

Hertfordshire Learning and Skills Council Annual Plan 2006-07

May 2006

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

Contents

Our Vision (page 3)

Our Priorities (Page 5)

Our Targets (Page 8)

Our Values (Page 9)

A Context for Delivery (Page 10)

Skills Matrix (Page 18)

The Key Changes needed (Page 20)

What we have delivered and our planned changes for
2006/07 (Page 21)

Key Actions (page 23)

Our Delivery Resources (page 30)

Partnership Working

Council Members

Equality and Diversity

Offender Learning

Learners with Learning Difficulties and / or Disabilities

Health and Safety

Sustainable Development

Our Vision

Our vision for Hertfordshire is that, **“by 2010, young people and adults in Hertfordshire will have the knowledge and productive skills that are the best in the country”**.

There is clear evidence that we are continuing to make good progress in raising skill and qualification levels. This can be seen in all sectors: Further Education; Work-Based Learning; and Schools.

In **Further Education**, following the re-inspection of Oaklands and West Herts colleges, three of Hertfordshire's four colleges in Hertfordshire are now judged as “satisfactory” and one (West Herts) is “good”. This is reflected in improved success rates, which are now close to (or above) national averages for General Colleges of Further Education: When the LSC was created, these were among the worst in the country. In addition, the Further Education sector has contributed significantly to our progress towards achievement of the Skills for Life target, which saw an 88% improvement in 2004/05 over the 2003/04 figure.

Oaklands, West Herts and Hertford Regional colleges have all submitted successful applications for major re-development of the Further Education estate in the last year. North Hertfordshire College intends to submit an application for the re-development of the Hitchin campus this year. If all goes to plan, Hertfordshire will have world-class 21st Century learning facilities for all learners in Further Education by 2010. The impact of high quality learning environments on recruitment, retention and achievement is now well documented.

In **Work-Based Learning**, we have also seen improvements in quality markings from the Adult Learning Inspectorate, and a doubling of the proportion of apprentices achieving a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) in the three year period: from a quarter in 2001/02 to a half in 2004/05. Providers have also played a full part in helping us achieve targets for Apprenticeship starts for 16-21 year olds, with nearly 2,400 starts last year.

The emphasis has now moved to ensuring that apprentices complete their programmes and achieve full framework qualifications, and whilst again the proportion has doubled (from 15% to over 30%) in the last three years, we still lag behind the national average. Hertfordshire's training providers have shown that they have the capability to meet these new demands. In addition the Entry to Employment programme has helped nearly half of 16-17 year old participants, often with significant problems, into further education, training or work.

In **schools**, Ofsted grades continue to show that secondary and sixth form provision is good, with only one of the County's 76 secondary schools in “Special Measures”. GCSE results showed a significant improvement in 2005, in particular at lower achieving schools. There are now no Hertfordshire secondary schools below the 25% five good (A*-C) GCSE pass floor target. However GCE A level results showed only a modest improvement.

The Area Wide Inspection of **14-19 learning** in Hertfordshire judged overall provision in the county to be “satisfactory”, and highlighted the need for greater

consistency across institutions, sectors and localities within the county. An overarching action plan has been created, combining AWI recommendations with our findings from Strategic Area Review (StAR) and our joint strategy with Hertfordshire County Council, *Putting the Learner First*. The main actions required are to:

- Implement the Hertfordshire 14-19 Learner Entitlement through seven Strategic Area Partnership groups
- Improve the quality, equality and success rates of provision
- Improve the range and quality of the vocational offer
- Improve the quality of information, advice and guidance to young people
- Reduce the number of young people aged 16-18 that are not participating in learning

For **Adult Learning and Skills**, a similar action planning process has been undertaken on the back of StAR. This has fully involved our major partners in Adult Learning, the Hertfordshire Adult Learning Partnership (HALP) and in Skills, the Hertfordshire Employer Skills Network (HESN). The key issues emerging from that plan are to:

- Develop Level 2 entitlement and increase the numbers of adults participating on first full Level 2 (and targeted level 3 provision to meet priority skills needs)
- Deliver the 'Skills for Life' strategy for tackling numeracy and literacy skills, including prioritising basic skills training that leads to a qualification and improving completion rates
- Increase skills development activities for all employees, particularly those within the public services workforce, such as the health and care sector, local authorities, children's services and schools and colleges
- Link skills training to employment opportunities through robust partnerships with the East of England Development Agency and Jobcentre Plus.

Two further key actions span the full age range. These are to:

- Improve and increase local provision for Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities
- Build a Further Education infrastructure that offers world-class learning in 21st Century facilities

These actions can only be delivered with the help and support of Hertfordshire providers and partners. In the last year we have seen rapid progress in many areas. We look forward to another year of continued success.

Roy Bain, Executive Director

Alan O'Neill, Chairman

Our Priorities

We have published our second Annual Statement of Priorities which will take us further forward in our aim of transformation. Our six priorities for 2006/07 are to:

1. Ensure that all 14-19 year olds have access to high quality, relevant learning opportunities
2. Make learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults
3. Transform the learning and skills sector through agenda for change
4. Strengthen the role of the LSC in economic development so that we provide the skills needed to help individuals into jobs
5. Improve the skills of workers who are delivering public services
6. Strengthen the capacity of the LSC to lead change nationally, regionally and locally.

Learning and Skills Council - East of England Regional Skills Priorities

This statement of priorities has been developed to reflect the commitment to:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare young people in the East of England to be the workforce of the future• Up-skill the present workforce• Support the unemployed to gain the qualifications necessary to re enter the labour market• Respond to the needs of individuals and employers				
In addition to the sectors reported in the Annual Statement of Priorities we have agreed with partners the following sectors on the basis of level 2 and level 3 needs which are of importance to the East of England:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The built environment/construction• Logistics• Health and Social Care• Retail• Hospitality <p>In addition, the following sectors have been identified as important both to certain elements of the Regional Economic Strategy and partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manufacturing and engineering• Land based				
National Priority	Regional Skills Priorities	What does success look like/Regional Targets	Key Partners	
N1 Ensure that all 14 – 19 year olds have access to high quality, relevant learning opportunities	R1 Increase attainment in learning and relevance to young people	a. 53,000 19 year olds qualified to level 2 by 2008 b. 132,500 16 – 18 year olds in structured learning by 2007 c. Jointly produce with partners area prospectuses on all learning opportunities for young people, for their information and their parents. d. Increase the amount of vocational learning undertaken by young people by developing links between schools and industry, and strengthen work related skills development.	Connexions Employers Higher Education Local authorities Schools, FE and work based learning providers Education Business Link Organisation	
N2 Making learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults	R2 Develop clear routes to appropriate learning for employers, young people and adults	a. Commence Train to Gain: April 06: Cambridgeshire & Essex August 06: Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk b. By 2009 14,775 employers engaged Which will include 8,000 hard-to-reach employers c. Agree with partners the delivery of the flexible elements of Train to Gain and a shift in the balance of provision d. Implement the regional impartial skills brokerage service with a focus on priority sectors, including public services .See also 1C above	Employers and employer organisations including Sector Skills Councils HE liP uk Jobcentre Plus Local authorities EEDA East of England Skills and Competitiveness Partnership	
N3 Transform the learning and skills sector through agenda for change	R3 Transform provision to ensure a better fit for employer and employee needs in the region with a focus on our regional priority sectors	a. Improve the quality of LSC funded provision including the leadership of the post-16 sector and aligning provider development plans to regional priorities. b. Produce Regional Sector Skills agreements for each agreed sectors c. Develop provision which will support the achievement of the following sector targets	Centre for Excellence in Leadership Colleges, independent training providers, schools Lifelong Learning UK Sector Skills Councils	
		Qualification		Target 06/07
		Information and technology qualifications (ITQ)		to be confirmed
		school support staff (SSS)		to be confirmed
		Onsite assessment and training (OSAT) construction		L2 – 3300 completions
		Business improvement techniques (BIT)		L2 – 127 L3 – 40 completions

