

Coast to Capital

Reference: Skills 360 Board Meeting
Date: Thursday 17 June 2021
Report Title: Action Plan Delivery
Report by: Claire Witz
Item No: 7
Part: A

Recommendation:

The Board is asked to:

- Note the progress made on delivery of the Skills Action Plan.

1. Context

This report will provide Skills 360 Board members with a detailed quarterly update on steps taken to achieve the activities and outcomes identified in the Skills Strategy and Action Plan.

The report will provide operational updates in relation to delivery of the Skills Action Plan, including resourcing, key milestones and budgetary information where appropriate.

In addition, the report provides information on activities undertaken on existing skills projects since the last Board meeting in April.

Additional information is provided as annexes where appropriate.

2. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement

Annex A sets out the outcomes for the Skills Action Plan, with separate equality, diversity and inclusion outcomes. Progress of the Skills Action Plan will be measured through these outcomes, so equality, diversity and inclusion will be a key consideration throughout delivery of the interventions.

3. Action Plan Delivery

The Coast to Capital Skills Team have been working on a set of measurable outcomes for the Skills Strategy and Action Plan. We are currently working on pulling together baseline data for each outcome for September 2020 so that performance

can be monitored to 2025, subject to the availability of the relevant data.

The outcomes can be found in Annex A. There are a set of separate equality, diversity and inclusion outcomes for each priority.

The intention is to include these outcomes and the accompanying baseline data in the next iteration of the Local Skills Report which will be published in November of this year.

4. Construction Sector Spotlight

The Construction Spotlight project has now completed two events. The Construction Talent Retention Scheme (CTRS) Information Session was held on 7 May 2021 with BEIS presenting on the CTRS online platform. Participants heard how it can support people looking for employment to showcase their skills, talent, expertise and experience to employers in the construction industry, as well as construction employers who wish to recruit to fill the skills gaps in their workforce. Attendees at the event included people support agencies, education providers, Sussex Chamber of Commerce and a Growth Hub representative.

The second event was the Skills Provider Roundtable meeting on 25 May 2021. This was attended by seven education providers including University of Brighton, all FE colleges in the area, CITB and Sussex Chamber of Commerce. The session included discussion about the challenges faced by education providers and how they are working with businesses on their skills needs. The key points coming out of the meeting were around the need to collaborate and build networks, as well as skills for the future. The next steps following the event are for the Construction Spotlight working group to review the key points from the event and identify where the Skills 360 Board can add value. This meeting is arranged for 8 June 2021 and Ana Christie from Sussex Chamber of Commerce will be joining the meeting to provide valuable input.

The research into the planned infrastructure construction programmes in the Coast to Capital area over the next 10 years to identify the future workforce and skills that will be required, has now been contracted to Genecon following a successful procurement process. They are currently undertaking data analysis and evidence review as well as stakeholder research and interviews. Twice monthly meetings are being held with the Skills Manager and the final report is expected in early July 2021.

The project working group took the decision to postpone the planned Construction Sector Industry Roundtable, which was planned for 15 June 2021. It was felt that there would be more value to this event once we have received the final report, and digested the findings, from the research into the planned infrastructure programmes, workforce and skills needs. We will rearrange this roundtable event for later in the summer.

5. Enterprise Adviser Network (EAN) and Careers Hub Programme

EAN Programme

Engagement with our Careers Hub and EAN institutions has been challenging in the period up to May 2021 due to competing priorities in schools and colleges to include teacher assessment grading of GCSEs.

During this period, the EC team have helped institutions across the Careers Hub and Enterprise Adviser Network to significantly improve progress in Gatsby Benchmarks 1 (a stable careers programme), 5 (employer encounters) and 6 (experiences of the workplace) as reflected in our dashboard for March, which can be found at Annex B. Although we are still some way off achieving our targets in the Benchmarks this year, our dashboard shows the significant progress we have made and that we are now performing above than the national average in Benchmarks 1, 2, 4 and 7. Our Careers Hub and EAN institutions have made further progress in all other Benchmarks, except Benchmark 6 for Careers Hub where uptake for virtual work experience placements has been lower than expected. We are supporting schools who plan to return to face-to-face work experience this term, promoting our offer of Virtual Insight Days with our Cornerstone Employers and are signposting all other virtual work experience opportunities to our Careers Leaders. We believe that we will meet our revised target for Benchmark 6 and no institution with pupils in year groups above Year 10 will be at 0%.

