

Learning and Skills Council Local Area Statement of Need

Salford

2008/09

February 2008

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

Introduction

As the Partnership Director representing the LSC in the City of Salford and leading the Salford Partnership Team it is good to be able to provide you with this overview of our current and future work and priorities working with partners within the City. This document highlights the challenges that Salford faces as a City in its own right but also as a sub-regional player in Greater Manchester and places these within the context of the Learning and Skills Council Regional Commissioning Plan.

There are significant ambitions and expectations for the economic growth and regeneration of Salford, and for the wider city region of Manchester, over the next 10-15 years. Initiatives such as the move of the BBC to Salford Quays and the mediacity:uk developments are estimated to bring 15000 new jobs to the City. Future demand for skills levels is likely to be in areas requiring higher level skills i.e., at qualification Levels 3 and 4. This needs to be considered against the current working population's level of skills - 40% of whom have no qualification above level 1.

There is a significant number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) population in Salford. This has improved significantly over the past three years; currently at 7.5% (including personal development opportunities, NCIS, December 2007), participation in learning for 16-18 year olds has increased by 7% across the Salford providers, however, we still need to increase the participation and achievement of young people resident in Salford, and develop appropriate progression routes to enable them to achieve their full potential and secure sustainable employment.

We have already taken action by working with our providers and partners to ensure our approach to investing in learning and skills meets the needs of the local community and we will continue to do this by:

- Providing more local choice in learning and skills provision at all levels for customers (individuals and employers) and tailoring services to meet their needs, including promoting Train to Gain.
- Focusing provision which is delivering skills for life in disadvantaged neighbourhoods with the highest levels of worklessness and/or with local employers which have a significant proportion of their workforce with basic skills needs.
- Designing and commissioning skills provision - and associated learner/learning support - to meet the needs of groups which face barriers to learning and employment, such as looked-after young people, young parents, lone parents, offenders/ex-offenders and people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Developing innovative pathways for young people and adults to degree-level provision, including pre-engagement programmes for young people, both pre- and post-16, at risk of 'dropping out' of learning.
- Delivering an integrated sixth form and further education provision with increased community access to learning and a fully responsive curriculum for young people, adults and employers.
- Developing a capital strategy for the city to bring in substantial resources in support of world class and industry standard learning facilities.

There are many changes taking place which will require us to be proactive, flexible, challenging and sometimes challenged. In all of this we look forward to working with all our partners and stakeholders to deliver the best for Salford.

Kevin Rowswell
Partnership Director - Salford

Challenges, key actions and measures of success for Salford

Priority 1: Creating Demand for Skills

Key Challenges:

- Addressing high levels of young people who are (NEET)
- Low levels of achievement at 16
- There are low levels of progression to Level 3 learning and beyond
- Low levels of young people achieving level 2 and 3 @19
- Low levels of skills in the workless population
- Increasing employer demand for skills

Salford has been characterised as having a 'poverty of aspiration' with young and adult learners coming from a generational culture of unemployment, low levels of skills, we need to work with stakeholders to raise the profile of learning, employment and individuals' contributions to local economic and social well-being.

The Partnership Team will:

- work with providers to ensure **flexible pathways of learning**, in accredited provision from level 1 through to eventual employment. Utilising mainstream and ESF funding through the 13-19 partnership to meet the demands of local employers, whilst also increasing participation and achievement
- support the introduction of the new Diplomas from September 2008, building on the **successful collaborative approach** for Gateway 2 and beyond.
- increase the participation of young people by **further developing and delivering NEET strategies** that align funding to the NEET hotspot areas, and target the most vulnerable groups through the Information and Guidance sub group of the 13-19 partnership, disseminating good practice from successful Neighbourhood Renewal Funding projects, and Activity Agreement procurement.
- continue through dialogue with the three colleges to **target the Further Education sector offer to workless adults** of skills for life, Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications.
- work with local providers and partners, to maximise the Train to Gain and Learner Agreement Pilot funding available to local employers that have a significant proportion of their workforce with basic skills and Level 2 needs, we will develop workforce skills, promote the Skills Pledge and **encourage employer engagement**.

Priority 2: Transforming FE

Key Challenges:

- Merger of Eccles College, Salford College with Pendleton College.
- Aligning the renewal of the FE capital infrastructure and facilities with the BSF programme for schools
- The need to increase capacity for level 1, 2 and 3 learning through flexible learning opportunities
- Continued relationship building with work based learning providers and schools with sixth forms

The three colleges in Salford have recognised the changing landscape of both 14-19 and adult learning and believe that this can be most effectively achieved through a single vision that will meet

the needs of the City and beyond, and as such have presented and initial outline proposal to the Learning and Skills Council.

