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West Yorkshire Local Skills Improvement Plan

This Local Skills Improvement Plan has been approved by the Secretary of State in line with the approval criteria set out in the [Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022](#), and in accordance with the [LSIP statutory guidance](#).

INTRODUCTION

The Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) is intended to put employers at the heart of skills development, enabling them to have a more direct input into the local skills system, influencing local provision to address their skills needs, and recognising their role in helping economies to prosper.

This LSIP, funded by the UK Government, has been facilitated and developed by West and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce (WNYCC), as the Employer Representative Body (ERB) for West Yorkshire, working in partnership with the Mid-Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce and Industry. We have focused on the key changes needed in West Yorkshire's post-16 technical education and skills infrastructure to better align with local labour market needs.

In identifying and developing the priorities set out, we have engaged with employers of all sizes across all West Yorkshire's sectors, ensuring that they are at the forefront of driving local change.

In addition, we are working with West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA); our five West Yorkshire local authorities; our further education and sixth form colleges; independent training providers; universities; higher education providers; and our wide-ranging, supportive business and representation intermediaries, including the Federation of Small Businesses, the Confederation of British Industry and other sector-specific organisations. Strong involvement and representation from these stakeholders through the LSIP Board has contributed to the overall aims and objectives for the LSIP, as set out in Part 1 of the LSIP.

We have not compiled the LSIP in a vacuum and have instead considered existing strategies and plans in place to support employers to access the skills they need and contribute to economic growth. Our engagement and collaboration with West Yorkshire's employers and skills stakeholders has enabled us to focus on where the gaps are locally, within that wider national and regional strategic and operational context.

This has resulted in an understanding of the skills needed and challenges that employers face in accessing the training that will help to boost productivity, alongside the barriers individuals face to increasing employability and progression.

In Part 1 of the document, we have set out:

- The overall priorities, aims and objectives of the LSIP.
- LSIP governance.
- Local context.
- Changes needed.
- Expected benefits of changes, success factors and how it will be taken forward.

Part 2 sets out the justification for future changes, on a sectoral basis. Part 3 sets out the roadmap and how actions will be taken forward.

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PART 1: LSIP PRIOIRITIES

Overall priorities

The West Yorkshire LSIP Board and our stakeholders have agreed the following overall aims, objectives and priorities for the West Yorkshire LSIP:

- To enable employers and individuals to access the technical skills they need to support growth, transformation and increased productivity in our key sectors, defined as:
    o Health and Social Care
    o Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing
    o Financial and Professional Services
    o Low Carbon
    o Digital and Technology
    o Creative Industries
    o Education
    o Construction
    o Transport and Logistics.

To enable employers to increase their responsiveness and resilience to changes, including emerging regulatory challenges and changing socio-economic circumstances, by addressing thematic skills needs, with themes defined as:
    o Net zero transition and sustainability
    o Transferable skills
    o Equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)
    o Leadership and management
    o Digitisation and automation.

To work in collaboration with key stakeholders to jointly address the skills-specific issues, focusing on the occupations/activities where there are significant local skills shortages alongside gaps in, or limited take-up of, locally available provision.

- To build upon the strengths in the existing collaborative working arrangements and post-16 skills ecosystem across West Yorkshire. To make the necessary changes to better respond to the shifting needs of employers and the West Yorkshire labour market.
- To facilitate practical interventions that are achievable on the local level and consider other regional and national strategies, plans and activities, ensuring the local workforce is equipped with the skills that employers need now and in the future.

In identifying and responding to these priorities we are seeking to:

- Help employers to:
    o Better understand and communicate their skills needs.
    o Overcome barriers to accessing suitable provision.
    o Become actively involved in influencing curriculum development.
    o Increase awareness of what provision is available to them.
    o Become more proactive in planning and investing in their workforce development activities over a longer period.
    o Develop a more inclusive approach to addressing their skills needs, working with providers to open up opportunities and skills and recruitment pipelines.
- Support providers to:
    o Align and develop provision to respond to identified needs.
    o Collaborate amongst each other to jointly address curriculum areas that are niche and may not be feasible for a single organisation; or alternatively, where demand is significant in several areas and may benefit from each organisation taking a specialism to ensure provision is available locally.

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- Develop new ways of delivering to improve take-up of provision by employers of all sizes.
- Provide funders with:
  - A clear strategic imperative for allocating resources to support skills development.
  - Clarity on the potential benefits and impact of skills investment on individuals, employers and the wider West Yorkshire economy.

LSIP governance and development

The ERB has established a Board[1] to:

- Provide strategic direction for the LSIP in West Yorkshire.
- Ensure alignment of the LSIP with the West Yorkshire economic strategies and plans.
- Input into the plan development on behalf of those they represent.

In developing the LSIP we have:

- Drawn on a range of evidence directly from the business community through in-depth conversations, one-to-one meetings, focus groups, roundtables, workshops, surveys, and large-scale events. This has been supplemented by reviewing data and intelligence collected from over 200 skills research and labour market information reports.
- Set out our understanding of local circumstances, needs and aspirations across various aspects of business, from large to small, sector to clusters and cross-theming to geographies.
- Set out clear actions to address each aspect, and measures to demonstrate real and sustainable progress.

Key principles underpinning our approach include:

- Employer-led: put employers' needs first to significantly transform the system for the better.
- Collaboration: proactively and positively engaging and collaborating with education providers to stimulate transformational and real change – recognising that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.
- Adding value: alignment with the local economic and skills strategies and plans, and proposals that focus on filling gaps that are not addressed at a local level.
- Shared ownership: facilitating input from all stakeholders to understand need and agree and deliver actions, recognising the roles each can and should play.

Supporting economic growth

The focus of our approach is to enable West Yorkshire businesses to access the skills they need, in turn creating an economy that works for everyone, is more innovative, has greater equality of opportunity and leads to a culture of employer reinvestment in training.

Addressing the priorities set out above and detailed in this document will support inclusive local economic growth by:

- Enabling the supply of skills and provision in West Yorkshire to better match the skills demanded in the economy.
- Assisting employers to address their skills shortages, gaps and longer-term recruitment and workforce needs.
- Increasing awareness and understanding of skills demands and drivers in key sectors across the West Yorkshire economy, supported by engaging current careers information provision to drive curriculum and labour market development.

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[1] The Board led by the ERB

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- Encouraging and supporting employers to increase their take-up of skills provision, having been involved in influencing it and ensuring that it is fit for purpose and industry relevant.
- Increasing access to skills for both employers and individuals by making provision available in a place, format and style that suits all employers and all learners, all while putting in place pathways to support progression and continued skills development, whilst reflecting changing needs.

We have focused on priorities and actions that need to be addressed at the local level in West Yorkshire, recognising that many of these challenges are common across the country, and are being addressed with actions on both a national and wider regional level.

Local context

The above priorities reflect the consultations that have taken place, and mirror the skills challenges and issues identified in research that underpins and has informed the local economic and skills strategies and priorities developed by West Yorkshire Combined Authority, the Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership, local authorities and other skills stakeholders. Details of these strategies and plans are set out in Annex A, and key elements of the local context, including some of the priorities, are summarised below (referencing the Leeds City Region Local Skills Report, Jan 2022[2], and the West Yorkshire Labour Market Analysis report, Jun 2022[3]):

- A local West Yorkshire (WY) landscape with:
  - A diverse geography with a population of over 2.3m across five districts with relatively distinct sectoral specialisms and the city of Leeds providing an economic hub.
  - A business base of 95,000 private sector businesses, predominantly small and medium-sized.
  - An employed workforce of 1.1m, and a broad base of employment growth across diverse manufacturing and service sectors.
  - Steadily increasing employment rate, mainly in employed and full-time jobs.
  - Unemployment rates are currently similar to those nationally but differ across West Yorkshire local authorities.
  - A large skills and education provider base at further and higher education levels, offering diverse provision, including apprenticeships at all levels to address technical needs. Apprenticeship starts grew by 9% in 21/22.
  - Productivity levels below the national average and a gap that has not narrowed over the last decade – this is impacted in part by skill levels below the national average at Level 4+, and an overrepresentation of residents with low or no qualifications.
  - Lower than average pay levels, reflecting weaker productivity.
- Widespread pockets of deprivation across West Yorkshire, particularly Adult Skills deprivation. Skills demand coming from:
  - The three biggest sectors in West Yorkshire's employment base - Health and Social Care (13%), Manufacturing (10%) and Business Administration and Support Services (10%).
  - Sectors with higher-than-average representation in the economy, including manufacturing and financial services.
  - Growth in the green economy skills linked to energy and environment and primarily Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) related skills across diverse roles including engineering, project management, electricians and specialists such as environmental scientists.
  - Growth in mainly high-skilled occupations including:
    - Science, research, engineering and technology professionals (especially digital).

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[2] https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/7885/local-skills-report-2022-final-pdf.pdf
[3] https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/10256/labour-market-report-2022.pdf

- ➤ Business and public service associate professionals (including finance and investment analysts and advisers).
  - ➤ Business, media and public service professionals (especially business and financial project managers).
  - o Growth in some intermediate level occupations including caring personal service and administrative roles.
  - o Two-thirds of employers with upskilling needs, driven by new working practices, new technology, equipment and regulatory requirements.
  - o Skills shortages, particularly affecting higher skilled roles, and compounded by labour shortages in sectors such as Health and Social Care and construction. 59% of skills shortage vacancies are due to a lack of specialist/job specific skills and knowledge, eg, marketing, finance, agile methodology and auditing. Transferable skills such as customer handling, team-working and time management are also identified as lacking.
  - o Skills gaps, particularly relating to computer literacy and basic IT skills, but also including numeracy and literacy in the lower skilled occupations, which also have high staff turnover. There are skills gaps in 15% of employers (accounting for 51,000 gaps).
  - o Replacement demand driving recruitment in most sectors and occupations, including those with expected employment decline such as skilled trades, administrative occupations and customer service, in turn impacting on a continuing need for skills.
- Demand-related challenges:
  - o Employers are crucial in developing the skills needed, but 39% of them under-invest in training (due to a lack of funds or not being able to spare staff).
  - o Succession planning is an issue for many employers, particularly across the range of sectors that have an ageing workforce.
  - o Skills under-utilisation (particularly among graduates) co-exists alongside acute skills shortages.
  - o A widespread lack of proficiency among managers is impacting on business performance and workforce development, and ultimately their ability to respond to key economic drivers and challenges.
  - o Exposure to automation in industries such as retail and food manufacture reduces the need for people with lower-skilled jobs – reskilling is essential to enable the affected individuals to develop new skills to make the transition into new career opportunities.
  - o Transferable and employability skills are cited by most employers as areas of skills gaps in both existing workforce and potential new recruits. The focus is not just on technical skills.
- Supply-related challenges cover a wide range of factors including:
  - o A relatively weak skills base and comparatively low educational attainments amongst young people, the latter concentrated in Bradford, Leeds and Wakefield. A lack of basic skills impacts on ability of individuals to both enter into and progress in learning.
  - o Acute deprivation is widespread across WY's communities and is closely associated with a lack of skills within those neighbourhoods.
  - o A significant challenge in getting jobless people into or back into work (in those that are inactive or dealing with health issues).
  - o Lack of access to education and training opportunities including apprenticeships and higher education for disadvantaged groups. This is a key barrier to inclusive growth and social mobility. This is typically reflected in employment rates for underrepresented groups, including women, older people, people from ethnic minorities and disabled people.
  - o Both the take up and provision of higher apprenticeships is focused on a narrow range of subjects in areas around technical skills. The most acute skill shortages are in areas such as engineering, construction and ICT, all of which have low start-up

rates. This misalignment of provision suggests that improved careers support is needed to raise awareness and understanding of the opportunities in the local labour market.

In addition to the local context for skills development, the LSIP needs to consider key drivers, that impact across sectors, and on a national/global basis. The skills strategies and plans all reference these drivers, but it is useful to provide examples of factors that will affect labour supply and skill shortages. These include:

- Long-term structural changes in the economy, the move to low-carbon industries, AI, automation and 5G networks and the shift away from permanent roles to portfolio careers are macro factors signalling a mismatch in skills and supply.
- The shift from secure roles to self-employment and gig work and the rise of creative tech skills/roles. For example, supporting companies and consumers to better manage their operations and processes by applying specialised software and algorithms, as well as using emerging technologies to bring about new ways of engaging audiences.

