

CAPITAL

February 2019

Welcome to CAPITAL, AELP London's membership newsletter, designed to keep our members up to date with the latest developments across London's employability and skills sector.

The AELP London Strategic Forum

This month's Strategic Forum, kindly hosted by our colleagues from the Mayor's Office at the iconic GLA building, saw us discuss a packed agenda and hear from a range of guest speakers.

A brief summary of the highlights and key issues discussed follows and we're delighted to be able to share presentations with you, as well as links to key documents.

GLA Skills Team Update

Joel Mullan, Principle Policy Officer, joined us this month and provided us with an informative update on the Careers for London Action Plan. The Plan, one of Sadiq Khan's manifesto pledges, is at the heart of the Skills Team's strategy for delivering a high-quality, all age careers programme.

The Careers for London Action Plan comprises of six key themes:

- Enhancing support for schools and colleges
- Improving awareness of provision
- Addressing gaps in provision
- Better coordination of careers provision in London
- Enhancing provision for young people with SEND

- Improving access to LMI – The Skills and Employment Knowledge Hub

Joel provided us with an update on the progress being made against each of the themes, and it was good to see that they are moving forward successfully, given the importance of improving careers advice in the Capital.

Our Advisory Board Chair, Nichola Hay, extended an invitation to Joel offering the support of AELP London and its Members as the delivery of the Action Plan continues.

We recommend that our members download and digest [The Careers for London Action Plan](#).

[Download Presentation Here](#)

London First

We were extremely pleased to welcome [Mark Hilton](#), Executive Director Employment of [London First](#), who joined us at the Strategic Forum for the first time.

London First is a business campaigning group with a mission to make London the best city in the world to do business. They are made up of over 200 leading employers across a wide range of sectors.



And what better topic to discuss on a grey, rainy Monday morning than Brexit? Joking aside, Mark's presentation was extremely interesting and he outlined how London First's key aim is to avoid 'no deal' at all costs given the disruption it will cause for its members.

Mark talked in detail about the issue of 'Access to Talent', outlining that 14% of all jobs in London (vs 6% nationally) are held by EU citizens. They are clear about the positive impact that EU migrant workers have on London's economy and stated that their membership is concerned about the skills gap that will be created by a hard Brexit. Mark outlined four key themes that they are pursuing:

1. Three clear routes into the UK jobs market
2. The arbitrary net migration target to be scrapped
3. Protect EU citizens' rights
4. Bringing back the post-study work visa

More detailed information is available within Mark's presentation.

At the conclusion of Mark's presentation, the suggestion was raised from the floor that it would be beneficial for London First to facilitate meetings between its larger corporate members and independent training providers (ITPs). The ITPs amongst our membership would have vast insight into how large employers can effectively spend their Levy. Mark stated how he hoped this would be the "beginning of a conversation" and agreed that he could see that breaking down some of the barriers between large employers and skills providers would be beneficial.

[Download Presentation Here](#)

Ofsted

It was great to be joined by Rieks Driver for the second Strategic Forum in a row, and similarly great to hear him describe how he felt it was “really helpful to have this regular dialogue” with our members.



Rieks gave a short, verbal update on the Education Inspection Framework, outlining how the formal consultation had been launched, running until 5th April, and explaining his wish for our members would contribute.

Rieks also shared information on a couple of proposed changes to the ‘short inspection’ process for providers with a Good Ofsted rating. The first was a proposed change to the planning process, with the Lead Inspector visiting providers on site, on the day following the initial planning phone call. The aim is to make the planning process more effective through face to face contact.

The second proposed change was that the short inspection would now follow a set framework, so all providers would be reviewed consistently rather than the previous ‘review of strengths, checking improvements have been made’ approach.

The changes prompted some debate and comment amongst the membership, and Rieks was unequivocal in his desire to collate this insight, “Give us your feedback... tell us’. True to his word, Rieks has provided us with links to all the relevant information that supports the consultation. Links are provided below:

[The Education Inspection Framework 2019 Consultation](#)

[The Further Education and Skills Inspection Handbook – draft for consultation](#)

Digital

Janice Piggot, Regional Director at the [National Careers Service](#), provided us with a summary of their work, their objectives and their current priorities.

