



**Tameside MBC and LSC Greater  
Manchester**

**Post 14 Review of Provision  
in Tameside  
October 2006**

**FINAL REPORT**

KPMG LLP

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*This report contains 72 Pages*

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2. Post 14 Review of Provision in Tameside – Mapping Analysis

# 1 Introduction

KPMG were delighted to be appointed by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council (Tameside MBC) and the Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester (LSC GM) to undertake this review of Post 14 provision in Tameside.

The Post 14 sector is going through a significant period of change in meeting the challenges of the new education and training, and lifelong learning agendas, and this change is having a profound effect on learning providers. In particular current emphasis is required on:

- strategic learning partnerships and market repositioning of providers;
- high quality provision effectively planned and delivered locally;
- rationalising overcrowded market places where appropriate;
- a demand-led approach to meeting the skills agenda;
- the importance of critical mass of institutions either formally or informally; and
- enlightened effective collaboration.

## 1.1 Background

In May 2006 Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council and the Learning and Skills Council Greater Manchester commissioned a review of post 14 provision in Tameside. The stated desired outcome in the tender specification was to provide a set of recommendations on future post 14 provision based on a comprehensive map of existing provision, and an analysis of gaps in this provision.

## 1.2 Terms of Reference

KPMG were asked to consider the following primary objective whilst undertaking the review.

To identify possible patterns of future provision which will:

- **ensure that the balance and mix of provision meets the current needs and future priorities of learners, employers and communities, while enhancing quality and increasing choice;**
- **increase participation of young people in learning within the borough of Tameside and raise achievement at age 14-19;**
- **support the implementation of the Skills Strategy in Tameside;**
- **promote social cohesion and inclusion;**
- **identify pathways, choices and progression to Higher Education (HE) and the links and collaboration with HE providers;**

- **Ensure a comprehensive mapping and analysis of Adult and Community Learning (ACL) provision and penetration, (including Information, Advice and Guidance);**
- **Provide an analysis of first rung and Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL) provision taking place on an institutional or an outreach basis organised by colleges, schools, voluntary and community organisations or by the LEAs, with encouragement to progress to higher level vocational or academic provision;**
- **support disadvantaged groups, including outreach and support services to remove barriers to participation;**
- **ensure that learning opportunities are responsive to local need and marketed in the most appropriate way for the locality; and**
- **support regeneration, community cohesion and neighbourhood renewal.**

The agreed outcome of the review is a detailed report to Tameside MBC and LSC GM which answers the primary objective.

### 1.3 **Methodology**

In undertaking this study we have adopted the methodology agreed at the outset of the engagement incorporating a mixture of desk analysis and direct fieldwork.

The desk analysis for the review examined a range of documents supplied by partners as well as examining recent inspection evidence, government policy and local/ regional strategic plans. We have also examined economic trends, learner and community demand and the supply of provision. Fieldwork included visits to partners and key stakeholders as identified by Tameside MBC and the LSC GM.

### 1.4 **Sources of Information**

In undertaking this study we have drawn heavily upon the information supplied to us by Tameside MBC and the LSC GM, Tameside providers and, where appropriate, we have obtained information and data that is in the public domain. We have also drawn on KPMG's experience in undertaking reviews of this kind within the education sector.

### 1.5 **Limitations to the Scope of the Study**

This study has been conducted in accordance with the requirements of the specification provided to us for the review and the further instructions provided to us by Tameside MBC and the LSC GM. The secondary research we have undertaken was in accordance with that specified. The interviews that we conducted were with those stakeholders, identified and agreed by Tameside MBC and the LSC GM.

We have not undertaken a review of teaching and learning with individual providers as this falls outside the scope of this review. Nor have we undertaken analysis of the financial health of the providers included in this review.

## 1.6 **Confidentiality and Disclaimer**

This report is strictly confidential and has been prepared for Tameside MBC and LSC GM. It should not be distributed to third parties without the express permission of KPMG.

We understand the final report we be shared directly with key stakeholders and, more generally, by posting it on the LSC Greater Manchester and Tameside MBC websites.

In the event that this report is obtained by a third party or used for any other purpose any such party relying on this report does so entirely at their own risk.

## 1.7 **Acknowledgements**

We would wish to record our appreciation to all those who contributed to the completion of this review and for the time taken in participating in the interview programme and supplying written information.

## **2 Findings from our Review of Post 14 Provision in Tameside**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In this section, as requested, we have set out our findings and conclusions against the objectives for the review we were set by Tameside MBC and LSC Greater Manchester.

These findings are based on a review and analysis of data agreed with Tameside MBC and LSC GM. A detailed analysis of the balance and mix of provision, participation, employer, learner and community demand can be found in Appendix 1 and 2.

### **2.2 Participation, Balance and Mix of provision in Tameside**

#### **2.2.1 Introduction**

Objective:

- **Ensure that the balance and mix of provision meets the current needs and future priorities of learners, employers and communities, while enhancing quality and increasing choice.**
- **Increase participation of young people in learning within the Borough of Tameside and raise achievement at age 14-19.**
- **Ensure a comprehensive mapping and analysis of ACL provision and penetration, (including Information, Advice and Guidance).**
- **Provide an analysis of first rung and Personal and PCDL provision taking place on an institutional or an outreach basis organised by colleges, schools, voluntary and community organisations or by the Local Education Authority's (LEA's), with encouragement to progress to higher level vocational or academic provision.**
- **Ensure that learning opportunities are responsive to local need and marketed in the most appropriate way for the locality.**

The Census of Population (2001) revealed that within Tameside 3.6% of the population were in full time education, compared with 5.1% nationally. In addition, more recently the Tameside Adult Learning Review reported that adult learning in Tameside was lower than that of Greater Manchester as a whole. Given the high proportion of adults with no qualifications in Tameside there is a real need for entry / level 1 provision and progression routes to enable learners to effectively compete for employment opportunities across Greater Manchester.

The assessment of whether the balance and mix of provision meets the current needs and future priorities of learners, employers and the community required an assessment of what the current and future needs are.

## 2.2.2 Supply of Provision 14 - 19

There are presently sixteen 11-16 schools in the Tameside area, of which two are denominational, and four single sex schools, (two boys and two girls). There are three special schools and three pupil referral units, two of which cater for 5-15 year olds and one of which caters primarily for Year 11 pupils. There are two 11-18 schools, one of which is voluntary aided by the Catholic Church. One of the 11-18 schools is all boys, though the sixth form is mixed. There is one Sixth Form College and one general Further Education (FE) College. There are three main work-based learning providers based in Tameside, one of which is an arm of the FE College. The colleges and the LA are the primary providers of LSC funded adult learning in the Borough. Provision for 16-19 year old learners with complex learning difficulties is delivered through Dovestones, part of Tameside College.

Whilst the population of Tameside is projected to grow by approximately 3% over the period 2003 to 2013 the number of young people aged 0 to 14 yrs old is expected to decrease by 8% over the period. In recognition of this fact the Local Authority have, during the course of this study, carried out a Secondary School Review which will result in the closure of six schools with three new schools to be built. Two further schools will have reduced Published Admission Numbers (PAN). In addition Samuel Laycock Special School will be relocated to the site of one of the new schools to be built at Broadoak Playing Fields. The details of Tameside MBC Secondary Review can be found on their web site.

### 2.2.2.1 14 – 16 Provision

A survey of the Key Stage 4 provision delivered within Tameside revealed that GCSEs provide the bulk of curriculum provision and accreditation at levels one and two in schools. In addition, an increasing number of schools are offering L1/L2 courses from the Diploma in Digital Applications (DiDA) suite and have introduced BTECs to extend curriculum provision at Level 2. There appear to be few courses leading to entry and pre entry-level accreditation, mainly Entry Level Certificates, Royal Society of Arts (RSA) Computer Literacy and Information Technology (CLAIT) and Award Scheme Development and Accreditation (ASDAN). Many schools enrich their curriculum provision by allowing students to access courses provided through collaborative arrangements with Tameside College, and by the mPower scheme.

There were many examples of schools enriching their curriculum through collaboration with training providers, employers; work related learning facilitators (e.g. EBP and Next Steps) and further education institutions, notably Tameside College. These were mostly organised by each individual school, examples of collaborative ventures between schools were fewer in number. **Greater collaboration between schools may broaden the curriculum offer available to pupils within Tameside.**

**There appeared to be considerable commonality shared between schools in terms of the constraints to extending their KS4 offer.** In terms of 'supply' the key issues raised were: the lack of specific, mainstream curriculum provision for Entry Level and Level 1 learners and lack of knowledge as to what L1, entry and pre entry-level courses are available and support for staff training to deliver them.

For more detail on the Key Stage 4 offer see Appendix 2 (page 40).

During our stakeholder interviews we found it was generally felt by the schools that they met the needs of their learners and this was evidenced by good examination results and Ofsted reports and also by progression to post 16 education and to Higher Education. It was felt that there was good engagement with the Aimhigher project. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities was felt to be appropriate with a variety of approaches in place. Community learning provision was felt to be variable with one school hoping to offer further learning as part of its Specialist Schools bid whilst another offered a full programme in the week.

Collaboration across the Borough was perceived by stakeholders to be easy to facilitate given the relatively small geographical extent of the area. It was felt that collaboration was developing, some of which is linked to bids for specialist school status. There was high regard for links with Tameside College for 14-16 provision and with both colleges for progression to education post 16. However there was a concern that there was some duplication of A-level provision in the Borough. The service offered by Connexions was felt to be good.

Stakeholders had some concerns that to collaborate more fully, issues need to be addressed regarding common timetabling and transport.

Gaps in provision were felt by stakeholders to be in the area of entry and level one courses; it was felt that this was of particular significance to students following life skills type courses.

Building Schools for the Future was thought to be crucial to the effectiveness of the "Tameside Campus" model. Given falling school rolls it was felt that there would be enough post 14 provision for the future. However, it was also felt that there was a shortage of jobs with training. It was also thought that there was a need to increase vocational capacity for 14-19 year olds as this was insufficient to meet demand at the moment, particularly from 14-16 year olds.

#### **2.2.2.2 16 – 19 Provision - Colleges**

It was felt by stakeholders that a wide range of provision is available within Tameside College and Ashton Sixth Form College covering both vocational and academic routes post 16 and providing alternative curriculum pathways and support for 14-16 year old learners. It was also noted that this also included Work Based Learning across thirteen vocational areas. A full analysis of both Colleges' provision based on their ILR returns can be found in Appendix 1.

Stakeholders also felt that there is good collaboration with the high schools which also includes an Increased Flexibility Programme which the Further Education College (FE College) has played a significant role in developing.

We were also informed by stakeholders that there has been collaboration between the two colleges and the post 16 provider schools in the drawing up and disseminating of the local area prospectus.

A significantly higher proportion of FE learners within Tameside are female. Whilst this is to be expected for 19+ learners (with national data showing that over 60% of FE learners are female) it is interesting that a significant proportion of under 19 learners at Ashton Sixth Form College are female (60%). Further education appears to be successfully engaging ethnic minority learners in provision.

The analysis of provision by Sector Subject Area (SSA) and level suggests that there may be a gap for level 4 Construction provision within Tameside. This may especially be the case with Construction being a potential focus of provision of the new Academy in Ashton. There appears to be a lack of entry level provision across a range of Sector Subject Areas. This, combined with the reported lack of 14 to 16 entry level provision in schools suggested a potential gap in the curriculum. Whilst FE providers within Tameside offer distinct provision, there are examples of duplication in provision. **Further collaborative provision could see a broadening of the curriculum offer across Tameside and cost effectiveness in the delivery of provision.** Further analysis is contained within the gaps and overlaps section of this report.

Some stakeholders expressed concern about the falling rolls situation and the potential decline in the number of post 16 learners; it was felt that this could be exacerbated by the advent of the proposed academy and a potential second academy. There was some concern that this may detract from the progress that has already been made on the 14-19 agenda and that there are insufficient learners to merit the provision of new places. It is also felt that any new post 16 provision in schools may not fill in existing gaps but instead duplicate provision and increase competition.

Some concern was expressed by stakeholders over the practical difficulties of the 'virtual campus', namely those of transport and timetabling. It was felt that discussions about clusters and Skills Centres were at a very early stage.

### **2.2.2.3 16-19 Provision - School Sixth Forms**

There are two 11-18 schools in Tameside, Audenshaw School and All Saints Catholic College. These two schools along with the two colleges offer a wide and varied A level offer within Tameside. The data shows that there are a number of subjects delivered by several institutions within Tameside. Conversely, there were also a number of subject areas where provision was being delivered by only one or two institutions<sup>1</sup>. This suggests there may be an opportunity, through increased collaboration, to further develop arrangements within several subject areas to broaden the curriculum offer at each institution. The sections on gaps and overlaps (see page 30) and recommendations examine the potential for collaboration in more detail.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Tameside MBC

#### 2.2.2.4 *Work Based Learning*

We were informed by some stakeholders that there is a wide range of provision for Work Based Learning (WBL) with in the region of ninety frameworks offered as apprenticeships.

The WBL provider interviewed reported that they work in a consortium with three schools delivering provision in engineering. This would be further developed within the context of Specialised Diplomas. It was felt that there was also good collaboration with the Further Education College.

This provider expressed concern that there was a perception that there was not enough WBL in Tameside; this was felt to be inaccurate. We were informed that in engineering there are more WBL places than can be filled, although this is thought to be due to a lack of learners with suitable entry qualifications in Literacy and Numeracy. It was stated that some learners do travel out of the Borough but this is for specialist areas such as refrigeration and heating and ventilation.

Over 95% of learners are White-British. **This is marginally higher than that recorded for the general population and suggests that ethnic minority WBL enrolments amongst Tameside residents is quite low – particularly amongst the Asian / Asian British ethnic group which account for 1.7% of learners but 4% of the general population.**

The most popular SSAs for Tameside residents are Engineering and Manufacturing, Construction, Retail and Business Administration – all key priorities within Greater Manchester. Analysis by gender reveals distinct trends and gender bias with males showing significantly higher representation in Construction and Engineering whilst females are more likely to be engaged in Retail and Business Administration programmes. It was interesting to note that differences exist by SSA and the delivery location for WBL accessed by Tameside residents. For example whilst the balance of delivery in Health, Public Services and Care shows a relatively even split between what is delivered within / outside of Tameside, in ICT almost all provision accessed by Tameside residents is delivered outside of the Borough. Two providers dominate the WBL provision accessed by Tameside residents. Manchester Solutions Ltd accounts for the most 16 to 18 Tameside resident learners – 344 as of Period 8, 2005/6. This is followed by Tameside College with 136 learners.

For Entry to Employment (E2E) Provision accessed by residents of Tameside (up to Period 8 2005/06) our review of the data showed that E2E success rates where 50.8%. Analysis of progression showed that the majority of positive outcomes entered a job without further training (36%). We understand that, given the nature of the E2E clientele, any positive outcome is to be viewed as a success. We do however suggest that, given the changing employer requirements and increasing demand for skills, efforts to increase future progression (either for further training or employment with training) may be required to ensure young people leaving E2E are furnished with the skills that ensure they can compete successfully for future employment opportunities.

For Tameside residents accessing WBL 49% of Advanced Apprenticeship / Apprenticeship leavers achieved the full framework with an overall success rate of 59%. Learners on provision contracted through Greater Manchester had higher success rates than those at providers contracted nationally. There are existing differences in success rates by Sector Subject Area, for example Leisure Travel and Tourism Framework success was 33%, compared with 75% for ICT. Differences in success rate also differ by age (defined using the age at the start of the programme) with 16 to 18 yrs old showing lower rates of success than the 19+ age group. The Success Rate is also lower for those with Additional Learning and Social Needs (ALSN), than those without ALSN (Period 8, 2005/06).

A more detailed analysis of WBL appears in Appendix 1 (page 58).

### 2.2.3 **14 – 19 Participation**

Connexions data shows that the participation of school leavers in education within Tameside is increasing. However, there are pockets within Tameside where a high number of young people are not engaged in education, employment or training i.e. the NEET group. The areas around Hurst, Dukinfield and north of Hyde show the most concentrated levels of NEET group members.

A detailed map of the NEET group in Tameside and further information on participation appears in Appendices 1 (page 30) and 2 (page 18).

The table below shows the latest Connexions data which was available to us. The In Learning measure has been increasing throughout the period 2003 to 2005. From being well below the England average in 2003 in 2005 the Tameside percentage was 85.3% and the England 85.9%. We understand that Connexions definitions are not consistent with LSC funding streams. For example, a learner on a WBL apprenticeship programme may be counted within one of three Connexions categories: Full time education, Government supported training or Employment with Training. More detailed analysis of WBL is contained within Appendix 1.

**Table 2.1 Year 11 Destination Survey (1<sup>st</sup> November Snapshot)<sup>2</sup>**

	2003		2004		2005	
	Tameside	England	Tameside	England	Tameside	England
In Learning	78.6	84.2	82.7	84.9	85.3	85.9
Full time education	67.9	72.1	67.3	73.3	72.3	75.3
Government Supported Training Non employed status	2.8	3.9	3.5	3.5	2.4	3.3
Government Supported Training Employed status	3.3	3.0	4.2	3.1	5.1	3.0
Employment With training	4.5	5.2	7.7	4.9	5.4	4.1
Employment Without training	6.2	3.0	2.3	3.2	2.7	2.5
Not Settled	9.9	8.1	9.8	7.5	9.9	7.8
Moved out of contact	0.7	2.4	0.6	2.0	0.5	1.7
No Response Total	4.7	2.3	4.7	2.5	1.6	2.2

Research produced by HEFCE as part of the project looking at ‘Young Participation in Education’, published in 2005 examined the proportion of young people who go on to Higher Education aged 18 or 19 over a six year period 1994 to 2000. The research revealed that progression on to HE amongst young people was critically low in some areas of Tameside, particularly in the area east of Droylsden and Dukinfield where participation was found to be less than 16%. **Progression to Higher Education across the majority of Tameside was significantly below the national average (29%).**

In terms of the marketing of provision that is available within Tameside, our literature review identified many examples of good practice, particularly within 14 to 19 provision. For example, the booklet ‘Your Choice in Tameside – Opportunities at 16’ offered an excellent overview of the options and routes open to 16 year olds to progress in education.

