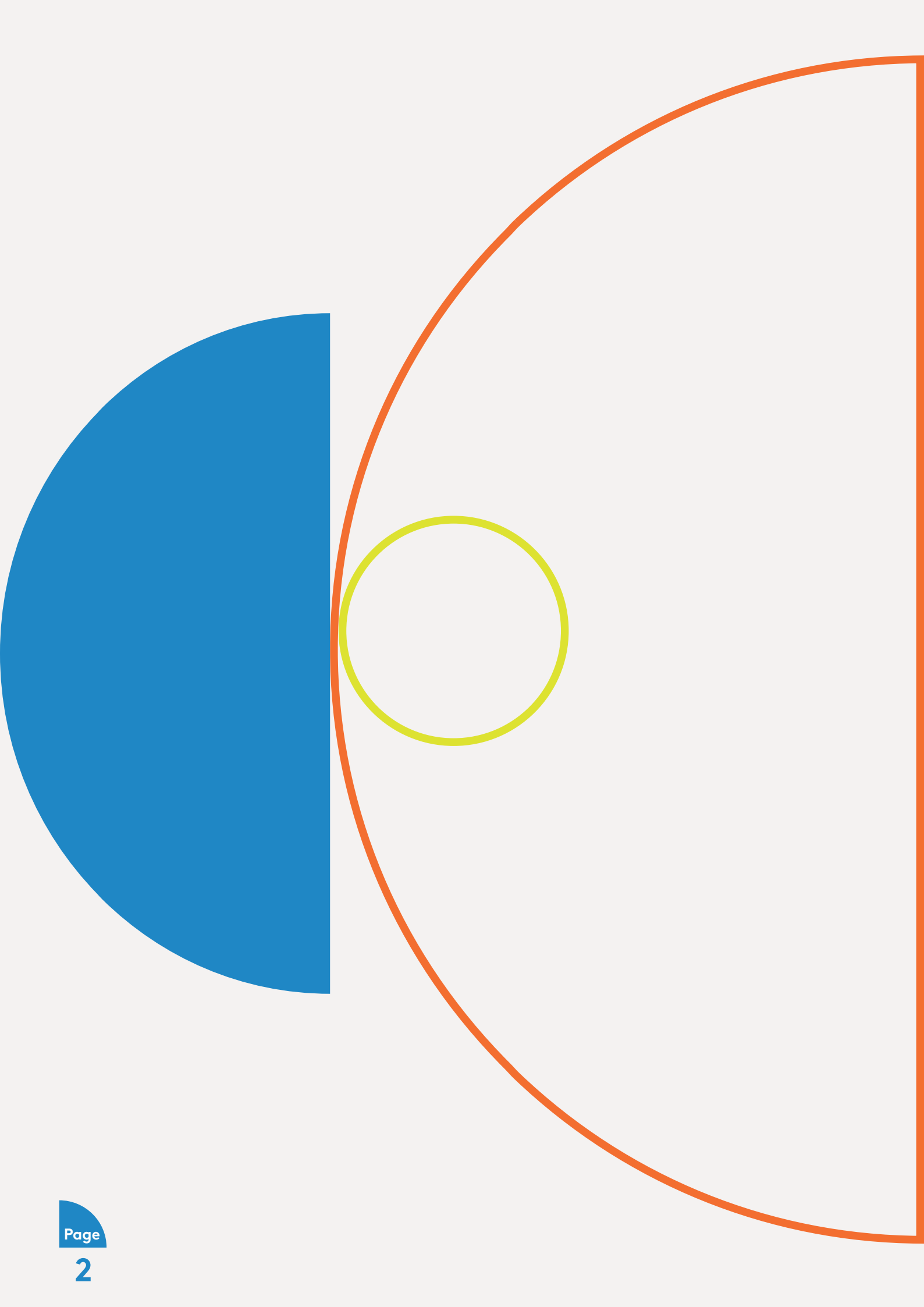




Progress Report June 2024

Cheshire & Warrington Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)




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01


Who is this publication for?

We are utilising this opportunity to update employers, providers and stakeholders on the progress being made in relation to the delivery of our Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).



By way of background, LSIPs focus on **putting employers at the heart of the skills system**. They were developed to ensure that employers' most pressing skills needs are reflected within the local skills system. The Cheshire & Warrington LSIP aims to support employers in articulating their skills needs whilst brokering links with Post 16 technical education providers and **shaping current and future provision**.

The Cheshire & Warrington LSIP was approved by the Secretary of State for Education in August 2023 following employer feedback, and **this report provides an update on what has been achieved so far**, what key activities have taken place and how we continue to bring employers together with post-16 providers and key stakeholders to support sub regional skills ambitions.



This progress report has been prepared in accordance with Local Skills Improvement Plans: Stage 2 Guidance (dated November 2023) and is intended to review progress against the local skills improvement plan published in August 2023. This report was produced in June 2024, but publication was delayed due to the pre-election period.

In our LSIP report, we highlighted our commitment to ensuring:

- A focus on **collaboration** with enabling partners
- Meaningful **opportunities for all**
- Development of **essential new skills**, whilst **upskilling the existing workforce**
- **Best practice** examples are shared
- Opportunities for knowledge transfer of skills-sets, including preventing loss of skills due to retirement
- Further **development of partnerships** between providers and employers for the long-term benefit of our people and economy
- **Support for employers** in articulating their skills needs
- Employer **needs are matched with available provision**
- **Ongoing facilitation**, discussions and collaboration between employers and providers
- Actions **build upon the success** of other skills projects
- **Provision of further opportunities for partner collaboration**

Therefore, the focus of this report is on the local priorities and actions needed to better align the skills system with employer and local labour market needs.

We aim to ensure that this report:

- Provides an **update on progress** made against key priorities set out in the LSIP Roadmap
- Highlights good practice **case studies**
- Avoids unnecessary jargon and **is accessible** to a wide range of interested readers
- **Recognises the positive collaboration** between employers, post 16 technical education providers and other key stakeholders
- **Demonstrates how employers can still get involved with the delivery of the LSIP**

Summary of LSIP

The Cheshire & Warrington LSIP was developed to support employers in articulating their skills needs whilst brokering links with post 16 technical education providers and shaping current and future provision. Our LSIP has put employers at the heart of the skills system in our sub-region.

Engagement with employers was key to the development of the LSIP, and it led to employers:

- providing specific details of occupations relevant to their businesses
- highlighting what skills matter for their businesses

The key aim of the LSIP has been to ensure the current and future workforce have the necessary skills and access to local opportunities, as well being able to upskill or reskill employees to meet changes within industry.



Based on our activities, the Cheshire & Warrington LSIP was broken down into five key theme areas:

Theme 1 • Technical Skills

Split between the LSIP priority sectors of Manufacturing, Life Sciences and Health & Social Care, whilst also looking at the cross-cutting themes of Digital and Low Carbon (including Green Skills). These key sectors were determined through use of Labour Market Information (LMI) and information provided by the former Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

The **key objectives** of the LSIP are to ensure the supply of and demand for technical skills matches the needs of employers, supporting increased productivity and sustainability.

The **primary challenge** we have seen around this theme is that when discussing skills, employers tend to focus more on behaviours and attitudes as they believe technical skills can be developed if an employee has the right employability and behavioural attributes.

