

FUTURE-READY SKILLS COMMISSION

Call for Evidence

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**West
Yorkshire**
Combined
Authority

Foreword

Our current national skills system is urgently in need of reshaping. Our economy is constantly evolving, new roles – particularly in the digital sector are being created more regularly, yet there are large numbers of people sitting alongside unfilled skilled vacancies for jobs that offer good pay and prospects.

As Chair of the Combined Authority and Leader of Bradford Council I have seen first-hand the critical importance of skills to the fortunes of West Yorkshire and beyond, in driving forward inclusion and social mobility as well as improving productivity, creating opportunities and for ensuring a buoyant economy we can all benefit from.

In this ever-changing skills economy we need a system that is responsive to local needs, not a one-size fits all formula that is out of touch with the changing needs of individuals and businesses. This new Future-Ready Skills Commission for a Devolved UK aims to change our ill-equipped system, by developing a workable blueprint that can be adapted at a local level and respond to the many future demands that will be placed upon it.

I believe that if we can get the design and operation of our skills system right it can serve as the catalyst for the transformation of skills nationally and ultimately drive strong productivity and growth to our economy. At the same time improved access to relevant skills will provide a ladder of opportunity for everyone, including those who are currently disadvantaged.

To develop an agenda for improvement we need to learn from past experiences and existing evidence to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past. But we also need radical and innovative thinking if we are to break out of the current constraints.

The challenge for us now, is to engage as widely as possible to develop an accurate diagnosis of current problems as a basis for prescribing a comprehensive and coherent package of solutions.

It is important that everyone with a stake the national skills economy helps to drive this initiative forwards to transform the system and ensure we are truly future-ready. Your submissions will be used as a key source of evidence for our deliberations and we will publish a summary of them for wider use in due course.

I look forward to receiving your views and proposals.

Warm regards,

Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe

1 Introduction

West Yorkshire Combined Authority has supported the creation of an independent Commission to shape the future of the skills system, so that it better meets the needs of individuals, businesses and the economy.

The aim of the Commission is to develop a blueprint for an education and skills system that can contribute to the outcomes needed at local level i.e. the achievement of local economic priorities, the fulfilment of individual aspirations and the promotion of inclusive growth.

An accompanying paper provides an overview of the role of the Commission: what it is seeking to achieve, the challenges it aims to address and the approach it will take to meeting its remit.

The purpose of this Call for Evidence is to seek wider views and input on the issues under consideration that can be used to inform the findings and recommendations of the Commission.

We encourage everyone with an interest in this topic to respond and would particularly like to hear from education and training providers, academics, employers, students, learners as well as from the public. Alongside this call for evidence the Commission will consult in a number of ways with relevant groups, including learners and employers.

1.4 Overview of the call for evidence

This call for evidence will inform the Commission's thinking on the issues set out in the overview document. It will open on 26 February 2019, concluding on 12 April 2019.

The Commission is seeking evidence from stakeholders on the following themes (which are set out in detail in the accompanying overview document):

1. **Technical education and training** - How can we ensure that technical education and training gives people the skills they need for high quality employment and employers the skills they need to meet business objectives?
2. **Careers information and inspiration** - how can we make the labour market work better through improved information, advice and guidance, ensure that young people are career ready and adults understand the options available to them for career development?
3. **Workforce skills** - how do we enable adults to invest in skills in response to the changing labour market and ensure that employers are investing in the skills they need for business success?

A further cross-cutting theme is the **local dimension**: how do we arrive at a workable blueprint for the skills system that provides local partners with the powers and funding that they need to deliver integrated economic strategy with skills at their heart but which also provides for a co-ordinated approach across localities.

The next section of the document contains specific questions under each of the four headings.

1.3 How we will use your responses to this call for evidence

We will carry out a structured analysis of the content of all the responses we receive and the input you provide will be incorporated into a summary report that will form part of the briefing provided to members of the Commission. Therefore, the responses have the potential to directly influence the scope of our enquiry as well as the findings and recommendations of the Commission. The summary of responses will be published as one of the outputs of the Commission's work.

Respondents to the call for evidence may also be invited to expand on their written submission via an oral evidence session, interview or participation in a group discussion.