## 2.2.4 14 -19 Information, Advice and Guidance

### 2.2.4.1 *National Context*

Nationally, the ‘End to End Review of Careers Education and Guidance’ published by the DfES in July 2005 states ‘Our conclusion is that the greatest potential for improving CEG lies in driving up the quality and relevance of careers education in schools.’

<sup>2</sup> Source: Connexions

They recommend that 'Schools should be encouraged to adopt a 'whole school' approach, incorporating CEG, student support and progression issues, starting in year 7. The DfES should publish examples of good practice.'

The DfES is currently developing new quality standards for IAG in response to the Green Paper 'Youth Matters: Next Steps' (March 2006) and draft standards will be produced by November 2006 with a final version in April 2007.

It identifies the vital importance of IAG as an integral part of the learning experience that supports the 14-19 entitlement; and it requires schools to publish information on the progression of their Year 11 students by the age of 19 in the School Profile from 2007. It also sets out plans for an Ofsted survey of IAG.

#### **2.2.4.2 Local Context**

Throughout our study of Post 14 education in Tameside we have become aware of the comments from a number of stakeholders that there appear to be issues around the quality of Information, Advice and Guidance that is available to all learners.

Stakeholders commented that the service offered by Connexions was generally felt to be good. There would appear to be an issue around some schools engagement with the Connexions service which may result in learners having inconsistent experiences depending on which provider they attend. For example Work Based Learning would appear to be a route which is not always fully understood or explained to potential users.

Work is being undertaken by the FE college to try to address these issues, and details of all post 16 provision available within Tameside has been produced in a booklet entitled 'Your Choice in Tameside – Opportunities at 16' which is also available on CD rom. This has been made available to all schools and other stakeholders in an effort to provide comprehensive and accessible information on post 16 provision.

There are further issues to be considered in tackling the problems around the lack of progression of young people into HE, the lack or low level qualifications of adults and the projected future skills needs requiring levels 2, 3 and 4+ qualifications, all of which will demand a level of IAG that is readily accessible and relevant.

#### **2.2.5 Supply of Provision - Adults**

A map of the adult provision taking place across Tameside on an institutional or an outreach basis organised by colleges, schools, voluntary and community organisations or by the LA, reveals that significant variation exists in the number and level of opportunities available within each ward. For example, within Denton North East Ward there are three delivery locations within very close proximity to each other (Denton IT Learning Centre, Denton Library and Haughton Green Library) offering Personal Community and Development Learning, ICT and Skills for Life learning opportunities. For other wards such as Droylsden West there are no learning opportunities available. It is acknowledged that, whilst there is no provision in some wards, provision in

neighbouring wards may only be a short journey and remains accessible to these residents.

The Tameside Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (October 2004) notes that ‘The Ashton Regeneration Area (formerly the Ashton Renewal Area) includes St Peters, one of the 5% most deprived local authority wards in England on the National Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000.’ It continues ‘Over 95% of the Ashton Regeneration Area falls within the St Peter’s ward of Tameside with the remaining 5% divided between the Ashton St Michaels and Ashton Waterloo wards. As well as being within the most deprived 5% of wards in the country overall, St Peter’s also ranks within the worst 5% for the individual indices of health, income and employment. In education, housing and child poverty, the ward is within the worst 10% in the country. Interestingly, the only Index where St Peter’s does not rank poorly is in geographical access to services where it is within the best 15% of wards in the country.

We have taken a ward approach to the analysis of adult participation to examine the relationship between adult participation in LSC funded learning and the location of adult education providers. This approach allows us to examine not only levels of participation but to also draw out comparisons with other indicators and information available on regeneration activity available at this level.

In terms of penetration, our analysis of the number of adults participating in LSC Funded provision<sup>3</sup> shows that a higher number are participating within the Ashton St Peter’s ward. This is not surprising given the number of providers located within this ward, but would also indicate that strategies for increasing participation in this area have been successful. Participation is clearly lower in Droylsden West, Denton South and Longendale – areas where learning opportunities are less numerous. It may be the case that learning opportunities delivered within neighbouring wards are accessible, however there does appear to be a relationship between delivery and participation and the LSC/LA and partners may wish to investigate to potential to increase provision where participation is low or there are high concentrations of deprivation.

Our analysis supports the Tameside Adult Review which suggested that:

- Provision may be needed where there currently is either no or low amounts of provision, including Droylsden West, Denton South, Ashton Waterloo.
- More adult provision may be needed in Longendale (particularly given that public service travel from Longendale to Tameside College / Ashton Sixth Form College takes approximately 1 hour).
- The review also noted that Ashton and Hattersley experience the highest concentrations of deprivation in Tameside and more opportunities to gain numeracy entry level skills are needed and refresher courses in skills for life literacy are needed in the area as a priority.

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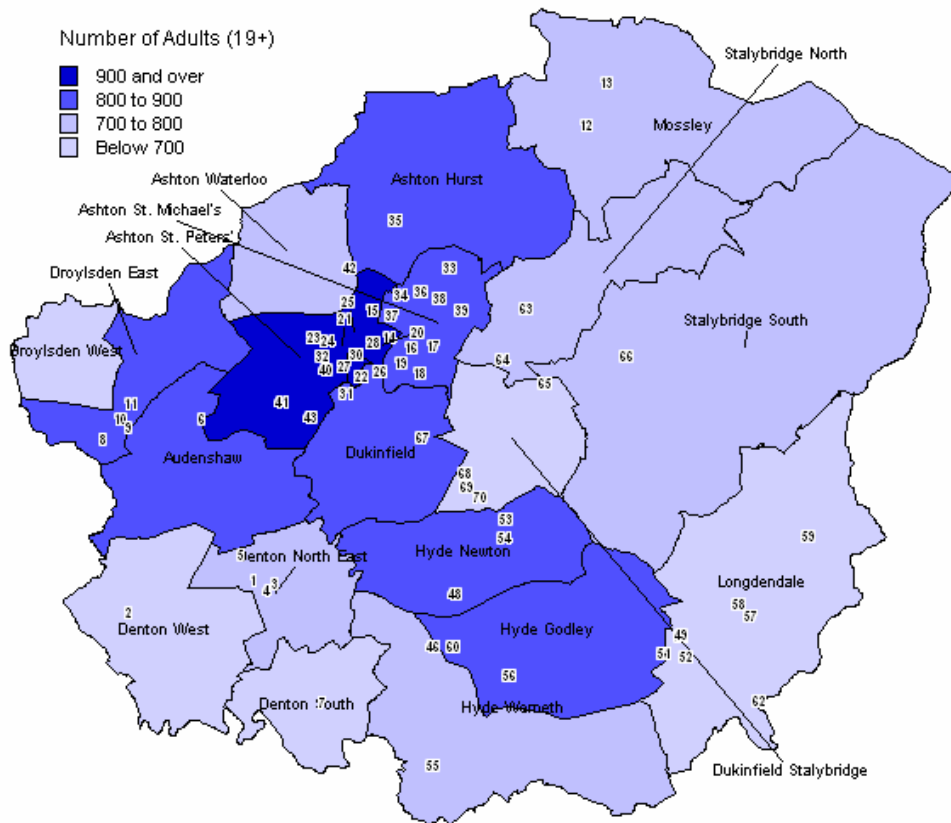
<sup>3</sup> Please note this will only capture LSC Funded learning opportunities. Learners may be engaged on other learning opportunities within / outside of Tameside that are not LSC funded.

**Collaboration to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of learning aims is essential, particularly in light of recent trends in FE which show a net decline in adult learners, reflecting the changing priorities of the LSC Funding Agenda.** The change in LSC Funding Priorities has resulted in approximately a 20% reduction for adult programmes and the loss of approximately 2,500 places within Tameside<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Source: Adult Learning and Skills Groups Across Tameside (2006)

Figure 2.1 Adult Participation and Learning Opportunities in Tameside<sup>5</sup>



Number	organisation	Number	organisation	Number	organisation	Number	organisation
1	Houghton Green Library	36	The Hope Chapel				
2	West End Library	37	St James Church	17	Tameside College - Ashton Centre	52	Hattersely Neighbourhood Partnership
3	Denton IT Learning Centre	38	Gujarati School	18	Kick Start in Tameside	53	Newton Library
4	Denton Library	39	Ashton-under-Lyne Sixth Form College	19	People First Tameside	54	Christy Learning Centre
5	Egerton Park Arts College	40	Richmond Suite	20	Tameside 3rd Sector Coalition	55	Hyde Adult Learning Centre
6	Audenshaw Library	41	Groundwork - Tameside	21	Age Concern	56	Hyde Hospital
7	Houghton Green Neighbourhood Centre	42	Christ Church	22	Cavendish Mill	57	Mottram Library
8	Fairfield High School	43	Clyde House	23	St Anne's Training Centre	58	Chambers Court 14
9	Tameside College - Droylsden	44	St Barnabas Church	24	Holy Trinity Church	59	Longendale Language College
10	Droylsden Library	45	Red Cross	25	Know IT Cyber Café	60	Union Street Learning Centre
11	Paramount Training	46	Hyde Bangladeshi Welfare Association	26	Graham Austin Training	61	Hattersely Learning Centre
12	Mossley Library	47	Hyde Library	27	Cavendish Mill Resource Centre	62	Hattersely Cyber Café
13	Christy Learning Centre	48	Hyde Clefenden Sixth Form Centre	28	Age Concern Training	63	Ridgehill Primary
14	Groundwork	49	Hattersely Community Centre	29	Ashton Central Library	64	West Hill School
15	Volunteer Centre Tameside	50	Hattersely Jet Centre	30	Central Library	65	Stalybridge Library
16	Clockwork Day Nursery	51	Hattersely Library	31	Clyde House	66	Copley High School
				32	Indian Community Centre	67	Dukinfield Library
				33	Hurst Library	68	All Saints Catholic College
				34	Indian Community Centre	69	Yew Tree Primary School
				35	Poppy House	70	Astley Sports College

For adults many good examples of marketing were evident with examples of attempts to coordinate adult learning marketing activity. For example, Tameside College, Ashton Sixth Form College and Tameside MBC subscribe to central advertising of their adult programmes in the Tameside Computer Course Guide and Adult Learning Guide.

<sup>5</sup> Sources: Tameside Adult Review; Tameside MBC Website; WEA website; Tameside 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector Coalition; ILR 2004/05

However, in terms of capturing all of the adult provision available, only six schools plus a non-specialist community linked school subscribed to the Adult Learning in Tameside brochure – this may undermine attempts to coordinate the marketing and delivery of provision. **This lack of coordination has led to a number of issues including the duplication of provision and differential fee rates undermining the established and highly successful programmes being delivered<sup>6</sup>.**

IAG is available for adult learners from a number of different sources including the local colleges, Tameside MBC and Tameside Library Information Service which has a number of partnerships and aims to work towards providing the best access to information possible.

From our studies, there would appear to be no one obvious point of contact that a prospective learner or their advisor can access that provides concise information on all provision available across Tameside, and this may be impacting on the development of key elements of the National Policy Framework (NPF). It is further recognised and commented on in the NPF that there is clear evidence that access to IAG increases the likelihood that individuals will enter learning, and that they will achieve a qualification from their study.

This appears to be an issue for Tameside as they have a significantly higher proportion of adults who possess no qualifications compared to figures nationally, and a significantly lower proportion of adults who possess level 4+ qualifications. Added to this are the persisting low levels of literacy and numeracy skills in Tameside and certain areas, which are characterised by a high percentage of adults without level 2 qualifications, rendering them unqualified for employability as highlighted in the Governments Skills Strategy.

#### 2.2.6 **Balance and Mix of Provision –Further Education (FE), Work Based Learning (WBL) and Adult and Community Learning (ACL)**

The analysis of FE provision delivered by providers in Tameside by Sector Subject Area and Level of learning aim is presented below. The table suggests good progression routes within Tameside. One potential gap may be level 4 provision for Construction – a key priority for Greater Manchester. More Level 4 provision across all Sector Subject areas may be required, given the rising skill needs of employers. There also appears to be a lack of entry level provision across Tameside. Entry level provision has been highlighted by schools as a current gap in the curriculum. Evidence from Tameside College suggests that the lack of Entry level provision in some Sector Subject Areas in Further Education is explained by the fact that most of its Entry provision (including vocational provision) is coded as Preparation for Life and Work. Tameside College’s own analysis of demand has indicated that it is level 1 where demand exceeds supply and this is a key shortage area.

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<sup>6</sup> Source: Adult Learning and Skills Groups Across Tameside

**Table 2.2 Further Education Provision Delivered Within Tameside by SSA and Level 2005/06<sup>7</sup> (all learners)**

	Level of Learning Aim					
	Entry	1	2	3	4, 5 or Higher	Mixed/Unknown
Health, Public Services and Care	8	1,670	1,334	854	76	130
Science and Mathematics	0	118	447	1292	0	0
Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	0	326	493	428	38	0
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	9	127	204	85	0	0
Information and Communication Technology	1,991	2,295	513	679	41	61
Retail and Commercial Enterprise	18	159	839	364	15	0
Leisure, Travel and Tourism	0	113	255	250	37	0
Arts, Media and Publishing	23	58	112	1,052	14	14
History, Philosophy and Theology	0	0	0	802	0	191
Social Sciences	0	47	1	492	0	0
Languages, Literature and Culture	30	129	375	620	0	12
Education and Training	0	0	100	294	61	0
Preparation for Life and Work	1,560	2,810	1,605	1,256	0	1,515
Business, Administration and Law	13	880	1021	1151	145	22
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	2,321

The analysis of ACL enrolments by Sector Subject Area and level of learning aim show that a significant proportion of enrolments are entry / level one in ICT. The data and evidence suggests that there may be a requirement for a broader range of entry and, in particular, level 1 provision to engage learners in those sectors that are a priority within Greater Manchester with effective Information, Advice and Guidance to ensure that those learners progress to provision at Level 2 and above to meet the skills requirements of employers.

<sup>7</sup> Source: ILR 2005/06 (F04 Early Return)

**Table 2.3 ACL Enrolments by Sector Subject Area and Level of Learning Aim 2004/5<sup>8</sup> (all learners)**

	Level of learning Aim		
	Entry /Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	7		
Information and Communication Technology	1083	1	34
Leisure, Travel and Tourism	11		
Arts, Media and Publishing	5		
Preparation for Life and Work	287		
Business, Administration and Law	38		

Analysis of the WBL average in learning for Tameside residents suggests a good match with those sectors that are key priorities within Greater Manchester and the North West region i.e. Health, Public Services and Care, Engineering and Manufacturing, Construction, Retail and Business Administration. Key here will be ensuring that learners are able to progress on to level 4 provision after completion of their WBL programme.

**Table 2.4 WBL Average in Learning by Sector Subject Area and Programme Type 2005/06 (Period 8)<sup>9</sup> (all learners)**

	Advanced Apprenticeship	Apprenticeship	NVQ Programmes
Health, Public Services and Care	60	76	12
Science and Mathematics	3	0	0
Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	2	5	1
Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	229	163	8
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	110	215	6
Information and Communication Technology	32	10	0
Retail and Commercial Enterprise	42	220	1
Leisure, Travel and Tourism	32	15	0
Arts, Media and Publishing	4	3	0
Education and Training	0	0	0
Preparation for Life and Work	1	0	0
Business, Administration and Law	106	200	27
Unknown	10	9	0
Total	630	917	56

<sup>8</sup> ILR C03 2004/5

<sup>9</sup> ILR WBL P8 2005/6

There is a significant need for Skills for Life provision within Tameside. In Further Education a national benchmark means that 80%<sup>10</sup> of all literacy, language and numeracy enrolments should be contributing (directly or indirectly) to the national Skills for Life (SfL) target. The 80 per cent benchmark would comprise a combination of provision directly contributing for the first time towards the target, first-rung provision (entry level 1 or 2), and provision for those who have already achieved a first literacy, language or numeracy qualification but who are now progressing further through the qualification levels. Clearly, this is just a guide and actual proportions will vary according to local and regional needs and the type of provider. The Tameside Adult Review states that all three Further Education providers in Tameside still have some improvements to make in order to meet the national benchmark.

In 2004/05, Ashton Sixth Form College has a ratio of 57% enrolments contributing to the national SfL target with 43% enrolments not contributing, Tameside College has a ratio of 54% enrolments contributing to the national SfL target with 46% of enrolments not contributing, and Tameside MBC has a ratio of 43% enrolments contributing to the national SfL target with 57% of enrolments not contributing. Indicative analysis for 2005/06 does suggest providers are moving in the right direction but have some way to go to meet the 80% benchmark of provision contributing to the national SfL target.

The number of learners taking up numeracy entry level opportunities is low across the three providers in comparison to the identified need for this provision. Literacy level 1 was also identified as a priority in Tameside and whilst a number of opportunities are taken up, many do not contribute to the SfL PSA Target. The need for further Skills for Life provision in Tameside has been recognised and Tameside MBC is the lead partner for an Embedding Skills for Life project, funded by ESF. The objectives of the project include:

- To undertake enhanced research into the scale and scope of Skills for Life provision; develop and implement appropriate marketing and promotional strategies;
- Undertake capacity building projects with local groups to further develop local partnerships and to; and
- Deliver taster sessions to a minimum of 630 participants supporting the progression of a minimum of 480 participants into further learning or training opportunities.

Further Skills for Life provision will be delivered as part of the Train to Gain initiative (formerly the National Employer Training Pilot) with Skills for Life provision representing part of the “core” offer to employers.

