

Regional Skills Partnership

Minutes of RSP Data Group -10am, 21st April 2010



Present:

Rosie Paskins (Chair) West Midlands Regional Observatory

Maureen Atkinson	Regional Action West Midlands
Kay Bevan	Labour Market Information Officer
Patrick Highton	Birmingham, Black Country and Solihull Lifelong Learning Network
Everton Burke	Birmingham, Black Country and Solihull Lifelong Learning Network
Claire Holden	Advantage West Midlands
Pat Jackson	Advantage West Midlands
Ian Mitchell	Job Centre Plus
Irina Petre	West Midlands Regional Observatory
Andy Phillips	West Midlands Regional Observatory
Clare Rapkins	West Midlands Regional Observatory
Sam Richardson	YPLA
Jamie E Smith	Staffordshire University
Reg D'Souza	SEMTA
David Thew	West Midlands Leaders' Board
Ian Yaroll	NIACE

Apologies:

Nigel Garrett	Learning and Skills Council
Geoffrey Fletcher	Advantage West Midlands
Rajdeep Kaur	West Midlands Regional Observatory

Item		Action
1	Rosie Paskins (RP) welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2	<p>Minutes of the last meeting</p> <p>The minutes were agreed by the Data Group.</p>	
3.1	<p>PROGRESS REPORTS</p> <p>2009 Regional Skills Assessment evaluation</p> <p>Andy Phillips (AP) gave a brief overview of the 2009 Skills Assessment evaluation results. Overall satisfaction with the delivery of the project was 3.43 (out of 4) and the most useful sections were seen to be skill gaps and shortages and the skill drivers of change. Of the different outputs the sector report had the highest score (3.7). The evaluation also illustrated how the Assessment is informing the planning and policy development work of partners.</p>	
3.2	<p>Impact Investment Locations research</p> <p>AP updated the Data Group on progress to date on this project.</p> <p>The Observatory has commissioned Jeff Jervis to gather data and complete initial analysis. The Observatory is then producing a series of summary posters. Posters for 7 Assessments are complete to date and the project is due to be completed by the end of April. A draft poster for one of the sites (Longbridge) was circulated for information. It was agreed to add a pie chart for the retail sector, which was missing.</p> <p>An overview of the overall impact of the 16 sites covered in the research will feed into a 'policy supplement' paper to inform the work of the RSP to identify key priorities within the regional skills strategy.</p> <p>Sam Richardson (SR) said that it would be useful if the work clarified the time scale of the investments and the number of jobs likely to be generated. AP said that this will be included in the overview report</p> <p>Pat Jackson (PJ) suggested that the approach could be a model for Local Authorities to use to identify the potential impact of other investment sites in their areas, feeding into their economic assessments.</p> <p>A list of all the 16 Locations covered by the research will be circulated to the Data Group.</p>	<p>RK</p> <p>RK</p> <p>RK</p>

