



North East Local Enterprise Partnership

Skills Advisory Panel (SAP) & Employment and Skills Board

Terms of Reference July 2021

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The North East Employment and Skills Board

The North East Local Enterprise Partnership provides strategic economic leadership for the region, working with partners and facilitating the delivery of the North East Strategic Economic Plan (SEP). The SEP is recognised by government as the policy document that sets a strategic direction for our regional economy. It outlines our medium term economic plan and helps identify interventions and investments to support economic growth, and to create more and better jobs.

Our aim is to create 100,000 more jobs for the North East economy and to ensure that 70% of these jobs are better jobs.

The North East Local Enterprise Partnership is leading on the delivery of a strategy for employability and skills which will strengthen the North East's position as a globally competitive region through ensuring the supply of skilled people meets demand from a growing and prosperous business base.

It will do this by shifting the skills market in the North East towards higher level skills, building greater demand for higher skills, be it in response to existing employer needs, projected shortages, or new skills sets for emerging opportunities. The aim is to create a landscape where companies (and individuals) realise the benefits of training and see the returns on their investment. A skilled workforce is central to private sector-led growth and the North East's workforce has a strong reputation for responding to the opportunities presented by a growing and changing economy. By investing public resources and stimulating employer investment in skills, a better functioning labour market can be created that delivers the human capital for our growing economy.

What is our ambition for 2024?

Our long-term ambition in the North East is that demand for skills and the quality of jobs continue to improve, leading to higher productivity. To deliver this, the North East must be a place where:

- Individuals, regardless of age or employment status, have a good understanding of the employment opportunities available in the North East and the pathways to access them
- Employers have strong links with education and training providers leading to responsive provision that meets local needs
- All partners understand the importance of skills in improving productivity and living standards, with commitment to delivering good working environments for residents.

This is an ambitious vision that will require substantial changes to deliver. By 2024, our ambition is that these principles are understood across the region and that there has been significant progress made towards their achievement, providing a strong base to build on in future years.

Skills, Employment, Inclusion and Progression is one of five inter-related priorities outlined in our North East Strategic Economic Plan ‘More and Better Jobs.’

Our Employment and Skills Board will oversee and advise on programme implementation and development. With the aim of driving new thinking around employability, skills, inclusion and progression the Employment and Skills Board will bring together ambitious business and voluntary and community sector representatives with members of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board and other key partners in the employability and skills arena.

With a business base in the North East, members of the Employment and Skills Board will have strong business leadership experience and share a commitment to skills investment to support More and Better Jobs in the North East LEP area.

Skills Advisory Panel

The Skills Advisory Panel of local employers and skills providers will pool knowledge on skills and labour market needs, and to work together to understand and address key local challenges. This includes both immediate needs and challenges and looking at what is required to help local areas adapt to future labour market changes and to grasp future opportunities. This will help colleges, universities and other providers deliver the skills required by employers, now and in the future.

Government Guidance provided in 2018 stated that where Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) have an employment and skills sub-board functioning well, they will take on the Skills Advisory Panel function (in addition to any other responsibilities they hold) rather than a new body needing to be created. The development of Skills Advisory Panels aims to strengthen the capability of LEPs to carry out this new role.

Aim and Purpose

The aim of the Employment and Skills Board is to progress the strategic implementation of the Skills, Employment, Inclusion and Progression Programme as set out in the North East Strategic Economic Plan (February 2019)

Skills Advisory Panels will to bring together local employers and skills providers to pool knowledge on skills and labour market needs, and to work together to understand and address key local challenges. This includes both immediate needs and challenges and looking at what is required to help local areas adapt to future labour market changes and to grasp future opportunities. This will help colleges, universities and other providers deliver the skills required by employers, now and in the future. This will allow us to generate analysis of our local skills and labour markets to understand the local position, to discuss and agree local skills needs priorities in the short-term and more longer-term and consider how these will be met through local provision over time.

