

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP (BLEP) SKILLS ADVISORY PANEL (SAP) MEETING

Minutes of meeting held on Friday 13 January 2023, from 10am, via Teams

Present:	Martina Porter, All Spring Media (SAP Chair/Creative Sector Group Chair)	(MP)
	Shabnam Ali, Buckinghamshire Council	(SA)
	Beth Baker, University of Buckingham	(BB)
	Ian Barham, BLEP Partnerships Director	(IB)
	Philippa Batting, Buckinghamshire Business First	(PB)
	Cllr Joseph Baum, Buckinghamshire Council	(JBa)
	John Browning, Bucks Skills Hub	(JB)
	Martin Christian-Kent, Kent Consulting	(MCK)
	Jenny Craig, Buckinghamshire College Group	(JC)
	Robert Curtis, Cities & Local Growth Team, BEIS/DLUHC	(RC)
	Heather Dean, Buckinghamshire Business First	(HD)
	Maria Edmonds, Buckinghamshire Council	(ME)
	Ian Harper, Buckinghamshire New University	(IH)
	Katie Higginson, Community Impact Bucks	(KH)
	Marina Jackson, BLEP Under 19 Skills Manager	(MJ)
	Aqsa Mahmood, Young Person Representative	(AM)
	James Moorhouse, Buckinghamshire LEP	(JM)
	Liz North, Buckinghamshire Council	(LN)
	Richard Peters, The Misbourne School	(RP)
	Paul Skitt, Flannery Plant (Construction Employer Group Chair)	(PS)
	Sally White, Sylo Beyond HR	(SW)
Apologies:	Juliet Anderson, Buckinghamshire Health & Social Care Academy	
	Cllr Anita Cranmer, Buckinghamshire Council	
	Simon James, Buckinghamshire Council	
	Mohika Kulkarni, Young Person Representative	
In Attendance:	Sarah Fraser, BLEP	(SF)

MINUTES

		ACTION
1	WELCOME	
	MP welcomed attendees, particularly Liz North (Buckinghamshire Council Skills lead) and Martin Christian-Kent (Kent Consulting), both attending their first SAP meeting, and offered thanks to Shabnam Ali (Buckinghamshire Council), attending her last meeting, for all the advice and support offered to the SAP.	
2	MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING	
	With an amendment to the BNU update in the previous minutes in that there were 1,300 apprentices on roll and 7.5k undergraduates; the minutes from the meeting held on 18 November 2022 were agreed as an accurate record.	
2.1	<u>Matters arising (not covered elsewhere on the agenda)</u>	
2.1.1	➤ SAP/Sub Group Chairs meetings – It was reported these will be reviewed/progressed in due course, if needed, post the outcome of LEP integration/governance discussions.	HD/JB

ACTION

2.1.2 ➤ **Provider Access Legislation – Carried forward** - MP/Eve Askey (TCHC) to discuss TCHC’s model for engaging with schools and colleges.

MP

2.1.3 ➤ **LSIP:**

- PB/LN/HD to arrange an online meeting for Buckinghamshire Councillors to share the context around development of the LSIP and progress being made.
- The first of the Training Provider Network meetings is planned w/c 16 January.

PB/LN/HD

All other actions arising from the last meeting had been completed or would be covered in the course of the agenda.

3 **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COLLEGE GROUP 5YR STRATEGIC PLAN** (Presentation attached)

JC provided an update on development of Buckinghamshire College Group’s 5 year strategic plan (as attached). Comments arising from the presentation included:

➤ **T Levels:**

- Interest remains high in T Levels despite negative press. The College’s decision to pause the T Level around science and health was considered to be prudent, many stakeholders having been engaged with on this. Government is aware of the need to restore reputation, particularly around science and health.
- With regards to construction T Levels, the decision to look at a Civil Engineering course is welcomed but it was also noted that T Levels focus upon a very narrow part of the curriculum that could be covered. There is a need to ensure that work experience/industry placements happen on all programmes.
- It was commented that the College is only able to plan for the future if there is confidence in the long term policy picture regarding skills. Government is listening to the issues around T Levels and the need to make changes in scope. Should there be a change in Government, the Labour party are currently suggesting there will be no move to overturn decisions around T Levels.

