

West London Skills and Employment Board Appointment of Co-Chair

Introduction

- The West London Skills and Employment Board (WLSEB) brings together senior representatives from across West London's skills ecosystem, including local authorities, skills providers and employers, to **help people develop the right skills for growth in the world's most connected place**. The Board wishes to appoint a Co-Chair to help lead its work.

Role description

- The Co-Chair will work alongside the current Chair (Cllr. Barry Rawlings, Leader of Barnet Council) to shape, drive and raise the profile of the Board's work to improve the skills system in West London. This work has three aims:
 - **Integration:** that the fragmented skills and employment systems are better integrated, to support people finding courses and developing the skills that employers want.
 - **Progression:** that opportunities for people's learning and development are more available and better equip them for improved career prospects.
 - **Growth:** that businesses and growth sectors can find the people and skills they need to fill the gaps and achieve stronger economic development, growth and sustainability.
- In particular, the Co-Chair will ensure that businesses and employers are meaningfully and usefully engaged in collective efforts to improve the skills system in West London.
- The Co-Chair will adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life and promote high standards of governance throughout the activity undertaken and overseen by the Board.

Board function and membership

- The Board provides critical oversight to the delivery of the actionable priorities set out in the London Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) and its West London Annex, developed collaboratively with input from employers, skills providers and local government, and to a range of other activities and programmes seeking to advance these outcomes and priorities in West London.
- The Board promotes transparency and mutual accountability across different actors in the West London skills ecosystem, and seeks to identify, agree and take forward actions which will deliver our shared aims. Where necessary, the Board also convenes a collective voice for West London on skills matters, seeking to ensure that the area's needs are properly considered by policymakers, and that local partners have the right powers, resources, incentives and information to drive system reforms.
- The Board reports periodically to the Leaders of the West London boroughs, including through the formal West London Economic Prosperity Board (WLEPB).
- Board members are expected to engage with wider colleagues and partners outside Board meetings in order that they can effectively represent a broader set of views within Board discussions, and to keep those wider colleagues and partners across the skills system in touch with the Board's activities.

- The Board is currently Chaired by a West London Council Leader. The membership of the Board comprises:
 - West London Council Leader (currently Chair, moving to co-Chair)
 - Representatives from skills providers: Further Education; Independent Training Provider; Adult and Community Learning; Higher Education
 - Employer representatives including West London Business, Heathrow and HS2
 - Representatives from initiatives seeking to connect and improve provision (e.g. Mayor's Skills Academy Hubs)
 - Officer representatives from West London boroughs and the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation
 - Representatives from London-wide and national government institutions (London Councils, Greater London Authority, Department for Work and Pensions)
- The secretariat to the Board is provided by the West London Alliance of seven West London boroughs.
- More details are provided in the Terms of Reference for the Board, annexed below.

Person specification

Essential criteria

- A strong commitment to improving the skills system in West London;
- Experience of the skills system from an employer perspective;
- Sound intellect and judgement and experience of strategic decision making, with the ability to operate effectively at Board level or equivalent;
- Good communication skills, with the ability to act as an ambassador to people of all backgrounds for West London's collective efforts to improve the skills system

Desirable criteria

- Knowledge of skills policy and funding
- Experience of interacting with and seeking to influence regional and national governments

Remuneration

- This is a voluntary role. Reasonable expenses incurred in the course of performing the role will be reimbursed.

Application and selection process

- The Co-Chair position will be appointed on merit following a fair and open competition process. To apply for this position, please send a CV and covering letter to Majeed Neky nekym@ealing.gov.uk and Benaisha Daruwalla daruwallab@ealing.gov.uk by **6pm on Friday 23 February 2024**. Please also indicate any reasonable adjustments or needs that you may have.
- For an informal chat about the role, please contact Majeed and Benaisha on the details above.
- The West London Alliance will administer the process including shortlisting of candidates against the criteria above, interviews and appointment of successful candidate. It is envisaged that the appointee will take up their appointment in Spring 2024.

