

This document will be published

Coast to Capital Careers Hub Steering Group Meeting

Thursday 11 November 2021 9.00am – 10.30am

Virtual Meeting held via Zoom

Key points & action notes

Steering Group Board Members:

Liane Richardson (LR) - Chair; Paula Neal (PN); Duncan Edwards (DE); Peter Waters (PW); Charlie Field (CF); Vanessa Potter (VP); Charlie Field (CF); Sue Taylor (ST); Steve Benwell (SB); Jeff Alexander (JA); Giles Thomas (GT); Charlene Simms (CS); Dario Stevens (DS); Freya Wall (FW)

Officers:

Lisa Mobbs (LM) – Coast to Capital; Georgina Angele (GA) – The Careers & Enterprise Company; Hannah Thomas (HT) – Coast to Capital; Izzy Pompova (IP) – Coast to Capital; Kirsten Trussell (KT) – Coast to Capital;

1. Introduction (Liane Richardson)

LR welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were noted from Georgina Angele (GA), Kirsten Trussell (KT), Giles Thomas (GT), Vanessa Potter (VP), Jeff Alexander (JA), Freya Wall (FW) and Emma Lawford (EL).

Thank you to everyone for your continued commitment to support the Careers Hub.

The meeting was recorded for the purpose of the minutes.

2. The Local Skills Improvement Plan (Claire Witz)

Welcome to Claire Witz, Skills Project Director at Sussex Chamber of Commerce.

We need to understand the local skills challenges, so we can implement a new skills system fit for the future of the local business. This pilot is part of the infrastructure that will transform the ability of local skills systems to adapt to the changing needs of employers; responding to new opportunities and challenges that will improve productivity and drive growth in the area.

The purpose is to break down barriers between employers and FE and skills providers by identifying the skills needs. Sussex Chamber of Commerce will work with employers and employer representative groups, to identify the local needs and solutions to address them in these key sectors:

- Engineering and Manufacturing
- Construction
- Digital

- Visitor and Cultural Industries
- Land-based
- Health and Care

Identifying skills gaps and barriers will be done via face to face and virtual workshops with businesses also via surveys. Coast to Capital is supporting this work and is doing a piece of research for Sussex Chamber of Commerce to support identifying the skills needs.

Workshops can be booked via the website [here](#)

Charlie Field (CF) - Are businesses being asked to think about their skills needs for a particular age/stage of a person's career? Claire Witz (CW) - No, it's for all ages from schools to older population.

Paula Neal (PN) - How much crossover there is with other institutions/places which are doing trailblazers? (CW) - We share information with British Chamber of Commerce for example.

Duncan Edwards (DE) - Have you got any intelligence on uptake from schools engaged? (CW) - No, but we had people coming from colleges and independent training providers. (DE) offered to support (CW) in raising the awareness among the West Sussex schools of the work Claire is doing.

3. Careers Hub Update (Lisa Mobbs)

Lisa Mobbs (LM) recapped briefly on the last academic year where the team focused on delivering projects to help support schools to plug the gaps in benchmarks. Schools struggled with employer engagement and work experience, so we developed a lot of projects (e.g. virtual talks, virtual work experience, virtual insight days etc.) to support this. Our Cornerstone Employers were fundamental in their support to deliver these projects. Special thanks to Thakeham Homes. Liane Richardson (LR) – The facilitation of the projects was very smooth.

Every school in the Careers Hub now has a platform to support students helping to build a careers profile, build a CV, explore LMI etc.

£27,500 spent out of £35,000 Careers Hub budget on Projects 20-21.

This term, 3 projects already delivered to schools and colleges:

- 7th Oct - What Next Sussex in collaboration with Get Career Confident, over 9,000 page views and 1100 students and teachers participated.
- 21st Oct - Best Next Steps Surrey – 15 schools registered. The event was for all schools in Surrey (not just C2C area). Lower uptake. Schools finding difficult to engage in virtual events.
- Building Green Foundations – virtual work experience programme (construction), the programme is still open until the end of December. 4 live webinars delivered in October half term.

Lower uptake in all virtual events than anticipated. We need to rethink how we spend the money. Should we be stepping away from projects and should schools now take responsibility for their careers provision now?

Benchmark performance at August 2021:

- BM1 – 49% (target 75%)
BM1 is the key focus for us this academic year
- BM5 – 54% (target 65%)
- BM6 – target met

Strategic priorities for this academic year:

- We need to shift from the project work, schools need to take responsibility for careers at local level

- BM1 is our focus – Community of Practice Leads may help with this
- Sharing best practice within schools. Sharing case studies and impact studies.
- T-levels awareness – mapping which T-levels are going to be offered by our colleges in the network.
- Transition projects to support schools with increased numbers in free school meals, likely in the Brighton area
- Need to increase Head Teacher engagement. Working with local authorities to raise awareness.
- Sustainable employer engagement – schools/colleges need to be responsible for building and maintaining employer relationships, so these relationships are sustainable.
- Expand the Careers Hub – ideally from Sept 2022. For this, we need funding to match the funding from The Careers and Enterprise Company for Enterprise Coordinators.

