



## Action 4 Skills – South East

Objective 3  
Co-Financing Plan 2006 -2008  
Round 12

Measures 1.2, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2 & 5.1



Leading learning and skills

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## 1 PLAN OVERVIEW

The activities proposed by this plan by the Learning and Skills Council (south east) reflect the strategic objectives of the Regional Development Plan and the Council's key priorities for 06/07 as set out in the DFES Grant Letter.

### 1.1 Geographic Coverage

This plan will cover the whole of the South East region

### 1.2 Objectives of the plan

This plan will enable the Council through specifically targeted regional and sub regional activity to engage with those individuals and groups not currently engaged in learning and who require a range of customised support measures to overcome barriers to support entry to employment or the development of the skills needed by their occupational sector. Activities will focus upon the needs of those who are economically inactive and those in the workforce whose vocational and basic skills are identified as being inadequate for the future requirements of their work role.

The plan will contribute to meeting the National Priorities

- ❖ To ensure that 14-19 year olds have access to high quality, relevant learning
- ❖ To have demand led learning so that it better meets the needs of employers, young people and adults
- ❖ To transform the learning and skills sector
- ❖ To provide the skills to help all individuals into jobs and lifelong employability

Specifically this plan will

- ❖ Provide access to training and support for disadvantaged groups such as offenders, people with learning difficulties and disabilities (LLDD), young people aged 13-17 who are not in employment, education or training (NEET), older people, black and minority ethnic groups (BME) women and people with no/out of date qualifications
- ❖ Capacity building for the voluntary and community sector and support for the Action for Communities initiative
- ❖ Training and development for Skills for Life workers
- ❖ Increase the skills and qualifications of those working in the adult and elderly care sector SMEs
- ❖ Increase the number of women working in or creating social enterprises

The overarching objectives for ESF Objective 3 support in the South East that will be met by this plan are:

- (i) Linking deprivation to local economic opportunity to promote equality of opportunity and help those in target groups to participate fully in the

- success of the region; linking strategies for regeneration to strategies for wider economic development and environmentally sustainable growth;
- (ii) Developing our own skills in the region through the creation of 'ladders of learning' to enhance and improve the skills base, in particular to promote equal opportunities by helping those in target groups with outdated, low or no skills to get onto the ladder and progress to acquire the skills needed by the region's economy to contribute to sustainable growth;
  - (iii) Growing our own businesses in all sectors - stimulating entrepreneurship and equality of opportunity, adaptability and business growth to provide sustainable development in terms of prosperity, employment and the environment;

### 1.3 Measures and Activities

This plan covers the following measures

- **Policy Field 1 Active Labour Markets – Measure 2** Supporting offenders in the community to progress into employment
- **Policy Field 2 Equal Opportunities – Measure 2**
  - ❖ Capacity building for the voluntary & community sector by providing development opportunities for the organisations and their staff and volunteers.
  - ❖ Development of learning brokerages for NEET young people and adults with learning difficulties and disabilities
- **Policy Field 3 Lifelong Learning – Measure 1**
  - ❖ Professionalizing the Skills for Life workforce
  - ❖ Engaging disadvantaged learners and promoting progression and achievement through developing their Skills for Life
- **Policy Field 3 Lifelong Learning – Measure 2** to provide lifelong learning opportunities for older workers
- **Policy Field 4 Adaptability & Entrepreneurship – Measure 1** this will provide a brokerage service to support companies especially SMEs to update and upgrade their employees' vocational, basic and key skills in the adult social care sector
- **Policy Field 4 Adaptability & Entrepreneurship – Measure 2** The activities in this measure will support employers to develop learning cultures and engage with hard to reach learners in the adult social care sector

- **Policy Field 5 Improving the role of women in the labour market – Measure 1** The activities will support the skills development for women through involving them with social enterprises

#### 1.4 Period plan covers

1 January 2006 – 31 October 2008

#### 1.5 Amount of ESF funding applied for by Measure

| PFM | £         |
|-----|-----------|
| 1.2 | 3,117,196 |
| 2.2 | 3,819,202 |
| 3.1 | 2,761,500 |
| 3.2 | 1230,000  |
| 4.1 | 1,531,000 |
| 4.2 | 832,000   |
| 5.1 | 753,000   |

## 2 CONSULTATION

Specifications were developed to meet identified training needs and gaps following consultations with LSC regional lead managers and external specialist fora related to the learning/training area. The organisations represented were

- NIACE
- RAISE
- SEEDA
- AOSEC
- Probation Service
- National Offender Management Service
- Youth Justice Board
- Prison Service
- Connexions
- Job Centre Plus
- Skills for Life Professional Development Centres
- Skills for Care (Sector Skills Council)
- Berkshire Association for Care
- LSC Employer Network

We have also consulted with Jobcentre Plus who have confirmed that this provision does not duplicate any of their provision

### 3 DEMONSTRATION OF NEED

#### 3.1 Labour Market Information

As noted in the review of the Regional Economic Strategy 2006 – 2016, evidence base the South East Region has a **'Tight Labour Market'** – employment and activity rates in the SE are amongst the highest in the country, and unemployment in the region continues to be low. Together with a relatively high vacancy rates the SE has one of the tightest labour markets in the UK. It also notes that there is an issue with **'Equality in the Labour Market'** – there are significant disparities in labour market participation by gender, ethnicity and disability

Unemployment levels are low in the South East with a claimant count of 1.7% in October 2005. There is a higher figure of unemployment using the ILO definition of 4% from the LFS July to Sept 2005. However both figures are lower than those for the UK as a whole. These low figures mean that the economy needs new people to enter the workforce and employers need to encourage excluded groups to enter the labour market. This plan particularly concentrates on those at a disadvantage in the labour market and in providing progression routes into further education/training and/or employment.

