

Annual Plan 2005-06



Leading learning and skills

For Annual Plan 2005-06

Local Office	Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire
Region	South East
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Foreword

The Strategic Area Review (StAR) that as been conducted over the past eighteen months and more has come to an end. The StAR, however, lives on in this Annual Plan.

The LSC MKOB Council met in December 2004 to appraise the strategic options that had emerged from the StAR process and agreed the local priorities arising therefrom. The fourteen agreed local priorities have been incorporated into the Annual Plan 2005-06

Now, work starts to implement the actions set out in the Annual Plan and so begin to realise the priorities for 2005-06 and beyond. For the local priorities to become a reality, the LSC MKOB will need to work closely with a range of partners and stakeholders. Indeed, it is only with the support of, and significant input from, those partners and stakeholders that the LSC will be able to achieve the priorities for which the StAR process has demonstrated there is widespread support.

I and my team, and the members of the Council, look forward to the challenge of putting our Annual Plan into action.

Pat Upson
Chair of Council

David Ansell
Executive Director

Executive Summary

This annual plan for 2005-06 outlines the proposals for individuals and employers across Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire (MKOB), ensuring they are offered high quality learning opportunities that will strengthen the local economy and appropriate skills are in place to accommodate future growth.

LSC MKOB is committed to taking forward the national and regional Learning and Skills Council priorities, which are reflected in the headline activities of this plan. MKOB is an area of high economic activity and benefits from low unemployment rates, which leads to particular issues around participation in post 16 education and young people moving into unskilled or low skilled jobs. This coupled with variable improvements in the quality of the learning provision, impacts upon employer demand and specific skills shortages. One in five employers report having a skills gap. Therefore for 2005-06 there will be a particular focus on the three areas below:

- Working with providers **to ensure access to high quality, relevant learning opportunities** by improving success rates year on year and improving the consistency of good inspection grades.
- Further extending the Apprenticeship programme and improving success rates, particularly in skills priority sectors, helping **to make learning truly demand-led to better meet the needs of learners and employers.**
- By continuing to develop CoVES (Centres of Vocational Excellence) and Action for Business Colleges to improve the responsiveness of providers to be more demand-led and meet the needs of employers, **transforming FE so it attracts and stimulates more business investment in training and skills development.**

Through the Strategic Area Review, the local LSC has worked closely with its partners and stakeholders and we are confident this plan reflects local concerns and local solutions through the following 14 priorities. These priorities will be delivered through three key areas of activity:

1. Young people - improving participation and achievement

After a period of static growth the demand for post 16 participation is predicted to grow, particularly in ODPM growth area such as Milton Keynes and Aylesbury. A significant number of young people are not achieving at Level 2 by age 19. The development of a joint LEA and LSC strategy will bring greater coherence and choice for all young people including those with special needs. Priorities in 2005-06 are:

- LEA and LSC joint strategy for 14-16, including development of vocational curriculum and review of funding for 14-16 offer
- Re-focus work related learning in schools to take better account of employer and industry sector needs.
- Ensure that post 16 provision for students with special needs is suitable and accessible.

2. Adults – raising the level of skills

Significant numbers (38%) of adults in MKOB have below level 2 qualifications of with many have poor literacy and numeracy skills. Employers report that they do not have access to appropriate skills. A need to raise appropriate skills is therefore a crucial challenge in the context of the high skill economy of MKOB. Priorities for 2005-06 are:

- To ensure that providers are well placed to meet employer needs.
- To expand development of Learning Centres linked to or based on employers' premises.
- Post 16 providers and employers develop specific pathways to employment in skill shortage areas.
- Help to meet skills shortages by addressing the needs of those at the margins of the workforce.
- Improve workforce skills of the public sector.

3. Improving the quality and responsiveness of provision: taking forward the agenda for change.

The quality of provision in MKOB is variable. In responding to current and future skills needs, the local LSC has recognised that there is a need for particular focus in some geographic areas and sectors.

- Implement a learner expectation framework through partnerships and collaboration to meet the needs of all learners. This should include a contribution framework for providers.
- Focus on agreed geographic areas for joint LSC / LEA planning to meet current and future learning needs.
- Involve communities and providers to provide satellite centres of learning in agreed areas of deprivation.
- Review delivery of adult learning so that extended schools take more active part in order to provide adequate access to learning.
- Ensure high quality provision by making the learning environment fit for current and future learning requirements.
- Develop a strategy to make better and more effective use of IT.

Strategic Priorities

National Priorities

The LSC's Annual Statement of Priorities published in December 2004 sets out what needs to be done to support the delivery of world-class learning and skills. Our priorities are to:

1. Make learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults.
2. Ensure that all 14-19 year olds have access to high quality, relevant learning opportunities.
3. Transform Further Education so that it attracts and stimulates more business investment in training and skills development.
4. Strengthen the role of the LSC in economic development so that we provide the skills needed to help all individuals into jobs.
5. Strengthen the LSC's capacity to work effectively at a regional level – particularly with Regional Development Agencies and Regional Skills Partnerships.
6. Improve the skills of workers who are delivering public services.

Government has set challenging skills targets that we are committed to delivering - directly and by influencing the activities of our partners. In supporting these priorities nationally, the LSC plans to deliver against the following targets:

For young people:

- Increase the proportion of 19 year olds who achieve at least Level 2 (equivalent of 5 GCSEs) by three percentage points between 2004 and 2006, and a further two percentage points between 2006 and 2008. Contributing to this, the LSC aims to deliver 23,000 additional 19 year olds at/above Level 2 in 2006 compared to 2004

For apprentices:

- A performance indicator for apprenticeships has been developed. By 2008, the number completing their apprenticeship will have risen by three quarters.

For adults:

- Improve the basic skills of 2.25 million adults between 2001 and 2010, with a milestone of 1.5 million in 2007 of which the LSC plans to fund at least 1.4 million directly.
- Reduce by at least 40 per cent the number of adults in the workforce who lack an NVQ Level 2 or equivalent qualifications by 2010. The LSC will lead on ensuring the delivery of this target through its own funding and contributions from others.

We will also work with key partners to contribute to their efforts to:

- Increase the proportion of young people and adults achieving a Level 3 qualification. These targets will be set regionally to reflect the priorities of regional skills partnerships and regional skills needs
- Reduce the proportion of young people not in education, training or employment by two percentage points by 2010
- Increase participation in Higher Education towards 50 per cent of those aged 18 to 30 by 2010.

Our planned local contribution to the delivery of these targets is summarised in Annex A.

