



Leading learning and skills

**Cheshire
and Warrington
Learning and
Skills Council
Annual Plan
2006-07**

May 2006

Of interest to National, Regional and
Local Learning and Skills Colleagues

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Our Vision

- 1 We are delighted to present the 2006/07 Annual Plan for LSC Cheshire and Warrington. This Plan outlines the actions and the provision we will fund to ensure we make further progress against the LSC's key priorities and targets and achieve our vision in Cheshire and Warrington for learning and skills that:
 - ***Creates a distinct 14-19 phase of education and training for young people across Cheshire & Warrington***
 - ***Offers high quality skills focussed provision that meets regional and local sector skills needs and encourages employers to further invest in skills***
 - ***Provides inclusive learning, enabling all young people and adults to access and progress through learning that improves their employability.***
- 2 Over the last five years we continue to see success in learning and skills provision across Cheshire & Warrington. 16-18 participation and success rates have continued to rise and the proportion of young people "not in education, employment or training" (NEET) has fallen. We now have eight Centres of Vocational Excellence responding to specific employer skill needs Our capital investment is helping to transform learning facilities, particularly within the FE sector, while local providers are setting the highest standards with for example, three Colleges achieving outstanding Inspection results.
- 3 The implementation of the 14-19 Development Plan in close partnership with the Local Authorities and Connexions is creating a more coherent 14-19 phase. Local collaboration is providing greater choice to young people and there is strengthened commitment to the Learner Entitlement. However, we need to continue to improve the choice and quality of all provision for all young people. The proposed structural changes from the Strategic Area Review should help to bring improvement to under-performing school sixth forms.
- 4 A critical element in our approach to the 14-19 agenda has been the development of a "learner entitlement", outlining the key elements of a high quality local offer to young people, which partners and providers have been keen to sign up to. We wish to extend this principle and are now in the process of implementing both employer and adult entitlements, for which we will again be seeking local support.
- 5 Meeting the skills needs of employers is a key driver for the LSC and we are determined to build strong and effective relationships between employers and local providers. The introduction of an employer training programme 'Train to Gain' from 2006 will be key to increasing local skills development activity. The experience of our own local Skills for Life Pilot along with the capacity we have built with providers will be vital in local implementation of 'Train to Gain'.
- 6 While much of Cheshire and Warrington benefits from a prosperous and thriving local economy, we are determined to address the learning and skills

issues faced by those local communities which do not share this prosperity. The LSC will continue to lead in bringing partners such as the Northwest Development Agency (NWDA), Cheshire and Warrington Economic Alliance (CWEA), Local Authorities and Job Centre Plus together to plan and fund joint action plans for learning communities.

- 7 During 2006/07, the LSC will be working more closely in partnership with the NWDA. The North West LSC has responsibility for major elements within the Regional Economic Strategy, through its position as a lead partner within the Regional Skills Partnership, it is accountable for delivering key aspects of the Regional Economic Strategy. The Regional Economic Strategy is in its third revision following extensive consultation involving joint working, leading to stronger collaboration in the future on regional, sub-regional and local level. The implementation of theme 7 will enable us to bring greater focus to regional skills, economic development and the key issues identified allowing increasingly closer partnership working with the North West Regional Development Agency.'
- 8 Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the role and leadership of members of the Council in furthering the strategic relationships with key partners and stakeholders. We also recognise the excellent work of staff in delivering this Plan and the professionalism they have shown in taking forward the Agenda for Change.

Andrew Gurr
Chairman

Liz Davis
Executive Director

Our Priorities

National

- 9 The LSC has published our second Annual Statement of Priorities which will take us further forward in our aim of transforming learning and skills.
- 10 Our six priorities for 2006/07 are to:

Priority 1: Ensure that all 14-19 year olds have access to high quality, relevant learning opportunities

Priority 2: Make learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults

Priority 3: Transform the learning and skills sector through agenda for change

Priority 4: Strengthen the role of the LSC in economic development so that we provide the skills needed to help individuals into jobs

Priority 5: Improve the skills of workers who are delivering public services

Priority 6: Strengthen the capacity of the LSC to lead change nationally, regionally and locally.

Regional

- 11 In delivering key aspects of the Regional Economic Strategy the Regional Skills Partnership has published the following Regional Statement of Skills Priorities. This is a joint statement that has been agreed between the LSC, North West Development Agency, Business Skills North West, Job Centre Plus and the North West Universities Association.
- 12 Our Regional Priorities for the North West for 2006/07 are:

- **Increasing the proportion of young people with the skills and qualifications needed for employment, and fostering progression to Higher Education**
- **Equipping adults with the skills required for employability, particularly basic skills**

- **Meeting Level 3 and Level 4 Skills needs:**
 - **Equipping individuals with the Level 3 Skills required within the economy, particularly in key regional sectors**
 - **Ensuring that the skills needs of the regional economy, and in key sectors in particular, are addressed at Level 4**
- **Tackling cross-sectoral leadership and management skills gaps**
- **Developing innovation and enterprise skills**
- **Tackling worklessness by linking people, jobs and training**

13 The underpinning priorities to these are :

- **Stimulating the demand for investment in skills from employers and individuals**
- **Providing high quality responsive support to meet regional skills priorities**

14 The implications for skills provision are that at Level 3 we will prioritise provision in those sectors identified in the Regional Economic Strategy and that responds to the Sector Skills Alliances. For Level 3 skills the regional priority sectors are:

- Advanced engineering and materials (specifically automotive, chemicals, aerospace and engineering)
- Energy and environmental technologies
- Construction
- Digital and creative industries
- Retail
- Care/ Healthcare
- Visitor economy (specifically tourism)

15 For Level 4 skills the regional priority sectors are:

- Advanced engineering and materials (specifically chemicals, aerospace and engineering)
- Energy and environmental technologies
- Construction
- Digital and creative industries
- Financial and professional services
- Care/ Healthcare

Our Targets

16 Under priority 1, for young people:

- Increase the proportion of 19 year-olds who achieve at least Level 2 by 3 percentage points between 2004 and 2006, and a further two percentage points between 2006 and 2008, and improve attainment at Level 3
- Nationally we need an additional 31,000 young people to gain a Level 2 in 2006 compared to 2004 and a further 22,000 in 2008 compared to 2006
- Locally we need an additional 125 young people to gain a Level 2 in 2006 compared to 2004 and a further 375 in 2008 compared to 2006. This will raise Level 2 achievement at age 19 in Cheshire and Warrington from an estimated 71 percent in 2004 to 72 percent in 2006 and to 75 percent in 2008

17 Under priority 2, for adults:

- Reduce by at least 40 per cent the number of adults in the workforce who lack an NVQ Level 2 or equivalent qualifications by 2010
- Nationally we plan to deliver an additional 40,000 first full Level 2 qualifications in 2006/07 compared to 2005/06
- Locally we plan to deliver an additional 500 first full Level 2 qualifications in 2006/07 compared to 2005/06
- In addition, we will also deliver 194 first full Level 2 achievements through Train to Gain.

18 Under priority 2, for adults:

- Improve the basic skills of 2.25 million adults between 2001 and 2010, with a milestone of 1.5 million in 2007
- Locally we need up to 4,300 learners to achieve Skills for Life qualifications in 2006/07 if we are to achieve the 2007 trajectory from our start point in 2004. This number of learners would need to rise to 5,450 if we were to make up the shortfall from the 2004 milestone.

19 Underpinning both priorities 1 and 2, for Apprenticeships:

- The LSC has agreed a new Performance Indicator for Apprenticeships. The aim is for 75 per cent more people to complete their apprenticeships in 2007/08, compared to 2002/03

- Nationally we aim to raise the number of completions to 71,000 in 2006/07 supporting the achievement of Level 2 and Level 3 qualification targets
- Locally we aim to raise the number of completions to 1,709 in 2006/07. This will raise the completions rate to an estimated 60 percent, an overall increase of 15 percent compared to 2004/05

20 We also work with key partners to contribute to the following targets:

- Increase the proportion of young people and adults achieving a Level 3 qualification
- Reduce the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training by two percentage points by 2010
- Increase participation in Higher Education towards 50 per cent of those aged 18 to 30 by 2010

Our Values

- 21 The LSC's national values set out for us the way we work in Cheshire & Warrington.
- **Trust:** the LSC has to be world-class at partnership and so we believe trust must be at the heart of the LSC.
 - **Expertise:** we demonstrate expertise and true leadership in every aspect of our work. We have complete understanding of the communities we serve and of what is needed by business in terms of current and future skills.
 - **Ambition:** we are ambitious for ourselves, in the goals and objectives we set, but more importantly we are ambitious for the communities we serve, for employers and for individuals in education and training.
 - **Urgency:** we want to bring drive and urgency to the learning and skills sector, to tackle long-standing issues swiftly and professionally and to be responsive and fast moving.
- 22 Together, our four values will ensure the LSC can provide leadership and direction at a time of great change.
- 23 Our plan sets out how we will deliver national and regional priorities in a local context, highlighting what actions will be critically important in local delivery and what our contribution to the national targets will be.

