

**i** For information



Leading learning and skills

Learning and Skills Council  
East of England

# A 16 to 19 Competition for Thetford: Our prospectus

The statement of need, selection  
criteria and competition timeline

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# Foreword

## Welcome to our Prospectus for the 16 to 19 Competition for Thetford.

During December last year, the LSC in Norfolk convened a meeting with a number of key partners to consider what might be done to address a number of considerable learning-related challenges in Thetford including high levels of NEET and low participation in post 16 learning. At that meeting, a number of ideas were proposed, including that of holding a 16-19 competition to commission additional provision for the area.

From 2006, where a local Learning and Skills Council has identified a need to either expand provision by 200 or more new learners over two years; improve the quality of provision and/or improve the balance of provision in an area, it must invite bids from potential providers asking them to set out proposals.

Below is our assessment of need for a competition in Thetford together with a map of the competition area, the competition timeline and the criteria against proposals will be considered. This assessment of need confirms as well-founded many of the concerns and observations made by those involved in learning in Thetford in December. It sets out, we believe, the most compelling case for a competition in the Thetford area.

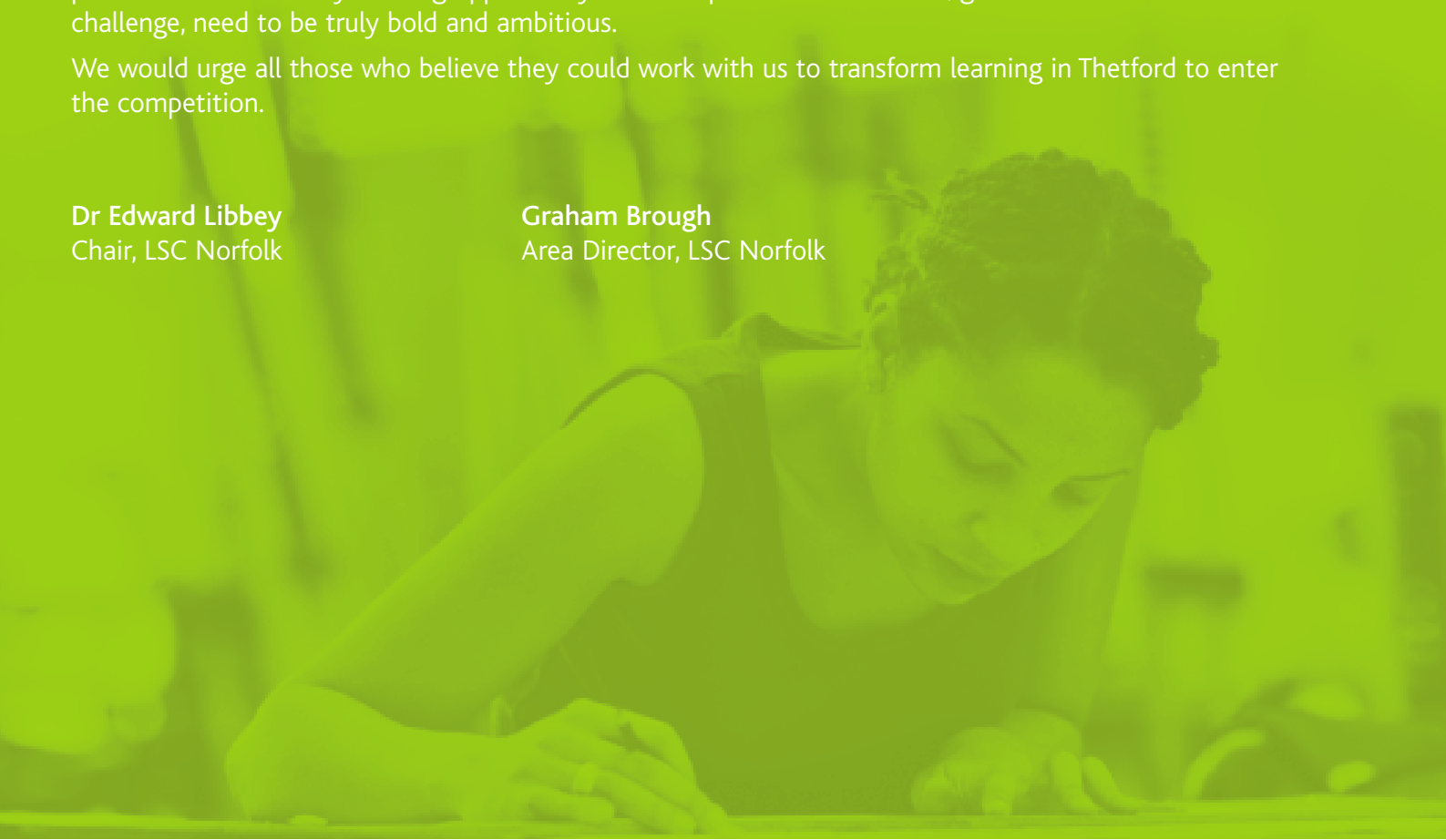
The Council of LSC Norfolk is passionate in its desire to transform learning in Thetford.

Low levels of participation in the 16 to 18 age group coupled with Thetford's Growth Point status provides an enormously exciting opportunity to develop new solutions that, given the scale of the challenge, need to be truly bold and ambitious.

We would urge all those who believe they could work with us to transform learning in Thetford to enter the competition.

