

Reference: Skills 360 Board Meeting
Date: Thursday 30 September 2021
Report Title: Action Plan Delivery
Report by: Millie Bew and Lisa Mobbs
Part: A

Recommendation:

The Board is asked to:

- Note the progress made on delivery of the various initiatives within 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

In support of its focus on inclusion, the Enterprise Adviser Network/Careers Hub is exploring the possible recruitment of an Inclusion Enterprise Coordinator to enable it to offer full coverage of support to special educational needs schools and alternative provision centers, many of which have high numbers of students with free school meals.

3. Local Skills Report

There is a requirement for Local Skills Reports to be refreshed towards the end of 2021. DfE expect revised Reports to be published between 30 November 2021 and 28 January 2022, allowing SAPs to choose the most appropriate date within this timeframe, balancing the need to inform local providers' curriculum planning at the most appropriate stage with the imperative to include the most up to date data available, some of which may only be released in late November/early December 2021.

The DfE is still working through the policy on LSIPs and the crossover/link to SAPs' Local Skills Reports. The specific requirement to produce a Local Skills Report may be removed or amended in areas that are selected to trailblaze LSIPs. This may or may not affect Coast to Capital as only part of the LEP (Sussex) is an LSIP trailblazer area.

4. Economic Impact Dashboard

Over the last 18 months we have published Skills and Labour Market impact assessments at regular intervals to track key metrics around skills and employment. As of August this year, the data previously presented through those impact assessments has been incorporated into our wider [Economic Impact Dashboard](#) which shows data to July 2021. The dashboard is interactive and allows the user to filter the data according to their needs. These dashboards will be published quarterly going forward.

5. Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) and Strategic Development Fund (SDF)

Sussex and Kent Invicta Chambers of Commerce, Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and South East LEP are pleased to be working collaboratively on the development of two Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) trailblazers for Sussex and for Kent & Medway.

The relationship between the Chambers and the LEPs' employer led Skills Advisory Panels (SAPs) will be key to understanding demand, with business representatives bringing a wealth of expertise and sector specific experience, and a commitment to understanding and tackling skills gaps. Further Education partners from Sussex and Kent are also engaged to ensure colleges and providers are primed to consider approaches to respond to the emerging challenges.

The LSIPs will build on existing data and research activity from the SAPs to better understand skills shortages in priority sectors within the LSIP geographies. This joint approach will allow us to share lessons learned with other areas, notably Surrey and Essex which also fall within the two LEP areas.

A strategic development fund (SDF) bid was also submitted by a consortium of eight college groups, further education colleges and sixth form colleges across East and West Sussex and Brighton & Hove, led by Chichester College Group (CCG) which

was successful, appointing Sussex as one of the pilot areas. The bid secured £7 million to deliver a collaborative programme across the County focused on boosting skills in sustainable industries by March 2022.

6. Construction Sector Spotlight

The skills team are working with consultants, Genecon, to produce a report which maps out the people and skills that will be needed to deliver the pipeline of construction and infrastructure projects over the next 10 years in the Coast to Capital area.

Genecon are engaging with a range of stakeholders to gather anecdotal evidence to support the data, including local and national construction companies, larger national organisations such as Highways England and Network Rail, and environmental organisations such as Environment Agency and Surrey Wildlife Trust. Where stakeholders are delivering capital projects, these conversations have been followed up with a questionnaire to gain quantitative data on the size and type of workforce and the associated skills that will be required to deliver the planned projects over the next 10 years.

We will hold an event towards the end of the year to share the key findings of the report, and to bring together employers and training and education providers to discuss collaborative opportunities to address current and emerging skills gaps in the sector.

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

Growth plans

The business plan sets our intention to explore ways to expand the EAN and Careers Hub across the region, including to coastal areas, and we will do this in collaboration with local authorities and local business partners.

As a first step, and to help tackle dis-advantage, we have been discussing ways to grow the EAN with our upper tier local authorities. Our strategy is to explore opportunities for local authorities to match fund provision for an Inclusion Enterprise Coordinator to enable us to offer full coverage of support to special educational needs schools and alternative provision centers, many of which have high numbers of students with free school meals. The conversations have been positive, but no firm decisions will be made until after the outcome of the LEP review.

Innovating to achieve

Despite repeated school/college closures and disruption to education, we have been able to provide many invaluable employer encounters and initiatives to help every young person in their next best step during the last academic year.

The EC team have worked hard to adapt, by delivering encounters virtually and providing our own funded online events for young people to make careers education accessible through the pandemic. Key successes have included collaboration with partners to deliver wide scale and inclusive events such as What Next Sussex, Next

Steps Surrey, Hello Future, Crawley STEM fest and the Coast to Capital Virtual Careers Fair.

Progress against targets

In view of the challenges for education institutions this year, The Careers & Enterprise Company revised targets for Enterprise Coordinators in March. Following analysis of our school evaluation returns at the end of Summer Term, we are pleased with our progress against the revised targets and have achieved above the national average for 3 benchmarks. It was particularly difficult to engage schools with conflicting priorities in virtual or face to face work experience this year which has impacted our progress in benchmark 6 (experiences of the workplace). However, we did meet our target in that 100% of schools and colleges in the network are partially or fully achieving the benchmark. Please see **Annex A** for a dashboard setting out this progress in more detail.

Strategy for the year

We are now expected to develop an annual Careers Hub strategy, and our focus for next year will be to raise awareness of technical and vocational routes, to remove barriers to access and to help young people to transition smoothly into their next best step. We will continue to support our networked institutions to build mutually beneficial, long term and sustainable partnerships with employers and will explore effective ways to measure impact.

8. Crawley Innovation Centre

The Coast to Capital Investment Committee is considering an updated proposal for the Crawley Innovation Centre which addresses a number of risks that could not be mitigated to the satisfaction of all partners.

9. Institute of Technology (IoT)

It was announced on 11 May that the proposal for an IoT in Coast to Capital, led by Chichester College Group, had been successful in passing the first stage and is one of the 13 proposals shortlisted to a final competitive stage. We are awaiting the results which we expected will be announced in the Autumn, most likely as a part of the budget announcements in October.

10. Home Decarbonisation Academy

We have paused activity on this project whilst we assess how we move forward with less resource. Various linked initiatives have emerged that we need to consider, such as the focus on green tech skills, including home decarbonisation in the Sussex Strategic Development Fund, plans in the Crawley Town Deal around Home Decarbonisation and developing plans at the University of Brighton. We have conversations planned with these partners to understand how we can join forces and maximise efforts with less resource.

11. Legal Statement

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

12. Finance Statement

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

Annexes:

- Annex A – EAN and Careers Hub Dashboard August 2021