

SCR - EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:

FRIDAY, 30 OCTOBER 2020 AT 10.00 AM

VIRTUAL MEETING



Present:

Councillor Sir Steve Houghton CBE (Co-Chair)	Barnsley MBC
Councillor Nuala Fennelly	Doncaster MBC
Professor Chris Husbands	
Councillor Robert Frost (Reserve)	Barnsley MBC
Councillor Julie Dore (Reserve)	Sheffield City Council

In Attendance:

Jacque Chambers	Assistant Director - Skills & Employment	MCA Executive Team
Rob Harvey	Senior Programme Manager	MCA Executive Team
Sue Sykes	Assistant Director - Programme and Performance Unit	MCA Executive Team
Dr Ruth Adams	Deputy Chief Executive	MCA Executive Team
Gillian Richards (Minute Taker)		

Apologies:

Nigel Brewster	Private Sector
Councillor Denise Lelliott	Rotherham MBC
Dr Dave Smith	MCA Executive Team

1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were noted as above.

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

None.

3 Urgent items / Announcements

None.

4 **Public Questions of Key Decisions**

None.

5 **Minutes from Last Meeting**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 1st September 2020 be agreed as a true record.

6 **Matters Arising**

None.

7 **Terms of Reference & Meeting Arrangements**

A report was considered which summarised the governance arrangements for the Education, Skills and Employability Board approved by the Mayoral Combined Authority on 21st September 2020 and the Local Enterprise Partnership on 10th September 2020. The paper also confirmed the schedule of meetings.

The report provided Terms of Reference for the Board, summarised key changes and clarified arrangements.

It was noted that the principle role of the Education, Skills and Employability Board was to:

- Shape future policy development and priorities on issues related to education, skill development and employability for matter of city regional significance;
- Develop new education, skills and employment programmes, where these are best done at a city region geography;
- Monitor programme delivery and performance; and
- Act as the Programme Board for the Adult Education Budget delivery.

It had been agreed that the Skills Advisory Network would be a formal advisory board to the Education, Skills and Employability Board.

The Board would continue to meet on an 8-week cycle aligned to the MCA meeting schedule. Additional meetings could be agreed with co-Chairs.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

- i. Note the approved governance arrangements, with the clarification of the relationship between the city region and local arrangements.
- ii. Note the schedule of Education, Skills and Employability Board meetings.

Role of the Education, Skills and Employability Board

A report was considered which built on a previous discussion to help frame the focus on the Education, Skills and Employability Board and to consider an initial programme of work.

Members discussed the potential focus for the work of the Board including:

- Making sense of the system locally
- What could be done directly
- What could be influenced
- What might the Board want to see further control over in the future.

The Board felt it important to better understand why the current education, funding and skills system continued to fail many of the regions residents and that it was important to define what the problems were as precisely as possible.

The Board needed to be clear about the outcomes they were trying to achieve and be able to show that their decisions were making a difference.

It was also important not to lose sight of what had worked in the past and could be developed further.

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic would also have to be considered and horizon scanning would be an important part of agenda planning.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

- i. Note the key points set out in section 2.1 and agree that they provided an appropriate big picture summary.
- ii. Note the framework of activity set out within the report and agree that it reflected the direction of the Board appropriately, with the addition of further emphasis on horizon scanning.

Renewal Action Plan (RAP): Update on the People Theme

A report was considered which sought Members' direction on the scope of activity which could support the People theme of the Renewal Action Plan and the context in which these schemes should be considered.

The Board acknowledged the importance of working with the national offer as described in section 2.2 of the report. There should be a dialogue with government as to what would be best for South Yorkshire and what the region needed.

Members noted the programmes currently being supported, which were detailed at Appendix 1.

With regard to the extension to Working Win, which had previously been specifically for people with health conditions, the Board felt that the results of the programme needed to be evaluated before it was offered to prison leavers

or other cohorts. It was suggested that a model be worked up with and without other cohorts and then a choice could be made.

The Board discussed new opportunities to make a difference in the short term with the use of Gainshare funding. These included an adult Kickstart South Yorkshire 25+ and an Extended Apprenticeship Training Agency/Brokerage which had been proposed as highest priority interventions. Further information was at Appendix 2.

Members also considered new opportunities to make a difference which required funding before they could be delivered.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

- i) Confirm that the actions at paragraph 2.2 reflected the role that Members would like the MCA to engage with in relation to national programmes.
- ii) Note the activity the Board had already supported and the update on ESF at paragraph 2 and Appendix 1.
- iii) Note the proposal for Gainshare funding at paragraph 2.4 and Appendix 2.
- iv) Agree to prioritise the programme of activity should funding become available at paragraph 2.5 and appendix 3.

At this point Prof. C Husbands left the meeting and the meeting became inquorate.

10 Skills Bank - Future Options

A report was submitted that set out the current status of the regional Skills Bank programme, commissioned by the ESFA on behalf of the LEP, and presented for consideration some future options regarding the programme operation.

Members were informed that the current Skills Bank Operator procurement, led by the EFSA, concluded at the end of the financial year and therefore a next phase of the Skills Bank needed operationalising. The Board discussed the three options contained within the report.

Members also discussed longer term options for the Skills Bank and options for future financing. Two options were suggested:

1. Continue the Skills Bank utilising only the retained Innovation Fund.
2. Continue the Skills Bank utilising some devolved AEB budget and the Innovation Fund.

Members noted that, subject to agreement of the Skills Bank operating model, there were two delivery options to consider. These were detailed within the report.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

- i) Agree that the short-term sustainability options are progressed to maintain the Skills Bank service, including the back-stop suggestion of extending the SLA agreement to ensure continuity.
- ii) Agree that the longer term option for the Skills Bank, utilising the Innovation Fund surplus only and not AEB be developed and presented to a future Board meeting.

11 **Adult Education Budget Update**

A report was considered which provided an update on recent activity undertaken to prepare for the devolution of the Adult Education Budget.

Specific updates included:

- Implementation Funding.
- Communication Strategy.
- Market Engagement/Soft Market Testing.
- Procurement.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

12 **Programme Approvals**

A report was submitted to seek approval of two schemes with a total value of £1.62m Getting Building Fund and approval for one change request and sought delegated authority to the Head of paid Service in consultation with the S73 and Monitoring Officer to enter into legal agreements for the schemes.

The Board noted that the schemes were:

- Doncaster College Digital Infrastructure proposal.
- Doncaster College Construction Space proposal.
- A project change request from Barnsley College Digital Innovation Hub Phase 2.

The Board supported the recommendations but could not approve them as the meeting was inquorate. It was noted that approval would be sought, in writing, outside the meeting.

13 **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