**Dr Edward Libbey**  
Chair, LSC Norfolk

**Graham Brough**  
Area Director, LSC Norfolk



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## Policy context

1 The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) published its *Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners* in July 2004. The strategy summarised the Government's plans for early years, primary and secondary schools, 14-19 education and training, adult skills and higher education (HE).

2 The strategy sets out the Government's view that choice is best delivered by opening up the provider market and giving institutions greater autonomy in serving their communities so that successful provision can expand and local strengths be fully exploited. To help achieve this for 16-19 year olds, the strategy includes:

- measures to make it easier for leading 11-16 schools to open sixth forms
- competitions, decided at local level, for new substantial 16-19 provision
- a new 16-19 capital budget combining school and FE resources to support investment in new 16-19 provision.

3 The Government's White Paper: *Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances* (DfES March 2006) requires the LSC to:

- use its funding and powers to secure rapid and high quality implementation of the 16-19 entitlement in every area
- ensure that young people benefit from five new specialist diplomas from September 2008 onward, with 14 Diplomas available nationwide by 2013.
- The Government has in addition included an expectation that post-16 participation rates in England in total will rise to 90% by 2015.

4 Where a local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has identified a need to expand 16-19 provision by 200 or more places, it must invite bids from potential providers asking them to set out proposals. The local LSC does this by organising a competition as set out in the LSC Guidance for 16-19 Competitions published in December 2005, available at: <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/Regions/EastofEngland/whatwedo/1619thetfordcompetition.htm>

5 LSC guidance states that a competition for new 16-19 provision will be held where:

- a need is identified for places for 200 or more new learners over two years
- there is a need to improve the quality of provision, and/or
- there is a need for a better balance of provision to meet the needs of young people.

# Our statement of need

## Introduction

**6** Thetford has recently been designated as a 'growth point' in the East of England. The Local Authority with its partners has developed plans to transform Thetford by developing its economic potential and regenerating the town centre. To maximise the opportunities that this programme offers, it is no less than essential that the education and training opportunities available in Thetford for young people aged 16-19 are truly excellent.

**7** LSC Norfolk's Strategic Area Review 2003/04 concluded that provision in Thetford was not fully meeting the needs of learners, local communities or employers. Education and training in Thetford remains characterised by low levels of participation, low achievement and a programme offer which is too narrow.

**8** To reflect the commitment of the LSC in Norfolk to transform education and training in Thetford, the LSC seeks proposals for new models of delivery for education and training for 16-19 learners. These proposals must extend the quality, breadth of courses and number of places available in the area. Applicants are expected to consider not just the range of programmes that will be provided, but also teaching and learning methods and the environment in which the programmes would be delivered. We expect the main site(s) for delivering 16-19 education and training in Thetford to be an integral part of the wider regeneration of Thetford.

**9** Whatever form the new provision takes, it is estimated that a minimum of 200 new places will be needed from 2008/09 to enable 16 to 18 participation to grow. It is likely that further places will be required to accommodate projected population growth in the 16-18 cohort. Regeneration plans for the town means that the population is set to grow beyond 2015 and proposals should take account of this.

**10** The geographical area for the competition is the town of Thetford, comprising the wards of Thetford Abbey, Thetford Castle, Thetford Guildhall and Thetford Saxon - see Annex 1. Full details of the scope of the competition are set out later in the section entitled Defining the Competition. This prospectus provides the rationale for the 16-19 Competition in Thetford, it sets out: (i) The LSC's vision for the area and a summary of LSC targets; (ii) a headline profile of Thetford; (iii) the need for change (including a summary of the findings of the Norfolk Strategic Area Review and the headline education and training statistics for Thetford); and (iv) the Competition parameters. The process for entering the competition is described in the last section of the prospectus.

**11** Applicants will need to access a broader range of information than is contained in this prospectus. The competition website contains details of additional resources available and applicants should regularly check the competition website for new information:  
<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/Regions/EastofEngland/whatwedo/1619thetfordcompetition.htm>

## The LSC Vision

**12** The LSC in Norfolk wishes to transform post-16 learning in Thetford in order to give all learners and employers access to a wide range of high quality local learning opportunities. The LSC and its partners are determined to achieve the national target of engaging 90% of all 16-18 year olds in Thetford in structured learning by 2015 and to match national attainment rates for Level 2 and Level 3 achievement at age 19.

**13** The creation of a comprehensive framework for 14-19 learning opportunities that provide a seamless progression routes up to and onto HE is central to achieving our aspirations for learners, employers and our partners.

**14** The LSC in Norfolk wishes that the organisation, or partnership, that submits the successful application will be an integral part of the educational infrastructure in the Thetford area, offering a wide choice of innovative and high quality provision to the local community.

**15** Our vision is based on the following underpinning principles, that:

(i) changes in provision should be driven by the needs of learners and not institutions;

(ii) all young people should have access to the fullest range of vocational and educational opportunities at levels relevant to prior attainment;

(iii) there should be optimum opportunities for individual learners to combine general and applied/vocational curriculum choices;

(iv) provision should be cost effective and represent value for money;

(v) any travel that might be required should be affordable; and

(vi) learning and skills should demonstrably contribute to both the economic and social regeneration of the area.

