

MCA - EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:

WEDNESDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2022 AT 10.00 AM

SOUTH YORKSHIRE MCA, 11 BROAD STREET WEST,
SHEFFIELD, S1 2BQ



PRESENT:

Dan Fell (Co-Chair)	South Yorkshire LEP
Councillor Lani-Mae Ball	Doncaster MBC
Councillor Robert Frost	Barnsley MBC
Kate Josephs	Sheffield City Council
Kevin Kerrigan	Sheffield Hallam University - LEP Member
Councillor Denise Lelliott	Rotherham MBC
Councillor Kevin Osborne (Reserve)	Barnsley MBC
Councillor Martin Smith	Sheffield City Council
Jim Dillon	South Yorkshire MCA
Angela Foulkes (Observer)	Chair of Skills Advisory Network

IN ATTENDANCE:

Sue Sykes	Assistant Director - Procurement, Contracts and Programme Controls	SYMCA Executive Team
Roger Wilde	Senior Development Manager (Education & Skills)	SYMCA Executive Team
Sarah Pugh	Minute Taker	

APOLOGIES:

Councillor Sir Steve Houghton CBE	Barnsley MBC
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36 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting. It was noted that Professor Chris Husbands' term had now ended, and Professor Kevin Kerrigan was welcomed to the Board.

Apologies for absence were noted as above.

37 Declarations of Interest by individual Members in relation to any item of business on the agenda

The following declarations of interest were made by members:

- Cllr Kevin Osborne – Employed by Reed in Partnership
- Professor Kevin Kerrigan – Employer, Sheffield Hallam University is a participant in Skills Bank work

Dan Fell – Employer Doncaster Chambers is involved in the development of the Skills Strategy

38 **Urgent items / Announcements**

None.

39 **Public Questions of Key Decisions**

None.

40 **Minutes from Meeting on 29th June**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 29th June 2022 be agreed as a true record.

41 **Minutes from Meeting on 20th July**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 20th July 2022 be agreed as a true record.

A question was asked on minute 34, and whether any meetings had taken place with providers not meeting 97% of their allocations. It was confirmed that these would be taking place in November.

42 **Matters Arising / Action Log**

RESOLVED: to note that all actions in the Action Log were now closed.

43 **Local Skills - Labour Market Information Report**

The Local Skills – Labour Market Information Report, a report that the Skills Area Network (SAN) is obliged to publish each year, was presented to the Board. The Report included findings that:

- The ageing population posed challenges for skills building in the general population, but also presented opportunities for young people
- Skills structures, employment rates and growth rates in South Yorkshire were in line with national figures
- Greater investment was needed from employers in the region into workplace skills
- Individuals in South Yorkshire were less likely to enter Higher Education than the national average
- Economic inactivity in South Yorkshire was lower than the national average
- South Yorkshire markets were more susceptible to external shocks, and didn't recover as quickly as other markets

- “Green” skills were in demand
- Since 2016 there has been a decline in employers offering apprenticeships, and a reduction in Adult Education Budget (AEB) funding

The Board asked what the MCA would do differently following this report. A response was given that the following should be addressed in the Skills Strategy:

- Defining what green skills and green jobs are
- Building greater digital literacy in the region
- Working on the region’s resilience to external shocks
- Building the offer of the Apprenticeship Hub
- Utilising the second round of the Strategic Development Fund
- Align the MCA’s offers, rather than delivering many disparate activities
- Working with businesses to ensure a better take-up of skills training

ACTION: Councillor Ball offered to share work from Doncaster MBC on skills resilience and talent innovation with the Board.

A discussion was had around targeting businesses who do not traditionally engage with the MCA’s offer, and how a market could be created for maintenance of green infrastructure, or new media industries, for example.

An update was also given on the SAN, which was established in 2020 to provide advice to bodies on skills provision, using funding from the Department for Education.

Angela Foulkes proposed combining the work of the SAN and the Skills Accelerator Board, and to report their work to the MCA Education, Skills and Employability Board. The Board welcomed this approach, with the intention that this combined group would deliver priority areas of research, work with employers to identify gaps in skills provision, and produce recommendations.

ACTION: Angela Foulkes to share a brief with the Board on combining these two groups.

The Board requested more frequent updates on the work of the SAN going forward.

ACTION: A standing agenda item for SAN updates to be added to future agendas.

ACTION: Angela Foulkes to share the Green Skills and Jobs Report with the Board.

RESOLVED: To note the findings and recommendations of the Labour Market Information Report.

ACTION: Local Skills Labour Market Information report to be published on the MCA Website.

(Angela Foulkes left the meeting.)

