

 For information

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Leading learning and skills

Learning and Skills Council Sussex Annual Plan 2007-08

March 2007

Of interest to National, Regional and
Local Learning and Skills Colleagues

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Note: The percentage improvements / targets given in this plan are at this stage illustrative and will be firmed up later.

Introduction

Learning and Skills in Sussex - Our Vision

This business plan for key actions in 2007/8 has been developed during a time of significant change in learning and skills policy. The Further Education and Training Bill and the Local Government Bill, both introduced in Autumn 2006, will strengthen the ways in which, in Sussex, the Learning and Skills Council and local authorities join forces to enable a better quality learning and skills offer to young people, to adults and to employers and employees.

The Leitch Review, published in early 2007, signposts radical reform of employer engagement with learning and skills. New 14-19 diplomas, enabling a focus on practical learning and engagement with the world of work, will further develop a new education and training landscape. The 2012 Games in London, gives the country and its learning and skills sector a focal point at which to aim to create imaginative and collaborative new 14-19 routes and exciting new chances for skills development in key sectors.

In a fast changing world, we look back on achievements and forward to challenges. LSC Sussex Council members, chaired by Dr. Norman Boyland, can be heartened by the advances in learning and skills opportunities in Sussex. Since 2001, LSC Sussex has enabled:

- Record numbers in education and training in the 16-19 age range
- More employees on public funded learning programmes than ever
- Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVES) established for every major employing sector in Sussex
- A dramatic 'weeding out' of poor quality public funded provision
- Major capital projects, estimated to be worth £300+ million, for the FE sector across Sussex

There remain, however, significant challenges:

- Achievement rates for apprenticeships are still too low and numbers in school sixth forms have remained static
- Employer confidence in the 'employability' of young people is still fragile
- The 'inspection profile' for Sussex colleges is '2/3' not '1/2'
- Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities deserve wider choice of post 16 opportunities across Sussex

The 2007/8 Plan, widely discussed with partners, sets a course to build on 2001/2 to 2005/6 successes and meet the challenges to 2009/10. The role of the 'local council' comes to an end. The LSC Sussex executive will be steered, in future, by the LSC South East regional board.

In this plan the local council has set some principles to guide implementation of future key actions and changes:

- Smart, targeted action and investment in key areas of Sussex
- Innovation and 'risk taking' to establish a transformed 14-19 offer
- A drive for curriculum and accommodation excellence across the post-16 sector
- Significantly improved communication with FE corporations and governors: new ways of listening to the learner and employer voice

David Smith

N. D. Boyland

David Smith: Area Director, LSC Sussex' and Dr Norman Boyland: Chair, LSC Sussex

Local Context Summary¹

Sussex comprises the Unitary Authority of Brighton and Hove and the two counties of East Sussex and West Sussex. The two counties comprise 12 local districts. In East Sussex these are Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes, Rother and Wealden. In West Sussex these are Adur, Arun, Chichester, Crawley, Horsham, Mid Sussex and Worthing.

Sussex has shown a significant increase in the 15-64 age group with an additional 69,900 persons (+7.9%) compared to a decade earlier. The highest rate of change has been observed in Horsham. It is projected that the population of children (aged under 15) will decrease over the next five years by 7,000, slowing to a decrease of 2,100 between 2010 and 2015.

Eastbourne is projected to increase in population by 10% between 2005 and 2015, whilst Crawley is projected to decrease by 2% over the same time period. Brighton and Hove is projected to increase its population of children by 2,400 over the next ten years, an increase of over 6%.

The South East contains two major industries in distribution, hotels and restaurants and public administration, education and health.

Female economic activity rates in Sussex are the highest of the South East region. More than half of employees in Brighton and Hove are in management and professional occupations. East and West Sussex have a lower proportion of employees in management and professional occupations and also have a higher concentration of employees in services, accounting for 17% of employees each.

Of the economically inactive more people want to re-engage in the labour force compared to the South East and England.

¹ Local Area Profile, Autumn 2006

Investing in Young People²

Overall young peoples' participation in Sussex has risen at a faster rate than the national improvement but remains below the regional rate.

34,168 learners were studying in Sussex (FE, School Sixth forms, WBL, E2E), in 2005/06. This is a growth of 1.7% between 2004/05 and 2005/06, however this is below the regional increase of 2.3%. The Sussex figure is expected to grow by a further 1.2% between 2005/06 and 2006/07 compared to a 2.7% increase planned regionally.

The Sussex figure for young people Not in Education, Employment and Training is healthier than the national average.

In January 2006 there were an estimated 2,412 young people in Sussex Not in Education, Employment and Training, representing 6.1% of 16-18 year olds. This is 1.4% percentage points below that, however it is 1.4% above that in the South East.

The progression rate in E2E programmes has improved, however in the context of the South East and National rates it remains an issue for Sussex.

In 2005/06 E2E positive progression rates rose by 10.5 percentage points from 32.7% to 43.2%. Over the same period starts have fallen by 13.1%, more than twice the rate of the fall in the South East. However the regional positive progression rate remains 4.2 percentage points above the Sussex rate.

Overall FE Success Rates and full Level 2 Success Rates improved in 2004/05 and were the same as in the South East.