## LSC Targets and Ambitions

**16** The LSC nationally is responsible for meeting the following Public Service Agreement (PSA) target: *'to Increase the proportion of 19 year olds who achieve at least a Level 2 by three percentage points between 2004 and 2006 and a further two percentage points between 2006 and 2008; and improve attainment at Level 3.'* Supporting this PSA target is a performance indicator: *'By 2007/08 increase the numbers completing Apprenticeships by three quarters compared to 2002/03'.*

**17** The LSC is aiming for at least 90% of 16-18 year olds to be participating in some kind of formal learning by 2015. In the East of England, this translates into a participation target for 2008 of 88% participation at age 16 and 78% participation at age 17.

**18** The LSC in Norfolk's Annual Plan for 2007/08 contains the following targets:

(i) the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) will be reduced from 7.9% (Nov 06) to 6.3% (Nov 2008);

(ii) E2E progressions into Further Education and/or employment with training will rise from 52% in July 2006 to 70% in July 2008 of all progressions;

(iii) a 5% annual growth is achieved in participation when expressed as a percentage of the cohort will be achieved;

(iv) participation will be increased at age 16 from 81% in 2004 to 85% in 2008 and at age 17 from 70% in 2004 to 75% in 2008;

(v) 16 to 18 level 2 Success for FE will increase from 63% in 2005/06 to 73% in 2007/08;

(v) 16 to 18 level 2 Success for Work Based Learning will increase from 54% in 2005/06 to 61% in year;

(vi) level 2 attainment at 19 will increase from 69.6% in 2005 to 78% in 2008;

(vii) 16 to 18 level 3 Success for FE will increase from 69% in 2005/06 to 73% in 2007/08;

(viii) 16 to 18 level 3 Success for Work Based Learning will increase from 55% in 2005/06 to 66% in 2007/08; and

(ix) Level 3 attainment at 19 will increase from 43% in 2005 to 49% in 2008.

## Thetford in Context

**19** The town of Thetford is the gateway into Norfolk from London, the South, Cambridge and the Midlands. It has recently been designated as one of only three 'growth points' in the East of England<sup>1</sup> and it has the potential to become one of the fastest growing towns in the East of England. Breckland Council and partners have developed proposals that aim to transform the town by developing its economic potential and facilitating the regeneration of the town centre. This includes plans to build up to an additional 6,000 homes, diversifying the employment base, creating between 4,000 and 6,000 new jobs, allocating more land for businesses and improving public and green transport links within the next 20 years.<sup>2</sup> Regional forecasts predict employment in Breckland to grow by around 25% between 2001 to 2021.

**20** Thetford town has four wards and according to Census 2001 figures has a total population of 21,589. **Table 1** shows the population in the four wards and gives figures for gender.

**Table 1 Breakdown of Ward Populations**

	Thetford Abbey	Thetford Castle	Thetford Guildhall	Thetford Saxon	Total of four wards
All people	5,132	1,961	6,799	7,697	21,589
Males	2,489	968	3,454	3,792	10,703
Females	2,643	993	3,345	3,905	10,886

Source: 2001 Census - UV01

1 The two others are: Norwich and the Haven Gateway

2 The Regional Spatial Strategy at [www.breckland.gov.uk/thetfordgrowthpointinitiative](http://www.breckland.gov.uk/thetfordgrowthpointinitiative)

**21** The Thetford population represents 3% of the total population of Norfolk (796,728) but it is estimated that this proportion will increase significantly. The projected population growth for Norfolk for the period 2004-16 indicates that the district of Breckland will have the greatest, year on year, percentage increase in the whole of the county. In Breckland, the 15-19 year old population is projected to rise by 500 during the period 2010-2015.

**22** Approximately 10,954 people in Thetford are economically active (Census 2001), which represents 71% of the working age population. This is higher than the rate for Norfolk (65.6%) and the East of England (69.2%). Not all of the working age population will be actively looking for work. However, people who are claiming Job Seekers Allowance are actively seeking work. The proportion of the working age population claiming Job Seekers Allowance is higher in Thetford, at 2.8%, than Norfolk and the East of England, which both have rates well under 2%. This indicates that although Thetford has a comparatively high rate of people working it also has a higher than average rate of people unemployed and looking for work. Figures for August 2006 show that 135 young people in Thetford aged 16-24 years old were claiming Jobseekers Allowance. Some 5.7% of the working age population in Thetford is claiming Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance. This is slightly above the average rates for Norfolk (5.6%) and the East of England (4.5%).

**23** Nearly 40% of people (8,647) living in Thetford live in areas identified as the 20% most deprived in the region<sup>3</sup>. Low income is a key indicator of deprivation and nearly 23% of children in Thetford live in households that are affected by income deprivation, substantially more than averages for Norfolk and the East of England, 18% and 16% respectively.

**24** According to the education, skills and training domain, within the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2004), there are four super output areas (SOAs) in Thetford that are ranked within the top 10% of the most educationally deprived areas within England. Three of these SOAs are in Thetford Saxon and one is in Thetford Abbey. The SOA in Thetford Abbey is ranked 299 out of 32,482 in England (with 1 being the most deprived). Within the Education, skills and training domain there is a sub domain that looks at children and young people. The same four SOAs in the Thetford wards appear in this sub domain but the SOA in Thetford Abbey moves higher up the ranking to 170 out of the total 32,482 areas in England.

**25** There are 450 businesses in Thetford accounting for 2% of the total businesses in Norfolk. Two thirds of Thetford businesses (66%) employ less than 5 employees<sup>4</sup>. Nearly 50% of people living in Thetford travel less than 2 kms to work<sup>5</sup>. Work opportunities in Thetford are mainly in low paid industries, such as, food processing and manufacturing industries, with over 25% of people working in manufacturing and 19% in the wholesale and retail trade.

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3 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2004 modelled down to Output Area (OA) level by OCSI (2006)

4 Neighbourhood Statistics - Counts of Enterprises 2004

5 Census 2001 - Table UV35 Distance travelled to work

## The Need for Change

**26** This section makes the case for the transformation of education and training in Thetford. It considers the findings from a strategic review of skills and learning in Thetford and gives a pen picture of education and training in the town.

**27** In 2003/04 LSC Norfolk undertook a review of learning and skills in Thetford as part of the county wide Strategic Area Review (StAR) announced by the Secretary of State for Education in Success for All, published in November 2002. Throughout the review LSC Norfolk sought the views of partners and stakeholders, through discussions of draft plans at Area Stakeholder groups, a series of local conferences and other forums. At the Thetford Summit, held in December 2006, an options appraisal was carried out to discuss and assess the different alternatives for improving provision in Thetford.

**28** Below are key conclusions emerging from the review, further consultations and evaluation of options that are pertinent to the competition in the Thetford area:

- There are significant inequalities in access to 16-19 provision across the county and Thetford young people have to travel considerable distances to access provision. This could contribute to lower levels of participation.
- Thetford's 'growth point' status means that the population in Thetford will grow substantially and the existing 16-19 provision will not be able to meet the needs of learners.
- A new clarity of role and purpose could result from bringing post 16 provision together in Thetford and this could contribute to the regeneration of the area.
- Currently there insufficient scope to combine elements of academic and vocational learning in Thetford.

- Existing collaborations and initiatives do not provide the necessary range of integrated learning pathways for all learners.
- Low achievement and aspirations could be compounded by rural isolation and lack of alternative opportunities.

**29** The following sub-section provides a summary of learning in Thetford and provides, where possible, data for Norfolk, the East of England and England as comparators to provide perspective. Firstly it examines where post 16 learners go and participation rates in education and training more generally. Secondly it looks at the achievement of qualifications and retention rates, all of which support the need for change in Thetford.

## 16-18 Participation

**30** Table 2 below shows the low levels of participation by 16-18 year olds resident in Thetford in comparison to the rest of Norfolk. In 2004/05 16-18 participation in Thetford was 57%, which was well below the Norfolk average of 70%. In 2005/06 16-18, participation in Thetford rose to 68%, due to an increase in numbers in FE and a 58% increase in the numbers of students entering the Thomas Paine 6th Form Centre. In 2006/07 recruitment at that Centre has fallen back significantly which would have the effect of reducing the participation rate to around 60%. Considering trends in participation over three years and in relation to each institution, we believe that participation rate in Thetford is around 60%.

**31** Across Norfolk in 2004/05 there was an 11% drop in participation between young people at 16 and 17 years old (years 12 and 13). There are no comparative figures available for Thetford, but because decline in participation at age 17 is a national phenomenon it is reasonable to assume that in Thetford the decline in participation will be consistent with both national and Norfolk norms.

## School 6th Form Centres

**32** Approximately 75% of 16-18 learners who progress into for 6th Form Centre attend the Thomas Paine 6th Form, a joint provision operated by both Charles Burrell High School and Rosemary Musker High School. The remaining 25% attend schools in surrounding areas, including some out of county. A breakdown of the distribution of Thetford learners in sixth form provision (2004/05 - 2005/06) is contained in Annex 2.

## Further Education

**33** Participation in FE rose by 26% in 2005/06. Of those 16-18 learners who continue their education in FE, approximately 43% attend West Suffolk College; 23% attend Norwich City College of Further and Higher Education; 13% attend Norfolk Adult Education Service and approximately 8% attend the College of West Anglia. A breakdown of the distribution of Thetford learners in FE provision (2004/05 - 2005/06) is contained in Annex 2.

**Table 2 16-18 Participation in Post 16 Education and Training in Thetford and Norfolk**  
Learner numbers and participation rates

	2004/05				2005/06			
	Thetford		Norfolk		Thetford		Norfolk	
16-18 population	1,005	-	28,932	-	1,025	-	28,624	-
FE population	279	28%	10,530	36%	351	34%	11,095	39%
SSF population	183	18%	5,129	18%	261	25%	5,310	19%
WBL population	111	11%	4,491	16%	86	8%	4,021	14%
<b>Total participation</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>20,150</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>698</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>20,426</b>	<b>71%</b>

## Work based learning

**34** Participation in Work Based Learning (WBL) fell by 22% in 2005-06. Thetford learners enrolled with eight different WBL providers. Over 36% attended West Suffolk College, with 22% going to either WS Training Ltd (Bury St Edmunds) or Protocol Skills Limited and the remaining low numbers spread between the other five providers. Since 2004/05 the numbers of young people taking an Apprenticeship (Level 2) have declined steadily. Numbers for Advanced Apprenticeships (Level 3) have risen, and Entry to Employment has remained relatively low, but static.

## NEET

**35** Thetford has a significant number of young people aged 16-18 years recorded as NEET (not in employment, education or training). **Table 3** below breaks down the NEET numbers into ages and those available and not available to the labour market as of November 2006 and shows that at the end of 2006 there were a total of 71 young people, aged 16-19 years, classified as NEET.