#### 3.2 Disadvantaged groups

The target groups for this plan include

- Black and Minority Ethnic Communities –they account for 4.48% of the working age population of the South East or 279,000 people. They are face significant disadvantage in the labour market and in achieving qualifications and accessing learning and training. (RDP pg 83/4)
- People with disabilities –In the South East only 64% of disabled people are economically active compared to over 80% of the rest of the population. They are twice as likely to be unemployed and are much more likely to be long term unemployed. They are also more likely to have not formal qualifications: 41% compared to 14% of non-disabled people (RDP pgs 88/9). Number of people in the South East on incapacity benefit/severe disablement allowance Jan 05 is 233,700.
- Older People – Age is now a high profile issue. The UK is facing significant demographic change with people living longer and the birth rate declining. In the SE 50-64 year olds are projected to increase from 1.425 m (17.8%) in 2001 to 1.768 m (19.9%) in 2020. Additionally 65+ year olds are projected to increase from 1.308 m (16.4%) in 2001 to 1.791 m (20.2%). The SE has a higher employment rate for over 50s than nationally (75% compared with 70% nationally of 50-65 yr olds). However employment rate for this group varies between areas e.g. 81% in Reading 70.2% in Portsmouth. In 2002/3 50+ learners enrolled on FE provision in the SE represented 23% (115,600), this reduced to 21% (106,500) in

2003/04. This plan will have provision for older people and older workers in particular

- Offenders in the community- Research has demonstrated that offenders who gain employment are less likely to re-offend. In 2005 just under 23,000 adults (aged 18 and over) and just over 2000 juveniles (15 – 17 year olds) were released into the community in the south east. 37% of offenders have a reading standard of below level 1 and 53% have no qualifications. 55% of offenders on community orders are unemployed at time of sentence. This plan will provide additional provision to support the newly formed Offender Learning and Skills Service and to help offenders gain employment.
- NEET young people – there are 14,318 NEET young people in the South East (Nov 05). The average NEET percentage is 5.64% however there are significant differences throughout the region with the lowest being Surrey with 3.1% and the highest being Portsmouth at 11.3%

### 3.3 Skills for Life

Over 1 million people are estimated to have low or very low literacy and/or numeracy skills (RDP page 98). Lack of basic skills has been shown to be an indicator of social exclusion and the reduction of life chances (Breaking the Cycle SEU 2004). People who lack basic skills are more likely to be unemployed or to be in low paid insecure employment

The Chairman in his introduction to the Regional Economic Strategy says that “It is not acceptable that in a generally well-education region we have some one million people unable to achieve basic skills in reading, writing and numeracy.”

The report ‘Basic Skills in the South East’ (BMG research Aug 04) found that only 5.9% of those with Basic Skills needs were receiving training. It also found that there was an association between proximity to a training provider and levels of qualification achieved.

This region has a shortage of basic skills teachers and has failed to meet the FRESA target of 112,752 adults having increased their basic skills, only achieving 83% due to this shortage.

The Public Accounts Committee in its report ‘Skills for Life: Improving adult literacy and numeracy’ (Dec 2005) concluded that “**The quality of learning is still too low and a more skilled teaching workforce is the key to improvement.**” Adult literacy and numeracy teachers were previously neglected and under-trained. New training courses were introduced in 2002 and it is intended that all Skills for Life teachers will be qualified by 2010. This plan provides training and professional development opportunities for these teachers.

### **3.4 Care Sector**

The personal service occupations in the South East have a projected increase in the period 2002-2012 of 120,000, 90% of the job gains are accounted for in the caring personal service occupations. This means that there will be a gain of 108,000 jobs in the caring personal services. (Working Futures: regional report 2003-4). In the report Aging Assets – Implication of population ageing for the South East region (SIPSE Oct 05) there were “concerns about future requirements for health and social care, on account of both an extended period of frail older age and larger cohorts of dependent older people”. This plan provides training for SMEs and their employees for the adult care sector.

### **3.5 Links to FRESA**

The key area which this plan addresses is the supply side of the labour market as outlined in the FRESA outline framework for a healthy labour market. It will do this by providing training to help ensure that there is a supply of skilled labour for local employers. It will help individuals by providing activities which provide information, advice and guidance together with ones which provide specific vocational training for both the employed and unemployed in occupations where research has shown that there is a skills shortage in South East. On the demand side it will help employers to be able to recruit and retain people with the right skills by the training for the supply side. However it also addresses the functioning of the labour market by providing projects which will help with labour market equity by providing training and support for disadvantaged groups.

