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Leading learning and skills

**Learning and
Skills Council
Hertfordshire
Annual Plan
2007-08**

March 2007

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

Local Annual Plan 2007/08

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is the national organisation with responsibility for the planning, funding and quality assurance of post-16 education (outside the university sector) in England. The LSC is organised into nine regional teams, each of which produces an annual commissioning plan identifying the priorities for the Learning and Skills sector in its region for the forthcoming year. This is the plan for the Hertfordshire area for 2007/08.

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1. Foreword

Our plan for 2007/08 establishes our local actions in response to the national and regional priorities and to the linked priorities of the East of England Skills and Competitiveness Partnership (EESCP). It also shows how we will tackle some of the challenges identified in our local strategic analysis (see section 2). We hope you will find this document clear, informative and ambitious.

Compared with other parts of the East of England, Hertfordshire is relatively prosperous, with higher skills and attainment levels and greater employment opportunities. However, this masks concentrations of learning and skills needs, both by geography and client group and there are still a number of significant learning and skills challenges in Hertfordshire that need to be addressed.

Our vision for Hertfordshire remains the same as stated in the 2006-2007 Annual Plan, in that **“by 2010, young people and adults in Hertfordshire will have the knowledge and productive skills that are the best in the country”**; an ambition for all of Hertfordshire and its residents and one that will ensure that the prosperity and social cohesion and well-being of Hertfordshire continues to grow.

There is clear evidence that great strides have been made in raising skill and qualification levels in Hertfordshire and this is touched upon in section 2, but there is still more to be done if we are to achieve our vision. In 2007/08 we need to focus particularly on continuing to drive up the quality of Work Based Learning and Entry to Employment (E2E) provision in Hertfordshire, using the latter to target concentrations of young people not in education or training (NEET). We will also need to continue to meet the skills needs of adults in Hertfordshire by both re-balancing Skills for Life provision towards more accredited learning and increasing the volume and quality of Level 2 and Level 3 provision in Hertfordshire.

The vision of an improved skills and knowledge base for Hertfordshire can only be delivered with the continued help and support of Hertfordshire providers and partners and we look forward to another year of shared success.

**Area Director
Liam Sammon**

**Local Council Chair
Alan O'Neill**

2. Local Context

The following takes each of the East of England Regional Commissioning Plan's four priorities and sets these against local context. This builds upon the local analysis provided in the Regional Strategic Analysis and should therefore be read in conjunction with this.

Hertfordshire in Profile

Hertfordshire's development has been largely influenced by its proximity to London with a resulting radial transport infrastructure and distribution of population/settlements reflecting this transport infrastructure. It has a population of just over one million with the majority of the population concentrated in the west of the county. As with other areas that border London, commuting is significant – with just over 20% of the resident workforce commuting into London.

The county is relatively prosperous; but with pockets of deprivation particularly in the districts of Stevenage, Broxbourne, Welwyn Hatfield, Borehamwood and Hemel Hempstead.

There are nearly 49,000 businesses in Hertfordshire employing more than 486,000 employees. Of these businesses 86% employ fewer than 10 employees whilst large companies with over 100 employees employ 41% of the workforce.

Around 80% of employees in Hertfordshire work in the service sector. Analysis of employment by sector shows that Banking, Finance and Insurance Services account for 25% of employment, with a further 28% employed in Distribution, Hotels and Restaurants and 9% in Manufacturing. The proportion employed in Banking, Finance and Insurance is significantly above the regional figure of 20%. Thirty-nine percent of Hertfordshire's VAT registered enterprises are in the Finance and Business Services sector, which suggests a preponderance of small/medium enterprises (SMEs).

Priority 1: Learning Opportunities for Young People

The overall participation rate for young people in Hertfordshire is 86% ~ the highest in the East of England according to the latest statistics for all post-16 providers.

This reflects the trends in participation in LSC funded provision and within the region. Hertfordshire saw the greatest percentage increase in 16-18 participation between 2004/05 and 2005/06 ~ an increase of 5.9%, compared to 4.3% for the East of England and 1.5% for England, as detailed in Table 1 below. Though this trend has not been seen by all sectors and the decline in the number of young people entering work-based learning (WBL) programmes needs to be reversed.

Early evidence for the start of the 2006/07 academic year indicates that this upward trend is continuing, with the further education (FE) sector seeing a point-to-point growth of nearly 5%, whilst the school sixth form sector has seen a point-to-point growth of nearly 3%.

Table 1: Participation of 16-18 year olds in LSC funded learning 2004/05 and 2005/06

