



MARKET RESEARCH TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF WYCC GREEN SKILLS

KEY FINDINGS REPORT

March 2022

Executive Summary

1. Tokos Solutions were commissioned by the West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges to undertake market research to inform the development of a Green Skills 'Hub' to contribute to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Mayoral Pledge on Green Jobs. This research was funded as part of the DfE LSIP pilot funding allowing WYCC to continue the collaboration developed under previous programmes between providers and employers in this specialist and growing area.
2. The research took place between April and July 2022, mainly through primary research with 15 representatives of key stakeholder organisations.
3. The work was undertaken within the policy context of the Government Net Zero strategy – Build Back Greener, and the West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan 2021 – 2024 facilitated by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA).
4. Consultation with WYCA provided details of plans with specific reference to Green Skills, including:
 - Establishing a Green Skills Partnership to deliver a roadmap and actions for the just and inclusive transition to a net-zero carbon economy and society.
 - Implementing training programmes to address skills shortages and gaps and build the local skills base ready for the future.
5. In addition to working with the Local Authorities and the business support infrastructure to implement these plans, WYCA stated that they also had plans to support a development plan and provide funds to enable FE colleges to train staff and develop curriculum to provide relevant training.
6. Key findings from green skills related research undertaken by Learning and Work Institute (L&W) (*Skills for a net-zero economy: Insights from employers and young people*) also help in setting the scene for the West Yorkshire-focused research. These include:
 - Most employers surveyed currently require green skills or expect to in the future and most have had difficulty in hiring suitable candidates.
 - The green skills are needed in a wide range of business areas and at all career levels.
7. The consultations undertaken by Tokos Solutions indicate more fundamental needs, whilst also providing the justification for WYCA's plans and the need for a Green Skills 'Hub'.
8. Key feedback points include:
 - There is little evidence amongst those consulted that green skills are particularly high in the priorities of many businesses. "Green skills is not coming up in strategic discussions with businesses".
 - Green skills awareness or demand increases where there are specific drivers where businesses want to tender for public contracts, they must have policies and processes in place, alongside standards. Legislation and sales tend to be drivers of sustainability actions. However, many businesses may not know where to start and need the skills and expertise to enable them to achieve compliance.
 - Many (smaller) businesses are unlikely to have a specific lead for this area, and it often falls to the Health and Safety Manager, who may not have the skills to deal

with it. It is often at this point, when businesses tend to think about how to access the 'green skills' that they need.

- Current demand for support is typically around energy and resource management – delivered by business consultants, rather than for specific green skills.
- The Carbon Literacy course developed via the LTRS project is seen as a good starting point in relation to general awareness of this agenda. Consultees suggested that WYCC could build on this to develop more courses aimed at increasing awareness and also around green management, building on technical training/courses that colleges have available (e.g. around retrofit or other specific industry requirements such as engineering/manufacturing).
- There is a need for someone to actively engage with businesses to get the messages across (as language is an issue) and to keep them abreast of developments. There also needs to be overall promotion of benefits and focus on money – not green/environment/net zero. Thus, benefits to be promoted include: helping with growth plans, ability to attract new customers, as well as reduction in costs (e.g. energy costs or transportation).
- In promoting green skills provision there is a need to differentiate between:
 - Green skills that are central to all operations (e.g. engineering, manufacturing, retrofit), and
 - Green skills needed to support the overall business e.g. managing costs/procurement or compliance against waste regulations.
- There is a vacuum in terms of communications about energy, carbon, legislation etc. Some consultees suggested a similarity with the apprenticeship agenda, where support 'Hub's have been developed to inform and support businesses with apprenticeships. A similar approach is needed here particularly for the smaller businesses that do not have the internal capacity.
- The green skills need are identified as follows:
 - Leadership and management, including an understanding of data (what it means in terms of impact on the business, and what should be done as a result).
 - Technical – job specific in certain sectors and largely regarded as an extension of STEM skills.
 - General awareness.
 - More in-depth understanding for those involved in procurement or responsible for compliance (typically the Health and Safety Managers).
- There is a need to upskill those working with the businesses (consultants and training providers), around sustainability/environmental action plans and implementation – i.e. the 'green knowledge' around carbon footprint and making sense of monitoring data and how it impacts on businesses.