### **3.6 Links to RDP**

The overarching objectives for support in the South East, which are covered by this plan, are:

- I. Linking deprivation to local economic opportunity to promote equality of opportunity and help those in target groups to participate fully in the success of the region; linking strategies for regeneration to strategies for wider economic development and environmentally sustainable growth;
- II. Developing our own skills in the region through the creation of ‘ladders of learning’ to enhance and improve the skills base, in particular to promote equal opportunities by helping those in target groups with outdated, low or no skills to get onto the ladder and progress to acquire the skills needed by the region’s economy to contribute to sustainable growth;
- III. Growing our own businesses in all sectors - stimulating entrepreneurship and equality of opportunity, adaptability and business growth to provide sustainable development in terms of prosperity, employment and the environment;

The co-financing plan supports (i) by having projects which will provide training and support for those who are at risk of exclusion from the labour market to help them participate in the local economy. Much of the plan targets potentially excluded groups such as ex offenders, NEET, LLDD, older workers & women.



For (ii) it will provide a ladder of learning from first rung projects, to specific vocational training. Where appropriate providers are required to target excluded groups such as BME or people with disabilities. One project specifically targets women to help them to gain skills through working with Social Enterprises. For (iii) some of the projects target SMEs and their employees helping local adult care SMEs upskill their employees to help fill identified skills gaps enabling them to grow.

The actions that are in this plan, as identified in the RDP, which will meet the overarching objectives above are

### **Actions to address the needs of individuals not currently in employment**

Provide access to training and learning for those most in need including: those with low or no basic skills or outdated skills, low or no qualifications; individuals for whom English is a second language; women in sectors or occupations in which they are under represented, ethnic minorities with low qualifications, those lacking key skills, people with disabilities and the over 50s.

### **Actions for individuals in employment**

Work with employers, particularly SMEs to provide access to learning and skills development for employees to improve employability, address skills gaps constraining growth and raise achievement levels particularly among those with low or no basic skills, outdated skills and low or no qualifications and those at a disadvantage in the labour market.

### **Actions to support businesses, particularly SMEs**

Provide support for businesses to develop high levels of adaptability and entrepreneurship. Address skills gaps and shortages in key regional priorities such as management and care to develop intermediate and higher level skills and to ensure commitment by SMEs to investing in the skills and development of their people, particularly those employees who are at a disadvantage in the labour market, and to enable them to take on and support learning and skills development for individuals in target groups.

## **4 BENEFICIARIES**

### **4.1 Number and categories of beneficiaries**

| <b>PF</b> | <b>ESF</b> | <b>SMEs</b> | <b>Target groups for ESF beneficiaries</b>  | <b>Match</b> | <b>Totals</b> |
|-----------|------------|-------------|---|--------------|---------------|
| 1.2       | 3,770      |             | Offenders in the community with emphasis on: substance misusers, BME, lone parents, disabled, mental health difficulties, no/out-of date quals & ESOL   | 980          | 4,750         |
| 2.2       | 1,550      | 200         | Employed & volunteers in VCOs & training providers, NEET young people with multiple barriers, LLDD adults, those recovering from mental illness, accidents and critical illness such as stroke and heart attack | 403          | 1,953         |

|               |               |              |   |              |               |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|---|--------------|---------------|
| 3.1           | 1,360         |              | Unemployed, care responsibilities, low skilled workers, young parents, ex-offenders, older workers, lacking basic skills, ESOL, BME   | 354          | 1,714         |
| 3.2           | 850           |              | Older workers with emphasis on low/no/out dated qualifications, without level 2, in part-time, temporary or insecure employment, without education & training opportunities                             | 170          | 1,020         |
| 4.1           | 6,200         | 430          | Workers in the adult and elderly care sector especially BME, older workers, lone parents, no/low qualifications, reluctant learners, disabled, working in domiciliary care                              | 1,240        | 7,440         |
| 4.2           | 340           | 280          | SMEs in the adult & elderly care sector and their owners/managers/supervisors especially those hard to reach employers, those with poor learning and development strategies, in domiciliary care sector | 68           | 408           |
| 5.1           | 500           | 200          | Women who face a disadvantage in the labour market to include, BME, ex-offenders, rural areas, returnees,   | 130          | 630           |
| <b>Totals</b> | <b>14,570</b> | <b>1,110</b> |   | <b>3,345</b> | <b>17,915</b> |

#### 4.2 Barriers to participation

| <b>Barrier</b>  | <b>How overcome</b>  |
|---|--|
| Lack of childcare   | Childcare to be funded/provided  |
| Lack of support   | Projects designed for disadvantaged groups will be funded to provide additional support such as one to one counselling             |
| Cost of training  | Free or subsidised training provided   |
| Cost of travel, especially in rural areas                 | Travel costs to be funded  |
| Discrimination due to gender, ethnic origin or disability | Projects either provided for discriminated groups specifically or targets given to providers for the recruitment from these groups |
| Low or no qualifications                                  | A variety of activities provided which provide a ladder of learning  |
| No or low basic skills                                    | Activities provided include screening for Skills for Life needs and referral   |
| Employers not training the workforce                      | Activities will be targeted to work with employers Training will be provided in skill shortage areas as identified by SSDA         |

## **5 & 6 EXPECTED RESULTS BY MEASURE, MATCH FUNDING & ADDED VALUE**

The table in Annex I shows the expected results by measure together with the amount and source of match funding and the amount of added value provided. It gives details of the number and type of qualifications, other outputs and outcomes. There will be an additional **14,570** beneficiaries who will achieve an additional **800** qualifications plus **2,300** attending non accredited first steps programmes. For those who are unemployed at the start of the programme at least **1,562** will go onto further education, training, employment and/or voluntary work. At least **1,110** companies will participate in the programme

## **7 ARRANGEMENTS FOR SELECTING PROVIDERS**

Providers will be selected through an open and competitive tendering process.

