

**Coast to Capital – Skills 360 Board Meeting 8**

Wednesday 09 September 4.00pm – 6.00pm

Virtual Meeting held via Zoom

**Meeting Minutes**

**Board Members:**

Frances Rutter (FR) - Chair; Winston Mahaffy (WM) – Vice Chair; Andy Brown (AB); Christina Dennis (CD); Jenny Andersson (JA); Jonathan Sharrock (JS); Kevin Delf (KD); Liane Richardson (LR); Robert Pye (RP); Ruth Whittaker (RW); Simon Bland (SB); Simon Pringle (SP); Tim Walder (TW)

**Officers:**

Claire Witz (CW) – Coast to Capital; Kirsten Trussell (KT) – Coast to Capital; Millie Bew (MB) – Coast to Capital

**Observers:**

Gillian Keegan MP (GK); Barney Ely (BE) – Skills Talent Action Group, EM3 LEP; Jamie Zucker (JZ) – Department for Education; Dan Templeton (DT) – Gillian Keegan’s office

**1. Introduction**

**a) Welcome, apologies and introductions**

FR introduced the eighth meeting of the Skills 360 Board, the Skills Advisory Panel for the Coast to Capital area.

Apologies were noted from Alison Addy from Gatwick Airport and Boyd Hatwood from the ESFA.

FR welcomed observers Barney Ely from Hays, who chairs the EM3 Skills Advisory Panel and Jamie Zucker from the Department for Education, and informed the group that Gillian Keegan MP and her assistant Dan Templeton would be joining the meeting later.

It was agreed to rearrange the order of the agenda to ensure that GK was present for the most relevant items.

**b) Minutes from last meeting and Matters Arising**

FR gave a recap of the minutes from the last meeting, the minutes were confirmed as accurate.

There were no outstanding actions from the last meeting.

**c) Conflict of interest**

FR read out the standard Conflicts of Interest statement. There were no conflicts arising from agenda items.

**2. Skills Projects Update**

FR introduced CW and KT to present the item.

CW gave an update on the Enterprise Adviser Network and the Careers Hub, including progress made against the implementation plan for the Hub and the development of the Steering Group and Cornerstone Employers Group.

CW asked if there were any questions. RP asked for more information on what the Careers Hub would do. CW replied that the Hub was a further development of the existing EAN programme, involving 35 schools and colleges in the area, covering all of the Gatsby benchmarks (whereas the EAN programme covers two of the six Gatsby benchmarks). SB added that Reigate and Banstead are in the process of developing a tool for secondary schools which has crossover with the Careers Hub, and is hopeful that the two projects can complement each other. CW agreed that this would be the case.

CW gave an overview of the opportunities for board members to be involved with the EAN as Enterprise Advisers (EAs), as well as an open role for the Chair of the Careers Hub Steering Group.

FR invited board members to put themselves forward for the role of Steering Group Chair for the Careers Hub. LR put herself forward and the nomination was seconded by TW, who commented that he already supports the EAN as an EA and would recommend it to any board member. LR was subsequently appointed as the chair of the Careers Hub Steering Group. Board members were advised to contact CW if they are interested in becoming an EA.

KT gave an update on the progress of the Innovation Centre project. The project team are currently procuring a consultant to write the full business case for the project. Crawley Borough Council have put a funding request through the Crawley Town Deal for the initial set-up and running of the Innovation Centre. JS commented that his update later would provide some context for the strategic importance of this project in the region.

KT then gave an update on the Institute of Technology project, informing board members that a partnership of Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) organisations had been working on a proposal for an IoT in the area, with Coast to Capital supporting as a strategic partner. Research for the Local Industrial Strategy identified challenges in recruiting to higher level technical roles, which the proposal being developed aims to address. KT gave an overview of the requirements for an IoT set out by DfE.

RP asked for more detail about timescales and KT responded that the initial prospectus had been issued by DfE for Wave 2 (Eight IoTs have already been established through the Wave 1 competition) and the competition for Wave 2 will be launched in the autumn of this year.