The overall FE Success rate in 2004/05 was 74% (a rise of 3 percentage points from 2003/04). This rate is the same as the regional rate which is one of the best in the Country and above the National rate. Full Level 2 Success Rates in Sussex and the South East increased by 6 percentage points to 62%. The percentage of people achieving a Level 2 and the percentage achieving a Level 3 (71.9% and 49.3% respectively) are both below the regional averages (74.6% and 53.2%). Although the proportion who gain their Level 2 between the ages of 16 and 19 in Sussex (19.1%) is below the national rate, it is 0.2 percentage points higher than the rate in the South East. Achievement of Maths and English GCSE's in Sussex are 3.9 percentage points below the regional rate.

Advanced Apprenticeship framework completions and all Apprenticeship Success Rates have shown a considerable improvement.

Advanced Apprenticeship framework completions have risen by 203.8% between 2002/03 and 2005/06, nearly double the percentage increase regionally and nationally. All Apprenticeship success rates in Sussex increased by 15.7 percentage points in 2005/06 to 47%. However, this is 5.7% below the regional rate. Advanced Apprenticeships, showed the biggest improvement, rising by 17.9 percentage points to 37.5%.

Over the next three years the population of young people in the South East is projected to decrease by an annual rate of 1% for 10 to 14 year olds and

² All sources: Autumn Performance Review 2006

increase by 0.7% for 15 to 19 year olds³. In Sussex the rate of decrease is projected to be higher for 10 to 14 year olds (decreasing by 1%), but the rate of increase lower for 15 to 19 year olds. The decrease of 10 to 14 year olds is projected to be highest in Adur, whilst growth is projected for Eastbourne and Mid Sussex. For 15 to 19 year olds Adur is projected to decrease by more than 2% per year, whilst other areas of West Sussex will increase.

Brighton and Hove tends to have higher levels of young people not in education, employment or training than the Sussex average, with lower levels of participation in school sixth forms and higher levels of participation in work based learning. Eastbourne and Worthing have higher levels of participation in further education, lower participation in school sixth forms and higher participation in work based learning. Crawley, Hastings and Wealden have higher participation in school sixth forms with lower participation in work based learning.

Partnership working between the LSC, Local Authorities, other stakeholders and providers will continue to be essential to improvements in education and training in Sussex. Strong partnership working between the LSC and West Sussex County Council has been favourably commented on in the Joint Area Review and Annual Performance Assessment as well as the 14-19 progress checks. The LSC, WSCC and Connexions joint strategy for 14-19 Education and Training sets out the partnership vision, outcomes and roles and responsibilities of partners and providers. This strong alliance has led to the creation of three active partnership boards representing all providers and agencies within each planning area. In Brighton & Hove, a strong Learning Partnership exists and LSC and Local Authority funding is currently aligned to support the co-commissioning process. Plans are in place to formalise the arrangement. In East Sussex there are regular meetings between senior officers from both the local authority and LSC Sussex to develop the 14-19 strategy for the area as well as to support developments in Hastings and Rother. The local authority and LSC Sussex are also represented on the five 14-19 Partnership Boards which exist in East Sussex. In order to facilitate the development of 14-19 activities including specialised diploma bids, 14-16 vocational provision and strategies to reduce NEETs, there is a team of Development Managers who are jointly funded by the local authority and LSC Sussex.

Issues and Challenges

- Collaborate with Sussex Local Authorities so that 14-19 Partnership Boards align funding and support the development of specialised diplomas
- Increase level 2 and level 3 success rates by ensuring that additional provision is commissioned
- To develop 3 interlinked electronic area prospectuses for Sussex by September 2007
- Work in collaboration with SEEDA, local authorities, employers and providers to deliver a Skills Festival
- To increase apprentice completion rates to 60% and ensure there is sufficient provision for young people and employers

³ 2004 based sub-national population projections, ONS

- Identify those young people at risk of becoming NEET and provide a guaranteed education or training place by the end of September.
- Identify and support vulnerable learners including looked after children and LLDD within the overall 14-19 entitlement

Action for Young People

Regional Priority: To improve substantially the range and accessibility of practical and vocational learning opportunities for all young people which inspire and engage them and lead to progression.

In Sussex we will boost performance against regional and national targets by: (the percentages quoted are regional; local figures will not be available until local volumes in the Summary Statement of Activity have been confirmed)

- a 2% increase in 16-18 participation with a focus on priority learners to reduce the numbers of young people who are not in education, employment and training (NEET)
- increasing volumes of learning below Level 2 in every local area with particular attention to those areas with high numbers who are NEET through commissioning local provision via 14-19 Partnership Boards and
- a 2.5% increase in participation in Entry to Employment programmes through more flexible use of the budget whilst seeking to at least maintain current progression in rates (47%)
- increasing the numbers of young people participating in apprenticeships by 4.5%
- piloting level 1 apprentices
- further improving Success Rates for Further Education and Apprenticeships.
- having 3 electronic area prospectuses available by September 2007 which will enable young people to identify education and training opportunities across Sussex
- piloting the Schools Engagement Programme in Brighton and Hove

Our Local Actions

Delivering a broader curriculum

1. We will work in partnership with the 3 Sussex Children's Service Authorities (CSAs) to:

- ensure 14-19 Partnership Boards align funding streams, commission appropriate provision
- introduce 3 electronic area wide prospectuses by September 2007 as a tool to ensure that all young people and their carers/parents have access to high quality and comprehensive information on learning opportunities, and to increase participation rates
- build sufficient capacity to deliver the first wave of the Specialised Diplomas from September 2008.

