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SZC EMPLOYMENT SKILLS AND EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Date:	28 th February 2024, 14:30-16:00
Location:	Teams/ SCC Endeavour House
Chair:	Michael Gray (SCC)
Attendees:	Guy Hazlehurst (GH,), Johnathan Reynolds (JR, observer), Michael Gray (MG), Natalie Freislich-Mills (NFM), James Chandler (JC), Simon Allen (SA), Fiona McMillan (FM, observer).
Apologies:	Chris Young (CY), Rebecca Calder (RC, observer) and Eleanor Wright (Secretariat, Quod).

Meeting Notes:

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Sizewell C (SZC): Guy Hazlehurst (GH), Workforce Development Lead (observer); Johnathan Reynolds (JR), Employment & Skills Consultant (observer)

Suffolk County Council: Michael Gray (MG), Head of Skills; and Natalie Freislich-Mills (NFM), Skills Infrastructure Lead (Regional Skills Coordination Function)

East Suffolk Council: James Chandler (JC), Skills and Inward Investment.

New Anglia LEP: Simon Allen (SA), Skills Manager.

Invited Guests: Fiona McMillan (FM), Chair of SZC Skills Steering Group / Chair of FE/HE Principals Forum (observer).

MG recapped on meeting purpose – important to highlight the ToR. ESEWG's role to oversee the delivery and development of the measures related to employment, skills and education that are part of DoO.

ACTION: SZC to recirculate the ToR for all new members of group to have sight of these and understand purpose of the ESEWG.

2 SAFETY MESSAGE

'When driving, only a fool breaks the 2 second rule – do you?'

Group discussed importance of road safety.

3 MINUTES AND ACTIONS OF PREVIOUS MEETING / MATTERS ARISING

MG stated in previous minutes, the importance of making sure there is a connection between this group and information flows to other DCOs is emphasised. Sharing of files and minutes needs to occur between all groups as these will become public records. Document library is a work-in progress and something that is being looked at by DCO team.

ERG should have agreed ToRs for this group. Understood that ToR were endorsed but formal feedback not yet received. Communications and rhythms of meetings need to be agreed and logic to sequencing is done correctly.

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ACTION: SCC to collate calendars and phasing of meetings so full sight of when meetings are occurring and the sequencing of these alongside other working groups.

4 THEMATIC GROUPS – AGREE MOBILISATION PLAN, SECRETARIAT, INAUGURAL CHAIRS AND MEMBERSHIP

JR gave overview of thematic groups and wider governance groups. Discussed the links between the groups that feed into this working group then into the Economic Review Group.

The SZC Skills Steering Group, chaired by FM, is a new 'responsive' group evolved out of work undertaken on skills – internal/ external advisory role that has been meeting as the local skills working group. Focus on bringing skills together and building relationships with the local colleges and schools etc to have their influence on how project is working whilst ensuring benefits to community and wider region. GH reiterated this will be more project-facing group and FM confirmed the group will meet on monthly basis (for now, to be reviewed in due course).

Thematic groups that feed into ESEWG: Employment Outreach Thematic Group, Skills Infrastructure Thematic Group and the Apprenticeship, Education & Young People Thematic Group. JR outlined the indicative memberships to these thematic groups – some slight amends due to progress within the FE/HE forum.

Relationship that SZC has with SZA (Nuclear Restoration Services) and SZB – more joint activity taking place, apprenticeship schemes etc. Currently a little disjointed, but aim is to bring these complexes together where possible.

Mobilisation plan

- Draft ToR created for principals forum and thematic groups. **ACTION:** SZC to circulate draft ToRs for review by the FE/HE principals forum and thematic groups.
- FE/HE principals forum scheduled to meet late-March 2024
- Thematic groups to be invited to meet in May 2024, allowing time for the first ASIP to be developed for April sign-off. ASEC fund and processes will be in place and ready to receive applications. Employment Outreach fund and processes will also be in place.
- Following the agreement on the thematic group model in November, SZC proposed to split the Apprenticeship & Young People Thematic Group in two: 1. Apprenticeships and 2. Young People. **ACTION:** Group to discuss further at next meeting.
- GH flagged importance of 'back channelling' – having stakeholder conversations and discussing the roles etc. Must deliver the apprenticeships (circa 540) - sit separate from Employment Outreach group. FM discussed balance between what is practical and what is ideal – risk that when there is a number of separate groups, people often need to come to more than one or things happen in one group that unintentionally influence what is happening in another group – must have smart communication throughout
- Change is inevitable and groups need to be agile to respond proactively to any changes
- SA queried that independent training providers are not explicitly shown on thematic group membership of ESEWG – there will be a cross cutting between thematic groups
- JC discussed that it would be useful to have dialogue setting out clear purpose of the apprenticeship group to help enable if it should be standalone topic or can fit into other thematic groups.
- Private training providers - proactive on Hinkley Point C.