A Context for Delivery

Local Context

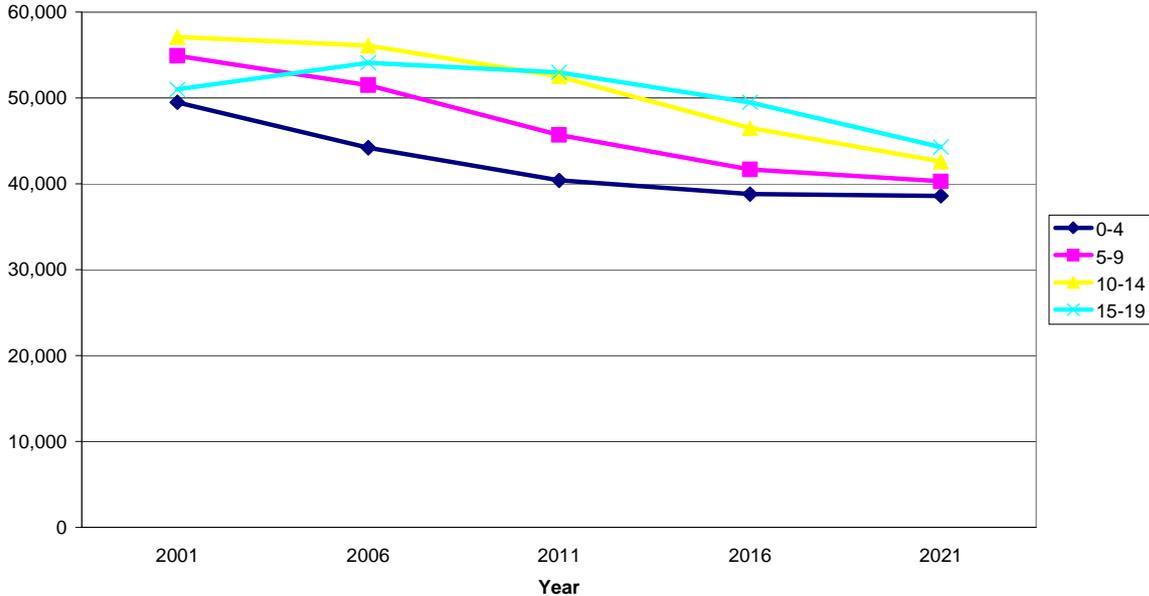
Economy

- 24 Cheshire & Warrington has a mixture of rural and urban communities and is located adjacent to the Liverpool and Manchester city regions. The area has a diverse economic base with extensive transport linkages supporting cross-border movement of workers and learners. There are **low levels of unemployment** and corresponding high employment levels which all help to make it the **most prosperous area in the Northwest**.
- 25 Gross domestic product (GDP) for Cheshire & Warrington is 114 percent of the UK average and the area contributes some 29 percent more to the regional economy than is expected from its employment base. In the future we **expect output to continue to grow at 2.6 percent each year for the next ten years**, a higher rate than the forecast for the UK and Northwest.

Demographic Trends

- 26 The overall population for Cheshire & Warrington at 873,000 is about to end a sustained period of growth and will enter a phase of decline over the next 10 to 15 years. Within this there will be some major structural changes that will result in more older people as they live longer, and a reduction in young people reflecting the fall in birth rates.
- 27 These changes to the population will see a **reduction in the size of the working age population** within Cheshire & Warrington of about 3 percent in the next 10 years. We also expect the number of 16 to 18 year olds to reduce by around 5 percent over the same period while the population of 14 to 19 year olds will reduce more sharply, by about 8 percent.

Population Estimates and Forecasts by Age: Cheshire & Warrington



Source: Cheshire County Council, Population Estimates

*Implications: Reduction in future years in provision required for 16 to 18 year olds.
Development of adult skills required to maximise capacity of local workforce.*

Learning Infrastructure

- 28 There are 57 secondary schools in Cheshire & Warrington. Of these, 39 are 11-18 and 18 are 11-16. Thirty nine schools have sixth forms and pupil numbers range from below 50 to over 400 pupils. The cost-effectiveness of some school sixth forms remains an ongoing issue that is being addressed through the 14-19 Development Plan. **Indeed, the curriculum choice particularly in some smaller school sixth forms (fewer than 150 pupils) is limited and the standard of achievement and value added provided to learners is below average.**
- 29 As part of the StAR and Transforming Learning Communities programme structural changes are being proposed that will reduce school places and help to address concerns regarding the present quality of the offer in some school sixth forms. In Warrington, there are currently no plans to reduce the number of schools as overall demographic trends are upwards until 2008 but we will be working with the Local Authority to complete a secondary school review in 2007.
- 30 There are 4 good and improving general further education colleges in Cheshire and Warrington, 1 tertiary college with Beacon status, 1 'particularly successful' land-based college and 2 sixth form colleges (one 'outstanding' and the other 'particularly successful'). There is a specialist college for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. As part of the Local Capital Investment Plan we already have 4 colleges in the late stages of planning their capital projects or actually in the construction phase. We expect to see a further investment to complete the renewal of all of the FE estate by 2010.
- 31 There are 23 providers of work-based learning in Cheshire & Warrington; of these 4 are general further education colleges and 1 is a specialist land based college. All providers have been graded as satisfactory or better in ALI Inspections and we have seen rapid improvements in success rates. However, this improvement is not uniform and **unless providers who continue to perform below the success rate floor target improve, they will not be able to secure funding for provision in the future.**
- 32 As well as mainstream secondary schools, there are 15 schools for learners with special educational needs. The area has 1 pupil referral unit located in Warrington. Cheshire County Council has recently completed a review of SEN provision that is being used to inform the TLC review.
- 33 At present there are well over 200 sites for the provision of Adult and Community Learning (ACL). To date there has been significant investment in ensuring disadvantaged communities can access provision. There has been the development of the Warrington Gateway centre in Warrington town centre and the development of the Learning Centre at Northwich Railway

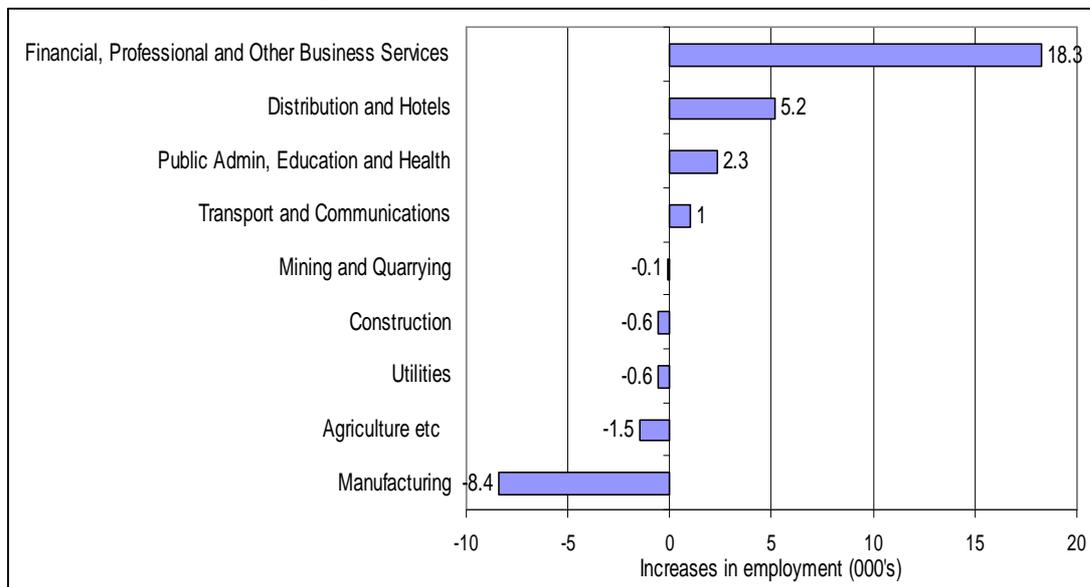
Station to serve east Northwich . Over the next year we will also be investing in the improvement of ACL facilities and in funding Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities. This funding will be used to invest in IT facilities and refurbishment of Community Learning Centres.

Demand for Learning and Skills

Employers

- 34 In Cheshire & Warrington, there are some 34,000 employers and 82 percent employ between 1-10 employees. Distribution, motor vehicle manufacture and hotel and restaurants employ nearly two-thirds of the workforce. Forecast growth in employment opportunities is 2.8 percent above regional and national averages. **By 2015, there will be 42,000 more jobs than in 2001.** These additional jobs will be in the Business Services, Hotel & Catering and Retail, Wholesale & Distribution sectors, whilst the Manufacturing sector will lose 12,000 jobs.

Cheshire and Warrington Employment Forecasts – 2005 to 2015



Source: *Baseline projections Cheshire & Warrington Econometric Model*

- 35 Cheshire & Warrington experiences lower than average hard-to-fill and skill shortage vacancies and employers' perceptions of training are changing. Around a quarter of all vacancies and hard-to-fill vacancies are in wholesale, retail and hospitality. **Skill shortages are most likely in health and social care, wholesale, retail, finance and business skills and hospitality.** Employers associate skills shortages with growing business and working above full capacity. Employers are satisfied that employees are proficient in their current jobs and on the whole they believe there are no barriers to keeping a fully proficient workforce to meet the needs of the local economy. During 2003-04, 40 percent of employers supported training for staff compared to 30 percent nationally.
- 36 However, in specific sectors, skills in customer handling are a significant need in hard-to-fill vacancies. Employers in personal services and sales

express some concerns about occupational proficiency related to staff turnover and an inability to keep up with change through reluctance to take up training opportunities.

