

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT SKILLS ACTION PLAN 2005-2008 (DRAFT 2)

1. INTRODUCTION

This Action Plan has been developed, on behalf of, the Accountable Body, by a team comprising representatives of the Bradford and District Learning Partnership, Bradford and District Economic Partnership, the LSCWY and Bradford Council's Regeneration and Housing Department, including those that are directly involved in regeneration in the Masterplan development and implementation across the District, namely, Airedale, Bradford City Centre and Manningham.

The purpose of the plan is to clarify and outline the key skills challenges for the Bradford and propose actions to deal with these skills challenges over the next 3 years.

In outlining the skills challenges it will look at the issues and barriers relating to skills needs of both individuals and employers already in the District and those looking to locate and develop in the District. It will look at what needs to change to enable long-term improvements in skills and to support the development of more competitive employers. It will put the skills needs in the context of the regeneration activities and economic development and growth opportunities and ensure that people in Bradford can benefit from these opportunities.

The actions outlined in the plan will directly link to these issues and specify how they can deal with the challenges and enable and support long-term skills development which meets the needs of the economy, the employers and individuals.

The overall aims of this action plan are:

- To put into place an infrastructure and mechanisms to ensure that learning and skills development activity in Bradford connects to and supports the employment and progression opportunities that are available through local and wider economic development, regeneration activities and public and private sector investments.
- To ensure that local people benefit and are actively involved in accessing the employment, progression and enterprise development opportunities, through improved skills and educational attainment and support, both within and outwith employment.

Both aims support the RES aims and objectives, in particular:

Releasing and enhancing the potential of all Yorkshire and Humber's people to achieve a healthy learning region and social inclusion (one of the three strategic aims);

Objective 4: Radically improve the development and application of education, learning and skills, particularly high-quality vocational skills; and

Objective 5: Connect all of the region's communities to economic opportunity through targeted regeneration activity.

2. CONSULTATION

Consultation on the issues and the development of actions which form part of this Action Plan has taken the following forms:

- Meetings with the Learning Partnership and several of its Action Programme Groups.
- Meetings with individual organisations and partnerships including BYDP, Shipley College and Education Business Partnership.
- Presentations at networking meetings for groups of organisations including Bradford's Social Care Sector, Objective 2 Workforce Development project partners and Area Regeneration Partnerships
- Specific sector meetings for key stakeholders, including construction
- The development of a background paper, which was circulated to 700+ individuals on the Learning Partnership, Economic Partnership and Regeneration and Housing Department databases and invited contributions of ideas for inclusion in the Action Plan.
- A one-day consultation conference, attended by 70+ individuals where issues and actions were discussed in workshops, and further contributions were requested.
- Consultation with the Learning and Economic Partnerships as part of the District endorsement mechanisms.

These different forms of consultation have involved a wide range of individuals and organisations from public, private and voluntary sectors and have contributed to the development of the key elements of the Action Plan, namely the identification of issues to be tackled and the types of actions that can tackle these issues.

3. NEEDS ANALYSIS – THE WIDER ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Strategic Economic Assessment Issues (issue to link to interventions stated in matrix)

The Sub-Regional Economic Analysis identifies several issues and challenges that need to be tackled as part of the development and implementation of the Investment Planning and the Skills Action Plan. These include the following:

- Decline in manufacturing across sub-region (although Keighley appears to be bucking the trend). The plan will seek to address this issue through actions that support up-skilling and development of progression routes into other employment. At the same time it will ensure that those that continue to be employed within the manufacturing sector are supported in higher skills development. Employers will also be supported through various initiatives at a sub-regional level through the Advanced Engineering & Manufacturing Cluster support and the Manufacturing sector support.
- 5 times as many jobs available, across the sub-region, through replacement demand as are newly created. This means a continued need for workers with relevant skills to undertake work of those moving to other jobs or retiring, and these may be in occupations where there is an overall decline in the actual number of jobs. Replacement demand may be quantitatively more significant than expansion demand. Actions in the plan will seek to improve the information and response with regard to existing employment-skills needs, in addition to new job opportunities.

- Digital cluster forecast growth in employment is significant. This element is a particular feature of the work in Airedale and the City Centre Masterplanning and the supporting skills interventions to be included in this Action Plan.
- Need to improve key stage 4 attainment and level 2 qualifications. Several interventions tackle this element, from both the employer and individual perspective.
- Mismatch between employer requirements and perceived/expected future job opportunities. Need to ensure learning opportunities meet needs and aspirations of individuals and employers.
- Need to tackle issue of decision-making about careers/employment -i.e. ensure improved information and advice to enable individuals to make informed choice of learning at each stage. This is a key element of the skills progression interventions.
- Literacy and numeracy levels need to be raised. This has long been recognised and supported in Bradford and the Action Plan aims to further support this activity through a range of interventions aimed at different groups.
- Promoting the competitive advantage of learning and skills to employers. This is one of the key objectives of this Action Plan.
- Ensure learning supports planned regeneration activities. This element is also a key objective of the plan.
- 33% of West Yorkshire people have no qualifications – need to work on increasing levels of participation in learning.
- Developing excellence in provision.

