

**£427,000 INITIATIVE WILL BENEFIT BLACKPOOL'S YOUNG PEOPLE
Blackpool's young people are set to benefit from over £427,000 of funding to
provide more options for those that are not in education, employment or training.**

Date of issue 11 July 2007

Publication number NWR – O74

Funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), the initiative was launched at the De Vere Whites Hotel in Blackpool recently with agencies including Connexions, the Prince's Trust and Youth Services in attendance.

The funding comes as a result of a new national programme of support for those areas identified as 'NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) Hotspots'.

A range of new initiatives will be introduced to the area to support the growing population of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training.

These will include specialist mentors to help those transferring to college, one week energiser courses to help young people identify the right routes and a job club to offer links to employers.

Young people will also be consulted to gauge their views on support they would like to see offered.

Janet Jackson, Partnership Manager for the LSC in Lancashire has welcomed the funding. She commented, "This is great news for Blackpool and will provide a wealth of new opportunities for young people to maximise their potential. Thanks to some excellent partnership work in the area, these opportunities have been quickly developed so that young people start to benefit as soon as possible and these innovative new approaches will make significant steps towards the LSC's overall vision of a world class workforce for the area."

Guests at the launch event also heard from Geoff Thompson MBE, a former world karate champion and Executive Director of Youthwise.

He commented, “Blackpool is unique in that it has the issues of the big conurbations – it is an inner-city by the sea. I have seen great multi-agency working here today, and a will from all to improve prospects for young people in Blackpool. We need to remember that the future of Blackpool is not just about a casino, or other tourist attractions, it is about the young people of Blackpool, who will be the ambassadors making the town prosper through decades to come”

If you are 16-18, or know anyone of that age wishing to get involved in the new opportunities, including one-week energiser events running throughout the summer and half day job workshops, contact Connexions at Market Street, Blackpool, on 01253 754840.

Ends

Learning and Skills Council:

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England’s young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

All media enquiries please contact:

LSC

Debbie Cooke on 0161 2610434, deborah.cooke@lsc.gov.uk

The Write Angle

01772 250505

Louise Lancaster: louise@writeanglepr.co.uk

Angela Smith: angela@writeanglepr.co.uk