

Suffolk 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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Part 1: Our Vision

Foreword

While we are preparing this annual plan for 2006-07, the LSC, through *agenda for change*, is transforming the way we engage with the education sector. In the future we will take a stronger lead within the sector.

Although we are a national organisation with a regional administration structure, we make our biggest difference working locally. Local activity in the future will have a continued emphasis on relationship management and partnership working.

Through all the change we need to concentrate on addressing our vision and the priorities we have identified for Suffolk. There is clear evidence that we are continuing to make good progress in raising skills and qualification levels and we are particularly proud of the following achievements.

- Our continued development of the 14-19 agenda, in particular the partnerships we have established between schools, colleges and other providers.
- Raising the profile of vocational learning in schools through our Increased Flexibility Programme and ESF funded GOALS projects.
- The improved performance on Skills for Life with higher numbers engaged in learning and higher numbers achieving accreditation.
- The amount of ESF funding awarded to the county has enabled us to have a range of innovative projects to support our key priorities and targets.

Our vision

Our vision is that all people living in Suffolk can access high quality and flexible learning so that they can acquire the skills and knowledge needed to fulfil their potential at work, participate in local communities, and enjoy personal development.

In order for people to benefit from economic growth, regeneration and new business opportunities, and contribute to business and personal success, they need the skills to allow them to participate. We will help them do this, and achieve our vision, by making sure there is sufficient high-quality learning in the county that is flexible and accessible, and is valued by employers and individuals. In 2006/07 we will focus on:

- 1) Shaping the future of education for young people in Suffolk by improving the breadth and choice of learning for all 14 to 19 year olds.
- 2) Increasing the proportion of young people in Suffolk aged 16 to 18 who participate in learning, and who achieve qualifications.
- 3) Working with Connexions Suffolk to reduce the number of young people aged 16 to 18 who are not in education, employment or training (the NEET group).
- 4) Improving Suffolk's economic vitality by supporting workforce development, particularly at levels 2 and 3, and with particular reference to our priority sectors: construction, engineering, food and drink manufacturing, health and social care, hospitality and tourism, and logistics.

- 5) Increasing the number of people studying for, and achieving, a Skills for Life qualification. We will also work to improve the proportion of people who take part in learning and go on to achieve a qualification.
- 6) Working with partners to ensure that Suffolk learners who have completed a level 3 course can progress seamlessly to continue their education at University Campus Suffolk.

We are actively involved in the development of the University Campus Suffolk (UCS) and will continue to work with the wider partnership to support and promote the new Education Quarter in Ipswich. This area of the Ipswich Waterfront will be home to the UCS and the new Suffolk College, creating an exciting and vibrant education community in a formerly run-down area. It will also form a key element of our priority to encourage more young people to progress into higher education.

Our work is highly dependent on relationship building. It will be critical that, through the transition to the new organisation, we maintain the strong working relationships we have at the moment and manage any 'handover' issues smoothly and seamlessly.

Tony Preston
Chairman

Nick Foster
Executive Director

Our national 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 to 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.

Our regional priorities for the East of England

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 			
In addition, the following sectors have been identified as important both to certain elements of the Regional Economic Strategy and partners:			
<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 the relevance of learning for young people and raise the level of attainment	a. 53,000 19 year olds qualified to level 2 by 2008 b. 132,500 16 to 18 year-olds in structured learning by 2007 c. Jointly produce with partners area prospectuses on all learning opportunities for the information of young people and that of 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 Further Education 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 and 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 N1c 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 to 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 priority sector c. Increase provision and align partner funding to support the achievement of:	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 – 3,300 completions
		Business improvement techniques (BIT) engineering		L2 – 127 L3 – 40 completions
		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 level 2 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 East of England Regional Assembly (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 CoVEs and Skills Academies across the region	Regional intelligence centre (RIC) EoESCP CoVEs Skills Academies SSCs

In Suffolk, 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 can be found in the key actions section of this plan.

Suffolk's contribution to the national targets

Under priority 1, for young people

- increase the proportion of 19 year-olds who achieve at least level 2 by three 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.

In Suffolk to meet the target we need 180 more young people to gain a level 2 qualification in 2005/2006 compared to 2004/2005, and a further 200 in 2006/07 and 220 in 2007/2008.

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 qualification 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. (N.B. excludes NES and NETP elements.) In addition, the roll-out of the National Employer Training Programme will increase the LSC's contribution to this target.

In Suffolk, we plan to deliver 1,200 full level 2 achievements through further education and work-based learning in 2006/07 – that is an increase of 160 compared to 2005/06. In addition, we will also deliver [insert figure] 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.

In Suffolk, in 2006/07, this means 4,200 learners to achieve a Skills for Life qualification.

Underpinning priorities 1 and 2, for Apprenticeships

- the LSC has agreed a new performance indicator for Apprenticeships. The aim is for 75 per cent more young people to complete their Apprenticeship in 2007/08, compared to 2002/03.

Nationally we aim to raise the number of framework completions to 70,000 in 2006/07 to support the achievement of level 2 and level 3 qualification targets.

In Suffolk we aim to raise the number of framework completions (all ages) to 1,161 (a 4 per cent increase) in 2006/07.

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

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.

Part 2: Suffolk – a context for delivery

Background information

Geography and demographics

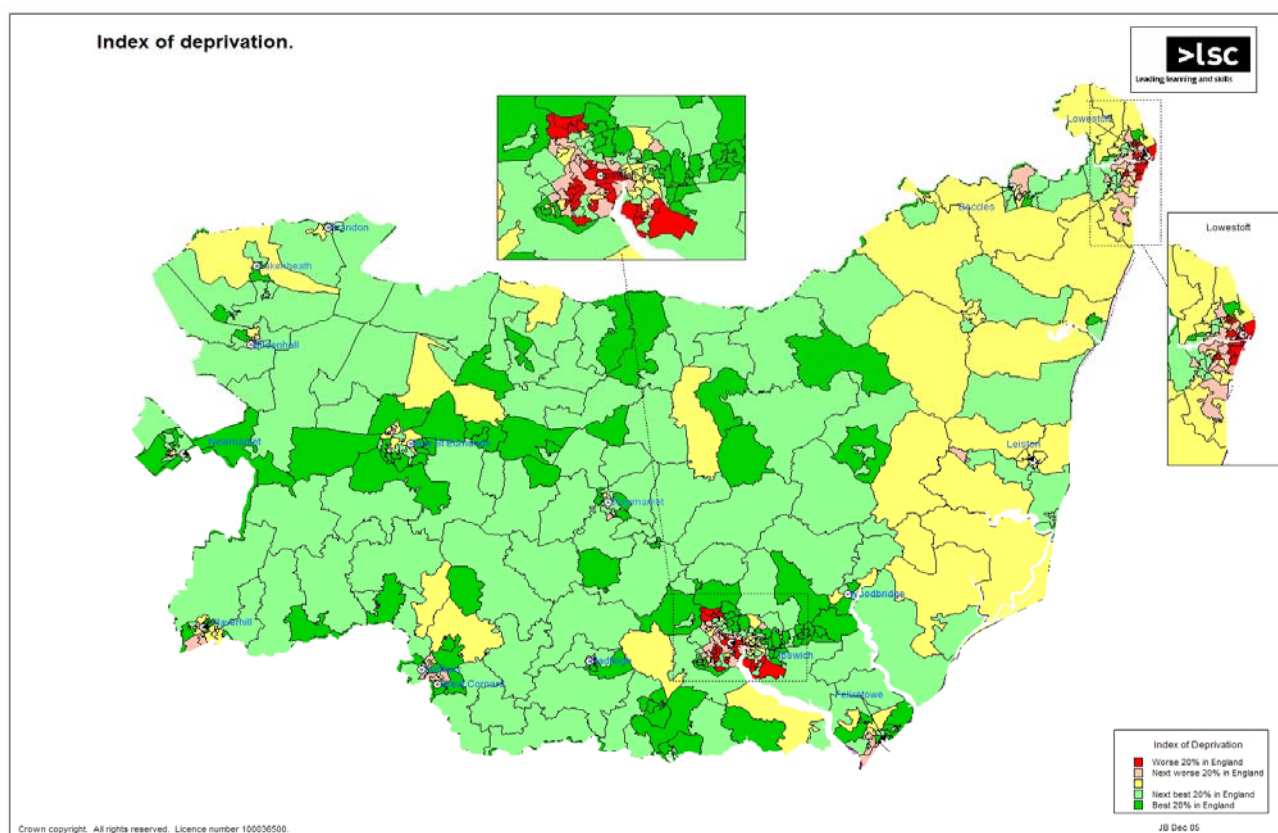
Suffolk is a largely rural area with a population of around 670,000. It is the second least densely populated county (after Norfolk) in the East of England and, at less than 0.5% a year, has the slowest growth rate. Growth is mostly due to people moving into the county. About 42% of people in Suffolk live in rural communities. Approximately 86% of the county's parishes have a population smaller than 1,000; over a quarter have populations smaller than 100. Lack of or poor public transport is a significant problem for many people who want to access public services such as education, employment and training.