The LSC priorities are set within the context of three key policy drivers that will inform and shape the direction of the work we undertake. They are:

14-19 White Paper

The LSC welcomes the 14-19 White Paper's focus on the needs of the learner and the importance of providing stretch and encouragement for all young people. Critically, it recognises the part employers will play in shaping provision and in providing more opportunities for work-related learning and work experience. The LSC will support these reforms by providing leadership, nationally, regionally and locally and by expanding on the excellent work already being provided in the 14-19 arena and by continuing to develop strong partnerships with the organisations that have direct contact with young people. 14-19 and collaborative developments are strong features of our plan for 2005-06.

Skills Strategy

The LSC will work with its key partners nationally, regionally and locally to ensure the effective implementation of the Government's Skills Strategy. A key element of this will be the National Employer Training Programme (NETP) that will offer employers hassle-free access to their skills needs. Building on the success and experience of the LSC's Employer Training Pilots, NETP will provide employers with solutions that address access to high quality learning provision at Level 3 and above and to short bespoke courses, and, where appropriate, support for basic skills and Level 2 provision. A comprehensive skills brokerage service, led by the LSC, will ensure that employers receive high quality and impartial advice that is designed to have a positive impact on their bottom line.

Agenda for Change

The LSC's agenda for change encompasses a wide range of activity to transform the FE sector. We recognise that there are significant strengths in the sector, but also major issues to tackle. We need to work together with all of our providers to respond to the challenges that we face so we are able to meet the vision for the future laid down by our own Annual Statement of Priorities, and the 14-19 Strategy, the Skills Strategy and

Success for All. The LSC 's agenda for change will strengthen the sector's ability to respond to the needs of local learners, employers, the economy and the communities we serve. To do so, we are committed to transforming six key areas of work: skills and employers; quality; funding; efficiency; data and reputation.

Regional Priorities

The LSCs in the South East¹ have developed a set of priorities for 2005-06 which reflect four main themes of regional working and which complement the national priorities.

1. Young people's learning

Participation and performance rates in learning by young people in the South East overall are relatively high, but there is scope for improvement and for reducing significant intra-regional variation. In addition, Apprenticeship programmes are not currently reaching targets and there is a significant group of young people who are unlikely to achieve Level 2 and who are at risk of disaffection. Regional priorities are to:

- ensure comprehensive choice and accessible learning provision for all 14-19 year olds, which provides progression opportunities
- ensure that provision of high quality, comprehensive and impartial advice and guidance, accessible to all young people
- develop opportunities for employer engagement with 14-19 learning.

2. Skills development

The dynamic economy of the region with its high skill requirements is forecast to continue to grow. It is crucial that learning, especially work related, better meets employer needs and that there is attention to the significant skills gaps and shortages (both sectoral and generic). Despite its economic buoyancy, there are localised areas of deprivation and disadvantaged groups throughout the region. Regional priorities are to:

- transform the FE offer to be more demand-led through Action for Business networks and employer focused missions
- further develop brokerage arrangements focused on information, advice and guidance (IAG) for employers and individuals
- target priority workforce skills sectors through sector specific investment plans and implementation (focusing on manufacturing/engineering, business services, wholesale/retail, health and care and construction)

¹ The South East LSC region comprises the six local areas of Berkshire, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, Kent and Medway, Surrey and Sussex

- implement a coherent package of learning programmes, advice and financial support for the low skilled and disadvantaged.

3. Quality of provision

In general, success rates and quality measures identified through the inspection process compare favourably with national averages but there is substantial variation across the region both in the performance of individual providers and between different learning sectors. Regional priorities are to:

- improve success rates to an agreed regional minimum standard
- improve the standards and credibility of the provider network.

4. Provider infrastructure

Significant population growth is forecast in some areas of the South East, creating substantial new demands for education and training. In addition many complex organisational and estates' challenges face providers in the region. There is also a need for greater synergy between policies and plans of partner agencies, especially to support economic growth and regeneration. Regional priorities are to:

- transform the provider infrastructure through review, improved organisation, collaboration and capital investment, giving world-class quality for learners, employers and communities
- strengthen joint planning and investment with strategic partners to respond better to needs and opportunities for leveraging in additional investment and for influencing change.

Local Priorities

The issues and proposals set out in this document reflect local concerns and local solutions. The LSC's local priorities have been based on the needs of the Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire (MKOB) area, within the context of national and regional policy, priorities and targets. One of the most crucial priorities for the LSC is the quality agenda. MKOB intend to significantly improve the quality and responsiveness of provision to ensure individuals and employers are offered high quality learning opportunities that will strengthen the local economy and make sure the skills are in place to accommodate future growth.

Working closely with key partners and providers will be paramount to achieving this for the period starting 2005-06. We will:

- Work with providers to ensure a high quality provider base by improving success rates year on year and improving the consistency of good inspection grades

- Further extend the Apprenticeship programme and improve success rates, particularly in skills priority sectors, to better meet learners and employers needs.
- By continuing to develop CoVES (Centres of Vocational Excellence) and Action for Business Colleges to improve the responsiveness of providers to be more demand-led and meet the needs of employers.

The Strategic Area Review has played an important part in determining planning priorities for 05/06 and beyond, resulting in 14 key local priorities under the headings of Young People 14-19, Skills and Agenda for Change, for inclusion within the 04/05 plan.

Young people 14-19

- The development of vocational curriculum within MKOB has been a success but a longer term; more sustainable approach to its role in post 16 learning is required.
- The LSC intends to re-focus work-related learning activity within schools to take better account of employer and industry sector needs.
- The 2004 review of Students with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities (SLDD) provision identified a range of different issues across the 3 MKOB LEA areas and proposed a number of solutions. Working with local partners the LSC will ensure that post 16 provision for students with special needs is suitable, accessible and specific to the area concerned.

Skills

- Growth is predicted in much of MKOB and particularly in Aylesbury Vale and Milton Keynes. The LSC will therefore work closely with providers to meet current and future employer needs, particularly in the four local priority sectors. Education Business Link Organisation (EBLO) activity and Action for Business Colleges will be integral to the successful achievement of this priority.
- Given MKOB's very high economic activity rates, one of the most important opportunities to increase adult participation in training is around provision within the workplace. The LSC will therefore work with key local employers to expand development of Learning Centres linked to or based within employers' premises.
- The LSC, working closely with the Local Skills for Productivity Alliance (LSfPA) will work with post 16 providers and employers to develop specific pathways to employment in skill shortage areas.
- The research and consultation phases of StAR suggested that the early retired and those on incapacity benefits were two key groups of the 'real' unemployed where attention needs to be focused to encourage their participation in the labour market.
- A national priority that is particularly important to MKOB given the proportion of the local workforce employed in the health and education is a need to improve workforce skills of the public sector.