The workforce

- 37 Cheshire & Warrington has a relatively well qualified workforce. There are some half a million adults of working age in Cheshire & Warrington, of whom 82 percent are economically active compared to 77 percent in the North West and 79 percent nationally. Unemployment rates are low at 1.4 percent compared to 2.3 percent in the North West and 3 percent nationally. However, **economic inactivity at almost 19 percent of the working age population represents almost 93,000 adults** some of whom, with support and training, could improve their own life chances and contribute to economic growth.
- 38 The qualifications of the workforce show a high proportion with NVQ Levels 3 and 4 equivalent qualifications; 58 percent and 38 percent respectively. There are also 21 percent who hold a Level 2 qualification, which is higher than the national and regional averages of 19 percent.
- 39 However, there are significant numbers of adults without any formal qualifications (26 percent) and a further 16 percent of adults who have yet to achieve a first Level 2 qualification. Although these rates are below national and regional averages this still leaves some **164,000 adults across Cheshire & Warrington without any formal qualifications and a further 100,000 who are yet to achieve a first Level 2.**

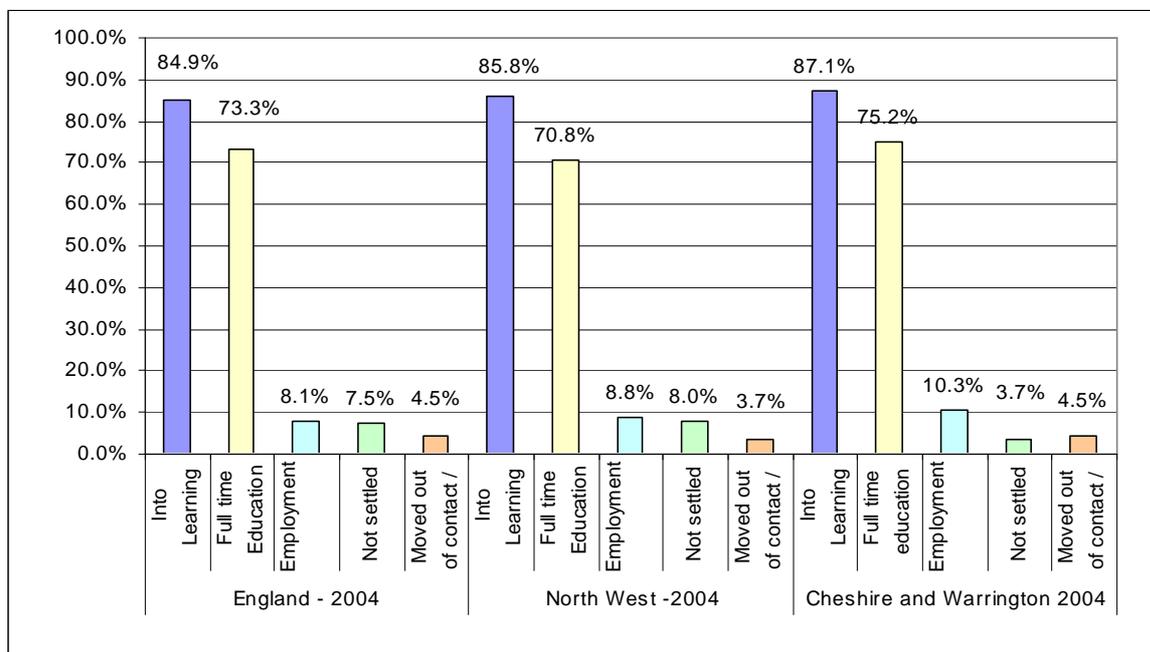
Implications: Despite a relatively highly skilled workforce, the rapid growth of the local economy requires that the full potential of all local people needs to be capitalised on through employment-related training and development.

Young People

- 40 Longer term we expect the number of 16-18 year olds to fall in Cheshire & Warrington. However, until 2008 this cohort will continue to grow. By 2007, there will be more than 66,000 14-19 year olds and 32,000 16-18 year olds. This is 4,000 (6.5 percent) more 14-19 year olds than in 2001. Beyond 2008, we expect the 14-19 cohort to reduce by on average 4 percent in the next 10 years and 16-18 year olds to reduce by 5 percent, but in some local planning areas this will be a reduction of up to 14 percent. This is likely to cause **local difficulties in sustaining effective partnerships between providers.** Continuing to support the local 14-19 planning groups in developing the curriculum in each locality will be critical in delivering local area prospectuses and improving choice for young people.
- 41 **Participation post-16 in Cheshire & Warrington is high** compared to regional and national averages, with most young people continuing in some form of learning. Participation has grown by around 1 percent each year since 2002 and more than 75 percent of young people continue in education and training at 16 which is some 2 percent higher than the national average and 4 percent higher than the region. Indeed, learner satisfaction surveys

locally have shown that nearly three quarters of learners in Cheshire & Warrington were satisfied with the learning they had undertaken. **However, there continues to a high rate of learners who leave education and training at age 17 and this continues to be a concern.**

Year 11 School Leaver Destinations 2004



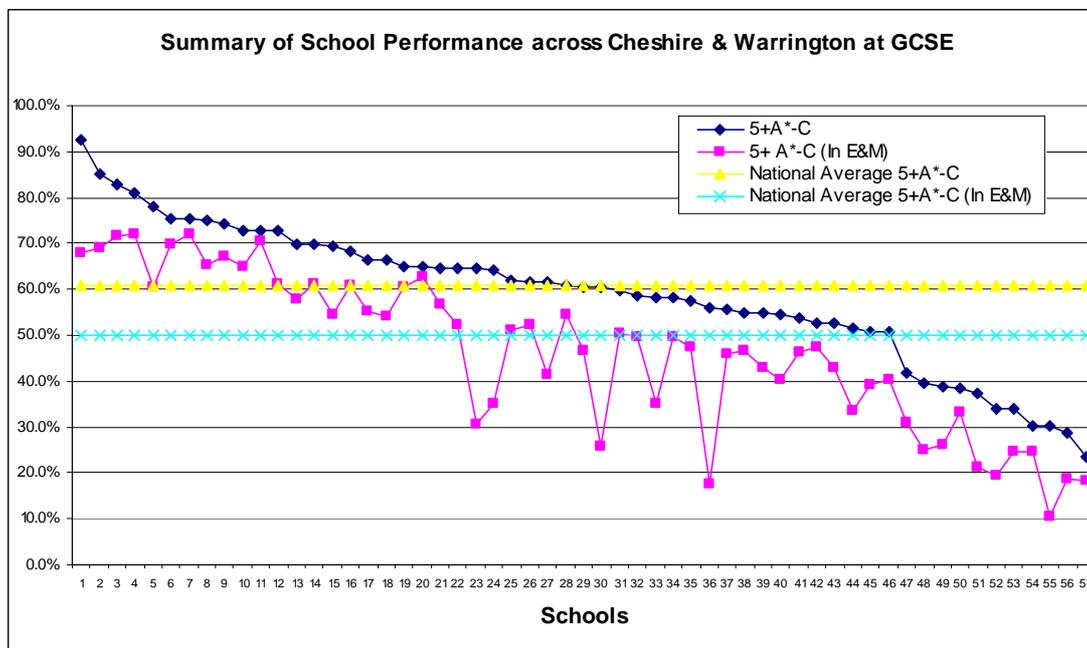
Source: Cheshire and Warrington Connexions

- 42 There has also been a corresponding reduction in the in the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). This reduction in the NEET group occurs within the context of a 16-18 cohort continuing to grow. **The NEET rate in Cheshire & Warrington at 5.7 percent is below the regional and national average** and has reduced from 1,499 (6.6 percent) young people in 2004 to 1,289 (5.7 percent) in 2005. However, the further reduction in NEET will become increasingly challenging due to the slowing of the labour market and the reduction in the level of 'not knows'.
- 43 Overall education performance is high, and in 2004 **GCSE achievement (5+ grades A* to C in GCSE/GNVQ) was above the national average (53.7 percent) in both Cheshire (60.0 percent) and Warrington (58.0 percent) for young people at 16.** However, performance varies significantly by school, particularly in maths & English, and still leaves some 5,000 young people who have not achieved the full Level 2 qualification that would secure a firm base for their future education and employment. The chart below shows those schools that are performing above the national average for 5+ A* to C GCSEs.

Implications: The positive trends in participation and achievement, together with a growing cohort in the short term, places pressure on local budgets to support this.

Additionally, as the numbers of young people who are not participating reduces, the remainder can be particularly resource-intensive and therefore more costly.

Summary of School Performance across Cheshire & Warrington at GCSE



Source: Cheshire LA, Warrington LA

The Community

- 44 Despite the overall prosperity of Cheshire & Warrington there remain areas that experience intractable levels of disadvantage. There are some 21 wards across the area that are in the 20 percent most deprived in England. These wards account for some 90,000 adults and are concentrated in the urban areas of Chester, Crewe, Ellesmere Port, Warrington and Winsford. These areas are historically characterised by low levels of participation and achievement by adults and young people. Indeed, the correlation between basic skills needs and deprivation is strong across the area. Some 22 percent of the population, **115,000 adults, lack numeracy and literacy skills**, compared to 26 percent nationally.
- 45 In Cheshire & Warrington many disadvantaged groups are relatively smaller than those in urban areas. They therefore face particular challenges due to the dispersed nature of the area, the isolation this brings and the lack of structures to support access to learning. This presents providers with challenges in ensuring sufficient access to provision for all communities.
- 46 For instance, **just 2 percent of the population are from an ethnic minority compared to 8 percent nationally**. However this proportion is growing and is expected to continue to do so. Last year it is estimated that an additional 4,000 migrant workers from the European Union accession countries sought work in the area. We also estimate that some 17 percent of the population have a limiting long-term illness, compared to 21 percent in the North West

and 18 percent nationally. Many of these people are likely to have no or low qualifications.

