**SUSSEX LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL**

**LOCAL STRATEGIC PLAN 2002 – 2005**

##### A Sussex blueprint for transforming

**post-16 education and training**



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**Section 1**

**Foreword**

Our mission at the Learning and Skills Council in Sussex is to ensure that quality learning opportunities are available to everyone in our community. We aim to ensure that, through having the right skills, everyone can make the most of a huge and varied range of career opportunities our vibrant, diverse Sussex economy has to offer.

Developing economic success will of necessity depend on the growing application of exciting new technologies that have begun to surround us. These technologies are already producing a revolution in the workplace and, as this gathers pace, it is clear there will be a growing skills dependency if we are to maintain this rate of change. There is no doubt that the skills we will require in the future will be markedly different to those that have sufficed in the past.

The creation of the Learning and Skills Council provides a unique opportunity to meet this challenge. Through our ability to both plan and fund post-16 learning, we have an opportunity to match the learning programmes available in our schools, colleges and training organisations with the skills needs of our local economy. While our remit commits us to the achievement of national standards and targets, it also provides us with a real opportunity to draw together a wide range of partners at local level to help define our needs and agree the best way of maximising appropriate skills availability across all sectors of the community.

In this first Strategic Plan we have built on our mission and laid out the values we have embedded in the Sussex Learning and Skills Council to help achieve our goals. We are targeting excellence through the pursuit of learning and accomplishing this in an inclusive manner through partnership and integrity.

This draft of the plan is the result of in-depth study of the situation, as described by current statistics and extensive consultation with learners, businesses and education providers alike, drawn from across the county. We know that achievement of our objectives will require significant change and we recognise that success will be dependent on shared ownership of the proposals laid out in the following pages.

Please therefore help us by giving this plan your best consideration and feed back to us your views, either through a response to one or more of the questions we have posed or via a separate comment. By working together on this, we can aspire to development of a truly world class skills base in Sussex.

Norman Boyland

Chairman

Sussex Learning and Skills Council

### **Introduction**

I am pleased to issue our draft of the Sussex Learning and Skills Council’s Strategic Plan for the period April 2002 to March 2005.

We believe that it contains an ambitious, at times radical, but always pragmatic and achievable, set of ideas and proposals on how we think Sussex can play its part in transforming Britain’s skills to equal the best in the world.

If we are to achieve this aim we must improve, significantly, learning opportunities for all young people and adults throughout Sussex and work with our employers to develop a higher skilled workforce.

The plan is the result of the many discussions that we have had with numerous organisations and individuals during the past few months. It really is a draft – and we need and welcome your comments on its content. We also hope that our style and language is inclusive and partnership oriented, as this is how we intend to work. If you think otherwise then please let us know, as we want our final version to be a plan that everyone in Sussex can ‘sign up to’. Indeed we hope that our partners’ plans will be developed to complement ours.

The final version of the strategic plan will form the basis of our Business Plan for 2002-2003, which will contain much more specific targets and activities for the year ahead.

We hope you will respond to our consultation exercise by **5 February 2002**, either on the form provided or in a format that suits you. Please send your comments to:

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We will be holding a series of consultation events during January/early February which will give organisations and individuals the chance to feed back their views to us. If you would like further information about these, then please contact Paul Stoggles.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Henry Ball

Executive Director

*\*Please note that when we use the term ‘provider’ in this plan, we take it to mean a college, community group, employer offering training, organisation that contracts and sub-contracts for education and training, school, training company, or voluntary organisation***Section 2**

**2.1 The remit of Sussex LSC**

Sussex LSC is one of 47 local Learning and Skills Councils established in April 2001 to deliver key tasks related to post-16 learning.

The Secretary of State has asked the Learning and Skills Council to:

* raise participation and achievement by young people
* increase demand for learning by adults and equalise opportunities through better access to learning
* raise skill levels for national competitiveness
* improve the quality of education and training delivery
* improve effectiveness and efficiency

## 2.2 Mission and vision for the national Learning and Skills Council

Our mission is to raise participation and attainment through high quality education and training, which puts learners first.

Our vision is that, by 2010, young people and adults in England will have knowledge and productive skills matching the best in the world.

**2.3 Mission for Sussex Learning and Skills Council**

We will encourage and enable Sussex learners to achieve standards for participation and achievement that match the best in the world. We will develop a coherent and collaborative network of learning providers that meets the needs of individuals, communities and the economy.

**2.4 Values for Sussex Learning and Skills Council**

We will achieve our mission through the following values:

* **Learning -** We aim to inspire and encourage more people to engage in learning in order to widen their opportunities, enrich their lives and improve their prospects. We are also committed to developing the skills of our own staff and becoming a learning organisation
* **Equality and diversity -** We are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity. We aim to equalise access to learning and achievement for all groups in Sussex. We will work to ensure that our decisions, processes and actions reflect the principle of equality of opportunity
* **Integrity -** We insist on integrity and honesty throughout our work and relationships. We will be fair, consistent and rational. We aim to inspire trust and confidence in all our actions and processes
* **Partnership -** We recognise that we enhance our strength and capacity through working effectively with partners. We will aim to build positive relationships with all appropriate stakeholders and agree common objectives to cement collaboration
* **Excellence -** We are committed to excellence. We insist on the highest quality in all our work and that of our providers, we aim to achieve or exceed our targets and actively encourage the sharing of best practice. We challenge people to be creative and innovative and seek to generate new ideas to achieve positive change

**2.5 Ways of working**

* We will be an engaging and relationship based organisation, working collaboratively with providers and stakeholders
* We have an organisational structure that is clear and comprehensive, comprising three directorates and the executive office
* We welcome secondments, recognising that there are benefits for the SLSC, for the secondee and for their employer. We intend to maintain a proportion of secondments as part of our staffing establishment for the immediate future
* We recognise the strength of the existing provider network. We intend to work with individual providers as well as provider partnerships. We are seeking to encourage supportive partnership arrangements by which larger organisations provide exemplary levels of support to smaller providers
* We know that, in order to achieve our targets we have to achieve significant change in Sussex. We are not daunted by this challenge. We believe that we need to adopt and encourage new ways of working and foster collaboration in place of competition, particularly between the different provider groups. We are also encouraging new arrangements for joint management of provision between providers
* We are committed to equality of opportunity. We will develop and publish our equality and diversity strategy in the next few months. We will work to ensure that, in developing and delivering our plans, we avoid disadvantaging individuals in terms of their gender, ethnic origin, disability, age or sexual orientation. We also want to actively promote equality, and will seek parity of participation and achievement on all programmes. We aim to be an equal opportunities employer and will strive to become an exemplary organisation

**Q1 Do you think that our mission, values and ways of working are appropriate to meet the challenges in the LSC’s remit?**

**Section 3**

**3.1 Fulfilling our role**

The Learning and Skills Council has been created to integrate the planning and funding of all post-compulsory age learning (excluding higher education). This is the first time that a single agency has had the responsibility and powers to provide co-ordination and strategic planning at national, regional, sectoral and local levels. It offers exciting potential for achieving step change in post-16 education and training, bringing significant improvements for individuals, for employers, for communities and for Britain’s competitiveness.