## 2.2.7 **Performance and Quality of Tameside Provision**

It is widely recognised that the education providers in the Borough deliver a very wide range of provision, which is sound, and in some cases good or outstanding, with good progression for many of the learners involved. The performance of a number of the schools, both the colleges, and private training providers in recent inspections indicates

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<sup>10</sup> The 80 per cent benchmark would comprise a combination of provision directly contributing for the first time towards the target, first-rung provision, and provision for those who have already achieved a first literacy, language or numeracy qualification but who are now progressing further through the qualification levels.

that there are some models of good practice which the partners could draw upon, to benefit all of the learners across Tameside.

See Appendix 1 for further details of institution inspections.

### **2.2.7.1 Schools GCSE Performance**

In 2005 the Local Authority average percentage of pupils achieving 5+ GCSE was 51.7% compared with 56.3% for England. Whilst the percentage for Tameside is lower than England, recent years have seen a significant improvement in achievement within Tameside – increasing by 8.6% percentage points since 2002, compared with 4.7% for England over the same period.

Over the period 2002 to 2005 there had been a general increase in achievement of pupils achieving 5+ A\* - C at all the schools, although this has not been evenly spread. With the exception of Audenshaw School, all schools had increased performance from 2004 to 2005; Audenshaw had achieved 80% in 2004 and 75% in 2005 which were both very high achievements and were the best in the Borough in both years. A number of schools had made significant improvements compared with their achievements in 2002, although the increase from 2004 to 2005 had been more modest. The most improved school over the four year period was Mossley Hollins High School which had improved by 36% compared with 2002, with a 28% improvement compared with 2004. The school which had made the least improvement overall was Two Trees Sports College which had improved by 2% compared to 2002 and 5% compared to 2004; its performance over the four year period appears to have risen and fallen from year to year.

See Appendix 1 for further details.

### **2.2.7.2 16-18 GCE and VCE Performance**

The table below suggests that there has been a consistent increase in performance at this level in the LA, LSC and England averages. All Saints Catholic College, Audenshaw School and Tameside College have also followed this trend whilst Ashton Sixth Form College increased performance from 2002 to 2003 but since then performance has declined. However, throughout the time period its performance exceeded the LA, LSC and England averages with the exception of 2005 when it exceeded the LA average but not the LSC or England averages. All Saints Catholic College was below the DfES benchmark averages for the LA in 2002 and 2003 but in the last two years has exceeded all three averages (LA, LSC, and England). Audenshaw School has consistently, and by a high margin, exceeded the benchmark averages. However, care should be exercised when making comparisons as learners may be starting from very different prior attainment scores.

Overall, with one exception, the point to note is that performance has been increasing over time.

**Table 2.5 School and College Achievement and Attainment Tables 2002 to 2005**

**GCE and VCE results: Tameside**

	2002	2003	2004	2005
LA average	244.1	249.4	256.6	254.6
LSC average			260.8	273.1
England average	254.7	258.9	269.2	277.8
All Saints Catholic College	229.5	232.2	269	296.9
Ashton-under-Lyne Sixth Form C...	261.7	265.3	263.5	255.1
Audenshaw School	367.6	372	388.9	356.2
Tameside College	175	175.3	183.8	186.4

See Appendix 1 for further details.

### 2.2.7.3 Further Education Performance in Tameside.

The table presented below shows success rates for 16 to 18 year olds accessing provision in Tameside. The data shows that success rates at Ashton Sixth Form College are 71% for short qualifications and 79% for long qualifications, In Tameside College the success rates are 71% for short qualifications and 66% for long qualifications. This compares with success rates of 78% for short qualifications and 71% for long qualifications nationally.

The achievement rate of short courses at Ashton Sixth Form has fallen significantly since 2003/4 and is below the national average. It is retention at Tameside College that appears to be an issue – it is below the national average and has shown a decline since 2003/4

**Table 5.8 Further Education Retention, Achievement and Success Rates for 16 to 18 Year Olds**

		Ashton Sixth Form		Tameside College	
		Short	Long	Short	Long
<b>Starts</b>	<b>2002/03</b>	1,243	5,246	950	5,711
	<b>2003/04</b>	1,497	5,542	708	5,036
	<b>2004/05</b>	207	5,496	498	4,809
<b>Success Rate (%)</b>	<b>2002/03</b>	95%	78%	77%	65%
	<b>2003/04</b>	89%	76%	80%	66%
	<b>2004/05</b>	71%	79%	71%	66%
<b>Retention Rate (%)</b>	<b>2002/03</b>	100%	89%	93%	78%
	<b>2003/04</b>	100%	89%	94%	80%
	<b>2004/05</b>	97%	89%	85%	78%
<b>Achievement Rate (%)</b>	<b>2002/03</b>	95%	87%	83%	83%
	<b>2003/04</b>	89%	85%	86%	83%
	<b>2004/05</b>	73%	88%	84%	85%

Source: LS

The table presented below shows success rates for 19+ accessing provision in Tameside. The data shows that success rates at Ashton Sixth Form College are 85% for short qualifications and 61% for long qualifications, In Tameside College the success rates are 81% for short qualifications and 73% for long qualifications. At Tameside MBC the success rates are 73% for short qualifications and 64% for long qualifications. All providers perform either at or above the national figures of 60% for long qualifications and 73% for short qualifications.

**Table 5.9 Further Education Retention, Achievement and Success Rates for 19+**

		Ashton Sixth Form		Tameside College		Tameside MBC	
		Short	Long	Short	Long	Short	Long
<b>Starts</b>	<b>2002/03</b>	1,138	163	7,216	13,294	54	320
	<b>2003/04</b>	1,655	163	6,316	11,446	167	374
	<b>2004/05</b>	1,430	149	6,240	9,461	157	308
<b>Success Rate (%)</b>	<b>2002/03</b>	83%	61%	81%	75%	81%	64%
	<b>2003/04</b>	89%	69%	82%	74%	83%	58%
	<b>2004/05</b>	85%	61%	81%	73%	73%	64%
<b>Retention Rate (%)</b>	<b>2002/03</b>	90%	82%	95%	85%	94%	80%
	<b>2003/04</b>	93%	85%	94%	86%	90%	64%
	<b>2004/05</b>	93%	85%	93%	80%	85%	75%
<b>Achievement Rate (%)</b>	<b>2002/03</b>	92%	74%	86%	88%	86%	80%
	<b>2003/04</b>	96%	82%	87%	87%	93%	90%
	<b>2004/05</b>	91%	72%	88%	91%	86%	86%

Source: LSC

#### 2.2.7.4 *WBL Tameside Residents*

The table below shows that (as of Period 8 2005/6) 49% of Advanced Apprenticeship / Apprenticeship leavers achieved the full framework with an overall success rate of 59%. It is interesting to note that there is a significant difference in success between providers contracted through LSC Greater Manchester and learners on programmes contracted nationally – the former showing significantly higher success rates.

**Table 2.6 Tameside Resident Success Rates for 2005/6 (Period 8)**

Contracting	Framework Leavers	Framework Success Rate	Total Leavers	Overall Success Rate
Greater Manchester LSC	555	51%	607	60%
National Contract	114	43%	117	54.70%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>59%</b>

Source: ILR

See Appendix 1 for further details (page 85).

## 2.3 Support the Implementation of the Skills Strategy

### 2.3.1 Introduction

Objective:

- **Support the implementation of the Skills Strategy in Tameside.**

### 2.3.2 Learner, Local Economy and Community Need

Whilst growth in employment has been relatively high in Tameside, the employment rate remains lower than that of Greater Manchester and the North West region. The low employment rate and dominance of low skilled employment has impacted upon the qualification level of adults in Tameside, with 22.9% of residents possessing no qualifications. Conversely, a significantly lower proportion of adults within Tameside are qualified to level 4+, 15.7% compared with 25% nationally. Significant variation exists across Tameside, within some wards in Tameside the proportion of adults that do not possess a level 2 qualification is over 50%. **Given the projected rise in employment across Greater Manchester requiring level 4 qualifications and reduction in employment requiring no qualifications residents of Tameside will be required to up skill to take advantage of new employment opportunities within the labour market.**

A detailed analysis of learner and community demand appears in Appendix 2 (page 5)

**Figure 2.2 Projected Employer Qualification Demand**

	Tameside*	Greater Manchester Employment Projections**						
	2004	2004		2014		2004 - 2014		Overall Requirement (000's)
	Percent (%)	Learner (000's)	Percent (%)	Learner (000's)	Percent (%)	Net Change (000's)	Replacement Demand (000's)	
Level 4 +	15.7	382	29	478	35	96	138	234
Level 3	22.1	255	19	305	22	49	92	142
Level 2	17.5	287	22	292	21	5	104	109
Level 1/Other	21.8	245	19	217	16	-29	89	60
Level 0	22.9	149	11	74	5	-75	54	-21
<b>total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,318</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,365</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>524</b>

Source: \*Annual Population Survey 2003/4 and \*\*IER/Cambridge Econometrics

Basic skills remain a key issue in Tameside. DfES research estimated that within Tameside 69% of working age adults had literacy skills below level 2, compared with 54% across England. Whilst Entry level need appears to be low, 50% of Tameside residents had level 1 literacy skills only. For numeracy it was estimated that within Tameside, 87% of residents had numeracy skills below level 2, compared with 75% across England. In Tameside it was estimated that 63% of adults had entry level numeracy skills compared with 46% across England. Significant variation by ward was

evident for literacy and numeracy skills. For example, with some wards reported an estimated 91% of adults with numeracy skills below level 2.

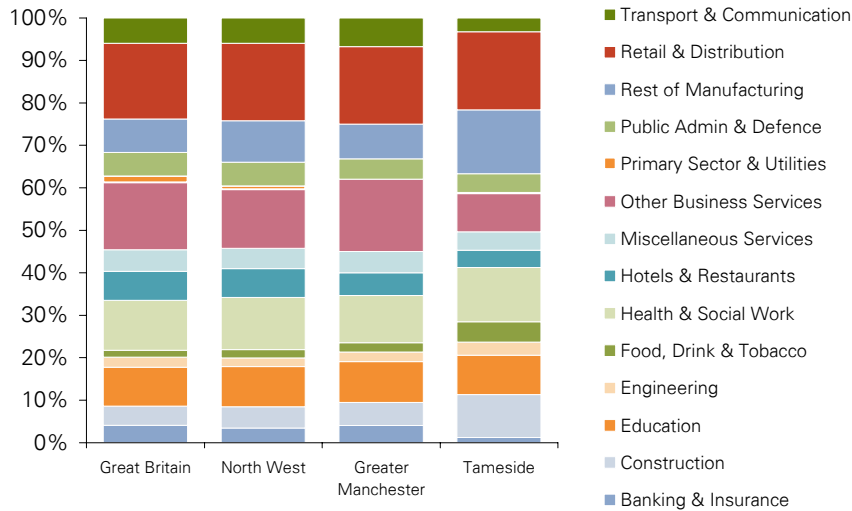
For language the DfES survey estimated that there were 5,980 adults where English was not their first language and of these 2,450 people had a requirement for ESOL provision (English for Speakers of Other Languages). The estimated number requiring ESOL is low, reflecting the fact that a small percentage of Tameside residents are ethnic minorities or were born outside of the UK. The DfES research showed requirements for ESOL tended to be concentrated within the Ashton area – unsurprising given that the percentage of ethnic minorities is higher within this area. The adjacent wards of Ashton Hurst, Ashton St Michael’s and Ashton Waterloo’s combined need represents half of the total estimated need in Tameside, with Ashton St Peters BME population accounting for 24%. Hyde Werneth was the only ward outside of the North to have similar levels of ESOL requirements to their neighbouring Northern Wards.

Stakeholders commented that certain schools located within these wards are experiencing high levels of enrolments and applications for places from ethnic minority groups and this would also impact on what ESOL provision would be needed and where. It was noted, for example, that Stamford High School already had a significant number of Polish pupils at their school with further enrolment applications which, if successful, would increase their number of Polish pupils to around 30 in total.

### 2.3.3 **Employer Demand**

Tameside is of significant importance to the future economic growth within the Manchester City Region and wider North West economy. The opening of the M60 in 2000 has already had a positive impact with a number of significant regeneration developments taking place or planned. Whilst recent employment growth within Tameside has outstripped that of the North West region and National average, the local economy remains structured around the more traditional sectors of employment, including Manufacturing, that are characterised by ‘lower’ levels of skills and projected to show future decline. In addition, several of the larger Manufacturing employers within Tameside are ‘branch plants’, making the local economy vulnerable to the movement of employment offshore. The proportion of existing Tameside employment within sectors projected to grow such as Business Services is low.

### **Figure 2.3 Employment by Sector 2004**



Source: Annual Business Inquiry

Analysis of employment for the first five Specialised Diploma's shows a higher proportion of employment in Construction, Engineering and Health and Social Work within Tameside than nationally. Within Tameside a lower proportion of employment is within the Creative Industries and ICT sectors. Employment opportunities within these sectors are however significant across the Greater Manchester area. Across Greater Manchester a number of sectors have shown a fall in the concentration of employment vacancies due to skill shortages and reported skills gaps i.e. the proportion of employers experiencing skills deficiencies amongst their existing workforce. These include ICT, Sport and the Retail sectors. For some sectors however skill shortage vacancies and skills gaps remain significant. **Three of those sectors experiencing significant skills shortages and gaps, Construction, Creative Industries and Engineering, are potential Specialised Diplomas.**

A more detailed analysis of this appears in Appendix 2 (page 46 and 47).

Analysis of the future demand for skills shows that within Greater Manchester over the period 2004 to 2014 there is projected movement of employment towards the public and private service sectors and projected decline in the traditional forms of employment including Engineering and Manufacturing. This may have implications for employment in Tameside. **There will still be a significant requirement for labour in those sectors projected to decline due to replacement demand i.e. the need to replace staff through turnover and retirement. A key challenge within Tameside may be to encourage young people to enter and train in those sectors that are perceived to be in decline.**

**Table 2.7 Projected Employer Demand by Sector 2004 - 2014**

Occupation	Tameside*		Greater Manchester Employment Projections**						
	2004		2004		2014		Net Change (000's)	2004 - 2014	
	Number (000's)	Percent (%)	Number (000's)	Percent (%)	Number (000's)	Percent (%)		Replacement Demand (000's)	Overall Requirement (000's)
Primary Sector & Utilities	0	0.2	7	1	6	0.4	-1	2	2
Food, Drink & Tobacco	4	5	26	2	24	2	-2	9	7
Engineering	2	3	29	2	29	2	0	10	9
Rest of Manufacturing	11	15	103	8	86	6	-17	35	18
Construction	8	10	79	6	75	5	-4	25	21
Retail & Distribution	14	18	226	17	231	17	6	81	87
Hotels & Restaurants	3	4	78	6	83	6	5	30	35
Transport & Communication	2	3	103	8	107	8	4	35	39
Banking & Insurance	1	1	47	4	49	4	1	17	19
Other Business Services	7	9	231	18	268	20	37	82	120
Public Admin & Defence	3	4	61	5	59	4	-2	22	20
Education	7	9	111	8	117	9	6	46	51
Health & Social Work	10	13	134	10	143	10	9	53	62
Miscellaneous Services	3	4	83	6	87	6	4	31	35
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1318</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1365</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>478</b>	<b>524</b>

Source: \* Annual Business Inquiry (2004); \*\*IER / Cambridge Econometrics

A significant proportion of Tameside adult residents are employed in Skilled Trades and Sales & Customer Service occupations. The National Employer Survey (2004) suggested that the key skill shortages that need to be addressed for these occupations were technical and practical, problem solving, literacy, numeracy, communication and customer handling skills. In terms of future demand, Managerial and Professional occupations are projected to increase significantly across Greater Manchester. This may impact upon Tameside given the relatively lower proportion of residents employed within these occupations. There will also be significant demand for employment with skill levels at level 2 and above, due mainly to replacement demand i.e. to replace those leaving the labour market through retirement etc. **There is a need to engage residents within Tameside not currently in employment to address level 2 requirements, with opportunity for progression to address higher level skill needs.**

Our analysis of employer demand for skills detailed above highlights a projected movement towards demand for high level skills and significant decline in employment requiring no skills. The matrix presented below illustrates the sectoral skills priorities impacting upon the development of provision within Tameside.

**Table 2.8 Sector Skills Matrix of Priorities**

	Regional			Sub Regional				
	NW Annual Statement of Skills Priorities 2006/7		Draft RES Growth sectors 2006/7	GM Skills Priorities 2006/7			LSC GM Annual plan 2006/7	
	L3	L4		Immediate	L3	L4	SfL / L2	L3
Engineering	∅*	∅***	∅***					∅
Energy / Environment	∅	∅	∅			∅		
Construction	∅	∅	∅		∅			∅
Digital Industries	∅	∅	∅		∅	∅		∅
Creative Industries	∅	∅	∅		∅	∅		∅
Retail	∅		∅	∅ **			∅	
Care/ Healthcare	∅	∅	∅		∅	∅		∅
Life Science					∅	∅		
ICT					∅			∅
Tourism	∅		∅					
Financial / Business Services		∅	∅	∅	∅			∅
Public Services			∅	∅ *****	∅	∅	∅	∅
Education					∅	∅		∅
Biomedical			∅					
Food and Drink			∅	∅ ****			∅*****	
Textiles							∅	

\*Automotive, chemicals, aerospace and engineering  
 \*\*Retail and Wholesale Managers  
 \*\*\* Chemicals, aerospace and engineering  
 \*\*\*\*Restaurant Catering Managers and Chefs  
 \*\*\*\*\*specifically Housing & Welfare Officers  
 \*\*\*\*\*Manufacture of Food and Drink

The North West Regional Skills Priorities 2006/7 states that all adults should be supported to develop skills up to and including level 2 with specific priorities at level 3 and level 4. Of key importance will be ensuring that learners take advantage of this level 2 entitlement and develop skills in areas of employment where significant demand exists or where replacement demand is likely to be extensive. Our analysis of employer demand for labour has clearly shown that a number of sectors within Tameside will have significant requirements for labour at level 2. These include Retail, Transport & Communications, Hotel & Catering and Health & Social Work<sup>11</sup>. In addition, for other sectors with level 2 entry requirements such as Construction, it is widely acknowledged that many of those currently employed do not hold the entry level qualifications and requirements for training may be significant.