Implications: We need to continue to find appropriate routes to help disadvantaged groups access Skills for Life training, and to sustain and grow provision which is effective in meeting their needs.

Supply of Learning and Skills Provision

Skills Provision

- 47 In Cheshire & Warrington there are a number of sectors that are key to the continued competitiveness of the local economy; providing the skills-focused provision to meet the employer needs of the sectors is a local priority.
- 48 The priority sectors are:
- Business and Financial Services
 - Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals
 - Construction
 - Creative Industries
 - Engineering including Automotive
 - Food Chain Technology
 - Hospitality and Tourism
 - Public Sector (Healthcare in particular).
- 49 We have continued to support our priority sectors through significant investment in specialist vocational provision, including that made through the Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) network. The network includes the 4 colleges and 2 training providers. The 8 CoVEs in Cheshire & Warrington are set out below:

Cheshire & Warrington CoVEs

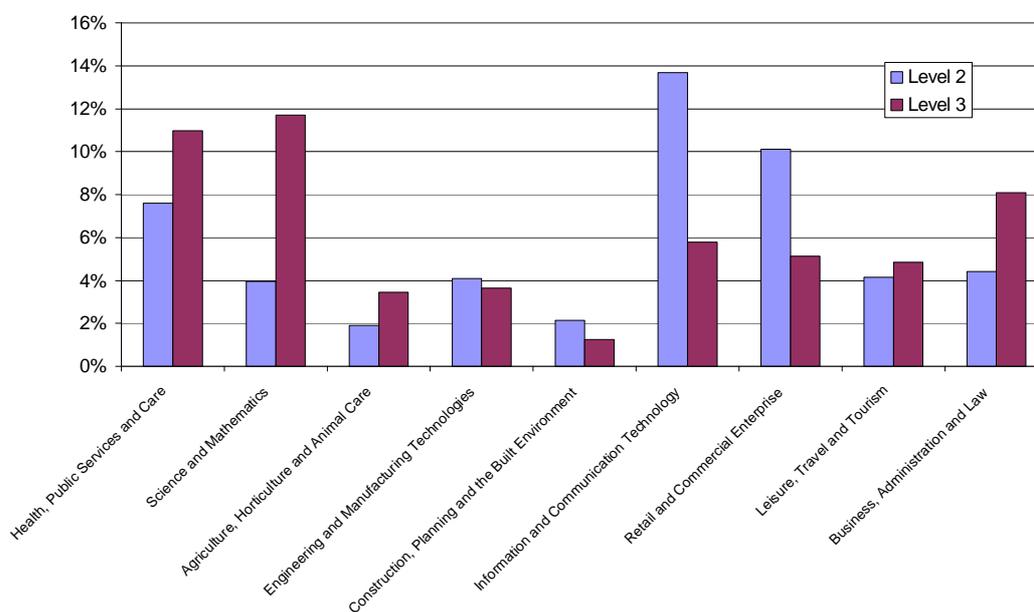
CoVE	College or Provider	Sector Subject Area
Automotive	West Cheshire College Total People Ltd	Engineering & Manufacturing Technologies
Chemicals	TTE	Engineering & Manufacturing Technologies
European Centre for Aerospace Training (ECAT)	Macclesfield College	Engineering & Manufacturing Technologies
Food Chain Technology	Reaseheath College	Engineering & Manufacturing Technologies
Health & Social Care	West Cheshire College	Health, Public Services & Care
Dental Nursing	Training 2000 Total People Ltd	Health, Public Services & Care
Logistics & Distribution	West Cheshire College	Retail & Commercial Enterprise
New Media Design	Mid Cheshire College	Arts, Media & Publishing

50 CoVEs will be developed further through Action for Business Colleges as part of the Agenda for Change.

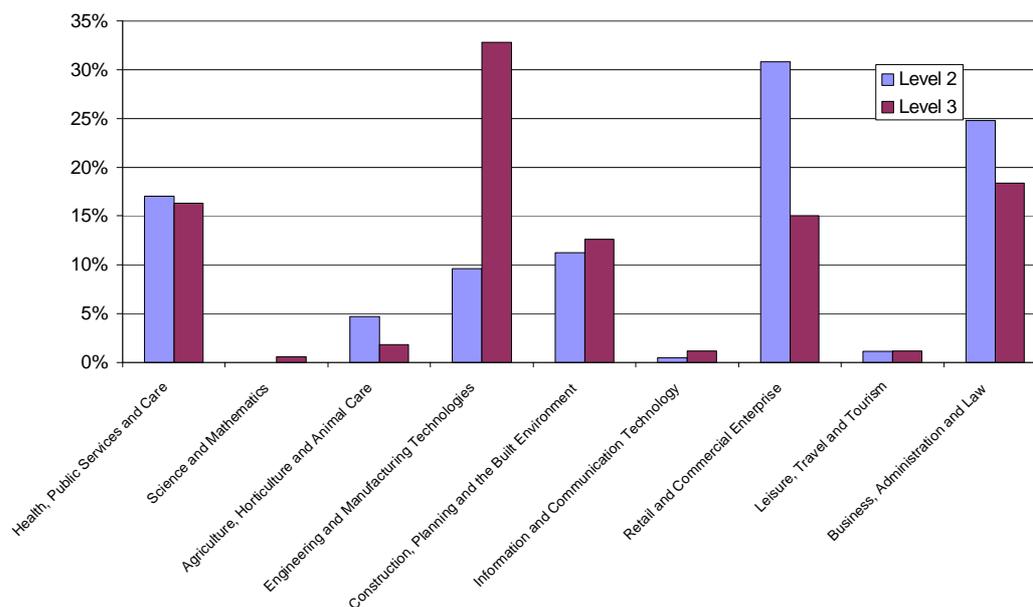
Implications: There will be a continuing requirement to review the need for, and the condition of, specialist high cost provision across the area and the extent to which it is meeting regional and local skills priorities.

51 The balance and level of skills-focussed provision at Level 2 and Level 3 in workbased learning and further education broadly reflects the priority sectors both locally and regionally as shown in the following charts:

Balance and Mix of Provision in Further Education



Balance and Mix of Provision in Workbased Learning



Source: Cheshire & Warrington LSC MI

52 However, there remains a number of key qualifications that are in short supply. These are not all solely specific to particular industry sectors but can cut across a number of sectors. The key shortages are as follows:

- **Health & Social Care:**
 - ▶ Care Level 2, Registered Manager Level 4 qualifications
- **Automotive, Retail, Food & Drink:**
 - ▶ Retail Operations Level 3 qualifications
- **Construction:**
 - ▶ Wood Level 2, Decorative Level 2, Foundation Award Level 2, Trowel Level 1 qualifications
- **Finance & Professional, Ports and Related, Digital, Engineering:**
 - ▶ ICT Level 2/3 qualifications
- **Finance & Professional:**
 - ▶ Providing Financial Services Level 2/3 qualifications
- **Logistics, Food & Drink:**
 - ▶ Transporting Goods by Road Level 2 qualifications

53 In addition, in response to the Sector Skill Agreements we would expect provision for Business Improvement Techniques (BIT) and On Site Assessment and Training (OSAT) to grow along with the delivery of IT qualifications using ITQ and provision for School Support Staff.

The Workforce

- 54 The priority to support those adults with a basic skills need and those who have yet to achieve a first Level 2 is having a significant impact on the LSC funded provision offered by colleges. As a consequence overall adult learner volumes have reduced and will continue to do so in the future. The majority of the reduction is in short course provision. Learner numbers in FE fell by 4 percent last year and in **2005/06 we expect this trend to continue with a further reduction in adult learners of 10 percent.**

Summary Learner Volumes in Cheshire & Warrington

LSC Funded Provision for Adults	2003/04	2004/05	Planned 2005/06
Further Education	43,993	42,238	37,986
Workbased Learning	2,357	2,484	2,118
Workbased Learning	2,908	2,831	3,024
Adult & Community Learning	18,241	20,302	16,975
European Social Fund	-	5,029	5,100

Source: Annual Plan Cheshire & Warrington 2005/06, Annex A

- 55 In 2004/05 participation on adult full Level 2 programmes increased, although in 2005/06 we have a planned reduction of just under 2 percent in the number of adults participating in Level 2 programmes. This has been forced by budget limitations and the prioritising of 16-18 year olds in work-based learning, although we expect FE provision to continue to grow.
- 56 In 2004/05 adults participating at Level 2 in FE increased to 2,023, a growth of 9 percent. We expect this to continue to grow to 2,101 in 2005/06, a further growth of 4 percent, as a result of colleges managing the mix of provision more effectively as they continue to deliver more approved programmes. However within work-based learning there is a reduction of 11 percent in participation, a fall from 1,239 in 2004/05 to 1,102 in 2005/06.
- 57 **Overall success rates for adults in Cheshire & Warrington at 76 percent are higher than the national and regional averages (72 and 73 percent respectively).** FE success rates have shown a steady increase since 2001, however, given the withdrawal of funding for short courses then we expect an overall reduction in FE success rates. Given the scale of short course provision for adults, this reduction could lead to a fall of up to 10 percentage points in the overall success rates.
- 58 Success rates at Level 2 for adults in Further Education are 56 percent, similar to the national average. We expect this rate to grow by 2 percent each year in order to support the achievement of the 2010 target. **In work-based learning the success rate at Level 2 of 54 percent is lower than the national average.** We expect this rate to grow by 1 percent each year to support the achievement of the 2010 target.