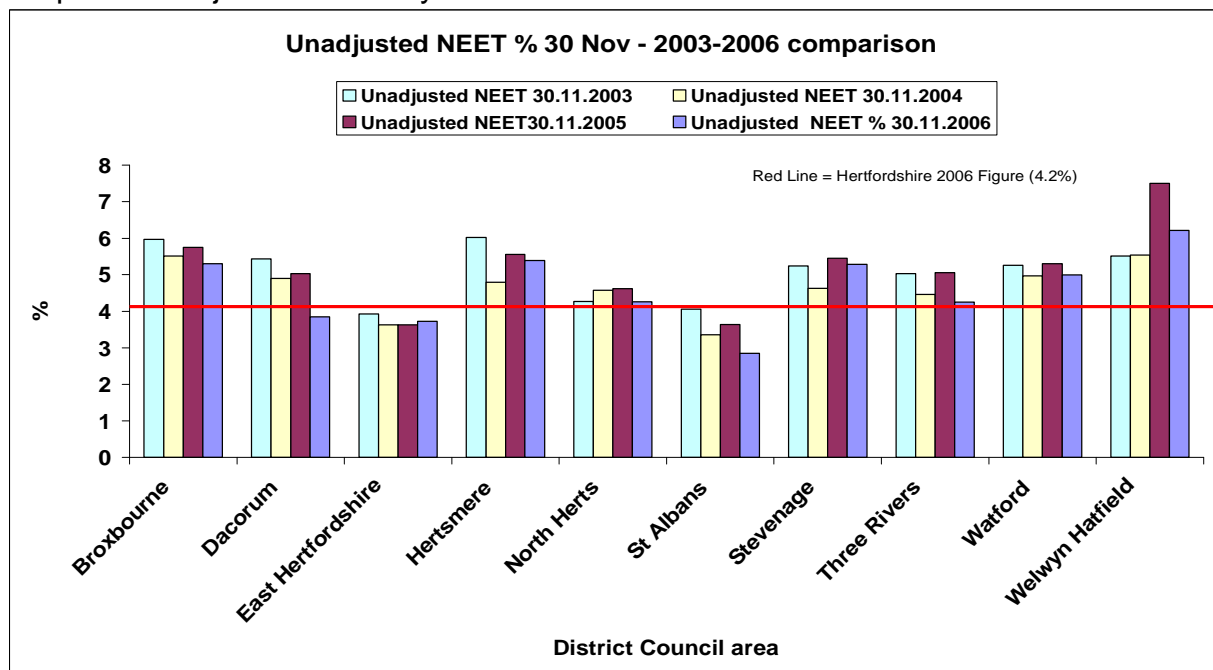
LLSC Area	Further Education			Work Based Learning			School Sixth Forms			All Sectors		
	2004/2005	2005/2006	04/05 to 05/06 % chg.	2004/2005	2005/2006	04/05 to 05/06 % chg.	2004/2005	2005/2006	04/05 to 05/06 % chg.	2004/2005	2005/2006	04/05 to 05/06 % chg.
Bedfordshire & Luton	9,119	9,706	6.4%	943	884	-6.3%	4,903	5,021	2.4%	14,965	15,611	4.3%
Cambridgeshire	11,179	11,617	3.9%	1,676	1,621	-3.3%	4,689	4,902	4.5%	17,544	18,140	3.4%
Essex	22,437	24,466	9.0%	2,816	2,544	-9.7%	11,203	11,439	2.1%	36,456	38,449	5.5%
Hertfordshire	10,007	11,162	11.5%	1,931	1,726	-10.6%	13,544	14,101	4.1%	25,482	26,989	5.9%
Norfolk	10,216	10,719	4.9%	2,026	1,650	-18.6%	5,304	5,448	2.7%	17,546	17,817	1.5%
Suffolk	6,008	6,335	5.4%	1,764	1,711	-3.0%	6,401	6,547	2.3%	14,173	14,593	3.0%
East of England	68,966	74,005	7.3%	11,158	10,135	-9.2%	46,044	47,458	3.1%	126,168	131,598	4.3%
National	720,734	738,785	2.5%	125,948	119,591	-5.0%	359,060	364,980	1.6%	1,205,742	1,223,356	1.5%

Source: Learning and Skills Council, October 2006

The upward trend in participation is mirrored by a downward trend in the percentage of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). The latest NEET information shows that NEET and also those young people with an unknown destination are both in decline for Hertfordshire. Hertfordshire saw its NEET rate fall from 4.8% in November 2006 to 4.2% in November 2005, this compares to a regional fall from 7.3% to 6.5% over the same period. Hertfordshire now has the second lowest NEET rate in the country, which is something to celebrate ~ though there is no room for complacency, as over 1,500 young people are still not following any structured learning upon leaving statutory education.

These 1,500 young people not in education, employment or training are not evenly distributed across the Hertfordshire area or client groups and concentrations of NEET can be found amongst a number of local areas and client groups. The geographical distribution of NEET is illustrated in Graph 1 below.

Graph 1: Unadjusted NEET by district ~ 2003 to 2006.



Source: Hertfordshire Connexions, February 2007.

Graph 1 shows the divergence in NEET rates across the ten districts of Hertfordshire. Broxbourne, Hertsmere, Stevenage, Watford and Welwyn Hatfield have NEET rates higher than the Hertfordshire average. In Welwyn Hatfield's case, notably higher than the other districts and notably higher than the preceding year. Ward analysis shows even greater variance and local targeted action from post-16 providers will be required if we are to make further inroads into NEET in the county.

These geographical concentrations often reflect concentrations by client group. There are also groups of young people with a higher incidence of NEET than other groups, such as teenage mothers, travellers, certain ethnic groups (Black African males, Bangladeshi males, Pakistani males and East European migrants) and particularly young people with LLDD. Each group will require targeted action by post-16 providers.

Another contributing factor to the NEET levels is the drop-out rate i.e. young people leaving education or training before completing their course, as many of these young people do not leave learning to enter work. According to the latest data available (2004/05) the participation rate for all post-16 providers changes from 90% of 16 year olds to 81% of 17 year olds between Years 12 and 13. Despite this being the lowest drop-out rate in the East of England, this is still an issue of concern and the retention rate of providers will remain a priority for the LSC in Hertfordshire.