### **7.1 Assessment**

Eligible Tenders will be assessed independently by Co-financing staff and representatives of the relevant expert agency. They will be assessed against the sections in the tender proposal and marked against specific criteria which will be published in the tender documents. Those tenders that meet or exceed the requirements of the specification will be considered by an Appraisal Panel. See annex I for assessment and appraisal descriptors.

### **7.2 Appraisal**

The Appraisal Panel considers all tenders that have met or exceed the requirements of the specification and compares each one in terms of their added value. In addition the Panel ensures that a balanced package of projects is approved to support the priorities of the Action 4 Skills - South East Programme and the requirements of the Objective 3 ESF Regional Development Plan. They will appraise the requirements of the Specifications and compare any areas of risk identified at the Assessment Stage.

The Appraisal Panel will select the tenders for recommendation to the LSC Regional Management and Council. It should be noted that any 'lobbying' of Panel members will not be accepted and will result in automatic disqualification of an applicant's proposal

The Appraisal Panel will examine tenders against each other to see which best:

- Adds value
- Provides value for money
- Has sustainability
- Has a good track record
- Has the required capacity to deliver within the timescale

### 7.3 Arrangement for publishing Invitation to Tender (ITT)

During late February 2006 a promotional flyer will be widely distributed by the LSC to potential applicants and to key stakeholders, SEEDA, SSDAs & Jobcentre. The programme will be launched in late March 2006 with a regional event at Sandown Park, Surrey. People will be signposted to all the tender documentation which will be available on the website [www.Action4Skills.org.uk](http://www.Action4Skills.org.uk)

### 7.4 Support for providers

A tendering seminar will be held in March 2006 to help potential tenderers understand the process. However due to the rules of the competitive and open tendering process it will not be possible to advise potential providers on particular tender proposals. If any clarification of tender specifications is required or potential tenderers have queries they must be via email to [info@Action4Skills.org.uk](mailto:info@Action4Skills.org.uk) and the answers will be published via a FAQ page on the website [www.Action4Skills.org.uk](http://www.Action4Skills.org.uk).

### 7.5 Timetable

|                  |                                     |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 24 March 2006    | Invitation to tender                |
| 30 March 2006    | Programme Launch & seminar          |
| 19 May 2006      | Tender submission                   |
| 25 – 30 May 2006 | Assessment and appraisal of tenders |
| 4 June 2006      | Letters to providers                |
| 5 June 2006      | Pre-contract negotiations           |
| 1 July 2006      | Programme delivery starts           |
| 30 June 2008     | Programme delivery finishes         |

### 7.6 Feedback arrangements

Following the appraisal panels' selection of preferred projects, tenderers that have not been selected will be advised by letter that they have not been successful. They will also be advised that more detailed verbal feedback will be available on request after all contracts have been let. Where feedback is requested, the tenderer will be invited to meet with the LSC to obtain a summary of the assessment and appraisal of their tender application..

### 7.7 Complaints procedure

In the event that a tenderer feels that the assessment and appraisal of their project has been mis-managed and that the resulting decision is improper, then they are entitled to invoke the standard LSC Complaints Procedure that is available on request from the Learning and Skills Council. Please note that the decision made by the Learning and Skills Council to select or not select tender proposals is final and no funds will be held in reserve for appeals.

## 8 FUNDING

The table below shows how the ESF funding has been allocated and the total for each measure

| PFM | Activity  | ESF        | Total PFM  |
|-----|---|------------|------------|
| 1.2 | Supporting Offenders in the Community   | £3,117,196 | £3,117,196 |
| 2.2 | Capacity Building Action for Communities  | £2,000,000 |            |
| 2.2 | Employability and Learning Brokerage to support young people not in education, employment or training (NEET)          | £909,601   |            |
| 2.2 | Employability and Learning Brokerage for Adults aged 19 years and over with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities | £909,601   | £3,819,202 |
| 3.1 | Professionalizing the Skills for Life Workforce   | £1,531,500 |            |
| 3.1 | Engaging Disadvantaged Learners and Promoting Progression and Achievement   | £1,230,000 | £2,761,500 |
| 3.2 | Lifelong Learning for Older Workers   | £1,230,000 | £1,230,000 |
| 4.1 | South East Training Brokerage for Social Care   | £1,531,000 | £1,531,000 |
| 4.2 | Developing Learning Cultures in the South East's Adult Social Care SME Community                                      | £832,000   | £832,000   |
| 5.1 | Skills Development for Women through Social Enterprise  | £753,000   | £753,000   |

## 9 PROVIDER FUNDING

Where formula funding applies to the delivery of the learning in a tender specification then payment will be made according to the formula. However some tenders will not be based on formula funding since there is no formula for that type of learning. These projects will therefore be funded on the costs agreed in the contract. The costs the provider supplies in the tender application will be assessed as part of the appraisal process as to whether or not they provide value for money. The final price for the contract will be agreed as part of the contract negotiations.