There is a higher than average number of residents aged over 50 (37% compared to 33% nationally) and fewer young people aged 20 to 49 living in Suffolk compared to the national average (38% compared to 42% in the rest of England).

Wealth and deprivation

Suffolk is generally perceived as a prosperous county, but there are areas of relatively high deprivation. In terms of income and employment, two wards in Forest Heath rank as the least deprived in England. Five wards in Ipswich are among the 1% most deprived areas in England in terms of education, skills and training.

The map below shows in red the areas of multiple deprivation in the county that are among the 20% most deprived wards in England.



The economy

Suffolk has a higher than average proportion of people working in sectors that pay below-average wages, and a high proportion of employment (over twice the UK average) in sectors that have a poor image. In rural Suffolk, 23% of jobs are in declining sectors compared with 8% in the East of England. No single sector predominates, but there is a relatively high dependence on primary production and manufacturing – particularly food and drink manufacture. There is a higher than average proportion of employment in small businesses in Suffolk. Over 62% of companies employ fewer than 50 people, compared to 46% nationally. Less than a quarter of employment is in large companies (200+ employees) compared to nearly a third, nationally. The average unemployment rate in Suffolk in November 2005 was 1.7%, but as high as 3.3% in Waveney and 2.9% in Ipswich, and as low as 1% in Bury St Edmunds. However, there are wards in Lowestoft in which total unemployment is over 8%, and male unemployment is between 11% and 12%.

In 2002/03, in Suffolk, 52% of employees received training paid for by their employer compared with 57% in the East of England and 56% in the UK. With the exception of the health and social care sector (68%) and education (57%) less than one in five employers chose FE colleges to train their staff.

The most significant factor in employment over the next few years is the number of major construction projects planned for Suffolk including SnOasis, Felixstowe docks expansion, Ipswich Waterfront, Suffolk College and the University Campus Suffolk, and the decommissioning of Sizewell A power station.

The 2012 Olympics is forecast to have a number of impacts on Suffolk, from increased tourism, greater interest in and take-up of sports and leisure activities, to a greater demand for skilled workers in the craft trades. Skills shortages and gaps in a number of sectors are likely to become more acute as local employers compete for skilled staff against larger projects offering better-paid opportunities in London.

The learning infrastructure

In Suffolk there are:

- 3 colleges of general further education
- 1 college of agriculture and horticulture (which also delivers general FE)
- 9 centres of vocational excellence (CoVE)
- 17 work-based learning providers (plus the FE colleges)
- Suffolk County Council (Basic Skills Unit)
- 38 secondary schools, 30 of which have sixth forms
- 11 independent schools with secondary phase education
- 4 pupil referral units
- 5 prisons

As at January 2006, there are 9¹ CoVEs in Suffolk which are either fully approved or in development. Each corresponds to one or more of our priority skill sectors (management and ICT skills being required across all sectors) and will contribute to raising skills levels and eliminating skills gaps in these areas.

The Suffolk plan for new models of learning '*Expanding Horizons 14-19: Vision into Reality*' was published in March 2006. The plan sets out the shared ambitions of Suffolk County Council and the LSC for the development of 14-19 provision across the county.

¹ There is currently one CoVE in each of: logistics; construction; health and social care; ICT; and management. There are two CoVEs in each of: engineering; food manufacturing.

Suffolk is one of the few counties in England without a university. The University of Essex and the University of East Anglia (UEA) are collaborating with partner colleges to establish University Campus Suffolk (UCS) which will offer a professionally and vocationally-relevant curriculum. It will open in 2008 in the new Education Quarter in Ipswich. We are fully committed to and involved with the development.

Capital plans

A significant proportion (over 75%) of the buildings and facilities in our three largest colleges has been assessed as either not fit for purpose, or only just fit for purpose. While the majority of it is DDA compliant, there is still a substantial amount that needs to be brought up to standard.

We have a detailed long-term capital plan for the county which describes the work that needs to be done at each of the colleges to bring them up to standard. The largest project is the demolition and rebuilding of Suffolk College, but there is substantial work planned in all four colleges. There are also plans for new 14-19 vocational centres and a proposal for a 16-19 centre. The potential cost of modernising the estate, alongside other identified capital projects, is £140.4 million over the next five to ten years.

The cost of the work will be met from a variety of sources, including sales of surplus or redundant land and buildings, providers borrowing and using their reserves, private sector investment and LSC capital funding. Other sources of funding such as employers, HEFCE and EEDA may contribute sums to projects where we share objectives.

Key learning and skills issues – introduction

This section contains a summary of the main learning and skills needs and issues identified in the county Strategic Area Review, Suffolk 14-19 Area Wide Inspection (2003) and recent analysis as part of the LSC Business Cycle.

Young people – target position

16-18 participation

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06 Planned
FE	4,906	5,184	5,372	6,200	6,261
Work-based learning*	2,158	2,018	1,802	1,961	2,026
Sub-total	7,064	7,202	7,174	8,161	8,287
Schools	6,052	5,980	6,025	6,185	6,573
Total	13,116	13,182	13,199	14,346	14,860

* Excludes E2E

Source: LSC data – Actuals FO5, WBL pd12, PLASC Planned, Annex A/AMPS

Level 2 at 19 cohort analysis

2004/05 (actual)	FE		WBL		Total	
	No	% of all	No	% of all	No	% of all
16-18 all learners	6008		1758		7766	
16-18 full level 2 learners	1281	21.3%	1308	74.4%	2589	33.3%
16-18 full level 2 achievements	845	14.1%	535	30.4%	1380	17.8%
2005/06 (planned)						
16-18 all learners	6261		2031		8292	
16-18 full level 2 learners	1520	24.3%	1514	74.5%	2822	34.0%
16-18 full level 2 achievements	1018	16.3%	568	28.0%	1586	19.1%
2006/07 (planned)						
16-18 all learners	6458		1980		8438	
16-18 full level 2 learners	1773	27.4%	1476	74.5%	3249	38.5%
16-18 full level 2 achievements	1223	18.9%	587	29.6%	1810	34.1%

