

Cheshire & Warrington Strategic Area Review

Executive Summary



Leading learning and skills

Introduction

Purpose

The Strategic Area review (StAR) provides a comprehensive review of learning and skills provision in Cheshire & Warrington. The StAR is a key element of the Government Success for All Strategy, which sets out the aims for the reform of education and training by striving for excellence in post-16 learning and skills provision. The purpose of the StAR is to improve choice, responsiveness and the quality of provision to meet learner, employer and community needs. The outcome of the Review will be used as a basis for the future planning and funding of learning opportunities in Cheshire & Warrington.

Proposals

The main report considers the issues arising from the review, makes recommendations on the issues to be addressed and provides strategic options for change. The options presented in the report have been discussed prior to publication with the Advisory Stakeholder Group and with other key stakeholders, including Cheshire County Council and Warrington Borough Council. The options presented are not mutually exclusive nor preclude stakeholders from proposing alternative options. The main report is structured along 3 key themes and presents the options for creating a distinct 14-19 phase, skills for competitiveness and adult participation and inclusion.

Consultation

The role of this publication is to consult widely on the findings of the review with all stakeholders in a dialogue. The LSC invites all stakeholders, from both individuals and organisations, with an interest in learning and skills provision in Cheshire & Warrington to consider the strategic issues and options presented in this document and submit a response using the response form at the following web address www.lsc.gov.uk/cheshireandwarrington

Alternatively please send responses to:

StAR Consultation

LSC Cheshire & Warrington

Dalton House, Dalton Way

Middlewich, Cheshire, CW10 0HU

Email responses to: cheshireandwarringtoninfo@lsc.gov.uk

Closing date for receipt of responses is 19 August 2005

Creating a Distinct 14-19 Phase

The local strategy for 14-19 developed is underpinned by a Learner Entitlement for Cheshire & Warrington, a 14-19 Development Plan and six local area planning groups. The Entitlement sets out the principle for 14-19 learning and the implications for all stakeholders, providers and young people in realising the vision. The 14-19 Development plan provides the local response to taking forward 14-19 reform and the issues identified as part of the 14-19 Inspection. The local planning groups are responsible for taking forward the 14-19 Development Plan in the locality and addressing the issues identified in each area study. The strategic priorities for 14-19 reform in Cheshire & Warrington are:

- Local Area Planning Groups should have a clear vision for learning in each locality, clarity in the contribution they make and arrangements for collaborating in delivering the Learner Entitlement
- Local Curriculum Maps should be produced in each locality based on an analysis of learner needs that will support learners and parents in understanding the options available such that it helps to improve choice and the effectiveness of provision
- Advice and Guidance learners receive should be appropriate at each point of transition and ensure learners are aware of all the applied and vocational options available to them
- Post-16 resources should be used more effectively to ensure there is sufficient choice and breadth of learning available and that investment is prioritised to support this

The main report contains an analysis of the challenges facing all six 14-19 local planning areas and makes recommendations with a range of strategic options for consultation.

Skills for Competitiveness

The five local LSC's, the North West Development Agency and Business Skills Northwest completed a joint regional review of skills focussed provision. This provided an innovative and insightful approach to identifying mismatches between the demand for skills and the supply of skills provision.

The main sectors where there was a potential oversupply of achievements of qualifications are:

- Food & Drink: Food Hygiene Level 1 qualifications
- Tourism: On Licence Premises Supervision Level 3 qualifications
- Automotive, Environmental Technologies, Food & Drink, Engineering: Engineering Level 3 qualifications
- Finance & Professional: Accounting Level 3 qualifications
- Tourism, Food & Drink, Public Administration: Customer Service Level 1/2 qualifications
- Other Services: Hairdressing Level 2, beauty Therapy Level 2

- Sport: Sports Massage Level 3 qualifications
- Automotive: Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Level 3

The main sectors where there was a potential undersupply of achievements of qualifications

- Health & Social Care: Care Level 2, Registered Manager Level 4 qualifications
- Automotive, Retail, Food & Drink: Retail Operations Level 3 qualifications
- Construction: Wood Level 2, Decorative Level 2, Foundation Award Level 2, Trowel Level 1 qualifications
- Finance & Professional, Ports and Related, Digital, Engineering: ICT Level 2/3 qualifications
- Finance & Professional: Providing Financial Services Level 2/3 qualifications
- Logistics, Food & Drink: Transporting Goods by Road Level 2 qualifications

In addressing skills issues and tackling the undersupply of provision solutions may come from an increase in the number of learners undertaking these qualifications, an increase in the level of a achievements or a shift in the mix of provision from over to undersupply.

To assist us in determining our long-term planning priorities for skills provision and to ensure employers and the workforce are clear about what they can expect we are developing an Employer Entitlement Framework. In delivering this Entitlement we will work with key learning and skills delivery partners to identify their role and contribution. The remainder of this theme provides a summary of the key issues for each industrial sector in terms of learning and skills provision along with the recommendations and options identified in the review. The main report contains an analysis of the challenges facing eighteen industrial sectors and makes recommendations with a range of strategic options for consultation.

Adult Participation and Inclusion

In Cheshire & Warrington Adult and Community Learning and Skills for Life play a major role in tackling basic skills issues within the community and engaging adults back in learning. There are a number of adult groups that are key to the engagement and upskilling to support them in realising their own potential and to support economic regeneration and competitiveness of the local economy. The priority groups are:

- adults living in deprived areas with low levels of participation and achievement, including Skills for Life needs, many of whom are in employment
- employed adults lacking a level 2 qualification, particularly those who have not been engaged in learning for many years
- unemployed adults and those with a limiting long-term illness
- offenders.

To assist us in determining our long-term planning priorities for adult learning and supporting economic regeneration we need to ensure adults are clear about what they can expect from learning and skills provision we are developing an Adult Entitlement Framework. In delivering this Entitlement we will work with key learning and skills delivery partners to identify their role and contribution and the provision the LSC wishes to fund for Skills for Life and Adult & Community Learning. The remainder of this theme provides a summary of the key issues and recommendations for Skills for life, Adult & community learning and Equal Opportunities & Diversity. The main report contains an analysis of the challenges in terms of adult participation and inclusion and makes recommendations with a range of strategic options for consultation.