They are currently addressing four key themes:

1. Helping people to progress into learning or work
2. Self-service – empowerment of customers
3. Go Digital – all customers assessed on Digital Skills
4. Multi-channel approach – online, phone, face to face



Much more detail is available in Janice’s presentation, particularly with regard to priority customer groups and the customer journey.

Janice concluded her presentation by providing a really useful summary of how NCS can provide support for AELP London members, through:

- Promoting courses/apprenticeships
- Promoting or attending open days, events and taster sessions
- Referring directly into courses where you set out the criteria for particular groups
- Involving you in our focussed workshops for customers – e.g. sector based; priority group based
- Involving you in our events eg Apprenticeship days
- Supporting your learners with careers advice

We’re sure that our members will be taking up Janice’s offer of support.

[Download Presentation Here](#)

London Councils

We were delighted to be joined once again by Peter O'Brien of [London Councils](#). This month Peter provided us with a very quick update, as many of the themes that his team are working on were touched upon in other presentations.



With regard to the devolution of Adult Education Budget (AEB), Peter expressed his wish that it would act as a catalyst for better alignment across the skills system in London.

Peter echoed Rieks' (Ofsted) view that it was very important that AELP London members "have their say" with regard to the EIF consultation.

And finally, Peter gave a short update on the consortium approach to the recruitment of social workers, where eight London boroughs are currently working together. The process is in the very early stages, with the specification still under development. Peter advised that any of our members that were interested in receiving more information could contact him directly at peter.obrien@londoncouncils.gov.uk

AELP

In a first for the Strategic Forum, we invited someone from AELP other than Mark Dawe or Simon Ashworth to deliver a short presentation! We were joined by Lee-Jay Barnes, Business Development Director, who gave an update on the ASK project.



ASK (APPRENTICESHIP SUPPORT & KNOWLEDGE FOR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES) is funded by the National Apprenticeship Service, part of the Department for Education. The programme is designed to give schools, colleges and other educational establishments across England free support to develop and transform how your students think about apprenticeships.

AELP is currently coordinating a submission for the programme, which it will be working on through to the Spring. ASK's start date is scheduled for 1st August 2019.

We will keep all our members up to date with progress.

[Download Presentation Here](#)

AELP Policy Update

AELP CEO, Mark Dawe, provided his customary “canter” through the national policy agenda. The following represents (very much) the edited highlights!



Devolution – There wasn’t a huge amount to report here. Mark reinforced that Devolution continues, albeit at differing speeds, across the various combined authority areas i.e. West Midlands, Greater Manchester. AELP is engaged with each of the combined authorities and is providing support and coordination. Harminder Matharu is overseeing our Devolution work and you can read a short update on her work below.

RoATP – The re-application process is ongoing and while it represents a ‘lot of work’, providers that have been delivering effectively should not have an issue as the process is about demonstrating capacity and readiness to deliver. All providers currently on the RoATP will be required to reapply by August 2019, although those on the RoATP already will be written to by the ESFA to tell them when to reapply. AELP is running a series of events designed to support members with the application process. More detail about RoATP events can be found on the Events Section of the [AELP website](#).

Apprenticeship Funding – “The Levy is the Levy”, was Mark’s opening statement. The challenges are fairly well established and, as you would expect, AELP is working hard to influence Government. With regard to the “non-Levy world”, we are not expecting to see growth either this year or next and this represents a significant challenge for the next 12-month period.

Brexit – The dreaded B word is proving to be a distraction within Government, with civil servants being reassigned from the Skills agenda onto Brexit, which is frustrating, with the DfE being one of the main departments to have been affected. We understand that T-Levels development has been ring-fenced from this though.

Funding Bands – A case of “same old story” here with the IFA refusing to show any transparency in its approach which Mark described as a “disgrace”. It is a shame that the IFA is not committed to delivering a clear, transparent system that provides clarity for providers. Members may be interested in this recent [FE Week article](#) on the subject.

EPA – Mark described how he felt there was “a real problem coming” with regard to EPA. Discussions with employers and assessment organisations have highlighted that there are clearly delays happening and supply is not meeting demand. 30% of EPAs do not have an EPAO in place. Again, AELP is working hard to influence Government approach to try and bring some coherence to the system.

T-Levels – The decision to exclude ITPs from the capital budget is bewildering, and AELP was not given a warning about the decision, despite lobbying to ensure that ITPs should have access. Mark will continue to make this point, regardless of the recent announcement.