Improving responsiveness to skills demand

West Yorkshire's skills stakeholders have long been at the forefront of innovations with regards to improving the post-16 skills system to enable it to work better for employers, individuals and institutions. Examples of activities and arrangements to address the skills challenges and issues set out above, and wider economic development activities, include:

- WYCA facilitating the *Future Ready Skills Commission*[4] and developing a blueprint for improvements. Actions proposed building on infrastructure such as the West Yorkshire Careers Hub (FutureGoals)[5], Employment Hubs in each of the districts, and the West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges[6], all contributing to making skills and information about it more accessible.
- *Delivery Agreements*[7] established and delivered between each of the FE colleges and WYCA, 2017-2020, setting out provision plans and evidencing how they were responding to their local skills needs and issues, including:
  - o Raising the bar on high level skills.
  - o More and better apprenticeships.
  - o Great education connected to businesses.
  - o Building workforce skills and attracting talent.
  - o Employability, accessing jobs and realising potential.

  These agreements were a forerunner to the Accountability Agreements, with their aims of addressing skills gaps and shortages that were barriers to local growth. This helped to target activities on the key sectors across West Yorkshire including Construction, Digital and Engineering.
- *Leeds Manufacturing Festival*[8] and *Bradford Manufacturing Weeks*[9], facilitated by the ERB, bring employers and the education sector together to address skills issues and succession planning within the manufacturing sector.
- The *West Yorkshire Digital Skills Partnership* – a collaboration between business, education, community and the public sector, has developed The West Yorkshire Digital Skills Plan[10] aimed at addressing the digital skills challenges, focusing on the local

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[4] https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/growing-the-economy/business-and-skills/future-ready-skills-commission/
[5] https://futuregoals.co.uk/engage/educators-and-advisers/west-yorkshire-careers-hub/
[6] https://www.westyorkshirecolleges.co.uk/
[7] https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/6077/delivery-agreement-report-2021.pdf
[8] https://leedsmanufacturingfestival.co.uk/
[9] https://bradfordmanufacturingweek.co.uk/
[10] https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/9492/digital-skills-plan.pdf

priorities: higher level skills for the tech sector; skills for all businesses; workforce; upskilling; education; inclusion.

- The West Yorkshire Mayor's leadership on green skills and jobs through the *Green Jobs Task Force*[11]. Stakeholders are working together to achieve the targets of 1,000 well paid, skilled, green jobs created for young people, and skills and training to ensure everyone in West Yorkshire has the skills they need to secure work within the green economy.
- *Skills Connect*[12] – Free training courses designed by employers and aimed at supporting adults to gain skills for job roles in the Digital, Construction, Health and Social Care, and Environmental sectors. This initiative was launched by WYCA and the Leeds City Region LEP, and delivered by a range of local providers, linking with employers and available vacancies.
- "Yorkshire Universities' work on *Supporting Graduate Employment and Employability in Yorkshire*[13] is providing coordination across the HE sector to amplify and build on the existing work of universities to continually improve relationships with employers in the region. This work aims to support opportunities for students and graduates while improving graduate utilisation in the region. The YU Graduate Implementation Group is exploring sector specific challenges and opportunities, as well as working on broader initiatives to make it easier for employers to engage with universities."
- HE providers across the region participating in the Office for Students' *Uni Connect Programme*[14] to widen access and participation for disadvantaged groups and communities. This enables teams of staff to deliver and evaluate impartial Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) and outreach activities delivered to schools and colleges in target areas supporting progression to HE.

The above examples evidence the significant work already being taken forward in West Yorkshire, and this LSIP is designed to work in conjunction with this to increase the total impact at a local level.

The changing **national context and policy** (further details in Annex A) must also be referenced in developing local responses. This includes changes in the qualification and funding landscape, such as:

- The introduction of T-Levels – employer-led vocational qualifications in our region.
- Review of qualification funding.
- Introduction of Lifelong Loan Entitlement (LLE) from September 2025, offering individuals in West Yorkshire access to the equivalent of four years of post-18 education covering L4-L6, or £37,000, to be used flexibly over an individual's working life, providing opportunities to upskill/reskill, encouraging wage/career progression, and addressing employer demands for higher level technical skills.

It should be stated that funding is a critical issue both for our region's providers in delivering provision that meets employers' needs, and for employers in terms of taking up training.

Employer feedback on local provision

Our consultations with employers across diverse sectors indicate things are changing as a result of the above, following concerted efforts and investments that have been made in

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[11] https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/a-mayoral-combined-authority/mayoral-pledges/1000-green-jobs-in-west-yorkshire/
[12] https://www.futuregoals.co.uk/learn/free-adult-training-courses/skills-connect-training-courses/
[13] https://yorkshireuniversities.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2022/05/YU_Supporting-Graduates_Full-Report_May-2022.pdf
[14] https://gohigherwestyorks.ac.uk/category/uni-connect/

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recent years to address the skills issues. Analysis of the employer surveys indicated the following specific reference to local provision:

- 69% can access training and development locally (although this drops to 56% for small businesses and 54% for micro businesses).
- 81% have engaged with a provider in last 3 years, and 61% in last 6 months.
- Half of those consulted indicated that they had very positive or positive experiences working with provider(s).
- 54% very positive or positive about the quality of education (19% with a neutral experience).
- 58% are planning to start an apprenticeship (new or existing staff) in the next 12 months.

Nevertheless, despite this feedback, and the interventions and activities being delivered locally, there is still work to do, and further improvements and changes are needed to better support economic growth. The surveys also identified that the following skills would be needed over the next three years:

Skill Type	% of employers with this need
Leadership and managerial	69
Employability skills (eg. team working, taking initiative, being inquisitive, attendance, time keeping, work ethic)	66
Customer Service	59
IT and digital	59
Planning and organisational	56
Technical, practical or occupation specific	51
Sales and marketing	42
Creativity	39
Financial management	29
Skills to do with low carbon and the transition to net zero	27
Numeracy	25
Literacy	20
Don't know	2
Other	0

Feedback from more in-depth consultations with employers, from the employer-provider events and focus groups, suggests that there are continuing challenges in accessing (and delivering) the skills and skilled workforce to support growth and address the skills needs set out above. These include (and are expanded upon in Part 2 on a sectoral basis):

- Awareness of available provision and different pathways to gain the skills needed.
- Qualifications that do not address the skills required. In many curriculum areas there is no need for wholesale curriculum change but for an evolution in the content being taught, to reflect changes and key drivers in the industries.
- Employers want the skills, not necessarily the qualifications, which may take too long to achieve and impact on capacity within the business, whilst employees are undertaking the training.
- Unmet demand for provision in areas of significant skills shortages due to a lack of qualified and experienced tutors at providers, and/or lack of up-to-date equipment (with learning not keeping up to date with developments).

- Leadership and management skills in an employer, to analyse and understand their business needs, responding to changing circumstances and conditions, eg planning for future staff/upskilling needs to support these.
- Closer relationships with providers – with employers purchasing a specific course but not necessarily taking a holistic approach to their current and future skills needs, at the same time as providers not having the resources to provide an account management approach but may appear to be focusing on 'sales'.
- Confusion over skills funding. Smaller businesses in particular struggle with the eligibility criteria for different courses on offer and may not have the time or capacity to follow-up queries and any paperwork needed. Funding may also constrain when or where training takes place, potentially limiting take-up. For example, if the training must take place during working hours this may not be feasible for smaller businesses (and sectors such as Health and Social Care) that need their staff to be at their workplace and cannot back-fill.
- Recruitment issues including, from an employer's perspective, a lack of understanding of the opportunities a more diverse workforce could bring and a lack of progression routes for those successfully engaged through placements/internships (linking to the workforce planning skills above). From a potential candidate's perspective, there is a lack of awareness and understanding of opportunities in key sectors and the pathways available.
- The culture within individual businesses to accept change and adopt new working practices remains an issue. If senior staff are not prepared to adapt then they look to source these skills externally which is costly, inefficient and time consuming. This is evident in different sectors including, Childcare, Manufacturing and Education.

It should be noted that many employers are struggling with issues related to the cost of living, which diverts attention (and resources) away from their business's longer-term skills needs. Many are only reacting to short-term needs and are not in a place to think beyond these.

Changes needed

The changes that are needed within the West Yorkshire skills infrastructure and across the sectors, as identified in the consultations, are summarised below. It should be noted that activities are taking place in many of these areas and the LSIP will focus on actionable priorities to better meet skills needs and drive change, adding value to, and filling gaps to existing infrastructure and activities.

- Employers to be supported in a better understanding and awareness of funding and provision. Brokerage, advice and information are essential, alongside better sharing of information about provision. This will involve both collaborative working across providers (to agree and promote specialisms), as well as providers improving their individual relationships with employers, to provide holistic support to meet their skills needs and help to change the culture in businesses where needed.
- Improved employer engagement and resources to:
  - Help employers to become more proactive and plan for workforce development and their longer-term skills need, including responding to key skills drivers eg, automation, net zero.
  - Encourage their active involvement in designing curriculum and influencing provision to meet their needs.
  - Enable them to offer placement opportunities, also opening potential recruitment pipelines.
- Careers guidance and awareness of the opportunities, key sectors and occupations that are driving the skills demand locally. This includes understanding of different pathways and types of jobs through collaboration across education and business.

- Developing more responsive and up-to-date provision, filling gaps and providing flexibility to enable take-up as needed. This may include:
    - Local funding changes to enable employers to access skills, rather than a focus on qualifications which may not fully fit requirements. For instance, increasing skills bootcamp style provision to upskill existing employees, i.e. not just potential recruits.
    - Developing new delivery models, eg using virtual reality.
    - New apprenticeship delivery to provide additional pathways for skills development.
- Developing and increasing capacity in the West Yorkshire post-16 skills ecosystem, particularly the provider base, to both increase the employer engagement (developing relationships and new curriculum) and deliver a responsive curriculum. This element is reflected by including Education as a sector, helping to address skills and recruitment issues that, in turn, will impact all the sectors.
- Maximising the potential opportunities presented by the Lifelong Loan Entitlement (LLE) for employers to upskill their workforce, whilst also supporting providers to improve pathways between HE and FE systems. Also, HE short course provision can be expanded to offer alternative skills and qualifications to address needs.

Underpinning and working on a cross-cutting basis across all the sectors, we also need to make changes reflecting the themes we have identified. Changes that are aligned to themes are set out according to the specific needs in each of the priority sectors (with details in Part 2), but include:

- Improving equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and access to skills across sectors and, in turn, helping to address skills shortages by maximising available talent. These include areas such as females in Construction and Engineering, males in Social Care and neurodiverse people in IT. The starting point for this is also to ensure that those that are involved in skills provision lead on, and fully represent and embed EDI. Responding to the demand for more transferable skills, including digital skills, team-working and communication.
- More needs to be done to change cultures in businesses that are slow to adapt in terms of digitisation and automation, as well as promoting the benefits of investments in digital technology. One business fed back: "*There needs to be a greater understanding of the benefits and capabilities of digital amongst the wider workforce and having people that can communicate that. You can employ or engage external staff on a technical level, but selling the benefits of digital possibilities to the business as a whole is a gap. SMEs generally need to catch up in this and are generally unaware or unwilling to fully explore the benefits of digital, whether that be in process efficiency, automation or customer engagement.*" At the same time, 400,000 adults in West Yorkshire lack foundation digital skills and circa 500,000 workers lack essential workplace digital skills.
- Leadership and management skills were in the highest demand amongst the employers consulted. They suggested that course provision should be more modular, ensuring that the content fits the needs of both the learner and employer rather than the provider. 69% stated they would need training within the next three years.

Expected benefits of change

We expect that these changes will create benefits for employers, individuals, providers, and the wider economy, including:

- Employers:
    - Improved workforce and skills planning.
    - Reduction in skills shortages and gaps.
    - Increased ability to support their workforce to achieve and progress.

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- o Higher and more relevant skill levels impacting on productivity, growth, and resilience.
- Individuals:
    - o Increased access to skills development opportunities, aligned with skills demand.
    - o Increased employability and vocationally relevant skills.
    - o Improved career progression.
    - o Improved ability to participate in and contribute towards economic growth.
- Providers:
    - o Increased capacity and capability to respond to local skills needs.
    - o Improved employer engagement, contributing to provision improvements and increased take-up.
- Wider economy:
    - o Reduction in the skills mismatch between the skills in demand, and those available locally in the workforce.
    - o Increase in productivity, resulting from better skilled recruitment pipelines and workforce.
    - o Higher levels of educational attainment.
    - o Reduction in the number of residents without any qualifications.
    - o Increased take-up of learning across all business sizes and equality and diversity groups.

Success factors

To align with the strategic context and interventions and activities already taking place in West Yorkshire, we propose to broadly adopt the ambitions set out in the West Yorkshire Employment and Skills Framework, as the success factors. These have been developed and agreed by all the key stakeholders. We have tailored them to reflect the LSIP's aims and objectives and the key changes that we want to put into place.

