**NOTE OF EMPLOYERS SKILLS AND EDUCATION BOARD MEETING ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2019**

1. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Clare Hayward welcomed everyone to the meeting – in particular, Bill Carr (Carpe Diem) and Jamie Zucker and Clare Cassidy from DfE who were attending the meeting as observers.

Clare noted that Jenny Clucas and Howard Sloane had resigned from the Board. Clare recorded her thanks for their contributions to the work of the Board.

The list of attendees and apologies is at **Annex A.**

Clare noted that following the recent exercise to recruit new members to the LEP main Board and associated sub-committees Nicola Dunbar had been appointed as a LEP Board members and would also be the Deputy Chair of the Employers’ Skills and Education Board with voting rights. Bill Carr, Phil Atkinson, Julia Teale and James Richard had also been appointed as voting members of the Employers’ Skills and Education Board and the three local authorities would be nominating voting members – one from each council (to date Stephen Fitzsimons has been nominated by Warrington Council).

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Clare invited Members to declare any interests. The following standing items were noted:

* Paul Colman – involvement in the development of the Pledge partnership network across Cheshire and Warrington.
* Clare Hayward – working for Cirrus recently named the best leadership and management/HR Consultancy at the CIPD Management Awards. Cirrus now offer apprenticeships as part of their overall service to businesses.
* Paul Colman – Board members of Cheshire College South and West
* Paul Taylor – Director of Wire, Warrington
* James Richard – Director of 4WardFutures

1. **ACCELERATE CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON (VIRTUAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY)**

**3.1 DWP Appraisal of ESF Bid**

Pat Jackson reported on Charlie Woodcock’s behalf that the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) had not yet completed their assessment of the bid for European Social Funds to support Accelerate Cheshire and Warrington. DWP had advised us that a decision was imminent.

Pat reported that the University had started the process of recruiting staff to help deliver Accelerate but could not appoint anyone until the DWP approval had been received.

Pat also noted that the University had developed the dynamic framework for procuring training but could not proceed further without the DWP approval.

Pat was asked to contact DWP to express further concerns about the delays in the DWP assessment process. **ACTION: Pat Jackson** - **DONE**

**3.2 Initial Work on the Training to be Procured by Accelerate**

Pat reported that Bentley had just produced a framework showing the extent to which digitalisation could be introduced across their workplace to improve productivity, the skills needed to introduce digitalisation and the associated training requirements. Bentley had already shared this some of this work to help inform the bids for Local Growth Fund and had also agreed that the work could be shared with other businesses to help stimulate further suggestions of training needs.

3.3 **Accelerate Management Board, Key Tasks and Performance Indicators**

Clare noted that there were still some outstanding actions for the University from previous meeting of the Board including:

* Share draft terms of reference of the Management Board and a programme of meeting dates asap including a meeting of the shadow Board in September **ACTION Charlie Woodcock and Maud Duthie**
* Share a breakdown of key tasks and rate determining inputs required to achieve full implementation in January 2020. **ACTION Charlie Woodcock and Maud Duthie**
* Provide a set of key performance indicators should also be developed with the Management Board **ACTION Charlie Woodcock and Maud Duthie**

Clare asked for these actions to be completed asap. **ACTION Charlie Woodcock and Maud Duthie.**

3.4 **Logo for Accelerate Cheshire and Warrington**

Clare Hayward tabled a suggested logo for Accelerate Cheshire and Warrington. Members noted that the logo helped to position Accelerate as part of the family of programmes developed by the Employers Skills and Education Board (Pledge, Digital Skills Partnership and Accelerate Cheshire and Warrington).

Members agreed to adopt the logo and to consider a strap line that could be associated with the logo. **ACTON: Pat Jackson to arrange conference call to agree strap line.**

Members thanked Clare for her work in developing the logo.

4 **NOTE OF MEETING ON 17 JULY 2019**

The note of the meeting was agreed.

**5 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

Pat Jackson was asked to review and update the list of actions. **ACTION: Pat Jackson – DONE**.

**6. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE EMPLOYERS’ SKILLS AND EDUCATION BOARD**

Jamie Zucker was invited to comment on the draft terms of reference. Jamie recognised that all LEP areas are different but expressed some concern that the membership of the Board included only one college and this representative did not have voting rights.

Members explained that the Colleges had agreed that, to manage workloads and to ensure that colleges were fully engaged in the work of the Employers’ skills and Education Board, one of the colleges would represent the training providers on the Employers’ Skills and Education Board and that other colleges would be members of the various subgroups that feed into the Employers Skills and Education Board (Pledge Management Board and associated 8 local Pledge Partnership Boards, Accelerate Management Board, Digital Skills Partnership Board and associated themed task and finish groups and the Data and Labour Market Steering Group).

Nicola Merriman commented that she circulates papers to all the providers and employers in the NSAM network.

Clare Hayward noted that the Employers’ Skills and Employment Board had adopted an approach that was focused on a clear strategy with ‘ruthless prioritisation’ to ensure effective delivery of the strategy. The Employers’ Skills and Education Board had to be employer-driven and had to work efficiently – engaging stakeholders through the sub-groups and the wider stakeholder network. This approach had been very successful to date as evidenced by the progress made with the Pledge, Accelerate Cheshire and Warrington and, more recently, the Digital Skills Partnership and the Data and Labour Market Steering Group.

Philip Cox noted that with over 80 training providers working in Cheshire and Warrington it was important to ensure effective communication to all the providers not just a few who were members of a Board. Dhesi’s role was to represent the training providers on the Board and to ensure the training providers had an opportunity to contribute to the work of the Board – in particular, through the various sub-groups.

