

# Learning and Skills Council

PHOTO REDACTED DUE TO THIRD PARTY RIGHTS OR OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

## Local Strategic Plan 2002-05

Tyne and Wear

## > Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Chairman's Foreword   | 3  |
| 1. Introduction   | 6  |
| > The Learning and Skills Council   | 6  |
| > Vision and strategic priorities   | 6  |
| > Links with other strategies   | 6  |
| > Capacity to deliver   | 7  |
| > The organisation  | 7  |
| > Resources   | 7  |
| 2. Learning and Skills Needs  | 8  |
| > An overview of Tyne & Wear  | 8  |
| > Learning and skills needs of employers in Tyne & Wear                                     | 11 |
| > Attainment and participation  | 12 |
| 3. Learning Providers   | 13 |
| 4. The Challenges   | 14 |
| 5. Addressing the Challenges  | 15 |
| > Strategic Objective 1: Extending participation in learning                                | 16 |
| > Strategic Objective 2: Increasing the engagement of<br>employers in workforce development | 22 |

|   |    |
|---|----|
| > Strategic Objective 3: Raising the achievement of young people  | 28 |
| > Strategic Objective 4: Raising the achievement of adults  | 33 |
| > Strategic Objective 5: Raising the quality of learning provision  | 37 |
| > Strategic Objective 6: Developing skills to meet the needs of the local economy, safeguarding existing jobs and responding to structural changes in the labour market | 42 |
| > Strategic Objective 7: Developing skills to increase levels of enterprise, entrepreneurship and self-employment   | 45 |
| 6. Working With Others  | 48 |
| 7. Measuring Progress and Impact Measures   | 50 |
| 8. Appendices   | 51 |
| > Local Council Members   | 51 |
| > References  | 52 |
| > Contact details   | 52 |

## > Chairman's Foreword

I am delighted to present the first strategic plan for the Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear. This is our strategic plan for 2002 to 2005. It has been shaped by analysis of all the information available to us and by extensive and careful consultation with local, sub-regional and regional organisations. Associated with this document are others, which I invite you to read:

- > 'Analysis of Learning and Skills Needs in Tyne and Wear 2001';
- > 'Equality of Opportunity Strategy' 2002 to 2005; and
- > 'Adult Literacy and Numeracy Delivery Plan' 2002 to 2004.  
This is currently being drafted and will be available during May 2002.

Information about how you can obtain copies of these is shown in the Appendices.

I know that the open, inclusive and consultative approach that Chris Roberts and his team took during the first year of the Learning and Skills Council was welcomed. We intend to continue working in the same way and soon after publishing this plan we will arrange to meet representatives of key sectors and partner organisations to discuss how to implement the strategy. These sessions will inform production of a business plan setting out in detail the activities and use of funding to deliver them, in 2002 to 2003. Meanwhile in response to comments received on the draft plan we have included in this final version some broad indications of the operational implications.

The existence of the Learning and Skills Council is a unique opportunity to improve the life chances of everyone who lives in Tyne and Wear and to strengthen the economy of the area. Our role is to plan and fund learning opportunities for people over 16 years old (except those in Higher Education) in a way that meets their needs and those of employers, while ensuring quality and value for money.

The challenges could not be greater; Tyne and Wear is significantly lower than the national average against most indicators of achievement and participation in learning. Meanwhile unemployment is higher, fewer new businesses are established and more fail. On the positive side, a number of world-class businesses are based here, the economy has strengthened in recent years and some exciting regeneration initiatives are underway. Addressing learning and skills needs will be central to the continued growth and success of these, enabling local people to benefit from the employment opportunities generated by them.

By the end of our first year we will have funded the delivery of over 18,500 learning opportunities for young people and almost 100,000 for adults, and attracted 7,500 new learners aged between 16 and 19 and over 3,000 new adult learners, of which over 2,000 will have completed Modern Apprenticeships.

Among the other things we achieved in 2001 to 2002 were:

- > Helping 47 companies to gain Investors in People recognition;
- > Bidding for and running one of the Department for Education and Skills' (DfES) Basic Skills (now 'Skills for Life') Pathfinder Projects;

- > Submitting by the required deadline and securing immediate Ministerial acceptance of action plans following the Area Wide Inspections of learning provision for 16 to 19 year olds in Gateshead and in Newcastle upon Tyne;
- > Securing over £300,000 of Rapid Response Fund, alongside £300,000 of the Single Regeneration Budget to help create over 600 jobs and safeguard a further 440, by working with 12 major employers in Tyne and Wear;
- > Achieving early status as a European Social Fund Co-financing organisation and an allocation of £14m funding for learning and skills related activities between now and 31 December 2003;
- > Securing £1.5m of Regional Development Agency 'Single Pot' Funding creating 395 learning opportunities; and
- > Spending £2.765m Local Initiative Funding on a range of innovative projects to address inequalities, achieve social inclusion, provide additional skills and enterprise opportunities, and in partnership with others, assisting the local economy by retraining redundant workers and providing skills training for the new recruits of inward investors and indigenous growth companies.

In addition, South Tyneside College has achieved Centre of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) status. Three of the other five Further Education colleges in Tyne and Wear are working towards it. This means we are on course to exceed the Department for Education and Skills' target of half the number of colleges achieving CoVE status by the end of 2004.

Looking forward over the next three years we have a number of targets to meet. These are set out in this plan. Some of them illustrate the contribution that the Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear is expected to make towards achievement of the national targets. We have accepted these targets on the understanding that they will be revised and that the budget implications have yet to be considered and agreed. We also recognise that delivery of the activities necessary to achieve the targets is not in our hands. This depends on the ability and willingness of our providers and partners both to accept the targets and to make the changes that will deliver them. Feedback from partners during consultation on the plan indicated that they thought the targets were unrealistic. As a priority therefore, we will work with them to establish what can be achieved and identify the measures needed.

**By 31 March 2005 you can expect to see a significant difference in Tyne and Wear as a result of our work. Here are some of the main changes you will notice:**

- > Increased and continuing demand by employers for higher levels of skill from employees and potential employees;
- > More people in learning, achieving at higher levels. We will increase participation by 5 per cent, achievement by young people by 5 per cent and achievement by adults by 5 per cent;
- > Better quality learning provision;
- > A closer relationship between the learning opportunities we fund and the needs of the economy; and
- > More people with the skills, knowledge and confidence to set up in business and to develop it.

I would like to take this opportunity to give an assurance of our commitment to meeting in full our statutory responsibilities for ensuring equality of opportunity, health and safety of learners and the funding and provision of learning for those with special educational needs and learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Organisations in the area have a tradition of working well together in partnership. The Learning and Skills Council is pleased to be part of that tradition and will continue to play its part. One of our early priorities was to establish relationships with the wide range of organisations and groups with whom we need to work. I believe that we have a firm foundation on which to move forward. I am particularly grateful to those that helped us develop the learning and skills priorities around which we worked in 2001 to 2002, and on which this three-year plan is in part based.

The Council looks forward to working with you to bring about much needed change in the area and to make our vision a reality.



Ashley Winter, Chairman,  
Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear.

PHOTO REDACTED  
DUE TO THIRD  
PARTY RIGHTS OR  
OTHER LEGAL  
ISSUES

## > 1. Introduction

### The Learning and Skills Council

The Learning and Skills Council is a national organisation with 47 Local Councils across England. The Council's National Corporate Plan, published in July 2001, sets out the mission of the Learning and Skills Council to raise participation and attainment in learning through high-quality education and training which puts learners first. The National Corporate Plan provides a framework within which the Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear has developed its own Local Strategic Plan. The Local Plan sets out learning and skills needs in Tyne and Wear and describes the priorities we intend to address to meet those needs. Our plan also describes how we will contribute to achieving the national vision that, by 2010, young people and adults in England will have knowledge and productive skills matching the best in the world.

### Vision and strategic priorities

Our vision for Tyne and Wear is that by 2010 we will have built a culture of learning and enterprise underpinning a high performing economy in which people and organisations can prosper. This vision will be achieved by:

- > Extending participation in learning;
- > Increasing the engagement of employers in workforce development;
- > Raising the achievement of young people;
- > Raising the achievement of adults;
- > Raising the quality of learning provision;
- > Developing skills to meet the needs of the local economy, safeguarding existing jobs and responding to structural changes in the labour market; and
- > Developing skills to increase levels of enterprise, entrepreneurship and self-employment.

These are our strategic priorities. The first five mirror those in the Learning and Skills Council's National Corporate Plan. The last two have been developed to reflect the particular needs and characteristics of Tyne and Wear.

### Links with other strategies

Our vision cannot be achieved by the Learning and Skills Council working in isolation. Learning and skills development is a critical component of strategies to improve competitiveness and address issues of social exclusion at the regional, sub-regional and local levels. Our strategy will only be effective if it is integrated with those of our strategic and delivery partners. Through effective collaboration with others we intend to minimise the danger of overlapping initiatives, which cause confusion to employers and learners alike. This approach will also maximise the use of resources available for learning and skills development in Tyne and Wear, whether through the Learning and Skills Council or from other funders such as One NorthEast and the European Union.

This plan has therefore been developed in the context of the Regional Economic Strategy published by One NorthEast, our Regional Development Agency, whose ambition is to unlock the potential of everyone in the region. It has also been developed in close collaboration with the other local Learning and Skills Councils in the North East: County Durham, Northumberland and Tees Valley.

At the sub-regional level our plan links directly to the strategy of the TyneWear Partnership. It also links to the work of JobCentre Plus in training unemployed adults. At the local level our plan integrates with those of the five Local Strategic Partnerships in Tyne and Wear and complements the Education Development Plans prepared by the Local Education Authorities in Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, South Tyneside and Sunderland.

Finally, we have linked our plan to the achievement of the National Learning Targets established by the Learning and Skills Council, to the Government's targets for skills for life (basic skills) and the target that 50 per cent of young people aged 18 to 30 should have the opportunity to enter Higher Education by 2010.

### Capacity to deliver

#### *The organisation*

We are committed to strengthening our capacity and capability at all levels. Our non-executive Council members are drawn from a cross-section of public and private sector organisations. They bring a wealth of expertise and knowledge which we have drawn upon to develop this strategy and will continue to use in addressing the challenging remit of the Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear.

The Council's structure reflects the importance of effective strategic planning, developing the existing workforce and improving the performance of the organisations with whom we contract. We have underpinned these functions with a strong internal support team.

We are committed to ensuring that we have the right mix of skills and expertise. We will do this by developing everyone within the organisation and by recruiting externally where there are gaps in our skills and knowledge that cannot be filled by existing staff. We will use our Information and Learning Zone as well as external facilities to develop our staff. We are committed to applying the principles of the Investors in People standard. We will embed the European Framework for Quality Management (EFQM) as a framework for managing and monitoring continuous improvement.

#### *Resources*

The Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear expects core funding of £141 million each year to deliver this Strategic Plan. In addition to this we expect to have £27 million for schools with sixth forms and European Social Fund Co-financing of £14 million between 2002 and 2003. In addition we will work with partners in Tyne and Wear to make best use of the contribution from One NorthEast's 'Single Pot' funding which is to be made available over the three-year period covered by the Plan.

## > 2. Learning and Skills Needs

### An overview of Tyne and Wear

Tyne and Wear is a largely urban area comprising the five Metropolitan Boroughs of Gateshead, Newcastle upon Tyne, North Tyneside, South Tyneside and Sunderland. Tyne and Wear is around 280 miles north of London and 109 miles south of Edinburgh. The City of Newcastle is located on the East Coast Mainline and is home to a major airport.

Tyne and Wear covers about five per cent of the landmass of the North East and a large percentage of the region's population live here. The city of Newcastle upon Tyne is the commercial centre of the North East.

Many people who live in other parts of the region travel into Tyne and Wear to work and learn. A much smaller number of people travel out of Tyne and Wear to work or learn.