9. Recommendations from the research include:

- To consider the language used in any development of support: Talk about energy and carbon or sustainability – not green or environmental – and talk about money.
- To set out clear objective for 'Hub' development activities, scoping out the specific role for WYCC and for other organisations including WYCA, Growth 'Hub', Skills for

Growth Programme, Universities, and private providers via the Yorkshire Learning Providers. Examples of the support the 'Hub' should offer include:

- Signposting /database of where businesses can go for support (be it business support or training/coaching). i.e.
 - Where can a newly appointed lead go for initial support/learning, awareness, first steps in developing an action plan etc.
 - Where can they get funding to support actions.
 - Where can they go for in-depth support.
- Best practice and case studies of practical implementation of sustainability interventions.
- Engagement with and amongst businesses to share good practice and experiences.
- Information and showcasing of the different technologies to increase awareness, demonstrate benefits and their potential impact on businesses.

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 West Yorkshire Consortium of Colleges (WYCC) aims to put into place a Green Skills 'Hub' to contribute to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Mayoral Pledge on Green Jobs. This research was funded as part of the DfE LSIP pilot funding allowing WYCC to continue the collaboration developed under previous programmes between providers and employers in this specialist and growing area.
- 1.2 The 'Hub' is intended to be virtual (available via the WYCC portal) and provide a number of support services to businesses looking to be informed and access green skills courses. It will also provide a mechanism for training providers to promote their skills offers.
- 1.3 WYCC commissioned Tokos Solutions to undertake market research into the potential service provision and support the delivery and funding model development.
- 1.4 Market research was required to identify and provide an understanding of the following:
 - Awareness the potential impact of the net zero policies and regulations amongst businesses and the green skills needed to address them.
 - How businesses are planning/working to reduce their carbon footprint and who is responsible in their organisation for this activity.
 - What would be valuable skills related information and support to businesses to reduce their carbon footprint and achieve net zero targets.
 - How businesses may identify and address their green skills needs.
 - Interest in delivering to 'green agenda' by training providers.
 - Courses currently available.
 - Interest in potential promotion of courses via the 'Hub'.
 - Potential payment model for training providers to promote courses via the 'Hub'.
 - Accreditation /endorsement model for courses promoted by the 'Hub'.
 - Collaborative working opportunities e.g. to provide access to businesses that may benefit from support via the 'Hub'.
- 1.5 This report sets out the approach to the research, policy context (including relevant national research and West Yorkshire developments), key findings from this market research, our conclusions and recommendations to WYCC.

2 Methodology

- 2.1 Tokos Solutions undertook the market research between April and July 2022, mainly through primary research with 15 representatives of key stakeholder organisations (see Annex A) including:
 - Employers.
 - Business Support intermediaries.
 - Training providers and business consultants.

2.2 Following marketing and awareness raising about the research to engage potential consultees, by WYCC staff, Tokos Solutions organised virtual focus groups and one-to-one interviews, resulting in:

- Two focus groups with training providers and business consultants.
- Nine one-to-one interviews.

2.3 Notes were drafted for each of these structured consultations, setting out the key feedback points.

2.4 It should be noted that several additional potential consultees expressed interest in this research, however, further engagement proved difficult, despite Tokos Solutions contacting them several times to follow-up.

3 Context

3.1 National Policy Context

3.1.1 The UK Government's Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener¹ setting out a vision and 10-point plan for a decarbonised economy by 2050.

3.1.2 It includes the priority of "*Creating the skilled workforce to deliver net zero and putting UK supply chains at the forefront of global markets*", with the following specific commitments:

- Support the development of a skilled, competitive supply chain for key green industries in the UK.
- Reform the skills system so that training providers, employers and learners are incentivised and equipped to play their part in delivering the transition to net zero – including by legislating for skills required for jobs that support action on climate change and other environmental goals to be considered in the development of new local skills improvement plans.
- Deliver a Lifetime Skills Guarantee and grow key post-16 training programmes (such as apprenticeships, Skills Bootcamps and T levels) in line with the needs of employers in the green economy, helping individuals get the training they need for a job in the green economy, either at the start of their careers or when retraining or upskilling once already in the workforce.

