

# Learning and Skills Council Local Area Statement of Need

## City of Manchester

### 2008/09

### January 2008

Of interest to everyone involved in improving skills and learning opportunities  
across Greater Manchester

## Introduction

This plan outlines the key priorities and challenges for the City of Manchester for 2008/09.

The City of Manchester has seen a number of successes over the past year, including finalising a merger of the two main FE colleges in the area, City College Manchester (CCM) and Manchester College of Arts and Technology (MANCAT). There has also been a significant reduction in the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) from – to 7%. Success rates in FE and work based learning are also rising year on year. Overall, the Train to Gain programme in the city is performing well.

There remain challenges to be addressed, particularly relating to young people achieving a level 2 by age 16; in 2006-8 only 54%(?) of young people in the area achieved 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C. Whilst the number of young people who are NEET is decreasing overall, there remain wards, such as Sharston and Newton Heath, where there are high numbers of young people who are NEET and we will use NEET hotspot funds to address this.

Unemployment in Manchester was 8.9% in 2005-06, compared to a national rate of 5.1% and worklessness in the area needs to be addressed through the City Strategy. We need more adults to be undertaking learning at Level 2 and, increasingly important to the economy, at Level 3 and we will work hard to stimulate demand for skills both from individuals and employers.

Partnership working has featured strongly in our approach to driving forward transformation in the area and we have forged strong relationships with key stakeholders. We will strengthen those relationships to take forward the new Manchester College and to ensure close joint working between the sixth form colleges. We will work in close partnership with our work based learning providers. We will develop our relationship with Manchester City council, particularly by contributing to the development of the newly instituted Public Service Boards.

We will also strive to ensure that the City of Manchester Partnership team continues to play a key role in the LSC's work to support improved regional productivity and sustainable employment.

## Challenges, key actions and measures of success for the City of Manchester

The challenges and actions for the City of Manchester are based on our local, regional and sub-regional Strategic Analysis, a robust review of supply, demand and need; as well as ongoing dialogue with key partner organisations.

### **Priority 1: Creating Demand for Skills**

#### Key Challenges

- Addressing high levels of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)
- There are low levels of achievement at Level 2

To increase the demand for learning we need to drive forward a cultural shift in the perception of learning and ensure the benefits of skills acquisition are clear. In addition for 2008/09 we aim to:

- Through the City of Manchester collegiate groups, plan a comprehensive 14-19 offer, maximising the utilisation and impact of ESF to provide pathways for young people to progress into mainstream learning within each borough.
- Ensure that the September Guarantee is met, ensuring all young people in the Manchester area have access to high quality learning.
- Work closely with the collegiates and the Manchester 14-19 Coordinator to self assess against the Progress Check criteria and to address areas of concern identified through the October 2007 progress check.
- Work with education partners to maximise the impact of City of Manchester NEET hotspot funding, to increase levels of participation of young people, especially those who are vulnerable or having learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Continue to raise the profile of the Learner Agreement Pilot to reduce the number of young people who are in employment without formal training.
- Work with partners, particularly MANCAT, CCM, Manchester Training, Hanovia and Economic Solutions to increase the take up of Train to Gain.

## **Priority 2. Transforming FE**

### Key Challenges

- The need to increase capacity for level 2 and 3 learning through flexible learning opportunities
- Working with CCM and MANCAT to ensure the new Manchester College meets the needs of learners and employers across the city.

Whilst the journey to self regulation has begun, we will support the continued transformation of the FE system as a whole with a clear focus on the areas where we believe we can add the greatest value. These include:

- Mapping out a comprehensive and responsive curriculum at the new Manchester College which will meet the needs of learners and employers across the Manchester area.
- Work closely with Manchester City Council to ensure that new academies being created in the Manchester area are aligned with current and future FE provision.
- Support our work based learning providers to expand and improve their Young Apprenticeships programmes and to facilitate the development of the Programme Led Apprenticeship route.
- Continue to drive up quality in our provider base and in particular success rates at Level 3; only purchasing learning opportunities which exceed Minimum Levels of Performance and give value for money.

## **Priority 3: Better Skills, Better jobs, Better Lives**

### Key Challenges

- High levels of worklessness in the Manchester population

- High levels of unemployment in the Manchester population

We will focus our efforts and resources to engage more people from disadvantage groups to increase overall participation and achievement levels. We will drive forward the integration of skills and employment and focus training on addressing skills shortages in local labour markets. In addition we will:

- Contribute to City of Manchester LAA targets through effective procurement and discussion with providers to ensure the integration of employment and skills
- Work with partners such as Job Centre Plus and through the City Strategy, ensure equality of opportunity, targeting areas of disadvantage, which result in improved success rates for minority groups, increased participation of under-represented groups and reduced imbalances in learning and skills acquisition
- Work closely with the New East Manchester Economic Board to maximise opportunities for residents in the New East Manchester area as regeneration continues.
- Work closely with the Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES) to help tailor the available curriculum to ensure it meets the needs of the area's most vulnerable residents.
- Work closely with local providers piloting Skills for Jobs work to ensure that the most disadvantaged learners are able to access appropriate provision.

## Partnership Working

- Work with the principals of CCM and MANCAT and the newly appointed corporation to ensure that the transition to a single institution is smooth and that the created college meets the needs of Manchester learners.
- Continue to facilitate joint working between Loreto College and Xaverian College.
- Continue to work closely with the 14-19 collegiates to foster partnership working with the key stakeholders in the city and taking forward the 14-19 plan.
- Work closely with the City Council, particularly around the development of MAES, the creation of the district level public service boards and the local area agreement.
- Work with the New East Manchester Economic Board and Gorton Monastery to improve opportunities for both young people and adults in the east of the area.
- Develop our relationship with Whalley Range High School, Parrs Wood High School and King David High school and implement the school sixth form support and challenge policy.
- Strengthen our relationship with the airport as a major employer in the south of the borough.
- Continue our work with the local Connexions partnership to reduce the number of young people who are NEET and to ensure the September Guarantee is met.