

101508581

Revision 01

## EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS AND EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

### NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Meeting:	4 <sup>th</sup> April 2025
Location:	MS Teams
Chair:	Michael Gray (SCC)
Attendees:	SZC – Guy Hazlehurst (GH), Chris Young (CY) – Obs, Fiona McMillan (FM) – Obs, Johnathan Reynolds (JR) – Obs ESC – Jo Probitts (JP) SCC – Michael Gray (MG), James Chandler (JC), Chris Dashper (CD) – Obs
Apologies:	

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#### Meeting Notes:

#### INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF PREVIOUS ACTIONS

#### Actions raised during the previous meeting:

Date Raised	Ref.	Description	Lead	Date Due
05/09/2024	1	Future workshop to be arranged to lift the lid on what we are asking contractors to report on, how we are doing it through the portal and how we are doing it alongside ESG.	SZC	Next meeting
15/01/2025	2	MG and JC to coordinate on the approach of identifying needs in ASEC expressions of interest, to facilitate discussions with the supply chain regarding investment.	ESEWG	Closed
15/01/2025	3	Group to further develop ASIP review process to ensure it is detailed and effective	ESEWG	Closed
15/01/2025	4	Group to refine the ESEWG forward plan to clarify the ASIP annual cycle and its impact on governance and meeting delivery	ESEWG	Closed

- Action 1: GH will arrange a session during informal meeting with the individual responsible for the contractual reporting tool. This session will clarify what is being asked of contractors in terms of reporting, guide them through the reporting process, and explain how the resulting data will inform their work.
- Action 2: covered in this meeting
- Action 3: covered in this meeting
- Action 4: covered in this meeting

#### ASIP Update (JC)

##### Confirmation of Annual Cycle.

- ESEWG Annual Cycle
  - JC presented the proposed annual cycle, providing clarity and structure for the working group. It included a 12-month lookahead and visual representation of ASIP-related meetings.
  - Key date: September for ASIP publication.
  - JC highlighted that this session marked the formal initiation of drafting the ASIP and the Regional Skills Needs Assessment. At the next formal meeting there will be an opportunity to review the first draft, allowing for adjustments and feedback before the final sign-off in September and subsequent publication.
  - GH highlighted the importance of incorporating supply chain engagement, MEH, and the input and review from thematic groups.
- Quarterly Meeting Agendas
  - JC has set predefined agendas for quarterly meetings.
  - This meeting signalled the formal start of ASIP and Regional Skills Needs Assessment development.

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- MG emphasised the importance of identifying aspects of the ASIP that require enhancement based on previous iterations. Noting these will help establish priorities and focus for informal meetings leading up to the next ESEWG, ensuring that the first draft of ASIP incorporates these changes.
- GH noted that the supply chain is characterised by small, independent contracts. He raised the question of how to effectively summarise this in the ASIP, stating that over the next couple of years, particularly within the employment group, it will be crucial to ensure effective engagement. While CWA and MEHA have single points of contact, he highlighted the need to also ensure that small contractors are adequately represented in the ASIP too.
- JR highlighted three evolving areas of focus:
  - Evaluation Monitoring: there is a need for proportionate evaluation monitoring across all aspects of the ASIP, ensuring it complements broader SZC efforts for employment, skills and education.
  - Alignment of ASEC Funds: clarity is needed on how ASEC funds align with ASEC initiatives and investments. Strengthening this alignment should be a priority in the next iteration of the ASIP.
  - Regional Demand Analysis: a more granular understanding of regional needs related to SZC is essential for targeted planning.
- MG reflected on the importance of clearly defining major project priorities for the upcoming year, stating that these should be explicitly articulated in the ASIP. He also raised that intentions may shift, suggesting the need for a mechanism to report changes and ensure effective communication regarding any amendments to the ASIP.
- JC reiterated that the ASIP is evolving. The evidence base informing the next ASIP will differ from the first, necessitating a robust review process and clear monitoring strategies.
- FM emphasised the significance of the national skills agenda and its reflection in the ASIP. FM also mentioned that as colleges and providers generate ideas (some in collaboration with colleges and others from individual organisations) it will be vital to capture these contributions. While some may emerge from the FEH forum, others may come from individual colleges that are not represented in that forum.