3.2 West Yorkshire Policy Context

3.2.1 The West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) has developed the West Yorkshire Climate and Environment Plan 2021 – 2024², which is intended to guide the actions of the Mayor, WYCA and the West Yorkshire Local Authorities through a partnership approach to achieve a net zero economy by 2038. The plan states:

¹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/103399/0/net-zero-strategy-beis.pdf

² <https://www.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/media/7382/west-yorkshire-climate-and-environment-plan.pdf>

“235,000 jobs could be affected by the transition to a net zero carbon economy, with around 119,000 workers in high demand because of their skills and experience, and 116,000 workers requiring upskilling and support. (LSE, University of Leeds, 2019)”.

- 3.2.2 The plan sets out road maps and thematic strands in an action plan, which includes green skills and training intending to “ensure the region has the workforce and jobs that it needs to enable a transition to a sustainable net-zero economy!”. Specific actions include:
- Integrating green skills and training into the mayor’s pledge to deliver ‘1,000 well paid, skilled green jobs for young people’.
 - Establishing a Green Skills Partnership to deliver a roadmap and actions for the just and inclusive transition to a net-zero carbon economy and society.
 - Implementing training programmes to address skills shortages and gaps and build the local skills base ready for the future.
 - Working with key partners to ensure that training aligns with labour market demand and provision can meet future demand in the growing green economy.
- 3.2.3 Consultation with WYCA skills leads indicate that initial thinking includes the following:
- a. Green jobs gateway - providing access to green jobs, supporting their creation and enabling employers to promote them. This will also link to access to green skills.
 - b. Young people engagement into green jobs.
 - c. Careers information and advice about green jobs.
 - d. Learner support.
 - e. Employers’ skill support – enabling them to identify skills needs and relevant provision.
 - f. Employer initiatives to create green jobs.
- 3.1.4 They anticipate a staged and collaborative approach, working with LAs, WYCC, as well as the business support infrastructure. They recognise that there needs to be an integrated approach.
- 3.1.5 WYCA will support a development plan and provide funds to enable FE colleges to train staff and develop curriculum to provide relevant training.
- 3.1.6 The funding allocated to support these actions is £5.15m with a 1FTE communications and marketing resource.
- 3.1.7 The plan also aims to put in place business support such as building on the Rebiz³ scheme, and providing support, advice and funding for a circular economy aimed at minimising waste reduction and increasing material efficiencies.

³ Programme providing funding to support businesses in energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements - <https://www.the-lep.com/business-support/sustainability/resource-efficiency/>

3.3 Green Skills Research

3.3.1 The Learning and Work Institute (L&W) has undertaken research (*Skills for a net-zero economy: Insights from employers and young people*⁴) on behalf of WorldSkills UK, focussing on the perspective of young people acquiring the skills needed to support the UK's transition to net zero carbon emissions – i.e. primarily looking at the supply perspective via the UK Skills System (i.e. largely entrants into the labour market), rather than the demand perspective.

3.3.2 Key findings from this research includes:

1. Most employers surveyed currently require green skills or expect to in the future and most have had difficulty in hiring suitable candidates.
2. The green skills are needed in a wide range of business areas and at all career levels.
3. Green skills gaps are having a negative impact on employers' ability to meet their net zero targets and their ability to manage rising energy costs.
4. Despite a strong commitment to sustainability, young people lack awareness on green skills/jobs and careers available, the skills employers require, and the relevant education and training pathways.
5. Young people and employers agree on the importance of green skills for future careers, but employers are unsure if the education system is equipping young people with them.
6. Corporate sustainability and social responsibility strategies, demonstrating how a company is having a positive impact on the environment, are vital in attracting young people into employment.