Individual beneficiary support will be provided based on the costs supplied by the provider in the tender proposal and agreed in the contract cost.

A payment profile and delivery plan will be agreed with each provider. Payment will be made quarterly according to the profile. If a provider requires advance payment or a different frequency of payment this will be discussed with the LSC as part of the pre-contract negotiations.

## 10 ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT COSTS

The South East region LSC will have an ESF team to provide a dedicated resource for the overall administration, management and co-ordination of co-financing. In addition there will be contract managers, who manage individual ESF contracts with providers. This team is supplemented by other senior and specialist staff who will be involved in the roles of quality, evaluation, marketing and publicity, provider capacity building, financial control and provider auditing.

It is estimated the additional administrative costs of managing the Supplementary Plan over the period 1 January 2006 to 31 August 2008 at **£1,560,433**, which is

approximately 5% of the total project cost. This will help to ensure that the Plan is carried out effectively, that it is delivered in accordance with ESF requirements. A breakdown of administration costs is given below:

| Item  | FTE   | Annual salary inc on-cost * | 2006            | 2007            | 2008 Jan - Oct  | Total 2006 – 08   |
|---|-------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Programme dev't & launch including flyers, event at Sandown Park, web site design |       |                             | £70,000         |                 |                 | £70,000           |
| Programme Plan & Measure bid development, assessment & appraisal                  |       |                             | £32,000         |                 |                 | £32,000           |
| Contracts co-ordinator  | 1     | £40,200                     | £40,220         | £41,427         | £35,558         | £117,204          |
| Contract Administrator  | 0.5   | £13,400                     | £13,400         | £13,802         | £11,847         | £39,049           |
| Data support officer  | 0.5   | £17,350                     | £17,350         | £17,871         | £15,339         | £50,559           |
| Contracts advisers  | 10.75 | £26,800                     | £288,100        | £296,743        | £254,704        | £839,547          |
| Staff Travel  |       |                             | £54,000         | £54,000         | £45,000         | £153,000          |
| LSC audit and financial assurance cost  |       |                             | £40,200         | £41,406         | £42,648         | £124,254          |
| Project Closure additional staff costs  |       |                             |                 |                 | £28,457         | £28,457           |
| On programme marketing & publicity  |       |                             | £26,362         | £25,000         | £25,000         | £76,362           |
| Evaluation  |       |                             |                 |                 | £30,000         | £30,000           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  |       |                             | <b>£581,632</b> | <b>£490,248</b> | <b>£488,553</b> | <b>£1,560,433</b> |

\* 3% inflation per annum on salaries from Sept each year

## 11 MANAGING THE PLAN

The plan will be managed using the National LSC ESF co-financing system and project management system. This will enable the LSC to monitor the progress of the plan in terms of spend, beneficiaries and their composition, outcomes and outputs. The ESF team will produce quarterly reports for Government Office for the south east outlining progress against profiled targets and detailing any changes required to ensure that the plan meets its profiles.

### 11.1 Monitoring/Management of Sub-contractors

Each sub contractor will have a Contract Manager who will agree a delivery profile with them and monitor it quarterly. If a sub contractor is not meeting its profiled targets then either a recovery plan is agreed or the project is re-profiled. The sub-contractor's contract outlines the arrangements required for Access and Monitoring both by LSC staff and those of the DfES, DWP, National Audit Office, EU etc.

## 11.2 Support for Sub-contactors

Sub contractors will be supported by an assigned contract manager who will visit them at least quarterly to monitor progress towards achievement of agreed outputs, outcomes and, milestones. In addition, issues regarding quality, equal opportunities and management information will be addressed.

New providers will receive additional support to help them respond to the requirements of the Common Inspection Framework, Inspection by the Adult Learning Inspectorate and the LSC annual Provider Review.

## 11.3 Publicity

Sub-contractors are required in their contract to publicise the ESF support for their activity and to inform beneficiaries of the contribution of the ESF towards their programme.

## 11.4 Evaluation

Berkshire LSC provides a bi-monthly monitoring report to the LSC Council. It is intending to externally commission a final evaluation report to evaluate its achievements against the objectives of the co-financing plan.

## 12 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The LSC is an organisation with influence and it uses its leadership role pro-actively to achieve greater equality and diversity. The LSC is committed to ensuring that equality and diversity are at the heart of the organisation and, ultimately that they are 'embedded' in the LSC annual strategic and business planning cycles.

### 12.1 The Vision

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. Our vision is that, by 2010 *'young people and adults in England will have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and be part of a truly competitive workforce'*. The LSC says that it is *"Sure that this vision can only be achieved through a strong commitment to equality and diversity. Crucially, we must make sure that the sector reaches out to groups of people who are not currently involved in learning, as well as working to enhance access to different types of learning.'*

### 12.2 Equality and Diversity Strategy

The LSC has identified six priority areas or 'strands' of work:

- **Leadership** – We will provide vision and strong leadership in the sector, and will make more positive use of planning and funding to achieve greater equality and diversity
- **Reaching out to learners who are disengaged** – We will improve our approach to communicating with/reaching out to marginalised groups
- **Supporting compliance** - We will use the strength of our remit and work in partnership, promoting equality of opportunity among providers

- **Inclusive/Personalised Learning** –We will work to ensure that provision responds effectively to individual learners
- **Working with employers** – We will work with employers to promote the business case for diversity and inclusion in the workforce
- **Measuring outcomes** – We will measure impacts and outcomes in a way that identifies good practice in equality and diversity

### 12.3 Actions

In each tender document priority target groups have been stated which clearly identify the participation of potentially excluded groups as appropriate to the projects as follows

- People with disabilities
- Women
- NEET young people
- People from BME groups
- Women returners
- People aged 50+
- People who have low/no/out dated work-related qualification
- Older workers
- Offenders in the Community and ex-offenders
- Lone parents

This plan is concentrating on those most at a disadvantage in the labour market and supports the Action for Communities initiative and the LSC/voluntary sector compact. It will provide capacity building for VCOs which provide training and support at grass roots level.

