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West of England LSIP Report

2023



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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.

July 2023



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Executive Summary.

West of England Local Skills
Improvement Plan Report

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Executive Summary

This Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) is for the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) region: Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, South Gloucestershire – all within the Combined Authority’s geographic coverage – and North Somerset as part of the LEP. The report has been produced by Business West Chambers of Commerce as part of the national LSIP delivery, producing a selective skills analysis aligned to collaboratively chosen sectors from the perspective of employers and incorporating views and input from stakeholders within the region, nationally and those from the skills sector. The primary focus of the LSIP’s intended outputs is towards Post-16 Technical Education and providers of Post-16 education (Further Education), but the findings may be of use and benefit to others within the education, skills and support systems.

The Skills for Jobs Whitepaper¹ published in January 2021 set out how the government intended reforming Further Education to ensure the (technical) skills provision delivered post-16 met the UK’s economic needs. LSIPs are one of the key tenets in the reform, by *‘bringing employers, colleges and other providers, and local stakeholders together to set out the key changes needed to make technical skills training more responsive to employers’ skills needs’*.

Post-16 educational pathways can be delineated into three areas: academic, technical and vocational, and Technical Education provision is within every Level of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) from Entry level through to Level 8. Some technical education and training may not be within NQF, such as courses that are short, modular or industry-certified and accredited training. The core technical qualifications considered for the LSIP are:

- ◀ Apprenticeships
- ◀ T-Levels
- ◀ Higher Technical Qualifications, and
- ◀ Shorter non-core curriculum provision, such as:
 - ▶ Bootcamps (both regionally and nationally funded)
 - ▶ the Certificate of Future Technologies pilot run by the West of England Institute of Technology
 - ▶ Other short courses via funding mechanisms such as the Strategic Development Fund (SDF) and expected via the Local Skills Improvement Fund in direct response to identified industry needs.

Although BTECs are classified as vocational or applied courses (and are being defunded where there is considerable overlap with T-Levels) they are expected to be part of the non-academic Post-16 qualification landscape for the immediate future and are considered as having technical equivalence for some occupational pathways (such as the Applied Science BTECs).

Business West was designated as the Employer Representative Body (ERB) by the Department for Education in August 2022 against an initial application for the initial three year delivery period, commencing 2022. Business West undertook an in-depth qualitative research project to gather and interpret current, granular and detailed intelligence to build on existing understanding and

¹ Department for Education. (2021). Skills for jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth. GOV.UK. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-for-jobs-lifelong-learning-for-opportunity-and-growth>. In the public domain.

identify any regionally significant needs outside of national and sectoral foresighting. Business West were also designated to deliver LSIPs for Gloucestershire and Swindon and Wiltshire LEP regions and those reports will also be available online when approved.

Due to limitations on report length and structure, this report cannot provide the full and in-depth findings sector by sector, and we therefore encourage all stakeholders and potential partners to read the 'Priority Findings' documentation alongside regional strategic documentation such as the West of England Combined Authority's Employment and Skills Plan and Local Industrial Strategy. We welcome all inquiries for discussion of findings, alignment, opportunities to engage or collaboration and how to best synergise projects in a whole systems approach for the benefit of employers, learners, providers and all others in the region.

The West of England region is a successful economy, with above average productivity but recently slowing growth and pockets of deep inequality. The working population is around 700,000 with above average qualification rates; 48% qualified to Level 4 or above (2021²), with unemployment four percentage points lower than national averages and mean wages are higher than national averages³. However, there are significant reported difficulties in staff recruitment, issues around equality of opportunity and occupational progression and multiple areas of deprivation.

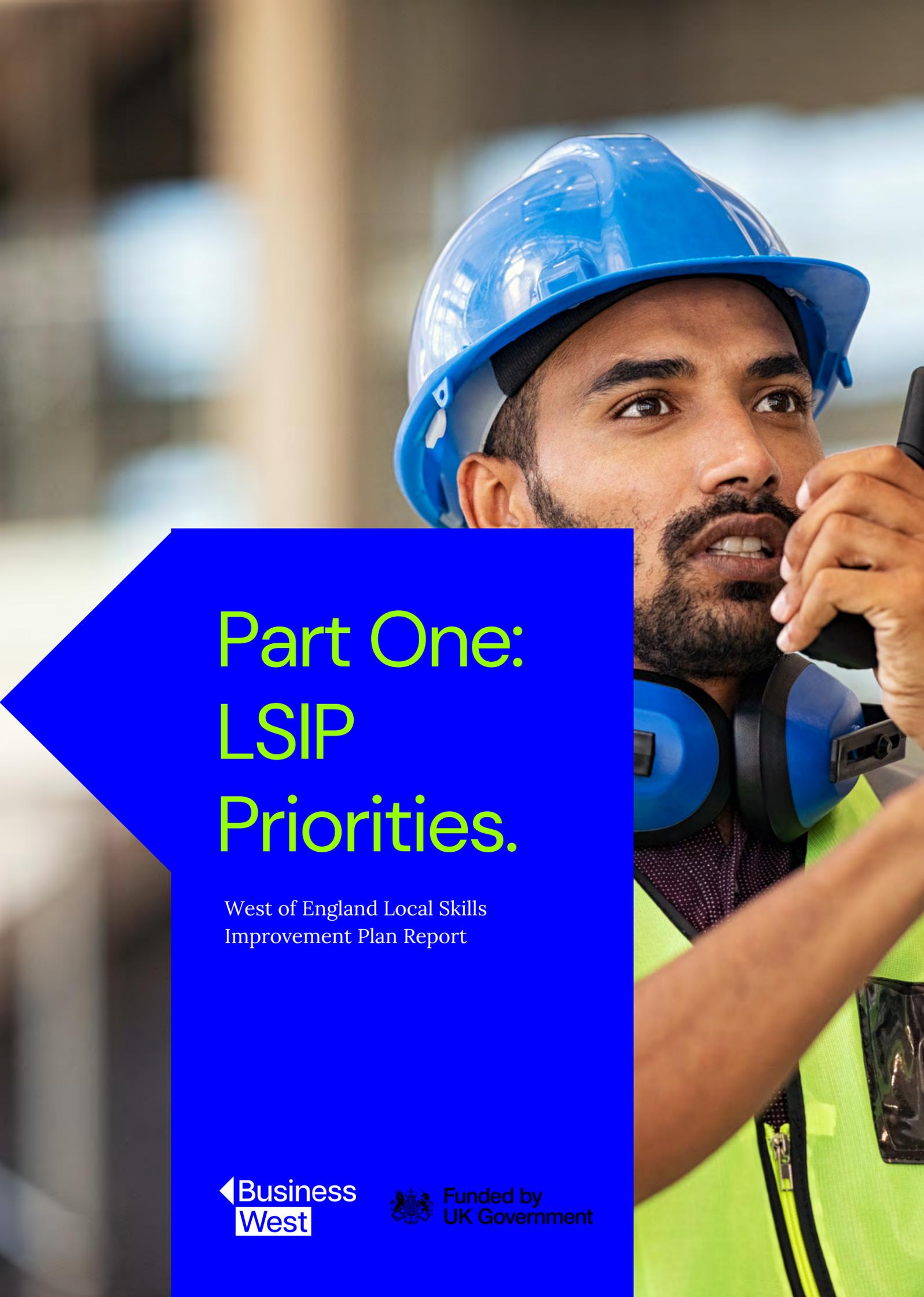
Our primary methods of employer and stakeholder engagement were through in-depth engagements in the formats of interview discussion and immersion or focus events, allowing employers to explain and explore their understanding of sectoral changes alongside identified needs within the organisation and attached to their understanding of wider sectoral and technological changes. All engagements incorporated questioning routes attached to the UK's Net Zero Strategy, decarbonisation and sustainability, as well as core and soft skills and digitalisation. Outside of these primary methods the LSIP team were open to shorter and more open routes of discussion, with a multitude of activities inputting into the LSIP's findings and report but not considered part of the core research activities due to not meeting the 40 minute direct discussion threshold to be considered an in-depth engagement – the Head of Skills Planning alone held or attended around 35 additional meetings and events for the purposes of LSIP activity and engagement that would not be incorporated into primary engagement.

Cross-cutting themes have been delineated within this initial phase, both for action by training providers and stakeholders, and for further exploration and refinement with further detail in Section 2. We also outline in Section 3 our intended delivery activities for within Stage 2, between August 2023 and March 2025, including actions and priorities across the skills system to benefit employers in terms of access, navigation, messaging, governance, synergistic and amplifying opportunities and potential measures and indicators of success and performance.

During Stage 2 delivery, we will continue to develop our understanding via agile research methodologies, partnerships and monitoring progress in the roadmap for change. This roadmap and continuation will provide significant further opportunities to continue to add meaningful and ever more succinct understanding of unmet and changing skills needs that align with employers' imperatives and consequently targeted interventions within skills and supporting systems to ensure the West of England region remains one of the best places to live, work, grow and thrive. We will also ensure we align these activities where feasible with other programmes and initiatives that support Post-16 educational improvements and understanding, via the Department for Education, and regional and national partners.

² From West of England Labour Market Summary, by West of England Combined Authority, 2023 ([Microsoft Power BI](#)). In the public domain.

³ *West of England Local Industrial Strategy*. (2019, February). West of England Combined Authority. <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/1.-WofE-LIS-Summary-of-evidence-2.pdf>. In the public domain.



Part One: LSIP Priorities.

West of England Local Skills
Improvement Plan Report

Part 1: LSIP Priorities

LSIP Overview and Background

The LSIPs are designed to put additional employer voices at the heart of skills planning, providing better intelligence and a more joined up regional approach to meet employers' needs, helping close the gap between Post-16 (technical) education and workforce readiness and to aid in planning and preparation for changes to industrial needs within priority sectors. This report is for the West of England LEP region, an area of over 1.1 million people with a workforce of around 630,000⁴ and a strong, diverse economy supporting one of the most productive city regions outside of London in England. The area has above average productivity, significantly higher employment than the national average at 79.7% versus 75.8% (Dec 2022)⁵ low unemployment support claims and a highly skilled workforce supporting the growth of several nationally and internationally significant sectors⁶.

The Skills for Jobs Whitepaper of 2021⁷ outlined the importance of ensuring technical education could be driven by employers' needs, creating a '*...strengthened and unified post-16 education and skills system that will benefit individuals, the economy and the nation*'. This Whitepaper also outlined the intention and setup of direct response mechanisms towards this, initially via the Strategic Development Fund (and now the LSIF as its replacement) and primary response mechanism, but there are expectations for further impact across core curriculum planning and alignment.

Business West was also designated as Employer Representative Body (ERB) for two adjacent LSIP regions, Gloucestershire and Swindon & Wiltshire, allowing investigation on a wider geographic basis whilst allowing for comparison of aligned sectoral needs and delineation of any difference within comparator region. Both reports will be made available at the same time as this West of England report. We have worked closely with a number of regional organisations through Phase 1, including the West of England Combined Authority, all further education (FE) Providers, the Institute of Technology, Independent Training Providers (ITPs) via the Western Training Provider Network (WTPN, see Annex B for details of contractual delivery), and Local Authority representatives.

Aims and Intentions

The West of England LSIP has been developed to:

- ◀ Gather and interpret granular and up-to-date employer intelligence about unmet skills needs within their existing workforce and for new entrants to the workforce.
- ◀ Assist providers to act on this intelligence alongside existing research into and understanding of shortages, regional and occupational priorities, and known change to sectoral needs.
- ◀ Help with decision making for potential changes to existing core post-16 technical provision, to help close the gap between formal learning and work readiness.
- ◀ Identify skills needs within employers that may be met with additional non-core curricula delivery.

⁴ Labour Market Profile – Nomis – Official Census and Labour Market Statistics. (n.d.).

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/lep/1925185566/report.aspx?town=west%20of%20england>. In the public domain.

⁵ From West of England Labour Market Summary, by West of England Combined Authority, 2023 (Microsoft Power BI). In the public domain.

⁶ Equality Framework. (2020). West of England Combined Authority. <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/WECA-EQUALITY-FRAMEWORK-FINAL-JAN-2020.pdf>. In the public domain.

⁷ Department for Education. (2021). Skills for jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth. GOV.UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-for-jobs-lifelong-learning-for-opportunity-and-growth>. In the public domain.

- ◀ Develop robust and effective methods of longer-term employer engagement to drive change and input into the system to best meet a region's needs.

Alongside these core aims, the LSIP may have additional impact or input into peripheral and supporting systems, initiatives and programmes, such as those further from the labour market, in receipt of universal credit and therefore return-to-work or work progression support and provision, Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) and wider business support, information and guidance. There are numerous supporting agencies and projects supporting and addressing Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND), communities and individuals who face additional barriers to learning and employment that can improve access to potential available labour market and support employers to recognise and mitigate any additional needs, to effectively provide meaningful employment and benefit to employers and employees. We recognise that the LSIP may have findings of relevance to these providers and supporting agencies and will ensure longer term we are open to meaningful integration of these.

The West of England LSIP focusses on selected priority sectors alongside cross-cutting themes key to economic growth and change. Due to the value of the West of England Plus trailblazer activities, we chose a continuation of the methodology of in-depth, lower volume qualitative analysis to add meaningful depth to existing national, regional and sectoral understanding of change and need. We recognise that this lower volume approach may not provide a statistically robust method of analysis taken in isolation but have incorporated existing understanding and analysis into our methodology hopefully to usefully extend understanding and to provide further granular intelligence, re-prioritisation during current and future shifts in needs.

Our core in-depth methodology produced a good level of detail, with the concatenated output of employer needs statements in the Priority Findings documentation providing useable specificity for providers to act upon, without being too prescriptive in how responses should be planned. This hopefully found a central point between being actionable and recognising that those who currently provide education and training are best placed to decide how to incorporate these findings to best meet the region's needs.

The sectoral foci for Phase 1 delivery were chosen to align with existing regional imperatives and developed in partnership with primary stakeholder input (regional FE Providers, representation of ITPs via Western Training Provider Network (WTPN), representatives from the Combined and Local Authorities) prior to designation (March - May 2022). These parties were invited to initial discussions of potential foci, to ensure both alignment with regional needs and regional provision, with the priority sectors chosen following these discussions.

The Priority Findings from Phase 1 activity have been made freely available to all whom could benefit from access, and we are continuing conversation about further research for Stage 2. For further information about the research project, outputs and methodology please see Section 2 and Annex B.

Sectoral Foci

The initial priority sectors chosen for the West of England region were prioritised upon a matrix approach across 4 areas:

- ◀ High Value (GVA) - as measured by most recent statistics.
- ◀ High Employment - as measured by most recent statistics.
- ◀ High Growth Potential - expected to be capable of significant above trend growth in near future subject to barriers being addressed.
- ◀ High Need/Change - expected to be or currently subject to significant barriers to growth or adverse business conditions in near future (e.g., workforce recruitment and retention,

technology including automation, skills development, significant regional capacity loss etc)

In the table below, we have incorporated both regional and national statistics. Where feasible we have prioritised regional figures, with national statistics used where identified in our preliminary sectoral and secondary research, where they are more recent, or where they are more closely aligned with requisite data e.g. the Department for Education Unit for Future Skills dashboard highlights current online job adverts, but does not extrapolate to current estimated vacancies, which is a more precise indication of need within a sector. All national figures are highlighted as such and appended where feasible with regional comparative data.

Sector	High Value	High Employment	High Growth Potential	High Need / Change
Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering	Engineering provides 32% and Manufacturing 10% of nation's GVA , significant Aerospace cluster, new nuclear on doorstep, regional driver of innovation and R&D. In 2016, manufacture provided £2.5b MCA regional GVA	Sector provides 6% of total employment within region, around 82,000 jobs, expected need for over 16,000 replacement roles by 2035[1]	Aerospace cluster potential for growth post-pandemic and towards Net Zero, energy transition,	Highest increase nationally in labour market tightening, over 10% of all current vacancies in this sector. Engineering roles in WoE currently provide 7.6% of total online advertisements. [1]
Construction	Value nationally of sector in 2021 around £115 billion[1]. In 2016, construction provided £1.7b MCA regional GVA[2]	Employs around 28,000 across region, predicted growth of 1.6% PA until 2036[1]	Net increase of 14,000 jobs expected by 2036[1] [1]	73% nationally report difficulties recruiting skilled and technical workers, +-1 million expected retirements in next decade[1]
Health and Social Care	GVA for region from this sector estimated at £2.25 billion (8%) [1]	Employs around 90,000 (14% of total employment) of which around 43,000 in hospital setting, current vacancy rate of around 7.2%[1]	Expected growth in roles by 2036 of 10,200 [1]	Role replacement need expected by 2036 of almost 60,000, significant expected additional demand for care/ Health provision. Turnover as high as 44% in some roles[16]
Creative Industries	Significantly higher than average GVA, around £5.1B in 2017[1], regional strengths in film and TV production [1]	3.2 million in Creative industries nationally, 26% higher employment in region [1]than average, around 26,000 directly employed in Creative sector and 50,000 in roles	One of the fastest growing sectors nationally, expected national growth of 6% per year, with 1,500 new roles created per year in the West of England, regional target of 40,000 new roles created by 2036[1]	Digitalisation and growth of this sector will require both new entrants and higher technical skills.