3.3.3 Conclusions relevant to our research include:

- Local Skills Improvement Plans offer the opportunity for employers and skills providers to identify and develop world class skills that boost their region's competitiveness for foreign direct investment in green jobs.
- Marketing and communications, such as the *Get the Jump* campaign⁵, could capitalise on the enthusiasm of young people to pursue green careers by helping schools, colleges, and universities signpost to education and training pathways available.
- Smaller employers could benefit from additional support to understand which qualifications and courses provide green skills for their sector.

⁴ <https://learningandwork.org.uk/resources/research-and-reports/skills-for-net-zero/>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/get-the-jump-campaign-introduction-and-background/get-the-jump-skills-for-life-campaign-introduction-and-background>

- Larger employers could have a positive role in helping smaller firms in their supply chain to understand what transition to net zero looks like, and the green skills required.

4 Key Findings

4.1 The findings of the research undertaken by World Skills UK and the Learning and Work Institute, are reflected in this market research, albeit on a much smaller scale.

4.2 *Green Skills Awareness:*

- 4.1.1 There is little evidence amongst those consulted that green skills are particularly high in the priorities of many businesses. “Green skills is not coming up in strategic discussions with businesses”.
- 4.1.2 On the other hand, there is increasing awareness of the sustainability agenda especially in larger SMEs, and amongst younger employees, recognising that this is the right thing to do. However, this does not automatically translate into an awareness of ‘green skills’, nor a specific demand for those skills.
- 4.1.3 Lack of awareness may result from the language used – are we talking about sustainability, net zero, carbon reduction, or circular economy? It could be a combination of all those, and also link to inclusive growth. There is a lot of ‘silo’ working – and skills are not necessarily discussed alongside these concepts.
- 4.1.4 Green skills awareness or demand, however, increases where there are specific drivers e.g. compliance. Where businesses want to tender for public contracts (and some contracts with larger companies) they must have policies and processes in place, alongside standards. Thus, legislation and sales tend to be drivers of sustainability actions. And this tends to be the point where many businesses may not know where to start and need the skills and expertise to enable them to achieve compliance.

4.2 *Green Skills Plans and Lead:*

- 4.2.1 As a result of green skills not being a high priority in many businesses, they are also less likely to actually have green skills plans in place, even if they had a sustainability/environmental plan, which many may not have.
- 4.2.2 The starting point is often what does the business need to address the sustainability agenda. For one company it is about how to manufacture sustainably, including equipment that is recyclable and with economical use of energy. These issues are largely addressed through design and engineering i.e. STEM skills -with one company stating that providers were including sustainability in their engineering apprenticeships, however, they did not necessarily have the skills for engineering green products (e.g. recyclable materials development).
- 4.2.3 The driver for many businesses and their customers is cost, rather than the ‘green’ agenda. However, there is some understanding that green practices could potentially

reduce costs, particularly where energy or transportation costs are a significant part of the production costs.

4.2.4 An increasing number of businesses are adopting sustainability as part of their CSR (especially where they have public sector customers and are required to have environmental sustainability policies), as a result, green skills and expertise are required in purchasing/procurement.

4.2.5 Many (smaller) businesses are unlikely to have a specific lead for this area, and it often falls to the Health and Safety Manager, who may not have the skills to deal with it. It is often at this point, when businesses tend to think about how to access the 'green skills' that they need.

4.3 Green Skills Provision Take up:

4.3.1 Those with these 'green' responsibilities may do some on-line research and there are websites such as Carbon Trust⁶ and the UK Business Climate 'Hub'⁷ to help businesses with achieving net zero targets. However, feedback indicates that smaller businesses find the information available is difficult to navigate and apply to their circumstances, and that it tends to be focused on larger businesses.

4.3.2 Current demand from businesses is typically around energy and resource management – with support provided by business consultants, rather than for specific green skills to help businesses to address this.

- The Rebiz programme provides support for assessments, action plans and implementation however, not all businesses are eligible, and several businesses put forward by one adviser were rejected.
- One consultee described work that he is currently undertaking in Barnsley, focusing on helping businesses to undertake assessments of their carbon footprint and developing plans for carbon reduction. He found clear evidence of benefits to the local economy through businesses moving away from global supply chains to local ones, to improve their score (e.g. reducing carbon emissions through reducing transportation). This also impacted on costs.

