

**From: Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform**

**Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services**

**To: Growth Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee – 19 January 2017**

**Subject: Update on the priorities and outcomes of the Kent and Medway Skills Commission for 2016/17**

**Classification: For information**

Past Pathway of Paper **N/A**

Future Pathway of Paper **N/A**

**Summary:** This report explains the governance, operating structures, priorities and outcomes of the Kent and Medway Skill Commission.

**Recommendation(s):**

Growth Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to note the 2016/17 priorities and actions of the Kent and Medway Skills Commission.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Kent and Medway local authorities have operated an Education, Learning and Skills Partnership Board since 2013, a group which evolved from the 14-24 (Education and Skills) Planning Forum. This board included representatives from education, funding bodies (the Education Funding Authority and the Skills Funding Authority), training providers and FE Colleges, as well as representation from employers.
- 1.2 Following the recommendations from the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership in October 2015 to establish a Skills Commission, the number of employer representatives on the Skills Board, nominated by the Employer Guilds, has significantly increased. The first meeting of this group was in December 2015.

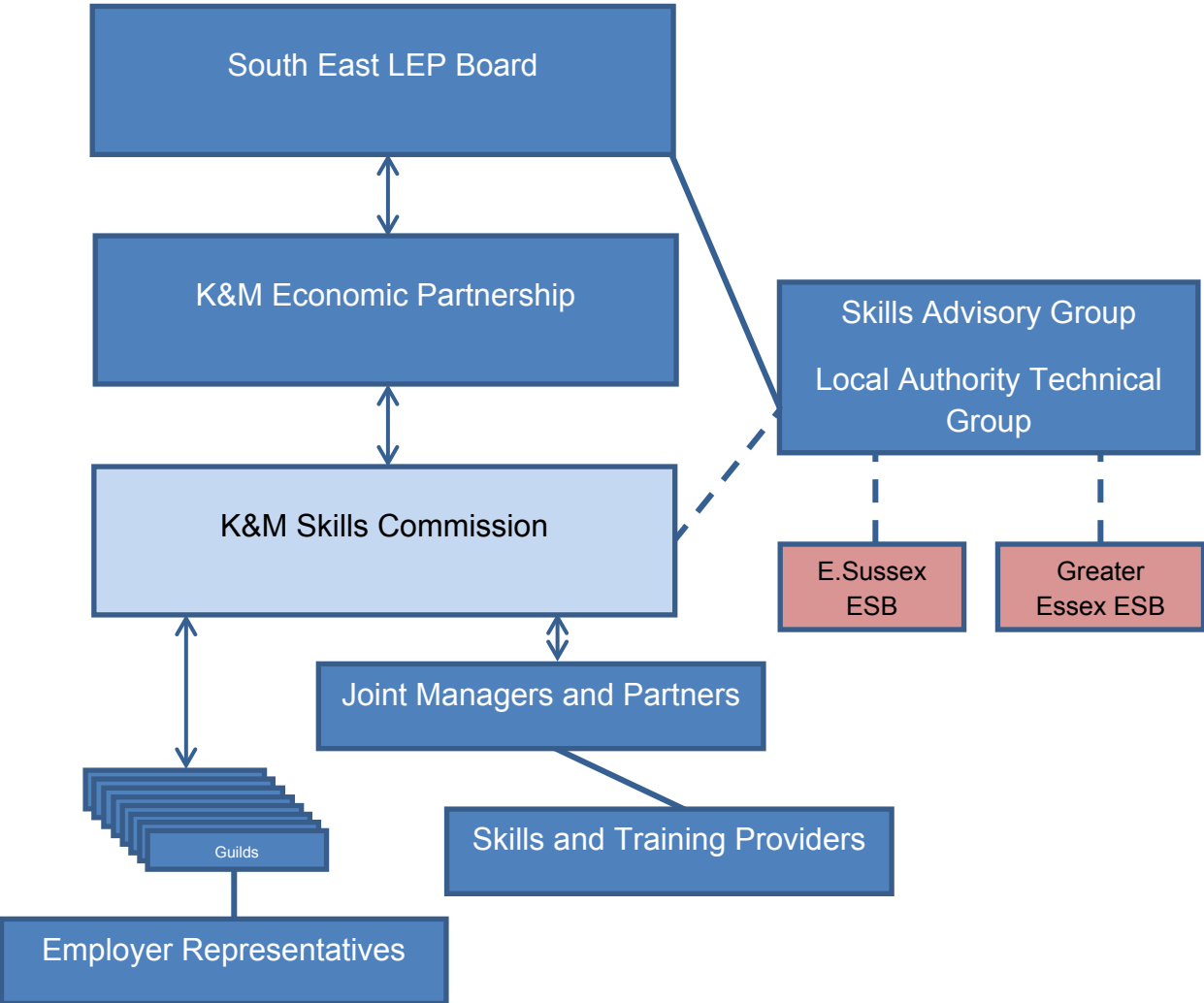
**2. Kent and Medway Skills Commission Governance Structure**