		engineering		
		Digital installation	to be confirmed	
N4 Strengthen the role of the LSC in economic development so that we provide the skills needed to help all individuals into jobs and lifelong employability	R4 Ensure all individuals can access the skills and qualifications they need to improve employability	a. 84,000 Skills for life achievements gained between 2004 and 2007 b. Develop and roll out the L2 entitlement strategy for each local area c. Maintain current levels of provision for Personal and Community Development Learning d. Implement the New Deal for Skills for Jobcentre Plus clients e. Lead a regional consortia approach to access public funding that supports education and training in local communities, with at least one new provider receiving mainstream funding during 2006/07		Colleges, Schools and providers Employers and employer organisations Higher Education liP uk Jobcentre Plus NIACE EEDA EoESCP Trade Unions Voluntary and community sector National Offender Management Service
N5 Improve the skills of the workers who are delivering public services	R5 Develop responsive learning pathways for public services	a. Include public services within the Train to Gain model including links to Apprenticeships b. Implement the regional early years strategy c. Implement Year 2 of the Skills for Life pilot project in partnership with EEDA		Colleges, schools and providers Government Office EoESCP EERA Trade unions
N6 Strengthen the LSC to lead change nationally regionally and locally	R6 Lead the development of responsive provision in the context of the regional economy	a. Implement the agreed statement of skills priorities b. Develop an effective rapid response approach to enable the delivery of relevant and timely training to employers c. Engage partners and employers in the development of the CoVE's and Skills Academies across the region		Regional intelligence centre (RIC) EoESCP CoVE's Skills Academies SSC's

Locally, we will work towards achieving the commitments made in both the National and Regional Statements of Priorities. A summary of local activities and measures of success are contained within the key actions section of this plan

Our Targets

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 2005/2006 compared to 2003/2004 and a further 22,000 in 2007/2008 compared to 2005/2006.

***Rationale:** Over the period 2004 to 2008, the number of 19 year olds in Hertfordshire is expected to increase by around 1000, with just 225 of this growth in the period 2006-08. Hertfordshire achievement rose from 74% in 2004 to 77% in 2005 - the national baseline rose from 67% to 70% (target by 2008 is 72%). The target is based on 79% achievement by 2008 i.e. 11240 by 2006, and 11740 by 2008.*

In Hertfordshire we need an additional **500** young people to gain a Level 2 in 2007/2008 compared to 2005/2006.

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, in 2006/07 we need to increase the numbers of full Level 2 achievements through further education and work-based learning to 117,000 [NB excludes NES and NETP elements]. In addition the roll out of the National Employer Training Programme will increase the LSC contribution to this target.

***Rationale:** The proportion of Level 2 provision for adults in Hertfordshire FE is 4% - the national average is 8%. There therefore needs to be a significant increase in the Hertfordshire offer. This requirement is also reflected in the "Key Changes" section.*

In Hertfordshire we plan to deliver **2700** full Level 2 achievements through further education and work-based learning in 2006/07, that is an increase of **570** compared to 2005/06,

In addition, we will also deliver xxx **first** full Level 2 achievements through NETP.

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.

***Rationale:** 2004/05 saw a significant increase in SfL achievement – from just over 3000 per year to 5500. Our local contribution to the regional target is 17000. To do this, we need to build on the achievements of 2004/05 over the full three year period.*

In Hertfordshire we need **6000** learners to achieve Skills for Life qualifications in 2006/07.

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 70,000 in 2006/07 supporting the achievement of Level 2 and Level 3 qualification targets.

***Rationale:** The full framework achievement target for 2005/06 is 35% in Hertfordshire. Whilst this is a significant improvement from our 2002/03 starting position (15%), this compares to a national average of 39% achieved in 2004/05. For 2006/07, we will target a 40% achievement rate.*

In Hertfordshire we aim to raise the number of completions to 780 in 2006/07.

We also work with key partners to contribute to the following national 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

Our values set out for us the way we work.

- **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.

Together, our four values will ensure the LSC can provide leadership and direction at a time of great change.

Our plan sets out how we will deliver our 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.

The Context for Delivery

1. Geography and demography

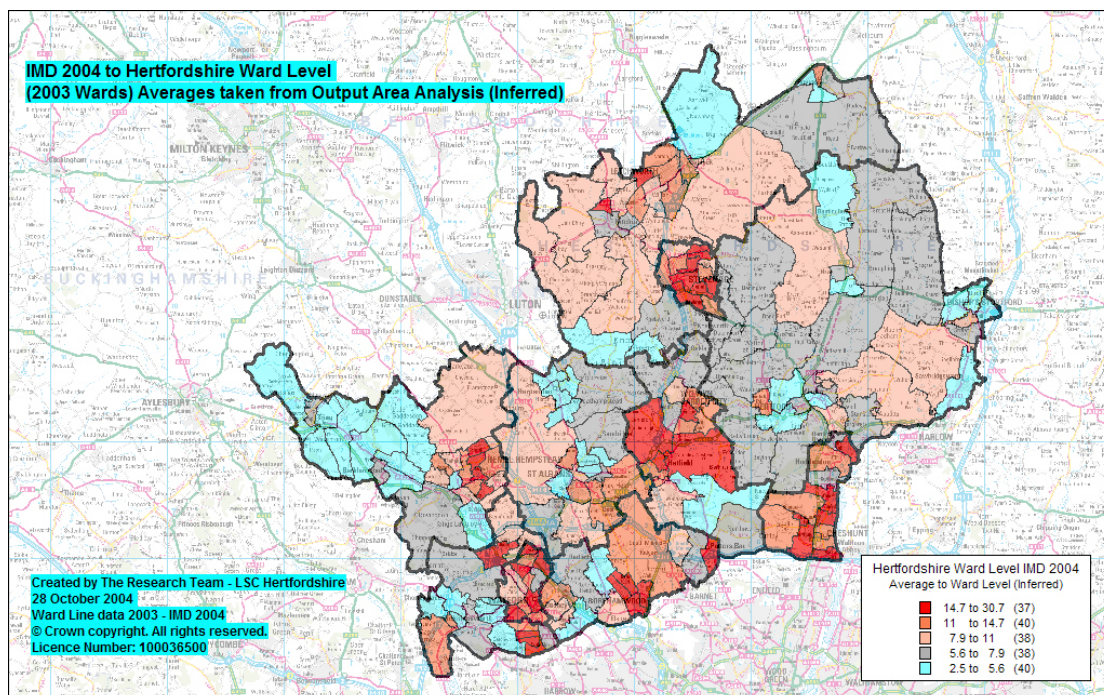
Hertfordshire is located immediately to the North of London, with a radial transport infrastructure and high house prices as a result. It has a population of just over a million of whom 93.3% are white. The largest minority ethnic group is Asian or Asian British. The largest Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) group is in Watford (around 13%).