The Sussex Learning and Skills Council intends to fulfil its planning role through the use of three different approaches:

* Identifying learner groups
* Using planning areas
* Analysing the demand for and supply of learning

# 3.2 Identifying learner groups

The key tasks for the Learning and Skills Council relate to the provision of more accessible, relevant, high quality learning for young people, adults and the workforce. In order to be clear about the needs and aspirations of each of these groups of learners and potential learners, the Sussex Learning and Skills Council will seek to understand the following groups:

* **Young people aged 16 – 19** – it is most important that the needs of this group are considered in the context of emerging 14 – 19 curriculum changes and the establishment of the Connexions Service for 13 – 19 year olds. These people will also be affected by the national commitment to increase participation in employment with training and in higher education
* **Adults aged 19+** - learning continues throughout people’s lives. It is important that the barriers and incentives to adults engaging in learning are understood and used in our planning. Adults may participate in learning for economic, personal, social or community gain
* **Workforce (employers and employees)** – Sussex Learning and Skills Council has a responsibility to ensure that learning leads to economic prosperity. The needs of employers and their staff must be understood; we will work with a range of partners to better understand and provide for these needs

**3.3 Using planning areas**

Sussex is a large and varied area of the south-east. Section 4 illustrates the diversity of Sussex in terms of learning, demographic, economic and social features. In order to make our task more manageable, Sussex Learning and Skills Council intends to identify geographical areas within which the majority of post-16 learners currently live and study. The areas defined on the map in section 4 show where 76,000 Sussex learners live and study. These areas also easily relate to existing structures such as learning partnerships, LEA boundaries and Sussex Enterprise economic areas. Once the Learning and Skills Council assumes direct responsibility for funding school sixth forms (2002) and adult and community learning (2003), the planning areas will be reviewed in the light of information about these additional learners.

**The planning areas will be used:**

* for analysing information on learning demand and supply
* as a basis for area reviews
* to develop the provider network to meet local needs
* as a basis for target setting and performance measurement
* to ensure equality of opportunity is developed across Sussex

**The planning areas will not be used to:**

* restrict learners from travelling to the provider of their choice
* influence the allocation of financial assistance to individual learners
* restrict providers in their recruitment of learners

**3.4 Analysing demand for and supply of learning**

As expressed in the mission, the Learning and Skills Council has the intention of ‘putting learners first’. Therefore, the needs of learners are vitally important ingredients in our planning.

The **demand for learning** can be considered in two ways:

* **The economic demand** – the current and projected needs of employers for trained, skilled people; the needs of the local economy for innovation and growth; the projected population size, taking account of migration; anticipated changes in technology and society; the need to promote economic and social regeneration
* **The individual demand** – the projected numbers of potential learners; the choices of individual learners; their goals and aspirations for the future; their preferred ways of learning; the barriers to learning that they encounter; their perceptions of the benefits of learning

The **supply of learning** is an analysis of the quality, amount and range of provision offered through the provider network. The analysis will include those providers with whom we contract, as well as (eventually) those who make provision for a group of learners using other sources of funding (for example, private schools and colleges catering for 16 –19 year olds, or the Employment Service catering for unemployed people). The analysis of the supply of learning will be enhanced by a series of ‘area reviews’, which examine the quality, adequacy and sufficiency of provision.

Our initial work on demand and supply analysis is contained in section 4. This is an early attempt to define the key issues for Sussex and will lead to the identification of issues for each planning area. This will be refined in future years as our capacity for research, information retrieval and analysis grows.

**Q2 Do you agree with our three-fold approach to planning for Sussex post-16 learning; analysing learner groups, planning areas and demand and supply?**

**Section 4**

**A picture of Sussex**

**4.1 Sussex in the south-east region**

*The south-east local LSCs, together with the South-East England Development Agency (SEEDA) have commissioned a study which will explore our common priorities across the region. This section will contain details of the outcomes of this work.*

**4.2 Sussex**

**Key Facts**

*Sussex is in one of the most prosperous EU regions but this conceals significant variations in economic prosperity, transport infrastructure, social and economic well-being and educational attainment*

**4.2.1 General**

* Sussex has a population of 1,516,803 (1999) that is expected to rise to 1,528,337 by 2011 (+0.8%).
* Within the population, 62% are of working age (aged 16 – 64) and 20% are aged over 60
* Sussex has a relatively low percentage of people from ethnic minorities; 2% compared with a national average of 5.5%.
* 95% of Sussex post-16 residents who are in learning attend Sussex based institutions
* Of 68,000 learners funded by FEFC in 99/00, 59% were female.
* In Sussex, over 68,000 learners attend FE colleges and external institutions; almost 7,300 learners are in state-funded school sixth forms and over 6,100 learners are contracted through training providers
* In general, Sussex learners have to travel further to access provision at level 2 and below, compared to level 3
* The totality of the provider network has developed in an unplanned and competitive environment, and operates at varying levels of effectiveness and efficiency
* There are large disparities in funding levels and methodologies for post-16 learners across Sussex
* There are 12 Sussex wards in the top 10% of wards nationally that are classified as educationally deprived. Education deprivation is measured by qualification levels, participation in post-16 learning and participation in higher education amongst the population

**4.2.2 16 – 19**

* Of the 1999 year 11 cohort in Sussex, 78% continued in full time education
* 53% of the 00/01 year 11 cohort achieved 5 or more A\* - C grades at GCSE in Sussex. This percentage achievement varied from 14% to 84% in individual state-funded schools
* Of all 16 – 18 learners in Sussex, over 18,000 (62%) are in FE colleges, about 7,300 (25%) in schools and 3,700 (13%) are contracted through training providers
* Of those 16 – 18 learners in FE colleges in 99/00, 69% were studying at level 3, 21% at level 2 and 8% at level 1 and entry levels
* There are insufficient facilities to support young people with severe Learning Difficulties and Disabilities in Sussex
* 67% of Sussex 19 year olds have qualifications at level 2 or above, this is 7% below the national figure

## 4.2.3 Adults

* In Sussex LSC area, 23% of the working age population have poor literacy skills and almost 22% have poor numeracy skills. This is about 1% above the regional average. Individual local authority districts / urban areas have concentrations of people with poor literacy and numeracy skills as high as 27%
* There are about 47,000 adult enrolments in FE colleges, 9,000 in external institutions and 85,000 funded through LEA contracts. 1,800 adults are engaged in New Deal programmes and almost 2,500 are contracted through LSC funded work-based learning programmes
* For the past few years, adult learning has been funded and managed in a number of different ways, even within relatively small geographical areas
* Of all 19+ learners in FE colleges and external institutions on accredited programmes in 99/00, 30% were studying at level 1, 32% at level 2, 25% at level 3 and 3% at level 4. The remainder were on programmes at entry, pre entry and other levels
* In Sussex, 25% of the working age population is qualified to NVQ level 4 or above and 45% is qualified to NVQ level 3 or above. These figures are comparable with regional averages

## 4.2.4 Workforce

* 90% of Sussex employment is in the two main corridors of economic activity – the south coast corridor and the Brighton to Gatwick corridor
* Of 55,000 businesses in Sussex, 86% employ fewer than 10 people but account for only 24% of those in employment. 13% of businesses employ between 10 and 200 people and only 1% employ over 200.
* Sussex has 940,000 people of working age, with 780,000 economically active. This represents an economic inactivity rate of 17%; 1% above national average. 56% of the workforce is in full time work, 27% in part time and 17% are self-employed
* The Sussex economy has grown faster than the UK economy for the past 7 years (2% compared to 1.5%). This growth has been driven by Gatwick Airport, a high proportion of ‘hi-tech’ manufacturing industry (20% above UK average), the strength of the financial services sector and a growing cluster of new technology businesses in the Brighton area
* Over 23% of the Sussex workforce is employed in the public sector
* Unemployment has fallen in Sussex over the past 5 years. Unemployment is lower than the UK but higher than the SE region (Sussex 3.4%, region 2.5%, UK 4.6%). These figures hide extremes, ranging from 1% in Mid-Sussex to 6% in Hastings and in Brighton
* Sussex employers report 4,000 skill shortage vacancies and 9,000 hard-to-fill vacancies. This represents 42% of companies reporting vacancies. Sussex LSC has the fourth highest percentage of companies with skill shortages nationally (25%). The majority of vacancies are at level 2 or below
* 14% of the Sussex workforce is employed in Investors in People (or similarly accredited) companies
* Employer perceptions of much of the existing state-funded training are too low

# 4.3 Key issues

We recognise that there is much activity already in place to address the following issues across Sussex. This needs to be strategically coordinated in order to ensure that good practice is captured and disseminated.