**2.1 Kent and Medway Economic Partnership**

The Kent and Medway Skills Commission reports regularly to the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership (KMEP). This reporting includes agreement about the skills priorities for Kent and Medway, identification of potential growth areas for skills and areas of concern. The Skills Commission has developed a range of projects and programmes to address the priorities set out by the KMEP, and the Commission provides regular feedback on progress and evaluates outcomes.

KMEP discusses a range of issues affecting business including infrastructure, transport and legislation. It is important that skills and training is given a higher priority within the work activities of KMEP. Currently the Kent and Medway Skills Commission and KMEP representatives on KMEP are Simon Cook, Principal of Mid Kent College, Jo James, Invicta Chamber of Commerce and Paul Winter, CEO Wire belt Ltd.

**The current LEP governance structure**



## 2.2 Skills Advisory Group (Pan LEP)

The Kent and Medway Skills Commission informs and updates the SELEP Skills Advisory Group. This is a pan LEP group that makes representation to the SELEP Board regarding any matters relating to training and skills. It is a technical group of Local Authority Officers and representatives from the ESBs. Each of the three ESBs (Greater Essex, East Sussex, Kent and Medway) has been tasked with producing a Skills Strategy, which, when combined, will form the SELEP Skills Strategy. This work will be overseen by the Skills Advisory Group.

## 2.3 Joint Managers and Partners Meeting (Kent and Medway)

The Joint Managers and Partners group is an operational officer group including staff from KCC, Medway Council, FE Colleges (KAFEC), training providers (KATO), JCP, CXK and EBP. The group is convened and chaired by the KCC Skills and Employability Service, and meets six times per year, and develops strategies and action plans with occasional task and finish groups. This supports the Kent and Medway Skills Commission in delivering its priorities.

## 2.4 Employer Guilds

The aim of the eight Guilds is to meet the skills and training needs of Kent and Medway businesses by working in partnership with relevant employment sector experts alongside skills and training providers. The role of the Guilds is to:

- Develop and increase effective apprenticeship programmes
- Develop sector specific workforce development strategies
- Promote priority sectors to young people
- Share good practice and identify funding streams to enhance skills and training provision across Kent

The role and terms of reference for the steering groups for the Guilds is attached as Appendix 1.

There are now eight Guilds operating, which are:

- Construction and the Built Environment
- Creative and Media
- Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing, Environmental Technologies and Energy
- Healthcare
- Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism and Transport
- Land Based Industries

- Life Sciences
- Financial Services.

An important function for the Guilds is to determine their requirements, in terms of revenue or capital funding, in order to inform KMEP and SELEP and agree a pipeline of projects. Each Guild considers the priorities, new projects and programmes that they wish to be considered by the Kent and Medway Skills Commission and KMEP, as a standing agenda item at each Guild meeting. The Guilds are now providing an effective interface between employers and education and skills providers. There are over 200 employers involved in the Guilds alongside 30 training and skills providers including schools, FE colleges and the Kent universities.

### **3. Kent and Medway Skills Commission Priorities and Outcomes 2016/17**

The terms of reference and current membership for the Kent and Medway Skills Commission are attached as Appendix 2. The priorities for the Skills Commission are set out below.

