

## Annex C: What still needs to be achieved (supplement)

### Introduction

Section 6 in the Progress Report outlines a number of areas of activity that will help build on what the LSIP has already achieved. This Annex adds a little more background context to each of the new areas of activity, aligned to each Priority.

### Priority 1: Improve information advice and guidance

For this Priority, the LSIF has supported the LSIP by delivering some careers-focused activity with the Careers Hubs, alongside some employer engagement / business brokerage activity. Although both these areas of activity had limited funding, there remains appetite to maintain momentum and build on the foundation work; taking advantage of the online and offline resources as well as groups of like-minded individuals. The Future Skills Hub is also an ideal resource to build and grow – a central resource that employers and partners can use to find trusted information, relevant events, responsive training opportunities and more.

Feedback from employers and providers continues to emphasise support for individuals who are neurodiverse and/or face barriers to accessing the labour market. Collaborative work with (e.g.) Hampshire County Council and Surrey Choices has helped deliver some of this but a high-profile Future Skills Forum will look to stimulate further discussions and capture some tangible actions for the LSIP team and delivery partners.

Three new areas of activity include:

- Careers Hubs to work with Careers leads in schools to train up in labour market information and embrace Jobs & Careers factsheets (and other, Careers-related resources) with young people.
- Record more examples of employers engaging in Opportunities tab / signing up to Commitments with providers and the resulting impacts.
- Run further events, including a Future Skills Forum, to focus on EDI and belonging in the workforce.

### Priority 2: Facilitate responsive and inclusive curricula

Since the Innovation South Virtual Campus (ISVC) was launched in 2021, thanks to funding from the Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership, it has grown from 12 courses to over 30, funded by the Strategic Development Fund and the Local Skills Improvement Fund. However, the ISVC is in a crowded space with lots of other offers of 'free short courses'. What makes the ISVC different is the range of local providers who have created the courses and the alignment between the subject areas and the skills needs of local employers. With support from partners, the LSIP team are keen to help raise further awareness of the ISVC and secure more enrolments and completions across the range of courses. Moreover, the team would also like to facilitate discussions with new organisations who may be interested in developing new courses and / or exploring innovative ways to sustain and grow the platform. Amongst the existing database of enrolled learners on the ISVC are local employees but also students and staff from colleges and universities.

The ISVC presented a new, innovative way of colleges and other providers coming together to create a suite of open access learning materials that would help them engage with new audiences. Similarly,

the Skills Bootcamp programme offers colleges and other providers a new funding model to expand their expertise and reach individuals looking to reskill or upskill in areas aligned to local skills needs, identified by the LSIP. Although the Bootcamp programme is still relatively new to the LSIP area, 380 individuals enrolled on Bootcamps between August 2023 and March 2024 and the next wave sees a number of new providers offering courses including at least one college.

The LSIP team recognise the Skills Bootcamps programme as an excellent vehicle for local people to reskill or upskill in relevant training and are keen to work with partners to promote the programme and help to make it grow and embed in the local skills system. Although there are some 'Digital' Bootcamps lined up, the LSIP invite partners to explore other ways to create and deliver training that would help individuals and businesses capitalise on emerging technologies such as generative AI.

Four new areas of activity include:

- Work with providers to support promotion and engagement on ISVC courses.
- Lead on work with partners to explore potential new ISVC courses, aligned to local skills needs.
- Work with partners to support promotion and uptake on Skills Bootcamps and ensure maximum provision and minimum duplication.
- Continue to work with partners to address gaps in 'Digital Skills' and opportunities to capitalise on new / emerging technologies such as generative AI.

### Priority 3: Coordinate networks and collaboration

Following on from the work of both Coast to Capital and Enterprise M3 LEPs, the LSIP has been able to lead and/or contribute to strategic skills discussions across the area – particularly with providers and local government but also with groups of employers and professional bodies. Mapping exercises across the two County Council areas, identified over 20 different groups and networks that each have a focus on skills. Many of these are led by local government; others are led by private sector and there are also lots of examples of groups within and/or between education and training providers such as colleges and universities. These exercises highlight a need to try to join up and reduce duplication to help accelerate a coordinated response to emerging and future skills needs, raised by employers.

Since the publication of the LSIP report, colleges have welcomed local economic and labour market insights, to help inform their curriculum planning. These data have also helped steer the work of the Local Skills Improvement Fund, including the outputs and outcomes colleges have to evidence during the programme. Through networking activity arranged by both the Department for Education and the British Chambers of Commerce, we have also been able to share these examples of good practice and other LSIP areas have considered similar approaches to maintain a more joined-up approach between the LSIP and LSIF projects.

The business development activity from both the LSIF and LSIP projects has had mixed success and shows there is still work to be done to connect and sustain connections between employers and providers. Nevertheless, there are some examples we have managed to capture and no doubt more within colleges, stimulated by the work of the LSIP and investments from the LSIF.

As we approach the end of the funding for both programmes, partners across the area are looking for new, collaborative funding opportunities to maintain and develop the work started through the

Strategic Development Fund. The LSIP team are ideally placed to help support and inform these funding bids.

Four new areas of activity include:

- Continue to play an active role in local strategic skills groups to help join up, reduce duplication and maximise responsiveness to current, emerging and future skills needs;
- Work with providers to input into curriculum development, supporting collaboration to capitalise on duplication (as opposed to saturation);
- Build on business development collaboration and impartial brokerage service across the area;
- Continue to work collaboratively to support funding bids to benefit the area and focus on joint procurement exercises.

#### Priority 4: Build dynamic relationships between businesses and providers

Colleges across the LSIP area are benefitting from LSIF capital funding for new equipment and facilities to help them respond to local skills needs. The ERB is keen to ensure the benefits are shared with employers as well as across the partnership, where possible. The LSIP area is recognised for innovation – particularly business-led innovation – so it would also make sense to use these facilities to support new R&D activity, where possible.

These interactions can also be supported by staff exchanges where staff from a college are able to spend some time with an employer OR vice versa. LSIF funding was able to enable some of this activity and the ERB are keen to capture / support more examples of this – especially where the visits result in changes to curriculum delivery.

Alongside Priority 1, the involvement of the Careers Hubs is essential to help develop and widen the network of employers but also raise awareness of the work of the LSIP with schools. Both Careers Hubs are already exploring new resources and activity based on those developed with the LSIF and LSIP.

The concern from colleges about their own recruitment challenges (i.e. teachers) remains. The LSIP team will look to work with colleges to help create a recruitment campaign that can be rolled out across the LSIP area, aimed at employers and individuals who may be interested in exploring teaching opportunities and/or ways to engage with providers to input into the curriculum.

Four new areas of activity include:

- Work with LSIF to evidence employers accessing state-of-the-art facilities, to test and develop new innovations and R&D activity;
- Capture further examples of staff shadowing / exchanges between providers and employers;
- Additional collaboration with Careers Hubs – Cornerstone Employer groups and EAN as well as resources that can support high quality careers education in schools and colleges;
- Work with providers to highlight opportunities to teach in FE and/or other ways for employers to engage with curriculum design / delivery.