- > 43% of the North East's working age population live in Tyne and Wear.<sup>1</sup>
- > 48% of people in employment in the North East work in Tyne and Wear.<sup>2</sup>
- > 43% of workplaces in the North East are located in Tyne and Wear.<sup>3</sup>

The economy of Tyne and Wear has undergone dramatic structural change, reflecting growth among service industries, the impact of inward investment and the long-term processes of manufacturing rationalisation. Recent indicators show that the economy has mirrored national and regional trends and has been on a steady but slow path of economic growth with the potential for significant expansion. Unemployment has fallen and industrial output has increased.

Several major regeneration and economic development initiatives are now planned or underway. They include new housing and business accommodation and offer the potential for further job creation bringing new skill requirements. These developments include:

- > The regeneration of East Gateshead (the Centre for Contemporary Art, the Regional Music Centre and the Knowledge Campus Development);
- > The Going for Growth initiative in Newcastle;
- > The riverside developments including those in the offshore sector;
- > The work of the Newcastle Gateshead Initiative including the bid for European Capital of Culture in 2008;
- > Further development of the Cobalt Business Park in North Tyneside and the A19 corridor;
- > The Urban Regeneration Company in Sunderland; and
- > Enhancement of the integrated transport system in Tyne and Wear.

<sup>1</sup> *Labour Force Survey, November 2001*

<sup>2</sup> *Annual Business Inquiry, 2000*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*

Despite these positive developments Tyne and Wear is affected by a number of significant economic, social and cultural problems.

The proportion of people in Tyne and Wear employed in occupations requiring higher levels of skills is significantly lower than the national average. 8.8 per cent of people employed in Tyne and Wear work as managers and senior officials, compared to 14.4 per cent of employed people in England. 10 per cent of employed people in Tyne and Wear work in professional occupations compared with 11.5 per cent in England. The proportion of people in Tyne and Wear working in occupations requiring low levels of skills is significantly higher than the national average. 14.1 per cent of employed people in Tyne and Wear work in elementary occupations (including mainly unskilled manual work), compared with 11.9 per cent in England. 9 per cent of employed people in Tyne and Wear work as process, plant and machinery operatives compared with 8.3 per cent in England.<sup>4</sup> This is a reflection of what the Regional Economic Strategy, published by One NorthEast, describes as a state of 'low skills equilibrium'. This is characterised by low levels of employer demand for skills and low levels of participation and attainment in learning.

The nature of the economy in Tyne and Wear makes it particularly vulnerable to decisions made by employers whose headquarters are located outside of the region. Self-employment in Tyne and Wear remains significantly lower than the national average. There are 30,000 self-employed people in Tyne and Wear, accounting for 6.3 per cent of all people in employment compared to 11.4 per cent in England.<sup>5</sup> VAT registration rates in Tyne and Wear have been below the national level since the mid-1990s.<sup>6</sup> Average business survival rates in Tyne and Wear are lower than survival rates in the United Kingdom.<sup>7</sup>

A historical reliance on large employers in traditional industries has not encouraged participation in Further and Higher Education. Tyne and Wear has one of the lowest overall participation rates in learning among 16 year olds in the country and performs poorly against most indicators of educational participation and attainment.<sup>8</sup> The reliance on larger employers has also tended to stifle aspiration and the development of an enterprising and entrepreneurial culture. 35 per cent of employed people in Tyne and Wear work in workplaces with 200 or more employees compared with 30 per cent in England.

Tyne and Wear is home to some world-class employers, with exemplary practices in workforce development. However, of growing concern is a tension between the medium/long-term skills needs of employers in Tyne and Wear and short-term employer reaction to a deepening recession in the manufacturing sector. This is manifest in reductions in the number of apprentices recruited in the riverside industries over recent years despite an acknowledgement that an accelerated flow of skilled recruits is essential for the survival and future success of the sector.

While there are pockets of affluence in Tyne and Wear, social exclusion is a major problem. Tyne and Wear suffers from above average unemployment, which tends to be concentrated in particular communities, and is manifest in high levels of poverty and crime.

<sup>4</sup> *Labour Force Survey, November 2001*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>6</sup> *Office of National Statistics VAT Registrations/De-registrations by Industry, 2000*

<sup>7</sup> *Department of Trade and Industry Business Competitiveness Indicators, 2000*

<sup>8</sup> *Department for Education and Skills*

South Tyneside has the highest unemployment rate among Local Authority districts in the United Kingdom. North Tyneside and Sunderland are also among the worst affected Local Authority districts in terms of unemployment.<sup>9</sup> Sections of the employed population in Tyne and Wear are also at risk of exclusion, particularly those working in unskilled and very low skilled work.<sup>10</sup>

The five Local Authorities rank among the most deprived 25 per cent of areas in England.<sup>11</sup> Levels of deprivation are high across each Authority in Tyne and Wear and particularly in South Tyneside. Newcastle also has very high levels of deprivation concentrated in a relatively small number of wards.

The proportion of the population with low levels of literacy or numeracy is significantly higher in Tyne and Wear than the national average. 18.4 per cent of the working age population of Tyne and Wear have low or very low literacy skills compared with 15 per cent in England. 23.7 per cent of the working age population of Tyne and Wear have low numeracy skills compared with 21 per cent in England.<sup>12</sup>

Calculations based on the latest available data (December 2001) suggest that claimant unemployment in Tyne and Wear would have to fall by about 13,000 people to reach the national rate. Employment growth in Tyne and Wear is likely to stimulate increased commuting by people living outside the area. The consequence of this is that many more jobs would actually need to be created in Tyne and Wear to bring claimant unemployment within the area into line with the national average.<sup>13</sup> Projections suggest that total employment in Tyne and Wear may increase by 1.2 per cent between 2001 and 2006, equating to approximately 7,000 new jobs.<sup>14</sup>

It is estimated that some 80 per cent of the workforce of 2010 are already in employment, underlining the importance of employer commitment to developing the skills of their existing employees.<sup>15</sup> Projections to 2011 show a decline in the number of young people entering the workforce, fewer people of working age and a general increase in the age profile of the workforce in Tyne and Wear.<sup>16</sup> The impact of these trends will vary between sectors and occupations.

The North East fares poorly in its ability to retain its 'best' graduates - those who attain first or upper second-class degrees - compared with other regions in the United Kingdom. Graduates from North East universities who leave the region are most likely to do well in the job market. In contrast, graduates who remain in the region tend to do worse in employment terms than graduates in other regions. Graduates remaining in the North East are less likely to be in full-time employment six months after graduating than their counterparts in other regions. Those who do find work in the North East are less likely to be employed in 'graduate level' jobs than in other regions.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Office of National Statistics *Unemployed Claimant Count, December 2001*

<sup>10</sup> *Labour Force Survey, November 2001*

<sup>11</sup> *Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2000*

<sup>12</sup> *Basic Skills Agency, 1998*

<sup>13</sup> *Calculations by the Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear, based on the Office of National Statistics Unemployed Claimant Count, February 2001*

<sup>14</sup> *Projections derived from Local Economy Forecasting Model*

<sup>15</sup> *National Skills Task Force*

<sup>16</sup> *Tyne and Wear Research and Intelligence Unit*

<sup>17</sup> *North East Graduate Labour Markets 1999-2000, Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 2000*

## Learning and skills needs of employers in Tyne and Wear

Almost 17 per cent of Tyne and Wear employers with more than ten staff, surveyed in November 2000, reported a 'significant gap' between the skills of their existing workforce and those needed to meet business objectives. Around 80 per cent of the employers surveyed reported a need to improve the skills of their workforce.<sup>18</sup>

Employers indicate that key skills, especially those related to dealing with people, are especially important. A significant proportion of employers highlight key skills such as communication, team working and basic computer literacy as needing improvement. Vocational skills and skills linked to new working practices also need improving.<sup>19</sup>

Employers report that skills linked to the introduction of new working practices or new plant and equipment are also becoming significantly more important, reflecting the increasing adoption and rapid development of technology, and its impact on work organisation.<sup>20</sup>

Levels of training provided by Tyne and Wear employers are positive overall, although a number of employers provide no training for either new recruits or existing staff. In line with national findings, employers are more likely to provide on-the-job training than off-the-job training. Small employers are significantly less likely to provide training than their larger counterparts.<sup>21</sup>

The majority of the development opportunities undertaken by employees in Tyne and Wear is roughly equivalent to Level 2 and often relates to key skills training, customer service skills training and training linked to new working practices.<sup>22</sup> This is a reflection of the 'low skills equilibrium', which characterises the North East economy.

However, the Tyne and Wear Employer Survey 2000 also provided some evidence that the needs of employers are moving towards more advanced vocational skills, approximately equivalent to Level 3 and above. The gap between emerging learning and skills needs at Level 3 and training provided by employers, predominantly at Level 2, suggests a need to raise employers' awareness of the importance of additional skills for their long-term business success and to assist them in human resource planning. 27 per cent of Tyne and Wear employers reported that people management skills within their organisation need improving.<sup>23</sup>

There is likely to be a significant 'latent skills gap' amongst the workforce - greater than that implied by the findings of the Tyne and Wear Employer Survey. Latent skills gaps are defined as skills gaps which are not recognised until an organisation tries to improve its position in terms of growth or market, uncovering additional skills needed to enable them to achieve improvements in organisational performance and a need for employers to plan for the future.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *Tyne and Wear Employer Survey 2000, Tyneside 2000*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>20</sup> *Tyne and Wear Employer Survey 2000, Tyneside TEC*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>24</sup> *Skills in England 2001, Policy Research Institute, 2001*

A significant proportion of employers in Tyne and Wear who had recruited young people aged 16 to 24 in the year to November 2000, reported a gap between the skills of their young recruits and those needed to meet business objectives. These skills deficiencies were perceived to be far more significant than among the workforce generally. In particular, employers highlighted the need for improvements in the level of key skills of young recruits, particularly communication skills, as well as improvements in levels of vocational skills.<sup>25</sup>

Around 30 per cent of Tyne and Wear employers with more than ten staff had recruited one or more graduates in the year to November 2000. Medium and large employers were significantly more likely to have recruited a graduate than small employers.<sup>26</sup>

25 per cent of employers who had recruited graduates reported a significant gap between the skills of their graduate recruits and those needed to meet business objectives. Again, key skills - particularly those related to communication - and vocational skills were highlighted as needing improvement.<sup>27</sup>

Less than 10 per cent of Tyne and Wear employers report that their vacancies are hard to fill, compared to 16.5 per cent in England. Of these, about half report that their recruitment difficulties are due to a shortage of the required skills, qualifications or experience in the external labour market.<sup>28</sup>

Almost 75 per cent of vacancies attributed to skills shortages in Tyne and Wear are at Level 3 or above. Nationally, recruitment demand at lower levels is significantly higher than in Tyne and Wear. While skills shortages at Level 4 are comparable, the supply of skills at Level 3 appears to be significantly weaker in Tyne and Wear than in England. Skills shortages at Level 2, conversely, are less intense in Tyne and Wear than in England.<sup>29</sup>

### Attainment and participation

About 7.2 per cent of 16 year olds in Tyne and Wear achieved no GCSE/GNVQ passes in 2001, compared to 5.5 per cent for England.<sup>30</sup>

Achievement of 5 A\* to C, GCSEs (or equivalent) at age 16 in 2000 varied across the five Local Education Authorities in Tyne and Wear from 36.7 per cent to 49.3 per cent. Nationally it is estimated that 50 per cent of young people achieve at this level.<sup>31</sup>

85 per cent of 16 year olds in Tyne and Wear are in further and continuing education and training compared to the national average of 83 per cent.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *Tyne and Wear Employer Survey 2000, Tyneside TEC*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>28</sup> *Employers Skill Survey: Skills, Local Areas and Unemployment, Institute for Employment Research, 2001*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>30</sup> *GCSE/GNVQ and GCE A/AS/Advanced GNVQ Results for Young People In England, 2000/01, DfES Statistical First Release, SFR 45/2001*

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid (Provisional Statistics)*

<sup>32</sup> *Statistics of Education: Participation in Education and Training by Young People Aged 16 and 17 in each Local Area and Region, England, 1995/96 to 1999/00, DfES Statistical Bulletin SB14/2001, 2001.*

17.4 per cent of 16 year old (Year 11) school leavers in June 2000 were either unemployed or not in education or training (13 per cent were unemployed and 4.4 per cent were categorised 'unknown').<sup>33</sup>

In the North East young men are less likely to participate in full time education than young women. 69 per cent of 16 year old females participate in full time education compared to 59 per cent of males.<sup>34</sup>

Participation in Government Supported Training among 16-year-old males is higher than among females (16 per cent compared to 12 per cent).<sup>35</sup>

16 and 17 year olds in Tyne and Wear are more likely to be attracted to the vocational route than to the academic route.

