



NOTES

Agri-Skills Working Group

Wednesday 12th November 2025, 9.00am – 10.00am
Via Zoom

PRESENT

Rod Chambers	Hull & East Yorkshire LSIP
Hannah Crookes	Hull & East Yorkshire LSIP
Sharron Mansell	Bishop Burton College
Sharon Hodgson	Jobcentre Plus / DWP
Kevin Kendall	Agricultural Education Consultant
Thomas Price	NFU

OVERVIEW

The meeting discussed the development of LSIP 2.0, with a submission deadline of 31st March 2026. Key sectors identified by the Hull & East Yorkshire Combined Authority (HEYCA) included agri-food, life sciences/biomedical, energy, manufacturing and marine, ports, & logistics. Concerns were raised about the absence of construction and health and social care. The LSIP Team provided an update on their engagement activities to support the development of LSIP 2.0, including survey work and roundtable activity to gather feedback. The importance of basic IT skills and soft skills like communication was highlighted. Apprenticeship challenges were also discussed, particularly around funding and understanding, with suggestions being received for improving employer engagement.

LSIP 2.0

Hannah Crookes provided an update on the current position of ownership of the LSIP model, where the legal responsibility still lied with the Hull & Humber Chamber of Commerce (as the designated employer representative body) but there was a requirement to work towards joint ownership with HEYCA. The primary role of HEYCA currently would be to confirm the priority sectors which they wanted the LSIP to focus on, with supporting data. The Hull & Humber Chamber of Commerce would be responsible for gathering employer feedback, developing the LSIP and ensuring submission of a substantive draft by 31st March 2026 with support of HEYCA.

It was noted that HEYCA had included Agri-Food as a priority sector for LSIP 2.0. It was noted that the HEY LSIP team were supportive of this, and for information that where sectors haven't been included the Hull & Humber Chamber of Commerce would be able to challenge HEYCA subject to sufficient evidence.

In terms of engagement activity, a survey would be launched for all sectors at the next HEY LSIP Forum, taking place on Monday 17th November 2025 at the University of Hull. Members were asked to provide support in distributing the survey to maximise employer feedback. Feedback from this would guide the in-person roundtable discussions for January 2026, which all working group members would be invited to noting that it would replace the normal bi-monthly zoom call. The HEY LSIP team would also be utilising external events to gain feedback, as well as 1-2-1 meetings. Any sector representative data or research would also be welcomed to support the development of LSIP 2.0.

The HEY LSIP team confirmed they intended to attend the next East Riding Rural Partnership event on 18th December as this would support potential involvement of representatives from farming in the development of LSIP 2.0.

Members were supportive that Agri-Food remained as a priority, but concerns were expressed about the exclusion of tourism and hospitality particularly due to the diversification of agriculture into tourism and leisure, and the need to support seasonal workers. Rod Chambers highlighted that he would be attending HEYCA's Policy Sprint on 17th November 2025 where it was hoped more clarity would be provided on priority sectors, and how the LSIP would link with HEYCA's development of various policies and strategies, including the Local Growth Plan and Get Britain Working Plan.

The group then discussed critical skills and the implication of Net Zero and Digital agendas:

- It was noted that there was a legal requirement to consider net zero as part of the development of LSIP 2.0, but noting consideration to terminology due to the national perspective of Reform and how this could impact on HEYCA's point of view
- Communication and resilience were described as being key skills the workforce need.
- The understanding was that schools are using Outlook, Powerpoint and Teams but questions were still being raised as to whether this was consistent across all schools.
- Despite this, concerns were also raised that simple business use of IT was still not apparent across all, i.e. constructing an email, using excel and presentation skills.

Suggestions were welcomed from the group to support employer engagement activity, noting:

- Larger employers like Ripon Farm Services should be contacted and invited to the roundtable events. Mole Valley was also suggested.

UNDERSTANDING APPRENTICESHIPS

- Sharon Hodgson highlighted that there appeared to be a reduction in apprenticeship vacancies.
- Despite this, however, apprenticeship starts within the sector were being observed as increasing although still relatively modest.
- Concerns were expressed about the ability of SMEs to be able to access the levy, and how they may not be in a significant supply chain to benefit from levy transfer.
- Preferred methods of information dissemination for employers regarding apprenticeships were discussed, with a preference for online resources and email updates.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Members were waiting for the budget to hear about paid work experience for 16 to 24-year-olds.
- The government's strategic priorities fund for transforming the UK food system and its implications for skills within the sector were discussed.
- A project being managed by Andrew Steel regarding surplus food was discussed, and its potential alignment with Kevin Kendall's work.