As set out in the West of England Employment and Skills Plan⁸ and Post-16 Estate Review Report⁹, the sectors have significant importance to the West of England's growth and economic output, as well as the nation overall. Their alignment and relevance to Post-16 Technical Education pathways and provision within the region are important, representing good foci for initial investigation.

These were chosen as the initial foci through pre-and-post designation meetings and conversations with stakeholders and to align with regional sector strengths and needs. We note that during stage 2 delivery we will continue to 'deep dive' and refine understanding of skills needs within these sectors, but there is also some appetite for additional inclusions and sub-sectoral research, both within related and unrelated sectors and themes. These are expanded in section 2.8 alongside suggested primary refinement areas within stage 2 delivery in section 3.

⁸ <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/West-of-England-Employment-and-Skills-Plan-July-FINAL.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Horizon-Scanning-Post-16-Education-and-Skills-Infrastructure.pdf>

Thematic Foci

Alongside these sectoral divisions, we continued to incorporate and thematic ‘drivers of change’ and cross-cutting threads within skills needs that had been highlighted in the West of England Plus Trailblazer, prior Business West-led research into industry transformation and within existing external research. These themes were:

Core and Soft Skills (otherwise known as transferable skills or critical workplace skills)

These are needed for most roles and are frequently listed as most sought after in recruitment, they enable effective communication, ability for further learning and a baseline of ability to progress within all pathways and professions.

Core Digital Skills

Considered to be the skills employers need the majority of employees to have to utilise existing work systems, undertake core activities on digital infrastructure and platforms and communicate effectively both internally and externally. These were highlighted by the wide spectrum of response and understanding within trailblazer activity during conversation around digitalisation and within existing research and trends analysis, and recognition of such has been accelerated by the impacts of the pandemic on work practise via hybridisation and digital connectivity.

Technological Change and the impact of Digitalisation

Technological change and digitalisation have been variously accelerated during and following the Covid pandemic alongside factors associated with tightness and lack of liquidity in the labour market. These factors are considered to be primary drivers of changing skills needs attached to continued growth, improved productivity and efficiency and potentially leading to significant transformation of employment and industry.

Needs attached to the UK’s Net Zero Strategy, decarbonisation, sustainability and ‘green skills and technologies’

The UK’s Net Zero Strategy outlines the national imperative to fully decarbonise all sectors of society by 2050, so there are clear UK and regional needs to decarbonise all industrial sectors and infrastructure, but less clarity surrounding understanding of requisite skills, timescales, and cost burdens to employers. These were chosen for incorporation into trailblazer activities and – following this – written explicitly into guidance for LSIP delivery and expectation.

The core skills needs (both soft and digital) remain essential to employers and are often perceived and needed to allow the development of enhanced or advanced technical skills, as well as gainful employ as a whole, with needs often either prior to or in parallel with new skills needs.

What is the LSIP attempting to solve?

The LSIP is a project to put additional employer need at the heart of skills provision, ensuring greater alignment between a region’s business needs for continued success and a region’s response to meet those needs. The West of England LSIP is primarily attempting to build on existing understanding and add granular intelligence to allow providers to make meaningful interventions in existing provision and to identify areas for new provision to meet immediate employer needs for continued commercial success and growth but will also have broader repercussions across the skills and employer support systems.

Phase 1 activity (to a degree) highlights some of these requirements, but also highlights areas where we can identify we have not yet reached a level of granular understanding in terms of industrial and employer needs, modes and methods of change, timescales attached to needs

versus commercial viability of industry need and will therefore prioritise elements of these within Stage 2 activity as ‘deep dive’ topics in both interview and immersion event structures.

The structure of activity for Phase 1 delivery revolved around three distinct phases of activity:



These can be summarised as primary research activities, working with providers and stakeholders to translate business input into skills needs and responses, and identifying how the wider skills system can respond and where LSIP activities in Stage 2 can be planned for wider regional benefit and synergy.

Potential primary audiences for the LSIP activities and findings are within three broad areas:

- ◀ Employers, who may find alignment with their needs (strengthening existing understanding) or may not (allowing further exploration of unmet skills needs for further clarification and exploration towards further response).
- ◀ Those with the duty to respond (FE Providers of Post-16 Technical Education)
- ◀ Those who should ‘have regard’, including but not limited to:
 - ◀ other education and training providers,
 - ◀ LEAs and Combined Authorities,
 - ◀ Employer organisations, sectoral bodies and centres of innovation,
 - ◀ The Jobcentre Plus network,
 - ◀ CEIAG providers

and

 - ◀ Other organisations that support the needs of employees and learners

We have through the priority findings process divided employers’ concatenated needs statements into areas of the workforce we believe they are most pertinent towards, from new entrants without experience (such as those direct from post-16 long course without significant industry placement or experience) through to awareness within senior management or changing needs in experience workforce. These findings have relevance to into-work education and training provision, and in-work training needs, both for internal upskilling and for those who are looking to progress within work towards more highly skilled occupation or further financial reward.

The LSIP has operated via an agile engagement methodology, utilising learnings from the LSIP trailblazer, previous Business West Sector Skills Statements research projects for the West of England Combined Authority (and from within the CA’s Employment & Skills Plan, Post-16 Estate Review, Retrofit and Green Skills Reports and others), with the intention of providing analysis of employer engagement, strengths and weaknesses of competing methodologies of research, and to predominantly build on existing national, regional and sectoral understanding.

Alongside the delivery of granular business intelligence towards regional needs for growth and prosperity, the LSIP is also attempting to improve business engagement mechanisms, both within

the reporting of unmet needs and within the wider skills system; we therefore developed a light touch but comprehensive referrals system against reported needs, to ensure that employers with whom we engaged could receive signposting towards additional support and internal and external supporting partners to continue to investigate needs and solutions. This will be expanded further for the region and integrated into Stage 2 delivery and employer engagement with a pathway developed for ensuring skills gap analysis results in signposting, navigation and suggestions for further exploration to meet identified needs.

We have designed the process to work collaboratively and openly with all whom could benefit from engagement. All regional FE providers – plus those whom provide towards regional needs and employers – were incorporated into the research and events delivery, often with LSIP teams invited to engage in their own employer engagement activities such as employer forums planned and held simultaneously. We recognise too that there is a significant part employers need to play in improving the system for their benefit, whether that is through sharing identified needs to assist with provision, or by further engagement within skills, careers and learner support to help embed industrial needs, career awareness and potential industrial transformation.

The LSIP findings and process have the potential to feed into existing regional and sub-regional strategies, mechanisms and planning processes: identified priorities for LSIP incorporation include the West of England Employment and Skills Plan (ESP), which takes forwards identified priorities from the regional Local Industrial Strategy, but our ongoing collaborative relationship with the Combined Authority ensures we can align with and input into other planning and strategic processes, documents and initiatives as identified.

We have and will continue to make iterative improvements in the LSIP methodology, to improve understanding of the skills system, response from the skills and supporting systems and employer engagement, in particular in respect to ensuring SMEs and those with low capacity for non-critical activities have the ability to engage and benefit from LSIP activities. The LSIP will have maximum impact when it recognises and reflects the needs of employers around direct skills provision, and we therefore are working towards longer term ‘meshing’ of LSIP processes, findings and engagement activities to support and initiatives of additional value to employers including via careers services and provision, strategic and sectoral research and planning.

Further work will be undertaken in Stage 2 to ensure we can leverage Business West’s existing networks and audiences, whilst recognising that there is true value in engaging those not already engaged, in particular SMEs, and intend on identifying additional opportunities to collaborate and routes to market for further reach into those not yet engaged.

Why does the LSIP matter? How can it help?

The rapid transformation of work life and environments have come about due to both wide-ranging economic factors and changes to the labour market in terms of those seeking work and those available for work. In some respects, these are accelerations of existing transformational progressions within employment due to political and geopolitical change. Whilst some of the themes of changing work are well known, there is uncertainty in direction for some employers, and needs within both the existing workforce and future employees for educational provision and workforce planning are only partially known in terms of both need and timescales. The LSIP – as a current project exploring from an employer’s perspective needs and awareness of transformative factors – can assist in closing gaps in understanding and support current understanding of employers needs from Post-16 educational routes.

To a degree, employers do not distinguish between whether available and applicable training is vocational, technical, or academic, and these separations are used primarily within provision and planning; as long as courses appear to meet recognised needs in terms of delivery method and content and can mitigate concerns attached to time and money they will meet needs; however,

understanding of the skills system, provision and routes to market (frequently alongside understanding of internal needs) is intermittent and compounded by change.

What is currently happening?

Existing provision and supporting initiatives

Existing Post-16 technical education provision in the region is provided via the FE Colleges, Sixth forms and the West of England Institute of Technology, as well as via Independent Training Providers, Higher Education Institutes (via short course delivery and higher apprenticeship and technical qualification pathways), and other delivery bodies via programmes and initiatives such as Workforce For The Future and industry specific programmes, continued professional development (CPD) and courses, via accredited, certified and non-accredited methods). Around 70% of apprenticeships nationally are delivered by Independent Training Providers, and 67% of training providers are considered ITPs¹⁰ - regional figures are unknown but expected to be broadly in line with national.

There are numerous projects within the West of England to both provide education and training in response to employer needs and supporting employers with wider employment and skills assistance – these include (but are not limited to) the WTPN coordinated Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Scheme and SME apprenticeship support programmes routes for Enterprise Advice through Careers Hubs into schools and colleges, and additional support programmes to help employers identify beneficial solutions to employment and skills needs, such as Workforce for the Future and Skills Bootcamps.

There are a number of recent and imminent significant changes to the Post-16 educational landscape, with FE providers recently being reclassified from private to public sector, potentially reducing access to investment and funding outside of direct central government mechanisms, as well as changes to national core delivery attached to the gradual removal of some BTECs and the wider rollout of T-Levels. This is set against some funding levels that have not changed against increases to the cost of living and expectations of recompense for employment (that is not currently being fully met within teaching professions in the same capacity as some industry roles, reducing the potential uptake of teaching from some careers and sectors) and both regional and nationally funded provision and response via Adult Education Budgets in devolved areas, and the forthcoming LSIF.

Other Parts of the System

Our predominant partner in the region for driving long term change to the system is the West of England Combined Authority, integrating the LEP and Skills Advisory Panel (SAP). The CA have devolved powers for AEB and skills provision, including via the upcoming Mayoral Skills Priority Fund, UKSPF (which will be also pertinent towards those Not in Education Employment or Training (NEETs), Skills Bootcamps, Multiply and other opportunities through joint and collaborative funding and planning. We have worked extensively with the CA to ensure the LSIP can add value and avoid replication with their initiatives and planning procedures and will remain doing so throughout project delivery.

Significant others looking to improve the skills landscape within the region include the National Composites Centre as part of the High Value Manufacturing Catapult, the West of England Aerospace Forum (WEAF), CITB and the Electrical Contractors Association (ECA), initiatives such as the Green Construction Advisory Panel, regional Constructing Excellence groups, Care South

¹⁰ Key Facts – Independent Training Providers v13 – 2021. (n.d.). <https://www.aelp.org.uk/resource-and-information-centre/resource-and-information-centre/research/key-facts-independent-training-providers-2021/>. In the public domain.

West and numerous others – we have attempted to incorporate input from and align outputs with these projects and initiatives where known and feasible.

Away from direct education and training provision, there are additional needs being met (or partially met) for both employers and learners, including via careers services, support for those further from the labour market, those with additional needs or barriers to education or work. We recognise the importance of integration and relevance but not focus primarily on potential unmet needs within these unless they have been explicitly referenced during our employer engagement activities; we do however recognise that labour market liquidity can be improved by improving opportunities for those under-employed or with the potential to return to work, including within those on universal credit, on in-work benefits and those whom are underemployed – there are existing regional and leading support projects funded by the Combined Authority (such as FutureBright, Adult Education Budget (AEB) funded pre-employment support and community provision), and via Local Authorities and partner agencies that are being utilised by those searching, underemployed and/or looking for additional financial security. Local Authorities will also be further involved in Stage 2 delivery as the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) third investment priority, 'People & Skills', progresses but also via some delivery of the national Multiply programme for numeracy skills and other initiatives.

Early stage careers interventions and awareness are themes that were highlighted by employers in most sectors and we expect further activity to highlight collaboration between employers and careers service providers; variously these services are provided via the Careers and Enterprise Company and Careers Hubs, directly via staff within school and FE careers provision, and is being integrated into ITP delivery, but with further analysis on potential improvements to be done under the proviso that apprentices are already employed with the funder of the apprenticeship, so there is some minor consternation about future expectations in this element of service delivery.

What changes are needed?

Employers are suggesting through the LSIP process both changes to content and mode of provision. There is a perception that core curriculum and national qualification framework courses are shaped solely by large employers and therefore do not wholly meet SME needs, without the accompanying and mitigating understanding of potential adaptations and adjustments via training providers, through discussion and ongoing effective relationships. This is alongside a lack of awareness of current shorter provision towards immediate and future needs in understanding technological shift or industrial trends, at least in part due to shorter term funding and delivery cycles that do not provide significant lead time to generate demand, as well as potentially competing funding streams such as those seen for regional and national Bootcamp programmes, which have to a degree put similar provision in competition with itself. There is some need against technological change – in particular attached to green skills and job – for stimulation of demand in some areas and ensuring awareness of commercial demand and viability, to allow employers to recognise current and future demand shifts.

Overwhelmingly employers prefer delivery methodologies that are flexible, rapid, and modular where feasible, but this must consider the demands of the learners too, at least some of whom may prefer to gain recognised qualifications whilst combining studying and work. Employers also need to better understand technical provision (T-Levels, Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) and for some Apprenticeships alongside shorter course provision) and the commitments they may need to make towards support, industry placements and experience; this needs to be tempered with greater awareness of benefit, helping employers to embed and take advantage of longer-term learners, and reducing barriers to engagement.

Alongside having unmet needs in the understanding of existing provision and requirements, employers need to feel that they can meaningfully shape provision and build relationships with

providers so that there is greater understanding and recognition of alignment with needs. Simultaneously, employers (smaller in particular) need further support to understanding current and future skills needs, as well as highlighting issues with bureaucracy and administration of longer term provision such as apprenticeships, and need to identify how longer term investment into skills needs as part of strategic growth planning will pay dividends across recruitment, retention and futureproofing, highlighting further potential needs for region-wide messaging about training and its impact on longer term retention and economic output versus short term commitment towards planning and integration into workforce development. The current reduced ability national to recruit fully trained employees requires a whole system shift towards workforce training, secession planning and development as core parts of businesses' growth strategies.

How will the LSIP drive change?

Section 3 outlines the longer-term direction of LSIP delivery, opportunities and the 'whole-system approach' that BW has identified as priority activities, collaborative opportunities and ongoing employer engagement. These will include a refinement of methodology and impact measurement, additional signposting and navigational support in response to identified needs and change, awareness raising and amplification of existing initiatives and pathways for support, galvanic events to increase employer understanding of needs, change, provision and regional support. Due to the wide sector alignments identified for Phase 1 delivery, there are now highlighted areas within our sectoral and thematic understanding where we have identified additional skills needs to delineate and clarify understanding. These areas (expanded in section 2 and the priority findings documentation) will be embedded and highlighted in stage 2 delivery to ensure further granularity of skills needs and appropriate provisional and systemic responses. Stage 2 will continue work in mapping the wider skills and employer support system, to improve signposting, amplify existing initiatives of benefit to employers and identify gaps in both provision and support. The Combined Authority Skills Connect service, which has mapped the skills system and provision, will deliver a system wide signposting service and form a key part of Stage 2.



Part Two: Taking the LSIP Forward.

West of England Local Skills
Improvement Plan Report

Part 2: Taking the LSIP Forward

2.1 Summary

This section outlines both sectoral and thematic reported needs and summarises the findings reported to us by employers in Phase 1 delivery. This is an illustrative snapshot of the comprehensive ‘Priority Findings’ documentation¹¹ for the West of England region which can be found [here](#). We continue to welcome discussion of these as work progresses into Stage 2 delivery and invite any and all employers, providers and stakeholders to get in touch via lsip@businesswest.co.uk

As a summary of the core, in-depth engagement methodology for the West of England region, Business West completed a total of 238 engagements specifically for this region, totalling approximately 419 hours of direct engagement time. This was via 11 held events and 4 arranged by others with a direct research methodology for a total of 183 attendees, 50 interviews and 3 wider skills system discussions. Further breakdown of these activities, including sectoral alignment is within Annex B. Approximately 31% of engaged employers were with existing Business West members within the West of England LSIP, with almost 69% undertaken with new contacts and non- member employers.

