

## Annex B: Background and Method

### Introduction

This initial phase of the Enterprise M3 (including all of Surrey) LSIP project was completed between September 2022 and May 2023. It has been conducted in line with [Government guidance to Employer Representative Bodies](#) (ERBs) and this annex has been produced to provide further information on the methodologies/processes used to “evidence that the process for developing an LSIP has been followed in compliance with guidance”.

There was significant emphasis placed on reviewing existing reports and analysis from local stakeholders and seeking to supplement this research and add value through a far-reaching business engagement campaign. This LSIP project made it a priority to reach as far and wide into the business community and hear from voices that often do not come forward for these sorts of initiatives. The other element of the business engagement was to deliver a positive campaign about the importance of skills development and help to build greater awareness and relationships between industry and the Further Education sector.

The engagement process was made accessible by offering multiple channels for businesses to be involved in the ways that made most sense to them. Overall, there were around 1000 interactions/engagements with businesses and stakeholders, which varied from submitting a survey response, to attending an event, or taking part in one-to-one meetings. Further details about each engagement channel are provided below.

Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to conduct business engagement, which has ensured the project has had appropriate “reach” into the business community, but also delved into the detail to understand more specific experiences of businesses.

Engagement was built around three overarching themes to help contextualise the research for businesses and make it easier to input.

- **Skills needs and challenges (now and in the future)** – What are the main skills gaps your business faces?
- **Relationship with the education and training system** – Describe your experience with the skills and training system (What has worked well? What could be improved? Are there any barriers?)
- **Potential solutions and opportunities** – What are some of the solutions to the challenges identified?

### Quantitative approach: Employer survey

An employer survey was conducted throughout the duration of the project which helped increase the “reach” of businesses involved. For example, many smaller businesses do not have the capacity or time to attend in-person events, but the survey offered them a way to still share their input. This involved a telephone survey carried out by an independent market research company and was supplemented by “organic” responses to an online version of the

survey. Overall, there were 234 responses (149 telesales; 85 online). The survey questions aligned with the three overarching themes and asked employers to share information about their main skills gaps and challenges and the types of course delivery methods that would best support their needs. Further details and analysis about each of the questions are provided in **Annex B.1**.

<b>Business size</b>	<b>Percentage of survey respondents</b>
1-10	32%
11-50	37%
51-250	20%
250+	11%

<b>Business Sector</b>	<b>Percentage of survey respondents</b>
Arts, Entertainment, Leisure	7%
Agriculture, hunting, forestry & fishing	2%
Banks, accountants and finance	7%
Business support	7%
Charity	2%
Construction and Property	23%
Health & Social Work	1%
Hotels/restaurants	3%
IT and communications	15%
Legal	1%
Manufacturing	8%
Marketing and PR	5%
Motor trades	1%
Public sector	1%
Recruitment and HR	2%
Retail/wholesale	5%
Training and Education	6%
Transport and storage	1%
Utilities	1%
Other	2%

### Qualitative approach

A number of different approaches were taken with events in order to encourage engagement from a wide cross-section of businesses of different sizes, from different sectors, and based in different locations in the LSIP area. Events were either run directly by the LSIP project through Surrey Chambers of Commerce, or delivered alongside key local stakeholders, including Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, the Federation of Small Business, education and training

providers and local authorities. In total, 20 events were held (post-event summaries for each are included in **Annex B.2**) and can broadly be broken down into three categories:

- Topic/theme-based events
- Sector-based events
- Location-based events

In addition, the LSIP project team took advantage of other engagement opportunities organised by external partners to get the message out about the LSIP process and speak directly with businesses. For example, [Regenerate North Hampshire and West Surrey Conference](#); [UCA Creative Industry Summit](#); [Surrey Research Park Talent Working Group](#); [Space South Central Networking Event](#); [Surrey Chambers members networking events](#); and [Surrey Business Expo](#).

#### Topic/theme-based events

These events were organised to bring a cross-section of businesses from different sectors together alongside local education and training providers, to focus on a specific topic for discussion. These included:

- ***Understanding the Education and training landscape*** – which included information and advice to help better understand the education landscape and ways to engage to help support your business.
- ***Understanding the value apprenticeships can bring to your business*** (joint with ALPS/ALPHI during National Apprenticeship Week) – opportunity for businesses to share and discuss the challenges and barriers to utilising apprenticeships.
- ***Future of Green Skills summit*** (joint with Surrey County Council) – launched the Green skills demand report, and explored the challenges and barriers in current green skills provision.