Alongside the issues identified in the Strategic Economic Assessment, we need to take into account the make-up of the Bradford Economy and the developments and opportunities currently taking place and being taken up.

Key facts and figures of the District and its economy:

- It is the 4th largest Metropolitan area covering 470km² with a population of 467,700.
- 23.9% of the population are from ethnic minority groups, the largest being those of Pakistani origin making up 14.5% of the total population.
- 191,250 of the population were in employment in 2001, however the District's economic activity rate has fallen by 3%.
- The largest employment sector employing 19.2% of those in employment is wholesale, retail and motor vehicles, with manufacturing coming a close second and employing 18.6% of the total in employment.
- There have been changes in occupations in recent years towards the higher skilled occupations and increases in people working in professional and associate professional and technical occupations, at the same time as a decline in the percentage of people working in skilled trades and process, plant and machine operatives occupations.
- 80% of the economically active are employees and 11% are self-employed, however 5.3% of the workforce were claiming unemployment benefit in May 2001.
- There are large disparities in levels of unemployment across the District, with the highest levels being found in the inner city wards of Bradford. Unemployment rates amongst Ethnic Minority groups and young people are significantly higher than other groups and long-term unemployment remains a serious problem.
- Bradford District is one of the most deprived in the country with a 9 inner city wards falling in the 10% most deprived in England and 33.6% of the population living in those wards.

Regeneration and Economic Development Activities and Issues

Bradford partners have agreed to considerable investment taking place for the following:

- ◆ The regeneration of the Manningham area, focusing on the Lister's Mill redevelopment, but extending to benefit the wider community.
- ◆ Creating economic growth in Airedale through the Airedale Partnership and supporting the recommendations of the Masterplanning exercise which has recently been commissioned.
- ◆ Supporting the regeneration of the city centre through Bradford Centre Regeneration, the URC, in implementing the Masterplan for Bradford City Centre

Funding has been allocated to support these spatial (and some business support) projects through the SRAP, SRIP, European Objective 2, and Council and other private and public sector partners.

Current and planned actions/developments include:

- Broadway redevelopment as part of the improvement of the retail infrastructure of the City Centre.
- Eastbrook Hall redevelopment for homes.
- The development of a television gallery at the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television.
- Lister Mills refurbishment to provide living, employment and social facilities.
- Lightwave – a National Centre for Creative industries, to be based in the City Centre, and will become a 'hothouse' complex integrating 'factory works' and talent campus for creative arts and enterprise in a lively social scene.
- Digital Park and the Advanced Digital Institute in Airedale.
- The Airedale Broadband project.
- The Sustainable Waste Park in Airedale.

As part of the Action Planning process the skills needs related to these activities are a priority; in the first instance to support the regeneration activities, and in the second, following regeneration and ensuring that local people benefit from the spatial investment and regeneration. This will include supporting the following, without pre-empting the Masterplan development and agreement in Manningham and Airedale:

- Supporting the renaissance of the City Centre, Airedale and Manningham through ensuring that the local people can benefit from employment opportunities in the construction and refurbishment activities. (**Interventions Will tackle these issues**).
- Ensuring that the local communities and organisations can connect to the developing long-term economic opportunities and are actively involved in developing working linkages between the developments and the local community fabric. This element will include interventions identify the future skills needs and to support the supply of skills, staff and services for the future activities and businesses to be located in the developments, at all the appropriate levels. As a minimum it is expected that future businesses and employers in these developments will need a range of vocational and occupational skills within the digital, cultural, advanced manufacturing, retail, hospitality and education sectors, including the high level skills required.

It is recognised that the current labour market and local skills supply is not geared up to take full advantage of these opportunities and much work needs to be undertaken to

ensure that local people benefit from this investment. Several interventions included in the Action Plan focus on this and it is a key objective of it.

In addition to these “flag-ship” activities there is considerable regeneration activity taking place supported through previous Yorkshire Forward funding –SRB – and through New Deal for Communities. The skills needs of these area-based regeneration initiatives will also be tackled as part of the Skills Action Plan.

These include:

- ◆ Bradford Trident, a community led company running the New Deal for Communities £50 million ten year regeneration scheme in the Park Lane, Marshfields and West Bowling areas of Bradford. Existing skills related programmes include a training awards scheme, college and university bursaries and support for construction industry training through Youthbuild. It is expected that such training schemes will also link to the new developments taking place elsewhere in the District.
- ◆ Regen 2000 is a community-led regeneration scheme using a £28.5 million award from the Government’s Single Regeneration Budget to regenerate the Barkerend and Leeds Road areas of the city along with parts of the city centre.
- ◆ Local Development and Employment PACTs covering 10 areas of high areas of high unemployment in the District, where community partnerships have been set up to create jobs and help people into employment and training. Over the past three years, with the help of £4.5m of Neighbourhood Renewal Funding, the pacts have set in training/access to employment projects to the value of £26m (including £13m European funds) to generate 493 new jobs, bring 653 jobless people into work and provide training to 1576 in these communities. It is envisaged that the good practice developed by these pacts, will continue to be supported as part of the skills development infrastructure in the District.