Level 2 at 19

	Number of learners who have reached the level 2 threshold by age 16 (i.e. by the end of 2000-01)	Number of learners who have reached the level 2 threshold by age 17 (i.e. by the end of 2001-02)	Number of learners who have reached the level 2 threshold by age 18 (i.e. by the end of 2002-03)	Number of learners who have reached the level 2 threshold by age 19 (i.e. by the end of 2003-04)
Suffolk	4,522	5,049	5,432	5,669
Percentage of cohort	56%	62%	67%	70%

LSC matched data set 2004

Young people (16-18) in Suffolk leaving Entry to Employment (2004/05)

No of leavers	Leavers into positive destinations	% of leavers into positive destinations
524	197	38%

Source: LSC data – WBL pd12

Young people (16-18) in Suffolk not in employment, education or training (NEET)

	Nov 2004 %	Nov 2004 volume	Nov 2005 %	Nov 2005 volume
NEET Suffolk	7.8%	1,562	8.2%	1,683
Not known Suffolk	5.1%	1,077	4.7%	1,018
NEET East of England*	6.5%	11,194		
Not known East of England*	5.7%	10,424		

* November 2005 regional data not currently available

Source: Suffolk Connexions

Success rates (age 16-18)

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
FE All programmes		62%	60%	68%
Long programmes		60%	57%	66%
Short programmes		76%	79%	83%
WBL (all-age) NVQ		46%	50%	57%
Full framework		33%	37%	47%

Source: LSC data FO5, WBL pd12

Supply of learning for young people

The 2003 Suffolk 14-19 Area Wide Inspection report identified a number of weaknesses linked to education in the county.

- Analysis of A-level performance showed that students tend to do less well in small sixth forms than in larger ones.
- The lack of a strategic, coordinated approach to planning provision and consideration of the implications for facilities and infrastructure.
- Although Increased Flexibility, and other projects, helped introduce vocational training for students aged under 16, funding and travel issues could inhibit development of new provision and jeopardize existing successful provision.
- Although almost half of Suffolk 18 year-olds go into higher education every year (compared with the national average of 43%) about 85% of them leave Suffolk to continue their education elsewhere.

Progress has been made in the past couple of years to address the issues raised in the inspection. We set up thirteen 14-19 locality planning groups with membership from all the learning providers in the area. Locality groups reported their findings and recommendations to the 14-19 Strategy Group in December 2005. These have been taken forward in the Suffolk plan for new models of learning.

The challenges for the future are to:

- increase post-16 participation
- raise achievements pre- and post-16 with particular focus on enabling more young people to achieve qualifications at level 2, and raising the achievement rate at level 3
- give access to all 14 to 16 year-olds across the ability range to an applied / vocational course of their choice as part of their overall programme of study
- develop progression pathways that complement the new 14-19 curriculum offer
- increase the proportion of young people who progress to higher education.

The rural nature of the county means some students have restricted curriculum choices at 14-16 and post-16. The 14-19 locality planning groups in rural areas are coming forward with a range of proposals to address this including joint curriculum planning and 14-19 Vocational Centres, run collaboratively by learning providers to provide new opportunities for young people.

In south-west Ipswich there are limited progression routes to post-16 integrated, general and applied learning programmes, and this is likely to be an area of significant growth as the new 14-19 curriculum becomes more established. This is coupled with restricted choice and relatively poor achievement at A-level in the school sixth forms that serve the south west of the town. We will follow the LSC Guidance for 16-19 Competitions to seek a solution.

Success rates in FE and work-based learning have been improving year on year, though there are variances among providers and between colleges. We are moving more provision away from foundation and level 1 to that which contributes to national targets and regional sector priorities. This shift in emphasis will ensure increased participation at level 2, and increase number of full level 2 achievements.

Demand for learning by young people

Participation at age 16 to 18 in Suffolk has risen over the past three years, in absolute terms and as a percentage of the cohort. Although the percentage increases look small, the number of young people aged 16 to 18 living in the county increased by 6% between 2001/02 and 2004/05 which masks the scale of the improvement. Over a thousand more young people were in LSC-funded learning in 2005 compared with two or three years ago.

There has been consistent growth in participation in FE and sixth forms in the last three years. By contrast, participation in WBL has declined. In dialogue with local employers we know that there are a number of practical difficulties for small employers (80% of Suffolk companies) in taking on an apprentice. We will use discretionary funds to pilot collaborative initiatives between groups of employers and training providers to make taking on an apprentice a realistic proposition for small employers.

Although there has been a steady increase in demand from young people in Suffolk who wish to continue in education and training post-16, resulting from the increased size of the cohort, the number *not* in education, employment or training (NEET) has stayed relatively static over the years. From local Connexions data, in November 2005, there were over 1,680 young people in Suffolk in NEET – 120 more than this time in 2004.

One of the key programmes available to the NEET group is Entry to Employment (E2E). We are aware of the need to improve the percentage of young people who progress from E2E to positive destinations such as FE, WBL or employment. We are developing action plans with our providers to address this as well as learning from other LLSCs who are more successful in this area.

Adults – target position

Adult learner numbers

	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05 actual
FE participation	28,163	30,756	28,020
WBL participation	1,536	1,597	1,378
Level 2 (FE & WBL only)	5,589	6,535	7,197
Level 3 (FE & WBL only)	4,991	5,021	4,888

Source: LSC data, FO5, WBL pd12

Suffolk position against Skills for Life targets

	Total to 2004	Achievements 2004 to Sept 2005	Target for 2007	% of target achieved
National	746,987	331,610	1,513,300	71%
East of England	63,645	29,216	158,346	59%
Suffolk	7,460	4,490	11,206	64%

Source: LSC data FO5 Skills for Life data release Sept 05

Success rates (age 19+)

	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
FE All programmes		74%	67%	72%
Long programmes		52%	52%	61%
Short programmes		91%	86%	88%
Skills for Life (all-ages) Number	1248	1635	3399	4490
Percentage against milestone	37%	49%	102%	120%

Source: LSC data FO5 Skills for Life data release Sept 05

Supply issues – adults

Priorities for Success

In October 2005, the LSC issued the document *Priorities for Success*. The main impact will be on adult learning as we withdraw most funding from very short courses and increase fee contributions 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 shift towards longer courses for those seeking skills for employability and further progression in learning. This will enable the roll-out of Train to Gain and ensure that adult learning, including PCDL, remains within our adult learning provision.