The tender application will have a question on equal opportunities and how it will be embedded into the proposal which will form part of the selection procedure.

The recruitment of the target groups will be part of the provider's contract. They will have to produce a monthly EDIM report which will be monitored quarterly as part of the project monitoring and quality process of the LSC.

All providers are required to have an Equal Opportunities Policy for both staff and beneficiaries as part of the provider selection process. This policy is then monitored as part of the quality process.

To ensure that projects promote equality of access by ensuring that where appropriate providers use available ESF funding to support childcare & travel costs of learners and make learning available to those with disabilities.



### 13 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The LSC in its document 'From Here to Sustainability: the Learning and Skills Council's Strategy for Sustainable Development Supporting Document' (Sept 05) articulates the LSC's vision. The vision is that the learning and skills sector will proactively commit and contribute to sustainable development through its management of resources, the learning opportunities it delivers and its engagement with communities

The LSC within the South East is committed to the maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment. Addressing skills shortages and improving the take up of learning by disaffected individuals and groups to ensure that their potential in society is maximised, is the key to sustaining the general level of well-being, economic prosperity and low levels of unemployment that characterise much of the South East of England. This plan will also help employers by training their staff to ensure that they can meet the challenges posed for the economy of the South East by London 2012.

This plan provides opportunities that will allow everyone to fulfil their potential. The training will include provision for people with disabilities, NEET young people, unemployed people, women returners, people aged 50+, BME groups, ex offenders, offenders in the community and people with low or no or outdated work related skills. It also provides training for women to develop their skills via participation in social enterprises.

An element of the tendering process for contracts with the LSC will be demonstrating the effective use of natural resources (e.g. through use of recycled paper or other materials) and effective protection of the environment (e.g. beneficial or neutral to flora fauna and wildlife, pollution levels ozone depletion). Sustainable development is included in the selection process and potential providers have been advised to use the ESF Sustainable Development Toolkit in their project development process to ensure that they take into consideration Social, Environmental and Economic aspects of their provision.

This plan provides training specifically to help the Construction and Sports and Leisure sectors to upskill their employees. Both sectors have recruitment difficulties and need to grow their own staff in order to be competitive

This plan has been assessed using The ESF Sustainable Development Toolkit and had the following results:

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| • Providing opportunities for all              | <b>Excellent</b> |
| • Environmental protection and enhancement     | <b>Okay</b>      |
| • Providing skills business demand and require | <b>Excellent</b> |

## **14 ICT**

The Learning and Skills Council will ensure that ESF activities employ appropriate ICT in the provision and delivery of courses and other services. All programmes will screen for 'Skills for Life' needs which includes ICT and will refer beneficiaries to existing provision for ICT training where there are skills gaps

ICT may be incorporated into the following aspects of provision:

- as a tool for content delivery (e.g. language training, distance learning provision)
- as a project management tool for training providers
- as a system to co-ordinate audit and accounting information, financial flows, project monitoring and evaluation, statistical analysis
- as a method of outreach / marketing / dissemination and publicity on LSC provision through the websites/web site links to other key training providers / networks in each locality

The LSC will use ICT for project management and communication with training providers. Training providers are required to complete the on-line LSC Short Record (SR) form for each beneficiary and the LSC on-line monthly co-financing monitoring return (CMR).

## **15 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

### **15.1 Targets**

Each contract with providers will have quarterly profile giving targets for numbers of starters, leavers and outcomes. Following the contract negotiations the Measure Level Application Form will be completed and submitted to GOSE. Measure level profiles will be agreed with GOSE giving quarterly and cumulative profiles for spend, numbers of starters, leavers and outcomes per measure.

### **15.2 Milestones**

See annex III for details of milestones

### **15.3 Processes**

LSC National Office has developed a Contract Management system to assist with this process. All providers will have a clearly defined contract directly relating to the objectives of the Co-Financing Plan. The contract will contain key objectives and milestones and an LSC contract manager will be assigned to each project provider and will have the following responsibilities:

- ❖ Contract Negotiation.
- ❖ Monitoring Provider Performance.
- ❖ Collection of Management Information.
- ❖ Monitoring contract against key milestones.
- ❖ Evaluation of provider performance

The ESF Regional Co-ordinator will co-ordinate and manage the overall programme at dossier and measure level and will have the following responsibilities:

- ❖ Monitoring performance in relation to spend and deliverables.
- ❖ Analysing Management Information.
- ❖ Control and Monitoring of ESF Budgets.
- ❖ ESF Audit and internal support for Project Managers.
- ❖ Liaison with Government Office and other CFOs.

