



# Minutes

<b>Meeting Title:</b>	CloS LEP Employment and Skills Board	
<b>Date:</b>	8 February 2023	
<b>Time:</b>	2pm to 4:30pm	
<b>Location:</b>	Via MS Teams	
<b>Chaired by:</b>	Frances Brennan	
<b>Attending Members:</b>	Frances Brennan (FB) Caitlin Gould (CG) Paul Wickes (PW) Eric Nicholls (EN) Rob Ingram (RI) Alex Lingard (AL) Clare Parnell (CP)	James Neale (JN) Julie Gripton (JG) John Evans (JE) Andrew Finley (AF) Stuart Roden (SR) Emma Stratton (ES) Ian Curnow (IC)
<b>Attending Officers:</b>	Stacey Sleeman (SS) Chloe Rickard (CR)	Clare Harris (CH) Laura Herbert (LH)
<b>Observers:</b>	Sarah Carhart (for Sarah Newham) (SC)	Rachel Whiting (RW)
<b>In attendance:</b>		
<b>Supported by:</b>	Julia Hopson, LEP Executive Team (JH)	

Minutes	Action
<b>1. Welcome and Apologies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apologies received from Kate Evan-Hughes, Sarah Newham, Glenn Caplin Grey, Kate Swain, Meredith Teasdale, Rachel Delourme, Jo Evans, Mark Duddridge, Emily Kent</li> </ul>	
<b>2. Employment and Skills Board 7 December 2022</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minutes from 7 December 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.</li> <li>All actions completed.</li> </ul> <b>Chair's Update</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESB membership has been confirmed for co-optees.</li> </ul>	

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<p><b>3.</b></p> <p><b>Progress Reports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment and Skills report to be taken as read but key highlights as below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It is National Apprenticeship Week. If anyone has anything they would like Cornwall Council to share on the Apprenticeships Campaign website then please make contact.</li> <li>○ Local Skills Improvement Plan. The employer survey on the FSB website is now live. Please complete and share amongst networks. There are also focus groups online and in-person; details on the FSB website. The team is working with colleges and the university to get the “learner voice” as well as employer voice. A rough draft of the data should be with the steering group by mid-April with a conference on 2<sup>nd</sup> May.</li> <li>○ JE reported that, at the LSIP meeting the day before, construction and renewables, engineering and marine and the visitor economy are all in; the latter for research as it’s a workforce issue rather than skills. The lack of engagement by employers is a concern so decisions could be being made on a very small sample. CH confirmed that there are issues with the Cornwall page on the website, which isn’t helping.</li> <li>○ <b>Action 1: SC offered to help with employer engagement so needs to be put in contact with Ann.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Action 2: RI suggested that LSIP should be put in contact with the ESB to help with employer engagement.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Member Comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ EN said that they have already been in touch with Ann and have suggested direct contact would be easier than asking businesses to attend a roadshow and have offered a list of businesses which they believe will help. CP supported this idea.</li> <li>○ CH confirmed that there are more roadshows around the county, which they are hoping the Chamber will advertise as well and there have been 58 telephone interviews to date. They are also trying to engage with more older learners.</li> <li>○ The LMI sector guides have now been circulated. These can be changed so any comments/suggestions please forward to CH or Laura, who will also be suggesting ways these can be promoted and shared.</li> </ul>	<p>CH</p> <p>CH</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CH would like to have another focus on apprenticeship levies, where larger organisations pledge to filter some of their levy down to smaller businesses. Also creating higher apprenticeship opportunities – apprenticeships as an option instead of university.</li> <li>○ <b>Action 3: CH to contact CG regarding the DPS and apprenticeships.</b></li> <li>○ <b>Action 4: CH to circulate the LMI factsheets to the Supply Group</b></li> <li>● Digital Skills Partnership report to be taken as read but key highlights as below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ As DSP funding goes, there has been a discussion about the future of the DSP and its role in bringing different organisations together to deliver projects. Also to publicise DSP activity and build relationships at local and national level.</li> <li>○ TECwomen and Truro &amp; Penwith College have launched a 10 week digital uplift programme. The first cohort starts on the 28<sup>th</sup> February and the course was over-subscribed so a September course is already lined up.</li> <li>○ Lego League is an after school club which has been rolled out across 50 schools in Cornwall (both primary and secondary). There is a competition at Culdrose on the 8<sup>th</sup> &amp; 9<sup>th</sup> which will involve all of the 50 schools.</li> <li>○ Tecgirls (10-12 secondary schools/150 girls) is working with the Eden Project on a Green Futures Day at the end of July.</li> <li>○ DSP is hosting a Createch Day with Cultivator at Hall for Cornwall in March.</li> <li>○ Headforwards and Cornwall Council are trialling a new training scheme where Headforwards recruits and then trains two new employees for the Council.</li> <li>○ CG raised, from Tecgirls perspective, that there is some frustration with SPF applications for community projects which have been rejected with no feedback.</li> <li>○ <b>Action 5: SS agreed to take this feedback to the Good Growth Team. All enquiries/feedback requests on SPF should be emailed to the Good Growth team at: <a href="mailto:goodgrowth@cornwall.gov.uk">goodgrowth@cornwall.gov.uk</a></b></li> <li>○ <b>Action 6: Invite someone from Good Growth to give an update at the next ESB meeting and discuss the impact of ESF rundown.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>CH/CG</p> <p>CK</p> <p>SS</p> <p>SS/JH</p>

