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## **Economic Wellbeing Pillar: Competiveness, Employment, Education & Skills (CEES)**

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### **Thematic Working Group (TWG): Workshop 3, 4 August 2016**

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**Attendees:** Joanne Wallace- **Wallace Consulting**, Kim Nesbitt- **ALMAC**, Eileen Stewart- **Armagh Business Centre**, Ciaran Cunningham- **Banbridge Enterprise Centre**, Jerome Burns- **Dept Agriculture**, Patricia Devine- **Invest NI**, Katherine Strain- **Moy Park**, Esther Baird- **Portadown 2000**, Emma McClimonds- **REED**, Heather Kavanagh- **SRC**, Raymond Sloan- **SRC**, Carol Fitzsimons- **Young Enterprise**, Pamela Arthurs- **EBR**, Shirley Devlin- **Invest NI**, Ciara Kilpatrick- **Invest NI**, Prof. Jim Kitchen- **Sustainable Northern Ireland**, Orla Major- **Princes Trust**, Evelyn Hanna- **Libraries NI**, Cara Dallat- **CIDO**, Claire Gordon- **Business in the Community**, Jim McConville- **St Johns Baptist College, Portadown**, Brendan McCann- **TADA**, Gerry Jones- **NICIE**, Nicola Mitchell- **Education Authority**

**ABC Council-** Sarah-Jane McDonald, Ciaran Tipping, Elaine McAlinden, Natalie Ronaldson, Lynn Morrow, Elaine Gillespie, Catherine McNeill, Damien McEvoy, Malachy Gribbin, Mary Hanna.

**Apologies:** Nicola Wilson-**ABC Council**, Michael Graham- **CCMS**, Elaine Cullen- **SOAR**, Shane Campbell- **ICBAN**, Rosemary Hughes- **ABC**, Paul Crooks- **EANI**, Paul Kavanagh- **ABC**, Diane Stinson- **ABC Council**, Damien Mulligan- **ABC Council**

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### **1. Welcome & Introduction**

Patricia Devine, Invest NI welcomed members as Chair of the CEES TWG.

### **2. Workshop 2 Report**

The Vision, based upon member proposals is:

*“We have a thriving and prosperous economy, underpinned by the skills of our people and our dynamic industries which attract investment and opportunities for growth: ABC is the Borough that’s open, ready and equipped for business.”*

Joanne Wallace, Wallace Consulting provided a recap of the draft outcomes & actions discussed at the previous session, as per the three inter-linked priorities of:

- Tackling the Skills Deficit;
- Building Career Pathways; and
- Promoting & Supporting Entrepreneurship.

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### **3. Short- Medium- & Long-Term Outcomes & Actions**

Joanne presented draft short- and medium-term outcomes & actions for discussion by members. The following Tables were updated on the basis of the discussions (see Table 3.1, 3.2 & 3.3).

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**Outcome:** Information updated to reflect TWG members comments.

Table 3.1: Tackle the Skills Deficit			
Proposed Actions		Detail	Outcomes
1	Establish multi-sectoral Employment & Skills Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore best practice (e.g. Employers Forum (Belfast));</li> <li>• Ensure representative &amp; private sector membership, undertake cross-sectoral scoping exercise &amp; research, data sharing protocol established, develop future-proof skills action plan &amp; seek funding to deliver</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders understand current &amp; future skills needs &amp; are addressing these through private, public, community &amp; voluntary sector partnership;</li> <li>• Targeted initiatives address gaps in sectors which have identified/projected skills shortages in order to meet and maximise business growth &amp; prosperity;</li> <li>• The skills of the resident workforce are aligned to current &amp; projected business need</li> </ul>
2	Stakeholder information/engagement process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness of existing &amp; future skills needs &amp; potential impact upon local economy &amp; business growth;</li> <li>• Long-term business focused information process</li> </ul>	
3	Develop collaborative initiatives to address skills deficits in target sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review, promote &amp; expand models of good practice in addressing employer needs;</li> <li>• Potential expansion of Banbridge Education Partnership model;</li> <li>• Develop programmes to match &amp; train people for vacancies;</li> <li>• Enhance recruitment support to employers (skills vs qualifications);</li> <li>• Improve programme reach, marketing &amp; attractiveness to employers;</li> <li>• Ensure managers &amp; owners are upskilled according to future business/market needs;</li> <li>• Promote higher level apprenticeships, technical &amp; vocational pathways</li> </ul>	
4	Communicate & celebrate successes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reward &amp; publicise good practice through case-studies &amp; awards</li> </ul>	
Target Beneficiaries		Potential Partners	Potential Indicators (to be aligned to PfG)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils/Students, graduates, unemployed, parents;</li> <li>• Employers &amp; employees;</li> <li>• Teachers/careers advisors;</li> <li>• Disadvantaged/marginalised groups (incl. rural/S75)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools, HE &amp; FE providers, Careers Service;</li> <li>• Business sector/employers, Business Partnership Alliance;</li> <li>• Invest NI, other relevant Government Departments, Business in the Community, Employment agencies (e.g. USEL, Jobs &amp; Benefits) &amp; training providers, ABC Council, Education Authority, Libraries NI, University of Ulster (Skills Barometer), Community &amp; voluntary groups;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• &lt;vacancies in target sectors (linked to Skills Barometer);</li> <li>• Increased access to work experience, apprenticeships &amp; on-the-job training</li> </ul>