2.2 Priority Findings Process

To assist with the ‘Duty to Respond’ and the Accountability Statement processes for FE providers, we adopted a structured approach to the LSIP’s priority findings release, publishing separate documents per sector. Each document was segmented as follows:

- ◀ Summative Labour Market Intelligence (LMI)
- ◀ Analysis of future regional employment needs within the sector.
- ◀ Summative analysis of top occupational priorities, shortages and opportunities
- ◀ Primary LSIP research via employer engagement, categorised into:
 - ◀ Core, soft and transferable skills needs.
 - ◀ Core digital skills needs.
 - ◀ Sector specific and technological change skills needs (including ‘digitalisation’).
 - ◀ Skills needs attached to the UK’s Net Zero strategy, decarbonisation and sustainability.

We also incorporated a table outlining additional systemic or labour market needs highlighted through research that was not directly linked to skills needs but was frequently enough reported to ensure we included in this process. We delineated primary findings through ‘needs statements’ across different categories within the labour and learner markets, from younger and/or inexperienced starters through to experienced workers with needs for upskilling, reskilling, awareness and understanding, particularly towards future need and change. Each sector specific document has been published on Business West’s website and made available to providers and stakeholders at the end of March 2023. We have held feedback sessions and welcoming feedback

¹¹ *Business West Local Skills Improvement Plan Priority Findings*. (2023, April 12). Business West. <https://www.businesswest.co.uk/business-west-local-skills-improvement-plan-priority-findings>. In the public domain.

since release, to ensure these are living documents and continue to be refined. These documents are contained within appendices and are in further depth than the summary here.

2.3 Action and Response from Providers

Providers have been responsible for mapping current and planned future provision against needs outlined within Priority Findings documents and identifying provision gaps within the LSIP region where there is likely to be a deficit of supply against anticipated demand. In terms of embedding and taking forward the findings of the LSIP, providers have been reflecting these in their Accountability Statements for provision commencing September 2023 onwards and will turn their focus towards implementation over the next few years. The Annual LSIP Report refresh will continue to shape providers responses to identified skills needs and priorities within the LSIP process. We are also aware of - and involved in - other elements of response to the LSIP findings, including via Ofsted Enhanced Inspections (where applicable), ongoing liaison with other training providers, and where requested discussion of strategic and direct curriculum planning.

The Local Skills Improvement Fund¹² (LSIF, at time of writing guidance not yet released) is intended as a direct response mechanism to LSIP priority findings and will be replacing the Strategic Development Fund. Business West commits to supporting and enhancing the successful collaborative application and ensuring full integration of this project's aims within LSIP Stage 2, without side lining other provision and support of non-included providers.

2.4 What do employers want?

2.4.1 System, navigation, awareness

Both our LMI research and business engagement activities have been focussed on division of stated needs statements, subdivided by areas of the workforce (current and future). We have consistently been mindful of, and clearly communicating limitations to our intelligence and areas where there are gaps in data.

We have mapped our findings to the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education occupational pathways where possible as the most comprehensive and easily understood terminology for both employers and training providers to relate to roles and functions within the labour market and expect to continue to do so throughout Stage 2. We considered employees needs at different points within their working lives - those already with extensive experience within the sector, career changers, and new entrants from Post-16 Education and Training.

To make sure our findings are sufficiently robust and reflective of the sector as a whole, we only incorporated needs statements where they met an evidence threshold (and removed outlying needs for further clarification and investigation in future activities), or where they align with national findings and/or regional LMI.

2.4.2 Existing provision

Employers consistently made broad systemic points about their needs and the changes that they need to retain economic viability and grow to meet future needs. Provision should break down the barriers that currently exists between industry and teaching (e.g., terms and conditions which make it difficult to recruit teachers with relevant recent experience especially in the sectors where technological developments continue at pace). Courses (where possible) need flexibility of content and delivery, modular options, responsive to changes and reflective to drive uptake.

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/applying-for-funding-from-the-local-skills-improvement-fund>. In the public domain.

In many cases our engagement activities with employers identified significant gaps in awareness of local existing provision, and most employers have significant needs for information, advice and guidance about suitability and differences in qualifications and courses in order to both identify best solutions to needs and to frame their engagement in the LSIP appropriately longer term; both apprenticeships and T-Levels have only partial understanding within the region's employers as to commitment, need and suitability for recruitment and training.

2.4.3 New provision

Within our prioritised findings we have suggested changes in relation to existing provision (divided between Post-16 technical curriculum and other non-technical content e.g., work readiness of learners by the end of their course) and the needs for new provision. Employers overwhelmingly request flexible, modular and rapid provisional responses to needs, with longer term and core curriculum course often utilised primarily for specific roles where prior work has been undertaken in partnership with providers to embed understanding of suitability and employer support within the process. A significant proportion of employer's reported needs aligns with shorter course delivery, for initial understanding or investigation of sectoral or technological change, to fill gaps within existing workforces and to upskill and reskill employees towards the future.

2.4.4 Next steps

We expect these themes and findings to be reflected within accountability and strategic documentation from FE providers, and Business West are committed to review, collaborate and support to ensure that the LSIP can be meaningfully integrated into regional responses to employer's needs. We outline within each section some areas where we expect to focus Stage 2 research on deep dives and other work, but this will be a dynamic model that can evolve as work develops. We will continue with our core methodology of research via wide-spectrum analysis of business expectations of change and need alongside incorporating in-depth qualitative research into the areas that require further delineation and granular understanding.

2.5 Core, Soft and Transferable Skills (Critical Workplace Skills)

Soft and transferable skills are still considered essential across all sectors and most roles – upon which technical needs specific to a sector can be learnt and embedded, and as a gateway towards opening potential pathways within careers and organisations. Common themes came up repeatedly across all sectors:

- ◀ Communication across all categories: verbal (especially face to face for younger cohorts), written, digital, and both internal and external modal shifts. Some indicators of communication 'anxiety' to be addressed in new entrants to the workforce, against preliminary observations of the impact of the pandemic on learner needs and expectations.
- ◀ Work readiness of younger staff members and new entrants, realistic expectations of the workplace and roles within employers, motivation and work ethic.
- ◀ Leadership potential and behaviours, supervision and management of people and projects/workstreams.
- ◀ Administration and organisational skills including time management.
- ◀ Problem solving, critical thinking, and how individual roles impact on outcomes of the whole organisation.
- ◀ Succession planning and workforce development (which has been brought closer to the fore by Brexit, covid and the resultant tight labour market).

- ◀ Resilience, especially where hybrid and remote working is the norm.

Some sector specific needs/alignments were identified outside of this, see below sections for sector specificity alongside the prioritised findings documents within Annex B.

Potential Deep dive topics for Stage 2 LSIP delivery

- ◀ “The Disconnect”: Employer expectations and assumptions of soft skills and ability from new entrants to workforces.
- ◀ Project Management and Leadership as critical work functions

2.6 Core Digital Skills

Businesses have reported significant additional support and training needs in effective utilisation of generic and specialist digital systems for core office and work requirements. Some of these are attached to generic work functions carried out by almost all roles (email, data recording and analysis, planning and administrative functions) and some are more industry and role specific. Employers are both looking for direct solutions via provision and support to effectively manage rollout and utilisation. Common themes across sectors include:

- ◀ Email and communication platforms, including calendar management (Microsoft Office etc).
- ◀ Communication via digital modes – effectiveness and expectation in digital comms.
- ◀ Infrastructure for hybridised and virtual work, including platforms such as Microsoft Teams - collaboration, communication, efficiency, standardisation of usage, rollout.
- ◀ CRM/CMS (Internal data usage in general outdated – those with digital client facing systems/support can often use as a USP).
- ◀ Generic office functions for data and usage (including Excel and databases).
- ◀ Some social media/marketing expectations across core functions undertaken by new employees (such as those within administrative and business roles).
- ◀ There is a disconnect in employer expectations with younger new entrants to the workforce and their experience and ability to use core office platforms – having grown up with online social activities and digital pastimes does not necessarily translate to business specific digital skills.

There are further sector-specific interventions and needs within all sectoral findings documents, including both re-prioritisations and additional core sectoral digital needs and alignments.

Potential Deep dive topic for Stage 2 LSIP delivery

- ◀ Effective Internal Rollout of Digital Systems

2.7 Alignment to the UK’s Net Zero Strategy, Decarbonisation, Sustainability and Climate Change – Skills Needs

This theme is key to the long-term sustainability of the wider economy but the major issue across all sectors is that the specifics of the implications are undefined, and demand can come in waves rather than in a more predictable growth pattern and is low at present. There is an element of market failure and raising demand from the perspective of employers – turning demand signals into economic certainty for business investment is a high priority to improve uptake of provision.

Major investment and planning currently focussed around regulatory/legislation changes (which are often a response to crunch events such as the hike in gas prices following the war in Ukraine) and/or large procurement decisions within major contractors. Cash flow and responding to other business risks often takes precedence.

Across all sectors (short course) management training on what the implications for their sector, organisation and role would help pick up key themes, such as:

- ◀ Calculations and monitoring of carbon budgets, lifecycle assessments, whole life concept including disposal.
- ◀ Understanding funding for Net Zero, including Green Finance, cost benefit analyses (including 'low hanging fruit'), measurement of footprints, Return on Investment (ROI).
- ◀ Regulatory/ legislative frameworks and expected changes, required timescales for action, clear direction of travel, including carbon offsetting.
- ◀ Waste and resources management: Pollution, waste and plastics on sites/in delivery.
- ◀ Communicating sustainability and change - internally for success and externally for benefit, understanding and planning for changing end consumer demand.

Similarly, to soft skills and core digital skills, there are a number of areas within each sectoral document outlining specific technological needs and alignments outside of these more universal reported needs, with identified 'deep dive' topics within each sector.

2.8 Sector 1: Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering

Labour Market Intelligence summary

Manufacturing and Engineering roles provide 6% of total employment within the West of England region¹³, but the sector nationally is in decline both in economic value and employment recently including a significant loss of experienced workers. Manufacturing delivers around 10% of the UK's GVA nationally and 46% of the nation's exports (MAKE UK 2019) but is in decline in comparison with competitor nations. Research conducted since 2019 finds manufacturing experiencing the highest increase in labour market tightening since Q4 2019, at over 350% increase¹⁴.

The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) estimates that the Manufacturing sector in the West of England area will require 16,390 replacement jobs as the existing workforce moves into retirement or leaves the sector for alternative employment opportunities elsewhere by 2035. This contrasts with a net fall in positions within the sector as roles are deleted, of 5,320 FTE – or 13% of 2020's estimated workforce of 41,300.

Priority Needs

Priority needs are from both awareness and understanding against workforce shortages and shortage occupations via national data research, and primary business engagement employer reported skills needs.

Shortages within occupations as identified nationally with suggested route to attract new workers to sector.

¹³ *Manufacturing the Future Workforce Report – HVMC*. (2022, July 14). HVMC. <https://hvm.catapult.org.uk/resource-hub/annual-reviews/manufacturing-the-future-workforce/>. In the public domain.

¹⁴ COVID Jobs Research UK. (2023, March 7). *Market Tightness by Industry Post-COVID – COVID Jobs Research UK*. <https://covidjobsresearch.co.uk/market-tightness-by-industry-post-covid/>. In the public domain.

Apprenticeships/Full time 16-19 study programmes include: Production and entry level roles; Machinists, fitters, operatives, Data analysts, Electrical engineers, T-Levels Higher Apprenticeships, and Full time and part time HE: Mechanical Engineers.

Sector Specific and technological skills

- ◀ Design Engineering requirements across wider roles: CDT, technical drawing, CAD
- ◀ Wider need for understanding of cloud storage, digitisation, data and analytics, turning data into intelligence.
- ◀ Needs for understanding coding/software development becoming wider across Engineering roles – python in particular, computer modelling.
- ◀ Business skills within Engineering roles: sales, communications, ‘financial viability in my role’.
- ◀ Project management and research and development through to commercialisation of new products.
- ◀ Understanding project flow and efficiencies from R&D stages through prototyping, build, QA and certification.
- ◀ Lean manufacturing and quality improvement, design thinking and methodologies
- ◀ Design Engineering – need for understanding across roles, more design requirements in more Engineering and Manufacturing roles, 3D printing.
- ◀ Automation and AI robotics, cobotics gaining in wider awareness and adoption.

Net Zero, Decarbonisation and Sustainability specific needs:

Electrification as a core sectoral change (and needs attached to high voltages, Health & Safety, batteries and storage, codes and standards) gas systems and replacements.

Priority areas for Stage 2

- ◀ CAD, Digital and Design Engineering
- ◀ Data
- ◀ Industry 4.0
- ◀ Net Zero theme: Engineering for the Energy Transition

2.9 Sector 2: Construction

Labour Market Intelligence summary

In the West of England region, the Construction sector currently employs 27,855 workers and adds £6.5 bn to the sub-regional GVA.¹⁵ Employment in Construction is predicted to grow at a rate of 1.6% per year in the period of 2020 – 2036, attaining a net increase of 14,000 jobs.¹⁶

¹⁵ *West of England Labour Market Summary*, by West of England Combined Authority, 2023 ([Microsoft Power BI](#)). In the public domain.

¹⁶ West of England Combined Authority, *Horizon Scanning: Post-16 Education and Skills Infrastructure*; and West of England Combined Authority *Labour Market Summary 2023* (<https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Horizon-Scanning-Post-16-Education-and-Skills-Infrastructure.pdf>). In the public domain.

73% of Construction sector firms surveyed faced difficulties in finding skilled manual or technical workers, and this represents demographic shifts as well as the UK's exit from the European Union given the heavy reliance on foreign workers. The Office for National Statistics reported a 42 per cent fall in the number of EU nationals working in UK Construction between 2017 and the end of 2020, with Construction sector vacancies peaking in Q3 2022 at around 50,000 and remaining higher than any period prior to the first half of 2021 (regional equivalent data unknown). The CITB also estimates around 1 million are expected to retire from the sector in the next decade¹⁷.

Priority Needs

Priority needs are from both awareness and understanding against workforce shortages and shortage occupations via national data research, and primary business engagement employer reported skills needs.

Shortages within occupations as identified nationally with suggested route to attract new workers to sector.

Apprenticeships, T-Levels Full time 16 to 19 study programmes:

- ◀ Woods trades (Joiners/Carpenters etc.) and interior fit out.
- ◀ Electrical trades
- ◀ Bricklayers
- ◀ Surveyors
- ◀ Plumbers

L2 Boot Camps/AEB programmes including CSCS card:

- ◀ Groundworkers/labourers / plant operatives

Sector Specific and technological skills

- ◀ Modular and offsite Construction for portable and static sites.
- ◀ Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) are all expected to be understood as principles/basics to enable future adoption as required. Energy assessors, as the use of Energy Performance Certificates increases.
- ◀ Retrofit coordinators will be essential to ensure quality installation across different systems.
- ◀ Project managers with an understanding of the retrofit process.
- ◀ Insulation installers. Existing installers will need to be upskilled if minimum qualifications are set in PAS2035 for building retrofit.
- ◀ Plumbing and Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) and its place within fabric first/performance.
- ◀ Heat pump installers. Starting by upskilling existing Gas Safe engineers, existing training needs to be improved and standardised.

¹⁷ UK Job Vacancies (thousands) – Construction – Office for National Statistics. (2023, May 15). <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/timeseries/jp9l/une>. In the public domain.

- ◀ Expected changes to Gas certification and skills, needs for existing workforce to reskill as legislation impacts, timescales awareness of need.

Net Zero sector specific:

Insulation of existing buildings and structures with focus on retrofit of external (solid) walls and internal modifications.

Planning, Installation and commissioning of solar (PV and heating) including project management of larger scale facilities.

Alignment of skills needs with commercial viability - return on investment, payback period, sustainability 'basics' within built environment.

Priority areas for Stage 2 (deep dives)

- ◀ Fabric First Efficiency
- ◀ Building Regulations and Change (Building Standards, Legislation)
- ◀ **Net Zero theme: Retrofit and Decarbonisation**
- ◀ **Net Zero theme: Sustainable Building Techniques and Modern Methods of Construction**

2.10 Sector 3: Health and Care

Labour Market Intelligence summary

Health and Care is one of the sectors predicted to experience a high level of growth due to a set of demographic changes taking place in the UK and other Western economies. Gross Value Added (GVA) for Human Health and Social Activities in the West of England region is likely around £2.25 billion (of UK total of £137.7 billion) in 2022, given the region makes up around 1.6% of the total UK population.

For the West of England region, the 'Human Health and Social Work Activities' industry section is reported to include approximately 1,640 employers, employing over 90,000 people. Of these, 42,600 are within hospital activities and 13,195 within residential care activities¹⁸.

