

Nottinghamshire: City & County Employment and Skills Partnership Terms of Reference

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Greater Nottingham Employment and Skills Partnership was formed in September 2004. In May 2009, after a request from the Alliance Employment and Skills Board for the GNESB to consider a merger, the new Nottinghamshire: City and County Employment and Skills Partnership was formed.
- 1.2. The partnership brings together a range of private, public and third sector organisations, for the common purpose of improving the skills and employment opportunities of people across Nottinghamshire; helping to reduce local poverty and raise aspirations. The partnership also aims to coordinate effective support to businesses and develop a local workforce whose skills meet the requirements of employers locally. Finally, the Employment and Skills Partnership supports a vision of creating a highly competitive local economy.
- 1.3. The partnership is led by the Nottinghamshire: City & County Employment and Skills Board.

2. Purpose of the Nottinghamshire: City & County Employment & Skills Board (ESB)

- 2.1. The purpose of the ESB is to provide a forum whereby partners meet to discuss issues in order to: inform each other's strategies and plans, to develop a collective understanding and seek to ensure that funding is targeted to meet identified priorities.
- 2.2. The ESB organises its business across two main roles:
 - **leading change-** by challenging current thinking and resolving issues- in order to improve opportunities for finding, staying and succeeding in work and for employers to benefit from better skilled workers. The ESB includes a significant representation from local employers, who help shape local services that are responsive to local labour market needs.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: CITY & COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS BOARD

- **developing collective priorities-** to improve employment levels, particularly amongst groups who find it hardest to find or stay in work. At the same time the ESB directs activity aimed at giving local people the opportunity to develop skills and access opportunities at a higher level, which match the needs of local employers. This will ensure that the Nottinghamshire economy benefits from the improved productivity of businesses, which are able to compete more effectively in national and international markets. The ESB develops its priorities by having a balanced representation from employers, funders of employment and skills services, and providers of those services. In addition the ESB Partnership focuses on regular opportunities to consult with employers, individuals and agencies who bring expertise and advice.

2.3. For both roles the ESB has developed *valuable* relationships at national, regional and local levels; ensuring the priorities that are established by the ESB work well with employment and skills plans elsewhere. The ESB reviews the effectiveness of its relationships on a regular basis and encourages representatives from other areas to bring positive challenge and expert contribution. This helps the ESB evaluate its position and improve its plans (see section 3.1).

2.4. The ESB acts as the key forum for the employment and skills partnership it leads, by demonstrating trust, creative thinking, flexibility and cooperation. It maintains an open door for anyone who feels they can contribute to ESB's two main roles.

2.5. The ESB will influence, and be influenced by, forums or organisations that are responsible for issues that relate to employment and skills such as Enterprise, Business Support and the provision for those aged 14-19.

3. Accountabilities

3.1. Ultimately the ESB is accountable to itself. It sets its own areas of responsibility to- through its leadership and position- achieve its aims successfully. In order for the ESB to evaluate whether its responsibility is being carried out successfully it has several formal relationships with key organisations:

- **Nationally** (for example with **the Government** to get the best support for local employment and skills activities from national employment and

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: CITY & COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS BOARD

skills priorities and to influence national policy- particularly through the **DWP City Strategy** programme);

- **Regionally** (for example with the Regional Development Agency – **EMDA** to get the best support for local employment and skills activities from regional employment and skills priorities); and
- **Locally** (for example with **ONE Nottingham (the Nottingham City Local Strategic Partnership)** and other partnerships who have established employment and skills as a priority (i.e. **Nottingham City's** Local Area Agreement), which the ESB can work with cooperatively.

4. Making it Happen

4.1. The ESB will own an **Employment and Skills Strategy** for Nottinghamshire, which has two joint aims: more people in work and more employers benefitting from skilled workers. This strategy will set out the vision and strategic priorities of the ESB. The ESB's strategy will capture the context, targets and steps to achieve the ESB's aims.

4.2. An **Advisory Board** (formerly the GNESB Executive Group) consists of a senior group of officers which advises the ESB on its strategic priorities, supports the ESB in its role and coordinates the delivery of the priorities identified from ESB activity. The ESB asks its Advisory Board to act as a senior secretariat to the Board. The role of the Advisory Board includes accountability for managing formal relationships the ESB has identified nationally, regionally and locally- particularly on the commitment of resources and the overview of performance. The Advisory Board will manage the issues, decisions and actions coming from the ESB and coordinate the delivery of the ESB's Integrated Employment & Skills Strategy. The Advisory Board will facilitate the reporting of progress and refresh of plans, on behalf of the ESB.