1.5 How to respond

Please note that there is no requirement for you to respond to every question posed in this Call for Evidence. We would also be happy to receive general responses relating to the broad themes we have set out. All stakeholders with an interest in this field are encouraged to submit evidence for the Commission's consideration.

Please download a word document version of the form and email it or post it to us at the addresses below.

skillscommission@westyorks-ca.gov.uk

Michelle Burton
West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Wellington House,
40-50 Wellington Street,
Leeds.
LS1 2DE

2. Questions

1. Technical education and training

1. How effective do you believe the current technical education and training system is in delivering the skills needed by individuals, employers and the wider economy?

	Very effective	Fairly effective	Slightly effective	Not effective	Don't know / no opinion
Individuals	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Employers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Wider economy	<input type="checkbox"/>				

2. Please explain your answer and cite any evidence that supports your view.

3. Thinking about the major reforms to the skills system that have recently been introduced or are in the pipeline, how likely is that they will contribute to the major improvements to the skills system that we need in the medium to longer term?

	Very likely	Quite likely	Fairly likely	Not likely	Don't know / no opinion
Apprenticeship reforms (including levy)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Technical education reforms (including T-Levels)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Office for Students	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Learner Loans (FE)					
Review of post-18 education and funding					
Other, please specify					

4. Please explain your answer and cite any evidence that supports your view.

5. Do you agree or disagree with the view that placing greater purchasing power in the hands of “consumers” (both employers and individuals) through interventions like the apprenticeship levy and learner loans will result in a significantly more responsive skills system?

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Tend to agree
- c) Neither agree nor disagree
- d) Tend to disagree
- e) Strongly disagree
- f) Don't know / no opinion

6. Please explain your answer and cite any evidence that supports your view.

7. How can we improve the current funding and accountability system for skills in order to promote the outcomes that we are seeking to achieve, around developing economically valuable skills, driving high quality provision and supporting opportunities for all? If possible, include any lessons you believe can be learnt from previous attempts to reform aspects of the skills system. Please cite any evidence that supports your view.

8. Do you believe that problems around parity of esteem between academic and technical routes have a fundamental impact on the ability of the system to deliver the skills we need?

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Tend to agree
- c) Neither agree nor disagree
- d) Tend to disagree
- e) Strongly disagree
- f) Don't know / no opinion

9. Please explain your answer and cite any evidence that supports your view.

10. What steps need to be taken to ensure that disadvantaged learners of all kinds can fulfil their potential and are not left behind by the skills system? Please cite any evidence that supports your view.

2. Careers information and inspiration

1. Is enough being done to build the career readiness and employability of young people before they enter the world of work?

Yes No Don't know / no opinion

2. If not, what further action is needed and why? Please cite any evidence that supports your view.

3. How effective are current arrangements for careers information advice and guidance, taking into account the support on offer both for young people and for adults?

	Very effective	Fairly effective	Slightly effective	Not effective	Don't know / no opinion
Young people	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Adults	<input type="checkbox"/>				

4. Please explain your answer and cite any evidence that supports your view.

5. How can it be ensured that those institutions with a statutory role in providing careers support do so in an impartial manner? Please explain your answer and cite any evidence that supports your view.

6. And how can it be ensured that institutions providing careers support can be held to account for the quality of support that they provide? Please explain your answer and cite any evidence that supports your view.

7. What are the key barriers that constrain meaningful engagement with employers for young people and how can they be overcome? Please explain your answer and cite any evidence that supports your view.

8. How can we ensure that the most disadvantaged young people have access to opportunities to build their understanding of the world of work? Please explain your answer and cite any evidence that supports your view.

9. What are the main barriers that limit the progress of schools and colleges against the [Gatsby Good Career Guidance Benchmarks](#)? Please explain your answer and cite any evidence that supports your view.

10. What role should local areas have in ensuring that effective careers support is available and what elements should be handled at national level? How can careers support be effectively linked to the emerging local industrial strategies? Please cite any evidence that supports your view.

3. Workforce Skills

1. How responsive do you believe the skills system is to the needs of adult learners who are seeking to progress their careers?

