Enfield’s Skills and Employment Strategy:
April 2008 to March 2011

Signposts to Action:
The strategy’s implications for education and training providers

February 2009
Introduction

This summary is directed towards organisations responsible for education and training in the London Borough of Enfield, particularly the education and training of people over the age of 19.

Its purpose is:
• To highlight the labour market issues flowing from Enfield’s skills and employment strategy
• Lay the path for integrating employment and skills services in the Borough
• Enable providers to make informed plans; design appropriate interventions and deliver programmes that are relevant to the local economy.

The strategy was prepared for the Enfield Strategic Partnership through its Skills, Employment and Enterprise Special Delivery Group (SEESDG). It was commissioned by the London Borough of Enfield (LBE) and funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). SEESDG has been assigned responsibility for the implementation of the strategy.

The strategy is based on evidence and policy. It summarises the current position of the labour market, examines its trends in recent years and what is contributing to these trends, explores the effects of policy drivers and presents a vision of future prospects.

Of course, much of the evidence was gathered during 2007 and early 2008 since when there has been a major downturn in the global economy. The precise impact on the Enfield labour market is uncertain and, as a consequence, the strategy’s action plan builds in periodic review as partners are committed to provide services that are most relevant to the immediate and long-term needs of businesses and residents of the Borough.
Key findings

1. Enfield’s labour market (set out on pages 42-53 of the strategy) explains how long-term structural change over the past 20 years has altered the Borough. The result is that Enfield has a relatively small share of the industrial sectors that are expected to experience greatest growth in employment in London. Although small firms dominate the local economy, the rate at which new businesses are formed is low – these factors affect the nature and scale of engaging employers in education and training.

2. Future demand prospects (pages 54-75 of the strategy) shows that while London’s economy has grown fairly robustly over the last 10 years – and few can doubt that the London economy has a great effect on its labour market – Enfield is relatively self-contained. Over the next 10 years it is likely that net job growth in the Borough will be modest compared with other parts of London; but significant regeneration of the Borough could deliver more jobs. Moreover, whilst there may be only 2,000 additional jobs over the next 10 years, there will be 32,000 ”replacement” jobs. These new jobs will require higher and modern skills that, given the attainment of the Borough’s population, open the prospect of a significant deficit between the skills demanded by employers and the skills of people in or entering the labour market. The potential growth industries that the strategy identifies are:

- Business services
- Creative / media
- Health & social care
- High technology manufacturing
- Hospitality
- Retail

3. Population characteristics (pages 76-101) also show that there is also a jobs gap in that employment within the Borough is not increasing at the same pace that the population is growing. The number of benefit claimants is not improving and some people are missing out, especially:

- Young people, particularly those who are leaving school with few qualifications;
- People with disabilities;
- Women who want to work, including both those seeking for their first job and returners to the labour market;
- The geographic distribution of benefit claims in the Borough is heavily weighted towards the Edmonton wards and to other areas on the eastern side of the Borough

4. The strategy pays reference to the following, which provide its Policy context (described in pages 102 -123):

- Sustainable community strategy and Local Area Agreement
- Regeneration and neighbourhood renewal
- Enfield’s 14-19 Strategy
- Enfield’s spatial planning (including the Local Development Framework)
- The London Skills and Employment Board (LSEB)
- The Leitch Review of Skills and a “demand-led” system
- An integrated employment and skills system
- Changes to 16-19 education and training: how a new curriculum will affect the flow of skilled young people into the labour market over time
- Welfare reform: support and encouragement for those people who are not in work
- Changes to the benefit system affecting long-term unemployed people, lone parents, older people and those receiving housing benefit

Conclusion:
The key challenge to providers is to engage more proactively and consistently with employers with a view to up-skilling the workforce and demonstrating how a more highly qualified workforce improves productivity and, for private businesses, profitability and competitiveness.

The challenge for public funding bodies is to integrate investment in employability and skills to ensure that services are relevant to businesses and therefore obtain better value for money.

Collectively, the main thrust of the skills and employment system should be to help people get the qualifications they need to secure jobs that employ their full potential and that help businesses succeed in their market place.

