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Learning and Skills Council

Local Strategic Plan 2002-05

Herefordshire and Worcestershire

Learning+Skills Council
Herefordshire and Worcestershire

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How to use this plan

Part A of the plan sets the scene for our strategy for the next three years. Included in this are our SWOT analysis, our interim targets for 2004 and our list of current priorities which together define the needs of the sub-region.

Part B is the strategy itself - split between seven strategic objectives which are drawn from the LSC's five national objectives. Within each objective are Measures of Success which are the quantifiable means of knowing that we are making progress, while beneath each measure are specific actions which will be the base upon which we build our annual business plans. Many of the ways in which we will ensure equality of opportunity are to be found in the actions.

Part C contains supporting information.

N.B. Where the term 'local Council' has been used this refers to the local LSC Council

> Chairman's foreword

I am delighted to present our first three-year strategic plan. It has been produced following very wide consultation and will be updated and rolled forward annually through a process of further consultation and review.

Our local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) started operation in April 2001. It is part of a national organisation with 47 local councils, one of which covers Herefordshire and Worcestershire. For the first time, England has a single unitary body responsible for the planning, funding, monitoring and quality improvement of all education and training undertaken by anyone aged over 16, except those in higher education. This is a challenging agenda and incorporates a number of elements - widening participation, raising achievement and improving the quality of learning provision.

The challenge for this local Learning and Skills Council is both exciting and very demanding. We need to create an environment for change: an environment in which the learner is at the heart. Their needs and aspirations will be the driving force for the way we administer and direct £80m of public money into learning provision for Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

For Herefordshire and Worcestershire to be successful, it is critical for businesses and individuals to learn new skills, be more creative and innovative and use their knowledge to produce higher value-added goods and services. In order to ensure that individuals develop their skills, employers will need to become fully engaged with the new learning agenda and implement workforce development strategies that not only benefit their own organisation but also the economic prosperity of this sub-region. Equally, we shall need to convince individual adults and young people that lifelong learning is exciting, life-enhancing and worthwhile.

Our aim is to make Herefordshire and Worcestershire a place where learning is valued by all sections of the community and the benefits of learning are enjoyed by individuals, businesses and the wider community. If we achieve this, we believe it will make a substantial contribution to the overall prosperity and quality of life for Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

Any learning that we support must be accessible to people irrespective of their gender, ethnic origin or disability. This is a major challenge that will not be resolved overnight and I am happy to accept the role of local "Champion" for equal opportunities. I am also very conscious that two particular areas of activity are currently under funded and need serious attention. They are the development of the employed workforce and adult and community education, the second of which attracts about one seventh of the national average funding per head of population - an area on which we shall continue to lobby for more central funding.

Although we now have the strategic responsibility for all post-16 education and learning at the local level, it would not be possible to achieve our vision and mission without the key support of our partners and stakeholders, with whom we need to work in close collaboration.

Once this strategic plan has been formerly approved by the LSC National Office we shall finalise our Business Plan for 2002/03 which will contain details of the activities that will need to be undertaken during the first year in support of the three year strategic objectives.

Chris Swan
Chairman
Learning and Skills Council Herefordshire and Worcestershire

> Introduction by Executive Director -
Developing our Corporate Strategy

In putting together our corporate strategy we ensured that the following stages were completed:

- We defined our corporate objectives and goals in the light of the requirements of the national LSC framework, local Council views, partners and stakeholders feedback and views of our employees.
- We appraised the organisation's current performance against the goals and against known achievements of other local LSCs.
- We assessed the trends in the business environment using PEST (political, economic, sociological and technological) analysis and SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis.
- We completed an extensive data research analysis and built the analysis into our PEST and SWOT analysis.
- We have assessed the organisation's resources (finance, people, technology, facilities and marketing) to determine how best to utilise these resources to achieve our objectives.
- We have prepared a comprehensive risk management strategy to understand clearly the major threats to our success. These risks will be monitored regularly by both the executive and the full Council to ensure firm control of the high risk elements.
- Already in our first year we have modified our organisational structure in order to take account of all the major changes in our new agenda and to ensure we achieve our key goals and objectives.
- We are thoroughly reviewing all our key processes not only to help reduce duplication, errors and bureaucracy but also to give better focus and clarity in the achievement of our objectives.
- We have reviewed and changed the organisational culture from a process driven organisation to become more customer focused and quality driven.
- We have given strong emphasis to the development of the capacity and capability of our staff to help them become more entrepreneurial, innovative and professional.
- We have identified clearly what reputation the LSC Herefordshire and Worcestershire wants to build over the next 4-5 years for staff, external stakeholders and providers of learning.
- We have stated clearly to our staff our mission, vision, values and culture over the next few years and we have also stated clearly what we expect in return from our staff.
- To help ensure we maintain the best standards of excellence we intend to use EFQM and Investors in People as the appropriate frameworks in the continuous self assessment process and continuous improvement.

Alan Curless OBE
Executive Director

Executive Summary of Measures of Success

Strategic Objective 1:
To encourage greater participation of young people in learning

BY WORKING WITH ALL POST-16 LEARNING PROVIDERS

- Increases in the number of young people entering sixth forms, further education and work-based learning

BY WORKING WITH LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITIES (LEAs) AND SCHOOLS

- All schools offering a pre-16 vocational curriculum in partnership with colleges and training providers
- By 2005, all schools wishing to offer a differentiated 13-16 curriculum have received support
- An entitlement offered to all young people in full-time education to directly experience the world of work through their school and college curriculum

THROUGH THE LSC'S ROLE WITHIN THE CONNEXIONS SERVICE PARTNERSHIP

- The creation of an easily accessed, comprehensive service of information, support and impartial guidance
- An improvement in the destination rates of young people at 16, 17 and 18
- A reduction in the level of non-completion of young people from the sub-region who entered higher education

BY WORKING WITH ALL POST-16 LEARNING PROVIDERS

- An improvement in the choice and availability of post-16 opportunities
- A reduction in the differential in progression of young people with disabilities and/or additional learning needs compared with the whole cohort
- A reduction in the differential in progression of young people from priority wards and disadvantaged postcode areas into learning opportunities compared with the whole cohort

BY WORKING WITH SCHOOLS WITH POST-16 PROVISION

- No school sixth form to have closed for reasons of size alone
- An entitlement to further education or training to be available for all school students with learning difficulties or disabilities

THROUGH IMPROVED HIGHER EDUCATION COMPLETION AND PARTICIPATION

- An increase in the percentage of people aged 18-30 entering higher education
- A reduction in non completion at higher education level

Strategic Objective 2:
To encourage greater participation of adults in learning

BY WORKING WITH THE INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE PARTNERSHIP (IAG)

- More people aged 19+ to be aware of IAG across both counties
- An increase in ease of access to a guidance centre or Information Point

- An increase in uptake of information, advice and guidance
- A increase in numbers of recipients of guidance to have acted upon the advice given

BY WORKING WITH BOTH LEAS AND LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS AND WITH THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTORS

- Sufficient, affordable, good quality Adult and Community Learning (ACL) provision to exist in all parts of the sub-region
- An increase in participation in Adult and Community Learning
- An increase in participation in learning in a number of deprived wards in each county
- An increase in ACL funding levels per capita of population to at least the West Midlands average

BY WORKING WITH EMPLOYERS AND THE TUC

- By working with local benchmark companies to introduce and develop an agreed target figure of Trade Union Learning Advisers to their roles

THROUGH BASIC SKILLS IN THE WORKPLACE

- 9,927additional adults to have increased their levels of literacy and numeracy
- Five employers to have signed up to provide Basic Skills screening and support for their employees

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3:

To engage greater number of employers in activities which develop the skills of the workforce for national competitiveness

- To show annual increases in the numbers of employers undertaking training activity

THROUGH EMPLOYER GROUPS

- To either have helped establish or engaged with sub-regional employer led groups in key sectors
- To have developed two new group training partnerships, and three industrial estate partnerships

THROUGH LOCAL GOVERNMENT

- Increase uptake of Investors in People and Modern Apprenticeships

THROUGH THE HEALTHCARE SECTOR

- Increase uptake of Investors in People and Modern Apprenticeships

THROUGH INFORMATION AND ADVICE

- The introduction of a professional and impartial advice to employers on training and learning for their business

THROUGH COLLEGES OF FURTHER/HIGHER EDUCATION AND OTHER PROVIDERS OF LEARNING

- An increase in the number of employers purchasing training from colleges and training providers

THROUGH ACHIEVEMENT OF INVESTORS IN PEOPLE TARGETS

- By December 2002 205 (45%) of medium sized or larger organisations to be recognised as having achieved the Investors in People Standard

- By December 2002, 163 small organisations (10 - 50 people) to be recognised as Investors in People

THROUGH MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- A baseline or proxy measure set to establish the amount of management and leadership development that is taking place in order to set targets for 2005

THROUGH LARGE EMPLOYERS AND SUPPLY CHAINS

- An increase in the numbers of large employers that encourage smaller firms in their supply chains to adopt workforce development activity

THROUGH BASIC SKILLS IN THE WORKPLACE

- A baseline or proxy measure set to establish the amount of basic skills training that is taking place in the workplace in order to set targets for 2005

THROUGH E-LEARNING

- Significant reduction in reported skill shortages and of difficulties in attracting good quality people into IT positions

THROUGH ENTERPRISE ACTIVITY

- More businesses to have started up in the growth and high value added sectors

THROUGH REDUCTION IN SKILL SHORTAGES

- An effective measure of skill shortage levels to be in place
- A reduction in the frequency and severity of reported skill shortages

THROUGH EMPLOYERS WORKING WITH EDUCATION

- Each year 10% of serving teachers in schools have undertaken a placement in the workplace
- Greater numbers of companies taking part in enterprise activity in schools

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4:

To ensure that a greater proportion of young people in learning achieve a qualification aim relevant to their career pathway and the future needs of the economy

IN SCHOOLS AND FURTHER EDUCATION (FE) COLLEGES

- An increase in the number of pupils gaining five GCSE passes grades A to C and overall GCSE pass rates (to include Vocational GCSEs)
- An increase in the number of pupils gaining A Levels and GNVQs
- To establish baselines with a view to improvement in the completion levels within full-time sixth form and further education provision

IN WORK BASED LEARNING (WBL)

- An improvement in the completion rate within WBL - baseline to be established
- More than 25% of young people to have entered an apprenticeship by the time they are 22 years old
- Improvements in achievement rates for the number of Foundation and Advanced Modern Apprenticeship completions per 100 leavers

- An improvement in levels of WBL satisfaction
- Improvements in equality parity measures for ethnic minority participants gaining a qualification and for young people with disabilities

YOUNG PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND DISABILITIES

- Improve progression of students with learning difficulties

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5:

To ensure that a greater proportion of adults in learning achieve a qualification relevant to their current or future employment and the future needs of the economy

- By 2004 68% of adults will be qualified at Level 2
- By 2004 57.5% of adults will be qualified at Level 3
- By 2004 30% of adults will be qualified at Level 4

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6:

To improve the quality and effectiveness of learning delivery

BY WORKING WITH LOCAL FE,WBL AND ACL PROVIDERS AND WITH LEAS AND SCHOOLS AND EFFECTIVE USE OF STANDARDS FUNDS

- A shift in balance from 'some' and 'serious concerns' gradings at provider reviews of WBL and FE provision towards 'Good' and 'Excellent'
- No 'non mainstream' provider of Adult and Community learning or of externally funded provision to be in the 'serious concerns category' and a reduction of those in 'satisfactory' or 'some concerns' categories

THROUGH E-LEARNING

- A strategy for e-learning to have been agreed with partners

THROUGH SPECIALIST PROVISION

- A wide geographical variety of spread and range of at least 22 specialist high schools by 2005
- At least three further education colleges designated as Centres of Vocational Excellence by 2004

THROUGH INVESTORS IN PEOPLE IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

- An increase in the number of schools recognised as Investors in People

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 7:

To ensure that the local LSC has the capacity to deliver all its key targets efficiently

THROUGH INTERNAL CONTROL

- No serious weaknesses to have been identified by National LSC internal auditors

THROUGH HUMAN RESOURCES

- To have achieved the Investors in People Standard and the double tick for disability awareness

THROUGH PROPER GOVERNANCE

- Local systems of governance will have demonstrated their effectiveness

THROUGH ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

- To have carried out our first measurable assessment against EFQM (Business Excellence) principles

THROUGH BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

- To be settled in premises which are entirely fit for the purpose of a local LSC

THROUGH IT AND TELEPHONY INFRASTRUCTURE

- All staff provided with computing and telephony facilities in line with national LSC policy

THROUGH EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

- A robust and effective internal communications strategy will be in place for informing and promoting the work of the LSC

THROUGH INFORMATION SYSTEMS

- Access to reliable corporate information systems in line with national LSC policy
- Recent and accurate information on participation, achievement and destinations of all learners to be accessible on-line

THROUGH COHERENCE BETWEEN FUNDING STREAMS

- To have gained agreement with other distributors of public money to support training that reciprocal consultation will take place on the deployment of such funds

THROUGH EXTERNAL FUNDING SOURCES

- To have maximised Co-financed Objective 3 European Funding
- To be fully engaged with Objective 2 and Rural Regeneration Zone processes

BY DEVELOPING A KNOWLEDGE BASE

- A comprehensive information base on the learning and skills market will exist
- Coherence of approach will exist between plans at local, regional, and national level

Part A: Setting the Scene

Our Mission and Vision and Key Objectives

We want all who work for the LSC to contribute as much as they can to its success. We will develop a climate which emphasises directness, openness to new ideas, personal accountability and recognition of individual and team achievement.

Our mission is to raise participation and attainment through high-quality education and training which puts learners first.

Our vision is that, by 2010, young people and adults in England will have knowledge and productive skills matching the best in the world.

NATIONAL KEY OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS FOR 2004

Key Objectives	**Targets for 2004**
1. Extend participation in education, learning and training	- 80% of 16 - 18 year olds in structured learning (2000: 75%) - Set baseline and target for adults in next year's Plan
2. Increase engagement of employers in workforce development	Develop measure of employer engagement in next year's Plan
3. Raise achievement of young people	- 85% at Level 2 by age 19 (2000: 75%) - 55% at Level 3 by age 19 (2000: 51%)
4. Raise achievement of adults	- Raise literacy and numeracy skills of 750,000 adults - % of adults at Level 2: target to be set in next year's Plan - 52% of adults at Level 3 (2000: 47%)
5. Raise quality of education and training and user satisfaction	Set baselines and targets in next year's Plan

Our local Strategic Objectives correlate directly with the national objectives:

Strategic Objective 1: to encourage greater participation of young people in learning

Strategic Objective 2: to encourage greater participation of adults in learning

Strategic Objective 3: to engage greater number of employers in activities which develop the skills of the workforce for national competitiveness

Strategic Objective 4: to ensure that a greater proportion of young people in learning achieve a qualification relevant to their career pathway and the future needs of the economy

Strategic Objective 5: to ensure that a greater proportion of adults in learning achieve a qualification relevant to their current or future employment and the future needs of the economy

Strategic Objective 6: to improve the quality and effectiveness of learning delivery

Strategic Objective 7: to ensure that the local LSC has the capacity to deliver all its key targets efficiently

Corporate values, culture and behaviour

As LSC Herefordshire and Worcestershire has moved from its start-up phase to being fully operational, it has taken seriously the development of an effective organisational culture. A clear statement of corporate values, culture and behaviour underpins the implementation of this strategic plan. These are shown below.

Delivering results through integrity, innovation,learning and teamwork

This means:	We can achieve this by behaving in the following ways:
▮ beginning with the end in mind	being goal oriented ... working to deliver results ...
▮ being business focused	focusing on the learner all the time ... developing a risk strategy concentrating on... our customers ...
▮ being learner and customer focused	focusing on internal and individual results as well as external ones
▮ paying attention to personal fulfilment	... doing things well ...
▮ being world class	maintaining high standards ... being the best ...
▮ a collective drive for success and excellence	balancing priorities ... positive can do attitudes ...
▮ develop effective partnerships	exceeding the expectations of our customers, stakeholders and community partners ... achieving team and individual objectives ... producing performance outturns that are consistently better than the average local LSC

Delivering results through integrity, innovation,learning and teamwork

This means:	We can achieve this by behaving in the following ways:
▮ taking responsibility ▮ being open and honest ▮ honouring commitments ▮ behaving professionally ▮ showing respect for others and valuing others contributions ▮ equality and diversity ▮ caring employer	taking responsibility individually ... being a responsible organisation ... owning problems ... listening to other people ... keeping an open mind ... being fair ... admitting when we are wrong ... sticking to our promises ... doing a good job ... delivering an equal opportunity strategy ... having effective HR policies and management styles ... having effective internal controls

Delivering results through integrity, innovation, learning and teamwork

This means:	We can achieve this by behaving in the following ways:
▮ being proactive ▮ being creative ▮ problem solving ▮ synergising ▮ taking risks ▮ empowered individuals	believing in the learning revolution ... finding new ways of doing old things ... creating new ways of doing new things ... not just inventing, but also implementing ... identifying what is wrong and fixing it ... being constantly on the look out for better processes, procedures, methods ... not just do things better but do things differently ... developing a culture of learning rather than blame

Delivering results through integrity, innovation, learning and teamwork

This means:	We can achieve this by behaving in the following ways:
▮ inspiring existing learners to develop their skills further ▮ winning over new and excluded learners; and ▮ transforming the accessibility of learning in everyday life and work	learning from each other ... sharing problems ... development programmes .. learning from our partner organisations ... learning from other businesses ... sharpening the saw ...

Delivering results through integrity, innovation, learning and teamwork

This means:	We can achieve this by behaving in the following ways:
▮ co-operation ▮ assistance ▮ understanding ▮ empathy ▮ interdependency ▮ team spirit ▮ common goals ▮ thinking win-win	overcoming traditional vertical working practices ... communicating with each other ... celebrating success ... recognising achievement ... giving credit to people and teams ... working across boundaries ... working together to deliver results for everyone

Building a great reputation for the LSC

Over the next four to five years we will work to build a highly regarded reputation for the LSC in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. This will be one where:

- we take social inclusion and widening participation issues seriously
- we have a reputation for reliability/safe handling - listening and responding - a recognised first point of contact for a wider range of information, advice and expertise in learning and skills
- we can demonstrate effective and positive management
- we act as a professional, high-performing agent of change
- we deliver against objectives so that - things have changed for the better - we must deliver what we promise
- we are on the side of the learner
- successful employers are making effective use of the LSC or its providers
- we are seen as highly supportive to the provider network in the development of quality and provision
- we are responsible for the overall improvement in the quality of the learning provision
- we are one of the most successful local LSCs in the country: an exemplar/benchmark
- we demonstrate a clear strategic leadership role in learning and skills

We would like our staff to describe the LSC as a challenging and exciting place to work and a great organisation to work for. We hope they will be proud to say that they work for LSC Herefordshire and Worcestershire and that it is a place where staff:

- are supported by excellent internal employee development processes to help ensure that they have the necessary skills to do their job effectively
- feel that the organisation is committed to supporting the development and progression of its people
- are encouraged to improve their own and other people's performance and that their contribution to the organisation is recognised
- believe the organisation is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity in the development of its people
- are made aware of the aims and objectives of the organisation, are helped to understand them as appropriate and are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the strategic plan and the organisational structure
- see clearly the link between our employee development programme, our objectives and our success
- understand how they contribute to achieving the organisation's aims and objectives through the setting of personal performance objectives

We intend that our managers:

- will be effective in supporting the development of their staff because they believe that their employees are crucial to the success of the organisation
- will recognise the need to promote a better work/life balance within the organisation
- have created a knowledge sharing organisation
- are constantly aiming to improve their leadership and management skills

We also want to be recognised by key external stakeholders and partners as an exemplary organisation:

- we wish it to be known generally that we put learners and employers at the heart of its planning and services and have made a major difference to the skills of Herefordshire and Worcestershire
- we wish to be seen to have brought coherence of services to a complicated infrastructure

From the providers' perspective, we intend that they will view the LSC as an organisation which enables them to be more effective by keeping bureaucracy to a minimum, and one which is consistent and maintains relationships and minimises the effects of sudden lurches in policy. We intend to bring new insights and information which help providers in service delivery, but also to take firm action with providers that are not up to the high standard required

For employers we must firstly understand their needs far better. We need to achieve a better match between the supply of and demand for skills. We will back long-term strategic partnerships (e.g. via sector-skills organisations; supply chains; other representative bodies) which involve employers

For ministers we must demonstrate that we meet our targets in order to enhance national competitiveness and that we evaluate our own effectiveness and demonstrate a commitment to continuous improvement

For local authorities we must be a strong and supportive partner in delivering an effective economic and community based strategy

For the voluntary sector we must identify how best to work with it for the achievement of its overall objectives, particularly in relation to social inclusion and capacity building

For Learning Partnerships we must agree on a shared commitment to work together to develop lifelong learning provision in the two counties and then make sure that it is working effectively

SWOT and PEST Analyses

In order to set a context for this plan, through analysis of data, from the bibliography of associated documents at the rear of this document and from partner and stakeholder feedback we have set out these SWOT and PEST analyses. The weaknesses will undoubtedly influence the local Council's choice of future priorities.

SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- High staying on rates at 16 and 18
- Low drop out rates from higher education
- Higher than average participation rates in education and learning
- Very good performance at Key Stage 3 in schools achieving Level 5

	English	Maths	Science
Worcestershire	68%	67%	64%
Herefordshire	73%	73%	70%
England	64%	64%	59%

Herefordshire is in the top 10 in England

- Good performance generally on GCSEs,A Level,AS Level - particularly Herefordshire
- Low unemployment (puts focus on employers)
- Some excellent businesses and benchmark organisations
- One of largest users of learndirect/Ufi in the Country
- Good alignment of partner strategies
- Good partnership working at strategic level e.g. LEA, Economic Development
- Above regional and national averages on Adults NVQ 3 and NVQ 4
- Above average performance against allocation for FE colleges, sixth form colleges and private sector training providers (on average)
- Above average performance on achievements against December 2002 target for Investors in People

Weaknesses

- Basic Skills - 20%+ with weaknesses on numeracy and literacy (Redditch weakest at 26%)
- 38% of workforce are not qualified to Level 2 (5 GCSEs A-C)
- Still to achieve national targets on Level 2, 3 and 4 qualifications - current position:
  - NVQ 3+ national 47%, regional 38.1%, Herefordshire and Worcestershire 42%
  - out of 47 sub regions: nationally 18th, regionally 2nd
  - NVQ 4+ nationally 23.6%, regionally 20.5%, Herefordshire and Worcestershire 27%
  - out of 47 sub regions; nationally 16th, regionally equal first
- Continuing fallout from Foot and Mouth Disease - recovery unlikely until 2003 at the earliest

- Relationship between employers and local learning providers needs strengthening
- Broadband access poor
- Low awareness of IAG (branding issue)
- Poor public transport and cost of public transport
- Lower than regional and national averages on GVA and GDP (skills and productivity)
- Lower than regional and nationally average earnings (links of earnings and skills)

  - Herefordshire 79.9% of national, Worcestershire 91.4% of national
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire and Shropshire lowest average earnings per hour in region - Herefordshire and North Shropshire lowest unitary or local authority area in West Midlands
- Perceived lack of HE provision particularly in Herefordshire
- Need to strengthen work based learning provision in North Worcestershire
- Adult and Community Learning budget is low in comparison to other areas
- Poor track record and performance on ACL compared with others
- Lack of post-16 provision for special needs
- Access problems for FE colleges and private training providers into schools
- Need for improvements on post-16 retention and subsequent follow up
- Too many training and education providers in some or serious concerns at provider reviews
- Not enough reliable data on skills, skills shortages, future needs
- Not enough baseline information to set realistic targets
- No clear baseline information on rural deprivation target areas
- Overall supply of information from NTOs has been poor
- Lack of flexibility in the qualifications system
- Need for capacity building in voluntary sector

  - nationally 319,000 full time posts - 25% of 135,000 charities employ staff, all others are voluntary
- 38% of adults not undertaken any learning in the past three years

  - 50% of these have done no learning in last 10 years and have no intentions to do so
- We do not know the number or names of companies with trade union membership
- There is still too much gender stereotyping in training and employment
- The gap between outcomes for ethnic minorities and people with disabilities compared with able bodied white population needs to be improved
- Major weaknesses on workforce development

  - too much supply driven not enough demand led

  - firms with low-costs, low added value market strategies have little reason to value workforce development

  - direction difficult while awaiting the outcomes of major reviews of workforce development

  - although many employer bodies e.g. CBI, IPD, BCC, NTOs and 1,600 trade associations, they send confused messages to Government and their agencies. Also two million businesses are not members of any organisation

- services on offer are confusing and fragmented
- businesses are confused on where to go for advice on learning and skills. Need for better integration with business support services
- workforce development does not lie at the heart of business strategies. 60% produce business plans, 39% training plans and 24% HR plans
- only 61% of local firms have provided any training for their staff over the last 12 months - construction and manufacturing were the least likely
- 53% of low skilled people are employed by firms employing less than 50
- there is very low take up of training by micro and SME businesses where largest skills shortage exists. Herefordshire and Worcestershire has highest percentage of micro and SME businesses in the region
- little evidence of strong business networks delivering effective support and workforce development. Only 500 employer networks in the whole of the UK
- Business Link penetration of businesses is only 7.1% but a key player nevertheless
- employers want independent advice on learning and skills
- there are hotspots of skill shortages and lack of good training provision to meet these needs
- small businesses train less off-the-job – only 33% micro (below 5), 54% small businesses (less than 20), compared with 90% for large companies (over 100)
- current predictions are that there may not be a 'full recovery' from Foot and Mouth Disease in the affected sectors until 2003 at the earliest

Opportunities

- Birmingham - Worcestershire Technology Corridor
- Malvern Hills Science Park
- Rural Regeneration Zone
- ESF Objective 3
- ESF Objective 2
- Centre of Vocational Excellence (and Expertise)
- Specialist schools
- Local Strategic Partnerships
- Rural schools acting as community venues for learning
- Food and Drink lead responsibility for region
- Cassel's Report on Modern Apprenticeships
- Performance Innovation Unit (Cabinet Office) proposals on workforce development
- Flexibility of 14-16 curriculum (vocational learning)
- Targets on HE for 18 - 30 age group
- Project Carrot in Herefordshire - organic farming research
- Climate right for encouraging rural crafts and heritage skills
- Proposals for new pilot on Adult Level 2
- Joint working with partners and stakeholders on disadvantaged areas

- Market town initiatives
- Major local developments - see section in Part C
- Inward investment partnerships
- New Connexions Service (April 2002)
- Community learning partnership and community development workers
- Linking large employers (including local authorities) in supply chain learning activities
- Employment Service takes 33% approximately of all vacancies notified - a key route to employers
- New local LSC strategies on the following: Basic Skills, Workforce Development, Equality and Diversity, Quality Management
- Sixth form funding arrangements from 2002
- Co-operation on data collection by Business Link, FE college, private training providers, local authorities and LSC
- Tourism and leisure sector could use down time following Foot and Mouth Disease to reskill
- Potential of high growth, hi-tech SMEs

Threats

- Under-funded schools, FE and sixth form colleges and work based learning providers
- Under-funded Adult Community Learning
- Too much bureaucracy
- Initiative overload
- Employer confusion on workforce development infrastructure
- Uncertainty over replacement for Individual Learning Accounts initiative
- Employers find it increasingly difficult to devote time to work experience
- Importance of skills increasing - eight out of ten new jobs created at NVQ 3+ by 2010
- Loss of skilled workforce through retirement - five times greater than new jobs created
- Failure to improve quality of data on skills, skill shortages, skill needs for the future
- Failure to improve quality of infrastructure
  - Providers; IT and use of e-learning; Information, Advice and Guidance network
- Capacity of LSC to deliver increased/enhanced agenda
- Any downturn in the economy will have a negative overall effect on the level of SME and large company training in order to cut costs
- A significant number of sixth formers are shunning the chance to go to university because of the fears on finance
- Lost talent from rural areas through migration of young people who are not replaced

PEST ANALYSIS

Political

- Stable National Government
  - term of office, education high priority, new initiatives
- Supportive Local Government
  - local Government a key player in ensuring success
  - good relationships with local authorities
  - good partnership arrangements but scope for improvements between partners
- Complexities of schools structures in Worcestershire

Economic

- 'Cautious optimism' over next three years
- Advantage West Midlands drive
  - skills a key priority
  - cluster development could lead to opportunities (35% of all employment in Herefordshire and Worcestershire)
- European Funding
  - skills a key priority
- Rural Regeneration Zone
  - skills a key priority
- Lower GVA and GDP than regional and national averages
- Lower than average wage levels especially Herefordshire
- Low number of large employers especially Herefordshire
- Too many companies in the declining sectors and below average increase in the growth sectors
- Major decline in agricultural sector
- Full recovery from Foot and Mouth Disease in the affected sectors not before 2003 at the earliest - Food and Drink sector affected badly - a priority area
- Herefordshire, Wyre Forest and Malvern Hills were the most severely affected areas from Foot and Mouth Disease
- Major growth in care and leisure sectors and major skill shortages
- Poor transport infrastructure
- Poor broadband access
- Lack of good inward investment in growth sectors and probably lack of local skills to meet the opportunities
- Low unemployment (creates difficulties on recruitment)
- Impact of Foot and Mouth Disease
  - especially farming and tourism and leisure
- Higher than average number of micro and SME businesses (least likely to engage in learning and workforce development)

- Poor funding levels of all key partner public sector organisations relative to others
- Transport costs are a major issue for schools and colleges and training providers
- 4% of employers affected by skill shortages but figure is 40% for micro businesses (1-5)
- A higher proportion of the labour force is self-employed
  - 16.5% Herefordshire, 13.7% Worcestershire compared with 11.3% nationally
- There are approximately 25,000 businesses in the sub-region
  - 8,000 Herefordshire, 17,000 Worcestershire
- An ageing workforce

Sociological

- More young people staying on in education and learning
- More going into HE
- Ageing population - implications on skill loss and care growth
- Small populations of ethnic minorities concentrated in three areas
- Migration of educated and skilled young people especially Herefordshire
- Major problems on basic skills
- Low unemployment
- Rural deprivation an issue but needs better definition for targeting
- Money spent on special needs in schools much higher than average
- Census of population - social class information

Population trends 1996-2011	% increase	% persons all ages increase
West Midlands persons ages 55-64	24%	1%
Herefordshire persons ages 55-64	36%	10%
Worcestershire persons ages 55-64	42%	6%
(Also see next section on demography)		

- Economic activity rates for all ages, males and females
  - all above West Midlands average
  - females of working age showing the greatest difference
- Part-time employment

  A higher proportion of the employees in this sub-region work part-time compared with regional and national figures
- Index of multiple deprivation
  - there are 354 local authorities and 8,414 wards nationally
  - Herefordshire is 166th, Bromsgrove 295th, Malvern Hills 251st, Redditch 149th, Worcester City 175th, Wychavon 267th, Wyre Forest 161st

  The lower the number the higher the level of deprivation

- There are 2,013 organisations within the social economy (73% are registered charities)
- Approx 50,000 people volunteer at some time during the year

Technological

- QINETIQ (ex DERA) and Science Park
- Birmingham -Worcestershire Technology Corridor
- Impact of learndirect (7,700 learners in first year)
- 3.4 million people a year are using the learndirect website nationally
- Access to broadband poor and extension of broadband access slow
- Major growth in demand for ICT skills and a major skills shortage
- E-learning in schools and colleges
- Local authorities' IT strategies
- E-business will become the norm for ordering and supply
- ICT will become integrated into domestic entertainment channels and result in the expanded use of interactive digital TV
- More homes and business premises will make use of satellite wireless or cable
- Government services predicted to be 100% online by 2005
- PC domestic use is approximately 40%
- E-learning is seen as a cost cutter for large corporate organisations

Sub-regional Demographics

Office for National Statistics Midyear Population Estimates 2000

	Hereford-shire	Worcester-shire	Broms-grove	Malvern Hills	Redditch	Worcester	Wychavon	Wyre Forest
0 - 9 Years	11.9%	12%	11.6%	10.8%	13.4%	12.8%	11.6%	11.4%
10 - 19 Years	12.1%	12.3%	11.7%	13%	13.7%	11.8%	11.6%	12.3%
20 - 29 Years	9.4%	10.7%	8.7%	7.9%	12.4%	13%	10.4%	11.4%
30 - 39 Years	14.2%	15.4%	15.1%	13%	14.9%	19.4%	14.2%	15.4%
40 - 49 Years	13.6%	13.8%	14.3%	13.7%	14.7%	13.2%	14.3%	12.6%
50 - 59 Years	13.9%	14.2%	15.2%	15.3%	13.9%	10.9%	14.7%	15.3%
60 - 69 Years	10.9%	9.9%	10.9%	11.4%	7.7%	8.4%	10.8%	10%
70 - 79 Years	8.9%	7.6%	8.3%	9.6%	5.8%	6.5%	8.4%	7.4%
80+ Years	5.1%	4.1%	4.3%	5.5%	3.3%	3.9%	4.1%	4.1%
TOTAL	**169,313**	**541,445**	**84,856**	**74,040**	**77,134**	**95,927**	**113,443**	**96,045**

Source:Nomis online labour market statistics

The midyear population estimates 2000 show that although Herefordshire and Worcestershire share similar population structures, Herefordshire has a more rapidly ageing population. In both counties, approximately 24% of the population are under 19 years of age and 28% aged 40 - 59. Herefordshire however has a slightly higher proportion of residents aged over 60 (24.9% compared with 21.6%) and a smaller proportion aged 20 - 39 (23.6% compared with 26.1%). Within Worcestershire, the Malvern Hills district stands out as having an atypical population structure with the lowest proportion of the population aged under 30 and the highest proportion aged over 60. 27% of the population in the Malvern Hills district were aged over 60 in 2000 compared with 22% over the whole of Worcestershire. Conversely, Redditch had the highest proportion of population aged under 30 and the lowest proportion over the age of 60.

1996-based English Sub-National Population Projections

	Population Increase 1996 – 2006	Population Increase 1996 – 2011	Population Increase 1996 – 2021
Herefordshire	+8%	+10%	+15%
Worcestershire	+5%	+6%	+9%
Bromsgrove	+8%	+10%	+14%
Malvern Hills	-3%	-4%	-3%
Redditch	+4%	+6%	+7%
Worcester	+9%	+11%	+15%
Wychavon	+7%	+10%	+15%
Wyre Forest	+1%	+1%	+1%

Source:National Statistics

Both Herefordshire and Worcestershire are expected to experience future population increases with the larger increases anticipated in Herefordshire. Some districts of Worcestershire such as Bromsgrove, Worcester and Wychavon are predicted to see population increases to the same proportion as Herefordshire. Redditch and the Wyre Forest districts expect to experience only small population increases while in the Malvern Hills district the population is set to actually decline.

Apart from the five main market towns of Kington, Leominster, Bromyard, Ledbury, Ross-on-Wye and the City of Hereford, just over half of the population live in rural areas of very low population density. The small size and relative isolation of a significant proportion of Herefordshire's schools and the consequent high cost of school transport are key factors for the LEA's policy and strategies. Significant reductions in primary school numbers are generally expected over the next five years but an increase is expected in the secondary sector.

Population Density

Herefordshire and Worcestershire	178 persons per sq km
West Midlands	409 persons per sq km
Great Britain	242 persons per sq km
Herefordshire	77 persons per sq km
Worcestershire	311 persons per sq km

Worcestershire ranges from 130 in Malvern Hills to 2,773 in Worcester City based on spread of population - Herefordshire most rural county in England

1991 Census of Population - Special Workplace Statistics

		Hfds %age	Worcs %age
Social class I	Professional etc occupations	3.41%	4.92%
Social class II	Managerial and technical	30.22%	30.83%
Social class III(N)	Skilled occupations – non-manual	19.87%	21.55%
Social class III(M)	Skilled occupations - manual	22.87%	20.48%
Social class IV	Partly skilled occupations	18.30%	17.18%
Social class V	Unskilled occupations	5.34%	5.03%
Total		100%	100%

Current Local Priorities

During 2001, the local Council set the following local priority areas with supporting actions and measures of success. These priorities remain in force until such time that we can say that we have concluded whatever intervention measures were necessary to support each of them. In the case of sectoral priorities, that will usually mean an analysis of supply and quality of education and training against demand. Depending on internal capacity, once one priority has been addressed, the LSC will usually be able to take on another. Therefore the list is dynamic, and must remain under constant review.

The local Council believes that the next priorities it needs to address include the Creative Industries and the Tourism and Hospitality sector, and beyond that perhaps training for work in care of the elderly because of the rapidly growing population of older people. However, one of the purposes of consulting widely each year is to ensure that the list is appropriate and sensitive to others' knowledge in particular areas.

1. The Construction Sector

This was chosen as a priority because of the well documented skill shortages in the construction industry and how this can hold back development of the sub-region, and because of the potential for close partnership with the industry that has been amply demonstrated in recent months. The sector employs approximately 11,000 people in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

Measure of success:

- Significant reduction in reported skill shortages and of difficulties in attracting good quality entrants to the industry

Actions:

- Conduct extensive survey of skills needs and current provision
- Explore the need for a Centre of Vocational Excellence and, if proven, work to establish it
- Create cohesion between fragmented education-industry initiatives
- Encourage the creation of an employer led strategy for education and training

2. The Food and Drink Sector

This is a regional priority as determined by Advantage West Midlands, and is the priority area in which the Learning and Skills Council Herefordshire and Worcestershire will take a lead on behalf of the region. The sector employs over 35,500 in the region. It links closely with the Tourism and Hospitality - a likely future priority area.

Measure of success:

- Significant reduction in reported skill shortages and of difficulties in attracting good quality entrants to the industry

Actions:

- Commission extensive survey of skills needs and current provision
- Continue to support the CORE Food and Drink centre and Project Carrot within the Pershore Group of Colleges
- Encourage the creation of an employer led strategy for education and training
- Aim to develop a Centre of Vocational Excellence for the West Midlands region

3. Childcare Training

There is a national target set by the former Secretary of State for Education and Employment that by 2004, 230,000 Early Years workers will have gained a Level 2 qualification.

Measure of success:

- Significant reduction in reported skill shortages and of difficulties of people obtaining employment because of lack of childcare facilities

Actions:

- Conduct extensive survey of skills, current provision and uptake, and impact on employment of shortage of trained childcare workers
- Establish local baselines and set targets for an increase in the numbers of trained childcare workers
- Work in close partnership with early Years Childcare Development Partnerships

4. Young people who have not yet attained a Level 2 qualification

This is a priority because of the difficulty in meeting the 2002 National Learning Target of 85%.

Measure of success:

- 92% of young people to have obtained a Level 2 qualification by 2004

Actions:

- Support schools with introduction of alternative curriculum
- Provision of additional funding for work with young people who are disaffected with learning (see priority 5 below)
- Marketing and implementation of Return 2 Learn Project
- Close monitoring of provider performance at Level 2
- Successful creation of Connexions Service

5. Young people who are disaffected from learning

This is a deemed a priority because of the greater efforts a generally high performing area such as Herefordshire and Worcestershire will need to make in order to make further improvements in attainment levels of young people. Qualification levels of young people who are or were in the 'looked after' system are priorities for both county authorities.

Measure of success:

- Fewer reported difficulties by Careers/Connexions Service of placing young people in appropriate learning provision
- Reduction in non-completion rates from WBL, college and sixth form provision

Actions:

- Sufficient funds are secured to support continued work with this category of young people
- Adequate learning provision exists for this category of young people, particularly (but not exclusively) at Gateway and Level 1 within the work based route

6. Basic Skills

This is a national priority area and is likely to remain so for some years.

Measure of success:

- By 2004 9,927 additional adults to have increased their level of literacy and numeracy
- By 2004 five large employers to have signed up to provide Basic Skills screening and support for their employees

Actions:

- Identify employers
- Research to identify providers and to establish levels of need
- Research to identify numbers of learners from priority groups
- Audit of tutor qualifications
- Audit of providers holding or working towards the Basic Skill Agency Quality Mark
- Encourage providers to send tutors for training for ESOL revised standards
- Liaise with providers to ensure all staff train to revised Basic Skill curriculum
- Identify appropriate staff to train as Basic Skills Brokers
- Ensure all providers are aware of and own the target set for the LSC area
- Collaborate with the TUC and employers to increase awareness and participation

7. IT Skills

This is a priority because of the well documented and continuing shortages of specific and general IT skills within the workforce. DfES has set a target of 6000 IT learning centres by the end of 2002. There are at least one hundred and twenty for IT Learning in this sub-region.

Measure of success:

- Significant reduction in reported skill shortages and of difficulties in attracting good quality people into IT positions

Actions:

- Map current provision and gauge its effectiveness
- Identify extent of employer need, and specific areas of skill shortage
- Increase number of IT learning centres

8. Management Development

This is set as a priority because of the well documented low levels of management training within the workforce - particularly within SMEs.

Measure of success:

- By the end of 2002 a baseline or proxy measure to establish the amount of management and leadership development that is taking place in order to set targets for 2005

Actions:

- Work with colleges of further and higher education to agree measures and strategies

- Annual analysis of Individual Learner record data

9. Foot and Mouth Disease Recovery

Although areas that were affected by FMD are now clear, the impact of drastically reduced business on key sectors will be felt for months or even years. The events of 11 September have exacerbated these problems for the tourism industry.

Measure of success:

- Number of affected companies who have made use of ring-fenced or other funds to assist recovery
- Number of individuals in affected companies whose training and development is within the above measure
- Number of permanent employer-led groupings from affected sectors working on long-term strategies for learning

Actions:

- Identify and make good use of funds to support companies/individuals affected by FMD
- Establish employer-led groups from affected sectors that will develop long-term strategies for learning as one means of recovery from FMD

Major Local Developments

As part of our role in local economic development and wealth creation we must maintain knowledge of and close contact with major development activity, be it regeneration, inward investment or other capital or social developments.

Activities which have an obvious requirement for input by the LSC on the skills dimension include:

- The Market Town Initiative in Herefordshire
- Countryside Agency's Market Town Initiative in Worcestershire
- The Objective 2 Area Industrial Regeneration package
- Birmingham - Worcestershire Technology Corridor
- Expansion of the Malvern Hills Science Park

Capital build projects taking place or planned include:

- mosques and learning centres in Redditch (£3.5m) scheduled for January 2003
- work on a 150,000sq ft B&Q warehouse will start in January in Redditch
- 90,000 sq ft of production and distribution floor space is to be created at the 77-acre Stonebridge Cross Business Park, near Droitwich starting in summer 2001 to meet growing demand from local and regional firms
- new business park at Stoke Heath (£25 million)
- offices and warehouses are being developed on the Ravensbank Business Park In Redditch
- plans to develop offices and industrial warehouses on Buntsford Hill in Bromsgrove
- £60m regeneration of the Kingfisher Shopping Centre in Redditch

- Welsh Water plan to spend £1,200,000 on expanding Hereford's sewage works. The expansion is needed to cope with the expected increase in both residential and commercial effluent
- new production facility for Dayla Liquid packaging at Rotherwas Industrial Estate
- next phases of the Malvern Hills Science Park will be on site within the next 18 months - probably up to £3m value contracts
- CERES Conference / Management Development Centre may commence subject to RRZ and Objective 2 funds in approximately 12 months time - possible contract value £5m
- new community hospital at Seaford Court, possibly to start within the next 18 months
- building continues on the Royal Worcestershire Hospital in Worcester
- construction of the new Magistrates Courts in Worcester
- Community Centre in Wylds Lane Worcester will commence within the next year
- new sports centre in Pershore

All of these have implications for learning and skills.

2004 National Targets and local versions of them

Baselines have been provided from a variety of sources, including a boosted national Labour Force Survey, leaver data from schools, colleges, training providers and the Basic Skills Unit. This year college strategic planning has taken place earlier than LSC planning, but in future years the processes will be better aligned. One benefit of this will be that the extent to which the major numerical contribution from each college (and other providers) can be assessed as a contribution to each target which will provide an indication of what efforts will be required to meet them. In the tables, numerical increases to reach percentage achievements, assume stable populations which will not apply so, although these figures provide a reasonable idea of additional participation and achievement required each year, more precise calculation will be required to take into account changes in successive age cohorts.

Extend participation of young people in education and training

The national target is for 80% of 16-18 year olds to be in structured learning. In the year 2000 the national figure was 75%. The nationally devised baseline suggests that this figure is 80% or 21,088 from a 16-18 population of 26,434. However, to contribute effectively to the national target of 80% participation when the national participation figure in 2000 was 75%, we need to involve another 3,362 young people by 2004 - another 840 each year in order to reach a participation level of 92.5%* – an extremely challenging target.

TABLE 1

Year	Total
2000	21,088 or 80% participation
2001	+842 = 21,930 or 83%
2002	+840 = 22,770 or 86%
2003	+840 = 23,610 or 89%
2004	+840 = 24,450 or 92.5%

Extend participation of adults in education and training

No definite target has been set yet as this is a difficult area to measure and it has been the subject of recent consultation, with a decision expected during 2002. However we do know that in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, 62% of adults had taken part in taught or non-taught learning in 2001.

Increase engagement of employers in workforce development

This is a vitally important area of activity for the LSC. Again, the LSC has been consulting widely on the subject and a target will be set 2002.

Raise achievement of young people at qualification Levels 2 and 3

The national target is for 85% of 19 year olds to reach Level 2 by 2004 against a national figure of 75% for 2000. Our current baseline shows that that in 2000 7,501 or 77.2% of a learner (not resident) population of 9,712 young people reached Level 2. To contribute effectively to the national target of 85%, the achievement level by 2004 needs to be 83% or 8,066 which is an increase of 564 achievements or 141 extra each year*.

TABLE 2

Year	Total
2000	7,501 or 77% Level 2 achievement
2001	+141 = 7,642 or 79%
2002	+141 = 7,783 or 80%
2003	+141 = 7,924 or 82%
2004	+142 = 8,066 or 83%

The national target is for 55% of 19 year olds to reach Level 3 by 2004 against a national figure of 51% for 2000. Our current baseline shows that in 2000 4,760 or 49% of a population of 9,712 young people reached Level 3. To contribute effectively to the national target of 55%, the achievement level by 2004 needs to be 54% which is an increase of 561 achievements or 115 more each year*.

TABLE 3

Year	Total
2000	4,760 or 49% Level 3 achievement
2001	+116 = 4,876 or 50%
2002	+115 = 4,991 or 51%
2003	+115 = 5,106 or 53%
2004	+115 = 5,221 or 54%

Raise achievement of adults in Basic Skills and at qualification Levels 2,3 and 4

The national target is to raise the literacy and numeracy skills of 750,000 adults. This is set as a number rather than a percentage because of the difficult of establishing a baseline. In this area we have set the numerical target of 9,927. Our incremental progression towards that figure is shown in table 4.

The first year's target reflects the greater amount of work that takes place on literacy. By the third year the intention is to carry out more work on numeracy as this is considered to be the greater need.

TABLE 4

Year	Literacy	Numeracy	Total
2001/2	2,027	1,476	3,503
2002/3	1,606	1,606	3,212
2003/4	1,445	1,767	3,212
Total	5,078	4,849	9,927

Percentage of adults at Level 2

No national target has been set yet and will not be until 2002. However we do know from our most recent Household Survey that 62% adults were show to be at this level, which suggests that a target of 68% might be appropriate, bearing in mind that a 1% increase in achievements by the 20+ economically active workforce is 760* individuals in Herefordshire and 2,640* individuals in Worcestershire (3,400 in total*). Our incremental progression towards that figure is shown in table 5. We can express this better in 2002 when the National Labour Force Survey provides an accurate population baseline and also an achievement level for comparison with our local measure.

TABLE 5

Year	Total
2000	62%
2001	63%
2002	65%
2003	67%
2004	68%

Percentage of adults at Level 3

The national target is for 52% of adults to reach Level 3 by 2004 against a national figure of 47% for 2000. National baseline data shows this sub-region to be at 49% or 154,000 from a working population of 314,402. But we are required to raise that to 57.5% as other parts of the country are performing less well. This translates into 26,781 additional adults qualified at Level 3 by 2004.

TABLE 6

Year	Total
2000	154,000 = 49%
2001	+6,696 = 160,696 = 51%
2002	+6,695 + 167,391 = 53%
2003	+6,695 = 174,086 = 55%
2004	+6,695 = 180,781 = 57.5%

Percentage of adults at Level 4

This is not a national target, but one which LSCs in the West Midlands have agreed on for collaborative working with Advantage West Midlands. Our current baseline shows that in 2000 27% of adults were at this level, which suggests that a target of 32% might be appropriate, bearing in mind that a 1% Increase in achievements by the 20+ economically active workforce is 779* individuals in Herefordshire and 2,335* individuals in Worcestershire (3,114* in total). Our incremental progression towards that figure is shown in table 6. We can express this better in 2002 when the National Labour Force Survey provides an accurate population baseline and also an achievement level for comparison with our local measure.

TABLE 7

Year	Total
2000	27%
2001	28%
2002	30%
2003	31%
2004	32%

Raise quality of education and training and user satisfaction

Quality of education:

Arrangements for external inspection and ongoing review of providers have changed. The Training Standards Council no longer exists and has been replaced by the Adult Learning Inspectorate with a different method of grading quality of learning provision. OFSTED's remit has been extended to include full-time 16 to 18 learning in further education colleges. The LSC is developing a thorough and robust system of provider review. This means that historical comparisons are difficult. Nevertheless a method of setting targets for quality improvements is required and a national approach will be formulated. It is clear however that we must assist more providers into the 'good' and 'excellent' categories and ensure that we have none in the 'serious concerns' group.