Agenda for Change

- Implementation of a learner expectation framework within each of the three LEA areas through partnership and collaboration to ensure an improved range of opportunities. This will incorporate planned progression routes from entry level to HE; flexible delivery modes, impartial IAG and sufficient provision to suit the needs of all post 16 learners.
- A number of localised geographic areas have been identified where specific gaps in provision are recognised or anticipated. Particularly important is an LSC response to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) growth agenda for Milton Keynes and Aylesbury Vale building on the joint research work undertaken with Northamptonshire and Luton & Bedfordshire LSCs in 2004/5.
- A consistent message from StAR was the significantly lower learning participation in areas of deprivation, mainly in urban areas. The LSC will therefore work with communities and providers to develop satellite centres of learning in agreed areas of deprivation incorporating appropriate IT and E-learning solutions.
- In response to issues of rurality in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, the LSC intends to review delivery of adult learning and the role that extended schools could play in addressing access.
- Ensure high quality provision by making the learning environment fit for current and future learning requirements.
- The LSC will take forward its StAR e-learning research project utilising its recommendations as the foundation for a strategy to make better and more effective use of IT.

Market Analysis

The MKOB area is made up of the County of **Oxfordshire**, the County of **Buckinghamshire** and the Unitary Authority of **Milton Keynes**. The area is crossed by the M40 motorway providing links to London, Birmingham and the North. Milton Keynes is also close to the M1.

- **Milton Keynes** is a large conurbation and is one of the most well known new towns in England. It has a growing population, which is forecast to exceed 255,000 by 2011². The Regional Planning Guidance for the South East has identified the general area of 'Milton Keynes South Midlands' as one of three major growth areas in the region, which will result in substantial growth in both the economy and population of the area.
- **Oxfordshire** is a rural county with a population of about 615,000, which is set to grow to about 640,000 by 2011³. The county contains the main city of Oxford, and there are a number of market towns outside Oxford City, such as Abingdon, Banbury, Bicester, Didcot and Witney. Although the main arterial rail and road links to the rest of the country are good, rural access can be problematic.
- **Buckinghamshire** is a prosperous and largely rural county with the main population centres in Aylesbury and High Wycombe. However, much of the County's population live in smaller towns dispersed around the county. In total, the population numbers about 478,000. This figure is forecast to fall to under 471,000 by 2011⁴. Aylesbury and High Wycombe both have rail links to the capital, whilst Amersham, Chesham and Chalfont are connected to the Underground network.

There are 64,662 businesses and organisations in Milton Keynes (15%), Oxfordshire (44%) and Buckinghamshire (41%)⁵. Key employers in the area include 3 Health Trusts, 3 Unitary/County Councils, and 4 HE institutions, AEA Technology, Unipart, Federal Express, Tesco Distribution and BMW. SMEs are crucial to the area - 86% of businesses employ 10 people or less and account for 21.9% of the workforce.

Despite the area's economic buoyancy there are localised areas of severe deprivation. Northfield Brook in Oxford hosts the most deprived Census Super Output Area (SOA)⁶ in MKOB, and is within the top 5% most deprived in England. The top six most deprived SOAs in Milton Keynes fall within the 10% most deprived SOAs in England, and four of these lie within Woughton ward. None of Buckinghamshire's SOAs fall within the 20% most deprived in England.

The area has an economic activity rate above the South East average and benefits from extremely low unemployment rates resulting in a very tight labour market. However, there are some groups of the 'real unemployed' such as those on incapacity benefits and the early retired who may have the potential to (re) join the labour market.

² MK Council

³ Oxfordshire CC

⁴ Bucks CC

⁵ ABI 2003

⁶ A range of geographical areas, developed by the Office for National Statistics, that are of consistent size (unlike wards) and whose boundaries will not be subject to change over time. They have a minimum population of 1000.

Key Learning and Skills needs

1. Young People – Improving the participation and achievement of young people

1.1 Performance Scorecard Analysis

After a static three years, young people's participation is predicted to rise for the year ending July 2006. In 2003/04, performance against plan stands at 96%, with early indications in 2004/05 showing that the planned increase is on target. Given MKOB's high economic activity rate and a low NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) count, it can be assumed that young people are moving straight into employment. Disappointingly PSA Apprenticeship starts are 87% of plan. Entry to Employment (E2E) starts are 23% above original plan.

MKOB is making year-on-year improvements in success rates and is planning the highest increase regionally, although currently local rates are below the South East average. Performance is variable across the provider network and curriculum areas.

1.2 Key local issues and challenges

Young people's achievement at KS4 is variable across the three areas. Buckinghamshire (65.9%) is significantly above the England average (53.7%) for 5 A*-C grades at GCSE. However, Milton Keynes is below (48.2%), although steady improvement has been made and Oxfordshire (51.2%) has had limited improvement over the last 3 years⁷ - both LEA areas are working to improve these levels.

Particular issues exist around participation - young people in MKOB are less likely to stay on in full-time education than the South East average although a higher than average number go into Government Sponsored Training and Employment with Training⁸. LSC research in 2004 identified particular issues around progression for students with learning difficulties and or disabilities in all three MKOB areas.

There has been a good take-up of Entry to Employment programmes (20% of the South East total) with 33% of leavers going into positive destinations, and the implementation of EMA's has been successful.

Low achievement and participation rates will impact upon employer demand and specific skill shortages needs from young people have been identified locally.

1.3 Local Priorities

The research information collected as part of our StAR together with the incorporation of national and regional priorities, form the basis for the following local priorities:

- LEA and LSC joint strategy for 14-16, including development of vocational curriculum and review of funding for 14-16 offer
- Re-focus work related learning in schools to take better account of employer and industry sector needs.
- Ensure that post 16 provision for students with special needs is suitable and accessible.

⁷ DfES GCSE and Equivalent Results and Associated Value Added Measures for Young People in England 2003/04 (Revised)

⁸ DfES

2. Adults – Raising the level of skills

2.1 Performance Scorecard Analysis

Adult participation in FE has not increased over the last three years. There has, however, been some increase in Work Based Learning (WBL). Overall MKOB has achieved 91% of the 2003/04 adult contracts. FE is at 90% of target and Work Based Learning is at 111% of target. The overall participation of adults is declining and still below the South East average.

MKOB had a Skills for Life target at July 2004 to reduce the number of people with basic skills needs by 18,874. From the figures received to date, the actual figure achieved was 11,672 (62% of target), with 55% of provision not counting towards the targets.

MKOB has the highest achievement rates for literacy and numeracy in the South East.

2.2 Key local issues and challenges

An estimated 204,500 adults in MKOB have no qualifications, which equates to over one fifth (22 %) of the adult population. This is below average compared with the South East (24 %) ⁹.