- Employers understand the benefits of a skills plan and invest in the workforce at all levels leading to a reduction in skills gaps reported, increased productivity and resilience to changes.
- Technical education is a choice with clearly developed pathways that meet the needs of employers, with flexibilities built in to increase access and take-up.
- Increased qualification and skills levels, particularly in STEM, of working age adults, foster a culture of enterprise and innovation, and widen the talent pool for employers.
- Learning supports preparation for and progression in work, it is informed by employers. Locally rooted careers information inspires and enables informed choices to support personal ambitions, and to meet the local skills demands.
- Employees have access to training in the workplace that enables progression and development of transferable skills.

Driving changes through the LSIP

We will drive changes within the following governance structure:

- ERB having overall responsibility for delivery of the LSIP.
- The LSIP board having strategic responsibility for the LSIP, with linkages to the wider infrastructure and stakeholders, eg, linking to the Digital Skills Partnership or the Manufacturing Task Force, to support coordination of activities.
- Sectoral steering groups and thematic task groups with operational responsibilities for agreeing operational linkages and delivery.
- Project management team within the ERB, and with secondments from the key stakeholders, to practically take forward, oversee and coordinate and monitor the delivery of the actions.

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The LSIP provides us with an opportunity to build on the existing strengths, activities and interventions in the West Yorkshire's post-16 skills ecosystem, proposing and facilitating additional changes and improvements – directly responding to issues identified through our consultations and research.

The LSIP is not intended to duplicate work and plans that are already taking place but is intended to focus on those specific changes and issues identified by the employers as key blockages to accessing the skills they need. We will involve all relevant stakeholders in taking forward the actions, with the LSIP Board, which is representative of all the key stakeholders, acting as the conduit for engagement and facilitation.

In practice this means that where activities are already taking place that align with our proposed actions, we will identify how the LSIP can add value, with clear roles and responsibilities agreed for any facilitation and delivery. The LSIP will provide additional focus and a means to channel resources (including via the Local Skills Improvement Fund) to develop and deliver relevant initiatives that create a greater impact. For example, the Manufacturing Task Force in their Recommendations Report[15] has included skills-specific recommendations that include – "short courses to retrain and upskill people in the sector". As this also links to actions proposed for the sector in the LSIP, we will work with the Task Force to set out practical approaches to this requirement.

As stated above, collaboration forms one of the key principles in the delivery of the LSIP. We will work with all key stakeholders in taking forward the actions, which have been developed with their involvement.

Part 2 of this document sets out the results of our collaborative working, incorporating the employer feedback and research, to set out and clarify the issues and challenges on a sectoral and thematic (where applicable) basis; to understand what is already provided to address these issues; and to agree focus and actions that are needed on the local level.

Steering groups have already been established for each of the priority sectors, and these will form the basis for taking the actions forward over the next three years, ensuring alignment with existing activities. These steering groups currently include representatives from the provider base, and will be expanded to include other relevant stakeholders, including industry specific representation organisations. Clear terms of reference will also be agreed.

Part 3 of the document sets out how the proposed actions may be delivered. Further work is required to agree roles and responsibilities, across many of the actions set out.

PART 2: TAKING THE PRIORITIES FORWARD

Priorities for action

For each priority sector this section sets out the rationale for its inclusion in this LSIP. This includes details of the jobs that are in demand; skills shortage jobs; specific issues and challenges employers and individuals face; examples of provision and specific gaps and needs in the sector. The themes are also highlighted, as appropriate. Details are also provided on priority issues, informing the actions to be taken forward in the road map in Part 3.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE – Sector Overview	
• The biggest sector in West Yorkshire with 160,000+ employment, and 350+ sector roles. • Growth in caring occupations at intermediate level with a 16,000 net growth in jobs.	
Jobs in demand	**Skill shortage jobs**

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[15] https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/a-mayoral-combined-authority/mayoral-pledges/manufacturing-task-force/

Care workers, home carers, nursing auxiliaries Care giver/personal care aide and RGN both c.7k job postings – 2022	Registered nurses, midwives and health visitors; and allied health professionals and managers (eg radiology and radiography and children's services); 5,500+ vacancies across Social Care sector c.990 establishments

Example issues identified in consultation/research

- Decline in students of nursing/physio/radiography.
- Zero-hour contracts in Social Care.
- Staff turnover in NHS at 13.7% and 23.8% in Social Care sector.
- Ageing workforce (and population), higher demand for services and increased workforce to meet these.
- Releasing staff for training (eg off job learning for apprenticeships).
- Sourcing placements as part of provision is difficult, often Higher Education pays employers for these placements, but FE do not.
- Lack of access to IT equipment by staff prevents digitisation in Social Care settings.

Skills gaps and needs

- Persistent skills gaps
- Digital skills
- Management and leadership across the sector
- Skills to support patients with mental health concerns.
- Emotional intelligence, resilience and non-verbal communication for frontline roles.
- Interpersonal/transferable skills including communication, timekeeping, teamworking.

Skill supply and responding to challenges

Wide range of courses across all levels and plans for more accessible provision and pathways – multiple progression routes with apprenticeships across nearly all FE colleges and ITPs.
eg Leeds City College – contract with LTHT for clinical health apprenticeships and developing a flexible apprenticeship with Leeds City Council. Also using employer support money to expand the provision, the issue of <18 on the placements is a significant one, creating a mock hospital on campus to substitute for placements initially.
eg Calderdale College developing/testing new delivery methods to make training accessible, using virtual reality to gain competencies before placements.

Priority issues to be addressed

- More support for employers to encourage take-up of training and offering apprenticeships/placements. Issues raised by employers include time lost supporting young learners, capacity to enable shadowing, they do not see themselves as the educators, unable to offer apprenticeship to paid job transition. Employers understanding of the theory underpinning the practical so can support training.
- The likely gaps in provision, particularly social care, for non-academic/exam averse learners
- Take-up of social care courses (even those developed to respond to employer needs).
- Requirement in T-Levels to know what young people want to specialise in very early in their learner journey.

Actions

- Employer engagement resources to support developments including placements.
- Creation of alternative shorter courses to provide pathway into the sector, for those for whom T-Levels may not be appropriate, incorporating transferable skills.
- Flexible skills provision to increase access and take-up – collaborative working across provider base to offer different pathways.
- Promotion of Social Care as a career – careers myth-busting and positive role modelling.
- To develop train the trainer courses as delivering training in house is more cost effective.

Future skills

21st century healthcare innovation requires a special set of skills. Whilst technical and clinical skills can be taught within the curriculum, learners will need to acquire creative, visionary and people skills that are not typically taught within the context of healthcare innovation. Providers should support students to develop these wraparound skills in creativity, analysis, communication, management, leadership, empathy, problem solving, and social responsibility.

ENGINEERING AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING – Sector Overview

- 7,300 businesses, 66%+ are specialists in advanced processes, research and development and product development, employing 144,000.
- Second largest sector, 30% of businesses are SMEs.
- Biggest specialism is textiles employing 7.5k, but manufacture of machinery and equipment employ 10k.
- WY Manufacturing Task Force in place.

Jobs in demand	Skill shortage jobs
Production operatives, maintenance engineers, vehicle technicians.	Production operatives, maintenance engineers, metal fabricators, electrical engineers, CNC machinists

Example issues identified in consultation/research

- Ageing workforce and businesses have limited/no succession planning.
- Replacement demand.
- Automation.
- Increasing demand for higher skilled occupations.
- Providers lacking skilled/experienced tutors to deliver the skills needed.

Skills gaps and needs

- 68% reporting skills gaps, 15% hard to fill vacancies (BMG).
- Several gaps in apprenticeship provision incl. robotics, computer aided manufacturing, engineering and manufacturing technologies at L4+, CNC and turning and milling.
- Hand based skills, eg moving products from the production line to pallets or finishing a product with a hand file and putting into packaging ready for shipping.
- Employability based skills; being punctual, telephone skills, drafting emails and 'having the right attitude' feature strongly in the feedback.

Skill supply and responding to challenges

Courses across all levels, ranging from 150 spaces at UTC, new campus at Keighley College, through to HE provisions eg textile focused provision at Huddersfield University.
10% of all WY Apprenticeships are in manufacturing businesses (36% of apps at Kirklees College are Engineering and manufacturing technologies).
15k+ STEM graduates from local universities.
Existing activities focused on promoting the sector as a career choice led by ERB and Make UK.

Priority issues to be addressed

- More support for employers to encourage take-up of training and offering apprenticeships/placements. (including for T-Level courses).
- Equipment for delivery of training at many providers is out of date. Cost of equipment is a big barrier to offering new courses.
- A provider skills gap exists – with few staff delivering training experienced or fully competent in the latest equipment.
- Promotion of Engineering as a career – particularly areas such as welding, where there is a lot of demand.
- Providers attracting highly skilled tutors, due to the earnings differential with industry (some final year apprentice students are earning more than the tutors).
- More consideration of the introduction of AI, automation and its impact on traditional tasks such as admin, communication and interaction. Creation of a new role to ease transition such as "Automation Project Manager".

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Actions
• Employer engagement for more work placements for T-Levels and apprenticeships, promoting the benefits in terms of potential recruitment pipelines etc.   • Work with employers to host the training and teaching (utilising state of the art equipment), act as industry experts, deliver training in-house, and embed training the trainer into the day job for specific staff.   • Enable industry secondments for teaching staff to learn and then inform curriculum development.   • Develop a bank of tutors made up of ex-students, industry experts and those coming towards the end of their careers industry, to support skills delivery.

Future skills
A significant increase in the number of young people taking up manufacturing and engineering apprenticeships is needed to address challenges including an ageing workforce, underrepresentation, perception of industry, as well as to boost productivity and to meet the region's 2038 carbon neutral target. Engineering subsectors experiencing growth include nuclear energy, big data, food and drink manufacturing and artificial intelligence (AI). There is pressing demand for mechanical, electrical, electronic, chemical and software engineers. These roles will be particularly sought-after in the onset of the fourth industrial revolution and the roadmap to a green, low carbon economy and net zero. Digital skills and the ability to think and work across traditional disciplinary boundaries is also key to enabling people to move from declining industries and capitalise on opportunities within the sector. The rise of automation in the workplace has brought with it an interesting corollary for skills needed in workers. As technology replaces several of the manual or repetitive tasks many manufacturing and engineering jobs entail, it frees up space for skills that are uniquely human: soft skills. A recent World Economic Forum study found the top 10 skills for the next decade include essential human skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and people management.

FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES – Sector Overview
• UK's 2nd largest centre for banking; largest growing Legal centre   • Key specialisms with 36k employed in Financial and Professional services in just Leeds, and 332k+ in LCR (including Business Services).   • Calderdale has highest location quotient and Halifax has 7k+ employed in the sector.   • Expected growth by 23%.

Jobs in demand	Skill shortage jobs
Bookkeeper/accounting clerk, lawyer (and office administrative assistant – highest overall). Accounting is the highest in demand skill on job postings.	28% of businesses reporting skills shortage vacancies 70% reporting skills gaps, 11% hard to fill vacancies (BMG). (In FSSC report, 92% of Financial Service businesses had hard to fill vacancies).

Example issues identified in consultation/research
• Technology/automation driving change in the sector – 20%+ of current financial services workforce at risk of displacement.   • 62% of jobs in SMEs, with limited awareness/resources to upskill staff.   • Higher level skilled jobs, resulting in competition with tech businesses for staff.

Skills gaps and needs
• Digital and data analytic and insight skills.   • Need for reskilling staff impacted by digital transformation.   • Management and leadership to navigate transition.   • Agile, change management and project management skills.

Skill supply and responding to challenges
Significant levels of provision delivered in-house, across the larger employers, and in HE providers.

L2/L3 and apprenticeships (eg business admin and law) across most FE colleges and many ITPs. Providers have created additional courses addressing skills gaps:
eg Calderdale College with FE/HE focus on apprenticeships accounting/project manager, and leadership and management L3-6.
eg Bradford College working with one company to develop an academy for Project Management (L3); also new AAT L2 study programme (2023-24) – high demand course – commercial/PT/evening and school leavers and a vocational pathway in business (HNC) leading to management or accounting and finance in the 2nd year.

Priority issues to be addressed

- More support for employers to encourage take-up of training and offering.
- Difficulty in tailoring courses to specific needs, when it is a diverse SME market – costs to do so are high and may not be feasible.
- To create alternative pathways for Legal or Banking sectors – to enable those who do not want to/cannot undertake a degree to access opportunities in the sectors.
- Challenge of multiple different apprenticeship standards – some are very niche and may not have the critical mass to deliver feasibly.
- Barrier to provision. Providers struggle to attract tutors with the right level of technical knowledge/skills, as they go into the better-paid industry.
- Attracting young people into the sector eg few want to do bookkeeping.