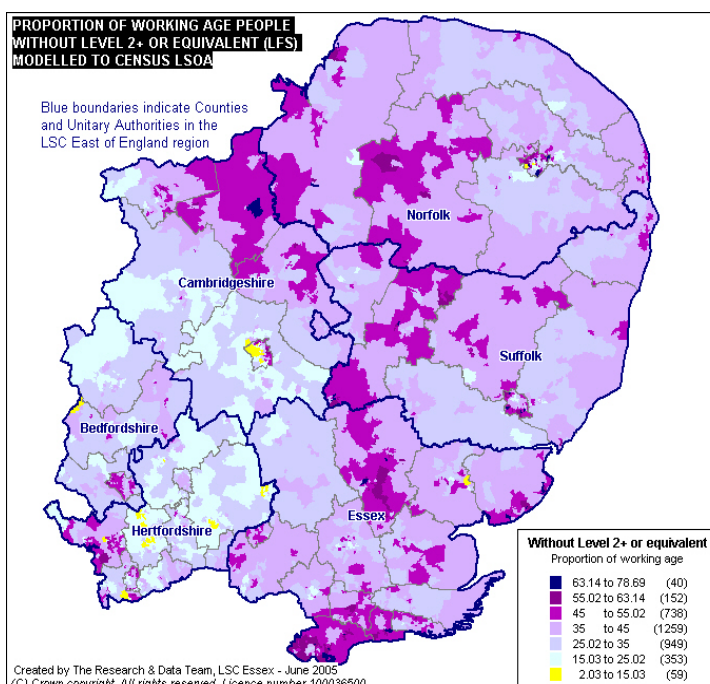
This will challenge the supply side in Suffolk where the ratio of youth and adult funding is already heavily weighted towards 16-18 provision. A further challenge for the FE sector will be to increase the proportion of 19+ provision that counts towards the key LSC targets of Skills for Life and first full level 2 qualifications.

Achievement of the PSA Skills for Life target could be affected by lack of capacity in the learning sector to deliver the numbers needed. To address this, the number of Skills for Life providers in the county must increase.

Demand issues – adults

Level 2

The most challenging target for Suffolk in 2006/07 will be to deliver one of the ambitions of the 2005 Skills White Paper: to give all adults an entitlement to training for a full level 2 qualification. About 44% of people (aged 16 to 74) living in Suffolk do not have a qualification at level 2 (compared with 39% in the East of England and the UK) and 30% of people of working age do not have any qualification at all (compared to 23% in the East of England and 24% in the UK). Part of this low achievement can be accounted for by the loss from the county of so many of the best qualified young people at age 18 and 19. However, lack of aspiration, and limited career opportunities in the county at level 3, mean there is a relatively low level of motivation to continue in learning or train to higher levels.



Skills for Life

An estimated 25% of the population of Suffolk has a problem with literacy skills, and a slightly higher proportion (27%) has difficulty with numeracy. Historically, a relatively low proportion (about 1 in 3) of learners participating in Skills for Life provision went on to achieve a qualification that counts towards the target. Suffolk providers have made a concerted effort to convert to accredited provision. As a result there has been an encouraging improvement in the achievement of Skills for Life qualifications that count towards the national target. To reach the 2007 target we must maintain the momentum amongst providers to move to a position where the majority of provision is accredited.

Adult learning

We will safeguard Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL), Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC), Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy (FLLN), and Wider Family Learning (WFL), and provision will be made for First Steps learning.

Our priority sectors

There are six local priority sectors in Suffolk; construction, hospitality, logistics, health and social care, engineering and food and drink manufacturing. The first four of these are also regional LSC priorities at level 2 and 3. The table below shows changes in the pattern of FE provision in our priority sectors.

Sector	2003/4		2004/5	
	% total funding	% total learning aims	% total funding	% total learning aims
Health and social care	10.7	11.8	11.6	9.7
Hospitality	8.3	6.4	9.2	5.8
Construction	6.7	2.7	7.0	2.3
Engineering	5.4	2.0	6.2	2.0
Logistics	0.9	1.2	0.9	1.2
Food and drink manufacturing	—	—	0.8	0.5

Source: FE purchasing statement 2003/4 and 2004/5

Ongoing work with Sector Skills Councils, and an increased focus on employer engagement, will influence our future sector-specific funding allocation. Recent and proposed ESF funding rounds have also included projects in the local priority sectors.

National and local research has also identified generic skills needs such as customer service, team working, creative thinking and time management in all sectors, as well as improved leadership and strategic management skills.

Health and social care sector – key facts

- Employs approximately 30,000 people in Suffolk in over 1,000 establishments.
- There has been an increase in demand for qualified staff, including level 2, as a result of legislative changes.
- Regional estimates show that only 30% of care staff (against a target of 50%) meet the standard required for level 2.
- This sector is a priority for NETP (level 2).
- FE funding in Suffolk has increased from 10.7% (2003/4) to 11.6% (2004/5) but the number of learning aims has reduced. This is a reflection of fewer qualifications at level 1, and more at level 2, with a corresponding increase in average cost per qualification.
- A regional ESF contract will provide a further 160 level 2 qualifications in Suffolk.

Logistics sector – key facts

- Employs 11,500 people in over 900 workplaces.
- Two-thirds (66%) of businesses have fewer than five employees.
- Suffolk is a prime location for growth with proposed port expansions at Felixstowe, Harwich and Lowestoft.
- There is an ongoing national review of qualifications to better meet employer requirements.
- Suffolk is working with Haven Gateway Partnership and other key partners, including Skills for Logistics, to influence curriculum in local schools, colleges and the new University Campus Suffolk.
- This is a sector for which there are currently very low levels of FE provision in Suffolk.

Construction sector – key facts

- Employs approximately 17,900 people in Suffolk, including a large number of 'one-man' operators.
- Nine out of ten employers in the sector are small businesses.
- The proposed ports expansion, the development of the Ipswich Waterfront and Education Quarter, SnOasis, decommissioning of the Sizewell A nuclear reactor, and the 2012 Olympics, along with many other, smaller construction projects, will require an increased pool of skilled construction workers.
- There is an increasing demand for level 1 and level 2 qualifications.
- There is limited interest among employers in the sector for level 3 and level 4 qualifications.
- FE spend in Suffolk has increased slightly with learning aims remaining fairly static.

Food and drink sector – key facts

- Employs 10,200 people in 124 workplaces in Suffolk.
- Almost two-thirds (60%) of workplaces employ fewer than ten people.
- Historically, a sector with low levels of training and development.
- FE spend is low. There are two CoVEs which deliver qualifications at level 3 and level 4.

Hospitality sector – key facts

- Employs 21,000 people in 1,700 workplaces in Suffolk.
- Employer research suggests a preference for short courses leading to certificates of proficiency and skills passports rather than full NVQ programmes.
- Need for improved customer service skills and leadership and strategic management training.
- There is a strong partnership network through the Suffolk Tourism Partnership.
- Initiatives planned to raise awareness and profile of the sector within schools.
- FE funding increased between 2003/4 and 2004/5 but learning aims reduced.

Engineering sector – key facts

- Employs approximately 15,500 people in 970 workplaces.
- Energy employers, through the East of England Energy Group, are keen to work on sector attraction and developing standard competencies across the sector.
- Suffolk is working with the Engineering Employers Federation (EEF) and a number of large engineering employers in the county to establish a collaborative and cooperative approach to purchasing and sharing learning.
- FE funding has increased but learning aims have remained static over the last two years.

Provider capacity

In August 2005 we published the LSC *agenda for change* prospectus in response to the challenge of developing an effective and dynamic FE sector. Since then we have received further advice in the form of the Foster Review of FE and the Leitch Review on Skills, both of which will be aligned to *agenda for change*. We will extend the principles of *agenda for change* across the learning and skills sector in Suffolk. In 2006/7 we will concentrate on moving the sector to a position where:

- The majority of FE and WBL providers have a good (or excellent) grading awarded by ALI for 'leadership and management'.

Currently one FE college is graded as good and the other three are graded as satisfactory. In WBL 6% (one provider) is graded as excellent, 41% are good and 53% are graded as satisfactory. Sixth forms are scheduled for Ofsted inspection under the new four-point grading system. Of the five completed to date, one has received a grading of 'outstanding', three 'good', and one 'satisfactory', for leadership and management. As Ofsted inspections roll-out, we anticipate that between 10% and 15% should be in the 'outstanding' category.

