

# Learning and Skills Council

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## Local Strategic Plan 2002-05

Tees Valley



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# SECTION A

## > Foreword

The Learning and Skills Council is at the centre of the most significant and far-reaching reform to post-16 learning ever enacted in this country. It represents the start of a new era for learning and skill development, with learning set to play a much greater part in our lives.

The Learning and Skills Council has an opportunity to impact significantly on the prosperity of the Tees Valley. Careful evidence based planning to achieve this challenge will be the only way that the objectives of the Learning and Skills Council will be met, or exceeded.

### The vision of the Learning and Skills Council is:

**That by 2010, young people and adults in England will have the knowledge and productive skills to match the best in the world.**

This vision is based on a number of principles:

**Investing in learning to benefit everyone;**

**Lifting barriers to learning;**

**Putting people first;**

**Sharing responsibility with employers, employees and the community;**

**Achieving world-class standards and value for money;**

**Working together as the key to success.**

The national Learning and Skills Council objectives that have been agreed with the Secretary of State for Education and Skills are also the objectives for the people of the Tees Valley. The achievement of our objectives will only occur by all partners working together in a cohesive, strategically planned way. It is most important that we secure the widest possible involvement of our strategic partners, schools, colleges, training providers, employers and trade unions, the community and by our ultimate customers, young people and adults.

By achieving our objectives we will help learners and non-learners in the Tees Valley. Success will have tangible benefits for the whole economy of the Tees Valley, the local communities and our regional, national and international competitiveness.

This Local Strategic Plan covers the period from 2002 - 2005. We already know some of the key changes that will occur and impact on the Learning and Skills Council during that period. The responsibility for funding School Sixth Forms came to the Learning and Skills Council in April 2002, Centres of Vocational Excellence are being extended and a national Workforce Development strategy will be produced in 2002. The recent Education White Paper - "Schools Achieving Success" also sets out proposals to develop a 14 - 19 phase of learning which will combine the vocational and academic routes and will give the Learning and Skills Council a key role to play in its implementation. The DfES 14 - 19: "Extending Opportunities, Raising Standards" consultation document develops this theme and indicates the Government's intention for this critical learning phase.

### During the last year, the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley has achieved many things including:

- An effective transition from TEC and FEFC funded programmes with no disruption to learners.
- 1,700 people participating in 'Bite Size' courses as a taster to learning.
- Secured more than £9m of European funding to manage in the Tees Valley.
- Launched a Local Initiatives Fund of £1.7m to support projects that tackle basic skills, such as reading, writing and maths; develop learning networks; help people who face barriers to learning and support equal opportunities.
- Started a basic skills project with local employers to help to improve the basic skills of their staff.
- Successfully bid for a BBC 'Learning Bus' in conjunction with Radio Cleveland.
- Contracted with more than 100 organisations to deliver and achieve the objectives of the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley, including Business Link Tees Valley, the Education Business Link Organisation (Learn2Work) and the Tees Valley Information, Advice and Guidance Partnership.
- Established links with many individuals and organisations to take forward our work.

### Key impacts this plan will have made by 2005 are as follows:

- All learning available to learners will be rated 3 (satisfactory) or better.
- 90% of learners will grade their learning experience as satisfactory or better.
- More than 20,000 people will have received good quality training to improve their basic or key skills.
- Over 10,000 people will progress into further learning following basic skills learning.
- Centres of Vocational Excellence will be developed throughout the Tees Valley in each priority sector area.
- 25 wards will have been targeted for specific intervention to improve levels of literacy and numeracy and participation and achievement in learning.
- More employers will be actively involved in developing their workforce using main Learning and Skills Council programmes.
- There will be easy to access and understand information for learners, parents and employers about the range of learning available.
- There will be clear progression routes from 14 -19, encompassing both vocational and academic routes, which will support young people to progress in learning in the sector that interests them and meets their learning needs.
- Learning will be seen to be a key contributor to economic regeneration.

We hope that you find this Local Strategic Plan useful and easy to understand. It is essential that we make a clear statement of our priorities and targets. This will ensure that we can work with our partners and the whole of the Tees Valley community to bring about the changes that have been identified.

We will work closely with partners to make sure that our activities are having the impact we are seeking to achieve.

This is just the start of our work in the Tees Valley, and we know that by working together effectively we can make a difference to the competitiveness of our area and to the lives of the people who live and work in the Tees Valley.



**Miles Middleton, CBE**  
Chairman

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## > Introduction

The Strategic Plan for April 2002 to March 2005 is our first statement which identifies how we are going to address the future of learning in the Tees Valley. This document aims to provide the reader with details of each of our local targets and how we are going to achieve them.

The local Council recognised the need for close collaboration in developing this plan. We worked closely with key strategic learning partners, including ONE NorthEast and the Tees Valley Partnership. This plan complements their work and we have their full support.

We will work with our partners to review our performance and our targets. Partnerships will be key to creating a learning culture in the Tees Valley. It is important that learning is valued, which will result in raising the aspirations of local people through ensuring high quality learning provision.

We will review this Local Strategic Plan each year to make sure that it is still meeting our targets and the needs of the Tees Valley.

The Learning and Skills Council values the contributions of all our partners and we look forward to continuing effective and positive relationships.



**Pam Eccles**  
Executive Director

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## > Key Themes in Strategic Planning

The Local Strategic Plan for the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley contains many recurring themes. There are also common priorities across the strategic objectives. It is appropriate to highlight these here, and to also acknowledge them as being of the greatest priority and influence on the work of the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley over the next few years.

### The 14 - 19 agenda

The recent Education White Paper - "Schools Achieving Success", gives a clear indication of the role that the Learning and Skills Council can play in making the proposals for a 14 - 19 agenda achievable. The impact in the Tees Valley is perhaps greater than elsewhere due to the predominantly tertiary education system that is in place, where most young people move to a different provider of learning at the end of their secondary education at 16.

The recent Green Paper 14 - 19: "Extending Opportunities, Raising Standards" gives more detail in terms of the move to integrate vocational and academic provision pre-16 and to develop a range of new pathways for young people to progress through the 14 - 19 phase of learning.

There is already local good practice in terms of supporting the transition between pre and post-16. The proposals within the White and Green Papers give a much greater opportunity to develop true progression routes, which incorporate both academic and vocational learning. They also give post-16 learning providers and employers a real opportunity to work with schools to develop a meaningful curriculum that will increase motivation and achievement pre-16.

### Information, advice and guidance

The availability of easily accessible, easy to understand information, advice and guidance on choices available for learners is a theme recurrent in most objectives. While there are long-established systems in place for young people, our consultation has highlighted a number of key issues. These included all young people getting access to the same amount, quality and type of information, regardless of where they are studying pre-16, the amount of careers teaching available in school and the availability of up-to-date careers advice for young people. The availability of advice for adults is an area that needs to be broadened and made much more accessible, to both employed and non-employed adults. There is also a demand for advice to be available throughout a programme of learning, not simply pre-entry, or towards the end. Understanding the range of progression options available to a learner is recognised as a key motivation tool.

### Engagement of employers

Workforce development has a crucial role to play in helping to close the UK's productivity gap with its competitors. It also has a significant impact on social inclusion and preparing the economy for the future.<sup>1</sup>

The role of workforce development, and the engagement of employers at all levels of learning from basic skills to higher level skills is a key element in the achievement of the Learning and Skills Council objectives. While learners do not exclusively learn for employment reasons, the offer of employment, or improved employment opportunities is a great incentive for potential learners.

Employers have a key role to play pre-16 in informing and motivating young people and the newly established Education Business Links Organisation will make a significant contribution to developing work experience placements. Employers also need to take responsibility for working with the Learning and Skills Council to create more employment opportunities for young people and for also improving the basic skills levels of their employees.

We do not currently have a clear picture of workforce development in the Tees Valley, and this will be a priority for action, alongside the actual implementation of Workforce Development strategies.

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Amity Mortgages Ltd have experienced at first hand the benefits of bringing trainees into the organisation and influencing them with their culture of learning.

**Stacey Harding (19) and Nicola Smith (18)** are just two employees who have benefited from Amity Mortgages learning culture. Both started with the company as trainees and are now permanent employees. Both have recently been promoted to Case Administrators.

**Bob Scott, Managing Director of Amity Mortgages Ltd said:**

"I know learning is important. The main element of our organisational strategy is the development of our employees and investing in training. We want to see the benefits of investing in learning, as I am a strong believer in education. I have personally found that learning is important to the development of staff and the company as a whole."

Trainees going all the way!

Back: Bob Scott (Managing Director, Amity Mortgages Ltd)

Left to right: Nicola Smith (Case Manager), Rachel Coulthick (Trainee), Stacey Harding (Case Manager)

### Joined up thinking and delivery

While the Learning and Skills Council has a strategic voice in relation to the planning and funding of learning in the Tees Valley, the organisations that are responsible for its delivery, across all sectors, age ranges and geographical areas are numerous. This has been taken into account in the preparation and consultation on this plan and is essential in the achievement of objectives in the future. This must now be translated into a commitment for delivery, which will ensure that the objectives set for the Tees Valley will be achieved.

There is considerable good practice in the Tees Valley in all of the areas that are priorities for the Learning and Skills Council. We will facilitate the sharing of this good practice and recognise and acknowledge it in our work and the work of our partners.

### Improving quality

The work of the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley, its partners and its staff will be in vain if the quality of the provision does not meet or exceed recognised quality standards. The priorities for improving the quality of provision extend across all of the work that we do, and the work of our partners.

### Equality and diversity

The local objectives for Equality and Diversity will underpin the achievement of each of the key objectives and the resulting Strategic Plan. An Equality and Diversity Plan for the Tees Valley has been produced separately to this plan.

## > The Role of the Learning and Skills Council

The Learning and Skills Council is responsible for funding and planning education and training for over 16 year olds in England.

Our mission is to raise participation and attainment through high-quality education and training that puts learners first. Our vision is that, by 2010, young people and adults in England will have the knowledge and productive skills matching the best in the world.

### The key objectives of the Learning and Skills Council are to:

1. Extend participation in education, learning and training.
2. Increase engagement of employers in Workforce Development.
3. Raise achievement of young people.
4. Raise achievement of adults.
5. Raise quality of education and training and user satisfaction.

With an annual budget in excess of £7.3 billion the Council operates through 47 local offices and a national office in Coventry. Established in April 2001 our work covers:

- Further education.
- Work-Based Learning and young people.
- Workforce Development.
- Adult and community learning.
- Information, advice and guidance for adults.
- Education business links.
- School Sixth Forms.

The Higher Education Funding Council is responsible for the planning and funding of Higher Education (unless delivered through the further education sector) and the Employment Service is responsible for training programmes for unemployed adults. The responsibility for funding training for employees in work rests with the employer.

Regardless of who is responsible for funding the learning that is taking place within the Tees Valley, the Learning and Skills Council needs to have close working relationships to ensure that the provision that is available is planned strategically across all sectors, age ranges and localities.

## > Equality and Diversity

It is a statutory requirement of the Learning and Skills Council that it provides equality of opportunity for all people in learning. The Government expects the Council to create "a society in which everyone can share in the benefits of learning, enabling people to discover new talents, stretching their creativity and widening their opportunities."<sup>2</sup>

In achieving Equality and Diversity, the Learning and Skills Council will become an equal opportunities organisation and a champion of equality. It will also embed Equal Opportunities into all policies, programmes and actions. The National Council will report progress towards equality to the Secretary of State for Education and Skills.

The Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley will promote equality of opportunity as an under-pinning and coherent strategy across all of its activity, as a funder of learning, and as an organisation. It will mainstream equality and diversity in all aspects of its work.<sup>3</sup>

Our strategy will be to address equality of race, religion, gender and disability together with inclusion of those disadvantaged in our community by age, special needs, or by factors concerning community isolation and pockets of deprivation.

### The key operational stages in tackling issues in relation to equality and inclusion are to:

1. Research the reasons for barriers to participation and performance in learning.
2. Make the information available to all providers and partners and work with them, using the support of 'experts', to implement actions to overcome these barriers.
3. Detail how any gaps identified in the participation/performance of particular groups will be addressed, and share good practice where barriers have been overcome and true equality of opportunity achieved.
4. Monitor progress by provider and evaluate the impact of the strategy.
5. Consult with the local community and community groups to help evaluate the impact and changes needed in the strategy and plans for their continued involvement in its implementation.

<sup>2</sup> Learning and Skills Council Remit Letter. November 2000.

<sup>3</sup> Equality in practice. A guide to mainstreaming. Learning and Skills Council. July 2001.

### The strategies we will implement to achieve this are to:

- Develop innovative approaches to learning which tackle social exclusion among disadvantaged groups, support and influence neighbourhood renewal and promote equal opportunities in workforce development.
- Challenge existing and traditional approaches and practices in post-16 learning where they act against equality.
- Work with partners to put in place bespoke and diverse learning opportunities, relevant and responsive to individuals at a time, location and cost which meets their needs.
- Baseline and benchmark equal opportunity performance of learning providers and publish comparative data, dis-aggregated by gender, race, age and disability.
- Explore the provision of marketing, publicity and other materials in a range of formats suited to the needs of learners.
- Develop and establish effective working relationships, regional and locally - to promote equality of opportunity regarding learning participation in the Tees Valley area.
- Act as a consultant internally as well as externally to organisations, providers and learners to overcome learning barriers amongst under represented groups regarding education and training.

### Students with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities

The Learning and Skills Act 2000 gives duties and powers to the Learning and Skills Council in relation to students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It is responsible for ensuring that arrangements are in place which will benefit young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities by clarifying procedures, widening choice and raising standards of achievement.

Since taking over responsibility for this group of learners, the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley has nominated and trained key staff to ensure that the requirements of the Act are met and that all learners, including this group, have equal access to good quality provision to meet their learning needs most effectively. On-going activity will include working with relevant local authorities and careers services to assess current and future provision needs and then planning to ensure that the relevant provision at the right quality can be easily accessed.

## > A Summary of Key Objectives, Targets and Strategic Priorities.

Key Objectives	Local Target for 2004	Tees Valley Strategic Priorities
Extend participation in education, learning and training.	84% of young people taking part in structured learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;Target areas and groups of young people with the lowest levels of participation.</li> <li>&gt;Provide financial help to young people so they stay in learning.</li> <li>&gt;Ensure an entitlement for all young people to good quality, interesting learning provision with clear progression routes.</li> </ul>
	Set baseline and targets for adults in next year's plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;Ensure access for all to information, advice and guidance on learning.</li> <li>&gt;Work with all learning providers to market learning.</li> </ul>
Increase engagement of employers in workforce development.	Set baseline and targets for workforce development in next year's plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;Improve the levels of basic skills in the workplace.</li> <li>&gt;Work with employers in developing provision across all sectors and new progression routes for 14 -19 year olds.</li> <li>&gt;Work with occupational sectors to develop learning activity that meets the needs of the local labour market.</li> <li>&gt;Create demand for learning through Investors in People and other routes.</li> </ul>
Raise achievement of young people.	82% of young people to be at Level 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;Develop learning provision for 14 -19 year olds across all learning routes.</li> <li>&gt;Reduce drop out rates and eliminate low achievement.</li> <li>&gt;Collect learner feedback and use it to make improvements.</li> </ul>
	47% of young people to be at Level 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;Improve basic skill levels to aid progression to further learning/employment.</li> <li>&gt;Increase the levels of Modern Apprenticeship completions.</li> </ul>
Raise achievement of adults.	49% of adults to be at Level 3.	>Share existing good practice of partners.
	Level 2 targets to be set in next year's plan.	>Increase learning provision in wards with the greatest needs.
	9,927 people to achieve basic skills qualifications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;Develop new provision to meet the needs of learners and the labour market.</li> <li>&gt;Eliminate courses with low achievement rates through improved quality of provision and support.</li> <li>&gt;Ensure clear progression routes on all courses.</li> </ul>
Raise quality of education and training and improve user satisfaction.	Set baseline and targets for quality in next year's plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt;Implement Area Inspection action plan findings.</li> <li>&gt;Develop a robust mechanism in all providers for responding to inspections.</li> <li>&gt;Support networking across learning sectors to improve quality.</li> <li>&gt;Develop Centres of Vocational Excellence.</li> </ul>

## > Objectives and Target Setting

The objectives of the Learning and Skills Council are broadly the same in each local Learning and Skills Council area, based on the corporate key objectives. What is different in each area is the actual target that has been set in relation to the objectives.

### Baseline Figures

Up until now, there has been no consistent way of providing baseline data across the Learning and Skills Council local offices with regard to achievement to date against the objectives. Various datasets and surveys have been used in the past to measure progress at a national or local level. A priority for the Learning and Skills Council was to establish a common system across the national and local offices, which would enable all offices to collect, record and measure achievement in the same way.