* Overall Sussex males are under-represented in post-16 learning
* The low overall percentage of people from ethnic minorities across Sussex disguises areas of very high representation. There is a need to ensure that these groups have equal access to learning, and that rates of participation, retention and achievement equal those of all learners
* Sussex has a higher than average percentage of the population aged over 60. Older people need access to learning to continue their engagement in economic and social activities, and so harness their experience and skills in the creation of ‘learning communities’
* There is a need to review the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of the provider network in the light of local area needs, and to take appropriate action
* The uneven distribution of funding, including revenue and capital, has led to inequities in the provision of support for learners; there is a need to establish a fair, consistent and transparent means of allocating funds in the future
* Significant effort must be expended to engage the ‘hard to reach’ 20% of young people who do not participate in any form of structured learning post-16
* Even though 47% of young people do not achieve the ‘gateway’ qualifications to level 3 at 16, almost 70% of the current provision is directed at level 3 learners. There is a pressing need to develop more level 2 provision across Sussex
* The variation in attainment of 5 GCSE’s at A\* - C grades amongst Sussex schools illustrates the need for a more wide-ranging, inclusive curriculum that reflects the variety of starting points of learners at age 16
* There is a need to improve the provision of and access to special facilities for young people with severe learning difficulties and disabilities
* The uneven nature of educational deprivation across Sussex requires local solutions to be tailored to meet local needs
* Multiple funding routes for adult learning has led to a lack of coherence in provision; the LSC now has an opportunity to review this across Sussex
* There are significant pockets of people with poor literacy and numeracy skills in Sussex, this requires targeted intervention
* There is a need to raise aspirations of young people and adults to participate in Further and Higher Education.
* The majority of adult learning provision is below level 2. Progression opportunities must be provided to levels 3 and 4 in order to meet targets for improvement in the qualifications base of the population
* There are large areas of low economic activity in Sussex. The predominantly rural areas in the north east and north west and several coastal areas require imaginative approaches to engaging learners and raising attainment
* In order to meet the needs of the large number of small businesses in Sussex, providers will have to adopt more innovative and flexible approaches to workforce development
* Because of its significance to the Sussex economy, the public sector should seek to develop exemplary approaches to workforce development
* In order to sustain the growth of the Sussex economy, high level skills needs in significant sectors must be met
* Low unemployment figures hide significant proportions of the population who are disengaged from the employment market due to their low level or lack of qualifications
* There is a need to raise the reputation of state-funded support for workforce development amongst employers
* In responding to the challenges in developing a world class workforce, Sussex providers will need to work in new imaginative partnerships that genuinely meet individuals’ and employers’ needs

**4.4 Our planning areas**

The map in this section shows our proposed planning areas.

We are in the process of gathering and analysing data relating to demand and supply in each of the six areas. We still have much to do, as the picture is complex and information has been collected in many different ways. We are also actively seeking to work with partners to augment the quality and detail of our information, so that we can gain as accurate a picture as possible.

Once we have sufficient information, we will present our findings for our three client groups in each area. The template on page 16 illustrates the type of information we are gathering.

**Q3 Does the planning template include the necessary information about demand and supply for each of the learner groups? Is there anything missing?**

Proposed planning areas

(based on analysis of 76,000 post-16 learners)



**Template for data collection and analysis by planning area**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Demand | Supply | Key Issues |
| 16 – 19 | * Numbers and projected change of 16 – 19 year old cohort * Participation rates in ‘structured learning’ * Sussex targets for participation and achievement at levels 2 and 3 * Projected need for type, mode, level, location and breadth of curriculum offer * Projected need for specialist support to meet individual learners’ needs | * Number, range and location of providers * Projected availability of learner places * Current levels of learner participation and achievement * Type, level & breadth of current curriculum offer * Quality of provider network * Availability of specialist support services * Special measures to support educational disadvantage | * Measures to bridge gaps identified in:   + Curriculum offer   + Provider network   + Learner services/ support   + Quality of provision   + Accessibility of provision |
| Adults | * Numbers of adults in local population and features by age, employment status, basic skills needs and socio-economic grouping * Numbers and projected growth of adults engaged in learning * Sx targets for participation and achievement at levels 2 and 3 and for basic skills improvement * Projected need for type, mode, level, location and breadth of curriculum offer * Projected need for specialist support to meet individual learners’ needs | * Number, range and location of providers * Projected availability of learner places * Current levels of learner participation and achievement * Type, level & breadth of current curriculum offer * Quality of provider network * Availability of specialist support services * Special measures to support educational disadvantage | * Measures to bridge gaps identified in:   + Curriculum offer   + Provider network   + Learner services/ support   + Quality of provision   + Accessibility of provision |
| WFD | * Numbers and projected change in working age population * Numbers seeking employment and those non-employed * Qualification levels of those employed, unemployed and non-employed * Distribution of companies by sector and size * Nature of skills (general and specific) shortages both current and projected * Numbers of young people in employment without training * Projected employer need for type, mode, level, location of breadth of training * Sussex targets for Investors in People | * Distribution of employees by sector and size of employer * Projected expenditure on training by employers and government agencies * Contribution of regeneration projects * Number, range and location of providers * Quality of provider network * Contribution from specialist business support services * Support available from trade unions * Work readiness of young people * Numbers of companies with current IiP recognition | * Measures to bridge gaps identified in:   + Provision of training   + Provider network   + Specialist business support   + Quality of provision   + Accessibility of provision   + Links between education and business |

**Section 5**

**Strategic aims**

**5.1 Young people aged 16 - 19**

#### **Raising participation and achievement by young people**

5.1.2 We will:

* ensure that there are clear progression routes for individuals from level 1 to level 2 and then to level 3 programmes in each planning area
* support innovative ways of engaging 16 – 19 year olds not currently in education or training
* improve the range and quality of provision in Sussex for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities
* work with the Connexions service and providers to improve learner progression and retention
* work with LEAs, learning partnerships and providers to establish a 14-19 strategy for eacharea
* encourage the further development and delivery of level 2 programmes

5.1.3 We plan to do this through the development of a 16 - 19 learning entitlement, that will define the standard and nature of provision offered to young people

*We are proposing that the entitlement will:*

* *be based on an analysis of the needs of young people and the demands of the local economy in a planning area*
* *be developed in partnership with providers and partners*
* *include the provision of objective and consistent advice and guidance for young people*
* *take account of 14 – 19 developments*
* *require appropriate additional support to meet the individual needs of young people*
* *seek to develop supportive learning communities for young people, with effective links with parents and carers*
* *ensure that opportunities are provided at levels 1, 2 and 3, with clear progression routes planned, both through the curriculum and within the world of work*
* *ensure accessibility and equality of opportunity for young people from disadvantaged groups*
* *provide opportunities for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities to realise their learning goals*
* *ensure that Sussex learners have structured opportunities for progression to higher education and employment*

5.1.4 We will measure our performance by monitoring:

* the number and percentage of 16 – 18 year olds in structured learning
* the number and percentage of young people achieving level 2 qualifications by age 19
* the number and percentage of young people achieving level 3 qualifications by age 19

**Q4 Have we covered the important issues for young people in Sussex? What is missing?**

**5.2 Adult learners**

**Increasing demand for learning by adults and equalising opportunities through better access to learning**

5.2.1 We will:

* enable support for individual adult learners to overcome barriers to learning in terms of motivation, access and information, advice and guidance
* encourage equality of opportunity for learners from disadvantaged groups
* ensure that there are clear progression routes for adults between non-accredited and accredited and between level 1 and level 2 and then level 3 programmes in each planning area
* maximise opportunities to promote learning for adults through the workplace
* support and explore alternative methods of learning; on-line learning, distance learning, community learning
* encourage the development of new learning opportunities for younger adults and their families and especially those aged between 19 and 25
* improve the diversity, relevance and quality of learning opportunities for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities to better assist them realise their learning goals
* promote and improve the quality of basic skills in targeted areas and offer support for developing basic skills through other types of provision
* increase the coherence and improve the responsiveness, diversity and quality of lifelong learning opportunities for adults in each planning area
* increase the involvement of voluntary and community groups in the provision of lifelong learning opportunities through imaginative contracting and by helping to build capacity in areas that will meet learners’ needs
* support regeneration programmes through the promotion of learning opportunities that meet neighbourhood and community needs