4.3.3 More could be done via training/coaching (in addition to business advice and consultancy) to support a culture change and enable businesses to take a more holistic approach.

4.3.4 Typically larger businesses that have pledged to support to the Mayor's pledge to create green jobs are referred to WYCA's Skills for Growth programme. In addition, Growth 'Hub' staff refer businesses that identify a specific green skills need. Support is provided to help each business on their journey with referrals to:

- Carbon literacy training (as developed via LTRS).

⁶ <https://www.carbontrust.com/>

⁷ <https://businessclimate'Hub'.org/uk/>

- Local colleges – typically for training around the retrofit agenda.
- Universities, where consultancy support to develop action plans may be needed.

4.4 Availability of Courses:

- 4.4.1 One trainer has recently developed and delivered 2.5 days online courses to support SMEs to develop their energy policy to achieve a net zero goal. This was supported by the SYMCA Skills Bank. This trainer, as a specialist with many years of experience can customise delivery to suit each business need, advocates a series of short bite-sized courses as the most effective way of responding to needs identified, and indeed increasing take-up of relevant ‘green’ qualifications.
- 4.4.2 There are also NEBOSH courses – accredited via the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment⁸ – but smaller businesses find these difficult to tailor to their needs, according to those consulted. In medium-sized businesses these may be useful for upskilling the Health and Safety Manager/Environmental lead.
- 4.4.3 The Retrofit Academy has developed courses across 5 retrofit disciplines/roles. They are licensing out the opportunity to use these resources, locally via Enable. There is an opportunity for WYCC to take on the licence for West Yorkshire, enabling the WYCC member colleges to deliver and take up opportunities starting with the social housing sector.
- 4.4.4 The Carbon Literacy course developed via the LTRS project is seen as a good starting point in relation to general awareness of this agenda. Consultees suggested that WYCC could build on this to develop more courses aimed at increasing awareness and also around green management, building on technical training/courses that colleges have available (e.g. around retrofit or other specific industry requirements such as engineering/manufacturing). (Note: no specific details about these technical courses were provided by consultees, due to the lack of engagement of relevant FE staff).
- 4.4.5 Qualifications such as Understanding Climate Change and Environmental Awareness are available at level 2.
- 4.4.6 The Investors in Excellence programme⁹ also offers training and support to business leaders to achieve sustainable growth standards, working with them to set and assess business specific targets, largely related to net zero and compliance. Businesses on the programme know they need to do something but are unclear about where best to start.

4.5 Responsiveness to Green Skills needs and gaps:

- 4.5.1 One business adviser, who works closely with the FE sector, indicated that FE was generally good at working with employers to address technical requirements,

⁸ <https://www.iema.net/>

⁹ <https://www.investorsinexcellence.com/>

providing practical responses to the skills needs (largely with an engineering-related response).

- 4.5.2 Feedback from a number of consultees indicates a gap in carbon specialists and expertise to support businesses to develop and implement green plans. Examples include Business support providers such as Winning Pitch, struggling to access the expertise. Overall, there is an agreement that Training Providers and business support providers need to upskill to provide the hand-holding support for smaller businesses.
- 4.5.3 Shipley College has adopted the UN's Sustainable Development Goals¹⁰ as the basis for their approach to this agenda – but the focus is on their organisation, rather than what they are delivering to learners. This approach is being mirrored in Universities too, where sustainability is about reducing costs and increasing compliance as an organisation, rather than as an education provider. Shipley College, offer available Level 2 qualifications to their staff (see above), alongside board level training around the SD Goals. They also incorporate sustainability in inductions for their staff and promote sustainability weeks.

4.6 Marketing Approaches:

- 4.6.1 The language is an issue – how do you define a 'green' job or 'green skills'?
- There are 3500+ lines of different activities that could fall within this area (according to one consultee). It includes renewable energy, energy efficiency, resources efficiency, materials and place management. But should also include education and training, and business areas such as PR, procurement, accounting and financing – as an understanding of the subject matter is important for these business areas.
 - The whole agenda is complicated further by continually changing policy – e.g. most recently with an increasing focus, by local authorities, on the circular economy. These titles do not mean a lot to the average SME.