Annex: West London Skills and Employment Board Terms of Reference

“The right skills for growth in the world’s most connected place”

What is the Board and what do we want to achieve?

- The West London Skills and Employment Board (WLSEB) brings together senior representatives from across West London’s skills ecosystem, including local authorities, skills providers and employers, to **help people develop the right skills for growth in the world’s most connected place**.
- West London was the only sub-region in London which saw a decrease in qualification levels in the decade to 2021; a fifth of working-age West London residents do not have a qualification of Level 2 or above; and nearly a fifth of West London employees earn less than the London Living Wage. Meanwhile, employers across sectors are struggling to fill vacancies. Despite the hard work, commitment and positive initiatives to be found across West London, the skills system as a whole remains fragmented, difficult to navigate and frustrating for learners, employers and providers alike.
- In this context, Board members share three aims for West London’s skills system:
 - **Integration:** that the fragmented skills and employment systems are better integrated, to support people finding courses and developing the skills that employers want.
 - **Progression:** that opportunities for people’s learning and development are more available and better equip them for improved career prospects.
 - **Growth:** that businesses and growth sectors can find the people and skills they need to fill the gaps and achieve stronger economic development, growth and sustainability.

What does the Board do?

- The Board provides critical oversight to the delivery of the actionable priorities set out in the London Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) and its West London Annex, developed collaboratively with input from employers, skills providers and local government, and to a range of other activities and programmes seeking to advance these outcomes and priorities in West London.
- The Board promotes transparency and mutual accountability across different actors in the West London skills ecosystem, and seeks to identify, agree and take forward actions which will deliver our shared aims. Where necessary, the Board also convenes a collective voice for West London on skills matters, seeking to ensure that the area’s needs are properly considered by policymakers, and that local partners have the right powers, resources, incentives and information to drive system reforms.
- The Board reports periodically to the Leaders of the West London boroughs, including through the formal West London Economic Prosperity Board (WLEPB).
- Board members are expected to engage with wider colleagues and partners outside Board meetings in order that they can effectively represent a broader set of views within Board discussions, and to keep those wider colleagues and partners across the skills system in touch with the Board’s activities.

Membership

- The Board will be co-chaired by a borough Leader and a co-chair with relevant experience of the skills system as an employer.
- The Board will be composed of representatives from employers, skills providers, government organisations and other relevant public and private sector representatives, as set out in the Annex below.
- Changes may be made to the Board's composition from time to time (for example, to rotate representation from a particular organisation or sector) and this will be done on the basis of transparency and consent.

Meeting frequency

- The Board will meet regularly on a quarterly basis. Further meetings of the Board, or decisions by correspondence, may be initiated at the discretion of the Chair.

Secretariat

- The Board will be supported by relevant officers from the WLA team.

Ways of working

- Board meetings will be structured around the Board's three aims for the skills system in West London. The WLA will produce a programme overview, covering activity across the three desired outcomes and the LSIP priorities, and circulate this in advance of each Board meeting.
- These programme overviews, and the Board's terms of reference, agendas and minutes, will also be circulated regularly to the chairs of other relevant forums in West London (FE Principals, borough skills leads, Adult and Community Learning leads, etc.). These groups will have a standing invitation to propose agenda items for future Board meetings.
- The secretariat will set out a forward plan highlighting questions, gaps, issues or opportunities for more detailed discussion at each Board meeting, with a view to agreeing actions that can be taken forward by Board members, their organisations and others in their sectors.
- Actions agreed by the Board will be minuted with clear owners and timescales and circulated promptly by the Secretariat on behalf of the Chair, and followed up with owners in order to track progress.
- Each Board Member will:
 - attend the Board consistently, and – where attendance is not possible – ask an appropriate colleague to deputise and inform the secretariat as far as possible in advance of a meeting;
 - contribute their own perspective, that of their organisation and that of their wider sector frankly and honestly;
 - accept accountability for, and hold others to account for, agreed actions to improve the skills system in West London; and
 - follow up on agreed actions between meetings, and keep the secretariat updated on progress.

