***Item 11***

***STOKE-ON-TRENT AND STAFFORDSHIRE***

***LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP LTD***

***BOARD MEETING 18 July 2019***

**Skills Advisory Panel**

**Purpose**

1. To inform the LEP Executive Board of the Department for Education guidance on the Skills Advisory Panel.
2. To inform the LEP Executive Board of the progress in the development of the Skills Advisory Panel.

**Recommendation**

1. The LEP Executive Board notes the position against the Skills Advisory Panel project plan. **(Appendix A)**
2. The Education Skills & Employment Group (ESEG) is dissolved and is replaced by the SAP board
3. The LEP Executive Board agrees the Terms of Reference for the newly created SAP **(Appendix B)**
4. The LEP Executive Board notes the next steps to address identified the SAP evidence gaps and further analysis requirements.

**Background**

1. Skills Advisory Panels (SAPs) are a 2017 Conservative manifesto commitment to “deal with local skills shortages and ensure that colleges deliver the skills required by employers through Skills Advisory Panels and Local Enterprise Partnerships working at a regional and local level”.
2. SAPs aim to strengthen the relationship between employers and education or training providers in local areas. The panels will use robust labour market analysis to understand skills needs and supply and address priorities effectively, improving productivity and their local economy.
3. SAPs analysis will underpin the ‘People’ pillar of the Local Industrial Strategies (LISs) to be produced Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and a guidance document has been developed by DfE to support this.
4. SAPs will be aligned to the broader work to implement the recommendations of the LEP Review and development of Local Industrial Strategies.

**The SAP project plan**

1. A SAP project group has been established as an operational group responsible for the development of the SAP in accordance with the Department for Education guidance. Its role is to lead on tasks and activities against a project plan and to make recommendations to the SAP Board as appropriate. The SAP project group will align all activities to the ongoing development of the SSLEP Local Industrial Strategy.
2. The SAP project plan is attached **Appendix A**. The plan identifies a number of key and underpinning tasks including start and end dates and progress. The key tasks are as follows:

* Initial review of evidence against SAP analytical framework
* Appointment of Economy & Skills Analyst
* The creation of the SAP board
* Establish communications with key stakeholders
* Complete Skills Analysis report
* Complete draft skills delivery plan
* Final skills delivery plan
* Implement Skills delivery plan

**Consultation with ESEG 29.5.2019**

1. At its meeting on the 29.5.19 ESEG considered 3 papers on the development of the SAP to date. The papers included an update on the SAP project plan, the creation of the SAP board and its Terms of Reference and the SAP analytical framework evidence base, main findings and recommendations for further analysis.

**Next Steps in the SAP analysis**

1. Further strengthening of the SAP evidence base – it is envisaged that the SAP evidence base will be a live document which is regularly refreshed through collaboration between stakeholders and based on new analysis and insights.
2. Establish SAP Data Working Group - To assist with addressing data gaps and accessing partners’ data a SAP data working group will be set up to share and seek data, and challenge on the emerging findings and priorities etc. The data group will consist of representatives from key stakeholders including LAs, HE, FE SPEs, third sector, and business sectors.
3. Primary research requirements– In order to address some of the evidence gaps there will need to be primary research conducted, funded by the LEP £75k SAP grant, including addressing the limited understanding of employer needs at a local level e.g. SMEs, sector issues etc.; employee challenges with skills development and training investment; and partner issues with understanding the overall picture of skills supply and demand, now and in the future.

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