Employer perspectives on training, education and youth skills: can policy and practice be more joined up?

Mark Goldstone
Head of Policy & Business Representation
West & North Yorkshire Chamber
Introduction

Business membership organisation – private sector, owned and directed by members

Members collectively employ 1/4 of population of West & North Yorkshire

Our role

• Facilitate international trade
• Invest in companies with growth aspirations
• Connect businesses and institutions for their mutual benefit
• Represent business with policy makers
• Supporting regional business since 1851
Meeting future skills challenges

• Acknowledgement by government - welcomed
• Policy interventions formulated
• But feels like they are developed in silos
Industrial Strategy

• Broadly supported by Chamber members
• Focus on technical skills is priority and welcomed
• Parity of esteem between academic and vocational
• But....... no links to pre-16 education
Apprentice reforms and the law of unforeseen consequences

Changes in apprentice starts 2014 - 2018

- Higher Apprenticeship: +62%
- Advanced Apprenticeship: -13%
- Intermediate Apprenticeship: -79%

Source: Department for Education, March 2019
Independent careers advice

• Inspire, enthuse and bring jobs to life

• Must be embedded in curriculum – not a time filler

• Comes over more powerfully from industry, especially young people within industry
Preparation for the real world

**The UTC Leeds Employability Skills:** The seven employability skills are central to the curriculum and are the driving force behind all aspects of UTC Leeds. They were devised in conjunction with our university and employer partners to ensure that students leaving us are highly employable.
Where are the jobs right now?

**Attempting to recruit – Q1 2019**

- Transportation and storage
- Utilities
- Wholesale and retail trade
- Information and communication
- Professional and technical services
- Other service activities
- Manufacturing
- Accommodation, hospitality and catering
- Construction
- Business admin and support
- Education, human health and social work

Source: WNY Chamber quarterly economic survey Q1 2019
But what about the jobs of the future?

• Much focus on Brexit preparations…
• But future workforce should be much higher priority
• In what way are you attractive to millennials?
• What about Generation Z?
Connecting partners

• Before connecting need to understand each other’s challenges

• Facilitation experts already exist e.g. Ahead Partnership, CEC and Aspire-I

• Are there too many education-business initiatives?
What are businesses doing?
Summary

- Access to talent is the number one barrier to growth
- Companies don’t always know the questions to ask
- Companies don’t always have a skills strategy
- Support is available
- Place based solutions please