Terms of Reference for the Skills Advisory Panel / Employment, Skills and Learning Delivery Group

Name of the Group: Skills Advisory Panel / Employment, Skills and Learning Delivery Group

Purpose

1.1   The Skills Advisory Panel ('SAP') / Employment, Skills and Learning Delivery Group ('ESLDG') collectively make up one of the LEP's three Leadership Groups, alongside Place and People. The 'Leadership Groups' have been established to provide strategic leadership for their theme reporting to the LEP Board and informing the Local Industrial Strategy.

1.2   The SAP / ESLDG collectively provides expert support and advice for the governance and management of LEP and partner activity and delivery linked to skills, employment and social inclusion matters, including around European programmes, Growth funding and other government resources, and shared funding / policy approaches taken forward by the LEP and is partners.

1.3   Unlike other Leadership Group, the SAP / ESLDG Leadership Group is split into two defined groups, reflecting differing responsibilities based on distinct skills and employment functions. Whilst subject to a common agenda and interests, the two integrated groups can be defined as below:

- **The Skills Advisory Panel**, a formal function required by Government to provide specific leadership of the skills agenda within the LEP, and a clear focus on setting strategic direction, intelligence collation and horizon scanning within the skills landscape.

- **The Employment, Skills and Learning Delivery Group,** providing the LEP with operation oversight and advice to the board on employment, skills and social inclusion programme and project matters.

Activities

1.4   The activities of the group can be defined as below:

Part A: Skills Advisory Panel

- Provision of strong local leadership on skills prioritisation and employment matters within the HotSW area, engaging with employers and providers, and providing substantive skills advice to the LEP Board and other lead bodies to shape resources.

- Development of a clear understanding of the current and future local skills landscape and labour market within the HotSW area, including:

    o   the development of a robust and authoritative shared evidence base for skills and labour market analysis, which can identify areas of need and opportunity;

- o the development of a clear understanding of existing provision within the HotSW area, including the extent to which it is addressing mobility and gaps;

- o knowledge of other local, regional and national provision plans and approaches; and

- o the creation / reinforcement of routes for the dissemination of skills and employment information, sharing analysis with employer and provider partners across the LEP.

- Coordination of local skills providers, through fostering cooperation between providers and actively working to align plans behind identified skills needs.

- Alignment and joint working with the National Careers Service / Careers Hub to ensure learners are properly informed about local career routes and opportunities, and that advisors are able to access up to date information.

- Leadership on the apprenticeship and T Level agenda, raising their profile with local employers and providers.

- Engagement and joint working with Job Centre Plus and other employment related partners, to ensure both relevant interventions are best places to support local employment opportunities, and related support funding is utilised to bets meet the needs of the broader labour market.

- Leadership / shaping of the People element of the Local Industrial Strategy, informing strong links between industrial and skills provision.

- Dissemination of best practise and what works to partners, including Government and other SAPs, to improve overall efficiency within the skills landscape.

Part B: Employment, Skills and Learning Delivery Group

- Provide management and oversight of LEP led and influenced programmes and projects related to skills, employment, education and social incision / economic mobility, including those concerned with European Funding, directly delivered projects like the Careers Hub, and wider partnership provision directly or indirectly funded by the LEP.

- Manage the activity of the LEPs Skills sub groups, seeking to sustain progress on areas of specific interest to the LEP Board, the SAP and the Employment, Skills and Learning Delivery Group

- Communicate the LEP's investment priorities for the skills and employment agenda, providing clear reporting to partners and wider stakeholder on progress

- Provide the LEP Board with specialist advice about broader education, employment, social inclusion and skills issues related to the growth agenda as appropriate.

Sub-Groups

1.5 Where appropriate, the Employment, Skills and Learning Delivery Group will establish 'task and finish' Groups / Project Boards, to facilitate progress on specific themes and issue. The Group will keep a register on these subgroups and seek to clearly define their work programme, including key objectives and milestones.