As part of this developing process, the national office has provided data for each local office. This has been based on a range of sources including 'administrative sources' and a boosted Labour Force Survey. The 'administrative sources' have been used to establish the local Learning and Skills Council baseline positions in respect of all the 2004 targets with the exception of that for adult attainment at Level 3. The targets are based on the number of outcomes achieved and use information from the Individual Student Record, the Government Supported Training System and DfES School Performance Tables.

The only available and reliable dataset for the adult Level 3 attainment target is the Labour Force Survey. A one-off boosted Survey, undertaken in August 2001, improved and widened the information available on adult attainment (all levels) and participation in learning. The number of households was boosted from 96,000 to 135,000 in the year - an increase of 40%.

The information that has been supplied to the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley has been compared to local data available with regard to the objectives and the results have been found to be in line with expectations locally.

The boosted Survey will be repeated annually at the same time (August) so will provide a consistent and reliable target measure at national and local Learning and Skills Council level.

### Target Setting

The baseline data, and other factors, have been used to produce a target range for the Learning and Skills Council to achieve by the end of 2004.

The targets that have been proposed in this document are set at a level that takes account of past and current achievement in relation to that target in the local area. It also takes into account the national target to be achieved, the population of the area, and what contribution this area could be expected to make towards the national target.

The target ranges are based on the population of the area and also recognise that some areas will have either a net inflow or outflow of learners. In the Tees Valley it is estimated that there is a net migration of learners coming into the Tees Valley. This has therefore been taken into account in calculating target figures.

The target ranges are presented both numerically and in percentage terms in the following section of the plan against each objective. We are aiming to achieve the top end of the target range in most cases. The target set for adult achievement at Level 3 and basic skills achievement is set at the bottom of the target range due to the stretching nature of the target and the current baseline in the Tees Valley.

At this early stage in the development of the Learning and Skills Council, there are some objectives that do not have targets set yet. Where it has been appropriate, local targets have still been set against these objectives.

### Objectives

The following sections address each of the five key objectives in turn. The sections present a range of information that is relevant to the achievement of that objective in the Tees Valley area. The key challenges are presented, alongside an analysis of the targets that have been agreed. Feedback from both rounds of consultation is presented, and in the concluding part of each section the proposed strategic priorities are detailed.

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"The best decision I made was to enrol on the Beauty Therapy course. Initially, I was going with my friends but they chose other directions so I went alone and I'm so glad I did," said **Natalie Maunder, aged 18** from Hartlepool. Natalie is currently studying at Hartlepool College of Further Education.



## > Key Objective One - Extend Participation in Education, Learning and Training.

### National Target for 2004

80% of 16 - 18 year olds in structured learning.

Baseline and target for adults to be set in next year's Plan.

### Local Position in 2000

73% of 16 - 18 year olds in the Tees Valley are in structured learning (National baseline 75%).

81% of school leavers in 2000 from the Tees Valley entered full-time education or training. This has increased from 71% in 1998.

69% of adults in the Tees Valley aged 16 - 69 (excluding those in full-time continuous education) have participated in learning at some time over the last three years (source: Labour Force Survey). Equivalent regional and national figures are 68% and 74% respectively.

In addition, the Skills Audit carried out in the Tees Valley in 1999 gave the following statistics:<sup>4</sup>

- 20% of all adults in the Tees Valley are currently engaged in an educational or training course.
- 40% of all people in the Tees Valley survey had taken part in vocational education or training over the past 12 months.
- 61% of local people have a very positive or positive attitude towards undertaking further training or study, to develop skills or qualifications.

### Proposed Local Target for 2004

The current volume of 16 - 18 year olds participating in structured learning is 20,888 out of a total age group of 28,600 (73%). The proposed target range for 16 - 18 year olds participating in structured learning is between 23,673 and 23,887.

If we are to achieve this target it means an increase of between 13% (2,785) and 14% (2,999) 16 - 18 year olds taking part in structured learning.

It is proposed that we aim for the increase of 2,999 locally. This will lead to an estimated 84% of 16 - 18 year olds entering structured learning in the Tees Valley.

A national target for 2004 has not yet been set for adult participation.

## Analysis

In the Tees Valley, young people are almost at the current national average level of participation in learning. The difficulty for this age group is that although they join a learning programme following school, and achieve Level 2 qualifications at the national level, they fail to progress to achieve Level 3 national average. This is illustrated by the achievement rates for young people detailed under Key Objective 3. The drop in participation between first destination following school (81%), and the 16 - 18 overall rate (73%), and then the subsequent adult level (69%), clearly shows a steep decline in participation in learning from 16 years of age.

The figures illustrate that as many as 27% of young people in the Tees Valley may be in no form of learning at all. It is likely, however, that some of the employed young people will be in some form of learning although this figure is difficult to estimate.

The participation of adults, as indicated above, is at a much lower level. At present there are no formal national statistics to compare this with. However, the annual National Institute for Adult and Continuing Learning Survey of Adult Participation during Adult Learners Week,<sup>5</sup> shows 29% in current learning, and 46% in current or recent learning. These figures clearly show a higher national participation than the Tees Valley.

Over a third of all young people between 16 and 18 not currently in learning need to be brought into structured learning to achieve the proposed increase in participation. Using the current population of the Tees Valley split by borough as a guide, and taking into account 7% net migration from other areas, the increases will need to be achieved in the following volumes:

**Table 1: Proposed increase in participation:**

Authority	% of Tees Valley population	Volume of extra 16 - 18 year olds in learning
Darlington	15	418
Hartlepool	14	390
Middlesbrough	23	641
Redcar & Cleveland	21	586
Stockton-on-Tees	27	753

Work will need to be carried out that will identify where these young people currently are, and maximise use of partner organisations made to access these young people, and work to interest them in returning to learning. Those not currently participating in learning will include a cross section of the population and some of the group will be in employment. By identifying who these young people are and asking them why they choose not to learn, planning can then take place to ensure that the correct provision is made available. If a high proportion of these young people have additional learning needs, then additional support will need to be provided. Similarly, if the group has a low level of current skills, then programmes at entry level will need to be provided. In addition to providing the right type of course for young people, significant work will need to be carried out to create demand in this non-learner group.

Retaining learners, once they have entered provision is a key challenge for the providers in the Tees Valley. This issue is tackled under Strategic Objectives 3 and 4.

## Challenges

### Participation of Young People

Participation of young people in the Tees Valley is just behind the national average level. While this appears to be quite positive, the statistics alone mask a number of problems. The actual achievement of the young people once they are in learning is below average at Level 3. This is addressed under Key Objective 3 - Raise Achievement of Young People, but cannot be ignored here. Too many young people seem to drop out of the learning they have entered before completing it or achieving the learning outcome.

Attention should also be paid to those young people who are not participating in any learning. The recent Adult Learning Inspectorate element of the Area Inspection of Stockton-on-Tees found that there is currently no strategy for increasing participation by those young people who are not taking part in any learning or work. Statistics show that these young people are concentrated in certain geographical areas within the Tees Valley. The proposed strategies must therefore find ways of reaching these young people where they are.

The pattern of participation in learning of young people is also not static. While there will be certain sections of the younger population who never engage in learning, a proportion of the 26% shown as not participating in learning will change as people move in and out of learning. The movement between courses, and in and out of provision is not necessarily negative if the young people are achieving their learning outcomes before leaving. Issues of drop-out are addressed under Key Objective 3 - Raise Achievement of Young People.

There needs to be careful planning of provision to ensure that due regard is taken of the level of achievement and ability of young people leaving school across the whole of the Tees Valley. The recent Area Inspection of Middlesbrough highlighted that there was insufficient provision for young people at foundation level. This is clearly a barrier to participation.

A further finding of the Middlesbrough Inspection was that there is no co-ordinated approach to making access to Work-Based Learning clear to larger numbers of young people. Other findings related to lack of equal access to information about all opportunities after school. The amount and quality of information provided varies from establishment to establishment. The whole area of information and guidance for young people regarding all routes available is clearly a challenge. These are all elements now included in the post Inspection Action Plan that has been developed. The challenge for the future is not simply to address the issues raised, but to implement a programme of work which prevents problems occurring in the future, or at least identifies and tackles them before an Area Inspection identifies it as an issue.

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**Richard Cooke** has embarked on no fewer than three Information Technology (IT) related courses at Hartlepool College of Further Education, all of which are giving him the skills to fulfil his dream.

"At school I did a General National Vocational Qualification in Business which included Information Technology. I really enjoyed this side of the course and so I decided to pursue this when I left school."

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"It seems the world is becoming a much smaller place. Nowhere is more evident than in Redcar where students, from no fewer than seven different countries across the globe, enrolled in lessons to improve their English."

Christabell Gerard Marjella (2nd right) pictured with the rest of the class at Redcar Adult Education Service.

The recent report of the national Modern Apprenticeship Advisory Committee recommended that by 2010, 35% of young people will enter Modern Apprenticeships. The target set for 2004 is 28% of young people to enter Apprenticeships before the age of 22, or 175,000 young people aged between 16 and 21 entering a Modern Apprenticeship for the first time in the year beginning 2004. This clearly has implications in the Tees Valley where the current take-up rate of Work-Based Learning is 14% of school leavers, with apprentices equalling approximately 9%. The challenge will be to increase the numbers by creating an overall increase in participation in learning, rather than simply displacing young people from one form of learning to another. A related finding from the Adult Learning Inspectorate element of the Stockton-on-Tees area inspection was that there should be greater encouragement for young people with higher levels of prior achievement to participate in Work-Based Learning. In order to allow the increase in participation as a result of increasing demand from young people, the commitment of employers is needed. Increasing employer involvement in all forms of learning, including Modern Apprenticeships, is detailed in the following section on Workforce Development.

The issue of different sectors of learning, competing for learners, with the result of simply displacing learners from one form of learning to another, needs to be addressed. This issue has also potentially presented itself in relation to the impact of Education Maintenance Allowances with an apparent increase in school leavers entering further education and a related decrease in participation in Work-Based Learning.

A recent report by the Equal Opportunities Commission<sup>6</sup> highlighted some significant inequalities in the engagement of young women and young men with Modern Apprenticeships. While the numbers entering the Modern Apprenticeships are almost equal, the numbers accessing particular occupational sectors differ greatly. The gender difference in take-up of Modern Apprenticeships by sector is significant because the sectors in which young women train, pay less than the sectors where young men predominate. This is a key area to be addressed in the Tees Valley.

### Participation of Adults

Adult participation in learning in the Tees Valley presents a different scenario. Average levels of participation fall below the national average.

Nationally, for the first time in 20 years, there has been a marked upswing in adult participation in learning.<sup>7</sup> However, the change in participation in learning in the North indicated a net reduction of 1% between 1996 and 2001. This is compared to a 19% net increase in the North West for the same period.

A consistent message of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education annual survey is that people who have had recent or current experience of learning expect to undertake further study in the near future (70% recent and 91% current), while those who have not taken part in learning since school (12%) see almost no likelihood of future participation.

<sup>6</sup> Gender Issues in Modern Apprenticeships. EOC. August 2001.

<sup>7</sup> Winners and Losers. NIACE. 2001.

One of the fastest growing occupational sectors is currently the childcare sector. This impacts on adult participation in learning, as lack of childcare provision is often a barrier to learning. The Tees Valley Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership have stated that an additional 500 childcare posts will be created in the Tees Valley by 2004 from the Neighbourhood Nursery Initiative alone. It is the role of the Learning and Skills Council to ensure that there is sufficient training capacity, of the right quality and in the right locations, to ensure that maximum advantage is taken of the opportunity that this presents. This is not only for the employment opportunities that it will create, but also for the much needed childcare provision that will enable more adults to participate in learning.

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Elaine Mortimer, 42 and 37 year old Wendy Duncan have built a special friendship from initially meeting at a 'family literacy' course, run by Darlington College of Technology. Both are now developing their own skills whilst assisting Rise Carr School in their Centenary Year celebrations by researching the schools' history.

## Summary of Consultations

### Summary of Feedback from Stage 1 of the Consultation

- Target should be set to widen participation not just increase it.
- Support young people with financial help.
- 67% of respondents support targeting of school leavers who have not learnt since they left school.
- Mixed response to creating demand regardless of cost.
- Majority support to address all barriers to learning with partners.
- High support for creating demand for learning.
- Tackle the travel issue quickly.

### Summary of Feedback from Stage 2 of the Consultation

- Provision must be tailored to need. It is not enough just to promote learning.
- Need to target the hardest to help - the 'non learners' and the 'disappeared'.
- Specialist teaching staff will be required to meet hardest to help needs.
- Ensure links to related programmes such as Education Action Zones and Excellence Challenge.
- Fund provision that is interest/hobby based and not necessarily leading to a formal qualification.
- Ensure academic courses are marketed.
- Fund all basic skills qualifications.
- Providers with employment prospects to be favoured.

The priorities on the following page have been developed based on this feedback.

## Strategic priorities to extend participation in education, learning and training

1. Increase demand for learning across the Tees Valley, especially in areas where levels of learning are currently low or negligible.
  - Target the wards with the lowest educational attainment at 16.
  - Target 16 -18 year olds within these areas who have not engaged in learning since they left school.
2. Reduce the barriers to participation in learning.
  - Reduce financial barriers through the implementation of a financial grant programme for 16 -18 year olds.
  - Make provision available in a location, and at a time that is accessible by the potential learner.
  - Maximise childcare provision.
3. Make provision available that matches the level of ability of 16 -19 year olds, is of interest to them, and also provides progression opportunities linked to the labour market.
4. Develop a range of provision to engage the interest of non-learners.
  - Work closely with the wide range of organisations that currently have established relationships with potential learners to find out what learning would be of interest.
  - Actively market the provision using techniques that take the courses to the potential learner.
  - Develop progression routes to encourage new learners onto a further, accredited stage of learning.
5. Develop and implement a marketing and promotion plan that treats all forms of learning equally and is supported by all providers of learning and related organisations such as Education Action Zones, Excellence Challenge and the Local Education Authorities.
6. Give all people access to easy to understand information about the learning opportunities available to them and the potential outcomes, success rates and progression routes from the different learning options.
  - Make maximum use of non-traditional routes for information giving.
  - Take the information to the potential learner.
  - Use innovative approaches to grab the attention of non-learners.
7. Ensure that each learner undergoes detailed pre-assessment before starting a course to make sure they are capable of completing the course.

## > Key Objective Two - Increase Engagement of Employers in Workforce Development.

Workforce Development consists of activities which increase the capacity of individuals to participate effectively in the workplace, thereby improving their productivity and employability.<sup>8</sup>

### National Target for 2004

Measure of employer engagement to be developed in next year's Corporate Plan.

### Local Position at December 2001

The strategy to develop the workforce to promote economic success and social inclusion has been on the agenda in the Tees Valley and the region for many years. There have been a number of studies and plans published which act as a framework for the development of plans in the local area and within the wider North East region. The following sections illustrate the role of the Tees Valley Vision, the Regional Economic Strategy and the Regional Skills Strategy in relation to workforce development. For more detailed information on the plans see 'The Planning Environment' section in Part B of this plan.

### Tees Valley Vision<sup>9</sup>

The Tees Valley Vision study was commissioned by the Tees Valley Partnership in order to assist the people of the Tees Valley to understand the economic under performance of the Tees Valley. This has informed action to address the problems and effect an improvement in the performance of the economy. Increasing skills and learning was identified by the Vision as one of five key actions the Tees Valley should concentrate on to promote the development of the Tees Valley as a sub-region. The Learning and Skills Council has subsequently been involved in developing the learning element of the Action Plan to achieve the objectives identified by the Vision exercise.

### Regional Economic Strategy

'Unlocking Our Potential'<sup>10</sup> is the Regional Economic Strategy for the North East of England, of which Tees Valley is a part. It identifies five priorities, which will help bring sustainable prosperity to the region over the 10 years to 2010. It will achieve this by helping create new jobs, increasing business competitiveness, raising training and skills levels and reducing social exclusion.

The priorities identified in the Regional Economic Strategy for the North East includes 'Building an adaptable and highly skilled workforce.' The work of the Learning and Skills Council clearly contributes in a significant way to achieving this regional objective.

### Regional Skills Strategy<sup>11</sup>

The Regional Skills Strategy for the North East has a vision of an economy in which world-class businesses have employees with high and broad levels of skills, who are continually learning and updating their skills, and in which everyone has an opportunity to participate in learning. The aspiration underpinning this strategy is to increase overall demand for learning, at all levels, from employers and individuals, and to ensure that the supply of learning is responsive to their needs. Disadvantaged individuals in particular must be actively brought into and sustained in the labour market.

<sup>8</sup> Performance and Innovation Unit Report. Cabinet Office. November 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Regeneration for the Tees Valley. GHK. July 2001.