➤ **Higher access courses:**

- It is planned to deliver a much more blended curriculum with delivery taking place in the most appropriate setting.
- There are definite gaps in provision currently, particularly electrical/ mechanical engineers, in addition to systems engineers. Recognising that the significant investment in resources to deliver these programmes, it is vital to ensure there is sufficient demand before progressing.

➤ Employers are keen to be involved in co-design and co-delivery of courses and, whilst this is already taking place, there is a need to develop a more formalised structure across all provision, but particularly technical and vocational, going forward. Employer Advisory Boards will be established to assist in course content development and delivery methods. **HD/JC to liaise on the possibility of using LSIP employer forums as part of this work.**

HD/JC

➤ LN/JC to liaise on crossover between the Digital and Business Administration/ Management T Levels.

LN/JC

4 **LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN (LSIP) UPDATE** (Presentation attached)

It was reported the outcomes relating to the LSIP arising from the last SAP meeting had been shared with the Buckinghamshire Growth Board, LEP and BBF Boards. Questions had arisen around the decision not to pursue Health & Social Care as a theme under the LSIP (decision taken on the basis that training provision in this sector is already well catered for and the aim of the LSIP being to support cross sectoral themes through

changes to qualifications themselves) recognising health and social care is a key priority area for Buckinghamshire Council.

It was noted that, in looking at this again, there are a number of groups already looking at work readiness and work experience opportunities for those working in social care. Additionally, Bucks College Group is working with Buckinghamshire New University and partners in Oxfordshire modelling the approach being taken through the LSIP and looking at recruitment issues and career pathways, etc in the sector.

It was suggested one of the main issues within healthcare lies in retention rather than recruitment, something that is being investigated by Buckinghamshire Council members through their Health & Social Care Committee. Whether this can be affected through improved qualifications or training was thought to be questionable; difficulties in retention largely being down to other factors (eg pay and conditions).

It was also suggested that it is important to get “buy in” from Buckinghamshire Councillors for the processes being progressed as the Council will wish the LSIP to pass through its own internal ratification processes.

With regards to Film and TV, the recent meeting of the Creative Industries Sector Action Group had highlighted the issue of the differing approaches/needs of mainstream education and employers, with the result that large scale employers are bringing in resource from the US rather than recruiting locally to fill skills gaps. It was suggested there is a need to think creatively about how to address skills needs going forwards.

5 SKILLS EVENTS CALENDAR – 2023

SAP members discussed the benefits of holding a “Skills Events Calendar” in one central location, the preferred location being on the Skills Hub website with partners being asked to forward information for events they wished to be added to the site.

ALL

Events already in train are:

- **6-12 February** - National Apprenticeship Week – the Skills Hub will be running evening sessions for parents and young people.
- **8/9 March** – Bucks Skills Show
- **w/c 20 March** – Buckinghamshire Council/Buckinghamshire New University, Healthcare inspiration week, encouraging young people towards healthcare careers.
- **26 April** – Construction Careers event at Bucks College Group, looking at matching current students at the college with jobs in the construction sector.
- **June (date tbc)** – SEND Skills Show at Stoke Mandeville Stadium
- **23 September** – Buckinghamshire Council will be running a Jobs and Apprenticeships Fair at the Elgiva in Chesham.

It was suggested it would be useful to check whether Pinewood Studios will be running skills/careers events in 2023.

HD

6 PARTNER UPDATES

6.1 Young Person Representative (Dr Challoner’s High School)

- The school has held a lecture series in the past week with past alumni returning to the school to talk about their careers and the routes into their particular sector.