**Table 3 NEET in Thetford**

	NEET available	NEET not available
Age 16	20	2
Age 17	23	1
Age 18	20	5

Source: LSC Norfolk, November 2006

## Higher Education

**36** Providing a definitive HE participation rate for Norfolk is complex as the data is collected in different ways using different definitions. Data for the year 2006<sup>6</sup> suggests that the Norfolk rate was 25% compared to the national average of 39%. In 2002 rates of HE participation in Norfolk were categorised on a ward basis into five bands; less than 16%, 16-24%, 24-32%, 32-43% and over 43%<sup>7</sup>. Three of the Thetford wards achieved less than 16% and one ward Thetford-Guildhall achieved a rate of 16-24%. It can be seen that participation in HE by Thetford young people is amongst the lowest in the county.

<sup>6</sup> HEFCE website for the year 2000

<sup>7</sup> HEFCE Polar Data for 2002

## 16-18 Achievement

**37** Table 4 below shows that a significantly low proportion of Thetford Year 11 pupils, at Key Stage 4, achieve 5+ GCSEs at A\*-C grade compared to Norfolk and England. In 2006 some 50% of learners in England achieved this level and 55% in Norfolk whereas the average for Thetford was less than half of this rate.

**38** Attainment levels at 'A' level and 'AVCE' are also low in comparison to figures for Norfolk and England, but have shown a slight improvement in 2006. Table 5 shows that the difference between Thetford and other comparators is not so wide when looking at the average score students achieve in each exam. There is a larger difference between Thetford and other comparators when looking at the average total score each student achieves. This suggests that although Thetford students do score proportionately less well in exams, it would appear that they enter fewer exams.

Table 4 Key Stage 4 Results 2003 - 2006

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Thetford School 1 - KS4 5+ GCSEs A*-C	30%	25%	28%	29%
Thetford School 2 - KS4 5+ GCSEs A*-C	24%	23%	25%	24%
Average for Thetford	27%	24%	27%	27%
Average for Norfolk	50%	51%	53%	55%
Average for England	53%	54%	57%	59%

Source: DfES Achievement and Attainment Tables Note : Figures have been rounded

Table 5 GCE/VCE and Equivalent Results, 2005 and 2006

	Average point score per student		Average point score per examination entry	
	2005	2006	2005	2006
Thetford Sixth Form Average	145.3	339	64.2	164
England Average	277.8	721.5	79.9	206.2
Norfolk Average	256.1	670.2	77.6	202

Source: DfES School and College (Post 16) Achievement and Attainment Tables 2005/06

**39** In 2004/05 FE Success Rates (16-18) for students resident in Thetford were lower than Norfolk and East of England averages. **Table 6** shows that in 2005/06 FE success rates for Thetford residents had increased by 12 percentage points and had overtaken both the county and regional average.

**Table 6 16-18 FE Success Rates, 2004/05 - 2005/06**

	2004/05	2005/06
<b>Thetford Wards</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>79.7%</b>
Norfolk	70.3%	76.9%
East of England	71.6%	75.3%

Source: LSC Norfolk

**40** **Table 7** illustrates the WBL achievements of Thetford learners compared to Norfolk and the East of England. In 2005 achievement rates in Thetford were increasing but remained below the county and regional average.

**Table 7 WBL 16 to 18 Framework Achievement Rates, 2004 to 2006**

	2004	2005	2006
<b>Thetford Wards</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>44%</b>
Norfolk	38%	54%	62%
East of England	39%	52%	55%

Source: LSC Norfolk

## Adults

**41** Table 8 shows that qualification levels within the adult population are generally low in Thetford compared to Norfolk and England. Some 62% of the population in Thetford have only a Level 1 qualification or no qualifications at all, compared to rates of 55% in Norfolk and 50% in the East of England. Studying the results at Level 4/5 it can be seen that only 9.5% of the Thetford working age population have achieved qualifications at this level, compared to 16% for Norfolk and 19.6% for the East of England.

**Table 8 Comparison of Qualifications in Thetford, Norfolk and East of England**

	Thetford	Norfolk	East of England
	Number		
People aged 16-74	14,094	-	-
No qualifications	5,526	39.2%	35.2%
Highest attained - Level 1	3,161	22.4%	19.6%
Highest attained - Level 2	3,005	21.3%	21.2%
Highest attained - Level 3	1,066	7.6%	8.0%
Highest attained - Level 4/5	1,336	9.5%	16.0%

Source: OCSI (2006), from Census 2001, ONS Settlement Definitions (2005)<sup>8</sup>

**42** Table 9 shows a greater proportion of people in Thetford have poor literacy and numeracy skills than in Norfolk and England as a whole. The percentage rate for the four Thetford wards is expressed as a range and this shows that at least one of the wards<sup>9</sup> has a poor ICT rate of 75%, a poor rate of numeracy of 69% and poor literacy of 20%.

**Table 9 Adult Literacy, Numeracy and ICT Skills**

	Total poor literacy		Total poor numeracy		Total poor ICT	
	Number	% range	Number	% range	Number	% range
Four Thetford Wards	2155	11-20%	8,235	50-69%	9,375	60-75%
Norfolk	-	10%	-	54%	-	66%
England	-	16%	-	46%	-	53%

Source: DfES Skills for Life survey - Basic Skills Agency 2001

<sup>8</sup> Taken from Thetford Profile, December 2006 by Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion

<sup>9</sup> It is not necessarily the same ward for each subject

## Defining the Competition

**43** The geographical area for the competition is the town of Thetford. A map defining the competition area is contained in Annex 1. The LSC in Norfolk seeks proposals for a mix of provision to meet the diverse educational needs of the local community. The successful applicant will be required to meet the following specification.