Young People

- 59 **Overall participation by young people in Cheshire & Warrington continues to grow.** Learner numbers in further education have grown by

more than 3 percent in the last year and school sixth form provision expanded by around 1 percent. This trend is forecast to continue for the remainder of 2005/06, although we will also see a 7 percent growth in work-based learning provision but a reduction in learners taking part in Entry to Employment (E2E).

Summary Learner Volumes in Cheshire & Warrington

LSC Funded Provision for 16-18 year olds	2003/04	2004/05	Planned 2005/06
Further Education	10,972	11,287	11,714
School Sixth Forms	7,422	7,215	7,500
Work-based Learning	2,908	2,831	3,024
Entry to Employment	589	535	454
European Social Fund	-	1,109	1,100

Source: Annual Plan Cheshire & Warrington 2005/06, Annex A

60 The routes young people participate in locally are broadly comparable to those for England, **with the exception that more young people locally enter school sixth forms and fewer enter general FE colleges.** However, the routes some young people choose are not always the most appropriate and can be a result of not receiving sufficient objective advice and guidance at key points of transition. Indeed, those learners who fail to achieve a Level 2 at age 16 can not equally access provision below Level 2 to meet their subsequent needs.

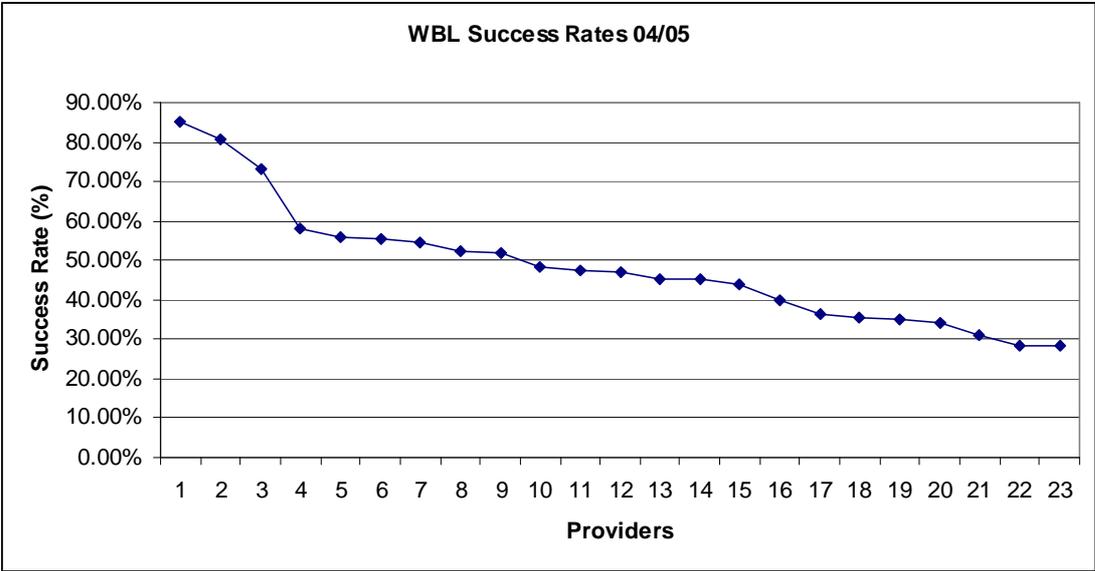
Distribution of Learners by Route

Learners in LSC Funded Provision	School 6th Form	General FE	Sixth Form College	Specialist College	Work-based learning	E2E
Cheshire & Warrington	34%	37%	12%	4%	12%	2%
England	28%	44%	11%	1%	13%	2%

Source: Individual Learner Record FO4 2004/05, Pupil Level Annual School Census 2004/05

61 **Level 2 achievement by the age of 19 for Cheshire & Warrington at 71 percent is high compared to the region at 64 percent and nationally at 68 percent.** Indeed, a significant proportion (56 percent) achieve Level 2 at the age of 16. However, we estimate that of the 5,000 16 year olds who do not achieve Level 2 when completing compulsory education reduce to 3,000 by the age of 19. Success rates on Level 2 programmes for young people in further education are 57 percent and similar to the national average (58 percent). Over the next three years we will **increase Level 2 achievement to 75 percent across Cheshire & Warrington.** This will require an additional 500 young people achieving a full Level 2 qualification by 2008.

- 62 Level 3 attainment is high with the average point scores per student (A/AS/AGNVQ) 274.0 for Cheshire and 258.1 for Warrington compared to the national average point score of 266.0. Success rates on Level 3 programmes for young people are high at 77 percent compared to 61 percent nationally.
- 63 **The Increased Flexibility Programme (IFP) along with the increased take-up of vocational GCSEs is not only helping to broaden the choice available to young people** but is also contributing to increases in achievement. In 2005/06 over 2,300 young people took part in IFP. Likewise the introduction of the Young Apprenticeships has provided 120 young people with experience of the Health & Social Care, Hospitality and Engineering sectors. Demand for this programme continues to be high.
- 64 **Overall success rates for 16-18 year olds in Cheshire & Warrington are higher than the national average** and at similar levels to the region. In FE success rates have shown a steady increase since 2001 and we expect this trend to continue by 1 percent each year, despite the withdrawal of funding for short course provision. Overall success rates for 16-18 year olds have grown from 68 percent in 2001/02 to 71 percent in 2003/04.
- 65 **Success rates on Work-based learning for young people are above the national and regional averages** and have increased by 23 percentage points since 2002/03 to a rate of 45 percent in 2004/05. The number of work-based learning frameworks completed has risen sharply from 1,069 in 2003/04 to 1,407 in 2004/05, a growth of 32 percent. We expect continued but slower growth in framework completions to 1,500 in 2005/06, a further growth of 7 percent giving a framework completion rate of 52 percent.



Source: Cheshire & Warrington LSC MI

- 66 To meet the volume target of framework completions for the 2007/08 trajectory will require **a further improvement in completion rates of up to 75 percent for some providers**. Indeed, some providers have success rates that remain below the floor targets for some areas of learning and are

below the Northwest thresholds for each sector. We will be looking to withdraw funding from providers where provision is not of sufficient quality.

The Community

- 67 Adult and Community Learning provides an important route for adults who are disengaged from learning and often lack formal qualifications. **Participation in Adult and Community Learning has grown but we expect this trend to reverse in the future.** This reduction is planned and due to more effective management of provision by providers in targeting priority groups for First Step Provision. The increased cost of targeting priority groups reduces the number of learning opportunities available. We will want to see how this provision contributes to bringing learners back into mainstream provision as they progress onto accredited courses and how effective the mix of provision is in meeting learner needs.
- 68 The rate of participation and achievements in Skills for Life provision continues to increase and we expect this trend to continue. However, this rate of improvement was insufficient to achieve the 2004 milestone and we expect to fall just short in 2007 by 5 percent. The inclusion of work-based learning, Adult and Community Learning and University for Industry (Ufi) provision, provided a further 699 achievements in 2004-05. **However, we have found that there is insufficient targeting of disadvantaged communities across Cheshire & Warrington by providers.**
- 69 We have paid particular attention to ensuring the balance of Skills for Life provision is managed effectively. The ratio of 78 percent contributing to target and 22 percent being funded through 'other provision' for Cheshire & Warrington compares favourably to the national ratio (72:28). However, we need to continue to ensure that 'other provision' is minimised and that courses are approved. Equally, **the apparent growth in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses as 'other provision' needs to be managed more effectively by colleges.**

Skills Matrix

70 The matrix below represents the categorisation of the priority sector subject areas (i.e High, Medium or Low) and the potential for that provision to contribute to our priorities and targets. In broad terms a greater proportion of LSC-funded further education provision appears to contribute to our local skills agenda and our priorities and targets than is the case for the Northwest as a whole.

