-term priorities to steer the work of partners, as shown in Figure 4 over the page.

Figure 3 below maps out the Employment and Skills Strategy in the wider local and national strategic context. Local strategies highlighted orange are those where there are specific overlaps with the priorities in the Employment and Skills Strategy. Greater detail of these overlaps is set out in Figure 5, page 6.

Drafting note: References to LIS and LERS to be replaced with the new Economic Growth Strategy, as this is complete.

Figure 3. Wider strategic context



DRAFT - not for circulation

Figure 4. CPCA long-term outcomes & short-term priorities for employment and skills

Core themes	Long-term outcomes	Short-term priorities
Pre-work learning and formal education People can access learning and experiences during formal education that provide a strong foundation for labour market entry and future working lives.	• People understand how their ambitions can be realised through learning and training and are connected to opportunities, experiences and role models. • Providers have increased numbers of students taking courses and apprenticeships aligned both to local job opportunities and their interests and ambitions. • Providers are outcomes driven, progressing learners into and between jobs and careers with the skills – from basic employability to soft skills, to technical capabilities – that employers need. • Skills system drives social mobility with access to advice, skills, and opportunities.	• Improving careers education, specifically around STEM and green skills, as well as information, advice and guidance. • Widening education access and participation to make education more inclusive and the student body (and future workforce) more diverse. • Enhancing exposure to role models, work experience, and understanding of various training routes into sectors and occupations. • Capital investment to improve teaching facilities and kit, particularly for providers of FE, alongside support for staff capacity building.
Life-wide and lifelong learning People are aware of their learning needs and opportunities and able to access provision that enables their development.	• People are drivers of their own learning and work journey, making informed decisions about the selection of training, development and work activities that are right for them. • People are equipped with the soft and technical skills to respond to opportunities in the labour market and see clear pathways into and between a variety of occupations and careers. • People can access - physically and digitally – and navigate an agile and responsive skills system to upskill and reskill throughout their careers. • Providers are outcomes driven, progressing learners into and between jobs and careers with the skills – from basic employability to soft skills, to technical capabilities – that employers need.	• Improving access to careers information, advice and guidance at any age. • Providing support to upskill and reskill in response to economic restructuring (e.g. following covid-19, Brexit, further digitisation, as net-zero transition intensifies). • Increasing work-based learning, particularly apprenticeships, and introducing more accessible formats (e.g. short courses/ online/blended learning). • Ensuring inclusion in continued and community learning and support for disadvantaged people, adults with SEN, care leavers and ex-offenders.
Employer access to talent Employers both drive and consume a dynamic market of skills provision, which shapes the current and future workforce.	• Employers can access a pipeline of skilled people seeking to move into the workforce and the right skills development training for their current staff. • Employers can easily access – physically and digitally - and navigate support to adapt their workforce planning in response to structural changes in the economy. • Employers can and do articulate their skills needs both in terms of long-term workforce planning/strategy (skills for which they have consistent/repeating demand over time) and short-term workforce demand (skills which for which they have an immediate, unmet need). • Employers have well defined and designed jobs, for which the skills requirements and development prospects are clear to staff and candidates. • Providers collectively plan, design and deliver learning and training provision responding to employers' long-term needs and can respond with agility to short-term demand.	• Supporting covid recovery, growth and net-zero transition by developing priority skills and responding to acute issues. • Driving up and sustaining employers' engagement with and influence on education and training. • Embedding modern work practices and conditions and improving job quality.
Support into and between work Coordinated support is available for those who need additional assistance to transition into or between work.	• People can access support into education and employment how and when they need it, at any point in their lives and whatever their starting point. • Place leaders collectively reduce barriers – health, mental health, digital and connectivity – for people to access learning, training and employment.	• Supporting unemployed and NEETs into training and employment. • Providing support for disadvantaged groups to access the labour market. • Targeting support for Covid-19 recovery and transitions for displaced workers

DRAFT - not for circulation

Figure 5. Wider CPCA strategic priorities, linked to Employment and Skills Priorities

Independent Commission on Public Service Reform (2020)

The Whole Person: The CPCA should engage employers around their teams' health, particularly mental health, given its proven relationship with productivity.
The Whole System: Build on existing Further Education and Higher Education activity in the region to create new pathways of education and development and a growing supply of home-grown skills to health and social care, with a particular focus on social care. Proactively recruit to fill vacancies, using a targeted campaign across health and care sectors.