The overall population of Hertfordshire is forecast to rise over the next 20 years from 1,051,800 in 2005 to 1,180,600 in 2027. The numbers of 15-19 year olds fluctuate with a peak in 2009 of nearly 67,000, falling to a low in 2018 of approximately 61,500. After 2018 the cohort is predicted to stabilise at just over 64,000 (Census data)

The 50 and over age group accounts for 32.1% of the population and if the national rate of growth of this age group is extrapolated to Hertfordshire it would mean an additional 123,000 people aged over 50 in the county by 2027.

2. Wealth and Deprivation

The county is relatively prosperous but with pockets of deprivation particularly in Stevenage, Broxbourne, Welwyn-Hatfield, Borehamwood and Hemel Hempstead. The five most deprived wards are in five different districts illustrating that deprivation can occur even in areas of prosperity.



3. The Hertfordshire Economy

There are nearly 50,000 businesses in Hertfordshire employing more than 480,000 employees. Of these 87% employ fewer than 10 employees whilst large companies with over 200 employees employ 30% of the workforce.

Around 80% of employees in Hertfordshire work in the service sector. Analysis of employment by sector shows that Financial, Property & Business Services account for 23% of employment, with a further 18% employed in Wholesale & Retail and 13% in Manufacturing. The proportion employed in Financial Property & Business is significantly above the Eastern Region figure of 19%. 39% of Hertfordshire VAT enterprises are in the finance and business services sector, which suggests a preponderance of small/medium enterprises (SMEs).

Economic activity rates in Hertfordshire are higher than in the region as a whole but there are local variations. The unemployment rate is currently 1.5%, the lowest figure in the Eastern Region. Just over 20% of the resident workforce commutes into London.

4. The Learning Infrastructure

There are 76 secondary schools each with a sixth form and 23 independent schools with post 14 pupils. The sixth forms range in size from less than 50 to over 400 students. Quality in most schools is assessed as "good" or better. There are four large general FE colleges operating on 13 sites – all are now assessed as "satisfactory" or better. There are 23 providers of apprenticeship programmes. Some of these also offer Entry to Employment (e2e) provision and there are a further 5 specialist e2e providers.

5. Young People

5.1 Target Position

16-18 Participation

	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05 actual	2004/05 planned	2004/05 % to plan	2005/06 planned
FE	9810	9305	9890	9480	104%	10830
WBL	1860	2035	1940	2370	82%	1940
sub-total	11670	11340	11800	11760	100%	12770
Schools	12730	13100	13550	N/A	N/A	14100
TOTAL	24400	24440	25350	N/A	N/A	26870

Participation in learning by 16-18 year olds is among the highest nationally, with a higher proportion studying in school sixth forms than in any other LLSC area. There is significant net inward migration from other LSC areas to Hertfordshire schools and colleges. In addition, 12% of Hertfordshire 16-18 year-olds study at independent schools. Connexions data suggests that 81% of Hertfordshire resident 16-18 year olds are in learning, with 5% not in education, employment or training (NEET) and 14% in employment without training. Participation in learning through LSC funded provision over the last three years has increased at a faster rate than the growth of the 16-18 population

Achievement

2005 data shows that 77% of Hertfordshire young people have achieved a Level 2 by age 19 - the highest figure in the East of England. The national average is 70%. 57% of Hertfordshire learners achieved Level 3 by 19.

	Number of learners who reached the level 2 threshold by age 16 (2000-01)	Number of learners who reached the level 2 threshold by age 17 (2001-02)	Number of learners who reached the level 2 threshold by age 18 (2002-03)	Number of learners who reached the level 2 threshold by age 19 (2003-04)
Number	8275	9271	9886	10210
Percentage of cohort	60%	67%	72%	74%
Source: Fisher family trust administrative dataset 2004				

There are 3 districts where Level 2 at 19 is significantly below the national average: Broxbourne, Stevenage, and Welwyn-Hatfield.

We have set a target of 11,000 young people (76%) with a Level 2 by age 19 in 2006, and 11,450 (78%) by 2008. Whilst population growth in the cohort will support this, it still requires improved achievement in schools, FE and work-based learning.

Level 2 @ 19 Cohort Analysis (FE and WBL only)						
2004/05 (Actual)						
	FE		WBL		Total	
	Nos.	% of All	Nos.	% of All	Nos.	% of All
16-18 All Learners	9890		1428		11830	
16-18 Full Level 2/3 Learners	6145	61%	1426	99%	7571	64%
16-18 Full Level 2/3 Achievements			657	46%		
2006/07 (Planned)						
16-18 All Learners	11452		2000		13452	
16-18 Full Level 2/3 Learners	6367	56%	2000	100%	8367	62%
16-18 Full Level 2/3 Achievements	3921	34%	1000	50%	4921	42%

The proportion of 16 year olds achieving 5 A*-C grades, 58.5% in 2004 (DfES performance tables, excluding Independent schools) and 60.7% in 2005, is 5 percentage points above national and regional averages. However, the average GCE A level point score per student is 262.5, below the national figure of 277.6. Success rates in FE and WBL have both improved markedly over the last three years. In FE, these are now close to (or better than) the national average, but further improvement in WBL full framework achievement is needed to reach national comparators (source: ILR).

Success Rates 16-18	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
FE All Programmes	47%	55%	60%	65%*
Long Programmes	45%	53%	59%	67%*
Short Programmes	59%	64%	67%	73%*
WBL (all-age) NVQ	24%	36%	41%	45%
Full Framework	15%	21%	24%	31%

* = estimated figure

Young people not in employment, education or training (NEET)

	Nov 2004 %	Nov 2004 volume	Nov 2005 %	Nov 2005 volume
NEET Herts	4.4%	1390	4.8%	1560
Not known Herts	4.7%	1660	4.5%	1671

Source: Connexions Hertfordshire. Figures shown are "adjusted"

The destination survey carried out by Connexions identified that demands from young people in the NEET group (or likely to become NEET) are focussed in the areas of Construction, Motor Vehicle; and Hairdressing & Related Occupations. Large numbers of young people enter sales occupations. Construction is clearly a high demand sector for both young people and the economy.

5.4 Issues for Young People's Learning

Despite a good geographic spread of provision the Area Wide Inspection 14-19 education identified "...wide inequalities in the availability of a suitable curriculum in different institutions, in different areas, and for different groups of young people with different needs and interests..... Work-based learning opportunities in parts of the county are insufficient to meet the needs and interests of young people. This is particularly so in skill areas such as construction, care and engineering."

The AWI recommends that "The local LSC and LEA, schools, colleges and work-based learning providers should work together to ensure a broader range of vocational learning opportunities are available to young people throughout the 14-19 phase." This not only forms a part of the 14-19 Action Plan, but targets have also been set as part of the Local Area Agreement for Hertfordshire to ensure a long-term focus on vocational learning, particularly in key sectors.

Development of provision 14 -19 is being carried out through the seven Strategic Area Planning groups, which have a clear brief to deliver the agreed 14-19 learner entitlement. This entitlement covers both academic and vocational provision in a wide range of occupational areas to meet future skills needs. Each area plan will be expected to encompass the national developments outlined in the Government's 14-19 White Paper.

