

EDUCATION, SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY THEMATIC BOARD

02.03.2021

Skills Advisory Network Workplan

Purpose of Report

To update the Board on progress with establishing the Skills Advisory Network and progress against the 2020-21 workplan. To give the Board an opportunity to consider the role of the SAN in the light of the Authority's priorities and to approve a proposed programme of work for 2021-22.

Freedom of Information

The paper will be available under the Combined Authority Publication Scheme

Recommendations

- That the Board approves additional memberships of the SAN with representation sought from:
 - Careers and Enterprise Hub
 - HEI with sufficient skills knowledge and understanding at regional level
- That the Board notes progress on the current plan of work, including the Local Skills Report
- That the Board endorses the proposed future workplan and supports the SAN in commencing work in earnest.

1. Introduction

- 1.1** The South Yorkshire Skills Advisory Network is a local partnership that brings together skills providers and local employers to ensure that SCR has sufficient knowledge and understanding of current and future skills and labour market needs. The SAN provides an opportunity for partnership working that includes oversight of both immediate needs and challenges and to take oversight of any potential future challenges.
- 1.2** The establishment of robust partnership working through the SAN is intended to support the LEP and MCA in analysing local skills and labour markets to better understand the current position; to recommend local skills needs priorities in the short-term and into the longer-term and to propose how that provision might be met for consideration.

2. Proposal and justification

2.1 Structure and Governance

- 2.1.1** Membership of the SY SAN reflects the geography of the region and includes representation from a range of skills providers, employers, employer

representative bodies, the voluntary and community sector and other local stakeholders.

2.1.2 As the SAN is becoming more established it now has a good level of knowledge and expertise to oversee labour market analysis, to advise on effective local strategies and to advise and assist in the implementation of effective local funding, investment and delivery decisions. However, there are still some gaps that we would like to fill including inviting representation on careers and from Higher Education. Currently the SAN comprises of representatives as follows:

- Sheffield City Region Provider Network
- Voluntary & Community organisations
- Schools & Colleges
- Chambers of Commerce
- ESFA
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Job Centre Plus
- Local Authorities

Are members content for the SAN to seek representation on careers and from Higher Education?

2.1.3 The Chair of the SAN is Angela Foulkes, a member of the LEP Board and the Chief Executive and Principal of The Sheffield College, the chair's term is two years.

2.2 Purpose

2.2.1 The key focus of the SAN is to advise the ESE Board as follows:

- Provide skills advice to the ESE Board through engaging with employers and providers
- Develop a clear understanding of current and future local skills needs and the local labour market by:
 - o producing robust evidence-based skills and labour market analysis which clearly identifies existing local skills and employment challenges, and identifies key areas of future needs relating to projected local employment growth areas
 - o developing a sophisticated understanding of both the local labour market and skills provision in the local area, the extent to which labour mobility within, or into, a local economy can address skills needs, and the projected gaps between skills needs and skills provision
 - o building knowledge of the range of both local, regional and national employment provision that exists or is planned
 - o presenting the analysis at board level and sharing it with the wider employer and provider communities to ensure that their perspective on the local labour market and local employment and skills system is reflected in the prioritisation the board takes forward

co-ordinate views and initiatives from local skills providers to ensure that plans are relevant, targeted and inclusive

2.3 In December 2020 the Department for education confirmed that funding of £75k would be made available to the Authority to deliver an initial package of work based on proposals put together by MCA officials.
The following items were agreed with DfE as a work programme relating to the £75k funding and to be delivered between March – May 2021:

2.3.1 Local Skills Report

(£35k) Due: 31st March

The Local Skills Report will provide a clear and consistent view of local skills across SCR. The LSR will enable the SAN to better engage with and influence support for the SCR skills agenda. It is intended to bring together information relating to skills across the region and to enable visibility in such a way that it can be compared to other areas given that the DfE has commissioned LSRs from all MCA/LEP areas.

The LSR is intended to be a holistic document, bringing together work on skills into one document which, following approval by the Chair of the SAN, is published on the MCA/LEP website by 31 March 2021.

The MCA has commissioned consultancy support to produce a draft report for SAN Board overview on 17th March with the intent of publishing per the deadline.

2.3.2 Intelligence Hub - Development of skills pages including sector dialogues

(£25k) Due: 31st March

In order to facilitate robust underpinning data which will contribute to the SAN Board's ability to analyse and use data to advise on next steps, skills specific content is being developed as part of the MCA's Online Data Visualisation Platform (Intelligence Hub), including information relating to the skills challenges and needs for specific groups of people / sectors.

Subsequent to the initial developments, a series of "sector dialogues" with Chambers of Commerce, employers and providers will be facilitated to begin the development of sector specific content.

The skills pages will be in place for 31 March 2021 with the subsequent sector specific pages in development and available for May 2021.

2.3.3 Deep dive into the Manufacturing sector

(£20k) Due: May 2021

An initial deep dive project into the Manufacturing sector has been initiated with the intent of preparing action research into the skills challenges within the sector. The deep dive is intended to supplement known data through contextualising core information to SY and through employer led dialogue. On completion, the SAN will collate, present and propose and potential activity to the ESE Board for scrutiny.

3 **Future Work Programme**

3.1 The proposals in the attached annex are the initial outcomes of discussions at the SAN Board and are intended to identify future priority areas for consideration for the ESE Board in relation to the delivery of the RAP and the SEP priorities.

3.2 SAN members noted the need to focus on providing recommendations to the ESE Board based on the need to support SEP and RAP priorities and to ensure that the proposals considered immediate Covid-19 related priorities, short-term skills issues and the potential long-term priorities for the region.

3.3 Do members support the proposals from the SAN at Annex 1 as the basis for a programme of work?

4. Consideration of alternative approaches

3.1 Alternative approaches not considered as this paper meets the Terms of Reference commitment to put a proposed plan of work to the Board for clearance.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial

The current workplan is funded through the core SAN grant from DfE. Funding for the Local Skills Report and for the Intelligence Hub was transferred to the Authority from DfE via Section 31. Whilst there is some flexibility, spend is expected to be completed by 31st March 2021.

The future workplace will require confirmed resources and we will need to return to the Board with a proposal for how these costs can be covered if the Board is content to prioritise the workplan. Some strands of work may be carried out in house within the MCA or across the analytical capability of SAN members who are willing to contribute time. There is an important link between the work on Level 2 and below skills that has a direct link to our AEB commissioning AEB admin costs could support some of that work. Similarly, work on apprenticeships could be funded through a small amount of Gainshare funding already identified to support apprenticeships.

4.2 Legal

No legal implications arising from the update and workplan proposals

4.3 Risk Management

No risks arising from this update and proposed workplan.

4.4 Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion

We have identified as a key element within several of the strands of the future programme the need to consider inclusion and equity across different groups in South Yorkshire. For example, our proposed workstrand on young people will consider where there is evidence of groups facing disproportionate barriers to inclusion and progression as a result of the pandemic.

5. Communications

5.1 No immediate communications implications, although longer term this workplan can be used to underpin greater partnership working.

6. Appendices/Annexes

6.1 *Annex 1 sets out the proposed future workplan for the SAN*

REPORT AUTHOR POST

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Background papers used in the preparation of this report are available for inspection at: 11 Broad Street West, Sheffield S1 2BQ