

Name	Role	Attendance
Alison Thorpe (AT)	DfE	✓ left at 10.30am
Paddy Bradley (PB)	Chief Executive Officer, SWLEP	✓
Sally Burnett (SB)	Swindon Borough Council Skills Lead	Apologies
Doug Gale (DG)	SWLEP Board Director, QinetiQ	Apologies
Iain Hatt (IH)	Wiltshire College & University Centre	✓
Mike Holliday (MH)	Gloucester and Wiltshire Partnership of Training Providers	Apologies
Helean Hughes (HH)	Director, Education & Skills, Wiltshire Council	Apologies
Georgina Keily-Theobald OR Ian Tucker	representing Wiltshire Association of Secondary School Heads (WASSH)	Apologies
Guy Keith-Miller (GK-M)	representing HEI Pathways & Provisions Group	✓
Carole Kitching (CK)	SWLEP Board Director and Principal, New College Swindon	✓
Anwen Jones (AJ)	SWLEP's BEIS Representative	✓ - left 10.45am
Mandy Paterson (MP)	Inspire by Wessex Chamber and Chair of Wiltshire skills, education, and employment skills board	✓
Andrew Steele (AS)	representing Swindon Association of Secondary Heads (SASH)	Apologies
Karen Taylor (KT)	DWP	Apologies
Mandy Timbrell (MT)	Wiltshire Council, Acting Head Employment and Skills and SWLEP Skills Lead	Apologies
Employers		
Name yet to be advised	Representative from Gooding Accounts	
Howard Deighton (HD)	Siemens	
Rick Kavanagh (RK)	Representative from MoD	Apologies
Andrew Lord (AL)	Alabaré	

Name	Role	Attendance
Ruth Lambert (RL)	FSB, representing the SWLEP Business Intelligence & Network Group (BING)	✓ left at 10.55am
Matt Leach (ML)	Beards Construction	
Ash Nandurkar (AN)	Wavin	
Jean Scrase (JS)	NHS Salisbury	
Phil Townsend (PT)	Littelfuse	✓
Guests		
Laura Alcott (LC)	SWLEP	✓
Sally Cook (SC)	DWP, representing Karen Taylor	✓
Katie Cross (KC)	Wiltshire Council, representing Mandy Timbrell	✓
Dragana Houston (DH)	SWLEP	✓
Amanda Peach (AP)	SWLEP	✓
Debby Skellern (DS)	SWLEP	Apologies
Shona Taylor (ST)	Swindon & Wiltshire Careers Hub Lead	✓ arrived 09.40am
Heather Thompson (HT)	The Duke of Edinburgh Award	✓
James Tindale (JT)	Emsi	✓
Chair:	Carole Kitching (CK)	
Minutes:	Deborah House (DKH)	
Venue	Via video / telephone conference	
Start time	9.30am	
Finish time	11.30am	

Item	Topic	Deadline
1.0	Welcome and introductions	
	The meeting opened at 9.30am with PB welcoming attendees and introductions were made. Apologies were noted. Particular welcome was extended to new attendees to the meeting and those representing absentees.	
2.0	Minutes, matters and Conflicts of Interest	
	CK took back Chair of the Subgroup. The minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2021 to were read and approved. Matters arising:	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on the short courses available at the Institute of Technology was requested so attendees could promote. CK advised that this would be circulated after the meeting. Group members to send event details to PB so he could draft an event schedule. ONGOING An update on Kickstart numbers from SWLEP as a Gateway Organisation was given by AP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a total of 280 placements had been pledged; the Register was now closed ahead of the March deadline in order for applications to be processed; a campaign to highlight vacancies was active with 99 currently live; 68 Kickstarters were now in placements; some Kickstarters were now employed or starting apprenticeships with their Kickstart employers; and work was being undertaken around apprenticeships with webinars scheduled in February to encourage Kickstart employers to convert to apprenticeships. <p>Conflicts of Interest SWLEP had a standing Conflict as an intermediary in the Kickstart Scheme and CK as the Principal for the Institute of Technology. RL declared that FSB was also a Gateway organisation for the Kickstart scheme. No further Conflicts were declared.</p>	
3.0	The Duke of Edinburgh's Award	
	<p>Heather Thompson from the Duke of Edinburgh's Award presented to the meeting and outlined the current aims of the programme. The presentation can be accessed by following the link below.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/skills-talent/2021/11-nov-2021/dofe-skills-talent-subgroup.pdf?sfvrsn=4a421705_4</p> <p>The programme was open to young people up to the age of 25 years in Swindon and Wiltshire and was increasing in popularity with achievement numbers increasing Year on Year. The DoE had partnered with GWR in Swindon and wanted to engage more with community organisations in an effort to increase diversity and inclusion, particularly within the SEND group. There was funding available for enrolment fees for those where finance was an issue removing this barrier for some young people and helping them to achieve.</p> <p>The link to the video "Youth Without Limits" can be accessed below.</p>	