<sup>10</sup> ONE NorthEast. 1999.

<sup>11</sup> ONE NorthEast. 1999.

The seven key priorities for action in the North East Regional Skills Strategy are:

1. Increasing demand for learning and for higher and broader level skills.
2. Raising aspirations and building success in the compulsory education sector.
3. Engaging young people in the world of work.
4. Developing a world-class workforce.
5. Increasing our capacity to respond.
6. Improving our understanding of skills.
7. Achieving economic inclusion.

The work of the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley contributes towards each one of these priorities.

### Tees Valley Labour Market<sup>12</sup>

The Tees Valley has certain characteristics in terms of the resident population, their economic activity and the nature of the work that they do, which impacts on any strategy to engage the workforce in learning. The following highlights some of the key issues in relation to the Labour Market:

- 59% of the total population of the Tees Valley are working age. (384,700 people).
- 74% of the population of working age in the Tees Valley is economically active (in employment or actively seeking work). This is lower than the national average of 79%.
- An estimated 258,000 people are in employment in the Tees Valley.
- There are approximately 17,000 employers in the Tees Valley. They are broken down into sectors as shown in the following table:

Table 2: Sector breakdown

Sector	Number of business units	% Employees
Primary	44	0.6
Manufacturing	1,462	19.9
Utilities	16	1.0
Construction	1,548	7.0
Wholesale, Retail, Repair	4,661	15.5
Hotels and Catering	1,502	6.1
Transport and Communications	792	5.9
Financial and Business Service	4,064	13.9
Public Administration	276	5.3
Education	520	8.0
Health and Social Work	962	13.2
Other social and personal services	1,748	4.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,595</b>	<b>100</b>

<sup>12</sup> The Tees Valley Labour Market. Tees Valley TEC. 2001.

### The Tees Valley Skills Audit<sup>13</sup> has indicated that:

- Future employment growth will continue to be concentrated in managerial, professional, associate professional and personal and protective service jobs.
- There will be a decline in the numbers employed as skilled craft workers, plant and machine operators and unskilled workers.
- Skills shortages continue to be a problem for local employers. Craft occupations in engineering and construction remain amongst the leading areas in which hard to fill vacancies exist.
- Main competencies in which skills gaps were reported by employers are communication skills, Information Technology skills, management skills and personal skills (attitude and motivation).
- A third of employers with skills gaps mentioned literacy and numeracy as a problem area.

The Tees Valley Skills Audit also stated that 'different sectors are affected by widely different occupational patterns of hard-to-fill vacancies, which suggests that specific solutions must be addressed at the company or sector level rather than the whole labour market'.

Within the Tees Valley, the Learning and Skills Council, and predecessor organisations, have taken a sector-based approach to workforce development. This approach has also been adopted in the region by the other three Learning and Skills Councils and is supported by the Regional Development Agency and Government Office for the North East.

### Sector Groups

The Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley has an established relationship with a number of Sector Groups. Sector Groups are representative groups of people working in certain occupational sector areas. They meet on a regular basis with staff from the Learning and Skills Council to discuss issues in relation to workforce development for their sector.

The current sector groups working with the Learning and Skills Council are as follows:

- Chemicals
- Construction
- Electrical
- Engineering
- Health and Social Care
- Hospitality
- Professional Firms Group
- Public Sector
- Small Business Focus Group
- Transport
- Voluntary

Membership of the groups usually includes employers, training organisations and local colleges.

The Sector Groups have a strategic role concerned specifically with workforce development:

- Inform and advise the Learning and Skills Council on sector workforce development issues, they will be used to add value to labour market information when making funding applications etc.
- Comment on National Training Organisation workforce development plans.
- Act as a consultative body for the Learning and Skills Council on local and national plans and when Government departments require employer, partner or stakeholder comments.

To avoid duplication of effort, Business Link Tees Valley representatives attend Sector Group meetings and no separate parallel system will be set up for Business Link Tees Valley. There are also close links with the Employment Service to ensure that work with employers is complementary and supportive to avoid duplication or disruption.

### Key Sector Profiles<sup>14</sup>

Within the Tees Valley a number of sectors have been identified as being key to the development of the Tees Valley economy and future employment opportunities. Each of these sectors is represented by a Sector Group unless otherwise indicated. The priority in relation to the development of the sector and related workforces, as identified by the Sector Groups, is detailed below, along with key features and trends of the sector over the past decade.

A key priority for all of the sectors in the next 12 months is the review of Modern Apprenticeships. The Sector Chairs Group has agreed that this will be a significant agenda item for each Sector Group during March/April 2002.

### Chemicals

- 30% decline in employment levels between 1991 and 1997 but 14% rise by 1998.
- Tees Valley is a world centre for the chemical industry with leading global companies located in the area.
- Sector employs highly skilled and highly paid staff.
- Skills shortages exist in technicians, process operatives and engineering maintenance staff.
- Multi-skilling and Information Technology skills are key within this sector.
- The Chemical Sector Group has recently reviewed its format and membership. This now includes the Offshore Sector and the Northern Offshore Federation has agreed to join the Group. It is also expected that the membership and format of the Group will develop further to include electrical organisations and develop a sector to look at workforce development for the manufacturing and process industries.
- Work is also taking place with a local chemical company that is looking at a major expansion and a Tees Valley location is one of the options. A commitment has been given to support staff development if the expansion occurs locally.

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"I always felt that I would be better suited to a work-based approach to learning and the Modern Apprenticeship seemed to fit the bill. The work that I did for my 'A' Levels was not wasted, as it gave me a head start for my next career move," said Louise McCulloch, aged 18 from Hartlepool. Louise is currently working and studying for her NVQ at Hartlepool College of Further Education.

## Construction

- There was a reduction in employment in the sector throughout the 1990s. However, there has been an increase towards the end of the 1990s.
- Growth in the sector is expected to continue as the Government investment in improving and renovating council housing stock continues.
- Sector experiences difficulties attracting the quality and quantity of young people that are required as trainees.
- Sector has skills shortages in craft areas such as bricklayers, plasterers, plumbers, carpenters and electricians.
- The Construction Sector Group and the Learning and Skills Council is working with four Local Authorities and other employers to respond to growing skills needs through the development of an adult 'apprenticeship scheme'. This will ensure that the number of trained and qualified construction workers is increased.
- Modern Apprenticeship provision is also being considered by the Construction Sector Group to meet the needs of employers and the local economy.
- There is also a regional approach towards workforce development with the four North East Learning and Skills Councils working in partnership with the Construction Industry Training Board, employers and other partners to identify and implement regional strategies to workforce development.

## Electronics/Electrical

- Increase in employment of 65% between 1991 and 1998. There has been a reduction since then due to the closure, or reduction in production, by a number of electronics companies in this volatile market.
- Operators and assemblers make up almost half of the workforce with technicians also making up a significant proportion of the workforce.
- Sector has suffered from skill shortages with regard to technicians and engineers.
- Looking at developing links with the Chemical Sector Group to provide a Sector Group for the manufacturing and process industries.

## Engineering

- Decline in employment of 54% between 1991 and 1998. Further losses expected.
- Changes in skills needed within the industry due to use of technologies and changing working practices.
- Despite reducing numbers, skills shortages still exist mainly due to ageing workforce population.

- There is a reluctance to invest in training in this sector due to perceived problems of staff poaching.
- The sector appears to have an image problem with fewer young people applying to train as craft workers or studying engineering at University.
- The Engineering sector is represented in dealings with the Learning and Skills Council by the Tees Valley Engineering Partnership.

## Health and Social Care

- Employment in the local area has increased by 29% from 1991 to 1998.
- The sector includes health care workers as well as those involved in social and care work.
- Long standing shortages exist with health professionals.
- Care workers are hard-to-fill vacancies. This is largely due to low pay and unsociable hours.
- In Darlington a partnership has been established with a local training provider, a college, social services and care homes in the area to develop the skills of their staff. This includes basic skills training as well as National Vocational Qualification training.
- Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley is part of a regional approach to workforce development within the health sector. Other partners are the other three local Learning and Skills Councils, National Training Organisations, the Durham and Tees NHS Workforce Development Confederation and other interested bodies.

## Hospitality

- Increase in employment of 11% between 1991 and 1998. Prospects for further growth are good with a range of leisure and tourism developments in the area.
- The sector provides a large number of relatively unskilled jobs such as waiters/waitresses, bar staff and sales assistants.
- There have been a number of hard-to-fill vacancies identified in the sector including cooks, chefs and bar staff.
- The sector has a reputation for low pay and poor conditions and experiences a high turnover of staff.
- The sector provides part-time employment for a lot of young people.
- The Sector Group has been working recently to submit a bid for European funding. The funding would be used to deliver a wide range of training in the hospitality sector, including management skills.
- Due to the strong links between the hospitality and leisure and tourism, the group is considering expanding its membership to include representatives from these groups.

## Professional Firms

- The Tees Valley Vision recognised that many of the skills gaps in the Tees Valley are within the higher skills levels, and within the professional sectors. This was also identified by the Skills Audit.
- The Professional Firms Group is targeting activity at raising young people's awareness of the opportunities available within the 'professions'. A current project is a week-long work experience placement for students with professional firms such as accountants and solicitors.
- The group are also looking at the opportunities that will be forthcoming from the current review of Modern Apprenticeships.

## Public Sector

- This has been a declining sector, and continues to be so due to the increasing opening up of public services to private sector practices.
- The public sector has a good record on training its staff.
- Problems recruiting staff have increased recently, mainly due to poor pay and a poor perception of the sector.
- The Local Sector Group has recently reviewed its remit and membership and is currently widening its membership. Following this the Group will prepare a local workforce development action plan.

## Small Firms

- 95% of businesses in the Tees Valley employ less than 50 staff.
- The Tees Valley Skills Audit indicated that staff in small firms are less likely to receive training than those in large firms.
- The Audit also indicated that smaller firms have more difficulty reacting to problems caused by having hard-to-fill vacancies.

- The focus of the Small Firms Group is to ensure that small firms can have easy access to support for developing their workforce.
- The Small Firms Group is currently expanding its membership.
- The Group are currently looking at working closely with the retail sector as many of the businesses in the retail sector employ less than 50 people.
- The Group has also had presentations recently from the University of Teesside on the support available for small businesses and the Education Business Link Organisation.

## Transport

- There have been small increases in employment in this sector.
- Skills shortages have been identified with large goods vehicle drivers and passenger service vehicle drivers.
- Mechanical fitters, specialising in large goods vehicles, have also been identified as hard to recruit.
- There is an increased need for Information Technology skills and knowledge of logistics for those involved in transport management.
- The Transport Sector Group has resulted in 'competitor' organisations working together to address the driver shortage issues in the industry.
- An application for European funding, led by a local training provider on behalf of the Sector Group, has been submitted. The funding would be used to pay for additional qualifications in relation to Large Goods Vehicle driver training. These qualifications relate to the nature of the industry sector locally which requires specialist training in relation to the transport of hazardous goods etc. Having these qualifications will enhance opportunities for employability and will also provide the sector with staff trained to meet specific local requirements.

## Voluntary Sector

- The voluntary sector in the Tees Valley is a well established sector which provides both paid and voluntary employment for significant numbers of people.
- The voluntary sector, through its work, also provides support for people who need it to get into employment and access training.
- The sector provides access to a wide range of organisations and individuals who have an interest in many aspects of lifelong learning.
- The Sector Group provides an opportunity to use this network to consult, inform and access many of the key target groups of the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley.

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**Lee Mentier** from Marske started training for his chosen career in August 1999, after he landed an apprenticeship with Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council's Housing & Direct Services Department.

"I wanted something locally based and something that would lead to a skilled profession," said Lee. "This seemed the ideal opportunity."

Now he is busy carrying out all sorts of plumbing and heating work on behalf of Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council.

## Employer Engagement in Workforce Development in the Tees Valley

There are no widely accepted ways of measuring employer engagement in workforce development either nationally or locally. The following statistics give a flavour of workforce development activity in the Tees Valley, but is far from complete.

### The Skills Audit

The Skills Audit carried out in the Tees Valley in 1999 gave the following statistics:<sup>15</sup>

- 80% of surveyed employers had paid for, or arranged staff training in the previous 12 months.
- 60% of employers have in some way supported training initiated by staff themselves in the past three years.
- More than one third of respondents in the Skills Audit have 'uncertified skills' (gained through experience at work but not formally demonstrated by qualifications).
- 60% of people surveyed showed a very positive or positive attitude to undertaking further training or study, to develop skills or qualifications. This compares to 20% of respondents being currently engaged in an educational or training course.

### Work-Based Learning

The following statistics indicate the volumes of young people being trained in the workplace through Work-Based Learning programmes. It also indicates whether those young people are employed status.

**Table 3: Young people on Work-Based Learning programmes**

Learning Programme	Volume in training January 2002	% employed status starts from March 2001 to January 2002
Advanced Modern Apprenticeship	2,471	91%
Foundation Modern Apprenticeship	2,640	46%
National Vocational Qualification Training	1,116	14%
Life Skills	243	1%

These figures have dropped since 1998/99 when the percentage employed was as follows:

- Advanced Modern Apprenticeship 93%.
- Foundation Modern Apprenticeship (formerly National Traineeships) 61%.
- National Vocational Qualification Training (formerly Other Training) 21%.

There is no obvious explanation for this drop in level of employment.

The volume of young people following the Work-Based Learning route has also dropped significantly in the last year. In March 2001 there were 6,826 young people following Work-Based Learning routes. At the present time (February 2002) there are 5,864 young people following Work-Based Learning.

This is of concern and a thorough review of quality of provision, accompanied by work to drive up standards, is a key priority for the Quality Team in the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley. This will take place alongside the implementation of any actions as a result of the review of Modern Apprenticeships.

### Investors in People

In February 2002, 359 companies in the Tees Valley were recognised as Investors in People, with a further 84 committed to working towards the Standard.

### Analysis

#### Willingness to learn

The Skills Audit illustrated that there is a gap between willingness to learn and participation in learning. It showed that while 60% of people were willing to learn, only 20% are currently engaged in learning. The barriers to individuals participating in learning have been illustrated under Objective 1 of this plan, and the proposed priorities to address this will help to narrow this gap.

This Workforce Development strategy looks at removing barriers that relate to learning specifically within the workplace, or related to the workplace, or in relation to developing workplace skills. The key to address here is to translate the willingness into actual participation. The barrier in this instance may be with the workplace itself, rather than the individual. Much of the work to be carried out in relation to this objective relates to employer attitudes and their commitment to workforce development.

In addition to those people who expressed a willingness to learn, there are also the 40% who have either a neutral, negative or very negative attitude to learning. The importance for this group is to create a demand for learning and illustrate the tangible benefits that they can achieve. Within the workplace this can be the opportunity to progress to better employment opportunities. The Tees Valley has a high number of hard-to-fill vacancies and making a clear link between learning and the opportunity for career advancement could be one element to creating the demand for learning.

Trade Unions have a unique contribution to make to the development of a learning society. The Northern Trade Union Congress has recently published 'Tackling Barriers to Skills and Learning'.<sup>16</sup> The detailed report sets out the barriers within the region and makes recommendations for overcoming them. One of the recommendations is the establishment of a Union Learning Fund. Another element of the work is the development of Trade Union Learning Representatives in the workplace. This will have a significant impact on the take-up of provision by people at work.

During 2001 the Trades Union Congress delivered a Basic Skills workshop for the Tees Valley Learning Representatives. The Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley will develop and formalise the links between the Learning Representatives, Accredited Brokers and providers to maximise the impact of their work.



### Hard-to-fill vacancies

One of the key indicators of a lack of investment in the workforce is the difficulty filling vacancies as they arise. The following are some of the findings from the Tees Valley Skills Audit, as referred to above, in relation to hard-to-fill vacancies.

- More than one-third of all surveyed employers had hard-to-fill vacancies in the previous 12 months. Craft occupations are the most frequent hard-to-fill vacancies, especially in the engineering, construction and offshore businesses.
- The most frequent reason for hard-to-fill vacancies are: a shortage of candidates or high demand for skills; candidates who lack experience; a lack of apprenticeships or training; and general national skills shortages.
- Four-fifths of all employers with hard-to-fill vacancies report at least one adverse effect on their business. Most frequently, hard-to-fill vacancies restrict the company's efficiency, reduce its output, or restrict its growth.
- Small firms are most likely to be adversely affected by hard-to-fill vacancies, yet they are the least likely to take any corrective action.

### Accreditation of learning

A feature of workforce development in the Tees Valley is that while training is delivered within the workplace, in many instances this is not formally accredited. This can create barriers to people advancing within employment, especially moving between organisations. This is a problem for individuals, and also for employers who then find it difficult to recruit staff with evidence of their skills. The Construction sector has recognised this as a problem and is working to develop a form of adult apprenticeship which will accredit skills that people have, and develop skills further to formal certification.