**44** There are approximately 1,025 young people resident in Thetford between the ages of 16-18. Of those, between 58%<sup>10</sup> to 60% are currently in structured learning. The comparable figure for 2005/06 in Norfolk (a county of low participation overall) was 71%. Our aim is to increase 16-18 participation to 90% by 2015.

**45** To achieve this the LSC in Norfolk seeks proposals for a range of high quality education and training for 16-19 learners that will significantly transform and extend existing provision in Thetford, making it more attractive to young people and more relevant to the need of employers.

**46** The analysis of need for additional places is based on three factors. Firstly, we need to extend the range and breadth of provision available in Thetford, together with capacity overall, to enable growth in 16-18 participation. A minimum of 200 additional places are required to achieve this. In addition, we believe there will be significant further growth in the 16 to 18 cohort as a result of Thetford's growth point status. Whilst we cannot be certain of the impact of this, we have assumed a modest 3% increase in the 16 to 18 cohort over the next few years. It is anticipated that the number of young people in the 16 to 18 age range in the Breckland area of Norfolk will increase by 500. Finally, we also need to improve post 16 success rates overall.

**47** Table 10 shows the number of additional places that would be required to bring 16 to 18 participation levels in Thetford to 90%. This would be 346 in 2009 growing to 378 in 2012.

**Table 10 The Number of Additional Places Required for 90% Participation**

	2009	2010	2011	2012
16 to 18 Thetford Cohort	1,154	1,188	1,224	1,261
Existing levels of participation at 60%	692	713	734	757
Additional places required to achieve 90% participation	346	356	367	378
<b>Total i.e. 90%</b>	<b>1,039</b>	<b>1,069</b>	<b>1,102</b>	<b>1,135</b>

<sup>10</sup> 2005/06 participation figures adjusted to compensate for spike in trend

**48** Table 11 shows the impact of an additional 200 places. An increase of an additional 200 places would enable an increase participation rates from around 60% to 76% in 2012. Such an increase would be consistent with local, regional and national ambitions in respect of participation - see paragraph 7 and 13 above.

**Table 11 What an Additional 200 Places Would Mean**

	2009	2010	2011	2012
16 to 18 Thetford Cohort	1,154	1,188	1,224	1,261
Existing levels of participation at 60%	692	713	734	757
An additional 200 places	200	200	200	200
New total	892	913	934	957
<b>Participation rate</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>76%</b>

**49** We believe that proposals might take a number of forms. Proposals to combine existing and extended numbers, through whatever model might be developed, would require, of course, that those institutions that currently deliver 16-18 education in Thetford were involved in developing the proposal.

**50** The range of provision on offer to Thetford learners across all providers involved in delivering 16-18 education and training must also reflect national developments in the 14-19 phase of learning and accommodate the diverse needs of the local population - particularly the introduction of diplomas. There must be an appropriate balance between traditional and vocational pathways. Provision must be available at levels 1, 2 and 3 across the age range. We believe that new provision would need to focus on both vocational courses at all levels and work based learning. Thought should be given to the particular needs of learners with English as a second language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

**51** Vocational provision is required in occupational areas that reflect East of England priorities, the needs of existing local employers and new employment opportunities created by the growth and regeneration of the area. On this basis, LSC Norfolk and its partners, consider provision in the following 5 areas of vocational learning to be a priority for the Thetford community and economy:

**(i) Construction and the Built Environment -**

Construction is an East of England priority and with plans to build up to an additional 6,000 homes in Thetford by 2021 this will be a key growth area of employment.

**(ii) Manufacturing and Engineering -** Breckland Council, through the Rural Enterprise Valley Project is bringing forward the Thetford Enterprise Park and further growth sites along the A11 in order to attract business and employment in advanced engineering, motor sport and other quality jobs.

**(iii) Tourism and Hospitality -** A Cultural Development package, within the 'growth point' plans will develop heritage museum and visitor opportunities for the town and the surrounding area. Thetford area is renowned for its heritage sites, open spaces, woodland and river corridor and distinctive Brecks landscape. Proposals to enhance this include a country park with visitor centre and foot and cycle links.

**(iv) Retail and Customer Service -** Thetford 'growth point' plans include the regeneration and intensification of the town centre to serve the projected growth in population which created more employment opportunities in this sector.

**(v) Business and Finance, including IT -** The development of the Thetford Enterprise Park and sites along the A11 will attract a range of new businesses into the area and this will create employment opportunities in business support and IT skills.

**52** The competition winner must be responsive to the local business community and be prepared to expand into other occupational areas as new needs emerge. In view of the above proposals must demonstrate specifically how they would:

(i) achieve an optimal balance between general and vocational learning;

(ii) work collaboratively with schools and colleges in the area to identify and exploit the strengths of different institutions to provide learners with increased choice and the best outcomes;

(iii) widen and extend participation in learning of school leavers in post 16 full time education, and in work based learning (including the participation rate at 17);

(iv) raise learner achievement and attainment levels;

(v) increase learning opportunities within the five sector skills areas, through the establishment of new vocational pathways;

(vi) engage with young people that are NEET and deliver innovative approaches to learning delivery that will help to overcome negative attitudes to learning and raise young peoples' aspirations;

(vii) meet the needs of employers for flexible delivery at a time and place that suits them; and

(viii) ensure there is continuous improvement in quality standards in the delivery of education and training.

