

Medway Skills Partnership (MSP) Board: Terms of Reference May 2019

Background

Skills is an area of work that crosses the Council's corporate priorities, its directorates and its portfolios. To reflect this situation, a cross directorate and Member portfolio approach, uniting and engaging internal and external stakeholders, will be delivered through the MSP Board. The Board's work will need to be supported by a robust evidence base and an audit of skill's supply and demand.

Why a Skills Partnership Board?

- To exploit the above procedural changes and to ensure the maximisation of Medway's regeneration and economic growth potential, there is a need for a new way of thinking and working across the Council.
- Skills are an essential part of the economic and social infrastructure upon which Medway's future will be grown. Developing higher skills within Medway's population is critical to securing the area's future economic and social growth.
- In Medway, unemployment is 2.1% higher than in the south east and NEETS percentage in January 2017 was measured as 5.6% of young people compared to 3.2% for Kent.
- To respond to the recommendations of Employment Opportunities for 18-25 Year Olds (Including Apprenticeships) Task Group covering NEETS, SEND, Careers Information Advice and Guidance and apprenticeships.
- To provide a cross portfolio and directorate platform, which is able to facilitate the meaningful engagement of key partners.
- To drive a positive response to the National Careers Strategy (Dec 2017), ensuring careers advice for all ages.

Purpose of Group

The MSP Board has been established as a Cabinet Advisory Group to coordinate and oversee progress of skills development in Medway. The Skills Board will drive implementation of the Medway Skills Plan in line with funding streams and appropriate mechanisms. It will be supported by the MSP Officer Group, chaired by the Chief Executive.

The Medway Skills Partnership Board has agreed to the following overarching principle, which unites skills interests across age ranges and between partners. *'To work in partnership with local schools, universities, colleges and training providers to develop clear pathways and opportunities for the people in Medway and its employers, in particular where there are skills gaps and priority sectors'*.

The remit of this group is to:

- Keep under review evidence and strategies to strengthen skills delivery across Medway's schools, academies, colleges, universities and businesses.
- Coordinate initiatives, projects and funding streams related to skills and employability.
- Make recommendations on internal resource allocations and external funding opportunities.
- Ensure all appropriate development opportunities are appraised and pursued.
- Ensure a positive message regarding skills and employability is effectively communicated, including holding of an annual Skills Summit.

At all times the group should ensure that appropriate stakeholder engagement has taken place.

The Medway Skills Partnership Board will be chaired by the Medway Council portfolio holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships.

Task and Finish Groups will be established, as agreed by the chair of the MSP Board, to develop opportunities as directed by the Skills Board.

An annual Medway Skill's Summit and Report will drive monitoring and championing the delivery of Medway's skills agenda.

Decision-Making Processes

As a Cabinet Advisory Group, the Skills Partnership Board will not be a decision making body.

It may make recommendations, which will either be implemented under existing Medway Council officer delegations or referred for decision by the Council, Leader and Cabinet or other Committees as appropriate, and in accordance with legal and constitutional provisions.

Medway Council will make decisions in its role as promotor of economic growth and as a corporate parent, however in some circumstances, recommendations will also need to be considered and agreed by other bodies such as SELEP and Further and Higher Education bodies. This will be mapped for each issue.

Decision-making processes relating to external funding should also be considered, and future funding sources will also need to be reflected should these have alternative reporting structures.

All matters coming before the Board shall be decided by a majority of the Board present and voting thereon at the meeting. In the case of an equality of votes, the chairman or person presiding shall have a second or casting vote.

Membership

The Medway Skills Partnership Board will consist of representatives with strategic interest in skills as follows:

Cllr Rodney Chambers OBE	Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships (Chairman)
Cllr Jane Chitty	Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation
Cllr Josie Iles	Portfolio Holder for Children's Services
Cllr Martin Potter	Portfolio Holder for Educational Attainment and Improvement
Neil Davies	Chief Executive, Medway Council
Richard Hicks	Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive
Darryl Freeman	Assistant Director, Children's Social Care (Interim)
Dee O'Rourke	Assistant Director, Culture and Community
Chris Kiernan	Assistant Director, Education and SEND
Sunny Ee	Assistant Director, Regeneration
Daniel Ratcliff	Skills & Employment Programme Manager

and key skills partners (Industry, Schools, Higher Education and Further Education) will also be in attendance as required, reflecting the specific meeting agenda.

Administration

Reflecting the strategic importance of the Medway Skills Partnership Board and the external interests associated with the interest, the Board will be chaired by the Portfolio holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships.

The Regeneration Delivery Team will be responsible for preparing and agreeing the agenda and papers, and the Executive Assistant of Assistant Director to Regeneration Delivery will set meeting dates and taking minutes.

Agendas will be circulated at least one week prior to the MSP Board meeting, following a template report format.

The Medway Skills Partnership Board will meet quarterly.

Declaration of Interests

Declarations of interest will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Medway Councillors and officers must act in accordance either with the Members' Code of Conduct or other provisions in the Council's Constitution as applicable.

Members of the Board representing external organisations must declare any financial or other significant interests that they may have before discussion of items. Action should be taken to resolve any conflicts of interest which should include not taking part or voting and withdrawing from the meeting in cases where a financial or other significant interest arises in relation to any business under consideration by the Board.