User satisfaction:

It is essential that we gain customer feedback. Those customers are individual learners, be they adults or young people, and also the companies who are dependent on the quality of training that their employees receive.

There are many ways of gathering feedback ranging from national 100% follow-up exercises to local sampling surveys, but until now there has never been a single methodology that will enable comparisons to be made between different parts of the country, groups of learner, and providers of learning. Nor have employer views been sought in any systematic fashion. The national LSC and local councils have been consulting widely on the best ways to collect customer feedback, and the methods will be announced during 2002. However, by working with Business Link we are already in the process of implementing a system of continuous feedback from employers on their experience of local learning provision.

To gain learner feedback, one or more of the following methods can be employed. There may be other suggestions.

i) Rely on a nationally conducted learner follow-up exercise based on sampling

ii) Conduct/commission local follow-up exercises to a nationally agreed methodology

iii) Rely on provider's systems for gaining learner feedback

Employer engagement:

During 2002, the LSC as a national body must decide how it will measure and set targets for employer engagement in learning. At present the closest we have to a measure is the number of recognitions to the Investors in People Standard. This may remain as a measure because of the large proportion of the workforce that it covers.

Whatever that future measure may be, we are developing a process of gaining regular feedback form employers on skills issues along the following lines:

- Conduct an annual employer survey
- Identify 100+ top companies to act as a 'barometer' of skill shortages
- Monitor replies to questions on skills posed by Chamber of Commerce quarterly survey
- Chamber of Commerce business advisers to regularly collect 'soft' information on skills
- Encourage other organisations in touch with employers to feedback regular 'soft' information to LSC

*Numerical increases have been calculated assuming stable populations. Slight recalcualtions will be required to take into account demographic changes.

Long Term Impact Measures

In addition to our 2004 targets, the local Council wishes to measure the long term impact of our work on the local economy and community. It is always difficult to prove cause and effect when so many other external factors are at play. Nevertheless an attempt will be made. Our first two measures will directly monitor increases in participation. The second two are proxy economic measures which may provide an indication that raised skills and qualification levels do improve prosperity and economic performance.

Level of participation in learning in deprived areas

Low qualification levels are a clear indicator of deprivation. We have identified the wards in Herefordshire and Worcestershire which are ranked lowest according to the education levels within the DETR Multiple Index of Deprivation and we shall plot increases in participation of learning. This can be carried out now for higher education, and for FE and sixth form colleges in 2002 when the new Individual Learner Record is introduced and held on a single database. By 2003 or 2004 it should also be available for Adult and Community Learning

12 most deprived wards in Worcestershire
Oldington and Foley Park, Batchley, St. Barnabas, Holy Trinity, All Saints, St. Johns, Broadwaters, Winyates, Tenbury Town, Sutton Park, Matchborough, St. Martins

11 most deprived wards in Herefordshire
Belmont, St. Martins, Central, Leominster East and South, Hinton, St. Nicolas, Holmer, Aylestone, Three Elms, Credenhill, Clehonger

ACL Participation by Social Exclusion Groups

An increase over the years of the level of participation in Adult and Community Learning (ACL) (and similar college courses) by people from Social Inclusion groups of the population. This cannot be base lined effectively until 2003 or 2004 when the Individual Learner Record (ILR) is introduced for ACL.

Average wage levels

There is a close link between earnings and qualification levels, therefore as qualifications rise we hope to show an increase in the average earning per employee, with the measures of success being reductions of the gap between local, regional and national average earnings.

Average Gross Weekly Earnings £

Local Authorities	1998	1999	2000	Regional Comparison Year 2000	National Comparison Year 2000
Bromsgrove	348.6	-	376.3	97.5%	91.6%
Malvern Hills	-	-	385.1*	99.8%	93.8%
Redditch	356.5	363.5	382.1	99%	93.1%
Worcester	339.3	345.9	373.2	96.7%	90.9%
Wychavon	348.2	366.4	374.9	97.1%	91.3%
Wyre Forest	336.0	334.4	366.7	95%	89.3%
Herefordshire	-	320.0	328.0	85%	79.9%
Worcestershire		357.2	375.1	97.2%	91.4%
West Midlands Region	-	375.6	385.9	-	-
Great Britain	385.8	400.1	410.6	-	-

Source:New Earnings Survey 2000 *This figure is based on a sample of less than 30 so should be treated with caution

Turnover Per Employee (TPE) by County

Similarly there is a correlation between productivity and qualification levels. At present we only have the latest figure for the two counties.In future we will be able to plot trends and we also hope to be able to make comparisons with regional and national figures.

County	Data	Total
Herefordshire	Total Turnover	£2,240,747,020
	Total Employees in sample	21341
	No. Businesses in sample	405
	TPE	**£104,997**
Worcestershire	Total Turnover	£25,851,716,018
	Total Employees in sample	227775
	No. Businesses in sample	1845
	TPE	**£113,496**
Total Sub-regional Turnover		£28,092,463,038
Total Sub-regional Employees		249116
Total Sub regional No. Businesses		2250
Total Sub-regional TPE		**£112,768**

Source:United Kingdom Marketing File, Dun and Bradstreet Data Warehouse
- Sample of 2,250 businesses in the Herefordshire and Worcestershire area

Dun and Bradstreet are the only known source of turnover data. Unfortunately they do not collect this information as separate year batches, but update records on a daily basis.

However any analysis is only based on the most recent 18 months collection. Therefore annually charting trends is a relevant activity, but does not exactly compare year with year.

Ensuring Equality of Opportunity

Quality, Equality and Diversity

Attention to quality, equality and diversity lies at the heart of all what LSC Herefordshire and Worcestershire is striving to achieve - for itself as an organisation, in its working practices with its partners and stakeholders and on behalf of all learners.

The vision of the Learning and Skills Council is to create a learning society in which everyone has the opportunity to progress as far as their talents and efforts will take them, free from discrimination and prejudice. Promoting and ensuring implementation of equality through all programmes and activities is key to achieving this vision. On this basis the Learning and Skills Council Herefordshire and Worcestershire has written an Equal Opportunities Strategy and Action Plan which will be taken for consultation to staff, learning providers and partner organisations.

This strategy is based on the four high level Equal Opportunity objectives set by national office which are:

1. To develop the LSC as an Equal Opportunities Employer/ Organisation
2. To develop the LSC as a Champion of Equality
3. To embed Equal Opportunities into all Policies, Programmes and Actions
4. To report to the Secretary of State on Progress Towards Equality

The LSC at national and at local level has the duty to promote equal opportunities in everything it does. It aims to tackle social and economic disadvantage by removing barriers to post- 16 education and training. This will be carried out through 'mainstreaming' and by 'equality proofing' all our policy, strategy and programme development. Equal Opportunities, inclusive learning and widening participation underpin the LSC approach to learning. Appropriate provision should be capable of meeting each learner's needs and of leading to a suitable learning outcome and employment or further learning. This approach supports the Government's goal of an inclusive society where everyone has an equal chance to develop their knowledge and be active in the workforce.

The LSC has a statutory duty to have regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- People from different racial groups
- Men and women
- People with a disability and people without

Our initial response to our legal requirement is set out in full in Part C of this plan.

Local Analysis and Issues/Baseline for Herefordshire and Worcestershire

Research data and information on the operating environment and demographic breakdown of Herefordshire and Worcestershire has been collected. This information will be updated as appropriate.Areas of study have included population structure by:

- age
- ethnicity
- gender
- disability
- levels of numeracy and literacy
- gross earnings
- care leavers
- lone parents
- unemployment
- school leaver destinations

The action plan is based on meeting the needs of the four national objectives in line with our local needs.

2001/2002 activity will concentrate on delivering national EO objective 1, based around developing the local LSC as an equal opportunities employer and national EO objective 2, developing the LSC as a champion of equality. 2002/2003 will involve setting targets against needs identified through the previous year via consultations with external agencies and providers and further research. These may include increasing the numbers of people with disabilities gaining full-time employment and increasing the level of reading ability of ethnic minorities.

Part B: Our Strategy

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: To encourage greater participation of young people in learning

The national objective to which this strategic aim relates is that of extending participation of young people in education, and training.

The national target is for 80% of 16 to18 year olds to be in structured learning by 2004. Our current estimate from local sources is that there are about 83% of 16 to 18 year olds in learning in this area although the national baseline for the Labour Force Survey is 80%. Current information from the Careers Service destinations reports shows that 89% of year 11 leavers went into a positive learning destination (full-time education, training without employment and employment with training), and this figure has been rising by almost 3% every year since 1998. The proportion of year 13 leavers going into a positive learning destination is slightly higher but has actually decreased by nearly 1% since 1999. Despite the area's high performance, our local Council wishes to bring further improvements and has set a stretching target of 92.5%. Table 1 on page 8 on the local targets page of Part A shows the incremental increases that are required to reach that level of participation by 2004.

We believe that if we are to enable all young people to continue in learning as young adults and then into fulfilling jobs and careers we will need to ensure the following measures of success

Measure of Success 1.1

By 2005, increases in the number of young people entering

- School sixth forms including independent sixth forms (from current baseline of 38.8% Yr 11 leavers)
- Further education institutions (from current baseline of 38.6% Yr 11 leavers)
- Work based learning programmes (from current baseline of 6.5% Yr 11 leavers)
- Employed with formal training (from current baseline of 6.8% Yr 11 leavers)

Analysis by gender from the most recent Household Survey shows 5% more females aged 16-18 were in further or higher education than males of the same group. We need to work with the new Connexions Service to examine participation rates by gender, disability and ethnic minority.

By working with Local Education Authorities and Schools

Measure of Success 1.2

By 2005 to be supporting all high schools that are offering a pre-16 curriculum in a collaborative mode with other learning providers

- further education colleges
- training providers
- other schools

Action:

- Pre-16 flexibilities introduced resulting in healthy uptake of Vocational GCSEs and NVQs at Level 1 by Key Stage 4 pupils

- Centre of Vocational Excellence (COVE) initiative to act as a catalysts for collaborative work through establishing vocational pathways, particularly between schools with specialist status and COVEs
- Work with Education Action Zone in Herefordshire

At present we have no local baseline, but we know that nationally only 5% of pre-16 students undertake vocational studies.

Measure of success 1.3

By 2005, all schools wishing to offer a differentiated 13-16 curriculum have received support. The LSC's contribution is by engaging schools with work based learning providers and by encouraging early experience of further education. This will be measured by

- the number of high schools offering a range of differentiated curriculum offerings
- ensuring that as many as possible of the work based learning providers continue to work with schools in some way
- an increase in the number of school students having an early experience of further education

At present we believe that 29 of the 44 special and high schools in Worcestershire offer a differentiated curriculum as do 11 of the 14 high schools in Herefordshire. Between all high schools, pupil referral units and special schools across the two counties, over one thousand 13-16 year olds benefit from differentiated curriculum activities including work experience, vocational training, mentoring, guidance and counselling. This information is derived from the Learning and Skills Council's Social Inclusion for 13-17s ESF project. Accurate information on alternative curriculum provision is not available. We do not currently know how many school students experience further education in years 10 or 11.

Measure of success 1.4

By 2005 an entitlement offered to all young people in full-time education to directly experience the world of work through their school and college curriculum. This will be measured by

- the number of high schools in Herefordshire and Worcestershire working with EMBARK the newly established Education Business Link Organisation increasing from 90% to 100% (from 40 high schools to 44 high schools)
- the percentage of year 10/11 school students undertaking structured work experience increasing from 88% to 93%
- an increase in the percentage of 16-18 year old FE and sixth form students undertaking structured work experience or work shadowing
- an increase in the numbers of young people taking part in Enterprise related activities

At present we do not know how many 16-18 year old students undertake work experience or shadowing.

Action:

- Contract for education business link work through EMBARK, the new Education Business Link Organisation for Herefordshire and Worcestershire

- Ensure that education business activities support the curriculum wherever possible
- Ensure that in 2001/2 the level of education business link work does not fall below that of 2000/1 with a view to increasing it in future years
- Audit 16-18 work experience/shadowing and consider accreditation systems
- Find ways of ensuring the health and safety work experience for full-time 16-18 students
- Ensure sufficient numbers of briefed employers on work experience database
- Provide a differentiated approach to work experience, including a tailored experience for special needs students, those taking GNVQs and work shadowing for post-16 students requiring exposure to, say, professionals at work

Through the LSC's role within the Connexions Service Partnership

The LSC is fully supportive of the formation of a Connexions Service Partnership in April 2002 and will be represented on that partnership. It has a particular concern to ensure that the necessary additional support for vulnerable groups of young people does not detract from the needs of all young people to receive impartial advice and guidance on all learning routes.

Measure of success 1.5

The creation of an easily accessed, comprehensive service of information, support and impartial guidance. This will be demonstrated by the successful establishment of a Connexions Service by April 2002

Measure of success 1.6

By 2005, an improvement in the destination rates of young people at 16, 17 and 18.

Particular measures of success for 2005 will be

- running three major careers conventions throughout both counties which will be attended by young people and parents
- increased attendance at the annual higher education fair from 3,300 to 4,000 with an increase of 44 to 48 schools and colleges participating
- ensuring that all year 11 students and their parents receive appropriate impartial information and advice on all post-16 routes
- reducing the numbers of 16, 17 and 18 year olds who do not continue learning in line with the Connexions business plan
- together with providers of learning to assist the Connexions Service in further improving success rates of tracking young people who leave education at 16,17 and 18 in line with the Connexions business plan

Regional and National Comparison of those completing Year 11 in 2000

	All Learning	Full-time Education	Govt Supp-orted Trng	Employment and Training	Work No Training	No contact	Other Categories
Herefordshire and Worcestershire	88.7%	75.8%	7.2%	5.7%	2.8%	0.7%	7.8%
West Midlands	84.9%	70.3%	9.7%	4.9%	3.3%	1.5%	10.2%
England	84.9%	71.3%	7.8%	5.8%	2.9%	2.3%	9.9%

Source: The Careers Service Activity Survey 2000

Herefordshire and Worcestershire had a higher overall proportion of those continuing in structured learning level than both the West Midlands and England despite a lower proportion involved in government supported training. This relatively healthy position does not argue for a reduction in effort to bring about further improvements, although it does contrast strongly with other areas of the LSC's work where participation and achievement are far lower. Rather it makes the case for working far harder at the margins of improvement where, despite low numbers, priority groups still require greater resource and support.

Regional and National Comparison for 17 and 18 year olds in 1999

	All Learning	Full-time Education	Govt Supp-orted Trng	Employment and Training	Work No Training	No contact	Other Categories
Herefordshire and Worcestershire	81.9%	62.8%	9.2%	9.9%	2.8%	4.2%	9.5%
West Midlands	77.1%	58.1%	13.4%	5.6%	3.3%	6%	12.6%
England	78.7%	61.3%	12.9%	7.3%	2.9%	5.8%	10.6%

Source: The Careers Service Activity Survey 2000

The figures for 17 and 18 year olds who completed education in 1999 also show a far higher proportion of this group remaining in full-time learning than the West Midlands and England as a whole, but again fewer went on to participate in government supported training or employment with training.

However, Herefordshire and Worcestershire had the twelfth highest learning participation rate for those completing year 11 in 2000, compared with twenty-fourth highest participation rate for 17 and 18 year olds completing in 1999 and 1998. This participation rate was the third highest in the West Midlands, again after Solihull and Warwick.

The sub-region has a significantly lower proportion of 17 and 18 year olds classified as not settled compared with the West Midlands and England as a whole which is nineteenth lowest in the country out of 67 careers service areas.

We will need to monitor participation rates of young people from minority groups and those with disabilities to establish how well they are represented at different levels of learning and in the different learning routes.

During 2000/1 there were six careers conventions in Worcestershire (organised on a district basis), and 14 in Herefordshire (organised on an individual schools basis) but we believe that this number may have fallen in 2001/2. We need to find a way of knowing

if all year 11 students receive impartial information and advice on all post-16 options, including information or exposure to higher education. Nationally in 2000/1, 44% of year 11 leavers had not been told about higher education, and only 880 young people from social classes C or D achieved three grade A level passes or higher.

Action:

- Collaborative direct marketing with Connexions Service
- Ensure that the role of the voluntary sector is acknowledged

By working with all post-16 learning providers

Measure of success 1.7

By 2005 an improvement in the choice and availability of post-16 opportunities

This can be measured by working with the Connexions Service to monitor the extent of instances of young people having difficulty in accessing their preferred post-16 option

Action:

- Close partnership working between LSC, LEAs, Connexions and schools
- Work through School Organisation Committees
- Work with Worcestershire LEAs and schools according to agreed guiding principles and consider a similar approach in Herefordshire
- Build on Worcestershire LEA's protocol on collaborative approaches between post-16 providers
- Cross-sector collaboration on travel to school/college transport
- Cross- sector collaboration on curriculum development and delivery
- Cross-sector collaboration on marketing and promotion of learning provision and delivery
- Work to provide access to high bandwidth for all colleges and schools with sixth forms
- Collaborative approaches to making the best use of new technologies in learning
- Maintain minority subject provision
- Maximise funding sources for all post-16 sectors
- Consider the benefits of area reviews of provision
- Ensure that LSC boundaries do not hamper school effectiveness

Measure of success 1.8

By 2005 a reduction in the differential in progression of young people with disabilities and/or additional learning needs compared with the whole cohort. Measures of success will be expressed as parity measures and also by ensuring

- increased geographical spread and choice of quality provision at Levels 1 or at sub-Level 1
- ability to meet diversity of individual learner needs
- effective use of funding to support disadvantaged groups
- programme of support for students with learning difficulties and disabilities maintained
- an increase in the number of young people with disabilities entering work based learning or further education after year 11
- an increase in the number of young people with disabilities or learning difficulties progressing from further education into permanent paid employment

Destinations – Special Needs

%	Without Special Needs	With Special Needs (from Mainstream Schools)	With Special Needs (from Special Schools)	With Special Needs (from Special Units)
Full -time Education	79.2	51.4	76.9	22.7
Work Based Training	2.5	7.6	0	8.5
Employment with Training	9.6	15.5	8.8	11.3
Employment without Training	3.1	9.2	4.1	14.9
Not Settled	2.9	10.4	0	26.2
No Response	2.6	5.9	10.2	16.3

Source:Careers Service Secondment to the Learning and Skills Council

The table above illustrates the destinations of year 11 students with special needs from mainstream schools, special schools, and special units compared with students without special needs from the year 2000 cohort. Students attending special schools are disadvantaged by profound disabilities. The students attending special units have emotional and behavioural difficulties.Mainstream schools however, encompass a broad range of special needs including learning difficulties,physical and sensory impairments as well as behavioural problems.

The data reveals that special needs students in mainstream schools are far less likely than non-special needs students to remain in full-time education and more likely to remain unemployed or take work without training or part-time work. Students from special schools are generally more likely to remain in full-time education, usually continuing into year 12 or progressing onto a specialist college course. Students from schools for those with emotional and behavioural difficulties and from pupil referral units, are almost five times more likely to take employment without training and eight times more likely to remain unemployed. There is little difference between Herefordshire and Worcestershire except that twice as many special needs students from mainstream schools and special units in Herefordshire took part in work based training compared with such schools in Worcestershire.

Action:

- Ensure greater availability of Level 1 or sub-Level 1 provision
- Targeted marketing at priority groups and their parents
- More professional development by learning providers
- Work to break down prejudices and other barriers

Measure of success 1.9

By 2005 a reduction in the differential in progression of young people from priority wards entering learning opportunities compared with the whole cohort

We do not currently hold cross-sector baselines for this information but an early indication of performance can be found in the DETR index of multiple deprivation.

Action:

- Work with Connexions, LEAs, colleges,WBL providers and LSC national office to establish baseline and set targets
- Actively market learning through the whole community, including greater use of case studies, with a focus on deprived areas
- Together with providers and Connexions Service work to improve numbers entering post-16 learning

By working with schools with Post-16 provision

Measure of success 1.10

By 2005, no school sixth form to have closed for reasons of size alone

There is a tendency, but not direct correlation, for small sixth forms to deliver less points per post-16 pupil, as shown in the table below. The local LSC has no agenda for closure of small sixth forms on the basis of size alone and it recognises the important place that such sixth forms have in their local communities – particularly those in highly rural areas - and their contribution to the provision of a mix of post-16 experience and wide subject choice. The LSC will work with the LEAs and schools to find ways of helping schools with small sixth forms compete in terms of examination performance and subject choice.

Size of Sixth Form	No. of Schools	% of all schools	Cumulative %	Average A-Level Points per Pupil
0-50	115	6.2	6.2	7.4
51-100	319	17.4	23.6	9.4
101-150	409	22.3	45.9	11.9
151-200	398	21.7	67.6	14.6
201-250	295	16.1	83.7	15.7
251 and over	298	16.2	100	15.8

Source:DfES figures for England (Figures for Herefordshire and Worcestershire are better than these)

Action:

- Through the use of mechanisms such as collaborative activity, and the application of modern technology work with schools to ensure their viability based on quality of teaching, breadth of provision, examination success, and successful progression of students
- Work with schools to help them access additional sources of funding

Steps taken to meet the LSC's responsibilities in respect of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

We will continue to work with schools, careers, specialist colleges and other public sector bodies, including social services, to ensure that steps are being taken to meet the needs of people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

For the academic year 2001-02, the LSC Herefordshire and Worcestershire has secured new placements for 33 learners from across Herefordshire and Worcestershire, at 14 specialist colleges across the country.

This totals funding of just over one million pounds. In total, 83 learners from Herefordshire and Worcestershire are currently attending specialist colleges across the country, with their provision being secured by funding from the LSC. This totals funding of £2,026,578.

Action:

- Continue to work with the appropriate bodies to extend the participation of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and maintain the placement process of these learners

Measure of success 1.11

By 2005 an entitlement to further education or training to be available for all school students with learning disabilities

The sub region has already created a strong track record for itself in placing students with learning difficulties and disabilities in specialist out-of-area provision. However, there is the need to explore the extent to which those who do not qualify for that level of provision are adequately catered for locally. Once we have a baseline of current participation, we can set targets for improvement.

Action:

- Audit current provision and uptake
- Consider the need for additional local specialist facilities to aid progression
- Establish baseline and set targets
- Monitor achievement and progression against national benchmarks
- Promote understanding of accreditation such as ASDAN and ALL
- Explore potential within the newly created WBL learner support fund and next year's funding matrix
- Establish clarity of role between LSC and LEA for full-time post-16 students with special needs
- Encourage greater collaborative work between providers

Through improved higher education participation and completion

The Prime Minister has set a national participation target of 50% for under 30s therefore we need to almost double the present rate of participation. We know that 75% of sixth form leavers enter higher education provision (including those with deferred places), but this is only somewhere between 25% and 35% of their year 11 cohort, the level of imprecision arises because we do not yet have firm figures for further education leavers. We do not yet know the overall participation levels for young people from ethnic minorities nor for those with physical disabilities. The local LSC Council has set as a long term impact measure an improvement in participation in higher education for deprived communities.

Measure of success 1.12

By 2010 an increase in the percentage of people aged 18-30 entering higher education from around 25-30% to 50%

Particular measures of success include

- increases in the number of young people from ethnic minority communities, young people with physical disabilities and those from deprived wards entering higher education
- by creating pathways of progression, an increase in the number of Level 3 completers from work based learning provision to have progressed to higher education by 2005
- a shared strategy in place by 2003 for access to Foundation Degree provision (with reference to local and regional priorities)

Figures from the Neighbourhood Statistics for 1998 show that the proportion of the total residents who were successful in their application to a higher education institute, for both Herefordshire and Worcestershire was significantly higher than the regional and national average. However, when further analysed at ward within district level, there were some notably significant differences. Six of the eleven wards in Redditch had proportions of successful applicants in the lowest quartile making it one of the poorest districts for contribution towards positive higher education outcomes.

Closely following this, three quarters of Worcester City's wards (nine of its 12 wards) had proportions of successful applicants in the lowest two quartiles and none of its wards was in the top quartile. Malvern Hills was the best performing district with almost three quarters of its wards having proportions of successful applicants in the top two quartiles and only one of its 27 wards in the lowest quartile. Closely following this, nearly two thirds of Bromsgrove district's wards (12 of its 19 wards) had proportions of successful applicants in the top two quartiles. To put the successes and concerns into context, the Midyear Population Estimates for 2000 for Herefordshire and Worcestershire residents show that the proportion of residents aged 15-24 was 9.6%. Both the Worcester and Redditch district proportions were well above this, making them two of the top three districts with the highest proportion of 15-24 year olds; Malvern Hills and Bromsgrove district had the lowest proportion of 15-24 year olds. We do know participation figures as a % of resident population for the 23 most deprived wards in the sub-region, but these include older entrants. More work is required to determine the participation rates of people aged 18-30 in these areas before we can set targets. Between 1999 and 2001 only 13 (0.8%) Level 3 completers from the work based learning programme (principally Modern Apprenticeships) progressed to higher

education. Seven of these were female. The local Awards and Grants section does not currently monitor participation by ethnic minority uptake or dropout, but has plans to do so in the future. We do not currently have a baseline for young people with physical disabilities who enter HE.