	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5AnVpUCggA Action: attendees to contact HT with any contacts who may be interested in working with DoE to support young people.	Ongoing
4.0	Skills Plan White Paper update	
	<p>CK updated the meeting on the status of the Skills Plan White Paper.</p> <p>The first reading had taken place in the House of Commons on 16 October 2021 with the second reading due on 15 November. The House would be debating the amendments put forward by the House of Lords. CK referred to a briefing document provided by the Association of Colleges which can be accessed via the following link.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/skills-talent/2021/11-nov-2021/aoc---skills-post-16-education-bill-briefing---november-2021.pdf?sfvrsn=36668acb_4</p> <p>Key amendments from the Lords highlighted in the document regarding post-16 education were given as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proposed placing the lifetime skills guarantee on a statutory footing in order that this would be funded, and reskilling would therefore be free of charge; • to take away the barriers for students on Universal Credit to take up training; • required the Secretary of State for Education to publish an annual report on reskilling funding restrictions; • Local Skill Improvements Plans (LSIPs) featured heavily in the Bill. The creation of LSIP and employer representative bodies must take on the views of local and regional authorities and post-16 education providers and to include the important role of LEPs in skills research; • to consider green skills with regard to climate change and the environment crisis; • other providers would have the right to go into schools and colleges to talk to students up to three times per year about alternative routes to further/higher education such as BTECHs, T-levels and apprenticeships; • the high-profile potential scrapping of BTECH qualifications was not now to be carried out for five years to allow T-levels to become embedded in the system. 	

	<p>PB advised the meeting of his recent attendance at an All-Party Parliamentary Group meeting regarding rural productivity. Supported by CLA functioning as the Secretariat, this was one of a series of meetings seeking evidence and the session he attended was on behalf of the LEP Network. He thanked CK and IH for their input to that evidence. There were discussions about access to training and learning in rural areas and about the tenacity of businesses in the rural sector to drive demand for skills. The role of stronger and more powerful Broadband and mobile spread into rural environments was also important. There was also discussion about Natural Capital in this arena. Cost Benefit Analysis for investment in the traditional manner favoured urban areas over rural areas, but if you brought Natural Capital into the calculations this would change the situation significantly, bringing greater opportunities for investment in rural areas. This approach to levelling up would increase the quality of access for learners.</p> <p>From 2022 onwards, it was uncertain what the overall approach to skills development would be nationally; we do not know which organisation would have responsibility and what part LEPs would play. At the moment, there was a policy vacuum much linked to the ongoing LEP Review. Until clarity was forthcoming, the SWLEP would remain agile and continue to work within the skills environment and continue to make the business voice heard.</p>	
5.0	Budget 2021: provision for skills development	
	<p>PB outlined the key points within the Autumn Budget for the provision for skills development and the funds allocated. The presentation can be accessed by using the following link.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/skills-talent/2021/11-nov-2021/swlep-skills-and-talent-autumn-budget.pdf?sfvrsn=b26f1b76_4</p> <p>MP advised of a 2021 Annual Review and Report from the Scale-up Institute. The link to this report is given below.</p> <p>https://www.scaleupinstitute.org.uk/scaleup-review-2021/introduction/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% of Scale-up businesses were offering employment to young people • 70% of Scale-up business were looking for critical thinking skills from potential employees and • 44% of Scale-ups wanted cognitive flexibility. 	