#### **3.1 Skills Priorities for Kent and Medway Skills Commission**

- Developing excellent labour market intelligence and making sure that this intelligence is used effectively.
- Developing a Careers Education, Advice and Guidance Framework for all Kent and Medway schools and FE colleges which reflects labour market trends and raises the profile of opportunities within the Guilds.
- Increasing the number of apprenticeships. In Kent and Medway, the number of apprenticeship positions offered by employers exceeds demand from young people, in contrast to the national trend, despite the career opportunities to which apprenticeships can lead. We aim to overcome barriers to participation (such as the frequent entry-level requirement for Level 2 qualifications), and identify beacon providers in every district linked with our improved intelligence base.
- Extending the growth of higher education as a key driver of innovation and productivity. Working with our four universities, ensure there are strong progression routes, especially in the scientific, technical and engineering skills that the economy needs.
- Developing a new model to inform 14-24 pathways across Kent and Medway. In particular, managing the negative impacts of competition between providers, which often limits the real choices available to young people and developing a model which provides much better, employer-driven information about career and training options.
- Ensuring that the resources available for technical learning are maximised and distributed effectively. We will establish a clear Technical and Professional Strategy for capital and revenue funding, sequential to the

new Strategic Economic Plan, to direct the future allocation of the Skills Funding Agency's devolved capital fund and the use of mainstream LGF funds for higher and further education. Building on the devolution of capital funds, we will also seek further freedoms and flexibilities from central Government and a strong role for the new Kent and Medway Skills Commission in setting the priorities for SFA, EFA and Jobcentre Plus revenue budgets where they relate to technical and vocational provision.

- Reducing unemployment among people aged 18-25, substantially cutting the number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET).
- Reforming community learning, so that it is focused on the needs of the Kent and Medway economy, ensuring that those most distant from the labour market are supported back to work, concentrate resources on tackling entrenched disadvantage, better linking investment in skills with housing, health and social care.

### 3.2 **Current Activities of the Skills Commission**

1. Providing LMI data for the Area Wide review of FE provision. The Skills Commission is a key stakeholder in informing the review and ensuring that employer's views are represented throughout the process.

New District Data packs are currently in development and will be published in February 2017 that will provide a profile of the employment opportunities within each Guild across Kent. This information will be used with skills and training providers to inform the local skills offer, to ensure this meets employer needs.

2. A Careers Enterprise Coordinator has been appointed by KCC to promote effective employer engagement strategies in 20 Coastal High schools. This work is commissioned and monitored by the Skills Commission.

A new online Careers Platform for schools called Success at Schools will be available in March 2017, and this will include regular updates from the Guilds about job opportunities across Kent.

3. Development of degree level apprenticeship programmes with Christchurch and Greenwich Universities and supporting HEFCE bids.
4. Providing briefings for employers through the Guilds on the new technical qualifications and engaging the Guilds in the development of industry standard assignments for schools.
5. Informed SELEP capital equipment funding.
6. Planning and delivering an employer led Skill Commission conference on 21 March 2017.

7. Endorsed the Kent Adult Learning Employment and Skills Strategy and the establishment of the 5 Adult Skill Forums.
8. Development of websites including Apprenticeship Kent which currently has over 100 Apprenticeship vacancies and 1000 young people registered for information about apprenticeship opportunities.

### 3.3 Updates from the Guilds

Each industry sector faces different challenges, and each of the eight Guilds are responding appropriately. All the Guilds have an action plan in place or one is in development for the newer Guilds. The Commission agreed at its last meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2016 that each Guild needs to set clear objectives so that impact and outcomes can be effectively monitored. This included a commitment from each Guild to:

- Provide a minimum number of new apprenticeships and schools visits
- Support the four Kent Choices live event in March and the March Conference
- Arrange sector conversations similar to the very successful Hospitality Guild
- Provide employer links for the Careers Enterprise Company
- Determine the sector needs re training provision in order to develop a pipeline of projects
- Contribute material for a Guild web site.

There have been a number of consistent messages from the Guild meetings over the last six months which will shape the priorities for 2017/18. The Kent and Medway Skills Commission will seek to address the following concerns:

1. Members of each Guild have expressed concern at the lack of understanding of their sector, or the workplace in general, on the part of young people.
2. Concerns about the Apprenticeship Levy.
3. The need for a promotional campaign to encourage schools and education providers to visit local industry.
4. Upskilling of existing workforce and easy to access to adult training opportunities.
5. Concerns about the lack of young people coming through with the right skills and experiences, and faced with an ageing workforce.
6. Need to develop a quality standard for Work Experience and Employability pathway for young people.