Under 19	High		Medium		Low		Total	
	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	% of Overall
Likely to contribute	21,768,601 31505	51%	11,616,675 6730	27%	1,290,984 2125	3%	34,676,260 40360	82%
Potential to contribute	1,395,078 2019	3%	357,698 881	1%	39,387 132	0%	1,792,163 3032	4%
No longer eligible for LSC funding	592,651 2387	1%	109,558 239	0%	0 0	0%	702,209 2626	2%
Other (eg UFI and Unclassified)	0 0	0%	0 0	0%	0 0	0%	0 0	0%
Entitlement	0 N/A	0%	5,170,143 N/A	12%	0 N/A	0%	5,170,143 N/A	12%
Totals	23,756,330 35911	56%	17,254,074 7850	41%	1,330,371 2257	3%	42,340,775 46018	100%

19 and Over	High		Medium		Low		Total	
	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	% of Overall
Likely to contribute	12,873,777 26519	48%	3,993,391 4491	15%	57,170 289	0%	16,924,339 31299	64%
Potential to contribute	6,225,113 20654	23%	1,741,506 3070	7%	178,896 536	1%	8,145,515 24260	31%
No longer eligible for LSC funding	1,160,167 7184	4%	265,401 3087	1%	0 0	0%	1,425,568 10271	5%
Other (eg UFI and Unclassified)	0 0	0%	0 0	0%	0 0	0%	0 0	0%
Entitlement	0 N/A	0%	111,291 N/A	0%	0 N/A	0%	111,291 N/A	0%
Totals	20,259,057 54357	76%	6,111,589 10648	23%	236,067 825	1%	26,606,713 65830	100%

NB percentages are funding values as a percentage of the total funds, for each age group

71 For young people under the age of 19, there is some 3 percent of provision which is low priority in terms of skills provision, which is slightly less than the North West figure of 4 percent and 1 percent of provision that is potentially no longer available for funding. However, we recognise the need to continue to offer sufficient choice for young people and this requires a broad range of curriculum as long as that provision can contribute to our priorities and targets.

72 For adults aged 19 and over, the pattern is more complex, although again more favourable when compared to the North West, with 31 percent of provision that has only the potential to contribute and 5 percent of provision that is no longer eligible for funding. For adults we would want to shift this provision into high skills priority areas that can contribute to our targets.

Franchising Percentages

73 The level of franchising has historically been low across Cheshire & Warrington. In 2003/04, 3 percent (£1.9 million) of provision was delivered

through franchised arrangements compared to 5 percent nationally. For 2006/07 we expect the level of franchised provision to remain constant.

Fee Income

- 74 The increase in fee income has risen from £8.5 million in 2003/04 to £9 million in 2004/05. In 2006/07, given the increase of 5 percent to 32.5 percent in fee income, we expect to see the level of fee income rise to nearly £9.5 million.

The Key Changes Needed

- 75 In order to meet the national and regional priorities there will need to be continued improvement in the quality and responsiveness of local provision. In order to ensure we achieve our priorities we therefore expect the following changes in provision we fund.
- 76 To achieve the Level 2 at 19 target we expect:
- 1,850 16-18 year olds to achieve Level 2 this year, raising overall achievement to 72 percent
 - 2,100 16-18 year olds to achieve Level 2 by 2008, raising achievement to 75 percent.
- 77 To support improved attainment of Level 2 and Level 3 by young people we would expect success rates in FE to increase by 1 percent in long Level 2 and 3 qualifications, and in work-based learning by 2 percent.
- 78 We will also increase the number of Apprenticeship completions compared to 2004/05 by an estimated:
- 15 percentage points in 2006/07 providing 1,082 completions, a rate of 60 percent
 - 24 percentage points in 2007/08 providing 2,084 completions, a rate of 69 percent.
- 79 To improve the basic skills of adults we expect 4,168 adults to achieve Skills for Life qualifications in 2006/07. This will require an increase in participation of around 500 adults and an increase in success rates of at least 1 percent in FE.
- 80 To reduce the number of adults without a first Level 2 we will increase the number of full Level 2s to 3,300 along with improving the overall success rates in FE by 2 percent each year and in work-based learning by 1 percent each year to 2010. This will provide an additional 300 adults achieving a full Level 2 in 2006/07.
- 81 To maximise the use of funds to achieve LSC priorities we will reduce the amount of 'other provision' that does not contribute to our targets as well as that which is low priority in terms of the regional Skills matrix. In order to achieve the 80:20 ratio this year we will reduce the proportion of Skills for Life courses that do not contribute to the target.
- 82 In Personal and Community Development Learning we will ensure providers are achieving an effective balance between First Step provision and Personal and Community Development Learning. We will want to increase the targetting of Personal and Community Development Learning at disadvantaged communities and will expect 15 percent of learners to come from disadvantaged areas, compared to 10 percent at present.

What we have delivered so far and our planned changes for 2006/07 (sheet 1 of 2)

SUMMARY OF YOUNG PEOPLE (16-18)	2004/05				Funding £
	Learners		Learning Aims Success Rates	Funding £	
	Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)			
FE Total Learners	11,237		79%	40,134,917	
<i>of which...</i>					
<i>Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications</i>	5,062	2,056	41%		
<i>Learners on a full Level 2 qualification</i>	2,048	1,341	67%		
<i>Learners on a full Level 3 qualification</i>	5,454	2,269	63%		
<i>Learners on 2 or more A2 qualis</i>	1,001	763	92%		
School sixth form	7,215			33,098,408	
Work Based Learning	12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework success rate	Funding £	
WBL Total Learners	3,583		43%	8,817,409	
<i>of which...</i>					
<i>Learners on an Apprenticeship</i>	2,334	504	40%		
<i>Learners on an Advanced Apprenticeship</i>	1,145	223	49%		
Entry to Employment	Learners				Funding £
	Volumes (starts)	Numbers in learning	Av. length of stay (weeks)	Pos've destinations	
All E2E	541	6,419	13.5	271	2,184,210

2005/06				
Learners		Learning Aims Success Rates	Funding £	Funding £
Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)			
11,649		80%	45,494,354	
5,271	2,651	50%		
2,242	1,486	69%		
5,908	2,507	64%		
1,130	878	92%		
7,539			34,826,000	
12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework success rate	Funding £	
3,738		53%	8,889,641	
2,528	613	51%		
1,193	232	58%		
Learners		Pos've destinations	Funding £	Funding £
Volumes (starts)	Numbers in learning			
516	5,814	10	283	2,122,338

2006/07				
Learners		Learning Aims Success Rates	Funding £	Funding £
Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)			
12,116		81%	47,847,392	
5,518	2,844	52%		
2,363	1,645	71%		
6,061	2,617	65%		
1,146	908	92%		
7,500			36,432,564	
12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework success rate	Funding £	
3,889		57%	8,556,926	
2,606	678	55%		
1,279	266	62%		
Learners		Pos've destinations	Funding £	Funding £
Volumes (starts)	Numbers in learning			
537	5,696	10.8	287	1,634,482

Green header indicates underpinning data is complete

Red header indicates underpinning data is incomplete

What we have delivered so far and our planned changes for 2006/07 (sheet 2 of 2)

SUMMARY OF ADULTS (19+)	2004/05				2005/06				2006/07			
	Volumes of learners	Learners In-year achievements (volume)	Learning Aims Success Rates	Funding £	Volumes of learners	Learners In-year achievements (volume)	Learning Aims Success Rates	Funding £	Volumes of learners	Learners In-year achievements (volume)	Learning Aims Success Rates	Funding £
FE Total Learners	40,959		79%	24,127,146	33,380		78%	22,106,812	32,930		73%	20,892,442
<i>of which...</i>												
<i>Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications</i>	2,576	1,584	62%		2,456	1,643	67%		2,673	1,756	67%	
<i>Learners on a full Level 2 qualification</i>	2,673	2,757	76%		2,730	2,388	78%		3,061	2,614	80%	
<i>Learners on a full Level 3 qualification</i>	2,276	1,936	59%		2,247	1,614	60%		2,289	1,619	61%	
<i>Learners on 2 or more A2 qual.</i>	26	20	72%		10	8	75%		11	9	77%	
Discrete* activity, eg fully ESF, or LIDF funded provision	6,138	4,910	80%		6,200	4,920	79%		6,000	4,920	82%	
Personal & Community Dev't Learning	21,227			1,935,890	19,981				19,981			
Work Based Learning	12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework success rate	Funding £	12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework success rate	Funding £	12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework success rate	Funding £
WBL Total Learners	3,077		39%	5,462,198	3,157		49%	4,328,335	3,164		55%	4,111,853
<i>of which...</i>												
<i>Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications (All Ages)</i>	3,387	1,274	56%		3,860	1,723	58%		3,819	478	60%	
<i>Learners on an Apprenticeship</i>	1,438	378	41%		1,570	423	50%		1,714	439	56%	
<i>Learners on an Advanced Apprenticeship</i>	1,343	252	36%		1,379	331	47%		1,444	341	53%	
ETP / NETP	Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)		Funding £	Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)		Funding £	Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)		Funding £
<i>Of which...</i>												
Level 2												
Skills for Life												
Budgets	FE	WBL	E2E	SSF	ACL	ETP/NETP	Development Funding	Capital	Administration	Other Programme Budgets		
2004/05	£67,885,000	£13,540,258	£2,176,359	£33,098,408	£2,034,251		£3,007,952	£1,330,203	£1,909,393	£1,520,097		
2005/06	£70,623,000	£13,767,000	£2,613,000	£34,826,000	£2,490,000		£1,941,000	£607,000	£1,884,000	£7,560,000		
2006/07	£73,211,404	£15,852,081	£1,634,482	£36,432,564	£2,245,200		£2,100,000					

Key Actions for 2006/07

83 The strategic actions set out below represent the measures we will take to ensure we develop the necessary infrastructure, partnerships and provision to meet our priorities and targets.