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5 UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY WORKFORCE INFORMATION

Initial Workforce Information published in March 2023 – shared with local partners through extensive engagement.

The level of Early Workforce Information on SZC's requirements being made available to share with local stakeholders (this is around 5 years earlier than at the same point on Hinkley Point C). Three key elements: Internal Site-based Forecast Updates; IDESP Forecasts from CWA and MEHA; and Role-based Forecasts (based on HPC actuals).

NFM requested information and clarity on job roles is provided. GH requested something is done to bring these two pieces of work together effectively.

JR discussed that the team are trying to create a dynamic model – sequencing on projects and identifying any consequential effects on people so team can understand wider impacts in terms of skills/ demand for these etc.

ACTION: SZC to set up a workshop to discuss the Early Workforce Information (due end March 2024).

6 UPDATE ON CONSTRUCTION WORKFORCE DELIVERY STRATEGY (CWDS)

Stage 1 CWDS is complete (covering advanced work and civils work) – this sets a framework for first ASIP to be developed. It has been designed to underpin early approach to ASEC investments and Employment Outreach.

Production Schedule of CWDS:

- Stage 1 – Get Ready Phase (advanced works) and Big Dig & Big Build Phase (Main Civils Construction). Delivered Dec 2023, reviewed and updated Q1 2026 in line with ASIP
- Stage 2 (discussions already commenced internally) - MEH phase. Commence drafting Q1 2027/ draft available Q3 2027
- Stage 3 – Commissioning and pre-operational phase. Commence drafting Q1 2029/ draft available Q3 2029. Developed in accordance with its operational employment strategy

7 UPDATE ON EDUCATION AND INSPIRATION ACTIVITIES

GH discussed 2024 targets for education and inspiration activity. Bold targets being set but confident that these can be successfully delivered. SZC leveraging the support where required to ensure these targets are met. GH clarified the targets are internally set.

FM suggested that 'real life stories' should be applied to some of the targets to help give context.

ACTION: GH to confirm with ESEWG that progress of targets can be shared with key partners and stakeholder groups.

SA queried if there is a desire to have career advisors in Norfolk and Essex. GH confirmed ambition to have SEN engagement and career advisors in these areas. Targets have been set to Suffolk due to DCO commitments but other areas will be targeted.

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SA questioned inclusivity agenda in outreach programme – has ethnicity been looked at? GH confirmed this is not being missed out – targets are being set to cover this point and meet aspirations.

8 HEADLINES OF FIRST ANNUAL SKILLS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (ASIP) AND REVIEW PROCESS FOR ALLOCATION OF FUNDS.

NFM discussed ASIP – key document to help prioritise the focus of the DoO measures and funding. Blue boxes give brief overview of the activity under that section – this may evolve over the years.

GH queried if the ASIP will have KPIs and monitoring/ reporting on different aspects of the ASIP. NFM confirmed these will be included in the ASIP.

By 15th April, ESWEWG must provide the Economic Review Group with the ASIP for approval (as per DoO) – NFM will circulate final draft ASIP to ESWEWG by 25th March. ESEWG to provide feedback by 5th April. NFM to make any amends following comments received by ESEWG by 12th April. ESEWG to agree amendments prior to submission to Economic Review Group. Date of next Economic Review Group meeting to be diarised in due course and intention is they will have ASIP approved during this meeting. Grant funds (ASEC and Employment Outreach) to be launched as soon as ASIP is approved. Within 30 days of ASIP approval, SZC pay first instalment of ASEC fund to SCC.

FM flagged that first FE/HE principals forum is to meet 28th March and intention is that the forum will provide some suggestions to ASIP – FM emphasized the timescale is tight to do so. Queried if assumption that first ASIP is to look at how things will be done in future rather than how we will spend money now – NFM confirmed the ASIP will not determine specific projects that are to be funded, rather to identify priorities and the types of areas for decision-making framework used to determine where grant money will actually go. MG explained that it will set overarching priority areas that money should be spent in – it needs to be high-level enough that the ASIP is workable and usable throughout the year. Pragmatic approach to be taken, particularly in first year. MG suggested in addition to the data workshop, there are some queries on monitoring and measures – **ACTION:** ESEWG to hold a focussed workshop on monitoring and measures.

ACTION: ASIP template to be circulated with final minutes to ESEWG.

NFM discussed Regional Skills Need Assessment (RSNA) is key part of ASIP. Will be focused on Suffolk and the region (East England). Key element of the RSNA is the Assessment model/ decision-making framework to ensure SCC respond to demand/ changes throughout the year without having to wait for the next year when the next RSNA occurs.

ACTION: NFM to share specification for RSNA with the minutes to ESWEWG.

ACTION: ESEWG to advise NFM if any other reports required for consideration in framework of evidence.