#### ASIP Quarterly Review (Outputs, Outcomes, Decisions)

- JC presented the draft framework for upcoming quarterly reviews. JC stated that in the last three months, the main items have been engaging with the FEHE group (and how they have evolved with the assistant principal group), and producing outputs on curriculum planning and a position paper (which have facilitated clearer communication of stakeholder perspectives) with the coordination function acting as an intermediary and facilitator.
- JC stated that they are moving towards more defined Eols from colleges. The clearer messaging being received shows a shift towards growing consideration for the curriculum model and design.
- JC raised the 'other developments' category, and highlighted the coordination function's efforts to raise awareness of its purpose and value, resulting in more distinct activities with individual developments. Two primary initiatives are emerging to address previous concerns: gathering workforce planning information from various developments and embedding coordination with projects that are mobilising. JC stated that for projects that have moved beyond planning, there is also potential to explore the idea of a developer forum in the coming months, which would complement information gathered from other developments and SZC, fostering strategic dialogue with lead developers.
- JC raised another point regarding the thematic groups, stating the need for further exploration regarding skills infrastructure and youth apprenticeships. JC stated that as there are significant discussions regarding these topics in existing groups, it may not be necessary to create a new thematic group, but could build on an existing one instead.
- JR questioned the necessity of the developer forum, citing potential overlap with existing initiatives aimed at aligning employers and industry. JC mentioned that a proposition paper is being drafted for further discussion, highlighting the importance of strategic workforce planning for large and small projects. JR agreed that a developer

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forum focused on major projects and skills could be valuable but cautioned against isolating skills discussions from broader strategic conversations.

- GH proposed establishing a skills observatory rather than a forum, to share SZC data and other relevant information for better decision-making, while JC confirmed that developing the forum and coordinating workforce planning activities should proceed independently and are not contingent.
- MG stressed the importance of discussing workforce development strategies and suggested that the Regional Coordination Function should continue to play a role in this area. GH proposed using alternative engagement formats such as symposiums or workshops.
- The group agreed to discuss the developer forum offline to determine the best approach.

**Action – ESEWG to have an offline discussion regarding the creation of a developer forum and determine the best approach**

#### Wide Governance Updates (FEHE Forum, AP Group)

- JC noted that the next milestone will be further developing the relationship with CWA through the AP group, focusing on tier 1 engagement and demonstrating the group's value in uniting colleges and universities. Significant work remains, particularly regarding the three skill sets they are examining.
- MG reflected on the current status of the FEH forum and its potential for greater impact. FM emphasised the importance of establishing a collective position for colleges, with the forum serving as the primary vehicle for this. Clarity is needed regarding attendance and its connection to the AP group, and there have been discussions around the possibility of renaming the forum to better represent colleges and universities.

#### Discussion Paper for ESEWG to agree

- CD provided context for the discussion paper, highlighting its usefulness in understanding various funding streams and investments within the DoO. CD stated that the aim was to clarify processes, governance, and investment directions in conjunction with other funding sources and the ASIP grant pot. CD asked the group for recommendations and feedback, with MG highlighting the need to outline what the priorities are for finalising the paper.
- MG stated that a priority was the flowchart diagram, which is crucial for understanding decision-making processes, including who is involved and what considerations are made.
- GH raised concerns about governance within SZC, stressing the need for clarity on contractor reporting obligations and frequency.
- JP suggested that the process flowchart diagram should be revisited for better structure and connectivity
- CY highlighted the importance of engaging contractors in this process and supporting their journey as major contractors in this programme
- MG emphasised the importance of informing contractors of potential investment opportunities, ensuring that the ESEWG guides the process in a strategic manner without compelling the contractors.
- JC added that discussions around supply chain investment occur in various forums, and the goal is to bring informal conversations into focus for clearer visibility of both demand and supply from educational providers and the supply chain.
- GH mentioned the challenges companies and colleges face in forming relationships, underscoring the importance of integrating these conversations into the process.
- FM noted that the flowchart diagram should reflect the interconnectedness of the supply chain and providers, moving away from a segmented view while ensuring awareness of executive funding applications.