### Proposed Local Target for 2004

To be agreed next year.

### Challenges

#### Change in the workforce and skills needed by the labour market.

- There is a constantly changing picture in terms of skills needs. The traditional skills held by many people within, and out of, the workforce, are no longer relevant in today's workplace.
- Some sectors and employers are failing to plan ahead and with the ageing workforce will shortly face extreme skill shortage in the remaining workforce.

### Business Pressure

- Many businesses operating in the current economic climate are busy just keeping the business operational and cannot give priority - either financially or through staff time to workforce development.

### School Leavers

- Employers perceive a lack of young people entering employment or training within key sectors.
- Many young people have low skills levels when they leave school.

### Skills Gaps

- Employers report difficulty recruiting into higher skilled jobs, yet graduates often leave the area to find work.
- Skills gaps currently exist within some sectors and hard-to-fill vacancies exist in others.

### Communication with employers and support for employers

The Tees Valley has over 17,000 businesses. Communicating with them all, in a meaningful way, that brings positive results for both parties, provides a significant challenge. Organisations like the Learning and Skills Council have a difficult job engaging employers in consultation, yet can then be accused of not being inclusive and having favoured employers to work with. Working through representative organisations is one strand of our strategy for communicating with employers.

Many employers belong to trade or professional organisations and these organisations provide an ideal opportunity to access members in an efficient way that suits them. Some of the main representative organisations that the Learning and Skills Council links with are the North East Chamber of Commerce - Tees Valley Branch, the CBI, the Federation of Small Businesses, the Small Business Service (Business Link Tees Valley) and the Trades Union Congress.

In addition to these groups are the Sector Groups who are referred to earlier in this section.

A further confusion in communication with employers is the wide range of organisations, seemingly working in a similar field. An on-going request from employers is for this to be organised better so that employers are clear whom to contact about what, and can do so easily. Business Link, Tees Valley Development Company and Employment Service are just three such organisations working alongside the Learning and Skills Council providing support to employers. The Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley has effective working relationships with these, and other similar organisations to try and avoid duplication and maximise and simplify the support offered.

All of the above issues are a barrier to businesses developing their staff, growing their business and increasing their competitiveness against markets locally, regionally and globally.

## Summary of Consultations

### Summary of Feedback from Stage One of the Consultation

- 63% stated that their sector does not have the skills that it needs.
- 64% supported compulsory Modern Apprenticeships.
- Many felt that the gender problem within Work-Based Learning was too difficult for the Learning and Skills Council to tackle.
- 90% supported clear progression routes.
- Gaining employers commitment to improving the basic skills in their workforce will be difficult. Financial help will be needed.
- Learning and Skills Council should be pro-active identifying and tackling skills gaps.
- 74% supported the principles of Investors In People, but other alternatives should also be valued.
- Communication with employers should be on a 1:1 basis, with consistency of contact at the Learning and Skills Council, and via representative bodies.

### Summary of Feedback from Stage Two of the Consultation

- Use Investors In People and consultation with employers to identify current needs.
- Consider alternatives to Investors In People for micro businesses.
- Consult directly with employers and via sector representatives.
- Support and encourage co-operation between work providers, Further Education and schools.
- Support grant aid employers with first class training programmes.

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"I would really recommend voluntary work to people of our age, because you get to meet new people and become really good friends with them. We worked in teams a lot, which meant we were able to share our skills and knowledge", said **Darren Devlin**, who is currently taking an AS level in Design and Technology and also studying GSCE English at Bede College Billingham and is a Millennium Volunteer.

## Strategic priorities to increase engagement of employers in Workforce Development

1. To develop links between schools, post-16 providers and employers working with the Education Business Links Organisation to support the development of vocational learning within the 14 - 19 curriculum. This will include:
  - Informed choice for learners at all stages from 14 - 19.
  - The development of clear progression routes between and through the alternative choices.
  - Specific focus on occupational sectors and skills linked to identified current and future skills needs of the economy.
  - Engaging employers in 14 -19 phase of education planning and implementation, including the provision of work-related placements.
2. Increase demand for training from employed people:
  - Through support for Investors in People.
  - Through targeted marketing campaigns.
3. To have up-to-date, detailed information on labour market needs, skills and demographic trends from which employers and learning providers can plan to meet future needs. This will include:
  - Contribute to the work of the Regional Skills Observatory.
  - To provide regular information to employers, learning providers and other relevant partners regarding the Labour Market.
4. Engage employers in the planning of provision to develop opportunities:
  - Respond to current and future needs of specific sectors and the labour market.
  - Respond to specific relevant projects such as Centres for Vocational Excellence.
  - Is flexible and responsive to different employers needs, at different times and under different circumstances.
  - Suits employer needs for staff development through the development of a flexible and imaginative approach to workforce development that creates individual programmes of learning to meet employee and employer needs.
5. Support employers by:
  - Making information about learning opportunities and support available easily accessible.
  - Making maximum use of employer representative bodies such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses in planning and communicating.
  - Developing and maintaining relationships with key players in the sector including National Training Organisations (and emerging Sector Skills Groups) and the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley Sector Groups.
  - Providing development which meets employers needs.
  - Increasing the number of managers in the Tees Valley with formal management qualifications and management training.

6. Increase employer participation in training of young people in employment through the most appropriate route for the young person and employer, and increase the number of employers with Modern Apprentices by 10% each year.
7. Reduce the number of employed people with low basic skills through programmes of basic skills training in the workplace.
8. To work with key partners to develop good quality, accessible information, advice and guidance for adults and employers regarding learning opportunities, employment opportunities and skills development.

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**17 year old Gemma Mealing** from Grangetown was unsure what she wanted to do when she left school. Eighteen months down the line, however, and she is busy building a career in the care profession and has even scooped two awards in the process.

Gemma signed up for a Foundation Modern Apprenticeship in Care. Now she is working four days a week at Longlands Care Home and is enjoying every minute of it. At the same time she returns to Shape once a week to support her work towards a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 2 in Care.

"I find my job really fulfilling and I feel happiest when I am helping other people," said Gemma. "My typical day involves washing and dressing the elderly residents; assisting with the laundry and feeding those who need a bit of help. I even have a role as the in-house bingo caller!"

## > Key Objective Three - Raise Achievement of Young People

### National Target for 2004

85% at Level 2<sup>17</sup> by age 19.  
55% at Level 3 by age 19.

### Local Position in 2000

75% at Level 2 by age 19. (National baseline 75%)  
41% at Level 3 by age 19. (National baseline 51%)

### Proposed Local Target Range for 2004

Between 7,919 and 7,957 19 year olds achieving a Level 2 qualification.  
Between 4,508 and 4,545 19 year olds achieving Level 3 qualification.

The recommendation is to aim for the higher target in each case. The resulting % based on a static population would be an estimated 80% achieving a Level 2 qualification and 45% achieving a Level 3 qualification.

### What achieving the target actually means

725 more 19 year olds achieving a Level 2 by age 19.  
That is 30% of those young people who haven't achieved a Level 2 qualification, gaining one.

596 more 19 year olds achieving a Level 3 by age 19.  
That is approximately 10% of those young people who haven't achieved a Level 3 qualification, gaining one.

Table 4: Extra qualifications needed to meet targets

Authority	% of Tees Valley Population	Extra Level 2	Extra Level 3
Darlington	15	101	83
Hartlepool	14	94	78
Middlesbrough	23	155	127
Redcar & Cleveland	21	142	116
Stockton-on-Tees	27	182	150

These figures have been reduced by 7% to take account of migration factors.

The issue in relation to these young people is understanding who they are and how to best access them.

<sup>17</sup> See Section B for details of National Qualification Framework.

## Analysis

Within the Tees Valley a mainly tertiary system of education exists. Of the 56 secondary schools, only four have a sixth form. Most young people who remain in education beyond the statutory school leaving age move to one of the 13 further education and sixth form colleges to do so. The four school sixth forms account for approximately 5% of 16-19 year olds in structured learning in the Tees Valley. (These figures exclude those in private education). The Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley is currently working with the three Local Education Authorities responsible for these schools to manage the transfer of funding to the Learning and Skills Council from April 2002.

In addition to the four school sixth forms and the 13 colleges, there is also a City Technology College with a sixth form, and there are five private schools with sixth forms.

Current proposals for the development of City Academies locally, and the recent legislation regarding schools establishing a sixth form is likely to create changes in the provision of post-16 education for young people within the Tees Valley.

The proportion of young people leaving school with five A\* - C GCSEs is steadily increasing. The Curriculum 2000 level for the Tees Valley is 42%. That is 3,780 young people. The Key Stage 2 and 3 results also show a steady improvement over the last three years. If the Local Education Authorities achieve their targets for 2002 then this will account for approximately 180 of the additional qualifications required. If the improvement in GCSE results continues, then the contribution will clearly be greater.

The following groups are also sources of potential achievement:

- Each year approximately 5,200 young people leave school without achieving a Level 2 equivalent qualification.
- Each year approximately 3,800 young people leave Work-Based Learning without or having partly achieved a Level 2 qualification.
- Each year approximately 1,700 young people do not enter structured learning. Many of these may be in employment. These people are being targeted to enter structured learning via Key Objective 1 - increasing participation in structured learning.

In addition to these groups, there are those young people who leave Further Education without, or having partly achieved a qualification. There are also young people who complete a Level 2 qualification and do not progress onto a Level 3 qualification.

## Challenges

Initial participation rates for this group are almost at national levels, which indicates a willingness to take part in continued learning beyond school. However, the achievement rates against the national measure of Level 3 is significantly lower than the national average. The challenge is therefore to ensure that each young person is able to achieve their potential within the learning programme they have entered beyond Level 2 to Level 3.

The participation strategy detailed earlier tackled the issue of making sure that young people are equipped to make decisions about the most appropriate learning route and programme for them. This strategy assumes that the young people are on the most appropriate course for them at the time.

The quality strategy detailed later in this plan tackles the issue of making sure that the provision that is available for young people to enter is of a high standard of quality. This strategy therefore assumes that the quality of the provision entered is satisfactory.

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“Working with ImpAct Theatre Group gives young people in Tees Valley secondary schools a different approach to making career choices. The ImpAct Theatre Group performances were excellent, they gave me a lot of information and it was put across in a way that was easy to understand,” said Neil Sinclair aged 15 from Middlesbrough. Neil attended the ImpAct Theatre Group performance at Nunthorpe School.

For the purpose of this strategy, success is measured by the achievement of the planned learning outcomes, which in most instances will be formal qualifications that achieve a Level 2 qualification or Level 3 qualification, or progress to further learning to achieve a Level 2 qualification or Level 3 qualification.

Ensuring that young people are on the right, high quality course cannot alone ensure that they succeed within that programme. Within the Tees Valley there has been no comprehensive recent research across post-16 sectors that definitively highlights the main barriers to achievement.

It is recognised that some lack of achievement is because the young person fails to complete the full programme or course. The other reason is that the young person fails to meet the standard required of the programme or course e.g. fails the examination.

The following are recognised as contributory factors to both failing to complete the full programme, or meet the required standards:

- Financial pressure - the need to earn some money, which can lead to drop out, or poor performance due to interference in time for study.
- No recognition of the benefits of achieving - the young person is not aware of what opportunities are available once they have achieved the course.
- Lack of employer support - to be released to attend learning, to complete required work during work time or to develop the member of staff to the level required. Frequently employers will support learning up to a vocational qualification level but not beyond for key skills qualifications.
- Difficulties with the level/nature of the learning - this may be due to special learning needs, teaching and learning styles or prior experience and achievement levels.
- Travel difficulties - some young people have to get a number of different buses/trains to attend classes. This can be an extra financial pressure but also a pressure relating to attending on time, reliability etc.
- Family/relationship/caring responsibilities - this wide range of pressures can impact on a young person's ability to continue in learning or to achieve learning outcomes.

- Poor course achievement rates - the course itself may only have a low achievement rate.
- Lack of pastoral support - young people have complex needs and pastoral support can help to deal with many issues, or signpost young people to more specialist help. Evidence shows that if problems are tackled early then they are more easily resolved.
- Lack of regular progress reviews/clear targets - evidence shows that people who have clear targets that are regularly reviewed and receive feedback make more progress than those who either do not have clear targets, or who are not reviewed regularly and receive feedback.
- Course cancellation - some courses or classes have to be cancelled for a range of reasons.

Some of the issues detailed above are clearly within the remit of the Learning and Skills Council. Others clearly have an impact on achievement, but are beyond the remit of the Learning and Skills Council. Other issues are not the direct responsibility of the Learning and Skills Council, but working with partners we would want to influence developments to try and tackle the issues in question.

## Summary of Consultations

### Summary of Feedback from Stage 1 of the Consultation

- Enhance careers education for young people still in school.
- Mixed response to only funding courses with clear progression routes, and courses with low success rates.
- Link between provision and the labour market very important.
- Work with Connexions and improve careers education in school.
- Share good practice and get people onto the right course first time.
- Encourage a collaborative approach.

### Summary of Feedback from Stage 2 of the Consultation

- Getting on the 'correct' course is key.
- Raising achievement should be the highest priority.
- Explore best practice for reducing drop out.
- Level 2 qualification is key to employability.
- Engage more employers.
- Reduce Modern Apprenticeship drop out.
- Integrate learner feedback rather than carry out 'one off' exercises.
- Improve basic skills to aid progression.
- Reduce red tape to enable more learning providers to get involved.

## Strategic priorities to raise achievement of young people

1. Increase the numbers of young people leaving school with a Level 2 equivalent qualification through actively working with the pre-16 sector to:
  - Provide information, advice, guidance and experience on post-16 options.
  - Contribute to the delivery of the vocational curriculum.
  - Develop new progression routes 14-19 linking the academic and vocational routes up to and including Higher Education.
2. Develop a rigorous system across all contracted learning providers to gather regular, relevant feedback on the learners' experiences. To have a common, minimum set of information collected by each contracted institution by 2004.
3. Reduce the barriers to achievement in learning.
  - Reduce financial barriers through the implementation of a financial grant programme for 16-18 year olds.
  - Ensure that young people have easy access to good quality support services, regardless of route, course or institution.
  - Provide on-going access to information, advice and guidance regarding progression opportunities.
4. Increase the provision of basic skills training available to and accessed by young people. Specifically to:
  - Target worst performing 25 wards in the Tees Valley in relation to basic skills.
  - Increase the number of providers with the Quality Mark.
  - Increase capacity of basic skills tutors with specific experience of working with 16-19 year olds.
5. Increase the full completion of Modern Apprenticeship programmes by 10% each year, thereby increasing levels of key skills amongst young people.
6. Reduce to nil the number of students who are unable to continue their programme of learning due to institutional problems:
  - Encourage collaboration between colleges to ensure viability of courses.
  - Pilot cross-provider provision where learners can learn at more than one establishment if required to meet their needs.
  - Make it easy for students to transfer between providers of learning, at different times of the year.
7. Create new, non-traditional progression routes - up to and including Foundation Degrees, and develop routes in non-traditional sectors. Develop and extend student apprenticeships.
8. Investigate performance on all courses and implement remedial action to eliminate courses with low achievement rates.

## > Key Objective Four - Raise Achievement of Adults

### National Target for 2004

Raise literacy and numeracy skills of 750,000 adults.

Percentage of adults at Level 2: target to be set in next year's Corporate Plan.

52% of adults at Level 3.

### Local Position in 2000

27% of people in the Tees Valley have low literacy skills and 28.4% have low numeracy skills. This can be broken down as follows:<sup>18</sup>

**Table 5: Tees Valley low literacy and numeracy levels breakdown**

Borough	Low Literacy %	Low Numeracy %
Darlington	25.2	26.1
Hartlepool	28.1	30.3
Middlesbrough	29	31.1
Redcar & Cleveland	27.1	28.4
Stockton-on-Tees	25.8	26.7
Tees Valley	27	28.4
England	24	24

62% of Tees Valley adults are qualified to at least Level 2 (England 68%).

42% of Tees Valley adults are qualified to at least Level 3 (England 46%).

Source: Labour Force Survey, 2001.

Within the Tees Valley adult achievement is via a range of routes. One of the main providers of learning for adults is the Adult Education Service of the Local Education Authorities. There is considerable experience and good practice within the Adult Education Services and the following are examples of work currently taking place within basic skills education:

- Integrating literacy and numeracy Level 1 into a wildlife community project with the local wildlife trust.
- Integrating basic skills into leisure courses such as photography and cookery.
- Delivery of Key Skills alongside Classroom Assistant courses to enhance the employability of learners.

- Delivery of basic skills within the work of occupational therapists with patients and extending this to provide a basic skills resource room within a Hospital secure unit.
- Offering single sex classes.
- Extensive family literacy developments.
- Work with employers and the Trade Union Congress to develop skills in the workplace.