Operation

Authority

The Employment and Skills Board members shall be appointed by the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board to progress the objectives set out in the Skills, Employment, Inclusion and Progression Programme according to these as agreed by the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board. Any further objectives and terms of reference will be developed by the Employment and Skills Board and agreed by the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board.

The role of the Skills Advisory Panel is advisory. Decisions will be made by the Local Enterprise Partnership board based on recommendations by the SAP or by the SAP where there has been delegated authority by the LEP board.

All members will duly act in the public interest and in keeping with the Nolan principles of public life (see Appendix).

Membership

The Employment and Skills Board shall consist of the following members:

- The member of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board with responsibility for skills
- A representative of the portfolio holder from the North East Combined Authority
- A representative of the Portfolio holder from the North of Tyne Combined Authority
- Up to six employers with a commitment to skills investment and strong business leadership experience reflecting key sectors.
- A representative of the area's FE institutions
- A representative of the area's universities
- A representative from the key organisations and partnerships which support the theme;
 - Education and Skills Funding Agency
 - Department for Education
 - Department of Work and Pensions
 - BEIS / MHCLG
 - Schools NorthEast
 - Trades Union Congress
 - North East Learning Providers
 - North East Chamber of Commerce
 - Federation of Small Business
 - CBI
 - VONNE
 - North East Automotive Alliance
- The North East Local Enterprise Partnership Chief Executive
- The North East Local Enterprise Partnership Skills Director
- Other individuals may be co-opted by the Employment and Skills Board for their knowledge of business operations and growth.

All members will serve for a period of up to three years and will be committed to at least one year's membership of the Employment and Skills Board.

Membership, will be reviewed annually by the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board to ensure that it best reflects the requirements for the delivery of its skills, employment, inclusion and progression programme.

Chair

The Chair of the Board will be a member of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board nominated by the Board for a term of office of up to three years. This may be extended with assent of the North East Local Enterprise Board.

Observers

Other observing members may be invited to specific meetings or on a standing basis by the Chair and Skills Director; however, any such attendees will not be eligible to vote on proposals or constitute part of the quorate requirement. Observers must be the same individual representing that organisation.

Deputies

Deputies may not attend the board. This applies to both individuals and individual representing sectors and membership organisations.

Attendance

Dates for meetings will be sent out in advance. Members should make every effort to attend where possible. When early indications suggest many board members are unable to attend, the board date may change. If a board member has not attended for three consecutive meetings, they will be contacted by the Chair to discuss their membership.

Duties

The Employment and Skills Board shall:

- a. Actively support the Employment and Skills Board Chair and the North East LEP Executive Team in the delivery of the Skills, Employment, Inclusion and Progression Programme, developing and encouraging the implementation of activity that is consistent with the strategic intent outlined in the North East SEP and Skills, Employment, Inclusion and Progression Programme;
- b. Monitor performance and review the delivery of the Skills, Employment, Inclusion and Progression Programme;
- c. Prioritise Skills, Employment, Inclusion and Progression initiatives and make recommendations to the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board regarding the allocation of programme resources and the approval of Skills, Employment, Inclusion and Progression funding proposals;

- d. Ensure that activities (initiatives, programmes and service provision) are linked effectively with the other related Strategic Economic Plan programmes including the Innovation Programme, Business Growth Programme and inward investment services;
- e. Inform evolution of business growth related activities, taking account of global trends, capability and capacity in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area;
- f. Commission service provision that is consistent with the agreed objectives of the Skills, Employment, Inclusion and Progression Programme, advising on and approving evaluation measures for Skills, Employment, Inclusion and Progression activities; and
- g. Consider any other Skills, Employment, Inclusion and Progression related matters which are specifically referred to the Employment and Skills Board by the Executive Team, the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board or any other relevant body.

