

Introducing a Digital Careers solution for Essex



Essex County Council



Microsoft



GetMyFirstJob
Where it all starts.

Introductions & purpose

- Aims of this session:
 - Introduce the concept of a Digital Careers Tool for Essex.
 - Explore and understand your organisational perspective on the concept.
 - Identify opportunities to engage in the scoping programme



Joanne Giles
Director - Local Skills Improvement Plan
Essex Chambers of Commerce

 Essex County Council

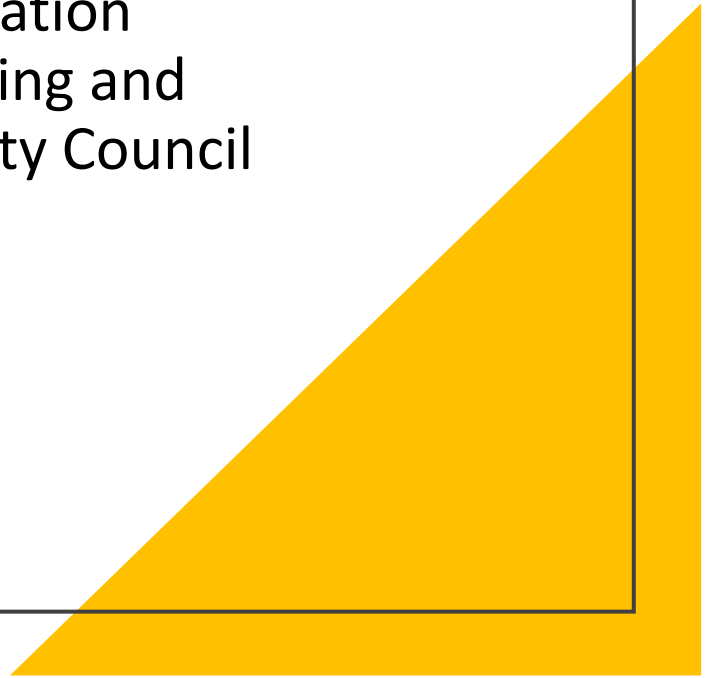
**Johnathon
Cuthbertson**

Head of Employability & Skills
Essex County Council

Opening Address

CLlr Tony Ball

Cabinet Member for Education
Excellence, Lifelong Learning and
Employability, Essex County Council



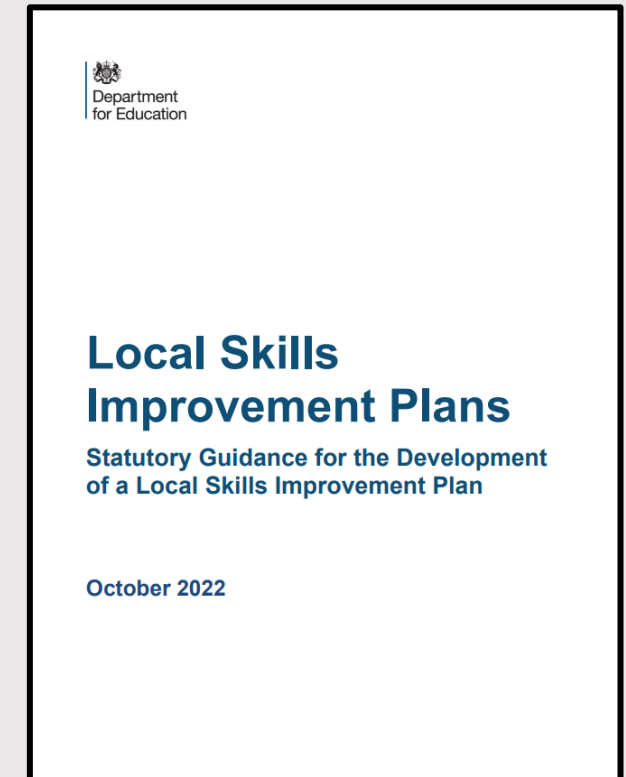


Joanne Giles
Director - Local Skills Improvement Plan
Essex Chambers of Commerce


Local Skills Improvement Plan perspective

What is an LSIP:

- ***“A plan that will provide an agreed set of actionable priorities that employers, providers and stakeholders in a local area can get behind to drive change”***
- ***“work closely with all stakeholders to develop a plan that sets out the key challenges needed in a local area to make technical skills more responsive to employer needs”***
 - Place employers at the heart
 - It’s a journey to bring together the 2 sides
 - Facilitate direct and dynamic working arrangements between employers and providers
 - Not just another plan, and it won’t cover everything – it’s about the key priorities!
- ***Essex Chambers of Commerce and Industry appointed as Employer Representative Body (ERB) November 2023***
- ***There are 38 across England , including Kent Invicta Chambers of Commerce and Sussex Chambers of Commerce***




Introduction:



Department for Education

Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth

January 2021



Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022

2022 CHAPTER 21

An Act to make provision about local skills improvement plans; to make provision relating to further education; to make provision about functions of the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education and relating to technical education qualifications and apprenticeships; to make provision about student finance and fees; to make provision about assessments and publication of certain matters by the Office for Students; to make provision about the funding of certain post-16 education or training providers; to create offences relating to completing assignments on behalf of students; to make provision about designating 16 to 19 Academies as having a religious character; and for connected purposes.

[28th April 2022]

BE IT ENACTED by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

PART 1
SKILLS AND EDUCATION FOR WORK

CHAPTER 1
EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR LOCAL NEEDS

Local skills improvement plans

1 Local skills improvement plans

(1) This section applies to a relevant provider that provides English-funded post-16 technical education or training that is material to a specified area.



Local Skills Improvement Plan



Essex Chambers of Commerce
Better for business



Business Driven Employer Led



Department for Education



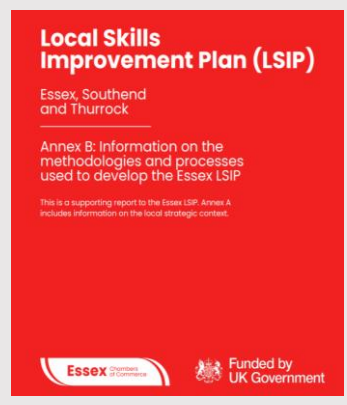
Department for Education



Ofsted
raising standards
improving lives

LSIP Stage 1 – report creation:

- Report and 3 annexes published on 10th August 2023
- Executive Summary and updated Annex C published
- Chamber has excellent working relationship build with
- High levels of business engagement across the county



LSIP Strategic Priorities

Reminder of our objectives



- To work with stakeholders to make the skills landscape easier to navigate for businesses, educators, and training providers.
- Be the Employment and Skills Board for Essex
- To provide strategic leadership in support of the realisation of Essex LSIP
- Continue to review the LSIP to ensure all stakeholders remain focussed on the priorities.
- Continue to maintain skills alignment with large infrastructure projects.
- Create and steer an ecosystem in Essex that is cohesive and collaborative
- Facilitate opportunities to challenge and improve

This slide summarizes the Essex LSIP priorities. It features three colored boxes: a green box for 'Skills priorities', a blue box for 'Skills system priorities', and a yellow box for 'Essex Sectors and Technical Skills'. Each box contains a list of specific priorities. The slide also includes the logos from the top right of the main slide.

Skills priorities

- Soft skills and behaviours.
- Basic English, Maths and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages).
- Digital skills and 'Digitech'.
- Green skills.
- Leadership and Management skills.

Skills system priorities

- System access and flexibility.
- Information, Careers Advice and Guidance.
- Tutor shortages and capacity of providers to respond.
- Inclusive employment.
- Barriers to engagement.
- Skills planning system for Essex.

Essex LSIP Priorities:

Essex Sectors and Technical Skills

- Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering & Aviation.
- AgriTech & Food Tech.
- Community & Voluntary
- Construction.
- Creative and Cultural.
- DigiTech.
- Education.
- Health, Care & Med Tech.
- Professional Services.
- Transport and Logistics.

LSIP Strategic System Priorities

Information, Careers Advice & Guidance

System Access & Flexibility,

Inclusive Employment, and Skills Planning System for Essex



At the outset it was identified that the system is

- Confusing
- Does not join up
- Works in silos
- Complex application process
- Language barriers
- Lack of consistent careers advice and guidance

Barriers to engagement – Many new entrants, existing and returning employees face significant barriers when accessing work or training. These barriers include low levels of aspiration, availability of childcare, complexities in the application and onboarding process, technical language, lack of equipment and the cost and availability of transport.

