



Report to Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee

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Report of: Kate Martin, Executive Director City Futures

Report to: Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee

Date of Decision: 20th March, 2024

Subject: Sheffield Employment & Skills Strategy delivery / Member Task and Finish Group

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? N/A				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<p><i>“The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”</i></p>				

Purpose of Report:

This paper:

- Provides an update on the project to deliver an Employment & Skills Strategy, as previously instructed by the committee. This includes confirmation of an external consultant commissioned to develop the project, key outcomes to be delivered and a project timeline
- Invites the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee to confirm the composition of the agreed Member Task and Finish Group, to oversee the Sheffield Employment and Skills Advisory Board’s (SESAB) delivery of the project
- Seeks to confirm the key stages that the Task and Finish Group will engage, review and input.

Recommendations:

That the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee:

- Notes the appointment of KADA Research and Ekosgen to develop the Employment & Skills Strategy for Sheffield
- Notes the revised project timeline, pledged outcomes and milestones
- Confirms the composition of the Member Task and Finish Group and elects a Chair
- Approves the suggested checkpoints for direct engagement with the Task and Finish Group and review.

Background papers

Lead Officer to complete:-		
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.	Finance: Adrian Hart
		Legal: Nadine Wynter
		Equalities & Consultation: Bashir Khan
		Climate: Kathryn Warrington
<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>		
2	EMT member who approved submission:	Kate Martin, Executive Director, City Futures
3	Committee Chair consulted:	Martin Smith
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the EMT member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.	
	Lead Officer Name: Laura Hayfield	Job Title: Head of Employment and Skills
	Date: 20th March, 2024	

1	PROPOSAL
1.1	Background
1.1.1	<p>On Wednesday 15 March 2023, the Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee (EDSC) voted unanimously to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the creation of the Sheffield Employment & Skills Advisory Board (SESAB) 2. Approve the development of a city-wide Employment and Skills strategy, to be commissioned by the Council and delivered by SESAB, for key stakeholders to sign up to 3. Approve the initial policy areas to be considered in the development of the strategy, with green skills a specified focus area 4. Establish a Member Task and Finish Group composed of members of the EDSC to oversee the development of the strategy
1.1.2	<p>The Council's Employment & Skills Service, Opportunity Sheffield, is managing the project to develop the Employment & Skills Strategy on behalf of SESAB, which consists of key sector stakeholders in the city.</p> <p>In September 2023, SESAB partners collaboratively produced a tender specification, as directed by the EDSC to procure a consultant to develop the strategy. This tender was published in September 2023, with a view to a November 2023 start date, however an appointment was not made at this point. A low number of bids were received, and none achieved the benchmark score required to progress to interview.</p> <p>With South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) anticipating publication of its own strategy in March 2024, SESAB partners agreed to delay commissioning of a consultant for Sheffield's strategy until this point. This was to ensure full visibility of the regional document for a commissioned consultant and ensure the Sheffield strategy fully aligns with its Mission Areas and proposed interventions.</p>
1.1.3	<p>A second round of commissioning commenced in January 2024, with Sheffield City Council seeking to procure a consultant via an open Request for Quotes. This revised approach was successful in terms of yielding eight qualifying bids, of which three progressed to Stage 2: formal interview on February 29th.</p> <p>Following this process, an appointment was made. The Council has contracted with KADA Research and Ekosgen to develop an Employment & Skills Strategy for Sheffield. This process will be supported by the Council's Employment & Skills Service 'Opportunity Sheffield' (as the client and project manager) on behalf of SESAB and supported by the EDSC's Member Task and Finish Group.</p>
1.1.4	<p>Kada is a UK and international economic development consultancy founded in 2011 providing social and economic research, analysis, and advice to the public, private and non-profit sectors. Its expertise includes strategy development, research studies</p>

	<p>and economic analysis having undertaken wide-ranging assignments for LAs, Combined Authorities, LEPs, education providers, business support and VCSE organisations, including employment and skills strategies and skills funding bids. KADA has worked extensively in Sheffield and South Yorkshire.</p> <p>Ekosgen was established in 2002 and is now one of the UK's leading independent companies providing economic and social research, analysis and consultancy advice. Ekosgen specialises in evidence-based strategy development. This includes employment and skills, economic, and sector focused strategies, as well as wider economic narratives, investment prospectuses and masterplans. Ekosgen's knowledge and expertise has been developed through its wider core offer of project development, case making and evaluation.</p>
1.2	Delivery and Outcomes
1.2.1	The project to develop an Employment & Skills Strategy for Sheffield is scheduled to run from April to September 2024.
1.2.2	<p>It will be a co-created, city-level strategy reflecting the views and input of stakeholders, relevant partners, businesses and communities.</p> <p>The final document(s) will be adopted by the EDSC. To ensure strategic alignment, the Committee will appoint a Member Task and Finish Group of cross-party members to direct SESAB and the commissioned consultant.</p>
1.2.3	<p>The strategy will deliver two key outcomes, co-created by stakeholders across the city:</p> <p>(a) A long-term, clear visionary Employment and Skills Strategy which sets an ambitious course for a more prosperous and inclusive city, both socially and economically. To include longer-terms aims and objectives, with milestones.</p> <p>(b) A detailed 5-year roadmap which states priorities, outlines actions assigned to stakeholders and sets SMART targets as the first step towards delivering on the vision.</p> <p>(c) A "live" dashboard from the baseline work to monitor the delivery of the strategy and achievements against our objectives</p>
1.2.4	<p>The process of delivering these outcomes will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A desk-based review of Sheffield's labour market, working age population and economic performance, analysing strengths and weaknesses, identifying opportunities to accelerate growth and employment, and building on the evidence already recently gathered