6. Skills and Adult Learning

Based on Census 2001 data Hertfordshire's working age population has a higher qualification profile than either the Eastern region or the national figure. 24% of the population aged 16 -74 are qualified to level 4 or above compared to a regional figure of 18%

6.1. Target Position

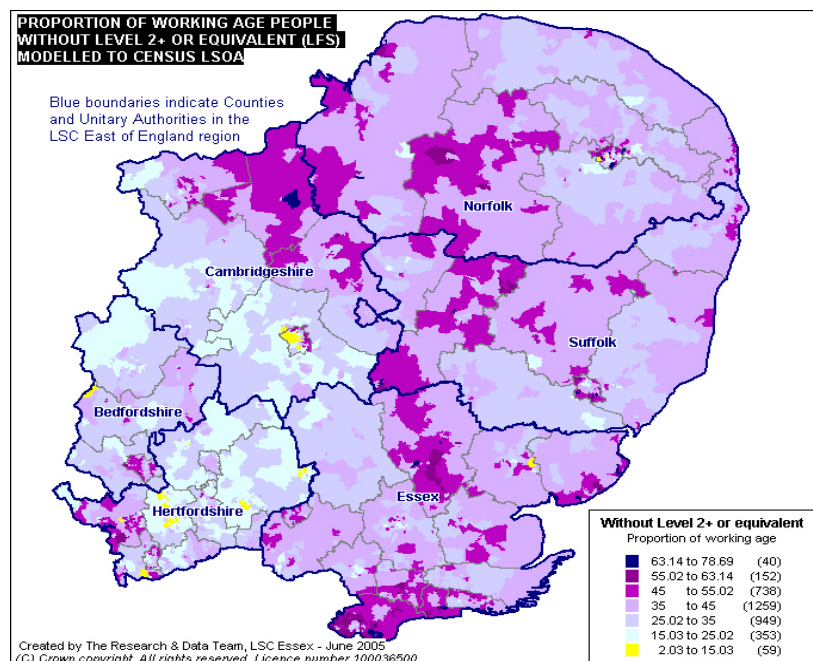
Numbers in learning (19+)	2003/04	2004/05 expected	2005/06 planned
FE participation	36020	39130	33240
WBL participation	1660	1480	1280
Level 2 in FE	1460	1620	1690
Level 3 in FE	1680	1890	1930

Success Rates 19+		2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
FE	All Programmes	53%	63%	69%	67%*
	Long Programmes	45%	52%	59%	52%*
	Short Programmes	63%	75%	74%	76%*
Skills for Life (all-age):					
	Number	2600	2520	3030	5660
	Percentage against milestone	67%	65%	78%	100%

* = estimated figure

23% of the Hertfordshire population 16 -74 has no qualifications. This is the lowest in the Eastern region but still represents 172,000 people. Over a quarter of the Hertfordshire workforce has a highest qualification at Level 1. The districts with the highest proportion of 16-64 year olds with no qualifications are Broxbourne, Stevenage and Watford. In addition Welwyn-Hatfield has particularly low levels of literacy and numeracy. (Basic Skills Agency 2001)

Skills for Life performance in the years 2001-04 saw overall achievement of 67% against the 2004 milestone of 15,200. For 2004-07, a higher milestone of 17,000 was agreed for the three year period. Improved performance in 2004/05 suggests we are on track to achieve this figure, provided current levels of performance are maintained. Whilst some of this improvement is due to changes in methodology (inclusion of Ufl achievements has added around 550 to the 2004/05 total) the bulk of the improvement is through Further Education and Work-based Learning.



6.2. Skills – Demand Issues

More than 55,000 new jobs at all skill levels are expected to be created in the county between 2003 and 2013. We anticipate that around 90% of these jobs will require skills at Level 2 or above (Source: Experian)

Ten sectors which account for 75% of the county's total employment have been identified as 'key' for Hertfordshire. Significant growth in employment is forecast in some of these sectors which will mean an increased demand for suitably skilled people to meet needs. The ten sectors are:

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| • Business and Finance | Additional 26,000 jobs by 2013 particularly professional and managerial |
| • Construction | Additional 1900 jobs by 2007 particularly managers and skilled trades employees |
| • Retail | High employment sector but small growth of 1.3% predicted by 2013. |
| • Hospitality | Additional 3,600 skilled new entrants required each year to 2013. |
| • Social care | 500 new entrants per year to 2013.
Particular skill gaps in personal occupations and communications |
| • Health care | 850 skilled new entrants per year to 2013.
Skill gaps particularly in personal services occupations |
| • Engineering | Net fall overall but additional 500 recruits annually anticipated. Need to increase skill levels |
| • Education | 1,100 new entrants to the workforce required per year. |
| • Cultural industries | 900 new workers required each year. Skill gaps in management and IT |

Source: Action 4 Skills Hertfordshire 2005

6.3. Skills - Supply Issues

A strategic analysis of provision through FE colleges and WBL has identified some gaps in provision together with significant high levels of provision in other areas of learning. This may indicate a need for re-balancing provision over a planned period.

Key areas identified include:

- Relatively high proportion of WBL starts in Retailing, Customer Service & Transportation; Hospitality; and Sports, Leisure & Travel.
- Starts in Business Administration, Management & Professional, and Construction are relatively low. Numbers doing apprenticeships in Health & Social Care and Public Service are low.

- Some gaps in FE provision in Construction particularly in North Hertfordshire.
- Highest numbers of learning aims in FE colleges are in ICT: Visual & Performing Arts; Health Social Care & Public Services; and Business Administration, Management & Professional

Source: ILR 02-03 and 03-04

6.4. Issues for Adult Learning

In October 2005, the LSC issued the document *Priorities for Success*, which was produced as an early warning to providers that the success in the post 16 sector in driving up recruitment, retention and achievement means that funding for 2006/07 and beyond, on current planning assumptions, will not be sustainable. The document sets out our proposals to stay within budget and continue to grow in target areas. The main impact will be on adult learning as we withdraw most funding from very short courses and increase fee contributions from 27.5% to 37.5% over the next two years, with a vision that learning costs (except Skills for Life and first full Level 2 qualifications) will be shared equally between employers, learners and the state.

Funding for adult learners will be broadly maintained, though planned provision will shift towards longer courses for those seeking skills for employability and further progression in learning. The policy will enable the roll out of the National Employer Training Programme (*Train to Gain*) and will ensure that Adult Community Learning (ACL) will remain a key element of LSC Hertfordshire's portfolio of adult learning provision, including a broad and balanced offer of **Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL)**.

Priority areas for PCDL will be Neighbourhood Learning & Family Learning, Citizenship, learning through cultural activities, learning for older people and LLDD. We will work in collaboration with LEA, FE and Voluntary Sector Providers to ensure that PCDL is integrated into a coordinated and coherent learning offer for adults at a local level. Fees policies should ensure that those who can pay for their learning are encouraged to do so while allowing providers sufficient flexibility to apply fee remission appropriately.

There is a growing migrant population in Hertfordshire which is having an impact on demand for **ESOL/Skills for Life** provision across the County. We will ensure that ESOL needs are met by appropriately trained staff. With support from the Investing in Communities programme we will commission research into the needs of migrant workers.

7. Provider Capacity

Our analysis of the supply base, compared to the demands from learners and employers, and LSC targets, suggests that our contracting/commissioning strategy needs to focus on the following factors:

7.1. Young People

- There is sufficient supply of high-quality "academic" provision leading to Level 3 in both schools and colleges, but we need to improve access to, and value for money of, such provision where collaborative arrangements are weak
- There is insufficient vocational provision available to young people who chose to stay on at school, which needs to be addressed by improved collaborative

arrangements between schools, colleges and training providers, and by the introduction of Specialist Diplomas from 2008 onwards

- There is insufficient provision at Entry level, Level 1 and Level 2. In particular, we need to ensure progression opportunities post-16 for young people with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD)
- We need to increase WBL provision in high priority sectors, and reduce low priority provision, or where full frameworks are not in place
- We need to turn around WBL provision where achievement of full frameworks is below the sector norm
- Current mainstream Entry to Employment (e2e) is sufficient to meet demand in most parts of the county. However, there are a number of “hotspots” where more provision is required, notably Broxbourne, Hemel Hempstead and Welwyn-Hatfield
- There is considerable demand for pre-e2e programmes for young people who cannot cope with a mainstream programme, and for post-e2e, to help young people who have completed e2e reach the standards required for entry to apprenticeship training. Some of this demand is being met through flexible funding, including LID and ESF.