Theme 2 • Accessibility

Accessibility is a broad theme, but for the purpose of the LSIP, was broken down into four key threads: accessibility of information; accessibility of training, provision, and funding; accessibility for those considered to be at a disadvantage; and accessibility of support in assessing future skills needs.

As we have **continued to gain employer feedback** around this agenda, we have found that our dedicated website **requires additional work to respond to this theme in its entirety**. We also note the importance of data as a means of better understanding the full extent of provision available locally. Further specialist support has been sourced to address this. A provision mapping project has been established, however due to the complexities and the broadness of this theme, it is agreed that it will take some time to fully address all aspects of this agenda.

Theme 3 • Employability Competencies

Looking beyond technical skills, during the development of our LSIP, employers focused on employability skills and ensuring job applicants are work ready. Again, employability skills cover a broad range of skills attributes such as communication, work ethic, numeracy, MS office, leadership and managerial and emotional resilience.

A key challenge we have identified within this theme is **ensuring employers think about the long-term requirements** and not just about those that can be addressed quickly. Skills such as emotional intelligence and self-awareness need to be explored further to better prepare individuals when they enter the world of work, as well as for in-work progression.

Theme 4 • Careers Education information & Guidance

Linked to themes 3 and 5, the range of aims this theme covers includes:

- **Building a future talent pipeline** through career exploration activities, showcasing the opportunities available within Cheshire and Warrington
- Link with theme 5 and **ensure Educational Professionals have the required knowledge of available opportunities** to provide better advice to the future workforce
- **Facilitate careers guidance** for those that wish to have a change of career
- **Acknowledge interests** in certain areas among young people, such as **climate change**, to establish targeted careers inspiration activities
- **Identify inequality situations** within industry and aim to address them through CEIAG

As we know, this theme is broad and we must take into consideration the pressures on the private sector to support this, with requests from different educational settings being vast and extensive. For the academic year 24/25, we propose to have an events calendar in place, **collaborating on a golden thread of messaging, where partners, providers and employers can become proactive in engagement activities** from the earliest opportunity.

Theme 5 • Educational Professionals

For our LSIP to respond to the needs of employers, we need to:

- Ensure there is **sufficient capacity** within the skills system to deliver the training we need to support employers, i.e. ensuring there are enough educational professionals to deliver the courses
- Ensuring that all educational professionals have the **up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the priority sectors** and can apply this to develop the skills of the workforce

We understand there is no 'quick fix' to resolve these issues, and **time is required to embed thinking** with employers and providers. There is a need to look beyond recruitment activity. To support us in addressing this theme we are considering outcomes of the Northern Skills Network project, as well as utilising alternative talent pools such as veterans and DWP's retro recruitment activities. We are also considering Northern Skills Network evidence where the lack of educational professionals is having a negative impact on curriculum design and thus pathways being offered are based on the expertise of tutors rather than the needs of employers.



03

Strategic and economic context update

The LSIP Report published in August 2023, drew upon data from June 2022, with around 437,400 people employed in Cheshire and Warrington, representing 75.7% of residents aged 16-64 in the area.



For January 2023 – December 2023, the Labour Market Profile for Cheshire & Warrington is as follows:

	CHESHIRE & WARRINGTON (%)	NORTH WEST (%)	GREAT BRITAIN (%)
Economically Active	82.3	76.7	78.8
In Employment	80.1	73.8	75.8
Unemployed	2.6	3.8	3.7
Economically Inactive	17.7	23.3	21.2
Claimant Count	2.5	4.3	3.9

Source: Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Census and Labour Market Statistics (nomisweb.co.uk)

Following the LSIP report in August 2023, job postings have decreased by 20.9%. We have key data that is relevant to the LSIP in terms of recruitment by sector and by key occupations within the region and which skills are most in demand during the period 01 September 2023 – 31 March 2024 (Data source: Adzuna):

For the period 01/09/2023 - 31/03/2024

TOP TEN INDUSTRIES RECRUITING	THE TOP IN-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS	THE TOP TEN SECTORS HIRING	IN-DEMAND SKILLS MOST REQUESTED
Wholesale & Retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	Manager	Engineering	Communication
Human Health & Social Work	Engineer	Hospitality & Catering	Management
Professional, Scientific & Technical	Social Care Worker	Teaching	Clients
Accommodation & Food Services	Teaching Assistant	Accounting & Finance	Assertiveness
Construction	General Nurse	Healthcare & Nursing	Customer Service
Finance & Insurance	Healthcare Support Worker	IT Jobs	Engineering
Transportation & Storage	Assistant	Retail Jobs	Wellbeing
Administration & Support Services	Project Manager	Sales Jobs	Solutions
Information & Communication	Chef	Social Work Jobs	Food
Manufacturing	Warehouse Worker	Trade & Construction Jobs	Sales



Join the conversation, get in touch at: LSIP@sccci.co.uk

We are considering several changes to the strategic and economic landscape as we move forward with the delivery of our LSIP and the potential impact on our local economy:

Local Enterprise Partnerships (**LEPs**) **ceased to exist** as of 31st March 2024. However, for Cheshire & Warrington, the LEP has transitioned to become **a new organisation**, wholly owned by the three Local Authorities in Cheshire & Warrington. The organisation, Enterprise Cheshire & Warrington (ECW), **aims to lead on the growth of the Cheshire and Warrington economy**, to help achieve the ambition to be the UK's healthiest, most sustainable, inclusive and growing economy.

ECW **brings together** several **organisations with industry and community partners**, all working to make Cheshire and Warrington a **better place to live, work and visit**; from economic strategy, tourism and place marketing to skills training, business growth and support. With the LSIP having the statutory responsibility for skills in Cheshire & Warrington, we aim to **continue to work collaboratively to avoid duplication of activities** and ensure the skills landscape is transparent to all.

When the LSIP was approved, **there was the expectation of HS2 extending** into to the sub-region. Thousands of jobs and homes were expected from planned regeneration projects. However, the leg from Birmingham to Manchester was cancelled, meaning a **loss of expected jobs and income for the region**.