Information, Careers Advice and Guidance – To ensure that appropriately skilled labour is available to industry, it is vital that careers advice and guidance is of high quality and consistent across all levels of the education system throughout the whole county. Employers have fed-back their experiences with inconsistencies. They are primarily pre-16, but post-16 and adults would also benefit from joining up to local initiatives and improvements to ensure they are reflecting the needs of the local economy. This includes ensuring that vocational pathways (including apprenticeships) are presented as a credible alternative to university. With new emerging sectors and skills, there is a general lack of awareness of specific roles and career paths.

All of which were recognised in the report as priorities to be addressed

LSIP Strategic System Priorities



- Today is about Innovation – challenging what we know and changing what we do
- Today is about doing something different – bringing solutions to the county
- Today is about introducing something new – this is not just another platform
- Transformative.....changing the way we think and collaborate across the county

Today is about bringing a solution to the residents of Essex!

Johnathon Cuthbertson

Head of Employability & Skills,
Essex County Council

Introducing the Digital Careers Tool concept

A fragmented system requires unified approach

The skills system is fragmented; hard to navigate for business, residents and providers; presenting a constraint to the growth of the Essex economy.

In the ever-evolving world of work, accessing opportunities, information guidance and training has become fragmented.

With a lack of resources and a rising demand for skilled workers, it's become imperative to find a cohesive automated solution that is accessible by design and ethical, to embrace change and put the power of connectivity back into the hands of the residents of Essex.

Why are we doing this?

1. **Strong Businesses, Strong Economy:** Aligned, simplified and accessible support & engagement with businesses.
2. **Working Together, Winning Together:** strong partnerships will ensure that everyone benefits from growth.
3. **Putting People First:** Immediate action means better-paying jobs for Essex residents, leading to a higher quality of life for everyone.
4. **Levelling Up Essex:** We aim to boost the economies of all levelling up areas and cohorts in Essex, creating equal opportunities for everyone.
5. **Delivering Results:** Ensuring businesses get stronger, residents get better jobs, and disadvantaged areas see real improvements.
6. **Cutting Red Tape, Maximising Success:** We'll make it easier for businesses, residents and communities to access the support they need, unlocking their full potential.

Effective business engagement will help grow, attract and retain businesses in Essex and enable our residents to have access to a higher quality of life.

A Digital Careers Solution for Essex

The Concept: A digital careers and employment platform for Essex

Recognising the system challenges we are proposing to explore development of a **'digital front door'** for the County, linking Essex residents and businesses with employment, training and skills opportunities.

Our vision is to create a platform that overcomes the systemic barriers to;

- **Return power to our residents;** supporting residents to take control of their skills journey and career development by recognising the value of their skills and creating a countywide culture of aspiration, lifelong learning and attainment.
- **Supercharge the Essex economy;** enabling business to be confident in locating and growing in the County by facilitating access to high-quality, appropriately skilled talent, embedding an ethos of continuous professional development and investment in people.
- **Harness the power of data;** maximise labour-market intelligence, employer & resident insight to deliver shared curriculum planning and direct strategic commissioning of skills infrastructure and projects.
- **Enhance system integration and value of investment;** streamline the presentation of Information, Advice & Guidance and foster a culture of collaboration across the Essex skills systems to deliver shared outcomes and respond to the system priorities articulated in the LSIP.

The proposal

Our plan is to explore how we use Automation and Artificial Intelligence to enhance visibility and accessibility of opportunities, remove barriers and support development of an integrated, intelligence-led skills & employability system for Essex with tool tailored to benefit each user.

Essex residents

- Access to free, tailored and impartial Information, Advice and Guidance on courses, training, employment opportunities and support.
- Enhanced aspiration and confidence.
- Increase value of residents' skills and qualification through a Digital CV.
- Streamlined application process and access to work and training through a 'Talent Pool' using digital CV's, skills badging and interfacing with live opportunities.

Essex Businesses

- Enhanced support for talent development and retention in their business.
- Rewarding commitment to Employability and Skills development through an 'employer charter'
- Providing a direct connection to a pool of candidates with skills match requirements they are recruiting using the candidates digital CV.
- Brand promotion and partnership opportunities.

