

MARCHES LSIP

LOCAL SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Marches LSIP Governance

LSIP 2nd 3-year Cycle 2025-2028

Covering Stages 1 & 2

Board Commenced 28th October 2025

- **Membership & Attendees**
- **Information Pack & Terms of Reference**
- **Conflicts-of-Interest Register**

Please note this document pack will be updated periodically to ensure that the latest information is available



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Marches LSIP
Local Skills Improvement Plan



Shropshire
Chamber of
Commerce



Herefordshire
& Worcestershire
Chamber of Commerce

Membership as at 30/10/2025

Members

Board Members	Company or Organisation
Ruth Ross	Shropshire Chamber CEO (LSIP Board Chair)
David Crosby	Partners in Care – representing Social Care sector
David Williams	Herefordshire Skills Board Chair
Dr Simone Clarke	Harper Adams University – representing Higher Education
Gareth Jones	In-Comm – representing Private Training Providers
Lawrence Wood	Telford College Principal – representing Further Education
Mandy Knott	AllPay – Service Sector Business Herefordshire
Matt Potts	Shropshire Council
Roger Allonby	Herefordshire Council
Sherridan Grady	Clear Design – Digital Business Shropshire
Simon Wellman	Telford & Wrekin Council
Steve Owen	Paveaways – Construction Business Shropshire
Tony Sproston	Fowler & Gilbert

Stand-Ins

To allow for continuity and strong turnout at all meetings the terms have allowed members to elect a stand-in to attend the meetings the principal Board member cannot attend. These will be individuals of similar rank to enable them to have the level of strategic knowledge of their sector or organisation which is required to bring value to the meeting.

Alistair Dawes	Harper Adams University
Darran Alford	DWP Wales & Marches
Gavin Mills	Clear Design
Paul Hodgetts	In-Comm



Other Attendees

Elizabeth Hopkins	Metro Dynamics
Frances Oldfield	Metro Dynamics
Liz Keirle	Chamber Governance
Mark Palmer	DWP Wales and Marches
Nicola Clinton	Chamber Governance
Rosie Beswick	Marches LSIP Project Manager



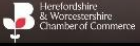
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**You Spoke...
...We Listened**



**How was your voice
heard & what has
been achieved?**

SHROPSHIRE | TELFORD & WREKIN | HEREFORDSHIRE

Marches LSIP Board

Information Pack & Terms of Reference

LSIP 2nd 3-year Cycle 2025-2028

Covering Stages 1 & 2

Marches Local Skills Improvement Plan - Overview and Hierarchy

Local Skills Improvement Plan

The Government's **Skills for Jobs White Paper** (2021) set out an ambitious plan to put employers more firmly at the heart of the skills system to help ensure businesses and people have the skills they need to thrive and progress. LSIPs are a key part of achieving this aim.

Led by designated ERBs (Employer Representative Bodies), LSIPs will set out a clear articulation of employers' skills needs and the priority changes required in a local area to help ensure post-16 technical education and skills provision is more responsive and flexible in meeting local labour market skills needs as well as national, regional and sector specific skills priorities.

LSIPs are different to previous skills plans in that they give employers, through local ERBs, a clear and strengthened role in shaping local skills provision.

The role of the designated ERB is to lead the development and subsequent reviews of a LSIP for a specified geographical area working with employers, providers, and local stakeholders.

Local Delivery:

Shropshire Chamber of Commerce has again been selected by Skills England to be the **Employer Representative Body** (ERB) for the Marches LEP area, for the second Local Skills Improvement Plan



(LSIP) 3-year cycle. This cycle commenced in October 2025. The Marches area includes Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin.

LSIP Process:

First 6 months are research and collaboration to reach a set of priorities that support local and national skills needs and submit a report to Skills England for scrutiny, sign off by the Secretary of State and then published. Those priorities are then to be acknowledged by public sector stakeholders when deciding actions or provision. Priorities that must also, for 2025-2028, take note of national skills priorities and strategies, as well as Local Authority Growth Plans etc. Priorities that should in 2025-2028 be small in number, relevant to the entirety of the Marches and beyond, and realistic to achieve.

For the further 2.5 years the LSIP Team monitor progress against the priorities, continue to gather employer intelligence, and work collaboratively to break down the barriers in language and culture between public and private sector. Regularly reporting into Skills England including an annual formal report for publication. Those priorities from 2022-2025 that are not seen as fully complete will be carried forward as part of the new LSIP, in condensed form.

Marches LSIP 2022-2025

The first 3-year cycle focused in the main on 4 sectors which are high employment sectors across the Marches.

- Engineering & Manufacture including food and drink production
- Health and Social Care
- Construction including environmental technologies
- Professional Services

From the research carried out for the 6 months leading to March 2023, 25 priorities were arrived at, 12 direct skills needs and 13 related to life, work ready or soft skills. The Marches LSIP report was signed off by the Secretary of State for Education and published in July 2023. By the end of the cycle in September 2025, 16 priorities were completed to meet expectations with a further 8 which are longer term but well underway, with only 1 that remains weaker than would be expected due to a lack of interaction with the LSIP.

