

LSIP Sector Group – Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering and Aviation Minutes

Tuesday 14th May 2024, 14:00 – 16:00

Discussed and agreed Terms of Reference - Jo Giles

- JG shared and discussed the Terms of Reference with colleagues. All agreed it was appropriate. Minutes and actions will be published on the LSIP website.

Discussed and agreed our purpose.

- JG advised that the Engineering, Manufacturing and Aviation Sector Group will discuss and share solutions to skills needs. We will report to the LSIP Board (Essex Skills Board), who will feed into the Economic Board for Essex. Representatives across Districts will sit on that board. The LSIP and skills information we provide will shape the planning system and potential procurement. A great opportunity to shape policy.
- LA advised that the LEP's (Local Enterprise Partnerships) who were responsible for capital funding etc. have now been dissolved and budgets are being managed by LA's. This will further ensure we are all swimming in the same direction to ensure join-up across Essex, with the LSIP setting priorities. Potential opportunities re: devolution post general election, which may further drive system changes.

Discuss and agree LSIP priorities for the sector.

- JG recapped LSIP Priorities for Skills, Sectors and System. Colleagues discussed:
- JA. Soft skills are a top priority. Pillar House has a history of hiring Apprentices etc. Where employees moved from the shop floor to management, they look for training, but it is usually based on practical experience. They then struggle to fulfil roles effectively, often seeing training later on as a disadvantage.
- MD. Routines developed with colleges to train younger people in different departments where they are not directly supervising but supervising on a technical level. Training is provided to Line Managers and potential Managers who might be candidates for management. It was funded by the College and DfE, with an external trainer provided to do training on site in range of skills over 2 days, with a 2-week gap in between.
- SB. Chelmsford College keen to understand skills needs of employers. Apprenticeship standards and qualifications. Not all standards provide soft skills. Colleges can help with this.
- SD. Stanstead use the Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award Scheme for their Leadership and soft-skills training. It provides training in resilience, self-esteem and leadership skills etc. Government standards do not go far enough. Often Apprentices will be taken on then have to be taken out of their training to ensure accreditation in Maths and English etc., which can be disruptive. Young People have very little idea what Engineering is, and young women do not think Engineering is a career for them. It is seen as off limits and there is no way to get into it.

- PD. Building Services Industry – biggest bug bear can be simple life-skills which small Employers do not have capacity teach.
- JP. Girls in Engineering. Apprenticeships often focussed on young men. Young women taking them up more limited.
- SR. Stanstead partnered with IET. IET shared research showing Engineering is mentioned only once in year 6 in schools. Exposure to it is limited. Young females need to see it as a career.
- SB. Chelmsford College actively encouraging females into Engineering via competitions etc. VEX Robotics competition takes place nationally every year, building a basic robot using an x-box. Provides a fun, practical way to see possibilities. Also, opportunities to develop Skills Builder, e.g. CVs over time. Building aspirations are key.
- JG - Soft-skills could be developed for September, e.g. telephone skills using a landline; plan via a phone; running Team Meetings and communicating through Teams; wrap-around communication. Are there potentials to link that through Chelmsford College's programme? Themes emerging - transitions, early leadership, and boarder communication skills. Interview skills etc. SB agreed this was a clear possibility. Colleges would be happy to help.
- JA - Engineering - have to go through the soft issues in development programmes e.g. behaviour/diversity/inclusion. Development programmes cannot turn young people into developed, mature adults. However, we can begin the process through schemes like Skills Builder. Full-time students will become Apprentices and Employees.
- PB - Greater Essex Careers Hub supporting promote women in Engineering. Talking directly to the schools to let them know what we can provide. Soft-skills and behaviours are a generational issue, which we need to give young people exposure to developing.
- KB - LSIF Projects discussed. Opportunities with commercial/virtual cities being developed and being piloted with Year 10's in Schools. Content and use will expand as time goes on. Keen engagement from Employers noted, thank you.
- SD – Links between the skills they learn in work and how they are applied in work is not clear. We need people who can use their hands and brains differently. Health and safety is also a barrier to demonstrating this in Apprenticeships. Young People need to see how the sciences they are developing can be applied.
- JP – Mixed messages re: Apprenticeships, with many Schools not doing it.
- PH - Work experience is a challenge. There is light at the end of the tunnel. T-Levels will be promoted widely across the county. A high level will involve work experience.
- VK - Virtual Cities helpful, especially if they can reach a wide range of school children, but Engineering involves physical work with your hands which relies on practical experience. JG suggested linking with Hyla and colleagues.

JG recapped priorities and purpose:

1. System understanding of Engineering is lacking. No information to see what Engineering is like.
2. Careers advice is inconsistent at best. Schools are struggling and careers advice is limited.
3. Building individual knowledge in the college world is key before they progress next steps.
4. Opportunities to teach people digitally. Tangible skills need to be maintained.

Themes:

Quick wins:

1. Pull together information re: Engineering and what it means. Careers Advisors can take it into schools to start to understand the terminology etc. Gear towards key age groups.
2. Transport and Logistics Sector Review. JG showed this to members, with the possibility of augmenting that for Manufacturing, Engineering and Aviation. All agreed. Aim to have all up and running on the LSIP Website by June.

Long-term

- Work with Chelmsford College, FEDEC and wider EPN to raise awareness. Put on an event - e.g. Saturday clubs etc.- in colleges where students can see Employers etc. Also possible to produce videos for Schools etc. Potential funding requirements from LA colleagues.

Potential opportunities discussed:

- SB - Chelmsford College are running competitions with T-Level students with Austin to rebuild cars and develop kits for them. Supports different specialisms within Engineering.
- PH - Good opportunities to develop packages for schools. We need to give them ready-made packages to deliver.
- PB - Chartered Institute for Building Engineers e.g. STEM ambassadors and linking them up with each other. Help to deliver initiatives like Engineering Day.
- LA - Lots of opportunities for quick-wins - we will speak to education colleagues who have good routes into Schools. A wide range of sources of support, e.g. Essex Careers Magazine/Careers Hub/STEM ambassadors. Chelmsford Skills Festival is a very engaging, Essex-wide event. An Essex-wide event showcasing sectors would be very positive.
- JG - Opportunities for AI driven careers advice are being explored. An individual will be able to put their profile in and it will link them to the things they want to access. Employers will be able to add their profile and it will advise why you should choose physics etc. It will provide consistent IAG designed by us.
- JA - Only way to give young people a good idea of what goes on is to get them to look inside your facilities and look round the factory. Videos etc. helpful but need to show them. Challenge to colleagues.

- SJ. Stanstead struggling to deliver work placements for school aged children due to H&S and restrictions on activities. No under 18's are allowed on the airfield, regardless of supervision. Physical experience needed.
- VS – Challenges with communication discussed. More successes with college-age students initially.
- KB - Need a balance of immersive technology and more hands-on experience. STEM centres suitable. Gatsby benchmarks now in place which support. Provider contacts discussed.
- AG – Who and what are blocking work placements? Is there an education piece to be done? JG agreed a clear opportunity to pick up with the Careers Hub and colleagues.
- KB suggested an opportunity for Employers to support educating and informing risk assessments completed, which Employers agreed helpful.

Next Steps

JG thanked colleagues for their time, expertise and input. A very helpful, productive discussion. GR will pull together notes and circulate summarised actions as follows:

- JG and LA to work together behind the scenes re: articulating opportunities, progressing the Toolkits and picking up areas for development with Education (for Schools) and Colleges (for young people).
- JG to contact Employers interested in supporting further development. They are JP; SJ; PB; PD; SB.

Next meeting - 10th September 2024, 2pm – 4pm.