Within the Tees Valley there are Adult Education Services within four of the five Local Authority areas and there is also a very active Workers Education Association.

The Workers Education Association in the Tees Valley operates in all five boroughs across the sub-region. It has made a significant contribution over the last three years in engaging some 15,000 hard-to-reach learners through targeting its provision towards those communities experiencing economic, social and educational disadvantage. A strong commitment to identifying and meeting the needs of ethnic minorities has resulted in producing well-received research documents and provision tailored to meet these needs.

Adult achievement is also obtained through other routes such as provision in the further education sector. In the Tees Valley, colleges deliver a wide range of outreach work in local communities. Other important provision is via the voluntary and community sector. This sector plays a significant role in encouraging adults into learning and gaining accreditation.

### Proposed Local Target for 2004

The target range for basic skills is between 9,927 and 10,510 adults to achieve basic skills qualifications. Our proposal is for 9,927 adults to achieve basic skills qualifications.

The target range for achievement of Level 3 is for between an additional 22,264 and 23,853 adults to achieve a Level 3 qualification. This would equate to between 49% and 50% of adults achieving a Level 3 qualification.

It is proposed that the lower end of the range is aimed for. This will be a stretching target.

### Analysis

The achievement of adults at Level 3 in the Tees Valley is below the national average. This is linked to the low level of adult participation locally. The participation strategy detailed in Key Objective 1 sets out strategies to increase the numbers of adults participating generally, and the Workforce Development strategy detailed in Key Objective 2 shows how more employees will be brought into learning, at all levels from basic skills to Level 3 and beyond.

The Tees Valley levels for people with poor literacy and numeracy are above the national average, and in certain wards within the area the levels are as much as 50% of the residents with poor numeracy skills.

There is an acknowledged correlation between low literacy and numeracy and achievement at GCSE and other socio-economic indicators, including the index of multiple deprivation and unemployment.<sup>19</sup>

## Challenges

There are a number of different agencies, statutory or otherwise, who are working with adults in the skills and employment related fields. A key challenge for all such partners has to be making the process as accessible and beneficial for the learner as possible. In addition to organisations actually delivering the training, there are specific partnerships and neighbourhood level activity, focused at supporting residents in a number of ways. A key challenge will be creating meaningful partnerships between these organisations for the benefit of the learner. A specific need for this is in relation to progression for offenders who may have started a programme of learning whilst in custody, but have been unable to complete it before being released.

A high proportion of adults working towards Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications will be in employment. The Workforce Development strategy covers our proposed strategies for engaging more employers in training their workforce in a positive and supportive way.

There are many barriers to adults achieving in learning. These include the following, many of which are the same barriers faced by young people:

- Lack of interest - the course content or delivery may not retain the interest of the learner so they fail to attend.
- Most adult learning is part-time, and of secondary importance to the primary role of the individual which may be employment or family responsibilities.
- Difficulties with the level/nature of the learning - this may be due to special learning needs, teaching and learning styles or prior experience and achievement levels.
- Access to provision - the location of provision, or the timing of classes, can be a barrier.
- Family/relationship/caring responsibilities - this wide range of pressures can impact on a person's ability to continue in learning or to achieve learning outcomes.
- Poor course achievement rates - the course itself may only have a low achievement rate.
- Lack of pastoral support - people have complex needs and pastoral support can help to deal with many issues, or signpost to more specialist help. Evidence shows that if problems are tackled early then they are more easily resolved.
- Lack of regular progress reviews/clear targets - evidence shows that people who have clear targets, that are regularly reviewed and receive feedback, make more progress than those who either do not have clear targets, or who are not reviewed regularly and receive feedback.

- Course cancellation - some courses or classes have to be cancelled for a range of reasons.
- Many people are reluctant to admit having problems reading, writing or with numbers. Indeed many people, particularly those in employment, may not wish to admit this at all.

The extent of the need for basic skills provision is widespread across the Tees Valley. Even in the wards with the lowest level of need, the level of adults with low numeracy is still 14%.<sup>20</sup> At its most extreme, 50% of adults in some wards in Stockton-on-Tees and Middlesbrough have low numeracy skills.

The level of basic skills tutors/trainers/teachers working in the area cannot currently meet the high level of need for basic skills training. There are high levels of capacity-building taking place within the basic skills networks.

The Moser Report<sup>21</sup> stated that 'basic education staff frequently have no relevant qualifications for the area in which they teach'. This was also highlighted by a Local Adult Education Service survey of staff, which highlighted that less than half of basic skills staff have a related qualification.

The Skills for Life<sup>22</sup> document states that all providers of literacy and numeracy skills education must meet minimum quality criteria. The Basic Skills Quality Mark currently represents the best model of these minimum standards. Only five providers in the Tees Valley currently have the Quality Mark.

Sufficient planning must take place to ensure adequate progression routes from basic skills training. This may mean new types of provision, at different venues, timings, subjects etc. It is crucial to plan ahead to this stage to ensure that there are progression routes available, but also to act as an incentive or motivator for someone joining a basic skills programme.

Due to difficulties in reading, some people with basic skills needs may have more difficulties than other adults in accessing user friendly information about provision that is available, how to access this and where to go for help. They may also have additional difficulties of low confidence and self-esteem that need to be overcome before they can engage in learning effectively.

## Summary of Consultations

### Summary of Feedback from Stage 1 of the Consultation

- The Learning and Skills Council should have some clear areas of focus for raising achievement, especially those at risk of non-completion and/or non-achievement.
- In certain circumstances it is appropriate to fund courses with low success rates.
- The use of the Basic Skills Agency Quality Mark is supported.
- Information on success rates of courses should be available.

<sup>20</sup> Basic Skills in the Tees Valley. Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit. September 2001.

<sup>21</sup> A Fresh Start. The Moser Report. 1999.

<sup>22</sup> Skills for Life. DfEE. 2001.

## Summary of Feedback from Stage 2 of the Consultation

- Strengthen provision of information, advice and guidance in the community.
- Target the worst areas.
- Raise employers awareness of the need to up-skill the workforce.
- Eliminate poor courses after two years not one.
- Why eliminate courses? Establish the root cause first.
- Need to ensure underpinning Level 1 and Level 2 achievement to achieve the target.
- Need alternative provision for hard-to-reach groups.
- Need clear progression routes.
- More competence-based training and assessment.

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"I wasn't really sure what I wanted to do when I left school," said **Nasira Hussain** an 18 year old from Middlesbrough, "but luckily my careers adviser gave me some good guidance and pointed me in the right direction."

The right direction for Nasira was to enrol on a Lifeskills course at North Ormesby Youth and Community Centre, run by local training company Shape.

"Through my placement I have developed numerous new skills through activities such as creating a community newsletter, helping the residents improve their IT skills in the computer suite and the day to day running of the administration side," continued Nasira.

## Strategic priorities to raise achievement of adults

1. Work closely with partners who are already engaged with the adult population that we are targeting to return to learning or join learning for the first time. Maximise the experiences and work of adult and community education services and voluntary and community groups.
2. Develop a rigorous system across all contracted learning providers to gather regular, relevant feedback on the learners' experiences. To have a common, minimum set of information collected by each contracted institution by 2004.
3. Reduce the barriers to achievement in learning:
  - Ensure that learners have easy access to good quality support services, regardless of route, course or institution.
  - Ensure that support available recognises the specific needs that learners may have as returners to learning or first time learners.
  - Provide on-going access to information, advice and guidance regarding progression opportunities.
  - Ensure adequate childcare facilities are available at the appropriate time and place.
4. Increase the provision of basic skills training available to and accessed by adults. Specifically to:
  - Target the worst performing 25 wards in Tees Valley in relation to basic skills.
  - Increase the number of providers with the Quality Mark.
  - Increase capacity of basic skills tutors with specific experience of working with unemployed adults and adults in the workplace.
5. Reduce to nil the number of students who are unable to continue their programme of learning due to institutional problems:
  - Encourage collaboration between colleges to ensure viability of courses.
  - Pilot cross-provider provision where learners can learn at more than one establishment if required to meet their needs.
  - Make it easy for students to transfer between providers of learning, at different times of the year.
6. Investigate performance on all courses and implement remedial action to eliminate courses with regularly low achievement rates.
7. Ensure that all provision has clearly identified progression routes.
8. Develop new provision to recognise the specific needs, interests and ability levels of the learners and the local labour market:
  - Develop adult apprenticeships within identified sectors where there are a high number of skilled people without formal, recognised qualifications.
  - Work with the HE sector to develop new progression routes into Higher Education.
  - Develop provision that allows progression from basic skills training.
9. Develop higher level training provision for graduates moving into employment locally - work with sectors and Higher Education institutions to achieve this which will also help graduate retention.



## > Key Objective Five - Raise Quality of Education and Training and User Satisfaction

### National Target for 2004

Baselines and targets to be set in next year's Corporate Plan.

### Local Position at December 2001

Further education and Work-Based Learning provision are inspected by OfSTED and the Adult Learning Inspectorate respectively. Both inspectorates share a common grading system, allocating grades to elements of provision. The grades used are as follows:

- Grade 1 - Outstanding
- Grade 2 - Good
- Grade 3 - Satisfactory
- Grade 4 - Unsatisfactory
- Grade 5 - Very Poor

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**David Hatton** is a 42-year-old from Colburn near Richmond. He is recovering from a serious accident, and is unable to work as he is still receiving treatment. David now spends much of his time learning, and is currently completing Advanced Mathematics at Darlington Technology College, as well as a Higher National Certificate in Mechanical Engineering.

"I visited a bookshop and bought a 'Mathematics for Engineers' text book whilst studying Advanced Maths. This gave me the initial idea to read more about maths and to perhaps consider Engineering as a career. I am thoroughly enjoying myself."

The average score in provider Adult Learning Inspectorate inspections was 2.75 for generic areas and 2.66 for occupational areas. The average score in College inspections was 2.18 for cross-college provision.

The performance reviews of all providers in June 2001 and October 2001 graded 75% of all providers as satisfactory or better. The proportion of providers graded as good increased from 19% in June 2001 to 24% in October 2001. Using this system no provision was graded as outstanding in either review period.

There is no consistent data available regarding user satisfaction.

### Analysis

Detailed information is available regarding quality in Work-Based Learning provision. This shows that the range of quality is variable within the network of providers. There is some excellent provision and some provision that needs improving.

The provider reviews show a growing number of providers with provision graded as satisfactory or better. However there are still too many giving cause for concern.

There is no common system in place for measuring user satisfaction.

### Proposed Local Target for 2004

The national target and measure for this objective will not be agreed until 2002. Local interim targets have been proposed as follows:

- Average grade on Work-Based Learning inspections to improve to 2.5 by end of 2003.
- Have no provision graded as giving serious concerns/very poor by end of 2002.
- Have an established system for gathering user satisfaction by end of 2002.

This will result in improved quality that will mean that learners will:

- Have a good experience in learning.
- Have learning that is responsive to their needs.
- Have clear targets set, that are regularly monitored and with timely feedback given.
- Achieve their potential and be more likely to achieve outcomes.
- Be more likely to return to learning.
- Tell friends/colleagues/families about their positive experience.

### This will result in:

- Improved value for money.
- Raised standards in some institutions and across the Tees Valley.
- Improved participation and achievement rates.

### Challenges

There is variable quality within the existing network of providers, and within individual providers between the different provision.

Maintaining a sound, provider infrastructure that provides adequacy and sufficiency, whilst also tackling on-going problems of quality will be difficult. There will be instances of providers not having contracts renewed, or elements not renewed, or reduced contracts. We cannot knowingly contract with a provider of poor quality.

Area inspections are currently conducted by unitary authority boundary rather than Tees Valley-wide.

There is a wide range of different measures of quality, which may not always correlate leading to anxiety within the provider network.

Some providers of learning also provide learning for other organisations such as the Employment Service. We need to make sure that we work together with these to take a common approach and make provision better for the learner.

There is currently no consistent approach to measuring user satisfaction - different approaches are used by different organisations/sectors.

Complex quality requirements will be a barrier to bringing some new provision into the network.

Increasing inspection demands puts pressure on providers and employers.

The development of Centres of Vocational Excellence will provide opportunities, however this needs to be balanced against ensuring equality of access for all. We also need to ensure this brings advantages to all sectors of learning. Currently Work-Based Learning providers cannot make direct bids to become a Centre of Vocational Excellence.

## Summary of Consultations

### Summary of Feedback from Stage 1 of the Consultation

- User satisfaction should be measured by achievement of learning outcomes.
- Learning and Skills Council to play a strategic lead role in the development of Centres of Vocational Excellence.
- Learning and Skills Council to enable providers across all sectors to collaborate on a range of issues, but primarily to share best practice and improve quality.

### Summary of Feedback from Stage 2 of the Consultation

- We need a supportive rather than inspectorial model.
- Collaborative networking across sectors is needed.
- Responding to inspections must include consultation with providers.
- Area inspection action plan findings must include employers and external groups to increase ownership by all.
- Providers are over inspected. Can we have one standard for all inspection?
- Emphasis must be on learner experience.

## Strategic priorities to raise the quality of education and training and user satisfaction

1. Take positive action to address the findings of Area Inspections in partnership with learning providers and local partners. To review the outcomes of Area Inspections each year to ensure that the issues that have been raised are being properly addressed.
2. To increase the quality of provision as graded by external inspections and learner feedback:
  - To ensure that all provision available to learners in the Tees Valley is rated 3 (satisfactory) or above by 2004.
  - To achieve 90% of learners grading their learning experience as satisfactory or better by 2004.
3. To develop a collaborative, cross-sector network of all learning providers, which will achieve the following:
  - To actively promote and support the exchange of good practice and delivery amongst all learning providers.
  - To support all learning provider staff involved in Basic Skills delivery to achieve Basic Skills qualifications and organisations in achieving the Kite Mark.
  - To support and promote the development of all staff in all learning providers through Investors in People, Standards Fund, management development etc.
  - To generate collaboration between learning providers, particularly between vocational and academic provision.
4. By the end of 2002 identify specialisms for each College that reflect local need and expertise. To have these specialisms in place in each College by 2004 with support from Centres of Vocational Excellence funding or from other sources. This will give learners the opportunity to choose from a wide range of specialisms across Tees Valley that meet local labour market needs.

## SECTION B

### > The Tees Valley Context

#### Location

Situated in the North East of England, the Tees Valley straddles the lower reaches of the River Tees, with a landmass of 79,420 hectares and a population of around 655,000. The sub-region is made up of five local authority districts: Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees.

#### Population - declining, especially those under 16

Latest estimates and projections<sup>23</sup> conclude that over the period to 2016, the key changes for the sub-region are likely to be:

- Total population - a decrease of 3% from 654,800.
- Children (0-16) - a fall of 17% from 152,900.
- Working age (17-retired) - down 3% from 386,200.
- Post-retirement - up 19% from 115,700.

The latest estimates from National Statistics suggest that by August 2004, the Tees Valley will contain:

- 27,800 16-18 year olds (27,300 in 2001).
- 9,000 19 year olds (8,500 in 2001).

#### Ethnic Minorities - numbers low, concentrated amongst the young

- Ethnic groups comprise a small proportion of the Tees Valley's population. At the time of the 1991 Census (the 2001 data are not yet available), they made up 2% of the total, with particular concentrations in parts of Middlesbrough and Stockton-on-Tees.
- Work by DeLoitte and Touche<sup>24</sup> noted that around 40% of the Tees Valley's ethnic population was under 16, and suggested that the overall size of the ethnic population is likely to rise in the coming years.
- Levels of ethnic minority population have also risen recently as local authorities respond to the national programme to support refugees and asylum seekers.

#### Employment Structure - over 80,000 redundancies in 20 years

- Historically, employment in the Tees Valley was dominated by a small number of key manufacturing sectors - iron and steel, chemicals, heavy engineering and shipbuilding. Many of these have faced heavy decline in recent decades, with over 82,000 redundancies over the past 20 years, resulting in high unemployment and pockets of severe deprivation.
- Today, a growing service sector provides the greatest number of new jobs in the Tees Valley, particularly in Middlesbrough (over 82% of all jobs) and Darlington (over 80%). Manufacturing jobs remain concentrated in Redcar & Cleveland (23%), Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees (both 21%).

#### Activity Rates - low levels of activity

- Activity rates, which refer to the proportion of the adult population in employment, remain below the national and regional average. The latest statistics, relating to Winter 2000/2001, reveal a Tees Valley activity rate of only 65% (North East 68.3%, England 75.2%).
- At the local authority level within the Tees Valley, activity rates were lowest in Middlesbrough (60%) and highest in Stockton-on-Tees (70.7%).