Therefore, there is a need to consider how do you promote the support for it?

- 4.6.2 There is a need for someone to actively engage with businesses to get the messages across and to keep them abreast of developments. There also needs to be overall promotion of benefits and focus on money – not green/environment/net zero. Thus, benefits to be promoted include: helping with growth plans, ability to attract new customers, as well as reduction in costs (e.g. energy costs or transportation).
- 4.6.3 Suggestions were made for marketing of available support with a focus on:
- Upskilling the H&S manager.
 - Energy legislation- how to respond.

¹⁰ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

- Cost-savings – working with facilities, procurement and supply-chain management teams.

4.6.4 In promoting green skills provision there is a need to differentiate between:

- Green skills that are central to all operations (e.g. engineering, manufacturing, retrofit), and
- Green skills needed to support the overall business e.g. managing costs/procurement or compliance against waste regulations.

4.7 Support and Infrastructure Needs:

4.7.1 Support to develop an environmental/sustainability plan. Support offered, needs to go beyond an energy assessment and to be tailored to the business. Help is needed to set appropriate indicators, collect the right data, analyse the data and understand what can and should be done in practice to follow on from it. This includes information about the questions that should be asked when procuring suppliers. This is both strategic and operational.

4.7.2 There is no central point for practical support, and when support is available it is ad-hoc, and generally with eligibility criteria that means that some businesses cannot access it (Rebiz was quoted as one of these support mechanisms that was not available to all businesses).

4.7.3 In some areas, networks are being set up at a local level for signposting, in the absence of a local central point e.g. Bradford, South Yorkshire (Sustainability and Carbon Co-op). There used to be a vibrant community focusing on environmental issues, which is no longer there because of funding.

4.7.4 There is a vacuum in terms of communications about energy, carbon, legislation etc. Some consultees suggested a similarity with the apprenticeship agenda, where support 'Hub's have been developed to inform and support businesses with apprenticeships. A similar approach is needed here particularly for the smaller businesses that do not have the internal capacity.

4.7.5 A number of consultees also identified the previous Skills Service model of support, with advisers potentially undertaking assessment, leading to brokerage of relevant skills and training.

4.7.6 There is a need for broader sustainability and support to address net zero targets, however, a lot of what business consultants are asked for generally focusses on energy usage reduction and linked to the ISO 50001 Energy Management standards. Smaller/micro businesses do not tend to ask for this type of support and the standards are seen as not appropriate to the way they work (size and responsibilities also play a role).

4.7.7 Practical support to enable businesses to think in a holistic way and take actions beyond just those that help them to achieve compliance, alongside awareness about

what support is available. Consultancy alongside training is preferable as the skillset is missing.

- 4.7.8 Leadership and management courses that integrate or focus on environmental issues are needed– as leadership is key to take this agenda forward.
- 4.7.9 To look at combining the ‘green’ specialism with sector-specific expertise to support the businesses, as different sectors will have different needs.
- 4.7.10 Several consultees suggested that bite-sized courses tackling different themes would work e.g. waste, sustainable procurement etc.
- 4.7.11 As stated in the L&W research, green skills are needed in a wide range of businesses and at all career levels. Consultees have suggested levels of need as follows:
- Leadership and management, including an understanding of data (what it means in terms of impact on the business, and what should be done as a result).
 - Technical – job specific in certain sectors (further described in the L&W research on pages 14-16), and largely regarded as an extension of STEM skills.
 - General awareness.
 - More in-depth understanding for those involved in procurement or responsible for compliance (typically the Health and Safety Managers).
- 4.7.12 Consultees have also suggested that more understanding and knowledge of the agenda is needed by trainers, consultants and those involved in delivering education. A number have indicated that there is a need for more upskilling of those that are working with the businesses (consultants or training providers), around sustainability/environmental action plans and implementation – i.e. the ‘green knowledge’ around carbon footprint and making sense of monitoring data and how it impacts on businesses.

