

## Education Skills and Employability Board

08 March 2022

### Education and Skills Strategy development – next steps

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<b>Is the paper exempt from the press and public?</b>	No
<b>Reason why exempt:</b>	Not applicable
<b>Purpose of this report:</b>	Discussion
<b>Is this a Key Decision?</b>	No
<b>Has it been included on the Forward Plan?</b>	Not a Key Decision

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### Executive Summary

At the Education, Skills and Employability Board meeting on 31st January, members approved a number of proposals for the key themes for the South Yorkshire Skills Strategy. The purpose of this paper is to provide members with a short update on proposed next steps for each of the key areas and for the overall timetable.

### What does this mean for businesses, people and places in South Yorkshire?

Residents and businesses across South Yorkshire face short and longer-term skills and employability challenges that affect their lives and their ability to realise their potential. The challenges are the result of long-term trends that affect both existing skills base and the flow of new skills into the workforce. Challenges also come from the impact of the pandemic in terms of a changing employment landscape, especially in the lower paid sectors that are prevalent in South Yorkshire, and notably from the impact on young people in particular and their readiness for work. The Skills and Employability Strategy will seek to put in place actions with the potential to transform the skills landscape and resolve for the long-term barriers to progress.

Actions will better prepare residents for work in general terms and for employment in areas that are priority for growth in South Yorkshire with the aim of supporting people to progress in their careers towards better paid employment but also to progress into work that is good for inclusion, wellbeing and communities, including work that supports environmental improvement.

## **Recommendations**

Board members are invited to

- note proposed next steps as set out in Annex 1 to this document; and
- approve recommended actions for the strategy overall as at para 2.3.

## **Consideration by any other Board, Committee, Assurance or Advisory Panel**

None

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### **1. Background**

#### **2.**

- 1.1 The Education, Skills and Employability Board has commissioned development of a skills strategy for South Yorkshire. At the January meeting of the Board, recommendations for key themes for the strategy were considered and accepted.
- 1.2 Key themes included a number of transformational measures with the potential to deliver the scale of change needed in South Yorkshire to overcome long-term barriers to growth and increased productivity. These included:
  - Targeting School Readiness so that young children start school with the skills experiences and behaviours they need for success;
  - Providing educational enrichment to raise young people's aspiration and achievement
  - Growing apprenticeships across South Yorkshire through a leadership role focused on securing maximum benefit from the levy in South Yorkshire, ensuring that feeder programmes such as T levels and Traineeships link young people with high quality apprenticeship opportunities, strengthening our marketing of apprenticeships with clear messages about progression; putting in place an apprenticeship hub and ensuring the public sector plays its role.
  - Putting in place a rounded strategy to help adults improve their basic English, maths and digital skills.
- 1.3 Other priorities agreed in addition included:
  - Improving responsiveness to employer skills demands building on the Skills Accelerator Trailblazer findings;
  - Making changes to the way we commission adult skills activity funded through the Adult Education Budget;
  - Aligning procurement of future skills activity more closely to strategic priorities including development of a clear skills offer focused on our Net Zero ambitions
  - Reviewing adult education and employability priorities and carrying out a review to strengthen our Community Learning offer to residents

- Developing a package of support for young people not in education, employment or training.

1.4 Initial feedback from discussions shared at local authority official levels suggests that while this is an ambitious programme of activity, it feels like a sensible set of suggestions where the MCA can add value to existing education and skills agendas.

## **2. Key Issues**

2.1 SYMCA now needs to move to the next phase of developing the strategy. There are two elements to this. The first is a drawing together of the overall narrative alongside a set of measures of success which must support our SEP aims and ambitions. This needs to be set against a costed resource plan and timeline for delivery.

2.2 The second part of the work is to develop each individual strand proposed and to start to unpick the detail of what can be done, who should be involved and how it can be delivered.

2.3 The table at Annex 1 provides information against each strand of activity showing where activity is already underway and can be built upon and where activity is new. The table provides a very early RAG rating for each activity based on a very basic assessment of our levers for delivery. It also proposes a way forward for each strand of activity so that we can start to develop a sense of what we might achieve, what funding might be needed and when impact might be felt. We will want each strand to be able to articulate a level of detail in order to feed into the overall strategic narrative.

2.4 In terms of drawing that all together, we will be commissioning some professional support to help us develop the narrative and to test and consult on the proposals in development. With ESE Board support we will begin the process of identifying someone to do that work before the Mayoral election.

2.5 ESE Board members are invited to note the content of Annex 1 including the proposed next steps.

## **3. Options Considered and Recommended Proposal**

### **3.1 Option 1**

This is an update paper on proposals already agreed. Option 1 is therefore to progress with next steps as proposed.

### **3.2 Option 1 Risks and Mitigations:**

Option 1 is an ambitious agenda and will require additional resources to implement fully. Some of those resources are already in place, but in other cases we will need to move through the next steps in order to develop costed proposals. We will need to revisit affordability and the overall timeline at the point when that costed plan is available.

### 3.3 **Option 2**

The ESE Board will want to keep the list of measures under review in the light of resources available. Members may want to reduce the overall list of commitments or make changes.

### 3.4 **Option 2 Risks and Mitigations:**

Making changes to the list of measures would reduce the overall impact of the strategy. While some prioritisation may be necessary once we have costed proposals, any decision to remove items from the list at this point would be premature and may leave out an impactful measure unnecessarily.

### 3.5 **Recommended Option**

Option 1

## 4. **Consultation on Proposal**

4.1 We will put consultation arrangements in place once we have taken on board some professional support and have a timetable in place.

4.2 Click or tap here to enter text.

## 5. **Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

5.1 The SYMCA Executive team will move to bring in some professional support so that work can progress during purdah and with a view to providing the Board with an update when it next meets. We will need to build into the timeline a briefing for the new Mayor according to their priorities and early meeting schedule. The length of time before publication will depend on how quickly we can progress on each of these strands of activity to articulate a set of key milestones and measures that explain how we are going to deliver change.

## 6. **Financial and Procurement Implications and Advice**

6.1 N/A

## 7. **Legal Implications and Advice**

7.1 N/A

## 8. **Human Resources Implications and Advice**

8.1 N/A

## 9. **Equality and Diversity Implications and Advice**

9.1 N/A

**10. Climate Change Implications and Advice**

10.1 N/A

**11. Information and Communication Technology Implications and Advice**

11.1 N/A

**12. Communications and Marketing Implications and Advice**

12.1 N/A

**List of Appendices Included**

A Skills Strategy Update Annex A

**Background Papers**

Strategic Skills Priorities V8 – ESEB 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022