Public Sector Investment and Opportunities

There are recruitment issues and opportunities relating to potential and planned investment by Government Departments and Services, in particular, the relocation of Government Departments and the investment to support the National Health Service for the implementation of the Health Plan.

Government Departments Relocation: As a result of the Lyons Report and the recommendation that Bradford is an appropriate location, considerable work is currently taking place to attract Government Departments to the District, primarily based on a package of available offices, the number of un/under-employed graduates with relevant skills (but currently with limited local employment opportunities), affordable housing and lifestyle. The Plan will seek to build on this current work and ensure that local people can access employment at the range of levels that are likely to be available, not only in direct employment, but in employment with suppliers to the Departments.

Health Service Investments: There are currently around 53,000 staff working in the 25 NHS organisations in West Yorkshire. This represents around 6% of the total West Yorkshire workforce and makes the NHS the largest single employer in the sub-region. There are healthcare staff employed in the independent and voluntary sector in addition to this figure. There are plans to grow the numbers of NHS staff significantly over the next 10-15 years, this will apply to all staff groups, clinical and non-clinical. As the population is predicted to remain static, or fall, over this same period of time, it will

become increasingly important to recruit from a wider range of areas than has happened in the past. It will be more important than ever to encourage and support existing staff to develop new skills and enable them to progress into new work roles. This creates opportunities both for existing staff and for those looking to join the NHS in entry level or more senior posts.

Of the 53, 000 NHS staff in West Yorkshire, around 24% are employed in the Bradford health economy. There are a number of issues which relate to the Bradford patch specifically, including the need to continuously support and develop the diversity of the workforce, from entry to senior management level.

[Additional info re issues/skills requirements](#)

Sectoral Developments, Opportunities and Issues

Much of the Area Regeneration activity has a particular sectoral focus, building on the strengths and opportunities within those specific localities. However, those sectors already specified, along with others, tend to be important across the whole of the District because of cluster, supply chain linkages, location and based on employment figures and output. The sectors where there are opportunities for employment, particularly in new jobs in the District and the surrounding area are:

- Digital
- Food
- Cultural, creative & media industries
- Tourism & hospitality
- Specialist engineering
- Social and health care
- Retail
- Construction

Interventions at both the sub-regional and local level will be included in the action plan to enable providers to respond to the specific skills demands and needs of these sectors. The issues that are specific to Bradford include the following:

[More detail about the skills issues/needs within each sector that is specific to Bradford to be included](#)

Within the District there are sectors that were previously seen as growth sectors and supported but are now increasingly affected by globalisation and the impact of cheaper sourcing overseas. These include:

- Electronics
- Call Centres

Actions need to be included in the Plan to support the employers and the individual involved in these increasingly vulnerable sectors, in particular to enable employees to take up opportunities that make use of their skills in other sectors. An example of this is to ensure mechanisms are in place for those currently involved in call centre work in vulnerable companies to access any similar work through the potential relocation of the Government Departments in Bradford and surrounding area. [Intervention... addresses this issue.](#)

4. NEEDS ANALYSIS - THE SKILLS BASE AND CHALLENGES

The action plan will also need to take into account the specific issues relating to the existing labour market and supply of people with the relevant skills including educational attainment, training and the supporting infrastructure.

Facts and Statistics (each point will link to specific actions in the matrix)

- Educational attainment levels are significantly lower than national averages. At Key Stage 2 the average point score for the LEA was 26.4 compared to 27.4 nationally; pupils gaining 5 or more GCSEs (grade A-C) is 37.3% compared to 51.6% nationally. This issue will be tackled by **interventions.....**
- Almost 15 percent of the employed population in Bradford and district have no qualifications of these, some groups are more likely than others not to have qualifications: Unskilled (41%), semi-skilled (33%), people with disabilities (24%) and those working in manufacturing (22%) people over 50 years of age (28%) are also significantly represented in the group with no qualifications. Work is currently starting through the Employer Training Pilot to enable these groups to obtain level 2 qualifications. However, considerable work needs to take place to motivate and engage the individuals and this element is to be tackled in **intervention....**
- People working for small businesses tend to have lower levels of qualifications than those employed in larger organisations. This issue will be tackled by interventions under the Skills Strategy priority of the Action Plan, in particular **interventions....**
- 25 percent of those described as economically inactive have no qualifications. This issue has been the subject of a range of widening participation and access to employment activity and in particular **interventions....**
- Lack of basic skills is a particular issue for Bradford District, with 27.6% of the working age population having poor literacy and 28.7 with poor numeracy, compared to 24.0% for both poor literacy and poor numeracy at the national level. **Interventions....** will assist in tackling this issue, alongside work that will take place on a sub-regional and regional level.

