D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership People and Skills Advisory Board

Date: Tuesday 18th February 2020, 10:00-12:00
Venue: Board Room, Chesterfield College, Infirmary Road, Chesterfield, S41 7NG

MINUTES OF MEETING

Attendees
Kath Mitchell (Chair) University of Derby
Jane Howson (Deputy Chair) Autism East Midlands
Joe Battye Derbyshire County Council
Veronica Dennant Newark and Sherwood District Council
Jake Exton (Observer) Department for Education
Sue Fielding DWP
Mike Firth Education and Skills Funding Agency
Natalie Gasson D2N2 LEP
Richard Kirkland D2N2 LEP
Nicola Lees South Derbyshire District Council
Harminder Matharu AELP
Will Morlidge D2N2 LEP
Sarah O’Hara University of Nottingham
Rachel Quinn D2N2 LEP
Mandy Ramm Nottinghamshire County Council
Julie Richards Chesterfield College
Sajeeda Rose D2N2 LEP
Maureen Vieyra (note taker) D2N2 LEP
Trudi Waldram Food and Drink Forum

Apologies
Pauline Anderson Derby City Council
Julie Beresford Bassetlaw District Council
Peter Brammall The Futures Group
Ian Bond Inspire Culture
Nathan Clements Boots
Cate Edwynn PHE – Derby
Nicki Jenkins Nottingham City Council
Nicola McCoy-Brown Nottinghamshire County Council
Karen Manual DWP
Gary Parsons Talk Staff
Iain Peel Derby City Council
Sian Rebourg Laing O’Rourke
Katrina Starkie Purpose Media
David Wright BEIS
1. **Welcome and introductions**

   The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **Apologies**

   Please see above.

3. **Conflicts of Interest**

   Members were asked to declare any conflicts of interest as they arose.

   D2N2 LEP officers and Board members declared there were conflicts of interest by virtue of their roles.

4. **Minutes of the last meeting (12 December 2019) and matters arising**

   The Minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting and there were no matters arising.

   All actions were completed.

5. **Developing the D2N2 People and Skills Strategy**

   Changes in Government were discussed with the following noted:
   - Gavin Williamson has maintained his position as Secretary of State for Education. People around him have changed.
   - Nick Gibbs has remained as Minister of State at the Department for Education. He is scheduled to attend an event in Sheffield on 12 March. The Chair was trying to get a meeting with him to coincide with this event.
   - The Minister for Higher Education is now Michelle Donelan – her big agenda has always been skills.
   - Research and Science has moved from the Education Department to BEIS.
   - Amanda Solloway, the new MP in Derby, has been appointed as the parliamentary Under Secretary of State at BEIS. She has asked the Skills team from the LEP to meet with her.

   The Government is looking for a clear strategy from the regions and as a result we have to be very focused as to what we want the East Midlands to be recognised for with regard to our skill base.

   There are clear strategies coming out of the Northern Powerhouse. The HS2 approval is good for the region although Andy Burnham is pitching for West-East extension and we need to make sure our voice is loud and clear with what is needed for our region.

   The political agenda should not be ignored but we want to come to some consensus as a Skills Board on what should be our key priorities and how would we be able to implement effectively.
Will Morlidge, Head of Strategy and Policy at D2N2 LEP, introduced himself. He advised that:

- The LEP is required to have a LIS with an associated skills strategy. As the Skills Strategy is already underway, we will reverse engineer it into the LIS.

- We need to determine the long-term outcomes so the focus today is on what we should be doing to achieve the results. There should be specific outcomes to target, with accountability for these outcomes.

- There needs to be clarification of areas of responsibility so there is no duplication of work.

- Rachel circulated a document entitled D2N2 People and Skills Strategy – Proposed Metrics. Rachel explained that there is an existing Skills Strategy within the D2N2 Strategic Economic Plan but that no specific targets or objectives were ever set against this strategy. The revised Skills Strategy will draw on the evidence base gathered recently to baseline our performance across a range of key people and skills indicators and set targets to improve. It is vital that the SAP are clear which issues are having the greatest impact on our economy, prosperity and social mobility, how much these will need to improve and who would be responsible for leading that shift. Objectives need to encompass all 4 strategic themes which are:
  - Future Workforce
  - Skilled and Productive Workforce
  - Inclusive Workforce
  - Planning for Future Skills Needs

**Future Workforce**
The meeting discussed the subgroups in this section.

**School Readiness**
- In terms of school readiness there is clear linkage between how ready young children are to enter school and how well they attain in the education system. Question for the group is should school readiness be part of the LEPs strategy and can it be influenced?

