

GLOUCESTERSHIRE SKILLS ADVISORY PANEL
14:00 to 16:00 on 11th October 2021 via Teams

1) Welcome, introductions and apologies for absence:

Attendees: Andrew Kirk, Anjie Winter, Anne Stocks, Dan Boon, Ian Mean, Jason Dunsford, Jim Grant, John Mayell, Kate Martin, Matthew Burgess, Michael Carter, Nikki Williams, Pete Carr, Rob Jenkins, Roxy Varnham, Sara-Jane Watkins, Scott Green and Simon Spooner

Apologies: Boyd Hatwood

Welcome by Pete Carr who explained -

- Robin Hall will take over from Di Haines as the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) representative on the GSAP.
- We're expecting confirmation of who will take over from Steve Lydon from Stroud District Council.

2) Notes of last meeting:

Outstanding actions –

- Action: GSAP members to explore others SAP reports which have been published - what can we learn? A small working group to be formed with Matt, Jim, Steve, Di and Rob to explore. [Action complete W/C 29/12/21.](#)

3) Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) Trailblazer:

- Presented by Matt Tudge & Nicky Williams from Business West.
- **Action:** Nicky Williams to share the presentation delivered. Roxy to circulate.
- An exploration into the LSIP Trailblazer for Gloucestershire businesses and skills providers and a conversation with members to understand the linkages between the LSIP work and the work of the GSAP.
- Explored LSIP Phase 1 as Advanced Engineering and Aerospace, Manufacturing and Health and Social Care.
- Spoke about the 'Golden Threads' through these sectors to be Digital Transformation and Decarbonisation of the sectors.
- Looking at LSIP Phase 2 to include Creative and High Tech.
- Discussion around the proposed geographical areas and the partners which sit within them. For example, M4/M5 travel to work corridor/Bristol Airport (etc).
- Business West as the leading 'Employer Representative Body' will work closely with other employer bodies across the region to ensure wide reach into the business community.
- It was asked "How does this work in relation to the Local Skills Improvement Plan for the remaining sectors?" - Because it's a pilot other sectors aren't included but could be included in the second phase. There was a consensus to focus on Advanced Engineering and Aerospace, Manufacturing and Health and Social Care.
- From a GFirst LEP perspective - the team will have access to the Business Groups within the LEP.

- **Action:** All – if you have links or contacts within the priority sectors that would be useful to Matt and Nicky then let Pete or Roxy know.

4) Economic dashboard update:

- Kate spoke to GSAP members about the implications in terms of unemployment and furlough. Discussions around further actions needed to support individuals and businesses affected within Gloucestershire took place.
- It was said the Claimant Count of people claiming unemployment related benefits in August 2021 was 13,560 with 3.5% of 16-64-year olds.
- The Government response to Covid-19 meant that an increasing number of people were eligible for unemployment related benefit support.
- The Coronavirus Retention Scheme furlough figures as of 31/08/21 was said to be 10,500 with 4% of employments.
- It was said in recent months the gap is reducing and all sectors saw a decline on those furloughed.
- The picture across Gloucestershire is overall positive with active job postings at 38,120 as of September 2021.
- It was explored that Universal Credit is presenting a similar picture to unemployment data with a decline in the number of people searching for work.
- NEETS pre-pandemic levels (approx.) were 292 of 16/18-year olds as of 31st August 2021.
- Pete Carr and Vikki Walters have discussed the ‘mismatch’ number of people clamming Universal Credit and those the data implies.
- It was discussed what is stopping people applying for the jobs advertised? with location, transport and confidence being commented upon. It was also touched upon re: work-life balance and transferees in certain sectors.
- **Action:** Pete to speak with Robin and do more analysis work to share with GSAP members.

5) Policy update – Kickstart and JETS extended, over 50s support:

- Kickstart will be extended until March 2022 and it was said the Gateways involved would find it difficult.
- The Job Entry Targeted Scheme (JETS) will be delivered until September 2022 by Prospects.

6) Strategy – Skills Survey and Strategy, Local Skills Report and Gloucestershire Employment Charter:

- An opportunity to discuss the ‘next steps’ and to restart the skills strategy workstream in order to progress the Skills Strategy and Local Skills Report.
- The December GSAP meeting will include a ‘deep dive’ on the Skills Strategy and Gloucestershire’s Employment Charter.
- Introduction to Anjie Winter who is the Employment and Skills Coordinator for GFirst LEP leading on the Employment Charter.
- As part of this work, meetings have taken place with the District Councils to identify skills needs in addition to a small survey/focus groups with the Business Groups in the LEP. The intention is to pull key findings together before January.

- Key themes included recruitment issues, skill foresight and the green agenda.
- Anjie will work closely with the Education team at GFirst LEP and align Paul Woodhouse expertise to help form a project plan for the Employment Charter
- **Action:** Pete/Anjie to circulate this documentation and concept diagram to GSAP members.

7) Skills programmes – Digital Skills bootcamps programme update:

- Presented by Rachid Hourizi, Institute of Coding.
- Rachid spoke about Digital Skills Bootcamps and how they operate – how they are used to benefit individuals and businesses throughout Gloucestershire.
- The Bootcamps provide people with an opportunity to build tech skills and will provide support to reach an interview with a local employer.
- They are developed by the Government in partnership with employers, providers and local authorities to help individuals develop skills that are in demand.
- **Action:** All – if you would like further information on Digital Skills Bootcamps or to contact Rachid then let Pete or Roxy know.
- **Action:** Rob Jenkins to introduce Rachid to Charlotte Smith Cyber Skills Growth Lead and Coordinator

8) Employment Programmes – Restart Scheme update

- Presented by Mik Belcher from SeeTec Pluss to understand how the Restart Scheme is operating in Gloucestershire and assist in the effective delivery of the programme.
- Mik introduced the Restart Scheme as part of the Government wider 'Plan for Jobs' to help people who have lost their jobs.
- The programme aims to support people who are out of work and claiming universal credit for at least 12 months in a person-centred manner.
- They will work with LEP and the Local Authority to integrate Restart into existing provision and meet local needs within Gloucestershire.
- There are three employment pathways:
 1. Adapt and switch (reskilling and training for people chasing career due to Covid)
 2. Experience builder (development for people with limited work history)
 3. Bounce back (job search and prep for people who are returning to a similar sector)
- The scheme helps to remove barriers to work in a supportive and holistic manner (with an introductory welcome to a Job Centre Plus Work Coach and Seetec Pluss Advisor.
- Specialist partners include Emsi, Serio, RNIB (etc.)
- Hopes to bring together local services and interventions to support the wider needs of participants and collaboration is key.
- **Action:** All – for further information or to contact Mik then let Pete or Roxy know.

9) Date of next meeting:

- Monday 13th December 14:00 and 16:00 on Teams
- [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Thank you to all GSAP members for their continued support.