Actions

- Career awareness activities – for both new labour market entrants and those changing careers.
- Capacity building activities and resources for tutor development and to attract potential tutors.
- Development and promotion of vocational pathways into the sector, eg legal apprenticeships to address skills shortages and increase diversity in the sector.
- Collaborative working across the provider network to address specialisms and feasibility of running courses (i.e. working across the wider region to deliver).

Future skills

The shift to virtual working is driving an increase in demand for more technical talent in the sector, such as software developers and engineers. The rise in technology-driven roles also necessitates and unlocks data insights, leading to increased demand for new roles such as data architects and scientists. The skills landscape already reflects some challenges/changes, eg growth in demand for programming languages and machine learning. New skills needs are also arising, such as leading others in hybrid working environments and advisory knowledge for a net zero economy. While there is a continued trend of firms seeking candidates with general data/digital literacy, the Financial Services Skills Commission has observed an increase in traditionally non-technical roles requiring a greater understanding or specialism in technology. eg, accounting firms have described hiring 'tax technologists', with ideal candidates demonstrating technical skills and industry-specific experience. Examples of soft skills in demand include emotional intelligence, empathy, complex problem solving, innovation, creativity, agile mindset, coaching, empowering people, adaptability, cognitive flexibility, resilience and positivity.

LOW CARBON – Sector Overview

Green economy definition, including power; home and building; green professional and research services; industrial decarbonisation; reduce, reuse, recycle and repair; low carbon transport; climate adaptation; and natural environment.
- 73,400 jobs in the sector (7% of all jobs) spread across diverse sub sectors incl. power (21k); home and building (20.8k).
- Total employment projected to grow by 104% between 2020 and 2030 – 9,270 jobs.
- 680,000 homes will need retrofitting.
- WYCA Green Jobs Task Force

Jobs in demand	Skill shortage jobs

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Environmental engineers, recycling workers, environmental consultants, environmental H&S managers, solar PV installers. Jobs growth dominated by STEM roles – engineers, scientists and technicians.	Overlaps with Construction sector's skill shortages – as 30k workforce needed just for retrofitting. project manager and civil engineer

Example issues identified in consultation/research

- Definition of sector and green jobs/skills is confusing.
- Awarding bodies response to changing qualifications/needs.
- Capacity/capability for green skills delivery.
- Providers are trying to develop skills that are not yet in significant demand from employers, i.e. creating the market in response to regulatory drivers and policy.
- Significant capital builds taking place alongside retrofit programme led by local authorities/housing associations but skills availability not keeping up with these.

Skills gaps and needs

- Demand from employers is low – need for market development.
- Estimated 116,000 workers requiring upskilling and support to meet net zero targets.
- Updating of apprenticeship standards to embed green skills.

Skill supply and responding to challenges

Green Skills Service (WYCC) offers 40+ courses at various levels.
SDF2 programme contributed to investment in green skills technologies and course development.
Many of the providers have developed add-ons to existing apprenticeships and L2/L3 provision.
WYCA plans for a Regional Green Skills Academy, involving the FE colleges through WYCC.

Priority issues to be addressed:

- A range of specialist technical skills and courses are needed including heat pump/recovery, EV and hydrogen, and skills for retrofit of housing stock.
- Existing channels such as skills bootcamps may work for some subjects to enable entry into the available jobs, but there are limitations - you cannot train eg a gas engineer in 60 guided learning hours.
- Upskilling is essential, i.e. not just new entrants into the sector. Eg we currently need 100,000 engineers capable of supporting heat pumps but only have 3,000 so upskilling of current gas engineers is essential. It is a similar for EV installation at garages.
- Cost of equipment eg an EV training rig may cost £100k, is a barrier to developing and offering courses.
- A provider skills gap exists – with few staff competent in the latest equipment.
- Whilst the apprenticeship standards are changing to reflect the needs for the green economy, they are not changing fast enough, so in the interim, the focus needs to be on adding pathways to existing qualifications. Only do accreditation if required – learning the skills is key.

Actions:

- To build on the work started in this sector through SDF, working alongside the planned Regional Skills Academy – in terms of developing the capacity and capability in the provider network to deliver these skills and new provision whilst waiting for standards.
- Career awareness activities for new labour market entrants/those changing careers.
- There are quite a few providers offering similar courses located close together – there is a fine line between collaboration and competition, but discussions to agree specialisms/target markets, and developing courses, may address this, in addition to addressing staffing issues, with sharing of experts.
- Ensure developers train/upskill their own workforce and offer labour market entrants opportunities. Providers can then work with the developers/funders to address the needs on a longer-term basis.

Future skills:

The fastest-growing green skills are in ecosystem management, environmental policy and pollution prevention. In addition to responsibly managing the environment, skills in clean energy, sustainable finance, construction, technology, and urban planning will also be required for an effective and inclusive green transition. As environmental sustainability becomes the norm, businesses will need the skills to take advantage of this change. The blend of green skills adoption, coupled with an environmentally sustainable workforce culture, will inspire new business models and strategies that deliver for people, planet, and profit. Green skills need to increase in every sector to build the supply needed and meet the demand required to achieve climate goals. For example, the Fashion industry is becoming greener, not only in fashion design hubs but also across manufacturing hubs. The automotive industry plays a substantial role in the environment and in the improvement of air quality. Upskilling/reskilling this workforce, across all levels, will accelerate the transition and create new opportunities. However, the National Open College Network's (NOCN) new report, 'Greening the UK Skills', estimates that of the 60 potential new occupations required to meet net zero, the largest share (20%) is in Construction. These learners will be tasked with, among other things, retrofitting the country's 29 million buildings and ensuring they are adequately insulated. Hydrogen maintenance engineers, solar photovoltaic engineers, retrofit advisers and animal waste manure aggregators are some of the 60 new jobs the UK is predicted to need to train people in if it is to achieve its ambition to become net zero by 2050.

DIGITAL AND TECHNOLOGY – Sector Overview

- UK's fastest growing digital sector, with 50k jobs in 8,695 businesses and concentration in Leeds.
- 5,400 businesses in ICT – of these 4,200 are computer programming and consultancy businesses.
- Emerging strengths in technology services, especially TV.
- WY Digital Skills Partnership and Digital Skills Plan

Jobs in demand	Skill shortage jobs
Programmers and software developers, IT business analysts, IT user support technicians, data analysts, cloud/data architects, data engineers	Software developers, programmers, cloud and data science roles, research, and data analysts. Digital marketing apps (level 3 and 4)

Skills gaps and needs

- Skills in short supply include artificial intelligence, machine learning, software development, cyber security, data specialists.
- Creation of software for virtual reality/augmented reality (VR/AR) as well as its use.

Skill supply and responding to challenges

ICT forms very small proportions of apprenticeship provision (Shipley College has highest proportion), but the providers are increasingly able to develop and deliver courses in a format that is accessible to the target businesses.

eg skills bootcamps have been developed to respond to emerging needs eg web design and development, leading digital teams.

eg Calderdale College have developed an Industry 4.0 hub with VR/AR and 3D prototyping and scope for extra input for the apprenticeships and engineering courses.

eg the University Centre (Luminate) are exploring "stackable short courses" that employers can dip in and out of for CPD. Bradford College/Uni network also have a version of this.

eg HE short courses and CPD linked to digital skills for example, through Leeds Institute for Data Analytics (LIDA) at the University of Leeds.

Priority issues to be addressed

- To maximise capital investments in technology and equipment, (eg for T-Levels) by enabling staff and course development, both in digital curriculum and across sectors (to support digitisation and automation in employers).
- SME engagement and delivering to diverse requirements.

- Getting enough work experience placements – given the size and location (i.e. home-working) – of many businesses in the sector.
- Need better understanding of qualifications, pathways and provision landscape, demystifying the complexity (and language) in the sector, for employers and learners, and linked to improved careers guidance.
- Acknowledge and address the difficulty of upskilling as the tech changes – for internal staff retention and for people to teach the skills.

Actions

- Expand good practice developed elsewhere to increase understanding of the scope of digital, involving employers and schools – to help to increase awareness of opportunities and aspirations.
- Careers advice.
- Brokerage support for the sector – helping people understand what is out there and where need to go for that training.
- Ensure strong links with the Digital Skills Partnership/Strategy going forward.

Future skills

As digital transformation is central to all organisations in the digital economy, digital business analysis skills have become an in-demand skill; digital business analysts are at the centre of digital transformation projects. At the heart of any tech product or digital service is coding. The core languages that most programming and app development positions need include Bootstrap, jQuery, Angular, Code Igniter, PHP/JavaScript and MySQL. There is also an increase in demand for digital marketers with skills including digital marketing tools, analytics tools, social media marketing, content marketing, SEO and UX (User Experience) Design. Data visualisation is used to gain valuable insights from data. Tools such as Tableau and Power BI are used to analyse and visualise data are also highly sought-after skills.

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES – Sector Overview

- Diverse sector including screen (film and TV production), arts, gaming, interactive experiences; design and publishing; dance, theatre, heritage, and culture.
- Dominated by small, micro and freelance businesses, but with large businesses including Channel 4's headquarters.

Skill shortage jobs

Production, craft and technical grades – in particular VFX, games and animation. Copywriters, creative design roles, production management roles, editor, accountants, line producers, first assistant directors, series producers, storyboard artists, animators and general coders

Example issues identified in consultation/research

- Creative skills are not necessarily the issue, but many lack the basic business skills for sustainability and growth.
- Take-up of training delivered via FE/HE is challenging given the make-up of the sector and costs that might be involved.
- Attracting staff into roles such as an electrician or an accountant, where pay is much higher in other sectors.
- Lack of awareness of the range of roles there are in this sector, and therefore limited take-up of provision, impacting on courses not running because they are not feasible.
- Struggle to get trainers due to those with these skills earn much more in industry.
- Courses at FE level do not provide a realistic insight of the working environment for the screen and music industries; HE courses for filming/editorial areas limited to one specific type of equipment in terms of camera training thus inhibiting entry into industry – candidates are required to be able to adapt quickly within roles for editorial and shooting.
- No structured development process for employees within the industry, which has contributed to an upsurge in freelance working since the pandemic.

Skills gaps and needs

- Fundraising and financial planning.

- Business/enterprise skills gaps including finance, marketing, social media (supporting business survival).
- IP development, project management.
- Gaming/games design – not just coding.
- Technical skills are lacking within grip and electrical roles – including best boy, sparks and lighting engineers.

Skill supply and responding to challenges

All offer L2-6 provision of various sorts, with creative arts providing a range of transferable skills, eg electrical/rigging skill, problem solving, engineering and building.
Support for freelancers and those setting up their own business after HE courses eg Leeds Conservatoire Agency.

Priority issues to be addressed

- Need to be promoting STEAM, not just STEM, and recognising the value of creative courses, not just as a gateway to 'traditionally valued roles.
- Ensure that courses are funded regardless of the smaller cohorts (which are required for safety).
- Employer incentives to get them involved in shaping the creative side of the courses.
- Enterprise skills for artists, enabling them to successfully run their businesses.
- Obtaining work placements could be a barrier to creative industry courses with links to production roles, events management etc. The H&S and insurance for theatres prohibits placements for those aged under 18. Also, most companies are very small so hard to get placements. Need a "tame" theatre with a passion to bring in the under-18s to be willing to incur the extra expense.

Actions

- Support and collaborate on the pooling of resources across colleges to ensure there is no penalty for merging a course, and that it runs somewhere, whilst enabling each provider to retain their ability to deliver. This should include funding for students to be transported between venues.
- Work with employers (and insurance companies) to overcome barriers to placements.

EDUCATION – Sector Overview

- The sector encompasses education and training from early years to CPD.
- The sector is key to delivery of the LSIP and enabling employers and individuals to access the skills they need.

Jobs in demand	Skill shortage jobs
Expected increase in early years staff (nursery nurses and assistants) to respond to childcare policy. FE tutors across a range of technical subjects and STEM areas. Teaching assistants – one of the most in demand jobs	An acute shortage of qualified teachers/tutors particularly STEM. Lack of tutors across a range of technical areas eg construction, engineering, manufacturing.

Example issues identified in consultation/research

- The sector faces significant recruitment challenges – particularly in FE, as providers find it difficult to recruit people with industry specialisms who can also teach well (eg construction/computing/engineering). Competitiveness of pay and working conditions to make teaching a more attractive proposition for those in industry to progress and evolve their careers.
- A range of teaching qualifications are available but providers are not recruiting fully to courses.

Skills gaps and needs

- Digital skills – digitisation of learning and increased technology in education requires upskilling of staff.

• Early years skills gaps include knowledge of stages of development, methods of supporting children's learning, observation, assessment, planning, understanding and managing children's behaviour.	

Skill supply and responding to challenges

A range of apprenticeships are offered across several FE providers – L2,3 and 4+; FE provision of certificates/diplomas in teaching and learning; HE degree provision for teaching at all levels.