- Reference was made to the London model and that 16-18 year olds are work-ready to go and access to higher education is extremely high. This was backed by millions of pounds of investment from early years onwards. It was possible to see the benefit of a wraparound approach and in looking at education through the eyes of the workforce.

- In some of the worst deprived regions in London their outcomes are now impressive. The question was asked that as the model in London has been successful why we should not duplicate it, subject to similar resourcing levels.
In our region evidence from the Labour Market Dashboard shows great variation in school readiness between areas in D2N2 but also with respect to level of progression and performance for children through primary and secondary phases. Some areas demonstrate poor school readiness but progress children well in secondary, for other areas, it is the reverse implicating quality of teaching is probably an important factor.

A lack of data around nursery provision and uptake does not help Local Authorities to improve the provision of nursery education or use information from this sector.

School readiness is an important element which the region needs to address. Kath Mitchell will access the data in Derby to see what can be shared and what actions have been undertaken as this is an improving picture in Derby. However, the converse is true for secondary provision.

It was agreed that a comprehensive map of performance would support the Board in decision making and skills matching.

**ACTION:**
1. Kath Mitchell to access data in Derby with regard to school readiness
2. Will Morlidge to scrutinise the reports when they are available

**GCSE Attainment**

A discussion took place as to whether GCSE attainment is an important consideration for the LEP. On the whole numbers of GCSEs were felt to be less important than success in the baseline Maths and English as the platform to other future learning.

It had been proven that four or more work experience interventions were working to support GCSE attainment. Would more consistent work experience make more young people enthusiastic for GCSEs?

Quality of teaching is identified as being a possible issue in this area as quality of teaching makes a huge difference and motivates learning.

There needs to be an understanding of the delivery of skills across the region within formal education institutions and training providers. The LEP needs to be clear of the skills gap and in what and how we are training or educating young people. We need to identify the skills that are required to get a high value job (value is not only calculated in financial terms but also in emotional terms and job satisfaction).

Is there a need to monitor this area of education or drive up attainment and what would be the role of the LEP in this?

What career information is available across the LEP region as there needs to be coverage of both high value jobs and other sectors as well.
There appears to be no link between pre and post 16 aspirations

**Gatsby Benchmarks**

- Rachel explained that there are eight indicators of an impactful careers strategy and these benchmarks concentrate on how to deliver them well. Whilst Gatsby performance is applicable to all schools, at present only secondary schools and general FE colleges participate in assessment.

- Members agreed that tracking Benchmark achievements is a useful indicator of progress. But choosing benchmarks which have the most impact on young people is probably more important than measuring aggregate achievement across all benchmarks.

- It was agreed that conversations need to take place with young people to determine what it is they wanted for the future. Higher Education and universities are not appropriate for all students. This conversation should inform the selection of appropriate target measures and should also inform understanding of what role the LEP should / could play in preparing the future workforce.

- Any strategy for young people should support the development of transferrable skills that people can use throughout multiple careers rather than focus on single careers pathways which are becoming increasingly uncommon.

- It was agreed that unless there is an understanding of the factors that lie behind young people's choices, and these are changed where necessary, then nothing will be achieved.

**ACTION:**
1. Rachel and Will to work up specific wording around Gatsby Benchmarks
2. The LEP to convene a youth event across the LEP region

**NEET**

- There is a need to identify who is NEET and whether it is a geographical problem. The data used should also reflect an older age group to account for people with disabilities who are otherwise not picked up in NEET figures.

- Social media was identified as being a cause of lack of confidence and communication skills when leaving school.

- Data needs to be collated so the LEP can determine:
  - Whether NEET levels are higher than in other parts of the country
  - What level of intervention can the LEP undertake
  - How do we prevent NEET earlier on
  - If there is something specific the LEP should be doing?
• It was agreed that the role of the LEP, as a multi-partner agency, is crucial to this problem

• It was noted that across the Advisory Boards SMEs are represented but not on Main Board, in proportion to other representative bodies. SME voice is important in all discussions and should be reflected throughout the structure as their experience of skills and economic conditions are often very different from larger businesses.

**ACTION:**
1. Members to share data on NEETS
2. Rachel and Will to do a piece of work across this. Need further data on what the region looks like and what the region needs.

Due to time further metrics were not discussed. Will and Rachel will work up a proposed structure based on feedback for further discussion at the next meeting

**ACTION:**
1. Rachel and Will to develop the metrics underpinning the skills strategy for April meeting.

6. **People & Skills Dashboard**
See report previously circulated

The dashboard was presented to the Board and data explained and discussed.

• The dashboard is a useful tool to help inform decision making for the other Boards. There is a goal to make it live so other Boards can access the information.

• The Board specifically recognised the work that Vladimir Epuri had undertaken to bring the information to the Board.