<sup>11</sup> Source: IER (2005)

Increased collaboration with employers will be of significant importance to tackle skills gaps and shortages within the workplace. The new Train to Gain initiative (formerly the National Employer Training Pilot) is intended to help companies and other organisations to improve the skills of their workforces and business performance by assisting them in identifying and sourcing training provision which will meet their needs. Part of the “core” offer to employers who participate in Train to Gain will be free Skills for Life and first full Level 2 provision. The Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) has secured the contract for the regional Skills Brokerage Service delivered under the Train to Gain brand in the Northwest.

Tameside College have been involved in delivering provision as part of the Employer Training Pilot. Data supplied to us by Tameside College for 2005/06 (incomplete ILR F04 return 2005/06) showed that overall 502 learning aims had been delivered as part of the Employer Training Pilot. Of this, 38% were Skills for Life provision and 59% Level 2 provision the majority of which were within the Health, Public Services and Care SSA. In addition there were also 13 Level 3 aims within this subject area. Level 2 provision was also delivered within the Engineering & Manufacturing and Retail, with a smaller number of aims delivered within Education and Training and Business Administration.

It is intended that the Train to Gain policy will be extended so that employers in pathfinder regions (including the North West region) can meet their skill needs at Level 4 and above through the Train to Gain brokers, as well as through HE institutions. This represents a significant opportunity for Tameside employers to ensure staff possess the requisite skills to compete effectively in the global market. In addition, it is worth noting that 80% of the Train to Gain budget will be allocated to providers with 20% held back for “rapid response” provision. Stakeholders within Tameside may wish to tap into this budget to support existing and new employers, particularly those relocating to Tameside as part of recent regeneration initiatives.

WBL is also of key importance to support and implement an adult skills strategy within Tameside. The sectors with the greatest number of resident adult enrolments are Health, Public Services and Care, Engineering and Manufacturing, Construction, Retail and Business Administration (Period 8, 2005/06) – all are key priorities within the Greater Manchester and North West Region. Further findings that are inextricably linked to the skills strategy are contained within the subsequent sections of this report and Appendix 1 and 2.

## **2.4 Social Cohesion and Inclusion**

### **2.4.1 Introduction**

Objectives:

- **Promote social cohesion and inclusion.**
- **Support disadvantaged groups, including outreach and support services to remove barriers to participation.**
- **Support regeneration, community cohesion and neighbourhood renewal.**

## 2.4.2 Overview

As detailed earlier in this report there are issues in Tameside relating to the low employment rate, the impact that the dominance of low skilled employment has had upon the qualification level of adults, the lower proportion of adults who are qualified to level 4+, and the issues within some wards where the proportion of adults that do not possess a level 2 qualification is over 50%.

As already noted, basic skills remain a key issue in Tameside, with literacy and numeracy skills levels well below the national average, with some significant variations by ward for literacy and numeracy skills (for example, with some wards reporting an estimated 91% of adults with numeracy skills below level 2)<sup>12</sup>. **Some stakeholders felt that barriers to pupils' learning stemmed from where they lived and the socio-economic circumstances in which they found themselves; teenage pregnancy was considered to be a particular issue. Transport across the Borough was perceived as a barrier to some pupils.**

The proportion of the population in Tameside from ethnic minorities is relatively low. There are however pockets within Tameside where a high proportion of the population are non white – including Ashton<sup>13</sup>. This means there may be a more significant requirement for ESOL provision in these areas. **It was reported by some stakeholders that there are falling numbers of lone parents in employment, which was felt to be largely due to lack of affordable, available childcare and nursery facilities. This suggests a requirement for stronger links between education and health and childcare services.**

## 2.4.3 Lifestyle classifications

Mosaic<sup>13</sup> is a system of classification which is based upon a range of sources and over 400 variables of information to segment each household and postcode in the UK into one of 11 groups or 61 types. This has been used to develop an understanding of the learner market, both from the perspective of learners but also the non learner with a range of information assisting us to understand the potential reasons / motivations for not learning. The results of the Mosaic analysis reveal that **Tameside residents are relatively homogenous around certain lifestyle groups and types. The two most common lifestyle groups in Tameside are D: Ties of Community and G: Municipal Dependency.** Overall 38% of Tameside resident lifestyle types fall under group D: Ties of Community compared with only 16% nationally. In addition 13% fall under group G: Municipal Dependency, compared with 7% nationally. A summary of characteristics associated with these groups is presented below and a detailed analysis appears in Appendix 2 (page 5).

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<sup>12</sup> Source: DFES (2003)

<sup>13</sup> Source: Experian

**Table 2.9 Summary of Ties of Community and Municipal Dependency Lifestyle Groups**

Summary	Demography	Economy
<b>Ties of Community</b>		
<p>Comprised of people whose lives are mostly played out within the confines of close knit communities. Living mostly in older houses in inner city neighbourhoods or in small industrial towns, most of these people own their homes, drive their own cars and hold down responsible jobs. Community norms rather than individual material ambitions shape the pattern of most residents' consumption.</p>	<p>Established communities that have, by tradition, relied on manual rather than white-collar jobs for employment. As a result, in past generations, relatively few children have been motivated to stay on at school to obtain technical qualifications and the labour force has little to offer employers other than craft skills, many of which are no longer suited to contemporary production methods. Today <i>Ties of Community</i> contains a younger than average population, with many young married couples and co-habiting partners bringing up young children benefiting from the social support networks where friends and relations seldom live far away.</p>	<p>Many have been reliant on industries that have been in serious, if not terminal, decline in recent years. Factories have moved out to more spacious locations nearer to motorways. Coal no longer competes with other sources of energy. Despite this decline many of these neighbourhoods have been able to retain their vitality with the assistance of regional initiatives that have attracted footloose industry to new light industrial estates. Many of these new jobs provide lower wages but in healthier conditions than traditional smokestack industries and more women now have chances to go to work. Today unemployment in these neighbourhoods is not as high as it used to be.</p>
<b>Municipal Dependency</b>		
<p><i>Municipal Dependency</i> mostly contains families on lower incomes who live on large municipal council estates where few of the tenants have exercised their right to buy. Often isolated in the outer suburbs of large provincial cities, <i>Municipal Dependency</i> is characterised as much by low aspirations as by low incomes. Here people watch a lot of television and buy trusted mainstream brands from shops that focus on price rather than range or service.</p>	<p>Living mostly in large cities, a key feature of these people is that they feel cut off; both in a physical sense from workplaces, shops and places where the community gathers for sports or entertainment. This group leads particularly passive lives, in which the exercise of choice is far less evident than among better off groups. This is largely because the majority of the population have jobs which neither pay well nor offer long term career opportunities.</p> <p>This pattern leads not so much to a culture of poverty as to a culture of <i>Low Horizons</i>. People do not come into contact with others who have lived richer or more varied lives than their own, and are not exposed to different lifestyles or leisure activities.</p>	<p><i>Municipal Dependency</i> tends to occur mostly in large provincial cities, whose pro-active councils have taken direct responsibility for the welfare of their citizens. The economy of many of these provincial cities is now reviving but offering better prospects for well educated knowledge workers in the media or government than for the skilled manual or semi skilled workers who have traditionally lived on these estates. Residents also suffer from the tendency of existing manufacturing industry to relocate to small towns and new towns, which are more conveniently located close to motorway exits and which they have difficulty reaching if they don't have access to a car.</p>

Our analysis of the NEET population by Mosaic Lifestyle group revealed a concentration of NEETs in those groups characterised by high levels of deprivation and education

including “Coronation Street” and “Low Horizon” Lifestyle groups. Examining the characteristics of those lifestyle groups with a high NEET population to see what provision they are engaged in (for those currently in learning) – as an indicator of what types of provision may be more appealing to the NEET population revealed that **learners from these lifestyle groups highlighted were more likely to be studying ‘vocational’ than ‘academic’ qualifications<sup>14</sup> than when compared to the average for Tameside. They were also more likely to be studying level 1 and level 2 provision than level 3 provision, when compared to the average for Tameside.**

The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004 (IMD 2004) reveals that Tameside is the 49<sup>th</sup> most deprived Borough in England (out of 354 local authorities). There is an even spread of deprivation across Tameside, with less in the way of deprivation hotspots. This is supported by findings from the Census 2001 ‘Super Output Areas, the Strategic Area Review and is also in comparison to statistical neighbours. Tameside suffers from relatively high levels of deprivation which is distributed evenly across the Borough. This is supported by Mosaic lifestyle analysis of the area which shows ‘Ties of Community’ and ‘Municipal Dependency’ to be the two most frequent lifestyle groups – **groups characterised as placing little emphasis upon education and having low aspiration – presenting significant challenges to policymakers**

#### 2.4.4 LLDD

The North West Regional Review of LLDD Learners reported that for Tameside residents the number of 16 to 18 year olds and 19 to 25 year old LLDD learners rose by 65% and 27% respectively over the three years to 2004/05. A similar trend was observed in WBL with 16 to 18 year old and 19 to 25 year old learners with an LLDD rising by 38% and 50% respectively over the three year period.

Provision for 16-19 year old learners with complex learning difficulties is delivered through Dovestones, part of Tameside College, and was considered by most stakeholders to be good provision. However, throughout our review we have become aware of the comments from a number of stakeholders that some of the current arrangements for post 19 LLDD do not meet learner needs and our therefore are not fit for purpose.

The issues with LLDD provision were highlighted in the White Paper ‘Valuing People - A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century’ which noted that whilst progress had been made in developing services for the community, current issues included: Poorly co-ordinated services for families with disabled children; Poor planning for young disabled people at the point of transition into adulthood; Insufficient support for carers; Day services are often not tailored to the needs and abilities of the individual; Limited opportunities for employment; The needs of people from minority ethnic communities are often overlooked; Few examples of real partnership between health and social care or involving people with learning disabilities and carers.

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<sup>14</sup> Definition of academic included GCSE and A/AS levels. Vocational included Advanced Apprenticeships, Apprenticeships, NVQ programmes, E2E, GNVQ/AVCE, BTEC, HNC / HND.

## 2.5 Progression into HE

### 2.5.1 Introduction

Objectives:

- **Identify pathways, choices and progression to HE and the links and collaboration with HE providers**

### 2.5.2 Participation and demand for Higher Education

The participation of young people in education has increased in recent years with Connexions school leavers data now showing similar levels of 'In Learning' to the rest of England. There is evidence however, of a decline in learning to age 17 years old, and progression onto HE within Tameside for young people appears to be extremely low as supported by findings from the HEFCE report 'Young Participation in Education'.

As already noted, data produced by HEFCE over a six year period 1994 to 2000, shows that overall participation in Higher Education across a number of wards in Tameside is low, particularly in the area east of Droylsden and Dukinfield. Progression to Higher Education across the majority of Tameside was significantly below the national average (29%). The progression of adults on to HE courses is also particularly low in some areas of Tameside – particularly around the Droylsden, Hyde and Haughton Green areas. **This is a clear issue given the projected increasing demand for level 4 qualifications across Greater Manchester from employers.**

The majority of Tameside residents accessing Higher Education do so within the Greater Manchester area (within both Higher Education Institutions and Further Education Colleges delivering Higher Education). The most popular subject area for HE delivered in FE is Business, Administration and Law followed by Education and Training. The most popular subject for HE delivered by Higher Education Institutions were subjects Allied to Medicine, followed by Business and Administration and Education. Tameside College is the fourth most popular destination for Tameside residents accessing Higher Education (excluding Open University)<sup>15</sup>.

As already noted, a significantly lower proportion of residents within Tameside possess level 4+ qualifications when compared to employer requirements, and future trends for Greater Manchester suggest this demand will increase significantly over the next 10 years'. As much of the future demand for employment in Tameside is projected to be within managerial and professional occupations that require level 3 and level 4 qualifications, there is a growing need for developing strong links with Higher Education.

A more detailed analysis of HE provision and demand appears in Appendix 1 (page 66).

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<sup>15</sup> Source: ILR F05 2004/05 and HESA 2004/05

## 3 Gaps/ Overlaps

### 3.1 Introduction

The aim of the following section is to bring together the analysis of demand and supply of provision to highlight issues as well as explore the potential gaps and overlaps in provision across Tameside MBC. The narrative is arranged into two sections – 14 to 19 provision and adult provision. Issues relating to employers are cross cutting.

### 3.2 14 to 19

#### 3.2.1 Issues

Employer Engagement appears to be a key gap within Tameside. Our consultation with stakeholders suggested that a need for greater employer engagement within 14 to 19 delivery. In addition, our literature review suggested that as the local employer base is skewed towards small employers, this makes employer engagement more difficult. It should be noted that whilst 82% of employers in Tameside have 10 employees or less, this is not significantly different to Greater Manchester and the North West where 81% of employers have 10 or fewer employees.

The issue of 14 to 19 learning participation within Tameside has also been highlighted. It should be noted that participation has shown improvements in recent years with an increased number of school leavers in learning and a reported decline in the NEET group. It remains the case however that a number of young people are currently not engaged in education, employment or training. In addition, information sourced from the DfES shows participation in Tameside to be below the England average, with a fall off in participation from 16 to 17 years old. The lack of entry level provision available to 14 to 19 yr olds across the Borough has been highlighted by schools as a significant issue and Tameside College have reported that demand currently exceeds supply at level 1. Our literature review and consultations have found that schools and colleges are aware of this and are looking to act to address this issue.

Levels of achievement for school leavers have increased significantly in recent years. It remains the case however that the number of Tameside residents achieving a level 2 at 19 in 2005 (62%) is lower than the national figure of 70%. Projected employment trends show that a significant proportion of future growth is likely to be for occupations requiring level 3 qualifications and above. For this reason it is essential that levels of achievement continue to increase. Whilst levels of achievement are increasing, there are other issues within Tameside including: The lower success rates in WBL 16 to 18 year olds compared with adults; in FE there are issues around achievement of short courses at Ashton Sixth Form and levels of retention at Tameside College. At present there is no established measure of retention in school sixth forms. A further issue within Tameside is that of E2E. Whilst progression rates on E2E are relatively positive (a noteworthy success given the nature of E2E clientele), a significant proportion of young people progress into employment with no further training. Given the changing requirements from employers and reduction in employment requiring level 1 skills - efforts should be

made to ensure these young people progress either in further education and training or training linked to the workplace.

### 3.2.2 Gaps and Overlaps

**There does appear to be both gaps and overlaps in provision for Tameside providers** which suggests that collaboration will be essential within Tameside to ensure a robust learning offer for all 14 – 19 learners that is economically viable, given the projected decline in the population of young people and projected fall in school rolls. We acknowledge the Secondary Review and the outcomes of this to address the projected fall in school numbers.

Our review of the Key Stage 4 survey carried out by Tameside MBC revealed significant differences between schools in the offer available to young people. One example is Modern Foreign Languages where some schools offered up to three languages and others offered only one. In addition, there were also examples of provision delivered at a number of schools with low numbers of participants.

**Gaps and overlaps were also evident within 16 to 18 provision delivered across schools and further education.** The following information has been supplied by Tameside MBC and presents the number of A level entries for 16 to 18 year olds at All Saints Catholic College, and Audenshaw School. We also analysed ILR returns for 16 to 18 learners at Ashton Sixth Form College, and Tameside College.

The table below suggests a wide and varied A level offer within Tameside. The table shows that a number of subjects are delivered by several institutions within Tameside (e.g. Biology, Chemistry and Geography). There are also a number of subject areas where provision is delivered by only one or two institutions (e.g. Economics and French). This suggests there may be an opportunity to further develop existing collaborative arrangements in the delivery of provision to both broaden the curriculum offer at each institution (offering provision that is currently not available) and address issues around value for money in the delivery of provision (for example, by combining classes where there are currently a small number of learners at more than one institution). There is already evidence of existing collaboration in the delivery of some provision (e.g. Spanish).

We recognise that the current provision is delivered within different settings, providing a choice to learners which is likely to impact on participation in a positive way. With the onset of at least one new Academy, this choice will expand in the coming years. As we report elsewhere this additional supply of 16-18 places will need to be managed by partners.