The NHS trust staffing gap for England is currently 110,000 Full Time Equivalent, and this gap is likely to grow substantially by 2030, with unfilled roles projected to increase to 156,000 FTE by 2030/31 in NHS Hospital and Community Health alone, approximately 9% of projected demand (Health Foundation). During 2021-22, the number of vacant posts in Adult Social Care increased by 52%; this is the highest rate ever recorded. West of England specific figures are unknown, but the NHS Vacancy Statistics Portal suggests that there are currently 9,400 vacancies in the South West, producing a vacancy rate of almost 7.2%¹⁹.

¹⁸ *West of England Labour Market Summary*, by West of England Combined Authority, 2023 ([Microsoft Power BI](#)). In the public domain.

¹⁹ *NHS Vacancy Statistics (and previous NHS Vacancies Survey) - NHS Digital*. (n.d.). NHS Digital. <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/nhs-vacancies-survey>

According to forecasts carried out by Skills for Care, if the adult social care workforce grows proportionally to the projected number of people aged 65 and over in the population, then a 27% increase (480,000 new posts) will be required in England by 2035 in care roles.²⁰

Businesses in the sector increased by 25% in the period of 2016-2019²¹, while employment in Health and Social Care is predicted to grow at a rate of 0.9% year-on-year in the period of 2020 – 2036, attaining a net increase of 10,200 jobs on top of the 59,700 expected positions to cover replacement demand.²²

Priority Needs (awareness and understanding against workforce)

Priority needs are from both awareness and understanding against workforce shortages and shortage occupations via national data research, and primary business engagement employer reported skills needs.

Shortages within occupations as identified nationally with suggested route to attract new workers to sector.

Adult recruitment and training programmes. (AEB/Bootcamp funded):

- ◀ Care Workers (within residential, nursing or other specific sites)
- ◀ Home Carers / domiciliary care

Apprenticeships (e.g., Healthcare Support Worker L2/ Senior L3, Nursing Associate L5 Healthcare Asst Practitioner L5)

- ◀ Nursing and midwifery

Sector Specific and Technological Skills

There's significant scope and efficiencies within the sector to be found using telecare services, other forms of remote service provision including assessment (incorporating sensors, Virtual Reality, machine learning and Artificial Intelligence) to reduce the frequency of short visits, freeing up care staff for deeper and more meaningful visits to clients to support emotional wellbeing.

Potential use of digital services, data analytics and data science, including care management systems and systems integrations (including incorporation of consumer Health tech and wearables as likely trend) to manage case work and store data securely. Better understanding of data including visualisation, GDPR and use of databases/CRM systems.

Both of the above particularly relevant for discharge (e.g., clinical setting to home) services, reablement and Integrated care systems.

- ◀ Infection control knowledge and its application to clinical and non-clinical settings.

²⁰ *The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England. (n.d.).* <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/adult-social-care-workforce-data/Workforce-intelligence/publications/national-information/The-state-of-the-adult-social-care-sector-and-workforce-in-England.aspx>. In the public domain.

²¹ *West of England Combined Authority Local industrial strategy, 2023* <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/about-us/our-strategy/local-industrial-strategy/>. In the public domain.

²² *West of England Combined Authority, Employment and Skills Plan, 2019,* <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/West-of-England-Employment-and-Skills-Plan-July-FINAL.pdf>. In the public domain.

- ▶ Assistive technologies and Cobotic/lifting
- ▶ Chatbots and customer service
- ▶ Bloodwork, tests and detections
- ▶ Preventative medicine

Net Zero sector specific:

Waste reduction and management especially in relation to Single Use Plastic and food.

Carbon footprint – measurement and targeting reductions especially in easier business areas.

Virtual and online service provision as sustainable options to offset journey times and mileage.

Priority Areas for Stage 2 (deep dives)

- ▶ Successful Tech and Digital Adoption (In Health and Social Care)
- ▶ Discharge, reablement and Integrated Care
- ▶ Home Care
- ▶ **Net Zero theme: Decarbonising estates and facilities**
- ▶ **Net Zero theme: Sustainable service delivery and improving efficiency.**

2.11 Sector 4: Creative

Labour Market Intelligence summary

Creative Industries has been one of the fastest growing sectors in the UK for the past decade and the sector's ability to combine creativity and technology is a significant strength in terms of current provision and future growth potential. Bristol is one of only 2 cities outside London which feature in the top 10 for both Creative and high-tech clusters²³. Creative Industries nationally account for around 2.37 million jobs, including 663,000 self-employed roles; around 7% of all UK jobs²⁴.

In a Creative UK report, Oxford Economics forecasted that the sector could recover faster than the UK economy by 2025 with a projected growth of over 26% and contributing £132.1 billion in GVA to the economy. The predictions drew parallel to the fact that the sector was growing at a rate of four times the UK average for economic growth prior to the pandemic.

In the West of England LEP region, there are more than 6000 SMEs within the sector with over 190 production companies and an estimated GVA contribution in 2017 of £5.1 billion from Creative and cultural industries.²¹ In 2022, the West of England Combined Authority reported in that the Cultural, Digital and Creative Industries employed 50,000 in the region, across almost 7,000 businesses²².

The sector can be broken down according to data from the 2021 ONS Census there were:

²³ West of England Local Industrial Strategy by Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, Professor Steve West and Tim Bowles (2022, September 27). GOV.UK. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/west-of-england-local-industrial-strategy/west-of-england-local-industrial-strategy>. In the public domain.

²⁴ UK has almost 2.3m creative industries jobs – official data – The Creative Industries. (n.d.). <https://www.thecreativeindustries.co.uk/facts-figures/uk-has-almost-2-3m-creative-industries-jobs-official-data>. In the public domain.

- ◀ 4,165 employees working in Motion Picture, video and television production, sound recording and music publishing activities.
- ◀ 1,210 employees working in Programming and broadcasting activities.
- ◀ 6,265 employees working in Creative, arts and entertainment activities, and
- ◀ 1,468 employees working in Libraries, archives, museums and other cultural activities²⁵.

Some roles nationally are in short supply, with the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) recommending the additional inclusion of a wide range of roles in the Shortage Occupation List for international recruitment, including programmers, web design and development roles and artistic roles (2019).^{26,27}

Priority Needs

Priority needs are from both awareness and understanding against workforce shortages and shortage occupations via national data research, and primary business engagement employer reported skills needs.

Shortages within occupations as identified nationally with suggested route to attract new workers to sector.

Apprenticeships, Full time 16 to 19, T-levels subject to national rollout:

- ◀ Programmers, software developers
- ◀ Marketing, managers and professional roles
- ◀ Authors, Writers and Translators
- ◀ Graphic Designers
- ◀ New emerging sub sector of 'Createch' (creative technology) professionals

Sector Specific and technological skills

- ◀ AR/VR, Virtual Production and wider use of 'green screen' technologies
- ◀ Videography, motion graphics, animation and editing (including framing principles)
- ◀ Technological awareness: Drone, Lidar and 3D design.
- ◀ Coding, software engineering (esp. python), html
- ◀ AI both as a product and a tool
- ◀ Cloud development

²⁵ Industry – Office for National Statistics. (2022, December 8).

https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/TSO60/editions/2021/versions/2?showAll=industry_current_88a#industry_current_88a. In the public domain.

²⁶ Immigration, U. V. A. (2023). Skilled Worker visa: shortage occupations. GOV.UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-shortage-occupations/skilled-worker-visa-shortage-occupations>. In the public domain.

²⁷ Skills, Talent and Diversity in the Creative Industries Evidence Review 2019/01, by the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, 2019 ([PEC-Evidence-synthesis-scoping_Work-Foundation-FINAL.pdf \(lancaster.ac.uk\)](#)). In the public domain.

- ◀ Various sub-sets of Computer Aided Design (CAD) including graphic design, graphic interfaces and UX
- ◀ Website basics inc. maintenance
- ◀ Search engine optimisation (SEO), Google Ads, social media and marketing
- ◀ Cloud and collaborative development including file sharing data protection and security
- ◀ Design software such as Adobe suite, Canva, CAD (including Autodesk and fusion360), product design elements.
- ◀ Copy and professional writing (inc. grammar)
- ◀ Data analytics, data services, data visualisation

Net Zero sector specific:

- ◀ Environmentalism in consumer demand
- ◀ Data storage

Priority Areas for Stage 2 (deep dives)

- ◀ Immersive Technologies (Writing, Production)
- ◀ Software and Coding
- ◀ Marketing, PR, Comms
- ◀ **Net Zero theme: Sustainable Production**



Part Three: Delivering the LSIP Priorities.

West of England Local Skills
Improvement Plan Report



Part 3: Delivering the LSIP Priorities

3.1 Summary

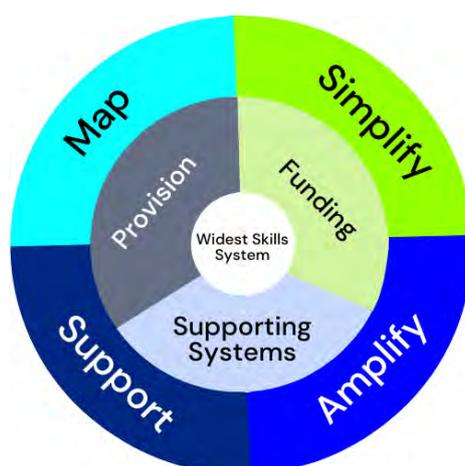
The principles of longer-term LSIP delivery and a roadmap for change for the West of England Local Skills Improvement Plan can be delineated into three areas for future work and refinement:

- ◀ Research and Engagement
- ◀ Addressing Systemic Needs
- and
- ◀ Collaborative Messaging

The areas employers can benefit from integration into the skills system are across access to and understanding of provision, understanding funding and financial arrangements, and understanding available support to identify, map and navigate solutions to labour market challenges. This is alongside the provision of support for mutual benefit into the skills system, such as via industry placements, guest sessions for learners and steering and guidance for providers and affiliated projects and initiatives.

The LSIP through its core activities and wider delivery (and impact and partnership with others, including through support of Skills Connect) can meaningfully support and assist in the widest possible skills system for the benefit of employers, through mapping, supporting, amplifying and simplifying for employers:

- ◀ Understanding employers' needs (research content and engagement methodologies).
- ◀ Addressing systemic issues and needs (map, simplify, amplify and support).
- ◀ Clear replicable messaging based on evidence, peer recommendation and a 'one message many voices' methodology across several partners and stakeholders utilising collaborative action.



The LSIP will have most potential impact when all identified elements of need are incorporated into intended existing and new response and direct delivery as well as recognised across the widest possible skills and employer support systems regionally. We recognise that across the region, the widest skills system (incorporating business support, careers support, skills support, Jobcentre provision, HEIs, business intelligence and other elements) is complex and therefore we are not putting forward suggestions for potential support gaps and additional service provision specifically within this roadmap (such as the suggested activities outline in Stage 2 guidance, to be made publicly available June 2023); we commit to working with the Combined Authority – in

particular through Skills Connect – supporting the mapping of these existing supporting mechanisms, projects and partners to attempt to delineate longer term potential gaps in the supporting system during the initial period of Stage 2. We believe there is more value at this stage in amplifying existing initiatives, such as WTPN’s apprenticeship support scheme and apprenticeship levy transfer programme (funded by the Combined Authority) and existing initiatives via the Growth Hubs, Local Authorities and employer encounters as per the national Careers & Enterprise Company initiatives and supporting programmes.



Business West held ‘Developing a Regional Roadmap’ sessions for each LS IP region, to ensure we could identify existing initiatives and tailored interventions for each region, dependant on existing provision, support and understanding of the system, with input from businesses, training providers and stakeholders (see Annex B for further information). We divided these facilitated sessions into three areas for incorporation into Stage 2 delivery, summarised as follows:

Collaboration and Communication

- ◀ Visibility of the LSIP and its impact is key to employers for engagement and change.
- ◀ The LSIP team should encourage further collaborative action and alignment between providers, employers and stakeholders.
- ◀ Core messaging should be on a ‘You Said We Did’ principle, with a greater focus on case studies and trailblazer and SDF responses.
- ◀ Employers recognise the benefits of earlier interventions within careers understanding, and we should therefore incorporate further involvement and awareness of CEIAG opportunities and integration.
- ◀ All stakeholders need to develop a region-wide plan for greater signposting and a principle of joined-up navigation in a multi-agency approach: No wrong front door to the right information and signposting.

LSIP Governance

- ◀ Utilise the existing Skills Advisory Panel within the Combined Authority but ensure any Terms of Reference explicitly outline LSIP aims and objectives.
- ◀ Ensure the LSIP utilises existing understanding, expertise and mechanisms, and adds to their value rather than the creation of new and competing governance.

Measuring Success and Impact

- ◀ There is recognition that significant measurement will come via existing Internal project metrics, alongside recording new and signposted engagement with the skills sector more widely and consistently (across stakeholders).
- ◀ We need to ensure we can record and identify longer term change.
- ◀ Metrics should attempt to incorporate both supply and demand for skills (providers and employers).
- ◀ There will need to be analysis of existing baseline data, to ensure that the LSIP can see what has changed, potentially in comparison to other regions, but it will be hard to delineate as both the wider system and economy change. This should be incorporated into external governance during Stage 2 planning.

Business West will – as expected in the guidance and designation process – produce annual progress reports during Stage 2 for release by June 2024 and June 2025, outlining how the system has been changed, including across navigation, support and provision, as well as employer perception. As this report is limited in pages, we will release documentation similar to the Phase 1 Priority Findings and separately to this annual refresh. We will review both direct response through provision, uptake and awareness and identify further targeted activities to improve awareness, access to and uptake of provision, ensuring lessons learnt are shared with all partners and embedding collaborative response into regional skills planning.

A key principle in successfully addressing systemic needs is the principle of ‘no front wrong door’ in respect to advisory information given to employers against identified and potential needs, but this will require greater stakeholder understanding of supporting bodies, simplification of the narrative attached to the skills system, work to address employer awareness of both support and provision and shared consistent messaging from primary partners. Time will be allocated in partnership with others to mapping employer’s existing routes to support, current awareness and potential collaborative solutions to improve employers access to best possible responses for identified needs, with the Skills Connect portal able to act as the ‘system’ to support signposting, identification and take up of the most relevant skills support and provision.

The West of England Combined Authority – in tandem with but separate to and not wholly influenced by the LSIP have undertaken a project to establish a new Skills Needs Analysis and Response portal, Skills Connect. This is not yet live but expected imminently. Whilst the primary intended audience for this platform is individual employers and learners, the repercussions for employers investigating training and provision towards skills gaps is clear and therefore this platform will receive ongoing support via the LSIP delivery body and other partners as a primary route for understanding existing regional provision. Critically, Business West (as ERB for the LSIP), will be an integral part of the Skills Connect governance via the Skills Advisory Panel (SAP). This will ensure that key findings, priorities and actions coming from the LSIP are picked up and addressed through the ‘system’ via Skills Connect.

Partnership and collaboration in action and narrative are key in assisting employers to engage with the skill system, from investigation through diagnosis to receipt of solution: better collaborative responses from all potential points of contact to simplify an employer’s journey are essential and we will work with the Combined Authority, Local Authorities and other supporting bodies to develop a primary process for iterative improvement that puts employer needs at the heart of suggested action via a multi-agency approach. If it is feasible to identify and agree primary routes to market and messages, we will then break down this approach into areas appropriate for diagnostic/analytical support, solutions for longer provisional response, solutions for shorter provisional response, and business support/navigation/brokerage options and opportunities.

Employers need to participate in the system more actively, both in terms of change of awareness, perception and uptake and also in providing support and input via providers towards learners needs. We will amplify and encourage uptake of opportunities, existing programmes and initiatives

such as via WTPN's apprenticeship support programme for mutual benefit, encourage greater aggregation of demand and awareness of support required for learners via workplace awareness, opportunities, experience and placements. We will boost employers' ability to analyse and identify needs, partially through internal resource and skills gap analysis, partially through raising understanding of sectoral change, best practise and opportunity attached to skills and provision.

Providers are integrated into the LSIP system explicitly via the current response mechanisms; the new Annual Accountability Statements, which will show how FE providers are responding to both National Skills Priorities and directly to the LSIP priorities, the inclusion of Skills within enhanced Ofsted inspections, and potentially directly and indirectly through both curriculum planning and strategic planning documentation. We expect the LSIP will be further incorporated into regional planning and procurement processes, such as the regional Employment and Skills Plan Action Plans produced by the Combined Authority. We have worked closely with providers through Phase 1 delivery and will undertake further activity to ensure Business West continues to be seen as a trusted partner, critical friend and employer engagement asset and can be integrated into existing engagement activities alongside providing opportunities to work collaboratively.