The People and Skills **priorities within Cheshire West and Chester Council's** UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Investment Plan continue to be addressed through year 3 programme delivery (2024-25):

- Providing **support to those** residents **facing barriers to employment and training** to achieve their potential
 - **Raising aspirations** of young people through learning and volunteering opportunities to support their future careers
 - Delivering **in-work skills** and training to support staff **recruitment, retention and progression**, and **improve business productivity and growth**
-

Warrington Council's Investment Plan, as part of UKSPF, is committed to:

- **Create jobs** and boost community cohesion
- **Promote networking and collaboration** to share knowledge, expertise and resources, and **stimulate innovation and growth**
- **Reduce** levels of **economic inactivity**
- Support people furthest from the labour market to **overcome barriers to work**
- Support local areas to fund gaps in local skills provision to support people to progress in work, and supplement local adult skills provision

Cheshire East Council, through UKSPF activities aims to: **'Build Pride in Place and increase life chances'** across the following areas:

- **Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards** by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging
- Spread opportunities and **improve public services**, especially in those places where they are weakest
- **Restore** a sense of **community, local pride and belonging**, especially in those places where they have been lost
- **Empower local leaders and communities**, especially in those places lacking local agency and supplement local adult skills provision

An important action for the sub-region is to **reduce carbon dioxide emissions** with a target of achieving **net zero by 2040**. At the forefront of this is a **£30bn plan for the North West and North Wales** to be home to the **UK's first net zero carbon industrial cluster** by 2040. The **HyNet project** (led by Progressive Energy) is made up of several different elements, bringing together partner organisations and local manufacturers, **providing the infrastructure to produce, transport and store low carbon hydrogen across the North West and North Wales**. In addition, the infrastructure will be created to capture, transport and lock away carbon dioxide emissions from industry. HyNet will both **upgrade existing** infrastructure, as well as **develop new infrastructure**. This includes underground pipelines, hydrogen production plants and storage facilities. In 2023, HyNet expected to enable the region to retain high value roles, secure **approximately 4,000 new jobs** during construction, attract inward investment and cultivate a supply chain across the region. As part of HyNet, earlier this year, North West, Cheshire West & Chester Council has given the green light to **develop the UK's first-ever low carbon Hydrogen Production Plant (HPP)**. This project has the potential to **unlock substantial investments**, forecasted to be in the billions.

There is also consideration to **"ORIGIN"**, powering the UK's race to net zero with a **vision for Ellesmere Port to become the world's first Net Zero Carbon Industrial cluster**. The aim is to connect global talent and local people with pioneering, green sector businesses at their waterfront location, they anticipate 3.3m Sq. ft. of potential floorspace, **30,000 new jobs forecast and £2billion worth of investment**.

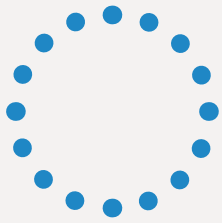


04



Priorities and Actions

(Roadmap)



Actionable Priority

Technical Skills (Theme 1)

ACTIVITIES	PARTNERS INVOLVED	MONITORING
Establish sector specific working groups to take forward the priorities within each individual sector.	Chambers of Commerce Employer & Sector Representative Bodies Enterprise Cheshire & Warrington Local Authorities FE/HE Providers C&W Learning Provider Network Pledge Partnership/Careers Hub DWP IOT	Quarterly progress reports. Changes to curriculum. Action notes used to inform meetings with Providers/C&WLP Network agendas.
Map supply of all types of local training provision by qualifications and competencies.		Weekly review meetings with data provider, moving to quarterly meetings following publication.
Increase apprenticeship uptake and levy transfer promotion via: Exploring potential for shared apprenticeship schemes. Increasing PR and social media activity regarding the benefits of apprenticeships. Increasing careers activity relating to apprenticeships. Encouraging employers to raise awareness of their own businesses and opportunities available.		Apprenticeship uptake, particularly at Level 3 and above. Increase in Employers engaged in apprenticeships. Website & social media analytics. Review via new Power BI Dashboard October 2024 and March 2025.
Build relationships between providers and employers to support the high level of recruitment intent over the forthcoming 12months utilising (for example) Career Days, Industry Placements; Cheshire & Warrington Opportunities Portal; and Forums to bring everyone together.		Number of unfilled vacancies reducing. Technical Education & Course uptake increasing.
Work with providers to identify how provision can be more responsive to employer need.		Technical Education course uptake. Changes to curriculum, considering small modular courses, flexible training and direct training into business (for example).

Who is this publication for?

Summary of LSIP

Strategic & economic context update

Priorities & Actions (Road Map)

What has been achieved so far?

What still needs to be achieved?

Closing statements

METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION & EXPECTED OUTCOMES	TIMESCALES	PROGRESS STATUS
<p>Conduct deeper dives into specific issues of importance, with focus on technical skills.</p> <p>Group changes: Merge low carbon and manufacturing groups; Launch Health & Social Care Strategic Board; and Life Sciences group to be reinstated.</p>	Quarterly meetings from January 2024 onwards.	On track to deliver.
<p>Engagement with all providers to gain details of courses available.</p> <p>Production of an online prospectus tool detailing all provision available.</p>	Power BI available to LSIP team from May 2024 (expected publication July 2024).	On track to deliver.
<p>UTC Warrington, LSIP and LSIF Conferences to provide key information and case studies from employers and learners on T Levels and Apprenticeships.</p> <p>The Pledge/Careers Hub activity (detailed within 'What we have achieved so far').</p> <p>Open discussion with the IOT and exploring potential partnership opportunities moving forward to support delivery of these activities.</p>	Ongoing as per Events Calendar.	On track to deliver.
<p>The Pledge/Careers Hub activity (detailed within What we have achieved so far).</p> <p>Additional relationships formed via our Working Groups and networking opportunities, and direct referrals from us to providers.</p>	Ongoing as per Events Calendar.	On track to deliver.
<p>LSIF related projects.</p> <p>Working Groups to focus on key aspects of technical skills requirements.</p> <p>Activities of Providers' Employer Skills Boards.</p>	Ongoing until August 2026.	On track to deliver.



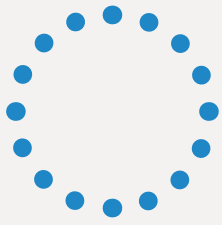
Actionable Priority

Accessibility (Theme 2)

ACTIVITIES	PARTNERS INVOLVED	MONITORING
<p>Raise awareness of LSIPs with stakeholders and their purpose to support understanding of skill requirements.</p> <p>Raise awareness amongst employers of the value of different types of recruitment strategies and training programmes.</p> <p>Address barriers to investing in skills and training.</p> <p>Increase awareness of the ability for levy transfer.</p> <p>Provision of business support advice and guidance to diagnose digital skill needs & signpost digital training provision.</p> <p>Provision of support for those considered to be at a disadvantage.</p>	<p>Employers</p> <p>Chamber of Commerce Network</p> <p>Employer Representative Bodies</p> <p>Enterprise Cheshire & Warrington</p> <p>Sector Representative Bodies</p> <p>FE/HE Providers</p> <p>Independent Training Providers</p> <p>Cheshire & Warrington Learning Provider Network</p> <p>Cheshire & Warrington Pledge Partnership (inc. Careers Hub)</p> <p>Local Authorities</p> <p>DWP</p>	<p>PR and social media activity and analytics.</p> <p>Numbers of attendees at engagement events, including individual employer meetings.</p> <p>Website analytics monthly reports.</p> <p>Monthly review of inbound enquiries via LSIP website, enquiry forms completed and stakeholder referrals to us as a broker.</p>


METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION & EXPECTED OUTCOMES	TIMESCALES	PROGRESS STATUS
Quarterly Chamber magazine adverts to raise LSIP profile.	Monthly LSIP/DFE review meetings.	On track to deliver.
Annual LSIP Conference (first took place in November 2023 and the next to take place in November 2024).	Social Media presence by Nov 2023.	Website analytics (Feb 24-May 24) 420 users. People accessed the website 671 times and viewed 1,211 pages.
LinkedIn profile launched November 2023.	Website launch November 2023, Relaunch August 2024.	No of enquiries via website 30.
Website launch, November 2023.	Termly individual College Review Meetings from May 2024.	LSIP Conference 110 attendees.
Invitations to present LSIP at various forums including HMPPS Thorn Cross (Feb 2024), CWAC Origin Meeting (Feb 2024), Warrington UTC Stakeholder event (April 2024) and SCCCI Networking (Dec 2023).	Sector Working Groups collaboration from January 2024.	LinkedIn 280 followers to date (May 2024).
Invitations to be part of CCSW, Reaseheath and Priestley College Employer Skills Boards.		Employer meetings - 215 undertaken between August 2023 – April 2024.
Launch of Sector Working Groups, January 2024.		LSIF colleges collaboration event over 60 attendees.
LSIF College Collaboration event, March 2024.		20 direct requests for further information and support as a result of engagement events.
Employer meetings.		Ongoing provision of informal Levy and course matching service.
		Evidence of further activity as a direct result of connections we have made.