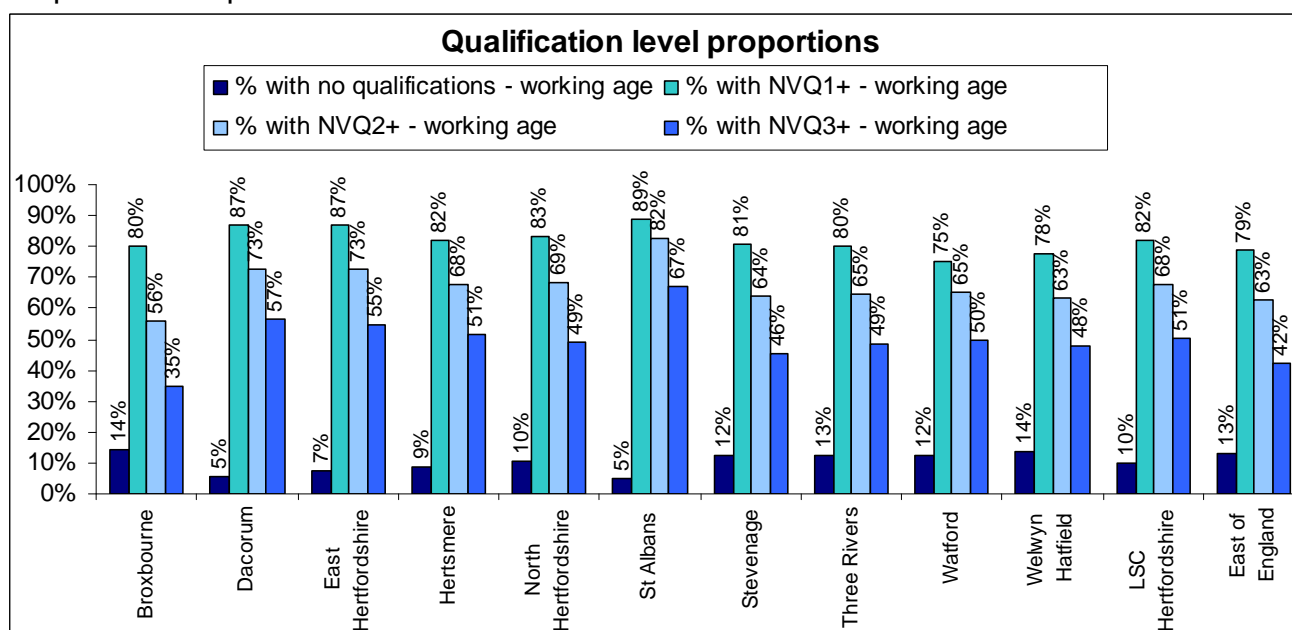
Related to targeting NEET is the positive outcome of Entry to Employment (E2E) provision. The primary purpose of E2E provision is to prepare young people in the NEET group for either employment or further education/training. Positive progression rates (the percentage of learners who leave E2E programmes for either employment or education/training) are therefore critical to reducing NEET, for if learners leave E2E programmes without a successful outcome they will return back to the NEET group. Hertfordshire has the second lowest positive progression rate in the East of England, with a figure of 42% compared to 48% for the region. This means more than 1 in 2 people leaving E2E programmes did not progress to either employment or further education. This must be improved if further inroads into NEET are to be made.

One of the key targets of the LSC is to improve the share of young people qualified to Level 2 by the age of 19. Hertfordshire has the highest share of young people qualified to Level 2 in the region, with 77% of 19 year olds qualified to Level 2 compared to 72% for the region and 70% for England. Despite this high level of performance, there are variances across Hertfordshire's ten districts, notably the under-performance of Stevenage and Welwyn Hatfield, with the latter seeing a drop in performance between 2004 and 2005. This will require further targeted action by Level 2 providers who serve these local areas ~ focusing on greater Level 2 provision and higher success rates.

Priority 2: Raising Skills

Hertfordshire performs well against the regional picture for levels of adult educational achievement. It has the second lowest rate of adults with no qualifications out of all the local LSCs in the East of England. However, qualification levels vary across the ten districts, as illustrated in Graph 2 below, with Broxbourne having the highest proportion of adults with no qualifications.

Graph 2: Adult qualification levels



Source: Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics, 2005

Even with this relatively high performance, there are still 201,000 adults in Hertfordshire who are not qualified to a Level 2 standard and 311,000 who are not qualified to a Level 3 standard. With adult funding pressures remaining, meeting the needs of these adults will remain a challenge for the LSC, particularly if we are to contribute to the Government's national target of reducing by at least 40% the number of adults in the workforce who are not qualified to a Level 2 standard. Although not a true measure of the target, as a proxy based on the above reported figures this is equivalent to 80,000 adults.

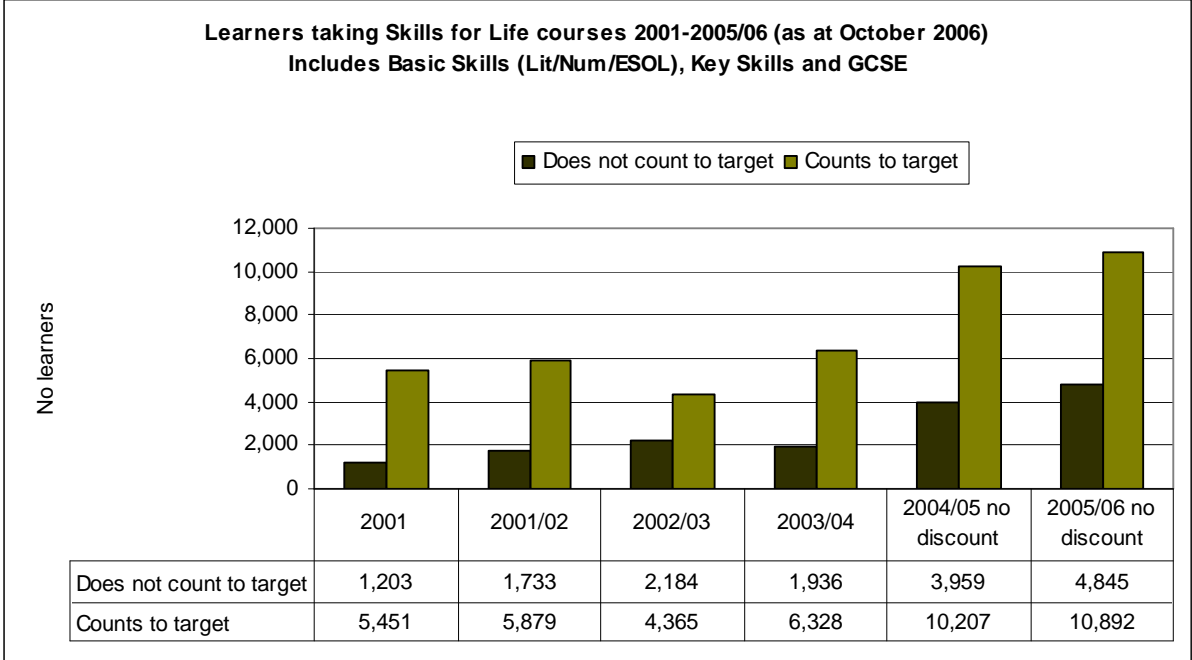
A large share of this will be delivered via Train to Gain (T2G) funded provision and the Hertfordshire consortium currently has the largest contract in the region (circa £4.7 million) with a target of delivering over 4,600 first and full Level 2 qualifications to adults. Given the proposed move to demand-led funding, increasing this type of flexible employer driven provision will continue to be a Hertfordshire priority.

