

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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REGIONAL TRAINING NETWORKS UNITE TO LAUNCH NATIONAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

A powerful new collaboration is underway as regional provider networks from across England launch the Networks of Providers: Community of Practice – an ambitious initiative designed to enhance cooperation, foster innovation, and share best practices across the post-16 education, training, and skills sector.

The initiative, led by founding members including Yorkshire Learning Providers, the Devon & Cornwall Training Provider Network, the Greater Manchester Learning Provider Network, the East Midlands Network, and the Association of Learning Providers Surrey, Hampshire & The Isle of Wight, aims to create a dynamic platform for peer learning and sector-wide improvement.

Key themes to be explored by the Community of Practice include:

- School engagement and employer collaboration
- Strategies to support NEET young people
- Responses to unemployment and economic inactivity
- Maximising Apprenticeship Levy transfers
- The impact of devolution on skills and employment
- Supporting employers through Local Skills Improvement Plans

Through thematic research, case studies, webinars, and policy recommendations, the initiative will generate comparative insights and identify effective regional strategies to influence national policy and practice.

Sharron Robbie MBE, CEO of the Devon & Cornwall Training Providers Network, said:

“We are delighted to be one of the founding organisations leading on this exciting initiative that brings regional and local training provider networks together to support partnership working, the sharing of resources and expertise. We see this new Community of Practice as having the potential to transform our individual efforts into a robust collective, enabling us to help influence and shape the future of the post-16 education, training and skills sector.”

Alex Miles, Managing Director of the Yorkshire Learning Providers network, said:

“This Community of Practice represents a significant step forward in how we approach sector challenges and opportunities. By connecting regional networks, we are not only amplifying local skills but also creating a stronger, unified voice to influence national policy. At Yorkshire Learning Providers, we’re proud to be part of this founding group, working collaboratively to ensure the skills and training system meets the needs of learners, employers, and communities across the country. I am excited to be visiting Plymouth in July to commence the first of our community of practice activities alongside Sharron from Devon & Cornwall Network.”

Sue Taylor, Network Manager of the ALPS Partnership, said:

“I am looking forward to us continuing to share the good practice we have in our networks and to develop stronger relationships with other geographical areas to bring around change and be a collective voice going forward. GMLPN and ALPS and ALPHI look forward to our first meeting next week.”

Charlotte Jones, Operations/Project Manager of the Greater Manchester Learning Provider Network, said:

“GMLPN are proud to be a member of this national Community of Practice. This initiative reflects the power of place-based collaboration and shared learning, helping us to better connect people, places, and partnerships across regions. I’m looking forward to greater collaboration and learning from other networks across the country!”

This ground-breaking collaboration signals a new chapter for training and skills providers—one rooted in unity, innovation, and a shared mission to strengthen England’s workforce and economic future.