

# FURTHER EDUCATION TASKFORCE

## Terms of Reference

### 1. Background

The West Lindsey Corporate Plan 2019-2023\*, sets out the long-term vision for West Lindsey to become “a great place to be where people, businesses and communities can thrive and reach their potential.” One of the key strategic aims within the plan is;

“To facilitate the creation of a highly educated and skilled workforce, that meets the present and future needs of the local and wider economy.”

The Corporate Plan sets out some key objectives to achieve this:

- Understand the skills needs of local employers.
- Support local schools to improve attainment levels and employment prospects for young people.
- Improve access to training and employment for residents.

Within the district, an established Employment and Skills Partnership is committed to an agreed Action Plan, which provides the delivery focus for local partners in terms of the resources and activities required to collectively achieve the overall Vision. It identifies a series of deliverable individual projects, and sets out subordinate activities, together with associated costs, resources, timescales, deliverables, and who is responsible for each, linking back to the objectives in the Corporate Plan.

The designated supporting Council Officer for the Employment Skills Partnership is Amanda Bouttell, Senior Employment & Skills Project Officer: [Amanda.Bouttell@west-lindsey.gov.uk](mailto:Amanda.Bouttell@west-lindsey.gov.uk) / (01427 676 562).

\* NB: A refresh of the West Lindsey Corporate Plan is due to be published soon

### 2. Further Education Taskforce

The overarching purpose of the Further Education Taskforce is to act as the **designated and time limited task group responsible for driving forward the development of a further education action plan for Council Officers to take forward**. The members of the taskforce will reflect the range of stakeholders best placed to shape its delivery.

The taskforce will also serve as an opportunity to support development of the Greater Lincolnshire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) and work closer together to make a difference and deliver beneficial local outcomes and joint initiatives.

The initial aims of the taskforce will be to explore:

- Opportunities to work alongside schools and further education providers to ensure pupils have a sustained Post-16 destination.
- Issues arising that prevent learners accessing sustained Post -16 education or training and feed this back to the Local Enterprise Partnership, Providers, Local Authorities and all Government Departments involved in education, employment and skills.
- How local data can be used more effectively to track learners that drop out of Post -16 education or training and what measures need to be in place to re-engage learners.
- Any gaps in further education provision across the West Lindsey district and how these can be addressed.

It is also intended that the very process of forging new relations and working closely together to make a difference and deliver beneficial local outcomes, will in itself lead to new learning, insight and joint initiatives, and provide a useful platform and legacy for future action.

### **3. Role & Functions**

The intended role and functions of the Further Education Taskforce is:

- To 'shape' and 'own' the respective action plan and its implementation;
- To share relevant information, intelligence and ideas;
- To identify gaps and additional opportunities with regard to the Action Plan, and agree and formulate new projects and activities accordingly;
- To scrutinise plan and project progress and performance, and make positive recommendations to help maximise these;
- To use individual and collective means available to support the delivery of individual projects and overcome associated obstacles;
- To hold individual project delivery agents to account in the event of unsatisfactory progress/performance;
- To make recommendations on project prioritisation and expenditure as required;
- To raise the profile and understanding of theme-related issues and opportunities, and advocate, influence and gain the support of local and external bodies accordingly;
- To support efforts to secure resources for delivery;
- To facilitate new and better strategic and operational links to a wide range of key individuals, businesses and organisations; and
- To act as a sounding board, debate and agree collective responses to influence local and regional policy and strategy.

### **4. Membership**

The members of the Further Education Taskforce will reflect the needs and contents of the Action Plan, i.e. comprise the range of stakeholders best placed to drive its delivery.

### **5. The Role of Board Members**

The fundamental role of the Further Education Taskforce is to agree what needs to be done and then make things happen. It is therefore vital that Members are willing, committed and prepared to positively challenge, and bring their own experience, expertise and insight to bear (as opposed to simply ensuring a pure representative spectrum of differing sectors, sizes, organisations, or geography).

Members are therefore expected:

- To attend meetings;
- To come fully prepared for each meeting;
- To respond promptly to communications between meetings;
- To disseminate information within their own respective organisations and networks;
- To champion agreed appropriate individual actions and spheres of activity;
- To declare any conflict of interest with regard to any items discussed at Board meetings.

## 6. Operation

**Chair:** The Chair will act as the designated strategic lead on behalf of the respective taskforce, and advocate accordingly. This will entail agreeing the meeting content/agendas, chairing the proceedings of the partnership in an inclusive and effective way that maintains a focus on delivery and maximises intended action plan outcomes, and liaising with key local and external stakeholders, including government and the media.

**Support:** The Further Education Taskforce will be supported by a named West Lindsey District Council Officer. Her role will be both administrative and operational, and involve organising meetings, preparing performance and progress monitoring reports on the theme plan and ancillary projects, taking minutes, following up on agreed actions, and acting as the day-to-day point of contact and liaison, providing close regular advice and support to the Chair in particular.

**Frequency:** It is anticipated that the Further Education Taskforce will meet around four times per year, commencing in February 2023, however it is ultimately for the Chair to determine the timing and frequency of the meetings in line with the needs and contents of the respective Action Plan. It is similarly the Chair's prerogative to establish "task and finish" sub-groups as and when required to deliver specific initiatives.

**Venue:** It will be for the Chair and members to decide at its inception meeting whether it will have a fixed meeting venue or alternate the host location/organisation.

**Review:** There will be an annual review of the taskforce operation and organisation - e.g. membership, Chair, procedures, and objectives – at the end of each year of its duration.

## 7. Reporting & Communications

Members will, via the Chair, report progress with regard to the delivery of its respective Action Plan to West Lindsey's Prosperous Communities Committee for the purpose of overseeing the effective integration, implementation and performance of the Corporate Plan.

Effective PR and communications will be essential to raising the profile of the Action Plan and facilitating its delivery. Associated issues will be discussed by members, and will agree which individual organisation is best placed to undertake communication and marketing activities on behalf of the group and whether a dedicated communication plan is required.