Action:

- Map the areas needing the most help in boosting higher education achievements
- Establish baselines and set targets for 2005
- Work with schools – particularly those drawing from areas of deprivation, to provide exposure to higher education (University College Worcester will be active in this area)

Measure of success 1.13

By 2005 a reduction in the level of non-completion of young people from the sub-region who entered higher education

As with non-completion from other post -16 learning routes, we need to have an idea of what is an acceptable level of non-completion before we can set a target and comparisons with other areas are required. However, in the absence of that information at present we were surprised and pleased to discover that in the last two years only 7% of first year undergraduates failed to complete their first year (see table overleaf), and although this is a slight increase on 1998/99, it is against a background of a sharp increase in participation. Non-completion is even less for disabled participants,therefore we feel that our next areas of research are on participation rates of disabled people and those from ethnic minorities as well as from deprived areas. We cannot currently differentiate between Herefordshire and Worcestershire but we hope to in the future

HE Dropout Rate

	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01
No. applications (excl. deferral and no take up)	4200	4830	4740
Male	1932	2249	2044
Female	2268	2581	2696
From an ethnic minority			
Non Disabled	4087	4682	4618
Disabled	113	148	122
No. 1st years dropping out	216	345	312
Male	108	163	136
% Male applications	6%	7%	7%
Female	108	182	176
% Female applications	5%	7%	7%
From an ethnic minority			
Non Disabled	213	340	308
% Non Disabled Applications	5%	7%	7%
Disabled	3	5	4
% Disabled Applications	3%	3%	3%

Source: Worcestershire County Council Awards and Grants section (figures include Herefordshire)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: To encourage greater participation of adults in learning

There is a history of low spending on Adult and Community Learning (ACL) in both counties therefore efforts are required to increase funding levels. In the short term, the Local Initiative Fund can provide some support, but it is vital that in the medium to long term Adult and Community Learning is adequately funded from mainstream resources. The table below shows that there is a long way to go to raise local allocations to the national average.

ACL EXPENDITURE

	12 Months	20+ Population*	%age of regional £	%age of regional population	%age of national £	%age of national population
Herefordshire	£104,040	128,623	0.7%	3.2%	0.1%	0.3%
Worcestershire	£ 298,971	410,433	2.0%	10.4%	0.2%	1.1%
Herefordshire and Worcestershire	£ 403,012	539,056	2.7%	13.6%	0.3%	1.4%
West Midlands	£14,870,597	3,960,700	-	-	9.6%	10.6%
England	£154,328,021	37,502,710	-	-	-	-

Source:LSC Operations Guide 2001-11-29

This amounts to 7.4 p expenditure per head of 20+ population in the sub-region compared with the national average of 41p.

Dialogue between LSC and organisations involved in ACL, is vital to ensure learning which promotes social inclusion and community capacity building. Learning which promotes enterprise and improves workforce skills is of equal importance. Learning partnerships and the voluntary and community organisations,have pivotal roles to ensure LSC funding provision meets local needs. Networking and partnership arrangements are essential to make the best use of resources and skills, and to ensure the spread of good practice.

Quality, assessment and inspection systems must take account of the nature of informal and community based learning if it is to flourish. Voluntary and community organisations will require support in preparation for inspection of ACL.

Providers must adopt new attitudes and new practices to encourage non-learners to participate in learning. Fitness of purpose means fitting provision to potential learners rather than learners fitting themselves into what is on offer. Notice has to be taken of learner need. Evidence suggest that in descending order, learner preference is for the following locations:

- at home
- at work
- in libraries
- in community settings
- in colleges
- in church

The most recent Household Survey for Herefordshire and Worcestershire showed that 38% of individuals had not participated in either or taught or non-taught learning in the last three years. This is 3% lower than the regional average. At district level there were not great variations other than that the proportion of non-learners in the Malvern Hills was 6% lower than the Herefordshire and Worcestershire average while the proportion of non-learners in the Wychavon district was 7% higher. These figures suggest opportunities for greater use of e-learning and learndirect.

Learning Participation – sub-regional comparison with West Midlands

	Herefordshire and Worcestershire	West Midlands
Have done taught learning	25%	15%
Have done non-taught learning	9%	13%
Have done both taught and non-taught learning	28%	37%
Have done neither	38%	35%
Base	2,087	20,874

Source:Household Survey 2000. Base:all respondents – except students

Learning Participation in Herefordshire and Worcestershire Year 2000

	Male	Female	White	Non-White	Refused	Employed	Non Employed
Have done taught learning	24%	25%	25%	30%	0%	26%	16%
Have done non-taught learning	10%	8%	9%	11%	0%	9%	8%
Have done both	28%	27%	28%	22%	0%	29%	19%
Have done neither	37%	40%	38%	37%	100%	36%	57%

Source:Household Survey 2000. Base:all respondents – except students

Generally, younger people were more likely to have undertaken learning than older people. There was a particular 'drop-off' in learning activity in the 55 and over age group. Those without disabilities were more likely to be learners than those with. Well over two-thirds of the proportion of non-learners in Bromsgrove were those in the 55 and over age group by contrast with just below one-third for Herefordshire. In the same district, people suffering with a disability were much less likely to be learners.

Women in the Wychavon district were much more likely to be non-learners which was in stark contrast with all other districts.

A strategy for Adult and Community Learning needs to be developed and implemented as a matter of priority to take into account the intrinsic value of recreational learning, the value of non-accredited learning, the needs of older learners, and low levels of participation in deprived areas. It is essential to ensure that learning promotes social inclusion and community capacity building. Learning should also promote enterprise and improve workforce skills.

The first step for the LSC is to map and evaluate the current level, uptake and quality of provision. Close collaboration between the LSC Learning Partnerships and organisations involved in ACL is vital to widen participation and promote effective and efficient lifelong learning. Voluntary and community organisations have a vital role to widen participation whilst the Learning Partnerships are pivotal in ensuring LSC funding meets local need.

Additionally, and pivotal to the whole area of ACL provision, is our current lack of knowledge of potential or unmet need. ACL statistics published by DfEE in November 2000, show under 1% of adults in Herefordshire and Worcestershire participated in learning. Both counties lie within the bottom quartile for participation rates across England comprising 8.7% of total enrolments.

Any strategy to improve skill levels, particularly in disadvantaged areas, must have the improvement of basic skills at the top of the agenda. The community and voluntary sector have an important role to play in this area along with lifelong learning networks.

It is essential to ensure quality adult and community learning provision. The assessment and inspection systems must take into account the nature of informal and community based learning. The LSC will support providers including voluntary and community organisations to meet the requirements of the new review process and inspection framework.

By working with Herefordshire and Worcestershire Information and Guidance Partnership (IAG)

Measure of success 2.1

By 2005 50% of people aged 19+ to be aware of IAG across both counties

We do not currently have a baseline for the level of awareness of IAG services although the Household Survey did provided the following figures. We will need to ask about this in next year's Household Survey.

	As a % of those aged 16-19	As a % of those aged 20+
Have obtained IAG on learning in last 2 years	24%	33%
Have not obtained IAG on learning in last 2 years	76%	67%
Don't know	0.2%	0%
Refused	0.05%	0%

Measure of success 2.2

By 2005 an increase in ease of access to a guidance centre or information point

Access to IAG Centres

Radius	Herefordshire	% population	Worcestershire	% population
1 mile	51796	31%	226427	42%
3 miles	90982	54%	379654	70%
5 miles	113393	67%	428909	79%
10 miles	150318	89%	505212	93%
15 miles	166317	98%	507896	94%
Population mid-2000	169313		541446	

Data Sources:The data is taken from the Family Health Service Area (FHSA) Health Authority figures. The Herefordshire figures are for April 2001,the Worcestershire figures are for Dec 2000

The LSC will need to take a view on whether the level of access shown above is sufficient, or whether there are geographical areas that require easier access. It is interesting that a higher proportion of the population further than 15 miles from a guidance centre in Worcestershire appears to have greater difficulty of access than in Herefordshire on grounds of distance.

These figures exclude the five FE colleges and the full-time Careers Centres who also have a range of information provided by IAG and there are several new information points currently being planned.

This information can be compared with the incidence of post-19 respondents who did not obtain any IAG on learning, by district, from the Household Survey. This may begin to show us if there are any plausible geographic trends.

Measure of success 2.3

By 2004 an increase uptake of information, advice and guidance to

- from 797 to 10,000 enquiries
- from 2028 to 7,000 advice sessions

The IAG partnership is not currently funded for full guidance interviews. A bid to participate in a guidance pilot has reached the second stage. If successful this will provide funding for guidance interviews which are for those who need in-depth help to explore job and career options. A target would be set. The LSC will work closely with the IAG Management Group to raise public and employer awareness of IAG via a marketing campaign in early 2002.

Employer involvement is to be a key priority for 2002/3 along with closer collaboration with staff in learndirect centres. It is hoped to mount a pilot guidance project in 2002/3 to extend the service. Ultimately an information point will be available in all major towns and villages across the two counties.

Measure of success 2.4

By 2005, through tracking and evaluation to show that increasing numbers of recipients of guidance have acted upon the advice given

There is no current baseline for this type of information, but the IAG service has just begun long term tracking of former recipients of advice or guidance.

Action:

- Marketing to promote IAG to include new brand and strapline, raising public awareness
- Road shows with a range of publicity materials aimed at a variety of audiences
- Collaborate with local radio to promote IAG
- Work with key partners to ensure new information points established
- Encourage and support quality initiatives
- Careful monthly monitoring of activity against target
- Research areas where guidance is sought and provision exists but funding is a barrier e.g. 25—30 males seeking craft training
- Support initiatives using LIF and ESF co-financing if appropriate
- Research to identify impact of the service
- Promote IAG within disadvantaged areas and with socially excluded groups including those from ethnic minorities, those with disabilities, ex-offenders, lone parents both genders and older (50+) potential learners

Working with both the LEAs and Learning Partnerships and with the Community and Voluntary Sectors.

Measure of success 2.5

By 2005 sufficient, affordable, good quality Adult and Community Learning (ACL) provision will exist in all parts of the sub-region

It has not yet been decided when ACL provision will be subject to internal inspection. When that does take place, we will be in a strong position to gauge the effectiveness of local providers.

Action:

- Clearer branding required
- Include ACL in provider review process at an appropriate time
- Develop policy of what we mean by 'affordable'
- Develop community learning centres e.g. schools, village halls

Measure of success 2.6

By 2005 an increase in participation in Adult and Community Learning

This is a particularly difficult area to baseline and it will probably not be possible until the new Individual Learner Record (ILR) is introduced to all sectors of LSC funding, which may not be in until 2003 or 2004. In the meantime, we may have to restrict our measurement of participation to activities supported by ACL funds alone.

Measure of success 2.7

By 2010 an increase in participation in adult learning in the most educationally deprived wards in each county to equal the sub-regional average

We will need to work with local partners to deliver robust systems of measurement.

Measure of success 2.8

By 2005 a significant movement in ACL funding levels from 7.4p per capita of population to at least the national average

Immediate comparison with national average expenditure demonstrate fairly convincingly that the area is under-funded, but more detailed analysis will need to take into account the amount of ACL that is supported by college funding before firm conclusions of unfairness can be formed. Additional monies have been made available to support family learning during 2002/3. The LSC is working closely with the LEA to promote and enhance provision across the two counties.

Action:

- Build capacity of people living in disadvantaged areas
- Promote equality and social inclusion in these areas
- Ongoing research to identify need across all areas marketing and publicity to stimulate demand
- Map provision, establish baselines, set targets and monitor progress. Provide training for community leaders

- Encourage and support training events to up-skill tutors/facilitators working in this sector
- Work through Learning Partnerships and with local education authorities to promote learning including family learning
- Collaborate with UfI and voluntary sector to increase access to learndirect or UK-online
- Develop learning champions in the community to stimulate demand
- Work with community and voluntary organisations to ensure self-assessment becomes embedded in their systems – involve Housing Associations
- Quality assurance procedures to ensure high quality provision responds effectively to learner need. ACL provider reviews
- Establish learning centres in a variety of venues e.g. pubs, clubs, supermarkets, residential homes, libraries and museums, primary schools
- Encourage communities to become more actively involved in self -help activity
- Facilitate the development of a wider range of learning opportunities, including skill development at local community level.
- Clarification on measures of success for this target group, not necessarily by achieving qualification – more work on soft outcomes that are not soft options
- Clarification of funding for non-accredited learning
- Participate in national initiatives to widen participation e.g. Bite Size, Adult Learning Week, Family Learning Weekend
- Use Local Initiative Fund to support the development of stronger communities. Help build capacity for accessing external funding

By working with Employers and the TUC

Because of low levels of trade union membership in the area, there is no strong tradition of working with trade unions to increase learning activity. Initiatives and funding streams are now available for these purposes and use must be made of them.

Measure of success 2.9

By the end of 2003 by working with local benchmark companies to introduce and develop an agreed target figure of Trade Union Learning Advisers to their roles

Through Basic Skills Work

It is difficult to separate adult and community learning from basic skills provision because it is often one and the same thing. However, because of its high priority status, it warrants a section of its own. There are estimated to be seven million adults with poor basic skills in England resulting in poor health, lower income or unemployment and social exclusion for many. This includes many speakers of other languages (ESOL). The number of adults with poor literacy and numeracy is estimated to be higher than the national average in the West Midlands. A total of 24% of the adult population of England is estimated to have poor literacy.

This can be broken down into the three groups as follows: 15% have low literacy (Group A), 5% have lower literacy (Group B) and 4% have very low literacy (Group C). England's 25% compares badly with most European countries e.g. Belgium is at 17% and Sweden at 7%. There is a gender difference of just 1% in literacy, with 21% men and 22% women having problems . However, an 11% difference exists between men and women in numeracy with men at 18% and women at 29%.

Measure of success 2.10

By 2004 9,927 additional adults to have increased their level of literacy and numeracy

Data from the Basic Skills Agency shows a greater need for supporting numeracy across the two counties. Targets are set to promote both literacy and numeracy across the three years. It is intended to recruit and train additional teachers of numeracy thus increasing the proportion of numeracy to literacy attainments in the second year with an equal target set in the final year contributing to the national target of 750,000 learners achieving a basic skill qualification in numeracy or literacy. For more detail refer to the earlier section on our interim targets for 2004.

Measure of success 2.11

By 2003 five large employers to have signed up to provide Basic Skills screening and support for their employees

Action:

- Identify employers
- Research to identify providers and to establish levels of need
- Research to identify numbers of learners from priority groups
- Audit of tutor qualifications
- Audit of providers holding or working towards the Basic Skill Agency Quality Mark
- Encourage providers to send tutors for training for ESOL revised standards
- Liaise with providers to ensure all staff train to revised Basic Skill curriculum
- Identify appropriate staff to train as Basic Skills Brokers
- Ensure all providers are aware of and own the target set for the LSC area
- Collaborate with the TUC and employers to increase awareness and participation

Through Individual Learning Accounts

Despite recent problems associated with Individual Learning Accounts they were popular with individuals and employers as a way of accessing training for key basic employment skills such as ICT skills. The LSC nationally is working with the DfES on a replacement model for ILAs and we will be actively participating in the revised programme. No doubt targets will be set in the future.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: To engage greater numbers of employers in activities which develop the skills of the workforce for national competitiveness

Workforce Development

By workforce development we mean activities which increase the knowledge, skills, abilities and capacity of individuals to participate effectively in the workplace.

Workforce development in the 21st Century is set in the context of the following drivers of change:

- Increasing globalisation: global markets in skilled workers as well as investment and trade
- The pace of scientific and technological innovation: drives rapid change and competitive advantage
- Increasing possibilities afforded by ICT and the need for ICT skills
- The 'war for talent' (an increasingly global search for highly skilled talented employees)
- More skilled and educated employees in other countries
- An ageing workforce arising from the changing profile of the population
- The need to focus on growth and added value companies and less on declining sectors
- The need to retrain those from the declining or dead industries
- Changes in composition of the workforce (more women, more people with higher qualifications)
- Eight out of ten new jobs created by 2010 to be at NVQ Level 3 or above
- Changes in the type of work: less manufacturing, more services, more specialised jobs, more part-time, flexible and contractual work, flexible production processes and technologies leading to increased demand for higher skill workers

The Problems

Addressing the challenges that these drivers bring needs to be carried out in full recognition of the local context as described in our SWOT analysis, and of the UK context as set out below:

- UK at higher skill and qualifications levels is comparable to other industrial countries
- UK has a problem with youth and adult vocational achievement at low and intermediate levels, particularly in relating to the existing stock of adults in the workforce – and particularly low in the West Midlands
- Basic skills in the UK are particularly poor compared to other European countries
- The high levels of people in the workforce with poor skills, impacts on their likelihood to obtain training at work (the more you have the more you get), this perpetuates a low/no pay cycle and hinders social mobility
- A higher skills base contributes to increased productivity, employability, added value leading to social inclusion benefits
- Training is distributed unevenly among employees. Those with higher skills, those

working in large firms and younger people are more likely to participate in training e.g. those with degrees have 24% participating in training compared to 5% for those with no qualifications

- There are market failures around poaching, resources available for training and a lack of real information on the value of learning

Employer Engagement Target

A key indicator of economic success will be the numbers of employers engaging in workforce development activity. Currently the proxy target for this is the Investors in People National Learning Target for December 2002 (see below).

As explained in Part A of this document, the national target will be around greater engagement of employers in the development of their workforce.

The annual Employer Survey gives an indication of the number of employers who are training their staff.

Proportion of organisations that have provided training or opportunities to train their staff related to work over the past 12 months

	Size of organisation					
	Total	5+ Employees	Micro (0-9 Employees)	Small (10-49 Employees)	Med (50-249 Employees)	Large (250+ Employees)
Weighted Sample Total	28,150	9,185	23,074	4,175	819	81
Have Provided Training	17,150	7,955	12,335	3,914	819	81
	(60.9%)	(86.6%)	(53.5%)	(93.7%)	(100%)	(100%)
Have not Provided Training	11,000	1,231	10,739	261	0	0
	(39.1%)	(13.4%)	(46.5%)	(6.3%)		

Source:Employer Survey 2001

Although the national target will not be set until some time during 2002, that need not prevent us from considering more specific ways of measuring employer engagement and then setting targets. Therefore we are developing a process of gaining regular feedback from employers on skills issues along the following lines

- Continuing to conduct an annual employer survey
- Identifying 100+ top companies to act as a 'barometer' of skill shortages
- Monitoring replies to questions on skills posed by Chamber of Commerce quarterly survey
- Chamber of Commerce business advisers to regularly collect 'soft' information on skills
- Encouraging other organisations in touch with employers to feedback regular 'soft' information to the LSC

Employer Need

Our understanding of the level of employer need will be increased as we progress with a structured plan of research into our priority and key sectors, through close working with NTOs and the emerging Sector Skills Councils, through feedback from providers and other partners and through sector networks whether already in existence or yet to be formed.

Workforce Development in SMEs

Securing an increase in commitment to learning from employers in general, and among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in particular, is widely considered to be an essential step in the key Government agendas of:

- widening participation and social inclusion
- workforce development to include increasing skill levels, reducing numeracy and literacy problems
- increased productivity, added value and profits
- improvements in GDP, international competitiveness
- harnessing the potential of the UK population through the development of a culture of lifelong learning

Why it is important to increase the take up of learning by SMEs:

- The SME sector makes a critical contribution to the nation's economy and employment and the size and importance of this contribution is growing steadily
- SME employers account for 99% of the nation's stock of organisations, 49% of total employment in the economy and 49% of total turnover
- Processes of structural change in the economy such as organisational downsizing, the trend towards outsourcing and the increasing predominance of service activities all reinforce the growing importance of the SME contribution
- As larger organisations continue to shed jobs, smaller organisations will have an increasing role to play in job provision, retention and development

Existing training provider involvement in the employer market - Implications and observations:

- For FE colleges and private sector providers funded by the LSC working with SMEs offers a valuable opportunity to develop commercial activities and reduce dependence on Government funding (FE Colleges only 7% nationally from business contracts)
- Employers and SMEs in particular feel that FE colleges are too supply driven with too much emphasis on vocational qualifications and not enough on meeting specific needs of employees
- The FE sector in particular makes a vital contribution to vocational learning, delivering over 54% of all the new vocational qualifications acquired each year. Private sector providers deliver 24% and employers only 6%. At Level 3 FE contribution rises to nearly 65%

- One third of employers who offer off-the-job training to their workers use FE colleges to meet at least some of their needs. However, the proportion of smaller companies undertaking training through FE Colleges is much lower
- FE colleges have poor client management systems regarding their penetration of the employers in our sub-region
- There is currently no formal arrangement in place for links between Business Link advice and training provider follow up. Business Link has the best client management system
- There are no formal systems in place to capture feedback from employers on their business development and training needs apart from new systems agreed with Chamber/Business Link. Information following visits by local authority officials also need to be captured
- Although the vast majority of businesses do not have a formal working relationship with local training providers / FE Colleges, a significant number of employees attend FE colleges on released provision
- Small businesses and micro businesses in particular have a poor track record on learning and skills development

The problems facing local learning providers in engaging the SME market and approaches which can be taken to overcome these

This section lists some of the main issues which impact on colleges and other providers of learning services as they engage with the SME sector. These suggestions are based on descriptions of best practice contained in recent literature.

- Understanding, analysing and meeting SME needs
- Interesting and engaging SMEs and their employees
- Making the most of college-based management information
- Developing and maintaining an effective relationship with SMEs
- Developing provider staff to met the challenge of the SME market
- Responding to time constraints within SMEs
- Positioning learning as a business solution
- Avoiding 'qualification-led' provision
- Developing a suitable curriculum for SMEs
- Making learning a practical possibility
- Demonstrating the return on investment

Action:

- Investigate different approaches to training needs and skills shortages analysis. Collect data once and use several times for the benefit of the education, skills and business development network. Develop an effective client management system
- Business Link, in partnership with the LSC, to broker relationships at a local level between Business Link and the various education and training providers. Need for an effective client management system with client account managers. Also need to provide a clear pathway to learning services for Business Link clients
- Need to build the capacity of the network to support e-learning with SMEs

- Take learning to the businesses where appropriate, using learning centres or mobile services
- Look at ways of increasing flexibility and widening participation in the workplace
- Ensure that learndirect courses are linked to mainstream qualifications most in demand among SMEs and their employees e.g. ICT and business development
- Review current marketing activities and produce an integrated joint marketing strategy which involves the resources of all the key players e.g. LSC, FE colleges, private providers and Business Link where appropriate
- Develop customer-facing staff in key areas including commercial skills, ICT and product knowledge
- Ensure better links / coherence between all those Government departments / agencies, Advantage West Midlands, Business Link, LSC who have funds available for training and development to ensure the customers are not confused. Create a true one-stop-shop
- Make certain providers change their strategy from a supply driven culture to a demand led culture

Sector Workforce Development Priorities

The following passages provide a brief overview of the key employment sectors in the sub-region They are featured here because they are a local or regional priority area, because of the size of their workforce or because of the nationally recognised importance of improving skills e.g. the health service. In most instances the findings that are reported are from the workforce development plans of the relevant National Training Organisations. Not all NTOs have currently produced their workforce development plans and therefore this report will need to be updated when additional information becomes available. More to the point, few of the plans have hard information at sub-regional level, which places the onus on the LSC's research function to produce locally useful facts and figures.

The eight sectors covered in this paper collectively account for well over 50% of total employment within Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

Childcare

This is a sector that is a key Government priority, and a local priority. The Early Years NTO has highlighted the following as the key issues in the sector: -

- A lack of trainers and assessors
- Standards of training
- Lack of funding for provision for over 25s
- Difficulties in recruitment and retention
- The need for existing staff in the sector to gain the National Framework qualifications by 2004

We do not have accurate figures for the numbers employed in the sector locally mainly due to the nature of the companies being very small. As a priority sector it requires a full research programme to be undertaken by the LSC in 2002.

Creative Industries

This is a wide ranging sector covering "those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have the potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property" - DCMS Creative Industries Mapping Document 2001. It includes the following

- Advertising
- Architecture
- Art and antiques
- Crafts
- Design
- Designer fashion
- Educational media
- Film and video
- Interactive leisure software
- Music
- Performing arts
- Publishing
- Software and computer services
- Television and radio

This sector employs over 27,000 people in Herefordshire and Worcestershire and is clearly of significant importance.As it is a wide ranging sector it is not covered by a single NTO and each group within the sector has differing training needs, but many are identifying skills needs at technician, professional and artistic level. Herefordshire Partnership has developed a Creative Industries Growth Plan.