Agri-Tech

Recommendation 3: Ensuring a fit-for-purpose workforce for an agri-tech-enabled industry, providing life-long learning opportunities, re-skilling, and up-skilling.
Development of a bespoke agri-tech skills plan to sit alongside a wider skills plan for food, drink, and agriculture.
Structured support for new learners with employers to help provide industry placements, apprenticeships, internships, and studentships.

Advanced Manufacturing

Recommendation 2: Support the CPCA's manufacturing skills programmes and those of partner organisations.
Recommendation 6: Produce a review and gap analysis of existing supply and demand for skills to inform where future provision should be targeted.
Recommendation 7: Over the long-term implement the findings of the skills review.
Recommendation 13: Implement a sector skills and careers programme based on the findings of the sector skills review.

Digital

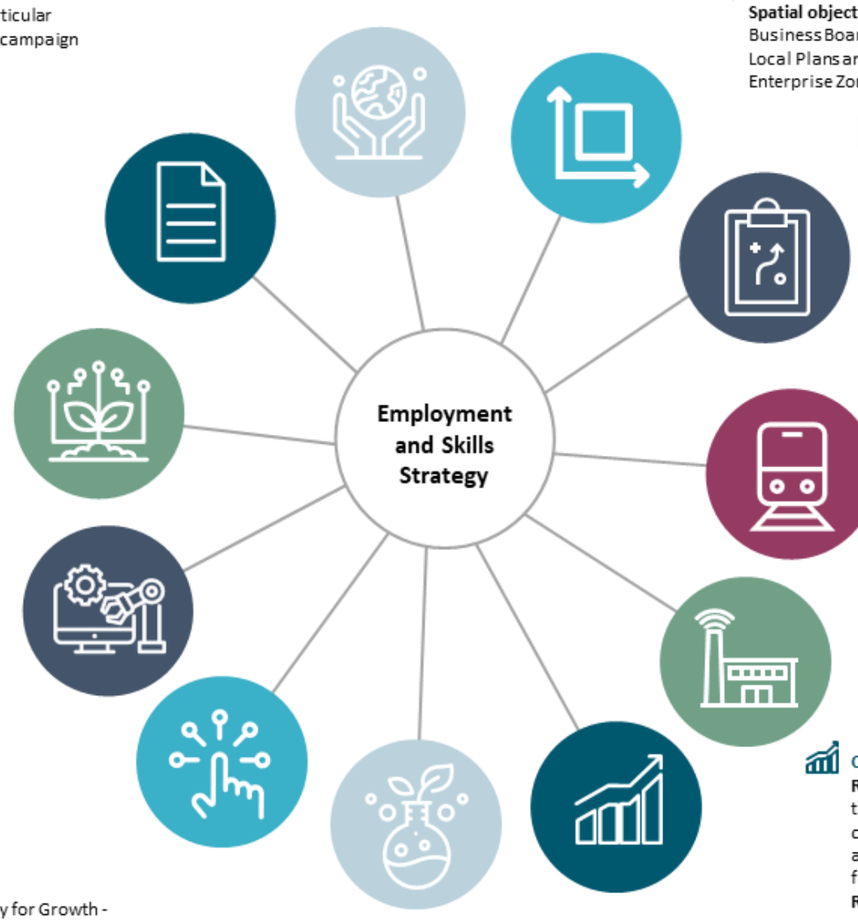
Recommendation 1: Collaborate on high-quality digital training for young people and teachers, and reskilling for adults. Develop a region-wide culture of employer engagement in education.
Recommendation 4: Ensure high-quality digital training for young people and teachers, and reskilling for adults. Develop a region-wide culture of employer engagement in education. Attract talent into the region with affordable housing and high-quality local amenities.
Recommendation 8: While the digital sector grows, other industries are also digitalizing their processes. Encouraging the adoption of digital technologies in key sectors for CPCA such as life sciences, manufacturing and agriculture will increase the number of skilled jobs in the region.