5.2.2 We plan to do this through the establishment of collaborative provider networks in each planning area, that recognise that individual strengths of providers can be combined to better meet learner needs

*We are proposing that these will:*

* *be based on an analysis of the learning needs of adults in a planning area*
* *be advised by users, providers and partnerships of adult and community learning services*
* *be based on an objective appraisal of how provision can be most effectively managed for a planning area*
* *recognise that some providers may work with other partners in the network, to provide the quality assurance, financial management support and audit expertise which will enable smaller providers to contribute their strengths*
* *be supported by impartial information, advice and guidance offered through providers and other partners*
* *work towards an agreed entitlement for adult learners*

5.2.3 We will measure our performance by monitoring:

* the number and percentage of adults in structured learning
* the number and percentage of adults improving their basic skills
* the number and percentage of adults possessing level 2 qualifications
* the number and percentage of adults possessing level 3 qualifications

**Q5 Have we covered the important issues for adult learners and potential learners in Sussex? Is there anything missing?**

# 5.3 Workforce (employers and employees)

#### **Meeting the learning needs of the Sussex workforce to help raise skill levels for national competitiveness**

5.3.1 We will:

* develop, or work with existing, sector and geographical employer networks to aid understanding of employers’ learning and skills needs
* collaborate with employer bodies, provider partnerships, Sector Skills Councils and trade unions to stimulate both learning and skills training in the workforce
* identify and develop Centres of Vocational Excellence (COVEs) to support the skills needs of Sussex and the region
* focus our efforts on working with small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to find appropriate solutions to their skills needs
* work with public, private and voluntary sector organisations to promote basic skills learning in the workplace
* increase the take up of Investors in People by private, public and voluntary sector organisations to develop the skills of their workforce
* work with our partners to support the skills agenda of organisations wishing to expand or locate in Sussex, and where restructuring results in large-scale redundancy
* work with providers to ensure that their products and services increasingly match the workforce development needs of their local businesses
* increase the promotion and take up of on-line learning
* work with partners to develop a strategy for meeting the skill needs of Sussex
* work within a regional framework for skills development in collaboration with SEEDA and other partners

5.3.2 **We plan to establish at least one ‘brokerage’ point in each planning area that provides advice and information on training and skills for employers. This will be supported by a network of providers who work to an agreed set of standards for the provision of work-based education and training.**

*We are proposing that this will:*

* *be supported by an analysis of the skills needs of employers in each planning area and in each of ten key employment sectors in Sussex (business and finance; construction; culture (art, new media, performance and sports); engineering; health and care; IT; public sector; rural economy; transport; tourism and hospitality)*
* *be advised by the key providers of work-related training*
* *operate with greater coherence of branding across Sussex*
* *offer a wide range of provision, including accredited and non-accredited programmes, tailored to meet employers’ needs*
* *provide training in locations to suit employers*
* *have an advice and marketing team to interpret employers’ requirements and suggest training solutions*
* *be developed in partnership with Business Link and representative employer groups*
* *be aimed at reinforcing the link between business development and investment in staff training and development*
* *encourage employers to take positive action to widen participation among under-represented groups*

5.3.3 We will measure our performance by monitoring:

* the engagement of employers in structured learning for themselves and their staff (measure to be defined nationally)
* the number and percentage of organisations achieving IiP

**Q6 Have we covered the important issues relating to meeting the skill needs of the Sussex economy? Is there anything missing?**

**5.4 Standards**

**Improving the quality of education and training and increasing learner satisfaction**

5.4.1 We will:

* establish and implement common Sussex measures of quality that apply to education and training for our three target markets
* identify where performance is below acceptable standards in order to target support and timely intervention
* identify good practice across providers regarding effective actions to improve recruitment, retention, achievement and productive progression
* support providers to develop their self-assessment capability, improve their analytical rigour and establish SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timebound) targets for improvement
* implement mechanisms to drive continuous improvement in provision
* encourage and support developments in the provider network in order to improve provision and raise standards
* work with providers to ensure that learner feedback is captured and considered in performance monitoring and evaluation
* work with the inspectorates and other partners to identify the quality of provision and ensure improvement
* work with the inspectorates and other partners to establish a coherent programme of intervention in order to minimise disruption to providers
* rigorously monitor the performance of providers on equality of opportunity and encourage improvements in provision
* promote the concept of the ‘safe learner’ and seek to improve the environments within which learning is offered
* undertake area reviews to assess the quality and range of provision
* operate a fair and effective system for handling complaints about providers

5.4.2 **We plan to work with provider groups for each of our key ‘sectors’; ‘external institutions’, further education colleges, private training providers, schools and voluntary organisations.**

*We propose that these groups will:*

* *provide a direct route for communication and consultation*
* *be operated and supported by providers working collaboratively to develop and enhance their services*
* *utilise a range of mechanisms for sharing effective practice*
* *provide a programme of professional development and quality improvement activities, supported by the standards fund and other appropriate funding sources*
* *provide an opportunity for working collectively on closing equality gaps and widening participation*

5.4.3 We also plan to work closely with individual learning providers

*We propose to:*

* *have a clear programme and protocols for visits to providers*
* *undertake a regular performance review, and share the outcomes with providers*
* *work with individual providers in preparation for inspection, and support them in the production of development plans as required*
* *encourage the development of provision which takes into account the needs of learners from different ethnic and social backgrounds*
* *support targeted professional development activities in line with our strategic aims*
* *use the local initiative fund, standards fund, capital funds and other additional sources of funding to develop exemplary provision*

5.4.4 We will measure our performance by:

* monitoring the outcomes of provider inspection and re-inspection
* examining the correlation between self-assessment grades and inspection grades for providers
* establishing key performance indicators for each planning area and reporting on changes
* developing methods of gathering provider feedback

## Q7 Have we covered the important issues relating to raising standards in Sussex? Is there anything missing?

## 5.5 Partnership

**Achieving change through the development of productive partnerships**

5.5.1 We will:

* work collaboratively with learning partnerships to develop their roles in support of our work
* continue to develop our contractual relationships with partnerships that provide directly funded services
* encourage collaboration between providers and partners in order to stimulate imaginative solutions to learners’ needs and to share good practice
* work with providers and partners working in pre-16 learning, and at levels 4, 5 and beyond in order to develop a coherent curriculum offer for Sussex
* work with providers and partners to improve the collection, sharing and analysis of information regarding demand for and supply of learning and skills in Sussex
* work with local partners to share objectives and plans in order to ‘join up’ our thinking
* support and sustain individual providers and partnerships to bid successfully for additional funds
* establish an equal opportunities advisory group to keep equality and diversity high on the Sussex agenda
* collaborate with regional partners and the SE LLSC network to ensure coherence of planning and dissemination of good practice as well as to secure the effective use of funds
* develop effective communications with the LSC national office in order to ensure compliance with national policies and to provide a Sussex perspective in the development of national policy and practice

5.5.2 **We plan to develop a partnership strategy that will:**

* *identify the key partners with whom we will work*
* *identify an appropriate point of contact within SLSC for each partner*
* *identify the most effective methods of working with each partner*
* *agree our shared objectives and activities*
* *identify the contribution that each partner can make towards achieving SLSC strategic aims and objectives*
* *ensure equality of opportunity is a core value adhered to by all partners*
* *encourage the sharing of good practice*
* *provide an effective communication route for consultation and dialogue*
* *rationalise and stimulate applications for external and additional funding for Sussex*