*GK and DT joined the meeting.*

FR welcomed Gillian Keegan and Dan Templeton to the meeting.

### **3. Coast to Capital update**

FR invited JS to present the item.

JS gave a presentation including:

- An overview of Coast to Capital's economy before COVID-19 and the work the LEP had been doing to understand the opportunities and challenges for the region, including the high concentration of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and the gap in the working population aged 20-40.

- Headline statistics from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Economic Impact Assessment by Hatch Regeneris including the estimated 12 – 17% reduction in GVA in the area, and the impact on the different geographies, from the hardest hit areas around Gatwick Airport to the resilience of Coastal towns and relatively high number of newly established businesses in Brighton.
- The LEPs manifesto for recovery, to build back stronger, smarter and greener, including:
  - Build back stronger. The recovery of the Gatwick Diamond economy, which had become reliant on the airport, including diversification of industries around the area to promote economic growth and attracting new businesses and innovation to the area. This provides the strategic context for the Innovation Centre project previously mentioned.
  - Build back smarter. Brighton has a strong university presence and a well-established digital and technology sector, for example the 5G hub and a Quantum computing spin-out company originating from the University of Sussex which has received international funding. This will naturally attract more businesses and drive innovation within the city and across Coastal West Sussex.
  - Build back greener. This is a common theme across geographies of the LEP. Examples of innovation in the green sector can be seen across the region, including a carbon neutral Gatwick Airport, hydrogen buses, solar and offshore energy generation, and initiatives offsetting of natural capital and carbon.
- JS updated that Coast to Capital is partnering with other LEPs in the South East to form the Catalyst South, to talk about what the South East can offer within the wider UK economy to Government.

JS asked if there were any questions, and no questions were raised.

FR asked if GK had any questions or wanted to share anything with the group.

GK said that her brief now covers Skills Advisory Panels (SAPs) and this meeting is an opportunity to see what SAPs are, their value, what they can deliver and how that feeds into planning for the wider skills agenda, for example planning around skills and qualifications, FE reform and the national skills fund.

FR gave GK an overview of the aims of the meeting, including the sign-off of the Coast to Capital Skills Action Plan

**ACTION - Share Skills Action Plan with GK once finalised**

#### **4. Board member updates**

FR asked each board member to give a short update on the top two priorities in their sector post COVID-19.

Some of the common priorities across multiple sectors were:

- Working remotely, establishing new ways of working, and preparing office premises ready for staff to return to work safely
- Adapting and diversifying business to meet changing demand and alternative ways of working as a result of COVID-19, for example increased demand for technology to support remote working, major infrastructure projects coming from

Government which shape the priorities for the construction industry, increased demand for new build housing, a shift towards online courses and high demand for remote learning in the education and training sector, and changes in priorities for public sector organisations

- Understanding changes in the labour market, the implications on recruitment, what the skills needs for the future economy post COVID-19 will be, and how to ensure learners can access the right training and education, including the opportunities presented through participation in the Kickstart scheme

GK thanked board members for sharing their updates, and highlighted some of the educational routes available that are working towards bridging skills gaps such as T-Levels and apprenticeships, and how these initiatives can contribute to recovery post COVID-19, as well as other Government initiatives such as Kickstart and the Skills Toolkit which provides free online training for people to gain the digital skills that are in demand by employers.

GK and DT left the meeting.

## **5. Covid-19 Skills and Labour Market Impact Assessment and Skills Action Plan (Part B)**

FR invited CW and KT to present the item.

CW informed board members of the proposed changes to the Skills and Labour Market Impact Assessment.

KT gave a reminder of the Skills 360 Board priorities that form the basis of the Skills Strategy and Action Plan, and informed board members of the proposed changes to the document.

FR asked board members to vote on whether they approved the two documents, subject to the changes outlined by CW and KT. All board members voted to approve both the Skills and Labour Market Impact Assessment and Skills Strategy and Action Plan.

## **6. Close**

There were no further items raised for discussion

*Footnote: Unconfirmed minutes – subject to approval/amendment as necessary at the next meeting of the Committee.*