#### **15.4 Quality standards**

The Remit Letter from the Secretary of State to the Learning and Skills Council states that it will have “the key responsibility to plan, fund, monitor, and improve the quality of post-16 learning up to higher education”. One of the tools that the Council will utilise to monitor and improve quality is a performance review of its providers. These will be carried out according to the national guidelines now in place.

The Learning and Skills Council will conduct an initial assessment of new providers to ensure that they have the capacity to offer provision of an acceptable standard. It will also review the performance of all other providers on a regular basis to confirm that provision is, at a minimum, satisfactory and delivery observes the Council’s statutory responsibilities in respect of health and safety and equality of opportunity. The reviews will provide an early warning of any providers whose performance may cause concern and enable improvement strategies to be implemented.

Contract managers at the Learning and Skills Council will monitor carefully the overall performance of the providers as well as the achievement of milestones and outputs/outcomes. As part of the performance review process, providers will be required to provide a self-assessment report. Contract Managers will provide support to new providers where necessary on the self-assessment process. All LSC providers are required to comply with the common inspection framework and to have inspections from ALI or Ofsted. New providers must comply with this within 12 months of receiving a contract.

## Annex I - ASSESSMENT AND APPRAISAL DESCRIPTORS

| <p><b>ASSESSMENT:</b> <i>The purpose of assessment is to apply defined criteria to each tender and to determine whether the tender meets the specification requirements.</i></p> <p><i>Each tender is assessed independently by two assessors and moderated by the team leader.</i></p> <p><b>APPRAISAL:</b> The purpose of the appraisal process is to compare each successful tender using defined criteria. This is a group process facilitated by the chair.</p> |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| Assessment   | Descriptor  | Appraisal   |
| Exceeds Specification  | The tenderer's response has <b>exceeded</b> the minimum requirements of the specification.  | Significant Added Value or Added Value<br><b>(SAV) or (AV)</b>  |
| Meets Specification  | The tenderer's response has <b>met the minimum</b> requirements of the specification.   | Meets Requirements<br><b>(MR)</b>   |
| Partly meets Specification   | The tenderer's response has <b>met the minimum requirements for some, but not all</b> of the section of the tender and the response <b>represents a risk</b> to the LLSC in terms of the potential to deliver the provision successfully  | Tenders that are assessed as partly meets specification do NOT go through to the appraisal stage<br><b>(R )</b>   |
| Not at all   | The tenderer's response has <b>failed to meet</b> the specification in a critical and/or substantial area of the tender and <b>represents a serious risk</b> to the LLSC in terms of the potential to deliver the provision successfully. | Tenders that assessed as not at all meeting specification do NOT go through to the appraisal stage<br><b>(SR)</b> |

| <b>THE TENDER MEETS THE SPECIFICATION</b>             |                                     | <b>Exceeds specification</b><br><i>(Significant added value or added value)</i> | <b>Meets specification</b><br><i>(Meets requirements)</i> | <b>Partly meets specification</b><br><i>(Some risk)</i> | <b>Not at all</b><br><i>(Significant risk)</i> |
|---|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| Circle the agreed score                               |                                     | <i>Max score</i>  | <b>Max score</b>  | <b>Max score</b>  | <b>Max score</b>                               |
| 1A-C  | Fit to Tender                       | Not Scored: Fit tender (√)  |   | Yes   | No   |
| 2A-B  | Relevance of the Project            | 15  | 10  | 5   | 0  |
| 3A  | Project Delivery Plan               | 15  | 10  | 5   | 0  |
| 3B  | Project Management                  | 15  | 10  | 5   | 0  |
| 3C  | Partnership Monitoring & Management | 15  | 10  | 5   | 0  |
| 3D  | Use of ICT                          | 15  | 10  | 5   | 0  |
| 3E  | Equality of Access                  | 15  | 10  | 5   | 0  |
| 3F  | Quality                             | 15  | 10  | 5   | 0  |
| 3G  | Health and Safety                   | 15  | 10  | 5   | 0  |
| 3H  | Sustainability                      | 15  | 10  | 5   | 0  |
| 4A  | Beneficiary Targets                 | 15  | 10  | 5   | 0  |
| 4B  | Project Costs                       | This question is for information only & pre-contract negotiations               |   |   |  |
| <b>Overall the Tender meets the specification (√)</b> |                                     | <b>Exceeds Specification</b>  | <b>Meets specification</b>                                | <b>Partly meets specification</b>                       | <b>Not at All</b>                              |
| <b>Project to progress to Appraisal? (√)</b>          |                                     |   | <b>Yes</b>  |   | <b>No</b>                                      |