Public procurement of training programmes will be prioritised by:

- Level of learning: with emphasis on basic employability skills offering progression to Level 2, Level 3 and higher-level qualifications;
- Sector of learning: with emphasis on the potential growth sectors and alignment of provision to regeneration;
- Locality: helping people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods get into work and get on in work;
- Addressing other barriers to work: gender, ethnicity and age point to some people at significant disadvantage in the local labour market.

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The overall ambition of the strategy is to increase jobs and wealth in Enfield, tackle worklessness and poverty and create a more socially cohesive Borough in which our residents can secure a good standard of living and follow their ambitions and goals.

The Strategic Objectives are:
1. Support inward investment and business growth
2. Increase the skills and employability of the Borough’s population
3. Better co-ordination, information sharing and networking

The main actions the strategy proposes that the partnership should take are:

- Introducing a ‘Joint Commissioning Plan’ for post-18 provision from March 2009 so that Public spending and investment can be maximised and blended effectively
- Prioritising neighbourhoods and sections of society that are proving most difficult for our traditional ways of working to reach;
- Majoring on the skills and qualifications that people need to secure and sustain jobs that will be in demand in the future
- Targeting support for businesses that are likely to thrive in Enfield
- Implementing the Local Area Agreement for Enfield and ensuring that the objectives established as part of the Local Development Framework are met

Key Targets

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<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Target</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working age people claiming out of work benefit in worse performing neighbourhoods</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Entry level 3 numeracy</td>
<td>(2007/08) 270 places</td>
<td>272 places</td>
<td>277 places</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 Literacy</td>
<td>(2007/08) 333 places</td>
<td>336 places</td>
<td>347 places</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 2 in the workforce</td>
<td>(2006/7) 66.2%</td>
<td>+ 2.3% (68.5%)</td>
<td>Baseline +3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3 in the workforce</td>
<td>(2006/7) 49.5%</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
<td>53.1%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Implications for providers

Providers will need to ensure that
- the courses they offer are relevant to employers
- their learners gain qualifications that help them secure jobs and progress in work
- they target those sections of the community who need most help

Ensure that adult learning and skills builds on the pre-19 phase of learning
- Enriching the vocational offer and learners’ entitlement for the decisive 14-19 year old age group will be of major concern to schools, colleges and other providers.

Supplying in-demand skills and meet firms’ recruitment needs through bespoke training and job entry services
- Providers will therefore need to establish a good understanding of the business needs of the employers with whom they are arranging training to ensure its appropriateness and relevance to those employers’ business strategies;
- Providers will have to operate publicly funded services to their maximum flexibility.

Making sure there is a good labour market offer to support inward investment and business growth services of different agencies
- Providers of adult learning and skills will need to work together more closely and with employer representative bodies and providers of other services to business in Enfield, such as North London Business, to ensure the relevance of their offer.

Deliver services identified in the Joint Commissioning Plan
- Providers – through accurate self-assessment of their offer and business risks – will need a clear understanding of their capacity and capability of delivering the services that purchasers have identified;
- Providers should seek to contribute to the development of the Joint Commissioning Plan by adding their unique insight of the functioning of the local labour market.

Deliver services to meet individuals’ needs set out in return to work plans
- Providers will play a pivotal role in linking the acquisition of skills to improved employment prospects. Integrating skills and employability will be a key objective for publicly funded adult skills training in the future;
- Providers will also need to keep abreast of developments in policy and its implementation. As part of the changes in the management of 14-19 and adult skills, new structures such as the National Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service and the Adult Advancement and Careers Service will be introduced imminently.

Deliver services that meet businesses’ needs as set out in Local Employment Partnerships (LEPs)
- Providers will have to develop relationships with Jobcentre Plus, if these are not already established. This applies to the full range of training services irrespective of the source of funding;
- LEPs are an opportunity for providers to construct staff development packages for employers that build on their immediate recruitment needs.