Engagement and support of employers at the Guild meetings has been very encouraging, with good attendance. This reflects a high level of enthusiasm and a desire to influence education and training provision. Each Guild has representatives from the relevant sector, and in order to maximise engagement it is important that each Guild cascades to the remainder of the employers in the sector. Each Guild has been asked by the Commission to develop sector communication plans so the work of the Guilds and engagement from employers is further enhanced.

#### **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 The Kent and Medway Skills Commission will continue to ensure there is appropriate and meaningful engagement with employers and key stakeholders to influence the development of the skills agenda across Kent and Medway. The Commission will inform and influence KMEP on decisions to improve education and skills opportunities for young people and adults across the LEP. The Skills Commission will also continue to improve communications with employers to enable new programmes to develop to meet the local skills needs and will seek to influence and potentially manage new programmes through further devolution and new funding streams.

#### **5. Recommendation(s):**

Growth Economic Development and Communities Cabinet Committee is asked to note the 2016/17 priorities and actions of the Kent and Medway Skills Commission.

#### **6. Background Documents**

Kent Adult Learning Employment and Skills Strategy and KPIs

#### **7. Contact Details**

Report Author:

Sue Dunn

Head of Skills and Employability

03000 416044

[Sue.Dunn@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Sue.Dunn@kent.gov.uk)

## **Guild – Steering Group Terms of Reference**

### **Steering**

The group has been established to provide strategic advice and an informed perspective to identifying the need for skills succession and all forms of progressive employment including Apprenticeships, Traineeships and Work Experience in the Sector.

We want to raise the profile of the industry and promote it as a progressive employment pathway, whilst meeting the skills needs of the economy.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this Steering Group is to meet the needs of the industry by working in partnership to drive the delivery of the maximum /or, maximise the, number of sustainable apprenticeship hours via the procurement and delivery of construction projects across the client group in Kent.

The Steering Group will be a collaborative working partnership where agreement will be by consensus. It is not formally constituted, will not have any legal status or apply for funding in its own right.

#### **1. Apprenticeships**

- Provide a sustainable and effective model of Apprenticeship delivery to meet the skills needs of the Guild sectors.
- Provide a flexible apprenticeship delivery model, enabling collaboration and increasing productivity.
- Deliver nationally recognised Apprenticeship frameworks supported by the industry, which meet employers' needs.

#### **2. Workforce Development**

- Working with specialist sub-contractors and supply chains to cater for each trade and identify skills and training requirements.
- Ensure there is appropriate and accessible provision for sectors to upskill the existing workforce.
- Identify skills and training opportunities and new provision to meet future skills needs.

#### **3. Education, Employment and Skills**

- To promote a positive image of the sector and shift perceptions
- To create a sustainable and long term infrastructure to support young people looking to embark on a career in the sector
- To support businesses to recruit and develop young people into sustainable jobs

#### **4. Overarching Activities**



- To ensure co-ordination and alignment of the group with that of organisations with shared interests.
- To share good practice, knowledge and experience with the group and ensure effective communications to all employers within the sectors.
- Respect all other steering group member's views and positions and support agreement via consensus.

### **5. Funding**

- An important role and function for the *Guilds* will be to determine their requirements, in terms of revenue or capital funding, in order to inform KMEP and South East Local Enterprise Partnership SELEP.

### **Membership**

The Steering Group will consist of no less than 10 members and no more than 50.

The steering group will include representatives from: Kent County Council, Local Authorities, Educational Institutions, FE, HE, Training Providers, Trade Associations, Procurement Representatives, Chambers of Commerce, Contractors and Suppliers, Local Employers and National Employers.

Other representatives are welcome to attend the meetings.

### **Meetings**

- The steering group will meet bi or trimonthly
- The agenda and supporting documents will be sent at least 5 working days before the meeting.
- Members are welcome to make suggestions for the agenda or follow-up actions.
- Notes of the meeting will be sent out 5 working days after the meeting and members of the Steering Group can make comments on omissions and mistakes.

