

SCR - SKILLS & EMPLOYMENT BOARD

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON:

TUESDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 11.00 AM

11 BROAD STREET WEST, SHEFFIELD, S1 2BQ



Present:

Nigel Brewster (Co-Chair)	Private Sector
Councillor Denise Lelliott	Rotherham MBC
Councillor Tim Cheetham	Barnsley MBC
Dr Dave Smith	SCR Executive Team
Councillor Mazher Iqbal (Reserve)	Sheffield City Council

In Attendance:

Jacque Chambers	Assistant Director - Skills & Employment	SCR Executive Team
Claire James	Senior Governance & Compliance Manager	SCR Executive Team
Felix Kumi-Ampofo	Assistant Director Policy and Assurance	SCR Executive Team
Sue Sykes	Assistant Director - Programme and Performance Unit	SCR Executive Team
Rob Harvey	Senior Programme Manager	SCR Executive Team
Councillor Chris Furness		Derbyshire Dales DC

Apologies:

Councillor Bill Mordue	Doncaster MBC
Councillor Tricia Gilby	Chesterfield MBC

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 **Matters Arising**

None.

6 **Minutes of the meeting**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Board held on 29 June 2020 be agreed as a true record.

7 **SCR Renewal Action Plan Implementation**

A report was considered which presented the SCR Renewal Action Plan (RAP) Implementation Plan and set out the actions being undertaken to deliver the People intervention in the Plan.

The Board noted that the RAP focused on three main areas of action:

- People – to invest to ensure local people had the opportunity to develop their skills, and to find, stay and progress in work
- Employers – to invest to ensure employers can survive, adapt and thrive
- Places – to invest to create jobs and thriving places, in a way that would reduce inequality and enhanced the environment.

The Board discussed the intended interventions in each of the areas of focus.

People – The SCR Jobs Programme, South Yorkshire Works, which was intended to help 35,000 people re-engage with the labour market, creating benefits such as 3,000 apprenticeships.

Employers – Backing employers to adapt, survive and support a jobs-led recovery and backing employers to accelerate growth. This was intended to support over 25,000 businesses in the areas of Covid-19 adapted working environments, reduction of carbon emissions, to create 15,000 jobs through supply chain localising and invoice and cashflow support.

Places – Strengthened communities and urban centres underpinned by maintained cycling and walking routes, uplift in urban footfall and spend, created/supported across 6,0000 new jobs across infrastructure programmes.

Members noted that national programmes were complicated due to the number of initiatives, timescales and current lack of detail. The MCA was actively engaging with government both nationally and locally with a focus on influencing and co-design interventions where possible.

Locally, a review by the Local Authority Officers Group for Skills and Employment was underway looking at what opportunities there may be to build upon or invest in several areas including support for people facing barriers and employment creation incentives.

Members were informed that there was currently an opportunity for areas to bid for additional ESF funds to be drawn from a National Reserve Fund.

MCA Executive Officers, working with local authorities, were seeking to bid for allocations from the National Reserve that would align to the RAP objectives, for example job creation and unemployed skills and existing workforce digital skills.

Given the speed that the Renewal Plan was evolving the Board agreed to meet more frequently in the short-term, whilst also adhering to the MCA's governance arrangements. C James was asked to arrange this.

Officers were requested to provide a 1-page update on the national programmes being developed, how these related to the RAP and what gaps there may be.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

1. Note the update on the SCR Renewal Action Plan, including the update on work to better understand the national and local programmes in order to shape and develop the actions being taken to implement the plan.
2. Note the priorities for the future ESF commissioning activity which had been influenced to deliver priorities outlined in the Renewal Action Plan.

8 **Adult Education Budget**

The Board considered a paper which provided a progress update to enable effective commissioning of Adult Education Budget (AEB) provision to Sheffield City Region (SCR) residents from 1st August 2021.

The paper presented additional detail relating to:

- Commissioning Approach including alignment to the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and Recovery Action Plan (RAP)
- Approach to Procurement
- Skills Plan and Soft Market Testing
- Implementation Funding

The Board discussed these in detail noting the areas for the basis of the MCA Commissioning Strategy were:

- Progression Pathways
- Skills Acquisition
- World Class Technical Education

The Board noted that the MCA intended to run a procurement round in autumn 2020 for provision to commence in August 2021; the paper contained a set of procurement principles.