- stage a pan Sussex Skills Festival in autumn 2007
- deliver Education Business Partnership related activity in line with the 14-19 strategy
- support the migration of the Connexions service to Local Authorities.

Success rates

2. We will, in partnership with the 3 Sussex Children's Service Authorities and Sussex 14-19 providers to:

- increase the proportion of 19 year olds achieving a full level 2 qualification by a further 2%
- increase the proportion of young people who achieve level 3 by supporting the provision of additional flexibly delivered applied learning opportunities at KS4 through Young Apprenticeships, increased flexibility provision and school engagement programmes
- increase school sixth form participation and achievement.

3. For WBL (Work Based Learning) we will work with providers to

- increase the overall percentage of apprenticeship completions to 60% by 2008/9
- increase completion rates for advanced apprenticeships
- increase participation rates into apprenticeships by 4.5 %
- evaluate Apprenticeships in Sussex, the on-line application and placement service for apprenticeship applications, and ensure connectivity to area prospectuses.

Young people not in education, employment or training

4. We will work with the 3 CSAs to address the needs of vulnerable young people, such as learners with learning difficulties and disabilities (LLDD) and looked after children and those leaving care (LAC) which will:

- reduce the percentage of young people across Sussex who are NEET
- seek a 2% increase in their participation by implementing the September Guarantee
- ensure that E2E provision is sufficient across Sussex and flexible enough to meet the needs of learners.

Investing in Skills

The Sussex workforce has higher skill levels than nationally and in some cases regionally.

More than 29% of the Sussex workforce is qualified to level 4 or above, 3% above the national average. Brighton and Hove has the highest proportion qualified to level 4 or above with 37.1%. Those with level 2 or above make up 68% of the Sussex workforce which is 1% higher than the region and nearly 6% higher than the national average. Those with no qualifications make up 10% in Sussex and 12% in Brighton and Hove, less than nationally but the same as the region.⁴

Almost nine out of ten jobs (87%) are in the service industry and one in ten jobs is tourism-related.⁵

Twenty-eight per cent of local jobs are in distribution, hotels and restaurants and a further 28% are in public admin, education and health industries, the highest of all South East local Learning and Skills Councils.

Employment in Sussex currently stands at approximately 721,000 and is predicted to increase by 0.6% per annum between now and 2014, at which point employment is likely to total 762,000.

Employment in both the Primary and Manufacturing sectors in Sussex is predicted to continue to contract over the next decade, although the pace of that contraction will not be as fast as that experienced over the preceding ten years (1994 -2004). By 2014 the Manufacturing sector is likely to account for only just over 8% of total local employment, down from 16% in 1984. (chart 2).

The construction sector's share of the total Sussex workforce is predicted to remain fairly constant at around 45,000 between now and 2014. The real growth in employment numbers is predicted to be in Distribution & Transport and Business service Sectors which are forecast to grow by 0.6% and 0.9% respectively per annum. At a more detailed sectoral level it is Other Business Services and Retail & Distribution sectors which are each predicted to see the strongest growth, with employment increasing in Other Business Services by over 10,000 in Sussex between 2004 and 2014.

Overall employment in the non-marketed services - such as Education, Public Administration and Health - is forecast to continue to increase by 0.8% per annum, with particularly strong growth in Health and Social Work. As found across the country generally, the occupation mix of the Sussex workforce is predicted to shift over the course of the next decade towards higher order occupations.

Intelligence from the National Employers Skills Survey (NESS) indicates approximately 18% of the organisations surveyed had vacancies at the time of the survey, equating to 16,000 actual vacancies.⁶

This is a similar percentage to the figure for the whole South East (SE) region as a whole. Of those companies surveyed in Sussex trying to recruit, 49% reported that they had difficulty doing so. Hard to fill vacancies were the highest amongst skilled

⁴ Annual Population Survey Jan – Dec 05

⁵ Annual Business Inquiry Employee Analysis

⁶ National Employer Skills Survey 2005

trade occupations and elementary positions. Of those companies with hard to fill vacancies in Sussex, 88% reported that the hard to fill vacancies were impacting upon their business performance; 41% reported that hard to fill vacancies were having a major impact. The main impacts of hard to fill vacancies were identified as an increased workload for existing staff and delays in developing new products or services.

Six percent of companies surveyed were suffering from skills shortage vacancies, equating to approximately 4,300 vacancies due to skills shortages. Skills shortages were reported to be highest among:

- associate professionals (17%);
- skilled trade occupations (16%); and
- sales and customer service staff (16%).

The current number of employees working in the Sussex area who are not fully proficient in their roles is approximately 38,000. Skills gaps were highest among sales and customer service staff (5.3%) and elementary occupations (4.5%). Employers believed that by far the greatest cause of skills gaps was a lack of experience through newness to the job. The other significant cause for skills gaps was staff lacking motivation (27%).

Sussex is on track to meet its target for the number of learners benefiting from Train to Gain.

Train to Gain was launched in the area in August 2006. The programme includes delivery of free NVQ and skills for life qualifications to employees not already qualified to full level 2. Within the Sussex area the Sussex Consortium are engaging with employers and delivering demand led training in the areas of care, engineering, ICT, retail, hospitality and for school support staff. Planned first year delivery is for at least 2158 NVQs and 139 skills for life enrolments by July 2007. Early indications are that after a slow start, performance is steadily improving.