6.2 University of Buckingham

- The University has seen another student intake in January, with student numbers being very strong.
- A speed networking event is due to be held in February bringing together students and SMEs from the local area to promote graduate opportunities in the area.
- 2023 sees the 40th anniversary of the University getting its Royal Charter and a number of events will be planned to celebrate this through the year.
- The University is in discussions with local Councillors to run a Jobs and Apprenticeship Fair for the north of Buckinghamshire in October. **BB/SA to discuss.**

BB/SA

6.3 Buckinghamshire Council

- The Council is progressing work on a prison outreach programme, working with prisoners on licence.
- The Council is progressing a Schools Award, engaging with multiple academic Trusts and maintained schools to recognise and reward the work of Teachers and Teaching Assistants. More information will be shared when available.
- The Council is working with the Bucks Skill Hub on putting together a programme of internships. More information will be shared when available. **MP/ME to discuss issues/opportunities experienced in establishing internships separately.**
- The Buckinghamshire Employment Partnership has now been established, this group initially seeking to support Ukrainian refugees. The Council will be working with employers to look at how to assist people into employment and will share the calendar of events being planned.

MP/ME

6.4 Buckinghamshire Business First

- BBF is delivering mentoring and peer learning through its Peer Ngage programme.
- The organisation continues to focus on business growth and innovation and is working closely with businesses based at Westcott and Silverstone.
- Low carbon programmes continue to be a key theme for BBF working with businesses to help them reduce their carbon footprint, reduce energy costs etc.
- Buckinghamshire Business Awards will launch in March 2023. Thanks go to the Council for sponsoring the Apprentice and Young Person Employer Awards.
- A number of events are scheduled to be held in January/February around “demystifying” apprenticeships.

6.5 Buckinghamshire LEP

- The LEP and Buckinghamshire Council are working to develop a local investment fund driven largely by investment held within the county, mainly centred around Enterprise Zone income. It is hoped to have this fund established by April 2023. Within this there will be discussion around the skills offer; one key element being the development of a central hub at Westcott for the space sector.
- The LEP is working with the National Film and TV School on their Costar project, offering specialist support for the TV and film industry.
- A new Enterprise Zone Director has been recruited and will start in post in February.
- The research team continues to support development of the LSIP. From February onwards latest economic data will be loaded to the LEP’s microsite including the latest census data and specifically information on the 10 deprived wards which are the focus of Opportunity Bucks.

6.6 Bucks College Group

- The College also continues to support the Opportunity Bucks programme.

- 6.7 Buckinghamshire New University
- The University has an events calendar established for the next 18 months which will be shared with the Bucks Skills Hub to upload to the Skills Hub website.
 - Engineering/Civil Engineering courses will be launched later in the year.
 - Building work is underway at the main Aylesbury campus building to provide new workshops and allied health sector capacity.
 - Buckinghamshire Council and Buckinghamshire New University are exploring opportunities to work together on joint projects.
- 6.8 Community Impact Bucks (CIB)
- The cost of living crisis is impacting significantly on charities, community groups, etc. Income is dropping at a time where need is increasing. There are challenges around recruitment and retention, including volunteer recruitment.
 - The organisation is undertaking research to understand these challenges better.
 - CIB is also undertaking research into the VCSE workforce including around skills and employability needs.
 - KH will share details of surveys that CIB are undertaking around volunteering and what can be done to help people to volunteer. Partners were asked to complete and share these surveys/information if possible.
 - It was noted some large organisations, such as the BBC, offer staff paid time off to volunteer. MP/KH to discuss further.
- 6.9 Bucks Skills Hub
- The Skills Hub has been successful in a bid to the Careers & Enterprise Company to develop a programme to bring teachers and employers closer together, arranging for teachers to spend time with employers in industry. The programme is to be delivered by the end of the current academic year.
 - The Skills Hub is also looking at the resources available for looked after children to raise their aspirations and to help them achieve better outcomes.
- 6.10 Construction Employer Group/Flannery Plant Hire
- The next Construction Employer Group meeting is due to take place w/c 16 January and it appears that this will be well supported by industry representatives.
 - The Construction Solutions Group is meeting regularly and is focussed on co-ordinating the construction sector presence at the Bucks Skills Show in March and the Construction Careers Event in April.
 - PS is working with groups around the country developing LSIPs and, of these Buckinghamshire is by far the most advanced and prepared.
 - The Construction Bootcamps are going well and a 12-month extension of the programme has been requested.
 - Flannery is working with the West London Green Skills Hub taking on the role of Green Transport lead.
 - Flannery are in discussion with Buckinghamshire College Group around co-delivery of Plant Operator training.
 - The mobile hub/outreach unit continues to engage with lots of local schools and will be present at the Bucks Skills Show in March.
- 6.11 Sylo Beyond HR
- Sylo is about to provide access to training videos first developed during lockdown helping people to improve their networking skills, identifying their skill sets, and helping to position people as they change careers.
 - Sylo has launched its Equality Diversity and Inclusion programme and is looking to re-promote this through BBF.