Education and Learning Provision

The key features of learning provision in Bradford District are:

- A wide and diverse range of education provision offering places for 89,339 pupils in 28 Secondary Schools with current or planned sixth forms, 157 primary schools, 7 nursery schools and 12 special schools – in 2001-02 there were over 4800 6th Formers.
- Three highly regarded Colleges of Further Education, which in 2002 offered a total of 54 courses at level 1, 75 courses at level 2 and 129 courses at level 3 to over 4,500 students.
- A renowned University with strong research credentials and world class Management Centre.
- 27 Providers of work-based learning operating across the District. 22 of these who were included in the Area Inspection offered 2,655 people learning opportunities during 2002-03.
- A vibrant Community based learning infrastructure supported by the Voluntary Sector and Community Groups. There are approximately 4,000 community and voluntary groups across the District as a potential channel for increased involvement in adult learning.

- A particularly active Careers service in Careers Bradford conducting interviews, parental discussions, attending parents' events and placing young people into jobs or training; and
- Numerous examples of innovative and ground-breaking projects usually carried out, on a collaborative basis amongst partners in Bradford, including, for example, the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television which offers formal and informal learning programmes with national reach and which is increasingly delivering media-related creative learning programmes into the District's schools, colleges and university.

Recent reviews undertaken of the provision in the District show a mixed picture of the quality of education and learning available.

Key findings from the LSC's Quality Improvement Progress Report undertaken during autumn 2002 include:

- All sixth form colleges are overall strong or excellent;
- 93% of FE college provision is acceptable or above.
- 50% of work-based learning providers performance are giving cause for concern, coupled with the fact that 55% of work-based learners are in learning that is less than acceptable;
- Larger providers are more likely to be strong performers;
- However, overall, 90% of all learners are in learning that is acceptable or above.

Key findings from the fundamental review of provision undertaken by Dr Terry Melia during February to May 2003 add to the LSC review to give a wider picture of some of the priorities arising and the key points include:

- Bradford schools and their pupils perform significantly below the national average.
- Bradford's 'In Learning' figure for 2001 was the lowest in England for LEA areas. In similar comparison for 2002, it has moved to 10th from bottom.
- Some schools have a pupil population that is almost entirely white, whereas in others the pupils are almost exclusively from minority ethnic groups.
- One third of Bradford's school sixth forms have 150 pupils or less.
- Large numbers of pupils remain in the sixth forms of schools that are in special measures or display significant weaknesses.
- In view of the good performance of FE colleges it is surprising that they are not popular with year 11 school leavers, only 17% of the 64% who continue their education post 16 opt to attend college.
- There is over-provision of education programmes at level 3 and insufficient at level 2 and below to satisfy the needs of Bradford's learners.

The recommendations of the fundamental review include a focus on:

- Increasing provision at Level 2 and below (to be addressed through **interventions...**)
- Encouraging a collaborative approach to lifelong learning amongst the education and training institutions (this is a key objective of the Action Plan and is addressed through all relevant interventions as a cross-cutting measure)
- Widening participation in education and training, particularly for those who have not yet achieved level 1 qualifications (to be tackled through **interventions...**)
- Developing ICT as an aide to the delivery of learning programmes (being addressed through **interventions...**)
- Addressing the issue of ethnic segregation that is a feature of Bradford's school

provision.

These are now being addressed through the Confederations infrastructure, but some elements are also included as part of this Action Plan, as indicated in the parenthesis.

Issues Identified in the Economic Strategy

As has already been stated, it is important that this Skills Action Plan is developed within the wider economic context and link with relevant strategies and activities. In particular it will need to take into account the priorities identified in the Economic Strategy.

The Strategy clearly identifies the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats within the local economy.

A Summary of the SWOT Analysis of Bradford & District

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Location ❖ Sectoral strengths ❖ World class businesses ❖ HE/FE infrastructure ❖ Quality of life ❖ Natural environment ❖ Cultural assets ❖ Manufacturing base ❖ Architectural heritage 	<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Urban Regeneration Company ❖ Airedale Partnership ❖ Manningham Mills ❖ Success of Leeds ❖ Growth of local businesses in key sectors/clusters ❖ Greater exploitation of the HE Sector ❖ Competitive cost structure ❖ Youthful population
<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Low productivity ❖ Low educational attainment ❖ Low basic skills attainment ❖ Low employment rates ❖ Lack of quality premises/development sites ❖ Poor road/rail connections for a major city ❖ Run down city centre, poor retail offer ❖ Image 	<p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Two speed region ❖ Two speed District ❖ Skill shortages ❖ Lack of labour market flexibility ❖ Increasing competition for investment ❖ Lack of co-ordination, strategic planning and leadership ❖ Decline of manufacturing base ❖ Increasing levels of economic inactivity and worklessness

The premise is that Skills, and ensuring Bradford has people with the required skills, are implicitly, if not explicitly, essential to building on many of the strengths, taking advantage of several of the opportunities and reducing the many of the weaknesses and threats. The following give an indication and examples of where skills development and interventions can support the long term development of the economy, for those elements not already outlined in the earlier sections of this plan.

Location:

The District's location is well-placed to provide the skills and labour for opportunities not only within the District, but in the surrounding area, recognising the fact that one in four people that live in the District work outside Bradford. A clearer picture is required of

these opportunities and the types of skills needed with a view of providing these skills to Bradford based people and supporting them to take advantage of these opportunities. (Interventions under the Learning Connectivity Priority will seek to improve information about these opportunities).