Adult Apprenticeship participation was higher than planned and success rates have improved considerably.⁷

WBL (Average in Learning) figures for Sussex in 2005/06 are 6.4% higher than planned, a higher ratio than the South East and nationally. Overall though all adult participation was 8.7% lower than planned, although this is a lower fall than the South East. All adult Apprenticeship success rates rose by 17.6 percentage points in 2005/06, higher than the regional improvement, however they still remain 5% below the regional and national rates.

In Sussex there were an estimated 61,160 adults with Entry Level 3 or below Literacy skills and 388,300 adults with Entry Level 3 or below Numeracy skills⁸. The highest concentration of adults with basic skills needs was estimated to be in Adur and Crawley for Literacy skills and Crawley and Hastings for Numeracy skills. However, migration trends since 2003 have shifted the demand for ESOL towards a growing Eastern European workforce employed mainly within horticultural industries on the coastal strip.

⁷ Autumn Performance Review 2006

⁸ Skills for Life Survey 2003

There will be a need to maintain the quality of skills provision especially in the health and social skills sectors and in construction, engineering and manufacturing technologies which, despite their predicted contraction, continue to be significant employment sectors.

Issues and Challenges

- The Sussex workforce is relatively highly skilled but there is still a need to address significant numbers of adults with low or no skills and equip them with employability skills
- The Train to Gain offer is now established in Sussex but the rate of employer engagement needs to be improved;
- There is a continued need to better respond to employer demand for higher level skills, as described by the Leitch Report, and to further develop progression pathways from FE to Foundation Degrees and HE;
- There is a continued need to better respond to the skills needs of priority sectors – as articulated in the Leitch Report and by Sector Skills Councils and the Skills for Productivity Alliance;
- There is a continued need to ensure that public funds are focused on LSC priorities and that the quality of skills related provision is at least satisfactory and preferable good.

Action for Skills

Regional Priority: To improve skills training and employer engagement through implementing the South East Action for Business Strategy and further developing the responsiveness of the FE and work based learning provider network.

Locally, we will boost performance against national targets by:

(the percentages quoted are regional; local figures will not be available until local volumes in the Summary Statement of Activity have been confirmed)

- 80% of Skills for Life provision to be accredited through nationally recognised qualifications
- a 4.5% increase in target bearing Skills for Life provision
- colleges delivering adult provision will move towards a minimum of 20% of their adult allocation to supporting full Level 2 provision
- delivery of Level 2 for adults having a greater focus on delivering first full Level 2s with particular increases in participation of those claiming benefits
- increasing employers' engagement in supporting learning and skills through Train to Gain with a particular focus on those employers who have not previously been engaged
- continuing to increase the proportion of adult funding being spent on priority provision
- increasing the numbers of people over 19 participating in apprenticeships by 5% (apprenticeships by 3%; advanced apprenticeships by 8%)

- improving provision and success rates in priority sectors with a particular focus on construction and the built environment.

Our Local Actions

Employment skills

5. We will contribute to the aims of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) and implement proposals made in the Leitch Report to deliver world class skills via a demand led system by:

- ensuring that employer and employee need and demand is analysed and collated through the Sussex Skills for Productivity Alliance and other employment and skills partnership bodies.
- trialling Learner Accounts (at Level 3 and for adults) in one or two areas of Sussex (including the Gatwick Diamond)
- working with the Sussex Learning Network to increase the opportunities for progression in vocational sectors from level 3 to higher education (level 4 and above).
- establish an appropriate capacity to deliver 2500 Train to Gain places in Sussex and a wider sectorally specific offer to key Sussex employers.

6. We will complete the establishment of the Action for Business network so that it can:

- ensure that LSC 19+ funding is spent on priority sector and priority learner categories and according to national, regional and local established priorities
- offer employers high quality and customised workplace training, including leadership and management training, in response to their needs and those of their employees
- use the 'provision mix matrix approach' to commission employment related skills training and continue progress towards the objective of ensuring that 80% of provision is target bearing or priority provision
- ensure that there is appropriate linkage between the FE and HE and WBL offer to employers and employees and that the pricing and employer engagement policies of Sussex colleges and providers are supporting the 'Leitch agenda' of public/private partnership to finance skills development.

7. We will support all Sussex colleges and training providers delivering significant employment skills to:

- achieve the New Standard by which provision for employers and employees will be judged effective.
- ensure a high quality, specialist Sussex CoVE network.

Individual Adult Skills

8. We will work to develop a joint plan with Jobcentre Plus, Next Step and community and private sector organisations to:

- ensure that the Welfare to Work and Skills for Jobs agendas are addressed in Sussex

- provide learning opportunities for vulnerable groups, such as offenders in the community (through the OLASS target of 841 learners) and Adult learners with learning difficulties and disabilities (ALDD) and mental health needs.
- pilot Skills Coaching in Sussex with Jobcentre Plus and Sussex Advice & Skills to support adults on capacity benefit back into employment or training.

9. We will work with providers to:

- increase the number of adult learners with a Level 2 qualification in Sussex and ensure we operate by national guidelines on the percentage of 19+ FE funding to be directed towards full level 2 (20%)
- deliver the Sussex share of the South East Skills for Life target, and ensure that the percentage of Skills for Life funding to be directed towards nationally accredited qualification is 80%.