- Success rates for all FE and WBL provision sustain the improvement seen in 2004/05.

In 2004/05 there was a significant increase in FE and WBL success rates. The FE performance in Suffolk is now above the East of England and national benchmarks, and work-based learning performance is the best in the region. Over time we want all our colleges to match the performance of the best in the country and move to the top quartile for FE success rates.

- All FE colleges, high schools and work based learning providers are members of formal collaborative partnerships, with joint curriculum planning and development, and shared facilities where appropriate.
- As part of a seven-year strategy, we will have an FE estate fit for the 21st century.

The first phases of extensive building programmes have already begun in three of the four colleges. In 2006/07 work will begin on a complete new building for Suffolk College, sited in the Education Quarter alongside the site of University Campus Suffolk.

- FE colleges deliver training and education that is highly regarded by local employers. By the end of 2006/07 all FE colleges will have achieved the Action for Business College, or Customer First standard.
- FE colleges change the mode of learning and qualifications they offer in some curriculum areas, in particular:
 - Business Improvement Techniques (BIT), which offers modern engineering techniques
 - On Site Assessment 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 (SSVQ) to develop the skills of these key workers
 - Digital installation.

Risk analysis

There are a number of risks that could impact on our providers' ability to deliver our priorities and targets.

- The ability of the sector to manage the implication of 'Priorities for Success', particularly the increase in fee assumptions and greater focus on first full level 2 provision, and the changing pattern of adult provision that will be publicly funded.
- Can colleges engage with employers to the degree necessary to increase the uptake of, and payment for, training? There are some areas which are very active, particularly where there is a strong employer lobby group – the Haven Gateway Partnership and Suffolk Tourism Partnership, for example. However, such activity is 'patchy'.
- The need to reverse the downward trend in take up of Apprenticeships.
- Each of the colleges is in the process of negotiating or contracting for substantial building work and quite considerable investment from their reserves and/or loans. While in the long term, the purpose of the work is to improve the estate, making it more attractive and relevant to learners and employers, and thus improve participation and encourage fee income, in the short-term it will have a negative impact on their financial health. This has been taken into account in all discussions and negotiations about proposed works and forecast improvements in numbers.

Skills matrix

Suffolk skills priority and provision analysis matrix 2004/05

Under 19	High		Medium		Low		Total	
	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	% of Overall
Likely to contribute	10,492,828	49%	2,631,081	12%	4,471,296	21%	17,595,205	82%
	12340		1311		2280		15931	
Potential to contribute	602,845	3%	24,630	0%	20,303	0%	647,779	3%
	456		104		7		567	
No longer eligible for LSC funding	408,805	2%	6,367	0%	0	0%	415,172	2%
	1510		31		1		1542	
Other (eg UFI and Unclassified)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	0		0		0		0	
Entitlement	0	0%	2,671,665	13%	0	0%	2,671,665	13%
	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A	
Totals	11,504,478	54%	5,333,743	25%	4,491,600	21%	21,329,821	100%
	14306		1446		2288		18040	

19 and Over	High		Medium		Low		Total	
	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	%	£ and Enrols	% of Overall
Likely to contribute	9,225,459	53%	1,914,577	11%	1,583,461	9%	12,723,496	73%
	16937		4113		1625		22675	
Potential to contribute	2,830,068	16%	679,147	4%	34,971	0%	3,544,185	20%
	7603		2827		97		10527	
No longer eligible for LSC funding	976,342	6%	84,303	0%	2,359	0%	1,063,004	6%
	10972		1187		22		12181	
Other (eg UFI and Unclassified)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	0		0		0		0	
Entitlement	0	0%	52,837	0%	0	0%	52,837	0%
	N/A		N/A		N/A		N/A	
Totals	13,031,869	75%	2,730,864	16%	1,620,790	9%	17,383,523	100%
	35512		8127		1744		45383	

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

The matrix above shows the proportion of FE provision in Suffolk that contributes towards regional sector priorities.

In 2004/05, over 80% of provision in Suffolk contributed to the national target, and nearly half of all provision was in high priority areas. Provision planned for 2005/06 will show an improvement with an estimated 97% of provision contributing directly to national targets, and 57% of contributing provision being in high priority areas. We have redirected funds in the current year away from non-contributory provision, particularly non-qualificatory IT provision, and provision at level 1. While this will clearly impact positively on outcomes that contribute to achievements targets, some providers and agencies have concerns that losing low-level, first steps provision will impact on participation and success rates.

The key changes needed 2005/06 to 2006/07

The key changes that we need to make in LSC Suffolk in 2006/07 have been determined by the analysis in the previous section of headline issues in relation to demand, supply and the capacity of the learning infrastructure to deliver against LSC priorities and targets. The key changes represent a picture of what we believe can realistically be achieved in year. As the LSC Suffolk Annual Plan is a rolling plan, we will extend our change programme over time.

1. Support the introduction of the Suffolk plan for new models of 14-19 learning, so that all young people in Suffolk have access to a curriculum that meets their particular needs.
2. Reduce the number of young people aged 16 to 18 not in employment, education and training to 7.1% (DfES target) by November 2006, and 6.65% (Suffolk LAA target) by November 2008.
3. Increase the proportion of young people who progress from E2E to further education, work-based learning or employment from 38% (2004/05) to 47% (2006/07).
4. Change the focus of the FE sector to increase the first full level 2 offer and the number of first full level 2 qualifications achieved. Locally we plan to deliver an additional 350 first full level 2 qualifications in 2006/07 compared to 2005/06. These will be split by age group:
 - 205 age 16 to 18
 - 145 age 19+
5. Increase the proportion of Skills for Life provision (all ages) in the county that counts towards Skills for Life targets. We will increase the proportion of provision that counts towards targets from 42% (2005/06) to 60% (2006/07) and increase the rate of learners achieving at least one Skills for Life target aim from 71% (2005/06) to 80% (2006/07).

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		
	Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)			
FE Total Learners	6,015		69%		19,991,757
of which...					
Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications	3,073	1,303	42.4%		
Learners on a full Level 2 qualification	1,259	933	74.1%		
Learners on a full Level 3 qualification	2,002	783	39.1%		
Learners on 2 or more A2 quals	50	38			
Discrete* activity, e.g. fully ESF, or LIDF funded provision					
School sixth form	6,401				27,686,676
Work Based Learning	12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework success rate		Funding £
WBL Total Learners	1,962		49.4%		6,403,486
of which...					
Learners on an Apprenticeship	1,818	487	26.8%		
Learners on an Advanced Apprenticeship	487	82	16.8%		
Entry to Employment	Learners			Funding £	
	Volumes (starts)	Numbers in learning	Av. length of stay (weeks)		
All E2E	479	697	12.7	201	1,910,920

2005/06				
Learners		Learning Aims Success Rates	Funding £	
Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)			
6,194		71%		23,417,357
2,442	1,353	55.4%		
1,530	1,141	74.5%		
2,102	1195	56.9%		
50	40			
6,547				30,494,803
12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AiL		Funding £
2,334		54%		7,106,783
2,081	652	31.3%		
495	115	23.2%		
Learners				Funding £
Volumes (starts)	Numbers in learning	Av. length of stay (weeks)	Pos've destinations	
563	745	10.9	263	1,878,466