Life Science

Recommendation 1: Building the Financial & Management Capacity for Growth - Create a "Future Leaders Programme" to build commercial management skills of the sector.
Recommendation 3: Building Talent & Skills Capacity for Growth -
> Create new technical education programmes to support skills required by life sciences firms
> Support for alternative routes into life sciences employment
> Create new programmes to upskill in the tech life science convergence

Independent Commission on Climate Change (2021)

Recommendation 7: The CPCA should review training and upskilling plans to ensure that these are designed to support the scale and nature of the required transition, maximise high quality job opportunities in the region and contribute to reducing inequalities and deprivation.



Local Transport Plan (2020)

Policy 7.3: Promoting health and wellbeing by increasing the amount of physical activity undertaken, reducing air pollution, improving the public and urban realm and increasing access to healthcare, leisure, employment and social activities.

Strategic Spatial Framework (2018)

Spatial objective 1: The Combined Authority will work with the local planning authorities and new Business Board to ensure the effective delivery of the strategic employment locations identified in Local Plans and economic strategies, including the designated Alconbury and Cambridge Compass Enterprise Zones.

Local Economic Recovery Strategy (2021)

Action 4: £500k of capital grants & start-up advice for employees and displaced workers transitioning to entrepreneurship.
Action 8: Connecting displaced talent.
Action 9: £125k investment into more resources into schools to better connect leavers with jobs.
Action 10: Leveraging the Adult Education Budget to improve digital skills.
Action 19: Guaranteed training & interviews for jobs in healthcare and construction.
Action 20: New funding for training for school and college leavers unable to find a job.
Action 21: Job clubs – upskilling volunteers to deliver services and support to the unemployed across the district.
Action 22: £80.1k investment into local piloting of a new retraining scheme.
Longer-term intervention 8: FE capacity building programme, 2023/25 bid from colleges on addressing skills deprivation in the north and technical skills capacity in the south.
Note: the LERS will be replaced by the Economic Growth Strategy

Local Industrial Strategy (2019)

People Initiative 2: Look at scope to create a new university in Peterborough, that will attract highly-skilled, productive individuals to the city, and develop the skills of the local population.
People Initiative 3: Create a Skills, Talent and Apprenticeship Hub: connecting employers, providers, and learners.

CPIER (2018)

Recommendation 10: Further research should be undertaken on the potential impact that increased Surestart-style provision could have, particularly in more deprived communities and with hard-to-reach groups. Similarly, further research on the nature and availability of preschool education is important and we would recommend that a further Commission be undertaken in this area.
Recommendation 11: The government should enter into meaningful conversations with the Mayor and the Combined Authority early in this parliament and that devolution of all skills funding be agreed as part of a second stage devolution deal.
Recommendation 11.xi: The Mayor and the Combined Authority should jointly support pilot initiatives with one or more key sectors of the economy to encourage employers to bring forward new and innovative proposals for increasing the skills supply with public funding used to pump prime new employer-led provision.

DRAFT - not for circulation

System changes

The Employment and Skills Strategy set out three linked longer-term change projects, critical to ensuring our skills system can truly meet the needs of our local communities:

1. **A regional curriculum enabling strategic collaboration across providers, with learning and training aligned to local job opportunities and careers** – using robust data and information from employers to inform the experiences, skills development and qualifications that school, college and university students need for local job opportunities and careers.

2. **A dual-track system, anticipating long-term needs and responding with agility in the short-term** – with providers who can *both* lead on future workforce development to provide a pipeline of talent and respond to short term skills needs from industry.