We recognise that more work can be done with a wider variety of stakeholders representing both the skills system and employer support. We intend to integrate further communication and partnership with stakeholders during planning and implementation of Stage 2, highlighting the benefits of our integration and support of existing initiatives within employer engagement, discussion of 'front door' activities into and from LSIP engagement for employer benefit, shared messaging to employer audiences, increased awareness of needs identification and support and alignment with regional imperatives. These will be integrated into the external governance mechanisms intended via the Skills Advisory Panel and wider strategic skills planning processes, ensuring maximum replicability and alignment of region-wide activities.

Business West will help in the coordination of shared messaging and region-wide response coordination, leading by example where possible by engaging directly with the skills system and providing industry placements for technical education learners. As an Accredited Chamber of Commerce, we have access to a significant proportion of the employer audience in the region and we recognise the strength in our impartiality and representation. We endeavour to maintain and improve our outstanding relationships with a wide spectrum of stakeholders and providers.

For region-wide strategic planning the key document for the West of England region will be the refreshed Employment and Skills Plan, due imminently from the Combined Authority; this document ensures that strategic direction, priorities, and business needs from within the Local Industrial Strategy (and the LSIP findings) are replicated for skills needs and have clear intended direction for planning purposes, including within procurement of education and training via regional funding. We are maintaining conversation with the appropriate contacts within the Combined Authority and recognise the benefit of the ongoing excellent working relationship we have with them for the betterment of the region. There is a declared intention to ensure the LSIP and the ESP align and work comprehensively together during Stage 2, including a strategic and critical alignment of Skills Connect, ESP and LSIP governance and priorities via the SAP.

3.2 Research and Engagement

A number of expected areas of deep dive and refinement have been outlined in section 2; areas that have been highlighted in the initial phase but require further investigation and will yield more targeted intelligence to help shape responses from providers towards employers' needs. These subjects will allow us to continue to engage those employers previously engaged and those still to engage. We will incorporate these elements into our interview narrative, tailored towards those previously engaged as areas for further analysis, and adapt the existing interview script and prompts to incorporate more questioning routes directly related to these needs. We will also be

focussing our events outputs onto these areas to help shape response from providers, continuing the LSIP's agile and open methodology.

An in-depth breakdown of LSIP engagements and activities is within Annex B, but in summary Business West held 238 in-depth engagements relevant to the West of England region totalling approximately 419 hours of direct engagement time (with some of these engagements included in more than one region, due to the employer's geographic representation or potentially multiple locations, economic activity, or workforce or learner activity – these were recorded as they were reported for the engagement by the employer). Engagement with SMEs remains more difficult than larger employers, with capacity reportedly at low levels due to both the labour market liquidity and the cost-of-living crisis compounding availability – this is similar to the trailblazer activity, which was more pandemic driven – this time is more aligned with the energy crisis, cost of living and labour market driven shortages in staffing. We believe some lead time in raising awareness (and potential impact) of the LSIP will ensure that Stage 2 Activities have further reach and expect greater numbers of engagements across Stage 2, especially in SME audiences who are the priority. We will undertake greater exploration of partnership routes to market and collaborative opportunities, including greater incorporation into internal and external Chamber activities and via partners, other ERBs and education and training providers.

We will refine and further develop our lighter touch modes of research and engagement (whilst still allowing them to be one point of access to further engagement) to be most accessible to employers with less capacity. We intend on producing new surveying methods and content, likely with some outputs in partnership with other sectoral ERBs and stakeholders, as well as with FE colleges and other training providers.

Our Phase 1 research content was both a continuation of the successful trailblazer narrative and a further sector-specific prompted conversation shaped with input from stakeholders and existing research and understanding, both within Business West and via external routes. We will work where possible with others with sectoral understanding to ensure additional questioning routes align with widest possible needs for understanding and to investigate prioritisation and change within sectors.

We have outlined in intended deep dive activity for Stage 2 further explicit and additional foci attached to green jobs, green skills and the integration of these into core curriculum delivery, alongside short modular training provision towards recognised sectoral needs for upskilling and reskilling. We will continue activities attached to increasing employer demand and awareness of provision, and ensure maximum alignment with skills planning, highlighting and amplifying legislative change, benefits, end-consumer needs and expected timescales for change,

A significant proportion of both our employer and stakeholder engagement events were held in partnership with others, primarily FE colleges, yielding good buy-in at both strategic and curricula levels (increasing access to employers unengaged by Business West routes), and we intend on expanding and continuing this method of events delivery. We will incorporate more overt and explicit requests for partnership, opportunities and dual-branded events into Stage 2 delivery to align activities.

3.3 Addressing Systemic Needs

Mapping the system and gaps: Although in-depth research has been done by Business West (and continues to be refreshed) into existing provision in the region, there will be a need to continue to map skills provision and understand its' relevance to employers' needs as well as learners' needs and position within regional requirements. This will allow us to identify further gaps within provision and provide analysis, recommendations and priority actions for the annual LSIP updates.

Simplify: All too frequently feedback from employers on availability and relevance of education and provision was either incorrect, unknown or dismissive, and there is a vast need to simplify the

region and nation's access to a complete and clear education and training narrative, for employers to identify routes to potential solutions. Whilst there are national initiatives that will support this (such as the integration of apprenticeships into the UCAS application process and website), the region will no doubt benefit from this too in a succinct and tailored multi-agency approach.

The West of England Combined Authority's upcoming Skills Connect Portal will go a significant way towards sharing the regional availability and options for providers, and Business West will incorporate this into our engagement activities to help support this vital project where it can benefit employers. We are committed to supporting the Combined Authority's business-facing activities, those directly delivered by the Employment & Skills directorate, and those funded by the Authority but delivered by others.

Amplify: There are some nation-leading initiatives in the West of England that Business West will support via LSIP and other activities, including via the Institute of Technology and other providers, Innovate UK EDGE South West, Workforce for the Future, the Growth Hubs and Skills Connect via the Combined Authority and Apprenticeship support programmes delivered by WTPN); we believe these will benefit from amplification through Business West's Skills teams, and we will integrate awareness, understanding and signposting to these for employers, to further close the gap between recognition of need and provision of support and response.

Navigate: Employers have identified (both overtly and implicitly) that they struggle to navigate and understand current provision, routes to market and identification of best solutions to needs. Therefore, we recognise (whilst not owning the process) that there needs to be perhaps widest change to employer's understanding of support and response mechanisms and greater awareness across partners and stakeholders of the best supporting projects and initiatives. Business West will ensure that during Stage 2 we are providing a tangible and clear follow up to all employers engaged to share the best 'front door' for initial conversations, whether that is via a Growth Hub (which should be the first point of contact to support businesses with (partially) identified needs), Skills Connect (for employees), direct to training providers or via further engagement with the LSIP team to explore skills needs, understanding and potential opportunities.

Light touch signposting was incorporated into Phase 1 delivery and employer engagement activities, following the trailblazer activity highlighting direct benefit from doing so in response to LSIP engagement. We will methodically and explicitly increase this element of employer engagement so that any identified needs during engagement are met with a formal LSIP team response to assist with signposting, awareness and navigation of the widest skills system. The region's Growth Hub's remain the first and most-appropriate point of contact for a business to receive support against identified or partially identified needs.

Support and provide: We will encourage employers to engage positively with 'giving back' to learners and potential workers, for both short-term and longer-term benefits. This can include driving greater recognition of careers and pathways in CAIEG and opportunities for employer integration, opportunities to highlight vacancies and sectors, improvements to recruitment and retention through meaningful engagement with learners via experience, placements, lecturing and any other relevant opportunities to engage with both learners and providers.

Galvanise: There is a need in some instances to provide additional portals for employers to understand and explore potential technological change and skills needs change, and we will therefore reprioritise (similarly to trailblazer activities in Jet Zero, Aerospace Digitalisation and Health and Care Leadership) galvanic events that simultaneously share useful granular industry knowledge from expert sources and partners and raise awareness of the necessity of skills need identification. If these activities can raise employers' awareness of impending changes in employment, training and educational needs, then they can go a significant way towards changing the hearts and minds of senior managers to integrate skills needs and provision in strategic planning and development foresighting.

3.4 Messaging and Collaboration

Employers have clearly suggested that they and the region will benefit from clear, consistent messaging about skills provision and identification of solutions, both in terms of how to identify need and solutions. This concept suggests that LSIP marketing and communication activities should be geared towards a 'one message many voices' modality, with agreed shared narratives to be utilised via providers and supporting bodies where possible. The Business West intention as part of Stage 2 is to utilise external governance via the Skills Advisory Panel and associated sector/issue specific working groups, to work out how best to translate this into measurable improvement in understanding regional provision and suitability.

In our sessions developing stage 2 intentions and activities, the consensus was towards 'you said we did' and peer content, highlighting how provision and support are responding to employer needs alongside case studies and narrative from those whom have taken advantage of new, successful and tailored provision – both via shorter term deliveries such as bootcamps and via core curricula course such as T-Levels and Apprenticeships; we will pivot requests through LSIP engagement towards these types of content, to hopefully improve understanding and take up, alongside any requisite messaging attached to the successful LSIF applications, helping make change in narrative and comprehension of the skill system.

Additional messaging and marketing will be integrated attached to both improving understanding of T-Levels and the potential benefits of providing input and placements Phase 1 engagement has highlighted that more needs to be done to dispel myths, highlight benefits and share opportunities. The Combined Authorities new Skills Connect platform will also integrate an Apprenticeship Hub, providing further regional information for learners but likely a useful resource for employers and providers too.

3.5 Governance

The LSIP project management and oversight structure is comprehensive and will remain so. Direct project management is maintained within the LSIP delivery team with direct reportage to the Skills contracts holder, Business West's Finance Director. Operational and Strategic decisions are made as per the internally agreed and written project application and internal project plan. Business West maintains a joint internal working and governance group made up of the Heads of the Skills Delivery, Skills Research, Strategy & Policy and Membership departments, with the oversight of the Finance Director as Skills contracts holder, and access to all Senior Management as required or requested.

The LSIP Project Manager is required to report to the Business West senior management team (SMT) quarterly and to the executive board biannually to ensure project alignment, progress and internal oversight. Internal and external auditing are carried as per contractual obligation and internal processes.

For Stage 2 delivery – and to ensure ongoing alignment within regional skills planning and procurement, we will establish a direct external governance mechanism via the existing Combined Authority Skills Advisory Panel, to provide input and alignment into long term strategic direction, ongoing collaborative opportunities to leverage sectoral expertise when needed, ensure the beneficial establishment of working groups and sub-groups towards both the LSIP and the SAPs core functions, and to undertake task and finish sprints towards mutual themes and needs.

3.6 Measuring Success:

Business West has started region-wide conversations about how best to commit to comprehensive and useful measures of success, project metrics and performance indicators – some of these are reasonably easy to identify via:

- ◀ internal engagements
- ◀ referrals
- ◀ identified needs (and routes to market)
- ◀ take up of provision and progressions
- ◀ SME representation
- ◀ integration of FE and ITP into delivery/research
- ◀ provision of events (both research and galvanic)

and

- ◀ marketing and communications outputs, including analysis of impact and progression.

There have also been suggestions that – if adequately measured against an existing baseline – there could be more robust measures of impact, such as via those who voluntarily choose technical education pathways, take up of provision in explicit response to the LSIP and those with whom FE Providers engage for planning purposes. These will be developed further during Stage 2 planning activities, in further partnership with providers and primary stakeholders and shared prior to commencement where feasible.

Annex A: Strategic and Economic Context.

West of England Local Skills
Improvement Plan Report

Annex A: Strategic and Economic Context

Economic Context of the West of England Region

The economy of the West of England continues to thrive, exhibiting multiple sources of strength and driven by new areas of growth and innovation. This is both in absolute terms and in comparison, with the wider South West region and England overall. The employment rate has consistently been noticeably higher than the England average at 80% (vs England average of 75.8%), totalling 594,200 employees and a further 75,300 self-employed. For the 2022 calendar year, 333,100 people were economically active, the vast majority being employees (280,000)²⁸.

The most recent claimant rate, for March 2023 bears out this economic prosperity – the proportion of the working age population claiming out of work benefits is lower than the regional and national averages (West of England 2.5%, South West 2.5%, England 3.8%)

The labour market is strong, with 1,124,000 unique job postings in the October to December 2022 period, down slightly since the middle of 2022 but considerably stronger in total and in each constituent LA area compared to pre pandemic figures. The proportion of residents holding an NVQ level 3 or above is the 3rd highest of any LEP area in England at 68.8% (vs England average of 60% for the most recent year available being 2021).

During 2022 the number of residents who are economically inactive (134,700 or 19%) is considerably lower than the GB average of 21.5%, being proportionally and in absolute figures highest in Bristol and lowest in North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. A significant component of the younger cohorts is comprised of students, especially in Bristol, and the level of economic inactivity for the 16-24 age group is four times that of the 25-49 age group (32% compared to just 8%).

Labour Market Intelligence (LMI) – Data and Reports provided by the Combined Authority used in the Development of the LSIP

West of England Local Industrial Strategy & associated documents [Local industrial strategy - Combined Authority \(westofengland-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/local-industrial-strategy-combined-authority)

Skills Advisory Panel Report (January 2022) <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/West-of-England-Skills-Advisory-Panel-SAP-Report-Full-Report.docx>

Horizon Scanning: Post-16 Education and Skills Infrastructure report June 2022 [Post16 Skills Horizon Scanning Research Report \(westofengland-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/post16-skills-horizon-scanning-research-report)

Green Skills report & analysis <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/employment-skills/green-skills/> & [WECA Green-Jobs-and-Skills Phase-2-Report_Final_01_06_2021.pdf \(westofengland-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/weca-green-jobs-and-skills-phase-2-report-final-01-06-2021.pdf)

Green Jobs Retrofit report June 2021 [WECA Green-Jobs-and-Skills Retrofit_Report-1_Final_01_06_2021.pdf \(westofengland-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/weca-green-jobs-and-skills-retrofit-report-1-final-01-06-2021.pdf)

WECA Employment & Skills Plan [West-of-England-Employment-and-Skills-Plan-July-FINAL.pdf \(westofengland-ca.gov.uk\)](https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/west-of-england-employment-and-skills-plan-july-final.pdf)

²⁸ *West of England Local Industrial Strategy*. (2019, February). West of England Combined Authority. <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/1.-WofE-LIS-Summary-of-evidence-2.pdf>. In the public domain.

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WECA West of England cultural sector economic summary February 2022 <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/West-of-England-Cultural-Sector-Economic-Summary-February-2022.pdf>

West of England Strategic Economic Plan 2015–2030, by West of England Local Enterprise Partnership, 2021 ([west-of-england-sep.pdf \(lepnetwork.net\)](https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/West-of-England-Strategic-Economic-Plan-2015-2030.pdf))

West of England Combined Authority Post-16 Skills and Infrastructure Report, 2022 <https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Horizon-Scanning-Post-16-Education-and-Skills-Infrastructure.pdf>

Other sources of information relevant to, and used, as part of developing the LSIP

Nomis dashboard summarising ONS data by LEP:

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1941962903/report.aspx#tabrespop>

DfE Further Education and Skills for the academic year 2022/23 <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/further-education-and-skills>

DfE Apprenticeships and traineeships for the academic year 2022/23 <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/apprenticeships-and-traineeships>

DfE Local Skills Dashboard [Local skills dashboard - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

ONS data, UK Business Activity Size and Location, 2022 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/business/activitysizeandlocation/datasets/ukbusinessactivitysizeandlocation>

DfE Unit for Future Skills Dashboard: <https://department-for-education.shinyapps.io/local-skills-dashboard/>

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2027 <https://www.citb.co.uk/media/acbnbn5t/csn-national-report-final-report.pdf>

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2022 <https://www.health.org.uk/REAL-centre/health-and-social-care-workforce>

Skills for Care Report, The state of the adult social care sector and workforce in England,

October 2022 <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/adult-social-care-workforce-data/Workforce-intelligence/publications/national-information/The-state-of-the-adult-social-care-sector-and-workforce-in-England.aspx>

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(<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld5803/ldselect/ldcomm/125/125.pdf>)

Annex B: Process for Developing the LSIP.