Investing in Quality

Inspection performance in Sussex has improved and we are looking to see an increase in the proportion of curriculum areas graded 1/2.

The average cross curriculum inspection grade in Sussex in 2004/05 was 2.4. Grades range from 2.0 for Humanities and English, Languages & Communication to 3.2 for Construction.⁹

Overall FE, full Level 2 and Apprenticeship 16-18 Success Rates improved in 2004/05 as have average A-level points scores.

The 16-18 FE long qualification Success Rate in 2005/06 was 77%, a rise of 3 percentage points on 2004/05. This is 1 percentage point higher than the national rate which is one of the best in the country. The average A-level points score was 676.2 and the average points score per exam entry 204.6. (These scores are not comparable to previous years due to a change in methodology). 16-18

Apprenticeship success rates are up by 15.7 percentage points, to 47%, although this is still 5.7% below the national average. Level 2 Apprenticeships have made a significant improvement to 50.7%, but this is still below the regional average of 53.9%. Advanced Apprenticeships have also improved considerably (by 17.9 percentage points) to 36.5%, although they are still below the regional and national averages.¹⁰

19 - 24 Apprenticeship success rates in Sussex have improved considerably with particular improvement at Level 2 to above the national average.⁸

All 19 - 24 Apprenticeship success rates rose by 17.6 percentage points in 2005/06, higher than the regional improvement, however they still remain 5% below the regional and national rates. Level 2 Adult Apprenticeship success rates in Sussex rose by 20.9 percentage points in 2005/06, and are now the same as the regional rate and above the national percentage. Level 3 Adult apprenticeships are still below regional and national benchmarks. FE adult success rates for long qualifications have risen from 60% in 2004/05 to 66% in 2005/06. The FE full level 2 success rate rose 7 percentage points to 68%. Both are above the regional rate by 2 and 1 percentage points respectively

There has been considerable investment in the FE estate in Sussex, a comparatively high proportion of which is regarded as good or excellent.

Sussex has over 215,000 m² of floor space, 32% of which is rated as good or excellent. This is in line with the South East average^[1]. The Sussex Capital Plan includes a total planned investment of £415 million.^[2]

The quality of the FE estate across Sussex is very similar to that across the region. Whilst almost a third of accommodation is considered excellent – a result of significant investment by colleges over the last ten years – there is still too much accommodation which is unsuited to 21st century needs, with a fifth of

⁹ Sussex Single Authoritative Database, Inspection grades 2004/05.

¹⁰ Autumn Performance Review 2006

accommodation considered unsatisfactory. All but one of the Sussex colleges has at least some of its accommodation in need of replacement or major refurbishment.

Sussex colleges are responding enthusiastically and imaginatively to the challenge to transform their estate so that their learners benefit from 21st century facilities. The first two phases of the complete replacement of the Haywards Heath campus of Central Sussex College are currently on site, with the detailed application for a final phase expected later in 2007. The detailed application to replace Hastings College on two new sites will come forward in the summer. Plumpton College aims to complete the first phase of its extension and refurbishment project for September 2007.

In addition, applications in principle, based on comprehensive property masterplans, are expected during 2007 from at least seven other colleges, including three which include complete replacement of existing buildings. The total estimated value of the projects currently being developed across Sussex is over £400m.

The breadth and volume of the programme across Sussex present major management challenges. The draft 2007/08 Annual Plan for LSC Sussex confirms our commitment to support all colleges in the development and implementation of their capital plans, but also identifies as priorities the Worthing, Brighton & Hove and Hastings areas.

Progress continues to be made in raising success rates for young people and adults, but these remain below the regional rate. The Framework for Excellence will provide broad challenges in developing effective and high quality provision with a supportive infrastructure that will give learners the opportunities they need to succeed.

Issues and Challenges

- Success rates are improving in Sussex but the pace of change needs to increase
- Apprenticeship framework completions are not in line with regional and national benchmarks and need to improve
- The inspection profile in Sussex is predominantly grade 2 and 3
- Some provision is below Minimum Levels of Performance
- Ambitious plans for estate transformation being developed by all Sussex colleges will require high levels of expert support, within the colleges and from the LSC

Action for Excellence

Regional Priority: To raise performance and improve the quality of provision, using the Framework for Excellence, to further develop a self-critical provider network with a focus on quality improvement. (the percentages quoted

are regional; local figures will not be available until local volumes in the Summary Statement of Activity have been confirmed)

We will assure quality in Sussex and the South East with a particular focus on:

- investing in and growing excellent provision and encouraging increased specialisation
- all providers delivering at least minimum levels of performance over the next two years
- increasing the proportion of good and excellent provision
- eradicating unsatisfactory provision by 2008
- increasing young people's FE success rate for full Level 2 and full Level 3 qualifications by xx percentage points.
- a 3 percentage point increase in framework completion rates for all apprenticeship programmes, particularly for advanced apprenticeships
- all FE and WBL providers working towards a 5 percentage point improvement in adult full Level 2 success rates
- identifying high quality alternative providers through applying the principles of competition to secure new provision
- investing in a significant improvement in the quality of the FE infrastructure.

