



Community and Environmental Services Minutes of Meeting

Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Skills Group

Held on: Friday 8th October 2021 Time: 14:00

Venue: Teams

Present:	Dept/Organisation
Becky Box	BCKLWN
Carl Fiander	Adult Learning
David Promfret	College of West Anglia
Debbie Gates	BCKLWN
Duncan Hall	BCKLWN
Kerry Dunham	NCC
Laura Bowater	UEA
Nicci Broughton	DWP
Ruth Royle	NCC
Tom Humphries	NCC
Sophie Bates	Freebridge

Item	Minute	Action and due date
1.0	Apologies for absence Anita Jones Jemma Curtis Julia Nix Denise Saadvandi Stuart Durrell	
2.0	Welcome and introductions Tom welcomed the group and all attendees introduced themselves.	
3.0	Review of KL young People's challenge/skills Tom shared his presentation and revisited the key challenges in relation to skills for young people in Kings Lynn. Discussions were had and comments were:	

DP – that was useful to set the scene and capturing what we've learned and brought it all together.

This is important to reflect on as we've been looking at this from a range of approaches for a while with Debbie and Becky having been working collaboratively with schools. There is a short-term challenge on a couple of points which has made this more difficult and both covid effected. Work experience and education business partnerships have not been possible which has affected a lot of young people. Loss of confidence and their link to work. There is also a big issue regarding the access needed to learn skills development, which is a big catch-up piece of work. Unfortunately, the data is depressingly like that of 10 years ago. Despite lots of things tried the challenge is still there. We need to ascertain what it is we are not offering. Sector skills academies is something we could do with more of. Collaboration is really key to getting things moving and a shared understanding.

DG – difficult to know the impact of 2 years without externally assessed exams as we haven't had any data through.

We see ourselves in quite an entrenched position in low aspiration and attainment. Maybe some of the money from the towns deal will give us the opportunity to work with parents. Career's advice is a massive issue in schools, don't think this is really getting picked up in schools due to money and other issues. Industry links have now dropped again due to covid so need to build these again.

Therefore, this is a great time to re-group and decide what we're going to do.

NB – totally agree with difficulties behind engaging with young people. We only really deal with 18+ although we do have a few 16–17-year-olds. The 16-20 age bracket are very reticent in engaging with anything, historically they are probably are the lower achievers in education and possibly come from a lower achievement background. The work coaches have great difficulty in getting them to attend anything. So many have been adversely affected, more prevalent in the youngsters than the over 25s in regard to their mental health. Agree that we do need to get careers advice back in schools, funding by towns deal, county council or indeed from DWP. I recently covered the role of the Schools Adviser for Norfolk and was contacted by 3 schools. Not sure if the schools just don't know that we are there to support them or there is a need. Need to raise the awareness of this across the board.

To ascertain whether the schools are aware of the support.

DP – would be very happy to put on a focus group, (which we have used for the wider community) we have 2700 16–18-year-olds. Could start a conversation on what it felt like for

TH/DP – have a discussion

them to receive, if any, careers advice. Could be a great student voice piece.

on how we can engage with this.

DH – reiterated how this funding is the starting point to look at this issue and that this group is a great place to prepare for all the opportunities of funding that will come down the line.

LB – as a higher education institute, we need to meet targets for widening participation. Our targets are problematic, we are doing it but are mindful that hitting those targets for 2030 is going to be a challenge. Considering what we have on our doorstep, these young people that are coming up could help us reach those. This project is an exciting prospect, if we could only get these young people from the colleges, but we just can't reach them at the moment. DP offered to work with LB. LB finished to comment that it's also about changing the mindset of students and the leadership at the schools and bring them on the journey with us.

4.0 **Kings Lynn Youth Retraining Project (Kings Lynn Towns Fund)**

Two aims of the project:

- Help young people overcome personal barriers and challenges preventing them from entering learning and or work
- The project to provide clear pathways (for those young people) and raise their skills and support them into a future career and into employment.

Budget: £442k

Delivery: 1st April 2022 (for 24 months) through to June 2024 for evaluation and financial completion.

Key objectives:

- Raise participant and youth employment rates in Kings Lynn
- Address the skills gaps within Kings Lynn – to understand and raise young people's aspirations, increase work related skills and raise awareness of careers. With a focus on the priority sectors.
- To develop a range of key relationships in the area, with local business, education providers and establish a forum where local skills needs are identified, proposed and implemented.
- To develop a suite of industry learning and retraining opportunities for young people
- Identify where there are transferrable skills and opportunities and increase the availability of provision

- To support transition to employment, engagement with secondary schools and FE provision. This will include a target group of young people to be considered more vulnerable.

Three cohorts of beneficiaries:

- Young adults 18-24 who are employed without training
- Young people 18-24 unemployed and who are economically active
- Young people 15-18 in education, focus on those at risk of NEET.

The project will establish the Kings Lynn Skill Partnership, a skills department for Kings Lynn. This will contain a small staff team who will develop, deliver, design, procure, commission and leverage a range of activities, that will include re-skilling.

The project will develop a portfolio and develop access to the current portfolio. The project and staff and in partnership with current youth pledge staff, will engage intensively with the employer base in King's Lynn. The rationale for this is: to understand the workforce needs and develop opportunities for young people in those work forces to be introduced to training and the employer to be introduced to perspective future young people.

Delivery methods: there are a number of different partners, to be procured through the system.

TH noted - We do need to support the long-term sustainable skills infrastructure for Kings Lynn, which sits with our further education college. The support is vital for College of West Anglia in recognition of their anchor status in the current and future skills of young people. CWA should be a core delivery partner in the project.

For more detailed information please see the presentation.

LB - Should we have a project output centred or including schools? Its going to be key to raising the awareness of this project and getting it deeply embedded within the key schools in Kings Lynn.

DH – Are there any thoughts around the business engagement regarding the barriers? They need to see this as a shared challenge.

RR – we will use the Youth Pledge for Employers Project as a business signed partner to ensure we are getting that employer engagement. At the moment we are engaging generally with employers and starting to concentrate on the Kings Lynn area. Where we have felt there is a need to be focused on a specific sector, we have done and are happy to

**TH – to
share
presentation**

**Need to
consider
how we do
this**

approach it in that way as we start the project. It has got flexibility within the project and can certainly take a tailored approach.

DP – We will need to ensure there is a balance of tightly defined projects and getting engagement in all cohorts to ensure we fulfil all our agenda.

BB – as DP mentioned earlier the Improving Attainment Steering Group has become a bit disjointed but the vehicle is still there to be used for the re-engagement with the secondary schools. Although some early activity is needed to get them engaged with us at an early stage.

DG – Would hope that part of the secondary focus would also be to encourage those young people to go to further education or university, not to lose that focus for those cohort of young people.

5.0 **Group Terms of Reference**

Please could members review these terms of reference and feedback to TH.

All

TH - Suggests a representation from Children's Services

6.0 **Any other business**

- **Group chair**

DH nominates DP for Chair seconded by DG

DP – happy to take on this role.

7.0 **Date, time and venue of next meeting**

t.b.c.