

Growth and Prosperity Department – growth/business engagement/employment & skills

List of Partners your department works with including the College

Employment & Skills

- Blackburn College
- Training 2000
- Via Partnership
- Ad-hoc engagement with schools
- Bootstrap Enterprises
- Together Housing
- SELNET
- Lancashire Skills Hub
- National Apprenticeship Service
- Inspire/CRI (Substance misuse service)
- Families Health & Wellbeing Consortium – Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM)

Growth/business engagement

- Prosperous Group (sub-group of the borough's Local Strategic Partnership Board)
- Blackburn Business Improvement District
- Regenerate Pennine Lancashire
- East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce
- Other business support organisations – Enterprise for All, Federation of Small Businesses, Community & Business Partners
- Local public service board organisations – ELHT, Fire, Police etc.
- Contractors/developers/commercial property agents – Maple Grove, Trevor Dawson, Taylor Weaver etc.
- Hive business leaders network (now incorporated as BwD Hive CIC)
- Funders – Homes and Communities Agency, Environment Agency etc.
- Government departments – BIS, DCLG

Strategic level look at the department's work with the College, around growth, skills, work around small business creation and apprenticeships. Also any work with the College you feel the Committee should know about

Members of Blackburn College's senior management team are engaged in/represented on the following initiatives:

BwD Employment Task Group

Led by the Council, the overall aims of the borough's Employment Task Group are to ensure that partners work collaboratively to capitalise on local employment growth created by new businesses and company expansions, to mitigate redundancies and to exploit the opportunities to put residents first when vacancies arise. Chaired by the Council's Director of Growth and Prosperity, the Employment Task group meets on a monthly basis. Key priorities for action

BwD Employment and Skills Leadership Summit

A borough-wide employment and skills summit was first established in April 2015 to facilitate a head to head between industry and education/skills providers on overcoming the challenges of meeting businesses immediate and future skills needs and making residents more attractive to employers. Chaired by the East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce, a second session was held in June with a further session earmarked for the 1st October 2015. Involves representation by the College.

LSP Prosperous Group

A sub-group of the borough's Local Strategic Partnership, the Blackburn and Darwen Prosperous board brings together decision makers from across our commercial economy and education sector. Focussed on business growth, the activity of the Group is underpinned by the 2014-2020 Plan for Prosperity which sets out the borough's ambitions against the key priorities of infrastructure and housing, business investment and innovation, employability, quality of life and image and marketing. The Group meets on a quarterly basis chaired by Khalid Saifullah, Director of Blackburn manufacturing firm Star Tissue.

Hive – BwD's business leaders network

Created from the LSP Prosperous Group and led by the business community, the Hive business leaders network was first set up in 2012. Now incorporated as a CIC to further the objectives of the original network, Hive exists to raise the profile of Blackburn with Darwen, locally and across the wider UK, as a good place to do business; to harness business pride within the towns; to attract investment, and to form long-lasting partnerships which help the borough to prosper and improve opportunities for our residents – including young people. An early objective of the Hive CIC will be to build greater links between the borough's schools and businesses.

Blackburn Business Improvement District

A Blackburn Business Improvement District was identified by the Blackburn Town Centre Partnership as an ideal mechanism to develop a dynamic business environment in Blackburn town centre. The aims of the BID are to attract and support business, create a more attractive town centre environment, create a safer town centre and to promote the town.

My First Job – recruitment event

First held in March 2015, "My first job" was a partnership recruitment event coordinated by the Council, College, Via and held at the new Blackburn Sports and Leisure Centre as part of national careers week. The purpose of the event was to deliver a jobs fair for 16-24 year olds in BwD, including school leavers (year 11 students – predominantly 16 year olds), College/6th form leavers/graduates, existing students and young people not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs). For business, it gave local employers the opportunity to promote live and upcoming job vacancies, apprenticeships and work experience placements.

Construction group

Following discussion at a Prosperous Group meeting hosted by Blackburn College in 2014, it was recognised that there was an opportunity to explore local skills

development in the construction sector, not least due to the forecast growth in house building in the borough during the next 10 years.

Similar to the College's approach to working with business in the development of curriculum attached to the Regional Automotive Technology Hub, and initially facilitated by the Council, the College has partnered with Capita to explore work placements, in addition to the creation of a module for BIM (Building Information Modelling) as part of the College's Construction Apprenticeship course.

Northgate THI Bid

Joint work with the College underway in producing a Stage 2 submission to the Heritage Lottery Fund to ensure effective links with the College in developing the former Waves site.