Despite the significant contribution from T2G provision, mainstream FE provision is still expected to make a notable contribution to Level 2 and Level 3 adult need. In the 2005/06 academic year FE providers delivered approximately 2,400 Full Level 2 and 2,300 Full Level 3 courses to adults (8% and 8% respectively of all adult courses), this compares to 1,500 Level 2 and 1,800 Level 3 courses (4% and 5% respectively of all adult courses) in 2004/05. Though in order to meet both local need and national targets more Full Level 2 and Full Level 3 FE provision will be required, which means further re-balancing from non-priority to priority adult provision.

As with all areas within the region, the literacy and numeracy needs of Hertfordshire’s adults are substantial. It is estimated that the number of adults with an entry level numeracy need in Hertfordshire is over 233,000, whilst an estimated 40% of the adult population requires Level 1 literacy skills. Literacy and numeracy need is particularly concentrated in the local areas of Broxbourne, Stevenage and Welwyn Hatfield.

Given the scale of the need, meeting this need will not happen overnight and much has been done in the last year to increase the amount of Skills for Life provision in Hertfordshire, but more still needs to be done. Graph 3 below, illustrates the significant increases in Skills for Life provision in Hertfordshire over the past five years. What is of concern is the similar increase in the volume of non-target bearing basic skills provision. This provision will not meet the need identified above. More will be needed to re-balance basic skills provision so that a greater share is target bearing.

Graph 3: Learners taking Skills for Life courses 2001-2005/06



Source: LSC Skills for Life Target Reports (October 2006)

Priority 3: Economic Development

Hertfordshire borders a number of growth areas within the region and neighbouring regions. The north and east of Hertfordshire will benefit from the growth expected in the London, Stansted, Cambridge and Peterborough Growth Area, running along the M11. For example, Stansted is now the third largest handler of airfreight in the UK behind Heathrow and East Midlands airports and passenger numbers have increased by 75% since 2000 reaching just under 21 million. Current planning permission allows growth up to 25 million passengers with the existing runway and, subject to planning permission, there is potential for growth of a further 10 million passengers.

The London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics will have an impact on the economic development of Hertfordshire not only due to the spill over effects from London, but the direct impact of the Broxbourne Olympic development. There will also be greater skill and employment demands, most notably in construction, logistics, culture, media, creative industries, hospitality and sport and leisure. It is therefore important that local providers are able to respond to these projected skill needs.

When compared to other Local LSCs in the East of England, Hertfordshire has a relatively low unemployment rate, with a June 2006 Claimant Count of 1.6% (the lowest in the region) compared to a regional figure of 2% and national of 2.5%. However, within Hertfordshire there are concentrations of unemployment and across the ten districts the Claimant Count ranges from 1% in St Albans to 2.3% in Stevenage. In addition to these geographical clusters of need, nearly 1,200 people in Hertfordshire have been unemployed for 12 months or more (June 2006). Given the above, this client group will remain a priority for Hertfordshire, and Hertfordshire LSC will continue to work closely with Jobcentre Plus in addressing the skill needs and improving the employability of this key client group.

Priority 4: Raising the Performance of the System

Significant improvements have been made in the quality of post-16 provision in Hertfordshire. Overall, success rates for 16-18 provision have increased by 8 percentage points between 2003/04 and 2005/06, compared to 7 percentage points for the region. Whilst for the adult priority areas of Level 2 and Level 3 provision, success rates have increased by 5 and 9 percentage points respectively.

Despite these impressive gains, Hertfordshire FE provision still lags behind that of the region as a whole and the gap is growing in some areas, as illustrated in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Success Rates by age group and qualification level

Qualification Level of Course	LSC Hertfordshire FE Providers					
	16-18			19+		
Level	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Level 1	65%	71%	71%	70%	72%	63%
Level 2	60%	67%	69%	62%	65%	67%
Level 3	61%	66%	68%	56%	57%	65%
Level 4, 5 and H	100%	67%		53%	50%	50%
All Levels	62%	68%	70%	71%	72%	69%
	East of England FE Providers					
	16-18			19+		
Level	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06
Level 1	66%	69%	74%	71%	71%	71%
Level 2	63%	64%	71%	62%	66%	70%
Level 3	72%	75%	78%	58%	61%	65%
Level 4, 5 and H	11%	38%	38%	50%	53%	55%
All Levels	68%	71%	75%	71%	72%	73%

Source: East of England FE Success Rate Data, February 2007.