Functional Skills – AELP continues to fight the ‘functional skills funding battle’ and is collating evidence to support the argument that functional skills is acting as a blocker to apprenticeship starts. Currently functional skills, as part of an apprenticeship are not included in the 20% off-the-job training requirement and are funded at around 50% of the classroom rate. Members are encouraged to contribute any evidence that they have to support us.

Traineeships – We developed a paper in July last year titled [Tackling the Growing Barriers to Traineeship Success](#) that provides a detailed breakdown of our position on Traineeships. We understand that government is about to start a review of the Traineeship programme measures which AELP has been lobbying for over two years with any changes to be implemented from August 2019, so one to watch closely.

Level 2 Provision – It remains the case that the Treasury is not convinced that Level 2 provision should be a priority area for investment. It’s an ongoing battle that we are fighting and the more evidence that we have, the more ‘ammunition’ we have, especially around productivity as opposed to just social mobility. Again, members are asked to share any evidence they have about the

impact/effectiveness of Level 2 provision.

At the end of 2018, we outlined our support for the [Trailblazer's Business Administration level 2 apprenticeship standard](#).

10% or 5% - There is still no update on when the reduction of the employer contribution from 10% to 5% will be implemented. It may be the start of the new financial year (April 2019) but no confirmation has yet been given.

AELP London – Devolution

In our last edition of Capital we updated you on the recent appointment of Harminder Matharu who has joined AELP to lead on the devolution agenda, working nationally and specifically on the devolved AEB budget in London.

Since joining AELP on 19th December, in the short time since, Harminder has been allocating time to meeting with key devolution stakeholders across provider networks, government and the Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) and Greater London Authority (GLA).

A Devolution Steering Group has since been formed comprising of the 12 Independent Training Providers and one sponsor who have all committed financially and with resources to support devolution activities.

The first Devolution Steering Group meeting took place on 14th January in London with the main points of discussion around ensuring the terms of reference for the group reflects the key purpose of the group, which is to:

- Seek to educate AEB stakeholders on the 'collective ITP offer' and the benefits of ITP provision
- Articulate the ITP story through a position paper which clearly outlines what ITPs can do, flexibly and quickly to respond to skills needs across the country. This should be supported by intelligence and data to provide richness of insight to influence stakeholders and decision makers
- Build on relationships with colleges as they are in a prime position with MCAs, consider a joined-up approach as they are also bidding into procured elements
- Capture what has been well received and what's worked through the procurement rounds, distil the learning and develop key messaging for influencing decision makers.

London Devolution

A quick update on the current state of play in London...

In January 2019, the Secretary of State for Education and the Mayor signed the delegation letter and Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which transfers certain AEB funding and powers to the Mayor.

On 31st January 2019, the Mayor received a letter from the Department for Education confirming London's AEB allocation for the academic year 2019/20 of circa £306m to deliver adult education in London. The Mayor is currently considering his response to this offer.

[FE Week's report](#) on devolution in the capital may also be of interest to our members. Please see Page 10.

Events

Our first event of the New Year took place on 15th January, focusing on the re-opening of the Register of Approved Training Providers (RoATP).

The workshop, facilitated by Steve O'Hare of [SCLO](#), was a great success and we received some excellent feedback from delegates:

"Excellent workshop, brilliant facilitator. Especially engaging and informative for a dry subject at heart!"

"Excellent workshop - really good interactive session. Helpful to hear from other organisations. Steve was very engaging, knowledgeable and supportive."

"Steve was fantastic. His enthusiastic nature and delivery was infectious. I would attend his workshops again."

More detail about RoATP events can be found on the Events Section of the [AELP website](#).

You may also be interested to read Steve's recent [Blog](#) on the subject of the RoATP.

Useful information, guides, resources and more

With so much happening across the sector, we thought it would be useful to provide a quick a summary of a few things that you might find useful:

AELP Best Practice Guidance

There are a range of best practice guides available through the AELP website. We've provided some easy links below to guides that we think our members might find useful. It's definitely worth keeping an eye on the website for the latest updates, as well.

EPA/EPAO

[Reasonable Adjustments – A Best Practice Guide](#)

Many of the new Apprenticeship standards make reference to reasonable adjustments but stipulate that you should refer to the EPAO Reasonable Adjustment Policy. Having carried out a review these differ and in some cases do not yet exist, which does not give a valid, reliable and manageable approach to supporting individuals with support needs.