357,000 adults have low (below Level 2) qualifications, representing 38 per cent of the adult population. This proportion is again below the SE average (41%) ¹⁰. 31% of *working age adults* in MKOB has qualifications at NVQ Level 1 or below (36% in Milton Keynes) ¹¹. There are an estimated 160,000 people with poor literacy skills, and 150,000 people with poor numeracy skills ¹².

A need to raise the skills issues for these groups and, in particular, to address basic skills is therefore a crucial challenge in the context of the high skill economy and the proposed skill aspirations for Milton Keynes and Aylesbury Vale.

In contrast, the local economy is relatively well skilled in terms of the proportion of individuals qualified to level 3 or above (43%). Both Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire record relatively very high proportions of individuals at level 4 or above; HE participation in Milton Keynes is being addressed as part of the University for Milton Keynes initiative.

2.3 Local Priorities

The research information collected as part of our StAR together with the incorporation of national and regional priorities, form the basis for the following local priorities:

- Ensure that providers are well placed to meet employer needs.
- Expand development of Learning Centres linked to or based on employers' premises.
- Post 16 providers and employers develop specific pathways to employment in skill shortage areas.
- Help to meet skills shortages by addressing the needs of those at the margins of the workforce.
- Improve workforce skills of the public sector.

⁹ 2001 Census

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Skills Audit 2003/4

¹² Basic Skills Agency

3. Improving the quality and responsiveness of provision

3.1 Key local issues and challenges

MKOB colleges have a higher proportion of curriculum areas at inspection grade 3 and a significant proportion of Leadership and Management grades at grade 4. A similar picture exists for Work Based Learning areas of learning, but leadership and management grades are above the national average.

Apprenticeship programme participation and achievements are low and reflect the national reluctance to embrace vocational training as an alternative to the academic route.

In terms of responsiveness, current data shows there are approximately 21,000 vacancies in MKOB. 36% of vacancies are hard to fill and 19% are skills shortage vacancies¹³. One in five employers report having a skills gap. Highest skills gaps are within business activities and retail. Associate professionals, sales and elementary occupations are most affected by skills gaps.

Employers also identify communication skills, customer-handling skills, problem solving skills and team working skills as lacking in the workforce.

In terms of the future, forecasts for the whole of MKOB suggest that nearly 72,000 additional jobs will arise over the period 2001-2010.

In responding to current and future skills issues, the LSC have recognised that particular focus needs to be placed on construction, retail, care and engineering/manufacturing.

- Skills shortages in construction are a continuing problem, and large deficits in the skills required are set to become more severe due to the age structure of the current workforce. Demand in the construction sector is expected to be fuelled substantially by the Milton Keynes South Midlands development.
- Employment in the retail sector is forecast to grow by 6% to 2011 but replacement demand is anticipated to be five times this.
- Skills gaps and shortages are apparent across the care sector some of this through legislative demands for level 2 and level 4 qualifications
- In the engineering sector, further job losses are expected locally and nationally to the end of the decade but there are still substantial replacement demands for many of the occupations in this industry, with the largest increases expected to be for skilled trades. The area continues to attract high value added manufacturers

A significant part of employment growth will be in occupations requiring relatively low levels of qualification or skill so relevant curriculum at level 1 and 2 is a crucial component of future provision.

3.2 Local Priorities

The research information collected as part of our StAR together with the incorporation of national and regional priorities, form the basis for the following local priorities:

- Implement a learner expectation framework through partnerships and collaboration to meet the needs of all learners. This should include a contribution framework for providers.

¹³ National Employer Skills Survey 2003

- Focus on agreed geographic areas for joint LSC / LEA planning to meet current and future learning needs.
- Involve communities and providers to provide satellite centres of learning in agreed areas of deprivation.
- Review delivery of adult learning so that extended schools take more active part in order to provide adequate access to learning.
- Ensure high quality provision by making the learning environment fit for current and future learning requirements.
- Develop a strategy to make better and more effective use of IT.

Headline Activities

Young People - Improving the participation and achievement of young people			
Key Actions in response to LSC priorities	Summary of local activity	Key outcomes / measures of success	Resource
Widen the choice of stronger vocational routes for young people, including the participation and completion of those undertaking apprenticeships	<p>1. Implement a learner expectation and provider contribution framework, to promote engagement and meet the needs of learners, including those with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities (LDD), as part of a joint LEA/LSC 14-19 Framework to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational learning • Work related learning • Impartial advice and guidance <p>Alternative, flexible and personalised curriculum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three 14-19 Strategy Groups and development plans in place • Partnership agreement with Connexions reviewed by April 2005 and implemented by March 2006 	<p>Proportion of the total LID/Learning Partnerships budget of:</p> <p>£305k</p>
	<p>2. Identify vocational routes and progression pathways for young people and extend the curriculum offer to improve progression from Entry level to Level 4 in the priority skills areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational pathways from Level 1 to Level 4, in each LEA area by Sept 06 in care, construction, engineering and retail • A planning tool available for local consortia by Sept 05 	<p>LIDF £28k</p>
	<p>3. Further develop the Apprenticeship and Entry to Employment (E2E) programmes by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extending the range of apprenticeships available, particularly in priority sectors • Extending the breadth of the Entry to Employment curriculum to widen participation • Improving pathways into and progression from Entry to Employment and Apprenticeships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase apprenticeship participation by 2% to an average in learning of 5378 all ages (16-18 2860 and 19+2518) • E2E starts increase from 871 to 959 • E2E positive destination rate increased from 45% to 50% 	<p>Proportion of the total mainstream funds for:</p> <p>WBL YP £10.7m E2E £4.9m</p>

	4. Set and monitor challenging success rate targets for young people in WBL and FE, in providers 3YDPs and apprenticeship framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FE success rates (all ages) improved by 2% to 72% WBL framework completions (all ages) improved by 11% to 42% Apprenticeship success rates meet the minimum of a floor target in each curriculum area to be agreed 	Proportion of total mainstream funds for: FE participation £82.4m WBL all ages £17.2m
	5. Increase participation and achievement of young people 14-19 from ethnic minorities by improving access and removing barriers to learning opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75 Young People retained in post 16 learning by Nov 2005 Baseline established for Level 2 achievement 	EMSAG grant £90k
	6. Increase employer involvement in the delivery of the vocational curriculum 14-16 and 14-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,000 IF students to benefit from employer engagement 100% (52) Young Apprenticeships (YA) to undertake employer placements 	Proportion of total budgets for: IF £1.1m EBLO £773k YA £71k
Guarantee 16-18 year olds a suitable learning opportunity, including the development of a	7. LSC and partners to produce a regional statement, articulated by young people, setting out their entitlement to learning 14-19 [R] ¹⁴ .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local implementation and dissemination of regional strategies to regional timescale 	Regional budget