West of England Local Skills
Improvement Plan Report

Annex B: Process for Developing the LSIP

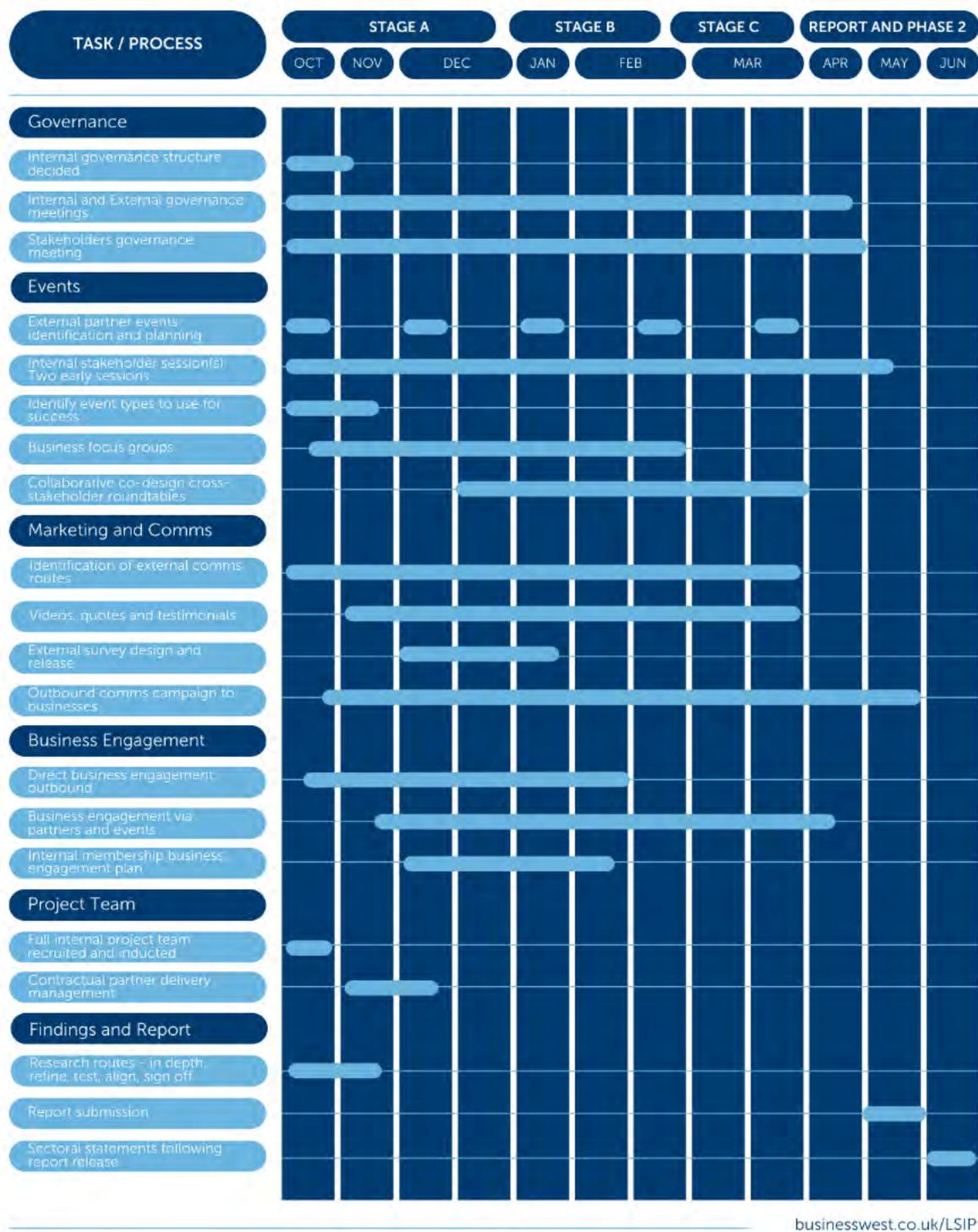
Summary

Business West utilised the principle for development of the LSIP methodology that most value could be added through this process by undertaking qualitative research, to add to existing understanding via granular and current employer's needs statements, rather than volume or quantitative analysis, significant quantities of which exist through Labour Market Intelligence and other national, regional and sectoral skills needs research. This process produced needs analysis on the principles of 'truing the wheel, not reinventing it' and adding value by freely sharing LSIP findings with others who could benefit from it, rather than replicating existing understanding. The findings align comprehensively against trends in existing sectoral national understanding, but provide additional detail on demand, re-prioritisation and micro-intervention within existing provision, alongside identification of potential areas for new provision.

Several initial sectoral priorities were chosen in collaboration, prior to and during the designation phases, with sessions held with FE providers, ITPs and stakeholders such as the Mayoral Combined Authority. The principles under which sectoral investigation and prioritisation took place were to ensure both maximum impact aligned with the region's industries and economy, and relevance and applicability to FE provision within the region.

A project plan, timeline and executive summary were developed and shared, both internally for project governance and management and with stakeholders, to ensure best possible awareness of project intent, outputs and timescales, ensuring awareness of engagement and collaboration potential and helping in shaping partnership opportunities.

West of England LSIP Project Gantt Chart (overview)



businesswest.co.uk/LSIP

Methodology

As outlined above, Business chose as primary engagement methodology a qualitative framework, with a 40-minute-plus expected timescale for each engagement for inclusion. The LSIP project operated under an agile project methodology, refining the questioning route and prompts, to ensure maximum benefit to the process.

Business West utilised a coherent division of questions and a qualitative methodology with an open exploratory narrative to encourage wide response, with sector-specific and general prompts alongside targeted sectoral and thematic events, utilising both internal expertise and

understanding of sectoral change and existing research and understanding into needs, change and sectoral transformation.

The wide spectrum investigation was initially aligned across 5 areas of need and change:

1. Business Growth and Change: Needs and perception
2. Skills and Training: Understanding and utilisation of existing provision, challenges in content alignment and modes of delivery
3. Recruitment and Retention: Gaps, shortages and impact on workforce development
4. Technological Change and Industrial Transformation: Including digitalisation, changes in operational need and workforce expectations
5. Understanding of, alignment to, and needs associated with the UK's Net Zero Strategy, decarbonisation and sustainability

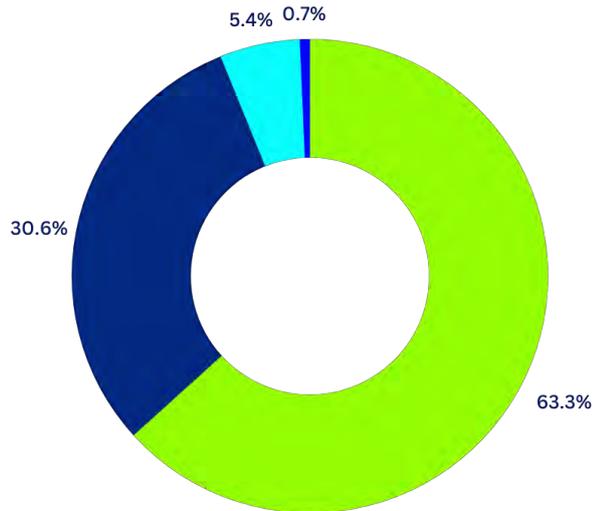
These were incorporated into our primary semi-scheduled interviews with additional topic guides and sector and business specific prompts, with research undertaken into each business prior to interview engagement. Our identified audience for primary engagements was across senior management and decision makers, operational and HR managers and within businesses ranging from SME to large organisations with alignment to both sectoral and thematic foci as outlined below:

Region	Gloucestershire	Swindon and Wiltshire	West of England
Cross Cutting Drivers of Change	Digitalisation, Technological Change, Core Digital Net Zero, Sustainability, Decarbonisation, Climate Change Core and Transferable Skills		
Comparator Sectors	Agriculture Agri-Tech Land Management	Health, Social Care, Life Sciences Agriculture, Agri-Tech Land Management	Health Social Care Life Sciences
Baseline Sectors	Construction Advanced Manufacturing Advanced Engineering		
Unique Sectors	Digital Industries	Automotive	Creative Industries

West of England

Job Titles

Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	93 (63.3%)
Professional Occupations	45 (30.6%)
Associate Professional Occupations	8 (5.4%)
Skilled Trades Occupations	1 (0.7%)



We divided sectoral engagements into baseline sectors (identified within each region as a priority focus), comparators (those within two designated regions and a unique sectoral focus within each region). This was alongside thematic and cross-cutting drivers of change, allowing wider engagement with those who identified relevance within essential themes without specific sectoral alignment, ensuring we could respond to and engage with any self-identified relevance.

Engagement in interview format was prioritised as a primary method for research, with most communications directing potential audiences towards this, alongside attendance in the events programme. An automated portal with direct calendar and appointment booking access was developed during early delivery to help eliminate barriers to engagement.

Research and business engagement events were set up to follow sectoral and thematic alignments for the region, with some running for baseline or comparator sectors to address larger audiences and explore any potential differences in perceived unmet skills needs. Employer and stakeholder events primarily focussed on one or more of these elements of research, to stimulate deep discussion and further analysis of employer needs. The average time of engagement was over 60 minutes interview format and 90 minutes for events.

Throughout the project we utilised an Agile methodology via adaptive and ongoing planning against current identified needs (both for employers and the project delivery as a whole) and a flexible feed-in system, with employers given the ability to engage via whatever method was most appropriate for them and multiple channels of contact developed during project delivery.

Principles, Limitations and Successes

We believe that the core methodology of in-depth direct engagement to add value to existing understanding through qualitative research and internal analysis provides maximum value from the primary task of LSIP delivery, with open access and free sharing via a publicly accessible platform reaching the maximum potential audiences and highest value in terms of those who should have regard or from whom a response is expected. The set up of Priority Findings documentation for FE Providers and the 'Duty to Respond' via accountability statements (and to a degree Ofsted Enhanced Inspections and expectations within curriculum planning and strategic documentation) meant that we incorporated significant existing understanding of labour market intelligence, vacancies, expected growth and replacement needs and other trends and existing data, to help make the widest possible case for investment into regional skills needs.

The intention to investigate sectoral needs via a baseline, comparator and unique sector focus, to identify regional difference in skills needs, did not yield any robust distinctions in skills needs across the three designated regions outside of unique foci: where there was outlier reported needs, these did not make it into the report or findings documentation, but may have yielded additional foci for Stage 2 delivery. It is the author's current impression that as these three LSIPs are physically and economically aligned as part of the Northern end of the wider South West region, with similarities in economic and socioeconomic geographies, the distinctions in skills needs will be minor if at all and represented more within larger employers with specific remits. It will be of interest to Business West in the initial Stage 2 planning stages (July – August 2023) to investigate other regional LSIP outputs attached to similar sectoral and thematic alignments and see whether there are significant differences or potentially gradual reprioritisations of needs through geographic dispersal on a wider basis. There may also be value in identifying other regional clusters, such as within Aerospace, and comparing and contrasting findings to assist in shaping Stage 2 delivery.

SME engagement remains more difficult than larger employers, with a lower proportion of SMEs engaged than during the trailblazer period, but still a total of 63% of engagements were with SMEs within the West of England LSIP. Further partnership activity with stakeholders and sub-contractors is intended for Stage 2 delivery to attempt to address this – we believe that to a degree, having completed the first Phase, being able to highlight findings so far and the initial rollout of new LSIP communications in both Case Study and 'you said we did' formats will go some way towards ensuring greater representation.

There is significant potential to collaborate on wider regional basis for direct project outputs (particularly from our perspective in the more galvanic and awareness raising events) and there could be benefit to all designated ERBs if there are identified synergies in Phase 1 findings and Stage 2 delivery expectations.

Engagement

The primary employer engagement period took place for 21 weeks, between 17th October 2022 and 13th March 2023, to allow time prior for planning, stakeholder engagement and awareness activities, and following this for the report and roadmap production. During the LSIP Trailblazer project we had a larger Business Engagement team and budget per region, but a shorter delivery and less lead time and awareness of the LSIP and its place within the wider skills system, including alignment with other research projects, planning processes and intended impacts on provision outside of that delivered via the West of England Plus Institute of Technology, with whom we coordinated activities for replicability, mutual benefits and outputs via the Strategic Development Fund.

Our application for LSIP designation outlined our core objective as a minimum of 80 in-depth engagements from relevant businesses based within the West of England region or with a self-declared interest in the region via employment, learning or commercial activity. Total engagements incorporated into the West of England LSIP primary research was 238 that met our criteria, with these being included in analysis towards the Priority Findings and employer needs statements. Please note that for some events we were unable to allocate sectoral or thematic alignments to registered attendees, therefore providing some input from unknown sectors, but the registration process for events ensured that attendees self-identified their interest with engaging with the topic. Please note too that these statistics do not include engagement via networking, short contact, survey completion, presentations or other contact, solely via the in-depth engagement methodology established prior to delivery as our core method of engagement.

Sectoral Representation via In-depth Engagements

Total # of Engagements (West of England)	Creative	Health, Social Care, Life Sciences	Construction	Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering	Digitalisation	Net Zero	Core and Transferable Skills	Non-Sectoral Aligned	West of England Total Engagements
Business / Employers only	25	22	9	20	26	8	7	1	104
Other Stakeholders *	16	26	21	18	29	4	8	37	134
Businesses and Stakeholders combined	41	48	30	38	55	12	15	37	238

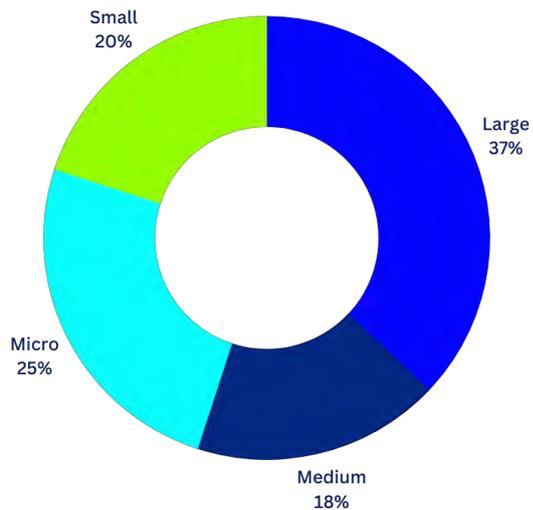
*Including providers and supporting bodies

NB: all columns include cross-sectoral engagements, to cover where an employer self-identified alignment within more than one LSIP priority sector, other than the 'West of England total engagements (all sectors)' column, which includes the total number of individual engagements only.

West of England

Size of Engaged Organisations

Micro	36
Small	30
Medium	26
Large	55



Employer Size (where known) in In-depth Engagements

Size of Organisations	Creative	Health, Social Care, Life Sciences	Construction	Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering	Digitalisation	Net Zero	Core and Transferable Skills	Non-Sectoral Aligned	West of England Total Engagements*
Micro	15	2	3	8	9	4	0	0	36
Small	10	7	3	6	3	1	0	0	30
Medium	6	11	4	5	4	0	0	1	26
Large	4	16	13	15	6	7	2	2	55
Total	35	36	23	34	22	12	2	3	147

* All sectors combined

Please note that where applicable, the above figures include cross region and cross sector engagements, some of which employers and/or stakeholders self-declared for more than one region and or events that did not record sectoral alignment or were pan-region or multiple sector. Total number of engagements across all three designated regions was 359.

Audience Identification, Outreach and Other Engagement Activity

Contractual provision into the LSIP was provided solely by Western Training Provider Network, with others identified but not taken forward in Phase 1 activity due to time and capacity constraints both within the LSIP team and with potential sub-contracting parties. WTPN provided, as an LSIP sub-contractor, various elements of project input and support, including the coordination of codesign events (with audience mixed between training providers and their employer partners) and additional training provider engagement activities, including speaking slots at quarterly update meetings and inclusion in marketing and communications materials. Other potential contractors were identified but not incorporated into Phase 1 delivery to provide similar services within both additional business audiences or those that were identified as not fairly represented or having additional value to add to understanding of skills' needs, such as via organisations representing those whom work with employers to address additional barriers to employment. Business West secured significant buy-in from FE providers, with the majority of events organised in degrees of partnership, from hosting events through to collaboratively developed content and co-facilitation. WTPN provided three events for the LSIP delivery with audiences split between training providers and their employer partners for open and frank discussion of needs, intervention and systemic improvement.

Alongside the primary interview and events methodologies, a number of additional 'routes to market' were identified, planned and rolled out, with varying degrees of success; experience and existing understanding, including during the trailblazer, suggested that employers were undergoing an element of 'survey fatigue', with significant numbers of supporting organisations simultaneously requesting input prior to and during this period, however both a short survey (designed to both provide direct input and as a route to further engagement) and a self-reporting questionnaire were developed.

The survey allowed a minimum time commitment for those whom capacity was extremely limited but still wanted to engage with the LSIP process, which was sent primarily via FE providers, but also requested by a number of different stakeholder organisations to share via their marketing

channels. This resulted in 73 responses across the 3 LSIP geographies (of which 38 included the West of England as a regional alignment) with 21 agreeing to further discussion and conversion into 3 additional interviews for the West of England prior to Phase 1 research completion.

The self-reporting questionnaire followed the same outline structure as the interview schedule and was developed at the request of a small number of employers and training providers but was then not utilised by any of those who requested it or was sent to.