The Hello Future careers event for EAN schools in West Sussex and Brighton & Hove will be delivered via a series of live workshops during a week in July. Clare Hutchinson, Director of Network for the Careers & Enterprise Company, will be a panel speaker. Workshops include Hello Brand, Hello Creativity, Hello Resilience and Hello Employment.

Careers Hub

The Careers Hub has submitted £200,000 funding application to the Careers and Enterprise Company Effective Transition Fund. The aim of the fund is to improve the education and employment outcomes for the target cohort by providing long-term targeted careers support to disadvantaged young people in Key Stage 4 to enable them to transition to, and sustain engagement in, a high-quality post-16 destination.

If successful we will work in partnership with Sussex Learning Network and Higher Education Outreach Network to oversee and manage the activity they will undertake for the area from September 2021 until February 2024. Successful projects will have funding awards made week commencing 9 August 2021.

The Hub Enterprise Coordinator team have begun delivery of our three key projects for summer term.

Several Open Doors Apprentice and Graduate talks have been successfully delivered with Year 12 students in secondary schools across the Careers Hub region.

Speakers from business were provided with a full brief for the talk to include their own personal journey since leaving full time education and what they would tell their 17-year-old self on reflection. All talks were followed by a Q&A session to enable two-way interaction between the employer and students, thereby meeting the criteria for Gatsby Benchmark 5.

Our [Virtual Careers Fair](#) will be delivered live on 16th June. 38 exhibitors are now confirmed to include local and national businesses, colleges and universities and training providers. Students will be able to participate in live chat with employers, watch on-demand videos, add items to their 'swag bag' and compete for Leader Board prizes.

Our Cornerstone Employers have created their Job Ads for our Virtual Insight Days with Speakers for Schools. Schools are now being encouraged to register their disadvantaged students for these opportunities in June. Delivery will be in July 2021. Our Virtual Insight Days have been designed to offer students the opportunity to hear about a larger local business organisation and to complete a work related small project or activity.

We have met with our Cornerstone Employers Group and Steering Group to outline projects and initiatives for 2021/22 academic year. Potential projects include the development of a work-based construction/green sector project with Spring Pod, partnership with the Cyber Police to raise awareness of careers in cyber and partnership work with our Cornerstone Employers to better prepare young people for job applications and the development of CVs.

Institutions across the network have expressed their desire for the return of face-to-face employer engagement and are reporting 'virtual fatigue'.

6. Innovation Centre ('The FUSION Centre')

The full business case for the project is ongoing, supported by a significant piece of market testing work to ascertain demand for the Innovation Centre and its proposed facilities and services. We hope to gain approval for the business case in September 2021, with pre-construction activities commencing shortly after.

7. Institute of Technology

Led by Chichester College Group (CCG), a consortium including the University of Sussex, University of Brighton and North East Surrey College of Technology (Nescot) is bidding for £13 million of Government funding to enhance higher level skills training across the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) region by establishing an Institute of Technology in Crawley.

It was announced on 11 May that the proposal has been successful in passing the first stage and is one of the 13 proposals shortlisted to a final competitive stage. Results will be announced later this year.

Details on the 13 shortlisted proposals can be found on the Government website [here](#).

The announcement from Chichester College Group can be found [here](#).

8. Home Decarbonisation Academy

Work is continuing to develop our intelligence and draft the narrative for the Home Decarbonisation Academy initial business case. This includes continued work with the Greater South Energy Hub on new data on housing stock. We are also undertaking further national and local analysis of the workforce and skills requirements, as well as the innovation workstream in conjunction with the universities.

We are talking increasingly with university partners who are using their expertise to help explore public sector plans for home decarbonisation across the area. Alongside the development of the initial business case for the local area we continue to work with our colleagues at New Anglia LEP and the national Energy Systems Catapult to develop our intelligence behind the various workstreams, thus ensuring a consistent regional and national approach.

Home decarbonisation is a rapidly evolving field across industry, policy and funding. It is important that we ensure that the pilot continues to add value in terms of the skills agenda. Therefore, we are working to ensure this project ties in with a variety of emerging projects in a similar space locally and nationally, for example the local Skills Improvement Plans and Strategic Development Fund applications, and national work around green skills and qualification development.

9. Legal Statement

There are no legal implications for consideration regarding the recommendations set out in this paper.

10. Finance Statement

There are no financial implications for consideration regarding the recommendations set out in this paper.

Annexes:

- Annex A – Skills Action Plan Outcomes
- Annex B – EAN and Careers Hub Dashboard March 2021