



Sheffield Chamber of Commerce

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Skills & Employment Forum Minutes

Tuesday 16th May 2018 – 8am – 9.30am

Wake Smith Solicitors

1 Velocity, 2 Tenter Street, Sheffield S1 4BY

Minutes

Apologies

Tricia Smith, The Source
Rebecca Morris, Benchmark Recruit
Bridget Kelly, SHIFT

Attendees

John Baddeley, Wake Smith (JB) Chair of Forum
Tom Sutton, Sheffield Chamber (TS)
Emma Marshall, 3Squared (EM)
Dale Robinson, The Source (DR)
Andrew Hartley, Sheffield College (AH)
Mark Rayner, Sheffield Hallam (MR)
Jon Barker, AMRC (JBr)
Simeon Perry, Efficiency North (SP)
Paul Hilton, Can Studios (PH)

Institute of Technology (IoT) Update

Setting up an educational establishment focusing on levels 4 and 5, which is degree level. Opportunity to bid for funding from government. The IoT would be employer led. Sheffield Hallam have led on the funding bid and the first stage was submitted in March.

The focus was around the development of digital skills if funding was approved. The IoT would assist educational partners in developing the curriculum at levels 2 and 3. BT have been involved as an employer partner. MR will confirm the employer partners that were in the IoT bid submission. JB the concern with the initiative evolved around employer engagement. EM cited the need to remember SME engagement in this project given the business landscape in the SCR – A topic that was discussed at the previous meeting.

JB highlighted the importance of still moving forward with the initiative of an IoT even if the funding isn't approved. The SCR Skills Shortages research emphasised the importance of digital skills in the region. DR suggested going back to the businesses that participated in the SCR Skills Shortages research to gain support from them as they highlighted the issues with digital skills. Not having the appropriate skills in the region limits the potential for inward investment.



Letters of support for the IoT were received from the below companies in the SCR:

- Polypipe, Doncaster
- Agemaspark, Doncaster
- Boeing, Rotherham
- Fletchers Bakery, Sheffield
- HMA, Barnsley
- MGB Plastics, Rotherham
- PCL, Sheffield
- Pegler Yorkshire, Doncaster
- Pennine Stone, Doncaster
- Skanska Cementation, Doncaster
- Tinsley Bridge, Sheffield
- Volker Rail, Doncaster

T Levels Presentation – Andrew Hartley, Sheffield College

T Levels have developed from the Skills Plan following a review conducted by Lord Sainsbury looking at Technical Education. The aim is to provide a framework to create more highly skilled people to grow the economy and raise productivity.

T Levels are the response to address current gaps in the educational model. The aim is to place the technical route on an equal platform to the conventional academic route. The model recognises that a transition year maybe required for some learners to bridge the gap between GCSE's and A levels or T Levels.

15 Technical routes have been identified based on occupational clusters. Refer to slides for further information on the routes. 2020 will see a roll out pilot in three pathways. 2021 will have 6 routes available and 2022 all 15 pathways will be rolled out.

T Level is level 3, which is A Level equivalent. One awarding organisation or consortium per route, which will be overseen by Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education. T Levels are more than just a qualification and will build on study programme principles; including, English and Maths, Work Placements and professional certification or enrichment activity. Work placements are longer, structured period of employment that will be assessed, typically up to 3 months. Employers have a larger part to play under T Level qualifications. JB There needs to be more publicity and engagement in the business environment to prepare employers for the changes. AH 3 Month work placement doesn't need to be a 3-month block period. The Placement can be structured over the duration of the qualification.

Sheffield College Work Placement Project – Project to build capacity and pilot work placements in preparation for T Levels (April 2018 – August 2019). The purpose of the project is to help the College prepare, help employers prepare and feedback experience to Government.

JB questioned how the engagement will take place with students to convince them it is the most appropriate route for them. AH stated that schools now need to provide information on all routes into employment – Academic and technical pathways. There is panel for each of the 15 routes that is chaired by a representative from industry. MR questioned the rationale of one awarding body per pathway as it will remove competition. AH stated that the basis for the decision is to streamline the qualifications to make the educational landscape easier to understand. The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education will need to regulate the qualifications.



AOB

AH suggested engaging with Mayor's office when the time is right to do so. JB agreed that Dan Jarvis should be invited to present to the Forum on the skills agenda.

Apprenticeship Levy proposed as an update for the next meeting.

