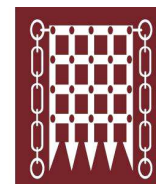


## Westminster Employment Forum Keynote Seminar: Next steps for skills devolution in England - funding, leadership and developing place-based industrial strategies

Timing: Morning, Tuesday, 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018

Venue: Sixty One Whitehall, London SW1A 2ET

Agenda subject to change



**WESTMINSTER  
EMPLOYMENT  
FORUM**

- 8.30 - 9.00 Registration and coffee
- 9.00 - 9.05 **Chair's opening remarks**  
**Karin Smyth MP**, Shadow Deputy Leader of the House of Commons and Shadow Minister for Northern Ireland
- 9.05 - 9.15 **Developing an integrated and devolved employment service - empowering the regions**  
**Professor John Shutt**, Professor of Public Policy & Management, Newcastle Business School, Northumbria University
- 9.15 - 9.45 **Providing local leadership to meet skills needs and improve productivity**  
**James Palmer**, Mayor, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.45 - 10.35 **Decentralising skills policy, sources of funding and advocating for future deals - priorities for the devolution agenda**  
*Given that there are limitations on how Metro Mayors will be able to utilise the Adult Education Budget once it is devolved - as the majority of this budget must be spent on nationally defined legal entitlements - what additional sources of funding might be made available? As the Government looks to work with those areas with devolution agreements to consider proposals for further devolution, what other areas of skills funding and policy could be devolved to combined authorities? What impact will the West Midlands skills deal agreement - which includes a National Retraining Scheme pilot - have on supporting more young people and adults into work in the region, and to what extent can other potential deals across the country address local skills gaps? In light of the 2016-17 Secretary of State's annual report on devolution, which announced that the Government reached no agreements on new devolution deals, what steps can be taken to extend devolution deals to those regions without one; with half of the funding from the Transforming Cities Fund allocated to the six Metro Mayors (and the rest open to bidding from other cities), what steps can be taken to ensure those areas without a Metro Mayor are not left behind?*  
**Naomi Clayton**, Policy and Research Manager, Centre for Cities  
**Melanie Lenehan**, Principal and CEO, Fircroft College of Adult Education  
**Ian Pryce**, Principal & Chief Executive, The Bedford College Group  
Questions and comments from the floor with **Professor John Shutt**, Professor of Public Policy & Management, Newcastle Business School, Northumbria University
- 10.35 - 10.40 **Chair's closing remarks**  
**Karin Smyth MP**, Shadow Deputy Leader of the House of Commons and Shadow Minister for Northern Ireland
- 10.40 - 11.10 Coffee
- 11.10 - 11.15 **Chair's opening remarks**  
**Ben Bradley MP**
- 11.15 - 11.25 **Addressing variations in skills requirements across England's regions**  
**Anna Round**, Senior Research Fellow, IPPR North
- 11.25 - 11.35 **Challenges for developing place-based Industrial Strategies and meeting the skills requirements of local employers**  
**Rashik Parmar**, Board Member, Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership and Chair, Employment and Skills Panel, West Yorkshire Combined Authority
- 11.35 - 11.50 Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.50 - 12.30 **Improving regional productivity - careers guidance, post-16 education and social mobility**  
*With the Government's recent social mobility plan highlighting the advantage to the economy that can be achieved if inequality in education is addressed, how might local and combined authorities work alongside schools to raise aspirations and educational outcomes for those from disadvantaged backgrounds; with those regions identified as 'cold spots' receiving additional funding, should financial support be extended to include regions not identified as Opportunity Areas? Given that funding previously provided through the Apprenticeship Grant is no longer available, what steps can be taken by Metro Mayors to encourage employers to make use of apprenticeships; should some of the funding collected through the replacement of the Apprenticeship Grant, the Apprenticeship Levy, be allocated to Metro Mayors to enable them to better support the delivery of apprenticeships, especially in light of the declining number of apprenticeship starts since reforms to funding were introduced? Following the publication of the Government's Careers Strategy, how can local employers be encouraged to engage with schools and educational providers to extend the number of encounters children have with employers; how can Mayoral Combined Authorities and LEPs anticipate future skill requirements to ensure these encounters include employers from growth sectors?*  
**Anna Gornall**, Chief Executive, Greater Manchester Learning Provider Network (GMLPN)  
**Ryan Gibson**, National Facilitator, North East Local Enterprise Partnership  
**Tom Bridges**, Leeds Office Leader and Director, Cities Advisory, Arup  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.30 - 12.55 **Next steps for devolution - priorities for current and potential combined authorities**  
**Stephen Jones**, Director, Cities and Local Growth Unit, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government  
Questions and answers from the floor
- 12.55 - 13.00 **Chair's and Westminster Employment Forum closing remarks**  
**Ben Bradley MP**  
**Emily Darling**, Forum Leader, Westminster Employment Forum