Our Local Actions

Excellence

10. We will work in collaboration with FE Sussex, SCTP, partners and providers in Sussex to:

- sustain the improvement of Success Rates for young people and adults
- ensure that all Sussex providers are at or above the national benchmarks focussing on Apprenticeships and FE-funded Level 2 programmes
- commission new provision where provision is below the benchmark for the minimum level of performance
- promote collaborative arrangements for children's workforce development to make use of and share the expertise held within Local Authorities, FE colleges, Universities and Sector Skills Councils and their networks.

11. We will continue to work with providers and partners on the 'drive for excellence' in Sussex, in order to:

- see an increase in the proportion of curriculum areas graded 1 or 2 at inspection
- eradicate provision which fails to meet published minimum levels of performance
- move towards a self critical and self improving Sussex provider network operating to the national 'Framework for Excellence'
- fulfil the FE Sussex commitment to outstanding colleges.

Infrastructure

12. We will work with colleges to transform the quality of post 16 accommodation across Sussex, with a particular focus on Areas B, D and F, ensuring that individual college projects are:

- complementary
- contribute to the development of the 14-19 entitlement, including the development of vocational skills centres, informed by Partnership Boards
- address identified skills gaps
- address disability and equality needs, and contribute to the achievement of the regional Action for Inclusion strategy.

13. We will ensure the appropriate alignment of LSC capital grant support with capital investment by

- the Regional Development Agency (SEEDA) – with a particular focus on Brighton, the Gatwick Diamond and Hastings
- the three Children's Trusts – with a particular focus on the Building Schools for the Future projects at Bexhill and Bognor
- other agencies, including the district and borough councils and the health service

Investing in Communities¹¹

Sussex is more deprived than the South East in the overall measure of deprivation, but slightly less deprived than the South East distribution in terms of education, skills and training.

Considering the distribution of deprivation by districts Brighton and Hove and Hastings contain the majority of most deprived super output areas (SOAs) based on the overall index of deprivation and many of the most deprived SOAs based on the education, skills and training domain. Brighton and Hove is ranked 83rd out of the 354 local authorities in England putting it in the top 24% of most deprived local authorities. The least deprived district is Mid Sussex, ranked at 346th putting it in the 4% least deprived local authorities in England.

In Sussex, one in six working age people are inactive.

The economically inactive consist of a diverse group comprising the early retired, students and sick or disabled that vary in their closeness to the labour market. Of this group, however, there are slightly more people who want a job compared to the South East average (27.3% compared to 27.1%). Brighton and Hove has the highest economic inactivity rate, whilst West Sussex has the lowest inactivity rate. In East Sussex 34% of the economically inactive reported that they wanted a job.

Claimant based unemployment figures show that unemployment is higher in Sussex for males, but not for females compared to the South East.

By duration of claim Sussex has a lower proportion of short term claims, up to six months, compared to the South East. The claim rate is comparable for durations of six to twelve months but is significantly higher for claims lasting longer than twelve months (20% of all claimants) compared to the South East (17% of all claimants). This suggests that Sussex has a long-term unemployment group.

The economy of West Sussex between 1997 and 2003 was by far the best performing sub regional economy in the South East.¹²

Commuting patterns in Sussex often mean that the skilled workforce travels to industry centres, resulting in economic growth for industries in these areas but low resident economic activity rates. These industry areas, including Brighton & Hove and Crawley, then have locally low-skilled populations. Thus, the economic geography of Sussex ranges from major industrial areas in Crawley (the Gatwick Diamond) and Brighton & Hove to small service industries supporting tourism and where opportunities for economic development are also limited.

Residential areas include deprived locations in Hastings to commuting centres in central and West Sussex and retiring populations along the Sussex coast.

The economy of West Sussex expanded by around 2.4% per annum, however estimates show that East Sussex and parts of the coastal strip had growth rates

¹¹ Sources on this page: Local Area Profiles, Autumn 2006

¹² Regional Economic Strategy

significantly below the national average. The Gross Value Added (GVA) per head of East Sussex (together with Kent and the Isle of Wight) is only 0.55% higher than that in the North East, which is commonly regarded as the poorest region in England. East Sussex and the whole of the Sussex coast are Area Investment Framework (AIF) areas which look to address deprivation.

There is a particular need to address the provision of opportunities for the long-term unemployed through increased access to basic skills provision and the development of vocational training opportunities.

Literacy and numeracy, Skills for Life qualifications

In 05/06, 5,522 adult learners achieved 7,613 qualifications contributing directly to the PSA target for Skills for Life, which is an improvement from 04/05 performance on both participation and achievement. Data shows that contribution towards the PSA target by providers funded by LSC Sussex is currently at 107% prior to multiple enrolment discounts. In 2005/06, 74 % of basic skills enrolments were on nationally approved and accredited provision. In 06/07, 85.5% of basic skills enrolments in Sussex were on nationally approved and accredited provision and 18.5% on other basic skills aims, mainly focussing on the pre-entry curriculum needs of adults with learning difficulties and disabilities. Nevertheless, there is still a high concentration of adults with basic skills needs in Adur and Crawley for Literacy skills and Crawley and Hastings for Numeracy skills. In addition, Brighton & Hove and Crawley have the highest concentration of population with English as a second language¹³ and, migration trends have increased the demand for ESOL among the Eastern European workforce employed mainly within horticultural industries on the Sussex coastal strip.