Polymers

Historically there is a tradition of working with this sector which is growing in Herefordshire and Worcestershire comprising 156 companies employing over 4,500 people. Nationally it is expected to achieve growth at twice UK manufacturing rates. There is an existing employer network of Polymer organisations covering both counties. The key issues for the sector as identified in the draft Workforce Development Plan by the Polymer NTO are as follows:

- Low numbers of young people in the sector
- Low take up of Modern Apprenticeships
- Low take up of Investors in People
- Skill gaps in technical competence, management and communication skills
- Recruitment and retention difficulties

Food and Drink

This sector features here because it is a regional priority area as designated by Advantage West Midlands, for which the lead responsibility has been passed to the LLSC, the Employment Service and Business Link to manage in partnership from their respective positions. There are also important links with tourism.

The Food and Drink NTO is just one of several nationally recognised training organisations for what would naturally be considered the food and drink sector. This NTO's report therefore refers to food and drink manufacturing and processing in the main.

The sector is of major importance both nationally and locally and is estimated to employ 7,500 people within Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

The NTO found that only 19% of sites were involved with NVQs and 14% with the Investors in People standard. The other key workforce development issues identified within the report were:

- To increase the recruitment of engineering/technical skills
- To improve basic and key skills in new entrants and the existing workforce
- To ensure a continued supply of science and food technologists into the industry from FE/HE
- To increase the skills level of the workforce at Levels 3 and 4 to gain basic competence in technical and management skills
- To ensure the production and technical workforce is multi-skilled to enhance capacity
- Encourage small businesses to acquire business and marketing skills
- Improve the image of the industry in order to aid the recruitment of young people

Retail and Distributive

This features here partly because of its size and its high proportion of part-time, often female workers, and also because of the number of retail developments in the sub-region. It is also closely linked with the tourism and hospitality sector that is key to this sub-region.

It is a highly disparate sector covering more than four million workers nationally and includes retail, distribution and warehousing. Key drivers of change in the industry are e-commerce, IT developments, regulatory changes, intense price competition and the growing importance of customer service.

The sector has an above average share of female and part-time workers and employment is expected to be concentrated amongst these people in the future. It is the second largest sector within Herefordshire and Worcestershire, employing nearly 30,000 local people.

The key workforce development needs identified were:

- The need for high quality management
- The need for good quality customer service skills
- The need for ICT skills to meet the demands of e-commerce
- To raise the calibre of entrants to the industry and raise the skills levels of current employees (especially basic skills)
- The need to raise the image of the industry and improve knowledge of career routes

The challenges in meeting the skills needs of this sector were identified as:

- Addressing the flexible training needs of women and part-time workers
- Reducing the high turnover of staff
- Counteract the image of the sector as a low-pay low-skill sector with limited career opportunities

Engineering Manufacture

This features here because of its continuing importance to the local economy, and the frequently high added value of its products. The sector includes metal manufacturing, metal products, mechanical equipment, electronics, electrical equipment, motor vehicles and aerospace. The sector continues to undergo profound structural change involving the take up of new technology and significant up-skilling. Recent growth in electronics has fuelled the need to increase the numbers of professional engineers and graduate

level technicians to fill gaps in skills needs across the whole sector.

The key drivers for change in the industry include:

- New working practices, such as cell and team working
- Out sourcing, pushing responsibility for product and component development further down the supply chain
- The need for innovation as a result of shorter product life cycles
- The impact of new technology on manufacturing processes
- The impact of ICT on areas such as stock control and on-line ordering

The NTO for the sector is EMTA, the Engineering and Marine Training Authority. It states that the workforce development priorities are:

- To recruit more people into the industry, through the promotion of engineering in schools and to currently under-represented groups in the sector including young women and ethnic minorities
- To fill the skills gaps for professional engineers, scientists and technologists, together with technicians and other skilled crafts people
- To provide up-to-date training leading to specific competences required by companies, with flexible delivery and syllabuses that meet the requirements of different customers
- To secure appropriate local provision of training
- Continue to support up-skilling of the existing workforce, particularly in SMEs. Promotion of the Investors in People standard remains a priority

Land Based Industries

This features here for a number of reasons. Contrary to popular belief there is expected to be a national increase in employment within the sector of about 1.3% over the next five years.

Although when analysed by sub-sector it is apparent that employment in agriculture is predicted to fall, there will be a more than corresponding increase in areas such as environmental conservation, production horticulture, landscaping, fencing and equine. It is also a sector that will continue to require assistance as the result of the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak. This sector is estimated to employ between 6,000 and 8,000 people within the two counties.

Given the diverse nature of this sector, skills needs were identified by sub-sector. Common amongst many of the sub-sectors were the following:

- Management/business skills
- Health and safety knowledge
- Basic literacy and numeracy
- ICT
- Diversification and marketing skills
- Customer care skills (particularly in those sub-sectors with regular customer contact)
- Project management
- Environmental management

Construction

This was chosen as a local priority because of the well documented skill shortages in the construction industry and how this can hold back development of the sub-region and because Construction Technology is one of AWM's designated priority clusters. Locally there is also notable potential for close partnership with the industry. The sector employs approximately 110,0000 people in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, the eighth largest sector. At the national level the construction sector needs to recruit 64,000 each year in the UK simply to maintain its current workforce. CITB recent industry projections suggest that the actual annual recruitment requirement, allowing for modest growth, is around 74,000. This covers all occupations from labourers and crafts people to construction managers and professionals. The overall recruitment pattern to the construction industry is not well understood. About 22,000 people each year enter formal new entrant training each year in the sector.

Some 10,000 also enter construction related courses in HE. To meet industry needs a further 40,000 – 50,000 people must enter construction through less formal means; many probably transfer from other sectors – agriculture, mining and the armed services. Others will have fewer transferable skills. Regardless of their backgrounds they all have training and development requirements to ensure they operate effectively and safely in the construction industry. Currently the six occupations with the largest recruitment needs are: carpenters and joiners; managers; electricians; clerical workers; bricklayers and plumbers.

The Construction Industry Training Board, (CITB), has identified the following five areas as priorities for workforce development in a strong drive to up-skill all workers in the industry:

- Recruit and train new entrants
- Reverse the decline in HE places
- Improve the image of the industry
- Target non-traditional workers
- Improve training provision for roofers, plumbers, plant operatives, plant fitters and floorers and scaffolders
- Enhance managerial and project management skills
- Better technical and practical skills in craft occupations
- Increase the uptake of Investors in People
- Raise the provision of training by companies and private providers
- Increase the multi skilling of craft workers
- Improve customer service skills

Hospitality and Tourism

The hospitality sector is one of the largest in the UK, currently employing 1.8 million people in a diverse range of occupations. Locally the hotels and restaurants sector employs approximately 14,500 people. The sector is characterised by its high level of part-time employment and the large proportion of employees who are women (75%). The relevant NTO, Hospitality Training Foundation, has yet to formally launch its sector workforce development plan, however they have produced a skills needs assessment as

evidence to the National Skills Taskforce. Key issues identified within the report were:

- The high levels of staff turnover within the sector
- The low levels of qualifications held generally by people within the sector (e.g. 25% had no qualifications at all compared to an all industry average of 18%)
- The occupations that were providing hardest to fill were for chefs, bar staff, kitchen assistants and waiters
- The need for improved management skills was also identified

It has also been very badly affected by the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak and by 11 September disaster.

Local Government

Local government employs well over 7,000 people (excluding those working in education). In addition there exist over 3,500 central Government workers and over 22,500 workers employed within education (making up over 8% of the local workforce). It also contracts with a significant number of local employers. It is a sector that is undergoing significant change, not least because of the Government's agenda to improve public services. It also has the potential to influence its supply chain through its significant levels of sub-contracting and out-sourcing.

A number of local authorities and directorates within local authorities have achieved Investors in People and this work continues in conjunction with Business Link. In response to a recent survey sent to 35 training providers, of the 32 that responded:

- 12 (38%) trained Modern Apprentices who work with local authorities
- 11 (34%) trained Modern Apprentices who work with organisations who carry out local authority funded activities e.g. out-sourced leisure services
- 9 (28%) trained Modern Apprentices who work with housing associations

Action:

- To commit to Investors in People and aim for recognition by the end of 2003
- To review recruitment/employment practices to see if more modern apprenticeships could be offered
- To carry out a stocktake of qualification of staff and set targets for each local authority
- To check if there are any basic skills issues amongst employees
- To complete a brief report on skills needs/shortages following any visits to employers and then return to LSC
- To consider how each local authority could influence its supply chain re Investor in People, Modern Apprenticeships, Basic Skills Qualifications

Measure of success 3.1

Increase uptake of Investors in People and Modern Apprenticeships in local authorities

We need to set a baseline for Investors in People and Modern Apprenticeship participation within local authorities.

Action:

- To continue to work with local authorities to achieve and maintain Investors in People
- To increase the number of Modern Apprentices in local authorities
- To work with local authorities and their trade unions to identify and tackle skill training needs
- Support partnership working
- Improvements in generic skills such as leadership, management IT, basic skills, diversity awareness
- Improvements in specific skills such as partnership and procurement
- To explore ways of linking local authorities with learndirect

The Healthcare Sector

Nearly one million people will work for the new NHS Trusts, and £2 billion a year is spent on supporting training and education for clerical staff and more money is spent locally on staff development and training. The Government has identified the NHS as a key priority area and wants to make sure that the NHS plans and develops its workforce and use its investment in it, to deliver the best, most effective care for patients. The LSC needs to work with local senior management of the NHS Trusts and their Confederation in developing local workforce development strategies. We can also help to ensure that the local provision is available to meet local needs where this is done in FE colleges and other local private providers.

In addition, we have an interest in working with the local health trusts on Investors in People, the appointment of young people through Modern Apprenticeship, basic skills developments and achievements for all staff up to Level 2.

Closely linked to NHS Trusts is residential healthcare for the elderly. Herefordshire and Worcestershire has an ageing population and has a higher proportion of its residents approaching retirement than most other parts of the UK.

The residential healthcare sector has a number of problems not least the lack of skilled care workers to meet all the needs and the lack of good quality training provision to help reduce the shortfall. Unless this is addressed urgently, there will be serious problems in both counties in relation to the caring for older citizens.

The healthcare sector employs over 19,000 employees - approximately 7% of the workforce in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.As with local government, it is also undergoing significant change, with a need to update existing employees skills and also a large requirement for new entrants with appropriate skills.

Measure of success 3.2

Increase uptake of Investors in People and Modern Apprenticeships in the healthcare sector

We need to set a baseline for Investors in People and Modern Apprenticeship participation within the healthcare sector.

Action:

- To work with the new NHS Trusts and other organisations in the health and care sector to achieve and maintain Investors in People
- Use GP surgeries as a conduit to learning 'the worried well'
- To increase the number of Modern Apprentices in public health bodies
- To work with public health bodies to identify and tackle basic skill training needs
- Support partnership working
- Improvements in generic skills such as leadership, management IT, basic skills, diversity awareness
- Improvements in specific skills such as partnership and procurement
- The LSC will work with the local Health Authorities, NHS Trusts, Primary Care Trusts and the new Healthcare Workforce Development Confederation to identify local training requirements and to ensure that these are met
- To explore ways of linking the sector with learndirect

Working through employer groups

It is considered essential that LSC staff engage with employer led groupings and encourage them to take a leading role in determining the nature, level and quality of provision for their sectors.

Measure of success 3.3

By 2003 to either have helped establish or engaged with sub-regional employer led groups in the following key sectors

- Childcare
- Creative industries
- Polymers
- Food and drink
- Retail and distributive
- Engineering manufacturing
- Land-based industries
- Construction
- Hospitality and tourism
- Local authorities
- Healthcare sector

in such a way that each group has taken ownership of a skills strategy and is showing leadership in promoting that strategy.

At present we are working with groups of employers in construction, agriculture, food and drink, hospitality and tourism and polymers. Some of the recent work has arisen as the result of our response to the Foot and Mouth Disease crisis, but we need to establish a culture in which employers naturally engage in such work.

Action:

- Identify sector leads within LSC
- Work with NTOs and their successor bodies
- Carry out research on priority areas
- Work with Business Link on development of clusters

Group training associations are an obvious way of employers being directly involved in the planning and delivery of the skills requirements for a sector. In Herefordshire and Worcestershire we have three true group training associations covering approximately 230 employers. The encouragement and support of either group training partnerships, or industrial estate partnerships for the joint planning and purchase / delivery of training will be a key part of our work with employer groups.

Measure of success 3.4

By 2005 to have developed two new group training partnerships, and three industrial estate partnerships

Increasing the proportion of the adult workforce qualified to Level 2,3 and 4

Around a third of the workforce do not hold an initial Level 2 qualification, although many employees have skills which are not certified through qualifications. The skills gap with UK competitors is widest at vocational Levels 2 and 3 The UK does not lag behind significantly on general qualifications, but 58% and 41% of the workforce have vocational qualifications at Level 2 in Germany and France respectively compared with only 27% of the British workforce.

Although there has been a dramatic fall in the semi-skilled/unskilled within manufacturing over the last 20 years, this has been partially offset by rising employment in other occupations such as personal services. Projections for 2010 indicate that although less than 35% of jobs are likely to be in lower-skilled occupants, this trend is qualified by the need for formal qualifications at Level 1 and especially Level 2 (e.g. care workers) in what were until recently no skill occupations.

Conversely, eight out of ten new jobs created between now and 2010 are estimated to require at least a Level 3 qualification.

Measure of success 3.5

By 2005 to show an increase in the numbers of employers undertaking training activity as indicated in the annual employer survey from 61% to 70%

The key strands of delivering increased levels of workforce development are:

- To provide employers with impartial and professional advice and guidance on training
- To work with sector groups to develop employer owned sector training strategies
- To engage more employers with providers of education and training Investors in People
- Management and leadership development
- Working with large employers and their supply chains
- Basic Skills in the workplace
- E-Learning / learndirect
- Enterprise
- E-learning

Through Information and Advice

Measure of success 3.6

By 2002 the introduction of a professional and impartial advice service to employers on training and learning for their business

Action:

- Business Link to have developed a Training Brokerage, including appropriately trained staff and a web-based information service with access to existing databases
- Investors in People advisers and business advisers to refer employers directly to appropriate training provision
- To agree a referral protocol between Business Link and providers
- Work to achieve coherence in advice for businesses between LSC, Employment Service, Business Link and NTOs/SSCs

Through colleges of further/higher education and other providers of learning

Measure of success 3.7

By 2005, an increase in the number of employers using colleges and training providers

At present we do not have a clear picture of the level of employer engagement by colleges and training suppliers, either in numeric or financial terms.A short-term aim must therefore be to agree a way of recording this engagement.

Action:

- To work with colleges and training suppliers to develop a baseline of employer engagement
- Develop principles for financial leverage where LSC funding is used
- To develop an agreed shared methodology of account management and joint marketing to business customers

Through achievement of Investors in People targets

Measure of success 3.8

By December 2002 45% of medium sized or larger organisations to be recognised as Investors in People

In this area the 45% target figure of organisations with 50+ employees is 231. By November 2001, 182 organisations had achieved the standard - 79% of target.

Measure of success 3.9

By December 2002, 10,000 small organisations (10-49 people) to be recognised as Investors in People

This translates to 163 organisations for Herefordshire and Worcestershire. By November 2001 there were 121 10-49 employee organisations recognised as Investors in People – 74% of target.

Investors in People is very successful in the area and there are currently over 390 recognised organisations, covering 40,000 people (13.4% of the workforce). Just under one third of these are in the education sector, and one tenth are in the manufacturing sector.

There are currently a further 300+ organisations actively working towards the Investors in People status, covering approximately 65% of the workforce Progress towards achieving the standard is good and there is an excellent chance of reaching the targets set for the end of 2002. There are currently no targets for Investors in People beyond December 2002, but the Government has clearly stated that the standard will remain a key part of its strategy for workforce development.

Action:

- Continue Investors in People delivery via Business Link working collaboratively to explore new avenues for marketing and promotion of the brand
- Develop a more sector focused approach to ensure that Investors in People is embedded in the key sectors for the area. The emerging Sector Skills Councils will be key partners in this
- Development of a post recognition strategy to be cogniscent of ongoing development of the standard

Through Management and Leadership Development

Measure of success 3.10

By the end of 2002 a baseline or proxy measure to establish the amount of management and leadership development that is taking place in order to set targets for 2005

We would be interested to receive suggestions on how this might be carried out. One suggestion is to negotiate the agreement of the main public and private providers that they will contribute to an annual census of local employees undertaking and achieve management qualifications.

By the end of 2002 we will need to establish the proportion of LSC mainstream and other external funding sources that is being deployed at appropriate levels in support of management or leadership development, with an appropriate degree of leverage being obtained.

At present we do not know how what proportion of the FE sector budget is used to support management development, nor with what overall degree of leverage. We have recently secured £800,000 of European funding to support this form of activity, and hope to sustain or increase that amount each year until 2006 through our co-financed ESF money. Based on the employers survey 2001 sample, 26% of organisations in Herefordshire and 23% of organisations in Worcestershire reported that staff had received management training in the past 12 months. Regional disparities were evident.

While 40% of companies in Worcester City and 28% of companies in Bromsgrove had participated in management training, only 11% of companies within the Malvern Hills district and 17% in the Wyre Forest reported that their employees had received such training.

Action:

- UCW and colleges in Worcestershire will establish a new Business Management Centre
- Annual analysis of Individual Learner record data
- Make best use of ESF funds
- Work through employer groupings
- Work with Centre for Excellence in Management and Leadership (CEML)
- Work with The Leadership Trust
- Work with IOD (Director Development Programme)

Through Large Employers and Supply Chains

Measure of success 3.11

By 2005 an increase in the numbers of large employers that encourage smaller firms in their supply chains to adopt workforce development activity.

At present we have no baseline for this.

Action:

- Establish a baseline
- Write and market exemplar case studies
- Work closely with Business Link to build upon supply chain work such as Accelerate
- By end of 2002 to identify three key employers and to start pilot projects on involving their supply chain in development activity

Through Basic Skills in the Workplace

Basic Skills is defined by the Basic Skills Agency as "the ability to read, write and speak English and use mathematics at a level necessary to function and progress at work and in society in general."

Measure of success 3.12

By the end of 2002 a baseline or proxy measure will be established of the amount of basic skills training that is taking place in order to set targets for 2005

As with management development, but even more difficult, we need to have a way of gauging the extent of need and rate of progress in this area.

One suggestion is to set targets for the number of employers whose employees are encouraged to take part in basic skills training in order to gauge what proportion of the working population is covered.

The most recent Employer Survey for Herefordshire and Worcestershire gives some indication of the extent to which the workforce has received basic training in the past 12 months. The table below shows the proportion of organisations that have given staff training in relevant areas.

	Total	Herefordshire	Worcestershire
Basic Literacy Skills	7.1%	12.7%	5.1%
Basic Numeracy Skills	7.2%	11.5%	5.6%

Source:Employers Survey 2001

Action:

- Implement the Basic Skills Agency Training Brokerage Scheme by training at least 15 brokers within Business Link and have started at least 30 employer projects
- To continue to work with the TUC on Learning Representatives and other Union Learning Fund projects

Through E-Learning/Learndirect

We have set IT skills as a local priority because of the well documented and continuing shortages of specific and general IT skills within the workforce. DfES has set a national target of 6,000 IT learning centres by the end of 2002. In this area there are over 120 IT learning centres in this sub-region and we will need to map them geographically to ensure that there is sufficient access for the population and workforce.

Measure of success 3.13

Significant reduction in reported skill shortages and of difficulties in attracting good quality people into IT positions

Action:

- Map current provision and gauge its effectiveness
- Identify extent of employer need, and specific areas of skill shortage
- Increase number of IT learning centres

Through Enterprise Activity

Measure of success 3.14

By working with Business Link and its partners, by the end of 2004 to have enabled over 1,500 businesses to have started up in the growth and high value added sectors

According to the Economic Assessments, the total number of business registrations in 1998 measured 2,400 within Herefordshire and Worcestershire, an increase of 7.6% on the previous year. This compares with an increase of 10.2% in the West Midlands as a whole. However, in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, 86.3% of businesses established in 1994, survived their first 12 months. This compares to the regional average of 84.1% and a national average of 85.3%. Furthermore, after 48 months, 54.6% of these businesses in the two counties were still trading compared with 49.1% in the West Midland and 50.5% in the UK.

While the survival rates of start-ups are above average, more encouragement needs to be forthcoming in order to increase the initial volume of new organisations in the market place in growth and high value added activity. Fair and competitive markets and a sound skills base are therefore required. We will need to create a link between start-up activity and local and regional priorities and also create a stronger focus on growth sectors.

Action:

- Focus on growth and added value businesses and priority areas
- No restrictions in most deprived wards
- Use other funding stream such as Phoenix and New Deal to supplement core activity build

Through Reductions in Skill Shortgaes

The Herefordshire and Worcestershire Employers Survey identified the extent and nature of imbalances between skills supply and demand. Skills shortages can be identified by the number of vacancies and skill-shortage vacancies (i.e. lack of job applicants with the required

skills/qualifications/work experience). A quarter of education, and a third of both public administration and defence and health and social work organisations reported vacancies. The vast majority of the organisations expressed the need to fill one to four vacancies.

A fifth of organisations in Herefordshire and Worcestershire reported a shortage of suitably skilled people and a shortage of people with relevant work experience for the job. One in ten cited a shortage of suitably qualified applicants.

Measure of success 3.15

By the end of 2002 an effective measure of skill shortage levels to be in place

We have agreed with Business Link that business advisors will provide continuous feedback on skills shortages. It will take at least a year to build up a picture for the sub-region based on continuous feedback from employers. The Employment Service is also a valuable source of information.

Measure of success 3.16

By the end of 2010 to have reduced the frequency and severity of reported skill shortages

This is one of our furthest reaching and most ambitious objectives and success can only be achieved if an effective way of measuring skill shortages is devised.

Action:

- LSC, colleges, Employment Service and Business Link will establish a Rapid Response Unit which companies can approach for direct support in tackling skills shortage issues

Through Learndirect

Learndirect will have a key role to play in penetrating the employer market, and in particular SMEs. The following table gives details of course registration at each learndirect centre since launch to November 2001. Some centres opened later than others.

Upton	163	Langland	16	Kidderminster	1583
Lingen	36	St Johns	14	KC3	114
Bromsgrove	171	Evesham	1686	Malvern	2834
Ross-on-Wye	472	Leominster	1527		
Hereford	3541	Redditch	1694		
Droitwich	2809	Worcester	4502		

Action:

- Ensure links between learndirect and Business Link training brokerage
- Develop a project linking Business Link business advisors as mentors to learndirect business clients
- Ensure close working relationship between Business Link and learndirect SME link role

Through E-Skills

The National Skills Taskforce in their first report found clear evidence of a national shortage of IT specialists. Recent surveys suggest that the sector faces some difficulties in recruiting people, based upon the assumption that IT careers do not offer the same long-term opportunities into corporate management that other professions such as personnel and finance do.

The E-Skills NTO, which covers both IT occupations as well as the general application of generic IT user skills, stated in their recent strategic plan that generic IT skills are now becoming as fundamental to employability as reading and writing.

The NTO priorities for generic IT users were:

- Increase the demand for IT user skills by improving understanding of their value to individuals and UK businesses
- Increase the use of IT user qualifications and development pathways that are valued by employers
- Improved accessibility of IT user training based on standards defined by employers
- Increased investment to improve IT user skills in line with the needs of employers and society
- Stronger linkages between educational curricula and employer needs for IT user skills
- Authoritative skills intelligence defining IT user skills needs

The NTO priorities for IT professionals were:

- Increase the number of high quality recruits into IT careers
- Stronger links between educators and employers of IT professionals
- Investment that is targeted at meeting the strategic needs of UK businesses for e-skills
- More relevant and available e-skills development pathways and qualifications
- Authoritative skills intelligence defining e-skill requirements

Through employers working with education

Measure of success 3.17

Each year 10% of serving teachers in schools to have undertaken a placement in the workplace

During the period of the academic year 1999/2000, a total of 501 teachers participated in a period of professional development through industrial placement.

This accounts for approximately 9% of the teaching workforce. We hope to be able to maintain this figure but appreciate that arranging placements becomes more difficult each year because of the disruption it causes to the curriculum.

Action:

- Consider alternative patterns of placement to reduce curriculum disruption
- Encourage more reciprocal placements from business

Measure of success 3.18

By 2005 at least a doubling of the number of companies taking part in enterprise activity in schools from the known figure of 150

For example, during the academic year 1999/2000, 150 businesses took part in Young Enterprise. Although by no means the only way of engaging companies with education, it is a popular and high profile project, and an easily measurable and useful proxy for employer engagement as firms that do take part are also likely to work with school in other ways.

