

## Basildon's young people will benefit from investment in skills

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Potential bidders for learning contracts worth millions of pounds over the next few years have attended a major launch in Basildon to find out more about how they can boost learning and training for young people.

Delegates heard how young people in Basildon will need to be equipped with relevant skills to make the most of the developing economy that is set to generate tens of thousand of new highly-skilled jobs over the next few years.

Two unique Competitions are now under way, one each in Basildon and in Thurrock, to find new ways of providing top quality local learning and training opportunities for young people aged 16 -19 and to equip them to take advantage of the area's regeneration.

In Basildon, the Competition will lead to many hundreds of new learning and training places coming on stream, in addition to existing provision, so many more young people will have the chance to gain relevant skills.

Delegates at the event held at the Holiday Inn, Basildon, spoke of the urgent need to encourage a new learning culture in south Essex so young people do not lose out on new and exciting growth opportunities.

Both Competitions are managed by the Learning and Skills Council, Essex (LSC Essex) which is committed to transforming further education provision in the Thames Gateway South Essex.

Would-be bidders have until June 15 to submit their proposals on how they propose to work together to deliver new and innovative approaches which will increase the quality and number of opportunities in post-16 learning.

In Basildon the specific growth sectors are sport and recreation; business administration and financial services; health, social care and medical technologies; engineering.

Delegates heard from leading local speakers including the Basildon Council Vice Chairman, Cllr Geoffrey Buckenham, Cllr Stephen Castle, Cabinet Portfolio holder Education, Sport and Thames Gateway, Essex County Council, Ian Butt, Manager of Strategic Development Co-ordination, Basildon Renaissance Partnership, and Chris Paveley, LSC Essex Council Chair.

They stressed the unprecedented growth opportunities which face Basildon in the heart of Europe's biggest regeneration area and as plans are emerging for the 2012 Olympics which will generate tens of thousands of new jobs over the next few years.

Chris Paveley said the Competition's aim is to better meet the needs of learners and of employers: "We're looking to set up a sector that will be famous for the quality of what it provides within a network of world class buildings and facilities," he said.

LSC Essex's Area Director, Janice Logie, says: "The Competitions 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.

"The Competitions Process is just one way in which LSC Essex is working with all its partners to bring alternative imaginative approaches to the FE sector and to build on the present successes with the 16-18 education and training sector in Thurrock and Basildon and throughout south Essex."

Proposals from would-be bidders have to be with LSC Essex by June 15 and the Competition decision will be announced in September.

For further information and guidance, visit the website on

[http://www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/eastof England/whatwedo/16-19\\_essexcompetition.htm](http://www.lsc.gov.uk/regions/eastof%20England/whatwedo/16-19_essexcompetition.htm) Or email [essexcompetition@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:essexcompetition@lsc.gov.uk) or phone 01245 550126

## **ENDS**

For further information on this press release, 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.