

MINUTES - **DRAFT**

**Meeting: Skills and Employment Vision
Steering Group**

Date: Tuesday 6 August 2019

Time: 10.00am

**Place: Room E, 169 Union Street,
London SE1 0LL**

Agendas and minutes of the meetings of this Group are published at www.London.gov.uk/Skills-for-Londoners (except in those cases where information may be exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act). Meetings are not held in public and are only open to those invited to attend by the Chair.

Members in attendance:

Skills for Londoners Board:

Kym Denny
Arinola Edeh

**Skills for Londoners Business
Partnership**

Anna Devlet
Lynne Myles

Others in attendance:

Dianna Neal, Strategic Lead –
Enterprise, Economy and Skills,
London Councils (representing Cllr
Georgia Gould)
Mary Vine-Morris, Area Director
(London) and National Lead

Employment, Association of Colleges
(representing Gerry McDonald)
Joe Dromey, Learning & Work Institute
Connor Stevens, Learning & Work
Institute (L&WI)

GLA Skills & Employment officers:

Cinar Altun, Senior Policy Officer
Julia Harrowsmith, Senior Manager –
Strategy, Policy & Relationships
Rachel Greenwood, Board Secretary
(Clerk)
Michael Heanue, Principal Policy
Officer
Sarah Spindler, Senior Policy Officer
Cameron Tait, Principal Policy Officer

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1 Introduction and apologies

- 1.1 In the Chair's absence, Dianna Neal took the chair for the meeting and welcomed members to the session.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Georgia Gould, Nichola Hay, Kirsi Kekki, Sukhi Jutla and Rupa Grahame.

2 Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes and actions arising from the previous meeting

- 3.1 The minutes and actions arising from the meeting held on 14 May 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

4 Skills for Londoners: A Call to Action

- 4.1 Joe Dromey and Connor Stephens from Learning and Work Institute (L&WI) presented to the Group the background and findings of their research on building the case for skills and employment devolution in London.
- 4.2 Members raised a number of points during the discussion, a summary of which is set out below. Detailed feedback was recorded by officers and changes would be incorporated into the final report ahead of publication.
 - 4.2.1 Members commented that a consistent approach to devolution asks across the country would offer a stronger position when making the case to government, suggesting that conversations be held at a senior level to join up messaging from different regions and develop a baseline set of principles around what devolution could offer.
 - 4.2.2 The research should recognise the challenges of devolution and identify ways these could be mitigated. In addition, it should recognise that retaining some elements of centralisation may be beneficial, citing examples of where this had been successful elsewhere.
 - 4.2.3 Members discussed the methodology used to calculate the 'devolution dividend' and L&WI agreed to circulate this section of the research in full. It was also suggested that clarity be provided around any limitations in the data and a technical annex included.
 - 4.2.4 The report should also note that for the benefits to be fully realised, future skills & employment funding devolved to London should remain at or above existing levels and a budget provided to administer the funds.

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- 4.3 The Group then received a presentation summarising the draft Call for Action (formerly known as the Skills & Employment Vision), a copy of which had been circulated with the agenda. Members provided their feedback on the draft, a summary of which is set out below:
- 4.3.1 Areas of the research that members felt could be drawn out or detailed better were highlighted. This included: providing clarity in the wording on the economy and skills growth; including emerging skills alongside higher-level skills and highlighting the need for increased flexibility; and setting out the connection between London's strengths and how skills growth in London could be of benefit to the rest of the UK.
 - 4.3.2 In addition, it was suggested that the messaging in some areas be strengthened. This included: wording on 'London's offer'; the importance of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to London; references to adult communities and lifelong learning; and the skills gaps likely to be created by Brexit and the knock-on impacts this could have.
 - 4.3.3 The document should also set out what the initial priorities would be if the call for further devolution was successful, to demonstrate to stakeholders that action would be taken. Members discussed how the subordinate bodies of the SfL Board and Business Partnership could be drawn upon to help develop some of the principles set out in the Call for Action, and officers agreed to take this forward after the meeting.
- 4.4 Changes suggested by the Group would be incorporated into the draft call to action before it would be taken through the GLA and London Councils' sign-off processes. Members offered their support with drafting to ensure the wording would resonate with intended audiences.
- 4.5 A copy of the Call for Action would be circulated to the Skills for Londoners Board and Business Partnership ahead of the launch on 16 September 2019.

4.6 DECISIONS:

The Steering Group:

- (a) **Endorsed the draft *Call for Action*, subject to amendments following their feedback;**
- (b) **Noted Learning & Work Institute's interim summary report on devolution scenarios; and**
- (c) **Noted that officers would identify which subordinate bodies could take forward the proposals set out in the Call for Action.**

5 Date of next meeting

- 5.1 This was the last scheduled meeting of the Steering Group as the Call to Action would be launched in September 2019.

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- 5.2 In light of the discussion at Item 4, however, officers would consider whether this group should continue to meet while the 'people' strand of London's Local Industrial Strategy was being developed, in order to feed into the discussion. It was also noted that this document should be circulated to the SfL Board for comment ahead of publication.
- 5.3 Finally, it was noted that relevant subordinate bodies of the SfL Board and Business Partnership would be identified to lead on the actions arising from the *Call for Action*.

6 Any Other Business the Chair Considers Urgent

- 6.1 There was no urgent business.

7 Close of Meeting

- 7.1 The meeting closed at 11.55am.

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