HE/FE infrastructure:

Both the HE and FE sector organisations in Bradford provide quality learning and qualifications. In order to ensure that their provision meets the local needs of individuals and employers and support technological advancements, both in terms of delivery methods and types of courses, investments must continue to be made in delivery equipment, learning materials and training of trainers. Where there are specialisms and the organisations are leading edge providers, investments are needed to retain that status. Investments must also be made to improve planning of provision, to ensure that, sectors and occupations, in particular where growths in opportunities and demand are forecasted over the next few years, can be supplied with local people with the required skills. Where there are gaps in such investments that specifically relate to the local skills needs, this Action Plan will seek to address these gaps as far as it is able, alongside the mainstream funding that is available through **interventions....**

Another element of this action plan is to ensure that graduates are retained in employment within the District, by linking directly with regeneration opportunities such as project management and the higher skills occupation opportunities in sectors that have a demand. **Interventions ...**address these issues.

Cultural Assets:

Improving the leadership and management skills of those involved in tourism and cultural facilities and services could provide additional opportunities and this may include the development of Saltaire as a World Heritage site by working with local businesses, Shipley College, Council and other services to develop and improve enterprise and creativity and in turn develop new jobs. This is an element that is addressed in **interventions....**

Success of Leeds:

This provides opportunities for Bradford's people to find employment, whilst also providing Bradford-based businesses with opportunities to market and supply services as part of a wider geographical cluster. Enterprise and leadership skills improvements may open up these opportunities. Furthermore, Bradford will need to build on the fact that Leeds' limited and increasingly costly property availability means that businesses in some supporting sectors may not be in a position to locate offices in Leeds, but will nevertheless wish to be close-by. Thus by developing a strategy and a labour market to meet the skills needs of such business services Bradford may become an attractive alternative.

Lack of Labour Market Flexibility

This weakness is a particular focus of the Access to Employment actions in the Action Plan.

Lack of Coordination, Strategic Planning and Leadership:

The Learning Partnership, Economic Partnership and the Regeneration and Housing Department working together on developing this Action Plan is a starting point for tackling these elements in terms of skills and linking directly to economic needs. These

elements will be addressed further as part of the Learning Connectivity actions and particularly focus on improved planning of provision and linking directly with economic and development opportunities, whilst also ensuring that those organisations that are providing Information, Advice and Guidance to individuals to support learning and career choices are also fully aware of the opportunities available locally.

5. LINKAGES

The needs and the actions identified in this Plan fit within a wider strategic and operational context, and work will take place as part of the Commissioning process to ensure that appropriate linkages are made for each of the actions and projects supported. As a starting point, all actions under each of the priorities should link and build on existing work taking place. The relevant Strategies and activities are identified under each of the Priority areas below.

Widening Participation interventions link to the following:

- RES Objective 4 and FRESA
- LSC Strategic Plan
- Strategic Learning Plan, in particular Community based learning Action Programme and b-connected strategy
- Building Communities Strategy
- Neighbourhood Learning Plans
- NHS workforce development strategy
- Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities
- Area Regeneration Masterplans and Strategies
- Adult Learning Plan
- Promoting Learning Excellence strategy
- Cultural Strategy

Skills Progression interventions link to the following:

- LSC Strategic Plan
- Strategic Learning Plan, in particular Employability Action Programme and IAG Action Programme
- IAG plan
- Promoting Learning Excellence strategy
- Area Regeneration Masterplans and Strategies

Implementing the Skills Strategy interventions link to the following:

- National Skills Strategy
- Strategic Learning Plan, in particular Workforce Development Action Programme
- LSC Workforce Development plan
- Business Support theme actions
- CoVE activities in the District
- FE Employer Engagement strategies
- Sub-regional cluster and sector strategies.

Enterprise skills and creative learning interventions link to the following:

- RES Objective 2

- Business Support theme actions
- HE/FE progression plans
- Economic Strategy
- EBP plan
- Sub-regional cluster and sector strategies
- Cultural Strategy
- Area Regeneration Masterplans and Strategies
- Promoting Learning Excellence strategy

Learning Connectivity interventions link to the following:

- Strategic Learning Plan, in particular Workforce Development Action Programme
- Economic Strategy
- Area Regeneration Masterplans and Strategies

Access to Employment interventions link to the following:

- Economic Strategy
- Strategic Learning Plan
- Jobcentre plus plan

6. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall aims for the Action Plan are:

- To put into place an infrastructure and mechanisms to ensure that learning and skills development activity in Bradford connects to and supports the employment and progression opportunities that are available through local and wider economic development, regeneration activities and public and private sector investments.
- To ensure that local people benefit and are actively involved in accessing the employment, progression and enterprise development opportunities, through improved skills and educational attainment and support, both within and outwith employment.