Action:

- Continue to recruit more advisers
- Link YE and other enterprise activities more closely to the curriculum
- Encourage business people to act as mentors in schools

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: To ensure that a greater proportion of young people in learning achieve a qualification aim relevant to their career pathway and the future needs of the economy

In Schools

Measure of success 4.1

By working with the LEA and schools, increase the number of pupils gaining five GCSE passes grades A to C and overall GCSE pass rates.

- in Worcestershire from 49.6% A to C passes to 56% by 2004
- in Worcestershire 92% achieving five A*-G passes by 2004
- in Herefordshire from 53.5% A* to C passes to 62% by 2004
- in Herefordshire 95% achieving five A* to G passes by 2004

GCSE Results

	Percentage achievement of 15 year old pupils entered for GCSE or GNVQ equivalent			Ave GCSE points score per pupil
	5+ A*-C grades	5+ A*-G grades	No Passes	
Herefordshire	53.5	90.7	53.5	53.5
Worcestershire	49.6	89.5	49.6	49.6
Herefordshire and Worcestershire	-	-	-	-
West Midlands	45.8	88.8	45.8	45.8
England Average	50.0	88.9	50.0	50.0

Source:Secondary School and School and College Performance Tables in November 2001 for each LEA and GO region and LEA/Schools Information Service

Latest figures show that Herefordshire has performed better than Worcestershire, reflecting the different socio-economic profile of the two counties. 3.5% more pupils in Herefordshire gained 5+ A*-C grades compared with the average for England. Worcestershire county was just below this average by 0.4%. Both counties were well above the regional average for this category, which was 4.2% lower than the national average. In comparison to figures for the

previous year, the percentage of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C GCSE grades has increased by 1.5% and 0.6% for Herefordshire and Worcestershire respectively putting Herefordshire in the top 10% of the country.

With regards to pupils leaving without any GCSE/GNVQ passes the average for England was 5.5%. Regionally, this figure was slightly lower by 0.1%. In Herefordshire only 5.1% of pupils leave without any passes – this is 0.4% lower than the national average.

One area where both counties scored considerably better than the average for both the region and England was the percentage of pupils achieving a pre-16 Vocational Qualification. In Herefordshire all pupils left achieving a pre-16 Vocational Qualifications (22.2% and 24.3% higher than the average for the region and England, respectively); in Worcestershire, this figure was 90.7% (12.9% and 15% higher than the average for the region and England, respectively).

The regional average points scored per pupil was lower than the average for England by nearly 2%. Although higher than the regional average by 1.5%, Worcestershire was still lower than the national average by 0.3%. The county of Herefordshire,however, was 2.1% above the average for England.

In the past, figures, for both counties, have shown a considerable difference when the figures are broken down by gender group with boys performing worse than girls. However at the time of publication such a breakdown is currently unavailable.

We do not currently have a breakdown for pupils from ethnic minorities or for those with disabilities. We also need to establish a baseline for the amount of pre-16 vocational work that is carried out.

Action:

- Work with LEAs and schools to create a coherent 14-19 phase of education and learning
- Work with LEAs and schools to ensure a wide range of vocational GCSEs delivered in a variety of appropriate settings
- Work with LEAs to support schools in providing an entitlement to Vocational GCSEs and NVQs

Measure of success 4.2

By working with the LEAs and schools with sixth forms to increase the number of pupils gaining A levels and GNVQs (including Vocational GCSEs)

A/AS Level Results

Average Point Score per 16-18 year old entered for 2+ A/AS Level											
Herefordshire				Worcestershire				England			
1997	1998	1999	2000	1997	1998	1999	2000	1997	1998	1999	2000
17.2	17.4	17.4	19.9*	16.9	17.2	17.1	17.4*	17.8	18.2	17.4	17.8

Source:Secondary School and School and College Performance Tables in November 2001 for each LEA and GO region and LEA/Schools Information Service
* Latest figures do not state a minimum number of A/AS levels entered for and include GNVQs

The average points gained by 16 – 18 year olds entered for two or more A/AS level examinations in Herefordshire have been consistently higher than those in Worcestershire during the period 1997 to 2000. In addition, with the exception of Herefordshire-based A level students in 2000, the average points scores for the two counties have been lower than that of England as whole over this period. Despite this, the average points decline since 1998 observed across the country as a whole is not reflected across Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Targets for improvement do not currently exist. We do not currently have a breakdown for pupils from ethnic minorities or for those with disabilities.

Measure of success 4.3

By 2005 to establish a baseline with a view to improvement in the completion level within full-time sixth form provision

We do not currently know the completion levels in school sixth forms so this will be a baseline that we will establish during 2002. In doing so, we will need to take a view on what are acceptable levels of non-completion given that many students change their minds about learning routes and career aims for entirely legitimate reasons. We will need to separately monitor completion rates of young people from minority groups and those with disabilities. Similarly, more work needs to be carried out with colleges to agree improvement rates and ways of achieving them.

Action:

- Consider organisational changes within LSC in order to accommodate sixth form responsibilities
- Secure smooth transfer to new funding arrangements for sixth forms
- Establish body of knowledge of sixth form retention, achievement and destinations
- Continue to develop effective relationships with schools and LEAs
- Implement LSC staff development programme on sixth form issues
- Encourage the take up of Curriculum 2000 qualifications
- Support access and use of greater bandwidth and new technologies for learning
- Work with schools, colleges, LEAs and Connexions to promote aspiration of attainment among learners and learning providers of minority groups such as ethnic minority students and students with disabilities
- Ensure LSC effective involvement in Schools Organisation Committees and Capital Funding applications
- Address basic skills needs where appropriate of post-16 school students
- Promote the wider role of LSC to schools

In Further Education Colleges

Similarly, more work needs to be carried out with colleges to agree improvement rates and ways of achieving them.

Measure of success 4.4

By 2005 to establish a baseline with a view to improvement in the completion level within full-time further education provision

Action:

- Agree acceptable levels of non-completion
- Monitor completion rates of young people from minority groups and those with disabilities

In Work Based Learning

Measure of success 4.5

By 2005 to establish a baseline with a view to improvement in the completion level within work based learning provision

As with FE colleges and sixth forms, we need to work with our work based learning providers to establish baselines and improvement targets for Modern Apprenticeship completion rates

Action:

- Widen range of available Modern Apprenticeships frameworks
- Implement LSC's action plan arising from Cassels' report on Modern Apprenticeships
- Address basic skills needs where appropriate of young people in work based learning

Measure of success 4.6

By 2004, more than 25% of young people to have entered a Modern Apprenticeship by the time they are 22 years old

We do not currently have a baseline for this.

Measure of success 4.7

By 2005, improvements in achievement rates for

- the number of FMA completions per 100 leavers
- the number of AMA completions per 100 leavers

Measure of success 4.8

By 2005 improvements in levels of learner satisfaction

We have no current baseline although up to two years ago when local collection systems were in place the percentage of WBL leavers who were satisfied or very satisfied with their experience was about 80% at each quarterly collection.

Measure of success 4.9

By 2005 improvements in parity measures for

- ethnic minority participants gaining a qualification
- young people with disabilities gaining a qualification

It is likely that the LSC will introduce parity measures whereby the performance of a group against the expressed as less than or greater than 'one'.

Steps taken to meet the LSC's responsibilities in respect of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

We shall continue to monitor the progress of learners from Herefordshire and Worcestershire, placed in specialist provision prior to the academic year 2001-02.

We are required to work within our legal duties to ensure that learners are appropriately placed, and clear and realistic targets are set to ensure that these learners achieve at appropriate levels to their needs and abilities.

Measure of success 4.10

Improve progression of students with learning difficulties

The destination data of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities from Herefordshire and Worcestershire is being monitored for the first time to ensure that the LSC's objective of raising achievement is being addressed, and any gaps or shortfalls in achievement are identified.

Once we have a baseline, we can set targets for improvement.

Action:

- Continue to monitor local provision to identify gaps in provision

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5: To ensure that a greater proportion of adults in learning achieve a qualification relevant to their current or future employment and the future needs of the economy

According to the results of the most recent Household Survey, 38% of the population of Herefordshire and Worcestershire are 'non-learners' – meaning that they have not undertaken any form of taught or non-taught learning in the last three years; 24% of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire population have no NVQ equivalent qualifications at all.

Qualification Levels for Adults

	Adults with a Level 3 qualification	Adults with a Level 4 qualification
Herefordshire %	40	27
Worcestershire %	42	30
Herefordshire and Worcestershire %	42	29
West Midlands %	39	26
England %	46	27

Source:2000 Household Survey

According to the same survey, of those that had been involved in taught learning in the last 12 months, most said that it was related to their current or a previous job. Although the Herefordshire and Worcestershire average for this response was nearly 2.5% higher than the regional average, Herefordshire county was much lower consequently showing that, comparatively, a greater proportion of these respondents became involved in taught learning for their own personal interest and development. Fewer respondents in Herefordshire and Worcestershire related their taught learning towards a future job or career aspiration than the regional average. It appeared, through further analysis of the respondents' characteristics in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, that a considerably higher proportion of males (6%) were involved in current or previous job related taught learning than the area average; and a considerably higher proportion of females (7%) were involved in taught learning that was not related to any previous, current job or future employment aspiration. A much lower proportion of the 55+ age group were involved in taught learning that was related to any previous, current, previous job or future employment aspiration than the local and regional averages.

Reasons for Learning

	Related to your current / a previous job	Related to a job you might want to do in the future	For your own personal interest and development	Don't know
Worcestershire	83.5	9.5	15.2	0.6
Herefordshire	76.8	13.1	21.2	0.0
Herefordshire and Worcestershire	82.1	10.2	16.5	0.4
West Midlands	79.7	13.4	18.2	0.4

Source:2000 Household Survey

This section addresses the adult targets more than the actions required to achieve them as they has already been addressed comprehensively under Strategic Objective 2 and particularly in Strategic Objective 3 which concerns itself with employers and the adult workforce. Therefore it is sufficient here to list a few areas of work that are key to enabling adults to gain accredited qualifications:

- Greater use of APL – Accreditation of Prior Learning
- Explore ways of making more use of bespoke collections of units of qualifications
- Promotion of learndirect to SMEs
- Work with the Employment Service to encourage continued accredited learning after New Deal
- Act as a broker between large employers and colleges, bringing ESF funding to bear when appropriate
- Develop the concept of marketing an FE service to employers with greater collaboration between LSC and college marketing approaches and budgets

Measure of success 5.1

By 2004, 68% percentage of adults will be qualified at Level 2

The Level 2 target is a completely new target as the former National Learning Targets only considered Levels 3 and 4. Therefore the LSC will not be setting a target until next year. For England performance was 47% in year 2000. However, according to the most recent Household Survey 62% of adults in Herefordshire and Worcestershire are already at this level, while the Employer Survey tells us that 63% of employed adults are. This should enable us to set a realistic local target next year. We will probably need to set a stretching target as, although our performance is high, the West Midlands is lowest of all nine English regions at this level.

Measure of success 5.2

By 2004, 52% of adults will be qualified at Level 3

Again, the West Midlands region is lowest of the nine English regions at this level. The recent Household Survey tells us that 39% of adults in this sub-region are already at this level, while the Employer Survey tells us that 42% are.Again, this should enable us to set a realistic local target, but to reach 52% will provide a challenge. It is at this level that the greatest deterioration in performance has taken place. In the last ten years although the proportion of the population at qualification Level 1 has doubled and for Level 2 has risen from 40% to 59%, those at qualification Level 3 has declined form 40% to 30%.

Centres of Vocational Excellence in FE colleges will focus on Level 3 achievement and are a key element of our strategy to raise levels in this area as they will need to carry out upskilling or reskilling of adults as well as work with young people.

Measure of success 5.3

By 2004 or beyond 30% of adults will be qualified at Level 4

This is not a national target for the LSC, but it is of extreme importance to the economy, therefore Advantage West Midlands and the six West Midlands LSCs have agreed to set a regional baseline and target. We know from the 2000 Household Survey

that 27% of adults are at Level 4 or above, while the employer survey told us that 29% of employed adults were at this level. This is high compared with may other parts of the country, nevertheless there are pockets of deprivation in both counties where adult participation and achievement at Level 4 is extremely low, and concentration on these areas is required.

Action:

- Set local targets for Levels 3 and 4 and chart incremental progression
- Work with AWM on methodology for regional Level 4 baseline and targets
- Engage employed and unemployed adults with COVEs
- Development of employed workforce
- Targeted collaborative marketing and promotion to encourage greater participation levels in higher education, particularly in areas of deprivation
- Collaborative marketing and promotion to encourage greater participation from 55+ age group and greater aspiration of achievement in under represented groups of the community e.g. ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, older learners, single parents and ex-offenders
- Greater use made of learndirect

Steps taken to meet the LSC's responsibilities in respect of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

We will continue to work with the appropriate professional bodies to ensure that adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are appropriately placed.An area of policy that requires clarification is the entitlement of young adults to continuing education and how this works alongside other provision such as that provided by Social Services within local authorities. We also need to consider what constitutes success and what improvement targets are required.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6: To improve the quality and effectiveness of learning delivery

By working with local FE, WBL and ACL Providers and with LEAs and Schools and effective use of standards funds

Local Quality Improvement Strategy

The categories awarded to providers following the October provider review were as follows:

Category	Providers	%
Excellent	0	0
Good	5	14%
Satisfactory	13	35%
Some Concerns	12	32%
Serious Concerns	7	19%
Total	37	

An analysis of the individual criteria showed that the four priority areas for development activity were:

- Continuous improvement
- Leadership and management
- Quality of education and training
- Equality and diversity

In general terms, the self-assessment reports and development plans received this year from many providers fall short of meeting the current LSC requirements.

A series of workshops and events will be planned over the next 12 months to address various related aspects of these findings in conjunction with the inspectorates, LSDA and other consultants and specialist organisations. These are described in more detail later in Part C of this plan.

Measure of success 6.1

By 2005 to improve the grades at provider reviews of WBL and FE provision with the aim of assisting more providers into the 'excellent'and 'good' categories and ensuring that we have none in the 'serious concerns' group

Work is continuing on refinement of the provider review process. Therefore, a baseline to show the proportions in each category will not be available until some time during 2002.

Action:

The improvements will be generated through:

- Targeted use of the Standards Funds
- Local networking, sharing of good practice and effective benchmarking
- Jointly agreed training and development programmes
- Effective support to providers on self-assessment/development planning, evaluation and review activities, pre and post ALI/OFSTED inspection planning
- Collaboration on area inspections
- Staff development in ACL to ensure tutors appropriately trained to work in community settings. Consider C&G 730 as a minimum qualification

Measure of success 6.2

By 2005 no 'non-mainstream' provider of Adult and Community Learning or of externally funded provision to be in the 'serious concerns category' and that no greater than 40% are in the 'satisfactory' or 'some concerns categories'

We have no baseline figures for this success measure yet for two reasons.

The local education authorities as providers of adult and continuing education do not yet fall under the external inspection regimes nor the LSC's provider review system.

We are only just beginning to consider new providers for externally funded learning provision e.g. ESF Objective 3 money. We are required to seek out and introduce new and imaginative providers, but we are very conscious that many of them will not be well versed in the formal system of inspection and review, so will require much support.

E-Learning

By the end of 2002 to have agreed with partners a strategy for e-learning

The use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and e-learning will be key to supporting the aims and objectives of the LSC in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Certainly e-learning will be a part of any knowledge-based economy in the future, and the LSC wishes to take a leading strategic role in applying this technology effectively.

Action:

- Appoint senior manager with responsibility for e-learning
- Map current e-learning activities in the sub-region
- Identify best practice
- Define scope of e-learning
- Promote awareness of e-learning and its potential within the LSC and its partners
- Explore applications for students with learning difficulties and disabilities
- Investigate developments further afield, including Centres of Excellence
- Encourage exchange of good practice between practitioners from different sectors
- Encourage collaboration in order to reduce costs of access, training, hardware, telecommunications etc
- Engage with AWM's broadband and other technology-based strategies (e.g. A38 technology corridor)
- Contribute towards the LSC's national e-learning strategy

A technology forecast I provided in Part C of this plan to support this list of actions.

Through Specialist Provision

Measure of success 6.4

By 2005 to work with schools and LEAs to achieve a target of at least 22 specialist high schools across both counties

In Worcestershire there are currently:

- Four specialist Technology Colleges and at least two schools working for it
- Two specialist Sports Colleges and two schools working for it
- One specialist Language College and at least one school working for it
- No specialist Business Studies and Enterprise Colleges but at least one school working for it
- No specialist Engineering Colleges but at least two schools working for it
- No specialist Arts Colleges but at least two schools known to be working for it
- No specialist Maths and Computing Colleges and no school known to be working for it

To meet the Government's 50% target 15 out of 29 high schools would need specialist status which will require another seven approvals.

In Herefordshire there are currently:

- One specialist Technology College and at least one school working for it
- No specialist Sports Colleges and two schools working for it

- No specialist Language Colleges and at least one school working for it
- No specialist Business Studies and Enterprise Colleges and no schools working for it
- No specialist Engineering Colleges but and no schools working for it
- One specialist Arts College and at least one school known to be working for it
- No specialist Maths and Computing Colleges and no school known to be working for it

To meet the Government's 50% target seven out of 14 high schools would need specialist status which will require another five approvals. The LSC wishes to support fresh applications which have a strategic rationale. Links will also be sought with Centres of Vocational Excellence in FE colleges and other providers.

Measure of success 6.5

By 2004 to ensure that at least three of the FE colleges have been designated as a Centre of Vocational Excellence (COVE), and also clear linkages with local and regional priorities

Colleges' intentions currently include the following specialisms:

- Automotive parts, distribution and sales
- Childcare
- Construction
- Creative arts
- The Food and Drink sector
- Hospitality
- Land-based industries, including horticulture and sustainable agriculture
- LPG gas
- Rural crafts
- Business studies
- Sport

Some of these may prove suitable for development to COVE status and there are other areas that colleges may yet wish to develop.

Action:

- Ensure coherence between specialisms across the West Midlands and with neighbouring areas
- Clear linkages with local and regional priorities
- Coherence where possible with specialist school initiative
- Develop the concept of a 'Centres of Expertise' throughout the sub-region

Through Investors in People in Schools and Colleges

All nine further education and sixth form colleges are recognised as Investors in People.

Measure of success 6.6

By 2004:

- An increase from 16 of the 29 high schools in Worcestershire recognised as Investors in People
- An increase from 27 of the 215 nursery, primary and middle schools in Worcestershire to be recognised as Investors in People

- An increase from four of the 14 high schools in Herefordshire to be recognised as Investors in People
- An increase from nine of the 85 primary schools in Herefordshire to be recognised as Investors in People

Source:Business Link Herefordshire and Worcestershire

Action:

- In consultation with LEAs and schools set realistic plans for recognitions and achievements, to include special schools
- LEAs and schools to work with Business Link to gain recognitions
- Work with FE sector colleges to maintain standard

Steps taken to meet the LSC's responsibilities in respect of learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

We will continue to contribute to the national review of specialist colleges to ensure quality of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Action:

- Maintain strong links with the national office to ensure quality issues surrounding provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are addressed
- Enhance knowledge of specialist providers in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. The LSC Herefordshire and Worcestershire is expected to be responsible for initiating and implementing monitoring visits to specialist providers in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, including Royal National College for the Blind, Hereford, and RNIB New College, Worcester. Monitoring visits will include strategic development planning, self-assessment, progress against the college's action plan, recent and planned growth and management changes
- Consider where local provision is sufficient – mapping exercise will be required

Capital Projects

It is our intention to develop an asset register for the sub-region and then develop a capital project strategy to support our overall strategy. Our involvement to date has centred around colleges in the further education sector as follows:

New College Developments	Redditch and Bromsgrove
Kidderminster College	Relocation to town centre
Herefordshire College of Art & Design	Building lease and refurbishment
Herefordshire Sixth Form College	Building development
Pershore Group of Colleges	Sale of Hindlip site
Worcester College of Technology	Deansway Police Station site acquisition

In the future we will find ourselves involved with capital plans, applications and approvals for other sectors including the strengthening of provision for Adult and Community Learning, school sixth form developments and perhaps linkages to our intended review of post-16 special needs provision.

Centres of Vocational Excellence may also bring with them further capital developments.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 7: To ensure that the local LSC has the capacity to deliver all its key targets efficiently

The infrastructure within the local LSC needs to be structured in a way to ensure it is cost efficient and effective. To enable the local LSC to achieve this, we aim to do the following:

Through Internal Controls

Measure of success 7.1

No serious weaknesses to have been identified by national LSC internal auditors

Procedures have been put in place which facilitate the effective, efficient and economic achievement of the organisation's objectives. Most have been managed in a planned and cohesive manner and we can provide reasonable assurance over the effectiveness of our systems of internal control. We have identified foreseeable risks and appropriate controls commensurate with the anticipated impact of these risks and the likelihood of their occurrence. The risk register has been approved by the Audit Committee to the Council. Risks will be monitored by senior managers each month, by the Audit Committee every quarter and by the full Council twice each year.

We have given staff appropriate resource, support and guidance necessary to enable them to discharge their duties appropriately and we have made clear to staff that internal controls must be taken seriously. All staff will understand their own role in the internal control system as well as how individual activities relate to the work of others. Staff will have the means of effectively communicating significant information upwards as well as communicating to external partners such as training providers, suppliers and other Government bodies.

Through Human Resources

Measure of success 7.2

By November 2002 to have achieved the Investors in People Standard

Measure of success 7.3

By March 2002 to have achieved the double tick for disability awareness

Action:

- Fill all outstanding vacancies by June 2002
- All staff encouraged to participate in learning events in the Learning Zone
- A management development programme is developed for all levels of staff
- Tailor-made induction programme is development and implemented of all posts
- LSC open day for providers and employers run at intervals of between six to twelve months
- To ensure all staff are trained and motivated and committed to a learning culture
- Review the organisational structure every six months to ensure customer requirements are being met
- To reduce staff turnover from an average of 14% to an average of 10% by better staff retention policies
- To ensure staff are motivated by a culture of performance management

- Successful planning of staff development and have a progression of learning for all staff who wish to embark on and complete an MBA or MA which is related and relevant to their work
- Team working is totally integrated across each directorate and is embedded within the organisation as a whole
- To ensure all staff are familiar with the Equal Opportunities strategy and action plan and are working to embed Equal Opportunities into the culture of the organisation and all policies and practices

Through Organisational Effectiveness

Measure of success 7.4

By March 2003 to have carried out our first measurable assessment against EFQM (Business Excellence) principles

Action:

- Preparation for first internal EFQM assessment – see section in Part C on internal controls

Through Proper Governance

Measure of success 7.5

By 2005, local systems of governance will have demonstrated their effectiveness

Action:

- Audit committee proves effective
- Carry out regular internal audit
- Management of Risk – regular reviews of risk strategy by audit committee
- Reporting to local Council
- Statements on Internal Financial Control (SIFC)

Through Buildings and Facilities

Measure of success 7.6

By the end of 2002 to be settled in premises which are entirely fit for the purpose of the local LSC

The LSC will need to move to alternative premises in Worcester City during 2002 because of the Chamber of Commerce's decision to sell Chamber Court. Possible alternative locations are being sought.

Action:

- Provide accommodation for up to 100 staff within the boundary of Worcester City, in line with national LSC standards
- Ensure good quality facilities and working environment for staff in line with national standards (see also IT and telephony below)

- Develop effective plans and contingencies in the event of loss of access to the building due natural or man-made disaster
- Local Council review of effectiveness

Through IT and Telephony Infrastructure

Measure of success 7.7

By the end of 2002 all staff will be provided with computing and telephony facilities in line with national LSC policy

Action:

- All staff will have access to a networked personal computer which includes
  - Microsoft Office software
  - Internet and e-mail access
  - Access to local and national internet and intranet sites
  - A centrally managed help desk, with local IT support
  - Access to corporate information systems (see below)
- All staff will have access to telephony services in line with national LSC policy
- Provision of other office equipment such as fax machines, photocopiers, printers, etc. sufficient to meet local needs

Through Effective Communications

Measure of success 7.8

By the end of 2002 there will be robust and reliable systems for internal communications within the local LSC, and between national and local offices

Action:

- Ensure regular issues of staff bulletins and information circulars
- Develop and maintain effective and topical e-communications throughout organisation
- Collate and disseminate essential information from and to appropriate staff in an organised and timely manner
- Work with HR to develop forums for sharing and disseminating information between teams
- Work with regional and national LSC communications groups to ensure clarity of purpose in communications throughout the organisation

Through Information Systems

Measure of success 7.9

By the end of 2002 there will be access to reliable corporate information systems in line with national LSC policy

Action:

- Creation of core 'Individual Learning Record' database for maintaining data about learners in Herefordshire and Worcestershire

- Implementation of CODA finance system, which devolves management of budgets, contracts and raising requisitions to local level
- Development of MIS and ad hoc reporting systems (such as 'Discoverer')

To ensure the achievement of this objective, it is important that staff with specialist knowledge contribute to national working parties which are in the process of setting up these systems.