¹⁴ [R] – Regional activity/outcome

<p>more coherent phase of learning for 14-19 year olds.</p>	<p>8. Increase participation and ensure FE/ Work Based Learning/ School Sixth Forms (SSF) provide accessible places for all 16-18 year olds</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14,145 16-18 year olds in School Sixth Forms (increased by 1.5% on 04/05) • 12218 16-18 learners in FE in 2005/06 (3% increase on 04/05) • 2860 average in learning on WBL (4% increase on 04/05) 	<p>Proportion of total FE £82.4m/WBL £17.2m mainstream funds</p> <p>SSF £67.2m</p> <p>Transport Partnership Funding tba</p>
	<p>9. Ensure the maximum number of young people access Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and/or Learner Support to encourage post 16 participation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Y12 applications by 10% in Bucks (from 1,482) and Oxon (from 1,730) and by 3% in MK (from 1,071) • Implementation plan and marketing of the extension of EMAs to Work-based learners by April 2006 	<p>EMA funding</p> <p>£52k</p>
	<p>10. Work with the LEAs and provider partnerships, to ensure access and progression to a range of vocational programmes for 14-16 year olds, raising the quality of delivery and outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved achievement of Increased Flexibility cohort 2 by 5% over cohort 1 • Retention in each partnership increase by 5% over previous years • 60% of cohort 2 progress to further learning post 16 • 19 Young Apprentices retained to year 2 of Engineering programme • 24 students recruited to cohort 2 Engineering • Development of YA programme in additional vocational area 	<p>Proportion of total IF funds £1.1m</p> <p>Proportion of total YA funds £71k</p>

	<p>11. Improve progression for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities including access to residential settings for learners with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties.(PMLD)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of PMLD completed to assess availability of suitable provision and changes implemented by Sept 06 • Progression protocols agreed by Sept 05 and multi-agency support agreed case by case • 20 more students with PMLD supported in the local area 	<p>Proportion of total FE mainstream funding £82.4m</p> <p>Proportion of total LIDF/Learning Partnerships of £305k</p> <p>LIDF £125K</p>
	<p>12. Engage partners in the development of provision to meet the needs of young people at risk of disengagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of current availability of provision in MKOB with information circulated to providers by Oct 05 • Three school-led integrated support service projects agreed by Sept 2005 and for implementation in 2005/6 • Opportunities directory for Oxfordshire published Jan 06 	<p>LIDF £95k</p> <p>LIDF (OXIAP)</p>

	13. Support the development of teachers/lecturers to deliver the vocational curriculum and develop teacher capacity to deliver key skills/basic skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40 teachers undertake placements in vocational areas • Work of skills for life professional development network (PDN) to extend to 14-19 capability mapping for key skills • 25 teachers undertake Continuing Profession Development in Key Skills delivery • Motivational techniques programme extended from WBL providers to colleges/schools • School clusters identified and individual relevant programmes developed for roll-out from 06-07 • 1000 IF learners to benefit from additional support and guidance 	<p>Proportion of total EBLO funds of £773k</p> <p>Proportion of total WFD/LIDF funds £446k</p> <p>LIDF £25k</p>
Encourage more collaboration amongst schools, colleges and training providers and closer working with employers	14. Develop area based 14-19 collaborative partnerships to develop appropriate local solutions to improve achievement at Level 2 by age 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEA/LSC/Connexions/provider strategies agreed in Banbury, Thame, Bicester, Carterton • 4 partnerships/consortia established 	
	15. EBLO re-focused to broker delivery of work related curriculum in schools and colleges to reflect employer and sector needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 employers contributing to the delivery of programmes in schools • Employer Skills Offer contracted to deliver 10 work experience placements by 31 March 2006. • 100 students on Formula schools programme 	<p>Proportion of total EBLO grant £773k</p> <p>LIDF £42k</p>

	16. Post 16 providers and employers to develop specific pathways to employment in skills shortage areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased participation in all priority sectors: • Construction sector by 10% • Care sector by 5% • Engineering by 8% • Each sub-area to have construction opportunities in college and WBL providers from Level 1 to Level 3 by Sept 06 	Proportion of total FE £82.4m/WBL £17.2m mainstream funds
Progression to Higher Education in support of the PSA target	17. In partnership with Aimhigher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead on research, evaluation and development strand • Manage the local development of Aimhigher database • Participate in collaborative curriculum development between HEIs, FE/Work Based Learning providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web-based tool released to providers and Connexions – January 2006 • Analysis reports produced by Mar 06 • Two new foundation degree developed in skills priority areas for introduction Sept 06 	LIDF (Aimhigher) £22k
	18. Support development of Level 4 opportunities in Milton Keynes through support for Universities for MK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universities for MK is part of the Aimhigher collaborative curriculum group for foundation degrees 	

Adults - Raising the level of skills

Key Actions in response to LSC priorities	Summary of local activity	Key outcomes / measures of success	Resource
Implement the initial priorities contained in Sector Skills Agreements (SSAs)	19. Work with Sector Skills Councils in local priority areas to agree and address local skills issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care • Construction • Manufacturing/Engineering • Retail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint planning agreements in place for MKOB priority sectors in conjunction with LSPA to address issues by Oct 05 • Current sector plans and activity continued and integrated into SSC planning agreements by March 06 	Proportion of total WFD/LIDF sector skills budget £442k
	20. Pilot a regional Level 3 technician training offer to address skills shortages (in advanced engineering) [R]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase volume of technicians qualified at Level 3 by 20%. 	Regional Budget Proportion of total WFD/LIDF sector skills budget £442k
	21. Develop responsiveness of providers in sector priority areas through Action for Business, CoVEs, employer engagement and brokerage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector specific income targets set in 3 year development plans by August 05 	Proportion of total FE mainstream £82.4m/WFD sector skills £442

Look to extending the Level 2 entitlement and increase the numbers of adults participating on first full Level 2 (and 3) provision	22. Support the continuation of the Level 2 offer. Local developments to be in line with regional arrangements, including development of the Adult Learning Grant and marketing the Level 2 offer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to PSA adult achievement target: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1000 adults enrolled on 1st full L2 • 2403 adults enrolled on L3 • Level 2 and Level 3 targets agreed with all eligible providers by July 05 • 60% applications for Adult Learning Grant to support L2 participation 	Regional Budget Proportion of total FE £82.4m/WBL £17.2m mainstream funds L2 initiative £107k
	23. Implement the 'Working Together' initiative by developing the Voluntary and Community sectors' potential to deliver learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to develop local sector compacts. • Establish sector-learning networks in Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, linking with learning partnerships. • Establish 6 local community-learning programmes. • Establish 3 new community based learning centres. 	LIDF £50k