4.3. Section 9 provides further information on the role of the Employment & Skills Advisory Board.

4.4. Appendix 1- The Nottinghamshire: City & County Employment & Skills Partnership Structure gives an overview of the delivery arrangements that are in place to carry out the ESB's activities.

5. ESB Membership

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: CITY & COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS BOARD

- 5.1. Membership on the ESB is broken down into four main roles, to give a good balance of views. This gives the Board enough expertise to be able to develop effective employment and skills priorities.
- 5.2. To ensure that the Nottinghamshire: City & County Employment and Skills Partnership are able to develop services, which meet the requirements of local businesses, local employers are significantly represented at the ESB. This gives its partnership a strong **employer voice**, which can challenge current practices and help improve delivery to meet the ESB's aims.
- 5.3. The local public sector, acting as **commissioners** of employment and skills services and training providers/education sector partners are also represented to give added expertise and advice on funding and policy issues. The public sector is also represented as an employer and purchaser of services, which can significantly help bring more work and training for local people.
- 5.4. There are no set lengths of position on the Board, although it is expected that Board Members commit to at least 1 year in their role; ultimately the ESB entrusts its Board Members to decide on when and whether it is right for them to step down. Board members are expected to attend regularly and will be prompted to review their membership if attendance becomes a difficulty.
- 5.5. The ESB maintains its '*open door*' approach and responds appropriately to any requests from others who feel they are able to assist the ESB in its roles and achievement of aims; however it strives to maintain an overall membership of around **twenty two (22) members**. This ensures meetings remain manageable and that effective decision making is achievable.
- 5.6. The ESB members must identify when there may be potential conflict of interest when certain issues and priorities are discussed. The ESB expects its members to clarify their position under these circumstances and at the discretion of the Chair, who is independent; members will be invited to abstain from board discussion if a conflict of interest has been identified. Maintaining probity is particularly important when the ESB focuses on commissioning and performance priorities. A registry of interests will be maintained by GNP on behalf of the ESB.
- 5.7. The four membership roles are:
 - **Employers** (around 12 PLACES)- comprising of:

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: CITY & COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS BOARD

- a **Major employers** representing the significant sectors across Nottinghamshire's labour market;
 - b Representatives of **small to medium sized** employers;
 - c **Public sector employers**; and
 - d **Community/ third sector employers.**
- **Trade Union** representing a worker perspective (1 PLACE)
 - **Commissioners of Employment and Skills Services** (5 PLACES)
 - **Colleges and Service Providers-** providers of services and the education sector (around 4 PLACES)

5.8. See Appendix 2 for a current ESB membership list (from April 2009).

6. The Role of the Employment & Skills Board Chair & Vice Chairs

6.1. The Employment & Skills Board Chair gives a strong commitment to raising performance in employment and skills, increasing business performance and the economic prospects of individuals.

6.2. The main purpose of the role is to chair meetings of the partnership and to represent the partnership.

6.3. The key tasks of the Chair are:

- Chair meetings of the full Employment & Skills Board
- Promote the benefits of the Employment & Skills Board and its strategies
- Act as an ambassador for Nottinghamshire and an active leader for the employment and skills agenda.
- Represent the Employment & Skills Board in other forums on occasion.

6.4. The Employment & Skills Board Chair has the following characteristics:

- **Essential**
 - Considerable private sector experience;
 - located in Nottinghamshire;
 - an interest in skills, training and education;

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: CITY & COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS BOARD

- some understanding of the role of partnerships or experience of non executive roles;
- have sound judgment, sensitivity and political awareness;
- confident communicator with strong diplomatic skills; and
- an ability to work at a strategic level with a wide range of partners, stakeholders and interest groups.

- **Desirable**

- from a company that recruits regularly
- a high profile local employer

6.5. The Employment & Skills Board meets as a full board on a quarterly basis for three hours. Others engagements include representing the Employment & Skills Board at local and national events on an ad hoc basis.

6.6. The Chair is expected to serve for a minimum of two years.

6.7. Board members do not receive payment for their services but expenses may be claimed.

6.8. Upon the role becoming vacant candidates, including current Board Members, should submit an expression of interest and a CV which will be considered by the **Search Committee**. Those candidates who demonstrate a close match to the requirements will be invited to discuss the position further with the Search Committee who will then select the candidate with the best match.

6.9. The ESB **Vice Chairs** deputise for the ESB Chair in their absence and support the Chair in representation and in ad hoc decision making to help develop the ESB's partnership. There are two Vice Chairs- one from Nottingham City Council and one from Nottinghamshire County Council who provide valuable oversight and accountability back to funders of employment and skills activities.