## The Competition Process

**53** Interested parties have four calendar months, extended by holiday periods, from the date of publication of the notice to prepare and submit proposals. In developing the proposal, it is important that both capital and revenue funding, site and building issues and other resources, are considered alongside the proposed curriculum.

**54** Following the closing date of the competition, the LSC will produce one report summarising all applications, and this will be published locally. A copy of the summary report will be sent for information to all applicants immediately before the general publication.

**55** The LSC will establish a Stakeholder Selection Panel in accordance with national guidance. This panel will have a key role in assessing the proposals and making a recommendation to the Learning and Skills Council.

**56** The final outcome for the competition process will be decided by the Learning and Skills Council, having considered the recommendation of the Stakeholder Selection Panel. It is intended that a decision will be made by the end of April 2008. All applicants will be informed immediately of the decision.

**57** Note that the decision taken at this stage will be subject to post tender negotiations between LSC Norfolk and the successful applicant.

**58** Innovative partnership proposals involving private sector promoters will need to have a publicly funded organisation, such as a school or college as the lead partner and through which the funding will flow. There can be no guarantee that a project that is successful in the competition will also be successful in the national bidding process for LSC capital funding, or that capital funding will be made available in any particular year.

**59** The LSC will support the successful applicant in developing a bid for LSC capital funding in line with LSC national guidelines.

**60** All applicants intending to submit a competition entry must register their interest via **thetfordcompetition@lsc.gov.uk** at the earliest opportunity. This is to ensure that during the application period the LSC is able to provide all potential applicants with the same information at the same time.

**61** All proposals from competition entrants must be submitted using the application form available on the website:

<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/Regions/EastofEngland/whatwedo/1619thetfordcompetition.htm>

**Applications must be received by 5.00pm on Monday 28th January 2008. Applications received after this time will not be considered under any circumstances.**

Applications should be addressed to:

Graham Brough, Area Director,  
LSC Norfolk, Lakeside 500,  
Old Chapel Way,  
Broadland Business Park  
NORWICH  
NR7 OWG

**62** Applications must be submitted in the following formats:

(i) two paper copies of the completed application form

(ii) a copy on a CD included with the paper copies

Applicants should note that proof of posting does not equal proof of receipt. Applicants may wish to check that their application has been received by calling Graham Brough on 01603 218858.

## Selecting the Winner

**63** The application form details the information that applicants must provide. However, in completing the form applicants should be aware of the following:

- (i) If the solution proposed requires an element of LSC Capital Funding it is important that those aspects of the proposal are sufficiently well developed to enable the applicant to submit a bid for capital funding within a reasonable timescale after the competition winner has been confirmed.
- (ii) Only the information supplied in the original application will be considered by the Stakeholder Selection Panel and LSC Council, although the LSC may ask for clarification on applications in advance of the Stakeholder Selection Panel.
- (iii) The competition winner will be announced subject to the successful completion of post tender negotiations, to include, where appropriate, validation of information contained in the original application.

**64** For points of clarification on the competition process, please contact Graham Brough on 01603 218858. The competition website contains a Frequently Asked Questions section which will be updated regularly:

<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/Regions/EastofEngland/whatwedo/1619norfolkcompetition.htm>

**65** Proposals for new provision should address six key principles:

- (i) quality
- (ii) distinct 16-19 provision
- (iii) diversity to ensure curriculum breadth
- (iv) learner choice
- (v) sustainability
- (vi) affordability, value for money and cost effectiveness

These principles are implicit within the selection criteria detailed in Annex 4, against which all applications will be assessed. The scoring methodology is explained in the application form.

## Annex 1

# Map Defining the Geographical Area of the Competition



## Annex 2

## Learners in Thetford - Participation Rates

	Thetford 2004/05	Thetford 2005/06	Norfolk 2004/05	Norfolk 2005/06
<b>16 to 18 Population</b>	1,005	1,025	28,932	28,624
<b>Further Education</b>				
West suffolk	124	152		
Norwich City	58	82		
NAES	44	47		
Otley	2	31		
CoWA	40	29		
Easton	2	4		
Cambs Regional	2	3		
Great Yarmouth	1	1		
Suffolk	3	1		
Bedford	0	1		
Other	3	0		
<b>FE Sub Total</b>	<b>279 (28%)</b>	<b>351 (34%)</b>	<b>10,530 (36%)</b>	<b>11,095 (39%)</b>
<b>School Sixth Forms</b>				
Charles Burrell	70	153		
Rosemary Musker	70	69		
KES	12	11		
Thurston	7	7		
Attleborough	2	6		
Diss	3	4		
Methwold	4	4		
St Benedicts	5	3		
Chapel Road	6	2		
Hewett	0	1		
Notre Dame	1	1		
Other	3			
<b>SSF Sub Total</b>	<b>183 (18%)</b>	<b>261 (25%)</b>	<b>5,129 (18%)</b>	<b>5,310 (19%)</b>
<b>WBL</b>				
West Suffolk	39	31		
Other	72	55		
<b>WBL Sub Total</b>	<b>111 (11%)</b>	<b>86 (8%)</b>	<b>4,491 (16%)</b>	<b>4,021 (14%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>573 (57%)</b>	<b>698 (68%)</b>	<b>20,150 (70%)</b>	<b>20,426 (71%)</b>