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<p><b>Member Comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CR put an overview of our discussion at that meeting about the Academy in the chat bar: Lots of interesting discussion, and clear themes around: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opportunity to ease existing pain points, particularly around the administration and eligibility hurdles involved in European funded programmes, and the resource required to support apprenticeships in SME/micros</li> <li>▪ Identifying user groups and building communications around the value for them (what's in it for me?)</li> <li>▪ Building on culture of collaboration, especially between education providers</li> <li>▪ Avoiding the danger of an almost unlimited scope</li> <li>▪ 'Hidden' skills gaps in businesses (e.g. data, MS office) – where employers wouldn't admit to it.</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ RI asked about SPF. SS explained that there are 3 "pillars" of SPF – Places and Communities, Business Support and People &amp; Skills with no commissioning for People &amp; Skills until the final year (2024-25). Where possible, Skills has been embedded into the first 2 pillars to try and reduce the drop-off after ESF. The aim is to get initiation forms etc signed off by the Economic Prosperity Board in July so that commissioning etc can be done in advance of the start date on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2024.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>4. Good Work Forum</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good Work Forum report to be taken as read but key highlights as below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The LEP and Cornwall Council have embedded 'Good Work' in the development and delivery of the Employment and Skills Strategy and Good Growth Investment Plans.</li> <li>○ The request is to establish a Good Work Forum, reporting directly to the Employment and Skills Board, to enable the LEP and CC to translate their strategies and investment plans into a clear set of actions and deliverables to support the Good Work aims.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Member Comments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SR suggested linking in with TUC on this.</li> <li>○ PW suggested including companies which invest in pension schemes which follow the Green Investment Agenda.</li> </ul>	

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<p><b>Recommendation</b> That the Good Work Forum is approved by the Employment and Skills Board. <b>APPROVED</b></p>	
<p><b>5. Member Updates</b></p> <p><b>Highlights</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Secondary Education (AL):</b> A survey of all secondary schools in Cornwall on careers provision showed that it's a priority in all schools. The number of apprenticeships is increasing and engagement with employers is on the rise, with many saying it's excellent/good. The biggest issue is recruitment and training providers are failing to recruit, which is an issue for the future. Retention is the new recruitment.</li> <li>• <b>Market Insights (AF):</b> Stress the importance of recruitment processes as laid out in AF's report. Demand for start up support is as high as it has been for the past seven years – c100 per month. Increased level of requests for help from companies in distress, particularly with cash flow and debtors going bust.</li> <li>• <b>DWP (SC):</b> Workforce Participation – the Secretary of State has been commissioned by No 10 to review how we generate more workforce participation. Older workers – anticipating some new areas to work on in the next few weeks. SPF – evaluation of People &amp; Skills spending not until the 3<sup>rd</sup> year and the proportion of SPF spend on People &amp; Skills.</li> <li>• <b>Agri-food (CP):</b> The Future Farm Resilience Fund from Defra, provides business support, is being rolled out and, in Cornwall, is being promoted by the Good Growth Hub and the BIP (Businesses Information Point) in Okehampton. There are the usual employment problems in Agriculture, Fishing and Food Processing. The Cornish Fish Producers Association (CFPO) has set up a Young Fishermen's Association, along the lines of Young Farmers. Farmers tend to just advertise jobs in their network and we need to try and push to change that. There is a move at the moment to set up an organisation/group to pull Food, Farming and Fishing together, pull in more private sector funding and make the sector aware of what is available.</li> <li>• <b>Hospitality (ES): Update attached to these Minutes</b> – Brexit is an issue – small suppliers who were exporting to Europe are struggling because of the paperwork; similarly small suppliers in Europe are struggling to export to us so prices have gone extreme. Also struggling to get parts for machines made in Europe. 30% of SME's have stopped exporting to Europe.</li> </ul>	