5.5.3 We will measure our performance by monitoring:

* the contribution of different partnership activities to the achievement of our targets
* partners’ perceptions of the SLSC
* success in securing additional funds through bidding

**Q8 Have we covered the important issues relating to partnerships in Sussex? Is there anything missing?**

**5.6 Capacity**

**Developing our capacity to deliver our strategic aims**

5.6.1 We will:

## review the effectiveness of our structure and organisation and recruit accordingly

## develop our communications strategy

## establish and implement professional / performance review processes

## implement a continuing professional development programme for all staff

* develop specialist teams to undertake specific responsibilities in support of our remit, aims and objectives
* work towards becoming an equal opportunities employer

## achieve and retain Investors in People

* improve the range and relevance of information, research and data available to us for analysing the demand for (and supply of) learning and skills
* develop the complementary roles of the Council and the executive

5.6.2 **We plan to develop as a learning organisation that has a:**

* *clear mission and vision*
* *shared set of core values*
* *coherent strategic planning process*
* *commitment to continuous improvement*
* *commitment to equal opportunity*
* *considered risk management strategy*
* *transparent system for resource allocation*
* *capacity to access external and additional funding to augment our work*
* *strategy for targeting flexible funding in order to meet our strategic aims*

5.6.3 We will measure our performance by monitoring:

* achievement and maintenance of IiP
* stakeholder perceptions of our communications and services

**Q9 Have we covered the important issues relating to the development of our capacity as a new organisation? Is there anything missing?**

# 5.7 Efficiency

Ensuring value for money and probity in the use of public funds

5.7.1 We will:

* establish appropriate audit and review processes relative to the disbursement and flow of public funds
* review providers’ financial health on a regular basis to assure us of their ongoing ability to deliver contracted provision
* seek to obtain best value from the resources available to support learning in Sussex
* work jointly with appropriate inspectorates to ensure the adequacy of governance and financial procedures and, at the same time, co-ordinate audit effort to minimise disruption to providers
* advise and assist providers and partners in relation to applications for capital grants and property consents, to maximise value for money and improve facilities for provision
* ensure that Sussex LSC budgets are effectively targeted on supporting achievement of our strategic aims
* observe, and encourage others to follow, the seven principles of public life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership)

5.7.2 **We plan to develop an efficient and effective financial and audit function that:**

* *has clear objectives*
* *has an appropriately qualified and sourced staff complement*
* *utilises a risk-based approach to ensure a regular and systematic coverage of key risks*
* *supports the understanding of risk management and helps embed risk awareness and internal controls within our organisation and within providers*
* *works collaboratively with other internal or external audit and assurance groups*
* *advises the Audit Committee and Council of audit plans, key findings and actions taken to resolve issues on a regular basis*
* *advises the Council on how to obtain best value for money across the LSC’s responsibilities*

5.7.3 We will measure our performance by monitoring:

* implementation of recommendations contained in LSC internal audit reports
* audit, inspection and other reports on providers’ governance and financial management arrangements
* changes to providers’ financial health ratings
* budgetary compliance

**Q10 Have we covered the important issues relating to value for money and probity? Is there anything missing?**

**Section 6**

# Strategic Objectives

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **6.1 Raising participation and achievement by young people** | | | | |
| **Objectives** | **2002 - 2003** | **2003 - 2004** | **2004 - 2005** | **Outcomes** |
| Complete 16 – 19 reviews of each planning area |  | ✓ |  | Reviews and action plans completed |
| Define a 16 – 19 entitlement for Sussex learners | ✓ |  |  | Entitlement agreed and published |
| Conduct an audit of provision in each planning area (to include schools, colleges and training providers) | ✓ |  |  | Audits completed and shared and used to aid planning decisions |
| Develop and implement audit frameworks that ensure appropriate provision of levels 1 to 3 in each planning area |  |  | ✓ | Planning areas making comprehensive offer of provision for young people |
| Evaluate and report on the outcomes of LIF and ESF funded projects related to 16 – 19 year old learners | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Evaluations published and good practice shared |
| Investigate the possibilities offered by new learning technologies for young people | ✓ | ✓ |  | Development of LIF project tender |
| Complete a review of 14 – 19 activity in Sussex, identify good practice and potential areas for further development | ✓ |  |  | Review completed and dissemination / development event held |
| Within our remit, support the further development of vocational provision for 14 – 16 year olds in schools | ✓ |  |  | EBL contracts delivered  Effective utilisation of additional funds |
| Establish good practice groups to evaluate and further develop use of vocational GCSEs | ✓ | ✓ |  | Development of LIF project tender |
| Together with learning partnerships, LEAs, Connexions and others, develop a 14 – 19 strategy for each area |  | ✓ |  | Strategies agreed and published |
| Establish closer links with Connexions Service, and develop our complementary roles | ✓ |  |  | Effective relationships established |
| Develop a strategy for improving provision for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities across Sussex | ✓ |  |  | All main partners signed up to strategy |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **6.1 Raising participation and achievement by young people - continued** | | | | |
| **Objectives** | **2002 - 2003** | **2003 - 2004** | **2004 - 2005** | **Outcomes** |
| Evaluate and report on the outcomes of level 2 funded projects related to raising recruitment, retention and achievement of 16 – 19 year olds | ✓ |  |  | Evaluations published |
| Agree targets for participation, retention, achievement and progression for each provider and for each planning area |  | ✓ |  | Targets signed up to, published and monitored |

**Q11 Have we included the important objectives relating to raising participation and attainment of young people? Are they sufficiently ambitious?**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **6.2 Increasing demand for learning by adults and equalise opportunities through better access to learning** | | | | |
| **Objectives** | **2002 - 2003** | **2003 - 2004** | **2004 - 2005** | **Outcomes** |
| Work with IAG partnerships to establish consistent and effective provision of IAG services for adults that reflect local priorities | ✓ |  |  | Contract targets met  Quality standards achieved  Evaluation and dissemination of good practice |
| Investigate the development of a pan-Sussex IAG framework which ensures appropriate access for all adult learners |  | ✓ |  | All key partners consulted and committed to joint approach |
| Encourage learning partnerships to review and refine progression routes between adult learning providers in an area | ✓ |  |  | Clear progression pathways defined and publicised |
| Develop progression routes from non-accredited to accredited provision, and to level 3 / Access programmes | ✓ |  |  | Development of LIF project tenders  Improved progression through the curriculum |
| Define an adult learning entitlement for Sussex learners |  |  | ✓ | Development of LIF project tender  Entitlement agreed and published |
| Work with trade unions and employer groups to identify new opportunities for and development of adult learning in the workplace | ✓ |  |  | Pilot projects established |
| Promote development of on-line and distance learning techniques appropriate to adult learning |  | ✓ |  | Development of LIF project tenders  Targets for volume of activity set and agreed |
| Work with partners to develop projects aimed at understanding and meeting the unique needs of 19 – 25 year old learners | ✓ | ✓ |  | Development of LIF project tenders |
| Encourage and support learning partnerships to find ways of gathering the views of adult learners (and potential learners) | ✓ |  |  | Good practice in liaison with adult learners shared |
| In conjunction with partners and providers, establish projects to improve access and progression arrangements for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities | ✓ | ✓ |  | Development of LIF project tenders |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **6.2 Increasing demand for learning by adults and equalise opportunities through better access to learning - continued** | | | | |
| **Objectives** | **2002 - 2003** | **2003 - 2004** | **2004 - 2005** | **Outcomes** |
| Develop, consult on and publish a basic skills strategy for Sussex | ✓ |  |  | All main partners signed up to strategy |
| Utilise standards funds and other funding sources to develop the capacity of the provider network to deliver basic skills | ✓ | ✓ |  | Provider network expanded  Quality and range of provision increased |
| Work with HEIs and other providers to expand the pool of qualified basic skills tutors | ✓ | ✓ |  | Increase in number and qualifications base of tutors |
| Exploit opportunities to work with regeneration partnerships and to link basic skills acquisition to regeneration strategies | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Provision of support for partnerships to achieve their aims |
| Evaluate and report on the outcomes of LIF and ESF funded projects related to adult learners | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Evaluations published |
| Agree targets for participation, retention, achievement and progression for each provider and for each planning area |  | ✓ |  | Targets signed up to, published and monitored |
| Commission a review of the quality and capacity of adult learning environments (preparing for capital allocations / applications) | ✓ |  |  | Development of LIF tender  Review influences capital development programme |
| Develop contracting and funding models that will enable providers to work collaboratively on complementary provision | ✓ |  |  | Model agreed with national office and communicated to providers |