52.9 per cent of Year 13 school leavers in 1999 progressed from sixth forms and Further Education to Higher Education.<sup>36</sup> (i.e. over 50 per cent of those young people who remain in full time education for the two years immediately following post-compulsory education progress to Higher Education).

40.3 per cent of people of working age in Tyne and Wear have achieved a Level 3 qualification, compared to 42.5 per cent in England.<sup>37</sup>

19.8 per cent have achieved a Level 4 qualification, compared to 23.7 per cent of all working age people in England.<sup>38</sup>

## > 3. Learning Providers

Currently the Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear delivers its programmes and operations through:

- > Three Further Education Colleges;
- > Two Further Education Colleges operating within a Tertiary system;
- > One Sixth Form College;
- > Two Specialist Colleges (catering for the needs of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities);
- > One Higher Education Institution;
- > Sixty three Work Based Learning Providers;
- > Five Local Authority Adult and Community Learning Networks; and
- > Thirty two schools with sixth forms.

<sup>33</sup> *Tyneside Careers/City of Sunderland Careers, cited in Tyne and Wear Economic Assessment 2001, Tyneside TEC/Sunderland City Tec.*

<sup>34</sup> *Statistics of Education: Participation in Education and Training by Young People Aged 16 and 17 in each Local Area and Region, England, 1995/96 to 1999/00, DfES Statistical Bulletin SB14/2001, 2001*

<sup>35</sup> *Statistics of Education: Participation in Education and Training by Young People Aged 16 and 17 in each Local Area and Region, England, 1994/95 to 1998/99, DfES Statistical Bulletin 11/2000, December 2000*

<sup>36</sup> *Tyneside Careers/City of Sunderland Careers, cited in Tyne and Wear Economic Assessment 2001, Tyneside TEC/Sunderland City Tec.*

<sup>37</sup> *Labour Force Survey, November 2000*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*



## > 4. The Challenges

The issues outlined above reinforce the need for a comprehensive and integrated approach by the Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear.

This three-year strategy is founded on that principle. It addresses the need to increase rates of participation and attainment in learning by young people and adults, strengthen employer engagement in workforce development, and tackle the cultural problems associated with low levels of aspiration and the tendency to undervalue learning.

There is a need to:

- > Increase participation and attainment at all levels. Indicators show that Tyne and Wear lags behind in educational attainment at all levels within the compulsory education sector, in post-16 learning, including Higher Education, and throughout the workforce. A co-ordinated plan of action is required to address this issue.
- > Raise individual aspirations. One of the greatest challenges for the Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear is to address a legacy of low aspiration among individuals and organisations. This requires us to position learning as a means of overcoming this legacy, thereby improving the social and economic well-being of Tyne and Wear.
- > Ensure that everyone has opportunities to participate in learning and overcome barriers for particular groups of learners. The danger of exclusion from the labour market due to low levels of attainment or low levels of skills, or outdated skills, is a significant problem in Tyne and Wear. We must ensure that everyone, whether in employment or preparing for or seeking to enter work, has access to appropriate Information, Advice and Guidance.
- > Encourage employers to take a longer-term view of learning and skills needs to minimise skills gaps and shortages. Action is required to secure longer-term commitment by employers to workforce development and minimise the danger of existing skills gaps emerging as crises in the medium to longer-term.
- > Develop skills for the growth and diversification of the economy in Tyne and Wear. Our analysis shows that the economy of Tyne and Wear performs poorly against most indicators. A key task for the Learning and Skills Council is to work with partners to help diversify the economy.

## > 5. Addressing The Challenges

This section describes how we intend to meet the challenges in Tyne and Wear. It sets out seven strategic objectives.

Objectives one to five are identical to the national objectives of the Learning and Skills Council:

1. Extending participation in learning;
2. Increasing the engagement of employers in workforce development;
3. Raising the achievement of young people;
4. Raising the achievement of adults; and
5. Raising the quality of learning provision.

In each case we express the contribution that we will make towards achieving the objectives in the context of Tyne and Wear.

Objectives six and seven have been determined and developed locally:

6. Developing skills to meet the needs of the local economy, safeguarding existing jobs and responding to structural changes in the labour market; and
7. Developing skills to increase levels of enterprise, entrepreneurship and self-employment.

We believe these reflect the particular characteristics and challenges in Tyne and Wear. Under each of the seven strategic objectives we present a brief outline of the rationale for their inclusion and the national and local targets by which we will measure progress. The priorities for action which follow are the principal activities we will undertake to address learning and skills needs in Tyne and Wear. Finally we set out some of the operational implications of these objectives and priorities for action, which we will address during 2002 to 2003. These will be built upon and developed in subsequent years. In many cases these include establishing a baseline position to enable us to set realistic targets for achievement in subsequent years.

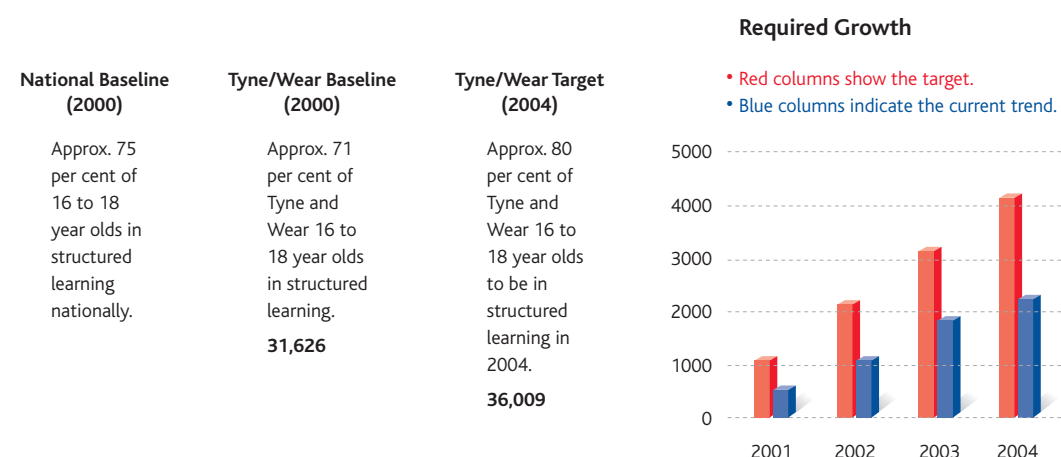
## Strategic Objective 1: Extending participation in learning.

This objective applies to all learners and potential learners, young people and adults in Tyne and Wear, whatever their circumstances and characteristics.

Some of the priorities for action are general and apply to all those who live and work in the area, others are targeted in ways that are needed to address particular inequalities, priorities and needs. We will work with a range of partners to address this objective, among them employers, the TUC, the Information, Advice and Guidance Partnership, Connexions Tyne and Wear, Ufi/Learndirect, and JobCentre Plus (as part of the Department for Work and Pensions, JobCentre Plus brings together the Employment Service, which runs Jobcentres, and those parts of the Benefits Agency which provide services to people of working age with effect from April 2002).

**Our objective is to extend participation in learning by 5 per cent by 2005. Within this we will aim to make progress towards the National Learning Target to increase participation by 16 to 18 year olds. The national and local targets are shown in the table below. The bar chart shows the target growth for Tyne and Wear alongside current trends.**

### 80 per cent of 16 to 18 year olds in England to be in structured learning by 2004.



### Priorities for action

#### 1.1 Addressing the needs of young people between 16 and 19 years old who are not currently participating in any form of learning or who are at risk of dropping out.

The Learning Gateway, including the Life Skills programme, will provide support to young people aged between 16 and 19 who are disengaged from learning and the labour market. We will expand and develop this type of provision and thereby address the needs of young people leaving care, ex-offenders, lone parents and others in circumstances that make it hard to participate, continue and achieve in learning.

We will work with Connexions Tyne and Wear and other partners to do this, including helping to raise standards through investing in staff development. We will work jointly with schools, colleges, providers, Connexions Tyne and Wear, Social Services departments, voluntary sector organisations and other partners to identify the young people and to develop suitable provision to enable them to participate and remain in learning until they achieve a Level 2 qualification or equivalent.

Our targets are:

- > To achieve full implementation of a range of professional delivery methods to meet the needs of particular disadvantaged groups, such as young offenders, care leavers and substance misusers, by December 2003.
- > To reduce the percentage of 16 to 19 year olds who are not in learning (many of whom are young men) from the local baseline in 2000 of 17.4 per cent<sup>39</sup> to 12 per cent by December 2002 and to reduce it to 7 per cent by March 2004.
- > To increase the number of young people progressing to mainstream provision from Life Skills by 8 per cent by March 2004.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Developing robust partnerships with key organisations including the Connexions Tyne and Wear Personal Advisor Network, Youth Offending Team and Social Services departments and drawing on expertise within the voluntary sector.
- > Establishing 'Drop-in Centres' in partnership with Connexions Tyne and Wear.
- > Developing direct intervention strategies to reach the hardest to help with effective outreach work.
- > Beginning to implement intensive support structures in partnership with Connexions Tyne and Wear to prevent unnecessary dropout.
- > Developing more flexible approaches to progression with all Learning Providers.
- > Exploring the value of creating a new type of learning experience designed to appeal directly to learners aged 14 and over and particularly to those learners who are at greatest risk of dropping out of learning or failing to progress.
- > Arranging staff development events for providers and support organisations.

#### 1.2 Widening participation in learning by adults.

We will ensure that participation in learning is encouraged and facilitated by making available provision, at all levels, that is relevant, accessible and of high quality. This will include learning through a variety of media, including information and communications technology, in a range of formal and informal settings (such as the workplace, neighbourhood and community), and accompanied by support services, for example, childcare.

<sup>39</sup> This figure is based on data relating to 16 year old school leavers in June 2000.

We will also develop and implement a coherent approach to the delivery and funding of Information, Advice and Guidance services through a single network. We will use it to identify and help overcome barriers to participation. We will widen access to it, underpin it with comprehensive and up to date information on local learning and employment opportunities and the practical support available to people in learning in a range of different circumstances. We will develop the capacity of all deliverers of Information, Advice and Guidance services, and increase awareness of the routes through which people can access them.

To encourage participation in learning by people in employment we will work closely with employers, Tyne and Wear Small Business Service and JobCentre Plus and support the development of Union Learning Representatives and Learning Champions in the workplace. Working with Local Education Authorities, the National Institute for Adult Continuing Education and other agencies, we will support family learning and innovative, community based approaches to increasing participation by adults in learning. We will also support programmes that can provide new routes to Further and Higher Education. Where appropriate we will co-ordinate these with the Universities and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Establishing a coherent, integrated Widening Participation Strategy across Tyne and Wear, including Further Education, Adult and Community Learning, JobCentre Plus programmes and employer-based provision.
- > Disseminating good practice among learning providers in maximising progression from access and short courses, Bite Size Learning and non-vocational learning.
- > Introducing a single contract for the delivery of Information, Advice and Guidance, delivering at least 3,800 advice sessions and building the capacity of the guidance network by using non-core funding to train new guidance staff.
- > Establishing effective mechanisms for the referral of adults with literacy and numeracy skills needs to the Skills for Life Provider Network.

### 1.3 Improving participation by those who are at a disadvantage or who are in a group that is under-represented in learning.

Through our Equality of Opportunity Strategy we will seek to eliminate inequality in participation in learning by people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, men and women, people in the black and minority ethnic communities, and people over 50 years old. We will focus on increasing the proportion of women in part-time employment who are participating in learning. We will improve our understanding of the barriers to participation in learning by people in the black and ethnic minority communities and work with providers and community groups to overcome them. We will increase participation in learning by people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. We will work with the five Local Strategic Partnerships in Tyne and Wear to build the capacity of neighbourhoods and disadvantaged communities and to support learning for those who are the hardest to reach. We will also improve participation by people with low levels of skills and qualifications who are now in the workforce.

Our targets are:

- > To improve participation in learning by young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities by 2 per cent by August 2004.
- > To increase participation by young women in Advanced Modern Apprenticeships by 2.5 per cent by August 2004.
- > To increase participation by young women in Advanced Modern Apprenticeships in Engineering Manufacturing by 2 per cent by August 2004.
- > To increase participation by young men in Advanced Modern Apprenticeships in the caring occupations by 2 per cent by August 2004.
- > To improve the participation of young people in black and minority ethnic communities in learning, compared to young white people, by 2 per cent by August 2004.
- > Working with regional partners to explore and address the specific needs of refugees and asylum seekers.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Delivering awareness-raising events to providers on the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.
- > Requiring all providers to complete an Access Audit of their premises and working with them to make the necessary improvements to enable them to meet statutory requirements.
- > Increasing the number of bi-lingual paraprofessionals to provide educational support services to people from ethnic minority communities whose first language is not English and evaluating the impact of this on participation in learning.
- > Investigating the needs of older learners and progression routes currently available to them.
- > Ensuring that the Community and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies being developed by the Local Strategic Partnerships in Tyne and Wear reflect the contribution that participation and attainment in learning can make to achieving social inclusion.
- > Achieving the right level of integration between the Learning and Skills Council's plans and Community and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategies and the work of the New Deal for the Communities.
- > Accessing the new Neighbourhood Renewal funds available to the Learning and Skills Council nationally.

### 1.4 Removing barriers to learning.

We will remove barriers to participation by young people to ensure that all are enabled to fulfil their entitlement to learning in Learning and Skills Council funded provision.

For example, we will ensure that all 16 to 19 year olds have access to learning opportunities without having to pay registration, tuition or examination fees. We will remove barriers to learning by adults, for example, by exploring how those who are currently ineligible for financial support to meet the costs associated with learning (such as registration and exam fees) may be helped. We will explore the options available for empowering learners to exercise greater choice about how they can identify and meet their learning needs and for incentivising learners to encourage participation, attainment and progression. Financial barriers may exist for employed people on low incomes as well as those not in work. We will therefore explore how employees on low pay, many of whom will be in low or unskilled occupations, may be assisted to retrain or up-skill.

We recognise that for some individuals and employers the requirement to study for a whole qualification may itself be a barrier. We also acknowledge that learning which does not lead to a full, recognised qualification can often be the first small step back into learning and that useful skills and competencies are acquired in this way. We will therefore support learning that does not lead to a full, recognised qualification, where it is appropriate to do so.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Translating the priorities and actions outlined in the Learning and Skills Council's National Workforce Development Strategy into action within Tyne and Wear.
- > Bidding to implement proposed new Government schemes, including the Pre-Budget Report pilots, designed to incentivise learners, to address basic skills needs and achieve Level 2 qualifications.
- > Investigating the potential to build on the Educational Maintenance Allowance scheme, currently being piloted in some parts of Tyne and Wear, by considering how it can be successfully extended and developed across the whole area, and to other age groups, and presenting the case to the Department for Education and Skills.
- > Working with One NorthEast, and using the Local Initiatives Fund, to pilot initiatives to incentivise learners.
- > Implementing changes to Work Based Learning Allowances and Expenses policy within Learning Provider Agreements.
- > Extending the pilot of the Work Based Learning Access Fund by re-contracting within five Local Authority areas.
- > Contributing to the Transport Development Pathfinder Initiative in South Tyneside and Newcastle.
- > Applying European Social Funds through Co-financing to support innovative delivery mechanisms designed to address specific barriers to participation.

### 1.5 Increasing the number of learners able to participate in Higher Education.

We will work with partners to develop coherent progression from Learning and Skills Council funded provision to Higher Education and we will support activities designed to widen participation in Higher Education by young people and adults in communities where such a tradition does not exist.

We will join with other Learning and Skills Councils in the North East in working with the Higher Education Funding Council for England and the region's universities to implement the policy agenda of 'Partnerships for Progression', to raise standards and widen participation.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Providing financial and other support to the Gifted and Talented and Widening Participation strands of the Excellence Challenge Partnerships' work.
- > Supporting the development of routes to Higher Education from Learning and Skills Council funded provision and opportunities for progression to Higher Education, including from learning in the workplace.
- > Strengthening existing partnerships between our providers and local universities.
- > Working with the Further and Higher Education sectors to embed the new national credit framework.

### 1.6 Promoting the benefits of learning.

We will develop and promote a culture in which learning is valued for its own sake and is regarded as essential, enjoyable and credible. We will undertake work that will help understand the characteristics of non-learners and we will target promotional activity at defined groups of non-learners and learners. For example we will target young people and adults who lack skills for life (basic skills). We will encourage the uptake of appropriate learning and raise awareness of the availability of learning opportunities, including where and how to access them. We will also raise awareness of people now in the workforce of the need to constantly review and update their skills and knowledge. We will promote the benefits of learning to employers and encourage them to develop and implement strategies for workforce development based on their current and future learning and skills needs.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Developing a comprehensive local marketing strategy (following completion of the national marketing strategy), running two marketing campaigns aimed at young people, and publishing a series of case studies to promote learning in the workplace.

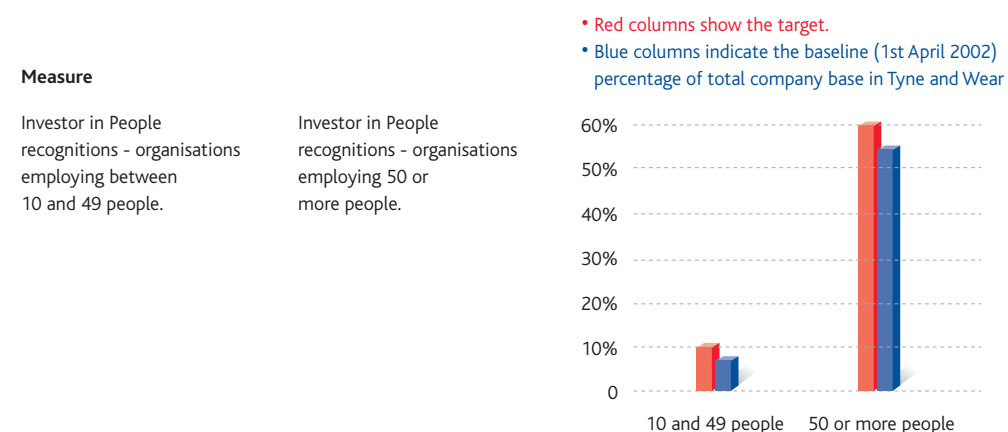
## Strategic Objective 2: Increasing the engagement of employers in workforce development.

Insufficient demand from employers for higher level skills and a gap in the skills of the existing workforce require us to increase the involvement of employers in workforce development. The involvement of employers is also crucial to informing and increasing the quality, quantity and relevance of learning provision funded by the Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear.

The majority of learning takes place, often informally, in the workplace. We will assist employers to maximise the return on their investment in developing their people. The Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear will work in partnership with Tyne and Wear Small Business Service and employers' organisations and representative bodies to engage employers of all sizes and across all sectors, in workforce development. An underlying principle for our involvement in workforce development is that intervention is required in those circumstances where market failure can be clearly demonstrated. Our response will be appropriate and in proportion to the identified need and the economic benefits to be gained from addressing it.

The Learning and Skills Council will engage directly with employers with more than 250 staff and those in the public, voluntary and community sectors. Engagement with employers of fewer than 250 staff will be through Tyne and Wear Small Business Service and its network. The Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear will monitor the delivery of services to smaller companies through the contract with Tyne and Wear Small Business Service. The portfolio of advice and assistance available from the Learning and Skills Council and Tyne and Wear Small Business Service spans a wide range of workforce development issues, including basic skills in the workplace, NVQs, training of trainers and assessors in the workplace, learning representatives and in-house learning resource centres' key-worker development, management and leadership development, European Framework for Quality Management and Investors in People and advice about work-life balance and equal opportunities in the workplace.

**Our objective is to increase uptake of the Investors in People standard by 31 March 2005, as follows:**



### Priorities for action

#### 2.1 Improving our understanding of employers' skill needs and satisfaction with learning provision.

Building on the analysis of learning and skills needs undertaken in our first year, and working with the Tyne and Wear Small Business Service, National Training Organisations and other partners, we will collect and use 'soft' intelligence about employers' skill needs and 'hard' information from employer surveys. We will also develop approaches to looking at future skills needs. We will use this information to inform our strategic role in purchasing learning provision which is responsive to employer needs and equips individuals with the skills required in the labour market. We will also collect feedback from employers on their satisfaction with Learning and Skills Council funded provision and use this to influence and shape it. We will share this information with employer bodies and partners, including through the Skills Observatory, being developed by One NorthEast, and the Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action, to develop a common understanding of skill needs in Tyne and Wear.

Our target is to contact at least 200 organisations in Tyne and Wear who have more than 250 employees by 31 March 2005.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Collecting labour market information in line with a format agreed with Tyne and Wear Small Business Service and inputting the results to a purpose made 'client management system'.
- > Commissioning Tyne and Wear Small Business Service to assess the skills and workforce development needs of 1,000 Small and Medium Enterprises, in the context of their wider business objectives.
- > Using the information gathered from the survey above (for example, views on the quality of existing training provision) to inform future provision and identify priorities for action.
- > Defining and gathering information about additional measures of employer engagement in workforce development to inform our planning processes, including the development of Sector Skills Action Plans.
- > Developing longer term plans to undertake surveys on an annual basis to monitor progress against the benchmarks established in 2002.

#### 2.2 Promoting the benefits of employer investment in workforce development and the value of learning.

We will work with employers and Union Learning Representatives in Tyne and Wear to increase their understanding of the value of learning at all levels from basic skills, learning at Level 2, through to higher level skills and management and professional development. This will encompass promoting the business benefits of learning, through the adoption of the Investors in People standard. It will also include highlighting the advantages of supporting participation in non-vocational learning.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Translating the priorities and actions outlined in the Learning and Skills Council's National Workforce Development Strategy into action within Tyne and Wear.
- > Bidding to implement proposed new Government schemes, including the Pre-Budget Report pilots, designed to increase employer engagement in learning and incentivise learners to achieve Level 2 qualifications.
- > Developing and supporting learning representatives in the workplace by providing financial assistance, in partnership with the Northern TUC and other North East Local Learning and Skills Councils, for a North East Union 'Learning for All' fund.
- > Developing promotional literature and holding events for employers to demonstrate the business benefits of investment in people. These will be co-sponsored and hosted by the Tyne and Wear Small Business Service.
- > Raising employers' awareness and understanding of the impact of poor literacy and numeracy on business performance, including holding six workshops for employers.
- > Developing 'employer workforce development forums', if they do not already exist within a sector.
- > Developing diagnostic tools, customised to the circumstances of employers in a particular sector, to assist in measuring the value of learning and development.
- > Raising employers' awareness of the value of work-based learning for young people and their obligation to provide young people with time off for study.

### 2.3 Providing information, advice and brokerage services to employers on all aspects of workforce development.

Working with the Tyne and Wear Small Business Service we will provide information, advice and sign-posting and, where appropriate, financial support to employers on all aspects of skill development from skills for life (basic skills) to higher level technical and management skills.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Developing a shared 'offer' of workforce development information and services and a co-ordinated approach to communicating and delivering this to employers in Tyne and Wear. The initial focus will be on 'joining up' activities of the Learning and Skills Council, Tyne and Wear Small Business Service and JobCentre Plus.
- > Continuously updating the 'offer' to employers, taking account of new initiatives or forms of support relating to workforce development, including activities arising from the development and implementation of sector or cluster action plans.
- > Extending the single telephone 'hotline', already established by the Learning and Skills Council and Tyne and Wear Small Business Service in relation to Investors in People, to other aspects of support for workforce development.
- > Cementing the relationship between the Learning and Skills Council and Tyne and Wear Small Business Service through two-way secondments of staff.