The Strategic Objectives are:

- To improve educational and skills attainment particularly amongst non-learners, those without qualifications and those with basic and key skills needs, through supported access and engagement into and progression through learning.
- To enable the supply of skills to meet the demand for skills, by improving responsiveness and provision, through improvements in strategic planning, information use, delivery methods, technologies and delivery infrastructure.
- To promote to employers and individuals the benefits of learning leading to improved competitive advantage and employment opportunities, respectively, and specifically linking to access to the opportunities as a result of local and sub-regional economic development and growth.
- To address the disengagement of individuals from the labour market, through information, learning and support to access employment opportunities.

- To support graduate and skills retention with the District linked to mechanisms to improve employment opportunities for the higher skilled.
- To encourage creative and entrepreneurial responses to local needs by developing and channelling such skills into learning and regeneration.
- To encourage a collaborative approach to lifelong learning and provision and support delivery amongst the education, training institutions and other public, private and voluntary sector stakeholders – this will be a cross-cutting objective.

7. INTERVENTIONS MATRIX

See Annex 1

8. SKILLS ACTION PLAN MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Basis for proposals

The following proposals are based on the information available currently regarding the proposals for the delivery of the skills and access to employment elements of the sub regional investment plan. Consequently, they are liable to change should the scale or processes involved be altered.

In particular, the proposals around management of the accountable body function are based on the following assumptions:

That there will be one contract agreed with the LSC, sub divided into five strands of activity:

- Widening participation
- Skills progression
- Delivering the skills strategy
- Learning connectivity
- Enterprise and creative learning

That in addition there will be one contract with Yorkshire Forward, delivering the access to employment activities identified for Bradford.

That the scale of financial resources available for the district is in line with current projections based on a range of indicators across the five strands, and assumptions made regarding the allocation of Single Pot and ESF resources to the skills agenda at a sub regional level.

Project management arrangements

Reporting to the LSC will be in the form of quarterly summary claims, regular steering group meetings and LSC ex-officio membership of the workforce development commissioning and other similar groups as per the priority which will manage the overall process within Bradford. Issues of evaluation will be carried out at a project level by delivery contractors (required under ESF) and at a district and process level to terms agreed with the LSC. These processes have already been tested in the two year period of funding ending December 2004.

An action plan steering group has already been established to provide mechanisms for initial consultation around the action plan's development, draft proposals, and ensure appropriate endorsement is achieved at a district level.

This group involves staff from the Learning Partnership, Economic Partnership and LSCWY as well as officers involved in the spatial and ICE elements of the sub regional investment plan, to ensure linkages are made between the skills agenda and wider developments in the district. It has also involved officers who will be involved in the delivery of the required accountable body function, to ensure appropriate processes and mechanisms are developed.

It is anticipated that this steering group will continue to take an active role until the contract with the LSC and accountable body is agreed and in place. At this point in time the staff employed to deliver the accountable body function will take the lead. It is anticipated that the need for an officer steering group will then be less pressing, as the key relationship will be between the team and the Learning Partnership / Economic Partnership, as the groups with the selection mandate in the commissioning process (see below).

Staffing structure

A team of three staff will be employed to manage the delivery of the action plan on a daily basis. This team will comprise of a senior funds officer, appointed at scale PO4/FE equivalent, who will report to the external resources manager in Regeneration and Housing/ Head of Business Enterprise Support. The senior funds officer will oversee the monitoring and support officer (SO2) and a dedicated administrative / systems officer (Scale 4).

It is anticipated that a specific recruitment exercise will be undertaken to ensure that the appropriate skills are brought into the wider external resources team. However, the team is already well accustomed to and experienced in the delivery of accountable body functions.

Project size

At this stage it is not possible to precisely determine the number of projects which will be commissioned to deliver the action plan. Although this is in part because of uncertainties regarding the scale of the budget available, it is also important to appreciate that each identified activity within the matrix may result in either one project or many.

Nevertheless, it is anticipated that there will be in the region of 30 projects per annum.

Management Fee

The following table provides an indication of the scale of resources required to deliver an effective accountable body function, that will provide the range of services set out in this section of the action plan. As above, these figures may require further refinement, particularly if there are any substantial changes in the scale of the resources available, or the management arrangements proposed by the LSC.

Skills Action Plan	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	TOTAL
Senior Regeneration Funds Officer (PO4)	£37,237	£39,332	£41,487	£118,055
Monitoring and Support Officer (SO2)	£29,155	£30,916	£32,717	£92,789
Admin/Systems Officer (Sc4)	£18,497	£19,762	£20,484	£58,743
Staff appointment costs	£3,000	£1,500	£1,500	£6,000
Subtotal direct staffing	£87,889	£91,510	£96,188	£275,587
Running costs (meetings, training, office costs)	£8,789	£9,151	£9,619	£27,559
Management input (development/support)	£4,752	£4,893	£5,041	£14,686
Marketing and promotional events	£10,000	£8,500	£7,000	£25,500
Independent audit costs	£10,000	£10,500	£11,000	£31,500
Independent annual evaluation	£10,000	£10,500	£11,000	£31,500
Organisational overheads/risk contingencies	£32,857	£33,764	£34,962	£101,583
Total	£164,287	£168,818	£174,810	£507,915

Funding also to be included for LP/EP Liaison and to support improved MIS/Tracking and reduces bureaucracy across the delivery programme

COMMISSIONING PROCESS

Marketing and promotion

Wide consultation has already taken place on the content of the action plan, as outlined in earlier sections. It is anticipated that upon endorsement of the plan by the Learning Partnership and Economic Partnership within Bradford, agreement by the LSC, and the confirmation that the LSC proformas to the West Yorkshire Economic Partnership / Yorkshire Forward have the green-light, a summary of the agreed proposals and key next steps will be disseminated, to ensure that interest is maintained among partner organisations.