The Partnership Team will:

- continue to **review and evaluate the full curriculum offer available to Salford residents**, understanding the needs of the learner and employer and being mindful of national targets and local baselines, through negotiated and commissioned procurement.
- **consult with other stakeholders** before a full merger proposal is presented to the LSC Regional Board.
- provide guidance and support to the merged institution to **develop provision which is integrated to local economic demands and opportunities**, strengthens links with employers, engages with, and enhances participation of, local communities in learning and provides learner pathways through learning into employment and further learning and development.
- continue to work with Salford City Council to maximise benefits from **LSC capital** proposals through **alignment with other infrastructure investment activities** including the **Building Schools For the Future (BSF)** programme for schools, sixth form presumptions and Academies, developing a strategy which will link the proposals for capital investment for the merged college with BSF.
- support capacity development amongst all learning providers to respond to **demand led** funding methodologies, **employer responsiveness** and quality initiatives including **Framework for Excellence**.

Priority 3: Better Skills, Better jobs, Better Lives

Key Challenges:

- Need for Skills for Life learning with a focus on numeracy provision, including financial inclusion.
- Low levels of attainment and skills within the working age population
- Increase participation in learning of the local workforce

We will drive forward our providers to focus their efforts to increase overall participation in learning, engaging with partners to ensure maximum alignment of investment into employment and skills.

The Partnership team will:

- work with local colleges and work based learning providers to expand our Apprenticeship offer including encouraging further **collaboration of Programme Led Apprenticeships**, building on the success of partnership working in the construction sector.
- work with our providers and the local authority to focus delivery of skills for life in disadvantaged neighbourhoods with high levels of worklessness, targeting funding to areas of disadvantage. We will increase the numeracy offer to those identified in need **contributing to Salford's Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets**.
- work with Salford City Council and providers to implement the recommendations from the Spotighting pilots, **including exploring integrated commissioning strategies**, leading on the developing a process to regularly share timely data, curriculum design and delivery models and coordination of activities with other stakeholders to engage and support participation in learning and employment.

- ensure that Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities funds are appropriately contracted with a focus on integrating employment and skills, targeting those individuals that are **furthest away from the labour market**
- develop the range of provision that is available through the **Learning Agreement Pilot** for young people that are in employment without training, **engaging employers in learning**, and working in partnership with Connexions and local providers.
- work with strategic commissioning partners to develop funded provision for **pre-employment activities** in support of **Local Employment Partnerships** through **Skills for Jobs** initiatives

Partnership Working

The Salford Partnership team has in the last 12 months developed successful relationships with our providers, partners and stakeholders. We will continue to drive forward these partnerships throughout our work in 2008/09.

As members of **Economic Development, Learning and Skills Partnership (EDSLP)**, we will work with partners and providers to design a coherent package of provision to respond to regional and local skills priorities. As members of the **13-19 Strategic Partnership** and the **Children and Young People's Partnership Board** we will be at the forefront 14-19 reform and the significant developments already on the horizon raising the participation age, development of new diploma lines and the transfer of funding for 16-19 to Salford City Council. The partnership team maintains a direct strategic relationship with Salford City Council as the primary stakeholder for the area with the objective of achieving added value to public funding and investment.

The Salford Partnership Team will:

- work with Salford City Council, Job Centre Plus, community and voluntary providers and neighbourhood managers on key local **Skills for life** and **worklessness** initiatives.
- engage in multi-agency activities with the Salford Strategic Partnership on defining priorities within the **Local Area Agreement for 2008-11** and agree appropriate National Indicators and associated targets, for 16-19 performance and post 19 achievement.
- continue to remain committed to the EDLSP to deliver on the LAA and the Strategy for Connecting People to Opportunity and Jobs in Salford.
- review and contribute to the 13-19 partnership and strategy development to ensure fitness for purpose, supporting the implementation of the new 13-19 strategy. Develop a shared understanding of joint agendas prior to the transfer of funding to the local authority, including **Diploma** development, **implementation of 14-19 reforms** and the **September Guarantee**.
- work with Connexions on the **NEET agenda**, particularly vulnerable groups, raising participation rates through the IAG subgroup of the 13-19 partnership, including the 14-19 prospectus, ensuring alignments of funding and initiatives, and additionally ensuring that young people in jobs without training are progressed into structured learning.
- work with Salford Construction Partnership and other sector specific and employer led initiatives to support **employer responsive** activities amongst our providers, integration of **Employment and Skills** and deliver benefits from the alignment of the **Skills Pledge** and **Jobs Pledge** strategies.
- challenge and support our providers on their curriculum, retention and achievement, ensuring learners have a choice of high quality provision, encouraging collaboration as appropriate.