Joint working with SEEDA

Our principal relationship with SEEDA is through the Surrey and Sussex area team. Through this link we effectively contribute to economic development (AIFs) and will be expressing our views and contributions for the RES, the emerging coastal strategy and during 2007 the rural development plan for the region. We provide the secretariat for Sussex Skills for Productivity Alliance which provides skills demand information. So far the strength of SSPA has been in the sector work led by us and building heavily of AfB and CoVEs. Our supply side counterpoints, Sussex Skills Strategy Group, FE Sussex and SCTP, will be developed during this year to bring stronger coordination and cohesion

Offender learning in the community

In 05/06, LSC Sussex, Sussex Probation Area and NACRO engaged 1048 offenders in the community into Skills for Life programmes and achieved 254 qualifications.

In 06/07, LSC Sussex will engage a minimum of 843 offenders in the community, providing a minimum of 405 additional Skills for Life qualifications. Additionally, funding provided from Local Area Agreements will support 30 high risk offenders to access Skills for Life provision in the community and ESF funding will also be

¹³ Skills for Life Survey 2003

used to supplement provision for offenders – both employed and non employed and linked to Train to Gain where appropriate

All three local Authorities have agreed Local Area Agreements (LAAs).

Brighton & Hove local authority were in the 2004 pilot LAAs. East Sussex and West Sussex Councils signed agreements in April 2006. All three have targets for achievements at level 2 by 19, reducing percentage of 16-18 NEETs, increase numbers of adults gaining accredited qualification as part of Skills for Life strategy and on full Level 2 programmes and/or in key employment sectors.

Voluntary and community sector

There are approximately 8,000 Voluntary and Community Organisations (VCOs) across Sussex, playing a vital role in community cohesion, health improvement, neighbourhood renewal and rural revival - as well as lifelong learning.

Sussex has the second largest total of learners on PCDL courses in the South East¹⁴

In 2004/2005 there were just over 41,000 learners are on PCDL programmes. This was a reduction of just over 3% since 2003/2004. This number of learners is the second largest in the South East. Three quarters of these learners are females.

Issues and Challenges

- Address continued Skills for Life ‘hotspots’;
- Support the implementation of the Welfare to Work and Skills for Jobs agendas by furthering developing provision for economically inactive adults - including the long term unemployed and offenders – in partnership with Jobcentre Plus, Local Authorities and other stakeholders;
- In partnership with Local Authorities, Economic Partnerships, AIFs, Jobcentre Plus and others develop a differentiated approach to Sussex economic sub areas – reflecting the needs of urban, coastal and rural parts of Sussex;
- Work with AIFs to target learning opportunities with progressions on coastal strip and other areas in need of regeneration;
- Contribute to LAAs and align funding and activity with LAA stakeholders and partners;
- Develop PCDL Partnerships linked to LAAs and able to lever in additional funding to support opportunities for vulnerable adults in particular – including those with learning difficulties.

Action for Communities

Regional Priority: To increase economic activity and productivity, and support the regeneration and growth of communities, by developing the South East Action for Communities model and aligning the LSC’s investment with that of others.

¹⁴ ILR, A03, 03/04 and 04/05

We will work towards the regional priorities with a particular focus on (the percentages quoted are regional; local figures will not be available until local volumes in the Summary Statement of Activity have been confirmed):

- increasing the proportion of learners from vulnerable groups engaged in Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL)
- engaging economically underactive people who wish to develop their careers through Adult Learner Accounts and the adult Level 2 entitlement
- increasing quality and opportunities for offenders in custody and in the community
- increasing outcomes and progression for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- increasing the resource allocated to priority skills in specified growth areas
- increasing opportunities and support for those without basic skills and first Level 2.

Our Local Actions

Regional and local economic development and regeneration

14. We will establish PCDL/Action for Communities Partnerships, in all three Sussex Local Authorities and alongside Borough and District Councils, which will:

- be responsive to local neighbourhoods (including rural communities) and to the learner voice;
- be credible with democratic bodies and with adult learning providers;
- include community and voluntary organisations as advocates of need and providers;
- have the ability to steer and shape adult and community learning and better meet the needs of disadvantaged neighbourhoods (including rural communities) and vulnerable adults.

Socially and economically disadvantaged people

15. We will contribute to the economic development and sustainable community actions of the three Sussex Local Area Agreements by:

- aligning our funding and resources with those of our key strategic partners;
- promoting social inclusion through economic inclusion and learning led regeneration;
- playing a full role in LAAs and AIF partnerships and taking the lead on actions designed to increase the number of adults achieving Skills for Life qualifications and on Level 2 and 3 programmes.

16. We will work in partnership with key, local area and regional agencies (including Jobcentre Plus and Local Authorities) and providers, to focus resources on the needs of:

- vulnerable groups (including offenders, adults with learning difficulties and disabilities)
- economically inactive adults in rural, coastal and urban Sussex.