- a) Very responsive
- b) Fairly responsive
- c) Slightly responsive
- d) Not responsive
- e) Don't know / no opinion

2. Please explain your answer and cite any evidence that supports your view.

3. How can we promote increased demand for learning among adults to support career progression, to promote adaptability and to address local skills deficits? Please cite any evidence that supports your view.

4. How can we stimulate employer investment in skills as part of the wider changes that we hope to promote through local industrial strategies and in response to challenges like automation? Please cite any evidence that supports your view.

5. How can we increase the level of engagement between employers and the public skills system in order to maximise the value of these public institutions / assets? Please cite any evidence that supports your view.

6. What are the key future challenges to which the skills system will need to respond and what are the practical implications for the various parts of the system? Please cite any evidence that supports your view.



5. The local dimension

1. Do you agree or disagree that greater devolution of powers and funding is an effective way of ensuring that local areas can get the skills they need to improve productivity and drive inclusive growth?

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Tend to agree
- c) Neither agree nor disagree
- d) Tend to disagree
- e) Strongly disagree
- f) Don't know / no opinion

2. Please explain your answer and cite any evidence that supports your view.

3. What powers need to be devolved to enable the skills system to operate more effectively at a local level? Please cite any evidence that supports your view.

4. Under a devolved skills system what mechanisms need to be exercised at national level to ensure that we have a co-ordinated system that does not become fragmented? Please cite any evidence that supports your view.

5. What should be the preferred indicators for measuring what matters most in terms of the performance of the skills system, both at a national and local level? Please cite any evidence that supports your view.

6. Thinking about all of the themes we have raised are there other issues of key importance that you would like to highlight for consideration by the Commission?



Respondent information sheet

Full name and organisation's name

Email

We may wish to publish your response in full or in part. Please indicate your publishing preference:

1. Publish response with name
2. Publish response only (anonymous)
3. Do not publish response

Should you wish for your response not to be published, it will only be shared between the members of the Commission and officers of the Combined Authority working on the Skills Commission project.

Should we wish to contact you in the future, would you be willing to be contacted?

Yes No

For the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018, the 'controller' of the personal data which you provide in the attached form is the West Yorkshire Combined Authority ("The Combined Authority", "we", "us") of Wellington House, 40-50 Wellington St, Leeds LS1 2DE (tel: 0113 251 7272) who are the responsible statutory body for the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership ("LEP") and WY Metro. The Combined Authority is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office with registration number ZA051694.

The Combined Authority is collecting this data and will process it for the purpose of assisting the independent commission and their aim of developing an education and skills system which better meets the needs of individuals, local businesses and the region's economy.

The Combined Authority will share this data with members of the independent commission. Where we seek to publish responses, consent will be obtained from respondents first.

We will not share you information with any other organisation or third party. There may be other circumstances in which we may share or use certain information about you, which are:

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1. if we have a legal obligation to do so or if we are required or requested to do so by a competent authority such as the police or a court;
2. if we need to use or disclose your information to obtain legal advice or in connection with legal proceedings;
3. if we need to share your information to protect your vital interests if you are unable to give us consent or it is unreasonable for us to ask for your consent in the circumstances (e.g. if you are injured).

We will retain your information until the end of the project (expected to be June 2020). This is in accordance with our information retention policy and on the expiration of such period we will safely delete it.

Information provided to the Combined Authority will be processed under Article 6(1)(e) of the GDPR which states that processing is necessary for the purposes of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller.

As a data subject you have a number of rights under the DPA. These include the right to access the information which we hold about you. In some cases you may have a right to have your personal data rectified, erased or restricted, and to object to certain use of your data.

This would not affect the legality of what we do with your personal data before you make such a request and would not stop us from continuing to use your data to the extent that we do not require your consent. It would stop us from further using data for purposes which require your consent (e.g. marketing).

If you are unsatisfied with the manner in which we collect or handle your personal data you have a right to make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office. Information about how to make complaints can be found on the ICO's website at <https://ico.org.uk>

[For further information, or to contact us to make a request, please visit https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/contact/.](https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/contact/)

The Combined Authority's Data Protection Officer can be contacted at Rebecca.BrookesDPO@westyorks-ca.gov.uk