4.8 Funding:

- 4.8.1 There are funding gaps – businesses need some resources to help them to address their needs.
- 4.8.2 It is clear from consultation with providers that whilst they would be happy to work on a collaborative basis to support the development of an infrastructure, none are in a position to contribute to fund such an infrastructure. With few exemptions, most will need to invest in upskilling themselves to support any demand for this agenda, and they are unlikely to do so, without a clear channel to market.
- 4.8.3 Suggestions were made about the potential for WYCC to develop the case for accessing resources from e.g. WYCA and Shared Prosperity Fund, to support and undertake some of the developmental work, including to support capacity building in the sector.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The language is an issue – how do you define a ‘green’ job or ‘green skills’?
- 5.2 However, the focus is not actually on the skills, but on the addressing specific issues that businesses face. E.g. energy resource management (to try to bring down costs for energy); and knowledge to ensure compliance with national environmental laws and guidance, when tendering for, or procuring, services, goods and works.
- 5.3 There is a need to develop the market and support businesses to take a holistic approach to this agenda, whilst also raising awareness of green skills needed, and increasing capacity, amongst providers, to respond to demand.
- 5.4 Overall, green skills need to be addressed at 3 levels:
 - General awareness of sustainability/net zero, carbon footprint etc focusing on softer skills related to changing the mindset and what they can do as businesses and individuals to become more sustainable, reduce carbon emissions etc.
 - Leadership skills in terms of developing, implementing and monitoring plans focused on how their organisation is contributing to sustainability, carbon reduction etc.
 - Technical skills:
 - Within specific sectors e.g. manufacturing recyclable products, installing solar panels, transport planning etc.
 - To support the planning within businesses and their workforce (i.e. specialists in understanding the monitoring data and how different actions impact businesses and organisations.
- 5.5 Trainers, consultants/business support advisers and those involved in delivering education, need upskilling to support this agenda effectively.
- 5.6 Collaborative working with the key stakeholders including WYCA, employers, learning providers across the spectrum and levels and business intermediaries, is essential to increase awareness and take-up of support.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 To set out clear objective for any development activities, scoping out the specific role for WYCC and for other organisations including WYCA, Growth ‘Hub’, Skills for Growth Programme, Universities, and private providers via the Yorkshire Learning Providers.
- 6.2 To consider the language used in any development of support: Talk about energy and carbon or sustainability – not green or environmental – and talk about money.
- 6.3 To build on the 6.1 recommendation and work with key business support agencies to develop a virtual ‘Hub’ that incorporates:

- Best practice and case studies of practical implementation of sustainability interventions.
 - Enables access to funding for businesses to develop plans and skills.
 - Signposting /database of where businesses can go for support (be it business support or training/coaching). i.e.
 - Where can a newly appointed lead go for initial support/learning, awareness, first steps in developing an action plan etc.
 - Where can they get funding to support actions.
 - Where can they go for in-depth support.
 - Engagement with and amongst businesses to share good practice and experiences.
 - Information and showcasing of the different technologies to increase awareness, demonstrate benefits and their potential impact on businesses.
 - Details of emerging legislation and what they need to do (how) to respond to it.
- 6.4 To consider how to enable access to ‘green’ skills advisers who will engage with businesses and undertake diagnostics and brokerage (expanding the work currently undertaken via the Skills for Growth programme).
- 6.5 To undertake detailed mapping of training /support available against the requirements (set out in 5.4), to better identify gaps, and inform course /curriculum development (linking with previous LTRS and current CRF activities).
- 6.6 To access resources and facilitate a programme of training of the trainers (and business consultants) developing capacity in West Yorkshire to better support local SMEs.

Annex A

ORGANISATIONS CONSULTED

Organisation
EMPLOYERS
Five Landis Ltd
Inspired Solutions Associates Ltd
TRAINING PROVIDERS & BUSINESS CONSULTANTS
Brook Corporate Developments Ltd
Investors in Excellence Training Limited
Pro Development Ltd
Shipley College
Sport & Activity Professionals
LJC Risk Management
Efficiency North
WYCA - Skills for Growth
STAKEHOLDERS
Bradford Council – Growth ‘Hub’
WYCA - Skills Policy