Actionable Priority

Employability Competencies (Theme 3)

 ACTIVITIES	PARTNERS INVOLVED	MONITORING
Embed Microsoft applications and social media into school and college curriculum.	Secondary Schools FE/HE Providers Cheshire & Warrington Learning Provider Network The Cheshire & Warrington Pledge Partnership (inc. Careers Hub)	Changes to curriculum–16-18. Termly college review meetings. ITP provision.
Understand that employability competencies are applicable to both the existing and future workforce.	FE/HE Providers Secondary Education Cheshire & Warrington Learning Provider Network Local Authorities VCS organisations Warrington Skills Commission National Careers Service (Seetec) Institute of Employability Professionals (IEP) DWP Chambers of Commerce	Changes to curriculum. Increased provision for those already in work. Increased provision for those preparing for or seeking employment. Course uptake.

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Summary of LSIP

Strategic & economic context update

Priorities & Actions (Road Map)

What has been achieved so far?

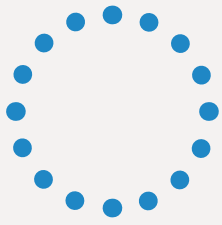
What still needs to be achieved?

Closing statements


METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION & EXPECTED OUTCOMES	TIMESCALES	PROGRESS STATUS
<p>Map what is already taking place within curriculum, noting mandatory and elective options.</p> <hr/> <p>Work with Secondary education and FE/HE providers to make changes to curriculum or provide additional courses to tackle this issue.</p> <hr/> <p>Work with other LSIPs to address the national concerns that there is a need to reboot the digital skills system.</p>	<p>College Review meetings held May 2024.</p> <hr/> <p>Termly College Review meetings.</p>	<p>On track to deliver.</p>
<p>Changes to curriculum to demonstrate the application of what is taught.</p> <hr/> <p>Careers in the curriculum activity, i.e., employers' contribution in the classroom.</p> <hr/> <p>Increased provision for those already in work & promotion of existing provision to employers.</p> <hr/> <p>Formation of partnerships between education leads and employers to support demonstration on how key skills are applied and transferable within employment.</p> <hr/> <p>West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber developed and delivered an upskilling course with NatWest for NHS staff on personal budgeting and excel via Multiply funding.</p> <hr/> <p>Bootcamps – Microsoft Power Platform and Process Automation Skills Bootcamp is now live.</p>	<p>Cheshire & Warrington Learning Provider Network event in June 2024.</p>	<p>On track to deliver.</p> <hr/> <p>3 courses delivered to NHS.</p>



Join the conversation, get in touch at: LSIP@sccci.co.uk

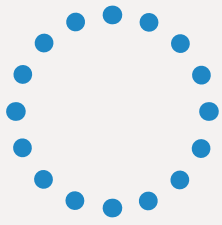


Actionable Priority CEIAG (Theme 4)

 ACTIVITIES	PARTNERS INVOLVED	MONITORING
Career inspiration activity and progression pathways that inspire and support young people, ensuring collaboration between partners and providers regarding key messaging.	Careers & Enterprise Company Chambers of Commerce Networks Employers FE/HE Providers Independent Training Providers (ITPs)	Types & volume of career inspiration activity that has taken place. Number of employers engaged that work within the relevant sectors. Industry placement days.
Facilitate opportunities for the future workforce to access opportunities available locally, as well as supporting those seeking a change of career, incorporating experience of the workplace activities and promotion of the Cheshire & Warrington Opportunities Portal.	JCP/DWP Recruitment Agencies Secondary Schools Sector Representative Bodies	Industry Placement Days. Career Events. Statistics relating to work experience activities. Website analytics.
Expanding existing partnerships between providers and businesses to enhance opportunities, share resource and expertise.	The Cheshire & Warrington Pledge Partnership	Employers engaged. Volunteers recruited.

METHOD OF IMPLEMENTATION & EXPECTED OUTCOMES	TIMESCALES	PROGRESS STATUS
<p>Establish a working group for this theme to develop activity programmes.</p> <hr/> <p>Careers inspiration activity linked with the strong interests of young people, e.g., relating to Climate Change and Digital skills.</p> <hr/> <p>Increase local knowledge amongst CEIAG Providers and Educational Professionals.</p>	Ongoing as per Events Calendar.	<p>On track to deliver.</p> <hr/> <p>Events calendar to be established for the start of the next academic year.</p>
<p>Establish a working group for this theme to develop activity programmes.</p> <hr/> <p>Career inspiration activities and events.</p> <hr/> <p>Employer/Industry open days.</p>	Ongoing as per Events Calendar.	<p>On track to deliver.</p> <hr/> <p>Events calendar to be established for the start of the next academic year.</p>
<p>Standard ways of working to be agreed across colleges, to better enable employer engagement.</p> <hr/> <p>Brokerage service between providers and employers.</p> <hr/> <p>Social media and PR campaigns to encourage employers to volunteer time.</p>	<p>Standards agreed by November 2024.</p> <hr/> <p>Ongoing until August 2026.</p>	<p>On track to deliver.</p> <hr/> <p>20 new direct introductions made to providers to engage in the skills system.</p>





Actionable Priority

Educational Professionals (Theme 5)

ACTIVITIES	PARTNERS INVOLVED	MONITORING
Establish partnerships between employers and departmental leads (link with Theme 4).	Chamber of Commerce Network FE/HE Providers Cheshire & Warrington Learning Provider Network The Cheshire & Warrington Pledge Partnership (inc. Careers Hub)	Employers engaged. Partnerships formed.
Establish a system for employees who are seconded into education to gain sufficient support and training.	Sector Representative Bodies Northern Skills Network Local Authorities Careers & Enterprise Company	Employers engaged. Number of staff seconded.
Identify solutions to increase capacity within the existing skills system, ensuring there are sufficient educational professionals to enable course delivery.	DWP/JCP Recruitment Agencies Association of Colleges	LMI. Feedback from FE/HE Providers and Independent Training Providers.