Priority issues to be addressed

- To develop new routes into the sector for subject matter experts, without having to undergo 2-3 years of training for high level professionals in their field to be able to become "qualified" to teach on a part time basis (and maintaining the links with industry for the remaining time).
- Funding issues related to sharing subject matter experts across colleges. Better brokerage/pooling of students to create large enough cohorts to run a course in one location.
- Careers awareness and promotion for teaching.

Actions

- Independent brokerage service to enable signposting to courses, one-stop-shop to develop these and identify business need, translate it into training and find the best local provider.
- Enable sharing of tutors/students/subject matter expert educators from industry between colleges.
- Support colleges to create a modular teaching qualification for subject matter experts to do hybrid teaching.
- Campaign to raise profile of teaching as a career.
- CPD for employees based in education sector, to enable them to keep up with technology/techniques and developments.

CONSTRUCTION – Sector Overview

- 70k + employed in the sector.
- 2.2% growth in Y&H, particularly in infrastructure repair and maintenance.
- Dominated by sub-contracting arrangements and self-employment impacting recruitment and upskilling.

Jobs in demand	Skill shortage jobs
Civil engineers, quantity surveyors, electricians and electrical fitters, scaffolders, dry liners, fencing, paving. Other construction professionals and technical staff (1470 p/a). Professional, technical, IT and other office-based staff (390 p/a); plasterers (330 p/a) – CITB – 17.8k workers needed Y&H 2023-27.	All trades especially, electricians and electrical fitters.

Example issues identified in consultation/research

- Time and funds to train.
- Retention of employees is a barrier to training.
- Short-term planning.
- Capacity to deliver – unprecedented demand for provision, but lack of tutors.
- Bureaucracy for apprenticeships is overwhelmingly demanding for smaller businesses.
- Alignment of some apprenticeship standards with skills needed in businesses.
- Employers understanding of the standards is patchy and the course is significantly more straightforward to follow than the completion of assessments – so many individuals do gain competences but do not secure a qualification in the end.
- Changes in qualifications and alignment with apprenticeships.

•	Rather than qualifications, employers want wider skills that do not fit under the construction specific standards (eg literacy/numeracy/time keeping skills really matter).

Skills gaps and needs

•	59% reporting skills gaps, 8% hard to fill vacancies (BMG).
•	Need to upskill as well as be able to recruit staff.
•	Updating apprenticeship standards to reflect sustainability requirements and skills.
•	Managerial levels – Federation of Master Builders say it is too hard to recruit/retain at this level.
•	Need training that is flexible – to access on site during down time and easily accessible.

Skill supply and responding to challenges

Wide range of courses across all levels (L1-6), with new campuses at LCB (and Kirklees College – working on live site development); apprenticeships at LCB, Calderdale, Kirklees, Wakefield Colleges and via ITPs etc.

Priority issues to be addressed

•	Need more Tier 1 courses to support entry into the sector. Not all jobs that need doing are at a higher level.
•	The intelligence from employers is limited. The business model is based on big builders subcontracting, so bottom line is the focus – leaves little room for spend on skills, other than those required to practice. This contributes to short-termism and just in time recruitment and upskilling.
•	Standards are required but they need to flex these to match the local economy.
•	A provider skills shortage exists with tutors not available to meet provision demands.
•	Develop new delivery models to improve access to skills development/upskilling.
•	Updating of curricula to continue to reflect/fit the needs of employers.

Actions

•	Career awareness and myth-busting activities for both new labour market entrants and those changing careers (or coming closer to retirement).
•	To build up the workforce for the future to address there is a need for more pressure on developers to train/upskills their own workforce and offer labour market entrants opportunities. This can be progressed through procurement channels. Providers can then work with the developers/funders to address the needs, on a longer-term basis, and offer apprentices permanent work.
•	Explore the ability to amend/update qualifications rather than wait for the awarding bodies to do so, thus responding to employer need. Working on this through cross college/provider collaboration would be beneficial to the wider sector.
•	Develop train the trainer programmes, retaining and retraining older employees to pass on their knowledge to younger generations.

TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS – Sector Overview

•	52k employment in Transport and Storage and increased by 69% between 2014-18
•	Particular specialism for Wakefield (8% of business units).
•	Sector dominated by small businesses, but with some very large businesses in the Wakefield/Castleford area.

Jobs in demand	Skill shortage jobs
Office staff, vehicle drivers and warehouse workers. Demand for staff, is 4.6% higher than young people wanting to work in the sector.	Software engineers, project managers and executives hardest to fill roles.

Example issues identified in consultation/research

•	Move to online retail has increased demand for warehousing.
•	Automation has an impact on the sector.
•	Higher skilled roles such as HGV drivers and mechanics harder to fill than those not requiring specialist qualifications (eg van drivers).
•	Ageing workforce and reliance on migrant workforce.

• Need the sector to engage and articulate their needs – the issue is more around recruitment practices, short termism and contract length.
Skills gaps and needs
• 66% of Transport/Storage employers reporting skills gaps and 64% of Distribution. • 9% of Transport with hard to fill vacancies, 8% for Distribution.
Skill supply and responding to challenges
Apprenticeship provision in selective FE colleges and in private providers. HE provisions for transport, logistics and/or supply chain management at eg Leeds Trinity and Huddersfield University. Sector-based work academy provision has been a source of skills (but focusing on those that are unemployed and enabling them to enter into jobs).
Priority issues to be addressed
• Need to work with employers to develop a longer-term view. Employers take a short-term view and recruit temporary staff especially for entry level roles, providing no progression/longevity.
Actions
• Employer engagement with focus on the forward-facing employers, to include developing good practice as a starting point to promoting the benefits of skills/upskilling and developing longer-term skills plans.

Desired outcomes

The following outcomes are sought by employers:

- Access to local training to upskill staff – from 81% of employers.
- Access to funding to support training – from 88% of businesses.
- Training courses/qualifications that are designed for their specific sector – 69%.
- Access to training courses that form a clear career pathway to support employee professional development – 63% employers wanted this.
- 56% of employers wanted tutors that have up-to-date knowledge of their sector.
- Training courses leading to qualifications for specific occupations (formally accredited by recognised awarding bodies) – 59% of employers stated this was wanted.
- 37% wanted training courses leading to qualifications for specific occupations (that were not formally accredited by recognised awarding bodies).

Monitoring and review

The outcomes will contribute to the key performance indicators to measure the extent that employer's needs are being met, eg employers able to access local training. Baselines will be identified at the outset, to support monitoring and help to identify the impact of changes made through LSIP delivery.

The Project Management team will report on the KPIs and progress on the LSIP implementation to both DfE and the LSIP Board, cascading details through sector steering groups. The LSIP will be reviewed, and actions updated based on new evidence of need captured through the ongoing employer engagement activities.

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PART 3: DELIVERING THE LSIP PRIORITIES

This section sets out the road map of how we will work with the employers, providers and other stakeholders to deliver the priorities.

1 – the likely lead organisation is in bold and potential partners – this is not an exhaustive list others may be added as relevant
2 – the top line outcome/benefits to be realised
3 – code for review/monitor method
A an annual report
B updates commissioned to/from LSIP board, including potential cascade of information
C updates or case studies shared on LSIP website
D cascade according to comms plan including social media/newsletters
The schedule for monitoring will be agreed with the lead provider and partners where not indicated

4 – Abbreviations used

Chamber	West and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce in partnership with Mid Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce	REC	Recruitment & Employment Confederation
		WY	West Yorkshire
CITB	Construction industry Training Board	WYCA	West Yorkshire Combined authority
ITPs	Independent Training Providers	WYCC	West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges
JCP	Job Centre Plus	YLP	Yorkshire Learning Providers – also known as West Yorkshire
LAs	The 5 local authorities covered by the LSIP – Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield		Learning Providers and North Yorkshire Learning providers
		YU	Yorkshire Universities
Providers	Potentially all providers of education and training in the region		

Item	Activity	Likely lead and example partners[1]	Start date	End date	Outputs/benefits[2]	Review/monitor/update process[3]
1	Agree reviewed Terms of Reference for WY LSIP Board Road Map implementation phase	**Chamber** project team, all current membership	Sep-23	Nov-23	• Clear structures, full buy in from partners	Annually
2	Set up/expand on existing sector-based groups with local representation to drive collaboration, reduce duplication, support provision mapping and progression routes	**Chamber**, providers, employers, WYCA[4], business representative bodies	Oct-23	April-24	• Established groups as required, with appropriate leads • Increased comms/understanding of what is in place by all partners in the delivery of skills training • Increased sharing between providers in relation to course delivery options • Increased input to curricula development by employers	Notes shared from group, reflect on impact to curricula development feedback to board. Cross reference between groups C

Item	Activity	Likely lead and example partners[1]	Start date	End date	Outputs/benefits[2]	Review/monitor/update process[3]
3	Deep dive provision mapping against our sector priorities to establish good practice, duplication, and gaps (include higher and degree apprenticeships)	**WYCA**/**Chamber, Providers**, YU, sector specialists, LAs	as required from Oct-23	Mar-24	• Clarity re gaps and duplication • Accountability agreements clearly informed • Greater understanding of gaps informing curricula development	Ad hoc working group overseen by board, individual feedback A, B, C
4	Review of FE Accountability Agreements as part of provision mapping to check what plans are in place for new provision	**TBC**, Chamber, WYCC, skills specialists, WYCA, providers	Oct-23	Annually to align with April sign off	• Maintain understanding of the marketplace for courses • Increased availability of courses to meet demand • Benefits from 2023/24 academic year • Career pathways become more clear • Courses for specific occupations clearly signposted to meet demand.	As part of annual accountability agreement review cycle lead by WYCA One to one from WYCA to colleges as part of negotiations A, B
	Course Enhancements					
5	Identify opportunities to retain/secure L2/L3 funding in priority sectors where required, to ensure pathways to work are maximised (with a focus on Social Care)	**WYCA, provider networks, providers,** Chamber, business representative bodies	Sep-23	TBC	• Ensuring EDI for all learners, regardless of qualifications undertaken • Options for returners to work/career change are enhanced, vacancies in affected roles are reduced	WYCA data reports, open data reporting B, D
6	Collaborative working across the provider network to address specialisms within sectors, to share expertise for niche areas, explore co-running of courses/cross college delivery	**Providers, employers**, WYCA, other careers guidance providers, Chamber	Jan-24	ongoing	• Increased efficiencies in course delivery and provision availability • Support sharing of expertise regionally enabling employers needs to be met • Students to report increased access to courses • Impact from 24/25 • Cost effective delivery of courses that have previously been unable to run	Course data/achievement data, specific facilitation of provider group A, B, C, D

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Item	Activity	Likely lead and example partners[1]	Start date	End date	Outputs/benefits[2]	Review/monitor/update process[3]
7	Support identification and communication of gaps in training identified by employers to provider base to inform curriculum planning	**Chamber, WYCA**, employers	following course starts Sep-23	summer-25	• Better understanding of course marketplace and funding opportunities maximised • Employers find the providers more responsive to need • Improved relationships between employers and providers • Improved understanding of the needs, and course content can be explained so matching of need and existing provision does not require as much expert intervention, enabling providers to release capacity to focus resources on unmet need that requires new course development	Updates from Business engagement team. LSIP board, track feedback to providers, update on ongoing basis via comms to provider network A, D
8	Develop resources in colleges/ITPs to support greater collaboration with employers, including for curriculum development and placements	**Providers, ITPs**, WYCA, YU, employers, business representative bodies	Nov-23	summer-25	• Co-designed new courses tailored to local need; higher quality resources available for delivery/access by students • Increased availability of placements • Students feel impact on study • Employers find they see the benefits of the training for their staff. Impacts start within 3 months of development	Survey of businesses, reporting by colleges/ITP providers A, B, C, D
9	Increase provision available at L4 and L5 in modular, flexible format in priority sectors, eg low carbon technologies – collaborative working across provider base to offer different pathways and specialisms	**Providers, ITPs**, WYCA, business representative bodies	Aug-23	TBC	• Increased access to local provision, training courses that have been designed for specific sectors and occupations	Providers network, feedback via WYCA, course review A
10	Increase provision in small, bite-size and introductory format in priority, technical sectors	**Providers, WYCA**, business representative bodies, employers, LAs, YU	Oct-23	summer-25	• Increased access to local sector-specific courses • Speed with which learners can upskill increased as do not have to attend courses and can fit learning into down time more easily • "Try before you buy" – lower drop out on more advanced courses as better understanding of content by potential attendees and fewer people making inappropriate career change/course selection as opportunities to test appropriateness are increased	Course pass rates, outputs from providers/ITPs to WYCA, employer surveys, feedback in communications to providers/ITPs A, B, C, D