**Q12 Have we included the important objectives relating to participation and attainment of adult learners? Are they sufficiently ambitious?**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **6.3 Meeting the learning needs of the Sussex workforce to raise skill levels for national competitiveness** | | | | |
| **Objectives** | **2002 - 2003** | **2003 - 2004** | **2004 - 2005** | **Outcomes** |
| Publish a strategy for Centres of Vocational Excellence (COVEs) | ✓ |  |  | Strategy agreed with national office and SE LLSCs |
| Secure at least eight COVEs for Sussex |  |  | ✓ | COVEs reflect Sussex economic drivers |
| Evaluate and report on the outcomes of LIF and ESF funded projects related to workforce development | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Evaluations published |
| Develop models for providing a ‘brokerage service’ for employers on training and skills in each planning area | ✓ | ✓ |  | Development of LIF project tender  Models developed in conjunction with employers and providers |
| Conduct a research project focusing on each of the ten employment sectors across Sussex | ✓ |  |  | Research report presented at dissemination event |
| Develop effective links with Economic Development partnerships to shape our work and priorities | ✓ |  |  | Economic development plans integrated with our plans |
| Utilise the learning partnerships’ existing workforce development strategies to develop our work in this field | ✓ |  |  | Strategies aligned |
| Develop, publish and implement a strategy for workforce development in Sussex | ✓ |  |  | Partners signed up to strategy |
| Develop pilot projects with trade union partners to engage more public sector employees in learning | ✓ |  |  | Development of LIF project tender  Projects evaluated and disseminated |
| Identify priority groups of employers targeted for support in each planning area (as part of the WFD strategy) | ✓ |  |  | Funding streams and team activities linked to priority employers |
| Agree targets for participation and attainment for work-based learning for each provider and for each planning area |  | ✓ |  | Targets signed up to, published and monitored |
| Develop flexible training programmes that meet the needs of SMEs | ✓ |  |  | Development of LIF project tender  Programmes evaluated and disseminated |

**Q13 Have we included the important objectives relating to the development of the Sussex workforce? Are they sufficiently ambitious?**

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| **6.4 Improving the quality of education and training and increasing learner satisfaction** | | | | |
| **Objectives** | **2002 - 2003** | **2003 - 2004** | **2004 - 2005** | **Outcomes** |
| Develop mechanisms for identifying, recording and verifying good practice | ✓ |  |  | Mechanisms shared, understood and used by SLSC and providers |
| Work with provider networks to identify effective ways of disseminating good practice | ✓ |  |  | Good practice activities established and positively evaluated |
| In partnership with providers, identify a tool kit for effective self-assessment and development planning |  | ✓ |  | Tool kit utilises best practice nationally  Positive feedback from providers |
| Establish learner entitlements for young people and adult learners, and develop mechanisms for ensuring that they are consistently applied | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Entitlements agreed and published with guidance on monitoring |
| Promote provider responsibility and accountability for learner health and safety through high expectations and thorough examination of the health and safety content in self-assessment and development plans | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Provider performance review grades show improvement or maintenance of high standards |
| Increasingly apply a selective, risk-based approach targeted towards the concept of the ‘safe learner’ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Visit programme to providers reflects levels of risk |
| Effectively integrate health and safety into the standards agenda |  | ✓ |  | Profile of health and safety raised through the work of the SLSC |
| Use the outcomes of inspection, provider review and other sources to aid identification of poor practice | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Early identification of potential weaknesses |
| Define and publish policies and processes for managing poor performance | ✓ |  |  | Processes shared, understood and used by SLSC and providers |
| Investigate and disseminate effective and innovative practices in capturing and responding to learner feedback | ✓ |  |  | Development of LIF project tender  Used to support effective self-assessment and quality improvement |
| Strengthen the provider performance review (PPR) process through analysis of more robust evidence and effective, co-ordinated liaison with providers | ✓ |  |  | PPR outcomes understood and accepted by providers |
| Provide support to the inspectorates and providers throughout the inspection process | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Positive inspection evaluations |

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| **6.4 Improving the quality of education and training and increasing learner satisfaction – continued** | | | | |
| **Objectives** | **2002 - 2003** | **2003 - 2004** | **2004 - 2005** | **Outcomes** |
| Monitor post inspection development plans to maximise providers’ potential for improvement | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Reinspection grades show improvement  Weaknesses addressed within reasonable timeframe |
| Develop and publish Sussex benchmarks to measure quality of provision across all providers |  | ✓ |  | Benchmarks agreed with providers  Measurement and publication is transparent |
| Establish baseline data for the provider performance review, self-assessment, inspection and re-inspection in order to monitor the impact of our work |  | ✓ |  | Data sets specified, agreed and verified  with providers and national office |
| Work with partners to develop effective measures of value-added in post-16 learning |  | ✓ |  | Development of LIF tender  Value-added measures agreed with providers and utilised |
| Develop, publish and implement an equality and diversity strategy for Sussex | ✓ |  |  | Partners signed up to strategy  Monitoring undertaken |
| Analyse monitor and review patterns of learner participation, retention, achievement and progression by race, gender, sexual orientation, disability and age | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Establish planning area baseline data and set targets for improvement amongst these groups |
| Benchmark equal opportunities performance amongst providers and publish comparative data |  | ✓ |  | Development of LIF tender  Establish local benchmarks for providers and monitor performance |
| Streamline processes for allocation, management and evaluation of the standards fund | ✓ |  |  | Positive provider feedback  Positive evaluations |
| Evaluate and report on the outcomes of LIF and ESF funded projects related to quality improvement | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Evaluations published |

**Q14 Have we included the important objectives relating to raising standards in Sussex? Are they sufficiently ambitious?**

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| **6.5 Achieving change through the development of productive partnerships** | | | | |
| **Objectives** | **2002 - 2003** | **2003 - 2004** | **2004 - 2005** | **Outcomes** |
| Establish a strategy for the collection, sharing and analysis of information about learning and skills in Sussex | ✓ |  |  | Coherent approach to data collection and analysis |
| Engage learning partnerships to work with trade unions, employers, voluntary groups and others to research and co-ordinate basic skills provision in each planning area | ✓ |  |  | Development of LIF project tenders  Disseminate good practice from previous projects |
| Establish mechanisms for joint planning with partners, where appropriate | ✓ |  |  | Mechanisms agreed and used |
| Utilise detailed needs analysis for each planning area to develop tenders for local initiative funded (LIF) work | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | LIF tenders published Projects developed with providers and partners |
| Improve the quality of bids relating to Sussex LSC’s strategic aims and  support capacity building of partners | ✓ |  |  | Establish funding and bidding network  Improve quality and relevance of bids |
| Establish an equal opportunities group to advise on the development and implementation of our strategy, and review the impact of our activities on learners and provision | ✓ |  |  | Representative group established and regular monitoring and impact reports produced for Council |
| Continue to develop a challenging but supportive relationship with Sussex learning providers | ✓ |  |  | Positive provider feedback  Achievement of Sussex targets |
| Develop partnership agreements to achieve our strategic aims, identifying our respective roles, functions and objectives | ✓ |  |  | Agreements reached with all key partners |
| Establish closer links with Connexions Service, and develop our complementary roles | ✓ |  |  | Effective relationships established |
| Exploit opportunities to work with regeneration partnerships and to link learning and skills development with regeneration strategies | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Provision of support for partnerships to achieve their aims |
| Develop Information, Advice and Guidance contracts to ensure that the needs of non-learners are being addressed | ✓ | ✓ |  | Contract targets met  Evaluation and dissemination of good practice |
| Develop Sussex Education Business Alliance contract to support improved participation at 16, raise levels of literacy and numeracy and promote work-related learning | ✓ | ✓ |  | Contract targets met  Evaluation and dissemination of good practice |