6.10. The search committee would also actively seek the appointment of the Vice Chairs following a similar process as the Chair, if either of the Vice Chair roles becomes vacant.

7. Board Member Responsibilities

7.1. In general Board Members are expected to lead change and challenge current approaches towards employment and skills services. Board

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: CITY & COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS BOARD

Members ensure that ESB's decisions are informed by a real appreciation of the employment and skills needs of people and employers in the Nottinghamshire area.

7.2. The general qualities of ESB Board Members are:

- Leadership and passion for change;
- Understanding/experience of the Nottinghamshire business community;
- Understanding/experience of the Nottinghamshire community or the ability to be able to share experiences of training and working locally;
- Commitment to the employment and skills agenda;
- Ability to think strategically and operate at a senior level;
- Experience of working on non executive groups/boards;
- Strong communication and representation skills;
- Self confident; and
- Strong team work skills.

7.3. In addition to the general role listed above; Board members are also invited to take up other responsibilities. These responsibilities are based on the four main roles previously described. This enables the Board to have sufficient expertise in developing employment and skills priorities.

7.4. The specific responsibilities for each of the four roles are:

- **Employers-**
 - Employers form a significant part of the ESB membership. This representation is profiled across the sectors that play an important role in shaping Nottinghamshire's economy and future skills potential (and will be detailed in the ESB's Integrated Employment & Skills Strategy). This includes representing the interests of small to medium sized employers and the community and public sectors- as an employer. Employer members will be expected to advocate the priorities the ESB identify relevant to the sector they represent. The main objective of being on the ESB from an employer perspective will therefore be to ensure that priorities are responsive to local labour market issues. To achieve this objective employer members perform the following roles: ;
 - providing 'employer leadership' from a public/private/community employer perspective- for the sector they represent;

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: CITY & COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS BOARD

- challenge commissioners and service providers to fund and deliver services that are targeted towards ESB's identified priorities;
 - invest time in leading the review of how successfully the ESB's partnership has met the priorities identified through its joint planning;
 - to be able to engage across businesses of a similar nature and seek views to put back into the ESB debate; and
- a willingness to advocate change across their organisations and networks, which result from the ESB and its partnership.

- **Trade Union-**
 - to be able to provide an alternative employment view to employers;
 - invest time in leading the review of how successfully the ESB's partnership has met the priorities identified through its joint planning; and
 - to represent the 'voice of the worker'.

- **Commissioners of Employment and Skills Services-**
 - Though commissioners are accountable to their own individual senior structures, the ESB Strategy and the role of its Advisory Board ensures that a common performance culture is developed and monitored on behalf of the ESB. This ensures there is joint accountability against the Local Area Agreement and the Sustainable Community Strategy. Further specific roles cover:
 - ensuring their individual and collective plans are targeted to meet the priorities identified by the ESB;
 - the ability to influence others on their role and services;
 - bringing a 'can do' approach towards leading changes that result in improved levels of employment and skills; and
 - challenging their own organisations way of working and representing the view of the ESB and its partnership.

- **Colleges and Service Providers-**
 - Colleges and service providers play a vital role in helping the ESB shape its strategic priorities from their delivery perspective. These organisations also bring strategic representation as employers, civic leaders and expert practitioners who play a similar role to employer members in advocating the priorities of the ESB's key sectors. Specific roles for college and service providers cover:

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: CITY & COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS BOARD

- providing insights into different perspectives, which helps resolve issues and develop ESB's priorities;
- ability to share success/good practice across their networks and with their peers to help develop the ESB and its partnerships performance; and
- a willingness to challenge their own and others' ways of working.

8. Board Proceedings

8.1. The ESB maintains a culture of openness and encourages constructive discussions on difficult issues. Based on the ESB's policy of maintaining flexibility, trust and openness any organisation or member of the public is allowed to attend a Board meeting, upon advanced written request to the Executive Team at Greater Nottingham Partnership, as an observer.

8.2. Other partners and providers may be invited to attend on a semi-informal basis as the need arises (for example Connexions, EMDA and the Government Office for the East Midlands). The Nottinghamshire: City & County Employment & Skills *Partnership* includes a great amount of representation from local policy makers, community representatives and college and service providers- who will be invited to ESB meetings to help inform discussions on relevant issues.

8.3. Decisions are made at the ESB by consensus however there is no quorum of voting rights.

8.4. The ESB meets as a full Board quarterly for 3 hours. Additional meetings are called at the request of the Chair and the Board.