National Priority	Action	Measure of Success
<p>Ensure that all 14-19 year olds have access to high quality relevant learning opportunities</p>	<p>Raising Level 2 achievement at 19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of our local action plan in collaboration with Local Authorities and Connexions • Effective tracking and intervention strategy in place • Tailored learner support packages in place 	<p>Improve overall achievement rates by 1 percent in 2006 and 3 percent in 2008</p> <p>300 additional young people targeted and in receipt of support</p> <p>125 additional young people achieving Level 2</p>
	<p>Realising the 14-19 Learner Entitlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Learner Entitlement is communicated to all young people through all appropriate means, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connexions publications • LSC/ Connexions websites • Area prospectus • Schools, colleges and work-based learning providers have confirmed their commitment to the learner entitlement and can demonstrate access to the range of local provision • Mapping of curriculum offer undertaken by data group used to inform curriculum planning in the planning groups • The learner entitlement to be developed into a curriculum offer • Data group fully established and 	<p>There is a curriculum offer in each local area which enables all learners to access a full range of provision to meet their needs</p> <p>An integrated data strategy is in place for sharing information about participation and retention across and with all providers</p> <p>There are agreed minimum entry thresholds for 14-19 programmes at a local level</p> <p>There is increased participation in work-based learning</p> <p>Successful Joint Area Review in Cheshire</p>

National Priority	Action	Measure of Success
	<p>working effectively to provide up to date data on 14-19 for task group, strategy group and planning groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum entry thresholds to be agreed within the planning groups 	
	<p>Ensure all young people access to impartial advice and guidance through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Fast Tomato' to be fully operational across Cheshire and Warrington • An area wide 14-19 prospectus informing young people and parents of the choices and routes available in each locality to be published • Taster days for the diploma lines to be offered in each planning group to promote the range of opportunities within the locality 	<p>There is an agreed process across the area for assessing learner needs in order to determine the most appropriate learning and career pathways</p> <p>Every young person is aware of the full range of learning opportunities available to them within their locality</p>
	<p>Improving the effectiveness of provision by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School effectiveness toolkit to be rolled out across Cheshire and Warrington and impact evaluated 	<p>Performance is in line with national expectations across all schools, colleges and work-based learning</p> <p>Apprenticeship success rates will have increased by 8 percentage points to 60 percent</p> <p>School sixth form provision offers good value for money</p>
	<p>Support collaboration to improve choice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of 14-19 collaborative local delivery models for extending the choice in each planning area in line with the recommendations of the StAR • A strategy for taking forward the use of Virtual Learning 	<p>There are six local area planning groups within Cheshire and Warrington making a significant impact in improving 14-19 provision</p> <p>Increased collaboration with more providers working jointly to develop</p>

National Priority	Action	Measure of Success
	<p>Environments across all schools and colleges with the sharing of resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14-19 employer engagement is driven forward through employer forums established to inform the local planning groups of local skills issues • A fifth cohort of Increased Flexibility Programme with a focus on sustainability • A third cohort of Young Apprenticeships implemented with collaborative planning and delivery arrangements. • Strong links made between the 14-19 Strategy group and Children's Trust 	<p>the curriculum in each planning area</p> <p>There are strategic arrangements In place to drive forward the 14-19 agenda making links to Children's Services</p>
	<p>Extended local provision for Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the findings of the regional review of provision for young learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities • Increase the capacity of the provider network to deliver high quality, innovative learning that provides opportunity for progression, to people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, within their own communities 	<p>Regional Strategy for LLDD provision in place providing cost-effective provision for learners</p>
	<p>14-19 employer engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local strategy developed and implemented • Embed as part of regional 14-19 employer engagement strategy • Develop vocational options up to Level 2 	<p>Employers are involved in each local curriculum planning group</p> <p>15 region wide projects delivered</p> <p>There are additional vocational options in each local planning area in support of all 14 Diploma lines</p>

National Priority	Action	Measure of Success
	<p>Reduction in NEET</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work to reduce young people not in education, employment or training 	<p>NEET has reduced to 4.5 percent</p> <p>Provide motivational work experience placements for 50 permanently excluded Key Stage 4 learners</p> <p>Provide the opportunity for ASDAN accreditation to all of these young learners</p>
<p>Making learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults</p>	<p>National Employer Training Programme (Train to Gain)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out 'Train to Gain' in Cheshire & Warrington Prepare for and launch Level 3 trials in Cheshire & Warrington 	<p>'Train to Gain' programme delivered by working with employers to support 3,745 Level 2 Learners and 410 Skills for Life Learners</p> <p>Level 3 trials launched in Cheshire & Warrington. Level 3 programme rolled out to 710 Level 3 Learners</p>
	<p>Brokerage Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity building to develop brokerage partnerships through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development funding pilot Regional Invitation to Tender Implementation of regional infrastructure fund 	<p>Skills brokerage service established in Cheshire & Warrington</p> <p>15 brokers trained</p> <p>Skills brokerage service offered to 150 employers resulting in 300 referrals to training</p>
	<p>CoVE Network, Beacons, Skills Academies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain robust CoVE network in Cheshire & Warrington Deliver Action for Business College pilot in preparation for employer quality mark for colleges 	<p>3 CoVEs with status reconfirmed</p> <p>4 Action for Business Colleges in place working to provide employer focussed skills training</p>

National Priority	Action	Measure of Success
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local providers to play role in national Skills Academies 	
	<p>Sector Skills Agreements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build capacity amongst providers to continue to deliver key sector qualification targets Integrate with the implementation of StAR sector findings 	<p>Provision of qualifications to support the SSAs is in place – OSAT, ITQ, BIT, School Support</p>
	<p>Level 2 Entitlement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure providers incorporate and prioritise Level 2 Entitlement in offer Ensure Ufl network delivers on Level 2 	<p>Continue to roll-out the Level 2 Entitlement to 3,200 learners without a first Level 2 or with basic skill needs. 10 percent of these learners will be from disadvantaged groups/areas</p>
	<p>Adult and Community Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Adult and Community Learning that provides opportunities to enter and progress in learning through access to first-rung learning, family learning, family literacy language and numeracy and neighbourhood learning for deprived communities that is integrated with the local offer to adults in line with the recommendations of the StAR 	<p>Deliver 17,000 adult and community learning opportunities: 30 percent on First Step programmes and 15 percent from disadvantaged groups/areas</p>
	<p>Education Business Link</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide high quality work experience placements for 90 percent of Key Stage 4 learners 	<p>Provide 10,000 work placements for young people</p>

National Priority	Action	Measure of Success
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage a minimum of 25 percent of schools in work related learning activities other than work experience 	15 schools engaged
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide motivational placements for young people to increase their knowledge of the world of work Work with employers to identify their recruitment and employment needs Provide professional development places for teachers to enhance the knowledge of options and vocational routes, and develop the links between the school's development plan and the work related learning and enterprise curriculum 	360 motivational placements provided 200 employers engaged 260 professional development places for teachers provided
	Young Apprenticeships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain existing Young Apprenticeships Extend Young Apprenticeships programme to new vocational areas 	201 Young Apprenticeships
	Increased Flexibility Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development Funding to support programme 	Provide 2,400 opportunities for young people to participate in IFP
	Additional Learner Support, Learner Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus Additional learner support on the most disadvantaged learners, including adults with below Level 2 qualifications, to enable them to enter and stay in learning 	2,650 learners have received Learner Support to help to support increased participation and attainment in learning
Transform	Address the mix of provision with	

National Priority	Action	Measure of Success
the learning and skills sector through Agenda for Change	colleges and providers to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Skills for Life provision which counts towards the target • Increase the breadth and availability of full Level 2 & 3 qualifications offered • Develop strategies with colleges to reduce the volume of Other Provision where this does not contribute to local priorities 	More focussed adult provision that clearly contributes towards national, regional and local priorities
	Drive forward the responsiveness agenda with colleges and providers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agree challenging but appropriate fee income targets and strategies • Encourage local skills/ employer forums to ensure colleges and providers are aware of the skills issues • Support strategic planning within colleges to ensure that plans reflect the future skill needs and qualifications required from sector skill agreements 	Strategic planning of provision is informed by relevant and appropriate information on local skills issues
	Improving the Learning Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to implement our Local Capital Investment Plan to ensure we have the right facilities in the right place 	Further investment and renewal of FE estate with up to £75 million of investment over the next three years and reducing surplus capacity by 22 percent
	Race Equality in Employment Standard <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take forward the Race Equality in Employment Standard through identifying, developing and 	All colleges have a race equality scheme (RES) action plan in place and the workforce is representative

National Priority	Action	Measure of Success
	disseminating good practice and embedding equality and diversity in policies and planning	of the local community
Strengthen the role of the LSC in economic development so that we provide the skills needed to help all individuals into jobs	Level 2 Entitlement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Target priority groups through Development Funding eg 50+, travellers, offenders, LLDD etc 	1,100 Adults entering Level 2 for first time
	Increase opportunities for LLDD provision in mainstream providers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the capacity of the provider network to deliver high quality, innovative learning that provides opportunity for progression, to people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities within their own communities 	Access to mainstream provision for LLDD has increased
	Offenders' Learning and Skills Offer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and build on the existing Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLaSS) to carry forward the partnership plans for Cheshire and Warrington. Develop an integrated offer to offenders that allows learners to complete a course of learning wherever it was begun, links learning to skills and jobs and contributes to the regional reducing re-offending action plan 	250 offenders have achieved Skills for Life and/or Level 2
	Skills for Life <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Development Funding to broaden target group and capacity build provision Ensure Ufl prioritises delivery on Skills for Life Continue to prioritise Skills for Life that leads to a recognised qualification and provides a platform of progression to Level 2 	4,170 Skills for Life achievements 33 Tutors in training 80:20 balance of mix of Skills for Life to Other Provision achieved