#### Self-Employment - 60% less than the national average

- Compared with other regions, the number of companies per head of population in the Tees Valley is substantially lower, the result of low self-employment levels and the (relative) dominance of larger companies.
- Within the Tees Valley, Darlington has a substantially higher number of companies in relation to its population than the other four boroughs.

#### Unemployment - still almost twice the national average

- Unemployment in the Tees Valley currently stands at 5.8% (September 2001); almost double the national average of 3.1%. Of the five Tees Valley boroughs, Redcar & Cleveland has the highest rate (6.9%).
- Middlesbrough has the highest level of male unemployment (10.1%) and Redcar & Cleveland the greatest proportion of females unemployed (3.6%).
- The length of time people are out of work remains a key issue in the Tees Valley economy. 22.5% of those currently unemployed have been without work for at least a year (nationally the proportion is 19.2%). Severest problems are felt in Hartlepool (24.7%).
- The age of the unemployed is also of great concern - almost a third (30.8%) of the unemployed are under 25.

#### Gross Domestic Product - only 85% of the national average

- Gross Domestic Product measures the value of goods and services produced in an area. It reflects the area's industrial and commercial structure, and provides an indicator of the wealth of an area.
- In 1998, Gross Domestic Product per head in the Tees Valley stood at £10,683, compared with £12,548 for the UK as a whole.
- Since 1993, Gross Domestic Product in the Tees Valley has fallen from 90% of the UK average to only 85%, principally because of employment locally not rising as fast as has been occurring nationally.

<sup>23</sup> Population and Household Projections for the Tees Valley 1998-2016. Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit. January 2000.

<sup>24</sup> Implications of Demographic Change in the North East and Projections for 2000-2040. DeLoitte and Touche. August 2000.

### Income and Earnings - widening gap with the national average

- Disposable household incomes act as an indicator of the wealth of the local population and are derived from the total income from various sources.
- Income levels in the Tees Valley are, on average, lower than the national average, principally the result of higher levels of benefit dependency.
- In terms of average earnings, these are also well below those for the rest of the United Kingdom. Average weekly earnings for adults working full-time in the Tees Valley in 2000 were £373.60, compared with £410.60 for the UK.
- Hourly full-time wages in the Tees Valley, based on longer average hours worked and more extensive overtime hours, was £9.20 in 2000, an increase of under 3.5% since 1998. Wage rates regionally are at similar level, although the growth rate is higher. The English average is £10.40, 4.4% higher than 1998.

### Deprivation - 42% of wards amongst the worst 10% nationally

- According to the Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation, published in August 1998, all five Tees Valley boroughs come within the poorest 25% of districts nationally, with Hartlepool and Middlesbrough coming 8th and 9th respectively out of 354 English Districts.
- At the ward level, variations are even more striking. Four Tees Valley wards (three from Middlesbrough and one from Redcar & Cleveland) are amongst the ten most deprived wards nationally, and over 40% of Tees Valley wards are amongst the worst 10% nationally.

### Benefit Dependency - 47% of children live in low-income households

- 7.9% of the Tees Valley working age population are claiming Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance, compared to a national average of 5.2%. Hartlepool (9.6%), ranked 17th nationally, has almost twice the national average. At the ward level, there are also particular concentrations of recipients in Hartlepool and East Middlesbrough.
- One third of households in the Tees Valley are in receipt of some form of low-income support. Both Middlesbrough and Hartlepool are ranked in the most dependent fifteen districts nationally.
- Almost half (47%) of Tees Valley children live in low-income households.

### Educational Attainment - GCSE success below the English average

- 42.9% of year 11 pupils achieved five or more A\*-C grades at GCSE in 2000/2001, just above the regional average (42.5%), but significantly below the English average of 50%. This is slightly above the 1999/2000 rate of 42.2%.
- Best performing local authority in 2000/2001 in the Tees Valley was Darlington (47.2%), with Middlesbrough's achievement rate reaching only 35%.

### School Leaver Destinations - more moving into learning

- Movement from school into full-time further education continues to rise. Around two thirds of Tees Valley school leavers in 2000 moved into full-time education - slightly below the English average of just over 70%.
- Work-Based Learning was almost three times more popular in the Tees Valley than in England.
- If those moving into employment with training are included, then the percentage of leavers in learning in the Tees Valley is higher than the national figure.
- Of those staying-on in education, over half enrolled on advanced courses (A or AS level or General National Vocational Qualification advanced or equivalent).

### Participation and Achievement - close to the national average for some measures

Information recently produced by Learning and Skills Council<sup>25</sup> relating to participation and attainment of young people and adults in the Tees Valley suggests that:

- 73.3% of 16 -18 year olds received further education or Work-Based Learning in the Tees Valley in 1999/2000, compared with the national average of 75%.
- 74.7% of 19 year olds reached Level 2 via further education or Work-Based Learning in the Tees Valley in 1999/2000 (national rate 75%).
- 40.8% of 19 year olds reached Level 3 via further education or Work-Based Learning in the Tees Valley in 1999/2000 (national rate 51%).

Turning to economically active adults (those aged 18 - retired), there are:

- 65% in the Tees Valley are qualified to at least Level 2 (national rate 68%).
- 42% are qualified to at least Level 3 (46% nationally).
- 21% are qualified to at least Level 4 (27% nationally).
- 69% of adults aged 16-69 are estimated to have participated in learning at sometime in the last three years (74% nationally).

### Literacy and Numeracy - over 100,000 people with literacy or numeracy problems

- According to work by the Basic Skills Agency, all five Tees Valley authorities rank in the worst third in terms of literacy problems, and in the worst 25% in terms of numeracy for the country.
- Over 104,000 Tees Valley adults have poor literacy skills and over 110,000 adults have poor numeracy skills.
- Two thirds of the wards in the Tees Valley have literacy or numeracy levels below the national average. In 42 wards, one third or more of the adults are classed as having poor literacy or numeracy skills.
- Nationally, the proportion of the population with poor literacy is 24%, the same as for poor numeracy. However, within the Tees Valley, numeracy is a slightly greater problem, with 27.4% of the population estimated to rank poor in numeracy terms (around 110,200 people), compared with 27% (104,500 people) in terms of literacy.

## > The Planning Environment

The planning and delivery of learning crosses many different policy and influence areas. The considerations, which must be taken into account in decision-making, are numerous.

The influences on the Learning and Skills Council cover sector areas, Government departments and geographical considerations. There is a wide range of strategies and targets that must be taken into account. There are current strategies, future plans and the constant round of consultation.

What is clear is that the importance of learning touches many people and organisations. What is also clear is that because of the extensive links with other organisations and policy making bodies, the learning environment is rarely, if ever, static. Some of the influences will be at a national, regional or local level. It is important that the Learning and Skills Council takes the opportunity to influence any developments, but should also position itself to be able to respond positively to any changes that are made.

Detailed below are some of the influences on the development of the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley Local Strategic Plan.

**Table 6: Influences on the Local Strategic Plan**

Objective	National Planning Influence	Local/Regional Planning Influence
Extend participation in education, learning and training.	Cassels Report on Modern Apprenticeships. ABSSU document Skills for Life. The national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills. Connexions White Paper.	European Social Fund Regional Guidance. Lifelong Learning Partnerships. Local Basic Skills Plans. Local Education Plans. Neighbourhood Renewal Plans. Provider Strategic Plans. Single Regeneration Budget Plans. Tees Valley Action Plan. Youth Offending Teams.
Increase engagement of employers in Workforce Development.	Cassels Report on Modern Apprenticeships. Centres of Vocational Excellence. Basic Skills Agency reports on sector groups. Development of Frameworks for Regional Employment and Skills. Action Performance and Innovation Unit report on Workforce Development. Review of National Training Organisations.	Regional Economic Strategy. Tees Valley Vision. Basic Skills with employers project. Workforce Development Strategy. Northern Trades Union Congress. - Tackling Barriers to Skills and Learning. Education Business Links Organisation Plan. Employment Service and New Deal Plans.
Raise achievement of young people.	Cassels Report on Modern Apprenticeships. Schools Achieving Success - 16 - 19 Organisation and Inspection. Centres of Vocational Excellence. National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.	Tees Valley Action Plan. Local Level 2 Target Plan. Excellence in Cities which includes: Excellence Challenge, Education Action Zones, City Academies, Specialist Schools, Beacon Schools. Youth Offending Teams. Connexions Development Plans.

Objective	National Planning Influence	Local/Regional Planning Influence
Raise achievement of adults.	Skills for Life.	New Deal 25+. Action Team for Jobs. Welfare to Work and Joint Investment Plans. Tees Valley Action Plan. Basic Skills Plan. Workforce Development Strategy. European Social Fund Co-Financing Plan.
Raise quality of education, training and user satisfaction.	Common Inspection Framework. Raising Standards: Learning and Skills Council Quality Improvement Strategy. Schools Achieving Success - 16-19 Organisation and Inspection.	Area Inspection Reports and Action Plans.
Equality and Inclusion.	Learning and Skills Council Guidance. Commission for Racial Equality. Leadership Challenge.	Equality and Diversity Plan.

### Regional Economic Strategy

'Unlocking Our Potential'<sup>26</sup> is the Regional Economic Strategy for the North East of England, of which Tees Valley is a part. It identifies six priorities, which will help bring sustainable prosperity to the region over the 10 years to 2010. It will achieve this by helping create new jobs, increasing business competitiveness, raising training and skills levels and reducing social exclusion.

The six key priorities identified in the Regional Economic Strategy for the North East are:

1. Creating wealth by building a diversified, knowledge-driven economy.
2. Establishing an entrepreneurial society.
3. Building an adaptable and highly skilled workforce.
4. Placing universities and colleges at the heart of the region's economy.
5. Meeting the 21st century transport, communications and property needs.
6. Accelerating the renaissance of the North East.

The Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley will contribute directly to the achievement of priorities 1, 3 and 4, and indirectly to 2 and 6.

### Regional Skills Strategy<sup>27</sup>

The Regional Skills Strategy, developed from the Regional Economic Strategy, has a vision of an economy in which world-class businesses have employees with high and broad levels of skills, who are continually learning and updating their skills, and in which everyone has an opportunity to participate. The aspiration underpinning this strategy is to increase overall demand, at all levels, from employers and individuals, and to ensure that the supply infrastructure is responsive to their needs. Disadvantaged individuals in particular must be actively brought into and sustained in the labour market.

<sup>26</sup> Regional Economic Strategy. ONE NorthEast. 1999.

<sup>27</sup> Regional Skills Strategy. ONE NorthEast. 1999.

### The seven key priorities for action in the North East Regional Skills Strategy are:

1. Increasing demand for learning and for higher and broader level skills.
2. Raising aspirations and building success in the compulsory education sector.
3. Engaging young people in the world of work.
4. Developing a world-class workforce.
5. Increasing our capacity to respond.
6. Improving our understanding of skills.
7. Achieving economic inclusion.

The work of the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley contributes towards each one of these priorities.

### Tees Valley Vision<sup>28</sup>

The Tees Valley Vision study was commissioned by the Tees Valley Partnership in order to assist the people of the Tees Valley to understand the economic under-performance of the Tees Valley. This would then inform future action to address the problems and effect an improvement in the performance of the economy.

#### The resulting strategic objectives from the study were:

1. Building a confident and vibrant society.
2. Building a competitive and sustainable economy.
3. Building a liveable and inspiring environment.

The work of the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley will contribute mainly to objectives 1 and 2. As a result of the Vision, the Tees Valley Partnership has prepared a Tees Valley Action Plan.

### Other Plans

In addition to the strategies and other work detailed above, many of the individual organisations that we contract with, or who also operate locally, have their own operational and Strategic Plans. Some of these are listed opposite. Some of these plans will include clear targets, which will link to the targets of the Learning and Skills Council.

It is crucial that the Learning and Skills Council is as fully aware as possible of such plans. This is to ensure that the plans that it develops are complementary to and do not conflict with partner plans. It will also ensure that the resulting delivery plans can maximise the work that is already planned and take them into account in a Strategic Planning process.

### Other plans we have considered:

College Strategic Plans.  
Adult and Community Education Plans.  
Local Authority Plans.  
Local Education Authority Plans.  
Lifelong Learning Plans.  
National Training Organisation Plans.  
Voluntary Sector Plans.  
Information Advice and Guidance Partnership Plans.  
Small Business Service Plans.  
Adult and Community Education Service Plans.  
European Social Fund Co-Financing Plan.

### Learning and Skills Council Plans

This Local Strategic Plan is just one of a number of plans being developed by the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley. A number of other complimentary plans have been developed which support the achievement of the Learning and Skills Council objectives. The plans that are being developed go into much more detail regarding their subject content than this plan, but should be considered as supporting strategies. The plans in question are:

Literacy and Numeracy Delivery Plan.  
Equality and Diversity Plan.  
Workforce Development Plan (to be produced Summer 2002).  
Annual Business Plan 2002/2003 (available end July 2002).

## > Learning Provision in the Tees Valley

Learning provision and support is available through a wide range of sources in the Tees Valley. This includes the formal educational institutions, through to learning within community environments and employers.

In the Tees Valley the following sources of learning are available from Key Stage 3 (age 14) onwards:

- 56 Local Education Authority 11 - 16 secondary schools.
- 4 11 - 18 schools with sixth forms.
- 1 City Technology School.
- 6 Further education colleges.
- 6 Sixth form colleges.
- 1 College of Art and Design.
- 2 Universities.
- 5 Adult and community learning services.
- 2 Careers Services.
- 1 Information advice and guidance partnership.
- 5 Private schools.
- Voluntary and community-based learning providers.
- 17,000 employers.
- A large number of Private training providers.

The Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley currently has contracts with a wide range of organisations for the delivery of its objectives.

The summary of provision that is currently contracted is detailed opposite.

## Further Education Provision<sup>29</sup>

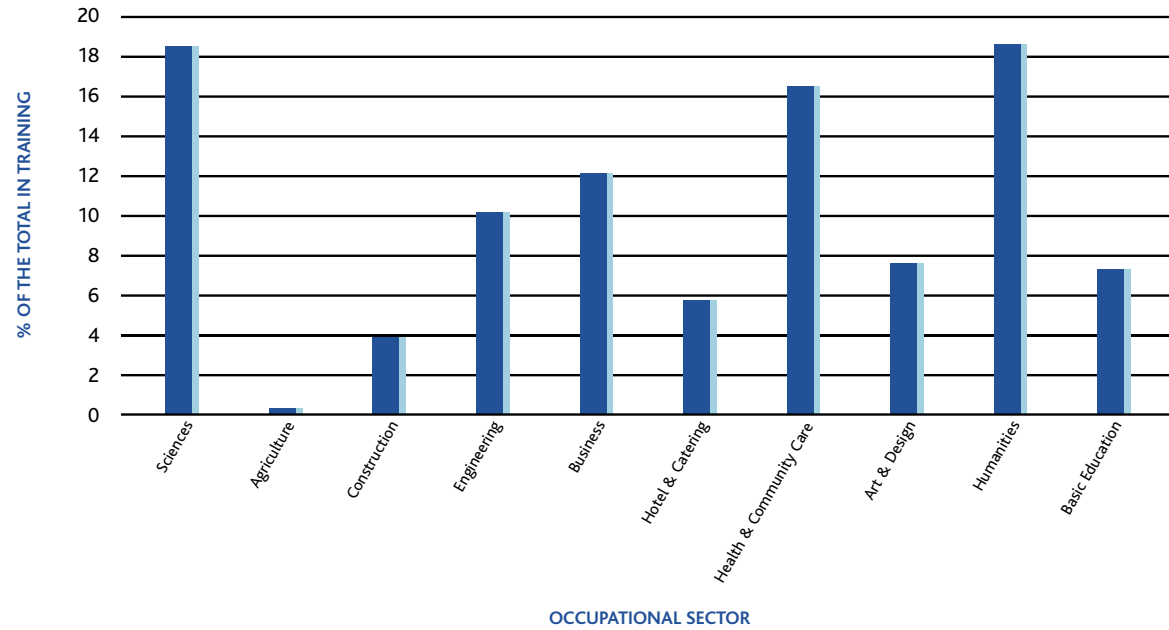
Within the 13 colleges there is provision across each of the 10 programme areas as shown below.

	Bede College, Billingham	Cleveland College of Art & Design, Middlesbrough	Darlington College of Technology	Hartlepool Sixth Form College	Hartlepool College of Further Education	Middlesbrough College	Prior Pursglove College, Guisborough	Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College, Darlington	Redcar & Cleveland College	St Mary's College, Middlesbrough	Stockton & Billingham College of Further Education	Stockton Sixth Form College	Teesside Tertiary College, Middlesbrough
Sciences	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Agriculture					●	●					●		●
Construction			●		●				●		●		●
Engineering			●	●	●				●		●		●
Business	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Hotel & Catering	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Health & Community Care	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Art & Design	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Humanities	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Basic Education			●	●	●	●	●		●		●	●	●

Further Education provision is also delivered through contracts with **Adult Education Services** within the Tees Valley. In addition to the delivery of Further Education provision, the Learning and Skills Council also contracts with the Adult Education Services for the provision of basic skills training, Information and Communications Technology and a range of other short courses for adults. This contributes towards the achievement of increasing and widening participation of adults in learning.