• Further to discussions about NEETs this measure will now be amended to cover a wider age range before publication.

**ACTION**
1. Vlad to make amendments to the measures for NEETs
2. Rachel to circulate the final dashboard to members once completed for consent to make the dashboard publicly available – nominally by Friday 21st February (subject to the changes being made). No response will be taken as consent.

7. **Addressing Skills Mismatch in D2N2**
See report previously circulated

The data in the report was discussed and drilled down.
It was acknowledged that prioritisation could be based on numerous factors – total job vacancies, cost to the economy, impact on growing sectors or wider social impacts e.g. lack of carers.

The largest areas of impact are nursing and teaching although both were acknowledged as national issues for which strategies were being put in place.

It was agreed that if we did not provide the skilled staff for SMEs they would fail to thrive or move away from the region – especially for some of our newer and growing industries.

Science, engineering, social care and primary/pre primary school teaching sectors cannot be ignored as these are having clear impacts on the economy albeit in different ways.

The largest area of resource shortage is in social care and it is important to determine what this data looks like.

Rachel reiterated that at this stage a decision is only giving a starting point and that over time many gaps and shortfalls will be investigated. On this basis the group agreed to support the initial proposed focus on Programmers and Software Engineers but with a pipeline to look at primary and nursery teachers, science and engineering and care workers.

Discussion around care workers highlighted major differences between adult and children’s landscapes which needed to be better understood before work could progress.

The trend towards an increasing need for digital skills was identified across all industries and that this dimension needs to be incorporated in all skills planning.

**ACTION:**
1. Scope and seek to commission a piece of work around social care. What is the skills gap and what does it look like around social care for both adults and children? The Board to help determine the scope of the piece of work.
2. Rachel to make the data live and Vlad will make it more localised.
3. Rachel to commence initial Skills Mismatch research on Programmers and Software Developers.

**8. ESF Reserve Fund – D2N2 Proposals**

See report previously circulated

- Richard advised the meeting that he had been told by ESFA that they will extend their options to March 2023. This would extend the provisions already in existence to 2023 but not for anything new.

- Anything that is procured adds value to the region. What we are looking to procure should be realistic in terms of what match can bring forward and in programmes.
Richard referred to Appendix A (previously circulated) and gave a brief overview of each of the calls to be made within the National Reserve.

Reference was made to point 4.1 in the report and specifically the ESF subcommittee call against Investment Priority 1.4 which brings added value to the existing BBO provision.

There had been a sector based work academy approach to ESF calls.

There is a new programme for those with special education needs to transition from full time education to work. This can be via work experience, placement or full time work.

The NEET programme will be expanded to support a NEET prevention programme in schools across the region. This will add value to local authority support for NEETs up to the age of 18. Considering the level of discussion of issues surrounding young people and NEETs the contract holders are to be invited to present a project overview at a future meeting. Members all expressed interest in better understanding the impact of the Community Grants programme.

The group acknowledged that a lot is happening in D2N2 and over time this group needs oversight of it all. This includes sight of where pilots were sitting in our region and specifically T levels. The meeting was advised that presently Derby College has the majority of T-level pilots in the region.

**ACTIONS:**
1. Strategic overviews will be produced and sent to ESIF committee members for approval. These will also be sent to this Board.
2. The Board is to be given the names and types of community organisations being given community grants. A presentation to be made to the Board about the impact of these.
3. There was a request to bring relevant providers who touch on areas discussed at the meeting to the Board to present on their projects.
4. Richard to invite DTS to present to a future meeting

**9. People and Skills Report**
See report previously circulated

- Rachel referred to point 1.4 of her report. It was suggested we utilise the underspend to purchase support from Vlad and also to bring someone in house to carry out work.

- Jake Exton (Project Lead, National Retraining Scheme Programme, Department for Education) talked about the National Retraining Scheme. This is aimed at adults aged 25+ in employment to address a skills mismatch and automation.

- Currently there is just one product in Beta testing phase called Get Help to Retrain – D2N2 have been asked to pilot the product in the East Midlands.
• The scheme is currently looking at Maths and English signposting but would review other areas as per the needs of the regions. Rachel to work with DfE to scope rollout in D2N2. More information will be provided at the next meeting.

**ACTIONS:**
1. Jake Exton to share the link with Rachel to share
2. Jake and Rachel to review this proposal and present to the Board.

10. **Any other business**

    After discussion members were asked to send Rachel suggestions for the agenda.

11. **Next steps**

    The D2N2 was thanked for its work and a request made for any views to be sent by email to Rachel, Will and Richard.

12. **Dates of future meetings**

    22nd April
    18th June
    26th August
    All meetings to be 10:00-12:00 unless otherwise indicated