National Priority	Action	Measure of Success
	<p>and employability skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on priority groups and in particular adults in disadvantaged areas along with those not in employment, those requiring ESOL, and offenders • Build on the StAR to develop, with partners and stakeholders, a Cheshire and Warrington plan for developing provision that is appropriate to needs 	
	<p>Effective advice and guidance for adults</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and ensure effectiveness of TUC Learner Representatives • Provide a cohesive offer of information, advice and guidance to adults aged 20+ that links learning, skills and jobs, and focuses face to face provision on adults with below Level 2 skills • Develop a network of high quality providers of advice and guidance 	<p>Provide high quality information to 40,000 adults, advice to 5,500 adults and enhanced guidance to 400 adults</p> <p>All 14 providers have achieved the Matrix quality standard</p>
<p>Strengthen the role of the LSC to lead change locally</p>	<p>Provide leadership within partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align the 14-19 plan and groups with those of the two Children's Trusts • Develop Learning Partnerships as the learning arms of local strategic partnerships • Implement the agenda for change and business cycle successfully locally 	<p>Positive responses in stakeholder survey</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harness the skills of local Council members 	<p>Local Council is actively engaged in promoting the LSC priorities and agenda</p>
	<p>Regional Skills Partnerships</p>	

National Priority	Action	Measure of Success
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Alliance providing linkage between local and regional skills stakeholders/partnerships Ensure link to Cheshire & Warrington Economic Alliance 	Establish Cheshire & Warrington Skills Alliance as the key skills partnership in sub region
Improve the skills of the workers who are delivering public service	Develop Skills for Life Offer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Development Funding to promote and achieve Skills for Life qualifications 	1,875 learners 250 Learners from the public sector participating in SfL, with 150 achieving qualifications
	Develop Level 2 offer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Development Funding to upskill employees with lower level skills Integrate with Train to Gain 	300 learners from the public sector participating in full Level 2 programmes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Apprenticeships offer Evaluate health cadetships and share best practice across the region 	15 percent of Apprenticeship participants will be from the public sector Future plan for cadetships developed with health sector
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce gender stereotypes in Apprenticeships 	
	Responsive colleges and providers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote importance of public sector to providers Develop public sector partnership to identify skills needs and devise programme with providers Respond to StAR sector findings Influence the health and social care CoVE to work with providers to increase public sector provision in Cheshire & Warrington Increase the adoption and use of 	Public sector partnership established and skills plan developed Increased take up of health/dental nurse/technician qualifications

National Priority	Action	Measure of Success
	e-learning in the public sector	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Development Strategy for those working with children – NETP and Level 2 Entitlement 	A strategy is in place with 100 adults on Skills for Life programmes and 150 on full Level 2 programmes

Our Delivery Resources

Partnership Working

- 84 Partnership is fundamental to the delivery of LSC objectives. To achieve our objectives in the next year we will work with the following key partners in developing and implementing the following plans, strategies and programmes:
- 14-19 Development Plan: work with the two Local Authorities and Connexions in delivering the 14-19 Development Plan
 - Children's and Young People's Service (CYSP) and Joint Area Review (JAR): work with the Strategic Board to develop and implement the CYSP Plan and in preparation for the JAR
 - NEET Plan: work with Connexions through a joint operational group to monitor and implement the Plan and improve 16-18 participation
 - Level 2 Action Plan: work with the two Local Authorities and Connexions to implement the Plan and raise Level 2 Achievement at 19
 - Welfare to Workforce Development Plan: work with Jobcentre Plus and the voluntary and community sector in implementing the Plan
 - Business Skills Northwest Pathways Programme: work with the NWDA and Business Link to engage more employers in developing and delivering skills provision
 - Local Area Agreements (LAAs): work with local Learning Partnerships and Local Authorities to develop and contribute to the learning and skills elements of the LAAs
 - Cheshire and Warrington Economic Strategy – work with Cheshire and Warrington Economic Alliance to lead the delivery of the skills elements of the Strategy and support improvements in workforce skills and productivity.
- 85 During 2006 we will strengthen our ability to work with partners by internal restructuring under Theme 7 of the LSC's Agenda for Change. This will create two local partnership teams lead by a Partnership Director and Area Director who will strengthen existing relationships and build new ones. The partnership teams will, in particular, help to consolidate our work in creating a distinct 14-19 phase and in securing the LSC's contribution to LAAs in Cheshire and Warrington.

Local Council

- 86 The LSC is keen to engage with a wide network of partners and organisations in Cheshire and Warrington in addressing the learning agenda but we will ensure that this engagement is effective, efficient and directly relevant to the achievement of our targets and strategic objectives. The LSC will communicate and co-operate with partners to:
- achieve strategic alignment on common targets and objectives
 - ensure effective and complementary use of funding

87 share information on, for example, data, progress towards targets and emerging policy, so that we have an effective understanding of each partner's potential contribution and how that may be enhanced through building capacity. This Plan and its targets is a fundamental part of this and the local Council will be monitoring it closely to ensure that are resources are aligned with our plan in support of our priorities.

Equality and Diversity

- 88 The Council will ensure that planned activities take account of its duty to promote equality of opportunity in relation to race, gender and disability and our responsibilities under other equality legislation including the Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and European regulations relating to sexual orientation, religion or faith and age. Our actions and activities will be underpinned by and reflect the Council's Race Equality Scheme. Specifically, we will implement our new Equality and Diversity Strategy for Cheshire & Warrington, along with the supporting Race Equality Action Plan and the Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs).
- 89 We will measure the impact we are having in delivering equality and diversity in learning and skills provision through our four new EDIMs which are to:
- reduce any disparity in success rates between those learners with declared disabilities and those without declared disabilities in work-based learning. By 2008 we need to increase success rates of disabled participants in work-based learning to match the average
 - eliminate any disparity in participation levels between different ethnic groups. By 2008 we need to increase the participation rates of learners from some ethnic groups up to the average and to maintain the participation rates of others
 - eliminate the disparity in participation and success rates between males and females for all learners in LSC funded provision. By 2008 we need to increase the participation and success rates of young male participants aged 16-18 for all qualifications and for males aged 19+ with below Level 2 qualifications, to match those of females
 - eliminate the disparities in participation and success rates between groups of learners from the national 20 percent most deprived areas (2004 Census Super Output Areas). By 2008 we need to increase the participation and success rates of learners from deprived areas at all qualification levels for those aged 16-18 and those aged 19+ with below Level 2 qualifications, to match the Cheshire and Warrington average.
- 90 The table below sets out the current position for three of the EDIMs in terms of the success of learners in further education and work-based learning programmes. We will be working with colleges and providers to address the inequalities in success.

EDIM Success Rates in FE and Workbased Learning, Cheshire & Warrington 2004/05 by Age Group

Success Rates 2004/05	Further Education		Work-based Learning	
	16-18	19+	16-18	19+
With Learning Difficulty and/or Disability	70%	75%	44%	35%
No Learning Difficulty and/or Disability	69%	72%	51%	54%
Black & Minority Ethnic Group	77%	72%	42%	54%
White Group	75%	77%	50%	53%
Female	72%	73%	53%	56%
Male	66%	71%	48%	49%

Source: Individual Learner Record (ILR)

Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities

- 91 Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Council has a specific responsibility to consider the needs of young people and adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are robust arrangements in place to ensure that this group of learners have access to suitable provision that meets their needs and where appropriate the additional support required.
- 92 We will work within the North West to implement the findings of the regional review of LLDD provision in developing our regional strategy for LLDD provision.

Sustainable Development

- 93 The LSC has a vision of a learning and skills sector that is committed and contributing to sustainable development through the management of resources, the learning opportunities it delivers and its engagement with communities. In Cheshire and Warrington we will support that vision by raising awareness amongst providers and partners of the Sustainable Development Strategy and helping to identify and train champions in our local office and in each college and training provider.

Health & Safety

- 94 The health and safety of learners is a fundamental value for the Learning and Skills Council. We believe that learners are entitled to provision that takes place in a safe, healthy and supportive environment. Our policy is to adopt a 'best practice' role with regard to the promotion of learner health and safety, by applying the following four core principles:
- to expect that colleges and other providers funded by the LSC will fully meet their legal obligations and duty of care to learners
 - to seek assurance that colleges and other providers have suitable and sufficient arrangements for learner health and safety
 - to take appropriate action where expected standards are not met or maintained

- to promote the raising of standards for learner health and safety through support, and challenge, as appropriate.

Human Resources

95 We will continue to support our staff in working to the LSC's values of Trust, Expertise, Ambition and Urgency as we transform the LSC through Agenda for Change. Last year we implemented our 'Learning from You' Action Plan which began to address issues identified in a staff survey and we will take forward the local actions from this through the Partnership teams. We will also invest in learning and development that supports staff in the transformation of the LSC that gives them the best opportunity to contribute to the LSC's objectives and supports them in progressing their own career.

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