Based on the findings of the LSIP and other research the Marches area was awarded £2.5 million to create new courses, facilities and to flex delivery. This was known as the Local Skills Improvement Fund and was applied for by a collective of public and private providers called the Marches Education Partnership. Two subject areas were covered - Manufacturing and Engineering Skills and



Green Construction and Retrofit Skills. Business and the LSIP were involved throughout the journey to ensure what was planned met the needs articulated by the businesses.

Besides the large LSIF projects, many other enhancements have been made with expansion in T level provision across the Marches, the new collaboration between Keele University and Telford College to deliver nursing degrees within the Marches and many additional pastoral activities added into course content support the employer's requirement for better soft skills. A rise in the number of Skills Advisory Panels, panels where local businesses share their knowledge directly with training providers to help shape curriculum and keep those providers abreast of sector needs, changes or enhancements.

Throughout the 3 years the Employer's Voice was regularly harnessed to ensure that the LSIP remained relevant and provided additional intelligence to stakeholders to support their decision making. The employers were at the very heart of the LSIP, with over 1,000 in total interviewed over 3 years. As the skills needs are still very much the same as 2022-2025 the need for vast volume interviews with businesses is lessened and a more targeted approach will be used in 2025-2028.

Skills England:

With the change of Government, the LSIP project transitioned from the Department for Education to Skills England. The cabinet reshuffle saw Skills England move from the Department for Education (DfE) to the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP)

Skills England is a newly created executive agency which officially came into being in June 2025, with the aim of understanding the country's skills needs, simplifying access to skills to boost growth and mobilising employers and other partners to create solutions to skills needs.

LSIPs support Skills England's driving ethos of Better Skills for Better Jobs and its vision to build our nation's world-class skills, supporting the growth and opportunity missions. LSIPs are key to Skills England's drive to:

- Understand our nation's skills needs and improve our skills offer.
- Simplify access to skills to boost economic growth.
- Mobilise employers and other partners, co-creating solutions to meet national, regional and local skills needs.

National LSIP Team:



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Shropshire
Chamber of
Commerce



Herefordshire
& Worcestershire
Chamber of Commerce

The team that designed, instigated and manage the evolving LSIP Programme are based within Skills England. They monitor each of the 39 English LSIP projects, and it is they who the ERB's report to.

Latest Post 16 Education White Paper – Published 21.10.2025

[Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper](#), setting out the commitment to building a world-class skills system – one that breaks down the barriers to opportunity, meets the needs of students and employers, drives economic growth and improves lives across the country.

This White Paper outlines bold and ambitious reforms across further and higher education. It marks the beginning of our journey toward achieving our target, announced by the Prime Minister on 30th September, of two-thirds of young people participating in higher-level training by age 25, whether through universities, colleges, or apprenticeships. It supports the over £1 billion investment this government is making to delivering skills packages to equip people with in-demand skills for sectors like digital technologies and construction where hundreds of thousands of jobs will be created in the next five years. As part of this, we will build a closer partnership with employers to better serve their needs – with Skills England working with businesses to identify and address skills gaps.

Marches LSIPS Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

DfE guidance states that LSIPs will embed a stronger and more dynamic partnership between employers and further education (FE) providers. They are a key component of the wider reforms to post-16 technical education and training set out in the Skills for Jobs White Paper and the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill.

The purpose of The Marches LSIP Board is to provide direction and oversight on the development of an effective LSIP for The Marches, building on existing intelligence from the work of the Marches first LSIP Cycle 2022-2025 alongside new research and wider intelligence available to ensure immediate, medium and longer skills needs are met, where it is practical and possible to do so. The Marches LSIP is bound by the Governance provided by Skills England.

2. Membership, Decision Making and Secretariat

The LSIP Board will act as a sub-committee of the Shropshire Chamber of Commerce Board with



delegated authority for decisions relating to the LSIP project.

The LSIP Board will report into the Shropshire Chamber of Commerce Board via the Chief Executive Officer.

The Board will be formed with a maximum of 20 members and consist of senior decision-making representatives from the following organisations:

- a. Employers – from a range of relevant sectors and across the Marches region
- b. Further Education Colleges representation
- c. Higher Education Organisation representation
- d. Independent Training Provider representation
- e. Local Authority representatives (3 Authorities)
- f. Herefordshire Skills Board
- g. Shropshire Chamber of Commerce
- h. Other organisations deemed relevant

Recruitment on to the LSIP Board will be as required to meet the needs and actions highlighted by Skills England in their 2025 LSIP Guidance.

The Chair will initially be the CEO of Shropshire Chamber of Commerce. However, if another member wishes to Chair, then a vote will be taken, and the person with the most votes will be the new Chair.

Other external experts may be invited to present and to report on specific agenda items on an ad hoc basis. Consultants will be present throughout all Board meetings.

If voting is required at meetings or via electronic communication, decisions will be made by a majority of the number of members present or responding. In the event of a drawn vote, the Chair will make the casting vote. Where decisions are required outside meetings, these can be made via written procedure (email) with the agreement of the Chair, any decisions made in this way will be reported at the next LSIP board meeting and reviewed.