Item	Activity	Likely lead and example partners[1]	Start date	End date	Outputs/benefits[2]	Review/monitor/update process[3]
					• Use of new skills in workplace more rapidly supported as short course is less to try out in work next day.	
11	Creation/maintenance of alternative shorter courses to provide pathway into key sectors, for those who are not ready to access T-Levels, incorporating transferable skills	**Providers, WYCA**, Chamber, employees	Apr-24	TBC	• Increased numbers of people able to show skills for key sectors, applicants to roles better able to demonstrate skills sets • Progression to next level training increased • Reduction in untimely departure from roles as are better informed of requirements before starting in post and can show ability to move from one role to another in practice	Uptake of courses via provider data/destination data/WYCA A, B, D
12	Increase bootcamp style provision to help mid-career individuals transfer into key labour shortage occupations.	**Providers, employers,** JCPs, WYCA, other careers guidance providers	Sep-23	summer-25	• Reduction in skills gaps in digital/tech related sectors • More swift progression from one career to another for citizens • Reduction in labour shortages • Greater success in securing employment for unemployed individuals	Course data from colleges, employment data A, B
13	Increase apprenticeship (incl degree) opportunities and pathways into skills shortage occupations eg legal degree apprenticeships	**TBC, YLP**, universities, business representative bodies, employers	Mar-24	ongoing	• Potential career pathways are clearer for those considering options • More diverse learning experience opportunities and routes into employment • More rapid transition to earning from learning for learners in these sectors • Improved EDI outcomes enabled as need to self-fund for degree reduced and access pathways to work expanded	Employment statistics from WYCA/open data/DWP, course outcomes from providers A, C, D
14	Raising awareness of leadership and management provision to support employers to plan for their workforce skills and influence development of resources	Providers, WYCA, Chamber, employers, YU	Sep-23	ongoing	• Access to training to upskill staff • Potentially bite size freely accessible materials and more in depth funded/ paid for courses • More effective and efficient staff at all levels • Internal promotion opportunities enhanced • More long-term planning leading to fewer shortages/less down time resolving issues • Enhanced teamwork	Skills Hub/brokerage network feedback, business survey, feedback from provider business engagement teams, direct feedback via business engagement team A, B, C, D
15	Collaborative working to raise awareness of the benefits of digitisation and automation. Ensure associated provision is in place to meet needs	**Providers, Chamber**, WYCA	Oct-23	ongoing	• Streamlined working practices • Increased efficiencies in the workplace • Enhanced skills in the workforce • Reduced overheads	Completion of relevant student destination stats, survey of businesses A, D
	Support for Delivery of Training					

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Item	Activity	Likely lead and example partners[1]	Start date	End date	Outputs/benefits[2]	Review/monitor/update process[3]
16	CPD for employees based within education sector, to enable them to keep up with technology/techniques and developments	**Providers,** Chamber, WYCA, employers, YLP, WYCC, YU	Sep-23	summer-25	• Tutors with up-to-date knowledge. Increased no of experts in the field feeding into the learning experience at colleges, one off or ongoing delivery direct to students • Providers are more able to offer tailored courses to the latest tech • Learner confidence in current knowledge of tutors increased • Real life application of learning can be more readily articulated • Employers/providers relationship strengthened	Survey, feedback on staffing reports, Ofsted/other inspection, direct comms to providers/links with employers, business engagement team A, D
17	Train the trainer programme development, including tutor Bank, to fill tutor gaps in both industry (within employers) and education across priority sectors	**Providers, employers,** universities YU, YLP, WYCC	Mar-24	ongoing	• "Relief" Tutors with up-to-date knowledge • Train the trainer courses for specific occupations • Enhancing work-based support for apprenticeships and other in work delivery • Enhanced support for apprenticeship/placement students and understanding of requirements • Experts by experience have their skills in knowledge transfer enhanced leading to better quality delivery into provider courses on an ad hoc basis • Within organisations coaching/training enhanced enabling knowledge cascade	Feedback from providers/employers, course completion stats, direct comms A, C, D
18	Create a modular teaching qualification for subject matter experts to enable increased hybrid teaching	**Providers, employers,** universities, YLP, WYCC, YU	Jan-24	ongoing	• Increased end of career/mid-career pathways for experts to incorporate some teaching into their work portfolio, including potential to move into teaching full time without taking a full year out for teacher training smoothing the transition • Increased availability of people to deliver tuition in latest technologies and applied examples with direct relevance to today's workplace	course completion data, tracking teaching vacancies, student/employer feedback on courses A, C
	Net Zero Support					
19	Ensure 'green' modules are added to existing qualifications in priority sectors	**Providers, WYCA** CITB	Oct-23	ongoing	• Additional modules within existing courses/stand alone for upskilling purposes to enhance the carbon neutral work for the region • Access to training to upskill staff • Greater understanding of how to make your business more carbon neutral for non-specialist staff	Course completion data, courses available data, business skills survey results, ongoing skills survey, sharing of case studies and

Item	Activity	Likely lead and example partners[1]	Start date	End date	Outputs/benefits[2]	Review/monitor/update process[3]
					• Enhanced skills for those involved in delivery of practical actions that contribute to enhancing the carbon neutrality of working practices, engines, workspaces, homes, etc	communications direct to partners/stakeholders A, C, D
20	Programmes to support businesses and organisations to embed sustainable work practices	**WYCA,** Providers, CITB	Feb-24	ongoing	• Access to training to upskill staff • Greater understanding of how to make your business more carbon neutral for non-specialist staff • enhanced skills for those involved in delivery of practical actions • Enhanced business efficiencies and reduced costs	Skills surveys to businesses, ongoing feedback from Skills Hub conversations A, B, C, D
	Promotion of existing initiatives					
21	Review options in relation to an independent brokerage service to enable signposting to courses, i.e. central contact point to identify business need, translate it into training and find the best local provider	**Chamber**, **WYCA**, Providers	Sep-23	Dec-23	• Increased take-up of local provision • Increased understanding of courses available by individuals and businesses • Clear referral pathways between services • Businesses report ease of access to information • Business engagement advisors across services share info	Working group overseen by board B, C, D
22	Establish local, shared process for brokerage	**Chamber**, **WYCA**, Providers, WYCC, YU	Dec-23	ongoing	• Increased take-up of local provision • Increased understanding of courses available by individuals and businesses • Clear referral pathways between services • Businesses report ease of access to information • Business engagement advisors across services share info	Dependent on 3 A, B, C, D
23	Coordination with existing CIAEG infrastructure to support promotion of priority sector careers – careers myth-busting and positive role modelling for new labour market entrants and those changing careers	**TBC**, JCPs, WYCA, other careers guidance providers, business representative bodies, Chamber, REC	Oct-23	summer-25	• Coordinated promotion of local opportunities • Improved information for citizens • Ease of access to information on career change increased positive new stories	Monitor of positive stories/applications B, D

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ANNEX A: LOCAL STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Strategic infrastructure

The LSIP has been developed within a context that includes the following infrastructure:

An Elected Mayor, Tracy Brabin, who represents the interests of West Yorkshire's 2.3 million residents. The Mayor works with the leaders of the five councils that make up the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. The Mayor's priorities include how to level up communities, with four of her 10 pledges focusing on businesses and skills (https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/a-mayoral-combined-authority/mayoral-pledges/), including "prioritise skills and training to ensure everyone in West Yorkshire has the skills they need to secure work".

West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA – https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/) – with strategic oversight of a range of policies and programmes that support the vision "to create a West Yorkshire that is prosperous, well connected, safe, inclusive and a hotbed of creativity and sustainability". WYCA is made up of the Mayor and elected councillors from Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield local authorities; the Chair of the Local Enterprise Partnership and a non-voting member representing the City of York Council.

WYCA with the Mayor (and the LEP) oversee a range of policies and programmes that contribute to objectives set out in the annual corporate plan. These include:

- Empowering our communities, towns and cities to thrive
- Championing culture, sport and creativity
- Driving economic growth and innovation to enable good jobs
- Enabling a diverse, skilled workforce and accessible learning for all

Priorities this year, which also link to priorities in the LSIP, include:

- Deliver the early priorities of our Carbon and Environment Plan and build our longer-term plans into implementable projects to work towards our target of becoming net zero by 2030.
- Grow the Creative and Digital sector through the Creative Digital Catalyst Programme.
- Implement the Employment and Skills Framework, including a Digital Skills Plan.

https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/8648/new-corporate-plan-2022-23.pdf

WYCA have overall responsibility for distributing a range of funding including:

UKSPF – with an allocation of £83,054,057

Devolved Adult Education Budget - with an allocation of £65,000,000 https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/growing-the-economy/business-and-skills/adult-education-budget/

Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (https://www.the-lep.com/about-us/our-board/) – brings together business and local authority leaders to oversee and make strategic decisions on the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) 2016-2036.

The LEP develops strategy and policy aimed at meeting both the current and future needs of the region's economy, and it delivers projects that support businesses and accelerates growth. Objectives and activities are set out in the SEP against the four Strategic Priorities:

Priority 1: Growing Businesses

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Priority 2: Skilled People, Better Jobs

Priority 3: Clean Energy and Environmental Resilience

Priority 4: Infrastructure For Growth

https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/1110/strategic-economic-plan.pdf

West Yorkshire Manufacturing Task Force – involving 15 representatives of different parts of West Yorkshire's manufacturing sector. Set up to review, research, consult and report, setting out a series of action-based recommendations to support the future resilience of the manufacturing sector. Areas of focus for the Task Force include:

- Future Industry Skills Needs: exploring the skills and capabilities that are required for the future of manufacturing.
- Productivity: looking into solutions and best practices that can tackle our regional productivity puzzle.
- Digitalisation and Adoption: supporting businesses to adopt and/or make greater use of digital technologies to streamline supply-chain, customer-relations and financing systems.
- The Transition to Net Zero: how our manufacturing base adopts to, and contributes to, tackling the climate emergency.

https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/a-mayoral-combined-authority/mayoral-pledges/manufacturing-task-force/

Alongside these publicly-led organisations, West Yorkshire also benefits from a strong representation of business-led organisations, including the 2 Chambers of Commerce partnering to deliver this LSIP, CBI and the Federation of Small Business.

Skills related infrastructure

As set out in the main part of the report, West Yorkshire has a strong post-16 skills infrastructure includes the following:

Overarching WYCA/LEP led strategic bodies:

- Employment and Skills Committee – https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=224
- Business, Economy and Innovation Committee – https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=221

West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges (WYCC)

The Consortium operates on behalf of the FE colleges in West Yorkshire as the 'Colleges' company'. They offer access to a diverse range of training and support funded through various funding sources, including DfE's Strategic Development Fund. They operate/coordinate programmes such as the Green Skills Service and Skills Connect, on behalf of their membership and other partners including Independent Training providers and the Universities in the region.

https://www.westyorkshirecolleges.co.uk/

FE is represented across West Yorkshire through a diverse group of colleges (some of which also deliver HE provision) including:

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Calderdale College, Bradford College, Keighley and Leeds City Colleges (both part of the Luminate Group), Kirklees College, Leeds College of Building, Shipley College, Castleford and Wakefield Colleges (part of the Heart of Yorkshire Group).

Sixth form colleges include Notre Dame Catholic Sixth Form College, Greenhead College, New College Pontefract, Huddersfield New College, Dixon's Sixth form Academy.

Designated Institutions include Future Horizons, Leeds.

Yorkshire Learning Providers (YLP)

YLP's diverse group of members also provide a wide range of FE/HE and technical provision. They are a network of training organisations operating across Yorkshire, representing training providers (including those delivering sector specialisms), colleges, universities and schools. They provide support and services covering four elements:

- The Network
- Support Services
- Contracts, Research and Projects
- Conferences and Events

https://www.wylp.org.uk/

Yorkshire Universities (YU)

YU provides a regional voice representing eleven universities and one specialist higher education institution (HEI) across Yorkshire. Seven of these are in West Yorkshire. They have a key role in supporting partnership and collaborative working particularly contributing to the skills agenda in the region.

https://yorkshireuniversities.ac.uk/

West Yorkshire Digital Skills Partnership

The Digital Skills Partnership is supported by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, and has been created to inspire change and tackle local digital skills challenges. Its aims are:

- Social Digital Inclusion – no individual is left behind as all are supported to engage in an increasingly digital society through accessible and inclusive provision of digital skills training.
- Workforce for the Future – the skills shortages and gaps are reduced in roles within the digital sector and in roles that require digital skills.
- SME and Third Sector Growth – SMEs and third sector value and invest in digital skills for their workforce to transform their businesses.
- Simplifying the Digital Offer – all residents understand how to access digital career guidance and digital skills training for any stage of life or work.

https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/growing-the-economy/business-and-skills/west-yorkshire-local-digital-skills-partnership/

There are clear linkages between the work of the Partnership and key priorities that have been identified through the LSIP. In taking forward these priorities there will be close coordination with the Partnership.