### 2.4 Supporting employers to build their own capacity for workforce development.

Our aspiration is to increase employer demand for learning and skill development, and particularly for higher levels of skills, by building employers' capacity to understand, articulate and address the learning and skills needs of the workforce. This will involve supporting employers to maximise the value of informal learning in the workplace, as well as more formal learning leading to accreditation. The Investors in People standard and support for management and leadership development are the main routes through which we will boost employer capacity. We will increase penetration rates for the uptake of the Investors in People standard among employers. Other measures will include assistance with developing the skills of trainers and assessors, learning representatives and learning champions in the workplace, establishing in-company learning centres, and developing adult and graduate apprenticeships.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Identifying those employers who might benefit most from advice and assistance to progress towards Investors in People recognition.
- > Providing targeted financial support for management and leadership development in Small and Medium Enterprises and larger companies who are working towards recognition or retention of the Investors in People standard.
- > Commissioning a bespoke 'Build a Better Business' programme for not-for-profit organisations, which will promote workforce development and the Investors in People standard.
- > Co-sponsoring and hosting with the Tyne and Wear Small Business Service a minimum of one development programme per year for the Investors in People Champions and internal assessors.
- > Researching, in partnership with Tyne and Wear Small Business Service and JobCentre Plus, the need for a bespoke 'toolkit' to assist Small and Medium Enterprises in the recruitment, selection, induction and subsequent workforce development process, based on occupational standards.

### 2.5 Developing sector skills action plans.

Building on pilot work which began in 2001 we will develop sector plans in the Health and Social Care and Construction sectors, and in the Voluntary and Community sectors, in consultation with employers, and taking account of the emerging Sector Skills Councils. The plans will provide a framework to strengthen the capacity of employers, to increase the number participating in learning and to plan the provision of learning with employers, providers and intermediary organisations. They will also provide a mechanism for making the best use of all the resources (public and private) available to support the development of the workforce in Tyne and Wear and take account of the needs of sectors across the North East region. Sector plans will provide a platform for gathering intelligence and focusing a wide range of the Learning and Skills Council's resources and activities including:

- > Contracting with work-based learning providers;
- > Ensuring the relevance of Further Education provision to sector needs;

- > Informing the development of Centres of Vocational Excellence;
- > Focusing the allocation of Local Initiative and European Single Programme funding and funds available from One NorthEast;
- > Ensuring the effective use of the Standards Fund; and
- > Supporting the engagement of learners and employers in training and education.

Plans will be developed in those sectors, which employ a significant number of people in Tyne and Wear and are expected to continue to do so, which exhibit the potential for significant economic growth and have a relatively high level of demand for skills as outlined by One NorthEast, or which play a key supporting role in relation to other sectors. This strand of our work will link to the Framework For Regional Employment and Skills Action led by One NorthEast, and its Cluster Development Strategy.

Our target is to develop comprehensive action plans for at least nine sectors by 31 March 2005.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Ensuring a strategic and co-ordinated approach between local Learning and Skills Councils and key sectoral partners at local, regional and national level in the development and implementation of the plans.
- > Building and maintaining effective, professional relationships with representatives of a wide range of organisations, who have a contribution to make to the development or implementation of sector skills action plans.
- > Developing and co-ordinating strategies for the on-going collection of information and the sharing of intelligence and data relating to learning and skills needs in order to inform strategic responses.
- > Establishing short, medium and long-term priorities for action, which will ensure sufficient people have the skills required to meet the needs of the key sectors.
- > Working with partners to identify, develop and implement a range of projects and initiatives to address workforce development priorities and support the achievement of local targets and Learning and Skills Council key strategic priorities.

## 2.6 Engaging employers in education-business link activities.

We will work with the Tyne and Wear Education Business Link Organisation and Connexions Tyne and Wear to involve more employers in education-business activities. Our aim is to engage more employers in building pathways for progression for 14 to 19 year olds, increase the volume and range of work-experience and 'taster' opportunities for young people and to support the development of teachers by securing more opportunities for placements with employers. Our targets are to increase employer engagement in activities with schools aimed at building pathways for progression for 14 to 19 year olds by 5 per cent by 2004 and to increase the volume of opportunities for teacher placements with employers by 5 per cent by 2004.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Including education-business link activities as an element in the sector planning process - with particular emphasis on the involvement of employers in building pathways for progression from 14 to 19.
- > Raising employers' awareness of the benefits of collaboration with educational institutions and the mechanisms for doing so.

## 2.7 Exploring incentives to increase employer engagement in learning.

We will investigate the impact that financial incentives, coupled with access to information and advice on workforce development, can have on increasing employer engagement in learning and explore how best these can be implemented. The focus will be upon providing solutions to employers' workforce development problems, which are tailored to meet their business needs.

Our target is that at least 350 employers will benefit directly from this assistance by 31 March 2005.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Offering financial incentives to employers to gain and retain Investors in People recognition and thus encourage the adoption of a framework for effectively recognising, defining and addressing all workplace learning needs.
- > Translating the priorities and actions outlined in the Learning and Skills Council's National Workforce Development Strategy into action within Tyne and Wear.
- > Working collaboratively with the Tyne and Wear Small Business Service to test new and innovative approaches to engaging employers in workforce development, particularly in relation to tackling basic and low skills in the workplace.
- > Implementing Small Firms Development Accounts.
- > Using a variety of funding mechanisms for taking this priority forward including Learning and Skills Council national pilot programmes, Local Initiatives Fund, European Co-financing and, subject to agreement with One NorthEast and partners in the TyneWear Partnership, Single Programme funding.

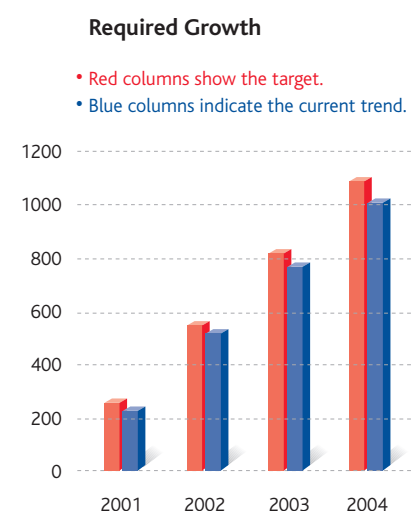
## Strategic Objective 3: Raising the achievement of young people.

Our objective is to raise the achievement of all young people, irrespective of their level of achievement in learning before reaching the age of 16, and whatever their chosen pathway. We will secure provision that offers maximum added value in terms of achievement in learning for all young people. We will plan strategically and secure provision for 16 to 19 year olds that offers choice and progression opportunities, is accessible, high quality and relevant to the needs of the labour market and represents value for money. Area Wide Inspections of provision for 16 to 19 year olds in each of the five boroughs will have been completed by December 2002. The reports and the action plans which follow are fundamental to our strategy for raising the achievement of young people.

**Our objective is to raise overall achievement of young people by 5 per cent by 2005.**

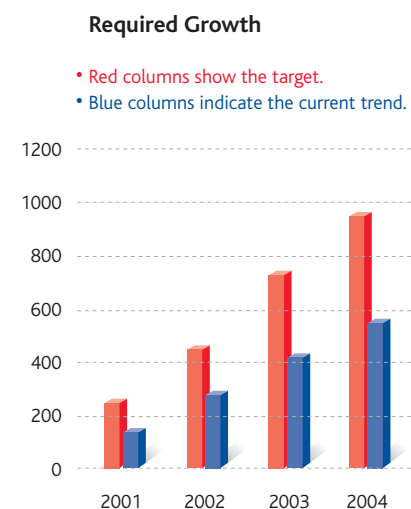
### 85 per cent of 19 year olds in England to achieve Level 2 or equivalent.

| National Baseline (2000)  | Tyne/Wear Baseline (2000)   | Tyne/Wear Target (2004)  |
|---|---|--|
| Approx. 75 per cent of 19 year olds achieving Level 2 nationally. | Approx. 69 per cent of Tyne and Wear 19 year olds achieving Level 2.<br><b>10,582</b> | Approx. 73 per cent of Tyne and Wear 19 year olds to achieve Level 2 in 2004.<br><b>11,674</b> |



### 55 per cent of 19 year olds in England to achieve Level 3 or equivalent in 2004.

| National Baseline (2000)                                       | Tyne/Wear Baseline (2000)  | Tyne/Wear Target (2004)   |
|--|--|---|
| Approx. 51 per cent of 19 year olds achieving NVQ3 nationally. | Approx. 37 per cent of Tyne and Wear 19 year olds achieving Level 3.<br><b>5,630</b> | Approx. 41 per cent of Tyne and Wear 19 year olds to achieve Level 3 in 2004.<br><b>6,519</b> |



## Priorities for action

### 3.1 Increasing the number of young people achieving a Level 2 qualification.

A qualification at Level 2 represents the minimum threshold for entry to the labour market. We will therefore seek to ensure that all young people who have the potential to do so achieve at least a Level 2 qualification. Annual numerical targets for Level 2 achievement are highlighted within the introduction to this section. We are currently undertaking a range of pilot activities across post-16 learning provision focused on Level 2 achievement.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Continuing the developmental work begun with the Level 2 project in 2001 to 2002. This encompasses a range of activities including support for providers to increase pastoral care for poor attendees and disaffected young people, following up students leaving for employment to ensure completion of studies, supporting young people to 'upgrade' to five GCSEs at A\* to C or equivalent, and accrediting Level 2 route to Level 3 in Advanced Modern Apprenticeships.
- > Evaluating the impact of this work after the Autumn Labour Force Survey results are known, applying the most successful elements more widely and using the information to inform the development of our longer-term strategy.

### 3.2 Increasing the numbers of young people staying in learning until 19 and making the appropriate choice of learning pathway at 16.

Together with partners we will improve the arrangements for transition from compulsory to post-compulsory learning. Working with schools, Connexions Tyne and Wear, the Tyne and Wear Education Business Link Organisation and through the Local Strategic Partnerships, we will raise awareness of the range of learning and employment opportunities and provide information about the labour market. The absence of high quality, timely and impartial information can cause learners to make the wrong decision and subsequently to become disengaged from learning altogether. This can have the effect of disrupting the planning of provision and wasting valuable resources.

We will work closely with Connexions Tyne and Wear to address this priority. We will ensure that young people have access to up-to-date, comprehensive information about all the learning routes available to them at the end of compulsory education. We will help organisations to work collaboratively where this would be to the advantage of learners and potential learners. We will support activity designed to fill gaps between phases of learning so that momentum is maintained and those who have been difficult to engage are able to stay in learning. We will support the development of a coherent 14 to 19 phase in learning, one part of which is the predominantly vocational route. Subject to the views of our partners, and the outcome of the consultation on the Government's Green Paper, '14 to 19: Extending Opportunities, Raising Standards', we would be interested in piloting new forms of collaboration among different types of provider.



In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Establishing a detailed Memorandum of Understanding with Connexions Tyne and Wear setting out our respective responsibilities and targets by July 2002.
- > Delivering ten awareness-raising sessions about information and learning routes to Connexions referral staff.
- > Delivering fifty workshops at local schools and colleges to raise awareness of vocational learning opportunities post-16.
- > Supporting the Learning Partnerships and Connexions Tyne and Wear to provide coherent web-based access to information about all Tyne and Wear learning opportunities at age 16.
- > Ensuring that every Year 11 pupil receives a copy of a Local Learner Provider prospectus.
- > Undertaking two marketing campaigns, which aim to promote the full range of learning opportunities to young people in preparation for decisions at key transition points.
- > Providing partner organisations with up-to-date information about the Tyne and Wear labour market.
- > Developing innovative ways of addressing the demand by many young people for vocational and work-based learning opportunities and increasing the level of employer engagement in this phase of learning. This will include evaluating the outcomes of learner incentives piloted under the 'Raising of Level 2 Achievement Initiative' and embedding these where appropriate.
- > Supporting the 14 to 16 'increased flexibility pilot projects' by working closely with the Learning and Skills Development Agency, the Department for Education and Skills and local providers.

### 3.3 Increasing the numbers of young people achieving a Level 3 qualification.

We will encourage and support measures that enable young people to succeed in learning at the highest level of which they are capable whatever their chosen pathway. We will promote learning for the most gifted and talented young people in Tyne and Wear and we expect to see their demand for Higher Education rising significantly. We will increase the number of 19 year olds achieving a Level 3 qualification and progressing to Higher Education. This will make a direct contribution to the Government's target for 2010 of 50 per cent of young people entering Higher Education by the time they are thirty.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Supporting the highest achievers in the Gifted and Talented strand of Excellence Challenge.

- > Taking an active part along with the Department for Education and Skills in evaluating Excellence Challenge initiatives and embedding and applying the lessons learned from them more widely.
- > Increasing the number of young people that complete the work-based learning framework, focusing in particular on completion of the key skills element of their programme.
- > Identifying, spreading and promoting best practice in improving added value.
- > Supporting the implementation of individual learning programmes (as described in the White Paper, 'Schools Achieving Success').
- > Evaluating the effectiveness of activities piloted under the 'Raising of Level 2 Achievement Initiative' with a view to extending the delivery of these into Level 3 programmes.
- > Promoting attainment in Advanced Modern Apprenticeships as an entry route to Higher Education.

### 3.4 Supporting the basic skills needs of those aged 16 to 18.

Our current estimates are that approximately 25 per cent of young people may require support to improve their basic skills. We will build on work now in progress to understand precisely the needs of this group, including those following an academic learning programme. This action will contribute towards achievement of the adult skills for life target (see paragraph 4.1).

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Bidding to implement proposed new Government schemes, including the Pre-Budget Report pilots.
- > Assessing the adequacy of provision and setting out a detailed approach in our basic skills delivery plan.

### 3.5 Eliminating inequality in achievement by young men and young women, people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those without, and people in the black and ethnic minority communities.

One of the aspects we will focus on will be increasing the proportion of young women completing Advanced Modern Apprenticeship programmes and achieving their learning aims. We will also take action to support and encourage young men to achieve.

Our targets are to narrow the gap in achievement between young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those without by 2 per cent by August 2004, and to narrow the gap in achievement between young people in the black and minority ethnic community and young white people by 2 per cent by August 2004. We will enable learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with special educational needs to achieve their potential.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

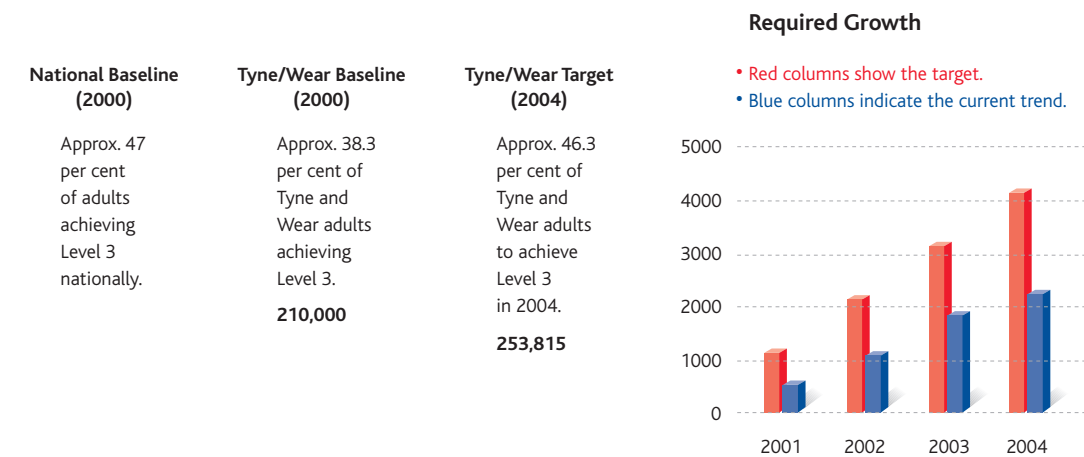
- > Researching under-achievement and non-completion of learning programmes by young men.
- > Examining the extent to which the needs of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with special educational needs can be better met, for example by developing provision in Tyne and Wear to cater for those who currently have to leave the area to access specialist facilities.
- > Implementing a common approach to transition planning between pre and post-16 learning for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- > Requiring work-based learning providers to produce Disability Statements as part of their planning process and addressing gaps in provision identified by this process.
- > Undertaking an end of year financial review of the local and national funding available for specialist equipment.
- > Evaluating the effectiveness of the work-based learning funding for learners with additional social or learning needs and making changes where required.
- > Supporting a bid for Transport Development Initiative funding to improve the transport arrangements for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## Strategic Objective 4: Raising the achievement of adults.

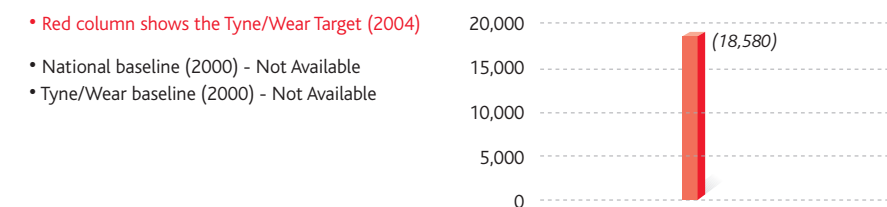
Our aim is to raise the achievement of all adults in Tyne and Wear. Achievement is not only measured by an increase in the number of people holding formal qualifications. We will support people to achieve learning goals that are appropriate to them in terms of the level, type, breadth and content of learning. For some people achievement will be reflected in taking the first steps in returning to learning. For many people now in the workforce, achievement will be seen in the context of adding to their existing skills and knowledge to maintain their employability. For others learning will be associated with continuous professional development or the acquisition or updating of management or higher level skills. We will support lateral achievement and progression in learning as well as assisting people to achieve higher levels of skills and qualifications. In addressing this strategic objective we will work with a range of partners including JobCentre Plus, colleges, the Higher Education sector, Local Strategic Partnerships, Local Authorities and others.

**Our target is to raise the overall achievement levels of adults by 8 per cent by 2005.**

### 52 per cent of adults in England to achieve Level 3 or equivalent in 2004.



### Raise literacy and numeracy levels of 750,000 adults in England by 2004



## Priorities for action

### 4.1 Increasing the number of adults (from the end of compulsory education) with skills for life (basic skills).

We will build the capacity of the learning infrastructure by expanding the total number of trainers and by increasing their uptake of skills for life teaching qualifications. In particular, we will increase capacity to deliver basic skills in the workplace, in the community, in neighbourhood settings and through family learning. We will improve understanding of the key issues for basic skills in Tyne and Wear and secure the commitment of partners to a co-ordinated, strategic approach to the planning, management and delivery of skills for life. We will support new ways of delivering learning including in the workplace, community and neighbourhood settings and of overcoming the barriers that prevent many from taking up opportunities to acquire skills for life. Finally, we will continue to refine our understanding of patterns of provision, demand and potential demand. Our approach is set out in greater detail in a 'Skills for Life' delivery plan for Tyne and Wear which addresses issues we have identified through the Basic Skills Pathfinder Project.

Our target is to increase the pool of trained basic skills tutors by working with providers to double the capacity of provision by 2004.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Enhancing the skills of basic skills tutors by encouraging and supporting the use of City and Guilds 9285 using the Standards Fund.
- > Enhancing the quality of basic skills provision in the area by supporting the achievement of the Basic Skills Quality Mark by 10 per cent of existing providers per year.
- > Introducing the new basic skills assessment, curriculum and testing processes through the Basic Skills Quality Initiative by purchasing extra facilitator time using the Standards Fund.
- > Increasing recruitment to basic skills provision by piloting screening training for the staff of referral agencies.
- > Developing direct intervention recruitment techniques appropriate to the priority groups identified in 'Skills for Life'.
- > Setting out our intentions in a skills for life delivery plan for Tyne and Wear.

### 4.2 Increasing levels of achievement by adults with no or low levels of skills and qualifications.

Only by increasing achievement in learning at Levels 1 and 2 can we expect to make an impact on the number of adults able to study and achieve Level 3 qualifications. To do this we need to focus on people who are unemployed as well as those in work. We will work closely with JobCentre Plus, Local Strategic Partnerships, Local Authorities and other partners to address the skills and learning needs of unemployed people.

This will involve establishing a coherent approach across Tyne and Wear to community-based learning opportunities and initiatives such as Workfinder, which offer intensive advice, guidance and support for unemployed people. Many of the people with low levels of skills and qualifications, whose achievement we seek to raise to at least Level 2, are already in employment. We intend to address their needs by ensuring that the appropriate provision is available, that people can follow progression routes from one level of learning to the next over whatever period of time may be appropriate or necessary, and that where possible, incentives are in place to encourage achievement and progression. We will encourage everyone to achieve the equivalent of a Level 2 qualification as this is widely accepted as the minimum standard for employability.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Analysing feedback from adult learners and collecting intelligence about learner motivation.
- > Undertaking a review of existing incentive arrangements locally, regionally and nationally, including assessing how the Educational Maintenance Allowance Models might be replicated for adult learners.
- > Planning a range of incentives based on our research to be implemented in 2003 to 2004.
- > Translating the priorities and actions outlined in the Learning and Skills Council's National Workforce Development Strategy into action within Tyne and Wear - particularly those elements which relate to the achievement of basic skills and Level 2 qualifications by adults.
- > Bidding to implement proposed new Government schemes, including the Pre-Budget Report pilots designed to incentivise learners to achieve Level 2 qualifications.

### 4.3 Increasing the number of adults achieving a Level 3 qualification.

Addressing this priority presents us with significant challenges in Tyne and Wear. In particular we face the problem of a legacy of low levels of achievement and low levels of demand from employers for higher level skills. Most of the adults we are seeking to support are already in the workforce. Engaging employers in workforce development (see Strategic Objective 2) is therefore vital to increasing the numbers of people with Level 3 qualifications. We will therefore address this priority by both working to increase demand from employers for skills at this level and also by stimulating demand for learning by individuals. We will also endeavour to maximise the 'pull through' of those adults learning at Level 2, so that as many as possible continue to develop their skills to Level 3.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Understanding the financial barriers to achievement at Level 3 and developing responses to be tested in 2003 to 2004.

- > Increasing awareness of Information, Advice and Guidance services for adults and extending this service into the workplace.
- > Supporting Union Learning Representatives to assist in promoting the benefits of learning and helping to signpost individuals to appropriate provision.
- > Building the capacity of employers to identify and meet their own workforce development needs, for example through the Investors in People standard.
- > Listening to the needs of learners and potential learners and addressing the barriers identified through this feedback.
- > Continuing to develop learning provision so that it meets the needs of learners who are in employment, for example by maximising flexibility and ensuring that a variety of delivery modes and locations are available.

#### 4.4 Eliminating inequality in achievement in learning by people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, by people in the black and ethnic minority community and by people aged over 50.

The Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear Equality of Opportunity Strategy sets out in detail how inequalities between these groups and others will be addressed. The Strategy relates to people in work and those not in work. Our targets are to narrow the gap in achievement between adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those without by 2 per cent by August 2004 and to narrow the gap in achievement between adults in black and minority ethnic communities and white adults by 2 per cent by August 2004.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Encouraging providers to set realistic and challenging targets for the achievement of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in line with those without.
- > Working with organisations representing the black and ethnic minority communities to gain a better understanding of barriers to entry and achievement within learning and finding solutions to overcome them.
- > Undertaking research and consultation to understand the factors affecting achievement by older workers and implementing the recommendations arising from the research in 2003 to 2004.

