



3 **Urgent items / Announcements**

None.

4 **Public Questions of Key Decisions**

None.

5 **Minutes from Last Meeting**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2021 be agreed as a true record.

6 **Matters Arising**

None.

At this point Angela Foulkes, Kevin Straughan and Kate Josephs left the meeting.

7 **AEB Commissioning**

A report was submitted which provided an update on commissioning Adult Education Budget provision across South Yorkshire for delivery commencing 1<sup>st</sup> August 2021. It was noted that in commissioning provision the MCA was committed to adhering to two core principles embedded in the devolution deal; the first was to support a set of legal entitlements and the second that the commissioning approach did not destabilise the South Yorkshire based Further Education colleges.

The report was exempt under Section 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

- i) Note, that while significant progress had been made, the complexity of allocating grant funding while incorporating policy changes and influencing the sector meant that final proposals for grant values had not yet been reached.
- ii) Note that the skills team had continued to work with finance and PPU colleagues in preparation of papers for the March meetings of the Education, Skills and Employability Board and the Combined Authority Board. This includes clearance of grant awards over £2m and a request for delegation to MCA officers where decisions may otherwise be delayed due to the impact of local elections.
- iii) Confirm that they are content to allocate “core” grant allocations in line with previous ESFA 2018/19 allocations to maintain FE stability in the transition to devolved funding.
- iv) Confirm that they are content to allocate “innovation/growth” funding based on additional activity of up to 15% of “core AEB” allocations to be

delivered in support of delivering increased levels of the activities set out in paragraphs 2.2.8 and 2.2.9 of the report.

- v) Confirm that any additional growth/innovation funding would not be consolidated into future college baselines.
- vi) Note progress on the current AEB procurement process.

At this point Angela Foulkes, Kevin Straughan and Kate Josephs re-joined the meeting.

## 8 Skills Bank Next Steps

A report was considered which sought approval for an extension and variation of an existing agreement with Calderdale College for an interim arrangement for the continuation of delivery of the Skills Bank Programme until the new programme is fully developed and operational. The report also sought approval for delegated authority to be granted to the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the Section 73 Officer and the Monitoring Officer to enter into legal agreements for the scheme.

The Board was informed that the Skills Bank was currently delivered on behalf of the MCA by Calderdale College who were contracted directly with ESFA with a separate contract in place for the MCA element of the programme. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was in operation between the MCA and Calderdale College which covered other aspects of the programme including skills brokerage and marketing.

As an interim arrangement it was proposed that the MCA issue an extension to the MOU to allow Calderdale College to continue delivery of the Skills Bank until the development, governance and procurement of the new programme was complete.

The proposed interim arrangement, aligned to the original principles and operating model agreed by the LEP, via an extension to the current MOU would ensure there was no gap in support for businesses.

The interim model would require a maximum investment of £785,000 leaving a further £1,515,000 to support the future Skills Bank programme.

**RESOLVED – That the Board:**

- i) Approve progression of an extension and variation to the existing agreement with Calderdale College for the continuation of the Skills Bank.
- ii) Agree that delegated authority be given to the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the Section 73 Officer and the Monitoring Officer to enter into legal agreements for the schemes covered above.

## Skills Bank - Future Options

A report was considered which sought Members' direction on proposals for incorporating social value and alignment to 'good' employer behaviour in the outcomes of the future regional Skills Bank programme. The report also sought agreement to the development of a specification for the future programme taking into account of the agreed options.

The report gave details of the current model which it was felt would not go far enough in aligning with the SEP/RAP to strengthen the focus on economic outcomes and also build a robust link to improving social value as required by the Board at the last meeting.

It was proposed that a broader range of programme outputs would allow the measurement and recognition of the full impact of the programme and ensure the programme supported the achievement of SEP/RAP outcomes. The introduction of a themed approach would broaden the focus on individual project applications and help support the greener and fairer aims of the RAP across the following areas:

- Economic
  - Business Benefits
  - Regional Benefits
  - Individual Benefits
- Social Value

This approach expanded the current model with a range of potential programme outcomes being linked to each of the areas above. The report detailed the expected economic and social value benefits. A table at Appendix A set out some examples of programme outputs with an indication of the impacts likely from each.

The report also contained details of proposals for the development of an outcome strategy for the programme to be used as a specification for the next phase of the programme.

The operating model was outlined at the meeting of the Board in January and was set out again at Appendix B. Members had asked to see the development of programme outcomes before considering the operating model. This would be brought to the June meeting of the Board with a specification which would include the operating model.

The report also included the next steps and timeline for procurement.

Cllr Mordue expressed concerns around previous communication and marketing of the programme. It was agreed that this needed additional thinking before the start of the next programme but should not be outsourced to the Skills Bank operator.