The Board will be supported by Shropshire Chamber's internal team who will provide the Secretariat for meetings, ensuring that papers and reports are completed and shared with members on time and actions and activities are completed in between meetings.

Board members will be expected to operate with the Nolan Principles of Public Life. A conflict of interests policy will need to be completed by all Board members, and a register of interests will be maintained by the Secretariat. These will be published on the Shropshire Chamber of Commerce website.



Meetings will mainly be held by electronic means using Teams or other suitable software. It is expected that all members attending will stay on mute unless speaking and use, where possible, a raised hand (Symbol or actual) to indicate a wish to speak.

The meeting will be recorded using AI technology to allow the minutes and actions to be captured. The recording will be destroyed as soon as the minutes are completed.

3. Main Responsibilities

Note: References to the Marches LSIP Team refer to both internal Chamber staff and external consultants.

- Provide strategic guidance to support the LSIP delivery team (internal and external) to develop the Marches LSIP, aligning to the 2025 guidance from Skills England.
- To share information with the Marches LSIP Board & Team with regards to business sector needs, education provision changes, expansions or contractions, as well as other relevant public sector information and other general information that would enhance the understanding of the current or changing skills landscape.
- Provide support and an ambassadorial role to ensure the LSIP team can engage with as many employers as required to develop and carry forward the Marches LSIP priorities.
- Engage Post 16 education and skills providers who can support the work of the project team and feed into the development of a Marches LSIP.
- Approve the project team commissioning additional research and data capture to support the production of a Marches LSIP.
- Promote and disseminate the Marches LSIP once published.

4. How often will the Board meet

The Board will meet 6-weekly between October 2025 and May 2026. The frequency can be reduced to bi-monthly with the majority agreement of the Board for the period June 2026 – October 2028.

Board members are expected to attend all meetings. With exception, where this is not possible, and by prior agreement, members may send a previously nominated substitute that has the power to vote and make decisions. This person should be of similar seniority to the Board member they are standing in for.



Marches LSIP Board

Conflicts of Interest Register as at 30/10/2025

LSIP 2nd 3-year Cycle 2025-2028

Covering Stages 1 & 2

MEMBERS

Name	Board Member	Represents	Conflicts-of-Interest
Ruth Ross	Member	Chair of the Marches LSIP Board CEO Shropshire Chamber of Commerce	CEO Shropshire Chamber of Commerce Marches Steering Group Shropshire Economic Partnership Group Chair of the Shropshire Council Skills Group Working relationships with local Colleges and Training Providers through Patronage and Membership Running short, mainly one day training courses to the business community Ambassador for the SCF Member of the APPG Telford Business Board
David Crosby	Member	Partners in Care PIC	Trustee of Lingen Davies Cancer Support
David Williams	Member	Herefordshire Skills Board	Awaited
Dr Simone Clarke	Member	Harper Adams University	Awaited



Gareth Jones	Member	In-Comm Training	Managing Director of In-Comm Training who are in receipt of government funding through ESFA and WMCA for the delivery of apprenticeships and training . Managing Director of MCMT who were in receipt of funding from the previous round of LSIF.
Lawrence Wood	Member	Telford College	Awaited
Mandy Knott	Member	AllPay - Business Member	Member of the Forest of Dean Partnership Group Member of the West Midlands Employer Apprentice Ambassador Group
Matt Potts	Member	Shropshire Council	Awaited
Roger Allonby	Member	Herefordshire Council	Awaited
Sherridan Grady	Member	Clear Design - Business Member	No conflicts of interest
Simon Wellman	Member	Telford & Wrekin Council	Awaited
Steve Owen	Member	Paveaways - Business Member	Awaited
Tony Sproston	Member	Fowler & Gilbert - Business Member	No conflicts of interest

STAND-INS

Name	Stand-In For	Conflicts-of-Interest
Gavin Mills	Sherridan Grady - Clear Design - Business Member	No conflicts of Interest
Paul Hodgetts	Gareth Jones - In-Comm Training	Business Development Manager of In-Comm Training who are in receipt of government funding through ESFA and WMCA for the delivery of apprenticeships and training .

Alistair Dawes	Dr Simone Clarke - Harper Adams University	As a director at the university, I am responsible for identifying and developing potential new skills programmes to be delivered on a surplus generating basis.
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OTHER ATTENDEES

Name	Role	Conflicts-of-Interest
Darran Alford	Department for Works & Pensions	Employee of the Department of Works and Pensions
Elizabeth Hopkins	Metro Dynamics	No conflicts of interest
Frances Oldfield	Metro Dynamics	No conflicts of interest
Liz Keirl	Marches LSIP Governance	No conflicts of interest
Mark Palmer	Department for Works & Pensions	Employee of the Department of Works and Pensions
Nicola Clinton	Marches LSIP Governance	No conflicts of interest
Rosie Beswick	Marches LSIP Project Manager	Managing Consultant of RFR Monmouth t/a Rosie Consulting. Member of Shropshire Chamber of Commerce