Events Programmes

Business West ran a series of 11 events for the West of England region, including those which covered more than one region due to sectoral alignment between November 2022 and March 2023, engaging employers, stakeholders and training providers. These events were separated into three distinct strands of activity:

- ◀ Employer Engagement (primary research, Stage A)
- ◀ Collaborative Codesign (translating needs, Stage B)
- ◀ Producing a Regional Roadmap (actioning priorities and developing a plan for multi-agency delivery, Stage C)

The average event length was 90 minutes of direct engagement time, with the primary format for each stage of activity structured around focus groups and immersion events to encourage deep and granular discussion on specific topics or themes within our foci, as well as larger forum style events covering wider topics and themes in our sectors with breakout style research sessions. Stage B events for co-design and addressing needs were held as collaborative forums to translate the business needs gathered in 121s and focus groups into actionable priorities. The regional roadmap events were held alongside individual stakeholder presentations and meetings (not outlined here but approximately 3 per week during 2023) to plan Stage 2, prepare the roadmap and multi-agency response and keep track of future progress and performance.

Events and Themes

- ◀ Stage A - Health & Social Care and Your Future Skills Needs
- ◀ Stage A - Health, Social Care and Life Sciences: Developing our Regional Skills
- ◀ Stage A - Journey to Net Zero: The Future of your Workplace
- ◀ Stage A - The Creative Industry: The Changing Skills Landscape
- ◀ Stage A - West of England LSIP Business Forum: Digitalisation and the Workplace
- ◀ Stage A - The Creative Industry, a Changing Skills Landscape (a Bristol Creative Industries and Business West Business Forum)
- ◀ Stage B - Preparing for the Future: Advanced Engineering and Construction
- ◀ Stage B - Preparing for the Future: Creative Industries, Health and Social Care
- ◀ Stage B - Skills and Sustainability: Shaping the Future of Advanced Manufacturing
- ◀ Stage B - Local Skills Improvement Plan Event in Partnership with Western Training Provider Network (WTPN) – Construction & Apprenticeships
- ◀ Stage C - West of England Skills: Developing a Regional Collaborative Roadmap

Delineation of Events Programmes and Phases

Event Type	Purpose	How it worked	Date Range
Business Forums / Immersion Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the topic and associated skills needs Gather and record business intelligence Integration of providers to help translate needs and provide additional Post-16 provision expertise and response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person Businesses and providers 90 mins – 120 mins 15 – 20 attendees One on each sector and cross cutting theme per region 	November 2022 – January 2023
Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the topic and associated skills needs Gather and record business intelligence Businesses able to discuss freely with peers Open format 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual on MS Teams 5-15 attendees 90 mins – 120 mins Businesses only One or two on each sector or cross cutting theme per region One event included for West of England was cross-region for a comparator sector (Health and Social Care, with Swindon & Wiltshire) 	November 2022 – March 2023
Collaborative Co-Design Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translating business needs into potential response and action Ensuring the right audience could work together towards interventions and responses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person within FE venues Providers, businesses and stakeholders Sharing existing research, discussion of response, issues and intervention 120 – 180 minutes More than one sector within each event, with divided and guided discussion 	January 2023 – February 2023
Creating a Collaborative Regional Roadmap	Thinking about how we, as a region, can work collaboratively to make a support employer with skills gaps to identify appropriate solutions, understand changes and find suitable providers and advice, we will discuss how we can make one single coherent system for employers, create awareness of this plan and how we can monitor our progress as well as record success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In-person events Providers, businesses and stakeholders Outputs focussed on regional response and towards Stage 2 delivery 120 – 180 minutes Overview of key findings Response to problem statement, three areas of discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration & Communication Governance Measuring Success 	February 2023 – March 2023

Marketing and Communications

Following the methodologies laid out in our application and above, a 21-week marketing and communications plan was developed alongside primary activities from October 2022 to March 2023 with the intention to share awareness of and increase involvement in the LSIP via:

- ◀ direct call-to-actions (CTAs) in the form of events attended and interviews booked
- ◀ awareness-raising of intent and deliverables to pre-identified stakeholders and businesses
- ◀ awareness raising and engagement CTAs towards employers that Business West had not previously engaged with
- ◀ a survey to help steer focus for each region and identify the learner demand and priority response for Stage C activity

Due to the short timeframe to identify the audience, plan deliverables and implement, the LSIP team again used agile methodologies in communications, to trial different ways of reaching KPIs for a higher return on investment (RoI). If a method or mode of communication did not show an effective RoI within 2 weeks, this communication method was no longer be utilised, and the team refocussed efforts on deliverables that gained better responses. Direct, individual and targeted communication was in the form of direct emails, event invitations, and invitations to interview or focus groups.

Our core CTAs included the below, listed in order of priority to the project:

1. Interviews booked in with engagement executives

2. Focus group events booked in
3. Collaboration and co-design events with stakeholders and FE providers
4. Learner demand roundtables with ERBs, stakeholders and FE providers
5. A short survey on Smart Survey in which respondents provide their thoughts on the most pressing skills needs and find ways to get involved with the LSIPs
6. Awareness of the project to share with key networks that can be pushed towards our core CTAs

Mass communication channels as below were utilised to achieve both awareness of the project and direct CTAs:

- ◀ Mailers to pre-existing Business West organisations listed on Unity and other procured lists
- ◀ Social media posts, specifically on LinkedIn and Facebook, using the Business West account for paid and organic advertisements
- ◀ Individually created posts and directed messages to selected identified potential audience members
- ◀ Website content – written, video and resource
- ◀ Promotional videos utilising various platforms
- ◀ Press releases, with a focus on changes to Post-16 Educational Provision

We sent seven newsletters to our West of England audience, as well as four ‘prospect’ mailers for lead generation for this region only. Personal invites/outreach, direct outbound marketing and word of mouth were reported as the highest single channels that lead to LSIP engagement so will be increased during Stage 2 activities, with targets to be set across the team for outbound identification and contact rates. LinkedIn post impressions and reactions increased by 10% over comparable trailblazer period activities, as did mailer receipt and opening rates. Sign-ups for LSIP specific marketing and communications via Business West increased during Phase 1 delivery, with an increase of 11% across the three regions between October 2022 and May 2023.

LSIP Outreach and networking activities were undertaken both by all relevant employees within the LSIP team and via representation of the LSIP through other departments within Business West, including via Chambers and Membership and the Skills Delivery team. Mass marketing was undertaken through both direct LSIP-specific identified audiences and the incorporation of LSIP updates into wider communications channels, as well as the production of tailored content for partner organisations via both existing and new mailouts. Numerous external events were attended for widening LSIP participation and awareness.

Stage A Summary

Stage A activity (Articulating employers’ skills needs) took place as outlined via both primary LSIP research and secondary data analysis, for incorporation into Priority Findings processes and to guide the research narrative. The secondary analysis was via existing Labour Market Intelligence and existing regional, sectoral and national data on change and skills needs, alongside analysis of existing provision within the region and nationally.

Our agile project methodology allowed us both pre and during delivery to identify the categorisation of skills needs and distinction between the areas identified; core and soft skills,

core digital skills (which were further delineated throughout initial phases of employer engagement towards a new distinction in skills needs), sector specific and technological change and needs within sustainability and decarbonisation. We utilised the Priority Findings process too for some incorporation of other systemic needs identified by employer engagement.

Although the primary qualitative analysis created a significant level of granularity, the commitments in terms of time for those who may have reduced capacity is significant; Business West will incorporate further higher volume shorter engagement research methods into Stage 2, with an expectation to utilise surveys sent internally and via partners, as there was greater than expected uptake through this in Phase 1.

Stage B Summary

Business West worked comprehensively throughout Phase 1 Delivery towards the intentions outlined for Stage B (co-design and response to employers' needs) and we recognised the benefits of incorporating providers and stakeholders into LSIP delivery from pre-designation forwards, to ensure greatest replicability, alignment and buy-in. Significant capacity was designated towards providers from senior management to co-develop both the narrative for regional audiences and to ensure recognition of LSIP's potential value-add to those with both the formal duty to respond and those who may find benefit through regard.

Skills Needs and Occupational Priorities were shared with partial alignment to IfATE occupational pathways and maps, but there were some difficulties in some sectors with recognition of appropriate pathways and correspondence to Post-16 technical provision due to the employer led narrative attached to skills needs rather than educational standards, employers perceived issues with categorisations and lack of understanding of relevance and change, and a number pointed towards the slow development of standards and lack of awareness in employers as areas that will need reinvestigation. Business West has potentially identified an additional workstream for Stage 2 attached to understanding of educational standards and frameworks as the basis for in-depth discussion of those engaged/involved, potentially in partnership with FE providers. At present there is no precise direction for incorporation into delivery but will be incorporated into stakeholder and provider conversations within the initial Stage 2 planning process.

Providers were engaged prior to Priority Findings release, in both Stage B and C, to soft start understanding of the delineation and suggested format of Priority Findings, and the narrative, layout and intentions were discussed both at events and during meetings to attempt to find the maximum benefit; illustrative and precise without being prescriptive about response. General and direct feedback from those with the Duty to Respond has been positive, with several accountability statements shared and discussed in advance of submission deadlines.

Stage C Summary

Although Stage C (identifying a regional roadmap for change and addressing learner demand) has been delineated in the project as a separate activity and phase of delivery, the requisite conversations for developing a regional roadmap in a whole-systems approach, to both improve access and awareness for employers and to simultaneously address other issues within the wide skills system, such as learner demand and greater integration of those on the periphery of Post-16 education (including but not limited to CEIAG, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and those working with SEND or addressing barriers to learning and employment) have been held throughout Phase 1, from pre-designation and ensuring stakeholders had similar ideas of LSIP primary intentions following differing interpretations of various sections of the Phase 1 guidance²⁹. This meant that Business West had clear intention and idea for what would be formally

²⁹ Department for Education. (2022). Local skills improvement plans. GOV.UK. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-skills-improvement-plans>. In the public domain.

incorporated into Stage C delivery and how to delineate foci in meaningful engagement with stakeholders and training providers.

Events during this period were held in roundtable format around three distinct areas for incorporation into the roadmap:

- ◀ Collaboration and Communication
- ◀ Governance
- ◀ Metrics and Measures of Success

These tangible outputs allowed us to focus on ensuring rational and strategic intentions as a region, including the additional needs attached to identifying the existing supporting infrastructure available to employers to both identify and support against skills needs. Each of these areas could be discussed from the perspective of providers, employers and stakeholders, to ensure a whole-systems approach of relevance via a multi-agency response that will be governed externally via the Skills Advisory Panel, to ensure this set of tasks and outputs aligns too with wider regional skills planning and strategy.

Roadmap events: 3 total (one per region), alongside numerous meetings and sessions with individual stakeholders, providers and via existing groups and structures representing regional stakeholders, in particular via the Combined Authority and WTPN.

Green Skills, Green Jobs, Green Economy: Alignment to the UK Net Zero Strategy

As elucidated in the May 2023 LSIP Approval Process Guidance (not publicly available), “Green skills” means the skills, capabilities or expertise needed to support jobs that contribute directly or indirectly support the net zero target contained in section 1 of the Climate Change Act 2008, adaptation to climate change or meeting other environmental goals. This element of skills need has been incorporated into every output within Phase 1 LSIP activity, and will be further integrated against identified priorities for Phase 2.

Business West is a certified B Corp and one of the largest Chambers of Commerce in the country, with the purpose to:

“Help businesses of all sizes take advantage of the opportunities and address the problems created by this new world so they may successfully start, grow, export and innovate”.

As such, Business West aims to ensure the region we operate in is the best place for all to live, work, learn and prosper and we have long been focussed on more than just economic prosperity. Business West is committed to safeguarding the environment and addressing the Climate Crisis. We are signed up to the International Chambers of Commerce Climate Coalition and incorporate sustainability, decarbonisation and alignment to the UK’s Net Zero Strategy into all activities undertaken, both internally and in our engagement with businesses and stakeholders in the region.

Decarbonisation and sustainability were incorporated into the heart of the West of England Plus LSIP Trailblazer, and further expanded within each of the three region’s Business West was designated as ERB for in the LSIP national rollout, with our methodology incorporating discussion and awareness of skills’ needs for futureproofing growth through decarbonisation and sustainability, within core functions, technological change and legislative and policy change. These findings are separated out within each sector in the Priority Findings documentation, summarised in Section 2 of the report and initial expectations of Stage 2 research within this Annex.

Our intended deep dives and refinements of skills need understanding aligned with green growth have been incorporated into every sector specifically for future activity, driven by our Phase 1 research, for further analysis and understanding of employer's expected needs, with the core investigative activity attached to Green Skills and Green Growth to be retained throughout Stage 2. We are aware of both existing and upcoming strategic documentation aligned with sustainable growth and skills needs.

Providers

Through and prior to Phase 1 delivery, Business West have developed meaningful collaborative relationships with FE providers in the West of England. All FE Colleges have been integrated into LSIP delivery, although there are some FE providers with additional capacity and ability to engage on a more significant and equal footing – we would like to bring all relationships with Providers of Post-16 Technical Education to a certain level of partnership, transparency and integration into LSIP and believe the LSIF is a potentially beneficial additional method to do so, ensuring alignment and certainty of purpose and partnership. There is however some implicit potential via the LSIF application process and expectations of explicit support to LSIF applicants for the deprioritisation of any providers not directly involved. Business West will therefore need to ensure that (if applicable) non LSIF providers are not marginalised or excluded from the LSIP process and treated evenly outside of LSIF support elements in terms of employer signposting and information.

We believe that through Stage 2 delivery we can encourage greater recognition of the Business West LSIP team as a direct asset for both internal and wider employer engagement, ensuring alignment of needs and activities within FE and post-16 education.

West of England – FE Colleges, Post-16 Education Providers and Higher Education Institutes

FE	Bath College
FE	City of Bristol College
FE	SGS College (South Gloucestershire and Stroud College)
FE	Weston College
FE	West of England Institute of Technology (WEIoT)
FE	St Brendan's Sixth Form College (please note this is a sixth form but required to undertake enhanced Ofsted inspections)
FE	Yeovil College (not in region but with declared delivery and activity as part of the IoT+)
FE	Gloucestershire College (not in region but with declared delivery and activity as part of the IoT+)

School Sixth Forms and Sixth Form Colleges	Downend and Mangotsfield Sixth Form Cabot Learning Federation V6 Sixth Form Ashton Sixth North Bristol Post 16 Centre (Cotham) Winterbourne Academy Marlwood / Castle School The Olympus Academy Trust (Bradley Stoke Community School, Winterbourne, Patchway, Abbeywood school, BTEA) Cotswold Edge Sixth Form Hayesfield Girls School
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	Prior Park college Writhlington School Cotham School Merchants Academy Clifton College Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership Sixth Form's (3 Campuses) IKB Academy (in collaboration with SBL Academy and Wellsway School and offer the same courses) Chew Valley School Bristol Free School Colston's School Backwell School Gordano School Nailsea School St Katherines School Sidcot School John Cabot Academy
ITP	Access Creative College
HE	Bath Spa University
HE	University of Bristol
HE	University of Bath
HE	University of the West of England (UWE)
Other Education Provider	Writhlington School
Other Education Provider	Ablaze
Other Education Provider	Access Creative College
Other Education Provider	Boomsatsuma
Other Education Provider	Lifetime Training
Other Education Provider	Seetec Pluss
Other Education Provider	Skill Soft
Other Education Provider	The Focus Training Group
Representative body	Construction Industry Training Board (CITB)
Representative body	Western Training Provider Network (WTPN) – representing ITPs within the West of England

Stakeholders

During designation and prior to LSIP Phase 1 Delivery, Business West attempted to identify all potential stakeholders and partners for the Swindon & Wiltshire region, to highlight the benefits of LSIP engagement, raise awareness and identify potential collaborators and partners. Below we have summarised both primary and secondary stakeholder organisations with whom we have identified potential synergies and included in pre- and post-designation communications and invites. Those who have been involved directly and explicitly involved some self-selection and

identification, with national ERBs and sectoral representative bodies. We believe during Stage 2 there will be significant benefit to a wider participatory mechanism to ensure national bodies can identify potential relevance, incorporation and similar access and awareness on a national footing.

Identified stakeholder organisations with an interest in the West of England LSIP

ERB	Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)
ERB	Portishead Chamber
Network	Bristol Green Capital Partnership
Network	FutureLeap
Network	West of England Aerospace & Advanced Engineering Forum (WEAF)
Network	Babbasa
Network	Bristol Creative Industries
Network	Electrical Contractors Association (ECA)
Network	TechSPARK UK
Other	NSEA – North Somerset Enterprise Agency
Other	Department for Education
Other	Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
Other	JobCentre Plus
Other	Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC)
Other	Shared Intelligence
Other	The Careers & Enterprise Company
Other	UCAS
Regional Stakeholder	Bath and North East Somerset Council (BANES)
Regional Stakeholder	West of England Combined Authority (WECA)
Regional Stakeholder	Bristol City Council
Regional Stakeholder	North Somerset Council
Regional Stakeholder	South Gloucestershire Council
Regional Stakeholder	West of England Combined Authority (WECA)
Regional Stakeholder	Heart of the South West LEP
Representative body	Construction Industry Training Board (CITB)
Representative body	Western Training Provider Network (WTPN)
Trade Association	Electrical Contractors Association (ECA)

Mayoral Combined Authority Integration and Involvement

The premise had been set via the LSIP Trailblazer activities for an integrated and equal relationship with the West of England Combined Authority, with consistent discussion, alignment and sharing of progress throughout Phase 1 delivery. Monthly project check-in meetings were held alongside less formal or regular meetings with various departments and representatives of projects. The Combined Authority fed into initial pre-designation application information, and we have integrated where feasible alignment into every element of LSIP delivery.

