

Minutes of Visitor Economy Task Group
 On Tuesday 07 May 2024, 14:30-16:00
 Online via Teams

Attendees

Initials	Name	Organisation and Role
JB	Julie Barker	Task Group CHAIR, Independent Consultant
CB	Caroline Bragg	ESCC SES Lead
CC	Catherine Clifford	Eastbourne Hospitality Association/The Landsdowne Hotel
Cllr CB	Councillor Christine Bayliss	Rother District Council
HB	Hannah Brookshaw	ESCC SES Task Group Lead
JS	Jack Scott	East Sussex Careers Hub
JB	John Bownas	Love Hastings Ltd
KP	Katie Parris	ESCG - Lewes
MC	Mandy Curtis	18 Hours
SS	Sally Staples	ESCC
VP	Vanessa Potter	SCTP
Apologies		
Guests		
CF	Claire Ford	Visit England

Actions arising from this meeting, 7th May 2024

ACTION	LEAD(S)	DUE BY/ STATUS
Action 1: Experience Sussex officers to be invited to the next meeting to engage with task group members on their plan and implementation - specifically around growth and skills.	HB/SS	Next meeting
Action: please make introductions/share details of any networks or representative organisations that could be engaged into this task group.	All	Ongoing
Action 3: ESCC Employability and Skills Team postcard to be shared with the minutes.	HB	With the minutes
Action 4: Forward plan items to be taken forward at the next meeting	HB	For the next meeting

1) Welcome

HB acted as interim chair and welcomed all in attendance, and all attendees introduced themselves.

2) Review of previous minutes and actions

Review of previous minutes with no amendments.

Previous actions:

- Discussion to be fed through to Skills East Sussex board - done at the most recent meeting
- HB and JB to consider projects and suggestions noted in the Celebrity Chef/Hastings hospitality spotlight items to agree next steps - meeting arranged with DWP/college/Hastings & Rother Food Network/Careers Hub
- Action plan to be finalised and shared with the Task Group - core items: Recruitment (raising the profile of the sector), Future Skills and Impact, Visit England presentation.
- Agenda items for the next meeting to be sent through to the SES mailbox - items are on today's agenda, and future item for the next meeting from the Destination Sussex organisation.

3) Visit England

Plans for integrating skills into our visitor economy strategy and how we work with visitor associations to do this.

Role of [Local Visitor Economy Partnerships](#) (LVEPs) - integrating skills into the growth plans - best practice elsewhere

Claire Ford shared a presentation (presentation shared with the minutes), including:

Discussion on the presentation:

Cllr CB - when we've been doing work in Bexhill, there's a feeling from schools that 'straight A' English/maths students are discouraged from doing catering/hospitality - perception is that catering is more for students with lower grades.

Responses to this:

CC - I've done some work with East Sussex College and Bexhill College on talking to the students about hospitality, to explain that there is more to hospitality than

they may think - e.g. events management and accounts, and up to the level of General Manager. I'd be interested to know what the content of hospitality courses is currently.

KP - what the schools might be referring to is that courses often start at Level 2, rather than Level 3 (which is the equivalent of A-levels), which give a basic background in hospitality, before progressing to Level 3, so some may find this too basic. But these courses typically have low contact hours for the maths element, while working in a hospitality environment. Also there is the apprenticeship option, where they can be working full time, with training attached. But also, if they already have GCSEs in maths and English, then they don't need to do maths and English as part of their hospitality course.

CB - so it sounds like there is a misunderstanding from the schools, thinking that the students with good qualifications are taking a step back in maths/English.

Cllr CB - It may be that schools are assuming Level 3 is the entry point for hospitality and catering for more able students, rather than level 1 or 2. It may be that T levels are the answer to this issue, but it's important that all levels of attainment/achievement match up with other options available at age 16.

Comments in chat:

MC - At the University of Brighton, we no longer offer Hospitality but do have a new degree next year for Business Management with Tourism / Business Management with Events. We also host a Help to Grow scheme (like Oxford Brookes).

