

## Competitions to transform learning in Thurrock and Basildon

<b>Date of issue</b>	17 January 07
<b>Publication number</b>	110
<b>Embargo until</b>	Immediate publication

Two unique Competitions, each offering millions of pounds worth of contracts over the next few years, will usher in a new era of wealth and job creation for young people and employers in Thurrock, Basildon and south Essex.

The Competitions share a single aim to transform the local skills and learning markets and equip Thurrock and Basildon's 16-19 year olds with high-level, appropriate skills in specific sectors which are likely to dominate the local economy in the next decades.

Local, regional and national training providers, businesses, voluntary organisations and traditional learning institutions are invited to submit Competition proposals from Tuesday 30 January.

The Competition awards on the table are valuable contracts to the two winners who will bring major new investment into the local 16-19 learning sector and provide high quality, learning and training opportunities with extended choice and wider participation in the Thames Gateway South Essex area.

The two separate Competitions, one each in Thurrock and Basildon will both be managed by the Learning and Skills Council, Essex (LSC Essex.) which is committed to transforming FE provision in the Thames Gateway South Essex.

The winners will be selected from those offering collaborative proposals which can provide new and innovative approaches, designed to grow capacity and quality in post-16 learning. These solutions must address the demands of specific skills sectors in the expanding local economy and develop choice for the learner and employer.

***Competition entries for both areas are welcome from Tuesday 30 January. There will be two separate events to launch the Competitions, one in Basildon and one in Thurrock in February. If you wish to register to attend either of the launches, or for further information and details of the full Competitions criteria and how to enter, go to***

***[http://www.lsc.gov.uk/Regions/EastofEngland/whatwedo/16-19\\_essexcompetition.htm](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/Regions/EastofEngland/whatwedo/16-19_essexcompetition.htm)***

***Telephone Rachel Dawson on 01245 550146 or email on [essexcompetition@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:essexcompetition@lsc.gov.uk)***

***Competition entries must be with the Learning and Skills Council, Essex, LSC Essex, by Friday 15 June 2007. The submissions will be summarised and published and this will be followed by a full consultation process before the outcome is announced in the autumn.***

The two Competitions come as plans are emerging for thousand of new jobs created by the 2012 Olympics, a key economic driver in the area, and one which will leave a huge skills legacy for the future.

LSC Essex's Area Director, Janice Logie, says: "Thurrock and Basildon are at the heart of the Thames Gateway South Essex, the largest regeneration area in Europe, and one which will generate tens of thousands of new jobs over the next few years.

"There are unprecedented opportunities for growth and wealth creation – but the young people in the area must be equipped with relevant skills to make the most of the developing economy.

"The two Competitions, one each in Thurrock and Basildon, are just one way in which the LSC is working to address those needs. We are looking to this new and exciting process to bring significant investment into local communities and to enhance the quality of learning, particularly in specific skills sectors.

"We are holding two separate Competitions because we are convinced that only innovative solutions to the challenges of learning and skills provision in these areas will provide the long term answers.

"These will need to be both employer driven and market led if they are to really secure a new era of wealth and job creation for young people and employers in Thurrock and Basildon."

LSC Essex is committed to working with its partners in Basildon and Thurrock to invest millions of pounds into world-class 21st century buildings, including a new Further Education campus in Thurrock by 2011; the successful bidders will manage multi-million-pound contracts to deliver exciting new learning programmes on specific skills sectors.

The skills sectors in Thurrock are: Creative and Cultural Skills; Retail and Customer Service; Construction and built environment

In Basildon they are: Sport and recreation; Business administration and financial services; Health, social care and medical technology; Engineering

The competitions follow from LSC Essex's Strategic Area Review in south Essex which concluded that current Further Education provision in south Essex was not meeting the needs of learners, local communities or employers.

The Competitions Process is just one way in which LSC Essex is introducing alternative imaginative approaches to the FE sector to maintain momentum and to build on the present successes with the 16-18 education and training sector in Thurrock and Basildon and throughout south Essex.

There are a number of exciting developments on which LSC Essex is committed to working with its partners to better meet employers' and learners' needs:

- The improving infrastructure includes £100 million Further Education investment to make a difference on the ground in the next five years.
- A new town centre Further Education site is planned for Thurrock for 2011
- New Federated V1th Forms being created
- The imminent relocation of the Royal Opera House support service to Thurrock from Stratford will drive forward the establishment of a National Skills Academy for Live Performing Arts in Thurrock

Adds Janice Logie: "We need to be bold and imaginative in our approach to learning and skills because the needs of the area's young people are urgent.

“We will be working collaboratively with all our partners, and especially with our local employers and businesses, to bring about real and effective change in the Further Education sector in Thurrock and Basildon. We will free up and create a new learning and skills market.

“We have started on our journey, but the final direction will be demand led and that means market principles will be applied in the FE system. We are determined to free up and create a new learning and skills market, working collaboratively to make things better for the learners in the area. “

## **ENDS**

For further information on this press release and any requests for interviews, contact Anne Sherer Broom at 01245 550035 or [anne.shererbroom@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:anne.shererbroom@lsc.gov.uk) or [anne@mosaicpublicity.co.uk](mailto:anne@mosaicpublicity.co.uk)

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for planning and funding high-quality vocational education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England’s young people and adults to world-class standards. Our vision is that by 2010, young people and adults in England have the knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. Established in 2001, we work nationally, regionally and locally from a network of offices across the country.

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

**This is the biggest investment LSC Essex has ever made in learning and skills for young people in Thurrock and Basildon. You are invited to send a representative to attend a short press briefing at 9.30am on Tuesday 30 January at LSC Essex,**

**Redwing House, Hedgerows Business Park, Chelmsford, immediately prior to the launch of bids in the two Competitions.**

**This will be an opportunity for you to interview LSC Essex's Area Director, Janice Logie, and the Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership Manager, James Ayling, about the implications of the competitions process.**

**We hope you will be able to attend the press briefing which will give you a chance to find out more about how the FE sector will be transformed in Thurrock, Basildon and south Essex.**

**Coffee and light refreshments will be served. Car parking is available.**

**Please call ahead to confirm if you are sending/attending. We would ask you to let us know by Friday 26 January. Ask for Anne Sherer Broom on 01245 550035.**