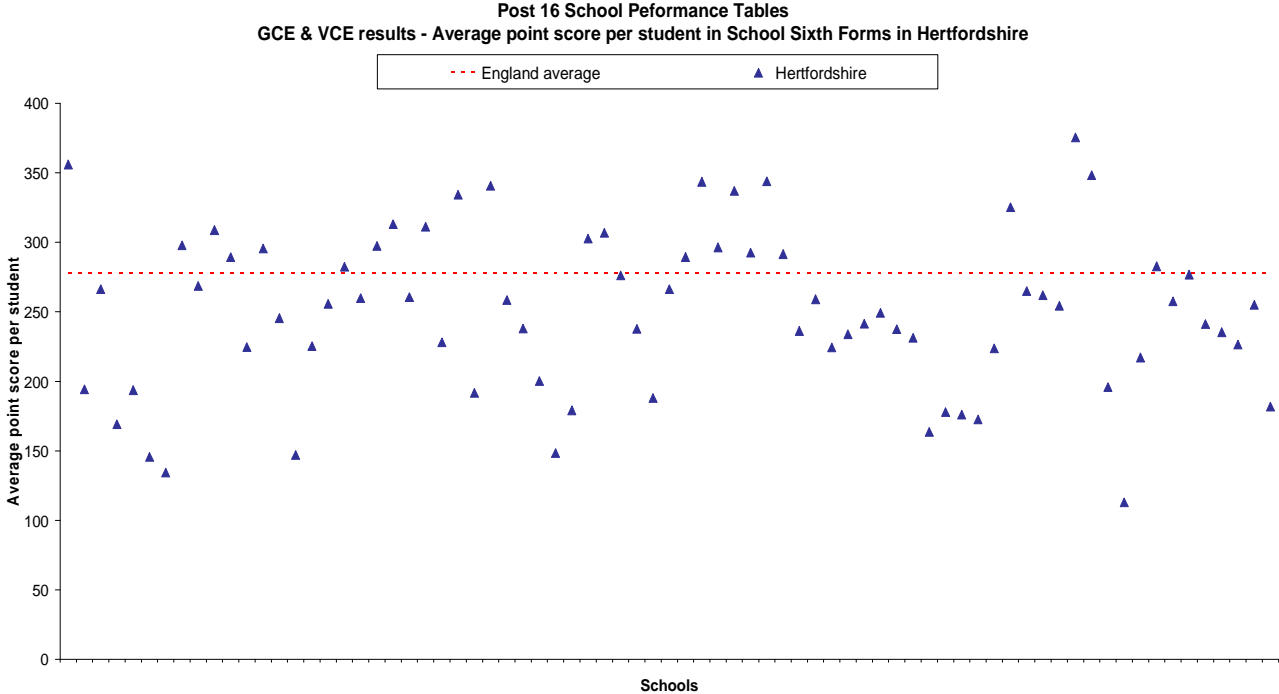
In light of the above there is still the need to drive up the quality of FE provision in Hertfordshire and this remains a priority, particularly for adult provision and the priority areas of Level 2 and Level 3.

Significant improvements have been made in the quality of WBL provision in Hertfordshire. WBL success rates improved by 19 percentage points between 2004/05 and 2005/06, the highest in the region ~ increasing from 33% to 52%, and the number of Framework completions increased by 39% over the same period.

Despite these improvements, in 2005/06 of the nearly 2,000 learners who left Hertfordshire WBL providers, nearly 20% were with providers with a success rate below 32% ~ therefore they had only a 1 in 3 chance of qualifying. A further 30% were with providers with a success rate below 50% ~ with a 1 in 2 chance of qualifying. Hertfordshire still lags behind the higher performing local LSCs in the region and is still some way off the 2007/08 national success rate target of 59%.

Graph 4 below shows the variance in school sixth form performance in Hertfordshire and a number of school sixth forms fall below the English average point score. This is not the only measure of school sixth form performance, nor necessarily the best, and the LSC in Hertfordshire will continue to work with Hertfordshire County Council in improving the quality of school sixth form provision in Hertfordshire and the range of opportunities available to school sixth form students as part of the 14-19 agenda.

Graph 4: School Sixth Form Performance in Hertfordshire



Source: School Performance Tables, Department for Education & Skills, 2005
 Note: National average includes results for FE and Sixth Form Colleges, Independent Schools and Special Schools

Commissioning Principles

By 'commissioning' we mean all our planning and purchasing activity across the sector, including purchasing through both negotiation and competitive tendering. It applies equally to grant in aid agreements and contracts as we move toward a 'provider neutral' approach to tendering for provision.

We are committed to ensuring that our allocated resource is targeted towards provision of the highest quality, contributes to government targets and priorities and is delivered at an appropriate unit cost.

We will work with our existing college and provider base and also open up provision to competition where there is poor quality, significant gaps or new funds available. We will apply a light touch approach where providers are excellent.

We want to introduce more competition to drive up quality and responsiveness, so we will commission provision in two main ways:

- Negotiated commissioning – agreeing plans with colleges and providers that currently deliver LSC funded provision
- Tendered commissioning – competitive tendering for adult and skills provision and 16-19 competitions. This will be open to any new providers wanting to enter the market and to existing colleges or providers wanting to extend their provision or enter new markets or geographical areas.

When will we use competition?

We will use competitions in the following circumstances:

- New investment
- Restructuring of provision or a new delivery model such as Offender Learning and Skills Service in custody and the community
- Significant gaps in provision including 16-19 competitions or where the market is not making provision available to meet the demands of learners and employers
- Poor quality – where colleges, providers or elements of provision are not meeting the minimum levels of performance and/or are deemed inadequate by Inspection

3. Local Priorities and Key Actions

Priority 1: We will fund plans and activities which drive up participation and attainment in education and training for all the 16-18 age group, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Linked EESCP strategic goal 2: Develop a culture of lifelong learning; and strategic goal 3: Create opportunities for disadvantaged groups and communities.