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active engagement and consultation with a broad range of stakeholders, including partners, residents and businesses on a two-stage basis. Stakeholders will be engaged early in the process following the desk-based review to shape the project’s strategic framework • Workshops/interaction with the SESAB board, partners and EDSC committee’s Member Task and Finish Group will then be revisited to ensure co-creation of a city-wide document and adoption by all stakeholders. • Highlighting existing good and successful practice, of what could be scaled up and where new services are required. To build upon Sheffield’s unique qualities and maximise the potential of employment and skills provision to deliver successful outcomes for residents, communities and local economy. • Identification of opportunities to engage with policy makers and funders to gain support for delivery of the strategy.
1.3	Member Task and Finish Group
1.3.1	<p>The Member Task and Finish Group will direct the development of the strategy.</p> <p>The project to deliver the Employment & Skills Strategy will be by the Council’s Employment & Skills Service ‘Opportunity Sheffield’, supported by SESAB.</p> <p>The Member Task and Finish Group will have oversight of key issues and give instruction to Opportunity Sheffield officers who are responsible for managing project delivery. This will include, but not be limited to, raising awareness and sharing information about policies, strategies and plans pertinent to the development of an Employment & Skills Strategy for the city.</p> <p>The group will also support the alignment to the Sheffield City Goals development.</p> <p>The Member Task and Finish Group will give progress updates to the EDSC and keep Members of informed of policy advice given to officers.</p>

1.3.2	<p>A minimum of four meetings of the Member Task and Finish Group will be held.</p> <p>Ideal dates:</p> <p>1) Between 22nd April and 3rd May: Member Task and Finish Group will meet with the appointed consultant to shape the strategic framework.</p> <p>2) Between 3rd June and 14th June: Member Task and Finish Group will meet to review the initial findings from the first round of consultation, provide feedback and give further direction.</p> <p>3) July – date tbc: Member Task and Finish Group will meet to review emerging findings from the 2nd round of consultation and inform the development of a draft strategy.</p> <p>4) August/September – date tbc: Member Task and Finish group will meet to review the draft and provide feedback to KADA/Ekosgen and SESAB in preparation for the strategy being brought to committee in Autumn 2024.</p>
2	HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE ?
2.1	<p>Approval of the work schedule and composition of the Member Task and Finish Group will ensure Members are able to steer the development of a citywide Employment & Skills Strategy that key stakeholders in the city will sign up to.</p> <p>The Member Task and Finish Group will enable key policy issues related to Employment & Skills to be debated by Members from across the political parties. This will ensure collective agreement on issues pertinent to the delivery of the city strategy.</p>
2.2	<p>The recommendation will support the following Council priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fair, inclusive and empowered communities • Tackling inequalities and supporting people through the cost-of-living crisis • Strong and connected neighbourhoods, which people are happy to call home • Healthy lives and wellbeing for all • Happy young people who have the start they need for the future they want • Clean economic growth
HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?	
	<p>The recommendations are based on a decision of the EDSC (on Wednesday 15 March 2023) to establish a Member Task and Finish Group. Extensive consultation will take place with the group to direct the delivery of the strategy.</p>
4	RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION
	N/A
4.1	Equality Implications
4.1.1	There are no Equality implications arising from this report.

4.2	Financial and Commercial Implications
4.2.1	There are no new Financial and Commercial implications arising from this report. Any costs identified (such as the consultants) will be contained within the current financial envelope. Any future plans/actions will require funding to be identified and brought back to a future committee.
4.3	
4.3.1	Legal Implications
4.4	There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.
4.4.1	Climate Implications
	There are no Climate implications arising from this report.
5	ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED
	N/A
6	REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS
	<p>This report provides an update on the progress made and its recommendations are based on the decisions of Wednesday 15 March 2023, when the EDSC resolved unanimously that the committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approves the creation of an Employment and Skills Advisory Board. 2. Approves the development of an Employment and Skills strategy for Sheffield and the initial policy areas to be considered in the development of the strategy to be led by the Employment and Skills Advisory Board, as set out in this report. 3. Notes that green jobs and skills are a critical part of the employment and skills strategy. 4. Establishes a task and finish group composed of members of the committee, with at least one representative from each of the political parties, to receive regular updates and feedback from the Advisory Board.

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