**Q15 Have we included the important objectives relating to the development of partnerships by Sussex LSC? Are they sufficiently ambitious?**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **6.6 We will develop our internal capacity to deliver our strategic aims** | | | | |
| **Objectives** | **2002 - 2003** | **2003 - 2004** | **2004 - 2005** | **Outcomes** |
| Achieve IiP for SLSC | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | IiP awarded and SLSC prepared for annual assessment |
| Develop our expertise and capacity in research and analysis | ✓ |  |  | Relevant staff trained and supported |
| In partnership with our PR company, develop and implement a communications strategy | ✓ |  |  | Strategy agreed and implemented |
| Continue to encourage and secure relevant secondments in order to support achievement of our targets and objectives | ✓ |  |  | Continuation of secondments |
| Review our organisational structure and performance against our achievement of targets | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Establishment of plans for positive change to improve our performance |
| Implement new performance management system and embed processes in our work | ✓ |  |  | Process embedded in team planning and individual objective setting |
| Implement management development process | ✓ |  |  | All managers participating in relevant development |
| Develop our recruitment and selection capacity and establish appropriate quality procedures | ✓ |  |  | Staff recruited effectively and efficiently |
| Establish a Staff Forum to support communications | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Views exchanged and organisational development supported |
| Conduct an equality audit of staff and Council members | ✓ |  |  | Establish baseline and targets for ensuring that we reflect the communities that we serve |
| Undertake training in equal opportunities with all staff and Council members | ✓ |  |  | Positive evaluations of training |
| Include appropriate references to equality in all job descriptions and work plan objectives | ✓ |  |  | Staff clearly see the impact of their work on promoting equality of opportunity |

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| **6.6 We will develop our internal capacity to deliver our strategic aims - continued** | | | | |
| **Objectives** | **2002 - 2003** | **2003 - 2004** | **2004 - 2005** | **Outcomes** |
| Install and implement IT systems that will improve our efficiency and ability to respond to external and internal demands | ✓ | ✓ |  | Systems installed and staff provided with appropriate training |
| Establish a Disaster Recovery Plan to enable us to maintain our capacity through unusual circumstances | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Plan for whole organisation in place and understood |
| Participate in national development of appropriate business support systems eg HR/Finance | ✓ |  |  | Contribution towards effective national systems |
| Access additional funding from sources other than the LSC to support the further development of provision to meet learners’ needs | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Additional funding secured and targeted on our key objectives |
| Network with other LLSCs and providers to share best practice in organisational development both regionally and nationally | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Effective practices adopted in Sussex |
| Participate in LSC network meetings to raise points for action, change, tackling bureaucracy | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Assist in meeting national targets (incl. 25% reduction in bureaucracy) |

**Q16 Have we included the important objectives relating to the development of our capacity as a new organisation? Are they sufficiently ambitious?**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **6.7 Ensuring value for money and probity in the use of public funds** | | | | |
| **Objectives** | **2002 - 2003** | **2003 - 2004** | **2004 - 2005** | **Outcomes** |
| Explore the scope for more efficient operation and organisation of the provider network | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Development of LIF project tender  Proposals for improving efficiency assessed with partners |
| Encourage providers to work more closely together to save on ‘common’ costs |  | ✓ |  | Methods of cost saving explored and implemented where possible |
| Develop risk-based audit systems for each sector of providers | ✓ |  |  | Systems agreed and implemented |
| Develop a strategy for capital development of the FE sector in Sussex | ✓ |  |  | Strategy agreed by FE partners |
| Advise and assist providers in relation to applications for capital grants and property consents to maximise value for money and improve facilities | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Improved facilities that provide value for money |
| Develop a strategy for maximising the use of the local initiative fund in Sussex | ✓ |  |  | LIF contributes proportionally to meeting our targets |
| Establish and implement appropriate audit and review processes relative to the disbursement and flow of public fund | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | National PFA/Internal Audit satisfied with processes adopted. |
| Work with national office to ensure that procedures maintain probity and target risk but do not impose unnecessary bureaucracy | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Streamlined but effective procedures |
| Pursue joint working arrangements with other local LSCs and the Employment Service to reduce the audit burden on providers and improve the use of PFA resources | ✓ | ✓ |  | Providers perceive reduced audit burden |
| Review provider financial health on a regular basis to ensure their ongoing ability to deliver contracted provision | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Financial health assessments promptly updated  Swift identification of providers causing concern |
| Work jointly with appropriate inspectorates to ensure the adequacy of governance and financial procedures | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Local management, National PFA and the Inspectorates satisfied with PFA input.  Reporting deadlines met |
| Explore and implement methods of reducing our running costs and increasing our effectiveness | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | Meet targets for efficiency and effectiveness |
| **6.7 Ensuring value for money and probity in the use of public funds – continued** | | | | |
| Develop and implement an environmental policy | ✓ |  |  | Reduce waste, and meet targets for efficiency |

**Q17 Have we included the important objectives relating to efficiency and probity in Sussex?** **Are they sufficiently ambitious?**

# Section 7

# 7.1 Consultation and approval processes

**Approval**

The Sussex Council meets on a monthly basis. The development of this draft plan has been monitored and approved by the Council as follows:

May 2001

* Positive commitment to working in partnership
* Agreement to the establishment of ‘travel to learn’ (planning) areas
* Agreement to demand and supply analysis

July 2001

* Council awayday and development of first draft of strategic aims

September 2001

* Approval of planning process and timetable

October 2001

* Approval of draft strategic aims

### November 2001

* Approval of outline plan structure

### December 2001

* Approval of draft plan for consultation

### **Consultation**

Since our creation on 1 April 2001, we have attended many events and spoken on public platforms about the LSC and how we see the challenges for Sussex. We have tested out ideas and given key messages about our strategic intentions through over 40 presentations to learners, employers, providers and partners.

We have published regular newsletters to stakeholders and partners. The mailing list now has over 2,000 entries, representing a wide range of public sector and commercial organisations across Sussex and the SE region.

The newsletters have dealt with the following issues, illustrating the development of the plan:

* Vision and aims of the Sussex LSC
* Key objectives of the Sussex LSC
* Structure of the Sussex LSC

The September issue of the newsletter contained an outline of the key principles Sussex LSC intended to use in its planning, and asked for feedback from partners. We used this to develop our thinking in the production of this draft plan.

This plan has been distributed to over 2,000 organisations and individuals. We have asked for feedback using the form attached to this document, but will be happy to accept comments in any format, including e-mail. Please see introduction for further details.

**Next steps**

January 2002

* Consultation meetings and activities

# February 2002

* Consultation process ends on 5 February

# Feedback from consultation process reported to Council at second awayday

* Strategic plan redrafted to take account of consultation
* Development of business plan for 2002/03

### March 2002

* Strategic plan approved for publication
* Business plan approved, including budgets, targets and implementation plans

### April 2002

* Plans published and implementation begins

### **Section 8**

**Monitoring and evaluation arrangements**

### **8.1 Three year Strategic Plan**

The Sussex Learning and Skills Council will be responsible for monitoring progress towards achievement of our strategic aims and objectives. An annual report will be published that reviews our progress. Performance measures will be used as indicated in this plan. Sussex-wide targets will be set as our contribution to achievement of the national targets, published in annex A. Progress against these targets will be reviewed in our annual report. We also intend to agree planning area targets that will be used to measure local contributions towards improvements across the whole of Sussex.