Green Jobs Task Force

This was established to contribute to the achievement of the Mayor's Pledge – 1000 green jobs for young people (skilled and well paid). In addition to advising on the development of the Mayoral Green Jobs Gateway to support this pledge, the Task Force was set up to agree

actions that were needed to provide access to green skills and jobs and the business community with access to a skilled and talented workforce.

https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/a-mayoral-combined-authority/mayoral-pledges/1000-green-jobs-in-west-yorkshire/

Local Authorities

The five local authorities (Calderdale, Bradford, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield) also have extensive skills related support and delivery teams, supporting their residents into and progression within employment, whilst also working with their local businesses to ensure they can access the skills they need.

Business-Led Organisations

There are also a diverse range of sector specific groups focusing on business and skills related activities. Research and consultations undertaken by these have informed the priorities and discussions. These include:

- Calderdale and Kirklees Manufacturing Alliance – https://www.ckma.co.uk/
- Leeds Manufacturing Alliance – https://leedsmanufacturingfestival.co.uk/about
- Textile Centre of Excellence – http://textilehouse.co.uk/
- Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) – https://www.citb.co.uk/about-citb/what-we-do/citb-in-your-local-area/yorkshire-and-humber/

Key skills related strategies, plans and supporting documents

There are several existing strategies and plans that provide the context for the LSIP and will support activities both within the LSIP and alongside of it.

Skills and Employment Framework (SEF)

This sets out the 5 priorities that will contribute to the Combined Authority's vision for West Yorkshire 'to be recognised globally as a place with a strong, successful economy where everyone can build great businesses, careers and lives supported by a superb environment and world-class infrastructure.' These are:

- Quality technical education.
- Great education connected to business.
- Accessing and progressing in good work.
- Creating a culture of investment in workforce skills.
- Driving innovation and productivity through high level skills.

It is supported by the latest research and intelligence (eg the Local Skills Report) and is intended to be a dynamic overarching framework enabling responsiveness to changing needs in the region, and for detailed strategies and plans to be developed within it to address specific opportunities or funding requirements. It also forms the basis for additional policy statements, including the High Level Skills and Apprenticeship Policy Statements.

https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/6573/employment-skills-framework-final.pdf

https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/7885/local-skills-report-2022-final-pdf.pdf

https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/8003/indicator-appendix-wy.pdf

https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/5394/policy-statement-raising-the-bar-on-high-level-skills.pdf

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https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/5395/policy-statement-more-and-better-apprenticeships.pdf

Adult Education Budget (AEB) Strategy

AEB provides a potential source of funding to support the implementation of the LSIP. The Key priorities for West Yorkshire AEB are to:

- Support the unemployed to gain and sustain employment.
- Unlock progression opportunities and career adaptability through skill, particularly for those on low wages and with insecure work.
- Make learning more inclusive to support disadvantaged residents.
- Increase the supply of skills to support key sectors in West Yorkshire.
- Improve West Yorkshire's resilience by identifying and delivering the skills needed for the future.

https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/5148/wyca-adult-education-budget-strategy-sept-20.pdf

https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/10118/west-yorkshire-aeb-funding-rules-2022-23-v5.pdf

https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/9607/22-23-wyca-aeb-allocations-v3.pdf

Digital Skills Plan

As referenced above, the Digital Skills Partnership have developed a skills plan, that will align with digital skills actions in the LSIP.

https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/9492/digital-skills-plan.pdf

ANNEX B: BACKGROUND AND METHOD

Methodology for business engagement – West Yorkshire LSIP

The task for the LSIP was to 'convene providers and employers which lead to the identification and prioritisation of skills needs with the development of actionable solutions', and 'develop learner demand and employer engagement to support providers, employers and the wider skills system'.[16]

The first step was to recruit a business engagement team. We were unable to recruit one post.

The business engagement strategy included event attendance, mailshots, direct phone calls, questionnaires/surveys, one-to-one meetings (either virtual or face-to-face) and one-to-many events. Email mailshots were sent to promote the LSIP and ways to get involved. We utilised the Chamber of Commerce and other local authority emailing lists as well as local branches of industry bodies such as CIPD, manufacturing alliances and forums.

The business engagement team alongside the board, project management team and consultant developed a methodology to capture business' skills needs and engage with sufficient number of businesses to analyse data trends. Primarily this was achieved through two survey tools; the first, a short survey that captured high level information and the second, a longer questionnaire that was more detailed.[17]

An 'engagement' with the LSIP involved any interaction with the project. The short survey was the next point of contact for business engagement. Those who were willing to discuss further could leave their contact details for a follow up conversation. There was the option to answer this questionnaire anonymously if the business did not want their contact details captured. The short survey took approximately 2 minutes to complete. The business engagement team were then able to use these responses as a funnel for future engagement.

The long questionnaire was based on the Hull and East Yorkshire Chamber's research survey. It consisted of approximately 40 questions and took between 10-15 minutes to complete. When developing our questionnaire, we considered usability for the businesses as well as ease of data processing and decided to use MS Forms as the tool for hosting the survey. MS Forms formats the data into MS Excel which can then be manipulated and analysed.

We hosted two virtual focus group feedback sessions with two Boards on 9th February for West Yorkshire and 10th February for North Yorkshire. We changed the wording of the questions to reflect a more diverse target audience to ensure that we did not inadvertently lead businesses to assume the LSIP was only for young people. We also removed jargon around qualification levels as this does not translate well to the general business population. Our finalised long questionnaire was completed by 14th February and live by 17th February 2023.

There are significant limitations to using survey tools, however, in order to collect business responses, we needed a structured tool to allow us to analyse the data effectively. One limitation included not being able to capture the nuance of an individual business' circumstances due to the need to create standardised responses. To address this the Business Engagement Team also conducted one-to-one meetings with businesses that were happy to follow up their questionnaire responses with a face-to-face discussion.

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[16] Chapter 3.1, LSIP Statutory Guidance August 2022, p.9.
[17] See below for Skills Need Questionnaire and LSIP Employer Skills Survey for more information

Another limitation was being able to encourage businesses to complete surveys. Within the region, there are significant numbers of surveys sent by local authorities, the MCA and education providers around skills development, curriculum planning and business needs. Skills 'fatigue' presented a barrier to get businesses to complete the short survey and long questionnaire. Therefore, the business engagement team had to convince participants of the value in engaging with the LSIP research project. The implications of the LSIP being part of Ofsted's enhanced inspections got more buy in with businesses. However, conveying this value proposition was a challenge throughout the entire research phase as there were no short-term tangible benefits of engaging with the LSIP just the medium-term 'promise' of change in education provision in the region.

Another part of our engagement strategy involved hosting employer and provider events that brought both stakeholder groups together. The events were hosted on the 19th April at The Midland Hotel, Bradford and 10th May at The Piece Hall in Halifax. During the events, the LSIP team gave an update on the production of the report and shared some feedback from the ongoing business engagement. The LSIP team then facilitated a number of round table discussions around the key cross cutting themes: Net Zero Transition/Sustainability, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics (STEAM), Digitisation and Automation, Leadership and Management and Transferable skills.

In developing and delivering our business engagement strategy, we have been mindful of the needs of employers and the current limitations placed on training providers.

Details of number of engagements and survey completions

Location	Total Engage-ments	Short Survey	Wanted Further Engage-ment	Long Survey Completion	% short survey per area	% long Questionnaire v short survey per area	Number of 1-2-1 Held
Bradford		84		19	30%	23%	7
Calderdale		22		4	8%	18%	2
Kirklees		31		9	11%	29%	4
Leeds		116		24	42%	21%	10
Wakefield		21		3	8%	14%	1
Other		2			1%		
Total	**849**	**276**	**136**	**59**			**24**

Newsletters and Events Attended

Location	Events Attended	Estimated Number of Attendees	Business and Provider Events Hosted	Focus Groups Hosted	Provider Events Hosted	Newsletter Features
Bradford	9		1			
Calderdale	6		1			
Kirklees	4					
Leeds	18				1	
Wakefield	9					
Virtual	3				1	
Total	**49**	**2589**	**2**	**9**	**2**	**10**

Detailed Industry Focus groups hosted

Date	Time	Priority Sectors:
18/04/2023	12 noon	Health and Social Care
19/04/2023	4pm	Construction
25/04/2023	4pm	Logistics and transport/Distribution
02/05/2023	4pm	Low Carbon
03/05/2023	2pm	Financial and Professional Services
09/05/2023	2pm	Education
09/05/2023	4pm	Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing
10/05/2023	2pm	Creative Industries
10/05/2023	4pm	Digital and Technology

LOCAL SKILLS
IMPROVEMENT PLAN
Developing future skills for the local economy

West & North
Yorkshire Chamber
of Commerce

Mid Yorkshire
Chamber of Commerce
Connecting, supporting & representing business

Short Survey Questions

Your first name; surname

Company name

Email

Phone

Postcode

Business Based in: West Yorkshire / North Yorkshire

Which local authority is your business in?

Bradford, Calderdale, City of York, Leeds, Kirklees, North Yorkshire, Wakefield.

Which Sector do you cover?

Agriculture	Apparel	Banking	Biotechnology
Chemicals	Communications	Construction	Consulting
Education	Electronics	Energy	Engineering
Entertainment	environmental	Finance	Food and beverage
Government	Healthcare	Hospitality	Insurance
Legal	Machinery	Manufacturing	Media
Not for profit	Other	Property	Recreation
Shipping	Technology	Telecommunications	Transportation
Utilities	Wholesale and retail		

Is there a skills gap within your staff force that you are finding difficult to address?	yes/no/don't know
Do you have challenges recruiting employees with the right skills for your business?*	Yes/no/for specialist roles
Any areas in particular? Eg	
Technical Skills	Yes/no
Soft Skills such as communication attitudes or behaviours?	Yes/no
Functional skills in maths, English/literacy or basic IT usage (if required)	Yes/no
Other	
Can you easily source and access the correct training for your existing staff to address skills gaps when they are identified?	No/ mostly yes For all skills / Don't know
Do you find that the training available is in a format your staff can easily access and then use straight away in the workplace?	Yes/no/sometimes
have you identified what changes in skills your business is likely to need over the next 2-5 years?	Yes /no
would you be willing to discuss any of these areas further with one of our LSIP team	Yes/no Name Email Phone

Detailed Questionnaire - Employer Skills Survey – West Yorkshire

Introduction

The Department for Education has contracted West and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce to deliver two Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) for the region, one for North Yorkshire and a second for West Yorkshire, with the latter being delivered in conjunction with Mid Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce.

We were awarded the contract by the Department for Education and are tasked with understanding the skills needs of local employers and facilitating the conversation between training providers and employers about how to best address skills gaps that are identified.

Thank you for taking part in this survey. Your feedback is critical in helping inform the development of the LSIP and understanding the key priorities and changes needed to ensure education and training is more closely aligned to employer and local labour market needs. We will not be seeking to rewrite education policy, nor are we intending to compete with pre-existing skills plans. Our aim is to complement and enhance what already exists for the betterment of the region.

The survey will take around 15 minutes to complete. Ideally it should be completed by someone with a strong knowledge of the skills and recruitment requirements of your business.

Looking After Your Data

All personal data you supply for the purposes of the survey will be securely stored and only retained until conclusion of the project research period. This data is held in line with the privacy policies of both West and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce and Mid-Yorkshire Chamber in their respective geographic locations, both of which can be reviewed below. You have the right to withdraw from the research project at any point, by notifying the relevant Chamber of Commerce.

https://www.wnychamber.co.uk/privacy-policy/

https://my-chamber.co.uk/privacy-policy/

Within this survey we use the term 'education providers' which includes:

- Independent training providers (local or online)
- Colleges
- Universities
- Schools
- University Technical Colleges (UTC)
- 6th Form Colleges
- Other organisations that offer any other skills training and/or qualifications. This can include accredited and non-accredited courses, bespoke or off the shelf forms of delivery that may be prior to employment or for professional development funded by business, the employee or through other sources.

The list of industry sectors has been taken from the ONS Report UK Business: Activity, Size and Location. However, we have separated out creative and digital, retail, wholesale and defence. See this link for more information:
https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/activitysizeandlocation/datasets/ukbusinessactivitysizeandlocation

Business and Contact Details

Please provide your details below. This will allow West and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with Mid-Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce, to contact you where

you have requested further information and / or about your business and its skills needs more generally.

Your business details will not be attached to the collated feedback you have provided and will be anonymised in any published document.

1. Your name

2. Job title

3. Business Name

4. Email address

About Your Business

5. Please give a brief description of what your business / organisation does. This might be how you would describe it to someone you had just met or on your Organisation's website.