2006/07				
Learners		Learning Aims Success Rates	Funding £	
Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)			
6,418		73%		24,710,006
2,617	1,614	61.7%		
1,657	1,247	75.3%		
2,240	1,299	58.0%		
55	48			
6,696				31,145,941
12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AiL		Funding £
2,349		57%		6,683,286
1,708	698	40.9%		
450	124	27.6%		
Learners				Funding £
Volumes (starts)	Numbers in learning	Av. length of stay (weeks)	Pos've destinations	
609	810	11.6	326	1,975,267

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			
	Learners Volumes of learners	In-year achievement s (volume)	Learning Aims Success Rates	Funding £	Learners Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)	Learning Aims Success Rates	Funding £	Learners Volumes of learners	In-year achievements (volume)	Learning Aims Success Rates	Funding £
FE Total Learners	27,642		73%	15,625,277	22,519		74%	13,670,734	19,920		76%	12,480,735
<i>of which...</i>												
<i>Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications</i>	2,386	1,690	70.8%		2,516	1,822	72.4%		2,721	1,982	72.8%	
<i>Learners on a full Level 2 qualification</i>	1,177	758	64.4%		1,585	1,031	65.0%		1,708	1116	65.3%	
<i>Learners on a full Level 3 qualification</i>	1,410	675	47.9%		1,453	769	52.9%		1,608	898	55.8%	
<i>Learners on 2 or more A2 qual.</i>	33	25			35	30			34	30		
Discrete* activity, eg fully ESF, or LIDF funded provision												
Personal & Community Dev't Learning	17,256			2,861,786	14,688				12,600			
Work Based Learning	12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievement s (volumes)	Framework success rate	Funding £	12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AiL	Funding £	12 month average in learning (volume)	Framework achievements (volumes)	Framework achievement / 12 month AiL	Funding £
WBL Total Learners	1,637		43.3%	3,076,655	1,664		48%	2,784,215	1,785		51%	2,873,796
<i>of which...</i>												
<i>Learners on Skills for Life target qualifications (all ages)</i>	1059	630	59.5%		1466	1025	69.9%		1547	1154	74.6%	
<i>Learners on an Apprenticeship</i>	989	248	25.1%		906	310	34.2%		732	321	43.9%	
<i>Learners on an Advanced Apprenticeship</i>	789	166	21.0%		717	218	30.4%		593	219	36.6%	
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	38,280,666	9,585,122	2,000,377	27,057,715	2,861,786	0	0	1,447,833	1,544,595	5,562,775		
2005/06	39,914,000	9,891,000	1,976,000	30,260,000	2,835,000	0	0	436,000	1,561,000	5,925,000		
2006/07	40,500,796	9,557,082	1,975,267	0	2,621,000	0	0	51,000	0	2,424,000		

Key actions

Local action	Measure(s) of success
P1 Ensure all 14-19 year olds have access to high quality, relevant learning opportunities	
<p>1.1 In conjunction with Suffolk County Council and Connexions implement the third year of the four thematic plans in the 14-19 Strategy.</p> <p>Theme 1: Developing the curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use ESF to continue the drive to develop the 14-19 curriculum in Suffolk. • Complete a comprehensive curriculum map for Suffolk to inform planning and student choice • Extend the range and number of level 1 and 2 programmes available post 16. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All milestones and targets in the strategy are met • Vocational opportunities for young people (14+) in school are available as outlined in the 14-19 development plan² • 25 partnership members will have increased their skills to work with young people in a vocational context • Further development of the county 14-19 curriculum map completed by March 2007 • By September 2006, 5 additional schools offer post 16 level 1 and 2 courses • Guidance/briefing document updated and disseminated by January 2007
<p>Theme 2: Providing high quality information, advice and guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All agencies to use common branding for 14-19 information and literature. • Use ESF to provide materials that inform young people about career choices and the relevant training/education route in the 6 priority sectors in Suffolk. • Continue to deliver 'Informing Choices' road shows in Suffolk schools. • Develop 14-19 Area Prospectus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branding agreed by September 2006 • Information and career advice pack produced for each priority sector • Training for 100 teachers from Suffolk schools on using the resources to ensure students receive appropriate information and advice by March 2007 • Road show has visited all Suffolk schools by March 2007 • Future4Me website further developed to comply with national guidelines by March 2007.
<p>Theme 3: Raising young people's achievements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a shared system for measuring, evaluating and challenging the success of all post 16 providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support providers in all sectors (FE,WBL and Schools) in interpreting and using new LAT software (Learner Achievement Tracker) and associated data for performance monitoring and target setting
<p>Theme 4: Supporting high quality local delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to the 14-19 infrastructure are taken forward through the Suffolk plan for new models of 14-19 learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suffolk plan for new models of 14-19 learning published by April 2006 • Competition for 16-19 provision in south west Ipswich announced in May 2006. • By March 2007 secure capital funding to implement first wave of new models of provision.
<p>1.2 We will influence providers, through negotiation of three-year development plans and monitoring throughout the year, to increase the number of Apprentice frameworks achieved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WBL framework achievements to increase from 47% in 2004/05 to 54% in 2006/07.
<p>1.3 We will target employers in our key sectors to raise awareness of the benefits of encouraging their young employees to take up and complete an Apprenticeship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An additional 200 people age 19 will gain a level 2 qualification in 2006/07 compared to 2005/06.
<p>1.4 E2E: we will work with providers and Connexions to review progression from the programme. Through Individual Action Planning we will introduce milestones to aid</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 47% of young people progress from E2E to further education, work-based learning or employment • All providers have Individual Action Plans with

² The 14-19 development plan is available on the internet at: www.suffolk14-19.org

Local action	Measure(s) of success
the progression process. We will develop ESF projects to offer options requested in the Connexions Evaluation Report of the NEET group in two areas: construction and motor vehicle. These programmes will support existing provision and focus on progression to Apprenticeships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> clear milestones for progression Construction and motor vehicle E2E support programmes are in place
1.5 Use ESF to develop projects targeted at attracting and retaining reluctant learners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the numbers in NEET to 7.1% (Nov 2006 – DfES Target) and 6.65% (Nov 2008 – Suffolk LAA target)
1.6 Improving Choice Pathfinder – the development of a comprehensive range of LLDD provision within county that will support people with complex needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 young people to access Pathfinder provision in County in 2006/7
1.7 Extend existing Young Apprenticeship programme to a second cohort. Introduce new YA scheme in priority sectors to a cohort of 14-16 year olds from September 2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing YA partnership gains second cohort expanding to 30 students and 1 new school joins the partnership One additional YA programme begins its first cohort in September 2006 for a minimum of 25 students
1.8 Steer 14-19 initiatives in the Local Area Agreement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the proportion of young people in the NEET group from 7.9% (Nov 2004) to 6.65% by Nov 2008 Increase the average UCAS points per entry at GCE A-level and equivalent from 76.4 (2004) to 78.9 in 2008
1.9 Ensure effective implementation of the national extension of Education Maintenance Allowance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All eligible young people have access to EMA funding At least 4,500 young people in receipt of EMA
P2 Make learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults	
2.1 Contract with selected providers to deliver Train to Gain in priority sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will achieve our allocated contribution to the regional target
2.2 Through the FE/LSC Quality Working Group investigate ways to increase the number of full level 2 qualifications on offer in all colleges : convert as many as possible existing level 2 courses to full level 2 and reduce the number of courses not full level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver an additional 350 first full level 2 qualifications
2.3 Through membership of the UCS partnership, influence the development of the HE curriculum in the county.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The developing UCS curriculum meets local employer and priority sector skills needs Where necessary, new level 3 provision is established to ensure clear progression routes are available from local level 3 provision through to University Campus Suffolk (UCS) provision
2.4 Use ESF to pilot employer engagement initiatives in two priority sectors, engineering and logistics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 60 employers are engaged (10 x logistics, and 50 x engineering)
2.5 Use ESF to increase adult level 2 and level 3 qualifications in the priority sectors for Suffolk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 2 – 480 qualifications Level 3 – 10 qualifications
2.6 Establish new arrangements for planning Adult Learning including recognition of the needs of adults with learning difficulties and disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch the Suffolk Adult Learning Strategy Establish a planning group Secure coordination of planning, funding and providers Establish county-wide prospectus for adult learning for 2007/8