## Results by measure, match funding & added value

## Annex II

| PFM | Planned specifications  | Match Funding & Source | No match bens | Match funding outcomes | ESF funding | ESF bens             | Additional ESF outcomes   |
|-----|---|------------------------|---------------|------------------------|-------------|----------------------|---|
| 1.2 | Supporting Offenders in the Community                                     | £3,809,906<br>FE       | 980           | 980<br>NVQ 1/2         | £3,117,196  | 3770                 | 3,600 to receive IAG<br>700 attend progs of informal learning<br>600 progress to formal learning programmes   |
| 2.2 | Capacity Building Action for Communities                                  | £2,444,444<br>FE       | 104           | 104<br>NVQ 1/2         | £2,000,000  | 400<br>+ 200<br>SMEs | Research report mapping local need<br>Identification of network hub and spoke<br>Capacity building 200 organisations<br>20 local service agreements<br>20 Local Action for Communities networks<br>40 workshops<br>20 local networks delivery plans<br>Action for Communities brokerage<br>Evaluation report<br>Final report and impact assessment<br>Regional partnership review event |
| 2.2 | Employability and Learning Brokerage to support NEET young people         | £1,111,735<br>FE       | 52            | 52<br>NVQ 1/2          | £909,601    | 200                  | 100 individual assessments<br>200 ILPs<br>60 participating in a learning/training prog<br>90 progressing to employment and/or further learning  |
| 2.2 | Employability and Learning Brokerage for Adults 19 years & over with LLDD | £1,111,735<br>FE       | 247           | 247<br>NVQ 1/2         | £909,601    | 950                  | 950 receive IAG<br>900 ILPs<br>900 supported to access other progs<br>900 records of progress and achievements (RARPA process)<br>520 progress to further learning and/or employment  |
| 3.1 | Professionalizing the Skills for Life Workforce                           | £1,871,833<br>FE       | 172           | 172<br>NVQ 1/2         | £1,531,500  | 660                  | 300 level 3 or 4<br>4 mapping reports<br>4 interim and final evaluation reports<br>4 databases<br>4 new level 3 programmes developed<br>3 conferences/events<br>Establishment of a SE network (s) of SfL teachers   |

| PFM | Planned specifications   | Match Funding & Source | No match bens | Match funding outcomes | ESF funding        | ESF bens                         | Additional ESF outcomes   |
|-----|--|------------------------|---------------|------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| 3.1 | Engaging Disadvantaged Learners and promoting Progression and Achievement        | £1,503,333<br>FE       | 182           | 182<br>NVQ 1/2         | £1,230,000         | 700                              | 700 Initial Assessments<br>700 start First Steps Learning in SfL<br>600 IAG<br>600 ILPs<br>300 First Steps Learning in numeracy<br>300 to progress to further education or training/employment                                  |
| 3.2 | Lifelong Learning for Older Workers  | £1,503,333<br>WBL      | 170           | 170<br>NVQ 1/2         | £1,230,000         | 850                              | Research report<br>850 IAG<br>250 SfL assessments<br>800 participating in learning programmes<br>200 completing SfL programmes<br>700 supported by mentors<br>100 new courses developed<br>Dissemination event                  |
| 4.1 | South East Training Brokerage for Social Care SMEs                               | £1,871,222<br>WBL      | 1,240         | 1,240<br>NVQ 1/2       | £1,531,000         | 6200<br>+ 430<br>SMEs            | 6,200 Personal Development Plans<br>430 SMEs engaged<br>2,450 employees referred and tracked<br>Employers network established<br>86 employers referred for liP  |
| 4.2 | Developing Learning Cultures in the South East's Adult Social Care SME Community | £1,016,889<br>WBL      | 68            | 68<br>NVQ 1/2          | £832,000           | 340<br>+ 280<br>SMEs             | 280 organisational development plans<br>280 SMEs supported<br>340 manager/supervisors referred to training<br>6 SME networks developed<br>Interim and Final Impact studies reports  |
| 5.1 | Skills development for Women through Social Enterprise                           | £920,333<br>FE         | 130           | 130<br>NVQ 1/2         | £753,000           | 500<br>+200<br>SMES              | 500 attending networking events<br>300 undertaking social enterprise training<br>200 achieving accreditation<br>150 social enterprise advice & support sessions<br>15 social enterprises established<br>50 obtaining employment |
|     | <b>Totals</b>  | <b>£17,164,764</b>     | <b>3,345</b>  |                        | <b>£14,043,898</b> | <b>14,570<br/>+1110<br/>SMEs</b> |   |

## Milestones

## Annex III

| Milestones                               | 2006     |          |           |          | 2007     |          |          |         | 2008     |          |         |
|--|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---------|----------|----------|---------|
|  | Jan- Mar | Apr- Jun | Jul- Sept | Oct- Dec | Jan- Mar | Apr- Jun | Jul-Sept | Oct-Dec | Jan- Mar | Apr- Jun | Jul-Oct |
| Co-financing plan approved               | X        |          |           |          |          |          |          |         |          |          |         |
| ESF tenders issued                       | X        |          |           |          |          |          |          |         |          |          |         |
| Tenders assessed/approved                |          | X        |           |          |          |          |          |         |          |          |         |
| Provider contracts issued                |          | X        |           |          |          |          |          |         |          |          |         |
| Projects commence                        |          |          | X         |          |          |          |          |         |          |          |         |
| Match funding projects commence          |          |          | X         |          |          |          |          |         |          |          |         |
| Marketing and Promotion                  | X        | X        |           |          |          |          |          |         |          |          |         |
| Project reviews/ re-profiling undertaken |          |          |           | X        | X        | X        | X        | X       | X        | X        |         |
| Interim claims submitted to GOSE         |          |          | X         | X        | X        | X        | X        | X       | X        | X        |         |
| Evaluation/dissemination reports         |          |          |           |          |          |          |          |         |          |          | X       |
| Final claim prepared/submitted           |          |          |           |          |          |          |          |         |          |          | X       |