

**Hampshire Skills Partnership**  
**Thursday 4 December 2025 – 10:00 – 12:00**  
**at Southampton Solent University**

**Attendees:** Julie Milburn (Chair) (Sparsholt College Group), Sara Russell (Peter Symonds College), Andrew Kaye (South Hampshire Colleges Group), Matt Johnson (South Coast IOT), Graham Galbraith (University of Portsmouth) Anthony Bravo (Basingstoke College of Technology), Paul German (Yateley School), Virginia Barrett (Farnborough College of Technology)

**Hampshire County Council:** Jamie Mackay (Observer), Michelle Wells (Note Taker).

**Apologies:** Sarah Greer (Chair) (University of Winchester), Andy Tickner (Hampshire County Council), Ross McNally (Hampshire Chamber of Commerce), Karen Taylor (DWP)

		<b>Action</b>
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Welcome and Introductions and apologies</b></p> <p>Julie (in the absence of Sarah) welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted.</p> <p>Following the news about a possible delay to the mayoral elections for those areas involved in the government’s Devolution Priority Programme, including Hampshire and the Solent, there was a group discussion about the potential impacts this would have.</p> <p>It was mentioned there is a need for clarity, consistency, and a unified approach, drawing on the simplicity previously achieved with the EM3 LEP. It was agreed by the group that a strong push and collective position statement is needed on this as the potential two-year delay is seen as economically damaging for citizens and would reduce funding opportunities for the area.</p> <p>It was agreed that Jamie Mackay would check to see if it would be appropriate for a collective statement to be drafted and released from the Hampshire Skills Partnership. Jamie would provide an update during the debriefing session with Sarah and Julie on 11<sup>th</sup> December.</p> <p><b>UPDATE:</b> Later the same day, Steve Reed MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, published the following statement:  <a href="https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2025-12-04/hcws1128">https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2025-12-04/hcws1128</a>.</p> <p><b>UPDATE:</b> Following the debriefing with Sarah and Julie, the action has been updated to reflect the appropriate process: JaM to circulate an update to the Hampshire Skills Partnership with an update on the changes as a result of the</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>JaM</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>JaM</b></p>

	<p>delay in mayoral elections. This update will include considerations for the Partnership with respect to the local skills system between 2026 - 2028. The Partnership may then wish to write an update for the Hampshire Prosperity Partnership Board regarding implications for local residents, businesses and education and training providers.</p> <p>There was also a discussion about the profile of the Partnership and ways to raise it – particularly at Hampshire Prosperity Partnership Board (HPPB) meetings. It was agreed it would be helpful to have standing agenda item on the HPPB agenda. Jamie will investigate and try to arrange for the next meeting in 2026.</p>	<p><b>All</b></p> <p><b>JaM</b></p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>Jamie outlined the proposed updates to the Terms of Reference, presented in the shared document.</p> <p>Jamie mentioned that there remains a vacancy for a private sector representative within the Partnership, due to Barney Ely leaving. The opportunity has been shared with HPPB but no expressions of interest have been received. The opportunity will be shared more widely in the new year.</p> <p>There was a discussion about the background to the Hampshire and the Solent SuperCluster, and it was agreed the presented changes to the Terms of Reference would be applied.</p> <p>Following a presentation about the cluster work at the last HPPB meeting, Jamie would invite Teresa Hogsbjerg (lead on this activity) to the next Hampshire Skills Partnership meeting to present about the work with clusters and explore how the Partnership can collaborate with the Hampshire and the Solent SuperCluster.</p>	<p><b>JaM</b></p> <p><b>MW</b></p> <p><b>JaM</b></p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Minutes and Actions from the last meeting</b></p> <p><b>3.1</b> The Minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as an accurate record. As per the Minutes, all action points were marked complete apart from item 6 which will be carried over. (It was confirmed the Vice Chancellors are meeting on 15 December where Sarah will lead on a discussion about next steps, ethical consent, lead institution/s, and a potential funding bid.</p>	<p><b>SG</b></p>
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Hampshire Prosperity Partnership Board (HPPB) update</b></p> <p><b>4.1</b> Julie presented an update on the previous HPPB meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> November. The related documentation can be found here:  <a href="https://www.hants.gov.uk/business/hampshire-prosperity-partnership/reports-documents">https://www.hants.gov.uk/business/hampshire-prosperity-partnership/reports-documents</a>.            In addition to the standard agenda items, the meeting included the following topics:</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devolution and Local Government Reform – Verbal Update</li> <li>• Hampshire Skills Strategy</li> <li>• Current Work on Cluster Development (see agenda item two)</li> <li>• Overview of HPPB Priority Workstream Implementation, including Key Risks</li> </ul>	
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Policy discussions</b></p> <p><b>a. Post-16 Education and skills white paper:</b>  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-education-and-skills-white-paper">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-education-and-skills-white-paper</a></p> <p><b>b. Curriculum and Assessment Review:</b>  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/curriculum-and-assessment-review-final-report">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/curriculum-and-assessment-review-final-report</a></p>	
<b>5.1</b>	Jamie led a group discussion on the two policy updates, above. Regarding the first, the group particularly focused on the update on the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) programme. Locally, this is being led by Ross McNally.	
<b>5.2</b>	The LSIP discussion covered areas such as differences in approach (Solent versus EM3 LSIPs); alignment with other, existing strategies; employer engagement; timelines; governance and the sign-off process (noting there is a new query about how the delay to mayoral elections will also impact on the LSIP for the area). Jamie confirmed there is a deadline of 31 March 2026 for a first draft to be shared with Skills England.	
<b>5.3</b>	It was agreed that Andrew and Jamie would arrange to meet with Ross to discuss the direction of the LSIP, the timeline and joint-working with providers (including schools) and businesses (including a Steering Group).	<b>AK/JM/RM</b>
<b>5.4</b>	If a further Partnership meeting discussion on feedback for the LSIP report is required, then Jamie will arrange.	<b>JaM</b>
<b>5.5</b>	<p><b><i>Defence Technical Excellence College (TEC) opportunity</i></b></p> <p>The group also had a discussion about the opportunity for colleges to bid for new Technical Excellence Colleges in different strategic sectors – although, at the time, guidance had not been published. Jamie agreed to share the guidance, once published.</p> <p><b>UPDATE:</b> Guidance has now been published here:  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-to-become-a-technical-excellence-college">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-to-become-a-technical-excellence-college</a>.</p>	<b>JaM</b>
<b>5.6</b>	It was apparent there were a number of colleges interested in leading on a Defence TEC but there was no agreed consensus on which college would lead on a single bid for the area. The group agreed that separate bids would be unlikely to succeed so a single, coordinated bid is essential – with local MP support, where possible.	
<b>5.7</b>	Outside of the Hampshire Skills Partnership, college principals are meeting to work through if / how a single application from Hampshire and the Solent could work	<b>(Colleges)</b>