**Table 3.1 A Level Entries 2005 for 16 to 18 year olds 2004/5**

Subject	All Saints Catholic College	Ashton Sixth Form College	Audenshaw School	Tameside College	Grand Total
Accounting/Finance	5	67		15	87
Archaeology		8			8

Subject	All Saints Catholic College	Ashton Sixth Form College	Audenshaw School	Tameside College	Grand Total
Art & Des(Graphics)				6	6
Art & Des(Textiles)				5	5
Art & Design	2	79			81
Art & Design (VQ)		5		4	9
Art & Des - Fine Art			24	36	60
Biology	21	182	50	24	277
Biology: Human				5	5
Bus. Studs: Single	7	123	50	26	206
Business (VQ)		5		5	10
Chemistry	8	141	59	26	234
Com.Stds/Computing	1	55	11	10	77
Communication		1			1
Critical Thinking		12		40	52
D&T Product Design		115	31	1	147
Dance		22			22
Drama & Theat.Stds		32		9	41
Economics		26		5	31
English		103	68	30	201
English Language	27	125		17	169
English Literature	19	88	28	12	147
Film Studies		57		9	66
French		21	18		39
General Studies	63	895	178	3	1139
Geography	10	66	50	15	141
German		19	17		36
Govt and Politics		30		1	31
Health&Soc.Ca (VQ)		88		7	95
History	6	107	72	32	217
Inform Comm Tech	10	149	21	51	231
Inform.Tech(VQ)		25		22	47
Law		205		30	235
Leis & Recreation(VQ)		10			10
Logic / Philosophy		79		2	81
Mathematics		43	65	32	140
Mathematics(Appld)	3	61			64
Maths (Further)		6	5		11
Media/Film/TV Stds		156		23	179
Media: Com & Prd(VQ)				3	3
Music		8	7		15
Performance Stds		5			5
Physics	3	73	18	16	110
Psychology	23	302		42	367
Psychology JMB/NEA				1	1
Religious Studies	15	57		4	76

Subject	All Saints Catholic College	Ashton Sixth Form College	Audenshaw School	Tameside College	Grand Total
Science: Geology		29			29
Soc Sci: Citizenship				12	12
Sociology	23	134		39	196
Spanish	3	17		1	21
Sport/P.E. Studies	8	77	42	10	137
Travel & Tourism (VQ)		34		17	51
Grand Total	257	3942	814	649	5662

Source: Tameside LA

### 3.3 Adult Provision

#### 3.3.1 Issues

Tameside suffers from relatively high levels of deprivation which is distributed evenly across the Borough and an adult skills profile which is skewed towards low qualifications. A significantly higher proportion of adults in Tameside possess no qualifications than nationally, conversely a significantly lower proportion possesses level 4 qualifications. **Given the projected demand from employers for qualifications it is essential adults “up skill” to take advantage of new employment opportunities across Tameside.** More detailed analysis (see Appendix 1) reveals that there are persisting low levels of literacy and numeracy skills in Tameside and certain areas are characterised by a high percentage of adults without level 2 qualifications – lacking the platform for employability highlighted in the Governments Skills Strategy.

**Basic Skills remain a significant issue within Tameside.** The analysis of Skills for Life(SfL) provision delivered within Tameside shows that some work is required to meet the target that 80% of learning aims (directly or indirectly) contribute to the SfL PSA Target. Analysis of SfL provision compared with the SfL need suggests that there may be a lack of entry level provision in numeracy across Tameside. This is an issue that needs to be addressed. In addition very little ACL funded provision is SfL provision, and that which does exist does not contribute to targets. Our analysis also found that much of the SfL provision delivered by the Voluntary and Community sector is non-accredited. This may be an issue that needs to be addressed through more strategic delivery of SfL provision across partners and funding streams to ensure the needs of the learner and communities are met in the current climate of reduced adult funding.

#### 3.3.2 Gaps and Overlaps

##### Adult Gaps and Overlaps

Adult provision is delivered within Tameside across a number of sites and by several providers. Whilst much of this provision has been successful in terms of getting adults back into learning and addressing some of the key skill requirements across Tameside, **there is an apparent lack of strategy regarding the delivery of adult provision.** This

has been highlighted in several strategic documents and the lack of a strategic plan has increased in importance given the changing LSC Priorities and future reduction in funding for adult learners. The result is duplication in delivery within some wards in Tameside and either no or little provision within other wards.

Our mapping exercise of provision across Tameside revealed that:

- Provision was needed where there currently is either no or low amounts of provision, including Droylsden West, Denton South, Ashton Waterloo. The need for Skills for Life provision is particularly acute in these wards.
- More adult provision may be needed in Longendale (particularly given that public service travel from Longendale to Tameside College / Ashton Sixth Form College takes approximately 1 hour)
- Ashton and Hattersley experience the highest concentrations of deprivation in Tameside and more opportunities to gain numeracy entry level skills are needed and refresher courses in skills for life literacy are needed in the area as a priority

For more details see Appendix 1 (page 55).

## 4 Overarching Conclusions

In this section we have reported our overarching conclusions resulting from our study which have informed the recommendations in the next section.

### 4.1 14-19 collaboration and participation

The conclusions in this section link to the following terms of reference:

- **Ensure that the balance and mix of provision meets the current needs and future priorities of learners, employers and communities, while enhancing quality and increasing choice;**
- **Increase participation of young people in learning within the borough of Tameside and raise achievement at age 14-19;**

**Our overarching conclusions are:**

- The need for collaboration across partners and the development of an effective multi-agency approach has been a common thread running through all our findings;
- This multi-agency approach ties in with current developments and strategies nationally and regionally, and critically the implementation of the children and young peoples plan (CYPP). The CYPP requires a multi-disciplinary approach which involves collaboration of key agencies such as health, social services, education and the criminal justice department. These developments will lay the foundation upon which the strategic partners can further develop the collaborative working and developments recommended within this report. Four clusters (service areas) have already been developed for the implementation of the CYPP and with this in mind, we have recommended that these same clusters are the basis for the development of our recommended preferred option for enhancing collaboration between Tameside partners. (See our recommendation in 3.1 of this documents for further detail on our suggestion that a formal collaboration between the Colleges, 11-18 schools, Work-based learning providers, and employers, is developed, along with informal collaboration with the schools based around local Borough based delivery “clusters”);
- Progress checks on 14-19 developments record current good practice and areas for action. This self assessment by partners reinforces many of the findings, conclusions and recommendations in this report;
- The recently completed secondary review has been mindful of the need to address a number of issues which have also been covered by this report including such areas as improving 14-19 participation and achievement and addressing the mix of provision. Our recommendations take account of this secondary review and developments;
- In the next few years, we understand that additional 16-18 providers are planned to come on stream. This new provision will be in the form of Academies, plus we understand, one school which is exploring the option of 16-18 provision;

This will impact on the current patterns of 16-18 attendance at existing Tameside providers and may cause some turbulence in this sector. To manage any impact, providers may need to collaborate more effectively to ensure that they continue to attract learners and that a balanced provision is offered across Tameside resulting in a spread of learners across institutions; and

- The New Charter Academy is proposed to be a cornerstone of the Tameside Campus. The location of an academy within Ashton is supported by a number of indicators including high levels of deprivation, a higher proportion of children eligible for free school meals and higher levels of ethnicity than the rest of the Borough. The opportunity to move seamlessly into further education or Apprenticeships at one of the sponsors will help to ensure learners achieve in an area characterised by low skills. Key here will be to ensure higher level training opportunities are available given the projected future level 4 demands of employers. Our recommendation on 14-19 collaboration and participation looks at the provision of a possible second Academy in Tameside.

## 4.2 IAG

The conclusions in this section link to the following terms of reference:

- **ensure that learning opportunities are responsive to local need and marketed in the most appropriate way for the locality**

**Our overarching conclusion is:**

- Throughout our study of Post 14 education in Tameside we have become aware of the comments from a number of stakeholders that there appears to be issues around the quality of Information, Advice and Guidance that is available to all learners. It will be imperative that IAG is available at critical points throughout all learners' progress, with information available that enables learners to be signposted to both the provider and provision that best suits their needs. Key here will be ensuring that vocational and work-based learning paths are given parity with more academic routes.

## 4.3 Post 19 provision – Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD)

The conclusions in this section link to the following terms of reference:

- **support disadvantaged groups, including outreach and support services to remove barriers to participation;**

**Our overarching conclusion is:**

- Provision for 16-19 year old learners with complex learning difficulties is delivered through Dovestones, part of Tameside College and was considered by most stakeholders to be good provision. However, throughout our study of Post 14 education in Tameside we have become aware of the comments from a number of stakeholders that some of the current arrangements for post 19 LLDD do not meet learner needs. LLDD issues cannot be adequately dealt with in isolation, and

therefore a ‘joined-up’ approach, with all of the strategic partners working collaboratively to develop flexible, responsive and appropriate resolutions across the spectrum is required.

#### 4.4 **Pathways into Higher Education**

The conclusions in this section link to the following terms of reference:

- identify pathways, choices and progression to Higher Education (HE) and the links and collaboration with HE providers

**Our overarching conclusions are:**

- Tameside has a significantly lower percentage of working age adults with an NVQ4+ qualification (in 2003-04 15.7% in Tameside against a Greater Manchester percentage of 22.8% and 25.2% for Great Britain). Aimhigher, some stakeholders report, has been successful at raising awareness of level 4 progression amongst the 14-19 age group;
- Overall participation in Higher Education across a number of wards in Tameside is low, particularly in the area east of Droylsden and Dukinfield. Progression to Higher Education across the majority of Tameside was significantly below the national average (29% in 2004-05). The progression of adults on to HE courses is also particularly low in some areas of Tameside – particularly around the Droylsden, Hyde and Haughton Green areas. The majority of Tameside Residents undertaking learning in Higher Education do so at a provider within Greater Manchester; and
- We are aware that current developments in Tameside involving regeneration and new businesses coming into the area will result in many of the jobs in the future demanding higher level skills requiring level 4 achievement.

#### 4.5 **Social cohesion and inclusion**

The conclusions in this section link to the following terms of reference:

- **promote social cohesion and inclusion;**
- **support regeneration, community cohesion and neighbourhood renewal.**

**Our overarching conclusions are:**

- The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004 (IMD 2004) reveals that Tameside is the 49<sup>th</sup> most deprived Borough in England (out of 354 local authorities). Tameside therefore suffers from relatively high levels of deprivation which is reported distributed evenly across the Borough;
- Further analysis by Super Output Area shows an even spread of deprivation across Tameside. This supports the Tameside Local StAR review which found an even spread of deprivation when compared with statistical neighbours, with less in the way of deprivation hotspots. Several areas including parts of Ashton-under-Lyne, Audenshaw, Droylsden and Hyde have areas of deprivation that fall within the most deprived quintile in England; and

- Promoting social cohesion and inclusion within Tameside has to be central to engage the hard to reach learners.

## 4.6 **Adult Learning and Skills**

The conclusions in this section link to the following terms of reference:

- **support the implementation of the Skills Strategy in Tameside**
- **Ensure a comprehensive mapping and analysis of Adult and Community Learning (ACL) provision and penetration, (including Information, Advice and Guidance);**
- **Provide an analysis of first rung and Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL) provision taking place on an institutional or an outreach basis organised by colleges, schools, voluntary and community organisations or by the LEAs, with encouragement to progress to higher level vocational or academic provision;**

**Our overarching conclusions are:**

- The level of need of adults in terms of skills for life and employability skills is substantive. There are key issues around the mix and match of skill levels held by Tameside residents and the projected requirements of employers. Not enough Tameside residents currently hold the level of qualifications that it is predicted employers will demand in the future. Raising the qualification levels of adults to meet skill requirements remains a key challenge;
- Our analysis of the delivery of adult provision and participation suggests that those wards with the highest number of adults participating tend to be those areas with a number of delivery providers nearby. Those areas where participation is low and little / no delivery is taking place include Droylsden West, Denton West, Denton South and Hyde Werneth;
- In terms of adult skills provision those areas with low amounts of delivery tend to have the lowest levels of participation – suggesting that the lack of delivery is acting as a barrier to participation. There is a need for greater collaboration and coordination of existing adult provision within Tameside to ensure more equitable access to provision. These include:
  - A potential requirement for provision where there currently is either none or low amounts of provision, including Droylsden West, Denton South, Ashton Waterloo;
  - More adult provision may be needed in Longendale (given that public service travel from Longendale to Tameside College / Ashton Sixth Form College takes approximately 1 hour); and
  - More opportunities to gain numeracy entry level skills are needed and refresher courses in skills for life literacy are needed in deprived areas including Ashton and Hattersely as a priority.

- In terms of adult skills provision there is the need for greater collaboration and coordination of existing adult provision within Tameside to ensure more equitable access to provision; and
- Jobcentre Plus is a key partner in facilitating the building of a coherent partnership approach to the provision of adult learning. They are an active partner in the Tameside LAA Economy Block .

#### 4.7 **Basic Skills**

The conclusions in this section link to the following terms of reference:

- **support the implementation of the Skills Strategy in Tameside;**

**Our overarching conclusions are:**

- Analysis of Skills for Life provision suggests that the take up of Skills for Life learning opportunities is not at the level required to address this issue within the Borough;
- Tameside has a significantly higher percentage of adults who have no qualifications when compared to the rest of Greater Manchester and the North West Region; and
- There is variation across Tameside with the areas surrounding Droylsden, Audenshaw, Ashton-under-Lyne, Hyde and Haughton Green showing the highest percentage of adults without level 2 qualifications.

#### 4.8 **Management Information**

The conclusions in this section link to the following terms of reference:

- **ensure that the balance and mix of provision meets the current needs and future priorities of learners, employers and communities, while enhancing quality and increasing choice;**

**Our overarching conclusion is:**

- There is a need for the partners to develop data on which to base quality assurance measures. Some of this data is held in individual institutions and partners will need to consider how this intelligence can be made available to ensure effective quality assurance of the post 14 learning phase.

## 5 Recommendations

This section of the report contains detailed recommendations based on our study of Post 14 education and training in Tameside. Our first recommendation considers how we believe Tameside partners should develop their existing 14-19 collaborative approach so enabling the step change, which we consider is necessary, to empower partners to best meet the needs of Tameside learners in the future.

### 5.1 Developing an enhanced collaborative approach to 14-19 developments in Tameside

This recommendation links into the following terms of reference:

- **ensure that the balance and mix of provision meets the current needs and future priorities of learners, employers and communities, while enhancing quality and increasing choice; and**
- **increase participation of young people in learning within the borough of Tameside and raise achievement at age 14-19.**

This section of the report looks at the ways in which an enhanced collaborative approach to 14-19 provision can be developed in Tameside. It seeks to draw together the outcomes of the analysed information to generate and evaluate options for the LSC Greater Manchester, and Tameside MBC to consider.

**The key focus of our approach to the option identification and evaluation is to place learners and other users of education and training at the centre of our considerations, rather than taking an institutional-led approach.**

Ideally a strategy for the pattern and profile of provision in the future should be seen as part of a broader 14-19 and adult plan. Therefore any strategy adopted needs to offer flexibility and responsiveness to current and future needs with the learner as the key driver for change.

Recently the DfES have published the 14-19 Educational and Skills Implementation Plan. In Tameside the Local Authority and the LSC GM, are providing the strategic lead on developing the arrangements needed to be put in place to meet the requirements of the Implementation Plan. Much of this involves building upon the existing collaborative developments between schools, colleges, employers, training providers and Connexions.

Tameside MBC and the LSC GM have a stated commitment to ‘invest richly in our young people who are central to the successful future development of Tameside’ and much progress has been made in the Borough to prepare the ground in response to the developing 14-19 agenda. We believe a step change is now needed to take things further.

The vision for the **Tameside Campus** is the corner stone of the developments for 14-19 provision in Tameside. This will, we understand, in effect provide three “skills hubs”

further supporting the development of the vision of the Tameside Campus. These centres would be the hubs for clusters of High Schools to send pupils to access a wide range of vocationally related courses supported by the partnership between local colleges, training providers and employers.

Through our analysis of provision and travel times between schools and providers, we suggest the authority proceed with three planned skill centres highlighted within the Tameside Education Vision 'Better Outcomes for All'. The vision document states that one centre would be based on existing provision at Tameside College with a further two skill centres attached to high schools, one in the north and one in the south of Tameside.

Our recommendation is that consideration is given to Hyde Technology School being developed as a skills centre in the south of Tameside. This is based upon its secondary specialism in Vocational Learning and the possible provision of some post-16 Vocational Learning (if they are successful in being granted a school sixth form presumption from the DfES).

We also recommend that the planned Ashton Academy is the skills centre in the North of Tameside (the locations for the skills centres are presented on the map below). These skill hubs would be central to the delivery of the new Specialised Diplomas. Whilst we understand that the content of the Specialised Diplomas are still in draft, we believe that some of the diplomas may be deliverable at both schools and skills hubs (e.g. ICT Diploma) whilst others may only be deliverable at one of the skill hubs (e.g. Engineering).

We suggest that, in the development of clusters within Tameside, consideration is given to the four service areas developed through the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership for bringing services together. The 14 to 19 Partnership could be used where necessary to ensure that service areas were managed together providing the optimum level of provision in each area. Advantages of using the four service areas would include joined up delivery with other services including health and social care. This is particularly important within Tameside given the social and health issues prevalent within some areas of the Borough. The approach would also ensure that due consideration is given to all areas within the Tameside Borough with greater understanding of the local issues faced and reduced travel to learn distances between schools / providers in each service area.

We believe the four service areas would offer the opportunity for schools, colleges and work-based learning providers to collaborate and broaden the offer available to young people. Such collaboration may start with small examples of collaborative delivery and common timetabling (building upon existing arrangements), which could be gradually extended. At this stage we do not envisage that all of the provision delivered under an entitlement including the Specialised Diplomas would be available within the four service areas. Borough wide collaboration would also be required in the delivery of some specialised areas.