Member list

Role	Current incumbent(s)
Co-Chairs <i>To convene and chair the Board, and represent the Board to other forums (e.g. the West London Economic Prosperity Board) as appropriate.</i>	• Cllr Barry Rawlings, Leader, LB Barnet • [vacancy for co-chair with relevant experience of the skills system as an employer]
Local skills and employment policy and delivery representatives <i>To represent the West London borough councils and the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation, as local convenors, place leaders and employers, and ensure that local skills, employment and business support officers are kept informed of and can feed into the Board's discussions.</i>	• Maddy Gilbert, Strategic Lead for Skills and Employment Services, LB Hounslow • Alex Marsh, Economic Development Lead, Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) • David Francis, Director, West London Alliance
Employer representatives <i>To share experience, information and views from the perspective of employers in West London, including those in identified priority sectors, to help shape improvements to the skills system – informed by an understanding of relevant national sector and industry discussions and by active networking with other relevant West London businesses.</i>	• Andrew Dakers, Chief Executive, West London Business / Park Royal Business Group • Poorvi Patel, Head of Education, Employment and Skills, Heathrow • Ambrose Quashie, Skills Manager, HS2 • Ashley Samuels, Skills Manager, Places for London • [vacancies for further sector representatives]
Mayor's Academy Hub representatives <i>To represent the Mayor's Academy Hubs and promote alignment, transparency and collaboration between these initiatives and the wider West London skills ecosystem.</i>	• Barry Mortimer (Green Skills Hub) • Clodagh Clarry (Health and Social Care Hub) • Richard Goodwin (Film/TV Skills Hub)
London government representatives <i>To represent London-wide governance institutions and promote alignment, transparency and collaboration between these institutions and the wider West London skills ecosystem.</i>	• Dianna Neal, Strategic Lead: Enterprise, Economy and Skills, London Councils • Ayo Akande / Anne-Marie Soyinka, Assistant Directors of Skills and Employment, Greater London Authority
DWP / Jobcentre Plus representative <i>To represent DWP / JCP and promote alignment, transparency and collaboration between Government-sponsored employment support provision and the wider West London skills ecosystem.</i>	• Olivia Hargadon, Service Leader – West London, DWP
Further Education (FE) representatives <i>To represent West London's FE institutions, as major providers of skills provision and interventions in West London, and ensure that FE institutions are kept informed of and can feed into the Board's discussions.</i>	• Darren Mepham, Chief Executive, Barnet and Southgate College • Keith Smith, Chief Executive, Harrow, Richmond and Uxbridge Colleges

Careers Hub representative <i>To represent the West London Careers Hub and promote alignment, transparency and collaboration between West London skills partners and London-wide skills and employment initiatives.</i>	Aarti Jaswal, Strategic Hub Lead, West London Careers Hub
Independent Training Provider representative <i>To represent West London's ITPs, as major providers of skills provision and interventions in West London, and ensure that ITPs operating in West London are kept informed of and can feed into the Board's discussions.</i>	Crawford Knott, Managing Director, Hawk Training
Adult and Community Learning representative <i>To represent West London's ACL organisations, as major providers of skills provision and interventions in West London, and ensure that ACL providers are kept informed of and can feed into the Board's discussions.</i>	Eamon Scanlon, Head of Adult Learning and Skills, LB Hammersmith & Fulham
Higher Education representative <i>To represent West London's universities, as major skill providers and destinations for FE leavers in West London, and ensure that universities are kept informed of and can feed into the Board's discussions.</i>	Matt Snowden, Dean of Academic Partnerships (UK) and Director of Research and Enterprise Operations, University of West London