7.2. Skills

- Increase the volume and improve the quality of provision in Construction, and if necessary bring in new providers
- Improve success rates in other poorly performing sectors that are of high priority locally, particularly those identified through the Local Area Agreement: Construction; Health & Social Care; and Hospitality
- Develop vocational provision at Level 3 through the CoVE network.
- Reduce the proportion of provision in Hairdressing & Beauty; and Visual & Performing Arts. For young people entering such provision, identify a range of career paths and offer programmes that will help them progress to sustainable employment
- Ensure that all provision is more responsive to employer needs, especially for businesses and workers in the Hemel Hempstead area following the Buncefield Oil Depot explosion in December 2005.

7.3. Adult Learning

- In FE, reduce the proportion of adult provision offering uncertificated provision, Entry Level or Level 1, and develop more provision at Level 2 and Level 3 (in local/regional priority sectors)
- Improve the capacity of the WBL sector to deliver Skills for Life provision
- Ensure that Skills for Life provision in FE is sustainable at current levels, and improve retention and achievement rates
- Increase the proportion of Skills for Life provision targeted at numeracy (mathematics) skills, and use flexible funding to support infrastructure development, teaching and learning in this area

7.4. Risks to delivery

The main risks that could significantly impact on the capacity of our provider infrastructure to deliver our priorities and targets in 2006/07 are:

- The ability of the sector to effectively engage with employers in relation to Train to Gain; Skills for Life in the workforce; the provision of Apprenticeship places; full cost adult provision; and flexible workplace provision for young people.
- The challenge of reversing the downward trend in take-up of Apprenticeships. Current experience suggests that providers are becoming more selective in taking young people on to Apprenticeship, which will drive up percentage achievement, but not necessarily support the PSA target.
- The ability of the sector to manage the implications of 'Priorities for Success', particularly the increase in fee assumptions; the greater focus on first Full Level 2 provision; and the changing pattern of publicly funded adult provision
- One college has been in serious financial difficulty, but is making rapid progress to achieve good financial health by 2007, with LSC support. The three colleges with major capital developments are at increased risk of getting into financial difficulty at some stage over the next five years, but all have well-developed plans to maintain sound financial health through to 2010/11
- The impact on performance in FE Colleges due to problems with recruitment and retention of staff in a high-employment, high-wage economy, and capacity to develop a workforce development strategy in the twelve months timeframe recommended by the Foster Review of FE.
- The current poor condition of the FE estate, and effects on recruitment and retention of both staff and learners in the period running up to completion of major capital projects in all four Hertfordshire colleges. Three of the colleges (Hertford Regional, Oaklands and West Herts) now have "in principle" LSC support for major capital developments over the next few years.

Skills Priority and Provision Analysis Matrix – Hertfordshire 2004/05

Under 19	High		Medium		Low		Total	
	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	% of Overall
Likely to contribute	13,130,422	36%	4,738,422	13%	11,261,104	31%	29,129,947	81%
	18457		2916		5578		26951	
Potential to contribute	1,286,596	4%	564,183	2%	308,936	1%	2,159,715	6%
	1196		584		258		2038	
No longer eligible for LSC funding	335,161	1%	7,023	0%	39,831	0%	382,014	1%
	931		44		67		1042	
Other (eg UFI and Unclassified)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	0		0		0		0	
Entitlement	0	0%	4,359,202	12%	0	0%	4,359,202	12%
	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A	
Totals	14,752,179	41%	9,668,830	27%	11,609,870	32%	36,030,879	100%
	20584		3544		5903		30031	

19 and Over	High		Medium		Low		Total	
	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	% of Overall
Likely to contribute	8,777,151	34%	2,596,400	10%	2,889,826	11%	14,263,377	56%
	15557		8635		3485		27677	
Potential to contribute	8,155,145	32%	1,330,535	5%	520,716	2%	10,006,396	39%
	10712		6488		2400		19600	
No longer eligible for LSC funding	917,189	4%	160,252	1%	87,803	0%	1,175,244	5%
	3996		3806		87		7889	
Other (eg UFI and Unclassified)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	0		0		0		0	
Entitlement	0	0%	118,458	0%	0	0%	118,458	0%
	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A	
Totals	17,849,485	70%	4,205,645	16%	3,508,345	14%	25,563,475	100%
	30265		18929		5972		55166	

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

l Plan

Balance and mix of provision

16-18

Four-fifths of Further Education provision for this age group contributes to the national target, with 36% in high priority sectors. This is a relatively high proportion. A further 6% has potential to contribute. Provision of education and training for this age group of learners should be primarily demand led. Whilst it is recognised that young people may be guided to sectors or areas of learning with high employment in the county, it is also accepted that the objective is to increase participation in education and training. Further education in a low priority sectors can increase transferable key skills for future employment in other sectors. Much of the work that is shown as "Entitlement" meets specific learner needs.

19 and over

More than a half of current adult provision contributes to target achievement, with one-third of the total in high priority sectors. A further third has the potential to contribute in high priority sectors. Again, these proportions are significantly better than sector norms. For adult learning, there is greater scope to influence the mix and balance of provision. We acknowledge that funding policy will present challenges to providers, who will need to shift the balance of provision to ensure that the focus on **full Level 2** and **Skills for Life** qualifications is increased, and PCDL learning is safeguarded. Despite the needs of Hertfordshire's high-skill economy, only 4% of learners in Further Education are working towards a full Level 2, compared to 5% in the region and 8% nationally. The introduction of Train to Gain and credit accumulation will help to increase these numbers, as adults are often unable to undertake full Level 2 programmes alongside full-time employment.

Sector working

FE colleges need to change the mode of learning and qualifications they offer in some curriculum areas, in particular, *Business Improvement Techniques* (BIT), which offers modern day engineering techniques; *On Site Assessment and Training* (OSAT), which offers the construction sector new modes and access to learning; *Information Technology Qualification* (ITQ), which offers a pick and mix approach to the build up of IT qualifications; and *School Support Vocational Qualification* to develop the skills of these key workers.

The key changes needed

Under Priority 1:

- **Apprenticeships:** Increase the proportion of apprentices gaining full framework qualifications from 35% in 2005/06 (estimated) to 40% in 2006/07, with the aim of achieving 50% by 2010
- **14-19 Strategy Implementation:** By 2007, all schools, colleges and work-based learning providers actively involved in collaborative activity. Increase range of provision and reduce duplication through work in Strategic Planning Areas, increase average group sizes and improve teacher: pupil ratios in sixth forms,
- **Vocational learning:** To support the Local Area Agreement, by 2007 increase volumes of vocational provision available to school students aged 14-19 by 40% compared to the 2004 level, and double volumes by 2010

Under Priority 2:

- **Train to Gain:** Establish the Train to Gain programme in Hertfordshire, contributing fully to the regional targets for 2006/07 of 7900 Level 2 qualifications and 3400 employers
- **Key Sectors:** To support the Local Area Agreement, increase the numbers of 16-18 year olds in FE (16-24 in WBL) completing/succeeding in Construction, Health & Social Care and Hospitality from 4430 to 4640 in 2006/07, with a target of 5430 by 2009. Improve FE success rates in these three sectors by at least 3 percentage points, and Apprenticeship success rates by at least 7 percentage points by 2006/07.