Table 6.2: Build Career Pathways			
Proposed Actions		Detail	Outcomes
1	Establish sub-group of Employability & Skills Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope out existing education, business &amp; enterprise links &amp; collaborations (e.g. Area Learning Communities, Careers Advisory Forum), identify gaps, good practice &amp; develop action plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is increased awareness &amp; knowledge around existing and future business needs, local employment &amp; enterprise opportunities &amp; the importance of life-long learning;</li> <li>• More individuals are attaining employability &amp; job-specific skills, obtaining practical work experience &amp; are supported to progress along their chosen career route;</li> <li>• The potential workforce has access to clear &amp; relevant pathways to employment which reflect their own interests &amp; skills, as well as the needs of the local economy</li> </ul>
2	Initiate stakeholder information/engagement process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a skills pipeline;</li> <li>• Raise awareness of existing &amp; future skills needs &amp; potential impact upon employment outcomes (e.g. Futureproof your business recruitment practices);</li> <li>• Raise awareness of the variety of career pathways &amp; opportunities within Borough;</li> <li>• Address perceived stigma around technical &amp; vocational routes (e.g. careers fairs, use of role models), collaborative working across education facilities</li> </ul>	
3	Work in partnership to open up career pathways & improve employment outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and/or disseminate career route maps &amp; help create confidence in career choices;</li> <li>• Influence the importance, relevance &amp; quality of careers advice in schools through improving knowledge of skills gaps, local training &amp; employment opportunities &amp; career options;</li> <li>• Open-up practical work experience, apprenticeships &amp; vocational training opportunities – open-up minds on potential career paths;</li> <li>• Work with schools, colleges, community &amp; voluntary sector &amp; other partners to develop a culture of entrepreneurship including primary school onwards</li> </ul>	
4	Develop collaborative initiatives to improve employment readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reward &amp; publicise good practice &amp; success through case-studies &amp; awards (CIPD NI Awards);</li> <li>• Work to embed employability &amp; transferrable skills required for enterprise &amp; employment as a core part of the school curriculum (e.g. new subject area);</li> <li>• Inform initiatives to reskill &amp; support the unemployed, build confidence &amp; encourage flexibility to meet business needs</li> </ul>	
Target Beneficiaries		Potential Partners	Potential Indicators (to be aligned to PfG)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils/Students, graduates, unemployed (incl. NEETS), parents, Employers &amp; employees, Teachers/ careers advisors, Marginalised groups (incl. rural/S75)</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools, HE &amp; FE providers, Business sector/employers, Federation Small Businesses, Princes Trust, Young Enterprise, Social Entrepreneurs, mentors/champions, Enterprise Agencies, Community &amp; voluntary groups, Employment agencies (e.g. USEL, Jobs &amp; Benefits) &amp; training providers, ABC Council, Education Authority, Department for Communities, Department for Education, Libraries NI</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• &gt;School leavers achieving 5+ GCSEs at Grade C;</li> <li>• STEM related qualifications (L4+);</li> <li>• &gt;Achieving 2+ A levels or equivalent</li> </ul>

