

## **New Anglia LEP Skills Advisory Panel**

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### **Terms of Reference** **Revised October 2019**

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#### **Purpose**

The Skills Advisory Panel exists to support the growth of an inclusive economy with a highly skilled workforce where skills and employment provision meets business need and the aspirations of individuals. It oversees the development of a skills and employment system to help enable business growth and enhance the employment and progression prospects for individuals working and living in Norfolk and Suffolk.

#### **Role of the Panel**

The Skills Advisory Panels aim to bring together local employers and skills providers to pool knowledge on skills and labour market needs, and to work together to understand and address key local challenges. This includes both immediate needs and challenges and looking at what is required to help local areas adapt to future labour market changes and to grasp future opportunities. This will help colleges, universities and other providers deliver the skills required by employers, now and in the future.

The Panel provides the collective leadership and a strategic steer for skills and employment activity across Norfolk and Suffolk to deliver on this objective.

The Skills Advisory Panel:

- provides a strategic steer for the LEP Board on the employment and skills agenda
- develops and supports key skills and employment interventions with clear focus areas to ensure post-16 educational outcomes meet business needs in the New Anglia LEP region
- lobbies to achieve required freedoms, flexibilities and resources and raise the profile of the New Anglia LEP region
- collaborates proactively to identify barriers and opportunities in delivering these key interventions
- galvanises the wider employer base to be involved in skills development
- provides analytical evidence, evaluation and subsequent coordination across the skills system in line with key strategies such as the Economic Strategy for Norfolk and Suffolk & Local Industrial Strategy

#### **Operation**

The Skills Advisory Panel is chaired by a member of the Panel representing the private sector.

The Skills Advisory Panel Chair is either a member of the LEP Board or reports directly to the LEP Board through attendance at Board meetings at least every 6 months where a formal report is given, subject to the ongoing focus of the LEP Board.

If a vote is required on any matter it will be decided on a simple majority with the Chair having the casting vote.

The Panel will determine the frequency and timing of meetings according to the programme of work required. It is anticipated that there will be 6 meetings each year.

Wherever possible the Skills Advisory Panel uses SMART targets to drive the delivery of key projects.

A separate 'Expectations' document lays out anticipated conduct of panel members. This is expected to be adhered to (see appendix).

### **Managing Conflicts of Interest**

Members of the Panel will be asked to complete an annual declaration of their interests (based on a financial year) which will be held on record.

At the beginning of each meeting Members are also required to declare to the Chair any conflicts of interest specifically pertaining to the agenda items to be discussed.

### **Membership**

The membership of the Skills Advisory Panel will be reviewed at a frequency of at least every three years and as agreed by the Panel itself. Each review will lead to Private and Voluntary Sector Skills Advisory Panel Members either being reappointed or relinquishing their membership of the Panel.

A member can only stand for a maximum of two terms (six years).

Relinquish of membership should take place in writing to the Skills Panel Chair for members other than the Chair. The Chair should write to the LEP Board Chair. A period of three months notice is expected by the members to allow a suitable hand over period.

The outgoing Chair is expected to brief the new Chair. They will also be supported by the Vice Chair when this position is filled.

At least half the Skills Advisory Panel members should represent the interests of private sector businesses. This includes members from a range of sectors and business types/sizes, and location.

It is expected that members attend meetings regularly. If members attendance drops below 50% in a 12 month period then the Panel Chair and LEP Skills Manager will consult with the member as to whether their continuation on the panel is appropriate. (This does not apply to the Post-16 Principals who attend on rotation as documented below).

**Panel Chair** – This representation will be an active member of the Private Sector in Norfolk and/or Suffolk. (Voting member)

**Panel Vice Chair** (optional) - This representation will be an active member of the Private Sector in Norfolk and/or Suffolk. (Voting member) The Vice Chair (or another panel member) will stand in for the Panel Chair when they are absent from Skills Advisory Panel meetings.