The following local actions will contribute to achieving Priority 1: XXXX indicates figures to follow

	Action	Success Indicators
1.	Target 16-18 provision towards those geographical areas and client groups with significant concentrations of NEET.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased E2E planned provision in those geographical areas identified by Connexions as having significant concentrations of NEET. This will be captured in E2E Provider Development Plans. • Increased E2E planned provision for key NEET client groups (subject to quality levels of providers). • Focused use of discretionary funds on pre-E2E provision in line with the above priorities. • Positive and quantifiable action identified in WBL Provider Development Plans in targeting NEET. • Positive and quantifiable action identified in FE Provider Development Plans in targeting NEET, particularly the strategic use of 'Other provision' and Entry/Level 1 provision. • Develop a 'bank' of E2E planned places to enable the LSC to provide a rapid response to NEET at key points in the academic year e.g. September to mid-October.
2.	Increase the total number of 16-18 places available and improve the geographical breadth of learning opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FE 16-18 learner numbers to grow from XXXX in 2005/06 to XXXX in 2007/08 (an increase of 12%, compared to 8.1% for the region), with particular focus on NEET and NET priorities. • WBL 16-18 planned Average in Learning to grow by 7% between 2005/06 and 2007/08, with particular focus on NEET and NET priorities. • Increase E2E starts by 15% between 2005/06 to 2007/08, in line with priorities identified above.
3.	Increase the number of young people who achieve a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19 years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of young people in FE achieving a Full Level 2 qualification by 15% between 2005/06 to 2007/08 (compared to 13% for the region). This equates to approximately 200 more young people qualified to Level 2 via the FE route. • Increase the Full Framework Success Rate for young people on WBL Apprenticeship (L2) programmes from 56% in 2005/06 to 59% in 2007/08.
4.	Increase the number of young people who achieve a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19 years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of young people in FE achieving a Full Level 3 qualification by X% between 2005/06 to 2007/08 • Increase the Full Framework Success Rate for young people on WBL Advanced Apprenticeship (L3)

		programmes from 52% in 2005/06 to 55% in 2007/08.
5.	Support Hertfordshire's network of 14-19 partnerships and the development of the 14-19 curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund joint LSC/CSF 14-19 Strategy Manager Post. • Continue to align LSC resource to 14-19 partnership infrastructure. • The September Guarantee is in place by 2007.
6.	Build the capacity of LLDD provision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure those FE capital plans in the early stages of development take due consideration of LLDD need. • Take forward the actions listed under the LLDD part of Section 5 ('Other Information').

Priority 2: We will strengthen our partnership with employers and continue to encourage the responsiveness of the Learning and Skills sector in order to raise the skills and productivity of the region's workforce.

Linked EESCP strategic goal 1: Strengthen the East of England's business base

XXXX indicates figures to follow

Action		Success Indicators
1.	Increase the number of adults in Hertfordshire who have literacy and numeracy skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-balance adult FE basic skills provision to ensure that more provision is target bearing. Increase the number of 19+ learners undertaking FE target bearing Skills for Life qualifications from XXXX in 2005/06 to XXXX in 2007/08. This equates to an increase of 60%. • Increase in the number of adults achieving a Skills for Life qualification that is target bearing from XXXX in 2005/06 to XXXX in 2007/08.
2.	Increase the number of adults in Hertfordshire who have a full Level 2 qualification and target local areas with concentrations of Level 2 need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The volume of FE 19+ Full Level 2 learners to increase by 15% (compared to 11% for the region) from 2005/06 to 2007/08, with particular focus on those geographical areas with concentrations of Level 2 need. • Increase the Full Framework Success Rate for adults on WBL Apprenticeship (L2) programmes from 44% in 2005/06 to 59% in 2007/08. • Increase the number of adults in FE achieving a Level 2 qualification from XXXX in 2005/06 to XXXX in 2007/08. • Continue to use the Hertfordshire Train to Gain Local Management Group as a means to promote and drive T2G provision in Hertfordshire.
3.	Increase the number of adults in Hertfordshire who have a full Level 3 qualification.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The volume of FE 19+ Full Level 3 learners to increase by 33% (compared to 30% for the region) from 2005/06 to 2007/08. • Increase the number of adults in FE achieving a Level 3 qualification from XXXX in 2005/06 to XXXX in 2007/08. • Increase the Full Framework Success Rate for adults on WBL Advanced Apprenticeship (L3) programmes from 48% in 2005/06 to 55% in 2007/08.
4.	Target provision towards priority sectors need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that growth in Level 2 and Level 3 (both FE and WBL) provision is mindful of priority sector need.

Priority 3: We will align a proportion of our investment in skills development with the region's Gateways, Growth Areas and initiatives in rural and coastal areas to encourage economic development and growth.

Linked EESCP strategic goals 3 and 4: Invest in sustainable economic growth and Create opportunities for disadvantaged groups and communities.

Action		Success Indicators
1.	The "added value" of partnership working with Jobcentre Plus is reflected in the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Joint Delivery Plan with measurable objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality tailored provision is locally commissioned to equip those not in work with the skills needed to enter, remain and progress in employment. • LSC and Jobcentre Plus achieve at least the expected outcomes for Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) referrals, Apprenticeship referrals and lower skilled qualifications across the county.
2.	Robust measurable regional, pan-regional and local plans are in place to align our funding with that of economic development partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local response to economic development is developed within the framework of the Hertfordshire Local Area Agreement (LAA) and the LSC contributes to the achievement of the LAA Block 4's targets.
3.	Work with non-statutory partners to enhance the development of skills and entry to the labour market.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A refreshed Working Together Strategy for Hertfordshire is put in place and the contribution of the Voluntary Community and Social (VCS) sector as a partner and provider is increased.
4.	Ensure good quality Information, Advice and Guidance is available to all offenders and Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) are in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offenders have one ILP tailored to individual need which identifies the support and skills development required for them to access employment and further training. • More ex-offenders are placed into learning programmes in Hertfordshire.