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<p>Employers who were paying the Real Living Wage are now not committing to that for this year. Quite a few hospitality businesses are scared for the future. Concern for the long-term prosperity of Cornwall and beyond.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Digital Skills (CG):</b> CG agreed with everything that ES said about getting parts. Energy costs are a big factor – start-ups and small businesses are moving out of offices because they can't afford them. The knock on effect of higher energy costs means that employment skills, wellness and training are being abandoned.</li> <li>• <b>Manufacturing (EN):</b> The sector is generally busy but it's getting more challenging. There is a good appetite for training but, with recruitment problems, it's hard for companies to release staff for training. Good news! – the Cornwall Manufacturers Group was runner up in the National Manufacturing Awards 2023. The CMG, which has only been going for 9 months was judged to be better than McLaren Automotive! Other sectors are now saying that they want to do something similar.</li> <li>• <b>Further Education (JE):</b> St Austell Brewery is sponsoring training for hospitality and catering, Kier is already on board for construction and there are some digital ones coming. We need KS3 students to realise that there are alternatives to A levels. It takes dedicated employers to make the scheme work. Please do go and see the SDF electric vehicle projects at the colleges; 70 garages have now been trained on electric. The Apprenticeship Games are on the 9<sup>th</sup> February at the St Austell campus. All principals are going to Parliament on March 1<sup>st</sup> to discuss funding the skills gap with MPs. The Ecology level 7 has been launched at Eden with 100 starting immediately from all over the country. We are lucky to have very good colleges in Cornwall.</li> <li>• <b>Health &amp; Care (JG):</b> There is lots of activity around recruitment and RCHT made 73 offers at their event; however a care home has reported losing 7 staff to the NHS. SWAPs sessions have seen an uplift. Proud to Care has launched its new website. The cost of living report done by the Health Foundation is very concerning for the sector; retention of staff is an issue because of the salaries. There has been a lot work with the DWP to find Ukrainian health professionals – there is a significant group but language is the barrier. Accelerated language learning has been organised with Language Tree, with funding from FEE for health professionals with good language skills already with the aim of meeting the ILETS which are required</li> </ul>	

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<p>for professional registration within a 3-month programme. Also looking to do a lower level language programme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community Sector (IC):</b> Concern about the gap between ESF and SPF may mean that some organisations fail. There are challenges for employers who are being asked to be more flexible about the way they employ.</li> <li>• <b>Creativity (JN):</b> October, November &amp; December were very quiet but the start of the year has been the busiest ever, up 30%, which is attributable to distressed businesses who are working hard to get ready for the coming season. Very busy but not making any more money, which is adding to the ongoing recruitment challenge. However, there are a lot of applications from people coming back from being freelance. Challenging to provide the flexibility that employees want plus a nice office for them to work in when they want!</li> <li>• <b>Marine (PW):</b> Problem with wage inflation on top of inflation. The sector is very busy but still with recruitment challenges. Most companies have been absorbing costs by reducing profits or using reserves. There are long order books but inflation and cost increases are eating into the margins of work which hasn't started yet and was agreed at a fixed price. The leisure season is expected to be busy and seasonal worker training will be supported with the ESF programmes. Apprenticeship numbers have doubled in the last 12 months. Working on launching 3 employer-based training centres and piloting some green skills developments for the sector in Cornwall, which will then be rolled out nationally. Cornwall Marine Network has been shortlisted as a finalist for the Maritime UK national award for the coastal powerhouse as, over 20 years, 4,600 new jobs have been created with a cumulative added value to Cornwall of over £500 million.</li> <li>• <b>Higher Education (RI):</b> Falmouth was ranked No 1 Arts University in the country according to The Times. Recruitment is up. Promising news coming from government around the lifelong loan entitlement for adult learners, including higher level qualifications. The post-study work visa situation still needs to be resolved. There was a good civic/university partnership event last week to talk about what the universities can do to support Cornwall – any thoughts/suggestions, please forward to Rob.</li> <li>• <b>Trade Union (SR):</b> Lots of disputes at the moment with pressures on employers and employees. In comparative terms, wages are lower than they were in 2008.</li> </ul>	

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<b>6. Any other business</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CH has received the LSIP survey and will circulate it with members.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Action 7: to circulate amongst members.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>CH/JH</b>
<b>Date of next meeting:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 19<sup>th</sup> April, 2.30pm – 4.30pm</li> </ul>	
<b>Actions</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. SC offered to help with employer engagement so needs to be put in contact with Ann.</li> <li>2. RI suggested that LSIP should be put in contact with the ESB to help with employer engagement.</li> <li>3. CH to contact CG regarding the DPS and apprenticeships.</li> <li>4. CH to circulate the LMI factsheets to the Supply Group.</li> <li>5. SS agreed to take this feedback to the Good Growth Team. All enquiries/feedback requests on SPF should be emailed to the Good Growth team at: <a href="mailto:goodgrowth@cornwall.gov.uk">goodgrowth@cornwall.gov.uk</a></li> <li>6. Invite someone from Good Growth to give an update at the next ESB meeting and discuss the impact of ESF rundown.</li> <li>7. Circulate the LSIP survey amongst members.</li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CH</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>CH</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>CH</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>CH</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SS/JH</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SS/JH</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>CH/JH</b></p>

Meeting finished at 4.20pm