With regard to the Skills Plan it was noted that this was a government

requirement. A draft had been submitted to the DfE and the intention had been to publish and consult in late summer in advance of the autumn procurement round. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact that had on the publication of the SEP and RAP that had now been delayed. The Board was asked to endorse an approach to enable key stakeholders the opportunity to engage on the AEB to meet the requirement set out in the devolution deal.

The Board noted that the proposed approach was, as part of the Soft Market Testing, approximately 8-10 questions specifically related to the AEB would be developed for response by interested parties. The questions would be live for 2/3 weeks and the responses would then inform the approach to commissioning both grant and procured provision.

It was acknowledged that the commissioning and procurement timelines were challenging and it was agreed to arrange an extra meeting of the Board in 2-3 weeks' time to enable them to be involved in the process.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

1. Agree the Commissioning approach, including the proposal that the MCA focus on the three areas detailed in section 2.2 of the report.
2. Approve the Commissioning Approach, detailed in section 2.3 of the report, as the basis for the forward work programme.
3. Recommend the Procurement Principles, set out in section 2.4 of the report, for onward approval by the MCA.
4. Agree the approach to Soft Market Testing, set out in section 2.5 of the report and agree to approve the questions for this either by an additional meeting of the Board or by written procedures as the timetable required these to be agreed prior to the next scheduled Board meeting.
5. Note the position regard Implementation Funding, detailed in section 2.6 of the report, and the risks this presented as detailed in the risk management section 4.3 of the report.
6. Note that the Communications Strategy being developed would be agreed either by an additional meeting of the Board or by written procedures as the timetable required these to be agreed prior to the next scheduled Board meeting.

9

National Retraining Scheme / National Skills Fund

A paper was presented which provided early visibility of an opportunity to position Sheffield City Region to participate in the Department of Education's National Retraining Scheme.

The Board was reminded that the National Retraining Scheme was a national Government programme to help adults retrain into better jobs.

Members were informed that under the National Retraining Scheme DfE had

funded 6 new pilots which were being branded as bootcamps and were expected to be employer led and start with vacancies employers would like to fill. The bootcamps would then support local people acquire the skills to move into these vacancies.

DfE would initially fund six areas over the period September 2020 to end of March 2021 to test the model by delivering 12-week flexible courses to train adults in a range of technical skills.

DfE were planning a second wave of initiatives from April 2021 and had asked SCR to consider whether there were any particular skills shortages within Sheffield City Region that may be considered for the next wave.

Members noted that there was no guarantee that work invested in engaging with DfE would result in funding for the area to develop the technical bootcamps. However, there was strong alignment between the proposed pilots and the Recovery Action Plan and the Strategic Economic Plan.

RESOLVED – That the Board:

1. Note the report.
2. Confirm that officers should to continue with DfE on this work.

10 **Getting Building Fund (GBF) Capital Programme Approval**

A paper was considered which sought approval in principle for one scheme with a total value of £1.45m Getting Building Fund and also 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 subject to statutory due diligence and satisfactory grant conditions being received and accepted by the statutory officers.

Members were reminded that in June 2020 the MCA was awarded £33.6m GBF to invest in 'shovel-ready' projects that would provide stimulus to local economies. The funds need to be defrayed by 31st March 2022 which left an 18-month delivery window.

The paper sought approval for a £1.45m grant for the Barnsley College Digital Innovation Hub Phase 2. The Board was informed that the project would build on the partnership between BMBC, the College and numerous employers to create a Digital Campus in Barnsley the re-purposing of the ground floor of the Digital innovation Hub would add to the current refurbishment of the building funded by the MCA and DfE to provide a world class digital learning experience.

The GBF grant would be used to fund construction of a side extension to maximise the footprint of the building and the provision of an additional entrance opposite to the DMC2 owned by BMBC to further integrate the College within the Barnsley Digital Campus.

Members were informed that the project would not provide any additional

student/learner places but would enhance the learning experience of students. Details of what the project would provide were detailed within the report.

As the meeting was inquorate the Board could not approve the recommendations but the Board did support the recommendations, whilst noting that Cllr Cheetham had an inherent interest in the project.

11 **Performance Dashboard**

S Sykes presented a report and accompanying performance dashboards to provide the Board with up to date performance information on all skills and employment programmes delivered on behalf of the LEP and the MCA.

The performance dashboards considered were:

- Working Win – the Health Led Employment Trial
- Skills Bank
- Local Growth Fund (Skills Capital)
- The Enterprise Advisor Network

The Board was informed there were no issue to report.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

12 **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