



**PROSPEROUS
COMMUNITIES
COMMITTEE**

Tuesday 28th January 2020

Subject: Employment & Skills Partnership

Report by:	Executive Director for Economic and Commercial Growth
Contact Officer:	Amanda Bouttell Senior Project and Growth Officer amanda.bouttell@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	To endorse the continuation of the Employment & Skills Partnership and attached delivery plan.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. That Prosperous Communities Committee note and endorse the programme of activities delivered by the Employment & Skills Partnership and support the future planned work.
2. That the Employment & Skills Project Officer continues to provide regular updates via Members Bulletin.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal:

Any project spend over £1000 is subject to the usual procurement practice.

Financial : FIN/167/20

The Programme Board approved £10k in 2017/18 towards the Employment and Skills Partnership, funded from the Investment for Growth budget (CS04) with any underspend at year end carried forward (FIN/EB/17/18).

This budget has now been expended and a further £10k has been allocated and approved from the Investment for Growth budget in 2019/20. Any underspend at year end be carried forward into subsequent years.

Staffing :

Project management would continue to remain in-house.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :

Activity will be delivered in line with the equality and diversity policies.

Organisations receiving any funding will be required to meet the same standards.

Data Protection Implications :

Employment & Skills members have signed TOR

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :

None

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations :

None

Health Implications:

None

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

West Lindsey Employment & Skills Strategy & Delivery Plan

Risk Assessment :
N/A

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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1. Background

- 1.1 At the end of 2017, members agreed to approve a £10k operating budget (ring fenced from the Investment for Growth budget) for the West Lindsey Employment & Skills Partnership. The primary purpose of the budget is to facilitate the achievement of priority projects outlined in the delivery plan.
- 1.2 In addition, the funding also secures a sustainable and long term commitment from partners to deliver the employment & skills outcomes that are vital to ensure residents and employers meet future skills needs within Gainsborough and the surrounding district.

2. Current Delivery Plan Summary

- 2.1 Attached to this report is the 2018-2019 West Lindsey Employment & Skills strategy, a summary of achievements to date and the most recent delivery plan. By working in partnership, the report clearly shows the tangible benefits to the district in terms of financial investment into the area and positive employment outcomes for local people.
- 2.2 The report also highlights an ambitious forward plan with a range of opportunities already identified in the pipeline. Success in these areas would result in further economic advantage to the district.
- 2.3 Evidence suggests that there is both the enthusiasm and the capacity for the development of the partnership where the right support is made available to help bring project ideas and initiatives to fruition and continue to build their provision within the local community.

3. Corporate Plan Themes

3.1 The Employment and Skills Partnership helps support delivery of the following Corporate Plan priorities:

Our Council

- Partnerships

Our People

- Skills
- Vulnerable Groups & Communities

Our Place

- Economic Growth
- External Investment
- Social Regeneration

3.2 The Employment & Skills Partnership is recognised within the Council and the wider community as an exemplar of collaborative working, with task and finish groups working together to bid for funding and to deliver quality training and events. Members have also had direct involvement in some of the initiatives including, for example, Made in Gainsborough and Mentoring at Benjamin Adlard School.

4. Issues and Challenges

4.1 The council continues to face financial pressures in delivering services and the Partnership represents good value for money. However, it cannot rely solely on charitable and voluntary contributions from partners and local organisations.

4.2 Cutbacks from agencies such as Department for Education, Education & Skills Funding Agency and Department for Work and Pensions will see local provision training and learning provision impacted further. Contracts are already being delivered by providers outside of the county and so the need for collaboration and partnership working is paramount.

5. Employment & Skills Programme Options

5.1 Management Board considered the 2 options outlined below:

OPTION 1: (PREFERRED OPTION)

Continue with the Employment and Skills Programme.

Total funding required:
£10k over 18 months

Advantages to this option:

- This will continue to fund relevant initiatives and events across the district and provide the evidence base to be able to bid for much

larger co-investment projects that the Council wish to see delivered.

- The process of partnership working ensures that future provision is not duplicated.

Disadvantages to this option:

- The Council may not always benefit from direct match funding from partners. In some cases, the funding is used speculatively as leverage for larger projects with partners offering “in kind” support and resources from within their own organisations. For example – bid writing or use of premises.

**5.2 OPTION 2:
Continue the Employment & Skills Partnership without funding:**

Advantages to this option:

- The Council can re-distribute funds to other priority projects such as Health & Well Being or Housing, for example.

Disadvantages to this option:

- Without the continued evidence base which identifies the employment & skills provision needed for the district, providers and partner organisations may look to target their provision elsewhere.

5.3 Management team approved Option 1 on Monday 25th November 2019.

6. Report Recommendations

6.1.1 That Prosperous Communities Committee note and endorse the programme of activities delivered by the Employment & Skills Partnership and support the future planned work.

6.1.2 That the Employment & Skills Project Officer continues to provide regular updates via Members Bulletin.