### **8.2 Annual Business Plan**

This will contain details of how we intend to deliver our objectives in 2002/03. A budget forecast will be part of the plan, with associated outputs defined for each type of programme. Quarterly management reports will be submitted to the Council to support the monitoring of the plan. Our performance will be reviewed in our annual report.

### **8.3 Team action plans**

Each of the seven teams (executive office; workforce development; post-16 learning; standards; partnership and planning; human resources and facilities; finance and audit) in the Sussex LSC will produce an annual action plan identifying their contribution to the business and strategic plans. This action plan will be further developed to provide a framework for scheduling projects, planning expenditure, setting individual targets and monitoring performance at all levels in the Sussex LSC. Teams report on their progress on a monthly basis to the Sussex LSC directorate, who manage organisational activity and performance.

### **8.4 Individual performance**

Every member of our team will have individual objectives that relate to their team action plans. These will be monitored through our internal processes. We intend to implement the national performance review system once it has been finalised. This will provide the basis for planning continuing professional development for our staff, and for providing guidance, support and resources where they are needed.

**8.5 Evaluation**

We will evaluate the effectiveness of our plan with our stakeholders and partners. We will undertake this evaluation as part of our consultation process for updating our plan on an annual rolling basis.

# Q18 Have we covered sufficiently the need to monitor and evaluate progress with this plan? Do you have any suggestions to add?

### **Section 9**

### **Key people**

### **Sussex Learning and Skills Council**

Norman Boyland Chairman, Sussex Learning and Skills Council

Henry Ball Executive Director, Sussex Learning and Skills Council

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Association/Position | Background/Experience |
| Alison Atkinson | Co-ordinator, Centre for Professional Development, University of Brighton | Higher Education Sector |
| Alan Bealby | Previously Director, Broadband Customer Service, British Telecommunications | Business |
| Ken Bodfish | Board Member, SEEDA | SEEDA |
| John Brookham | Principal, Plumpton College | FE and Sixth form college sector |
| Richard Bunker | Director of Education,West Sussex County Council | Young people, special needs, adult and community education |
| Maurice Denyer | Finance Director and Company Secretary, Fowler Group of Companies | Business |
| Patricia Egan | Principal, Pan Aviation Training Services | Business |
| Steve Foster | Assistant Branch Secretary, UNISON, Brighton & Hove | Trade Unions |
| Robert Fryatt | Chairman, Association of South East Colleges and Chairman of Governors, Crawley College | FE and Sixth form college sector |
| Jacky Harding | Elected Member, Brighton & Hove Council | Local Authorities |
| Marie Harris | Business Development Manager, Crawley College | Young people, special needs, adult and community education |
| James Hicks | Chairman, Amplicon Liveline | Business |
| Rik Prowen | Operations Director, JS Humidifiers | Business |
| Denise Stokoe | Director of Education,East Sussex County Council | Local Authorities |

**Appendix 1**

**Targets – national and local**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **National key objectives** | National targets for 2004 | **Sussex targets** | |
| **Percentage** | **Number of additional learners** |
| **Extend participation in education, learning and training** | **80%** of 16 – 18 year olds in structured learning | **∇ %**  *(2000-79%)* | +4759 – 5046 |
|  | Baseline and targets for adults in next year’s plan ⊗ | - | - |
| **Increase engagement of employers in workforce development** | Measure of employers’ engagement to be in next year’s plan ⊗ | - | - |
| **Raise achievement of young people** | **85%** at level 2 by age 19  **55%** at level 3 by age 19 | **∇ %**  *(2000 – 68%)*  **∇ %**  *(2000 – 61%\*)* | +1123-1174  +914 - 957 |
| **Raise achievement of adults** | Raise literacy and numeracy skills of **750,000** adults  Percentage of adults at level 2 – target to be set in next year’s plan ⊗  **52%** of adults at level 3 | **10% improvement**  **-**  **∇ %**  *(2000 – 43%)* | +19,026 – 19,869  -  +47,920 - tba |
| **Raise quality of education and user satisfaction** | Set baselines and targets in next year’s plan ⊗ | - | - |

\* figure relates to number age 21 with level 3 – data not yet available in reliable form for 19 year olds

∇ Sussex targets to be agreed – we are currently consulting on appropriate figures

⊗ national targets will be set by the LSC next year

**Appendix 2 Introduction of new funding methodology**



**Appendix 3**

**Abbreviations and acronyms**

ACL - Adult and Community Learning

COVES - Centres of Vocational Excellence

EBL - Education Business Links

ESF - European Social Fund

FE - Further Education

FEFC - Further Education Funding Council

HE - Higher Education

HEIs - Higher Education Institutes

HR - Human Resources

IAG - Information, Advice and Guidance

IiP - Investors in People

IT - Information Technology

LEA - Local Education Authority

LIF - Local Initiative Fund

LSC - Learning and Skills Council

PI - Performance Indicators

PFA - Provider Financial Assurance

PPR - Provider Performance Review

PR - Public Relations

SE - South East

SEEDA - South East England Development Agency

SLSC - Sussex Learning and Skills Council

SMART - Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timebound

SMEs - Small and Medium Enterprises

WBL - Work Based Learning

WFD - Workforce Development



**Strategic Plan Feedback Form**

Name:

Organisation/Company:

Address:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Please describe yourself (eg. Are you a learner, employer, provider etc.):

Signature: Date:

**Please may we have your comments back by 5 February 2002.**

Throughout the draft document we have suggested questions to which we would particularly like your answers. The questions are reproduced on this form - please use additional sheets for fuller answers.  Please don’t feel that you have to answer all questions, we would rather receive your comments on just one question than have no response. Also, please don't feel restricted by the questions - we value feedback on any aspects of the draft plan.

Q1 Do you think that our mission, values and ways of working are appropriate to meet the challenges in the LSC’s remit?

Q2 Do you agree with our three-fold approach to planning for Sussex post-16 learning; analysing learner groups, planning areas and demand and supply?

Q3 Does the planning template include the important pieces of information about demand and supply for each of the learner groups? Is there anything missing?

Q4 Have we covered the important issues for young people in Sussex? What is missing?

Q5 Have we covered the important issues for adult learners and potential learners in Sussex? Is there anything missing?

Q6 Have we covered the important issues relating to meeting the skill needs of the Sussex economy? Is there anything missing?

Q7 Have we covered the important issues relating to raising standards in Sussex? Is anything missing?

Q8 Have we covered the important issues relating to partnerships in Sussex? Is there anything missing?

Q9 Have we covered the important issues relating to the development of our capacity as a new organisation? Is there anything missing?

Q10 Have we covered the important issues relating to value for money and probity? Is there anything missing?

Q11 Have we included the important objectives relating to raising participation and attainment of young people? Are they sufficiently ambitious?

Q12 Have we included the important objectives relating to participation and attainment of adult learners? Are they sufficiently ambitious?

Q13 Have we included the important objectives relating to the development of the Sussex workforce? Are they sufficiently ambitious?

Q14 Have we included the important objectives relating to raising standards in Sussex? Are they sufficiently ambitious?

Q15 Have we included the important objectives relating to the development of partnerships by Sussex LSC? Are they sufficiently ambitious?

Q16 Have we included the important objectives relating to the development of our capacity as a new organisation? Are they sufficiently ambitious?

Q17 Have we included the important objectives relating to efficiency and probity in Sussex? Are they sufficiently ambitious?

Q18 Have we covered sufficiently the need to monitor and evaluate progress with this plan? Do you have any suggestions to add?

Please tell us about any projects or activities that you or your organisation are involved with that may support our strategic aims:

Any other comments you wish to make:

Please return this completed form and any additional comments to Paul Stoggles, Head of Partnership and Planning, FREEPOST SEA12470, Sussex LSC, Prince’s House, 53, Queen’s Road, Brighton, BN1 3ZZ

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