The subsequent key stage will be the completion of the initial commissioning prospectus. A commissioning development group is proposed, to ensure that a wide input into the refinement of activities identified within the plan is achieved.

The commissioning prospectus will be disseminated widely. The Learning Partnership has a database of over 700 individuals, and it is anticipated this network will be used. In addition, networks established through the Economic Partnership and delivery of other relevant programmes, such as SRB and New Deal for Communities will also be employed to ensure a wide range of partners from different backgrounds are made aware of the opportunities presented by the action plan.

A marketing and promotion budget of £10,000 for 2005/06 has been included in the budget for the management of the action plan, reflecting the need for awareness raising and support within the commissioning process, and the need for more intensive support in earlier stages. A range of events will be planned, focused according to need and theme, to ensure that a range of delivery agents are secured to implement the action plans various strands.

Commissioning timetable

A clear timetable for commissioning and delivery will be established as part of the strategy for developing and delivering a well balanced action plan that reflects capacity, early development work and the need to maintain headroom to deliver flexibility and local responsiveness.

The initial focus will be on contracting with those organisations that are included in the action plan to deliver early project activity (from April 2005), and which have developed appropriate partnership proposals that provide the basis for such inclusion.

The second step will be to commission an initial round of projects, to deliver against activities and interventions which are clear, but for which there are currently no established delivery agents.

However, it is not anticipated that this will form the sole commissioning round. Instead it is proposed that there are annual rounds, which will ensure a staged and managed approach to development, a flexible action plan that responds to local needs and opportunities, including those identified and agreed through Master Planning activities, and the ability to compensate for under spending projects, given that contract agreements will be for up to three years in duration.

Commissioning of specific activities will include some focus on specific delivery sectors, particularly through the publicity and support offered as part of the process. However, general information on all activity to be commissioned will be generated as widely as possible, to ensure that other organisations are given the opportunity to solicit further detail if necessary.

Appraisal and selection of projects

The intention is to establish a working group to develop the activities described within the matrix appended to this action plan into fully specified proposals that it is possible to effectively use as the basis of the commissioning prospectus. Based on a model established during the delivery of the Workforce Now LSC/ESF contract in Bradford, the working group will involve key stakeholders to ensure that the skills and specialisms needed are maximised. Accountability and transparency will be carefully managed as part of this process, to ensure that any potential conflicts of interest are managed. It may prove necessary to further focus this working group on the strands of the action plan, forming separate groups for the various priorities.

The staff employed as part of the accountable body function will appraise the project proposals that result from this commissioning process. The criteria used in this appraisal will be open and available, to ensure that the process remains transparent throughout. The full criteria that will be implemented will be developed by the team and stakeholders, based on the platform of criteria used for the past two years.

The generic SRIP criteria developed by the West Yorkshire Economic Partnership will be incorporated into this exercise. These include:

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Criteria	Key Review Factors
Strategic fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RES Objectives • Theme Group/WY SEA Priorities • Fit with other Theme/Spatial proposals • With RES cross-cutting themes (environmental good practice, partnership, geographic adaptation, social inclusion and diversity, creativity, innovation & technology, employment and skills) • Relevant European programmes
Duplication and overlap does it meet a gap in provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duplication/competition with existing provision? • Evidence of need and demand
Linkages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linkages with other programmes? • Evidence of learning from good practice • Evidence of innovation
Critical mass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical mass (programme is of sufficient scale) • Impact e.g. on local economy
Capacity to deliver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credibility and track record of effective delivery, eg proposed support for an existing programme • Clear delivery plan, with milestones • Readiness to be delivered • Evidence of learning from good practice
Value for Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution to Tier 3/European outputs • Proportionality • Addresses market failure • Demonstrator effect, eg regional roll out/best practice
Funding mix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate funds identified, including reason for YF resources • Potential for European Funding or other support?

Part B type assessment can be carried out either in house or by use of independent appraisers on a piece work basis (as was successful in the Council administered Key Fund 1997-2000).

The officers will make recommendations on the basis of these criteria to the Learning and Economic Partnerships, which will have the selection mandate for projects. This relationship between the accountable body and endorsing partners will be formalised, to ensure that the risks implicit in sub contracting arrangements are managed effectively.

In addition, there will be a clear separation of functions, provided through the officers on the team, to ensure that there is no conflict of interest when the Council/College bids for funds, in a separate capacity to that in which it will act as accountable body.