1.6 There are currently the following 'Task and Finish' Groups / Project Boards with an alignment to the Employment, Skills and Learning Delivery Group:

- HotSW Construction Skills Group
- HotSW Digital Skills Partnership
- HotSW Careers Hub
- Hinkley Strategic Development Forum – People Group
- European Social Fund Programme
- Career Learning Pilots
- Apprenticeship Ambassador Network
- West Somerset opportunity Area/ Wider Social Mobility Project Activity

1.7 The Skills Advisory Panel will have no task and finish groups, with delivery activity the responsibility of the Employment, Skills and Learning Delivery Group.

Membership

1.8 LEPs were originally established as a partnership between business and local government, alongside other important public, private and voluntary/community organisations. As such the composition of the LEP's Leadership Groups will reflect the spirit of a balanced partnership between public, private and voluntary/community sectors. This also reflects the guidance provided for the formation of the Skills Advisory Panel within each LEP area.

1.9 The SAP / ESLDG will therefore have a maximum of 20 members, drawn from across relevant areas of the public, private, provider and third-party partners.

1.10 The make up the membership will be as out set in Annex A of this document, as defined by the SAP Guidance Note December 2018.

1.11 The Chair or Vice Chair of the SAP / ESLDG will be a LEP Board Director from either a Private Sector or Provider background, agreed by and from with the SAP / ESLDG.

1.12 Where there is a vacant role on the group, new members will be agreed in accordance with the LEP's group member recruitment policy.

1.13 Devon County Council will provide the executive support for the SAP / ESLDG as part of its Service Level Agreement to lead the People Theme on behalf of the LEP. Relevant officers will also attend the meetings as non-voting members where not already on the Board.

1.14 Advisors and other key individuals may also be invited to attend the SAP / ESLDG to discuss specific items on the agenda.

Meetings

1.15 Meeting will be bimonthly.

1.16   Additional meetings can also be called at the discretion of the Chair.

1.17   Meeting papers will be circulated one week in advance of the meeting.

1.18   If the Chair is unable to attend, the Vice Chair will Chair the meeting. If both the Chair and Vice chair are unable to attend, the LEP Theme Lead will Chair.

Decisions

1.19   At least seven members must be present for the SAP / ESLDG to be quorate for the purposes of any formal decision-making item, and at least four members of these must be from the private or provider sector.

1.20   All decision will be made by consensus. Where consensus cannot be reached, decision deemed sufficiently 'novel or contentious' to be referred to the LEP Board in line with the '*Assurance and Accountability Framework'*.

Urgent Matters

1.21   For urgent matters which require decisions outside normal meetings, the Chair may make decisions on behalf of the Group in consultation with the Vice-Chair. Any decisions taken in this manner will require a full written update to the next Group meeting, justifying why an urgent decision was required and the actions taken.

Complaints

1.22   Should members of the SAP / ESLDG have a complaint or conflict that cannot be resolved, this should be reported to the following people in alignment with the recommended stages:

Stage 1: Theme Lead for People
Stage 2: Chief Executive of the HotSW LEP
Stage 3: Chair of the HotSW LEP Board

1.23   At each stage, if the dispute cannot be resolved within seven working days it will be escalated to the next level.

Conflicts of Interest

1.24   The SAP / ESLDG will often be involved with commenting on or advising on policy recommendations and / significant or funding programmes.

1.25   If any members of the group, through personal interests, employment, or through relatives or close personal friendship, have any interest at all, these should be declared through the Chair at the beginning of each meeting and this will be recorded in the minutes. If appropriate, you may be asked to leave the room.

1.26   This requirement is in addition to signing an annual statement; confirming that you have received, read and understood the LEP's Conflicts of Interest Policy and completed a Declarations of Interest Template, detailing the nature of any such conflicts

Amendment, Modifications and Variations

1.27   Any changes to these Terms of Reference must be agreed by the Chair of the SAP / ESLDG and subsequently endorsed by all members.

Agendas and Minutes

1.28   The Agenda for each meeting will include standard items as well as any additional items as required. Copies of the Agenda and Minutes will be available on the LEP's website in the public domain.

28.   The LEP is committed to conducting its business in the most open and transparent way possible, however in exceptional circumstances information may be deemed sensitive, for example, business cases containing commercially sensitive details of a local business, and in such cases documents will have any such information removed.