## Strategic Objective 5: Raising the quality of learning provision.

One of the key responsibilities of the Learning and Skills Council is to be a strategic purchaser of learning provision. Our aim is to put the learner at the heart of the decisions we make and thereby secure provision that offers choice and progression opportunities, is accessible, is of the highest quality available and is relevant to the needs of the labour market. We are committed to raising standards and improving not only the breadth and level of the achievements of all learners, but the quality of experience that they have whilst in learning. Access to high quality and appropriate facilities for all learners will be a priority. All our providers will be actively encouraged and enabled to improve the quality of their provision through the use of the Standards Fund, through Provider Performance Reviews and continuing monitoring and review of performance through specialist contracts. The health and safety of everyone participating in Learning and Skills Council funded provision is of paramount importance. We will take a planned approach to health and safety and will develop policies and procedures that meet legislative and best practice requirements.

Our targets, to be achieved by July 2005, are to:

- > Increase the proportion of Learning Providers in the two highest categories of Provider Performance Review from the current level of 32 per cent to 45 per cent.
- > Ensure that the number of Learning Providers in the 'Serious Concerns' category of Provider Performance Review is reduced to zero.
- > Work with Learning Providers to increase the proportion of Inspection grades 1 and 2 from 42 per cent to 48 per cent.

### Priorities for action

#### 5.1 Striving for excellence in the provision of learning.

We will use the Provider Performance Review Process, Area Wide Inspections, the inspection reports of the Adult Learning Inspectorate and OFSTED and the Standards Fund to raise standards. We will support the colleges' and providers' improvement plans, assisting in their implementation where appropriate. We will encourage the development of trainers, tutors and teachers and share good practice to develop leadership and management skills.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

#### Provider Performance Review

- > Increasing the proportion of providers in the 'excellent' and 'good' categories from 32 per cent to 35 per cent.

- > Reducing the proportion of providers in the 'concerns' categories from 23 per cent to 17 per cent.

#### **Inspection and Re-inspection Grades**

- > Increasing the proportion of grades 1 and 2 from 42 per cent to 45 per cent.
- > Reducing the proportion of grades 4 and 5 from 13 per cent to 10 per cent.

### **5.2 Developing high quality, specialist provision.**

We will encourage and support the development of Centres of Vocational Excellence in areas where there is a local, regional or sectoral need for a guaranteed flow of people qualified at Level 3 and above. Where necessary we will use non-core Learning and Skills Council funding to help providers to raise the quality of the learning opportunities they offer by specialising in a particular type of provision. By December 2004 all of our Further Education colleges will be part of the CoVE network. We will ensure that, as the CoVE network is extended to non-Further Education providers, appropriate links are made between centres to transform, practise and raise skills levels. We will work closely with One NorthEast to ensure a coherent approach across the region.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Achieving Centre of Vocational Excellence status in at least one vocational area for 50 per cent of the Further Education colleges in Tyne and Wear.
- > Facilitating collaborative activity between schools with specialist status, CoVEs, New Technology Institutes and the Higher Education Centres of Excellence sponsored by One NorthEast.

### **5.3 Assuring the quality of Information, Advice and Guidance Services for Adults.**

We will develop the capacity of and quality assure all deliverers of Information, Advice and Guidance services. We will develop and implement a coherent approach to the quality, delivery and funding of advice and guidance services through a single Information, Advice and Guidance network.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Quality assuring one third of all providers through the MATRIX quality standard.
- > Ensuring that at least fifty staff in our accredited providers of Information, Advice and Guidance achieve Level 2 or 3 in guidance.
- > Ensuring that at least seventy staff complete the Open College Network certificate in Introduction to Guidance.
- > Ensuring that at least two hundred front-line staff receive awareness training in Skills for Life, workplace learning and helping refugees.

### **5.4 Gathering information from the users of learning provision.**

We do not know enough about learners' perspectives and their level of satisfaction with the provision that is available. We will develop and fund mechanisms to address this. The Tyne and Wear Learning Partnership, the five local Learning Partnerships and Connexions Tyne and Wear have a critical role in articulating the views of learners (including views about the extent to which our strategy for achieving equality of opportunity is making a difference to them), and the relationship between the demand for learning and provision. It is important that there is a broad, independent base for dialogue with, and the representation of learners. Local area community forums may have a role to play here. We will also use the results of National Learner Satisfaction surveys and tailor local studies to meet gaps in our intelligence about local needs.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Developing processes to gather feedback on employer satisfaction.
- > Developing a joint strategy with the Tyne and Wear Learning Partnership for gathering the views of learners.
- > Acting on the results of the Tyne and Wear Household Survey, which will include some indicators of learner satisfaction.
- > Using the results of the National Learner Satisfaction survey to inform strategic planning and making effective use of appropriate national benchmarking performance and learner satisfaction data.
- > Developing and embedding approaches to understanding the reasons for non-participation in learning.
- > Setting local targets within three months of national benchmarks becoming available.

### **5.5 Achieving a closer match between the demand for learning by employers and by individuals, and the provision that we purchase on their behalf to meet that demand.**

We will develop a methodology for doing this that also enables us to fulfil the Learning and Skills Council's statutory duty to secure provision that is proper and reasonable, and which ensures value for money. It is expected that the pattern of provision will change as a result. The Sector Skills Actions Plans will be an important mechanism for analysing demand and provision.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Creating and maintaining an up-to-date picture of all post-16 learning provision and participation in Tyne and Wear so that it provides a robust planning tool.
- > Developing robust processes within the Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear for bringing together intelligence regarding the needs of employers and individuals alongside a picture of provision.

- > Develop protocols for gathering and sharing information and intelligence with key external partners, for example Connexions Tyne and Wear, Tyne and Wear Learning Partnership, Tyne and Wear Small Business Service and JobCentre Plus by March 2003.
- > Improving our understanding of travel to learning patterns (i.e. travel by learners into, within and out of the area) by undertaking an analysis of the data available by September 2002.
- > Helping to equip all young people with skills for employability including by encouraging the take-up of Curriculum 2000 qualifications.

### 5.6 Investing in the learning infrastructure.

We will support programmes that improve the quality and accessibility of the buildings, facilities and environment in which learning takes place. We will inform and facilitate consideration of the extent to which learning and skills needs can be addressed through information and communications technology. We will identify and test innovative ways of delivering learning to a high standard. This will include identifying good practice and exploring techniques that have been used successfully elsewhere. We will explore how the application of information and communications technology can be used to enrich the learning experience. Our targets are to produce by October 2004 and annually thereafter, a summary of accommodation strategies, including priorities for investment for all post-16 provision, and, from 2003, to support the development of at least two applications each year for major works capital funding for Adult and Community Learning (subject to the availability of national funding).

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Producing an annual summary of accommodation strategies, including priorities for investment, for Further Education provision.
- > Responding to applications for Further Education capital projects support within three weeks of receipt of applications.
- > Assessing the suitability of Local Education Authorities' plans for use of minor works and Disability Discrimination Act capital funding.
- > Following the publication of 16 to 19 Area Wide Inspection reports, identifying where applications for capital funding are to be encouraged, to address the recommendations of the Inspectors.
- > Identifying and securing appropriate sources of funding to support providers in their compliance with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act.
- > Continuing to use the e-learning Task Group established in 2001 to assist in the development of an e-learning strategy for Tyne and Wear.
- > Publishing a draft e-learning strategy (2003 to 2005) for consultation in October 2002.

### 5.7 Maintaining high levels of health and safety for learners.

We have established arrangements to ensure that all providers understand their requirements in terms of health and safety. Providers will continue to be reviewed periodically to ensure compliance with our contractual requirements and performance on health and safety will be measured as part of the Provider Performance Review process. The concepts of 'safe learner' and 'safe workplace' are promoted within our learning programmes to benefit the learner. Providers are supported in raising standards and seeking excellence through the principles set out in *'Successful Health and Safety Management' HSG65 (HSE)*. This approach will contribute to the Government's 'Revitalising Health and Safety' and 'Securing Health Together' strategies.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Assessing the effectiveness of providers to ensure the safety of learners, including arrangements for providing information, instruction and training, and the safety of the workplace (i.e. ensuring a healthy and supportive environment for learners, the competency of staff, and the effectiveness of providers to deal with the identification, reporting, investigation, remedial action and follow up of accidents, ill-health and other incidents affecting learners).
- > Ensuring that, by April 2003, all providers fall into the category of 'satisfactory' and that 20 per cent of providers fall into the category 'good'.
- > Ensuring that all providers have arrangements to set in place an agreed self-assessment and development plan.

## Strategic Objective 6: Developing skills to meet the needs of the local economy, safeguarding existing jobs and responding to structural changes in the labour market.

The Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear will work in partnership to attract new employers by supporting the skill needs of inward investors, and work with employers going through periods of significant transition to support the reskilling and resettlement of individuals affected by large scale redundancies. We will build a coherent approach to increasing employment, developing relevant skills and strengthening the economy. Our partners for this work will include employers, One NorthEast, Government Office for the North East, the TyneWear Partnership, Tyne and Wear Small Business Service, Local Authority Economic Development Teams, Tyne and Wear Development Company (TEDCO), learning providers and JobCentre Plus.

**Our targets are to play an active role in the Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action, to offer a coherent service and interface to employers and to support larger organisations undergoing substantial change, for example, inward investment, major redundancy or rapid growth. This is in addition to the advice and support referred to under Strategic Objective 2.**

### Priorities for action

#### 6.1 Assisting employers and employees to respond to changing market conditions.

We will support employers to adapt to the introduction of new technology and working practices or respond to changing market conditions by up-skilling and reskilling existing employees. Where appropriate the Learning and Skills Council will work with other partners to prepare and implement an integrated package of support.

Our targets for 31 March 2005 are that 3,000 people will benefit directly from support provided by the Learning and Skills Council in relation to this area of activity and that 15,000 additional learning opportunities<sup>40</sup> are created to meet the skills needs of key sectors and clusters.

<sup>40</sup> A 'learning opportunity' is defined in guidance issued recently by the DTI and ONE NorthEast as "a place on any vocational training or general educational course which is funded in whole or part to help improve the regional skills base. The course need not lead to a formal qualification but should last for the equivalent of at least one week. This could comprise a number of sessions for the same individual. Training should be relevant to the Regional Economic Strategy".

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Working collaboratively with One NorthEast, Tyne and Wear Small Business Service, JobCentre Plus, Government Office for the North East and other agencies in the strategic context provided by the emerging Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action (FRESA).
- > Using the Tyne and Wear 'Learning for Regeneration' Single Regeneration Budget programme and, thereafter, the Single Programme and/or Co-financing, to supplement other forms of support made available locally through mainstream programmes (such as work-based learning for adults or young people) or regionally by One NorthEast.
- > Engaging with One NorthEast and other partners operating at regional level in the development and implementation of sector and/or cluster action plans, in collaboration with the other North East local Learning and Skills Councils.
- > Working with JobCentre Plus, Tyne and Wear Small Business Service and Tyne and Wear Economic Development Company to put together flexible and customised packages of support to meet skills needs arising from job creation and from inward investment or increases in employment in local businesses.
- > Acting as a European Co-financing body and 'Champion' for Competitive People within the TyneWear Partnership. Such funds will be deployed in accordance with the priorities for action identified in emerging sector and cluster action plans. This will include measures customised to meet the needs of sectors and clusters such as Health and Social Care, Microelectronics, Construction and Marine Engineering.

#### 6.2 Supporting individuals affected by major redundancies.

In the event of large-scale redundancies we will work with JobCentre Plus, One NorthEast and other partners in the context of the Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action. We will develop integrated support packages for the employees affected which may include Information, Advice and Guidance, opportunities for reskilling and resettlement with employers seeking similar skills. Where appropriate, to finance such activity, we will draw down funding from the Rapid Response Fund (acting as accountable body on behalf of JobCentre Plus if necessary) and other sources, for example European Co-financing funding and the Local Initiatives Fund. Our aim is to re-engage people in the labour market as speedily as possible and minimise the mismatch between the skills employers are seeking and those of people seeking to re-enter the labour market.