Training Providers and Colleges

- Targeted promotion of the existing course offer to increase visibility and take-up
- Access to up-to-date insight on skills required by employers & skills gaps to support intelligent curriculum planning that and enhances financial sustainability of courses in emerging sectors.
- Promotion and partnership opportunities.

District, County and Unitary Authorities:

- Enable delivery of a coherent high-quality offer across Essex LA's regardless of geography or LA budget.
- Provides access to enabling a deeper understanding of the labour market including business skills needs. and resident demographics enabling best practice & gap identification.
- Supports strategic commissioning and collaboration on skills programmes e.g. UKSPF.
- Opportunity to promote Essex to investors and retain existing businesses by providing intelligence on vacancies, skills, training opportunities.

Moving forward

The Opportunity: Essex as a skills system leader

No Local Authorities have yet developed a tool with the level of aspiration that we are proposing.

We have a unique opportunity for Essex to become a system leader that puts our residents and businesses at the forefront of digital innovation and enables us to deliver our shared commitment to inclusive economic growth.

Taking this work forward

As a first in class solution, we need to first undertake detailed scoping and product design to verify the prior to procuring the product, doing this in partnership with our system partners.

- We have engaged Get My First Job and Microsoft to support a discovery phase, running across May and June 2024 including a series of facilitated scoping sessions with system partners.
- Using this specification we will develop a product specification, complete market analysis and undertake supplier selection.
- Our aspiration is to have a first product complete by November 2024.

Introducing: The Microsoft Connector

Rebecca King

UK Apprentice lead for Microsoft UK



→ Challenges.

Why was the Microsoft Connector scoped?

→ Solution

Why the Microsoft Connector was the right solution?

→ Impact

What has been the impact of the Microsoft Connector?

Introducing: GetMyFirstJob

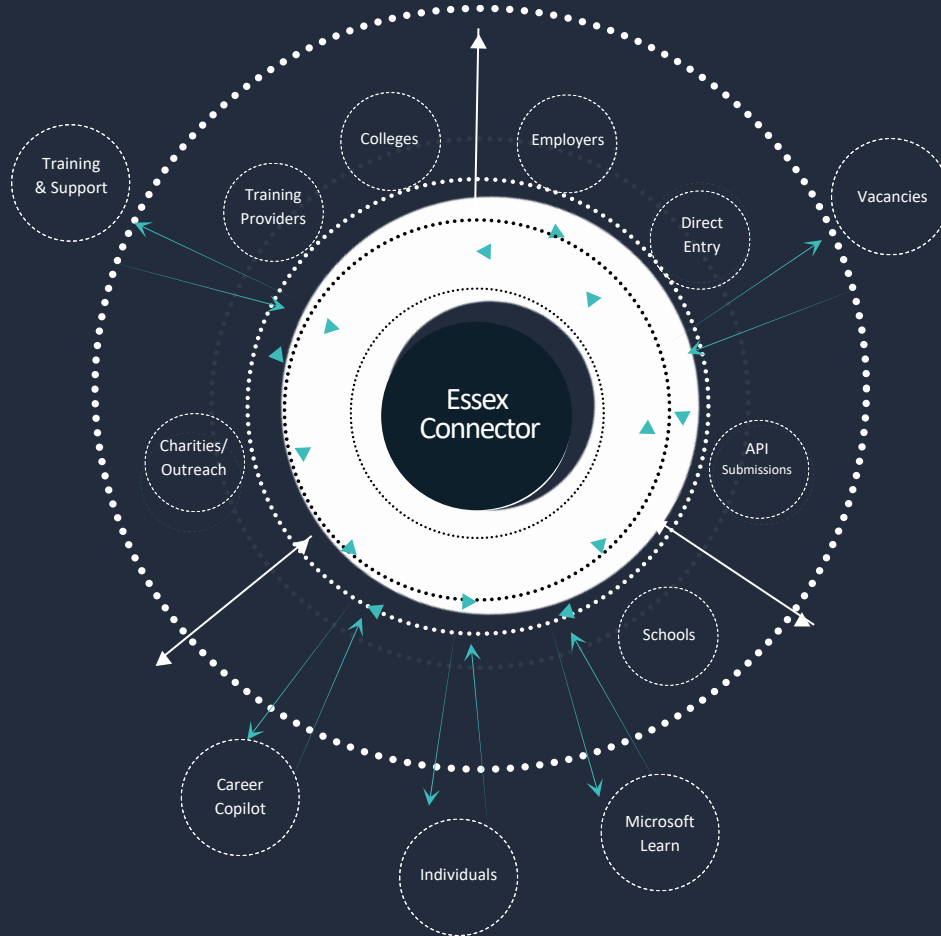
A world where people from every background are inspired to connect with insight, development and employers which are right for them.



