

LSC RESPONSE TO THE LEITCH REVIEW OF SKILLS

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The Learning and Skills Council North East (LSC) welcomes Lord Leitch's vision for world-class skills, following the publication of Leitch's independent review to examine the future skills needs of the UK economy. The LSC want more people to operate at a high level in the global economy with increased productivity per head and more people in work. Prosperity for all will be achieved through world class skills - and the Further Education system will be central to this.

LSC National Chair Chris Banks said:

"This is a clear rallying call and Lord Leitch has set ambitious challenges to employers, learners and to those who work with them. The LSC is in full agreement that we need to seize this opportunity and ensure that the ambitions of being world-class in skills are met.

"The LSC National Council* met today to discuss the Leitch Review of Skills and gave its full support to the direction and ambitions contained in the final report.

"We are particularly pleased to see the recognition of the contribution that some of our flagship programmes and services are already making such as Train to Gain, Apprenticeships, Skills for Life, the National Employer Service and the clear direction to build on these to accelerate progress in the years ahead."

Chris Roberts, regional director of the LSC North East added:

“It is a big challenge to be world-class. We have already made considerable progress but there is much, much more which needs to be done. The LSC lies at the heart of this and is ready to play its full part.

“It is clear that we must all continue to accelerate change so that we go further, faster. The LSC North East - and the other eight regional offices across England - recognise and share this ambition and we will continue to raise our game to make this a reality. We look forward to working with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and our partners to achieve this. In particular the LSC is delighted that, yesterday, the Chancellor has further reinforced his commitment to our Train to Gain service. Over 4,000 individuals from 800 employers in the region have benefited from learning through the service since it was launched in April.

“The Chancellor also announced a threefold increase in the numbers of adults who will be able to gain qualifications by 2011. By doubling Apprenticeships by 2020 to 500,000 nationally he is ensuring we continue to raise the skills of young people alike. Here in the North East we have 2,355 young people in work-based learning, an increase of 2.4% on last year. The Chancellor also committed additional capital for Further Education colleges.”

The LSC itself has changed significantly over the past year with the introduction of local partnership teams - part of a major reorganisation which has allowed an extra £40m to be spent on learners. There are 12 Partnership Team based across the North East, with one in each of the following areas: Darlington, Hartlepool, Stockton-on-Tees, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland, Gateshead, North

Tyneside, South Tyneside, Newcastle, Northumberland, Sunderland and County Durham.

The full report - The Leitch Review of Skills 'Prosperity for all in the global economy: world class skills' – and the Treasury press release can be found at http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/leitch_review/review_leitch_in_dex.cfm

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Editor's Note:

*The LSC National Council contains representatives of business, higher education, further education, schools, Jobcentre Plus, voluntary sector and the TUC.

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.

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