

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Executive Decision Record

Decision Maker:	Hampshire Economic Board
Date:	27 April 2010
Title:	Hampshire Employment and Skills Board
Reference:	1577
Report From:	Director of Economic Development

Contact name: Alison Quant

Tel: 01962 845099

Email: alison.quant@hants.gov.uk

1. The decision:

- a) That an Employment and Skills Board be established which is eligible to be designated a specified body under S.112 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009
- b) That the Board's remit be to formulate and keep under review a strategy setting out how the functions of Skills Funding Agency in relation to adult skills should be carried out and also to consider the issues for business in relation to 16-19 skills.
- c) That, subject to confirmation by the Department of Business, Innovation and skills on eligibility criteria, the size and representation on the Board, as set out in section 3 of the report, be agreed.
- d) That the Director of Economic Development explore the opportunities for joint working (adult skills) with the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire's Employment and Skills Board.

2. Reasons for the decision:

- 2.1. At its last meeting, the Hampshire Economic Board decided to establish a Hampshire Employment and Skills Board in pursuit of its skills objectives for Hampshire. The National Skills Funding Agency (a successor body to the Learning and Skills Council) is required to have regard to the strategy of a specified Employment and Skills Board in the delivery of its adult skills programmes. The County Council became responsible for commissioning learning for 16-19s from 1 April 2010.

- 2.2. This report sets out the proposed make-up of the Board for approval, in the context of the requirements for a specified body under the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009.

3. Other options considered and rejected:

- 3.1. To establish an informal partnership body. This would mean the Government's agencies that disburse adult skills funding need have no regard to Hampshire's strategic priorities, only national and regional ones.
- 3.2. Not to include training providers. Although providers have a financial interest in the commissioning of delivery programmes, they also bring a wealth of knowledge and experience of dealing with their students and business intelligence. Some of them also deal with both 16-19s and adults so have a useful perspective on delivering joined-up services.
- 3.3. To restrict the remit of the Board to considering adult skills issues only. Businesses do not distinguish between those aged 16-19 and adults when considering their skills requirements. From 1 April 2010 responsibility for commissioning training provision for 16-19s has transferred from the Learning and Skills Council to Hampshire County Council. A Hampshire Employment and Skills Board provides an excellent opportunity to engage with businesses on their skills requirements, including for 16-19s.
- 3.4. Not to collaborate with the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH). At its January 2010 meeting, PUSH agreed to apply for status as a specified body for the South Hampshire Employment and Skills Board it has set up, which includes a County Councillor as one of only two local authority representatives. At the County Council's request, PUSH agreed to support an application for a Hampshire-wide Employment and Skills Board (ESB) once suitable arrangements were in place for the rest of the county. This commitment has been referred to in the South Hampshire Multi-Area Agreement (MAA). The Secretary of State's approval is required for a specified ESB and a statutory instrument needs to be progressed through Parliament.
- 3.5. Business and Government will expect public sector partners to present a coherent approach on Skills Boards across Hampshire.
- 3.6. Working at a sub-regional level will make sense for some businesses and be relevant for some sectors or themes. Labour markets vary depending on skills levels (eg London draws people from across the south-east). For lower paid jobs, the identification of skill shortages and the delivery of training programmes at a more local level will be relevant.

4. Conflicts of interest:

- 4.1. Conflicts of interest declared by the decision-maker: none.
- 4.2. Conflicts of interest declared by other Executive Members consulted: none.

- 5. Dispensation granted by the Standards Committee: none.
- 6. Reason(s) for the matter being dealt with if urgent: not applicable.
- 7. Statement from the Decision Maker:

Approved by: ----- Chairman of the Hampshire Economic Board Councillor T K Thornber CBE	Date: 27 April 2010
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