

## Heart of the South West Skills Advisory Panel

Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2022, 10:00 – 12:00

### Via Microsoft Teams

#### Attendees:

- Vince Flower (Chair)
  - Phill Adams
  - Lee Tozer
  - Stuart Elford
  - David Ralph
  - Victoria Hatfield
  - Gabrielle Climie
  - Paul Blackmore
  - Mike Matthews
  - Rod Davis
  - Hilary Stevens
  - Bill Blythe
  - Nora Corkery
  - Tina Brinkworth
  - Hannah Keyte
- (Minutes)

#### Apologies:

- Keri Denton
- Alan Denby
- Chris Evans
- David Ralph
- Jamie Evans
- John Laramy
- Michael Green
- Khristine Norton
- Debbie Stafford
- Sharron Robbie
- Mark Sheppard
- Jackie Grubb
- Rosie Bates
- Carl Wyard

#### 10am Welcome, Housekeeping and any new Declarations

Vince Flower welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### 10:05am Minutes of Last Meeting

All previous actions completed. Action referring to PA setting up a meeting with leads will be progressed in due course.

Future of Work Report – **ACTION: HS** to recirculate report to SAP members.

Board members approved the minutes from the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

#### 10:10am End of Year Report & Latest Covid Impact – Phill Adams

PA shared a presentation detailing the overview of 2021 economy, labour market in 2021, NEET data, demographics and what the SAP have achieved in the past 12 months.



SAP - 26 Jan 2022 -  
Phill Adams.pptx

Paul Blackmore confirmed many patterns described are being observed, including upturn in number of jobs available above and beyond pre-pandemic. Businesses really struggling to recruit including graduates. PB asked for the source of the hard and soft skills data. PA confirmed data is collated by Emsi Burning Glass.

David Ralph asked if we are tracking UK PLC data as well as HotSW to which PA confirmed we were but the trends are very place specific. In terms of GVA data, North Devon, Exeter and East Devon tracking ahead of the UK, with Torridge, Mendip and Mid Devon tracking slightly behind. Narrative back to Government is that South West did not fairing any better than the North, with same mix of accelerating and struggling areas.

PA advised that college intake was up by roughly 15% overall across Devon. Challenge around higher drop-out rates in Jan 22 than expected however this is likely due to students not being prepared for college. Further detail will be received on this in Mar 22.

Bill Blythe – 16-18 apprenticeships look to be holding up reasonably well but a number of late decisioning. Nationally, FE colleges are down around 2.5%. Higher rates of withdrawals during Sept – Nov 21 than normal. Re-engagement is always problematic however Jan 22 levels were slightly higher figures but on lower-level courses.

### **10:30am      Roundtable of Members**

Mike Matthews – Recruitment companies experiencing pressure in terms of wages and the NI increase in April will only add to this. Seeing some evidence of cost of materials beginning to fall. For individuals who have left employment and gone self-employed, we won't have data until self-assessments are required.

Bill Blythe – Academic programmes have held up and more interest in traditional courses. In relation to material costs, been out to tender for building works and costs are where cost consultants would have expected with no highlighted significant risk around supply. IT and Tech products appear to have significant lead times. Experiencing a high level of covid related absences with 25 students having confirmed positive cases this morning.

Lee Tozer highlighted that some people who have retired and have a pension have started small self-employment locally to earn the difference between previous salary and current pension.

Stuart Elford – wage inflation remains a huge concern for businesses especially with impending NI increase. Businesses are frustrated with the white paper being delayed as they are unable to plan ahead. In terms of the grey market, there is an opportunity for creative solutions especially if employers are able to be flexible.

Rod Davis – challenges with recruiting (including salary demands) across post 16 education sector alongside retaining staff. National Apprenticeship Week W/C 7<sup>th</sup> Feb – looking at significant levels of promotional activity due to high levels of vacancies. Apprenticeship incentive programme due to cease end of Jan 22. Over 600 early leavers within FE 16-19 category as of Dec 21. Support programmes in place to assist young people following pressures of covid including resilience, direction and impact of assessed grades etc.

Tina Brinkworth highlighted 2 training providers in serious crisis due to cashflow issues and if we are unable to support them locally then we will lose them.

- **PA to have an offline conversation around the two providers with the TPN and others.**

Nina Corkery – Feedback through voluntary sector recovery group identifies significant issues with recruitment and people leaving the sector. Concerns around apprenticeship pay and possible increase in wages to compete.

Victoria Hatfield – Exeter saw a reduction in claimant counts in Nov / Dec 21. Youth Hub are seeing good results in supporting young people in employment and training. Job vacancy figures continue to rise, and health care are struggling across the city. Employers focused on staff returning to offices. Large increase in micro-businesses within the city.

Paul Blackmore – professional services requirement to recruit has shifted from dealing with covid related issues to investment and business growth. Hospitality sector is really struggling and this also relates to Brexit. Due to demand and vacancies, businesses are required to take on younger individuals with limited experience of workforce environment whilst still paying a premium. Development activity taking place with employers and schools around delivering against benchmarked gaps and currently seen positive response from schools wanting to engage.

#### **10:50am            Revised Local Skills Plan – Phill Adams**

Phill Adams shared Powerpoint presentation which will be circulated with the minutes. Amendments are currently being collated and will be fed into the final version.

- **Tina Brinkworth to provide a case study for Plymouth so this can be included.**

David Ralph suggested whilst this is a light touch review it is important we do some bigger thinking around what has happened with covid, what the key issues are, what we might need to do differently etc.

- **HK to add this to the March SAP agenda to start preparatory work.**
- **HK to send out an emailing requesting feedback as soon as possible due to limited attendance at today's meeting.**

#### **11:20am            Core Indicator Dashboard – Gabrielle Climie**

- **GC to circulate slides to provide more context.**



PowerBI 2021 - Gabi  
Climie - SAP 26 Jan 2

GC introduced PowerBI providing examples of other dashboards currently in use and example data sets for the SAP. GC opened this up for comments on what the board would like to see on the dashboard.

Tina Brinkworth mentioned the real value is ability to compare city level and across the LEP.

Phill Adams commented that live vacancy data would be beneficial if we could share this with others as this is the data most frequently requested / updated on.

Suggestion to include subsector data/ breakdowns around employment would be useful. If this could be broken down to city level that would be very helpful.

Unclear on licencing for Emsi Burning Glass around pulling the information straight into this dashboard as this is shortcutting gateway policy.

Feedback to be requested as soon as possible so GC can present a draft dashboard at the next meeting.

- **HK to add to the March SAP agenda.**

**11:50am      AOB – Chair**

Phill Adams updated on some work currently ongoing; Digital Package put together by the LEP - this will be circulated to SAP members once available. The other area of work is around Bootcamp Programme, wave 3 has been announcement and scoping with providers taking place to look at types of bootcamp and geographies for the next phase.

Tina Brinkworth mentioned the Skills Summit held in November highlighted that Medium to SMEs do not know how to do strategic workforce or succession planning, so this is a desperate requirement. Therefore if there is a consideration, would welcome this as a bootcamp.

No other business was raised by members.

**12:00      Close**

The next SAP Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 10:00 -12:00.