	<p>24. Continue to deliver the 2004-2007 ESF Co-financing Plan. Implement a range of activity designed to address learning disadvantage and increase skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 Projects addressing the learning needs of the long-term unemployed. • 9 Projects addressing social exclusion • 28 Projects addressing lifelong learning • 11 Projects addressing skills needs • 5 Projects addressing gender stereotyping 	<p>ESF £10m</p>
	<p>25. Support Learning Partnerships to work with providers and local communities to develop learning centres in areas of deprivation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current offer reviewed • Provider strategy agreed to deliver learning in different settings by Mar 06 • New programmes aimed at disadvantaged learners – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BMEs ○ Travellers ○ Rural Communities ○ Marginalised Communities. 	<p>LIDF/Learning Partnerships £100k NLDC £300k</p>
	<p>26. Develop adult apprenticeships in line with national funding and guidance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult apprenticeships offered in priority skills areas at Level 2 – in the engineering sector • Engage 200 automotive sector SMEs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver 180 NVQ Level 2 qualifications. ○ Produce a case study for dissemination. 	<p>Proportion of total FE £82.4m/WBL £17.2m mainstream funds</p>

	27. Carry out a review of the delivery of Adult learning to ensure curriculum offer is targeted to meet the needs of local communities and contributes to the development of the extended school network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised Adult Learning offer implemented to include older learners and those on benefits Plans developed to integrate adult learning offer into 3 fully extended schools networks by Dec 05 ACL target 33,000 NLDC target 750 	Proportion of total FE £82.4m mainstream funds ACL £5.8m (inc NLDC)
Deliver the 'Skills for Life' strategy for tackling numeracy and literacy skills, including prioritising basic skills training that leads to a qualification and improving completion rates	28. Establish a Professional Development Network (PDN) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number and qualifications of basic skills tutors in MKOB Increase the number of tutors using the national test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 new tutors recruited 10 additional tutors with Level 3 10 additional tutors with Level 4 Increased use of national test by 25% Increased take up of work place provision with employers 	Resource for MKOB professional development unit- proportion of total WFD/LIDF £446k Marketing tba
	29. Implement regional Skills for Life delivery plan; focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raising Key Skills achievement volumes (communications, numeracy and ICT at Levels 1 and 2) Sharing good practice solutions across the region Benchmarking literacy, numeracy and ICT skill levels of provider staff, building on training analysis under SFL initiative [R] 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5500 Skills for Life achievements in year 0506 10 examples per LSC area shared. Skills for Life baselines identified for all providers 	Regional Budget
Increase skills development activities within the public	30. Strengthen working relationships with public service organisations and develop joint plans to tackle skills issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear and agreed action plans in place for schools, NHS and Local Authorities to deliver skills development to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WfD school support staff grant tba £ for marketing to stimulate demand tba

<p>services workforce, particularly those in the health and care sector, local authorities, children's services and schools and colleges</p>		<p>staff by 31 March 06.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 300 school support staff starts on Level 2 and 3 programmes • 60% completion against starts from Phases 3 & 4 whatever the funding routes • Care CoVE to address skills needs in adult care workforce 	
<p>Work with Union Learning representatives to boost the demand for learning, especially literacy and numeracy</p>	<p>31. Continue to develop Union Learning Centres and make links with Skills for Life Professional Development Unit</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ULCs promote skills for life, including national test • Increase in people gaining basic skills qualifications through ULCs • Establish network of Union Learning Representatives and set up 6 Union Learning Centres in MKOB employers 	<p>LIDF £50k</p> <p>Communication/marketing of options to workforce tba</p>

	<p>32. Pilot an initiative to enable disadvantaged groups including older workers to gain employment and continue to receive training up to Level 2 where appropriate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot developed with local councils, voluntary & community organisations, JobCentre Plus, economic partnership and providers to address construction and retail skills shortages • Transferable model developed to use for other skills shortages • Pilot linked into LSPA work • Train 1200 people, 16% from MK' s most deprived communities. • Engage with 45 employers, 8 representing major retailers. • Deliver 36 taster sessions. • Support 430 learner beneficiaries. • Provide job-search with 43 beneficiaries into jobs 	<p>LIDF £200k</p> <p>LIDF £25k</p>
	<p>33. Development and delivery of agreed e-learning strategy as part of a regional approach, work closely with the other South East LSCs and in partnership with E-Skills UK.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate a local e-learning strategy group. • Draft plan issued for consultation Sept 05 • Final plan in place by Dec 05 	

Improving the quality and responsiveness of provision – taking forward the agenda for change			
Key Actions in response to LSC priorities	Summary of local activity	Key outcomes / measures of success	Resource
Improve the quality, equality and success rates of provision	34. Improve success rates to an agreed regional minimum standard by setting challenging success rate targets across provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All providers to meet floor targets by 2006 Targets for improvements set by area of learning for priority sectors for all providers 2005/6 All providers subject to OFSTED or ALI inspection respond to requirements of the inspection process within agreed deadlines WBL framework completions (all ages) to improve by 11% to 42% FE Sector Networks established by April 2005 and FE provision aligned with employer needs 	Proportion of total FE £82.4m/WBL £17.2m mainstream funds LIDF £135k LIDF £20k
	35. Deliver a quality improvement agenda in line with SE Regional Quality Strategy by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring providers occupy and agreed position in the local/regional area in terms of their mission Support providers development needs evidenced by effective self-assessment reporting and external inspection. Making use of the appropriate support agencies i.e. LSDA, ALI, OFSTED, DfES Standards Unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WBL providers quality network established by December 2005 to provide support and share best practice. ACL providers quality network established by December 2005 to provide support and share best practice. All providers produce annual Self Assessment Reports and associated improvement plans by agreed deadlines Where necessary providers are aware of and can access appropriate support agencies 	LIDF regional/ local £85k