Free Text Response

6. What is your main industry / sector?

- Accommodation and Food Services
- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
- Business Administration and Support Services
- Construction
- Creative and Digital
- Defence
- Education
- Finance and Insurance
- Health
- Hospitality
- Information and Communication
- Manufacturing
- Mining, Quarrying and Utilities
- Motor Trades
- Professional, Scientific and Technical
- Property
- Public Administration
- Retail
- Transport and Storage (including Postal)
- Wholesale
- Another industry / sector (please give brief details)

7. Which local council/borough council area is your business based?

- Bradford
- Calderdale
- City of York
- Craven
- Hambleton
- Harrogate
- Kirklees
- Leeds
- Richmondshire
- Ryedale
- Scarborough

- Selby
- Wakefield
- Other

8. Where else do you have other office locations, if any?

Free text response

9. Which of the following best describes the size of your business?

- Micro (less than 10 employees)
- Small (10 to 49 employees)
- Medium (50 to 249 employees)
- Large (more than 250 employees)

10. If you are able, please indicate the general age distribution of your workforce across the following age groups. Please rank from most employees to least employees for each group.

- % aged 16 to 24
- % aged 25 to 44
- % aged 45 to 64
- % aged 65+

11. Have you heard of Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs)?

- Yes
- No

Support for Recruitment and Training Needs

12. Do you have any specific skills gaps?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

13. If yes, what are the skills gaps?

Free Text Response

14. In general, do you know where to go to access the training and development support you need for your workforce?

- Yes
- No

15. If so, where would you go?

*Free Text Response

16. Can you source it locally?

- Yes
- No

17. When did your business last use the services of any education providers? If you haven't engaged with an education provider please respond 'never'.

- In the last 6 months
- In the last 12 months
- In the last 2 years

- In the last 3 years
- More than 3 years ago
- Never

18. How would you rate your business's experience in engaging with education providers? Please select one option in each row. (Very positive / Positive / Neutral / Negative / Very Negative / Don't Know)

- Finding a local education provider who offers the training you require
- The quality of education or training received
- The relevance of the education or training to the job that employees do

19. Has your business been asked to contribute or become involved in course design by an education provider?

- Yes
- No

20. Would your organisation be prepared, in principle, to participate in developing training course content?

- Yes
- No

21. In which of the following ways do you currently or would your organisation be prepared to participate in developing course content? Please select all that apply.

- Being consulted about course content
- Being directly involved in the development of course content
- Being involved in delivery of courses through site visits or by providing talks to learners
- Being involved in delivery of courses by formally teaching aspects of the curriculum/ course
- Other (please specify)
- *Free Text Response*

22. Would you like further information on any of the following?

- Recruiting external staff
- Developing/upskilling your staff
- Transferring unspent Apprenticeship Levy to another employer (if applicable)
- Schools Partnership Teams (eg, by working with schools and colleges to promote careers within your industry)
- Information on how to make adjustments for employees with health needs or disabilities to help them to access training

Skills and Training

23. Which of the following skills and training approaches are of benefit to your business? Please select all that apply.

- A relationship with education providers who have an understanding of the needs of your business and sector
- Access to funding for staff training
- Access to local training to upskill staff
- Tutors that have up-to-date knowledge of your sector
- Access to sites with appropriate equipment for technical training
- Access to training courses that form a clear career pathway to support employee professional development

- Access to training courses and/or qualifications designed for your sector
- Training courses leading to qualifications for specific occupations (formally accredited by recognised awarding bodies)
- Training courses leading to qualifications for specific occupations (NOT formally accredited by recognised awarding bodies)
- None of the above
- Other (please specify)
- o *Free Text Response*

24. Which of the following types of skills and attributes will be important to your business over the next three years? Please select all that apply.

- Creativity
- Customer Service
- Employability skills (eg team working, taking initiative, being inquisitive, attendance, time keeping, work ethic)
- Financial management
- IT and digital
- Leadership and managerial
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Planning and organisational
- Sales and marketing
- Skills to do with low carbon and the transition to net zero
- Technical, practical or occupation specific
- Don't know
- Other (please specify below)
- o *Free Text Response*

25. To what extent are there currently skills shortages or gaps in those areas that you have said are important? Please select one option in each row. (Not at all / To some extent / To a great extent / N/A)

- Creativity
- Customer Service
- Employability skills (eg team working, taking initiative, being inquisitive, attendance, time keeping, work ethic)
- Financial management
- IT and digital
- Leadership and managerial
- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Planning and organisational
- Sales and marketing
- Skills to do with low carbon and the transition to net zero
- Technical, practical or occupation specific
- Other skills gaps

26. What would make the biggest difference to you being able to successfully train and develop your workforce?

Free Text Response

Recruitment

27. During the last 12 months have you experienced any of the following difficulties in recruiting? Please select all that apply.

- Finding sufficient numbers of employees
- Finding employees with the right technical skills for your business
- Finding employees with the right employment skills (employability skills, transferable skills, communication, attitude, body language etc)
- Finding employees with sufficient levels of literacy
- Finding employees with sufficient levels of numeracy
- Finding employees from the local area
- Accommodating hybrid working
- Time to recruit and induct new staff
- None of the above (have not experienced any difficulties in recruiting)
- Other (please specify below)
  - *Free Text Response*

28. Which of the following do you plan to do over the next 12 months? Please select all that apply.

- Recruit new staff with an option of an apprenticeship or other appropriate skills development
- Recruit new employees without a specific education level in mind
- Upskill your existing staff
- Reduce the size of your workforce
- None of the above

29. If you have said that you plan to reduce the size of your workforce over the next 12 months. Please say why in the space below.

Free Text Response

30. Do any of the following affect your ability to recruit? Please select all that apply.

- Poor quality applications preventing you from identifying the right potential candidates
- A lack of good careers information for all candidates so that they understand your business / sector. Be that in general, from careers advisors or other specialist information sources preparing people to apply for jobs
- Barriers to take up of job offer (eg pay, shift patterns, transport or caring responsibility),
- Lack of appropriately qualified workers
- Lack of specific technical skills
- Lack of workers with the right level of experience
- Higher pay being offered by other businesses
- Other (please specify below)

Free Text Response

31. If you said, barriers to take up of job offer (eg pay, shift patterns, transport or caring responsibility), please specify below.

Free Text Response

32. If you said, lack of appropriately qualified workers. Please specify below.

Free Text Response

33. If you said, lack of specific technical skills. Please specify below

*Free Text Response

34. What single thing would make the biggest difference to easing any recruitment difficulties that you may have?

Free Text Response

Apprenticeships

35. Have any of your staff (new or existing) started an apprenticeship in the past 12 months?

- Yes
- No

36. Are you planning on any of your staff (new or existing) starting an apprenticeship the next 12 months?

- Yes
- No

37. If your staff have started the new apprenticeship, could you find right supervision within your region?

- Yes
- No

38. Where is your apprenticeship provider located?

Free Text Response

Your Business's Digital Skills Needs

39. What specific digital skills are needed within your business (eg Microsoft applications, online sales and marketing, social media, database/CRM systems, cyber security, AI, automation)?

Free Text Response

40. To what extent are you currently able to access the required digital and technical skills training for your business?

- Fully, can access all digital skills training needed
- Partly, can access some of the digital skills training needed
- Not at all, cannot access the necessary digital skills training
- Not relevant, have not tried to access digital skills training

41. What would help equip your business with the right digital skills for the next 5-10 years?

   Free Text Response

Thank you for completing this survey.

If you have any questions or would like any more information on the LSIP then please get in touch with skills@wnychamber.co.uk or contact our Business Engagement Team:

Case Study – Madeby.Studio Ltd

madeby.studio

Madeby.Studio Ltd was incorporated in April 2019.

The two directors said: "we met at Leeds University whilst studying for a Graphic Design and Communication Degree.

During their final year of their degree course, they started Madeby.Studio as a digital design studio, offering web development through to online applications.

They based themselves at Nexus. As Leeds University Alumni they were offered free desk space and some business support to get the business established.

They also joined the Ad:Venture programme (a fully funded ERDF Business Support Programme for B2B businesses up to 3 years old) which allowed them to meet a business adviser on a regular basis to hold them to account and to be a critical friend.

Recognising that as the business grew, they would need to be able to manage staff and find time to work on the business rather than in it, they started upskilling themselves by joining the Leeds Beckett University Accelerate programme.

The business currently employs 4 people; the directors as Creative and Digital Directors, their current staff are a Web Developer and Digital Marketing Intern.

They have a current vacancy for a Digital Designer.

Digital skills are essential for the business. They have managed to recruit for specific tasks such as coding and web design.

The Digital Marketing Intern was a result of their relationship with Leeds University. Once the internship was completed, they decided to offer the person a part-time position and the position will become full-time permanent Marketing Executive when they finish their Marketing Degree this year.

This system has worked well for the business and for the intern as they have been able to learn about business, integrate themselves into the team whilst adding value to the business by continuing to learn the latest academic thinking in her field.

The business has also worked with Leeds University to provide work experience to 2 Digital Designer interns in recent times.

As the company continues to grow the two Directors have plans to include staff with the following skills:

- A Technical Lead
- A Design Lead
- A Data Analyst
- A Client Management role
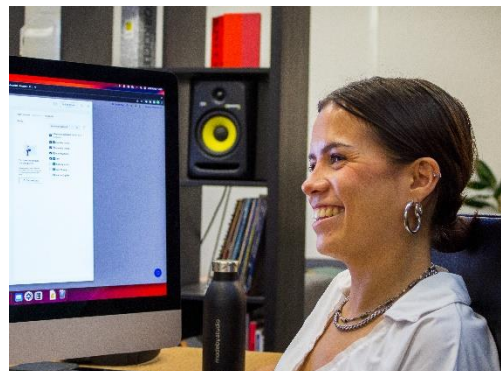
Skills needed will include project management, SEO analysis and selling skills.

They will look for training provision in project management to upskill existing staff members which will provide a route for progression and then replace the junior roles rather than looking for higher level, more experienced staff.

The directors are aware that they need to continue their skills growth in Leadership and Management.

To this end, they have enrolled themselves onto a 'Leading Digital Teams' course offered by The Coders Guild.

In the future they would like the opportunity to be involved in course development as well as offering the chance for lecturers to visit them to enhance their CPD through understanding the needs of a modern, growing business in this sector.

Case Study - Air TV

Air TV is one of the UK's fastest-growing independent production companies located just outside of central Leeds, ideally situated for access to the increasing media hub of creative industries across West and North Yorkshire. The business welcomes talent from a wide range of backgrounds and experience levels from entry level to mid and high-level roles depending on demand and commissions.

The company has a range of staffing needs that fluctuates through the year depending on which TV series are in production. Recruitment is regularly aimed at Assistant Producers, Series Producers, and other specific editorial roles. These roles can sometimes be hard to fill at short notice due to the nature of the TV business where freelancers are often all in demand at the same time during the busy summer months.

Skills gaps can vary depending on the requirements of the production in question, however there is a general need for more production management staff across the industry. This is largely due to the sudden decline during the pandemic, which saw many of those in production management roles taking the decision to leave the industry, creating an increased demand for remaining production staff.

For new joiners to the TV industry, there can still be uncertainty around where to find entry level opportunities. For those who do not choose to attend university or equivalent institutions, the skills gaps can appear to widen, and those with a genuine interest in TV can struggle to access the required training to provide the introduction into the industry.

Skills gaps at entry level include technical skills specific to camera operations, general communication skills, digital skills (understanding of basic software packages relating to TV)

and a true understanding of the industry. A Junior Production Manager advised during the interview:

"TV is a job where it's good to be skilled at lots of things."

Air TV is committed to providing opportunities for all employees, allowing shadowing opportunities for both those on work placements and current staff, who are invited to upskill through Screenskills, third party training providers and practical demonstration. Air also has its own in-house mentoring programme which pairs more experienced members of the team with new starters to help share their skills.

Changes were recently made to the recruitment strategies of the company due to an increase in demand for programming and as a result, the company is now looking to source additional external talent to its current in-house pool.

The impact of this has improved efficiency by enabling mobility of skills across departments through collaboration and a better understanding of the talent within the business which has contributed to innovation and adoption of new technology and the opportunities this presents.

Future innovations at Air TV include the experimentation with the use of AI for certain processes, additional training on green skills with new strategies such as a tree planting initiative for each production and increased awareness of the environmental aspects of production recorded under the Albert Sustainability Certification.

Besides standard employability skills gaps, the industry is experiencing an issue with some technical transferrable skills, as those with formal accredited training are only introduced to one form of equipment or software during education which can be difficult to translate into a professional setting. This could be improved by increasing the knowledge of the variety of equipment and software used within specific departments, allowing an easy transition at entry level into practical based roles such as video editing and other more technical roles.