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- CY stressed the critical timing to maximise FM's point, particularly with CWA and MEH alliances and mobilising other contracts in the early works phase where ASEC funding is relevant. MG reiterated the need for clarity on how the coordination function interacts with the supply chain.
- The group agreed that they were satisfied with these recommendations and that they should prioritise the finalising and agreement of the details in this paper at the next meeting.

#### Fund Updates and Key Decisions

##### ASEC

- CD reported that the ASEC fund is being actively promoted, and several warm leads and contacts have been established and are expressing interest. CD highlighted the importance in having proper governance, understanding, and delivery arrangements in place before moving forward with official applications, stating that alignment of internal processes is essential before considering external applications.
- Conversations have taken place with local and external training providers. While these providers may not submit ASEC applications directly, they have been introduced to colleges that could act as conduits for funding. Discussions have been had with training providers (i.e. those providing logistics, lifting, steel fixing, and welding) around integrating them into broader applications. This has been an important part of the brokerage function.
- CD noted that interest in the fund is growing, and significant progress has been made since the last ESEWG session. The focus now is on effectively integrating these elements into impactful projects for ASEC. CD will share an updated record of conversations with potential applicants on SharePoint for visibility.

#### **Action – CD to share an updated record of conversations with potential ASEC applicants to provide an overview of the status of Eols and the progression of leads**

- JC suggested developing standardised slides to communicate ASEC's status during supply chain events and webinars, which could enhance engagement with skills providers. CY agreed, emphasising the need to refresh existing slides to showcase the diversity of benefits from ASEC and other funding opportunities.

#### **Action – CD to refresh existing ASEC slides to better outline the benefits and funding opportunities**

- GH highlighted the importance of reviewing Eols at the right time, ensuring a balanced input and insight into any gaps.
- FM raised the question of how to encourage stakeholders to feel comfortable discussing potential Eols without feeling committed. MG acknowledged the challenge of balancing open conversations with the need for formal submissions.
- JC emphasised the importance of raising awareness about ASEC and setting clear expectations. He pointed out that this process differs from typical grant applications, particularly regarding deadlines. Establishing clear project timelines for when applications should be submitted will help mobilise Eols effectively.
- JC suggested tweaking the presentation of ASEC to convey a sense of urgency. The group agreed to discuss how to communicate and emphasise deadlines and expectations for ASEC Fund Eols more clearly, with plans to update at the next formal meeting.

#### **Action - group to discuss how to better emphasise and communicate expectations for deadlines associated with ASEC fund Eols**

##### Bursary

- CD reported that they are in the process of advancing funding into the system to ensure that tangible resources are available to colleges. They are currently finalising the draft of the MOUs that will guide the relationships with the colleges.

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- CD stated that they are just one agreement away from securing funding for FE colleges. Additionally, there is a locally managed component that is nearing the point of issuing the MOU, pending discussions with colleges regarding its content.
- The bursary represents a straightforward funding source with clearly defined purposes. It will complement other funding streams and utilise existing protocols for decision-making and allocation.
- Overall, progress is on track

#### Outreach

- The outreach fund is making good progress, although it has faced some delays due to recent changes in procurement regulations. Significant strides have been made toward initiating the procurement exercise.
- Meetings are scheduled to engage with the market, and they are well-prepared with the information CD needs to conduct the tender exercise for outreach. The aim is to launch the grant allocation process by May or June.

