



West Midlands Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)

Operational Board Terms of Reference

(Draft – for Identified Board Members)

Period: 2026–2028

Issued by: Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce (the West Midlands Employer Representative Body (ERB)) in partnership with Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce and Black Country Chamber of Commerce

Statutory framework: Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022 and LSIP Statutory Guidance (November 2025)

1. Purpose

The West Midlands LSIP Board (“the Board”) provides strategic oversight, assurance and coordination for the development, refresh and implementation of the West Midlands Local Skills Improvement Plan between October 2025 – July 2028.

The Board ensures that the LSIP:

- Remains employer-led, with employer voice and assurance at its core
- Is evidence-based, drawing on robust labour market intelligence and the LSIP research programme
- Aligns with regional strategic economic priorities, including the WM Growth Plan priority sectors and the Everyday Economy, and the West Midlands Works Plan (the region’s Get Britain Working Local Plan)
- Complies fully with LSIP statutory guidance (November 2025) and associated Skills England requirements.

The Board acts as a system-level forum connecting employers, education providers, local authorities, WMCA, DWP, careers and skills partners to support delivery of the LSIP.



2. Objectives

The Board will:

- Oversee the LSIP research programme and be satisfied that findings are robust, reflective of the breadth and depth of employers / industries and actionable
- Validate findings on employer skills needs identified and provide assurance to the ERB and WMCA that the LSIP reflects genuine employer need and system readiness
- Be satisfied that due regard has been given to WMCA strategic priorities
- Provide strategic advice on LSIP priorities, recommendations and implementation roadmap
- Give advice on where and how there is effective alignment between the LSIP and related education, skills, careers, and business related initiatives within the WMCA area
- Give the ERB advice where it should explore opportunities to enhance employer and education provider collaborations that will enable the delivery of the LSIP
- Monitor progress, risks and delivery against statutory LSIP requirements, including where matters should be raised with Skills England and its parent Government Department, presently the Department for Work and Pensions.

3. Statutory Context and Compliance

The Board operates in accordance with the [LSIP Statutory Guidance](#) (DfE, November 2025) and will ensure:

- Employer leadership is clearly demonstrated and evidenced
- Meaningful employer engagement meets statutory expectations
- Evidence sources are transparent, current and triangulated
- Education providers and system partners are appropriately engaged to complement employer decision-making (underpinning triangulation)
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- Annual reporting and refresh requirements are met including where the LSIP currency and research updates are beneficial.



The Board is advisory in nature; final accountability for LSIP submission and compliance rests with the ERB.

4. Scope and Responsibilities

4.1 LSIP Development & Research Oversight

The Board will:

- Oversee delivery of the LSIP research plan including surveys, employer interviews, provider engagement and co-design workshops
- Ensure coverage across WMCA priority clusters and geographies
- Test and challenge emerging findings to ensure they reflect employer reality

4.2 Evidence, Insight and Intelligence

Members will:

- Contribute labour market intelligence, provider insight and system intelligence
- Highlight emerging or urgent skills issues
- Support triangulation of qualitative and quantitative evidence

4.3 Implementation & Alignment

The Board will:

- Support translation of LSIP priorities into delivery through AEB, LSIF, Bootcamps and provider planning
- Promote system-wide alignment and avoid duplication
- Identify barriers to implementation and propose solutions

4.4 Risk, Assurance and Escalation

The Board will:

- Monitor risks to LSIP delivery and compliance
- Escalate strategic issues to the Employer Steering Group where required



5. Governance and Reporting

5.1 Relationship with Employer Steering Group

- The Employer Steering Group is the primary decision-making body and is the parent committee to the LSIP Operational Board.
- The Board provides advice, challenge and recommendations to the LSIP Employer Steering Group, acting as employment and skills system advisors.
- One Employer Board Representative sits on both groups to ensure continuity and assurance.