Aggregate Volumes

[All volumes are indicative]

Summary Statement of Activity	Year 1	
	16-18 (Learner Volumes)	Adult (Learner Volumes)
LSC Funded Participation		
Number of FE learners (total)	[24,670]	[45,950]
Number of FE learners undertaking Level 4 and above		[1,920]
Number of FE learners undertaking Level 3	[15,070]	[9,580]
<i>of which:</i> Full Level 3 Learners	[11,190]	[4,790]
<i>of which:</i> First Full Level 3 Learners		
Number of Train to Gain learners undertaking Level 3		
Number of learners undertaking an Advanced Apprenticeship (Average in Learning)	[750]	[800]
Number of FE learners undertaking Level 2	[6,140]	[14,830]
<i>of which:</i> Full Level 2 Learners	[4,850]	[4,970]
<i>of which:</i> First Full Level 2 Learners		[1,990]
Number of Train to Gain learners undertaking Level 2		
Number of learners undertaking an Apprenticeship at Level 2 (Average in Learning)	[1930]	[780]
Number of FE learners undertaking Skills for Life qualifications that directly contribute to PSA target	[8,840]	[6,320]
Number of Advanced Apprenticeships and Apprenticeship learners undertaking Skills for Life qualifications that directly contribute to PSA target	[1,450]	[820]
Number of Train to Gain learners undertaking Skills for Life qualifications that directly contribute to PSA target		
Number of FE learners undertaking Level 1 and Entry	[3,420]	[16,350]
Number of learners undertaking Entry to Employment (starts)	[890]	
Number of learners undertaking Safeguarded Adult Learning (Total)		[30,140]
<i>of which:</i> Number of learners undertaking Family learning, literacy and numeracy		[1,940]
<i>of which:</i> Number of learners undertaking Neighbourhood learning in deprived communities		[540]
<i>of which:</i> Number of learners undertaking Wider Family Learning		[2,140]
<i>of which:</i> Number of learners undertaking Personal / Leisure Learning		[25,510]
ESF Funded Participation	16-18 (Learner Volumes)	Adult (Learner Volumes)
Number of ESF Learners undertaking any ESF Activity		
Number of ESF Learners not included in LSC Funded Participation table above		
<i>Of which:</i>		
Level 4 and above		
Full Level 3		
Full Level 2		
Skills for life that directly contributes towards the PSA target		
Level 1 and Entry		
Other ESF activity		

LSC Funded Outcomes	16-18 (Learner achievements)	Adult (Learner achievements)	16-18 Success Rate (%)	Adult Success Rate (%)
Number of FE Learners achieving a Full Level 3 qualification	[7,470]	[2,330]		
Number of FE Learners achieving a First Full Level 3 qualification				
Number of Train to Gain learners achieving a Full Level 3				
Number of Learners achieving an Advanced Apprenticeship Framework	[150]	[190]		
Number of FE Learners achieving a Full Level 2 qualification	[2,950]	[2,830]		
Number of FE Learners achieving a First Full Level 2 qualification		[1,130]		
Number of Train to Gain Learners achieving a Full Level 2 qualification				
Number of Learners achieving an Apprenticeship Framework (at Level 2)	[760]	[360]		
Number of FE learners achieving a Skills for Life qualification (s) that directly contribute to PSA target	[5,290]	[3,500]		
Number of Advanced Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship learners achieving a Skills for Life qualification(s) that directly contribute to PSA target	[940]	[820]		
Number of Train to Gain learners achieving a Skills for Life qualification(s) that directly contribute to PSA target				
Number of learners progressing to a positive destination from Entry to Employment				
ESF Funded Outcomes				
Number of ESF Learners not included in LSC Funded Outcomes table above achieving a qualification at:				
Full Level 3				
Full Level 2				
Skills for life qualification that directly contributes to the PSA target				

Funding summary	Funding (£)
FE 16 - 18	
FE Adult	
FE Additional Learning Support	
Train to Gain	
Advanced Apprenticeships and Apprenticeships 16-18	
Advanced Apprenticeships and Apprenticeships (Adult)	
Entry to Employment	
WBL additional learner / learning support	
Safeguarded Adult Learning	
ESF	
Total	

Fee Income and Other Activity Summary	Fee Income (£)	% of LSC funded activity Fee Income	Number of Learners
LSC Funded provision			
Not publicly subsidised / full cost			

Other Information

Equality and Diversity

In all provision that we fund we aim to:

- promote equality of opportunity across six equality strands: race, disability, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation and age.
- reduce gaps in participation and attainment by individuals from disadvantaged groups and for those in the most deprived localities within the region.
- utilise the capacity and expertise of the voluntary sector wherever possible.

The overarching aim as stated in the LSC's Equality and Diversity Strategy is to ensure the provision responds to all customers of education and training, driven by need. The LSC continues to promote the use of Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMS) as set by the LSC at regional and local levels.

Information Sources

Local indicators relating to population and society can also be examined using the Audit Commission area profiles website at www.area-profiles.audit-commission.gov.uk

The latest Office for National Statistics Region in Figures for the South East was published for 2004/05 at the end of 2005. It can be accessed at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk>

The Government Office for the South East regional plan sets out a vision for the region from 2006-2026, focusing on housing, transport, economy and the environment. The plan provides a framework in which strategies can be developed for the region and can be accessed at <http://www.go-se.gov.uk/gose/planning/regionalPlanning/>, where information on the latest response to the plan can also be found.

The Government Office also has a role, on behalf of central government, in leading the discussions on Local Area Agreements. Further information on these can be found at <http://www.go-se.gov.uk/gose/localGovt/>. In addition to the Government Office, the South East England intelligence network also provides additional research and data that provide further context to this report and can be accessed at www.see-in.co.uk.

Statistical First Release:

[Education and Training Statistics for the United Kingdom 2006 \(Internet only\)](#)

Regional Economic Strategy:

<http://www.seeda.co.uk/res/>