

Heart of the South West Skills Advisory Panel

Tuesday 4th October 2022, 13:00 – 15:00

Attendees:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| ○ Vince Flower (Chair) | ○ Jon Gibson |
| ○ Nicholas Child | ○ Claire Gibson |
| ○ Hannah Keyte (Minutes) | ○ Tony George |
| ○ Laurence Frewin | ○ Stuart Elford |
| ○ Tony Skeel | ○ Rosie Bates |
| ○ Mary Payne | ○ Keri Denton |
| ○ Sharron Robbie | ○ Julie Hawker |
| ○ Lee Tozer | ○ Andy Dean |
| ○ Gabi Climie | ○ Helen Hart |
| ○ Mel Roberts | ○ Paul Blackmore |
| ○ Bill Blythe | ○ Connor Conneely |
| ○ Phill Adams | ○ Nora Corkery |
| ○ Tina Brinkworth | |

Apologies:

- David Ralph
- Victoria Hatfield
- Mark Shepherd
- Alan Denby
- Debbie Stafford
- John Revill
- Mike Green
- Jamie Evans
- Jo Skeel
- Chris Evans
- Khristine Norton
- John Laramy

Welcome, Housekeeping and any new Declarations

- Vince Flower welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- No conflicts of interest were declared.

Minutes of Last Meeting

- SAP Board were content with the minutes from the previous meeting and all actions completed.

Economic Update – Gabi Climie



Economic Update -
Heart of the South \

- Gabi Climie presented the above to the Board.
- Anticipating next update on employment rates next month at the earliest.
- Gabi Climie would be interested in any thoughts on local changes you are seeing in employment (industry and occupation change).
- In terms of data from the VCSE sector, not sure we have this but Gabi Climie would be interested to see. **ACTION: Andrew Dean** to see if national level data is being gathered for the sector and report back to Nora Corkery.
- Lee Tozer shared a slide on screen highlighting UC claimant count has halved for Exeter City Council area however the 'no work requirements' category has increased from 1,800 to 2,900.

LSIP Update – Helen Hart / Stuart Elford

- Business case submitted to DfE yesterday and the Chamber have been nominated as employer representative body to deliver LSIPs and ensure employers voice is at the heart of FE planning.
- Next step is for DfE to contact the Chamber regarding any queries or points of clarity.
- Separate in-person forums will be scheduled for Somerset and Devon with their employers however the same methodology will be used for both. Will be obtaining a huge amount of

information on what employers are looking for, what their skills gaps are, what would work for them etc.

- Requirement to collate information by February 2023 to start putting proposals into place and commencing work with providers.
- Report from LSIP is due at the end of May 2023, reporting on recommendations. DfE will then review over the following month or so and confirm any clarification questions.
- July 2023 to March 2025, there will be ongoing period of evaluation, reflection and looking at how we can update, change, modulate and tweak things and hopefully extend outside core sector to look at replicating good practice into wider sector base.
- Team in place to work on LSIP from Devon perspective, currently requiring an administrator. Somerset are required to develop and create a team due to insufficient capacity to deliver on this at present.
- Anticipating to hear from DfE to start in earnest on projects at the beginning of November 2022 and hoping to have full team in place by then.
- Tina Brinkworth highlighted the Chamber are also closely linking with independent training providers, sixth forms and others.
- **ACTION: Vince Flower** to pick up with Helen Hart offline regarding how this fits with the SAP.

Careers Hub Update Report – Nicholas Child



Careers Hub
Update - SAP Board.

- NC presented the above to the Board regarding the Careers Hub.
- Sharron Robbie mentioned they are closely working with careers hub to support. Range of Government funded and locally funded work ongoing to raise awareness of technical vocational routes. Statutory legislation comes into force in January 2023 and providers will be inundated with schools seeking support for year 7s.

Plymouth Skills Plan – Tina Brinkworth

- Request for this to be moved to the next meeting. **ACTION: Hannah Keyte** to schedule this on the agenda for 22nd November 2022.