## Annex 3

# Outline Timetable for Submission and Appraisal of Competition Entries

18th July 2007	LSC publishes formal Notice of Competition
28th January 2008	Closing date for receipt of competition entries
4th February 2008	LSC publishes a summary of all competition entries and invites representations
21st March 2008	Closure of representation period
Date to be confirmed	Stakeholder Panel considers the proposals and representations received and makes recommendations to LSC Council
Date to be confirmed	LSC Council meets to consider proposals, the views of the Stakeholder Panel and any representations received
Date to be confirmed	LSC announces outcome of competition

## Annex 4

# Selection Criteria

All competition entries will be assessed against the nine criteria set out below. For each criterion examples are given of the factors that will be taken into account when appraising proposals. The factors are included as a guide; they do not represent an exhaustive list of the factors that will be taken into account. Where possible, evidence should be provided to substantiate responses.

### 1 How will the proposal ensure effective collaboration with existing providers that complements existing provision as part of a locally coherent system?

- Where appropriate, what are the arrangements for any proposed collaboration, including governance and management arrangements?
- How does the proposal demonstrate the development of ladders of progression, in collaboration with other local providers, from the Foundation Tier of learning through to Higher Education (a curriculum map should be supplied)
- How does the proposal fit with the 14-19 Delivery Plans (including the new Specialised Diplomas) for the area?
- How does the proposal demonstrate a coherent offer from the partnership and how will it be managed across the partnership?

### 2 Will there be an adverse impact on existing successful local 16-19 provision?

- Does the proposal address gaps in the market?
- How does the delivery proposal fit with LSC Regional and Local Commissioning Plans?
- How does the applicant intend to ensure that they maintain a positive working relationship with providers in the area who are not part of the delivery solution for this proposal?
- What evidence is there that the applicant has engaged with existing providers?

### 3 How will the proposal ensure a broad range of sustainable provision?

How does the proposal ensure up-to-date, quality, impartial Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) for learners of all abilities?

How will local progression rates from year 12 to year 13 be improved?

- What evidence is there that the proposal is likely to receive wide support from the local community?
- How will the proposal meet the needs of local employers?
- What links are there to CoVEs, Skills Academies and/or other quality networks in relation to the specified subject areas?

### 4 How will the proposal meet the basic requirements to engage additional 16-19 learners?

- How does the proposal address the barriers to participating in post 16 education and training that exist within the area, and ensure equality of opportunity for all potential learners?
- Does the proposal contain realistic and appropriate information on learners, including the numbers of learners and age range?
- Does the proposal address the requirements of groups with specific needs?
- How is it proposed to engage with the 'hardest to reach' learners?
- What is the strategy for engaging learners in jobs without structured learning?

**5 How will the proposal increase participation and attainment at levels 2 and 3 to meet local, regional or national targets?**

- How does the proposal contribute to LSC targets?
- How will the proposal attract those young people who are at the greatest risk of becoming NEET?
- How will the offer be made sufficiently flexible to accommodate young people with special educational needs and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to enable them to progress in a way that is appropriate to their abilities and aspirations?
- How will the proposal facilitate progression into HE?

**6 How will the proposal enhance institutional and curriculum choice?**

How will the range of level 1 and 2 courses available be enhanced to increase learner choice and promote progression and participation?

How will learners be supported to achieve their aspirations?

**7 How will the proposal support and enhance delivery of the new Diplomas?**

- What plans are set out in the proposal to engage with the local 14-19 Planning Groups?
- What contribution does the proposal offer to the roll out of all 14 specialised diplomas for 14-16 year-olds as well as for 16-19 year olds?
- Does the proposal include an employer engagement strategy that complements 14-19 Specialised Diploma needs?

**8 How will the proposal make a contribution to the well being and economy of the local community?**

- What evidence is there of prior experience of delivery in a similar socio-economic area?
- What links have been demonstrated with the local Voluntary & Community sector?
- What is the leadership role of the applicant(s) within the local community?
- What is the level of engagement with other key stakeholders (such as Connexions and regeneration partnerships)?
- How does the proposal address the needs of local employers?
- What linkages have been made to regeneration priorities?

**9 Does the proposal address operational challenges?**

- What plans does the proposal set out to begin delivering additional places in advance of the completion of any proposed building project?
- What plans are there to grow the capacity of the offer over the first 3 years, whilst maintaining quality?
- Does the proposal offer sufficient innovation and flexibility in order to attract young people into education and meet the needs of employers?
- Is the time-span of the roll-out for each area of learning (including volumes) reasonable?
- Does the proposal contain a comprehensive and realistic analysis of risk?
- What arrangements are in place to ensure quality provision in a multi-provider arrangement?



**Learning and Skills Council Norfolk**

Lakeside 500  
Old Chapel Way  
Broadland Business Park  
Norwich NR7 0WG  
T 0845 019 4173  
E [norfolkinfo@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:norfolkinfo@lsc.gov.uk)  
[www.lsc.gov.uk](http://www.lsc.gov.uk)

You can also find this document on our website: [www.lsc.gov.uk](http://www.lsc.gov.uk)