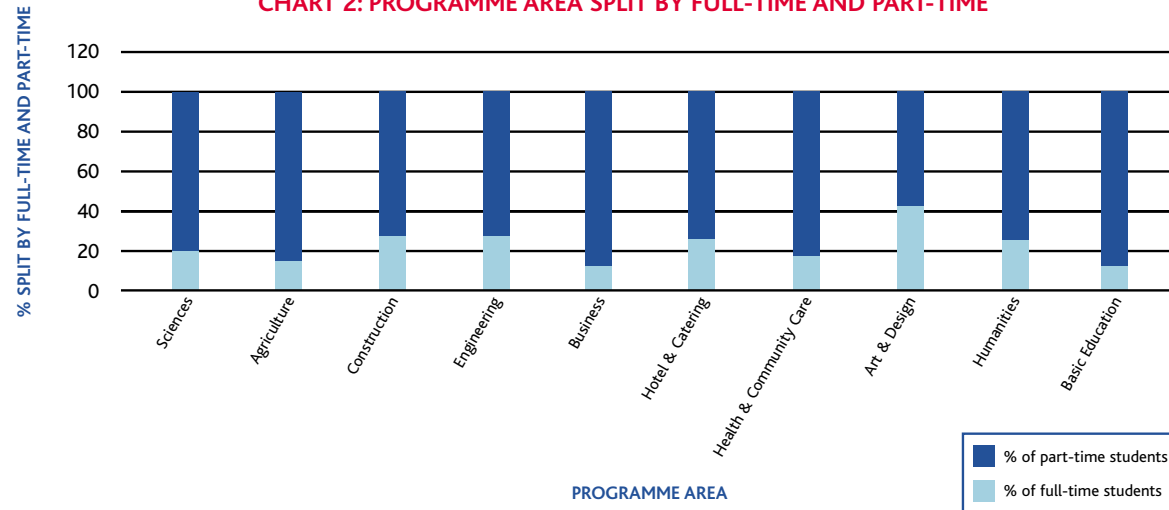
The following chart illustrates what proportion of the overall Further Education provision in the colleges is against each programme area.

**CHART 1: FURTHER EDUCATION IN TRAINING BY OCCUPATIONAL SECTOR**



The chart below shows the split between full and part-time students by programme area.

**CHART 2: PROGRAMME AREA SPLIT BY FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME**



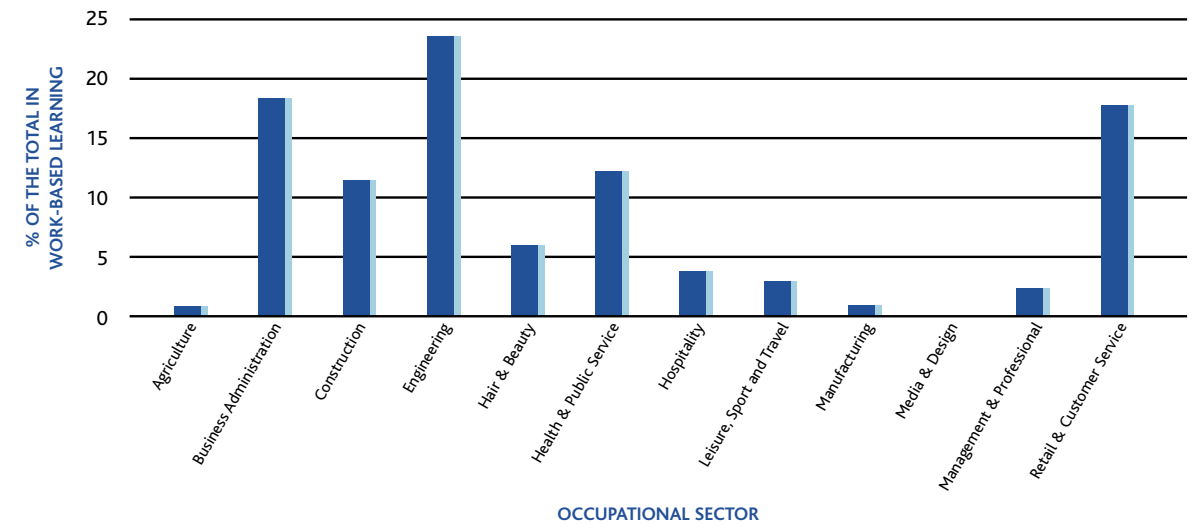
### Work-Based Learning Provision

There are currently<sup>30</sup> 6,268 young people on Work-Based Learning programmes through 56 contracted providers.

The distribution of trainees by occupational sector, programme and level of qualification aim is detailed below.

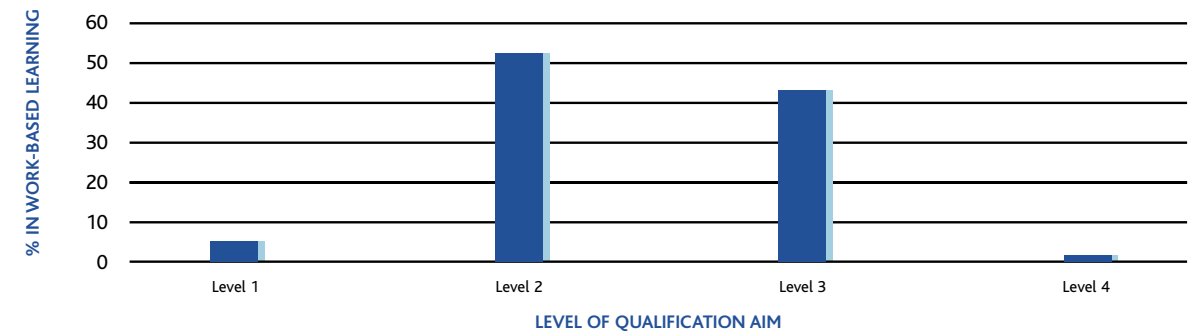
The following chart shows the breakdown of the numbers in Work-Based Learning by occupational sector areas.

**CHART 3: WORK-BASED LEARNING BY OCCUPATIONAL SECTOR**



The following chart shows the breakdown of trainees by the level of qualification they are aiming for.

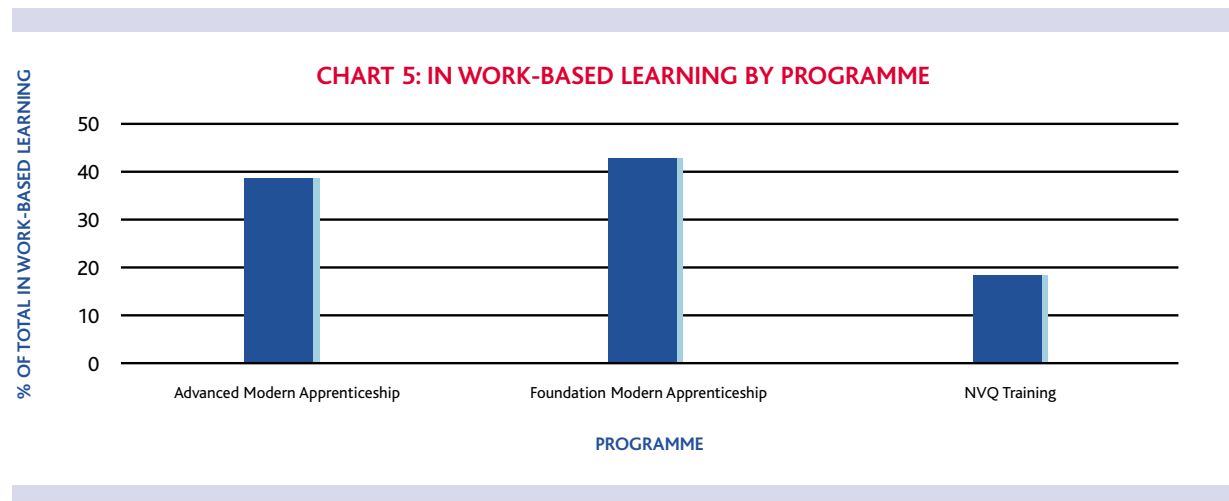
**CHART 4: % WORK-BASED LEARNING BY LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION**



<sup>30</sup> Measured at the end of November 2001.



The following chart shows the breakdown of the young people in Work-Based Learning by the programme they are the following.



### Local Initiative Fund

A wide range of provision has been purchased using the Local Initiatives Fund. As described elsewhere in this document, the Local Initiative Fund budget gives the Learning and Skills Council a small amount of flexibility to fund activity that cannot be supported by mainstream budgets. All activities that are supported by this budget contribute towards the achievement of the Learning and Skills Council objectives.

Within the financial year 2001/2002 - the following are just examples of the type of activities that the Local Initiative Fund budget has been able to support:

- Training of basic skills tutors to increase the local capacity to raise basic skills.
- Support for equal opportunities training materials.
- Support for local learning partnerships.
- Promotion of Bite Size courses.
- Improving basic skills in the workplace project.
- Workforce development.
- Education business links.

### Workforce Development Provision

Contracts have been agreed with the Tees Valley Education Business Links Organisation for a range of activities contributing to the provision of high quality Education Business Link opportunities for all young people (including primary and secondary). The contract is for the development of sustainable links that will allow every young person the opportunity to participate in high quality work related Education Business Link activities. This includes the provision of work experience places and teacher professional development.

Further workforce development provision is through the Small Business Service for the Tees Valley, Business Link Tees Valley. The contract is for the provision of a fully integrated workforce development service for small and medium-sized organisations. This includes support for organisations towards recognition against the Investors In People Standard, encouraging the use of National Vocational Qualification units and qualifications and designing and implementing a structured approach to improving business performance through the development of people.

### Information Advice and Guidance

3,550 Learning and Skills Council funded advice episodes will be delivered by the Tees Valley Information Advice and Guidance partnership for the contract year 2001/2002.



**Sarah Golden** is from Beechwood and started with Rathbone Training in October 2001, on the Life Skills initiative. Sarah is currently working towards NVQ Level 2 in Business Administration. When asked about her aims for the future, Sarah said: "I'm not doing this qualification to just sit at home when it is completed. The time at Rathbones has given me the motivation to hopefully go on and do a further college course or to try and get onto a company placement. I would definitely recommend Life Skills to other people who are unsure about what they want to do when they leave school".

## > Resourcing the Plan

The annual budget for the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley is £118 million for the year (2001-2002). This was to support up to 100,000 learners in Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees.

Up to 93% of the local budget was committed to spend on main programmes - this included funding colleges, Work-Based Learning providers, adult and community education and Information Advice, and Guidance partnerships. There is usually little or no flexibility with use of these funds as national rates and formulae apply.

Approximately 1% of the Learning and Skills Council budget is available for discretionary spend and is known as a Local Initiatives Fund. This budget allows spend on activities that will help the Learning and Skills Council to achieve its local objectives, but could not be funded through other budgets. The priorities for the use of this fund in 2001/2002 were basic skills, equal opportunities and reducing the barriers to learning. Future priorities will be linked to the strategic priorities of the Learning and Skills Council.

The Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley is committed to working with partners to increase the total funding that is available to spend on learning in the Tees Valley. This includes bidding for funds that become available, or being a partner in developments that may have funding attached to them.

Our priorities in bidding for additional funding, and working in partnership, is to ensure that:

- There is evidence of need and demand for the activity being proposed.
- The activity contributes to the strategic objectives of the Learning and Skills Council.
- There is capacity within the Learning and Skills Council to manage the resulting activity.
- There is capacity locally to deliver the project in question, or that capacity building is part of the project action plan.

### Examples of additional funding already confirmed are:

Recent work with the Tees Valley Partnership regarding the Regional Development Agency Single Pot funding has resulted in an allocation of approximately £10 million over three years to raise aspirations. Specifically this includes extending foundation degrees and reducing financial barriers for young people entering learning. The Learning and Skills Council will be the accountable body responsible for working with partners to agree a delivery plan and ensure that agreed targets will be delivered.

The Government Office for the North East has confirmed that we have been successful in our application to become a 'Co-Financing' Organisation. This will help the Tees Valley to strategically plan the delivery of up to £12 million of European Social Funding Objective 3 money over the next two years.

## > Capacity to Deliver the Plan

In addition to funding, the other main resource of the Learning and Skills Council is its staff.

The Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley employs 103 staff when it is fully staffed. The priorities for ensuring the capacity of the organisation to deliver the Strategic Plan fall into four main headings: Resourcing, Learning and Development, Performance and Reward and Employee Involvement.

### Resourcing

There is a Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley staff Resourcing Strategy which details how we ensure we have sufficient staff of the right ability and experience to deliver the business. The strategy details how we will identify staffing needs, where and how we will recruit and how we will ensure equality of opportunity in recruitment. The circulation of opportunities to key partners is a key element of the strategy. This gives the staff the opportunity to progress and develop whilst at the same time bringing the required skills to the Learning and Skills Council.

### Learning and Development

Staff have undertaken considerable learning and development since the start of the Learning and Skills Council. The learning and development policy emphasises an individual's responsibility for driving forward his or her own learning and development. The learning and development that has taken place includes learning on the job, learning from working with partners, attendance at national and regional conferences and the provision of local sessions for staff within the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley. All staff have equal access to appropriate learning and development opportunities and we forecast that more than 500 development days will have taken place in the first year of the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley's operation. All investment in learning and development is evaluated in line with Investors In People principles against individual and corporate objectives.

### Performance and Reward

National systems are being developed and Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley staff are contributing to this process. Interim systems are currently being used. In addition to this, national and local policies are also being developed on work-life balance, and staff have been consulted widely on this and other issues. As a measure of the stability of the organisation, staff turnover has been 5% to date and is not expected to exceed 7% by the end of the first operational year. This compares to a national average annual staff turnover of 15.6%. The staff sickness level is also below the national average.

### Employee Involvement

A staff council has been established in the Tees Valley office. This has been properly constituted and includes staff members who have been voted for by their peers. Their remit covers a wide range of issues, including consultation.

Staff are kept involved and informed in key policy developments through the internal communications structure, as well as through channels such as the local office Intranet, the national Bulletin and a range of briefing and consultation events. To date these have included the Corporate Plan and European Objective 3 Co-financing.

## > Key Partners in Learning Provision within the Tees Valley

We need the help of a wide range of our partners to identify the issues and to develop agreed joint action to address them and achieve success. The following pages detail the partnerships that the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley are working with, or need to develop a relationship with, in order to achieve the challenging targets set for the area.

### Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships

The five Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships within the Tees Valley have formed a Joint Training Forum. The Learning and Skills Council has developed a link with this group. Shared priorities between the Learning and Skills Council and the Training Forum include:

- Provision of training for childminders and carers.
- The provision of childcare facilities by learning institutions and employers.
- Accessibility of information about learning for potential childminders.

The Partnership and the Learning and Skills Council are agreeing a "memorandum of understanding" to make sure that they work together in addressing skill needs of this key growth sector.

### Secondary Schools

There are 56 Local Education Authority secondary schools within the Tees Valley. The Headteachers meet on a regular basis by borough. The Executive Director and other senior staff of the Learning and Skills Council have attended their meetings on a regular basis to discuss issues such as shared priorities and planning. The two main vehicles for working with the secondary sector are via the Local Education Authorities and the Education Business Link Organisation. The Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley is also developing working relationships with the four Excellence in Cities partnerships in the Tees Valley.

The Tees Valley has a mainly tertiary education system. Only four of the 56 secondary schools currently have school sixth forms. The Government White Paper - Schools Achieving Success - issued in October 2001 intends to make it easier for schools to establish sixth form provision.

### Local Education Authorities

Senior staff of the Learning and Skills Council are on each of the five School Organisation Committees in the area. The Learning and Skills Council is increasingly working with the Local Education Authorities in areas such as responding to the Government's White Paper proposals for 14 -19 learning.

### Education Business Link Organisation

This newly established organisation trading as Learn2Work, has a key role to play in creating a link between various sectors of the learning environment in the Tees Valley, with the purpose of delivering education business link activities. The remit of the organisation covers the 5 -19 age group, which provides a vehicle for appropriate Learning and Skills Council influence pre-16. It will be a key focus for 14 -19 development issues.

### Colleges of Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges

There are currently 13 colleges in the Tees Valley. Each establishment has a contract for delivery of provision with the Learning and Skills Council and each establishment has a Senior Contact Manager from the Learning and Skills Council allocated to work with the college on a range of issues, including delivery. The Executive Director attends monthly meetings with the "Group of 13" Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges.