KH/ALL

MP/KH

6.12 All Spring Media

- All Spring Media's internship programme for the Sector Skills Council is becoming increasingly busy. All productions are being filmed in the North West of England.
- The GLA funded programme to get more people into employment in the sector recognises the production landscape is becoming busy again following the pandemic.
- All Spring Media have been joined at their offices in Chesham by Chiltern Voice, the local commercial radio station in Chesham. The hope is that the building (next door to the Elgiva) will become a media hub.

7 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Nothing of note.

8 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS (All 10am-12pm)**

- 10 March, 12 May, 7 July, 29 September, 1 December

The meeting on 10 March will be the last before the LSIP is submitted to Government and partners were asked to make every effort to attend this meeting to gain agreement to the draft LSIP to be submitted.

9 **SUMMARY ACTIONS**

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|-----|---|-------------------------|
| 9.1 | ➤ SAP/Sub Group Chairs meetings – HD/JB to review/progress these meetings in due course, if needed, post the outcome of LEP integration/governance discussions. | HD/JB |
| 9.2 | ➤ Provider Access Legislation – Carried forward - MP/Eve Askey (TCHC) to discuss TCHC's model for engaging with schools and colleges. | MP |
| 9.3 | ➤ LSIP: PB/LN/HD to arrange an online meeting for Buckinghamshire Councillors to share the context around development of the LSIP and progress being made. | PB/LN/HD |
| 9.4 | ➤ Bucks College Group – HD/JC to liaise on the possibility using LSIP employer forums to fulfil the college's need for Employer Advisory Boards formalising employer engagement around course content/delivery. | HD/JC |
| 9.5 | ➤ T Levels - LN/JC to liaise on crossover between Digital and Business Administration/Management T Levels. | LN/JC |
| 9.6 | ➤ Skills Events Calendar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ SAP members to ensure all skills events are uploaded to the Skills Hub website so that all events are in one central location. ○ HD to check if Pinewood Studios will be running skills/careers events in 2023. | ALL
HD |
| 9.7 | ➤ Jobs and Apprenticeship Fair – BB/SA to discuss the planned Jobs and Apprenticeship Fair for north Buckinghamshire in October to ensure no clash with the fair being planned by Buckinghamshire Council in September. | BB/SA |
| 9.8 | ➤ Internships - MP/ME to discuss issues/opportunities experienced in establishing internships separately. | MP/ME |
| 9.9 | ➤ Community Impact Bucks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ KH to share details of surveys that CIB are undertaking around volunteering and what can be done to help people to volunteer. Partners to complete and share. ○ MP/KH to discuss large organisations, such as the BBC, who offer staff paid time off to volunteer and how to leverage this. | KH/ALL
MP/KH |

Meeting closed 11.45am