



NORTHERN
SKILLSNETWORK

SKILLS ACROSS
THE NORTH
DELEGATE PACK

Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce
06.10.2022
10am - 4pm

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Thank you from the NSN Co-Chairs

The [Northern Skills Network](#) held a very successful conference on the 6th October in Manchester. The theme was 'Skills across the North', specifically the role of skills delivery and development in the Levelling Up agenda. We welcomed c. 100 delegates from a wide range of organisations across the skills sector including Independent Training Providers, Further Education Colleges, Local Authorities, Employers and many more!

A number of speakers from national and regional organisations contributed their professional perspectives covering policy as well as place-based initiatives. The result was an informative and inspiring agenda highlighting the unique position that further education and skills have to secure a more equitable future for individuals and communities. As we aspire towards a Net Zero North the implications for a future labour market will be quite different from the present and it is vital that all have the opportunity to take advantage of this major transition ... the further education sector will provide those opportunities by skilling, upskilling, reskilling ...

A big thank you to all our sponsor, NCFE who made this conference possible, our speakers for their contributions and to all attendees.

Anne Gornall

NSN Co-Chair

Executive Director | GMLPN

Alex Miles

NSN Co-Chair

Managing Director | YLP

The Northern Skills Network

NSN's aim is to represent training and education providers of all types across the North of England and promote the value of vocational and technical education, especially apprenticeships, to employers and other important stakeholders. Its members consist of the eight providers networks across the North.

In all NSN represents over 300 providers, ranging from FE Colleges, Independent training Providers, Universities, Employer Providers, Local Authorities and 3rd sector charitable organisations.

As the name implies, NSN is both aligned to and supports the Northern Powerhouse agenda and is passionate, through its members, to play its part in increasing the productivity and prosperity of the north through increasing the skill levels of both young people entering work for the first time and existing employees within the workforce.

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Speaker Summaries

Henri Murison

Director, Northern Powerhouse Partnership

- Funding & delivery system of apprenticeships requires changing - National system with national constraints
- Levy - potential additional income for skills
- LSIPs - if you don't also devolve skills to CAs what is the point?
- More targeted qualifications to attract more employer investment
- Northern Powerhouse Partnership are committed to working with NSN & providers to level up the North

NSN is to consider levy reform campaign and work with NPP on this



Kirsty Evans

Post 16 Regions and FE Provider Oversight Director,
Department for Education

- £3.8bn more in further education and skills over this Parliament.
- DfE understand the challenges providers are facing e.g. Cost of living impact - energy, wages, etc.
- Providers can 'Secure great outcomes for people, employers, contribute to higher skills higher wages economies'
- Promotes ITPs and colleges work collaboratively to address needs

NSN to bring ideas for solutions to challenges to DfE



[Click here to access Kirsty's presentation](#)



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Speaker Summaries (cont.)

John Myers

Head of Apprenticeship Funding Policy,
Department for Education

- Economic benefit of reducing reoffending
- Law changed – prisoners can become apprentices
- Any prisoner near release is eligible
- Pilot target of 100 apprentices per annum

NSN to raise further awareness for prison apprenticeships

Providers to approach open prisons in their area to deliver PA

 [Click here to access John's presentation](#)



Sharon Walpole

Director, Careermap

Points to consider

- How effective is your careers guidance?
- Are students placed on the right programme to meet their abilities and career aspirations? (retention)
- Is careers guidance tailored to learners' individual needs? E.g. learners with high needs/SEND, care leavers...
- Do you have a careers leader who is responsible for coordinating careers guidance?

Providers, ask yourselves the questions above! Recognise the importance of engaging with parents, schools & influencers

 [Click here to access Sharon's presentation](#)



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Speaker Summaries (cont.)

David Gallagher

Chief Executive Officer, NCFE - **Conference Sponsors**

Why is NSN so important?

- Levelling up – want the best deal for learners, communities in the North
- ‘Skills isn’t the silver bullet but is a massive part of the solution’
- ‘Got to get better at leveraging collective intelligence, resource and voices’

NCFE – improving the sector

- Help to power organisations that will help to make a difference
- Supporting Autistic Individuals into Apprenticeships – great example of working together at a local level. How can we scale up?
- Essential skills – discrete, threaded and embedded way in the curriculum
- Green & Sustainability – how to thread across curriculum?
- Assessment Innovation Fund available – 1.5 million
- ‘Good for me good for FE’ – volunteering opportunities for learners

“
Movements
need
collaborators”



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Speaker Summaries (cont.)

