



**Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director - Place**

Report to:	<b>Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>14 September 2021</b>
Subject:	<b>Draft Lincolnshire Employment and Skills Strategy 2021-23</b>

**Summary:**

This report invites the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee to consider the work undertaken to date to develop the draft Lincolnshire Employment and Skills Strategy and Work Plan for 2021-23. The views of the Committee will be reported to the Employment and Skills Commissioning Board, which includes Executive Councillors and the Chief Executive of the Council, as part of their consideration of this item.

**Actions Required:**

The Committee is invited to: -

- 1) Consider the attached report and determine whether it provides a local cohesive, evidence-led response to Lincolnshire's challenges and future opportunities.
- 2) Agree any additional comments/refinements to be passed onto the Executive Councillors and the Chief Executive of the Council in relation to this item.

**1. Background**

The Lincolnshire Joint Employment and Skills Commissioning Board is comprised of the following stakeholders collaborating to improve employment and skills outcomes for Lincolnshire's residents, communities, business and wider economy:

- Lincolnshire County Council (LCC)
- Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP)
- The Federation of Lincolnshire Colleges
- Department for Work and Pensions

Despite the long-standing excellence of our local schools, Further Education (FE) colleges and independent learning providers, there is a collective recognition that Lincolnshire faces some substantial, enduring employment and skills challenges balanced with exciting, fast-emerging new opportunities. The Board's remit includes the collaborative identification of strategic priorities and specific actions to:

- *support engagement with, and continuous improvement of, local learning and career opportunities.*
- *ensure the alignment of LCC and GLLEP priorities, particularly around the 'skills agenda'.*
- *realise the positive influence and wider social value that can be achieved through collaborating as employers, service providers and commissioners.*

The Lincolnshire Employment and Skills 2021-23 Strategy sets out a two-year Work Programme providing a local, cohesive, evidence-led response to Lincolnshire's enduring challenges and exciting opportunities.

The Strategy and Work Programme have been developed following:

- A comprehensive review of our robust local evidence base which incorporates recent local research and several ongoing employment and skills action plans.
- Ongoing partnership dialogue with the board, senior officers and other strategic partners.
- Articulation of the current 'status quo' of employment and skills in Lincolnshire.
- Identification of our enduring distinctive Lincolnshire 'problems'; our consequent employment and skills priorities; and cross-cutting interventions that will add greatest cohesion and value.
- Recognising the wider national economy and skills policy context, yet focusing upon where we can make the most difference in Lincolnshire.
- Production of an outcome-led Work Programme as a framework to steer a cohesive local response, complementing national provision with local initiatives that can make a difference.
- Production of a High-Level Work Plan setting out the priority activities for 2021-23.

The accompanying Work Plan sets out the key activity areas from the Work Programme which forms a key part of our Employment and Skills Strategy. This identifies three Employment and Skills Priorities:

- ***Employment Opportunities for All***
- ***A Higher Qualified, Higher Skilled Lincolnshire***
- ***Skills for Business Growth***

A more detailed Delivery Plan setting out milestones and success measures will be put in place and will be reviewed on a six-monthly basis. The Lincolnshire County Council activities are directly connected to the LCC Corporate Plan priority to '*Support High Aspirations.*'

## Year 1 Activities 2021-22

The ESFA allocates around £40 million each academic year to Greater Lincolnshire based colleges and training organisations for adult learning programmes. Consequently, we are not seeking to duplicate the existing training provision and suggest that we do not devise new training programmes but consider taking a prudent approach and work with our training providers to tackle the challenges identified and influence them to meet the gaps within their existing funding allocation. The Lincolnshire Employment and Skills Strategy seeks to align and champion skills and employability, workforce development and health and well-being. Therefore, the actions proposed in Appendix B are a blend of strategic and operational measures where we can fill a gap, add value, and take a coordinating role to drive forward the skills development and employment opportunities.

In Year 1, officers are recommending four priority areas for action:

- 1) **Better collaboration between Colleges, Vocational Training Providers, Schools, and commissioners of funding** to ensure **shared intelligence and insights** informing locally-led activity; enabling **collective local stakeholder feedback to Government** on national policy and initiatives; and **influencing and aligning with forthcoming funding – leading to a collaborative process established for developing potential future pipeline employment and skills projects / initiatives –** LCC/ Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and Partners.
- 2) Developing a **Graduate Retention Plan** aligned to FE/Higher Education (HE) – Lead LCC.
- 3) **More Apprenticeships, including Higher Apprenticeships** in Lincolnshire – Lead LCC/LEP.
- 4) **An expanded Enterprise Advisor Network**, through a Career Hub model to support local secondary schools to achieve nationally set career standards, bringing together more business leaders with local secondary schools to improve employment options for young people, raising aspirations. Including creative, virtual, and traditional events such as GLLEP Online Jobs Fair and Online Careers Fair **engaging more residents in career planning and supporting employer recruitment needs** – Lead LEP.

Delivery will be overseen by the officers from Economic Development and the LEP; a new post will be recruited to support this work. The strategy will be funded through budget carry forward and planned skills reserves.

## **2. Conclusion**

Members of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee are invited to review and comment on the draft Strategy and High-Level Work Plan and highlight any recommendations or further points for consideration.

**3. Consultation**

The draft Strategy will be reviewed by the business community and training providers, via the Business Lincolnshire Growth Hub, Team Lincolnshire members and the Adult Skills and Family Learning training providers.

**a) Risks and Impact Analysis**

Not applicable.

**4. Appendices**

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Lincolnshire Employment and Skills Strategy 2021 -2023 Summary DRAFT
Appendix B	Lincolnshire Employment and Skills Strategy 2021 -2023 High Level Work Plan DRAFT

**5. Background Papers**

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Samantha Harrison, Head of Economic Development, who can be contacted on 01522 550576 or [samanthal.harrison@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:samanthal.harrison@lincolnshire.gov.uk).