Local action		Measure(s) of success		
2.7	Through the Suffolk CoVE network increase full adult level 3 provision in priority sectors.	Targets	2005/6	2006/7
		Construction	42	53
		Engineering	180	207
		Health and social care	-	67
		Food manufacturing	53	64
2.8	Through the Suffolk CoVE network increase full level 3 provision in management and ICT across all priority sectors.	Targets	2005/6	2006/7
		Management	-	195
2.9	Through ESF increase the number of level 2 and 3 qualifications in supervision and management in Suffolk's six priority sectors.	ICT	79	94
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 120 full level 2 • 20 full level 3 		
2.10	Establish the Up-Skilling Operatives and Managers initiative in the engineering sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 programmes devised and delivered • Evaluation undertaken • Further programme developed for 2007/8 		
P3 Transform the learning and skills sector through <i>agenda for change</i>				
3.1	We will continue to liaise with schools, colleges and other providers, and use our influence, purchasing power, and negotiation of three-year development plans to drive up quality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve FE and WBL success rate targets • In 2006/07 increase from 53% to 65% the number of WBL providers with a 'good' or 'excellent' ALI rating for leadership and management. • All FE colleges to attain at least a 'good' rating for leadership and management by the time of their next inspection. 		
3.2	Use ESF funding to encourage colleges to achieve the Action for Business Colleges (AfBC) standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By December 2007, all colleges will have achieved the AfBC or Customer First standard 		
3.3	Work with the School Improvement Partnership to raise achievement in 6 th forms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the average UCAS points per entry at GCE A-level and equivalent from 76.4 (2004) to 78.9 in 2008 		
3.4	Support alliances between FE providers and Suffolk employers to address skills gaps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures of employer engagement agreed and met within provider development plans. 		
3.5	Through negotiation with LSC providers ensure there is capacity to offer new qualifications identified in national sector skills agreements. <i>Numbers to be confirmed</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision which supports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ OSAT (construction) ○ BIT (engineering) ○ ITQ ○ School support staff ○ Digital installation 		
3.6	Support the development of a regional hub for logistics as part of the proposal for a National Skills Academy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bid for Skills and Logistics by April 2006. • Business Plan produced by August 2006 • Academy established by September 2007. 		
3.7	Continue to renew the FE estate to achieve 21 st century facilities for all students in the county.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds secured in 2006/07 for estate renewal in four colleges. 		
P4 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				
4.1	Use ESF to expand the provider network for Skills for Life by developing capacity within the existing WBL network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By March 2007 5 existing WBL providers offer Skills for Life provision. • Local Skills for Life target is met 		
4.2	Establish action plans with all key Skills for Life providers to increase the percentage of courses that count towards LSC achievement targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase from 42% in 2005/06 to 60% in 2006/07 		
4.3	Work with the Skills for Life strategy group to share good practice in order to improve achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase from 71% in 2005/06 to 80% in 2006/07 		
4.4	Use ESF to support the Trade Union Learning Representatives initiative to promote take-up of Skills for Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 Trade Union Learning Representatives are supported • Activity will contribute to increased take-up and 		

Local action	Measure(s) of success
	achievement of Skills for Life qualifications
4.5 Use ESF to support Learning Champions to promote take-up of Skills for Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 Learning Champions are supported Activity will contribute to increased take-up and achievement of Skills for Life qualifications
4.6 Continue to work with Jobcentre Plus to develop the Welfare to Workforce Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Action Plan to be reviewed and updated on a quarterly basis. Objectives in the plan to be delivered within the agreed timescales.
4.7 Steer the learning and skills elements of the Suffolk Investing in Communities Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSC priority to build a rural 14-19 vocational centre supported in the final plan.
4.8 Steer skills initiatives in the Local Area Agreement (LAA) (Skills for Life, full level 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult learners (19+) on a full level 2 qualification increase from 1,258 in 2004/05 to 1,673 in 2006/07 Adult learners (19+) on skills for life qualifications increase from 2,574 in 2004/05 to 3,496 in 2006/07.
4.9 We will continue to liaise with the prison service and probation service to ensure a smooth transition of responsibility for offender learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery contracts in place by August 2006
4.10 Embed high quality information, advice and guidance (IAG) in all LSC Suffolk funded provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of adults receiving IAG (National Office targets to be advised)
P5 Improve the skills of the workers who are delivering public services	
5.1 We will contribute to the regional 'Local Government Skills for Life Strategy' in partnership with EEDA – embedding Skills for Life through local implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilots will be established with at least two district councils Local trade unions and district councils will agree learning agreements to promote Skills for Life in district councils
5.2 Use ESF funds to subsidise skills training (up to level 2) for employees who do not have a first full level 2 qualification. We will give priority to employees in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prison service Health and social care School support Childcare settings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will achieve our target allocation for each of the priority sectors
5.3 We will continue to work with the Health and Social Care network to increase the number of apprentices in the health and social care sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 160 employees in health and social care achieve a qualification at level 2
P6 Strengthen the capacity of the LSC to lead change nationally, regionally and locally	
6.1 Develop new Partnership Teams to deliver first class leadership and management, supported by new business processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal restructuring completed by end June 2006 2 geographically based partnership teams in place by end June 2006

Our delivery resources

Partnership working

As far back as the 1980s Suffolk had an established forum of economic partners under the banner 'Partners for Prosperity' – a forum which became the Suffolk Development Agency (SDA). Although we have changed and re-formed over the past twenty years, the local body with responsibility for funding post-16 learning in Suffolk has long been at the centre of the economic and community development agenda for the county.

Over the last three years, we have been helping to shape and develop the pilot Local Area Agreement (LAA). We are represented on the county-wide Suffolk Strategic Partnership (SSP) – the accountable body for the Suffolk LAA. We are also engaged with the six local authority district Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) boards and working groups. Learning and community development feature strongly in local LSP plans, allowing us to work with the police, primary care trusts, crime and disorder reduction partnerships, voluntary and community groups and others.

The year ahead will be challenging. It is only with full engagement, support and commitment from partners that we will be able to ensure that learning provision is right for Suffolk. We look forward to working together to tackle these important issues.

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

The group with responsibility for setting the direction of 14-19 education in the county is the Suffolk 14-19 Strategy Group, made up of the LSC, Connexions Suffolk and Suffolk County Council. This group is supported and advised by the 14-19 Consultative Group which has members from across the education sector. At operational level, thirteen locality provider planning groups are looking at the needs of 'clusters' of learning around the county. The outcomes from these groups will be taken forward in the *Expanding Horizons 14-19: Vision into Reality Plan*. The 14-19 partnership will interface with the Children and Young People Directorate currently being established by Suffolk County Council in response to *Every Child Matters*.

