

Employment and Skills Board 14 December 2021

Attendees:

Board Members

- Al Kingsley (Chairman) - Group Managing Director, NetSupport
- Pat Carrington - Executive Principal Assistant Director Skills and Employment, City College Peterborough, Cambridgeshire County Council Peterborough City Council
- Dan Edwards - General Manager of Marshall Centre, Marshalls
- Mark Robinson - Principal and CEO, Cambridge Regional College
- Sharon Keogh - Head of Community Action, Kingsgate Community Church, Peterborough
- Bob Ensich - Area Director, Morgan Sindall
- Lawrence Morris, Cambridge Ahead (Substitute)
- Ross Renton - Principal, ARU Peterborough
- Annette Knott - Department for Work & Pensions (DWP/ JCP) (Substitute)

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

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

Observer

- Sandy Cruickshank - Oxford to Cambridge Arc and East Anglia Team | Cities and Local Growth Unit, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy BEIS

Part 1 – Governance Items

46. Welcome, Apologies and Introductions

Apologies received from:

- Jane Paterson -Todd - Chief Executive - Cambridge Ahead
- Rose Shisler - Stakeholder Engagement Programme Lead - Anglian Water
- Tony Jones - Chief Executive - One Nucleus
- Julia Nix - District Manager - Department for Work & Pensions (DWP/ JCP)
- Claire London - Associate Director of Learning and Organisational Development Learning and Organisational Development, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust
- Vic Annells - CEO, Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce
- Joe Crossley - Chief Executive - Qube Learning Ltd.
- James Gazzard - Director of Continuing Education, University of Cambridge – Institute of Continuing Education
- Stuart Searle - Managing Director, First Mailing Co.
- Jane Thomas - Regional Lead, East of England , BT Group Plc
- Martin Lawrence – Commercial Director, Stainless Metalcraft

47. Minutes and Action log

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2021 were agreed for accuracy. The Action Log was noted.

Verbal update covered the following points:

Adult Education Budget (AEB):

- The Combined Authority Board approved the Adult Education Budget and procurement would be launched at the end of January.
- Second year of evaluation of the AEB

Community Renewal Fund (CRF):

- Two successful projects launching in January, funding would focus on Fenland and Peterborough
- Project one would provide paid internships for professionals seeking a change or returning from furlough.
- Project two would aim to aid business start-ups in Fenland, Peterborough, and Huntingdonshire.

Other updates:

- Work experiences launch planned for May and the Combined Authority was engaging with businesses to attain feedback, therefore seeking support from the Board.
- Skills Boot Camps were underway, and a new provider would be added in January

- Careers Hub was in operation and the Careers Annual Plan would be presented to the ESB during the next meeting.

48. Work Programme (Forward Agenda Plan)

The work programme was noted.

Part 2 – Delivery

49. Local Skills Report Refresh

Board Members received a report detailing the Local Skills Report Refresh that set out the local strengths and skills needs as well as how the Skills Advisory Panel (SAP) would propose its area to addresses its key priorities. The aim of the report would be to influence local partners and feed intelligence to central government, including the national-level Skills and Productivity Board (SPB).

The presentation/ report provided:

- An overview of the project.
- Background to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough SAP, namely the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Employment and Skills Board.
- A summary of the skills strengths and needs for the three 'sub-economies' which form the Combined Authority area.
- A comprehensive action plan that would be reviewed twice a year by both the Employment and Skills Board (SAP) and the Skills Committee, highlighting the first priorities.
- Information and assessment on the actions and progress made within the 2019 Skills Strategy, including actions which would be carried forward into the new action plan.

During discussion Board Members:

- Commented that the data indicators for the digital and tech sector were not reflective of the local data. Officers explained that the data included in the indicators must be for the whole of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, however they would be including an explanatory paragraph to highlight the unique characteristics and data applicable to different geographies.
- Sought clarification on whether any information regarding the current challenges regarding staff recruitment would be included within the report. Officers clarified that the vacancy data would cover this issue.
- Sought clarification on the meaning of the highlighted fields. Officers explained that those represent fields where data is still outstanding and would be updated upon receipts.

- Suggested that a new, innovative way should be identified locally to attract talent in order to address vacancy issues.
- Requested a deadline until feedback should be provided on the proposed plan.

The Board noted the update.

50. Cambridge Ahead and CPCA Survey Presentation 2021

Board Members received a [presentation](#) summarising the outcome of the Employer Apprenticeship Survey in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

The presentation provided:

- An overview of the project.
- A breakdown of the responses by the size of business and sectors.
- A breakdown of apprenticeships and apprenticeship levy.
- Background in what way businesses provide apprenticeships.
- An analysis of the recruitment and retention rates and training delivery of apprenticeships.

During discussion Board Members:

- Praised the report for its clarity and stated that it was a good starting point, but more data would be needed to give a wider picture.
- Questioned whether there was a reason for the limited engagement and if the data could be presented by regions. Officers confirmed that data was collected twice, however there was no further participation, therefore they are currently basing their data on the feedback that was received.
- Highlighted the ongoing challenge around the underspend of the Levy and the possible option to share and to pool levy as an option was not widely used by employers.
- Suggested that the national benchmarking data should be included next to the statistics to provide a base.
- Requested that a copy of the survey should be sent out to them so they can promote it in the wider business community.

A verbal update was provided about the performance data for the apprenticeship numbers; however, a more detailed report would be presented to the Board in the future.

Part 3 – Strategy

51. Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Employment and Skills Strategy - Draft

The Board received a report that gave an overview of CPCA Employment and Skills Strategy as of November 2021.

The report provided:

- An updated vision for the area.
- An explanation on what this vision means for each group interacting with the skills system.
- Four new themes the strategy would focus on: Pre-work learning and formal education, Employer access to talent, Life-wide and lifelong learning, Support into and between work
- Highlighted that a step-by-step system would be in place to address short term priorities and to lead to a longer-term change.

During discussion Board Members:

- Praised the report
- Sought clarification on how the actions against individual SWOT analysis for different regions cross tabulate and whether the action plan included these priorities. The officer confirmed that only a high-level action plan was included, and a detailed action plan would be provided alongside with the strategy.
- Questioned whether there were any plans included regarding the re-generation following COVID and taking count of people's changing priorities. Officers confirmed that there were no specific details, however the use of the AEB funding would cover some of the support.

Officers highlighted that the action plan that accompanied the Employment and Skills strategy would be a live document which would be reviewed on a six-monthly basis. She further suggested to set up a number of task and finish groups to support the operation. It was agreed that the discussions on the creation of the groups would be added to the agenda plan. **ACTION**

Part 4 – Date of Next Meeting and AOB

52. AOB

The chair thanked Bob Ensich and John T Hill for their contributions and highlighted the need and importance of a well-maintained memberships and suggested a review in February 2022. **ACTION**