8.5. The ESB is supported by the Employment & Skills Team within Greater Nottingham Partnership.

8.6. Ongoing membership at the ESB is coordinated by the **Search Committee**.

9. The Role of the Employment and Skills Advisory Board

9.1. The ESB is supported directly by its Advisory Board, a senior group of public sector leaders who will act as the senior secretariat for the ESB. The Advisory Group endeavours to deliver the priorities the Board sets, aligns partner strategies and helps develop the ESB's forward agenda

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: CITY & COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS BOARD

on their behalf. The Advisory Board plays a key role in advising the ESB on a range of strategic issues.

9.2.Outlined below are the main functions of the Advisory Board:

- is led by the ESB and its **Integrated Employment & Skills Strategy**;
- following the direction of the ESB, the Advisory Board plans ESB meetings, the forward look and prepares agenda items and papers;
- coordinates work resulting from the priorities emerging from the ESB and its Strategy; including implementing sector plans/actions and reporting on progress back to the ESB;
- the Advisory Board will pay particular attention to planning the allocation of funding using ESB's aims and priorities- across the Nottinghamshire area, including within local authority boundaries. Though there are geographical conditions to accessing these funds (for example Working Neighbourhood Funding for Nottingham City) the Advisory Board will bring a coherent approach towards services commissioned by aligning funds where possible and appropriate. It will recommend the allocation of and be accountable for these discretionary funds on behalf of the Greater Nottingham Partnership (GNP) and ONE Nottingham, in line with the GNP business plan, the Local Area Agreements and the Sustainable Community Strategies in place across the Nottinghamshire area;
- manages the delivery of the DWP City Strategy Pathfinder on behalf of the ESB; and
- reviews and evaluates delivery practices, especially projects commissioned through the Nottinghamshire: City & County Employment and Skills Partnership; to help the ESB and its partnership understand what works and why;

9.3.The Advisory Board is chaired by a nominee from both the Local Authorities, which will ensure that Local Authority involvement in the partnership is maintained and that their interests are effectively governed.

9.4.The Advisory Board meets six weekly for two hours, usually at GNP offices.

9.5.Core membership of the Advisory Board comprises of:

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: CITY & COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS BOARD

- Chair
- Jobcentre Plus
- Learning & Skills Council/Skills Funding Agency
- Nottingham City Council
- Nottinghamshire County Council
- GOEM
- EMDA
- GNP
- GNP Employment & Skills Team
- Additional organisations as agreed by the Advisory Board

10. Search Committee

10.1. The Search Committee comprises of both ESB members as well as external support. This helps ensure an open approach and help keeps to Nolan type principles.

10.2. The role of the Search Committee is to encourage applications and to build up a list of suitable candidates for both Board membership and Chair. The Committee considers the overall balance of ESB membership and seeks to address any gaps, based on this Terms of Reference.

10.3. The Search Committee advertises publicly when required, and each time that a Chair is selected, but will enhance this advertising by encouraging interest in the work of the ESB through local and regional networks.

10.4. The Search Committee is responsible for reviewing the role and remit of the Chair and of ESB members and proposing changes to the ESB as appropriate.

10.5. The Search Committee will specifically review the profile of the membership on an annual basis, with particular attention to refreshing the employment sectors represented; how other members of the college and training sector are given an opportunity to participate and the countywide balance of membership. Regular attention will also be given to the impact of national policy on local partnership arrangements and recommendations will be made on how this *may* affect Board Membership- for example relationships with partners responsible for developing for developing training and support for young adults (14-19 provision).

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: CITY & COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS BOARD