VP - Skills Bootcamps are potentially an option to explore locally for adult learners. Here are some national examples. [Results | Find a course | National Careers Service](#)

KP - All our hospitality based courses can be found here, running from Level 1 - Level 3 <https://www.escg.ac.uk/search/?q=Hospitality>. Our Hospitality based apprenticeships can be found here: <https://www.escg.ac.uk/apprenticeships/our-industry-sectors/catering-and-hospitality/>

VP - Regarding apprenticeships, it would be good to highlight the range of apprenticeships available within the sector, at both the Apprenticeship Roadshows and Apprenticeship Graduations this year.

VP - SCTP has just launched a directory in partnership with the East Sussex and West Sussex and Brighton and Hove Careers Hubs, that connects schools with training providers that are willing to visit schools to promote vocational and technical education. This includes both the college and the range of ITPs. This includes some providers that deliver in the hospitality sector. Schools could be

encouraged to book providers who deliver within the hospitality sector as a 'spotlight' campaign.

KP - Definitely. We always have a stand at the two roadshows. We also run Information Sessions on Zoom every couple of weeks, including the school holidays, that are open to anyone to attend. We have parents, students etc attend. At the Open Events we also run presentations and have a stand specifically on apprenticeships.

Questions from HB - what training does the sector need in terms of upskilling? And how can we be using the work that Visit England is doing with education providers, to do extra through the Careers Hub?

Question from JB - is there something about the marketing of courses to help change the perception of hospitality and catering?

CC - maybe the language 'hospitality and catering' needs some thought? Does the word 'catering' put some people off? Could it sound more dynamic and appealing?

SS - regarding feeding back on the Visit England strategies, we will have an LVEP officer (shared between East Sussex, West Sussex, Brighton & Hove), who will circulate any strategies that Visit England are consulting on. Experience Sussex is not the LVEP, but it may well be that Experience Sussex contacts will be used to make sure that it reaches you.

Action 1: Experience Sussex officers to be invited to the next meeting to engage with task group members on their plan and implementation - specifically around growth and skills.

4) Sector Engagement & Reach

Retail Centres

HB - We've had some engagement with The Beacon Shopping Centre and Priors Meadow shopping centres sharing the support available through the Employability & Skills Team and wider task group partners, which has resulted in some direct 121 engagement.

Networks/sector representative organisations

HB - Note that we have representative organisations on this task group, as well some engagement undertaken separately - are there any other key ones we are missing that could be engaged?

Action: please make introductions/share details of any networks or representative organisations that could be engaged into this task group.

5) Skills East Sussex April meeting update

CB - task group discussions were fed back to the SES Board. The main items discussed at the April SES Board meeting were:

- Update on East Sussex 2050 Economic Prosperity Strategy - due for publication this summer, once further amendments have taken place following the consultation/feedback period.
- Darrell Gale (Director of Public Health) gave an update on Health, Wellbeing & Work strategy, and the key recommendations
- NHS gave an update on their role as an anchor institution and what that means in terms of their focus on skills and workforce

6) East Sussex Employability and Skills Team - sector support/opportunities for young people and adults

JS gave an overview of the work of the Careers Hub - working with 43 schools and colleges, and 9 independent non-maintained schools. We're always after opportunities for employers to talk to young people, nothing better than employers speaking directly to them. There are a few ways to get involved:

Industry Champion Network - signing up to a monthly newsletter, which includes activities happening (e.g. school assembly talks, workshops, small group discussions with students).

Open Doors - inviting young people into employers' places of work (currently have 30 schools involved, with over 2000 young people visiting businesses over the last couple of years).

Traditional work experience (all schools involved, always after opportunities).

ESTAR work with post-16 providing further opportunities.

There is a new leaflet (a one-page postcard), summarising how you can engage with these opportunities.

Action 3: ESCC Employability and Skills Team postcard to be shared with the minutes.

7) AOB/Forward plan items/Date of Next Meeting

Forward plan items discussed:

- Summer season snapshot for East Sussex to assist with planning for 2025
- Rother District Council Skills Survey results and analysis
- Experience Sussex officers - information on plan and implementation

Action 4: items to be included on the September meeting agenda

AOB

VP promoted the Apprenticeship Roadshows, taking place in June and July, great opportunity to promote any apprenticeship vacancies. Let Vanessa know if you would like a free exhibition stand. Also, graduations are taking place in November, details to follow.

Next meeting will be 17th September 2024, 14:30 to 16.00 - online only via Teams.