Our key contact points within the Combined Authority were via the People and Skills Programme Manager and Head of People and Skills, ensuring wide visibility of potential collaborative opportunity, alignment with regional strategies and priorities and cascading of relevant information through both parties. We have identified priority strategic documentation currently in development and methods of ensuring the LSIP can meaningfully feed into wider skills strategy planning and employer engagement in Stage 2.

We have the declared intention to continue joint activities for the wider benefit of the West of England region, with the LSIP supporting the CAs strategic aims and synergistic employer engagement activities. We also believe that there will be value in the inclusion of the Combined Authority in the LSIF application and approval process, to ensure both national and regional skills funding alignments and awareness and will share intelligence around EoIs and applications towards this to ensure as much risk of duplication and gaps as possible in the permitted timescales. There is also an expectation to highlight a key number of Combined Authority initiatives (and supporting programmes delivered by other Local Authorities and partners) as primary support outputs for stage 2 delivery alongside ensuring employers are aware of existing mechanisms; please see section 3 for further information on intent and alignment.



LSIP Statement by the West of England Combined Authority.

West of England Local Skills
Improvement Plan Report



Funded by
UK Government

LSIP Statement by the West of England Combined Authority

The West of England Combined Authority is the recognised Mayoral Combined Authority (WoE MCA) for the West of England LSIP (WoE LSIP). In accordance with the Statutory Guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE) the WoE MCA issues this statement relating to the WoE LSIP which has been developed by Business West, the Employer Representative Body (ERB).

The WoE MCA has a longstanding working relationship with Business West, and the latter has been a key member of our Skills Advisory Panel since its inception. The WoE MCA has supported the development of the WoE LSIP, building on the pre-existing strong working relationship which was further fostered during the development of the previous pilot LSIP. Ongoing support provided by the MCA has included:

- Senior MCA officers have met regularly with Business West to ensure the LSIP findings inform and feed into emerging regional strategies and programmes including the refresh of the regional Employment & Skills Plan (E&SP), Climate Emergency Strategy Action Plan (CESAP), Innovation Plan and various skills programmes;
- Continuous input provided by several senior skills leads to help shape and inform the intelligence gathering, the working groups and ongoing development process;
- The Combined Authority's skills leads, the Growth Hub, Inward Investment Service, delivery partners and centralised Communications team have all promoted LSIP surveys and events to help ensure strong business awareness, attendance and input;
- Facilitating the opportunity for Business West to present to the following Combined Authority led strategic groups: West of England Skills Advisory Panel (SAP), West of England Business and Skills Board (elected members), West of England Skills Officer Group (SOG) (Unitary Authority leads), the West of England FE Principals Group and other key strategic business and skills forums. These discussions have helped to inform the LSIP and shape thinking/developments;
- Attendance at LSIP co-design working groups, ensuring regional LMI as well as information/ intelligence from regional consultations, strategies, research projects and service delivery (such as Growth Hub and Invest Bristol Bath Inward Investment business intelligence) fed into the LSIP report and roadmap;
- Acting as an ambassador for the LSIP, informing other networks and forums of the LSIP through presentations, reports etc and signposting them to the ERB;
- Working with the Growth Hub to help promote LSIP progress and ensure businesses engaging with the Growth Hub were aware of how to engage with the LSIP process; and
- The WoE MCA's central LMI team has provided significant strategic LMI, data and intelligence to shape the LSIP.

In addition, the WoE MCA has shared LMI, the Post-16 FE Estate Review Report, Retrofit and Green Skills Reports and other key survey findings, reports and data which have been used to shape the LSIP report. Conversely, granular sectoral evidence and 'business voice' produced by the LSIP engagements has and will continue to be used (in-part), to help inform the regional Employment & Skills Plan, Action Planning and delivery of individual skills initiatives.

In recognition of the benefits this close working relationship brings and following a recent meeting with the ERB to discuss this, the WoE MCA proposes to re-shape and continue to run the Skills Advisory Panel (SAP) to provide strategic direction and coordinated oversight of the Employment and Skills Plan, LSIP and Skills Connect (a new strategic regional skills and careers service led by the West of England Combined Authority). Sitting below the SAP will be working groups (sector specific or 'issue/gap' specific where cross-cutting), addressing gaps, issues and opportunities identified in the delivery of the Employment & Skills Action Plan and LSIP (stage 2). Business West (as ERB) will be instrumental in the work of the SAP and its related working groups.

In order to further this coordination, we would like to request that DfE provides further clarity around the governance and decision making for the LSIF and the inter-relationship between the regional skills priorities (as set out in our Employment & Skills Plan), regional skills investments/initiatives, recent investment capital investments in the FE estate and skills provision by the WoE MCA and the LSIF investments. It is further requested that the WoE MCA has a role in assessing and signing off the LSIF application from the lead college, helping to ensure that LSIF investment decisions align with regional skills priorities. This will ensure that decisions for investment are aligned and do not duplicate our own recent capital investments and existing skills provision.

We look forward to working with both DfE and Business West on the implementation of the LSIP and the reshaping of the SAP. We are confident this will provide the strategic regional join-up and governance to make the roll out of the LSIP plan and roadmap a success.

Signed



Stephen Bashford
Director of Business and Skills
West of England Combined Authority

Stage 2: Principles and Outlines

The objective of stage 2 of the LSIP is to embed the LSIP process in the local skills system. We will be expected to “galvanise collaborative action with employers, providers and local stakeholders to support the delivery of the actionable priorities and the roadmap” that we have set out in our report.

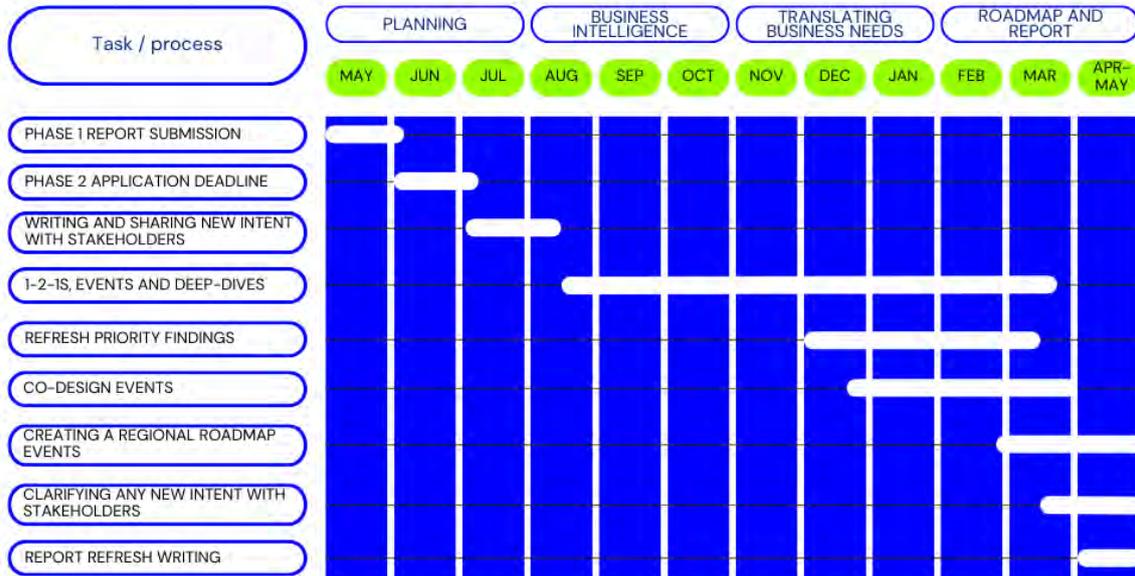
In light of this, we will be continuing with similar activities that we hosted in phase one of the LSIP, including 40-minute 1-2-1 interviews and small focus groups on specific topics and themes within our sectoral foci, as well as the larger business forum style events where we cover wider topics and themes in our sectors.

We will also continue to host co-design collaborative forums to translate business needs gathered in 1-2-1s with local FE providers (and ITPs, etc.). In addition, we will be hosting regular regional roadmap events to plan and keep track of our actionable priorities with our engaged businesses, stakeholders and providers.

However, in addition to all the above, this time around we will also be undertaking further deep dives into areas where we feel our research could go further within our current sectoral foci, refining topics where we know there is a requirement for change, where gaps in understanding have been highlighted and where there is a high need for skills in that topic or subsector. We will be hosting specific focus groups and galvanic information sharing events on these themes, as well as our regular 1-2-1s and focus groups.

Below we have outlined some intent in terms of changes to methodology and foci, alongside an outline of the intended delivery timescales prior to the first report refresh. We expect a significant level of additional granularity and specificity attached to previously identified needs that will hopefully form a further meaningful basis for providers to respond against, including understanding of demand and timescales for commercial viability. We look forward to the extended (12 month) delivery timeline and believe we will achieve greater reach, engagement and granularity.

LSIP Stage 2 Project Cycle Gantt Chart



Stage 2 Intended Engagements Structure:

1-2-1 Interviews (40-minutes)	Focus Groups / Events (90-minutes)
<p>New Narrative for Core/Overarching Sector Question Route</p> <p>Audience: New employers we have not engaged with</p>	<p>New Narrative of Overarching/Core Sector Focus Groups</p> <p>Audience: Both new employers we have not engaged with and new employers we have not yet engaged with permitted in the same focus group</p>
<p>New Narrative – Sectoral Refinement Question Route</p> <p>Audience: Existing employers we have already engaged with in phase one of the LSIP (and trailblazer)</p>	<p>Deep Dive Themes</p> <p>Audience: Both new employers we have not engaged with and employers we have previously engaged with permitted in the same focus group</p>
<p>Deep Dive Themes</p> <p>Audience: New employers we have not engaged with</p>	<p>Expert-led events into deep-dive topics</p> <p>Audience: Both new employers we have not engaged with and new employers we have not yet engaged with permitted in the same focus group</p>
<p>Deep Dive Themes</p> <p>Audience: Existing employers we have already engaged with in phase one of the LSIP (and trailblazer)</p>	

Deep-Dive Themes:

These topics below are the areas which have been highlighted during Phase 1 as areas for further investigation. We have attempted to divide these into both incorporations into interview methodology and potential initial foci for events outputs in Stages A and B of Stage 2.

Baseline Sectors:

Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering <i>Region: West of England, Gloucestershire, and Swindon & Wiltshire</i>	
Deep Dive Topics (for events engagements)	New Interview Narrative (all topics to be incorporated into Interview Question Route)
CAD, Digital and Design Engineering	Production Roles
Data	Data Analysis
Industry 4.0	Project Management
Engineering for the Energy Transition	Mechanical Engineering
	Industry 4.0
	QA and Testing
	Automation
	Resource Efficiency
	Sales Mentorship
	In-House Training
	Electrical Engineering
	Net Zero/Green Skills set of questions surrounding each topic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Energy - Waste - Policy - Legislation - Communicate change - Measurement and ROI

Construction <i>Region: West of England, Gloucestershire, and Swindon & Wiltshire</i>	
Deep Dive Topics (for events engagements)	New Interview Narrative (all topics to be incorporated into Interview Question Route)
Fabric First Efficiency	Carpentry, Joinery
Building Regulations and Change (Building Standards, Legislation)	Heat Pumps and Boilers
Retrofit and Decarbonisation	Solar and EVs
Sustainable Building Techniques and Modern Methods of Construction	Modern Methods of Construction
	Building Performance and Fabric First Efficiency
	Digital Design and CADs
	Upskilling and Reskilling for Plumbing and Heating
	Soft Skills and Representing the Company On-Site

Comparative Sectors:

Agriculture, Agritech, Agri-food and Land Management <i>Gloucestershire and Swindon & Wiltshire</i>	
Deep Dive Topics (for events engagements)	New Interview Narrative (all topics to be incorporated into Interview Question Route)
Advanced Commercial Agri-Tech (Robotics and Autonomy)	Smart Farm Management (Monitoring and Technology)
Digital Farming (Data, sensors)	Automated Farming
Smart Farm Management (Integration of Technology and Efficiency)	Agricultural Engineering
Decarbonising Farm Infrastructure	Communications and Connectivity
	Data
	Sectoral Drivers of Change (Economy, Policy, Legislation)
	“Farming 4.0” (Connectivity, Automation, Smart Farm)
	Net Zero/Green Skills set of questions surrounding each topic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Energy - Waste - Policy - Legislation - Communicate change - Measurement and ROI

Health and Social Care and Life Sciences <i>West of England, Swindon & Wiltshire</i>	
Deep Dive Topics (for events engagements)	New Interview Narrative (all topics to be incorporated into Interview Question Route)
Successful Tech and Digital Adoption (In Health and Social Care)	Health Care and Multiple Needs
Discharge, reablement and Integrated Care	Pinch Points in Provision (Health and Care)
Home Care	Advanced Digital and Remote Service
Digital, Computer and Statistical Literacy (Life Sciences)	Infection Control and Core Service Provision (Medication, Dressing, Hoisting)
Decarbonising estates and facilities / Service delivery and improving efficiency	Data and Systems Integration / Productivity and Efficiency in Systems
	Balancing Training and Work
	Gaps in Core Digital Ability
	Leadership and Management
	Life Sciences and Transferable Skills (Life Sciences, Computer Science, Maths, Statistics, Engineering and Chemistry – diagnostics, data, etc.)
	Net Zero/Green Skills set of questions surrounding each topic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Energy - Waste - Policy - Communicate change

	- Measurement and ROI
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Unique Sectors:

Creative Industries <i>West of England</i>	
Deep Dive Topics (for events engagements)	New Interview Narrative (all topics to be incorporated into Interview Question Route)
Immersive Technologies (Writing, Production)	Data visualisation, Data analytics
Software and Coding	Design Software
Marketing, PR, Comms	Videography and Motion
Sustainable Production	Project, Client Management, and Account Management
	Cloud Collaboration and Development
	Service, Sales and Pitching
	AI
	In-house and mentoring
	Net Zero/Green Skills set of questions surrounding each topic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Energy - Waste - Policy - Communicate change - Measurement and ROI

Digital Industries <i>Gloucestershire</i>	
New Interview Narrative (all topics to be incorporated into Interview Question Route)	New Interview Narrative (all topics to be incorporated into Interview Question Route)
Marketing (Digital Services), PR, Comms	Data Usage, Data Science and Data Visualisations
Software and Coding: Digital Industries	Increasing Adoption of Consultancy Mindset and Client Needs Focus (Commerciality, Planning and Delivery, Evaluation and Lead Conversion)
AI and Automation	Cyber Security
Systematic Sustainability within Service Provision (Data storage)	Project Management
	Effective Software and Service Integration
	Cloud Collaboration and Development
	Net Zero/Green Skills set of questions surrounding each topic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Energy - Waste - Policy - Communicate change - Measurement and ROI

Automotive, Transport, Logistics Infrastructure and Sustainability <i>Swindon & Wiltshire</i>	
Deep Dive Topics	New Interview Narrative (all topics to be incorporated into Interview Question Route)
Transports and Logistics	Coding and Software
Maintenance and Repair (Garages as well as transport and logistics)	CAD and Simulation
Electrification (EV and wider electrification and infrastructure)	Data, Analytics, Diagnostics and Interpretation
Alternative Fuels and Infrastructure	5G and Connectivity and its Impact on Transport and Logistics
	High Voltage Batteries and Longer-Term Sector Change
	Net Zero/Green Skills set of questions surrounding each topic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Energy - Waste - Policy - Communicate change - Measurement and RO

Crossing Cutting Drivers of Change, Thematic Investigations:

Core Soft and Core Digital <i>West of England, Gloucestershire and Swindon & Wiltshire</i>	
Deep Dive Topics	New Interview Narrative (all topics to be incorporated into Interview Question Route)
“The Disconnect” (Employer Expectations and Assumptions)	These topics will be included in general interview question route for all. Note: Rather than focusing on any Net Zero specific deep dives, this theme and green skills will be an essential focus within each of our sectoral foci.
Project Management and Leadership	
Effective Rollout of Digital Systems	

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West of England Local Skills Improvement Plan Report



TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

- Brief introduction
- Financial progress
- Workforce on leaving home
- Progress in raising of apprentices
- Support for training
- Plans for the future
- Final words

Discussion Outline

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Substantive

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Voice your opinion

Get involved with the Local
Skills Improvement Plan



For more information please contact:

Business West
Leigh Court Business Centre
Abbots Leigh
Bristol, BS8 3RA

01275 373 373
info@businesswest.co.uk