10.6. The Search Committee is comprised of parties from the following sectors:

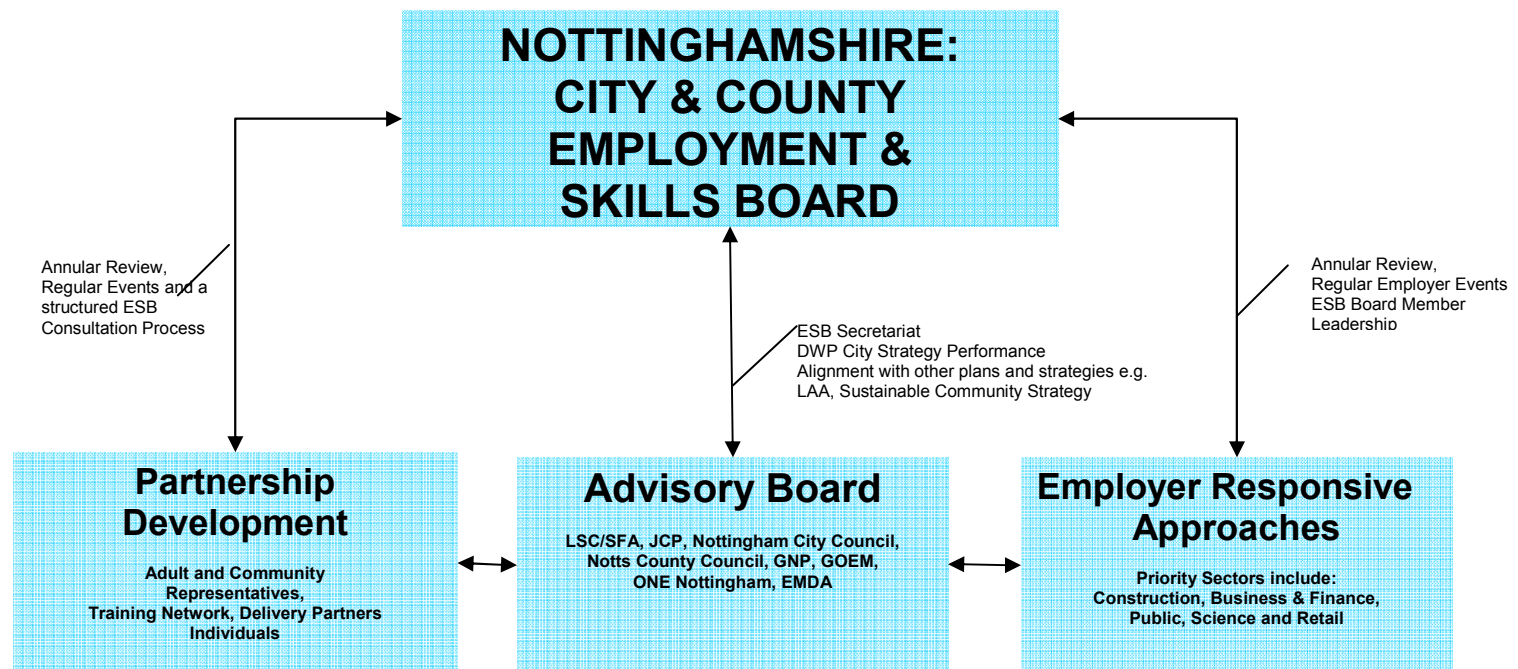
- Chair- in rotation from search committee members
- Local Authority
- Public Agency
- Private Sector
- External co-opted “networkers”

10.7. The Search Committee consist of no more than 6, of which at least two are ESB members and at least one is a senior representative of an independent body.

10.8. The Committee meets as a minimum of twice each year and is supported by the Employment & Skills Team based at Greater Nottingham Partnership.

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: CITY & COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS BOARD

Nottinghamshire: City & County Employment and Skills Board (ESB) Partnership (Appendix 1)



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: CITY & COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS BOARD

Appendix 2- List of ESB Board Members (from September 2009)

- **Employers-**
 - Experian
 - Laing O'Rourke
 - Capital One
 - Federation of Small Businesses
 - Nottingham City Council
 - Nottinghamshire National Health Service Authority
 - Nottinghamshire County Council
 - [Nottingham Trent University](#)
 - 4 PLACES tbc (inc SME reps)

- **TU-**
 - UNITE Trade Union

- **Commissioners of Employment and Skills Services-**
 - Jobcentre Plus
 - Greater Nottingham Partnership
 - Learning & Skills Council (Skills Funding Agency from 2010)
 - Nottingham City Council
 - Nottinghamshire County Council

- **Colleges and Service Providers-**
 - Castle College/[New College Nottingham \[in rotation\]](#)
 - [West Notts College/North Notts College \[in rotation\]](#)
 - ENABLE
 - [Nottingham Training Network](#)

- **GNP Employment & Skills Team attend in a support role**

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: CITY & COUNTY EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS BOARD

GNESB Terms of Reference Version Control

Version	Changes	Date
00a & 00b	Executive Group comments incorporated	08/01/09
00c	Revisions made to the role of the Advisory Group in light of current Exec Group Terms of Reference	12/01/09
00d	Revisions made to incorporate Nigel Jacksons comments	13/01/09
00e	Revisions made to incorporate Tom Stockwell and Martin Gawith's comments and clarification of relationship with other partnerships that have an interest in employment and skills	15/01/09
1.01	Revisions based on GNESB Board Member comments	23/02/09
1.02	Revised version for recommended sign off at GNESB Meeting 190309	09/03/09
1.03	Nottinghamshire dimension reflected plus revisions based on Executive Group comments	07/08/09
1.04	Include SFA references, Advisory Board comments.	21/08/09