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

In 2005, we formed the Suffolk Skills and Competitiveness Forum with Business Link Suffolk, the SDA and Jobcentre Plus. While the vision, policy and goals for the skills and competitiveness elements of EEDA's regional economic development strategy are set by a regional forum, delivery management mostly takes place locally. The Suffolk Skills and Competitiveness Forum is the body that provides coordination and delivery at county level.

In 2004, we joined with Jobcentre Plus and Connexions Suffolk to develop closer working. We made a commitment to undertake joint local delivery planning, which began in 2004 with the publication of the Suffolk Welfare to Workforce Development strategy. The plan addresses the needs of the hardest to help, disadvantaged groups and those living in deprived areas. There is a strong focus on social inclusion, increasing employment in deprived areas, and helping people gain employability skills. Skills for Life is high on the agenda.

Until 2005, the chairman of the Suffolk LSC also chaired the SDA. We are still represented on the SDA board, and the coordination group. We are involved in working groups looking at aligning partnership goals and targets, setting parameters for agreeing key sectors for the county, inward investment, and tourism.

Priority 3: transform the learning and skill sector through agenda for change

The Suffolk 14-19 Strategy Group (see above) has taken a holistic, objective and radical approach to reviewing learning in Suffolk. With a common vision and strong commitment from all parties, a lot has been achieved in a short time – particularly around curriculum development, information

and communications, data sharing and collaboration between schools, colleges and work-based learning providers. While this has contributed to addressing issues under priority 1, there are a number of issues, for example facilities and premises, which will take longer to achieve.

We have formed a partnership group with the Suffolk County Council Adult Directorate, to work up an adult learning strategy for the county that will mirror the 14-19 Development Plan.

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

The Suffolk LSC is involved in the SDA from board to officer level, working on issues ranging from setting a ten-year economic regeneration and development strategy to helping develop the Investing in Communities (IiC) strategy.

A new 'block' is being introduced to the Suffolk LAA in 2006. Block 4 (Prosperity for All) aligns with the goals of the SDA's economic development strategy, and complements SDA-funded activity to improve economic regeneration and development in the county. There is an emphasis on skills development as a means to achieve the targets. Support for the University Campus Suffolk is an important part of the strategy, as well as supporting skills for key sectors, and Skills for Life.

Our engagement with the six local authority LSPs, as well as the SSP, means we have influence with delivery partners (not only learning providers) at community level, enabling coordination of services, and aligning services to best meet the needs of communities.

The Haven Gateway Partnership (HGP) is a discrete sub-regional economic partnership. The geography of the partnership area overlaps the counties of Suffolk and Essex. This has resulted in some practical and profitable cross-border working between local authority districts (including LSPs), local LSCs, Jobcentre Plus, providers and others.

We are members of the county-wide partnership looking at the impact of the 2012 Olympics, from the effect it is likely to have on skills shortages in construction and engineering, to increased demand for sports and leisure activity, and pressure on heritage, cultural and environmental sites from increased tourism.

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

Health and social care is one of the key sectors in Suffolk. We work closely, at local and regional level, to help influence and coordinate learning provision and take-up of quality-assured provision. We continue to work with the Suffolk Partnership which brings together the independent and public social services, as well as the Sector Skills Councils – Skills for Care, and Skills for Health.

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

The Annual Statement of Priorities confirms our commitment to local working. Regionalisation of functions such as marketing and communications, finance, data management and planning, will help us to be more consistent in our approach, as well as more efficient at providing these 'generic' services. This will allow local offices to be smaller, quicker and more partnership facing.

We have to change our way of working if we are to deliver the sort of strategic changes we expect from our partners. This is the focus of 'Theme 7' in *agenda for change*. The focus of Theme 7 is on achieving better quality and more consistent delivery at local level through partnership teams of highly skilled and experienced education and training professionals working closely with partner organisations. In Suffolk there will be two partnership teams, led by an area director, who will manage partnerships across the county.

Local Council

Our local Council members act as ambassadors for the organisation, working to develop the reputation of the LSC locally and regionally. The skills and experience they bring, from a wide range of sectors, including employers and their representatives, learning providers, voluntary and community, trade unions, local authority, and other government funded organisations, helps to ensure that we stay focused on meeting the needs of the communities we serve. In December 2005 the Council debated and agreed upon the vision for Suffolk and the local priorities that are contained in this plan. Council members were fully involved as the plan was developed and gave their agreement to the final draft in February 2006.

Working with college governors

Approximately 18 months ago, we established an FE strategic forum which is made up of LSC senior staff, chairs of governors and principals of all four colleges. This forum meets quarterly to discuss LSC policy changes, college performance and strategic development of education across the county.

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 covered in this plan will be underpinned by, and reflect, the Council's Race Equality Scheme (RES).

A local RES action plan has been agreed for Suffolk which reflects the regional priorities and identifies how they will be addressed at local level. This plan is due to be published in 2006 and will be shared with all providers. All providers will be expected to make a positive contribution to delivering the actions in the Suffolk RES action plan.

Equality and diversity impact measures (EDIMs)

Work is in progress to develop EDIMS for the East of England for 2006/07. Equality and diversity management information has been produced and will be analysed in January 2006. Locally we have agreed the priorities and improvement targets for Suffolk, and these will be devolved to colleges and work-based learning providers through three-year development plan negotiations. We have selected areas for improvement by sex, ethnicity and disability.

- Work-based learning and FE: increase the number of young men entering health and social care and public services by 3%
- Work-based learning and FE: increase the number of young women entering ICT, engineering, technology and manufacturing by 3% in each sector
- Increase the number of learners from black and minority ethnic groups starting on work-based learning programmes by 10%
- Increase the level of achievement by learners from black and minority ethnic groups on work-based learning programmes by 15% across all WBL programmes
- Increase the level of achievement by learners with a disability by 10% across all WBL programmes.

Offender learning

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

In Suffolk, we will continue to work with our local probation partnership to make sure that we continue to achieve a high standard of Skills for Life provision and develop good quality vocational opportunities for offenders within our area.

Following the introduction of OLASS on 31 July 2006, planning for 06/07 will focus on increasing participation and achievement in education and training for offenders in custody and the community, and redesigning provision to support this.

Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD)

Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Council has a responsibility to consider the needs of young people and adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are robust arrangements in place to ensure this group of learners has access to suitable provision that meets their needs and where appropriate the additional support required.

In April 2005, the East of England launched a £500,000 18-month project, *Improving Choice*, to fund learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in Suffolk to access further education. The project will help learners who would otherwise have to go out of the county to access services. A key feature of the project is that it uses a 'person-centred' approach, which means individuals' abilities and needs are taken into account when designing a package of support. Other partners, such as Health and Social Care, are also involved in the process. An important element of the project is that outcomes are meaningful to the individual learner and designed to help them progress. During 2006/07 a range of capacity building activities will be implemented so that colleges can access LLDD matrix funding which, until now, has only been available to specialist colleges, most of which are located outside the East of England.

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 2020 and beyond.

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 that all providers funded by the Council will follow the 'safe learner concept' by promoting risk education and awareness. This will be achieved by applying the following four core principles:

- to expect that all learning providers funded by the Council will fully meet their legal obligations and the Learning and Skills Council's 'safe learner concept'
- to seek assurance that colleges and other providers have suitable and sufficient arrangements for learner health and safety in accordance with the Learning and Skills Council's safety procurement standards
- 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.

Learning and Skills Council
National Office
Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry CV1 2WT
T 0845 019 4170
F 024 7682 3675
www.lsc.gov.uk

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