	<p>36. Health and Safety:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk targeted visits to providers to seek assurance regarding health and safety arrangements • Take appropriate action to address any identified weaknesses • Investigate and respond to all formally reported learner incidents • Seeking to ensure that all providers self assess health and safety arrangements • Promote and raise the standards of learner health and safety through support via the Regional H&S Manager and the Local H&S Co-ordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All contracted providers will have produced HSQ1 H&S statements as part of new contract by June 2006 • All providers incorporate H&S into their SAR/DP by March 2006 • % of provider to have received an LSC H&S monitoring visit and report on findings by March 2006 • 100% response rate to all reported learner incidents within an agreed timescale 	<p>Dedicated internal specialist resource – shared with Berkshire LSC</p>
	<p>37. Equality and Diversity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To deliver the MKOB key E&D priorities • Engaging learners in deprived wards • Addressing the Basic Skills/Skills for Life Agenda (see elsewhere in plan) • Meeting the needs of SLDD (see elsewhere in plan) • The promotion of race equality through the adherence to Race Equality Scheme requirements and ensuring all recruitment, participation and achievement data is analysed and acted upon in relation to Ethnic Minorities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E&D priorities addressed in all provider 3 Year Development Plans from 05/06 onwards • RES Framework Action Plan developed by April 2005 – progress reviewed quarterly via E&D Steering Group. • All contracted providers have clear Equality Measures targets as appropriate in their agreed 3 year development plans by June 05 	<p>LIDF £60k</p>

Align LSC plans and funding with those of other regional partners in support of Regional Economic Strategies	38. Work closely with strategic partners in the Local Skills for Productivity Alliance (LSPA) (particularly Business Link, Jobcentre Plus, SEEDA and employer bodies) to oversee the implementation of the Skills Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSPA delivery plan objectives implemented for care, construction, retail and engineering. 	
Ensure that the further education sector improves responsiveness to employers and become more demand led	39. Further develop the regional Action for Business network, to enable employers to access and purchase high quality learning that meets their needs from further education providers and their learning and skills partners [R].	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Action for Business colleges accredited by March 2006 Income Targets and Employer Responsiveness targets in each of providers 3YDPs 5 skills advisors/brokers appointed in A4B colleges 	LIDF support £100k Proportion of total local WFD/LIDF brokerage budget £175k
	40. Continue to develop the CoVE network in line with local sectoral priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction, Logistics, Tourism and Cycle Engineering CoVE attain Interim Status by December 2005 Management, Digital Media, Engineering and Care CoVEs achieve Full CoVE status by Nov 05 ICT Systems Application and ICT Systems Hardware CoVEs retain Full CoVE status 31 Mar 06 	Proportion of total WFD/LIDF sector skills budget £442k WFD support £5k
Tackle the problem of gender stereotyping in apprenticeships	41. Raise awareness and promote greater participation by each gender in non-traditional occupational areas. Focus on construction and engineering.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each construction/ engineering provider match national norm for gender breakdown and target 1% increase in minority gender participation in academic year 2005/06 At least one case study per occupational area produced & used in literature & promoted to local media 	

Streamline the ways in which employers secure suitable skills training and provide local employers with an integrated offer of business and skills support	42. An integrated offer will be developed in the 4 key priority sectors (care, construction, engineering/ manufacturing, retail)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer developed with key partners and communicated in 4 key priority sectors by March 06 	
	43. Implementation of phase 1 of brokerage service and ensure the Employer Skills Outcomes (ESO) are delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Link ESO contract outcomes delivered by Mar 06 Business Link contact outcomes delivered by Mar 05 Business Link service running from 1/4/05 JobCentre Plus, LEAs, WBL and Sector Skills Council partners developed as brokers during 2005/06 Feedback mechanisms in place to help inform future provision Brokerage supported by employer skills offer 	<p>Regional WFD/LIDF database support £10k</p> <p>WFD/LIDF/ ESO support budget £105k</p> <p>ESO £769k</p>
	44. Ensure local implementation of the regional Brokerage network, to appropriately address the skill needs of employers [R].	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brokerage team of a minimum of 40 brokers in MKOB. Brokers achieve accreditation within six months of appointment 	<p>Regional Budget</p> <p>Proportion of total local WFD/LIDF brokerage budget £175k</p>
	45. Engage, through the regional Brokerage service, with a minimum of 3,000 new employers, across the region, and ensure the Employer Skills Offer (ESO) outcomes are delivered [R].	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45% of workforce in IIP committed or recognised companies by 2007 80 Small Firm Initiative recognitions 	<p>WFD/IIP £76k</p> <p>SFI £86k</p>

Provide an improved impartial information and advice service	46. Information, advice and guidance service integrated into partner plans and priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 year plan developed • Priorities set and delivered for year 1 • 30% increase in referrals to JC + and providers • IAG targets: Below L2: 8722 Locally determined: 4296 Enhanced: 558 • Employer Skills Offer contracted to deliver 51 NextStep employer referrals by 31 March 2006. 	IAG £974k Marketing tba
	47. Implement a coherent package of learning programmes, advice and financial support for the low skilled and disadvantaged (Regional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice interactions achieved tba • Adults below Level 2 supported tba • Adult Learning Grant take up tba 	Proportion of regional IAG budget
	48. Raise quality of service offered in provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80% of mainstream providers to achieve matrix standard by end of academic year 2005/06 – baseline to be agreed • 5 new providers (IAG) to achieve matrix 	Proportion of regional IAG budget
	49. Prepare the South East Capital Strategy that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeds into the National Capital Strategy • Accelerates improvements in FE estates • Funds infrastructure developments in priority areas (e.g. StAR projects, vocational) • Involves the provider network in strategic developments • Integrates the new 16-19 Capital Fund [R]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Capital Strategy by December 05, supported by local strategies • MKOB Local Capital Plan produced, endorsed by council, communicated to key stakeholders, and an effective tool for identifying/prioritising capital projects Dec 05 	Regional Budget

<p>Make learning truly demand-led so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults</p> <p>Strengthen the LSC's capacity to work effectively at a regional level – particularly with regional development agencies and partners</p>	<p>50. Update MKOB strategic area review outputs ensuring on-going currency and relevance in order to influence future strategic and operational plans of the LSC and its partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating of LSC's Skills and economic assessments • Production of supply side reports for each local authority district • Project management of research and evaluation activity to support annual planning activities • Contribution to regional research projects • Marketing and communicating StAR related developments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 district based data reports by Mar 06 • 3 LEA area based skills and economic assessments by Dec 05 • Bespoke research projects to support LSC planning and evaluation activities including:-Connexions Learner Voice; MKSM growth; National Employer Skills Survey;Travel to Learn;Econometric Forecasting;Aimhigher;Local LSC project management and support for regional and national research projects • Feasibility work for StAR priority areas. 	<p>Regional LIDF contribution £60k</p> <p>Local LIDF £115k</p>
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Internal Resources

Council involvement in strategy and planning

MKOB LSC Council has been closely involved in developing local strategies for 2005-06. The Strategic Area Review Council Sub-Group has had a primary role in advising and agreeing on the local priorities incorporated in the Annual Plan. Council members will continue to play a key role in a strategic advisory capacity.