These events were designed for larger numbers of attendees and attracted interest from a range of education and training providers in the area. Guest speakers were also used to help provide information and advice back to the audience around different ways businesses could be more engaged with the skills system. The feedback generated during breakout discussions provided significant value for the LSIP report, but importantly helped to raise awareness of different opportunities to local businesses, and built connections with providers.

#### Sector-based events

The range of sector-based focus groups and events (listed below) were designed to be much smaller to help generate richer insights and support more joined up conversations between businesses facing similar challenges in the same sector. For each session, a few curriculum specialists were also invited to help provide expert advice from a college perspective and build a greater understanding on what is needed to improve how businesses and the education sector work together.

- Construction
- Professional services
- IT
- Advanced manufacturing and engineering

- Space and aerospace (joint with Farnborough Aerospace Consortium and Hampshire Chamber of Commerce)
- Creative (joint with Hampshire Chamber of Commerce)
- Creative (joint with UCA)
- CreaTech (joint with Activate college)
- Hospitality and tourism
- Health and social care (joint with Basingstoke College of Technology)
- Land-based (joint with Sparsholt college and Merrist Wood college)
- Education/FE sector (joint with Alton college)
- Cyber security (joint with Surrey Cyber Cluster)

### Location-based events

The LSIP project also held a number of events that were aimed at attracting businesses from the surrounding area. This helped to ensure the geographical spread of events covered as much of the LSIP “patch” to ensure businesses had the opportunity to contribute to the project.

- Basingstoke and Andover (joint with Hampshire Chambers of Commerce)
- Winchester (joint with Hampshire Chambers of Commerce)
- Farnborough (joint with Hampshire Chambers of Commerce)
- East Surrey (joint with FSB and Reigate & Banstead Council) – business engagement/networking event

### Education and training provider engagement

Throughout the LSIP process a number of engagement events were held with education and training providers to keep them informed on progress with the project, share draft themes and priorities emerging from the research, and also receive their input on the challenges and opportunities faced regarding the relationships between local businesses and providers.

- **ALPS/ALPHI** – Represent 60 college and training providers across Surrey and Hampshire. The LSIP project attended two quarterly meetings to present information and updates to members.
- **SDF college partnership meeting** – On 7 March 2023, an in-person workshop was held which brought together Principals, Chairs’ of Governors, and Employer leads from all the colleges in the SDF college partnership.
- **Individual colleges** – All Principals from FE colleges in the LSIP area were met with as part of the project and had the opportunity to input into the process. In addition, some colleges requested presentations from the LSIP project team to internal groups (e.g. Governors).
- **Business Development Leads session** – A joint session with the SDF project team was held to bring together Business Development specialists from local FE colleges as a way for them to share insights from their experience of working with businesses and engaging with them on skills gaps and training needs.

- **Draft priorities webinar** – At the end of March, a webinar was held for all education and training providers in the LSIP area to present findings from the project and draft priorities that would be developed further as part of the final LSIP report. There was an opportunity for comments and feedback, and a follow-up webinar was held on 25 April 2023 to provide a further chance to input.
- **SDF/LSIF planning session** – In anticipation of further guidance about the LSIF, the LSIP project brought together colleges from the SDF partnership to discuss the LSIP priorities and start to consider ideas for what could be included as part of a LSIF submission that helps to address the challenges discussed in the LSIP report and support the priorities identified.

### Green economy research

Demand for green skills is an area that businesses seemed to struggle to articulate their needs and/or were are unaware of the opportunities that the green economy presents. In response to this, the LSIP project commissioned a separate piece of deep dive research by a partnership of WPI Economics, Lightcast, and The Data City into the green economy and green occupations. The research was to:

*Understand current green jobs and occupations within the LSIP area, including an analysis of occupations, skills, employer demand, and qualifications (for present day and projected into the future).*

The purpose for the research was to support the LSIP projects' engagement with businesses by highlighting opportunities to businesses and encourage more growth/demand for green skills. The research also provides colleges and training providers with robust evidence and clear articulation of future green skills needs to support them in identifying areas of focus and be confident in responding.

The full report is included in **Annex A.2**.