3. **A coordinated place-based action framework, to engage all stakeholders in addressing multiple/complex issues** – convening place leaders, providers, schools and partners to focus on improving skill and qualification levels and getting people into good jobs and to achieve higher earnings.

These three projects will ensure **effective** provision is delivered using an **agile** approach, in a way suited to the nuances of **our places**.

Drafting note: This section will include more detailed overviews of the long-term projects, why they are needed to really change the system, provide examples (where available) from elsewhere and set out a path to change. Engagement to develop this information with stakeholders is ongoing.

DRAFT - not for circulation

3 How we will get there

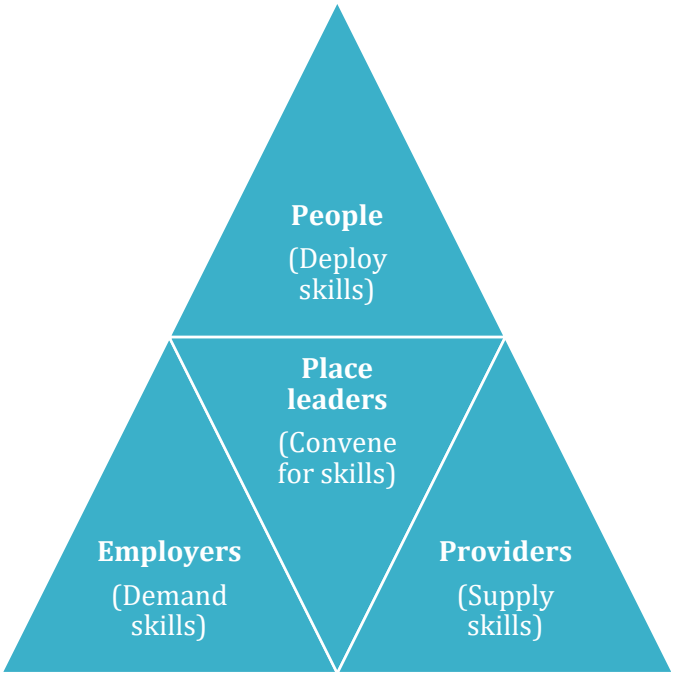
Who will act

Drafting note: this section will outline who needs to act, how to deliver the strategy and give a perspective on the effectiveness of existing arrangements and outline new structures which may be introduced to ensure successful delivery, based on desk-based research of what works and engagement with stakeholders. This section will then outline what it is anticipated these groups will be responsible for delivering and how relationships are intended to work - i.e. who is accountable for what.

The updated Employment and Skills strategy places the four key interrelated anchors of the skills infrastructure – people, employers, providers and place leaders – at the heart of the vision for Employment and Skills in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

If delivered successfully, the strategy should result in a skills model whereby people are empowered to take charge of their learning and career journeys, providers work collaboratively across the patch to offer inclusive and high-quality employment pathways, employers have access to a diverse talent equipped with the right skills for the future and place leaders effectively convene to leverage opportunities for all.

Figure 6. Actors in the skills system



Each must act purposefully to translate this vision and drive a truly dynamic local skills system that meets the differing needs of the region's communities. Action cannot happen in isolation but must be cohesive and collaborative, with effective structures in place to ensure

each groups is represented and has a voice in shaping change and reaching strategic objectives.

This is not about creating complex governance systems, but making Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's existing governance, management and delivery functions (see Table 1) work in a more integrated way to successfully support the strategy transition from development to implementation. This must be underpinned by both a shared commitment to delivery and understanding of the role and remit of each function.