With reference to the provision to be delivered at the Ashton Academy the Tameside Vision 'Better Outcomes for All' states that 14 to 16 provision will involve access to the full range of GCSE and GNVQ programmes but will also build on the expertise of the

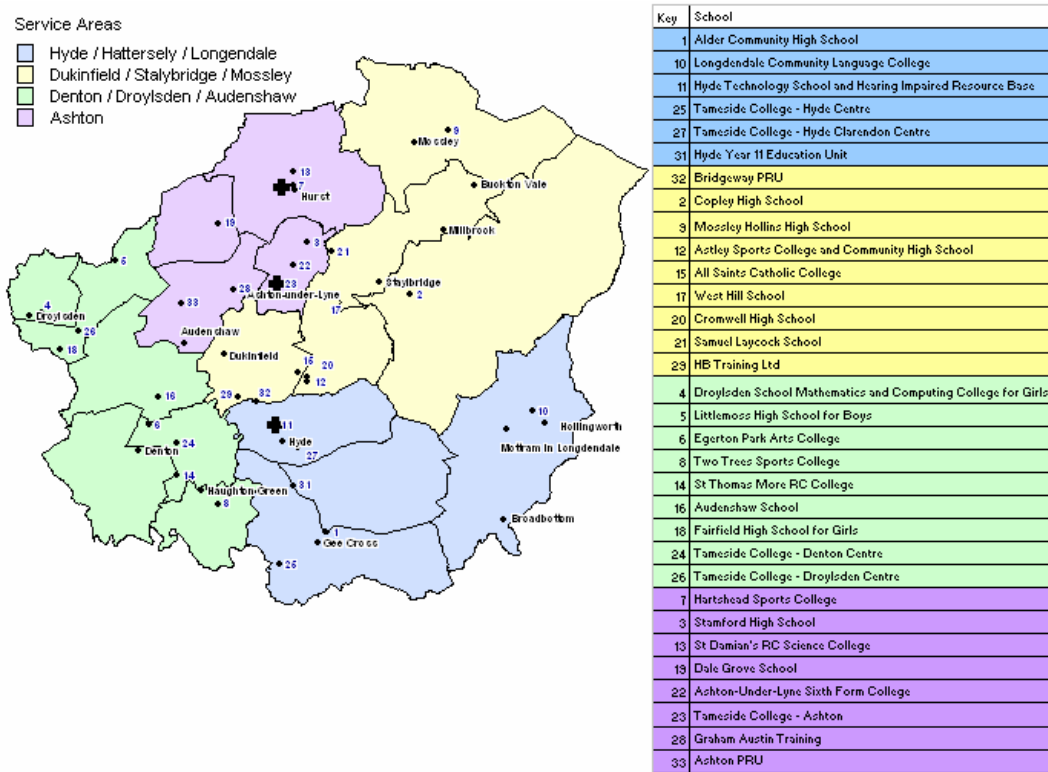
PCT to deliver additional programmes in Health and Social Care. It is intended that Sport will be a further specialism at the Ashton Academy.

No decision has as yet been made on any further programmes that will be made available at the Ashton Academy. Our recommendation is that Tameside LSC/LA and partners build upon the expertise of the Academy sponsor, New Charter, to deliver additional programmes in Building and Construction. Our recommendation is consistent with the Tameside Vision and is based upon the fact that Construction is a key priority sector both across the sub region and region. In addition, Construction is a key employer in Tameside, accounting for 10% of employment with significant projected demand to replace workers leaving the industry through retirement.

In terms of any specialist 14 to 16 provision at the potential second Academy in Droylsden, we recommend learners have access to the full range of GCSE and GNVQ programmes and offer additional programmes in:

- Food provision– this is a key employment area in Tameside and there is currently level 3 provision available only at Tameside College. A number of employers in Tameside have been accessing level 1 and 2 provision from Bury College suggesting a potential gap in provision. In terms of future employment opportunities whilst the number of employees within the manufacture of food is projected to remain relatively unchanged there will be significant replacement demand i.e. the need to replace workers who are retiring. In addition, the Hotel and Restaurant sector is projected to show significant demand across Greater Manchester;
- ICT Provision – there is projected growth in employment requiring advanced ICT skills. In addition, state of the art ICT facilities could be used for adult evening provision – with Droylsden East ward (the location of a potential new Academy) lacking in adult provision delivery;
- Business Provision – we recommend the LSC/LA and partners investigate the potential to introduce provision relating to Business at a new academy in Droylsden. Our recommendation is based upon employment projections which show growing demand for level 3 / 4 skills within the Business Services sector across Greater Manchester; and
- All three of the recommended areas above are key strategic priorities across the Greater Manchester and North West Region.

Figure 5.1 Location of Tameside Skill Hubs and 14 to 19 Providers



From 2008 five Specialised Diplomas will be available to be delivered. Tameside MBC has expressed an interest in delivering four of these Diplomas; Engineering, Health and Social Care, ICT, and Creative and Media, and twelve of the existing high schools along with Ashton Sixth Form College and Tameside College are working through the Gateway process for the delivery in 2008.

A Tameside Diploma Consortium has recently been established (July 2006), It is envisaged that this collaborative work will lead to the creation of an infrastructure for the Tameside Campus. The specialisms of the individual high schools will also contribute to the range of provision for learners in Tameside, and pupils may attend a skills hub and another high school along with their home base school.

We believe that greater coherence in provision patterns and profile will only be achieved where all the learning providers in the area are equally engaged in **joint planning and delivery activities**. Our evidence gathering suggests that there is currently a degree of formal and informal dialogue between the Principals and Headteachers, and other providers about collaboration, and there are some examples of effective collaboration taking place, although it is generally recognised that more could be done.

The lack of entry level provision available to 14 to 19 yr olds across the Borough appears to be a significant issue. Our literature review and consultations have found that schools and colleges are aware of this and are looking to act to address this issue.

There is further evidence of an empathy about the need to generate change, which would more effectively deliver the Post 14 agenda in the Borough. In this context it is important that the expertise available in all providers are viewed as a resource with the potential to contribute to meeting the needs of the local communities in Tameside as well as targeting new learners that they collectively as yet, do not reach.

Bearing these points in mind, the overall aim of the option evaluation carried out below is to provide the best possible strategy and configuration to meet the requirements for coherent and focused specialist and non-specialist Post 14 provision in Tameside rooted firmly in the context of the need to be adaptable and flexible to meet emerging local needs.

#### 5.1.1 **Options Evaluation**

In order to evaluate the emerging options we have used the criteria outlined in LSC Circular 02/09 'Provider Reorganisations: Criteria and Procedures for LSC Consideration of Provider Reorganisation' together with additional criteria which in our experience are necessary for successful reorganisations. These criteria are:

Will the Option:

- A. Extend access and participation in current provision;
- B. Improve standards achieved and progression;
- C. Increase curriculum and programmes focus, coherence and relevance;
- D. Raise the quality of teaching and learning;
- E. Enhance management, collaboration and liaison;
- F. Gain acceptability to the proposed changes, local collective buy-in to implementation, and deliverability of the proposed option;
- G. Improve financial viability, cost-effectiveness and value for money; and
- H. Be compliant with LLSC plans.

Each of these issues is expanded upon and explored in more depth below as they form the basis of the criteria for option appraisal which we have applied later in this section.

**Mindful of the terms of reference for this project, we have added one additional criteria for analysis:**

- I. Ensure that the balance and mix of provision meets the current needs and future priorities of learners, employers and communities, while enhancing quality and increasing choice.

The above priorities and characteristics are therefore critical elements in measuring the current appropriateness of the options presented. These are discussed more fully in the sections below.

### 5.1.2 **Strategic Options to be considered**

On the basis of information which has been gathered from the secondary data analysis and the interviews conducted, plus our experience of conducting such reviews elsewhere, we have considered five main options for the Tameside area. These options are summarised below.

**Table 5.1 Strategic Options**

• Option 1	‘Status quo’- No change
• Option 2	Enhanced informal collaboration between colleges, schools, work-based learning providers and employers
• Option 3	Formal collaboration between the colleges, 11-18 schools, work-based learning providers, employers and informal collaboration with the 11-16 schools based around Borough Based Delivery ‘Clusters’.
• Option 4	Formal collaboration between the colleges, work-based learning providers, employers and schools based around Borough Based Delivery ‘Clusters’
• Option 5	Merger of the two colleges with enhanced informal collaboration with all other providers around Borough Based Delivery ‘Clusters’.

We have provided a brief commentary on each option below. Part of the context for this options appraisal is the need to develop learning across Tameside, to continue to raise standards and to serve the needs of individuals wishing to enter School, Further Education, Higher Education or the local labour market. In taking the preferred option forward, it is important that an integrated strategy is developed across academic, vocationally related and occupational provision and across all delivery locations.

### 5.1.3 **Option One- Status Quo**

In any appraisal of options for change, it is always useful to consider the option of no change, even if this is only considered as a benchmark to measure other proposals by. In the case of Tameside, the Status Quo option would preserve the current institutional configuration and continue to deliver education and training. However, this Option would require a drive throughout Tameside to raise standards and improve performance.

It is widely recognised that the education providers in the Borough deliver a very wide range of provision, which is sound, and in some cases good or outstanding, with good

progression for many of the learners involved. The performance of both the colleges and private training providers in recent inspections indicates that there are some models of good practice on which the partners could draw, to benefit all of the learners across Tameside.

On the whole, the nature, structure and culture of the current provision is based firmly around autonomous individual institutes making decisions about their **own** provision that meet the needs of their **own** learners. Such an arrangement could make it difficult to plan strategically for the whole Borough and to develop provision to meet changing learner needs, and local and national economic and skills needs.

Within a three year time period there are also major changes to Post 16 funding that will occur, for 11-18 schools in particular. These could have a significant impact on the viability of some of their Post 16 provision. Reduction in funding, to bring them into line with further education institutes, and restriction on the ability to transfer 11-16 funding across to support Post 16 provision will make the sustainability of such provision a much more critical issue. Whichever option is developed we would therefore suggest that the partners should undertake a curriculum mapping exercise of the present post 14 provision to establish where provision might be located to allow the establishment of cost effective group sizes, whilst protecting minority provision and the role of employers in the provision of post 16 education and training. This exercise could use the data gathered as part of this review as its baseline.

Consultation with stakeholders, and the analysis of data indicate that there are significant groups of young people who are currently not as well served by many of the structures and arrangements inherent in the status quo. It has been argued that the quality of provision available to the majority of learners in Tameside also needs to be extended to those more vulnerable learners, who may find themselves disenfranchised and disengaged. It was felt by many stakeholders interviewed that all the providers in Tameside should accept some degree of joint responsibility for providing programs of learning for those not in education, employment or training (NEET) as well as adapting current provision to try and ensure fewer learners become part of this cohort in the future.

Whilst the Status Quo may prove to be attractive to some partners, it is unlikely on its own to extend participation in, or access to post 16 provision, or to improve the standards achieved or progression routes for learners across Tameside. The Status Quo is also likely to do little to ensure that the balance and mix of provision meets the current needs and future priorities of learners, employers and communities, while enhancing quality and increasing choice.

This being the case, if the Status Quo were to be retained, the partners should look to develop a set of key performance indicators for the Tameside “offer” which could include targets for increased retention and achievement across the Borough, targets for the distribution of funding, and arrangements for strategic planning.

Overall however, having reviewed the Status Quo option, it is our view that it does not sufficiently meet the needs and development demands of the hard to reach learners, and

will not ensure that the balance and mix of provision will meet the future priorities of learners, employers and communities, while enhancing quality and increasing choice.

#### 5.1.4 **Option Two - Enhanced informal collaboration between colleges, schools, work-based learning providers and employers.**

It is recognised that there is already a great deal of excellent practice within the Tameside in respect of informal collaboration and partnership between education providers and employers. Much of this has developed as a consequence of very locally based need. In this respect, whilst benefits accrue to learners in the institution concerned, the development is not in response to strategic need or direction.

Enhanced informal collaboration would take much of this good practice and strengthen arrangements and planning processes to ensure that developments are planned, not only to meet more fully the needs of all learners in Tameside, but also to more fully match the direction indicated by government legislation and guidance, and the funding frameworks for Post 16 education and training.

Through a model of enhanced informal collaboration it is likely that the partners will be able to extend access to and participation in Post 16 provision, and improve standards achieved and progression routes, and raise the quality of Teaching and Learning through the sharing of good practice across the Borough. This Option is also likely to be acceptable to partners and gain local buy in from key stakeholders.

Such informal collaborative arrangements should ensure that both training providers and employers are fully engaged in discussions, planning and the eventual delivery of provision determined and designed through a '14-19 Partnership' which could be based on the existing 14-19 Borough wide strategic group.

Such a forum would represent all the education and training providers in Tameside as well as key employers. Terms of reference would clearly determine the role of the Partnership enabling providers to retain autonomy, but within a collaborative ethos and framework that ensures mixed provision would be designed to be accessible to **all** learners in the Borough.

Enhanced Informal Collaborative activity would comprise of:

- A joint prospectus;
- Other joint marketing activity or 'events' e.g. Options evenings;
- Adoption of high level Terms of Reference;
- Adoption of high level Service Level Agreements covering issues such as 'pastoral support', tracking, recording and reporting achievement etc.;
- Joint planning of provision;
- Adoption of a common Learner Entitlement; and
- Monitoring of progress against agreed 'targets'.

This option would maintain the provision at both colleges in Tameside.

Whilst this Option would go some way to ensuring that the balance and mix of provision meets the current needs and future priorities of learners, employers and communities, while enhancing quality and increasing choice, and providing enhanced Management, collaboration and liaison, the informal nature of the collaborative model may mean that it may not have as great an impact as may be required by Tameside MBC and the LSC Greater Manchester. In our view, the informal nature of this collaboration would not provide the impetus for providers to collaborate effectively and meet the challenges of ensuring the required balance and mix of provision.

**5.1.5 Option Three - Formal collaboration between the colleges, 11-18 schools, work-based learning providers, and employers, with informal collaboration with the schools based around local Borough Based delivery ‘clusters’.**

Formal collaboration would entail more formally organised management and governance arrangements and operational partnerships between the Colleges, the 11-18 schools, Work-based learning providers and Tameside employers. Governance arrangements would be restructured to create an overarching “Governance Forum” with representatives from all the other governing bodies and boards of directors. Memorandums of Understanding would be put in place to ‘tie-in’ providers to one another.

This option would comprise of:

- A joint prospectus;
- Other joint marketing activity or ‘events’ e.g. Options evenings;
- Adoption of high level Terms of Reference;
- Adoption of high level Service Level Agreements covering issues such as ‘pastoral support’, tracking, recording and reporting achievement etc.;
- Joint planning of provision;
- Adoption of a common Learner Entitlement; and
- Monitoring of progress against agreed ‘targets’.

The 11-16 schools would be involved in the delivery of this model through the development of a number of Borough based delivery clusters, who would jointly plan the delivery across the “cluster” and would report into the 14-19 partnership.

Collaboration with the 11-16 schools would remain as in option two above, both with regards to their relationship with each other and in their relationship to the more formally collaborating providers and employers.

To a degree such a arrangement would enable those partners involved in Post 16 provision to better plan for, design and deliver provision that meets the needs of the

majority of learners in Tameside, as well as moving towards government 'direction' and meeting LSC priorities and targets. However, such a 'power base' could be seen as a cartel, creating an atmosphere of defensiveness and protectionism within the Borough.

Again this model relates closely to the Tameside Campus concept, and would lend itself to a move towards a more formalised model over the medium term, say in three years time. However, it is felt that the time is right to start this process, as it can be linked to the Building Schools for the Future programme which will be undertaken in the Borough.

Additionally, with the prospective new post 16 providers coming on board, this model will further enable planning by existing providers, to ensure that learners needs are met and any impact on institutions can be managed effectively.

This Option would help lay the foundations for further collaborative practice, similar to that which is being undertaken at Denton and Droylsden, where the schools are working towards a common curriculum and are sharing subjects such as music and drama.

Through a mixture of formal and informal collaboration this model would help to extend access to and participation in Post 16 provision, and increase curriculum and programmes coherence, focus and relevance. Through the sharing of good practice across the partners this Option should help raise the quality of Teaching and Learning, and provide for enhanced Management, collaboration and liaison. If fully implemented this Option should also ensure that the balance and mix of provision meets the current needs and future priorities of learners, employers and communities, while enhancing quality and increasing choice.

However, due to the formal nature of the collaboration required, and as some partners may feel that this will set up a two tier structure, this Option may not gain as wide an acceptance of the proposed changes and local buy-in as would the previous Options outlined above.

#### **5.1.6 Option Four - Formal collaboration between the colleges, 11-18 schools, work-based learning providers, employers and schools based around local Borough Based delivery 'clusters'.**

The structural arrangements and benefits outlined above in option three related to colleges, work-based providers and employers in this option would also include the schools. A number of Borough based delivery clusters, which are combinations of the seven neighbourhoods within Tameside would again be developed. This would include representation from all providers and any developments in provision would be the result of collaborative agreements that held the needs of all Tameside learners at its core.

Such a framework for the organisations involved could ensure the availability of a mixed curriculum offer and a range of learning environments and styles for the learners of Tameside. It would also enable comprehensive high level strategic planning across the respective parts of the Borough to ensure financial viability of all provision, and ensure that the 'right' provision was available in the 'right' places.

Again this model should provide for increased curriculum and programmes coherence, focus and relevance, and should aid the raising of the quality of Teaching and Learning through the sharing of good practice across the partners. This Option should also provide for enhanced Management, collaboration and liaison, and should ensure that the balance and mix of provision meets the current needs and future priorities of learners, employers and communities, while enhancing quality and increasing choice.

One of the major drawbacks to this model is that the inclusion of so many partners and organisations in such ‘formal’ major decision making processes inherent in such a large collaborative structure. This may have the effect of making decision making cumbersome and decrease the ability of the partners within the arrangement to rapidly respond to changing learner, employer and HE demands. Given time, it should however, enable the Borough to achieve national and local targets.

The ‘formality’ of this option is likely to be the main reason for its unacceptability to stakeholders.

#### 5.1.7 **Option Five - Merger of the two colleges with enhanced informal collaboration with all other providers around local Borough Based Delivery ‘Clusters’.**

This review has provided solid indications that the Borough has two strong further education institutes who provide a comprehensive mix of educational and training programs from pre-entry level to level 4. This comprehensive mix includes clear progression pathways and quality teaching and learning.

From our review of Post 14 provision in Tameside, it would appear that there is a weak case for the merger of the two Colleges at this stage. Both are successful colleges with high standards, good inspection reports and are financially healthy. If both Colleges were involved in the options relating to more formal collaboration it is felt that this would bring about the necessary step change in the Borough. If the colleges were involved in more formal collaboration it is felt they would:

- Be better placed to meet Employer’s needs;
- Avoid unnecessary duplication;
- Benefit from economies of scale and optimum resource allocation;
- Be able to present a joined up strategy for widening participation and community learning;
- Share best practice and therefore raise standards;
- Provide one point of contact and procedure for schools’ liaison; and
- Be more effectively placed to progress given the changing future landscape.