<p>3.3</p>	<p>Post-recession research</p> <p>Clare Rapkins updated the group on current with this project. Project scoping & project initiation documents have been signed off and Cambridge Econometrics have completed baseline GVA and employment forecasts to 2015 by sector, cluster and local authority area. A scenario illustrating the benefits for the regional economy in terms of GVA and jobs growth of up-skilling the existing workforce to match national levels has been completed. A second scenario illustrating the benefits of growing and developing high value added sectors and clusters in currently being produced.</p> <p>A phase of consultation and ‘reality checking’ by businesses is planned for June, using existing networks. There is a web-page for the project on the Observatory website where members can find further information http://www.wmro.org/standardTemplate.aspx/Home/OurResearch/Skills/PostrecessionWestMidlands</p> <p>The draft interim report was discussed. PJ said that it would be important to capture key messages from the UK Commission for Employment and Skills report ‘Skills for Jobs Today and Tomorrow’, notably the need for making raising the demand for skills a priority and identifying where new jobs will be created going forward.</p> <p>Data Group members were asked to provide any further comments on the draft interim report by 30th April. AP explained that further work on refining the structure of the report and identifying key messages was on-going. It was agreed to circulate a note on the report structure for comment,</p> <p>Actions - AP and CR to circulate a note on the report structure and to incorporate any comments and to circulate the project highlight reports that go to the project board</p>	<p>AP/CR</p>
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<p>3.4</p>	<p>Annual review of regional skills performance</p> <p>AP introduced a paper on proposed changes to the skills performance indicator framework. He explained that the indicator of achievement 14 year olds at key stage 3 in Maths, English and Science is no longer available from DCSF as testing has been discontinued. Unfortunately there is no appropriate replacement measure available. A new measure of young people's progress between 11 and 16 has been developed by DCSF but no time series data is available. However the impact of removing the key stage 3 measure on the summary skills index is negligible. It was agreed, therefore, to remove the indicator from the framework.</p> <p>Claire Holden (CH) commented that the range of indicators that make up the index should continue to be reviewed given that it shows an improving position at a time when the region's 'output gap' with the UK continues to widen. The work being undertaken by the RSP to identify a 'basket of measures' for the regional skills strategy may help in this regard. AP explained that an alternative version of the index, stripping out public sector investment in training, will be produced as part of the annual review.</p> <p>Action - the Observatory Skills Team to move forward with the annual review of performance and to circulate an alternative version of the index, stripping out public sector investment in training</p>	<p>AP/RK/ IP</p>
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Development of a regional skills strategy</p> <p>PJ explained that a series of task and finish group have been set up by the RSP to take this work forward. An initial draft needs to be completed in July. The task and finish groups, which include members from a wide range of public agencies and employers, cover the following themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic priorities • Investment priorities • Measures of success • Partnership working <p>Scoping documents for the groups were circulated</p> <p>AP introduced a specification for a policy supplement paper to be produced by the Observatory to provide key evidence to support this work. The paper will highlight key messages from the 2009 Regional Skills Assessment, the post recession research, the impact investment locations work and summaries of key issues at a local level being prepared by local authorities. A first draft will be presented to the strategic priorities group in mid May. AP said that comments on the specification were welcome - with a deadline of 30th May.</p> <p>Action - AP to revise the specification to incorporate any comments and to begin drafting the policy supplement paper</p>	<p>AP</p>

<p>5.1</p>	<p>Partner research activity and plans</p> <p>Reg D'Souza mentioned some forecasting work covering the engineering sector that will be published soon including national and regional projections and some research on emerging technologies.</p> <p>Ian Yarroll said that a 'learning in the recession' research project has now been completed that includes interviews with key organisations from all 9 regions. He will circulate the report to the Data Group.</p> <p>CH said she was working with Kiran Virk from Birmingham Chamber of Commerce on a project which considers the barriers employers face when looking to take on apprentices. The research report will be circulated when complete.</p> <p>PJ highlighted research being undertaken by Jobcentre Plus on employers who are willing to take on young people and the unemployed.</p> <p>CH said she has almost completed a report on skills issues in business clusters which she will circulate soon.</p> <p>Ian Mitchell (IM) said Jobcentre Plus are undertaking a research project on child poverty (in partnership with the local government).</p> <p>David Thew (DT) mentioned a 'visioning exercise' to be undertaken by the Joint Strategy and Investment Board in June.</p> <p>Jamie Smith (JS) said that Staffordshire University is building a new technology centre in Stoke on Trent that will allow them to expand the support they can offer to businesses - notably those in the environmental technologies cluster. The project is set to be completed by 2012.</p> <p>SR mentioned that this year the YPLA are producing strategic analysis to support the commissioning of 16-19 learning at a local and sub-regional level which will be published by the end of May.</p> <p>PJ highlighted a range of recently published UKCES reports, the Skills Audit (jobs for today and tomorrow) and the Regional Skills Almanac, which include much useful intelligence.</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>The next meeting will take place on June 16th 2010. For a schedule of Skills Data Group Meetings for the rest of 2010 go to: http://www.wmro.org/standardTemplate.aspx/Home/PeopleNetworks/Groups/RegionalSkillsPartnershipDataGroup</p> <p>RP thanked the Data Group for their input and adjourned the meeting.</p>	