The six colleges of further education, plus the College of Art and Design, have formed a formal partnership known as FE Plus. This group works together on areas of common interest and officers of FE Plus have a regular involvement in a range of projects with the Learning and Skills Council representing the Further Education sector. The Learning and Skills Council and the Further Education Colleges have worked closely together on securing funding from ONE NorthEast through the Tees Valley Action Plan and the delivery of basic skills activities.

### Learning Partnerships

The Tees Valley Learning Partnership has recently restructured itself. In response to the views of partnership members, who mostly work at a more local level, the partnership has given greater emphasis to the five local learning partnerships. The Learning and Skills Council is represented on each of the five local learning partnerships. Tees Valley-wide issues are addressed by monthly meetings of the chairs of each of the five local learning partnerships and the Learning and Skills Council. The local learning partnerships are currently working with the Learning and Skills Council to carry out research into patterns of learning and non-learning across the Tees Valley and on Area Inspection Action Planning in Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees and Hartlepool. The Learning and Skills Council and the Learning Partnerships have agreed a "memorandum of understanding."

### Private Work-Based Learning Providers

The Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley currently has contracts for delivery with 51 private Work-Based Learning providers. In addition to regular contract and review meetings with individual providers, the Learning and Skills Council runs a provider forum. This meets regularly to act as a focus for communication between the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley and Work-Based Learning providers. It has now been expanded to include representation from each of the contracted further education and Adult and Community Learning providers.

### Local Authorities

The Learning and Skills Council has established effective working relationships with each of the five Borough Councils in the Tees Valley. Established working contacts exist within a range of departments including education, economic development and regeneration.

### Local Strategic Partnerships

The Executive Director is a member of each of the five Local Strategic Partnerships and is also a member of the Tees Valley Partnership, which is the sub-regional partnership group. Senior managers from the Learning and Skills Council are also involved with each of the skills/learning sub-groups that exist in the Boroughs.

## Adult and Community Learning Network

The Learning and Skills Council has set up a network of the five local Adult and Community Learning organisations. This is in recognition of the generally different client group that are helped by the five organisations and the local authority based delivery. Initial work of the group has focussed on changes to funding formula and opportunities for a common approach to cross-boundary issues.

## Careers Information, Advice and Guidance

Future Steps Ltd covers the former Teesside area of Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees. Careers information, advice and guidance is provided in Darlington by Careers Service Darlington. The Learning and Skills Council works actively with both organisations to develop its services for both young people and adults. The Learning and Skills Council is also actively involved in the development of the Connexions partnership which will operate across the Tees Valley from September 2002.

## Higher Education Institutions

There are two higher education institutions within the Tees Valley. The University of Teesside has had a presence in the area since incorporation in 1991. Durham University established its Stockton-on-Tees Campus in the area in 1996. The Universities represent major investors in learning and in the sub-region. The Regional Economic Strategy places both Higher and Further Education at the heart of the economy.

## Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit

The Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit is the strategic planning arm of the five local authorities in the Tees Valley. It has a key role to play in the economic development of the Tees Valley. It has been the driving force behind the Tees Valley Vision which sets out a future development strategy for the Tees Valley. It also plays a key role in the Tees Valley Partnership and in the co-ordination of the Tees Valley Action Plan.

## Tees Valley Development Company

The Tees Valley Development Company promotes the Tees Valley for tourism and inward investment. The Learning and Skills Council has already worked with the Tees Valley Development Company on a number of significant local investment projects and in developing the tourism skills of the local economy.

## Voluntary and Community Sector/Youth and Community Groups

The Learning and Skills Council manages a Voluntary Sector Group which acts as the focus for communication between the Learning and Skills Council and the voluntary and community sectors across the Tees Valley. Active consultation and communication has also taken place with the voluntary and community sectors on the preparation of the Local Strategic Plan. Consultation has also taken place in key policy areas such as Workforce Development, Co-financing and the Tees Valley Action Plan.

## Employers

The Learning and Skills Council has direct links with a broad range of employers in the Tees Valley. This is a priority group to develop further links with, and to establish the most effective way for employers to contribute to the planning of the Learning and Skills Council and its provision. In addition, effective ways of communicating with large numbers of employers needs to be established so that as many employers as possible are able to engage in the work of the Learning and Skills Council.

## Job Centre Plus

Links exist with the local Job Centre Plus service, previously called Employment Service. Two main priorities exist due to the organisations working with the same client groups and the same provider network. Regular communication ensures that the best service is provided to the client group, and to also work collaboratively with providers on issues of quality and provision.

## Business Link Tees Valley

Business Link Tees Valley has a key role to play in the delivery of the Learning and Skills Council's objectives. It is contracted for the delivery of Investors in People and workforce development support. The Learning and Skills Council and Business Link have also collaborated on a survey of employers' future skill needs that has been used to inform strategic planning. The chairman of Business Link is a local Council Member.

## Employer Organisations - Chamber of Commerce, Confederation of British Industry, Sector Groups, Sector Skills Groups

As well as contact with employers through Business Link, arrangements have also been set up with the Chamber of Commerce. A survey of all Chamber of Commerce members was carried out in October 2001 to help to build up a picture of local skills needs. The Learning and Skills Council also sits as an observer on the local Chamber area committee. Regional discussions also take place between the Learning and Skills Council's four offices in the North East and the Confederation of British Industry and Chamber of Commerce.

## Regional Development Agency

Close links exist with the North East Regional Development Agency (ONE NorthEast) in order to support regional aims as detailed in the Regional Economic Strategy, but also to ensure that ONE NorthEast is kept informed about local issues that have an impact on regional developments and priorities. Links exist with the other regional Learning and Skills Councils and ONE NorthEast for the same purpose. A recent example of this was in considering college applications to establish Centres of Vocational Excellence to ensure that a regional view was taken. There is a 'memorandum of understanding' between the Learning and Skills Council and Regional Development Agencies.

## Government Office for the North East

Close links exist with the Government Office for the North East in relation to European Funding and the development of Objective 3 Co-financing. We also consult with and involve relevant Government Office for the North East staff as appropriate in both local and regional planning. The Director of Communities and Learning at Government Office for the North East is an observer to the local Council.

## National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education

Learning and Skills Council staff have linked with local National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education members on a number of occasions, most recently to consult with them on the priorities for the Local Strategic Plan. This established link will continue and will be supported by Patricia Whaley, Council Member, who is also the local agent for the National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education in the Tees Valley.

## On-going Partnership Development

While considerable relationships exist with key partners and partnerships, the list needs to continue to constantly evolve, in order to ensure continued effective working. It is not enough to establish a link now, and not maintain it, ensure its effectiveness, and develop new partnerships and relationships from it, as they are needed.

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**Colin Gordon is 16 years old** and attends Hartlepool College of Further Education. He is currently studying Hospitality and Catering NVQ Level 2.

"At school I enjoyed Food Technology, not only preparing and cooking food, but also researching special diets and foreign foods.

"I was unsure what to study when I left school, however the careers advisor at school told me of some options available, and because of my enjoyment in the preparation and cooking of food I knew this was something I would love to do."

## > Consultation on the Tees Valley Local Strategic Plan

This Local Strategic Plan has been consulted on widely. This consultation process has included two formal rounds.

The first round took place during October and November 2001. This was aimed at getting feedback from partners on a range of questions in relation to the achievement of the Learning and Skills Council's objectives. More than 1,000 Outline Strategic Plans were posted to key contacts, and a number of events for employers also took place. One-to-one interviews also took place with contracted providers and key strategic partner organisations.

The second round of consultation took place during January and February 2002. A 12 page summary of the draft strategic plan was circulated widely to the same partners as in Round 1. A two page fax back sheet was included for respondents to indicate if they agreed with the targets and the strategic priorities proposed.

**The strategic partners who were briefed and consulted are as follows:**

One NorthEast - The Regional Development Agency for the North East.  
Local Strategic Partnerships.  
Tees Valley Partnership.  
Local Learning Partnerships.  
Local Careers Services.  
Local Universities.  
Business Link Tees Valley.  
North East Chamber of Commerce.  
Employment Service.  
Education Business Links Organisation.  
Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit.  
Local Authorities.  
Association of Colleges.  
Confederation of British Industry.  
Learning and Skills Development Agency.

The responses to the consultation are summarised in each of the key objective sections. Where appropriate sections of this plan have been updated from the draft to take account of feedback.

## Other consultation to date

Consultation has been a key feature of the work of the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley since its inception in April 2001. The consultation has included a wide range of partners, and a wide range of discussion items, from the Draft Corporate Plan to the implementation of European Social Funding under Co-Financing. More recently, the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley has carried out consultation into the proposed merger of Middlesbrough College and Teesside Tertiary College.

The consultation has been both formal, with events taking place at different venues throughout the Tees Valley, and more informally, through working groups and one-to-one meetings. The consultation activity has been tailored to the groups, individuals and organisations that we have sought to consult with. We have paid particular attention to those groups and sectors with whom the Learning and Skills Council's predecessor organisations have not had strong, or any relationships. In particular this includes disadvantaged groups such as disadvantaged communities, offenders, ethnic groups and people who have not accessed learning recently. In consulting with these groups the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley has used key local representative organisations as a vehicle. Considerable work has been done to develop relationships with the voluntary and community sectors, the adult education sectors, and NIACE as they are recognised groups who work regularly with the Learning and Skills Council target groups.

Some of the consultation that has taken place to date is detailed below.

Date	Item	Who
May 01	Draft Corporate Plan.	All partners.
July 01	Co-financing ESF.	All contracted providers. Current recipients of ESF funding. Potential recipients of Co-financing.
June 01 onwards	Global Grants.	Voluntary Development Agencies, Local Authorities, Employment Service.
Aug/Sept 01	Consultation on proposed college merger.	Tees Valley community.
September 01	Basic Skills.	Community and voluntary sector.
Sept/Oct 01	Employer needs.	Employers.
Oct 01	Basic Skills.	Basic skills providers.
Oct/Nov 01	Local Strategic Plan Outline.	All partners.
Nov 01	Regional basic skills conference.	Basic skills providers, probation service, prison service, social services.
Jan 02	Summary of plan.	All partners.
Feb 02	Presentation of plan.	Learning Partnerships. Tees Valley Strategic Partnership.
June 02	Local Strategic Plan	All partners

## > Health and Safety of Learners

The Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley has the responsibility to ensure that all people who are learning and training on programmes funded by the Learning and Skills Council are adequately protected in respect of their health and safety.

The aim for learner health and safety will be to ensure that it is genuinely seen as not only an integral part of high quality training provision, but also as an area for continuous improvement. We will endeavour to ensure:

1. The promotion of provider responsibility and accountability for learner health and safety, in particular through an expectation of continuous improvement and via high quality health and safety content in self-assessment and development plans.
2. The transition from previous approaches to one of maximising influence and effect through enhanced, more appropriate and targeted ways of working with WBL providers, Further Education colleges, voluntary sector and adult and community learning providers.
3. That we will increasingly apply a selective, risk-based approach targeted towards the concept of the 'safe learner'.
4. That learner health and safety is pro-active, influential and an integrated part of the overall remit of the Learning and Skills Council.
5. That organisations with whom the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley contract with will be assessed on their capacity to provide a safe, healthy and supportive environment for all learners and will be required to demonstrate:
  - A planned approach to health and safety.
  - Resources available to provide competent health and safety management.
  - Arrangements to promote safe working and supervision within all learning programmes.
  - A system to check adequate supervision and a safe learning environment at employer placements.
  - Mechanisms for informing learners about health and safety arrangements including their entitlements and responsibilities.
  - Systems in place for the discovery, reporting and recording of accidents and incidents.
  - A system in place for the investigation of accidents and incidents, and evidence that measures have been taken to prevent reoccurrence.

The policy described above will be monitored for effectiveness on an on-going basis, and in response to any serious health and safety incidents, to ensure that it continues to adequately protect learners in the Tees Valley.

## > Monitoring and Evaluation

This Local Strategic Plan will be monitored and evaluated in two distinct ways. It will be monitored and evaluated as it stands, on a strategic level, and it will also be monitored and evaluated through its translation into an Annual Business Plan on an operational level.

### Annual Business Plan

This Local Strategic Plan will be developed into an Annual Business Plan. The first Business Plan from this Local Strategic Plan will run from April 2002 to March 2003.

The Business Plan will clearly detail the following information in respect of each of the identified strategic objectives due to take place between April 2002 and March 2003:

- Specific, clearly defined, measurable outcomes, achievable within the timescale.
- Method of measuring achievement.
- Numerical targets where possible.
- Milestones to achievement where possible.
- Specific timescale for achievement.
- Responsible team/individual within the Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley.
- Key external partners.

An internal management system to monitor the delivery of the Business Plan will ensure that staff members responsible for action, report monthly, against progress towards the targets and milestones within the Business Plan. The Planning Manager will produce a summary monthly report detailing any variances from the Plan and recommending remedial action if required.

### Local Strategic Plan

The monitoring and evaluation of the Local Strategic Plan will take place on a monthly basis, with two objectives being reviewed every month on a rolling programme (including Equality and Diversity). The review will form part of the monthly Senior Managers meeting and will involve the following:

- Discussion of the objective.
- The current and planned activity contributing to the objective.
- The impact of the activity on the target.
- A review of the on-going relevance of the identified priorities.
- Discussion and agreement on any proposed updates to the priorities.

The monitoring and evaluation process will be managed by the Planning Manager in conjunction with Senior Manager colleagues. Monitoring and evaluation of the Plan is also a key responsibility of the local Council and it will be included as a regular item at their Council Meetings.

## > Learning And Skills Council Tees Valley - Council Members at March 2002

- Miles Middleton, CBE. Chairman, Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley.
- Pam Eccles, Executive Director, Learning and Skills Council Tees Valley.
- Margaret Armstrong, Principal and Chief Executive, Stockton and Billingham College.
- John Arthur, General Manager, UK Mills, Corus Special Profiles.
- Mike Brider, Senior Regional Organiser, Transport and General Workers Union.
- Bob Gibson, Leader, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.
- Alexandra Haskins, Retired Senior Lecturer and Further Education Manager, College and School Governor.
- Helen Pickering, Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Teesside.
- Peter Rowley, Chief Executive, Darlington Building Society.
- Rob Shotton, Chair, Business Link Tees Valley.
- Patricia Whaley, Consultant in Higher Education and North East Agent for NIACE.
- John Williams, Deputy Chair, ONE NorthEast.

## > Glossary of Terms

ABSSU	Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit
ACL	Adult and Community Learning
ALI	Adult Learning Inspectorate
AMA	Advanced Modern Apprenticeship
BSA	Basic Skills Agency
BSQI	Basic Skills Quality Initiative
CBI	Confederation of British Industry
Cove	Centre of Vocational Excellence
DFES	Department for Education and Skills
EBLO	Education Business Link Organisation
ES	Employment Service
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ESF	European Social Fund
FMA	Foundation Modern Apprenticeship
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GO:NE	Government Office for the North East
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IIP	Investors in People
ILA	Individual Learning Account
ILR	Individualised Learner Record
ISR	Individualised Student Record
LSDA	Learning and Skills Development Agency
LEA	Local Education Authority
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LIF	Local Initiative Fund
LLP	Lifelong Learning Partnership
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
NAO	National Audit Office
NIACE	National Institute for Adult Continuing Education
NTO	National Training Organisation
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OfSTED	Office for Standards in Education
PSA	Public Service Agreement
QCA	Qualification and Curriculum Authority
RDA	Regional Development Agency
SBS	Small Business Service
SME	Small to Medium-sized Enterprises
SRB	Single Regeneration Budget
TEC	Training and Enterprise Council
TUC	Trades Union Congress
Ufi	University for Industry
WBL	Work-Based Learning
WFD	Workforce Development

## > National Qualifications Framework<sup>32</sup>

Level of qualification	General		Vocationally-related	Occupational
5	Higher-level qualifications			Level 5 NVQ
4				Level 4 NVQ
3 advanced level	A level	Free-standing mathematics units Level 3	Vocational A level (Advanced GNVQ)	Level 3 NVQ
2 intermediate level	GCSE grade A* - C	Free-standing mathematics units Level 2	Intermediate GNVQ	Level 2 NVQ
1 foundation level	GCSE grade D - G	Free-standing mathematics units Level 1	Foundation GNVQ	Level 1 NVQ
Entry level	Certificate of (educational) achievement			

For more information about qualifications and their equivalencies, visit the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority website on [www.qca.org.uk](http://www.qca.org.uk)

<sup>32</sup> Qualification and Curriculum Authority. National Qualifications Framework.





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If you would like further copies of the Local Strategic Plan please ring our helpdesk number on (01642) 743001.



**Learning+Skills Council**  
Tees Valley