Common Challenges:

- ✔ Navigating a complex education, skills and training system
- ✔ 'Identification' powered career Insight and Inspiration.
- ✔ Mapping, Managing and Curating Supply and Demand
- ✔ Technology to Support, Not Replace
- ✔ Evaluating the Impact of the System

The Connector:



Key Principles:

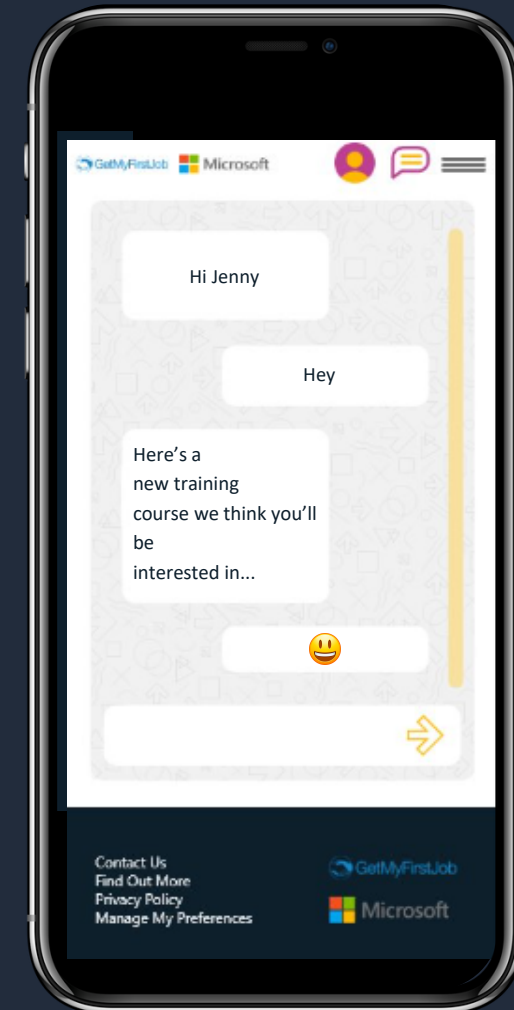
- ➔ Navigating and supporting existing provision
- ➔ Accessible by design
- ➔ Ethical, intuitive AI & smart technology
- ➔ The power of stories
Employers
Industries
- ➔ The power of data
LMI
Impact data
- ➔ Actionable opportunities
- ➔ Aligned advice for stakeholders

Career Copilot:

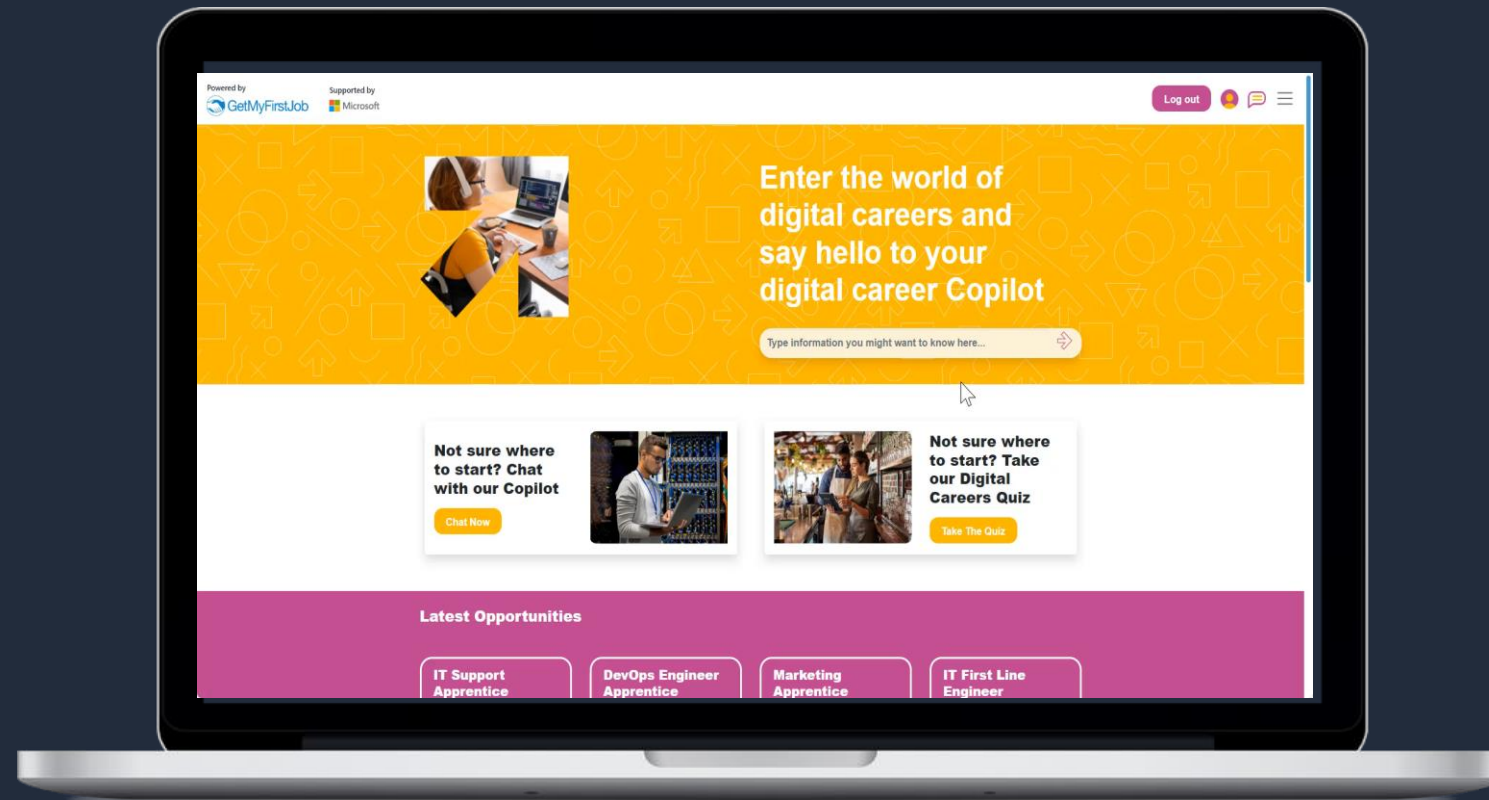
Our AI technology ensures each individual learner is given a bespoke journey which is relevant and right for them.

The Career Copilot will search all the trusted information added to the hub and showcase the next step, whether it is a college course, apprenticeship, grad role, IAG or training module.

- ✔ Personalised Conversations for each resident
- ✔ Trusted and verified career sources
- ✔ Live opportunities and programmes
- ✔ Signposting to alternative roles



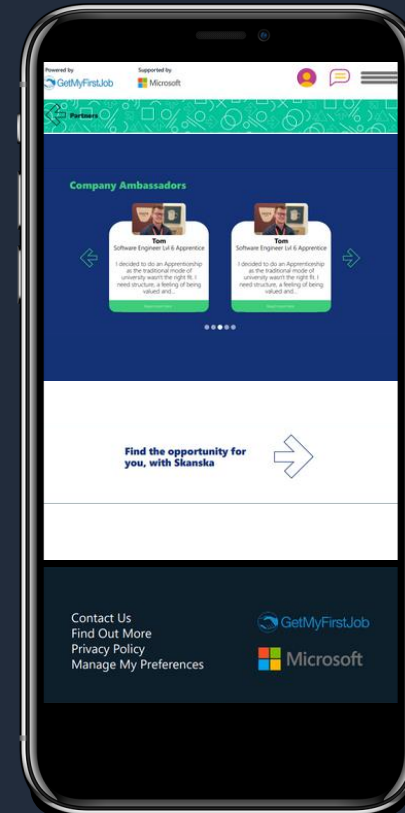
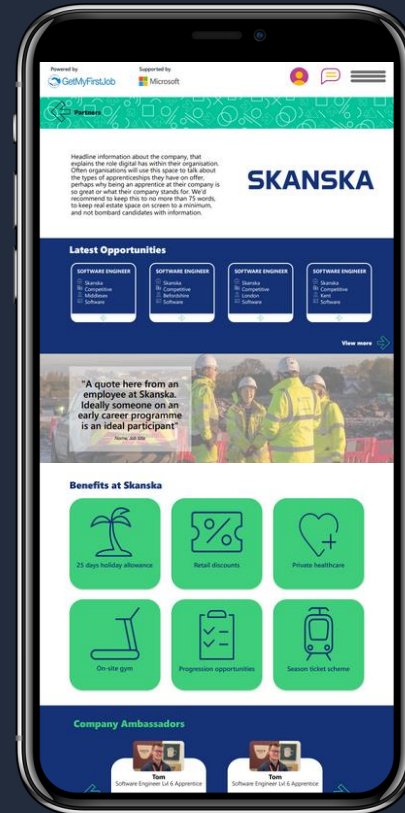
Career Copilot:



Employer profile:

Front-end:

- ✓ Local jobs for local People.
- ✓ Targeted Attraction Campaign.
- ✓ Career Copilot: Chatbot, recommendations & training.
- ✓ Ambassador stories.



Back-end:

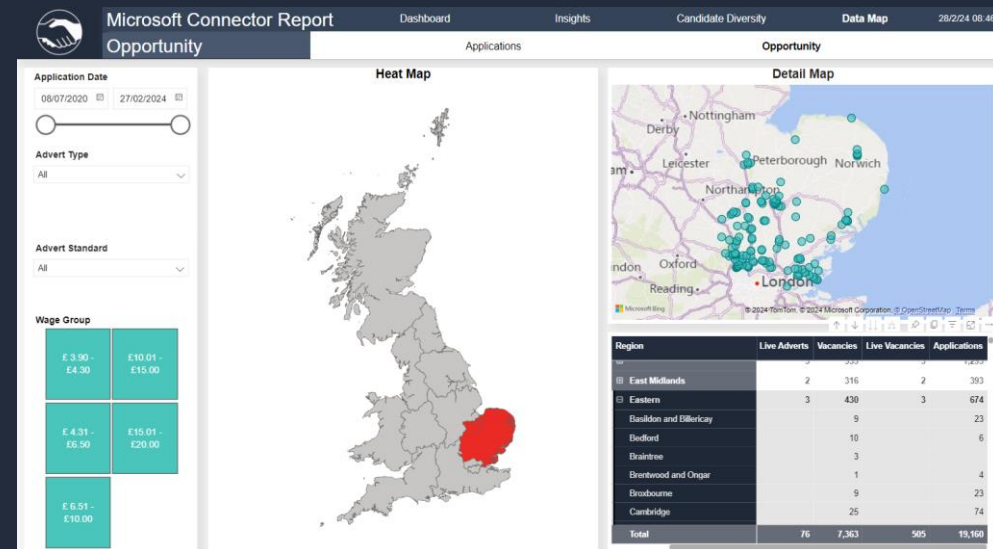
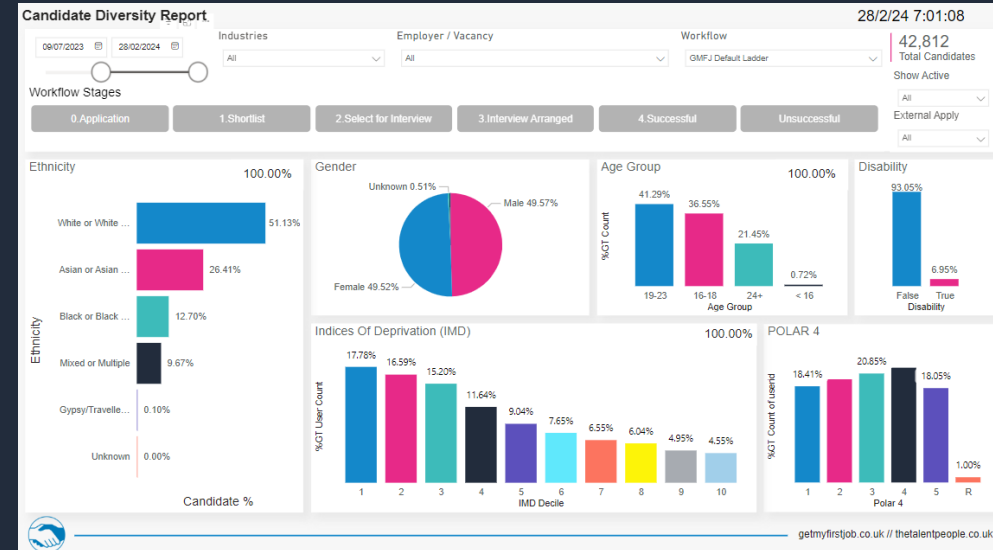
- ✓ Backend data, Impact reporting - ROI
- ✓ Ability to understand resident talent & current skills set.
- ✓ Connector will look at available jobs and skill sets and push relevant information and recommendations to users