Table 1. CPCA Governance Structures

Entity/Group	Role	Representation
CA Board	Oversight	Place leaders
Business Board	Oversight	Employers
Skills Committee	Oversight	Place leaders
Education Committee	Oversight	Place leaders
Employment & Skills Board	Advice	Place leaders, Providers, Employers
Business Advisory Panel	Advice	Employers
LSIP	Delivery	Place leaders
Cambridge Public Service Board	Delivery	Providers
AEB Grant Fund Providers	Delivery	Providers
College Principals Group	Delivery	Providers
Growth Works	Delivery	Providers
Youth Board	Advice	People

DRAFT - not for circulation

What action will be taken

The shared understanding of who will fulfil the delivery, advisory and oversight functions of implementation must be complemented by a comprehensive overview of the full portfolio activity being delivered across the CA geography as well as the pipeline. This enables the identification of interventions which are well aligned to the short-term priorities and anticipated longer term outcomes of the Employment and Skills Strategy and therefore should be continued and intensified, and which activities do not contribute to strategic ambitions and as such should be adapted, curtailed or stopped. The mapping of current and future interventions will also help decision makers identify gaps in activity and will support ongoing monitoring of implementation progress.

Drafting note: An initial qualitative rating of the range of activities currently active against each of the short-term priorities has been undertaken using the following framework. At the current time, effectiveness and strategic of skills interventions at a portfolio level is considered to be a '2'. This indicates that the current range of activities are only partially delivering outcomes at the scale, pace and quality required, and as such, will need to be adapted and/or intensified to improve outcome realisation.

Table 2. Indicative rating of intervention portfolios

RAG	Score	Status	Course of action/considerations
	3	Current range of activities working well and delivering outcomes at the scale, pace and quality required.	Maintain. Learn lessons about what works, adapt where necessary as outcomes are delivered/in response to changing context
	2	Current range of activities partially delivering outcomes at the scale, pace and quality required.	Adapt & Intensify current activities to improve delivery outcomes at the scale, pace and quality required.
	1	Current range of activities not delivering outcomes at the scale, pace and quality required.	Adapt to improve or disband and replace current activities to improve delivery outcomes at the scale, pace and quality required.

The detailed activity mapping and scoring exercise is currently underway. The following scoring matrix has been developed to determine the effectiveness and strategic alignment of current and planned interventions.

Initial mapping shows that the majority of current and planned activity contributes to the pre-work learning and formal education theme (46 interventions). A lower volume of activity is being delivered or planned which is aligned to the support into and between work theme (18 interventions, of which three are in the pipeline). 27 interventions fall under employer access to talent and a further 30 are aligned to the life-wide and lifelong learning theme.

Table 3. Activity Scoring Matrix

RAG	Score	Note	Course of Action
	5	Working well, delivering outcomes	Intensify
	4	Working well, some minor changes would improve delivery of outcomes (e.g. more, sooner, better quality)	Adapt
	3	Mixed performance to date, changes could stabilise and improve delivery of outcomes (e.g. more, sooner, better quality)	Adapt
	2	Consistently constrained performance to date, will require substantive adaption to improve delivery of outcomes	Curtail
	1	Not working, difficult to see how adaptation could improve delivery of outcomes	Stop

The finished implementation plan will detail each activity in a table format that clearly shows the strategic theme, short-term priority and outcome the intervention falls under, the partners responsible for delivery, how delivery is being funded, the delivery time frame and its effectiveness score.

The following analysis will be pulled from the completed mapping and scoring exercise:

- things that are in the pipeline, in two categories: funding secured and to be secured (latter is something that is a worked up project, need is recognised but funding has not been identified or the identified stream not secure);
- gaps where something new/different is required and the plan to address them; and,
- how/where actions contribute to starting the system change projects.