[Pricing and Eligible Costs – A Best Practise Guide](#)

There have been questions raised by providers and employers about what is included in an EPA price and what has to be paid for additionality. Furthermore EPAO members have been concerned that providers and employers do not release the expectations as to who pays for what.

Subcontracting

[The AELP Good Practice Governance Guide](#)

Subcontracting has become an integral element of the FE system. It has grown and evolved mainly because of the changes to the funding system and policy development, and, as such, little has been written on what good practice looks like. To fill this vacuum AELP, Collab Group and HOLEX have worked together to produce a short good practice guide to support both the prime and subcontractor on the key principles of subcontracting.

[Online Assessor Training](#)

A reminder that EPAO and provider AELP members can access a free online assessor training course, developed in partnership with Innovate Awarding and Pearl Assess.

Building the membership



Since AELP London was formed earlier this year, we've been working hard to forge links with key stakeholders, such as the GLA and London Councils.

We've also been working to expand our membership, because we know that the best way to make a network work is to increase its number, make it more diverse and expand its reach.

For this reason, we encourage you to speak with your peers, customers and stakeholders to let them know about the benefits of joining AELP London, either as a member or a Patron. Need a reminder of the benefits? No problem.

Membership Benefits 2018 – 2019

- Access to AELP's broader policy knowledge
- Lobbying to support London-based providers objectives
- Up to date information about changes to the skills and employability agenda in London
- Regular AELP London e-newsletter - *Capital*
- Access to the AELP London webpage on the AELP website
- Opportunities to network with other London members
- Support from the AELP Research Team
- Access to the half-day, bi-monthly AELP London Strategic Forums
- Access to AELP London member only events
- Discounted delegate fees to attend AELP events, webinars and conferences
- Complimentary Subscription to e-publication FE Week (worth £60)
- AELP Project Delivery Team support or AELP Events Team support for webinars and conferences
- Discounted AELP Full or Associate Membership

Membership Fees

Membership of AELP London is available to any organisation that delivers government funded skills or employability programmes to learners, apprentices or jobseekers.

- Turnover under 2.5m - £450.00 + VAT
- Turnover over 2.5m - £650.00 + VAT

Associate Membership is also available for an annual fee of £100 + VAT

AELP London Patron Benefits 2018 – 2019

- Branding on the AELP London website
- Patron profile on the AELP London website
- Discounted opportunity to deliver own webinars to members
- Patron footer branding on the AELP London Newsletter 'Capital'

Patron Fee

£2,500 + VAT or £1,000 + VAT for an existing AELP Patron

The AELP London Strategic Forum

Our next Strategic Forum will take place at [City Hall](#) on Thursday 4th April at 9.30am -11.30am.

The meeting will be hosted by Advisory Board Chair, Nichola Hay, and a policy update will be provided by Simon Ashworth and Mark Dawe. We will provide an in-depth update of the discussion

points and outcomes in the December edition of CAPITAL.

Please be aware that only full members of AELP London are able to attend our Strategic Forum meetings.

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 4th April 2019	9.30am – 12pm	City Hall
Thursday, 18th July 2019	9.30am – 12pm	City Hall
Thursday, 3rd October 2019	9.30am – 12pm	City Hall
Thursday, 05 December 2019	9.30am – 12pm	City Hall

As we updated last month, we'd like your feedback on our Strategic Forums, so we can keep evolving them to meet your needs. The feedback on our inaugural Forum was broadly positive, but we don't rest on our laurels so please continue to let us know your thoughts by emailing aelp london@aelp.org.uk

Continuing the conversation

We're committed to engaging with our members, working with you to understand how we can best support you and designing services 'with you, not for you'.

Last month we let you know that we're working on a new AELP London website. We're making good progress and we'll be able to share an update with you very soon. Our aim is to deliver a website that provides a great user experience; enables members to communicate with one another; and provides a showcase for the excellent work taking place across London.

You can also talk with us via Twitter @AELPLondon, or the more 'old fashioned' way by email at aelp london@aelp.org.uk or over the phone at 0117 440 9525

Best wishes,

Jane Hickie
AELP COO
janehickie@aelp.org.uk



We want to make sure that CAPITAL evolves to meet the needs of our members. If you have any feedback, or are interested in writing a comment piece, then we would love to hear from you. Please email us at aelp london@aelp.co.uk.



AELP London

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