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<p>Social media and PR campaigns to support attendance at Sector Working Groups.</p> <hr/> <p>Employer engagement activities.</p> <hr/> <p>Sector Working Groups, requesting Departmental Leads to be present, leading to new and improved relationships between employers and colleges.</p>	By March 2025.	On track to deliver.
<p>Appoint a provider to lead on upskilling of industry professionals into learning assessors and teachers.</p> <hr/> <p>Engagement with employers to support the process.</p> <hr/> <p>Social media and PR activity.</p>	Ongoing until August 2026. (Subject to funding).	On track to deliver.
<p>Work with other LSIPs, where this is also considered a priority, to establish solutions.</p> <hr/> <p>Identify a provider that can lead on increased training.</p> <hr/> <p>Social media and PR campaigns.</p> <hr/> <p>Raise awareness of the benefits of this career path, particularly targeting industry professionals considering retirement/change of career leading up to retirement.</p> <hr/> <p>Employers to second employees to assist with course design and delivery.</p> <hr/> <p>Prioritise sectors based on vacancy gaps/engagement with providers to understand their shortages.</p> <hr/> <p>Increase awareness of funding streams available to support this.</p>	By March 2025.	On track to deliver.



05

What has been achieved so far?

This section provides a summary of what the Cheshire & Warrington LSIP has achieved so far.



Introduction

From the LSIP's perspective, our remit extends beyond technical skills; we take a holistic approach to resourcing, for new and existing employees, looking at all available talent pools with a long-term view, which extends beyond August 2026. We are proud to have received recognition for the support services we offer:

- 'A business described this offer as a breath of fresh air and where has this service been hiding! I would definitely recommend this service to local businesses.' CWAC Economic Growth Team
- The offer of support is robust and credible.' HMPPS Thorn Cross
- 'Helps employers to understand that they can have a voice and a positive impact in schools and colleges.' Colas Social Value Team



“Our relationship with the LSIP has been invaluable. It’s an agile relationship; if we approach the LSIP there is always an answer and someone to be directed to. We will see more impact from the relationships when we have a better understanding of what we need in the prisons”

Louise Parr

Regional Employment Lead for Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire, New Future Network and HMPPS

Barriers we have faced & what we have overcome

Creating the LSIP Report was the beginning of the process. We knew there would be challenges and barriers in the delivery phase of our LSIP. This section highlights some of these points:

- We established working groups aligned with our priority sectors. We note that Life Sciences has proven to be a more challenging sector to engage with and thus we are now working with Cogent Skills, who are also represented on our Board, to re-establish their local employer group
- There are already a sizeable number of sector based working groups that aim to respond to the skills agenda. As such, rather than create duplication, we have joined forces with providers and partners to ensure LSIP engagement, for example working towards a Health & Social, Care Strategic Board
- Monitoring changes to the skills agenda and other matters of importance to business
- We are working with employer expectations alongside college ability to respond, ensuring college business engagement teams are able to react to meet expectations
- We continue to encourage all partners to meet their statutory responsibilities

Emerging Benefits

Through our working groups and networking, we have facilitated approximately 50 new relationships between businesses, Independent Training Providers (ITPs), Colleges and Local Authority contacts. These new relationships have been used to enhance College Employer Boards, as well as collaboration activity between ITPs and colleges.

We have been working with DWP in our Working Groups and networking activities, and **as a result we have been able to extend their knowledge on local priorities and how sectors really operate.** DWP Partnership Managers have been able to take this knowledge to share with their teams, to **consider alternative and more innovative methods of support to local business**, including discussions around SWAPs and sector-based activities. This has also included a more informed awareness between NHS and social care vacancies and how these might be aligned.

Our relationship with the local authorities has continued to grow, ensuring where roles have been established that could duplicate LSIP activities, that **we have created further collaboration, and joined-up working**, to ensure employers receive the best possible service.

We have developed positive relationships with Cheshire West and Chester Economic Growth Team, becoming a key influencer in the ORIGIN Project (Ellesmere Port Net Zero Carbon Industrial Cluster). As such, **we are now looking to replicate this support in other towns across the region**, e.g. Crewe.

Our positive relationship with Cheshire East Business Team has led to us **brokering training and recruitment support for a number of businesses** in the area. We have also supported building relationships between providers and the three Local Authorities. Workforce development is being supported through National Careers Service being linked into the provider base.

There has been **an increase in collaborative working between providers across the region** and increased learner referrals to alternative providers, enabling access to provision which most closely matches their need. We have **built significant relationships, beyond our priority sectors, with providers, stakeholders and employers, therefore establishing our reputation as a trusted skills broker.** For example, providing signposting to enable access to specific provision or for funding support.

The LSIP has also **supported the relaunch of the previously lapsed Cheshire & Warrington Learning Provider Network**, which aims to increase collaboration between Independent Training Providers (ITPs), FE colleges and HEIs, delivering skills training, education and work-based learning to young people and adults across the Cheshire and Warrington Local Authority areas. The network provides: **signposting of employers to member organisations; a collaborative approach to bids/tenders and local/national funding opportunities; direct contact with local stakeholder and local government agencies; and peer support on aspects of work within our sectors.**

We **successfully hosted a sub-regional Skills Conference**, showcasing apprenticeships, T-Levels and Bootcamps. This gave employers an opportunity to hear from training providers and enabling employers and learners to share experiences. The conference covered the **apprenticeship levy, support from DWP, and inclusion activities.** At the Conference we launched our Working Groups, providing opportunities to discuss the most pressing matters for each of our priority sectors. This also facilitated employer and provider engagement.

Responding to Theme 1 • Technical Skills

Publicly available Department for Education data demonstrates that:

- the percentage of 19+ delivery providers delivering in line with the LSIP overall priorities has increased from 20.66% in the academic year 2022/23 to 27.84% in the academic year 2023/24
- the percentage of Apprenticeship providers delivering in line with the LSIP overall priorities has increased from 56.45% in the academic year 2022/23 to 58.72% in the academic year 2023/24

We will continue to monitor this data on an annual basis for the duration of this LSIP.

Our local Colleges have responded positively to the LSIP and are providing new provision in line with identified technical skills needs:

- At least 36 staff have already been upskilled on new equipment
- Digital skills for local workforces including Microsoft Office, Excel and cloud-based working. In addition, course enhancement is being reviewed across current courses, including T Levels
- Employer boards to allow employer engagement into business planning process and influencing curriculum in their relevant subject areas
- Upskilling college staff with digital literacy
- Green baccalaureate and developing green leaders for a green economy
- Cross-college opportunities to share equipment and projects
- Student sustainability groups and looking at hosting a green sustainability conference
- Creating roles for Industry Placement Offices with the prime focus of sourcing apprenticeship and industry placements with local employers
- Curriculum plans aligned with the LSIP
- 74% of delivery in line with LSIP priorities
- Widened Health & Social Care offer
- Restructuring of work placement teams to support increased employer engagement
- Pilots with NHS England for non-clinical skills for nurses
- Young Enterprise style challenges
- Expected launch of Clinical Skills Hub
- Short courses in preference to lengthy provision
- Partnership working between colleges to develop a Green Technologies Hub

The influence of the LSIP can further be evidenced through introducing HMPPS Thorn Cross to ITPs, colleges and partners, widening their understanding of the local priorities and how prisoners might directly benefit. As a result, they are now tailoring their course provision to meet employer need.

Our positive relationship with Progressive Energy, leading HyNet, has enabled us to directly challenge resourcing and training plans within their supply chain, as well as ensure our local providers are able to support.