Initial analysis of progress against the early actions of the strategy is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Progress Against Early Actions

Pre-work and Formal Education	RAG	Employer access to talent	RAG	Life-wide and Lifelong Learning	RAG	Support Into and Between Work	RAG
Development of ARU Peterborough, green skills centre and net zero programme	4	CRF Start and Grow – pre-start up and micro business enterprise skills support in Fenland, Peterborough and Huntingdonshire	3	All Age Careers Advice – bid for National Careers Service contract for mentoring programme, Careers Hubs and market town hubs *Strategic discussions with DfE, CEC and key local partners to secure funding*	1	CRF Turning Point – funded internships and short courses for work re-entry and digital/management in Fenland and Peterborough	3
College of West Anglia Wisbech campus development *Funding bids submitted for LGF and LUF*	2	Energy Hub supply chain development *Research commissioned – awaiting findings and recommendations*	2	Direct AEB funding to priority skills needs, use AEB Innovation Fund to pilot new forms of training provision	3	Expand short courses through innovative course design, such as skills bootcamps	4
Ely and St Neots FE provision improvements *Gainshare allocation approved.*	3	Expand Growth Works in business management and leadership for small business leaders	0			ESF projects up to 2023 focused on young people, NEETs, ex-offenders, and furthest from labour market, and national DWP support	3

DRAFT - not for circulation

PID to be reviewed at CA Board on 27th July							
Apprenticeship Levy Pooling, apprenticeship delivery at level 3+ for young people	2	Continue delivery of Growth Works Skills Brokerage and Digital Talent Platform and engagement model	3			Add Work and Health Programme to Growth Works *DWP pilot in process to develop a Work and Health Strategy to inform this programme*	2
Expand employers engagement for T Levels	3	Rapid response skill gap mapping for recovery/Brexit *Wider sectoral mapping to be commissioned*	0				
Growth Works Talent Pledge	3						
Social value contracts *Not yet started*	0						

DRAFT - not for circulation

4 When we will get there

Drafting note: This section will present a timeline of activity and specific review points. This will be drafted once the full scope of current and planned activities have been mapped.

5 Monitoring our progress

Drafting note: this section will give further detail on specific governance/management/delivery functions responsible for producing and reviewing monitoring reports.

Approach to monitoring and evaluation

Rigorous monitoring and evaluation processes provide a powerful means to hold ourselves and partners to account, assessing implementation progress and communicating the impact of strategic working to a range of stakeholders.

Our approach to monitoring and evaluation will operate at two levels.

The first will be at the intervention level, whereby Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) specific to a project or activity will be reported on at regular intervals. Delivery partners can utilise this information to monitor progress and refine project design or delivery models as required to meet KPIs. When combined, the progress reporting of interventions contributing to strategic delivery will provide a useful tool for CPCA and partners to understand what is working well and could be intensified or replicated in other geographies, as well as what projects are underperforming and require corrective action. Intervention level reporting will result in a rich evidence base for CPCA and partners that gives insight into what works, where and for who, that can be utilised to inform the design of future interventions. The monitoring and evaluation approach for the Employment and Skills Strategy must therefore include a mechanism for sharing key lessons across the local skills system.

The second level of reporting will be at a portfolio level to assess the impact of strategic delivery. This will involve monitoring core success measures (see Table 4) to help communicate the story of change in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough system and the actors that operate within it. As well as helping to trace the longer-term impact of strategic activity, CPCA and delivery partners will be able to use reporting outputs to leverage further investment in the region to support the longer-term system change projects.

The progress measures to watch

The Employment and Skills strategy highlights the following indicators as the cross-cutting core measures that CPCA and partners will report on as part of implementation.

Table 5. Measures of Success

Group	Indicator	Pre-work learning and formal education	Employer access to talent	Life-wide and lifelong learning	Support into and between work
People	Economic activity (increasing)				✔
	Low or no qualifications (decreasing)	✔	✔	✔	
	In work universal credit (decreasing)				✔
Employers	Median wages (increasing)		✔	✔	
	GVA and productivity (increasing)		✔		
	Skilled jobs (increasing)		✔		
Providers	Participation rates (increasing)	✔		✔	
	Progression at 18 into FE, Vocational and HE (increasing)	✔			
	Skill levels (increasing)	✔	✔	✔	
Place Leaders	Employment levels (increasing)		✔		✔
	Economic inactivity (decreasing)				✔
	Travel to work and learn times (improving)	✔		✔	✔

DRAFT - not for circulation

DRAFT - not for circulation