Programme Performance

An update on the performance of programmes was presented to the Board, including:

- AEB
- Working Win, which the MCA was waiting for confirmation of another three years' funding for
- Multiply
- Careers Fund Network
- The Skills Bank, which had been successful and would be starting again in July 2023
- Gainshare programmes including the Skills Hub which had been delayed but to a lesser extent than was expected

It was noted that the programmes ran on different financial cycles. Therefore, an updated cycle of reporting was provided in the report, including that the December Board meeting would include a more detailed AEB Programme Update.

It was noted that there was an underperformance in procured provision, but that for this activity payment would only be made upon delivery.

In relation to this, an update was given on Adult Education Budget Policy. It was noted that the MCA had not been able to predict what local need would be following the pandemic, so the delivery of AEB activity in this year had not always been appropriate to need. Much of the provision offered has been too prescriptive and therefore not deliverable. Therefore, underspend in the Adult Education Budget was now intended to be used for other purposes, such as implementing relevant aspects of the Mayor's manifesto, the green agenda or ongoing issues with recruiting bus drivers in the region.

The Board asked why an underspend was predicted and requested more detail on local performance going forward.

ACTION: Assistant Director Procurement, Contracts & Programme Controls to provide more detail on local performance in the updated reporting cycle.

RESOLVED: To note the Programme Performance update.

(Cllr Ball and Cllr Lelliott left the meeting.)

Skills Strategy Update

An update on the development of a Skills Strategy was presented to the Board.

It was noted that the Board had recommended a Skills Strategy in January 2022 to better address needs in the region, to align and enhance ongoing work and confirm what the MCA's asks of Government would be in future.

A steering group was overseeing developing a five-to-ten-year strategy, with

evidence being gathered through a series of workshops with providers.

ACTION: Senior Development Manager to extend invitations to workshops to Board members.

It was noted that more detail would be brought to the Board at its December or February meeting.

The Board welcomed the progress of the Skills Strategy and its importance in MCA engagement with Government. Members of the Board cautioned against aligning any strategy with the work already delivered by the MCA, and instead asked that it work with stakeholders to set new ambitions.

RESOLVED: To note the progress of the development of the strategy.

46 **Shared Prosperity Fund – Multiply Programme**

A report on the Multiply programme, the first tranche of the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) in the region, was presented to the Board for approval.

£7.25m had been allocated over 3 years to provide bespoke adult numeracy skills for those without a Level 2 qualification.

Approximately £2.3m would be allocated across South Yorkshire in the next year, inclusive of a 10% management fee to cover additional overarching resource and support for all users in the region.

Procurement for activity was taking place, and an investment plan was being produced for the new financial year. It was hoped that in future years the procurement process for activity could be streamlined.

It was noted that, although there was risk of overlaps, this funding was not intended to replace the AEB.

A question was asked how the MCA would ensure that the whole allocation would be spent within the three-year period. A response was given that this is a challenge for recipients nationally, but that the requirement had been put in place that any allocation would only be made to providers who were already mobilised. It was also possible that more hidden barriers to participation could be addressed with funding, such as childcare, IT resources and travel for users.

The Board agreed that marketing Multiply opportunities fully would be key to spending the full allocation.

RESOLVED: To approve the procurement of activities based on the key themes for the Investment Plan.

47 **Skills Bootcamps**

A report on Skills Bootcamps was presented to the Board for approval.

It noted that although the MCA had been successful in securing funding for

Wave 3 of Skills Bootcamps, a training provider had dropped out, which had caused significant problems for delivery. It therefore recommended that Wave 3 be deferred, and a bid submitted for Wave 4.

It was noted that the timescale for delivery of Skills Bootcamps was tight, but that work was ongoing to target the correct employers who would benefit from the scheme.

RESOLVED: To support the deferral of progress with Wave 3 - Skills Bootcamps and approve delegated authority to apply for Wave 4 - Skills Bootcamps.

48 **Adult Education Budget Policy Update**

It was noted that a verbal update on AEB Policy was given earlier in the meeting, at item 9.

RESOLVED: To note the Adult Education Budget Policy Update.

ACTION: Assistant Director Procurement, Contracts & Programme Controls to circulate agreed decisions on changes to the AEB outside of Board meetings.

Although not in attendance at this meeting, the Board welcomed the new Assistant Director of Employment & Skills, who would be involved in this work.

49 **Any Other Business**

None.

In accordance with Combined Authority's Constitution/Terms of Reference for the Board, Board decisions need to be ratified by the Head of Paid Services (or their nominee) in consultation with the Chair of the Board. Accordingly, the undersigned has consulted with the Chair and hereby ratifies the decisions set out in the above minutes.

Signed

Name

Position

Date