	and which college would act as the lead provider. Coordination for this will likely happen outside of the Partnership but involve many of the members.	
<b>5.8</b>	Jamie made reference to the South Central Regional Defence and Security Cluster who could provide a valuable steer from industry on the Defence TEC. Jamie will explore a potential meeting with the Cluster and liaise with the colleges.	<b>JaM</b>
<b>5.9</b>	Matt added that nothing prevents conversations about using the South Coast Institute of Technology (IoT) and expanding membership as part of a TEC bid. Matt and James to present a paper at the next Partnership meeting on how the IoT could help with future TEC funding opportunities.	<b>MJ/JK</b>
<b>5.10</b>	<b><i>Curriculum and Assessment Review</i></b> As the schools representative for the Partnership, Paul gave some reflections on the Curriculum and Assessment Review and helped lead a discussion which included reflections and observations on school shifts towards accountability and inclusion; a strong push for disadvantaged learners (especially those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, SEND); the centralisation of the SEND budget and the challenges presented by the Youth Guarantee.	
<b>5.11</b>	There was also a discussion about the introduction of V Levels where opportunities and challenges were raised by the group. The Partnership agreed V Levels warrant further discussion and a related agenda item will be included at the next Partnership meeting in March.	<b>MW</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Updates:</b>	
<b>6.1</b>	<b><i>Local Skills Improvement Plan programme</i></b> – this was discussed, above.	
<b>6.2</b>	<b><i>Hampshire Skills Strategy</i></b> Jamie confirmed the Strategy has progressed through the majority of the approval process and is due to be presented to Hampshire County Council's Cabinet on 9 <sup>th</sup> December where it is expected to be approved and adopted. <b>UPDATE:</b> The Hampshire Skills Strategy was approved by Cabinet and will be published on the Hampshire Prosperity Partnership pages in the new year.	
<b>6.3</b>	<b><i>Get Hampshire Working Plan</i></b> Jamie presented an update, confirming many of the actions from the Action Plan are underway. The three workstream group leads have also met and agreed Terms of Reference and plans for the new year. Although the news about delayed mayoral elections presents a new query on the Get Britain Working plans for Hampshire and the Solent, Jamie confirmed he continues to work closely with Get Solent Working colleagues, with a view to merging the plans in the future.	
<b>6.4</b>	Jamie also confirmed the <b><i>LEP legacy funding opportunity</i></b> is now open: <a href="https://www.hants.gov.uk/business/hampshire-prosperity-partnership/capital-funding-lep-legacy-reserves">https://www.hants.gov.uk/business/hampshire-prosperity-partnership/capital-funding-lep-legacy-reserves</a> .	