#### Funding position

- No transfers required at this moment in time between SZC and SCC

#### **Sizewell C Commitments and Updates**

- Workforce capability:
  - This includes workforce facilities for CAS and IDESPs. Significant progress has been made on workforce skills facilities, both locally and regionally, in connection with ASEC. The focus is on replicating successful elements from HPC and positioning them closer to the project. Plans are underway for substantial non-DoO investments in skills-related facilities over the coming year.
  - Forecasting: an early workforce information deadline is approaching in April/May, and a new forecasting model for the entire project is being developed. This model is progressing well and will inform the production of forecasts later in April, contributing to ASIP. It is a more robust model that consolidates various data sources, providing a single source of truth through a bottom-up approach
- In terms of contractual involvement, the IDSP process is advancing well, enhancing the robustness forecasts and fostering greater interaction between the supply chain, colleges, and this group.
- JC emphasised the importance of maintaining a longitudinal, month-by-month perspective on their educational initiatives. He noted that they are generating outputs and measuring results, including the number of individuals reached. Additionally, the types of interventions being implemented are being examined to ensure a balanced approach to constituency and outreach efforts. This analysis will help identify whether the right areas are being effectively targeted and determine if there are specific geographic regions that require more attention based on their outreach impact.
- Job service: currently undergoing restructuring, which will make it a more integral part of the project's resourcing structure compared to HPC. The goal is to ensure that contractors view this service as the primary point of entry for recruitment.

#### **Forward plan review and updates (JC)**

- The next ESEWG meeting is scheduled for the end of June.

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- JC mentioned that supply chain members will be invited to participate in informal ESEWG meetings on a semi-regular basis to enhance coordination among working groups, particularly regarding local supply chain skills programs.
- ASIP:
  - The annual cycle is now aligned with the 12-month lookahead, reflecting their current status.
  - Timelines for skills funding will be updated and adjusted based on the progress of ASEC, employment outreach, and the procurement process. These internal adjustments will be communicated accordingly.
  - Regarding thematic groups, a thematic outreach group meeting is planned for end of April to align with the procurement process and funding timelines. This workshop will serve as a pre-market engagement exercise to inform specification design.
  - Pre-work is ongoing for other thematic groups as they define their structure and objectives.
  - JC states that in planning workshops, ESEWG meetings typically focus on prioritising themes for discussion and designing the agenda for the upcoming months. The two primary themes will be supply chain engagement (specifically CWA Tier 1 engagement and collaboration with SCWG) and education and skills (focusing on data and how SZC measures impact).
  - GH commented on the importance of standardising reporting practices. He suggested that it would be beneficial to agree on a consistent reporting framework to ensure regular and uniform reports rather than ad hoc or bespoke ones.

**Action – JC to continue embedding of the quarterly review process as per the Deed of Obligations ensuring a consistent reporting framework**

#### AOB

- The ERG meeting is scheduled for April 30th. ESEWG should consider how they will report to ERG, what objectives they aim to achieve with these updates, and ensure they are meeting the requirements outlined in the DoO.

**Action – ESEWG to determine how they will report back to ERG, what objectives they aim to achieve with these updates, and ensure they are meeting the requirements outlined in the DoO**

- JC noted that there is now a requirement for working groups to report on the risk register. A new tab has been created within the framework for this purpose, allowing members to catalogue any relevant information. JC will circulate this tab.

**Action – a discussion will be held at the next informal ESEWG session to address the risk register and the process for formalising it into an official document**

#### Actions raised during the meeting:

Date Raised	Ref.	Description	Lead	Date Due
04/04/2025	1	ESEWG to have an offline discussion regarding the creation of a developer forum and determine the best approach	ESEWG	Next meeting



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04/04/2025	2	CD to share an updated record of conversations with potential ASEC applicants to provide an overview of the status of Eols and the progression of leads	SCC	Next meeting
04/04/2025	3	CD to refresh existing ASEC slides to better outline the benefits and funding opportunities to ASEC applicants	CD	Next meeting
04/04/2025	4	Group to discuss how to better emphasise and communicate expectations for deadlines associated with ASEC fund Eols	ESEWG	Next meeting
04/04/2025	5	JC to continue embedding of the quarterly review process as per the Deed of Obligations ensuring a consistent reporting framework	JC	Next meeting
04/04/2025	6	ESEWG to determine how they will report back to ERG, what objectives they aim to achieve with these updates, and ensure they are meeting the requirements outlined in the DoO	ESEWG	Next meeting
04/04/2025	7	A discussion will be held at the next informal ESEWG session to address the risk register and the process for formalising it into an official document	ESEWG	Next meeting

**Author: Caitlin Murphy (SZC)**