Priority 4: We will invest to accelerate improvements in the quality of provision, in order to achieve higher success rates, increases in learner and employer satisfaction and better value for money.

Action		Success Indicators
1.	Improve the quality of WBL and E2E provision in Hertfordshire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in Full Framework Success Rates from 52% in 2005/06 to 58% in 2007/08. • Increase in E2E positive progression rates from 42% in 2005/06 to 50% in 2007/08. • Provision in WBL below minimum levels of performance will be put out to tender (subject to national guidelines). • Continue to support the development of the WBL/E2E Provider Network in Hertfordshire by funding a Network Manager post, and encourage greater collaboration and the development/sharing of best practice via this post.
2.	Improve FE Success Rates at the headline and priority qualification level and close the gap in performance between Hertfordshire and the rest of the East of England.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Success Rates for 16-18 Long qualifications increases from 70% in 2005/06 to 75% in 2007/08. • Success Rates for 19+ Long qualifications increases from 69% in 2005/06 to 73% in 2007/08. • Success Rates in 16-18 Level 2 qualifications increases from 69% in 2005/06 to 73% in 2007/08 • Success Rates in 19+ Level 2 qualifications increases from 67% in 2005/06 to 71% in 2007/08.
3.	Support the implementation of the East of England Quality Improvement Strategy 2007/10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement indicators agreed in Provider Development Plans. • Work collaboratively with our provider base to successfully implement the Framework for Excellence. • No more than 5% of long course provision to be below the appropriate success rate threshold • All providers to achieve the designated 2006/7 minimum level of performance for full framework achievement • Proportion of good or better teaching and learning to improve so it is at/above the national average.
4.	We will work with the Local Authority, School Improvement Partners and Headteachers to improve School Sixth Form achievement levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Hertfordshire County Council to jointly implement the 'Challenge to School Sixth Forms' initiative (in line with the DfES announcement), the New Relationship with Schools and the LSC's Framework for Excellence.

4. Commissioning Volumes

Provider Summary Statement of Activity	Year 1	
	16-18 (Learner Volumes)	Adult (Learner Volumes)
LSC Funded Participation		
Number of FE learners (total)		
Number of FE learners undertaking Level 4 and above		
Number of FE learners undertaking Level 3		
<i>of which:</i> Full Level 3 learners		
<i>of which:</i> First Full Level 3 learners		
Number of Train to Gain learners undertaking Level 3		
Number of learners undertaking an Advanced Apprenticeship (Average in Learning)		
Number of FE learners undertaking Level 2		
<i>of which:</i> Full Level 2 learners		
<i>of which:</i> First Full Level 2 learners		
Number of Train to Gain learners undertaking Level 2		
Number of learners undertaking an Apprenticeship at Level 2 (Average in Learning)		
Number of FE learners undertaking Skills for Life qualifications that directly contribute to PSA target		
Number of Advanced Apprenticeships and Apprenticeship learners undertaking Skills for Life qualifications that directly contribute to PSA target		
Number of Train to Gain learners undertaking Skills for Life qualifications that directly contribute to PSA target		
Number of FE learners undertaking Level 1 and Entry		
Number of learners undertaking Entry to Employment (starts)		
Number of learners undertaking Safeguarded Adult Learning (Total)		
<i>of which:</i> Number of learners undertaking Family learning, literacy and numeracy		
<i>of which:</i> Number of learners undertaking Neighbourhood learning in deprived communities		
<i>of which:</i> Number of learners undertaking Wider Family learning		
<i>of which:</i> Number of learners undertaking Personal / Leisure learning		
ESF Funded Participation	16-18 (Learner Volumes)	Adult (Learner Volumes)
Number of ESF learners undertaking any ESF Activity		
Number of ESF learners not included in LSC Funded Participation table above		
<i>Of which:</i>		
Level 4 and above		
Full Level 3		
Full Level 2		
Skills for Life that directly contributes towards the PSA target		
Level 1 and Entry		
Other ESF activity		

LSC Funded Outcomes	16-18 (Learner achievements)	Adult (Learner achievements)	16-18 Success Rate (%)	Adult Success Rate (%)
Number of FE learners achieving a Full Level 3 qualification				
Number of FE learners achieving a First Full Level 3 qualification				
Number of Train to Gain learners achieving a Full Level 3				
Number of learners achieving an Advanced Apprenticeship Framework				
Number of FE learners achieving a Full Level 2 qualification				
Number of FE learners achieving a First Full Level 2 qualification				
Number of Train to Gain learners achieving a Full Level 2 qualification				
Number of learners achieving an Apprenticeship Framework (at Level 2)				
Number of FE learners achieving a Skills for Life qualification(s) that directly contribute to PSA target				
Number of Advanced Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship learners achieving a Skills for Life qualification(s) that directly contribute to PSA target				
Number of Train to Gain learners achieving a Skills for Life qualification(s) that directly contribute to PSA target				
Number of learners progressing to a positive destination from Entry to Employment				
ESF Funded Outcomes				
Number of ESF learners not included in LSC Funded Outcomes table above achieving a qualification at:				
Full Level 3				
Full Level 2				
Skills for Life qualification that directly contributes to the PSA target				

Funding summary	Funding (£)
FE 16-18	
FE Adult	
FE Additional Learning Support	
Train to Gain	
Advanced Apprenticeships and Apprenticeships 16-18	
Advanced Apprenticeships and Apprenticeships (Adult)	
Entry to Employment	
WBL additional learner / learning support	
Safeguarded Adult Learning	
ESF	
Total	

Fee Income and Other Activity Summary	Fee Income (£)	% of LSC funded activity Fee Income	Number of Learners
LSC Funded provision			
Not publicly subsidised / full cost			

5. Other Information

14-19 Partnerships

The LSC will continue to actively participate in 14-19 partnership arrangements in Hertfordshire and drive forward the post area wide inspection strategy and action plan ("Putting the Learner First"). We will actively support the preparation for the Joint Area Review (JAR) in May 2007 and take forward any actions that arise in collaboration with Hertfordshire County Council.