Measure of success 7.10

By 2004 recent and accurate information on participation, achievement and destinations of all learners to be accessible on-line

This is quite feasible for WBL provision because providers already provide monthly data on these lines.Although it is not currently available for 'non-mainstream' provision such as Adult and Community Education and ESF funded provision, achieving this objective may not be too difficult because there are few/no established systems to change. The major difficulty lies within the FE sector where colleges are already over-burdened with bureaucracy, and to demand live (or close to live) information is asking a great deal unless there are either clear advantages to the colleges, or else there is a cost effective way of doing so. Additional bureaucracy is also an issue for school sixth forms as there is a Secretary of State's assurance that it will not be increased.

Through Coherence Between Funding Streams

Measure of success 7.11

By the end of 2002 to have gained agreement with other distributors of public money that support training that reciprocal consultation will take place on the deployment of such funds

The learning and skills market is crowded and confusing – particularly to employers. Funding for business support is available through eight Government departments via a multiplicity of funding streams.

It is the role of Business Links to act as 'signposters' for business to appropriate support and it is for this reason that we shall work through Business Link on workforce development and on the provision of information for employers rather than create our own front-line presence. This is described more fully under Objective 3 which addresses employer engagement.

It is also important that we create coherence between publicly funded bodies that deliver funds for training separate to the LSC's funding streams. These organisations include:

- DfES
- Government Office for the West Midlands
- Advantage West Midlands
- Employment Service (to become Department of Work and Pensions)
- DEFRA
- Countryside Agency
- Learning Partnerships
- Ufi/learndirect
- NIACE
- HEFC
- Heart of England Tourist Board

Action:

- Work with each agency in turn to gain agreement or agree memoranda of understanding
- Use existing forums wherever possible to co-ordinate funding decisions e.g. county partnerships, RRZ management board, LSC strategic funding panel
- Present and promote understanding of the local infrastructure - see diagram on following page – publish a 'Who does What' leaflet

Through External Funding Sources

Measure of success 7.12

By the end of 2004 to have maximised Co-financed Objective 3 European Funding

LSC Herefordshire and Worcestershire has been approved as a Co-financing Body for European Objective 3 funds. The sum of £11,265,868 will be available between January 2002 – December 2004 and then further sums to 2006.

The Co-financing plan was submitted following consultation with providers and partners at three local events. It reflects the learning needs of people and organisations in Herefordshire and Worcestershire and draws heavily on local labour market information and the economic assessments produced by Advantage West Midlands.

From 2002 onwards providers will be invited to submit proposals against a published strategic plan, which will be widely available in order to reach new organisations not currently engaged in the development of the plans. This will ensure that proposals are better linked to our strategies.

Regular surgeries will be arranged to discuss project ideas/proposals and fit them with ESF Priorities and Measures. At a later stage, capacity building events will be set up to encourage organisations to successfully access a range of external funding sources, including Co-financed ESF money.

Co-financed funds will start to flow in January 2002. Traditionally this sub-region has failed to maximise external funding sources. It is important that we do better this time.

Action:

- Prepare a priorities portfolio to assist future bidding
- Funds allocated in accordance with local and regional priorities
- Contracts well managed to ensure maximum draw down and achievement of outcomes
- Annual evaluation and review of spending.
- More specific targeting money towards strategic priorities - together with LIF funding

Measure of success 7.13

By the end of 2002 to be fully engaged with Objective 2 and Rural Regeneration Zone processes

During our development year we have been obliged to concentrate our resources on the deadlines for achieving co-financing status. However, there are other major sources of

money that need to be accessed in support of learning. Our external funding team will identify them, and work with partners and providers to exploit them for the benefit of the area.

Action:

- Ensure LSC presence on management structures
- Create convergence of application processes to ease burden on applicants
- Cross-refer proposals between funding streams to maximize spend and benefit
- Gradually and sensitively apply quality criteria to non-mainstream providers

Through Developing a Knowledge Base

Measure of success 7.14

By the end of 2002 a comprehensive information base on the learning and skills market will exist

All our strategies and actions must be driven by accurate and up-to-date information. At present this body of knowledge is far from complete with particular gaps in local sectoral information, basic skills activity and Adult and Community Learning.

Action:

- Make greater use of employer sourced information
- Ensure a reliable baseline for every measure of success
- Engage with Regional Observatory
- Collaborate with West Midlands LSCs and AWM on Regional Household Survey
- Commission local Employer Survey
- Sign up 100+ top companies in the sub-region to act as our local 'barometer' on skills shortages
- Work with Business Link to capture continuing intelligence on skill needs from client companies
- Share knowledge with partners and providers
- Sectoral leads create local knowledge networks in order to keep in touch with skills need
- Add to local research library

Measure of success 7.15

By the end of 2002, demonstrate coherence of approach between plans at local, regional, and national level

Action:

- Build the capacity of research team
- Work collaboratively with partners who hold information
- Influence regional and national developments such as the Regional Observatory and LSC's corporate information systems
- Create coherence between local LSC strategic plan and providers' strategic plans

Part C: Supporting Information

Baselines that need to be established during 2002

Young People

- Work on the discrepancy between local and national estimates of 16-18 participation in learning
- The number and percentage of full-time 16-18 students undertaking work experience or work shadowing
- The amount of accredited pre-16 vocational work that is carried out
- The number of school students experience further education in years 10 or 11
- The number and percentage of young people from ethnic minorities who progress to higher education, and their retention rate after one year
- The number of young people with physical disabilities who progress to higher education expressed as a share of the population of young people with physical disabilities
- The destination rates of young people from the identified wards by comparison with elsewhere
- GCSE achievement rates of young people from ethnic minorities
- GCSE achievement rates of young people with physical and learning difficulties
- Post-16 achievement rates of young people from ethnic minorities
- Post-16 achievement rates of young people with physical and learning difficulties
- GCSE and post-16 achievement rates of young people from deprived wards
- Establish baselines with a view to improvement in the completion levels within full-time sixth form and further education provision
- Establish a baseline with a view to improvement in the completion levels within work based learning provision
- Retention rates of school sixth form students
- Percentage of young people up to the age of 22 who have entered an Modern Apprenticeship
- Improvements in achievement rates for the number of FMA and AMA completions per 100 leavers
- Uptake of Modern Apprenticeships in the healthcare sector
- Uptake of Modern Apprenticeships in local authorities
- Improvements in levels of learner satisfaction
- Establish baselines and improvement targets in parity measures for
  - ethnic minority participants gaining a qualification
  - young people with disabilities gaining a qualification
- Establish baselines and then improvement targets for achievement and progression by young people with learning difficulties and disabilities.A mapping exercise of local provision will be required to determine whether it meets needs

Adults

- Establish awareness rates of a adult guidance service
- Establish the extent of Open University activity taking place
- Participation rates of adults in Adult and Community Learning plus baselines on quality
- Learning participation rates of adults in from the most deprived wards
- Establish local baselines and set targets for an increase in the numbers of trained childcare workers
- Uptake of Investors in People in local authorities
- Uptake of Investors in People in the healthcare sector
- Demographic profiles of key sectors

Providers

- Once the provider review process is finalised, set a baseline that shows the numbers of FE and WBL providers in each category, and set a target for assisting more into the 'excellent' and 'good' categories
- Map the extent and quality of childcare training provision
- Geographically map Adult and Community Learning and ICT provision

Priority and key sectors

- Extent of skill shortages
- More locally defined skill needs
- Demographic profiles
- Rates of growth or decline in workforce
- Maps of supply and quality of learning provision mapped against employer demand

All Employers

- Management and leadership activity
- Director development
- Employer influence through supply chain
- Basic skills activity in the workplace

Technology Forecast

2002

Access devices

- PC remaining the primary internet access device.PDAs and smart phones used for mobile and off-line working
- PC domestic use remaining steady around 40%
- slow growth in mobile on-line services led by banking industry, but content for GPRS slow to develop
- iDTV coverage expected to reach 40%, giving users access to e-mail and simplified web content
- increased number and variety of phone-based computing devices aimed at the domestic/ entertainment market e.g. MP3 player/phones
- rollout of subscription-based e-book devices planned for quarter 2
- digital radio prices expected to fall steadily; take-up slow

Communications

- extension of broadband access slow
- ADSL likely to remain disappointing
- emergence of satellite and wireless delivered web services

e-business

- e-business developing as a cost reduction tool, B2B mainly order and purchase transactions, B2C window shopping
- e-learning is seen as a potential 'killer application' for mobile, iDTV and network service providers
- e-learning seen as a cost cutter for corporates
- steady expansion of government services available on the web

2003

Access devices

- multi-purpose mobile phone devices, similar to the Japanese I-mode (a mobile phone system with colour screen, web access, e-mail and games) coming onto the market
- use of Java enabled devices for low cost internet access
- digital radio affordable, but an unknown

Communications

- ADSL still limited and wireless/satellite widely available
- iDTV coverage at 50%+ of households, but may be nearer 70%. Programmes national, but web services delivered on a local radio model
- GPRS widely available, 3G just emerging

e-business

- 3G phone services in early adoption
- GPRS services widely available, but limited to simple web content and interactive forms
- extension of web and e-mail services designed for iDTV access around banking, shopping, and selling. Mainly a gateway role because of content design and re-purposing unknowns

2005

Access devices

- emphasis on integrating multiple platforms and delivery channels to provide continuity of information
- in work - use of the PC as the hub for mobile working
- home - entertainment hub for multiple devices
- in-car computing including information hub for multiple devices.Digital radio could be key technology for content and delivery
- mature speech and language recognition

Communications

- 3G services available to main conurbations
- most homes have access to high speed communications, but not full broadband
- wireless networks at work and home

e-business

- corporate integrated brand strategies across all platforms
- Government services predicted to be 100% online
- broadcasting moving to integrated strategy platforms

Acronyms

ADSL	asymmetric digital subscriber line (low cost high bandwidth over copper cable)
B2B	business to business
B2C	business to consumer
GPRS	general packet radio stream (intermediate mobile phone technology)
3G	3rd generation (mobile phone technology)
iDTV	interactive digital TV
MP3	mpeg-1 layer 3 (moving picture export group – method of storing or transmitting audio and visual data)
PDA	portable digital assistant
Java	programming language popular on the Internet
XML	extensible mark-up language

Alignment with Partners' Strategies and other Internal Supporting Strategies

It is essential that our plan fits well alongside other national, regional and local strategies. This section shows how we have already identified such synergies.

National

The LSC's Corporate Plan

There is a direct correlation between our seven local strategic objectives and the LSC's five key objectives. Our local 2004 targets are designed to contribute to the national targets for 2004.

DfES Skills Strategy for 2006

- DfES Objective 1 to give children an excellent start in education so that they have a better foundation for future learning
- DfES Objective 2 to enable all young people to develop and equip themselves with the skills, knowledge and personal qualities needed for work and life
- DfES Objective 3 to encourage and enable adults to learn, improve their skills and enrich their lives
- **Skills for Life** - The National Strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills. DfEE 2001
- **Schools: Achieving Success** - DfES White Paper
- **In Demand: Adult Skills for the 21st Century.** A report on Workforce Development by The Performance and Innovation Unit. 2001
- The UK Productivity Challenge. CBI/TUC Submission to the Productivity Initiative 2001

Regional

West Midlands Draft Regional Planning Guidance November 2001

The LSC will have a specific role to play under the following policy areas

Within Policy SS2 Rural Renaissance

- Policy RR1 The Rural Regeneration Zone
- Policy RR2 Economic Development
- Policy RR3 Agriculture and Farm Diversification
- Policy RR4 Tourism in Rural Areas
- Policy PA2 Cluster Development
- Policy PA4 High Technology Corridors
- Policy PA13 on Education, Training and Research
- Policy T5 Transport in Rural Areas

The Rural Regeneration Prospectus

Pillar 1 Economic Regeneration

Pillar 3 Learning and Skills

Agenda for Action Spring 2001 Advantage West Midlands

Pillar 2: Promoting a Learning and Skilful Region

- Increase % economically active adults with NVQ4 or equivalent
- Reduce % of adults with basic skills deficiency
- Reduce % of employers reporting hard-to-fill vacancies

Pillar 4 Regenerating Communities

- Assist an increase in business formation rates in (rural) Regeneration Zones
- Contribute towards reduction in unemployment rates in (rural) Regeneration Zones

Connecting People to Opportunity – the information and communication technology strategy and action plan of the West Midlands – first phase (AWM 2001)

Birmingham – Worcester Technology Corridor

In addition to higher level education and training requirements to support this development, there will also be the need to provide appropriate Level 2 and 3 skills.

The Regional Employment Strategy Advantage West Midlands 2001

The West Midlands Regional Development plan for European Objective 3 Funding: Our Co-financing plan for Objective 3 funding has been written in direct support of the regional plan and has gained approval in that respect by Government Office for the West Midlands.

Local

The Herefordshire Partnership Plan

Learning, Education and Training Ambition Group – Action Plan 2001-2002 (Herefordshire ETAG)

The Herefordshire Strategic Regeneration Package

Herefordshire Farming Study The Centre for Rural Research, University College Worcester. July 2001

Herefordshire in Touch

Strategic Lifelong Learning Development Plan 1999 - 2002: Herefordshire – towards a learning county (Herefordshire Learning Partnership)

Herefordshire Education Action Zone Strategy

Worcestershire County Council's 4-Year Strategic Plan

Strategies for:

- Education and Lifelong Learning
- Economic Development and Regeneration
- Social Inclusion
- Social Service with special reference to care leavers

Education Development Plan (Worcestershire Local Education Authority)

Education Development Plan (Herefordshire Local Education Authority)

Adult Learning Plan 2001/2 (Worcestershire Local Education Authority)

Worcestershire Learning Plan 2001/2 (Worcestershire Learning Partnership)

A Foundation Community Strategy for Worcestershire

- Section 6 Economic Development
- Section 9 Lifelong Learning
- Section 10 Social Inclusion

Local Strategic Partnerships as they develop: The LSC is already heavily involved in over arching community plans for Herefordshire and Worcestershire and will increasingly engage with other local community strategies. During 2001 we have begun work with Malvern Hills, Worcester Alliance and the Redditch Partnership. Work with other district partnerships will follow.

2002/3 Business Link Delivery Plan – Chamber of Commerce Herefordshire and Worcestershire

Connexions Strategic and Business Plans

Links to Public Service Agreements

Our own separate Equal Opportunities Strategy and Action Plan details the four national EO objectives as 29 action areas to be addressed. These points cross reference with PSA objectives.

Links to College Strategic Plans

The publication of this plan will create the climate for greater alignment of college and LSC strategies.

Other Internal Support Strategies

Summary equality and diversity strategy

The Learning and Skills Council Herefordshire and Worcestershire intends without compromise to promote the philosophy and culture of equality of opportunity both internally and externally; we will ensure full commitment to activities and practices that are just, fair and free from discrimination. We will recognise the worth of every individual and value the richness of a diverse and pluralistic society.

By fully embracing the national imperatives as well as the legislative framework, the Learning and Skills Council Herefordshire and Worcestershire will ensure that its strategy and ethos positively shape and influence the lives of individual people and meet local needs.

Our strategy will pay particular attention to groups within the sub-region who are disadvantaged, for example through; age, disability, ethnic or national origin, gender, sexual orientation, social or religious background, learning difference, difficulty or factors arising from ruralism and/or community isolation and poverty. We will take heed of issues facing the community in which we operate and will consult with the voices of our community at all stages.

We seek to recognise and remove all the barriers that prevent individuals from accessing education, training and employment and are committed to applying these principles to our own organisation. We will keep this aim central to our Equality and Diversity Strategy and use it to remain focused when agreeing both objectives and targets.

We will try to ensure that policy and practice are affirmative and coherent and meet best practice.

We recognise that knowledge, enthusiasm and commitment of local organisations and groups will be key to the success and effectiveness of the strategy.

Our expectations are that all those engaged with the Learning and Skills Council Herefordshire and Worcestershire will fully support these aims and principles in their own conduct and organisational policies.

Priorities of the strategy:

- To develop the Learning and Skills Council Herefordshire and Worcestershire as an exemplar organisation
- To pursue inclusion and widen participation
- To promote the concept of dignity at work and valuing people
- To recognise and welcome diversity
- To quantify and celebrate success

Basic Skills Strategy

The plan sets out the strategy to raise the levels of literacy and numeracy across Herefordshire and Worcestershire by 2005. An achievement target of 9,927 contributes to the overall national target of 750,000 learners achieving a qualification in literacy or numeracy.

Key priorities include mapping existing provision, recruiting and training appropriate teachers, raising the quality of provision whilst identifying and supporting learners in the community and in employment. A major issue is to raise awareness and commitment of employers to support employees thus raising productivity and profitability.

Marketing and Communications Strategy

The Learning and Skills Council Herefordshire and Worcestershire marketing and communications strategy is intended to be a cross-cutting document, providing guidance and support to initiatives throughout the local LSC. The strategy is built around the same core values as the main strategic plan – those of participation, achievement and quality – but reflects the unique input that the department plays in promoting the services of the local LSC and its partners, and in developing effective communications systems. The marketing and communications team have set high service standards to deliver a service that is resource efficient, timely and which achieves measurable results. The marketing and communications strategy sets out how these standards will be achieved.

Workforce Development Plan

Our workforce development plan is under development and will be ready for

consultation during the first part of 2002. It will include more in-depth data and research into employer need and demand, as well as a more detailed action plan on how the LSC and partners will address these issues. It will be heavily influenced by the Performance and Innovation Unit's Workforce Development project and its conclusions, the emerging work of the new Sector Skills Councils and the early work of the sector groups that we are working with.

European Funding Co-financing Plan 2001-4

This plan addresses local and regional priorities as a means of maximizing ESF Objective 3 funds.A prospectus will be published during 2002 against which focused bidding will be encouraged.

Local Quality Improvement Strategy

Our local quality improvement strategy is based on the thorough identification of development needs of providers, taking into account the following:

- A review of provider 2001/2002 Self-Assessment reports and Development Plans against national standards
- The retention and attainment levels of individual learners by provider
- The categorisation of providers following half yearly provider review
- Results from external inspections by either ALI or OFSTED
- Any previous working knowledge, history and background of the provider
- Effective use of standards funds

The support and intervention that will take place with a provider will be in inverse proportion to the perceived risk identified. A variety of approaches may be employed as appropriate. Examples of this are equality and diversity monitoring, programme specific validation visits, aspects of management and leadership, process development activity, health and safety support and monitoring progress against development plans. For some providers very little activity may take place other than periodic requests for minimum information.

Linked to this approach is the use of standards fund monies that enable providers to target particular quality improvement activities detailed in their development plan or as a result of provider review that may be tailor-made to their organisation.

A range of capacity building events for providers will be developed and delivered on an ongoing basis to encourage continuous improvement and to keep abreast of current practitioner and process development within training and education. This will also include tackling the key issues of improving self-assessment processes within providers, better action planning, improving continuous improvement strategies and tackling the equality and diversity agenda that have already been identified following the October review.

We will use a variety of external consultants and specialist organisations to deliver this programme of events, and alongside this building in continuous capacity development for our own staff.

Quarterly events will take place to bring together all providers to share best practice across sectors, building on the strengths that each has to offer. Involvement with key partners is being given a high priority including both inspectorates, the ES and the LSDA.

A joint local LSC and provider development group is being established to contribute positively towards our local strategy and assist the development of supportive relationships between sectors.

We will initially measure our success in two main areas:

- An upward trend in the categorisation of providers following half yearly provider review
- The acceptability of locally produced Self-Assessment reports and Development Plans to jointly meet the requirements of the LSC and ES

Health and Safety Strategy

Key considerations

- Requirement of Learning and Skills Act 2001 (sections 2,3 and 6)
- The primary 'duty of care' rests with the provider
- A potential LSC duty of care to learners – proportionate to risk
- Wider policy context and key stakeholders'interests e.g. ministers, DfES,ES,HSE, AoC, ALP
- Need to maintain and build on existing achievements – but via new approach

Guiding principles

- Learner health and safety is an integral and important part of high quality provision and should embrace the 'safe learner' concept
- In particular, learning should take place in a safe and supportive environment
- Learner health and safety is a key element of the self assessment, performance review and development planning process
- Provider responsibility and accountability – including for any sub-contracting
- An expectation of continuous improvement, supported where necessary by LIF
- Internal health and safety of the premises to be in line with the guidance contained in HS (G) 65 for the wellbeing of all staff and visitors

Key elements of approach

- A 'Gateway' questionnaire and evaluation
- Self assessment by providers with development plans to address health and safety
- Risk assessments by LSC staff
- 'Eyes and ears' monitoring by LSC staff
- Selective monitoring visits (based on risk and performance) by competent LSC health and safety advisers
- A continuous system of measurement and review of the local office policies and procedures to be undertaken to ensure continuous improvement
- Support from national health and safety team
- Use of a range of information sources
  - LSC accident and complaint data
  - Public databases e.g. HSE

- Sharing information with ES
- ALI/OFSTED reports and liaison
- Learner feedback and surveys
- To develop the Learning and Skills Council Herefordshire and Worcestershire as an exemplar organisation

Risk Management Strategy

Our first internal audit as an LSC highlighted the need, in common with other public bodies, for a risk management strategy. External guidance was sought on the methodology needed to put a strategy in place and this highlighted the need to document, all other risks to the operation of the LSC Herefordshire and Worcestershire in the form of a 'risk register'.A meeting of the senior management team, led by the Executive Director, was organised to 'brainstorm' all known risks. Subsequently, a working group was formed to refine the register, with the Executive Director acting as overall arbiter to finalise the working document. At the conclusion, 45 risks spread across six different categories (with two confidential annexes) had been identified.

The Audit Committee has now reviewed the risk register and recommends the following:

- That high impact high likelihood risks are reported to every Council meeting
- That Council reviews the whole register every six months
- That the risk register is updated on a monthly basis

Equal Opportunities – Equality in Practice

This section summarises the actions that either have or will have been taken during the first year of the LSC in order to provide a strong base for developing an effective approach to equality and diversity.