Our target is that by 31 March 2005, 1,500 people will benefit directly from support in relation to this area of activity.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Operating within the context of the Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action (see 6.1 page 42) we will work with JobCentre Plus, Tyne and Wear Small Business Service and other agencies such as One NorthEast to put together flexible and customised packages of support in order to safeguard employment in local companies through upskilling or retraining of employees, and to minimise the loss of skills resulting from redundancy situations. The Learning and Skills Council will focus on employers of 250 or more people but will work with the Tyne and Wear Small Business Service to develop and deliver a complementary approach for smaller employers.
- > Supplementing, where appropriate, Learning and Skills Council Local Initiatives Funding and European Co-financing funding with other sources of financial assistance, for example, with the agreement of the TyneWear Partnership and One NorthEast, using Single Programme funding.

### 6.3 Retaining graduates in Tyne and Wear.

We will work with Tyne and Wear Small Business Service, the Higher Education sector and One NorthEast to retain graduates in the region. This will be an important element of our joint approach to improving collaboration between industry and education to meet current and emerging skills needs.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Developing a joint strategy with the Universities to encourage graduates to remain in the North East.
- > Supporting businesses to retain graduates in Tyne and Wear and encouraging employers to offer placements to undergraduates and graduates as part of their degree level or post-graduate learning.
- > Supporting employers, particularly those unaccustomed to recruiting people at this level, to offer employment opportunities to graduates.
- > Working with Tyne and Wear Small Business Service, JobCentre Plus and other agencies to make businesses in Tyne and Wear aware of the benefits of employing graduates, including implementing the final year of graduate retention and enterprise initiatives supported by the Tyne and Wear Single Regeneration Budget 'Learning for Regeneration' programme.

## Strategic Objective 7: Developing skills to increase levels of enterprise, entrepreneurship and self-employment.

This is widely recognised by our partners as an important objective. It stems from the need to achieve a change in culture and attitude. Traditionally the North East has relied on large employers to recruit school leavers, train them and employ them for life. While there has been a shift away from this, the culture is less disposed to risk taking, innovation and continuing learning than elsewhere. Lower than average levels of self-employment and business start-up and higher incidence of business failure are manifestations of this. There is therefore a need to encourage young people, those in employment and unemployed people to think and behave in a more enterprising way. We will seek to address this objective at all levels: with individuals, organisations and institutions, neighbourhoods and communities and among not-for-profit as well as commercial organisations. We will also help the development of new businesses and existing small companies by supporting the acquisition of skills by owner managers through our contract with Tyne and Wear Small Business Service.

### Priorities for action

#### 7.1 Developing the skills of owner-managers and management teams in small companies.

Working with Tyne and Wear Small Business Service we will support the development of management skills. By increasing management capability we aim to increase the capacity of smaller businesses to address their own skills needs. We aim to unlock latent demand for higher level skills, for example by enabling businesses to operate in new markets, develop new products or introduce more sophisticated technology.

Our target is to develop the skills of at least 1,000 Small and Medium Enterprise managers and/or employees by 31 March 2005.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Commissioning the Tyne and Wear Small Business Service to design and implement new mechanisms for supporting the development of owner-managers and management teams in Small and Medium Enterprises using the Learning and Skills Council's Workforce Development budget, European Co-financing or Local Initiatives Fund.
- > Quantifying need and establishing benchmarks against which progress can be measured through the findings of survey of Small and Medium Enterprises.



### 7.2 Developing enterprising skills in young people within the compulsory education sector.

Through our work with the Tyne and Wear Education Business Link Organisation we will develop programmes, tasters and work-experience opportunities to enable young people in the compulsory education system, including those with special educational needs and learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to acquire enterprising skills and gain an insight into the option of self-employment or working in a small company.

Our targets are to increase the number of pupils having access to programmes to develop enterprising skills by 5 per cent by 2004, either through national provision such as Young Enterprise or through other locally developed initiatives, and to increase by 10 per cent by 2004 the opportunities available for pupils to become involved in mentoring and other business-education link activities. We will explore how the Learning and Skills Council can contribute to the professional development of teachers and others who have a key role in encouraging the development of an enterprising attitude and the qualities needed by successful entrepreneurs.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Developing strategies and operational activities in line with the Davies Report on Enterprise in Education.
- > Ensuring that every pupil in Tyne and Wear continues to have the opportunity to participate in up to two weeks work experience during Years 10 and 11 (see Strategic Objective 2.6).
- > Working with our partners, including the Regional Education Forum of the North East Assembly, to develop strategies to embed enterprise within the curriculum.

### 7.3 Embedding enterprise skill development within existing learning programmes.

We will increase the element of enterprise skill development within existing learning programmes by working with schools with sixth forms, colleges and providers of work-based learning. Our aspiration is that all learners should acquire skills to enable them to be enterprising whether as an employee or by becoming self-employed. We will target for early action those learning opportunities which offer the greatest potential for learners to move into self-employment.

Our target is by 2005 to have developed a fully integrated strategy with Tyne and Wear Small Business Service to ensure that where appropriate all young people participating in Learning and Skills Council funded provision have access to information, advice and support about self-employment or establishing their own small company.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Encouraging all providers to offer sign posting to Information, Advice and Guidance on self-employment or establishing their own enterprise to all appropriate learners.
- > Improving support arrangements by developing closer links between providers and business support agencies.

### 7.4 Encouraging and supporting the acquisition of skills for enterprise in disadvantaged communities and among disadvantaged groups.

Working with Tyne and Wear Small Business Service and the Community Enterprise Network we will develop and implement ways of helping individuals to acquire and exploit knowledge and skills for commercial purposes. We will encourage providers of learning in community settings, including voluntary sector organisations, to signpost opportunities that can assist in the establishment and growth of successful new community and social enterprises. We will engage the Local Strategic Partnerships in the development of skills for their communities.

In 2002 to 2003 this priority will be addressed by:

- > Identifying models of good practice which could be replicated to inform operational plans in 2003 to 2004.
- > Developing links with New Deal for the Community and other community groups.
- > Accessing Neighbourhood Renewal Funds, both locally and nationally, for skills development.

## > 6. Working With Others

We will work closely with partner organisations at regional, sub-regional, local and community levels, as well as contributing to policy development and debate nationally.

Regionally we will work with the Government Office for the North East, One NorthEast (with whom we have a Memorandum of Understanding) and the North East Assembly.

Through our relationship with these and other regional organisations we aim to influence the development of strategies and the use of resources that will help address our objectives and achieve our targets, achieve synergy with the strategies and policies of others, make optimum use of available resources and ensure actions are coherent and complementary from the perspective of learners and employers.

We will continue to engage with initiatives emerging from the Regional Education Forum (on which we represent all four Learning and Skills Councils in the region), including the Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action (FRESA) and the Skills Observatory.

The four Learning and Skills Councils have well-established mechanisms for communication and collaboration at the regional level. Executive Directors have agreed the areas on which each takes lead responsibility:

- > **County Durham:** Higher Education, strategic planning, quality, tourism and rural issues.
- > **Northumberland:** Information and Communication Technology and e-learning, funding, communications and Further Education.
- > **Tees Valley:** social inclusion, adult learning, equality of opportunity, widening participation, Information, Advice and Guidance, and skills for life.
- > **Tyne and Wear:** European funding, workforce development, research and data handling, finance, Regional Development Agency and the North East Assembly.

Where it is appropriate and helpful to do so, Executive Directors represent their colleagues at national and regional meetings and communicate the outcome to their colleagues. These arrangements do not replace the strategic and operational responsibilities of each local Learning and Skills Council.

Staff at all levels meet regularly to share ideas, resolve issues and agree common approaches where appropriate, for example in relation to the Co-financing of European Social Fund Objective 3, Workforce Development, Centres of Vocational Excellence, marketing and operational matters, in particular those arising from travel to learn patterns that cross local Learning and Skills Council boundaries.

At the sub-regional level we will maintain our close involvement with the TyneWear Partnership, including our role as Champion for Competitive People issues, the Tyne and Wear Learning Partnership, JobCentre Plus, Tyne and Wear Small Business Service, the G6 group of colleges, the three Universities in Tyne and Wear and the Regional Office of the Open University.

We will continue to hold regular meetings with the work-based learning provider network, heads of secondary schools, Chief Education Officers, heads of special schools and the two specialist colleges (offering provision to learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities), representatives of the diocesan authorities and the voluntary aided schools sector. We will build on the strong set of relationships already developed with employers and partners involved in promoting and delivering learning.

We will continue to be part of the five Local Strategic Partnerships and to work closely with individual Local Authorities and Local Education Authorities.

We will encourage more effective collaboration among providers through the Tyne and Wear Learning Partnership and local Learning Partnerships. We are integral to the development of Connexions Tyne and Wear and will build a close relationship with the new organisation from its establishment in April 2002.

Our relationship with Tyne and Wear Small Business Service is well established and we will ensure that together we provide an effective service to small and medium sized employers. Our contract with the Tyne and Wear Education Business Link Organisation provides an opportunity to ensure that young people gain work experience while at school and that teachers keep in touch with the changing nature of work and the labour market.

## > 7. Measuring Progress and Impact Measures

The strategic objectives described in this plan provide the framework and focus for measuring the Learning and Skills Council's impact. We are committed to the development of a robust and innovative measurement process, which differentiates between monitoring and evaluation, between throughput and impact, and between effectiveness, efficiency and cost effectiveness. This process will satisfy both the requirements of the European Framework for Quality Management and our commitment to report annually on progress towards the targets and objectives contained in this plan.

### The Process

We will develop a process including a survey matrix focused on the collection of additional and non-standard 'impact' data (including customer awareness and satisfaction research). The results of this will be considered by a panel of evaluators alongside a weighted 'basket' of key proxy measures, in a structured, bi-annual review to produce an annual assessment of progress.

### Initial Target Setting

The numerical targets shown in this plan are initial, best estimates based on disaggregated national targets, existing knowledge and available data on local levels of achievement and participation. By the end of the 2002 to 2003 operational year, robust baselines will have been established for each of the seven strategic targets and these provisional targets will be more accurately calibrated.

## > 8. Appendices

### Local Council Members

#### Ashley Winter - Chairman

Managing Director of R H Patterson & Co Ltd.

#### Chris Roberts

Executive Director of Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear

#### Vicki Abson

Head of Training & Development for Siemens Power Generation Ltd.

#### Colin Anderson

Leader of Sunderland City Council

#### Dr. Madeleine Atkins

Pro-Vice Chancellor of University of Newcastle  
Governor of Gateshead College

#### Clare Baker

Employment Director of RNID

#### David Barker MBE

Northern Regional Director, Mental Health Matters

#### Carol Barwick

Managing Director of Quadrant Training & Recruitment

#### Gill Hale

Chair of the Northern TUC

#### Tom Macallan

Managing Director of Michell Bearings

#### Michael Stephenson

Managing Director of Helena Biosciences

#### Keith Taylor

Deputy Leader of Newcastle City Council  
Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning & Training

#### Dr Judith Woodruff

Governor of North Tyneside College

## References

**'Strategic Framework to 2004 Corporate Plan'**

Learning and Skills Council, June 2001

**'An Analysis of Skills and Learning Needs'**

Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear, 2001

**'Unlocking our Potential: The Regional Economic Strategy'**

One NorthEast, October 1999

**'Tyne and Wear Economic Strategy: Making a Difference'**

TyneWear Partnership, September 2000

**'Analysis of Learning and Skills Needs in Tyne and Wear, 2001'**

Copies of this document can be downloaded from:

[www.tyneside-link-to-learning.co.uk/analysis](http://www.tyneside-link-to-learning.co.uk/analysis)

**'Equality of Opportunity Strategy, 2002 to 2005'**

Copies of this document can be gained from the Strategy and Planning Directorate of the Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear.

**'Adult Literacy and Numeracy Plan, 2002 to 2004'**

Copies of this document can be gained (after May 2002) from the Programmes and Operations Directorate of the Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear.

## Contact Details

Learning and Skills Council Tyne and Wear

Moongate House

5th Avenue Business Park

Team Valley

Gateshead

NE11 OHF

Tel: 0845 019 4181

[www.lsc.gov.uk](http://www.lsc.gov.uk)

This document can be made available in other languages and formats on request.