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Implications for providers (Continued)

Prioritise recruitment onto courses from the hardest-to-serve population and from the most deprived areas

• There is a large proportion of Enfield’s population who are not benefiting from education and training services and who are consequently severely disadvantaged in the labour market (see ‘population characteristics’ above). There is an urgent need for providers to enrol these people by designing appropriate courses and by targeting recruitment activities;

Deliver vocational lines of learning that support target sectors and occupations

• Providers, through regular dialogue and networking with purchasers, will need to be alert to changing labour market pressures in the Borough, to changing market conditions and to new opportunities;
• Providers will need to review their offer of adult learning and skills and make informed business decisions about the areas in which they need to specialize.

Offer more specialised and market-sensitive training through Train to Gain

• There is already a great deal of flexibility built into Train to Gain, which offer providers a tremendous platform upon which to build relationships with businesses. Providers will need to exploit every opportunity to form and develop these relationships;
• The introduction of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) affords providers an opportunity to design and deliver – with employers and learners – new progression pathways from short, modular courses leading to full qualifications.

Supply vocationally-relevant and employer-focussed embedded Skills for Life provision that leads towards employment

• Providers who supply services funded in support of the employment and skills strategy will need to orientate their Skills for Life provision towards the employment goals of their learners.

Focus on full Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications in the main

• Level 2 qualifications are the basic stepping-stone into employment, but increasingly Level 3 qualifications help to ensure longer-term employability;
• Providers should examine their curriculum offer and ensure that all courses are either at Level 2 / 3 (as appropriate) or offer all their learners progression to Level 2 or 3 in the shortest possible time;
• For learners with learning difficulties and / or disabilities, providers need to design appropriate progression, including where relevant to independent living.

Work together to ensure that the adult skills offer in Enfield is relevant to the demand from businesses and learners
Implications for Purchasers
(LSC, Jobcentre Plus, LDA, LBE)

Public funding bodies need to:

- integrate their employment and skills services into a single offer for individual customers and employers

- make funding conditions more consistent and emphasise the importance of achieving key targets: Level 2 and 3 full qualifications and sustainable job outcomes

Produce and implement the Joint Commissioning Plan
• The Joint Commissioning Plan, to be produced by 31st March 2009, should show the responsibilities of each purchaser active in the Enfield labour market; how their individual investment in the Borough will complement each others and how requirements n providers can be simplified.

Design and fund a range of programmes to meet the needs of businesses, learners and the local economy
• Purchasers will need to give providers and employers the full flexibility afforded by the services they procure. Local staff should make representation to their national bodies to help fill any gaps in provision.

Provide the means for local businesses to shape the local labour market offer
• Purchasers should facilitate links between the providers from whom they procure services and the business customers on whose behalf those services are purchased;
• Purchasers should develop their direct communications with businesses.

Resource the supply of high-quality Skills for Life and basic employability training
• Purchasers should work together so that providers and members of the public are clear about the range of provision that is publicly-funded in the Borough;
• Purchasers should ensure that their investment in these courses blends to enrich provision rather than duplicates effort.

Integrate multiple interventions and mainstream services, especially in the lowest employment neighbourhoods
• The neighbourhoods with lowest employment tend to be those whose residents experience many other disadvantages. Purchasers must therefore work both strategically and tactically with a range of other agencies and in a sensitively targeted way to achieve long-term change in these areas.

Develop outreach services in lowest employment neighbourhoods
• Purchasers need to consider how best to support and resource providers’ outreach activities into these neighbourhoods.

Agree and share priorities for accessing external funds
• Purchasers will need to build networks of practitioners to work together on existing programmes, to identify gaps in provision and to access additional resources – including building consortia to bid competitively.

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Glossary

LBE   London Borough of Enfield
LDA   London Development Agency
LEP   Local Employment Partnerships
LSC   Learning and Skills Council
LSEB  London Skills and Employment Board
QCF   Qualification and Credit Framework
SEESDG Skills, Employment and Enterprise Special Delivery Group, part of the Enfield Strategic Partnership structure

This publication was produced in partnership with Enfield Council, Enfield Strategy Partnership, Enfield Jobs Net and Job Centre Plus

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