Under Priority 3:

- **Further Education Success Rates:** Increase success rates on 16-18 and 19+ long courses to 70% by 2007/08, with a milestone of 68% in 2006/07.
- **Further Education Capital:** Secure "In Principle" support for all four colleges, and construction work underway on at least one site by March 2007, with a view to renewal of the entire estate by 2010/11.

Under Priority 4:

- **Level 2 for Adults:** Increase the proportion of full Level 2 in Adult FE from 4% to 6% in 2006/07, and 8% in 2007/08, and increase Level 2 success rates from 74% to 80% by 2007/08
- **Skills for Life:** Sustain 2004/05 achievements, with 6000 people gaining qualifications that contribute towards the target each year to 2010

What we have delivered so far and our planned changes for 2006/07

SUMMARY OF YOUNG PEOPLE (16-18)	2004/05			
	Learners			Funding £
	Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)	Learning Aims Success Rates	
FE Total Learners	10036		65%	36,538k
<i>of which...</i>				
<i>Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications</i>	4389	2259	51%	
<i>Learners on a full Level 2 qualification</i>	2182	1646	75%	
<i>Learners on a full Level 3 qualification</i>	3794	2039	54%	
<i>Learners on 2 or more A2 qualis</i>	239	204	85%	
Discrete* activity, e.g. fully ESF, or LIDF funded provision	-	-	-	
School sixth form	13544			62,674k
Work Based Learning	12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework success rate	Funding £
WBL Total Learners	1967		31%	6,333k
<i>of which...</i>				
<i>Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications</i>	891	425	48%	
<i>Learners on an Apprenticeship</i>	1289	425	33%	
<i>Learners on an Advanced Apprenticeship</i>	491	186	38%	
Entry to Employment	Learners			
	Volumes (starts)	Numbers in learning	Av. length of stay (weeks)	Pos've destinations
All E2E	616	273	23	46%

2005/06				
Learners				Funding £
Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)	Learning Aims Success Rates		
10877		67%		41,169k
6705	3497	52%		
2371	1824	77%		
4214	2245	53%		
264	228	86%		
-	-	-		
14101				68,888k
12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AiL		Funding £
1944		35%		6,700k
890	445	50%		
1283	450	35%		
563	225	40%		
Learners				Funding £
Volumes (starts)	Numbers in learning	Av. length of stay (weeks)	Pos've destinations	
718	276	20	49%	3,094k

2006/07				
Learners				Funding £
Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)	Learning Aims Success Rates		
11340		69%		43,078k
7430	3930	53%		
2567	1965	77%		
4340	2299	53%		
297	256	86%		
-	-	-		
14600				71,414k
12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AiL		Funding £
1947		40%		6,307k
920	506	55%		
1320	528	40%		
600	258	43%		
Learners				Funding £
Volumes (starts)	Numbers in learning	Av. length of stay (weeks)	Pos've destinations	
873	319	19	49%	2,911k

Green header indicates underpinning data is complete

Red header indicates underpinning data is incomplete

SUMMARY OF ADULTS (19+)	2004/05			
	Learners		Learning Aims Success Rates	Funding £
	Volumes of learners	In-year achievement s (volume)		
FE Total Learners	37253		67%	25,735k
<i>of which...</i>				
<i>Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications</i>	2207	1479	67%	
<i>Learners on a full Level 2 qualification</i>	1577	883	56%	
<i>Learners on a full Level 3 qualification</i>	2112	949	45%	
<i>Learners on 2 or more A2 qual.</i>	51	34	67%	
Discrete* activity, eg fully ESF, or LIDF funded provision	-	-	-	
Personal & Community Dev't Learning	7892			2,946k
Work Based Learning	12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievement s (volumes)	Framework success rate	Funding £
WBL Total Learners	1250		31%	2,895k
<i>of which...</i>				
<i>Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications</i>	957	528	55%	
<i>Learners on an Apprenticeship</i>	703	238	33%	
<i>Learners on an Advanced Apprenticeship</i>	611	183	30%	
ETP / NETP	Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)		Funding £
<i>Of which...</i>				
Level 2				
Skills for Life				

2005/06			
Learners		Learning Aims Success Rates	Funding £
Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)		
30145		69%	23,119k
3352	2268	68%	
1901	1192	63%	
2417	1045	43%	
53	39	74%	
-	-	-	
11887			2,947k
12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AiL	Funding £
1218		35%	3,281k
950	523	55%	
585	205	35%	
535	187	35%	
Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)		Funding £

2006/07			
Learners		Learning Aims Success Rates	Funding £
Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)		
27345		69%	22,673k
3230	2097	65%	
2067	1334	65%	
2555	1403	55%	
64	47	73%	
-	-	-	
12793			2,952k
12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AiL	Funding £
1110		40%	3,330k
900	530	59%	
580	232	40%	
530	212	40%	
Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)		Funding £

Budgets	FE	WBL	E2E	SSF	ACL	ETP/NETP	Development Funding	Capital	Administration	Other Programme Budgets
2004/05	63448k	9228k	3538k	62674k	2699k	0	8914k	726k	2125k	
2005/06	64288k	9981k	3094k	68888k	2946k	0	5316k	408k	1949k	
2006/07	65751k	9637k	2911k	71414k	2652k					

Key actions for 2006/07

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

Priority	Action	Measure of Success
1.1	Achieve Level 2 at 19 target	11,000 young people aged 19 qualified to at least Level 2 (76%) by 2006
1.2	Implement the Learner Entitlement framework, and produce a local area prospectus	<p>1.2.1 First phase of area plans through Strategic Area Partnership groups implemented from Sept 2006.</p> <p>1.2.2 Area prospectus published in line with national guidance by December 2006</p> <p>1.2.3 Reduced duplication and increased range of provision, including work on Specialist Diplomas</p>
1.3	Encourage collaboration and choice	<p>1.3.1 Volumes and levels of vocational provision available to students aged 14-19 increased by 40% compared to 2004.</p> <p>1.3.2 New Increased Flexibility Programme cohort, with 1400 students aged 14-16, and 85% achieving a vocational qualification</p> <p>1.3.3 90 young people aged 14-16 on Young Apprenticeship programmes</p>
1.4	Work with local area partnerships (e.g. Children's Trusts)	LSC activities contribute and add value to the Hertfordshire Children's Trust Partnership
1.5	Create a network of state of the art facilities	All four colleges with "In Principle" support for major re-development that helps deliver the Hertfordshire 14-19 strategy
1.6	Increase employer involvement in curriculum development, apprenticeships and work placements	<p>1.6.1 12,600 young people in Year 10 or 11 offered a minimum of two weeks' work experience</p> <p>1.6.2 Support the new Education Business Link Organisation to develop strong employer representation and links</p>
1.7	Work with School Improvement Partners to raise quality	81 points per entry for AS/A2 Level and equivalent in school sixth forms (currently 79.9)
1.8	Increase apprenticeship framework achievement (especially in sectors	<p>1.8.1. 800 frameworks achieved (40%) based on 2000 leavers in 2006/07</p> <p>1.8.2 Construction achievement rate improved from 19% to 28%, Health & Social Care from 33% to 40%, and Hospitality from 27% to</p>