**Private Sector** - At least nine representatives drawn from across Suffolk and Norfolk and ensuring a spread of representation of our key sectors and varying sizes of employers. Members are selected through an open call for nominations and a process agreed by the

Panel. In addition, both the Chambers of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses are invited to nominate representatives. (Voting member)

**Post 16 and Further Education** – A maximum of 5 representatives are expected to attend each Panel meeting comprising of 4 Post-16 Principals and a representative for independent (private or VCS post-16 provider). Members are selected by the Norfolk and Suffolk Principals Group and the New Anglia Learning Providers Group respectively. (Voting members)

**Higher Education** – 1 representative. Nominated by the three HEIs within Norfolk and Suffolk. (Voting member)

**Voluntary Sector** – 1 representative who will convey the views of the sector in Norfolk and Suffolk plus equally relay information from the Skills Advisory Panel to the sector. (Voting member)

**Local Authorities** – 1 Councillor each from Suffolk and Norfolk County Council. Nominated by the respective authorities. (Voting members)

**Enterprise Advisor Network Manager** – 1 representation (Non-voting member)

**Job Centre Plus** – DWP District Manager. (Voting member)

**Government Agencies** – support for the Panel provided by Government departments such as the Education Skills Funding Agency and BEIS. (Non-voting member)

**LEP** – Skills Manager and Enterprise Advisor Manager. These are non-voting members.

**Quorum** – It is expected that at least 5 panel members from the private sector and voluntary sector membership should be present where votes are required.

**Officer Support** – support for the Panel is provided from the LEP Executive Team, Suffolk County Council and Norfolk County Council. Officers are non-voting members. No more than two representatives from each council are expected at each meeting unless by invitation.

**Secretariat** – this will be provided by the LEP with support from NCC/SCC where needed

**Links to other skills groups** – It is expected that members are likely to sit on task and finish groups set up to look at certain interest areas from that come out of discussions at the Skills Advisory Panels. In addition, there are other groups linked formally to the LEP or through invitation. Details of these are found on the LEP website.

The Chair's role is not necessarily filled by the existing Vice Chair at the end of their term.

## Appendix

### **New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership Skills Advisory Panel Member Agreement**

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The Skills Advisory Panel exists to support the growth of an inclusive economy with a highly skilled workforce where skills and employment provision meets business need and the aspirations of individuals. The Skills Advisory Panel aims to bring together local employers and skills providers to pool knowledge on skills and labour market needs, and to work together to understand and address key local challenges.

As a member of the Skills Advisory Panel I understand that I have a duty of care to always work in the best interests of the industry, sector or community of interest which I represent, a duty of loyalty to put the good of the region first and avoid any conflicts of interest and a duty to be faithful to the central goals of the panel and follow its governing arrangements.

#### **Expectations of Members**

In order to effectively fulfil my role as a Skills Advisory Panel member, I will endeavour to:

- fully prepare for, attend and participate in panel meetings, sub-group meetings and any related special events
- strive to keep abreast of all relevant trends, issues and skills policy developments to enable informed discussions at each meeting.
- represent a wide industry area or community of interests – not only my own individual interests.
- report back to the panel from any associated group or forum that I am linked or assigned to
- provide accurate information in a *declaration of interests* form and abstain from any decision in which I may have a conflict of interest.
- fully engage in panel discussions and, where relevant to my specialism, volunteer to take a lead for the panel on certain areas of work.
- take collective responsibility for decisions made by the Skills Advisory Panel.
- represent the Panel in a positive and supportive manner at all times
- work collaboratively with staff and other panel members as partners towards the achievement of our goals.

- strictly maintain the confidentiality of all privileged or sensitive information provided to me to safeguard the reputation and integrity of the Panel, as well as the privacy rights of individuals connected to the Panel.

If I do not or am unable to fulfil these commitments, I understand that this may trigger a discussion with the Panel Chair to determine my suitability for continuing as a Skills Advisory Panel member.

### **Expectations of Panel Support**

In turn I expect the Skills Advisory Panel secretariat and supporting officers (provided by the LEP Executive Team with support from Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils) to:

- provide an induction meeting to all panel members that request one
- provide agendas, papers and reports that provide members with an understanding of the performance of the skills and employment system in Norfolk and Suffolk and the strategic objectives of the panel
- regular policy updates between skills advisory panel meetings
- respond to panel requests
- update a simple dataset of key skills indicators on a regular basis
- circulate LEP related skills and employment news before it is published
- highlight opportunities to develop solutions (funding pots etc.)
- provide a clear forward plan for skills advisory panel meetings
- work with me in good faith towards achievement of our goals

If the support provided does not fulfil these expectations, I can call on the Panel Chair to discuss the suitability of the level of support provided.

I certify by my signature that I understand the expectations outlined above and that I will do my best to fulfil them as a member of the Skills Advisory Panel.

**Name**

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**Signature**

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**Date**

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