Finance and Performance Management

We have adopted a "Balanced Scorecard" approach to measuring our performance and effectiveness as a local LSC. This business model is based on four perspectives - Customer, Financial, People and our Ways of Working. It allows a robust, holistic and balanced view of how effectively the organisation is working by looking at a range of targets and results, processes and plans through the different perspectives.

This approach has built on the much-improved data and benchmarking connected with the National Performance Scorecard. A series of key targets and measures, including the core goals of National Office and local goals set by ourselves have been agreed and we will measure and review progression towards targets on a quarterly basis. Performance against each target will be risk-assessed to flag up potential under performance or danger signals.

Risk Management

The LSC will continue to ensure that it maintains an environment and structures for managing risk effectively. A register of risks is maintained with regular reviews by internal staff and submitted to the local Audit Committee for scrutiny. The Audit Committee offers a third party view of the effectiveness of the risk management process and the nature, extent and acceptability of risks.

Investors in People

MKOB LLSC was assessed in November 2004 against the IiP Standard. As with other LLSCs in our region we were not successful at this first attempt; not reaching the required standard in 6 of the 12 Indicator areas. The assessor did compliment us on the progress we have made as an organisation, areas of good practice and especially on improvements to staff morale.

Key Areas for Development that were identified included:

inconsistency in people management,
communications and decision –making, and
evaluation of the value and impact of Learning & Development activities on our performance

A Staff Working Group, led by the Executive Director, has been formed and will develop and manage an action plan towards successful re-assessment during 2005.

Learning & Development

Our learning and development plans will be based on our business priorities by helping to ensure that staff are able to meet challenges implicit in meeting our objectives and to respond to the LSC values.

Key skills and knowledge areas identified include:

Leadership & Management skills development for all levels of Managers.

“Top Team” and Managers Group development.
Contract Management / Relationship Management skills
Equality & Diversity – embedding principles and effective practices within our provider network, aided by improved awareness by staff of E&D issues
Continuing Professional Development - keeping abreast with innovations and changes.
Managers at all levels to mentor and coach staff.
Meaningful evaluation of events and conferences including impact and value of the event
Following events all staff to cascade learning and information with colleagues

Health and Safety

The health and safety of learners is a fundamental value for the Learning and Skills Council. We believe that learners are entitled to learning that takes place in a safe, healthy and supportive environment. Our policy is to adopt a “best practice” role with regard to the promotion of learner health and safety, by applying the following four core principles:

- to expect that colleges and other providers funded by the Council will fully meet their legal obligations and “duty of care” to learners;
- to seek assurance that colleges and other providers have suitable and sufficient arrangements for learner health and safety;
- to take appropriate action where expected standards are not met or maintained;
- to promote the raising of standards for learner health and safety through support, and challenge as appropriate.

Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Council has a specific responsibility to consider the needs of young people and adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are robust arrangements in place to ensure that this group of learners have access to suitable provision that meets their needs and where appropriate the additional support required.

Equality and Diversity

The Council will ensure that planned activities take account of its duty to promote equality of opportunity in relation to race, gender and disability and our responsibilities under other equality legislation including the Race Relations Act, the Disability Discrimination Act and European regulations relating to sexual orientation, religion or faith and age (due to come into effect in 2006). Our actions and activities which are covered in this plan will be underpinned by and reflect the Council's Race Equality Scheme.

Engaging Local Partners in 2005/6

Partner	Key Activities
Aimhigher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively involved in partner delivery plan and leading on research and development delivery strand.
Business Link	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic consultation in developing key skill and sector activity including Business Link as partner on local employer forums and initiatives. Key deliverer of employer engagement activities including: Investors in People, Small Firms Initiative, and employer engagement initiatives. Integral partner in development of the local brokerage service being implemented across the South East.
Connexions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of a Service Level Agreement Attendance at the Connexions Local Management Committee in each area Supporting Connexions in the introduction of Children's Trusts in each area Participation in MK Connexions Development Group
EBLO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides education and Business Link activities for young people in schools and colleges.
Economic Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSC represented on Board of all 3 MKOB Economic Partnerships.
GOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint lead with GOSE in implementing Regional Partnership Agreement for skills intelligence.
IAG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver information and advice to adults to support implementation of skills strategy and the L2 offer.
Jobcentre Plus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LLSC will build on the Service Level Agreement with Jobcentre Plus and be an active member of the local employer coalition to be established during 2005-06. Jobcentre Plus is a member of the IAG Strategic Board, which will ensure greater coherence in work targeting Job Seekers and Adults below L2.
LearnDirect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A single contract between the LSC and Ufi will be established. To build the national situation we will establish priorities and agree targets for Learn direct provision in the region. Ufi Regional Offices will contract with Hubs for the delivery of learning against the priorities.
Learning Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the three Lifelong Learning Partnerships in order to add value to learning and skills in MKOB. Contribute resources to ensure effective co-ordination of activity in each local authority area. Plans will be developed by the Partnerships specifying targets and outcomes to be agreed by the LSC including those relating to StAR. These Plans will identify any activity over and above that paid for by the LSC
LEAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build relationships at a strategic and operational Level with the three Local Authorities. This work will focus on developing 14-19 strategies and implementation plans; supporting the quality of provision by implementing the Post Inspections Action Plan for Oxfordshire; working through Schools Forums and supporting schools by funding post 16 provision; understanding and contributing to the pattern of provision as members of School Organisation Committees and through the Strategic Area Review; jointly reviewing the support available for learners through the work of Local Authority based Transport Partnerships; working together to review the pattern of adult community based provision; establishing a clearer understanding of needs students with learning difficulties and disabilities from 14 onwards and agreeing a protocol for working together to meet those needs
LSDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to use support from LSDA to implement MKOB CoVE map.
LSfPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Skills for Productivity Alliance is a MKOB based forum for employers to articulate demands and enable training providers to provide appropriate solutions.
LSPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint LSC/Local Learning Partnership plan to ensure representation in appropriate local strategic partnerships.

Partner	Key Activities
MKOB Economic Data Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to support group developed by LSC and local skills for productivity alliance.
OfSTED/ALI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold regular meetings with the ALI/OfSTED regional link inspectors to identify key areas for improvement, inspection preparation and action implementation.
Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to use local FE, WBL, ACL and school network groups e.g. COMBO, MOBNET to implement national, regional and local initiatives including mainstream provision.
SEEDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with SEEDA on implementation of National and SE Skills Strategy.
RMG and Regional Networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Optimise the areas of work, which are best carried out regionally to improve value and effectiveness.
Trade Unions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to work with Southern & Eastern Region TUC (SERTUC) and the 6 LSCs in the SE, working with Trade Unions both locally and regionally.
Voluntary & Community Sectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LSC will develop a Voluntary and Community Compact (Agreement) and implement during 2004-05.