	Innovative businesses needed to be ahead of the game, hence their requests for these future skills.	
6.0	Careers Hub update	
	<p>ST updated the meeting on the status and current performance of the Careers Hub. The presentation can be accessed by using the following link.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/skills-talent/2021/11-nov-2021/careers-hub-update-11th-november-2021.pdf?sfvrsn=fa6b5b48_4</p> <p>Some points made were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key data would come through in January. These figures were the most up-to-date currently available; • the Annual Review meeting with the Careers Enterprise Company (CEC) had taken place on 27 October 2021 and all was progressing well; • the first meeting of this academic year for the Cornerstone Employers Group took place recently. This Group did not function particularly well last year; • there were currently schools which had vacancies for Enterpriser Advisors and the Careers Lead asked for attendees to use their networks to promote these vacancies. <p>SC of DWP was the Afghan Resettlement Lead for the area. She requested that the Careers Hub prioritise an Advisor for the Lawn Manor School as the secondary age children were attending this school. This would demonstrate joined up thinking with DWP.</p>	
7.0	Labour Market Intelligence (LMI)	
	<p>DH introduced James Tindale from Emsi to the meeting. With DH's imminent departure, Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) information for the Swindon and Wiltshire area would now be covered by Emsi for the next six months. The presentation can be accessed via the link below.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/skills-talent/2021/11-nov-2021/21-11-05-swlep-november-slidedeck-v0-1.pdf?sfvrsn=cf543262_4</p> <p>Some comments made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the end of the Furlough Scheme had not made as big an impact on unemployment figures as was anticipated; 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> people were able to obtain jobs, but some sectors still had difficulty in filling posts; wages were increasing in certain sectors and attracting people who had previously worked in lower-paid sectors, such as hospitality; would these unemployment figures increase when the Honda redundancy packages drew to an end in approximately April 2022? it appeared strange that the numbers for IT and digital were decreasing when it was such a vibrant sector. The question was why. Was this just a one-off occurrence? Or an increasing trend? <p>More insight would be given on LMI in January on specific areas of focus.</p>	Jan 2022
8.0	Business Action Plan Performance Q2 Summary	
	<p>PB spoke to the paper. Priorities stated within SWLEP's Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) had been added to the Business Action Plan and reports were given to the Board at each Quarter. The Skills & Talent area sat within the People Foundation of the LIS and activities were all RAG-rated as green.</p> <p>SWLEP had submitted a bid for a Health & Wellbeing at Work project within the Swindon and Wiltshire area, but this had not been successful. SWLEP had questioned whether there was still an appetite and capacity to continue this work, so it was currently on hold.</p> <p>The main focus now was on improving the uptake of apprenticeships, the outputs within the Skills Plan and the activity of the Careers Hub.</p> <p>The Skills & Talent Subgroup: REVIEWED and NOTED the progress made during the quarter for activity which falls under its oversight.</p>	
9.0	Plan for Growth update	
	<p>PB spoke to the meeting explained that the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) would evolve into the Plan for Growth. This was owing to a change in Government policy. There was commonality in both but with a slightly different emphasis.</p> <p>Some key points raised were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Levelling Up agenda would be different depending on geography; there was more focus on green energy and the route to net zero; skills remained prominent with a drive to speed up skills acquisition of the population within key sectors, but also in the population overall; and HM Treasury was championing the Plan for Growth. 	

	<p>One of the priorities within the LIS had been a Business-led Federation of Higher Education for the Swindon and Wiltshire area, but the question now was if this was still relevant. However, businesses and education providers should continue to work together to become an integral part of the education landscape.</p> <p>The appropriate section of the Plan for Growth would be brought back to the relevant Subgroups for review.</p> <p>The draft of the Plan for Growth would be submitted to the Board in January. Thereafter there would be a wider consultation with the aim of submitting a final draft for approval at the Board Meeting in March.</p>	
10.0	Local Skills Report and structure of Skills Plan 2021-22	
	<p>DH presented to the meeting outlining the format and timetable for the production of the Local Skills Report. This year it would take the same format as previously but with a lighter touch by the DfE. The presentation can be accessed by using the following link.</p> <p>https://static.swlep.co.uk/swlep/docs/default-source/sub-groups/skills-talent/2021/11-nov-2021/local-skills-report-2021---skills-talent-sg---11-nov-2021.pdf?sfvrsn=c0ae128_4</p> <p>DH also highlighted key points within the Skills Plan which were being undertaken, such as the campaign to encourage employer uptake of apprentices.</p>	
11.0	Looking ahead to the next meeting – Skills for the Green Economy	
	<p>CK explained that the January Subgroup meeting would be themed around skills for the green economy. PT from Littelfuse had already expressed his agreement to participate in the agenda.</p> <p>Action: Anyone who had thoughts about further contributors for the agenda should get in touch with the team.</p>	Dec 2021
12.0	AOB	
	<p>Thanks were extended to DH for her important contribution to the Skills & Talent agenda and she was wished well for her future role at the University of Bath.</p> <p>Date of next meeting</p>	



	<p>Wednesday, 12 January – 10am to 12noon Via video / teleconference call</p> <p>Future meetings: Tuesday, 8 March – 2pm to 4pm Thursday, 19 May – 10am to 12noon Thursday, 14 July – 10am to 12noon Wednesday, 14 September – 10am to 12noon Wednesday, 9 November – 10am to 12noon</p> <p>All meetings will take place via video / teleconference call until further notice.</p> <p>CK thanked those present for attending and for their contributions.</p>	
	Meeting closed at 11.37am	

Signed 13/01/2022
Carole Kitching: