Suffolk Chamber of Commerce
Policy Group notes

Name of group	People and Skills Group (PSG)
Date of meeting	Wednesday 27 June 2023
Chair	Richard Brame, WTW

Summary of presentations/guest speakers

- Jonathan Gear (Suffolk County Council): Improving Workplace Health

- Andy McMillan (Suffolk Chamber of Commerce): Emerging Suffolk Skills outlook – discussion

Key feedback/responses

- The group thanked WTW for hosting the hybrid meeting.

- Jonathan Gear explained the Improving Workplace Health project that is encouraging Suffolk employers to work with their staff to find ways to improve their overall mental health, physical health, and wellbeing.

- Bethany Fisher and Jane Cox (Suffolk Libraries) were unable to attend and so the presentation on Menopause in the workplace will be delivered at a subsequent meeting. The dates for free [Employers Training](#) are:
  - Tuesday 17 October, 9.30AM - 4PM
  - Tuesday 5 December, 9.30AM - 4PM
  - Wednesday 31 January 2024, 9.30AM - 4PM
  - Wednesday 13 March 2024, 9.30AM - 4PM

- Andy McMillan set out the Local Skills Improvement Plan research findings and the next steps to deliver projects that boost employers' access to skills training.

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Links to reports/presentations shared

Improving Workplace Health p

SCoC LSIP update.pptx

Recommendations for Suffolk Chamber policy positioning

- None

Recommendations for development/Suffolk Chamber action

- The group agreed that sponsoring a Healthy Workplace award as part of the EADT business awards was a good idea, also need to promote the Health Workplace Award accreditation as a good way of addressing the social value ask. PS to raise with Newsquest.
- Involve more businesses in the Best Health at Work Partnership (BHAW) and to get closer working between BHAW and PSG

Requests for group engagement/information

Improving Workplace Health:
1) Members consider joining:
   i) The Best Health at Work Partnership (BHAWP) (overleaf for info)
   ii) The Supporting Women at Work (Menopause) task and finish group
   iii) The Supporting Line Managers at work task and finish group
   Contact jonathan.gear@suffolk.gov.uk
2) Member feedback would be welcome on 'the IWH hub'.
   www.suffolkchamber.co.uk/business-support/improving-workplace-health
3) Businesses consider applying for a healthy workplace award
   www.healthyworkplaceaward.org.uk and share with business connections.

LSIP
More business/employer representation needed for working groups. If anyone would like to be part of the work to shape skills development for your workforce, contact andrew@suffolkchamber.co.uk.

Young Chamber
Any employer willing to support young people/schools in their careers development journey is requested to email andrew@suffolkchamber.co.uk

Forward plan

- Menopause in the workplace
- Employing vulnerable people (supported internships, children in care – Clive Mobbs SCC)
- Young Chamber
- Revise previous agenda subjects to review progress
- Community Action Suffolk Big Suffolk Pledge (volunteering and personal development

The group wished to continue hybrid meetings .

AOB
Skills funding
We are now entering the last few months of the Supply Chain Skills Development Fund. The European Social Fund project in collaboration with Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils will close in November 2023. The Fund offers 50% match funding to companies in Norfolk and Suffolk to upskill their workforce. The SCSDF is available to businesses of any size under the following sectors:
   o Engineering
   o Food Manufacturing
   o Manufacturing
   o Renewable Energy
   o Construction
   o IT/Digital
   o Energy
   o Or a business that supports the above sector(s)

There is no cap on the value of grant but as scheme is operating under de minimis state aid rules, companies should not have already have had more than €200,000 in state aid over the last 3 years.

As we enter the final stages of the Fund, we are keen for the companies not to miss out. Training needs to be finished by the end of November, with claims being made and closed in December 2023.   Training can be accredited/non-accredited, a full course or modular, and in anything that is needed to help business to grow.

If you would like to know more, please do get in touch with the project manager. The project manager can provide decisions in principle within 1 working day and can turn applications round to approval in 2 working days to get people into training quickly. More information can be found at: https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/business/projects-and-programmes/supply-chain-skills-development-fund Or contact the project manager: supplychainskills@suffolk.gov.uk.

Date of next meeting	Date in December TBC.
	Venue: Endeavour House (Ipswich) or Greene King (Bury St Edmunds)

BHAWP's mission: to encourage the growth of healthy, safe, diverse workplaces by:

o Working with economic partners and businesses to join-up agendas and co-produce solutions.

o Encouraging more insight into health and work issues, e.g., cost of living profile, healthy workforce survey and focus group work to understand how health issues impact on Suffolk business.

o Supporting employers to improve workplace health and wellbeing and understand the barriers e.g., healthy awards initiative, innovation fund, support for line managers role.

o Supporting the delivery of the Poverty reduction strategy.

o Fostering system-wide SV policies.

o Working with Suffolk Anchors to better support health and economy, e.g. by encouraging short supply chains, developing the notion of business and community (small) anchors, improving social mobility.

o Establishment of a women, work and menopause group to support older women's health and retention in the workplace. NB lowered HLE in this group