Whilst a merger may produce some benefits in terms of economies of scale and avoidance of duplication of provision, such a merger at this stage would reduce the level of choice which is available to the learners of Tameside.

Whilst there is some overlap in a minority of provision between the two colleges, it is the complementarity of provision, even within specific sector subject areas, that is notable and provides an excellent model for curriculum harmonisation. This being the case a merger would not involve a significant rationalisation of provision in the Borough.

The recent FE White Paper (February 2006) refers to contestability, value for money, rationalisation, economies of scale and the opening up of competition from other providers. In addition it recommends that governors carry out regular reviews of arrangements for federation and merger. This being the case, it is suggested that even though a merger is discounted at this time, the Governors of the Colleges, the LSC and Tameside MBC should constantly keep this option under review.

The development of the Academies and the likelihood that some schools are looking to establish their own sixth form is likely to have some effect on FE provision in the future.

#### 5.1.8 **Applying the criteria to the options**

Each of the options set out needs to be evaluated against the above common set of criteria. Each option has been scored against each criteria and given a score between 4 and 0 depending on how well it meets the LSC objectives, where:

- 4 Option meets the criteria very well.
- 3 Option meets the criteria well.
- 2 Option meets the criteria well, but with some weaknesses.
- 1 Option meets criteria, but with major weaknesses.
- 0 Option does not meet criteria at all.

The scores from the evaluation then led us to identify the preferred option.

#### 5.1.9 **Conclusion and Recommendation**

**Our analysis of the five options would suggest that the Preferred Option should be Option Three:** Formal Collaboration between the Colleges, 11-18 schools, work-based learning providers and employers, and informal collaboration with the 11-16 schools.

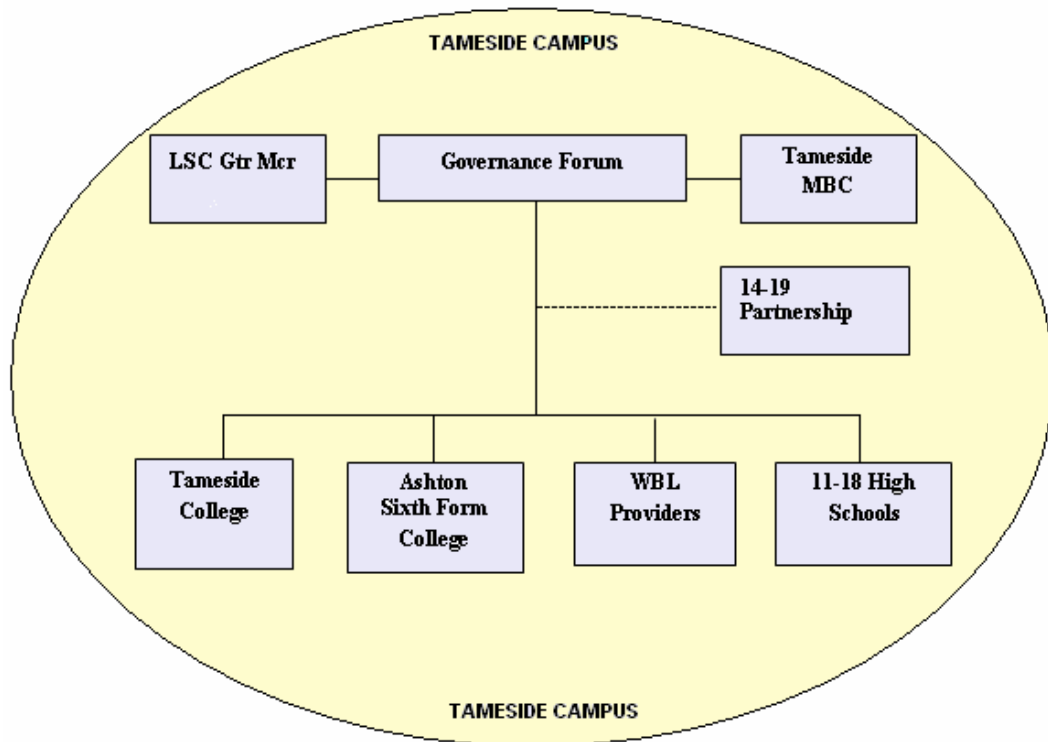
It is our view that this Option provides the greatest opportunity to:

- Extend access to and participation in Post 16 provision – through the development of locally based models to engage learners from 14 upwards;
- Provide for increased curriculum and programme coherence, focus and relevance – through the development of the partnerships and the “clusters”;
- Aid the raising of the quality of teaching and learning – through the sharing of good practise across the partners;

- Enhance Management, collaboration and liaison – through the development of the collaborative models;
- Improve financial viability, cost-effectiveness and value for money – through the development of the delivery models;
- Comply with LLSC plans – through bringing greater coherence to the offer across Tameside; and
- Ensure that the balance and mix of provision meets the current needs and future priorities of learners, employers and communities, while enhancing quality and increasing choice.

We would recommend the Local Authority and LSC Greater Manchester pursue this option in partnership with the other providers.

**Figure 5.2 Potential Implementation Model**



The Governance Forum’s main role would be to interpret national, regional and local priorities and to review the implementation of the high level Borough-wide strategy. It would comprise representatives from Tameside College, Ashton Sixth Form College, the

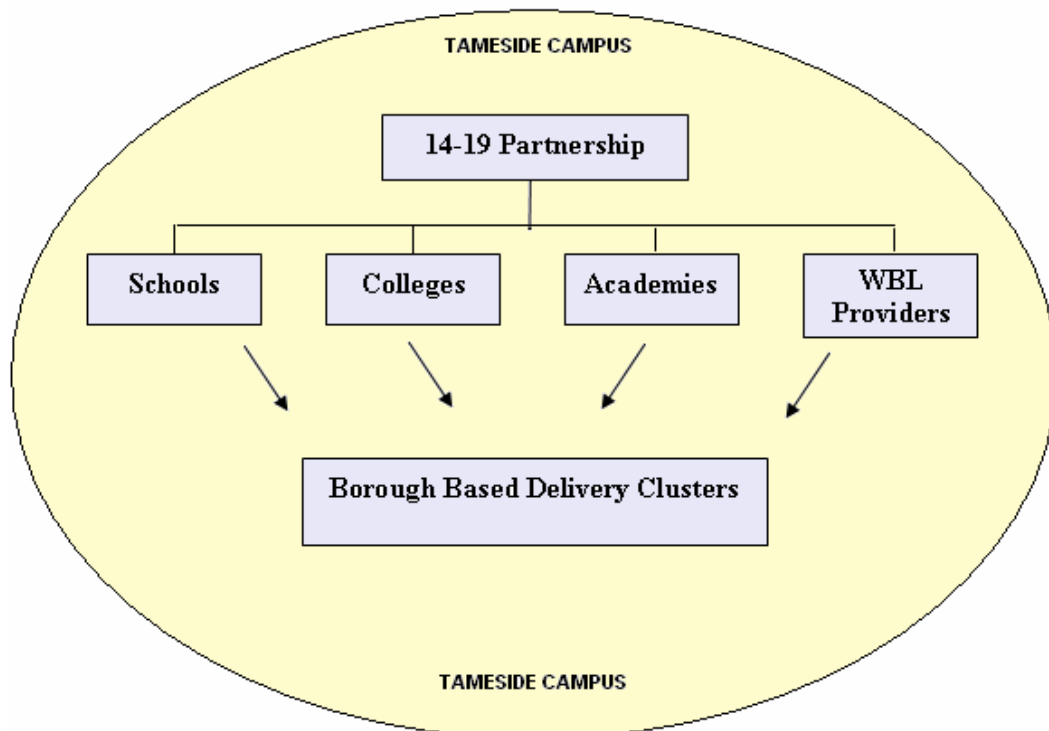
Work Based Learning Providers and 11-18 schools. The LSC Greater Manchester and Tameside MBC would be also be full members of the forum. The Forum may also invite representatives of the Borough’s 14-19 Partnership to be observers at the meetings in order to ensure synchronicity between the activities of the Forum and other 14-19 providers in the Borough.

The Forum would look to develop a “Tameside Plan” for the delivery of Further Education in the Borough.

It would link into the Borough wide strategic group, and would:

- Examine existing and future patterns of provision;
- Address levels of under and over provision within the FE providers;
- Develop joint approaches to curriculum development;
- Provide the opportunity to establish joint links with the High Schools in the Borough.

**Figure 5.3 Informal Enhanced Collaboration Model**



Case studies and details of existing federations appear on the DfES website at [www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/innovation-unit/collaboration/federations](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/innovation-unit/collaboration/federations)

The Borough-wide Strategic Group would comprise representatives from each of the Providers in the Borough. This group would link into the existing 14-19 Strategy Group and would oversee the implementation of pattern and profile of provision across the whole of Tameside. It would draw upon the work of the 14-19 curriculum network and the Diploma Consortium. We envisage representatives from Connexions and Jobcentre Plus would be represented within this group.

Tameside MBC has recently appointed a 14-19 strategic coordinator to develop its capacity to further implement the 14-19 strategy. It is recommended that the Borough consider developing a 14-19 coordination unit, consisting of staff from Tameside MBC, to drive this strategic agenda and facilitate partnership and progression.

Provision would then be divided into individual cluster groups and would comprise of representatives from schools (11-16, 11-18, Special), the Colleges, WBL providers and employers. They would meet on a regular basis in order to:

- Examine existing patterns of provision within each delivery cluster;
- Address levels of over or under provision;
- Examine local needs and priorities;
- Review ‘Learning to Learn’ activity;
- Review Connexions information on activity within deprived neighbourhoods; and
- Continuously Review targeted activities to address:
  - a) Learners with SLDD;
  - b) Skills for Life strategies;
  - c) The NEET group;
  - d) Community engagement and widening participation;
  - e) ‘Vulnerable’ learners; and
  - f) The 14-19 Implementation Plan- Specialised Diplomas.

We have not at this stage assigned existing Borough Council neighbourhoods to individual clusters. However, we would suggest that the partners consider using the four services areas developed through the Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership. An alternative option for configuration of the Borough could be a series of overlapping clusters based around the delivery of the Specialised Diplomas. Whichever method is adopted, the Borough-wide strategic group could oversee this process and ensure that each cluster is ‘fairly’ represented and has an equitable ‘balance’ of provision.

#### **5.1.10 Conclusion**

The overall aim of this review was to identify possible patterns of future provision which will ensure that the balance and mix of provision meets the current needs and future priorities of learners, employers and communities, while enhancing quality and increasing choice, increase participation of young people in learning within the Borough of

Tameside and raise achievement at age 14-19, support the implementation of the Skills Strategy in Tameside, and promote social cohesion and inclusion. The review was also required to identify pathways, choices and progression to HE and the links and collaboration with HE providers, ensure a comprehensive mapping and analysis of ACL provision and penetration, provide an analysis of first rung and PCDL provision taking place, support disadvantaged groups, including outreach and support services to remove barriers to participation, ensure that learning opportunities are responsive to local need and marketed in the most appropriate way for the locality, and support regeneration, community cohesion and neighbourhood renewal.

There is much good practice to be shared amongst providers in the Tameside area. However, it appears that the collaborative partnerships currently in place tend to be rather ad hoc and not necessarily strategically driven. It is therefore our view that in order to better meet the needs of learners across Tameside, there needs to be a step change in the level and type of collaboration within the Borough.

It is therefore our view that:

- The analysis of the five options would suggest that the **Preferred Option should be Option Three**: Formal collaboration between the Colleges, 11-18 schools, Work-based learning providers, and employers, with informal collaboration with the schools based around local Borough based delivery “clusters”. We would recommend that this option is fully considered and implemented by the Tameside MBC, the LSC Greater Manchester and the providers;
- The 11-16 schools should use the opportunity of the published secondary review and BSF developments and timescales to move towards establishing a more formal model of collaboration as set out in Option 4. For example, some work on joint curriculum planning is already being performed by these schools, however where two schools will be closed to be replaced by one new school, these schools could be further developing this work and their curriculum plans;
- Any new Post 16 provision should be planned in the context of local strategic need and in collaboration with other providers;
- In the next few years it is planned that one Academy and perhaps a second will open creating up to 600 additional 16-18 places. In addition, Hyde Technology School is exploring the possibility of providing 16-18 places. Overall, this could mean an additional 700 to 800 places in the Borough. It is our view that these additional places will be best managed within the context of option 3;
- In the more deprived wards, distance and ease of travel to access provision is often as much of an issue as the culture or economies of the community in which the learner lives;
- The delivery of the 14-19 Implementation Plan and the implementation of the Specialised Diplomas should be a shared responsibility between providers to meet the needs of all learners across Tameside;
- Effective progression needs sufficient provision at each qualification level and clear arrangements for movement between the levels and the safeguarding of access

arrangements. This will require providers to work together on these 'learner- centred' issues to ensure that learners are not disadvantaged or deterred from making progress. Collaboration between all providers, including Work Based Learning Providers is vital for this. Shared high quality information advice and guidance is also essential. It is important that the expertise available in all providers are viewed as a resource with the potential to contribute to meeting the needs of the local communities in Tameside as well as targeting new learners that they collectively as yet, do not reach;

- Partners have expressed a desire and a commitment to work together for the benefit of all learners in Tameside;
- The formal collaborative model should target the following brands:
  - a) 14-19;
  - b) Skills for Life; and
  - c) Vocational Skills through the Skills Centres.
- The collaborative models set out in this report should be taken forward using the DfES guidelines of Federation and Collaboration as a model upon which to build and develop;
- The formal collaborative model will not solve all of Tameside's problems on its own as it will require collective responsibility from all providers to tackle issues in a 'joined-up' and strategic way. This is particularly true with respect to the delivery of the Specialised Diplomas;
- Any clustering will need to be supported by targeted funding in order to facilitate their ongoing progress and development.
- Specific activities and focus should be placed on the deprived wards, pupils with SLDD, 'vulnerable learners' and the NEET group. Targeted support through transport, learning mentors, suitable progression and sharing of staff and expertise should take place. A 'Learning to learn' culture should be prevalent throughout. Awareness of all strategies to target these specific groups should be a major focus on each "clusters" so that all providers take a collective responsibility to tackle these specific issues;
- Other issues highlighted throughout this report point to:
  - Further provision for the 'most vulnerable' and specific activities/ support to maintain engagement of this cohort;
  - A need for the promotion of Work-Based Learning routes in schools as well as through Connexions officers; and
  - Specific development of links between special schools and the local FE provision.

## 5.2 IAG

It will be imperative that IAG is available at critical points throughout all learners' progress, with information available that enables learners to be signposted to both the provider and provision that best suits their needs.

### 5.2.1 14-19

It is recommended that all of the schools agree and 'sign up' to developing quality assured IAG which can be benchmarked and will:

- ensure that all learners have access to objective information, advice and guidance to enable individual, clear, planned pathways to be developed and
- ensure that the transition for learners at 16 is supported by all agencies, assisted by the provision of information and data that will allow informed choice and place learner entitlement at the forefront.

This will build on the development of the preferred option set out earlier in the recommendations, and should be developed by schools within the clusters identified for this collaboration as those that have been developed for the Children and Young Peoples Plan. Of key importance here will be ensuring that parity is given to academic, work-based learning and vocational pathways.

This would ensure that all schools are either delivering, or progressing towards delivering, a consistent high level of IAG which would underpin the local and national developments, in particular encouraging curriculum collaboration between clusters of schools and colleges and providing critical support to the delivery of the national curriculum and qualifications entitlement, the 14 specialised Diplomas (four of which may be delivered in Tameside in 2008) the area prospectuses and the September Guarantee.

### 5.2.2 Post 19

We recommend that Tameside partners consider developing a single point of contact, in the form of a website, which provides a completely free, impartial, easily accessible, quality service to adults on anything associated with learning or work. As no one organisation could achieve this on its own, working in partnership, many organisations can be brought together to provide a complete service to Tameside residents, its employers and people working in the Borough.

A course search portal could be developed which would provide easy and relevant information on courses, locations, providers and contact information. Information and advice and guidance could be provided to learners on qualifications, types of learning available, local help and local organisations, employment and vacancies. It would also be possible to provide help and guidance to prospective learners on:

- 1 Identifying their strengths;
- 2 Identifying any help they might need with literacy, language and numeracy;
- 3 Improving their confidence and self esteem;
- 4 Understanding the local job market;
- 5 Matching their interests to jobs;
- 6 Finding the right education, training or employment;
- 7 Identifying possible sources of funding;
- 8 Tackling barriers such as childcare and transport;
- 9 Developing CV's and job applications;
- 10 Performing better at interviews; and
- 11 Identifying other services that can help them, and referring them to these.

Overall, it is recommended that a **developed approach to IAG** be implemented, which provides information and tools for those that influence career choice, with defined roles and responsibilities within all stakeholders, including work with Education providers to ensure a **coherent ICT offer** linked to the Tameside e-learning network. This would further support the recommendations for the development of an adult skills strategy set out later in this report.

### 5.3 **Post 19 provision - Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD)**

The issues highlighted in this report relating to LLDD provision cannot be adequately dealt with in isolation, and therefore a 'joined-up' approach, with all of the strategic partners working collaboratively to develop flexible, responsive and appropriate resolutions across the spectrum of needs should be implemented.

Our recommendations are based upon the review of literature and learner data and consultation with stakeholders. **We suggest the LSC GM and Tameside MBC and partners develop a transition policy that draws together the key agencies to establish a baseline entitlement for young LLDD learners.** Once such a policy is produced, a working group of key representatives would be formed to develop the implementation plan. Such a forum may also provide for more effective sharing of knowledge and collaborative planning arrangements. For example, this would allow the Union Learning Centre in Hyde to work more closely with the Dovestone's Centre when considering future students. More collaborative working would help students to progress and build upon work carried out before rather than duplicate what students are offered to study.