Regional LSIP review to identify common priorities – Education, Engineering, Life Science, IT & Digital and Agriculture/ Food. LSIPs and other documents will be cross referenced to determine regional skills needs. As an example, engineering is a common priority within the LSIPs across the region, as well as being a priority within FE strategies. Assessment model will ensure ability to assess needs outside of yearly RSNA report and respond to dynamic demands. Regional cross-sector skills priorities – digital skills, soft (transferable) skills and green skills. FM queried if team can come up with high-level framework of skills challenges and assumption that projects to be funded would be linked to these skill challenges but could be at number of stages in pipeline. NFM reiterated it would be dependent on level of qualification required as to how specific the

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training would need to be. Applications for grants would need to justify why the area they want to have funding for links to the RSNA.

MG explained that part of the assessment model is to provide a filter of determining what the regional skills need actually is – triangle of regional skills need (wider lower level feeds into the more specialised focused skills). FE/HE forum can help feed into this to test it out.

9 AGREE INVESTMENT AND APPLICATION PROCESS FOR ASSET SKILLS ENHANCEMENT CAPABILITY (ASEC) AND PLAN FOR LAUNCH

NFM discussed the ASEC process: Establish need (RSNA) – Assess ability and respond – Determine funding required from ASEC – ESEWG approve funding – Develop EOI/outline proposals – ESEWG review – Detailed proposal development – ESEWG approve – Grant documentation completed – Project delivery (ongoing monitoring and reporting).

Regional Skills Coordination Function (RSCF) to coordinate key stakeholder engagement and support applicants where required – providing guidance and clarity. GH queried if people have initiatives – how are these going to be tested etc. NFM clarified this is where the assessment model will come into play and assist with this as well as the other thematic groups. MG reiterated this needs to be balanced – need to be as responsive as possible vs. being robust and transparent.

JR confirmed that final decisions/ approvals with regard to funding would need to be made by Economic Review Group, not ESEWG due to conflict of interest.

NFM explained that over next couple months, team will have initial conversations with providers to notify their direction of travel so they can progress internal conversations. Approval of ASIP should be granted in April so ASEC funding can be prioritised. Expression of Interest by end of June and submission of full proposals to ESEWG by September (Economic Review Group to approve too). Projects to commence October/ November.

ACTION: Group to discuss ASEC timescales in more detail at the next ESEWG meeting.

FM queried whether having direct discussions with colleges may be beneficial and discuss timescales with them directly.

MG reiterated that the ASIPs are not just about setting out what happens in that 12 month period, focused on what is happening at that point in time and looking ahead in relevant timescale.

10 ESEWG FORWARD LOOK AND SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

ACTION: MG to revise slide setting out when key actions and meetings are due to take place during the year, taking into account today's discussions and after confirmation from the DCO team on ERG and other DCO dates. Will recirculate an updated slide once completed to ESEWG and any other relevant groups for reference.

11 AOB

ACTION: Dates for future meetings to be diarised by SCC.

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ACTION: Interim ESEWG meeting on 12th April to discuss ASIP. NFM to confirm.

Actions raised during the meeting:

Date Raised	Ref.	Description	Lead	Date Due
28 th Feb	1	SZC to recirculate the ToR for all new members of group to have sight of these and understand purpose of the ESEWG.	SZC	March 2024
28 th Feb	2	SCC to collate calendars and phasing of meetings so full sight of when meetings are occurring and the sequencing of these alongside other working groups.	SCC	March 2024
28 th Feb	3	SZC to circulate draft ToRs for review by the FE/HE principals forum and thematic groups.	SZC	March 2024
28 th Feb	4	Group to discuss further at next meeting.	ESEWG	Next meeting
28 th Feb	5	SZC to set up a workshop to discuss the Early Workforce Information.	SZC	End March 2024
28 th Feb	6	GH to confirm with ESEWG that progress of targets can be shared with key partners and stakeholder groups.	GH	March 2024
28 th Feb	7	ESEWG to hold a focussed workshop on monitoring and measures.	ESEWG	TBC
28 th Feb	8	ASIP template to be circulated with final minutes to ESEWG.	NFM	w/c 11 th March 2024
28 th Feb	9	NFM to share specification for RSNA with the minutes to ESEWG.	NFM	w/c 11 th March 2024
28 th Feb	10	ESEWG to advise NFM if any other reports required for consideration in framework of evidence.	ESWEG	March 2024
28 th Feb	11	Group to discuss ASEC timescales in more detail at the next ESEWG meeting.	ESEWG	Next ESEWG meeting
28 th Feb	12	MG to revise slide setting out when key actions and meetings are due to take place during the year, taking into account today's discussions and after confirmation from the DCO team on ERG and other DCO dates. Will recirculate an updated slide once completed to ESEWG and any other relevant groups for reference.	MG	March 2024
28 th Feb	13	Dates for future meetings to be diarised by SCC.	SCC	March 2024
28 th Feb	14	Interim ESEWG meeting on 12 th April to discuss ASIP. NFM to confirm.	NFM	April 2024

Author: Eleanor Wright (Quod)