**RLSP Provider Group Meeting**

**Tuesday 13th May 2025**

**Via Teams**

In attendance:

* Jane E Lewis
* Kerry Jones
* Stuart Robb
* Angela Maguire-Lewis
* Rebecca White
* Jackie Mathias
* Jackie Mathias
* Barry Walters
* Amanda Daniels
* Paul Kift
* Matt Smith
* David Bawden
* Scott.McKenzie
* Helen Davies
* Wendy Williams
* Julian Dessent

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|  | **Update on the skills and talent fund and consider the following pilot project applications for funding:**   1. **Semicon West – resubmission from the last meeting with answers to questions raised**   This application was previously presented to the board and was refused. Following the refusal Semicon West provided a response addressing the concerns raised from the board.  The initial refusal was based on three key concerns:  1. Duplication of Provision  2. School Curriculum Demands – There were concerns regarding the feasibility of integrating the proposed programmes within schools given the demands of the new curriculum.  3. Lack of Apprenticeships & Industry Demand.  They emphasise the growth of the semiconductor sector and argue that existing educational pathways do not adequately serve industry needs.  Given their response to the initial refusal, the application has been brought back for further review by this group.  PK added that Gower College Swansea had reached out to the applicant and are in conversation about exploring this project and ideas.  DB added the proposed school outreach number is feasible but would require significant collaboration with schoolteachers, Careers Wales, and other stakeholders.  **AGREED by the group that concerns around:**  **Delivery numbers – are they realistic,**  **Engagement with Schools,**  **Lack of Regional Stakeholder Engagement**  **Recommendation that the applicant re-looks at their application taking into consideration the concerns raised by the provider group.**   1. **Future Ready Skills – Harnessing AI and Environmental Standards for Healthier and Smarter workforce.**   JL gave an overview that this project aims to enhance workforce skills across Southwest Wales by introducing two interconnected qualification pathways: one focused on Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ) aligned with the British Standard BS 40102-1, and the other on Artificial Intelligence (AI) literacy in Health and Social Care. Though distinct, both areas share a need for digital competence, future-ready skills, and proactive adaptation to regulatory changes and innovation.  JL also informed the provider group that this application had come to both the Digital and Health and Social Care Cluster to give an overview and both clusters were in support of the project.  **AGREED to recommend approval to Skills Solutions Group subject to clarification on the following issues:**   * Concerned that Open Rain had only been trading for a few months and would like to know how long it will take to become an awarding body or will someone else be the awarding body? * What level is the qualification for the AI element of the bid? * Is this level of qualification on AI  high enough for industry?  1. **Future Gen Skills: Building the Workforce of Tomorrow**   JL gave an overview of the application in response to strong regional demand for improved employability skills and innovative curriculum design.  The project would be working with Agored Cymru and Coleg Sir Gâr to co-develop a bespoke, accredited unit that reflects the evolving needs of young learners and employers in South West Wales. This newly created qualification will form the foundation of the Futurescape programme, offering a bold alternative to existing provision.  **The group raised the following questions and concerns and required answers before recommending to the Skills Solution Group:**   * The progression route  from the project to GCSE Construction? * The delivery time -30 weeks in school to deliver one unit. * Delivery in only two counties * A Level 2 qualification will be achieved. Who will be delivering the remainder of the qualification and is there confirmation that the schools will deliver this full qualification?  1. **Climate Link up**   JL gave an overview of the application. The QUIN5 Women’s Sustainable Leadership Programme is a pioneering initiative designed to empower women across Swansea with the leadership expertise and green skills necessary to drive the region’s transition to Net Zero. This University certified pilot project addresses two fundamental challenges: the under-representation of women in leadership roles within green industries and the pressing need for skilled professionals to lead the green transition.  The programme offers university-certified training in climate leadership, nature-positive strategies, and circular economy principles, alongside practical, project-based learning, enabling participants to co-design and implement solutions for their communities.  Each cohort will train 25 women in teams of five, running three times a year over two years, training a total of 150 women. Participants will work on sustainability projects aligned with Swansea’s Nature and Climate 2030 Goals, Wales' Net Zero strategy, and funding priorities such as emissions reduction, nature-positive outcomes, and the circular economy.  This scalable initiative is designed for future growth, aiming to train at least 75 female leaders annually, amplifying its long-term contribution to gender equity and regional climate resilience.  BW: Raised a question about the qualification, expressing uncertainty about its classification. BW indicated that the programme is described as an “accredited professional development programme” but noted that it is also stated as “non-credit bearing,” which seems contradictory.  SR: Clarified that the University of Gloucestershire is issuing an accreditation certificate. While it does not carry direct credit weighting, it could potentially be recognised by another university for credit purposes. He further explained that the qualification could be useful in the context of Continuing Professional Development (CPD).  It was noted that the QUIN5  Sustainable Leadership Programme is already receiving funding from the Welsh Government, UK Government, and the Levelling Up Fund for programme delivery across Wales.  This particular initiative appears to be focused specifically on leadership development for women within Swansea. A key concern raised was the lack of regional context in the research and documentation supporting this application.  PK added the application documentation suggests that the programme was developed with support from Swansea University, yet the accrediting institution is the University of Gloucestershire rather than Swansea University, could we have clarity on why this is please.  SM provided insight into qualification structures from his experience at the Open University. He explained that micro-credentials are credit-bearing and can be considered qualifications. However, short courses and paid courses may use content adapted from degree-level programmes but are not credit-bearing and do not undergo the same quality assurance processes as fully accredited modules. SM suggested that the Programme may follow a similar approach—mapping content to a qualification level but not offering formal academic credit.  The group recommended seeking clarification from the programme providers to confirm how their accreditation works and whether it can be recognised within existing credit frameworks.  **The group reviewed the issue raised acknowledging that the qualifications and criteria did not align as expected. After discussion, it was**  **AGREED: that a recommendation be made to the Skills Solution group the application be refused for the following reasons:**  **I that there are a sufficient number of leadership courses available     across the region.**  **2 The lack of clear qualification within the programme**  **3 there was no evidence from businesses that this training is needed**   1. **Junction: Choose your pathway**   JL gave an overview the Junction: Choose Your Pathway initiative aims to address the critical skills shortage in the Welsh construction industry by offering a flexible, practical alternative to traditional college-based education. The programme  targets individuals who are disengaged from or excluded by current academic pathways, while also upskilling the existing workforce to meet modern construction demands.  WW raised a concern that this is duplication of what was already available in the region.  **The group raised concerns around the costs of the project and how much duplication there was. After discussion, it was**  **AGREED:  that a recommendation be made that the application be rejected for the following reason.**   1. The potential duplication of work already being undertaken. |