5.2 Relationship with WMCA and DfE

- The Board supports the ERB's assurance requirements in meeting its obligations to Skills England.
- Outputs inform statutory LSIP reporting to Skills England (and in turn DWP).
- The LSIP informs WMCA's obligations in delivering the Mayor of the West Midlands' priorities and WMCA statutory considerations.

6. Membership

Membership reflects the breadth of the West Midlands skills system while preserving employer leadership.

6.1 Core Membership

- **Chair:** ERB Chair - Corin Crane, C&W Chamber
- **Deputy Chair:** WMCA LSIP Policy lead - Mahfia Watkinson, WMCA
- Greater Birmingham Policy Partner – Emily Stubbs, the Greater Birmingham Chambers of Commerce
- Black Country Policy Partner the Black Country Chamber of Commerce - Gemma Edwards
- WMCA EHSC Local Authorities Directors of Employment and Skills Group Representative – Spencer Wilson, Birmingham City Council
- FE College Representative – Neil Thomas, Chair of Colleges West Midlands



- Independent Training Providers Representative – Derrin Kent, West Midlands Provider Network
- Skills West Midlands & Warwickshire Chair – Suzie Branch Haddow / Rebecca Waterfield
- HE Representative (West Midlands Combined Universities) – Wayne Langford
- HE Representative (Universities West Midland) – Professor David Mba, Vice Chancellor, Birmingham City University
- Labour Market Research & Evidence expertise – Delma Dwight, Director of the Economic Intelligence Unit Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU) / Scott Grindey
- Labour Market Research & Evidence expertise – Anne Green, Professor of Regional Economic Development at City-REDI WM City-REDI
- Department for Work and Pensions Representative* – Pauline Jones, Business Manager [*This nomination also represents the new Jobs and Careers Service for 19+ careers previously the responsibility of the National Careers Service.]
- 16-19 Careers System Representative – Angela Tellyn - Careers & Enterprise Company
- Employer Representative from LSIP Employer Steering Group – TBC
- WMCA Employment & Skills Directorate – Mahfia Watkinson, WMCA
- Business Growth West Midlands (BGWM) Representative – Ian McLaughlan

In attendance

- Warwickshire County Council LSIP Lead – David Ayton-Hill Director of Transport and Economy

Membership may be reviewed to ensure statutory compliance and system coverage.

6.2 Attendance

Members are expected to attend at least 50 per cent (or 2 of 4) quarterly meetings per annum and nominate appropriate deputies where necessary.

7. Chairing and Secretariat

- The Board is chaired by the ERB Chair or nominee
- Secretariat is provided by the ERB West Midlands LSIP Project Team



Secretariat responsibilities include:

- Circulating papers at least five working days in advance
- Recording actions and decisions
- Maintaining records required for DfE compliance.

8. Meetings

- Meetings will be held **quarterly**
- Additional meetings may be convened during key LSIP development or refresh phases
- Meetings will normally be held online.

9. Conflicts of Interest

- Members must declare any actual or perceived conflicts of interest in a timely order.
- Conflicts will be recorded and managed in line with the LSIP Conflict of Interest Policy.

10. Confidentiality and Communications

- Board discussions and papers are confidential unless otherwise agreed
- External communications relating to the LSIP must be approved by the ERB (or WMCA) in advance.

11. Review

These Terms of Reference and membership will be reviewed annually or in response to:

- Updated statutory guidance



- Changes to LSIP scope or governance
- Direction from the LSIP Employer Steering Group or Skills England.

Status: Draft – for circulation to identified Board members for confirmation and onboarding



Appendix A – Statutory Alignment (Skills England LSIP Guidance, November 2025)

This Board supports compliance with statutory LSIP requirements by:

- Evidencing employer leadership through an employer-chaired structure and employer-only Steering Group
- Ensuring engagement activity is meaningful, proportionate and evidenced
- Separating advisory system input from employer decision-making
- Maintaining transparent records to support annual reporting and DfE assurance

SKILLS SHAPED BY BUSINESS

Timeline: October 2025 – March 2026

ANALYSIS OF
EXISTING
RESEARCH

SOLUTIONS
WORKSHOPS

RAPID RESPONSE
PUBLICATIONS

EMPLOYER SURVEYING

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT CONVERSATIONS

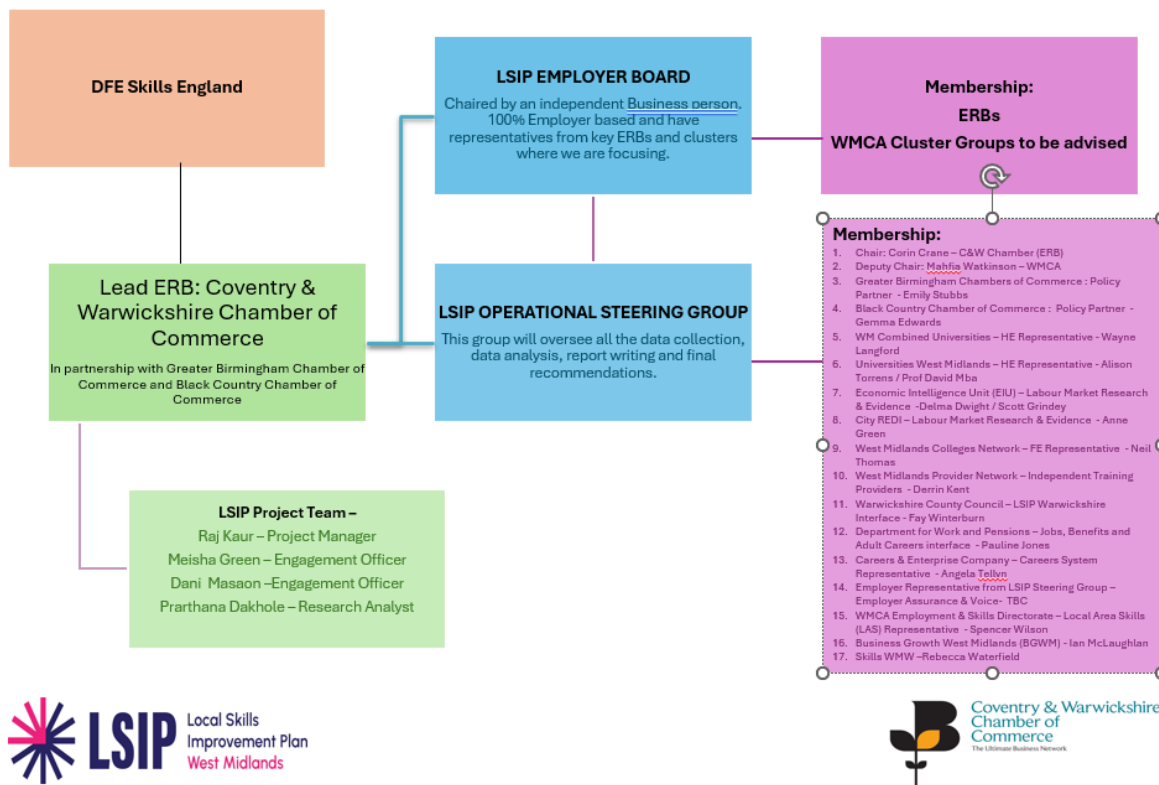
LSIP
Report
Published
Summer
2026

Progress
Report
Published
Summer
2027

Progress
Report
Published
Summer
2028

SKILLS SHAPED BY BUSINESS

WM LSIP - Governance Structure



Future LSIP West Midlands Operational Board Dates

Please note all meetings will be online via MS Teams – Links will be emailed by LSIP Secretarial

lsip@cw-chamber.co.uk

Progress Meeting 17/06/2026 10am till 11am

Progress Meeting 16/09/2026 11am till 12pm



Progress Meeting 09/12/2025 11am till 12pm