



Skills & Employment Committee – Draft Minutes

Monday 4 March 2024

Venue:	Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, Huntingdon PE29 3TN	
Time:	11.00 to 13.00	
Present:	Councillor Lucy Nethsingha Mayor Dr Nik Johnson Councillor James Lay Councillor Eileen Wilson Councillor Sam Carling Councillor Sam Wakeford Councillor Peter Hiller Charlotte Horobin	Chair and Member for Cambridgeshire County Council CPCA Mayor East Cambridgeshire District Council South Cambridgeshire District Council Cambridge City Council Huntingdonshire District Council Peterborough City Council ESB Chair, LSIP Chair & CEO Chambers of Commerce
Apologies	Mr Nitin Patel Councillor Ian Benney	Business Board Representative Fenland District Council

Minutes:

1	Announcements, Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest
1.1	Apologies were received from Councillor Ian Benney and Mr Nitin Patel.
1.2	No declarations of interest were made.
2	Minutes of previous meeting and action log
2.1	The minutes of the meeting on 15 January 2024 were approved as an accurate record.
3	Public Questions
3.1	No Public Questions had been submitted.
4	Combined Authority Forward Plan
4.1	There were no comments from the Committee. <u>RESOLVED:</u> A That the Combined Authority Forward Plan be noted.
5	Improving Efficiency and Effectiveness (Adult Education Budget)
5.1	The Committee received a report from the Head of Adult Education Budget which proposed a number of actions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of how the CPCA deployed Adult Education Budget funding.
5.2	During discussion the following points were discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agile commissioning, providers can join the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) on a continuous basis.• Impact Evaluation: Impact measurements due to be piloted in community learning. With Care Leavers treated as a protected characteristic the care leavers bursary was being reassessed to ensure available funding was maximised.

5.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constituent authorities were able to benefit from funding and ideas could be fed in through the Skills Planning Partnership. • As part of the review of community learning, an in-depth look at barriers to engagement for community learning was needed. In order to reach more rural areas, work would be done to evaluate engagement with small voluntary community organisations. Members were invited to pass on any details of contacts that would be worth engaging with. <p>On being proposed by Councillor Nethsingha, seconded by Councillor Wakeford, the Committee:</p> <p><u>RESOLVED (Unanimous):</u></p> <p>A To note and scrutinise actions that will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of how the CPCA utilises its devolved Adult Education Budget funding.</p> <p>B To recommend that the Combined Authority Board approves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the in-year amendments for existing providers which include growth requests for high performing providers and reprofiling of funding where providers have under-performed b) the establishment of a flexible Innovation Fund, allowing us to respond to regional activities that underpin the priorities identified within the Employment and Skills strategy. <p>C To delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Skills, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) enter into grant funding agreements and/or service contracts with training providers to deliver Innovation Fund project activity. This can either be with new (following a procurement exercise) or existing providers b) extend and /or vary contracts with existing providers where appropriate.
6	Careers Hub Academic Year 2024/25
6.1	The Committee received a report from the Strategic Careers Hub Lead which noted the anticipated allocate of 24/25 funding from the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC)
6.2	<p>During discussion the following points were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Para 3.5 of the report was clarified to confirm that the Careers Hub has now TUPEd in-house with 1.5 FTE being delivered by Form the Future covering the districts of Cambridge City, South Cambs and East Cambs (delivered by Form the Future). • Clarification was given on national funding streams for the delivery careers programmes. In this context, the CPCA All Age Careers service, funded via UKSPF was reintroduced. This was a service looking to bring coordination and cohesion of all careers offers in the region, allowing better access to information. • CPCA’s contract with CEC involved working with senior leaders in schools, with progression measured through the Gatsby benchmarks. Learner destination evaluation was complicated and not easily available at an individual level due to the nature of how information was captured. One of the priority areas was increasing the availability and uptake of apprenticeships and technical education; removing biases and stereotypes to help enhance recognition of the value of technical vs academic education.
6.3	<p>The Committee:</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u></p> <p>A To note the anticipated Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) grant funding for the academic year of 2024/25.</p> <p>B To note we are working to identify CPCA match funding, and we anticipate a paper to the CA Board to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept the CEC funding offer, and allocate the match funding • Accept future grant funding that is awarded by the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) in addition to core funding, up to the value of £150,000 for projects aligned to strategic priorities • Delegate authority to the Interim Director of Skills, in consultation with the Chief Finance Officer and Monitoring Officer to enter into contracts and grant funding agreements <p>Grant funding is expected to be in the sum of approx. £310,000 for the academic year 2024/2025.</p>

7	Adult Education Budget – Audit and Assurance Update
7.1	The Committee received a report from the Commissioner, Adult Education which set out the CPCA’s Education Budget audit and assurance. This outlined how the CPCA fulfils the requirements and the process for selecting who was audited. The paper updated the Committee about the Funding Assurance Audits for 2022/23, outlining key issues and with improvements identified.
7.2	During discussion the following points were discussed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Errors identified by the audit and worked through: issues have been addressed with no ongoing concerns • Members were pleased to see the report coming to Skills Committee; noting that it would usually only go to the Audit and Governance Committee. It was confirmed that annual assurances had been completed since the first year of devolution.
7.3	The Committee: <u>RESOLVED:</u> A To note the Audit results for 2022/23 B To note the Audit approach for 2023/24
8	Employment and Skills Board Update
10.1	The Project Manager: Skills Bootcamps and Special Projects, and lead officer supporting the Board provided a verbal update on the meeting of the Employment and Skills Board which took place on 20 January 2024. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charlotte Horobin had been appointed as Chair of the Board, following the departure of Vic Annells. • An update was received on LSIP; focussed on regional leadership and visibility of skills and provision gaps. • The Good Work Charter was discussed, with Board Members asked for their thoughts as well as views around branding. • Another key focus was internships. Following a successful initiative last year, 70% of those on the internships were offered employment at the place they interned.
11.	Budget Performance Report
11.1	The Finance Manager, introduced the report which provided an update of the financial position for 2023/24 up to the period ending January 2024. The Committee: <u>RESOLVED:</u> A To note the financial position of the Skills Division for the financial year 23/24 to January 2024
12.	Skills and Employment Committee Agenda Plan
12.1	It was noted that there needed to be sufficient time and opportunity for the Committee to feed back into the Good Work Charter before it came back to the June meeting. The Committee: <u>RESOLVED:</u> A To note the Skills and Employment Committee Agenda Plan
13.	Date of Next Meeting
13.1	The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Monday 17 June 2024

Meeting Ended: 12.35pm