In 2007/08 we will:

- Continue to support 14-19 activities and partnership arrangements in Hertfordshire by contributing £1.6 million to the joint 14-19 funding pot. These funds will be used in part to continue to support a joint LSC/CSF 14-19 Strategy Manager post.
- Align our structure to the seven 14-19 Strategic Area Planning Groups and support these partnerships in focusing on the following:
 - Reduce the number of young people who are NEET or in danger of becoming NEET.
 - Broaden the learning opportunities available to young people via increased collaboration.
 - Implement the roll-out of Specialised Diplomas and the Foundation Learning Tier.
- Re-focus actions on reducing the number of young people who become NEET through the development of a joint NEET Strategy with Connexions, with associated partnership and planning arrangements and the alignment of resources/provision to support this strategy.

Hertfordshire Forward ~ Hertfordshire Local Area Agreement

Hertfordshire Forward, the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) for Hertfordshire, was re-launched in October 2006 with a renewed work programme focusing on 'well being' and the development of the knowledge economy in the county.

The LSC is a core member of the LSP and we will continue to align both our resources and priorities to those agreed by the LSP. We will actively contribute to the NEET reduction target and the actions/provision underlying the Hertfordshire-wide campaign to raise aspirations and promote the benefits of learning, with the aim of targeting specific places within the county with low achievement levels and unemployment 'hot spots'.

Personal and Community Development Learning Partnerships

Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL) is an important strand of learning for the communities and individuals of Hertfordshire. Despite not intending to lead to any formal qualification, PCDL provision is often the first rung on an individual's learning ladder ~ encouraging learners to progress to further learning at successive qualification levels.

There is a need to take a fresh look at PCDL provision in Hertfordshire, to see whether we have the partnership and planning infrastructure in place to deliver the best of PCDL services to the communities and individuals of Hertfordshire.

The LSC in conjunction with key partners will embark on a review of PCDL provision in Hertfordshire. A key part of this review will be examining the current and future roles of the Hertfordshire Adult Learning Partnership (HALP) and Hertfordshire Adult and Family Learning Services (HAFLS) in the PCDL planning and commissioning process. The desire will be to put new partnership and planning arrangements in place in time to inform the 2008/09 planning round and a focal point for the review will be the production of a PCDL Provision Plan for 2008/09. The partnership arrangements developed to oversee the review will be the platform for the formation of the LSC convened PCDL Partnership, as outlined in the FE White Paper.

Learner Health and Safety

The health, safety and welfare of learners are fundamental values of the Learning and Skills Council. All learners are entitled to learning that takes place in a safe, healthy and supportive environment. In addition, we consider health and safety to be an integral part of quality and that safe learning is essential to maximise learners' experience and achievement.

We expect all those we fund to fully meet their legal obligations and will seek assurance that they have suitable and sufficient arrangements for learner health and safety. We will take appropriate actions when standards are not met.

The 'safe learner' concept is central to our policy and we will promote risk education and awareness of health and safety, and positively engage all those that can contribute to preparing young people to be safe and healthy workers.

We will encourage and support the raising of standards and 'best practice' approaches, working in partnership with key stakeholders.

Equality and Diversity

The Council will ensure that planned activities take account of its duty to promote equality of opportunity in relation to race, gender, age and disability and our responsibilities under other equality legislation including the Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and European regulations relating to sexual orientation, religion or faith and age. Actions plans for the Race Equality Scheme (RES) and the Disability Equality Scheme are in place.

Work is currently underway by regional colleagues to produce Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs) for the coming year. Measurable targets for areas of low participation or underachievement will be set for Hertfordshire Providers, according to the intelligence supplied by regional colleagues. We will also work with our providers to address equality and diversity issues. As an employer we will continue to monitor the staff profile in terms of gender, ethnicity and employment band levels.

Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities

Under the Learning and Skills Act 2004 the Council has a specific responsibility to consider the needs of young people and adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are robust arrangements in place to ensure that this group of learners have access to suitable provision that meets their needs and where appropriate the additional support required. We will work with the region to implement the regional strategy in response to 'Learning for Living and Work', the LSC's national strategy.

The Hertfordshire Strategic LLDD Partnership is developing a local implementation plan to take forward the recommendations from Learning for Living and Work. The plan will include the following actions:

- Development of a RNIB/Hertfordshire Regional College partnership to create a centre of expertise for the visually impaired. This service will support all colleges in Hertfordshire and the East of England in the training and services required to allow learners who are visually impaired to access good quality provision.
- Development of a Brokerage Service in collaboration with Health and Social Services partners to identify the support services required to enable a young person to access local education/provision whenever possible.
- Engage with partners to develop opportunities for supported employment and Social Enterprises to create meaningful progression routes for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, post education.
- Collaborate with partners to develop Individualised Budgets based on the 'In Control' model in line with regional recommendations
- Develop a sustainable model for services for ASD based on Stop Gap provision in collaboration with Hertfordshire County Council and ACS.