The Impact of the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF)

The LSIF provides funding for providers to respond to LSIP priorities by investing in new facilities, curriculum development and improving teaching expertise to enable delivery against the skills priorities set out in Local Skills Improvement Plans.

The overarching aims of our colleges' collaboration:

- Increase skills provision, creating new level 3-5 LSIP aligned courses in: manufacturing, health & social care, life sciences with cross cutting digital and low carbon themes
- Support employer engagement, innovation, particularly in conjunction with SMEs
- Improve quality in skills provision by upskilling teaching staff
- Increase collaborative, inclusive activity, improving regional coordination and efficiency
- Provide long term sustainability, establishing funding routes beyond LSIF funding



We have already begun to see the positive impacts LSIF is making through:

- Increased collaboration with a joint event between the LSIP and the Colleges delivering LSIF projects. Over 60 employer/partner attendees, aimed at raising awareness of the LSIF, partnership working, reducing costs and duplication
- The Cheshire & Warrington IoT intends to extend planned works to fulfil requirements of the LSIP
- The Pledge Partnership are providing support in engaging employers in careers advice in schools
- Increased collaboration between colleges delivering LSIF projects and employers supporting curriculum development, ensuring learning facilities are reflective of employer need

The Impact of the LSIF • Continued

In direct response to priorities outlined in the LSIP we have seen (but not limited to):

- 8 staff have undertaken phlebotomy training, mental health first aid training and paediatric first aid
- Development of Health Higher Technical Qualification underway focusing on health care management
- In collaboration with NHS, Work Zones and DWP, a new Health Skills Bootcamp, delivery due in May
- 12 staff have undertaken CNC and additive manufacturing training across FDM and SLA 3D printing
- Recruitment video for promotion of engineering programmes aimed at schools and employers
- Employer and stakeholder advisory board established for LSIF development and curriculum design
- Development of a Bootcamp focusing on developing skills required for positions with HyNet's supply chain
- Internal/external workshops to analyse LMI information purchased via project- feedback used to direct curriculum development
- 30 staff attended Microsoft 365 practitioner training
- Marketing materials created promoting manufacturing programmes to schools, employers and HE partners
- Purchase of new equipment such as tenstar simulators, laser curtains. Surface hub training with staff to follow in preparation for curriculum delivery
- Staff CPD is underway focusing on Computer Aided Design (CAD)
- Delivering bespoke Engineering training to staff at a local Chemical company
- New provision such as L4 HTQ Engineering
- Colleges are working with employers to develop new low carbon provision for launch in autumn 2024
- A 'Girls in Construction' school engagement event was held in the Spring term and included promotion of green skills and the upcoming Green Technology Hub at the college

We will continue to monitor this data on an annual basis for the duration of this LSIP.

Other activities to increase technical education uptake

- We have raised the profile of levy transfer, supporting levy paying businesses to use the <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/transferring-your-apprenticeship-levy-to-another-business> pledge site. We have supported non-levy paying businesses to access the site to request levy funding
- We have used the Chamber network, Local Authorities Economic Growth Teams, our website and LinkedIn profile to promote opportunities, and supported businesses on an individual basis to better understand their options. This has included the benefits of Levy Transfer for businesses
- The Careers hub funded The Pledge activity for 4 sub-regional Mock Assessment Centres which included Teacher Encounters for 36 educators who were up-skilled by employers/apprentices/ Further Education colleagues in Apprenticeship & Technical Education pathway recruitment and application practices. These sessions were directly supported by the LSIP team. A further 250 educators received training from those teacher ambassadors. The Pledge ran this programme last year with over 500 educators receiving current and relevant Information Advice & Guidance about the apprenticeship pathway
- To launch the Employment Readiness Programme, the Pledge ran whole year assemblies with Year 12 or 13 students to explain the apprenticeship route and invite students to apply for the programme. For example, in the Macclesfield Pledge area, year 12 students from every sixth form received the launch assembly
- The Pledge ran three Apprenticeships and Jobs Fairs for employers actively recruiting, across each Local Authority in February 2024. There was a total attendance of 1746 attendees

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"I am really glad the levy allows us to help support training for non-levy payers whose services impact the hospital and the health and social care system in our region. We have supported staff in these organisations to undertake apprenticeships such as Nursing Associate, Assistant Practitioner, Registered Nurse and Adult Care Worker to name a few."

Molly Whelan

Vocational Development Manager
Countess Of Cheshire Hospital



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Responding to Theme 2 • Accessibility

We talk about this theme in 2 parts:

- **Our website** - offering support to employers to better understand how to engage with educational pathways, how to benefit from this and where to get further information
- **Inclusion and diversity** - including disadvantaged and under-represented groups as additional talent pools. This includes work we have undertaken with HMPPS Thorn Cross (an open prison), working with our local authorities on promoting Supported Internships and care leaver recruitment, and working with DWP colleagues to support Veterans, Retro Recruitment (over 50s) and job seekers with disabilities

We will continue to monitor this data on an annual basis for the duration of this LSIP.

.....

A key tool to support in addressing this theme is the Cheshire & Warrington LSIP website. The website's purpose is to provide information to employers. It offers a one-stop shop, targeted at SMEs, to support them access skills pathways and providers.

.....

Further work is still required; however a website has been launched to support employers in:

- Understanding the key objectives and delivery of the LSIP
 - Providing news on what is happening locally to support the skills agenda
 - Event notifications
 - Accessing support to navigate the skills system, sourcing funding to support technical education uptake
 - Building links & developing relationships
 - Encouraging business to get involved with the LSIP
 - Supporting the development of Training Needs Analyses
 - Accessing diverse, inclusive talent pools which may not have previously been considered, including veterans, ex-offenders and care leavers
-

The Pledge Partnership greatly contribute to this, as agreed with The Careers Hub. Examples include:

- Priority 5 - Connect careers provision in schools and colleges to the needs of local economies (as articulated through (LSIPs)
- Completion of employer insight CPD sessions delivered to employers including: The Teenage Brain; supporting young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (SEMH) barriers; Supporting care experienced young people; Inclusive Recruitment and Accessible Employment; Autism at Work and Young People with physical disabilities
- Engaging with the three Local Authorities, raising awareness of careers education & employer encounters and advocating for those most disadvantaged, focussing on School Improvement, Inclusion, SEND and those at risk of NEET
- LSIP colleagues and key messages are connected and shared across our network of 86 Schools/Colleges and over 500+ employers
- Rolling out the CEC Employer Standards across their network

Responding to Theme 3 • Employability Competencies

DWP have reported that being able to understand skills gaps identified by employers, has enabled them to respond strategically.

As a result, they have observed changes to their purchasing of skills provision which better supports individuals and addresses gaps that employers have highlighted. This has particularly related to employability skills and digital skills.

Enterprise Cheshire & Warrington (previously the Cheshire & Warrington LEP) have highlighted that gaining the viewpoints of employers has further evidenced their activities are progressing in a relevant direction, and cements what they have observed from data analysis.