Remit and role of Skills Advisory Panel

Skills Advisory Panels will have an advisory role with regard to their LEP board with the following responsibilities:

- a. Provide a strong leadership role on skills in the local area, engaging with employers and providers and providing skills advice to the North East LEP Board.
- b. Developing a clear understanding of current and future local skills needs and local labour market as well as the present skills and employment support provision in the local area. The Skills Advisory Panel will do this by:
 - producing robust and authoritative evidence-based skills and labour market analysis which clearly identifies existing local skills and employment challenges, and identifies key areas of future needs relating to projected local employment growth areas
 - developing a sophisticated understanding of both the local labour market and skills provision in the local area, the extent to which labour mobility within, or into, a local economy can address skills needs, and the projected gaps between skills needs and skills provision
 - building knowledge of the range of both local, regional and national employment provision that exists or is planned

- presenting the analysis at board level and sharing it with the wider employer and provider communities to ensure that their perspective on the local labour market and local employment and skills system is reflected in the prioritisation the board takes forward
 - providing analysis to inform the development and the implementation of the 'People' element of Local Industrial Strategies
- c. Building on this high-quality analysis to develop a clear approach to addressing skills and employment challenges within the local area, including by looking ahead to likely skills priorities in the coming decade.

Skills Advisory Panels will do this by:

- building an understanding of the local area across a range of partners including employers (SME and larger employers from across the private and public sectors), all types of providers and other key partners (including the community & voluntary sector) to agree shared approaches to addressing the challenges the analysis has identified.
 - working with the LEP or MCA to develop the 'People' element of the Local Industrial Strategy.
- d. Understanding the wider dependencies in the local area and working together with other parts of the LEP to:
- link them to the skills and employment analysis as well as strategic plans.
 - ensure the 'People' element of the Local Industrial Strategy is integrated effectively with the wider work of the LEP or MCA.
- e. Acting as co-ordinator of local skills providers. Skills Advisory Panels will do this by:
- fostering co-operation between providers in a mix of provision
 - actively working with a range of local providers (Further Education, Higher Education and independent) to plan for how the skills needs are to be met
 - encouraging local providers to reflect the Skills Advisory Panel analysis when planning for T-Levels implementation and delivery, and for the Skills Advisory Panel analysis to inform the investments that are made in the provider base to prepare for T-Levels roll-out

- f. Working closely with careers advisory services (National Careers Service and Careers and Enterprise Company) to ensure that potential learners are informed about potential career routes within a local area, and that all careers information and guidance is informed by up-to-date local labour market information. This will involve Skills Advisory Panels working with:
- the Careers and Enterprise Company's Enterprise Advisor Network, based in LEPs, to ensure that the Skills Advisory Panel analysis is shared through the network and informs the activities they support locally.
 - the National Careers Service area-based contractors to ensure that Skills Advisory Panel analysis is embedded into advice and guidance given to adults.
- g. Raising the profile of apprenticeships with local employers and providers.
- h. Advising where skills and labour market resource should be directed to support local employers and residents, using its understanding of existing employment support provision in the local area and the needs of the local labour market.
- i. Sharing analysis and best practice, as widely and transparently as possible, with central government and other Skills Advisory Panels to learn from each other and tackle wider skills challenges.

Reporting Procedures and Accountability

Minutes of all Employment and Skills Board meetings will be circulated to the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board to whom the Employment and Skills Board will report at least annually through its Chair.

The Employment and Skills Board will contribute to the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board Annual Report.

Secretariat and Operational Support

The secretariat to the Employment and Skills Board shall be provided by the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Executive Team. The Programme Manager will provide operational support for coordinating the delivery of the programme, working under the guidance of the Employment and Skills Board and responsible to the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board and Skills Director.

Secretariat duties shall include:

- Preparing agendas and associated Employment and Skills Board papers
- Administering the activities of any working groups formed on the recommendation of the Employment and Skills Board
- Managing the delivery of the Employment and Skills Board's agreed work programmes

Outline Terms and Time Commitment

These are non-executive posts with a time commitment equivalent to around two days per quarter. The appointments will be for an initial term of up to three years, with the potential to be appointed for a further period by mutual agreement.