Table 6.3: Promote & Support Entrepreneurship			
Proposed Actions		Detail	Outcomes
1	Establish Enterprise Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope the sector, identify needs &amp; available support, good practice &amp; gaps, develop action plan &amp; seek funding;</li> <li>• Identify potential growth sectors (e.g. digital, services) &amp; develop strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Borough provides a welcoming, collaborative &amp; supportive environment for business start-ups, growth, innovation &amp; attracting FDI;</li> <li>• There is a diverse stock of thriving local &amp; non-local businesses, which are responsive to market demand &amp; generate improved &amp; higher value employment opportunities;</li> <li>• ABC is recognised as a Centre of Excellence for Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Investment</li> </ul>
2	Inform, coordinate & promote initiatives to kick-start enterprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support needs-based pre-start &amp; start-up mentoring, training &amp; signposting (e.g. based on Business Engagement Programme, knowledge exchanges, Ideation Camps – idea creation support, mentoring &amp; support, Time Banking);</li> <li>• Inform a Business Re-birth Programme – highlighting business successes &amp; failures to enhance learning &amp; resilience;</li> <li>• Promote social economy as a route to enterprise (e.g. SRC Enterprise Firms);</li> <li>• Encourage &amp; enable joint ventures (e.g. schools ambassador) between schools (to include primary) &amp; business to foster creativity &amp; entrepreneurs (e.g. role models, product development &amp; sales)</li> </ul>	
3	Inform, coordinate & promote initiatives to attract investment & develop, protect & grow businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve new &amp; at risk businesses' access to support;</li> <li>• Coordinate &amp; market the types of business support available &amp; how to access it (target new, at risk &amp; potential growth businesses);</li> <li>• Improve business knowledge of available funding avenues (e.g. Council, NI Business Info)</li> <li>• Establish a collaborative business network (e.g. Sectoral champions, B2B support &amp; mentoring, supply chain, training, information);</li> </ul>	
4	Help create the conditions for investment & growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internally &amp; externally promote &amp; market ABC's assets – positive case-studies &amp; build a brand (e.g. Food Heartland model);</li> <li>• Collaborative FDI action plan (sustained targeting, education, upskilling &amp; support to attract &amp; sustain FDI);</li> <li>• Lobby for increased &amp; improved broadband coverage (extend pilot scheme, Super Connected Cities);</li> <li>• Maximise Local Authority Powers of Planning, Social Enterprise &amp; Youth Entrepreneurship to full advantage;</li> <li>• Ensure internal policy &amp; processes promote entrepreneurship;</li> <li>• Land use/availability of business units (incubation units, next step units, office space etc.);</li> <li>• Transport connectivity</li> </ul>	
Target Beneficiaries		Potential Partners	Potential Indicators

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils/Students, graduates, unemployed, employees;</li> <li>• Disadvantaged/marginalised groups (incl. rural/S75);</li> <li>• Employers/Business sector (incl. micro-business, those in decline) &amp; Growth sectors;</li> <li>• Teachers/Careers advisors;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses</li> <li>• Business owners (e.g. role models, mentors);</li> <li>• Schools, HE &amp; FE providers;</li> <li>• Community &amp; voluntary groups;</li> <li>• Agencies (e.g. USEL, Jobs &amp; Benefits);</li> <li>• Banks/investors;</li> <li>• Invest NI, ABC Council, Enterprise NI, Princes Trust, local media, social enterprise, Enterprise Agencies, Department for Enterprise, Department for Communities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• &gt;Business start-up rate</li> <li>• &gt;Business survival rate</li> <li>• &gt;Employment rate</li> <li>• &gt;Annual earnings</li> <li>• &gt;Growth in key sectors</li> <li>• &gt;GVA &amp; &gt;Inward investment</li> <li>• &gt;Broadband coverage</li> </ul>
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## 4. Cross-Cutting Themes

Presentations were given on the following Community Planning cross-cutting themes:

- Sustainability;
- Equality, Good Relations & Social Inclusion;
- Rural Development; and
- Communication.

Members discussed issues relating to their Theme in groups.