<p><b>6.5</b></p>	<p><b><i>Hampshire Skills Partnership Working Group</i></b> Following earlier discussions about employer engagement, Jamie offered the Working Group as a forum to come together and look more closely on employer engagement practice across the area.</p>	
<p><b>6.6</b></p>	<p>The Partnership agreed and would like to task the Working Group to look at and report on employer engagement activity across the area: What does it look like? What works? How can we reduce duplication and maximise engagement?</p> <p>This will help inform and shape related actions from the Get Hampshire Working Plan, the Hampshire Skills Strategy and the LSIP.</p>	<p><b>JaM</b></p>
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p>	
<p><b>7.1</b></p>	<p><a href="#"><u>Keep Britain Working report</u></a> - Sarah shared this report with the partnership.</p>	
<p><b>8.</b></p>	<p><b>Next meeting</b></p>	
<p><b>8.1</b></p>	<p>The next meeting will be taking place at University of Winchester on Thursday 5 March 2026, 2-4pm.</p>	

**Action Log:**

No.	Previous Action carried over:	Who
1	<p><b>Discussion: Exploring the match / mismatch between learners' expectations vs employers' skills demands.</b></p> <p>SG to discuss next steps with other universities on ethical consent, lead institution/s and potential funding bid. – <b>IN PROGRESS</b></p>	SG

No.	New Actions	Who
2	<p><b>Slidedeck</b> JaM to circulate the slidedeck, together with the Minutes and Actions from this meeting.</p>	JaM
3	<p><b>Devolution</b> (<b>NOTE:</b> Following a separate discussion with the Chair / Vice-Chair, the recorded action has been updated to reflect due process).</p> <p>JaM to circulate an update to the Hampshire Skills Partnership with an update on the changes as a result of the delay in mayoral elections. This update will include considerations for the Partnership with respect to the local skills system between 2026 - 2028.</p> <p>The Partnership may then wish to write an update for the Hampshire Prosperity Partnership Board regarding implications for local residents, businesses and education and training providers.</p>	JaM  All
4	<p><b>Terms of Reference / Clusters</b> Apply changes to the Terms of Reference, as outlined in the document.</p> <p>JaM to invite Teresa Hogsbjerg to the next Hampshire Skills Partnership meeting to present about the work with clusters and explore how the Partnership can collaborate with the Hampshire and the Solent SuperCluster.</p>	MW  JaM
5	<p><b>Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)</b> AK and JaM to meet with RM to discuss LSIP direction, timeline and joint-working (including a Steering Group) towards 31 March 2026 deadline for first draft to Skills England.</p> <p>JaM to liaise with Hampshire Skills Partnership to arrange an additional meeting, if required, to feedback on the LSIP report.</p>	AK / JaM  JaM
6	<p><b>Defence Technical Excellence College</b> It is important to note the guidance and application process for this opportunity are still yet to be published by the Government. JaM to share when published.</p>	JaM

	<p><b>UPDATE:</b> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-to-become-a-technical-excellence-college">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-to-become-a-technical-excellence-college</a></p> <p>Outside of the Hampshire Skills Partnership, college principals are meeting to work through if / how a single application from Hampshire and the Solent could work and which college would act as the lead provider. Coordination for this will likely happen outside of the Partnership but involve many of the members.</p> <p>JaM to explore potential meeting with members of the South Central Regional Defence and Security Cluster who could provide a valuable steer from the industry. JaM to keep Partnership updated on this.</p> <p>MJ and JK to present a paper at the next Hampshire Skills Partnership on how the South Coast Institute of Technology could help with future Technical Excellence College opportunities.</p>	<p><b>(Colleges)</b></p> <p><b>JaM</b></p> <p><b>MJ / JK</b></p>
<b>7</b>	<p><b>V Levels</b></p> <p>An agenda item to be included at the next Hampshire Skills Partnership meeting.</p>	<b>MW</b>
<b>8</b>	<p><b>LEP Legacy Funding</b></p> <p>If there any queries about the LEP legacy funding opportunity (<a href="https://www.hants.gov.uk/business/hampshire-prosperity-partnership/capital-funding-lep-legacy-reserves">https://www.hants.gov.uk/business/hampshire-prosperity-partnership/capital-funding-lep-legacy-reserves</a>), please contact JaM.</p>	<b>All</b>
<b>9</b>	<p><b>Hampshire Skills Partnership Working Group</b></p> <p>The Partnership would like to task the Working Group to look at and report on employer engagement activity across the area: What does it look like? What works? How can we reduce duplication and maximise engagement?</p> <p>This will help inform and shape related actions from the Get Hampshire Working Plan and the Hampshire Skills Strategy.</p>	<b>JaM</b>