Benchmark focus and targets for this year:

- Each school needs to achieve min 3 Benchmarks (any).
- Careers Hub needs to achieve an average of at least 5 Benchmarks.
- Clear evidence in progress in BM5 & 6
- BM1 at 80%

Group Discussion –

Work experience: Face to face challenging. Virtual work experience is fatiguing.

What would work well that you could recommend for schools in the Careers Hub? Where should our funds be spent? Needs to be sustainable and keeping in mind with the EC resource we have to deliver.

Liane Richarson (LR) - What do schools/colleges prefer? (LM) - it's a mix, and different across schools at the moment. Some schools are starting to bubble students again because of rising cases and also not allowing external visitors in.

(LR) - hybrid version of using both, virtual as well as face to face.

Dario Stevens (DS) - Different picture in colleges. In colleges we have very little COVID cases. We still want external work experience. We had lots of employers coming in doing work shops, students went on external visits. All very positive. We did struggle with virtual lethargy last year. How can we as Lead College support other schools in the network? What does other Lead colleges in other Hubs do to support their outreach? (LM) – **ACTION** a meeting will be organized with Freya and Dario to share our Careers Hub strategy in full and identify opportunities for our Lead School and College to support.

We also got involved with National Citizenship Service (NCS) and Willmott Dixon. Sandra will do some case studies on these activities so we can share the impact with the group.

Paula Neal (PN) - Ownership of employer relationships needs to be handed over to Careers Leaders (schools/colleges). Do we need a bit of research on the insight into Careers Leaders perceptions etc.? (LM) - the CEC will shortly be launching a survey for Careers Leaders.

Charlie Field (CF) - The idea to support the schools to support themselves is really good. Careers Leader Forums may be a good idea. (LM) - yes, we already organise these once a term and it's from these meetings that we have picked up on how unhappy some of our Careers Leaders are.

Charlene Sims (CS) - virtual events this year have had low uptake at Thales too, compared to last year. Good uptake when we send Ambassadors to schools with boxes.

4. Community of Practice Leads (Lisa Mobbs)

The purpose is to identify strengths in the Careers Hub and to support best practice in relation to meeting the benchmarks. This role is in addition to our Lead School and Lead College. It will be a paid role. Other benefits for the Careers Leaders include personal development, kudos and recognition of their expertise. Creating a Community of Practice Lead aligns with our strategy to help build a self-improving system and leaders for the system to help drive school and college improvement plans.

We will be engaging Head Teachers in this via email.

Ideally, the person would be in role by 27th Jan to participate in training. There will be an application process. Criteria for CoP Lead outlined (see presentation slides). The EC team will be able to identify strong contenders.

We can also consider ambassadors and paying schools to participate in coaching.

Group Discussion –

Your thoughts on engaging an CoP Lead? Would this be a good use of our funds? What should we expect from our CoP Lead to meet our targets?

Peter Waters (PW) - can you explain what money is available? How many Leads are you going to have across the Hub? (LM) - our annual budget from DfE for all 35 institutions is £28,000 to support our plans, projects and initiatives. The idea is to pilot this, not to go wide yet. If it's successful, we can escalate. We can determine how much we're paying the Lead. (PW) - starting small is sensible. What is the difference between the EA role and the CoP Lead role? (LM) - it would be more of a coaching role, providing much more targeted support on the individual need of the school and how their careers plans fit in with the school improvement plan.

Peter Waters (PW) - why would a Head Teacher want to let their Careers Leader dedicate their time somewhere else? How can we enable people doing the Lead role? (LM) - most Heads are keen to share their best practice now. It elevates the profile of their school. It won't be on weekly basis; it might be once every 6 weeks. We wouldn't be pulling them too much from their own school.

Dario Stevens (DS) - CoP Lead is a good idea. Mentoring partnership would work well, bouncing back ideas. Trialing the pilot would give us an idea how that could work.

Paula Neal (PN) – Mentoring - have we trialed this with our Careers Leaders (as unpaid)? (LM) - No, we've not been able to do this yet. We are hearing from schools they feel underpaid in their role; we're hoping the financial incentive will make a difference.

The group have agreed that we should proceed with the pilot. An update will be provided at our next meeting.

5. AOB and Close

Charlie Field (CF) - European Social Fund grant received. We will be using for a project to support people who have left education. **ACTION** – Charlie to be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

There were no further items raised for discussion.

Next meeting – Thursday, 3rd February 2022 9:00-10:30am

This meeting has been booked via Teams but we will continue to monitor the opportunity to meet face to face. Dario Stevens (DS) has kindly offered NESOT as a venue.

Footnote: Unconfirmed minutes – subject to approval/amendment as necessary at the next meeting of the Steering Group committee.