OBJECTIVE 1: Develop the LSC as an Equal Opportunities Organisation

During 2001/02, the local LSC will have:

- **Designated an officer responsible for the human resources and employment equality of opportunity policy** - completed
- **Prepared a written equal opportunity policy setting out a statement of the commitment to equality** - still waiting Equal Opportunities Policy from national office. They have stated early in the New Year we should receive it, but the Equal Opportunities Strategy and Action Plan has been developed for the local office setting out our commitment
- **Secured the commitment of senior management to equality of opportunity** - completed
- **Prepared a plan for implementing the policy** - an action plan has been developed and falls in with the local strategy plan

- **Communicated the policy to all staff and potential employees** - the local strategy and action plan was e-mailed in October 2001 for consultation to staff and comments. The plan will also be included in a proposed future equality awareness event by end of March 2002, to continue awareness and communication
- **Trained all staff on the requirements of the policy** - job descriptions will be updated with the commitment to Equal Opportunities in them by March 2002. Awareness training completed for all staff by September 2001. Twice yearly refresher training for all staff commencing 2002. Policy incorporated in induction programme
- **Conducted an equality audit of the staffing profile and all current and proposed policies and practices** - completed, held on Personnel Drive, updated for leavers, new starters. In 2002, aim to increase ethnic origin staffing to 3%, and disabled staff to 3%. Work proactively to achieve these targets, with raising awareness, meetings with key parties, continuous checking of practices
- **Monitored to ensure that the policy is working in practice and prepare an annual report on progress** - ongoing. Recruitment and selection continually being updated. Staffing profile along with grievance and disciplinary records will help record information/issues etc., for addressing and improving practices. Continuous raising of awareness of equality will be ongoing via seminars, presentations by third parties, refresher training, induction etc., will continue to be carried out

OBJECTIVE 2: Develop the local LSC as Champion of Equality

During 2001/02, the local LSC will have:

- **Designated the chair and the chief executive as champions for equality at board and organisation levels** - completed. Executive Director, Chairman, and local Council members committed to this
- **Ensured that the induction programmes for staff and local LSC members and the staff development strategy focus on promoting equal opportunities** - induction currently does, but needs to be more informative – March 2002 deadline. Local LSC Council members – invited to attend in-house seminars on the subject. Ongoing throughout 2002. Performance management and job descriptions, maintain a focus on equal opportunities throughout 2002 and onwards
- **Put in place arrangements for making future appointments equality proof to reflect the diversity of national and local populations** - ongoing. Already deal with informing RNIB, and Race Equality Council, and Disability Employment Adviser of vacant positions available. During 2002, make contact with further local contacts e.g. local race equality councillor, local ethnic newspapers etc., to promote situations vacant and work within house policies to ensure that equity prevails
- **Established an advisory committee at local level with external representation to take forward the equality agenda, to review the impact on provision and learners and to spread good practice** - the youth advisory group and the adult advisory group are used as an advisory committee
- **Worked with key equality organisations locally to build equality of opportunity into all policies,programmes and actions** - local groups addressing diversity issues such as ethnicity, disability and transport rurality are consulted with

OBJECTIVE 3: Embed Equal Opportunities into All Policies, Programmes and Action

During 2001/02, the local LSC will have:

- **Established a working group covering all areas of the local LSC's activities to integrate equality into operational plans** - an internal social inclusion group has been set up with members from each directorate
- **Created management information and business systems that gather all appropriate data supported by information from provider inspections, quality monitoring and so on to ensure monitoring and evaluation of EO performance** - MI systems still to be fully developed by national LSC. Local requirement requests for report information detail has been forwarded by LLSC
- **Identified through research and stakeholder consultation across all programme areas, key equality issues and barriers and strategies for positive change at local level** - this is an ongoing process through provider review to baseline issues around equality. Consultation process on strategic planning with providers has taken place
- **Assessed the impact of local policies and programmes on potential learners, in particular identifying and reshaping those aspects of provision which would differentially disadvantage ethnic minority, disabled or women and men learners** - this objective will be met as national LSC MI systems are put into place and the provider review procedure is finalised. This assessment will be implemented by members of the Quality and Learning Directorate
- **Set equality targets and performance indicators within operational plans to tackle under representation, under achievement and stereotyping in terms of gender, race, age, disability and disadvantage in particular occupational and learning sectors** - 2001/02 will be used as a time for baselining information from internal and external sources. National LSC have confirmed that equality targets can be set from 2002
- **Used mainstream and discretionary funding systems which do not disadvantage any group and which promote innovative responses** - appropriate allocation of funding to providers and monitoring of projects funded by mainstream and discretionary funding by Quality and Learning Directorate and external funding manager
- **Developed learning programmes and materials which take into account the different characteristics of learners from different cultural and social backgrounds and learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities** - this is being addressed through ESF funding. Further information is awaited from national LSC regarding mainstream programmes development. (3k,3j, 3f)
- **Ensured that providers and employers promote equality of opportunity and take positive steps to widen participation** - through partnership work with employers and agencies and through the provider review process with providers
- **Monitored progress on promoting equality through reports received from its advisory committee and internal working group, recommending and following up action as necessary** - addressed by Quality and Learning Directorate and social inclusion group
- **Benchmarked the equal opportunities performance of the local LSC and providers on race, gender and disability** - awaiting benchmarking MI systems from national LSC

OBJECTIVE 4: Report to the National LSC on Progress towards Equality of Opportunity

During 2001/02, the local LSC will have:

- **Consulted actively with its partners on its EO strategy and local action plan and published the agreed document** - organisations representing equality and diversity issues were invited to the general strategic plan consultation sessions
- **Offered guidance and support to providers on defining, consulting on and implementing their EO strategies and action plans** - develop procedures as part of performance review using self assessment and quality assurance systems by providers to support providers to develop and subsequently action, review and update their EO policies and then assess how learners, employers, communities and other stakeholders evaluate the providers commitment to EO
- **Made arrangements with the national LSC to measure and record progress towards the achievement of strategic objectives-** awaiting guidance from national LSC on national designated system of feedback
- **Drafted a report for the national LSC summarising the arrangements made, and progress on the main outcomes and plans for the year 2002/03** - national LSC to forward details of format for reporting procedures

Evaluation and Review Process

Evaluation of our performance is essential, and to assist this we must ensure that we instil a culture of continuous improvement in all staff.

We will use a number of mechanisms to conduct annual and ongoing review.

There are the obvious measures of how we perform against budgets and learning programme targets, and LSC National Office will shortly publish a set of performance indicators for the future. Progress against the interim 2004 targets will be measured annually through the provision of national data, and we can moderate this against locally collected data from local Employer and Household surveys.

This whole plan is based on measures of success, and progress against each one must be charted, not least improvements in quality of learning provision which must drive our efforts for constant improvement.

The local Council has set the three long-term impact measures of average earnings, turnover per employee and learning participation in the 23 most deprived wards. These need to be charted annually.

We will be subject to continuous external and internal audit.

Because we wish to learn form all our activities, we are committed to a culture of continuous improvement and will seek feedback from our partners, providers and customers on how effectively staff at all levels are meeting their needs. We have been impressed by practice within local authorities where comment is invited from partner organisations, including anonymised senior office peer group appraisal.

We have decided to base our internal improvement strategy on the EFQM model, which will provide a focus on results.

Individual projects will need to be evaluated. We do not have the resources to cover all projects that we fund, so we will devise an annual evaluation programme which selects those according to criteria such as highest monetary value, of most interest or of greatest impact. For other projects we will normally incorporate the requirements to provide an evaluation report into any contract and, depending on the funding that supports that project, include a sum of money for that purpose.

We will publish the number of complaints that we have received and state how many were satisfactorily resolved.

All of these will be captured in an annual report that we will make widely available and also place on the LSC website.

Internal Quality Management

EFQM Planning Framework

All our internal and external quality controls, assurance and assessment processes are/will be developed using the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) framework. The way in which this has been applied to and aligned with the formulation of this Strategic Plan 2002-2005 is shown below.

Enablers

Leadership

- Local Council and executive develop mission, vision and values and are role models of a culture of excellence
- Leaders are personally involved in ensuring the organisation's management system is developed, implemented and continuously improved
- Leaders are involved with customers, partners and leading representatives of society
- Leaders motivate, support and recognise the value of employees

Policy and Strategy

- Our strategic plan and policies are based on comprehensive analysis of data and on the present and future needs and expectations of key partners and stakeholders
- Comprehensive analysis of data, use of SWOT and PEST analysis, benchmarking data and development of effective performance indicators
- Clear strategic objectives identified in our three year strategic plan and one year business plan
- Regular monthly reviews of strategy and updates accordingly
- Risk management strategy developed
- Focus on priorities and critical success factors
- Key processes developed, reviewed and updated
- Internal controls established and reviewed regularly
- Clear communications to all staff on strategy and policies
- Development of effective communication systems

People

- National and local HR policies in place, reviewed and improved as necessary
- Development of a knowledge and competence database through training needs analysis
- Clear strategy for capacity building
- Individual targets and performance reviews
- Strong emphasis on team and inter-team working
- Empowerment encouraged
- Clear communication strategy which is reviewed regularly
- Introduction of new LSC terms and conditions for all staff

Partnerships and Resources

- Membership of key strategic partnerships
- Effective partnership relationships to create and maximise values
- Sharing of knowledge with partner organisations
- Support mutual development
- Develop effective internal audit controls
- Develop effective and comprehensive risk management strategy
- Effective management of building, equipment, utilities and materials
- Make best use of technology made available by national office
- Ensure best use of data collection, management information and knowledge not only to support our strategy and policies but also those of our partners and stakeholders
- Improve synergy of working together to improve processes and add value

Processes

- Our systems are systematically designed and managed
- Our processes are improved as needed to increase value for customers, partners and stakeholders
- Our services are designed and developed based on customer needs, expectations and feedback
- Programmes and services are delivered and quality reviewed through our provider review process
- Marketing and communications are geared to effective participation on our programmes
- We have a rigorous customer complaint procedure
- We use regular surveys of customer satisfaction

Results

Customer Results

- We will complete learner, customer, partner and stakeholder perception surveys
- We shall make full use of performance indicators and benchmarking

People Results

- We shall complete employee perception surveys which includes motivation and satisfaction
- We shall use internal performance indicators to monitor, understand, predict and improve organisations performances and perceptions by employees. This will include: competency achievements, motivation, satisfaction, HR data, communication

Society Results

We shall measure society's perception of the organisation on a number of issues:

- Responsible organisation

  disclosure of information, equal opportunities, impact on economy, ethnic and relationship with other partners
- Involvement in the community

  local activities involved with
- Preventing nuisance

  health and safety, pollution
- Presentation and sustainability of resources

  transport, waste, utilities

We shall aim to make improvements in these areas

Performance Results

- We shall measure key performance outcomes

  financial, volumes, success rates
- We shall identify key performance indicators

  processes, external resources, financial, running costs, technology, information and knowledge

Evidence of Consultation

A number of consultations has been held throughout both counties. Most were aimed at particular audiences but the final event was of a general nature and was advertised in the local press to permit attendance by members of the public or others with a professional interest who had not been captured on our mailing lists. At each consultation we sent all attendees the latest version of this plan. At each event general questions were posed and also questions relevant to that audience. Helpful suggestions and amendments were included in time for the next consultation. We are indebted to those who took the trouble to attend, and also to many others who read the draft plan and submitted written comments. The process was extremely helpful and a great many changes have been made as a result.

11 October	Meeting with headteachers of high and special schools throughout Worcestershire
1 November	Meeting with community workers
6 November	Meeting with West Midlands South NHS Federation which encompasses Herefordshire and Worcestershire
15 November	Headteachers and staff from high schools and LEAs and Learning Partnerships from both counties
21 November	Senior managers from local authorities in Worcestershire
28 November	Private sector employers, including NTOs and the Chamber of Commerce/Business Link
4 December	Representatives of the voluntary sector, including Community First
4 December	Herefordshire Council elected members, CEO and senior officers
5 December	Work Based Learning providers (including FE colleges)
7 December	General session which included more schools, colleges, training providers and employers. There were also more elected members, and representatives from CITB, the careers service and Government Office for the West Midlands

Although no representative of the RDA, Advantage West Midlands, was able to attend a consultation, copies of the draft plan have been sent to key personnel for comment.

Although we have not carried it out on this occasion, we have set as an action the need to establish consultation mechanisms with young people.

The penultimate version of the plan was sent to key partners, whether they had attended earlier consultations or not. This included all local authority chief executive officers, Advantage West Midlands, both county directors of education, heads of Employment and Connexions Service and the CEO of the Chamber of Commerce/Business Link. In addition, a few people who had not been able to attend a consultation event had requested sight of the plan and they were provided with the penultimate version. Additional comments were received and incorporated.

The local Council has been involved throughout the planning process with many council members attending consultation events, and employers and representatives of other key partners including Learning Partnerships attended a council workshop on setting priorities.

Evidence of Partnership Working and Local Support

Herefordshire Learning Partnership

- Adult Working Group
- Data Group
- Young People's Working Group

Worcestershire Learning Partnership

- WLP Basic Skills Group
- WLP Bromsgrove
- WLP ICT Group
- WLP Malvern Hills
- WLP Redditch
- WLP Worcester Community Education Forum
- WLP Wychavon
- WLP Wyre Forest

Herefordshire Partnership

- Herefordshire Partnership Board
- Business Economic and Tourism Ambition Group
- Community Development Ambition Group
- Education and Training Ambition Group
- Herefordshire In Touch Steering Group
- ICT Strategy Group
- Information and Research Network
- Rural Transport Partnership

Worcestershire Partnership

- Steering Group
- Co-ordinators Group
- Economic Partnership
- Data Officers Group

Connexions/Careers Service

- Careers Service Board
- Learning Gateway Steering Group
- Connexions Strategic Development Group
- Herefordshire Local Contact Group
- Worcestershire Local Contact Group
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire Careers Quality Mark Team

Other Education-related

- Herefordshire Higher Education Joint Venture
- Herefordshire Education Action Zone Forum
- EAZ Community Learning Centres Group
- EAZ Executive Board
- Herefordshire LEA Schools Organisation Committee
- Worcestershire LEA Schools Organisation Committee
- Worcestershire LEA /LSC 14-19 Working Group
- Worcestershire LEA Sixth Form/LSC preparation (Finance sub-group)
- Worcestershire LEA Sixth Form/LSC preparation (Special Needs sub-group)
- Herefordshire Management Committee for PRUs
- Worcestershire Management Committee for PRUs
- LSC forum with FE Principals
- Worcestershire Rural Opportunities HE Project
- LEA Quarterly Reviews
- DofE Regional Management Committee

Other Young People Related

- New Start Steering Group Herefordshire
- New Start Steering Group Worcestershire
- Worcester Teenage Pregnancy Group
- Worcestershire Youth Homeless Partnership
- Worcestershire Youth Strategy Group
- Wychavon Youth Strategy Group
- Worcester Action for Youth
- Worcester Youth Affairs Forum
- Training Providers' Young Parents Thinking Group
- Learning Targets Level 2 Steering Group (Return 2 Learn)
- Wheels 2 Work Herefordshire
- Ledbury Youth First Steering Group

Adults

- IAG Partnership

Equal Opportunities

- Herefordshire Joint Investment Partnership
- Worcestershire Joint Investment Partnership
- Skills Herefordshire and Worcestershire
- Mental Health Promotion in Worcestershire
- Worcester City Ethnic Minorities SRB

Employment Service

- New Deal Basic Skills Group
- New Deal Strategy Group

SRB Programmes

- South Wye Jobs Education and Training Group
- Herefordshire Supported Housing for Young People

Economic Development/Regeneration

- Malvern Hills Science Park
- Rural Regeneration Zone – Board and Management Groups

Europe

- Herefordshire, Shropshire, Worcestershire Sub-Regional Group Meeting
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire Euro Officers Groups (JEOWG)

Childcare

- Herefordshire Childcare Advisory Group
- Herefordshire Early Years Development Childcare Partnership
- Herefordshire EYDCP Training Advisory Group
- Worcestershire EYDCP
- Redditch Partnership
- Redditch Partnership Economy and Learning Sub-Group
- Malvern Community Partnership
- Wyre Forest Community Partnership

Workforce Development and Employer Groups

- Core Food and Drink Project
- Regional Workforce Development Group
- Worcester City Regeneration Partnership
- Worcestershire Construction Training Group

Transport Related

- Malvern Hills Rural Transport Partnership
- Addressing Transport Barriers to Employment and Training Opportunities

Voluntary Sector

- Voluntary Sector Training Forum Herefordshire
- Voluntary Sector Learning Network Worcestershire

LSC groups

- National Quality Standards Group
- National Communications and Marketing Group
- National Accreditation of Prior Learning Group
- National Workforce Development Policy Group
- National Performance and MI Steering Group
- LSC Executive Directors' Regional Network
- AWM/LSC Network
- Regional European Officers Group
- Regional Research and Evaluation Group
- Regional Management Strategy Group
- West Midlands LSC Marketing Group
- West Midlands Framework for Regional Employment and Skills Action

Learning and Skills Council Herefordshire and Worcestershire
List of Local Council Members

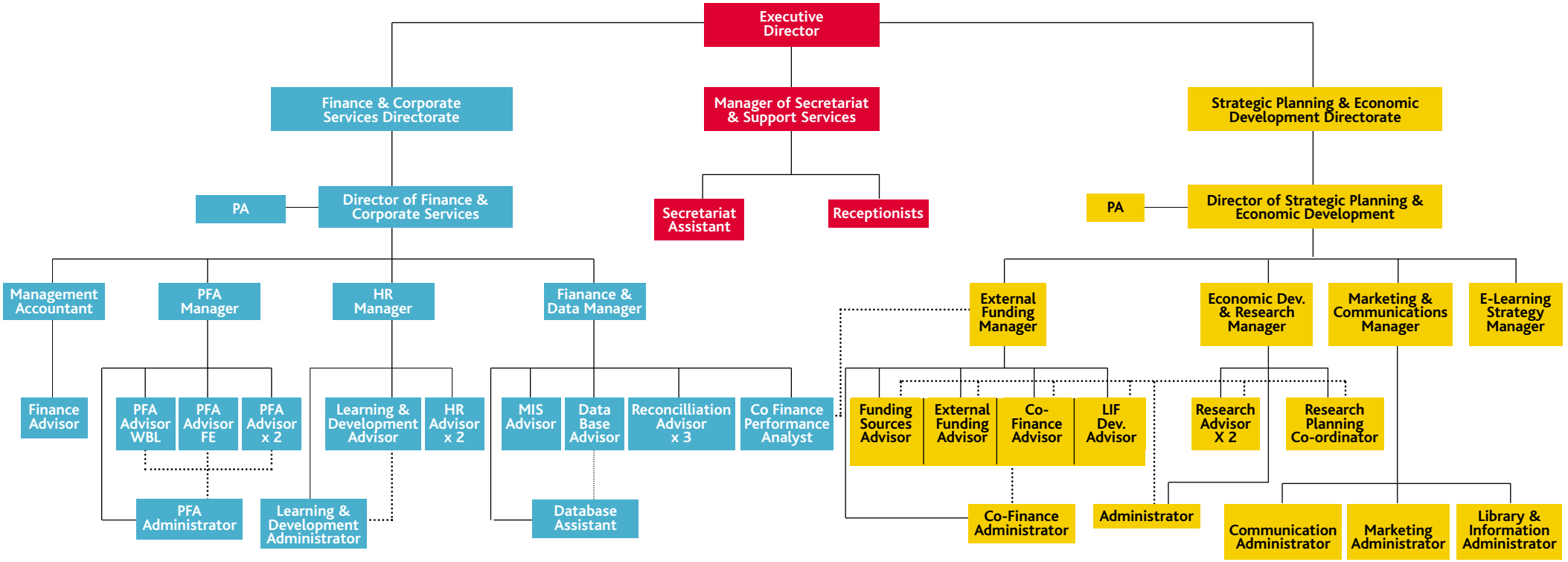
Council Members	Sector background	Pen Picture
Mr Chris Swan - Chairman (2)	Business Entrepreneur	Chris Swan Management Services
Mr Alan Curless (1,2,3,4,5)	Learning and Skills	Executive Director, Learning and Skills Council Herefordshire and Worcestershire
Mrs Christine Bucknell (1)	Adult and Community Learning	Head of Training and Business Development, Herefordshire College of Technology
Mr Nick Helme (5)	Business	Managing Director, 7Y Rural Services Network Ltd
Mr Neil Bromley (4)	Education	Principal, North East Worcestershire College
Mrs Valerie Thomasson	Education and Adult Community Learning	Principal, The Minster College
County Councillor Dan Wicksteed (1,2,3)	Local Authority	Elected Member, Worcestershire County Council
Mr Neil Pringle (2,5)	Local Authority	Chief Executive, Herefordshire Council
Mr Richard Quallington (2)	Local Communities – Voluntary Sector and Business	Chief Executive, Community First in Herefordshire and Worcestershire
Mr Norman Price	RDA Nomination – Business	Chair of a number small businesses. Formerly Group Operations Director of Triplex Lloyd plc
Mr Philip Bannister (2,5)	Trades Union	Senior Regional Officer UNISON

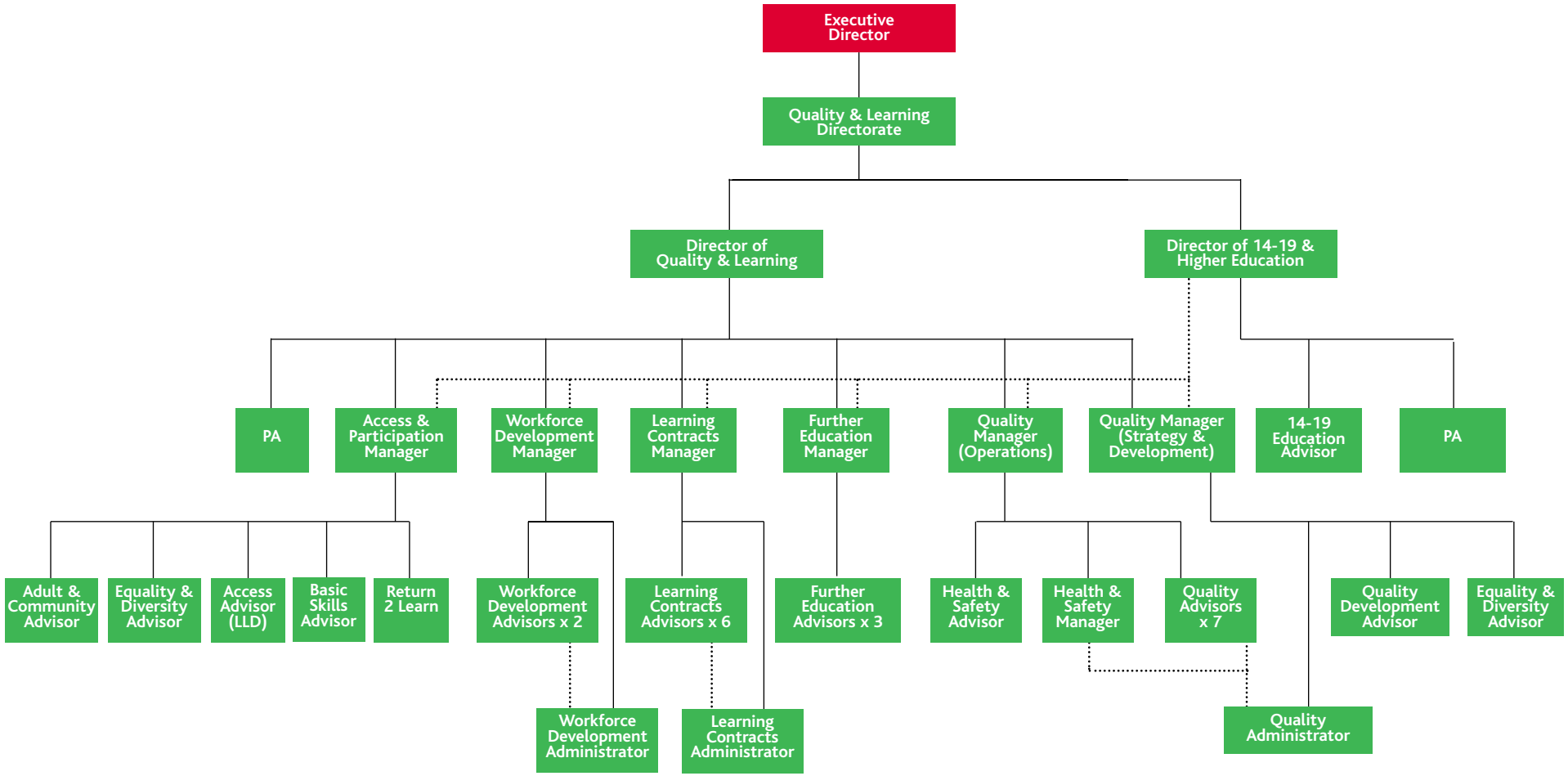
IN ATTENDANCE

Mrs Christine Jones – Chief Executive of Chamber of Commerce Herefordshire and Worcestershire and Business Link
Mr Roger Little - Chief Executive of Herefordshire and Worcestershire Connexions Service
Mrs Joan Skerry – District Manager, Employment Service
Ms Sue Todd – Government Office for the West Midlands

1 = also serves on the Audit Sub-committee
2 = also serves on the Strategic Funding Panel
3 = also serves as chairman of the local LSC's Young People's Sub-committee
4 = also serves as chairman of the local LSC's Adult Learner's Sub-committee
5 = also serves on the Centre of Vocational Excellence (COVE) Approval Panel

LSC Structure Chart





Executive Director Team	4
Directorate of Finance & Corporate Services	23
Directorate of Strategic Planning & Economic Development	18
Directorate of Quality & Learning	40
TOTAL	**85 (Includes 7 new ESF roles)**

LSC Funded posts	74 (FTE) 75.5 (Staff)
European Funded Posts	9.5
TOTAL POSTS	85

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Glossary of Terms

ACL	Adult and Community Learning
ALI	Adult Learning Inspectorate
AMA	Advanced Modern Apprenticeships
AWM	Advantage West Midlands
C&G	City and Guilds
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CITB	Construction Industry Training Board
CORE	Centre Of Regional Excellence
COVE	Centre Of Vocational Excellence
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DETR	Department for Environment, Transport and Regions
DfEE	Department for Employment and Education (now DfES)
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
EMTA	Engineering and Marine Training Authority
EO	Equal Opportunities
ESF	European Social Fund
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
EYDCP	Early Years Development Childcare Partnerships
FMA	Foundation Modern Apprenticeships
FMD	Foot and Mouth Disease
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNVQ	General National Vocational Qualification
GVA	Gross Value Added
HE	Higher Education
HEFC	Higher Education Funding Council
HR	Human Resources
IAG	Information Advice and Guidance
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ILA	Individual Learning Account
LEA	Local Education Authority
LIF	Local Initiative Funding
LLSC	Local Learning and Skills Council
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MIS	Management Information System
NHS	National Health Service
NIACE	National Organisation for Adult Learning
NTO	National Training Organisation
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
PEST	Political Environmental Social Technological
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
PSA	Public Service Agreement
RDA	Regional Development Agency
RNIB	Royal National Institute for the Blind
RRZ	Rural Regeneration Zones
SME	Small and Medium sized Enterprise
SSC	Sector Skills Council
SWOT	Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats
TPE	Turnover Per Employee
TUC	Trades Union Congress
UfI	University for Industry
UK	United Kingdom
WBL	Work Based Learning
WE	Work Experience
WLP	Worcestershire Learning Partnership
YE	Youth Enterprise

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