Exeter Skills Plan – Rosie Bates

- Update provided on the Exeter Skills Strategy confirming the new strategy has been developed in partnership with Exeter City Council and Wavehill Consultants.
- Event in April to bring together businesses and providers to help shape this programme with a partnership approach across the city.
- The Strategy Summary has been shared with the SAP Board as below. Should you wish to see the full strategy document or evidence base, please contact Rosie Bates directly.



Exeter Skills
Strategy Summary FI

County Deal Update – Phill Adams



SAP - County Deal
Update Slides.pdf

- Update provided on the current position of county deal as above.
- Appears that devolution has been fast tracked with a couple of areas having been brought forward at pace.
- In-depth evidence base collated which has been condensed down in the last couple of months, we can identify the core issues that affect us and know where some of the weaknesses are in order to identify where support is required.
- Still hoping for Spring and anticipate next year will be a transition year.
- Next step is for central government to provide clarity on how they wish to proceed.
- Nora Corkery suggested considering VCSE under innovation. Phill Adams provided assurance that this is woven into the longer document.
- **ACTION: Phill Adams and Nora Corkery** to have a wider conversation about Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) and UKSPF outside of this meeting.
- Phill Adams provided clarity that this will not affect the SWIoT.
- Investment Zones - Keri Denton updated we are currently digesting guidance and tight deadline for submission of EOIs. Bill Blythe expressed an interest in putting forward bids, but requirement to speak with districts about this.

Roundtable of Members

- Bill Blythe – in communication with business colleagues and nervousness about overall national economic situation and impact on business supply and demand. Northern Devon been declared an area of housing crisis and potential rising rent costs is high on the agenda in terms of ability to recruit staff into the area.
- Mel Roberts – Somerset's next piece of work is to strategically understand the needs of the county. Concerns around potential funding gap next year, due to many local and European funding tailing off in 2023 and at present no alternative sources of funding to continue delivery. Until SPF comes in from 2024, anticipating a gap of support.
- Jon Gibson – a lot of providers and staff are struggling with the cost of living. Also for those in construction, they are dealing with the high material costs.
- Stuart Elford – the British Chamber of Commerce response to the budget was fairly positive for businesses as included a number of asks they had made. However knock on effect for increased interest rates, value of pound etc which will impact on import / export market. Shared concerns regarding recruitment. Been pushing for extending Annual Investment Allowance on a permanent basis. Any public sector or trade body who could also assist with pushing this would be a great help. **ACTION: Sharron Robbie and Stuart Elford** to discuss outside of the meeting.
- Sharron Robbie – recruitment and retention within FE sector is a big concern. Cost of delivering quality training is increasing and real concerns for training providers, FE colleges and the independent sector. Aware of 2-3 training providers who will be closing as the year comes to an end. Regular meetings with DfE, ESFA and Ofsted are taking place.
- Mary Payne – virtual work experience sessions commencing next week, currently have about 300 students signed up however not capped so opportunity for more students to get involved. [Hinkley Point C - Virtual Work Experience Programme \(nextstepssw.ac.uk\)](https://nextstepssw.ac.uk/). [Hinkley Support Operative Bronze Level Training \(edfenergy.com\)](https://edfenergy.com/) link for the ECITB funded 2-week new entrant

course - delivery partners are Focus Training and Train4All - guaranteed job interview for all who complete.

- Nora Corkery – struggling with recruitment, particularly in specialist and management level roles across the county. Great deal of uncertainty towards the end of the European funding as this has traditionally been a good investment into VCSE.
- Andrew Dean - pleased to see ongoing innovation offer still being promoted and ask for those putting together presentation on skills to look at innovation offer and ensure skills elements chime with this. Currently producing regional skills strategy and this will be shared for comment in the next couple of months.

AOB

- Dates for the next meetings are as follows:
 - 22nd November 2022 - 10:00 – 12:00
 - 21st March 2023 - 10:00 – 12:00
- Mel Roberts asked in terms of funding gap between European Funding and UKSPF, are the SAP or LEP feeding concerns back? **ACTION: Nicholas Child, Phill Adams and Keri Denton** to provide update on this.

Close

- The next SAP Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 22nd November – 10:00 – 12:00