Reporting:

Employers: Gain reports showcasing the performance of the adverts they advertise, the diversity of applicants and gain insights into the labour market.

Training Providers and Colleges: Gain reports showcasing the performance of the adverts and opportunities they advertise, the diversity of applicants and gain insights into the labour market.

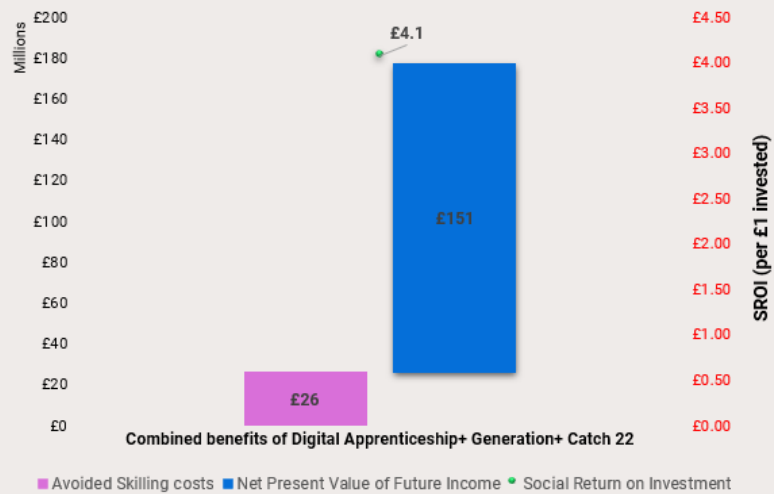
Essex County Council and LSIP: Gain a deep understanding of the market including roles being advertised, candidate demographics, performance of opportunities and appetite. This will allow them to gain valuable reports on the labour market, share best practice across the region and track the success of the initiative.



Quantifiable social impact measurements:



Economic Impact generated by skilling programmes



Economic Impact: Digital Apprenticeships + Generation + Catch 22

- The skilling programmes generated a Total Economic Value (TEV) of **£ 177 million**.
 - Net Present Value (NPV) of future income generated for participants is **£ 151 million**.
 - Avoided Skilling Costs for participants is **£ 26 million**.
- Total SROI generated is **£ 4.1** i.e. £ 4.1 per £ 1 invested
- The economic impact generated per beneficiary is **£52,228**.

The Future of Essex:

Let's look ahead at what could potentially be achieved over the next two years with the Essex Connector:

- ✔ Increase in successful job placements for target sectors
- ✔ More residents with AI and digital skills
- ✔ Higher volume of applicants to SME's in the area
- ✔ Smoother job-hunting experience for residents
- ✔ Reduction of career choice fatigue
- ✔ Clear impact reporting
- ✔ Streamlined IAG for residents
- ✔ Quantifiable social impact measurements

Check-in session

You will remain on your tables with facilitators moving between you to support three 15-minute discussions on the following questions;

- **What opportunities and benefits do you see from a Digital Careers Solution?**
- **Are there any potential challenges associated with introducing a Digital solution?**
- **Is there current or proposed activity that should be aligned to this project?**

The responses from these discussions will be used by the project team to inform the approach to scoping of the tool and further workshops as development progresses.

Close and next steps

Thank you for attending the session!

Next steps:

- Scoping work to continue throughout May and June, led by GMFJ, Essex CC and Chambers.
- Further briefing session in summer on the final project.
- Keep the discussion going:
 - Johnathon.Cuthbertson@essex.gov.uk
 - joannegiles@essexchambers.co.uk