



<p>Economy and Labour Force Topic Group</p> <p>21st May 2010</p> <p>Minutes</p>		
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1. Welcome, apologies and introductions

Attendees

Anne Green (AG)	University of Warwick (Chair)
Nigel Garrett (NG)	National Apprenticeship Service
Stephen Howarth (SH)	West Midlands Regional Observatory (from item 5)
Neil Powell	Government Office West Midlands
Clare Rapkins (CR)	West Midlands Regional Observatory
Krystyna Tarkowski (KT)	Coventry & Warwickshire Lifelong Learning Network
Jonathan Vining (JV)	Staffordshire County Council
Kim White (KW)	Intelligent Career Development (Wolverhampton Uni)
Caroline Williamson (CW)	CWA
Hamish Wilson (HW)	Birmingham City Council

Apologies

Louise Alton (LA)	CSWP Ltd
Gill Bentley (GB)	University of Birmingham
David Collier (DC)	National Farmers Union
Melissa Dreyling (MD)	Prowess
Mark Hudson	Government Office West Midlands
Sally Irgin (SI)	Advantage West Midlands
Obi Okwuadigbo (OO)	Coventry University Enterprises
Baden Parkin (BP)	Train to Gain
Rosie Paskins (RP)	West Midlands Regional Observatory
Louise Richardson	Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire Partnership
Sam Richardson (SR)	Learning and Skills Council
John Short	Coventry & Warwickshire Lifelong Learning Network
Gareth Wrench (GW)	Warwickshire County Council

2. Minutes from the last meeting

- The minutes from the last topic group meeting were approved.

3. Topic group news

CR informed the group that the Observatory has published a study looking at the opportunities for growth into the low carbon economy for the West Midlands. A set of profiles have also been produced for each local Authority in the City Region to include:

- Birmingham
- Coventry
- Dudley
- Sandwell Solihull

- Telford & Wrekin
- Walsall
- Wolverhampton

CR also notified the group that analysis can also be replicated for the 'Shire' countries.

KW mentioned that some work was being conducted which looks at the changes taking place within the engineering sector, particularly for small companies. Some areas of the sector have experienced a 'double dip' recession.

KT informed the group that a LMI group focusing on low carbon issues in Coventry and Warwickshire. It will consist of around 20-30 people which represents employers, sector skills councils, universities and the Observatory.

Action: KT to produce an Observations post to outline details of the LMI Low Carbon group

4. Post recession economy / skills work

CR provided an update on project progress to date with task 1 (review of existing evidence), task 2 (forecasting and scenario development), task 3 (business consultations) and the preparation of the interim report.

The following comments were made during the meeting:

- HW suggested perhaps doing some comparisons with regions with similar characteristics (such as North England, Wales, Northern Ireland)
- JV asked if it was possible to look at 'replacement demand' at a sub-regional/local authority level (e.g. Wolverhampton, Staffordshire)
- CW suggested looking at gender issues (e.g. women forced to move out of the labour market during second wave of recession)

Action: CR to send electronic copies of the report to all topic group members

Action: All topic group members to provide CR with comments on the interim report by the 28th May 2010

5. Supporting State of the Region: Fit for the future 2010 / 2011

SH updated the group on the State of the Region: Fit for the Future process. This process should begin by inviting contributions in response to the following question:

- **What is the most effective way of transforming the West Midlands into a successful low-carbon economy?**

Action: SH to refine question & circulate them over the next couple of weeks. Invitations to contribute will be issued in mid July and a workshop organised for September.

Future meeting dates:

Action: ON to arrange a date for next meeting.