Philip also noted that the colleges were represented on the main LEP Board, but it would not be appropriate for training providers to have voting rights because they were potential beneficiaries of delivery programmes.

Members agreed the terms of reference and noted the stakeholder map. They asked Pat Jackson to provide Jamie with a more detailed note explaining how training and education providers are involved in the work of the Employers’ Skills and Education Board. **ACTION: Pat Jackson DONE**

**PROGRESS REVIEWS**

**6.1 Data and Labour Market Intelligence**

Dhesi reported that a task and finish group comprising all the colleges and local authorities had met on four occasions to develop proposals for working together on the data and labour market intelligence to help inform the work of the Employers’ Skills and Education Board and the development of training and education across Cheshire and Warrington. All the colleges and local authorities had agreed to evolve the task and finish group into a Steering Group that would oversee future data and labour market work.

It was suggested that the next meeting of the Employers’ Skills and Education Board should devote more time to review the data and labour market work. **ACTION: Pat Jackson**

**6.2 Digital Skills Partnership (DSP)**

Sarah Williams presented a short set of slides on the DSP including a draft road map setting out the objectives and key challenges for the DSP and a stakeholder map. Members were invited to comment on the road map, to suggest other stakeholders who should be included on the stakeholder map and to suggest the key themes of work for the DSP. **ACTION: All Members**

Clare Hayward invited Members to let her know if they would like to join the DSP or if they could suggest names of employers who might want to join the DSP. **ACTION: All Members**

Sarah outlined the proposed structure of the DSP Board, stakeholder groups and task and finish groups.

Sarah was asked to explore if the DSP logo could use the same family of branding as the Pledge and Accelerate Cheshire and Warrington.

Trevor reported that Sarah had been invited to attend all the local Pledge Partnership Boards and a numbers of IT leads in local schools had also expressed a keenness to work with Sarah.

**6.3 Pledge**

Trevor Langston provided a short progress report on the work of the Pledge. He shared a draft road map for the Pledge which would be discussed at the next Pledge Management Board. Trevor noted the Pledge Management Board comprised over 50% employers to ensure an employer- driven approach. Trevor also reported that local Pledge Partnerships were now established across Cheshire and Warrington and to date over 90% of the secondary schools and colleges had engaged at local level with the Pledge. Each local Pledge Partnership would produce their own road maps to reflect priorities in their localities.

It was noted that James Richards, Paul Colman, Paul Taylor and Nicola Merriman are currently all members of the Pledge Management Board. Membership would be reviewed once the Pledge was fully operational.

There was some discussion about the proposed target of engaging meaningfully with at least 125 employers over the next 2.5 years. It was recognised that it was important to explain the business benefits of engagement with the Pledge and to differentiate between raising the profile of the Pledge with employers and meaningful engagements – not just easy wins to meet the targets set by funders of the Pledge. This feedback would be reported to the Pledge Management Board. A further draft of the road map would be presented to the Employers’ Skills and Education Board after the Pledge Management Board had completed their review of the road map.

It was suggested that the LEP should produce a list of vacancies across all the sub-groups of the Employers’ Skills and Education Board. **ACTION Pat Jackson, Trevor Langston and Sarah Williams**

Trevor noted that Higher Horizon had recently indicated that they would extend the funding for the Enterprise Coordinators to 2021.

Trevor asked for help in engaging businesses in Chester and Ellesmere Port and Dhesi noted the opportunities to link with Story House in Chester which had a very significant footfall of employers. Trevor noted that the Pledge was planning a survey to be launched over the next few weeks and Clare Hayward suggested that he should speak to the Cirrus Marketing Team about how best to conduct the survey. **ACTION: Trevor Langston.**

Trevor reported the Christleton and Helsby High Schools were both now looking to recruit Enterprise Advisors and asked Members to suggest potential candidates for these roles. **ACTION: All Members**

Philip Cox noted that he had just received a letter from the Careers and Enterprise Company congratulating the LEP on progress over the last year. He thanked Trevor and the Pledge team for their work to date.

**7.. Any Other Business**

There was no further business other than the review of Local Growth Fund Bids and Members with a conflict of interest were required to leave the meeting.

**8. Date and Venue of Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 16 October – venue to be confirmed.

**AT THIS POINT THE FIRST PART OF THE MEETING CLOSED. MEMBERS WITH CONFLICTS OF INTEREST LEFT THE ROOM.**

The following have a potential conflict of interest in the larger bids

* Dhesi

The following have a potential conflict of interest in bids up to £20,000

* Dhesi
* Paul Taylor
* Phil Atkinson
* James Richards

Sarah Williams and Trevor Langston also left the meeting.

**PART B OF THE MEETING – LOCAL GROWTH FUND BIDS**

Part B of the meeting considered the Local Growth Fund bids.

**CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON LEP Annex A**

**EMPLOYERS SKILLS AND EDUCATION BOARD MEETING ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2019**

The following members of the Employers’ Skills and Education Board attended the meeting:

* Clare Hayward
* Paul Colman (South Cheshire Chamber)
* Phil Atkinson (Daresbury)
* Paul Taylor (Taylor Business Park)
* Dhesi Jasbir (Cheshire College South and West – representing the FE Colleges)
* Bill Carr (Carpe Diem)
* James Richards (Network Rail)
* Nicola Merriman (National Skills Academy Nuclear)
* Philip Cox
* Pat Jackson (LEP)

**Apologies**

* Louise Higgins (United Utilities)
* Julia Teale (Bentley Motors)
* Faye Van Flute (Lloyds Banking Group)
* Martin Wood (Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy) – observer

Also attending Sarah Williams (LEP), Jamie Zucker (DfE), Clare Cassidy (DfE), Trevor Langston (LEP)