The Pledge Partnership have completed activities to support the LSIP in addressing this theme. These include:

- 20 cohorts of an Employment Readiness Programme with school sixth forms and colleges, supporting 1,000 young people looking for an apprenticeship. Sessions led by employers/apprentices enabled young people to understand and prepare for applications to apprenticeships
- Explore programmes with schools, a series of between 3 and 5 visits to employers, training providers, further education and/or higher education providers. Targeted to inspire young people about progression routes and careers and to develop their employability skills
- 18 National Citizen Service (NCS) programmes delivered to students from mainstream schools and sixth forms/colleges and special schools. These have focused on developing their employability skills
- A monthly employer meeting sharing practice, topics including apprenticeships recruitment and supporting young people with basic employability traits and habits in the early stages of apprenticeships

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Responding to Theme 4 • CEIAG

- In January 2024, the Careers Hub held their first Careers Leaders conference, covering updates about careers education and employer engagement, with a focus on green skills and ITP engagement
- Careers Leaders meet termly, discussing pathway opportunities, specifically the skills required for Apprenticeship & Technical Education pathways, with presentations given by employers and sector leaders
- Parental engagement newsletters and on-line forums for all pathway options, including Apprenticeship & Technical Education, were delivered on behalf of the Careers Hub
- Work is underway to roll out the Skills Builder accelerator programme
- Curriculum resources were designed for Years 9-12 covering growth sectors, with a specific focus on Apprenticeship & Technical Education
- The Careers Hub supports schools and providers to meet and evidence their requirements around Provider Access Legislation
- The LSIP presented at the Cheshire and Warrington Pledge Annual Conference in June 2023. This was attended by over 220 employers, schools, colleges, youth and community groups and local authority staff, with a focus on the importance of technical skills
- The Pledge Partnership Leads have presented to each of the three secondary Headteacher forums (based on Local Authority Area), updating them on Information, Advice & Guidance, especially technical skills and routes
- The Pledge Partnership ran 6 town wide Careers Fairs, with 336 exhibitors and 7,389 attendees
- Additional opportunities have been facilitated to help the future workforce better understand careers within the sub-region. These include Climate Change and Digital Careers events, Industry Open Days, Experience of the Workplace activities, careers fairs, mock assessment centres, teacher encounters, Girls in Bentley, Jobs & Apprenticeship Fairs, Digital experiences of the workplace, Key Stage 3 Experiences of the Workplace Projects; and NHS/Social Care activity

Responding to Theme 5 • Educational Professionals

- Curriculum leads attending Sector Working Groups and networking with business professionals to support establishing partnerships between employers and providers
- Macclesfield College are delivering FE Tutor L5 from September 2024, the LSIP team will aid promotion
- Promotion of the DFE initiative "Taking Teaching Further (TTF)" via LSIP website and LinkedIn
- Raising awareness at Colleges Collaboration Event in March 2024, and Warrington UTC event in April 2024, asking employers to consider how they can get involved and support this theme
- Building relationships with DWP to investigate alternative methods in building capacity within the skills system, such as focus on Veterans, Retro Recruitment and VSO support

Monitoring Progress

As we respond to our LSIP's key themes, we will remain committed to monitoring and supporting progress.

- **Theme 1 - Technical Skills**, we will be checking progress against LSIF KPIs; monitoring technical education uptake; utilising LMI data; and monitoring and reporting on changes to curriculum
- **Theme 2 - Accessibility**, we will be recording employer engagement; brokerage support (including with regard to the apprenticeship levy); and monitoring website and social media analytics
- **Theme 3 - Employability competencies**, we will be monitoring: changes to curriculum to incorporate these skills; monitoring changes to provision for those already in work or seeking employment; and monitoring course uptake
- **Theme 4 - CEIAG**, we will be recording career inspiration activity; monitoring employer engagement; and delivery of our events calendar
- **Theme 5 - Educational Professionals**, we will be monitoring: LMI data; partnerships formed; recording employer engagement to support capacity; and partnerships formed between providers and business

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What still needs to be achieved?

The work of our LSIP is gaining momentum, our Roadmap and the progress update, demonstrate LSIP achievements to date. It is worth noting that the LSIP will run up until August 2026, as it was approved as a three-year plan, although we believe this is the start of a longer-term process.



We will now highlight activities that have begun, but which are not yet been completed, as well as objectives that we intend to take forward.



Theme 1 • Technical Skills

Timescale - complete by December 2024

- Support smarter ways of working as we see the development of the new Health & Social Care Strategic Board, Life Sciences Group led by Cogent Skills and Digital Skills Project with Careers Hub. We will also be merging our manufacturing and low carbon working groups due to the significant crossovers between the two sectors
- Building on partnerships and understanding where the linkages lie. For example, CIMSPA (Chartered Institute of Managing Sports and Physical Activity) have recognised the importance of the LSIP and have identified how they can link in with its work. As a result of our partnership approach, we have welcomed CIMSPA to our Health & Social Care Working Group, and look forward to having them contribute to our Health & Social Care Strategic Board. The Northern Skills Network have taken a similar approach with their response to the theme of Educational Professionals

Timescale - complete by March 2025

- Monitoring LSIF delivery in response to employer needs where specific technical skills gaps and future requirements have been identified

Timescale - ongoing until August 2026 (Subject to Funding)

- Maintain up to date data analysis linked to the LSIP Priorities
- Increase apprenticeship uptake and levy transfer promotion and monitor quarterly
- Continue working with providers to identify how provision can be more responsive to employer need
- Ensure ongoing employer influence of future curriculum planning
- Support the Working Groups to ensure the employer voice continues to be heard
- LSIP will sit on relevant Strategic Employer Skills Boards/Groups
- Build upon the work of College Employer Skills Boards
- There is also ongoing work with HyNet ESG to ensure they understand their responsibilities to their supply chain and beyond

Theme 2 • Accessibility

Timescale - complete by December 2024

- The NEET project is being led by Careers Hub and was launched in September 2023. Work has been undertaken to establish common ways of working across the three local authorities, with a goal to release a toolkit into high schools to reduce potential NEET figures. We are awaiting the publication of the toolkit.

Timescale - Complete by March 2025

- CWaC led, UKSPF Year 3 funded programme responding to LSIP, delivered by West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber. The programme identifies training needs, offers skills brokerage and training grants to SMEs
- 15 case studies demonstrating the benefits of training and impact or any gaps in training offer
- Working with HyNet to consider communications to understand the benefits of the project to support employers in understanding the implications of low carbon on business
- Full mapping of current support available for those considered to be at a disadvantage to assist accessing provision and employment
- We have established links regarding Care Leavers but would like to take this further, to encourage private sector employers to sign the Care Leavers Covenant. Similarly, with the Armed Forces Covenant
- Full mapping of current Digital-related provision, including MS Office training provision, Careers Hub projects and Local Authority work, e.g. Digital Cheshire
- Following feedback from our website focus group and a website audit, work is to be undertaken to reposition the website to better fit employer need

Theme 3 • Employability Competencies

Timescale - complete by December 2024

- Map where there are gaps in delivering employability skills

Timescale - complete by March 2025

- Establish activities to demonstrate how key skills are applied and transferable within employment through building relationships between providers and employers

Timescale - complete by September 2025

- Further embed employability skills, interpersonal skills and work experience into curriculum

Timescale - ongoing until August 2026 (Subject to Funding)

- Increase mechanisms to increase the exposure of learners to the world of work so that they understand what is expected of them within the workplace
- Careers in the curriculum activities to increase employer contributions within the classroom to further influence learners

Theme 4 • CEIAG

Timescale - complete by September 2024

- Establishment of an Events Calendar to make it easier for employers to see expectations of all providers and partners across the region, to provide more tailored activity and reduce duplication

Timescale - complete by June 2025

- CWLPN to work with Careers Hub on ITP pilot to increase local engagement activities in schools

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Theme 5 • Educational Professionals

We have already begun to support the ongoing formation of relationships between providers and employers, and assessing to what extent employers are able to engage and support this agenda. If these relationships continue to be formed, we expect to see enhanced opportunities for employer/provider teaching collaboration.