Sustainability		
Economic	Social	Environmental
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good evidence that what we have proposed is economically sustainable;</li> <li>• Potential to strengthening initiatives around social enterprise &amp; local production &amp; consumption (establish local supply chains) which would also help social sustainability (e.g. buy local, ACE model schemes);</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic wellbeing has strong links with social wellbeing, particularly promoting health &amp; wellbeing, overcoming disadvantage, improving community safety;</li> <li>• Promote health &amp; wellbeing in the workplace;</li> <li>• Partnerships community &amp; voluntary sector to develop skills;</li> <li>• Mentoring initiatives promoting volunteering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is potential to improve environmental sustainability by using existing buildings &amp; brownfield sites for economic use, promoting energy efficiency &amp; renewables, minimising waste &amp; avoiding pollution within the private sector;</li> <li>• Sell financial savings of energy efficiency to business;</li> <li>• We should be supporting ABC businesses to be innovative in their use of this technology;</li> <li>• Circular Economy Programme, environmentally friendly clauses</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong links with Revitalisation, Creative Capital, Digital &amp; Physical Connectivity priorities, Improve Energy Efficiency &amp; Waste Management priorities</li> </ul>		

Equality, Good Relations & Social Inclusion		
Equality	Good Relations	Social Inclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify under-represented groups (statistics), encourage involvement &amp; upskill (e.g. older people, people with disabilities, BME, females, those with dependants), procurement processes reflect;</li> <li>• Representative groups involved in programme design &amp; promotion;</li> <li>• Reduce barriers (e.g. transport, childcare, qualifications, completing applications/interviews, confidence)</li> <li>• Ensure employers aware of S75 legislation related to recruitment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address chill factors;</li> <li>• Improve mobility;</li> <li>• Partnership working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social clause in procurement</li> </ul>
Rural Development		
Challenges	Opportunities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “No definition of rural”</li> <li>• Poor broadband &amp; mobile connectivity;</li> <li>• Fewer facilities/resources, social hubs;</li> <li>• Fewer rural job opportunities;</li> <li>• Weak transport links;</li> <li>• Need to understand differences in rural/urban educational attainment;</li> <li>• Young people leaving the area;</li> <li>• Planning applications for business can be difficult;</li> <li>• Isolation issues;</li> <li>• Political divisions can be more acute;</li> <li>• Varying community infrastructure;</li> <li>• Literacy issues amongst older people;</li> <li>• Poor information dissemination</li> <li>• Lack of succession planning amongst farmers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Link to Infrastructure TWG;</li> <li>• Improve marketing through partnership with Ulster Farmers Union, faith based organisations &amp; community &amp; voluntary sector;</li> <li>• Provide basic literacy &amp; numeracy learning opportunities, capacity building;</li> <li>• Work with planning to support rural business development, support for young people who want to farm;</li> <li>• Use halls &amp; facilities in community to create hubs (grants programme to revitalise);</li> <li>• Improve links with careers services, promote opportunities in local area, link community transport</li> </ul>	

Communications	
Challenges	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaching those in most need;</li> <li>• Information overload;</li> <li>• Different communication needs amongst specific groups (e.g. Interpreters, people with visual impairments, young people, older people)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need central communication portal &amp; consistent message (Communication Plan with tailored communication methods);</li> <li>• Shared databases (MOU)</li> <li>• Maximise the use of other events to consult/disseminate information;</li> <li>• Better coordination (1 event for everyone – Employers Mall, joined up job fairs, use NI Business Info);</li> <li>• Work in partnership – identify the right person (e.g. Area Learning Careers Advisory Group);</li> <li>• Creative messaging – arts &amp; drama, use free marketing tools, new technology, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, involve young people</li> </ul>

## 5. Next Steps

As this is the final workshop for the TWG, Elaine Gillespie, Head of Community Planning & Patricia Devine, Invest NI thanked the group for their continued support and expertise.

Next Steps are:

- Consideration and prioritisation of outcomes from all six thematic working groups by Statutory Partners (Sept/Oct 2016);
- Consultation and engagement with local citizens and communities (Sept/Oct 2016);
- Draft Plan and formal consultation (Oct- Dec 2016);
- Conduct formal assessments (Oct-Jan 2017);
- Development of final plan (Dec- March 2017).