SUB CONTRACTING

Capacity to delivery

The appraisal of the project proposals resulting from the commissioning process will include an assessment of organisational capacity to deliver. This will include a consideration of an organisation's audited accounts, alongside track record and previous experience. A preferred providers approach will not be taken, however, in order to ensure that innovative actions and new organisations are supported.

Organisations applying for funding will be subject to fit for purpose checks, tested against LSC and European criteria. These will be developed based on past performance and experience, organisational status (public bodies exempt), and evidence of capacity dependent upon local knowledge, independent assessment. (Details to be developed).

Risk assessment

As part of the commissioning process, project proposals will include an assessment of risk, and the actions planned by the project delivery agents to minimise and manage them. The validity of these arrangements will be assessed in the appraisal of the proposals.

The department of Regeneration and Housing is currently developing a risk assessment methodology for its own internal projects, which incorporates elements of private sector risk management as well as Yorkshire Forward's own methodology for the risk assessment of projects. It is anticipated that this model could be adopted to provide a pragmatic methodology for the risk assessment of project specifications and proposals, as part of the action plan process. It is important to ensure that this does not lead to a culture of risk aversion, but rather that identified risks are effectively managed during implementation and delivery.

The contractual agreement between the accountable body and sub contractors will identify the detail of the project to be delivered. Included in this will be spend and output targets. If projects do not demonstrate ability to deliver over a sustained period, remedial action will be taken by the accountable body (see below).

A comprehensive risk assessment should be completed that identifies:

- All the inherent and potential risks
- The systems already in place to address the risk
- The actions that will be undertaken to minimise the risk
- Who will be responsible for implementation and carry overall responsibility
- Financial "at risk" profile indicating the contingent sum required to cover risk.

Milestones

Approval of action plan	December 2004
Update to stakeholders	January 2005
YF / LSC contract in place	January 2005
LSC / CBMDC or College contract in place	February 2005
First phase projects discussion (where lead partner identified /agreed)	February 2005
Accountable body / contract management team advertised	March 2005
Team in place	April 2005
First phase contracts issued	April 2005
Contract management meeting with LSC	Quarterly
Monitoring returns	Quarterly
Commissioning specification workshops	April 2005
Launch of commissioning prospectus	May 2005
Appraisal and selection of projects	June 2005
Contracting with providers begins	July 2005

Second round of commissioning workshops	January 2006
Launch of commissioning prospectus	February 2006
Workshops	February 2006
Appraisal and selection of projects	March 2006
Contracting with round 2 providers.	March 2006
Third round of commissioning workshops	January 2007
Launch of commissioning prospectus	February 2007
Workshops	February 2007
Appraisal and selection of projects	March 2007
Contracting with round 3 providers.	March 2007

Contracting and payment

The Council/College, as main contractor to the LSC will enter into parallel sub-contracts for each element of activity, collectively addressing objectives activities and outputs as set out in a commissioning framework. Safeguards will include passing condition risk to sub-contractors. Negotiations will need to take place to determine the safeguards on payment for evidenced activity *dependent* upon the additional requirement of output quotas, to ensure that the package as a whole is not seen to fail to deliver because of one or several component parts.

De-commitment of grant arrangements will be put in place to enable re-contracting of activity, and failure to claim or report adequately will result in withholding of grant pending investigation. The phased delivery of the programme will involve bidding rounds with overlapping projects allowing re-contracting and new contracting to take place on a pre-determined timescale. Payment will normally be in arrears on condition of receipt of grant from LSC. Exceptions may be made subject to a risk assessment for small organisations with cash-flow difficulties, subject to an overall maximum "at risk" figure to be clawed back during the life of these smaller projects. Clawback will also apply if audit findings are negative.

Monitoring

Visits to projects will take place on a scheduled and random basis to ensure activity is evident and trainees are as reported. Programme management will be operated on the basis set out above.

Health and Safety / Equal Opportunities / Quality of Delivery

The appraisal process for project proposals will encompass both delivery issues such as health and safety and quality of delivery, alongside the RES cross cutting themes that encompass equal opportunities. At the project proposal stage, potential delivery agents will be asked to specify what procedures they will establish to ensure effective and appropriate delivery. A gateway approach will be taken during appraisal, by which all projects will be required to demonstrate appropriate plans and mechanisms before they can move towards approval and contracting.

During delivery, the implementation of the systems outlined at proposal stage will be monitored as part of the overall monitoring arrangements for the action plan (see above).

Audit

Sub-contractors will be required to instigate internal audit or external audit arrangements as part of the normal checks and balances of ESF. The accountable body will undertake internal audit of systems and procedures at inception and at least once during the course of the three year project.

Independent External audit will be conducted if contractually required.

Monitoring and inspection rights by funding bodies will be honoured.

Evaluation

Through an annual process of evaluation, the intention is to use its findings to influence the further delivery of the action plan. The evaluation will focus on identifying what elements of delivery have proved effective, where significant gaps can be identified and ways in which process can be improved. In doing so, it will feed into the commissioning development element of the action plan, as well as inform the selection and appraisal process.

Individual projects will be required to self evaluate as part of the project closure process.

Final external evaluation will take place through negotiation with LSC.