Anne Gornall & Alex Miles

Co-Chairs, Northern Skills Network

2022 Achievements:

- Joined the Northern Skills Taskforce of the Northern Powerhouse Partnership (NPP)
- Represented NSN at the Northern Powerhouse Education, Employment and Skills Summit
- Represented NSN members views on national consultations including Levelling up White paper
- Contributed to AELP's report – "Excellence for learners, value for employers - How independent training providers can deliver the workforce of the future"
- "Green Skills Across the North" Online Conference
- We are increasingly well positioned with stakeholders and policy makers and have ongoing and regular conversations with e.g. DfE – recognising the value and contribution of regional networks

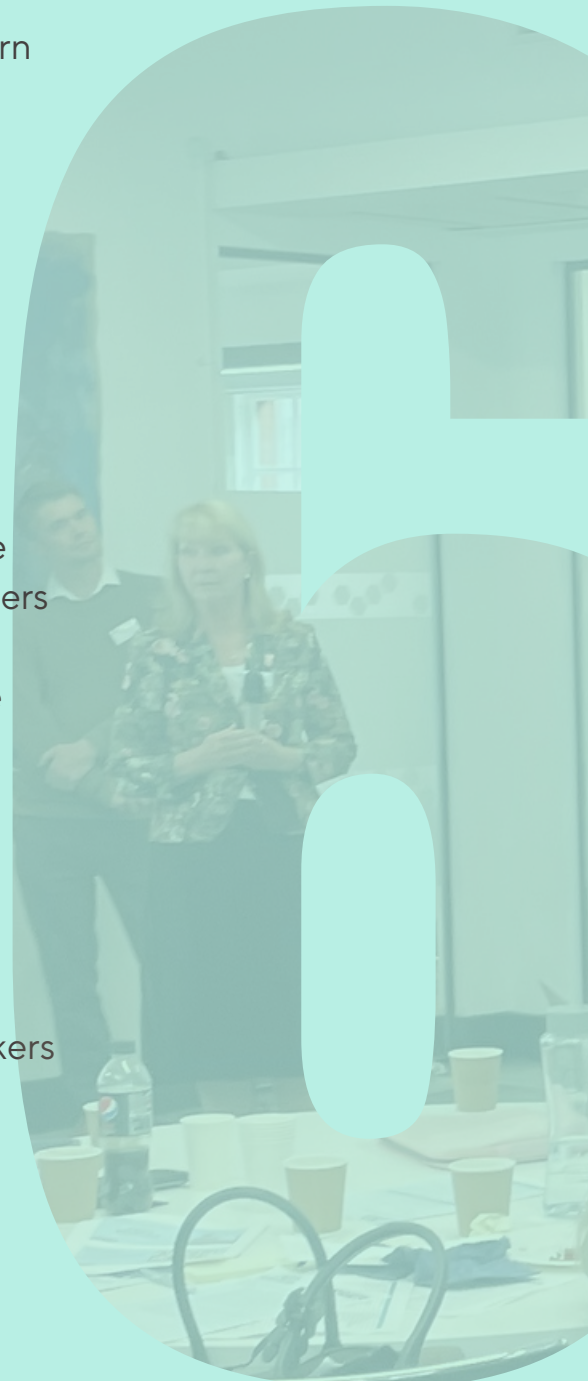
Northern Skills Network will:

- Act on the takeaways of today's conference- see actions
- Continue to promote green as part of curricula
- Represent the voice of providers across the north
- Engage and influence stakeholders and policy makers
- Engage SMEs in the Apprenticeship Market

NSN to ensure career resources are available to all.

NSN to Scale up inclusion projects.

 [Click here to access NSN's presentation](#)



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Speaker Summaries (cont.)

Jim Coleman

Head of Economic Advisory, WSP

- Levelling up is not a new challenge – but previous work has not closed the gap
- Skills base is necessary for closing the gap
- The needs of the 'green economy' will be central to successful levelling up
 - Decarbonisation will create a lot of new jobs and opportunities
- Net zero is all about skills education and learning
- New industries new skills e.g. solar, hydrogen etc.
- FE is a key enabler of this seismic transition

NSN to continue communicating the vital role of FE in securing a resilient, sustainable economy. To develop strategy to ensure skills in the North contribute & skill people up for Net-Zero.