It was agreed that officers and members of the Board should look again at the Operating Model to ensure that it was an optimal model whilst acknowledging that the timescale was tight.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

- i) Agree to a specification being developed which included agreed economic and social value outcomes.
- ii) Agree to convene a group of interested Board members and officers to look further at the Operating Model.

## 10 **Renewal Action Plan (RAP): Update**

A report was submitted which set out how the Authority intended to take forward the proposal for a 'South Yorkshire Jobs Fund' using Gainshare Funding.

The Board was reminded that the Authority had committed £8.4m to deliver activities under the People Strand of the Renewal Action Plan. This included funding for a Back to Work Programme for residents aged 25+. At the informal Board meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> February members had given a steer on the development of the programme and asked for more work to be done in time for the March meeting. The report set out proposals for some pathfinder work based on further work since the February meeting of the Board.

The Board was informed that the purpose of the programme was to give participants who had been out of work for 6 months the confidence, skills and sector-based work experience necessary to help them secure sustainable employment. The proposal filled a gap in DWP provision between offers for claimants at 13 weeks and Restart which would support those who had been unemployed for 12 months+.

The report gave details of the offer, working with employers the funding model, wider support and collaboration, additional staffing resources, JCP resources and governance arrangements.

A Steering Group would be set up, with clear Terms of Reference, setting out the roles, responsibilities and accountability arrangements. Expected membership of the Steering Group would be:

- The Authority
- Local Authorities
- DWP Local Team
- Employer Representation
- Training Provider Representative.

The Board agreed to keep the working title of the programme as South Yorkshire Jobs Fund.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

- i) Agree with the proposed model for the programme.
- ii) Agree with the approach to an initial phase of the programme.

- iii) Agree with the core funding model for the programme.
- iv) Agree that the Flexible Support Funding offer from DWP should be accepted and that the Authority should progress the detail and application with local authorities.
- v) Note the buy in and support offered from DWP for the programme.
- vi) Agree to sign off the Terms of Reference for the South Yorkshire Jobs Fund Steering Group.
- vii) Agree that the working title 'South Yorkshire Jobs Fund' should be used for the programme.

## 11 **Support for Union Learning Fund Y&H**

Cllr Sir Steve Houghton declared an interest in this item.

A report was considered which sought approval for an offer of funding to TUC Yorkshire and Humber to support a project officer post to lead on the continuation of Union Learning Funded activity once national funding came to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

The Board was informed that the Union Learning Fund (ULF) was set up in 1998 to support trade unions to widen access to learning and training in workplaces. The fund supported workplace projects across England and was coordinated by the TUC.

Successive evaluations of the ULF had shown it to be effective in reaching people in workplaces who were hardest to engage in learning and also played an important part in helping people to progress into apprenticeships and higher level learning.

In late 2020 the government announced that funding for the ULF would cease from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, leading to a significant loss of capacity and expertise across South Yorkshire.

The report recommended that funding was provided by the Authority to the TUC to extend the ULF model and continue activity on a geographical basis and gave details of the proposal and justification for the recommendation.

It was proposed that a project officer and support fund would cost an estimated £85,000 annually with an initial pilot programme proposed to run initially over 24 months; the TUC would offer to provide payroll and line management services as the employer.

**RESOLVED** – That the Board approve the use of a maximum of £170k Gainshare funding for a TUC project officer support post for two years from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 when the Union Learning Fund came to an end.

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### **Skills Advisory Network Workplan**

A report was submitted which updated the Board on progress with establishing the Skills Advisory Network (SAN) and progress against the 202-21 work plan. The report also sought approval for additional members of the SAN from the Careers and Enterprise Hub and HEI.

The report gave details of the work undertaken in regard to the Local Skills Report, the Intelligence Hub and a deep dive into the manufacturing sector.

The Board noted that the proposals in the future work programme were the initial outcomes of discussions at the SAN Board and were intended to identify future priority areas for consideration for the Education, Skills and Employability Board in relation to delivery of the RAP and SEP priorities.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

- i) Approves additional memberships of the SAN with representation sought from:
  - a. Careers and Enterprise Hub
  - b. HEI with sufficient skills knowledge and understanding at regional level.
- ii) Notes the progress on the current work plan, including the Local Skills report.
- iii) Endorse the proposed future work plan and supports the SAN commencing work in earnest.

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### **Any Other Business**

Cllr Lelliott suggested the need for a SCR-wide Task Force to help mitigate the effects of the end of the furlough scheme, the expected rise in redundancies as restrictions were lifted and the effects of Brexit, some of which had been masked by the effects of Covid-19.

It should be across the whole of the SCR, linking across all the Thematic Boards, involve the four local authorities and DWP and offer comprehensive support to employers, businesses and employees.

Cllr Sir S Houghton agreed that a combined approach would be essential and would take the matter to the next SY Leaders meeting.

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 .....