Members will serve in an unpaid capacity, although payment for legitimate expenses will be available in the first instance.

The Employment and Skills Board will meet 6 times yearly, aligned with the North East LEP Board cycle. Any business requiring urgent attention will be dealt with by correspondence as required.

Role of Employment and Skills Board Members

Employment and Skills Board Members are expected to:

- Provide expertise to enable the Employment and Skills Board to build a sound knowledge of business needs across a range of different sectors and industries
- Understand and work with other Employment and Skills Board Members to make decisions about different strategic priorities
- Examine and challenge analysis to develop a range of delivery options of strategic significance
- Monitor and evaluate performance of the Employment and Skills Programme to improve delivery and drive the scale of outcomes and achievements
- Support the development of the Employment and Skills Board and the wider partnership
- Act as an ambassador/champion for the North East as a place to live, study and do business

In carrying out these expectations, Employment and Skills Board members will:

- Provide guidance on priorities for delivery
- Make recommendations to the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board regarding the allocation of resources and the approval of funding proposals
- Inform the evolution of business support related activities, taking account of global trends, capability and capacity in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership area
- Oversee the commissioning of business support initiatives and activities that are consistent with the agreed objectives of the Employment and Skills Programme
- Ensure that business support measures (initiatives, programmes and service provision) are linked effectively with the other related Strategic Economic Plan programmes including the Innovation Programme, Business Growth Programme and the inward investment agenda
- Evaluate and review the programme to improve impact
- Consider any other business support related matters which are specifically referred to the Employment and Skills Board by the Executive team, the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board or any other relevant body

Further Information

Any queries relating to these Terms of Reference should be directed to the North East LEP Executive Team. Please contact dawn.bewick@nelep.co.uk .

Appendix 1: Nolan Principles of Public Life

In 1995, the Committee on Standards in Public Life defined seven principles which should underpin the actions of all who serve the public in any way.

These are:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or other friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

APPENDIX 2 –

Skills Advisory Panel and Employment and Skills board membership:

Sector	Member name	Organisation
Member of the North East Local Enterprise Partnership Board and Chair of Skills Advisory Panel/Employment & Skills Board	Ellen Thinnesen	Chief Executive Education Partnership North East
Portfolio holder for North of Tyne Combined Authority	Councillor Karen Kilgour	Newcastle City Council
Portfolio holder for North East Combined Authority	Councillor Amanda Hopgood	Durham County Council
LEP Executive Team Skills Director	Michelle Rainbow	North East LEP
LEP Executive Team Chief Executive	Helen Golightly	North East LEP
Health & Life Sciences Sector	Emma Banks	RA Marketing
Digital Creative & Software Sector	Karen Marshall	Accenture
Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Sector	Sam Harrison	Sterling Pharma Solutions
Subsea and Offshore	TBA	
Advanced Manufacturing	John Barnett	
HE Organisation	Sir David Bell	Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sunderland
FE organisation	Ellen Thinnesen (Chair)	Chief Executive Education Partnership North East
Representatives of key organisations and partnerships supporting the theme	Sandra Brydon	Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)
	Paul Butler	North East Automotive Alliance
	TBA	BEIS, Cities and Local Growth
	John Taylor	Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)
	Chris Zarraga	Schools North East
	Beth Farhat	Trade Union Congress (TUC)
	Karen Routledge	North East Learning Providers
	Niamh Corcoran	North East Chamber of Commerce (NECC)
	Sarah Glendinning	Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
	Carol Botten	VONNE
	Jill Cassells	NHS
	TBA	Department for Education (DfE)
	Reshma Begum	Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)

APPENDIX 3

Analytical Toolkit.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-advisory-panels-analytical-toolkit>