	where completions are low)	35%. 1.8.3. Develop pre-NVQ 2/Programme Led Pathways to help young people prepare for Apprenticeships
1.9	Reduce NEET through appropriate provision and support (including EMA) and reduce employment without training	1.9.1 NEET group reduced to 4.2% by Nov 2006 (Connexions target). 1.9.2 Entry to Employment (e2e) programme, positive progression rate of 49%, with 890 starts. 1.9.3 150 additional places on pre-apprenticeship programmes through ESF and flexible funds 1.9.4 Proportion of 16-17 employed with no training reduced to 13% by November 2006 (14% in Nov 2005)
1.10	Establish a coherent range of qualifications below Level 2 (foundation tier)	Foundation Tier proposals included in all Strategic Area Partnership plans
1.11	Recognise the diverse needs of individual learners	1.11.1 Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs) developed at regional level 1.11.2 proportion of women in Construction and Engineering increased by 1 percentage point (currently 1%), and of men in Business Administration and Health & Social Care from 18% to 20% 1.11.3 Proportion of minority ethnic learners on WBL increased from 11% to 12% focusing on priority sectors that have identified significant recruitment issues
1.12	Increase capacity to deliver learning to LLDD	20 learners supported in-county who would previously have required out-of-county placements

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

Priority	Action	Measure of Success
2.1	Roll out National Employer Training Programme (Train to Gain) from August 2006	Contribute to the regional target of 7912 Level 2 qualifications delivered to employees from August 2006, and 804 Skills for Life qualifications
2.2	Develop an impartial skills brokerage service, integrated with wider business support services	Skills brokers supply leads for Train to Gain from 3491 employers across the region
2.3	Work with Regional Skills Partnerships (particularly on Level 3 and 4 learning)	Enhanced strategic relationships with Regional Skills Partnership organisations
2.4	Encourage integrated training programmes through accredited providers	2 additional Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) at Hertford Regional College and North Hertfordshire College with full CoVE status
2.5	Meet priorities identified in Sector Skills Agreements	Provision in identified key sectors increased and improved
2.6	Deliver high quality Information, Advice and Guidance to adults	Deliver target number of advice sessions through <i>nextstep</i> for adults in priority groups (those without a first Level 2 qualification)
2.7	Protect resource for Personal or Community Development Learning (PCDL)	Improved ACL and associated provision through the Post-Inspection Action Plan, including: 2.7.1 7721 PCDL opportunities 2.7.2 1217 "First Steps" learning opportunities
2.8	Ensure tailored provision for LLDD	Increase participation in learning of people with learning difficulties and disabilities in line with regional LLDD strategy

3. Transform the learning and skills sector through agenda for change

Priority	Action	Measure of Success
3.1	Trial a simplified funding methodology and allocations process	Funding allocated to mainstream providers by May 2006 and March 2007
3.2	Buy provision that truly meets our priorities	Shift in the balance of provision so that it more closely reflects skills needs and offers high quality (see page 16)
3.3	Challenge and withdraw from poor performance, and develop a differentiated approach to improvement planning	Withdraw from provision that is assessed as "unsatisfactory" on more than one inspection.
3.4	Continue to improve the quality of Further Education provision	Success rates on 16-18 and 19+ long courses increased to 68%
3.5	Embed business excellence through benchmarking and value for money measures	Appropriate New Measures of Success (NMoS) for all learning provision implemented
3.6	Develop a new standard that recognises excellence in delivery of workforce development	Colleges and providers with plans in place to meet the new "Quality Mark" standard
3.7	Develop world-class accommodation through regional capital investment strategies	"In Principle" support for all four colleges, and construction work underway on at least one site
3.8	Generate increased levels of income by maximising opportunities for business development alongside Train to Gain	Fee income in FE increased from £3.9m in 2004/05 to £5.8m in 2006/07

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

Priority	Action	Measure of Success
4.1	Align plans and resources of all partners who are addressing skills needs regionally	Local provision that better meets skills needs (see also 3.2)
4.2	Work through Local Area Agreements to contribute to the social and economic wellbeing of local communities	Active members of "Hertfordshire Forward", and contribute effectively to LAA targets for skills and learning
4.3	Fully roll out the Level 2 entitlement	Proportion of adults gaining a full Level 2 through FE/WBL increased by 20% Proportion of Level 2 provided by Colleges for Adults to increase from 4% to 6%
4.4	Continue to prioritise Skills for Life learning	6000 adults gain a qualification that counts towards the target
4.5	Work with Jobcentre Plus to increase referrals to appropriate provision	Increased referrals from JC+ to WBL and IAG services
4.6	Provide Skills for Life and ESOL provision for Jobcentre Plus customers	Deliver 300 assessments and 100 Skills for Life qualifications to JC+ clients, contributing to Hertfordshire target of 6000
4.7	Assume responsibility for offenders' learning and skills	Support the regional team in the delivery of OLASS targets
4.8	Use ESF and flexible funds to support provision for non-traditional learners and those working in priority sectors	4.8.1 Round 5 projects progressing successfully 4.8.2 Project closure of Round 4 projects within 15% of profile 4.8.3 All match /admin. match fully identified

5. Improve the skills of workers who are delivering public services

Priority	Action	Measure of Success
5.1	Focus on public sector workers without a first Level 2	Contribute to regional target of 1625 school support staff gaining a qualification through Train to Gain
5.2	Focus on higher level skills needs as part of the NETP offer	20% of "Train to Gain" take-up from the public sector
5.3	Increase the number of apprenticeships in the public sector	At least 10% of local apprenticeships are public sector based
5.4	Work with colleges and providers to ensure responsiveness to public sector needs	See 5.1 – 5.3 above.
5.5	Actively support delivery for those working with children	<p>5.5.1 Chair Hertfordshire Children's Trust Partnership sub-group on workforce development in the childcare sector</p> <p>5.5.2 Increase proportion of NVQs in childcare delivered through FE/WBL</p> <p>5.5.3 Support the development of the workforce in Children's Centres</p>

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

Priority	Action	Measure of Success
6.1	Provide first class leadership across the whole of the LSC	Outcomes from <i>agenda for change</i> Theme 7 implemented
6.2	Develop the skills of LSC staff to improve our capacity to work productively with providers and partners	Hertfordshire partnership teams with the skills and capabilities to deliver the LSC agenda established
6.3	Embed equality and diversity in all that we do	Race Equality Scheme embedded locally
6.4	Use transparent ways of working, including publication of clear indicators of national, regional and local performance	Clear publications and web materials, and active response to complaints and requests for information
6.5	Review business processes to reduce bureaucracy and increase efficiency	Timely actions in support of the 2006/07 Business Cycle

Our Delivery Resources

1. Partnership Working

We recognise that we can only deliver our agenda with the proactive engagement and support of partners. We have built secure and effective relationships with key partners such as CSF, Connexions, Business Link and Jobcentre Plus, evidenced by joint plans and alignment of priorities. A recent audit shows that LSC staff are members of over 100 external groups, making valuable inputs to the development and implementation of strategies and actions that help to drive forward the learning and skills agenda in the county. Significant partnerships include:

Priority 1, 14-19: The LSC chairs the 14-19 Strategic Partnership Group, comprising partners and provider representatives, which oversees the 14-19 strategy and planning framework. This is currently steering the 14-19 Action Plan, which went to DfES on 19th December 2005 following the Area Wide Inspection in May 2005. With CSF we have developed seven Strategic Area Partnerships, covering the whole of Hertfordshire, whose role will be to ensure delivery of the 14-19 learner entitlement, and publish a prospectus for their area. We are closely involved with CSF in taking forward the “Every Child Matters” agenda, contributing to the development of Children’s Trust arrangements, including membership and chairmanship of a number of sub-committees. LSC staff also chair the Connexions Policy and Planning sub-group and the Increasing Flexibility steering group

Priority 2, Adults and Skills: The LSC manages the contract for the Hertfordshire Adult Learning Partnership (HALP), working with them to develop strategy for adult learning in the county, and ensuring delivery of community learning through the 10 Local Learning Forums. With Business Link we have developed and provide the secretariat for the Hertfordshire Employer Skills Network (HESN), and for Sector Employer Groups (SEGs) covering 5 key sectors. We have recently established the Skills for Life strategic group, chaired by a College vice-principal.