[Click here to access Jim's presentation](#)



[Click here to access the Green Skills & Sustainable Development Ambition](#)



LSIP Facilitated Panel

Overall Considerations

- Specificity – more informed choices about what AEB is spent on
- LSIP and regional skills strategy have to be properly joined
- Employers want shorter more accessible courses
- How much are employers willing to invest in training?
- Have to get better at showcasing the careers available in regions



NSN to continue to support collaboration between chambers, employers and providers

Providers to consider how to get employers to invest in skills

Speaker Summaries (cont.)

LSIP Facilitated Panel

Subrahmaniam Krishnan-Harihara

Head of Research, Greater Manchester Chamber

- Why LSIPs? If the work to put employers at the heart needs to happen again it has not worked in the past
- GMCC works very closely with ERBs, colleges, providers, CA, GMLPN
- In conjunction with GMLPN created [GM BEST](#)
- Engaged with 2000 businesses and found there are challenges that are specific to sectors, there are regional/local variations across GM, assessment of needs has to happen in each Local Authority
- Employers do not want to own the skills system – they want it to be responsive to their needs



Geoff Mason

Policy Manager, North & Western Lancashire Chamber

- Large skills survey / Sector focus groups
- Desire for pick and mix modular view of training
- Systemic issues e.g. funding / levy
- Build on provider relationships
- Employer need is worth nothing if providers can't address it



Dan Fell

CEO, Doncaster Chamber

- Skills system is not broken – some great partnerships out there that can be built upon
- Needs to be inclusive of Higher Education, ITPs
- Findings/ themes e.g. navigation, employer engagement, customer service issues with providers, short courses that businesses really value, how to support middle managers within businesses, problems with accessing and retaining talent



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Speaker Summaries (cont.)


Paul Cocker

Senior HMI, FE & Skills, Ofsted

Levelling up key measures:

- ‘Embedding employers in the heart of the skills system by placing a legal requirement on colleges and other providers to work with employers to develop skills plans, so that the training on offer meets the needs of local areas, and people no longer have to leave their hometowns to find great jobs’
- Looking for Stakeholder groups – Civic | Community | Education | Employers referred to
- Employer engagement is key
- Response to LMI, employer demand applies across providers to create responsive curricula

NSN to get providers together to consider employer involvement - LMI

 [Click here to access Paul's presentation](#)



Andy Burnham

Greater Manchester Mayor

- Let the voice of the North be heard
- Employers, providers of all kinds facing the same direction in order to make change really happen
- The system cannot be too rigid in its focus – local flexibilities and priorities are needed
- All ten mayors across the country support devolution
- Skills has been under-prioritised in national debate
- FE -Talent pipeline for employers
- Greatest strength of the North of England – the people of the region
- Ambition for a North of England that is a world leader in green technology and can apply skills to achieve Net Zero

NSN invited to be on the platform at the Northern Convention



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"These qualifications are the key to unlocking so many doors, and I know personally if I had not decided to gain my qualifications, my career would be very different."

– Yvonne, previous participant of the Level 3 Diploma in Specialist Support for Teaching and Learning in Schools.

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In attendance

- Acacia Training Ltd
- AELP
- Alliance Learning
- ANS Group
- Ascentis
- Association of Colleges
- Back 2 Work Complete Training
- Burnley College
- Bury College
- Calderdale College
- Clarity Travel
- CMS Vocational Training
- Cognassist
- Damar Training
- DMR Training & Consultancy Ltd
- Education Training Foundation
- Gateway Qualifications
- GMCA
- GMCVO
- GMLPF
- Great Places
- Greater Manchester Police
- Institute of Physics
- Julie Shawcross Consulting
- Kaplan
- Learning Curve Group
- Manchester City Council
- Manchester Metropolitan University
- Mantra Learning
- Mode Training
- Myerscough College
- Nacro
- NCFE
- NLTG
- North East Learning Providers
- North Yorkshire County Council
- NowSkills Limited
- Oldham College
- Pearson
- Pilot IMS
- Plato Training UK Ltd
- Portland Training
- Rochdale Council
- Rochdale Training
- Salford City College Group
- Shaw Trust
- Simian Risk Management
- South Yorkshire MCA
- SR Supply Chain Consultants
- Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
- The Growth Company
- The Growth Company
- TMP College
- Total People
- Trafford College Group
- Trainsure
- Transport Training Academy
- Tyneside Training Services

Get in touch with NSN!

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