Linked to the sharing of knowledge **we suggest the LSC GM and Tameside MBC, follow up the destination of former students to evaluate the appropriateness of the curriculum being offered to inform the future curriculum for students.** For example, feedback for the alternative curriculum programme has been strongly endorsed by the young people who have been involved over the last two years in terms of the hands on longer term career choice and providing a better understanding of employment. A long

term development building on this good practice should be established, to more effectively engage disaffected young people.

Key to the previous issue is the progression of young people with LLDD into employment. Research into the destination of young people will provide invaluable information to inform this. We understand that the LA supported 'Job Match' programme for adults with learning difficulties is to be re-launched as 'Routes to Work' by combining the existing programme for people with mental health needs. However, the programme has a limit on the number of new clients that can be supported. If this was expanded, or other agencies became involved as part of the working group highlighted above, this may free valuable resource at providers and provide more meaningful progression opportunities for young people in danger of repeating provision that is available.

One way of improving the progression of LLDD learners would be to involve these learners at the Dovestones Centre in vocational provision across Tameside College. **This may involve a requirement for a training needs analysis** to be taken amongst staff in respect of the implications of working with LLDD students to assist with the integration from specialist LLDD programmes to mainstream vocational programmes.

Through conducting this review in Tameside and through our recent review of provision in Trafford many of the issues appear to be applicable to the whole of Greater Manchester. In addition, the evidence suggests significant cross boundary activity with an increasing number of Tameside residents accessing provision delivered elsewhere. For this reason, **our recommendation is that the LSC Greater Manchester consider extending the recommendations above into a Greater Manchester LLDD strategy and learner entitlement.** This should be developed in partnership with key stakeholders across the ten Boroughs, which should include representatives from Connexions, Social Services, Colleges, Special Schools and WBL providers among others, but should be strategically driven by the LSC GM. As well as the issues above, the strategy should address the following:

- Where learners access residential provision, this is often outside of the Greater Manchester area. The LSC GM should review existing Greater Manchester LLDD provision and where educational need dictates, and funding and logistics allow, ensure that adequate specialist residential local provision is available to meet the needs of these learners, encouraging learners to stay in the area and re-directing funding into local provision;
- Flexible delivery, with appropriate funding, retention and quality mechanisms in order that providers are not penalised for accepting under-represented learners (as detailed by the Tomlinson Report Inclusive Learning) being those with profound and complex learning difficulties, young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties and adults with mental health difficulties, onto programmes;
- Commit and combine resources to close gaps in areas such as; the development of methods to support the colleges in learning and skills development for staff to deliver to learners with SEN; transport links to ensure that provision is accessible; progress

the provision of mobility learning; and create modern 21<sup>st</sup> Century provision that meets learner needs and aspirations; and

- Develop strong collaboration and communication between the key stakeholders and particularly with providers, learners and their parents, employers and the relevant support services, such as the social services and local disability teams, to ensure a common approach is developed to aid progression with *positive* outcomes for all learners across Greater Manchester, this could include such developments as an ‘into employment’ scheme (responsibility for which should sit within the Social Services and the Local Authority).

## 5.4 Pathways into Higher Education

Other recommendations made in this report, will, if acted upon, impact on progression into HE, for example recommendations around enhanced collaboration, engaging learners and developing a skills strategy for the Borough. The recommendations set out below should build upon and further support these developments.

We recommend that actions are implemented to:

- Further develop Aimhigher and build on its success to enhance knowledge of higher education learning pathways amongst 14-19 learners.
- Ensure that the progression routes from modern apprenticeships into HE are publicised and understood by potential users, stakeholders, providers and parents.
- Continue to work with local HEIs to develop links with providers and to ensure that they continue to respond to the needs of Tameside learners.
- Explore the need and likely impact of increasing the number of level 4 learning opportunities in Tameside, including developing further collaboration on Foundation Degrees and HND provision.
- Engage a number of key employers in Tameside who have staff with level 4 skills and qualifications to share good practice and possibly develop/provide training programmes and/or produce case studies.
- Ensure that communication of pathways and level 4 progression routes are shared with and understood by all providers.

Much of the activity required to implement these recommendation will be to build on the good practice already in existence in Tameside, for example around the work of Aimhigher.

Further activity should be developed in areas such as disseminating information amongst schools and learners by organising:

- University students to visit schools and give informal talks to year 10 and 11 groups on their personal experiences and choices;

- Parents and student events to raise awareness of choices and progression routes into level 4;
- Information which gives clear detail on progression routes should be available and distributed to all providers, with information on whom/where to contact for further advice; and
- Colleges and HEIs to collaborate to provide joint awareness raising events.

## 5.5 Promoting social cohesion and inclusion within Tameside

It is recommended that the LSC GM and Tameside MBC work together to develop strategies to promote social cohesion by engaging those hard to reach learners, such as young people at risk of becoming disaffected, disabled people and the NEET group.

**Our advice would be that the development of Option 3 provides the most effective vehicle for promoting social cohesion and inclusion within Tameside.**

The LSC GM and Tameside MBC should work closely with other agencies such as social services, police, community groups, charities, schools, colleges, training providers, youth offending teams and prison services ensuring a strategic lead.

It is recommended that measurable and meaningful targets are set by which the strategic partners can see where developments are effective and promote improving social cohesion and where improvements or different methods are required.

Education and training build the critical foundation for developing knowledge based society for combating social exclusion; links between education and other areas of policy are crucial to achieving both aims. **It will therefore be necessary as a first step in developing any strategies, to assess the role of education and training, in interaction with other areas of social policy in addressing social inequalities, vulnerability, marginalisation, disengagement and as a means of fostering social cohesion.** As strategies are developed to improve social cohesion they will need to be driven by local needs and be linked into other local strategies, (such as e.g. Tameside Economic Development Plan, RDA strategies).

It is recommended that key agencies map current intervention strategies in terms of promoting social cohesion. This would need to be performed within the context of local and national policy.

Any strategies should look at ways of involving not just individuals but *communities* in learning to minimise disadvantage, with targets for short, medium and long term benefits.

Developments across Tameside, such as 14-19 developments including the implementation plan, the adult skills strategies and the development of the Tameside Campus, all provide opportunities for collaboration to further develop strategies to combat social exclusion.

Developments within these areas need to be considered in a wider context, to ensure that opportunities to enable *all* citizens to participate in lifelong learning are not missed.

An example of one such opportunity could be the further development of e-learning within the Tameside Campus. Developments in computing and IT have sometimes been seen as encouraging the growth of a digital divide, creating a society which includes the information-rich and the information-poor. However, the use of computers and IT in continuing education can help to overcome barriers and enhance participation in marginalised groups, particularly as ICT is developed as the fourth skill for life. The growth of online learning communities can also enhance links between people not only in Tameside, but globally, helping to broaden experiences and raise expectations.

Strategies could be developed to increase the availability of computers across Tameside, targeted at those areas where the need is greatest. Mobile IT vans could be deployed across the Borough, providing additional support to what already exists and overcoming problems of lack of facilities. This would be particularly helpful in those areas where there is currently no IT community resource at all.

## 5.6 **Adult Learning and Skills Strategy**

### 5.6.1 **Adult Learning and Skills Strategy**

In terms of adult skills provision, previous sections of this report have highlighted the need for greater collaboration and coordination of the existing adult provision delivered across Tameside via different funding streams and agencies to ensure more equitable access to provision across the Borough. We have also highlighted the strategic importance of a more co-ordinated approach to ensure greater levels of progression, thereby equipping adults with the skills in increasing demand from employers.

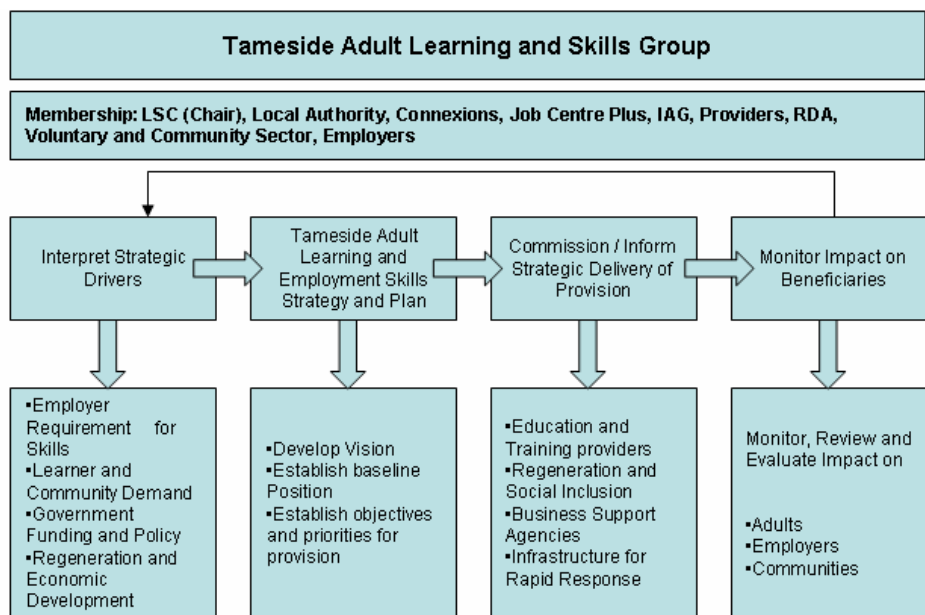
**Our recommendation is to establish an Adult Learning and Skills Group within Tameside (chaired by the LSC GM) the key remit of which would be to develop an Adult Learning and Employment Skills Strategy for Tameside.** The aim of this recommendation is to address the current weakness that there is no clear and collaborative learning offer within Tameside. A collaborative offer could reduce duplication, share resources and targets. This would lead to a broader and more holistic offer to adults and employers, recognising that their needs do not conveniently fall into distinct funding regimes and targets. When dealing with such a broad and complex agenda, no single organisation can deliver what is required. Only a more collaborative approach across all of the key strategic purchasers of learning and skills will bring clarity of offer, consistency of approach and an intelligent use of resources.

We have outlined below our recommendation on how the Adult Learning and Skills Group may operate. Membership of the group would be made up from key stakeholders responsible for the strategic planning and delivery of education and training with representation from other areas including regeneration and economic development. Employers and training providers would also sit on the group. The key remit of the group

would be better alignment between the delivery of provision and the current and future needs of employers, adult learners and the community.

Key here would be the development of an Adult Learning and Employment Skills Strategy and Action Plan to address the issues highlighted within this report. The Strategy would include a vision for adult provision within Tameside with objectives and priorities to address the key issues within Tameside. We would suggest the Strategy be used as a framework to both commission provision that best meets local need and act as a framework for all adult provision including Voluntary and Community provision. It is also envisaged that the Adult Learning and Skills Group and Strategy would enable more rapid response to requirements for provision including, for example, new employment or funding brought to the area through regeneration and economic development activity or to respond to economic impacts including redundancy and the need to up skill adults to re-enter the labour market

**Figure 5.4 Tameside Adult Learning and Skills Group**



Further benefits of the approach outlined above would include:

- **Partnership Development** ensuring structures are established to take ownership of adult and employment skills planning and provision. This would include a forum to strengthen engagement with employers and stronger links with current and future regeneration initiatives to enhance the case made to employers looking to locate to the Tameside region;
- An Adult Learning and Employment Skills Strategy that would be developed in consultation with strategic partners, providers, employers and the wider learning community and could **feed into the Tameside Local Area Agreement**;

- **Enhancing the breadth of provision** to ensure that adult provision contributes towards the priorities of the National Skills Strategy and establishes clear progression routes with appropriate support at specific transition stages e.g. entry level employment to workforce development opportunities;
- A more **Co-ordinated approach to neighbourhood and community initiatives** to ensure that learning is accessible across Tameside, particularly within deprived communities and areas with gaps in provision, and promote the Voluntary and Community sector through a network of networks;
- A **developed approach to IAG** providing information and tools for those that influence career choices, with defined roles and responsibilities within all stakeholders (see IAG recommendation) and work with Education providers to ensure a **coherent ICT offer** linked to the Tameside e-learning network;
- Provide a mechanism to develop **effective coordinated marketing** of all available adult provision; and
- A coordinated approach to capacity building within the Voluntary and Community Sector and supporting the Professional Development of this sector.

The aim of the strategy would be to work towards a single collaborative offer for adults, employers and the community that is jointly owned and collaboratively funded. A strategy that makes it clear what are the strategic priorities within Tameside, what provision is available and how can it be accessed. The arrangements would also enable the development of a more meaningful dialogue to continuously improve the curriculum and make it more relevant to individual and employer needs.

## 5.7 **Employability and Skills for Life**

Our analysis of data has shown that within Tameside a significantly higher percentage of adults have no qualifications when compared to the rest of Greater Manchester and the North West Region. In some wards the percentage of adults without a level 2 qualification (the platform for employability) is in excess of 50%. In addition, within Tameside there are areas where the percentage of adults with poor skills in literacy and numeracy are extremely high and restricts their ability to engage with employment. If such individuals are in employment, then research has shown how much poor basic skills can cost the employer.

Analysis of Skills for Life provision suggests that the take up of Skills for Life learning opportunities is not at the level required to address this issue within the Borough. Further research suggests that this is especially true with numeracy, where the take up of provision is low relative to the skills levels of Tameside residents, particularly at Entry level.

Clearly, the issue of poor basic skills is one that would be addressed through our recommendation to establish an Adult Learning and Skills Group and Adult Learning and Employment Skills Strategy. This would be linked to a co-ordinated approach to neighbourhood and community initiatives ensuring learning is accessible across Tameside. The issue of Basic Skills in Tameside is so acute that however we have

outlined recommendations below to engage employers and learners and improve the skills base of residents.

**We recommend that Tameside replicates the ‘Test the City’ approach that has been used in areas including Sunderland and County Durham to engage adults in Skills for Life learning.** The ‘Test the City’ approach involves making contact with employers and adults in the community and testing literacy and numeracy with targets for engaging adults in further learning. The approach has brought considerable success with the City of Sunderland College recently receiving beacon status for its ‘Test the City’ work.

The initiative has been successful both in a marketing sense and also in engaging those currently not in learning. The initiative has also been useful in increasing employer engagement. For example, in Durham following ‘Test the County’ the NHS replicated a similar initiative with its workforce. The initiative puts learning on the agenda and has also brought other benefits including progression of learners on to programmes such as IT and Access to Higher Education, and an increased enthusiasm for staff involved in Skills for Life learning.

Raising awareness amongst employers is key to addressing the issue of Skills for Life. Common problems such as high customer complaints, persistent administration and budget errors, rapid staff turnover and difficulties in recruiting for vacant posts, are often symptomatic of how difficulties with literacy, language and numeracy affect organisations. **A key recommendation here would be to ensure that all stakeholders and staff involved with employers are aware of the current Skills for Life learning opportunities and the tools / resources that are available.**

**We recommend that increasing Skills for Life activity is a central objective of the Train to Gain initiative within Tameside.** We also suggest that stakeholders and providers within Tameside explore the innovative approaches to Skills for Life taking place at the sector level and raise employer awareness of these approaches. This includes sector specific Skills for Life activity and the work currently being done on the embedding of Skills for Life learning within broader learning. This may also include learning from best practice taking place nationally (See case study below). Where sector specific Skills for Life learning has not been developed, Tameside stakeholders may wish to commission the development of provision for key sectors

### **Skills for Life Case Study**

Walkers Snack Food embarked on a whole organisation approach to addressing literacy and numeracy, embedding Skills for Life (SfL) activity in the core activity of the company. Measures adopted have included: A new NVQ in Health and Safety, with embedded SfL; SfL is being integrated into the recruitment process with identified needs built into personal development plans; SFL is being promoted not just internally but to the wider area, including family, friends and the business community.

Benefits so far include: Enthused employees, who regularly request programmes, which they attend in their own time; offering access to the Learning Centres and their families has improved the commitment and retention of staff; Evidence that improved language, literacy and numeracy skills has contributed to a major waste reduction exercise at the Walker Snack Foods plant which has improved business performance; Awareness of Walkers as a responsible employer has risen and its image and reputation has benefited from national publicity.

## **5.8 Management Information**

Throughout conducting this review a number of issues have been raised concerning management information, both in our efforts to source information requirements and by stakeholders who have highlighted gaps in the information that is collected. Effective arrangements to monitor management information is key to ensuring that stakeholders are able to fully understand the prevailing issues within Tameside and monitor the impact of policy interventions.

Some of the gaps in information we have identified through our review of literature or have been highlighted by stakeholders have included:

- Details of 14 to 16 learners accessing provision outside of school provision e.g. at another training provider;
- Data on Information, Advice and Guidance relating to adults;
- Adult learning delivered by voluntary / community and the community provision that is delivered within schools;
- Data protection inhibiting the sharing of information (e.g. Jobcentre Plus data);
- Data that is not collected on some pre entry level provision; and
- A lack of data on adult education progression.

A further issue may be that of performance management. If there is to be greater collaboration between providers in the deliver of programmes then transparent information on which to base funding decisions will be required as will an effective framework for provider performance.

**We recommend that, as a precursor to the development of arrangements for 14-19 and adult provision, an audit of the available information is carried out between partners** with details of what is available and any data access restrictions. Linked to this would be the development of a Memorandum of Understanding regarding data and use of information that may enable sharing of information that is not currently permitted.

**We also suggest that better use is made of existing data.** For example, the LSC 14 to 19 matched dataset will be an effective tool in analysing patterns in achievement and destination patterns of school leavers. This may be of significant interest, given the level of change that will take place in 14-19 learning over the next three to four years.

The Key Stage 4 survey (carried out on year 10 pupils) has been an extremely useful tool to assist us and inform this review. **Our recommendation is that the exercise is repeated annually and that a similar exercise is carried out across all 14 to 19 providers including school sixth forms, further education and work based learning providers to enable effective joint planning of provision.** This may take the form of an electronic database that can be accessed and populated by providers to assist in the development of provision and inform collaborative activity.