Further collaborative activities we are planning to support addressing this theme include:

- **Launching a working group** specifically to address this theme
- Appointing a provider to lead on upskilling of industry professionals
- Engaging with employers to understand how they feel they could support us with this theme
- Social media & PR campaigns
- Identifying a provider that can lead on increased training
- Raise awareness of the **benefits of this career path**, particularly targeting industry professionals considering retirement/change of career leading up to retirement
- **Establishment of a brokerage service** between employers and providers
- Raising awareness amongst providers of **provision being available for FE Skills Tutor level 5**
- **Sharing resourcing plans** across colleges in addressing the gap in Digital skills tutors

As much as we are aware of the gaps we have locally, we must also **consider the national picture**. Therefore, as we move forward with the LSIP, we will be working closely with other LSIPs to share best practice on how they are addressing this theme within their own regions.

Solutions that are being investigated include:

- Methods for **increasing remuneration for tutors in STEM** related subjects
 - Staff **recruitment events** targeting skills operatives from industry
 - Working with employers to promote a **'dual professional' approach**, whereby employees are released from their industry roles to work within an educational setting on a part-time basis
 - Consideration to national schemes such as **Taking Teaching Further (TTF)** to support the recruitment of staff from industry who are new to teaching, or promoting financial incentives such as Teacher Education bursaries
-



07

Closing Statements

The successful delivery of the Cheshire & Warrington LSIP to date has been due to the collaboration across the sub-region.

We are proud of the positive feedback we have received from our collaboration with partners as we progress with the delivery of our LSIP. Feedback received includes:


- The Cheshire & Warrington LSIP has demonstrated: **"Understanding our specific needs** in the wider context of the local area."
- "It was really important to **understand what employers were telling us around skills gaps** so that we can then look at a strategic level what needs to be in place to support our customers access those opportunities but be better prepared."
- "To **deliver what we need as a business around sustainability** and everything we need, being involved with the LSIP network helps us understand properly the skills that we need. So, we need that broader thinking, particularly around skills we don't know we need yet or they don't exist as yet."
- **"We're listening and we shape the offer accordingly** and through the work of the LSIP we gain that clarity around the employer voice and need, and then we can reflect that in the offer."

We want to **thank all stakeholders and employers** who have supported the process, helping ensure the Cheshire & Warrington LSIP truly reflects employers' needs.

In particular, although not limited to, we would like to thank:

- ▶ Cheshire College South & West
- ▶ Reaseheath College
- ▶ Macclesfield College
- ▶ Warrington & Vale Royal College
- ▶ Priestley College; Richmond Training
- ▶ Cogent Skills
- ▶ University of Chester
- ▶ Enterprise Cheshire & Warrington
- ▶ The Cheshire & Warrington Pledge Partnership
- ▶ Cheshire & Warrington Learning Provider Network
- ▶ Warrington Borough Council
- ▶ Cheshire East Council
- ▶ Cheshire West & Chester Council
- ▶ Warrington Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ West Cheshire & North Wales Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ DWP
- ▶ Cheshire & Warrington LSIP Board members





The Cheshire & Warrington LSIP team will remain committed to working collaboratively with key stakeholders, providers and employers across the region to ensure successful delivery of the Cheshire & Warrington LSIP.

May we also take this opportunity to highlight how our LSIP can assist you:

- Navigating your way around training provision and funding available
- Understanding your current and future skills needs
- Supporting you to engage with young people
- Promoting skills opportunities for your business in the region
- Guidance on the Apprenticeship Levy
- Taking on an apprentice or an industry placement (required for courses such as T Levels)
- Accessing different talent pools, to extend your inclusive workforce
- Influence training available locally, to meet your business needs.

For further information on the Cheshire & Warrington LSIP, and to keep up to date with our latest news, please visit our website: cheshireandwarringtonlsip.co.uk



Annexes

Annex 1 - Case Studies

Annex 2 - Business & Skills LSIP Conference, Nov 2023

Annex 3 - LSIF Projects Summary

Annex 4 - Our Network Groups

Annex 5 - Glossary of Abbreviations



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The Cheshire & Warrington LSIP Team



Paul Colman

Project Director

As Chief Executive of the South Cheshire Chamber of Commerce, I bring over 25 years' experience representing the local business community.

My role involves keeping businesses informed with the latest developments, while facilitating valuable networking and knowledge-sharing opportunities. I actively represent South Cheshire on a wide range of local and regional boards and committees, as well as within the nationally accredited British Chambers of Commerce network.

Crewe and South Cheshire are at a pivotal moment, with a real opportunity to transform the area by building on the strength and diversity of its economy. To unlock this potential, it's vital that we address the region's skills needs. My involvement in the LSIP ensures that the voice of business is central to shaping education and training provision – aligning it with employer demand, supporting future workforce development, and driving inclusive economic growth for the region.



Sarah Emes-Young

Project Manager

Sarah is responsible for driving the overall LSIP project, leading the team to ensure successful delivery to set targets. Sarah also leads on business engagement within the LSIP team.

Sarah's background is in Human Resources leadership, predominantly in manufacturing and supply chain environments within the North West of England and North East Wales. She gets the skills challenges faced by business and can confidently support with innovative solutions, including tapping into her wide network of contacts and exercising her workplace rebel behaviours.





Julie Shawcross

Skills Consultant

Julie Shawcross is a seasoned professional with expertise in leading high-performing Bid Teams across the apprenticeship, training, skills, and employability sectors.

Her experience as Chair of the Cheshire & Warrington Learning Provider Network, helps her to lead collaboration among FE providers across the sub-region, driving strategic thinking and meaningful engagement with employers and communities. to strengthen education and workforce development.

"I am proud to support the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), a vital initiative for aligning education and training with the needs of our local economy. The LSIP is an important opportunity to ensure learners gain the right skills and training providers stay responsive to changing workforce demands."



Maria Davison

Skills Consultant

Maria Davison brings a wealth of experience spanning an early career in retail management and over two decades in Further Education, where she held a range of teaching and senior leadership positions.

Throughout her career, she has worked closely with employers to address workforce development needs and drive skills-based initiatives. Since the inception of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), Maria has played a key role in providing strategic skills consultancy, fostering stakeholder collaboration, and ensuring alignment with regional priorities. As Skills and Policy Director at the West Cheshire and North Wales Chamber of Commerce, she continues to champion skills development and policy engagement across the region.



Hannah Crookes

Skills Consultant