December 2016

### The Terms of Reference for the Kent and Medway Skills Commission

#### Aims

- maintain a credible labour market intelligence base to inform provision and ensure a strong employer voice
- identify areas in which delivery would be strengthened through the devolution of powers and/or funding to Kent and Medway
- develop and drive new approaches to the delivery of skills training in Kent and Medway
- support the delivery of the 14-24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy
- support the delivery of the Adult Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy
- identify key priorities for action to upskill the workforce in Kent and Medway
- influence the allocation of skills resources from EFA, SFA and LEP

#### Our Ambitions:

##### a) For Employers

*Employers to shape and influence the delivery of skills training to ensure there is a skilled workforce to meet local economic needs.*

##### b) For Young People

*Our ambition is for all young people in Kent and Medway to become better qualified and skilled for employment; to be able to participate and achieve success in education and work based training at least until the age of 18 and to ensure more 18 to 24 year olds can access higher learning or sustained employment that is appropriate to their needs and relevant to the local and national economy.*

##### c) For Adults

*Our ambition for Kent and Medway providers will be to: maximise adult participation in training and learning in order to achieve economic growth, full employment, social inclusion and community cohesion.*

#### Structure of the Kent and Medway Skills Commission:

1. The Board will appoint a Chair, which shall be reviewed annually
2. Membership of the Kent and Medway Skills Commission will be reviewed at least every two years (reflective of the skills need).
3. Members who miss three consecutive meetings without sending representation will be reviewed by the Commission.
4. Each Kent and Medway Skills Commission member will provide a named alternative for attendance in their absence.
5. Co-opting of Members is allowed where appropriate. Co-opting will be for a defined period of time and will not have voting rights.
6. The Kent and Medway Skills Commission will be supported by a Secretariat provided by Kent County Council

### Membership

Executive Board of the Kent and Medway Skills Commission

Members with voting rights (22\*):

<b>Employer representatives</b>	
Employer representation organisations (Chamber/FSB)	1
Guilds/sector representatives	10
LEP/KMEP representative (business member)	1
VCS representative (social enterprise)	1
Institute of Directors	1
<b>Total (employers)</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Providers</b>	
Kent Association of Headteachers	1
Medway School representative	1
KATO (Kent Association of Training Organisations)	1
KAFEC (Kent Association of Further Education Colleges)	1
HE (Higher Education)	1
<b>Total (providers)</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Strategic partners</b>	
KCC	1
Medway	1
District Councils	1
JCP (Job Centre Plus)	1
EFA (Education Funding Agency)	1
SFA (Skills Funding Agency)	1
<b>Total (strategic partners)</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Grand total:</b>	<b>25</b>

#### \*+ Co-opted members required (without voting rights)

The working Executive Board will establish and commission a range of specialist project groups as required.

Officers from partner organisations will be in attendance as and when they are required.

#### **The Kent and Medway Skills Commission will develop an action plan for business growth which will:**

1. Assess gaps in skills training and advise schools, FE, HE and work-based learning providers on strategic planning and co-ordination of post-14 provision. Ensuring there is equality of access to appropriate education and training , traineeships and apprenticeships which provides opportunities for progression into sustained employment or further training.
2. Assess the impact on Kent and Medway of national funding arrangements for post-14 provision and to advise the LEP, LA, EFA , SFA, FE, HE and work-based learning providers on local priorities to meet the needs of learners and employers.

3. Ensure that employers influence and review skills training provision across Kent and Medway
4. Monitor, evaluate, continually seek to influence and improve skills and training opportunities with the agreed priority sectors across Kent and Medway.
5. Commission activities, as appropriate, and improve aspects of skills training in Kent and Medway, to include employer engagement work experience, careers guidance, upskilling existing employees and employability skills.
6. Lead on LEP skills and training by influencing, informing and advising KMEP and SELEP Board on skills priorities (to aggregate into a LEP Strategy), activities and funding allocations. Develop a pipeline of capital and revenue programmes.

The Kent and Medway Skills Commission will:

1. deliver an annual conference for all partners to promote skills development and effective employer engagement
2. support the development of a website and an effective communications strategy on skills opportunities for employers
3. develop an three year plan with annual reviews, which sets out the priorities and monitors the impact of the Kent and Medway Skills Commission
4. support and influence the development of the Guilds
5. promote traineeships and apprenticeships to improve the skills-base across Kent and Medway
6. oversee the activities and monitor the impact of the Careers and Enterprise Board Coordinator