Priority 3, Provider Networks: Our links with provider groups include bi-monthly meetings with College Principals and the University; the Work-based Learning provider network; and the Hertfordshire Associations of Secondary School Heads (HASSH). To this, we have added bi-annual “Away-Days” where the senior management teams of the colleges, the University and the LSC meet to exchange views on strategic issues. These enable us to deliver tangible outcomes in support of the local implementation of 14-19 Reforms, Skill Strategy and Priorities for Success. LSC has had “observer” status on FE Boards of Corporation whilst they have been in Ofsted categories.

Priority 4, Economic Development: The context for regional and sub regional partnership is provided by the Regional Skills and Competitive Partnership (RSCP), and our involvement in Hertfordshire Prosperity, the sub-regional economic partnership (SREP). Our partnership with Jobcentre Plus has been strengthened by a secondment from Jobcentre Plus to the LSC. We work with other LLSCs through the Regional Strategic Implementation Groups (SIGs). On ESF, we are members of the Local Management Group, and regional groups such

as the Objective 3 Operational Group (O3OG). LSC Hertfordshire is leading on regional ESF work, including an ESF Olympic bid with the South-East and London regions.

2. Contribution of the local Non Executive

Council Members play a key role in the development of the Annual Plan through their oversight of its development in Council Meetings and the monitoring of its achievement through periodic performance reports. Council members wish to develop the role they play in the communication and dissemination of our strategies and plans at events and through their own networks. They play a proactive role in key forums, including:

- East of England Regional Development Agency
- National Audit Committee
- National Capital Committee
- National Young People's Committee
- Hertfordshire Employer Skills Forum

In addition to the detailed information and guidance provided to Council Members in Council Papers, every Council Meeting incorporates both a Chairman's Report and an Executive Director's Report to ensure that Council Members are apprised of emerging learning and skills matters.

We are discussing the establishment of bi-annual meetings between FE Chairs of Corporation and LSC Council members.

3. Equality and Diversity

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 (due to come into effect in 2006). Our actions and activities which are covered in this plan will be underpinned by and reflect the Council's Race Equality Scheme.

Progress against local Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs)

EDIM 1 - Increase participation yearly for male learners aged 19+ to reduce the gap between male and female learners in FE.

The overall difference in participation rates for male and female learners over three academic years 2001/02, 2002/03 and 2003/04 was 9%. In the 19+ age group, the number of male starts was less than half the 38,000 female starts.

EDIM 2 - Increase success rates for male learners and reduce the 9% gap between male and female learners to less than 5%.

In FE provision for the 16-18 age groups, female learners in the 2003-04 academic years achieve higher success rates at Level 1 (6%), Level 2 (4%) and Level 3 (5%). Taking all levels together, the gender difference is 5% overall. In the 19+ age group, the gender differences in success rates become more significant. Female learners continue to achieve higher success rates than male learners ranging from 5% difference at Level 1 to a 9% difference at Level 3.

EDIM 3 - Increase female representation on Advanced Apprenticeships to represent more than a quarter of all advanced apprentices.

In Hertfordshire WBL provision for 2004/05, female learners represent 43% of all learners on WBL programmes including apprentices and advanced apprentices. However, the gender difference increases significantly at the Advanced Apprenticeship level where only a quarter are female.

EDIM 4 - Increase success rates for disabled learners on WBL provision to bring their success rate closer to the rate achieved by other people.

The success rate for leavers from Hertfordshire's WBL provision in 2004/05 was 47%. Disabled people (268) have a 43% success rate. Ethnic minority people form a small part of this cohort with 101 persons and have a 52% success rate.

Work is currently underway to produce a set of Equality and Diversity Impact Measures for the East of England Region for 06/07. Equality and Diversity management information has already been produced, which will be analysed in January 2006. At a local level, research is being carried out to establish base-line information and work with providers will commence in spring 2006 to agree individual EDIMs for 06/07 which are aligned to regional and local targets.

The table below shows the LSC Hertfordshire staff profile in October 2005, compared to local targets. Plans for re-organisation under *agenda for change* Theme 7 means this profile is likely to change radically during 2006/07.

	B3+ Females	B1 Male	All BME	B3+ BME	Disabled
Actual	60.00%	9.09%	6.25%	3.33%	2.08%
Target	51.00%	12.00%	6.74%	6.74%	6.00%

4. Offender Learning

We will continue to develop existing community provision within the regional Offender Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) framework as captured in the Education, Training and Employment (ETE) Pathway Delivery Plan produced in March 2006 as part of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) Reducing Re-offending Delivery Plan.

Our work with the Probation Service has been successful in achieving its Skills for Life targets. Current plans will be rolled forward to August 2006, when new arrangements will go live. A major focus will be ensuring that colleges make sufficient appropriate provision available for this client group. We shall develop provision at the Mount Prison through our sub-regional contract with LSC Essex.

Following the introduction of OLASS from 31st July 2006, planning for 2006/07 will focus on increasing participation and achievement in education and training for offenders in custody and the community, and redesigning provision to support this.

5. Learners with Learning Difficulties and / or Disabilities (LLDD)

The recommendations in the National Review (*Through Inclusion to Excellence*) and our findings from the **Improving Choice Pathfinder** will drive our programme for transforming the education and training for LLDD. The overarching

recommendation of review is that the LSC should develop provision for LLDD which is of high quality, learner centred and cost effective. We will develop inclusive provision in line with Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements and create opportunities for those young people who require a level of support above that currently available.

Our objectives are to:

- Increase participation in FE for learners with high support needs and with complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Extend of local provision to give learners choice around whether to go to out-of-County Specialist Colleges or remain in their home area
- Create a multi-agency assessment framework which can be utilised across all providers (education, health and therapeutic support)
- Implement a county-wide multi-agency staff development programme for those working with learners with high support needs
- Increase life long learning, work experience, training, employment and social activities for learners with high support needs

6. Health and Safety

The health and safety of learners is a fundamental value for the Learning and Skills Council. We believe that learners are entitled to learning 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 Council 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.

7. Sustainable Development

The LSC published its strategy for sustainable development (SD), *From Here to Sustainability*, in September 2005. The LSC’s vision is that the learning and skills sector will proactively commit and contribute to sustainable development through its management of resources, the learning opportunities it delivers and its engagement with communities. In particular, by 2007 we will expect providers to have carried out a baseline audit of current SD activity, agreed on guiding principles and approaches, and agreed long-term milestones to 2020 and beyond.

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Publication reference: LSC-P-NAT-060341