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INTRODUCTION

Against a backdrop of turbulent economic conditions and a rapidly shifting political and educational landscape, the College has constantly needed to evolve and adapt to meet the changing needs and circumstances of individuals, employers and our local communities. The new educational landscape is characterised by both great opportunity and a need to change, but the common theme within this is significantly reduced funding and tighter budgets. Therefore to survive and prosper, all FE Colleges will need to change the way in which they operate and respond to their learners and stakeholders.

The College has already undergone significant change in recent years leading to a major transformation of curriculum, staffing, management and infrastructure with a renewed emphasis on challenging accepted norms and dramatically raising aspirations and expectations. In doing so, we have redoubled our efforts to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and putting this at the heart of everything we do. At the same time, we continue to review our areas of business, the range of courses on offer and the services provided to our learners and the wider community.

A key priority for the College within this Strategic Plan is to support individuals and businesses during this period of economic hardship and uncertainty by ensuring they are equipped with the skills, knowledge and attitudes to succeed in an increasingly competitive global market for business and jobs. Helping people to obtain, sustain and create jobs will be a key element of all our courses, alongside our commitment to developing responsible citizens who will support and maintain a thriving community and local economy. This ambition is in line with Knowsley Council’s Corporate Strategy, its Economic Regeneration Strategy, the Knowsley Partnership’s Strategy – ‘The Borough of Choice’ and the Liverpool City Region’s Employment & Skills Strategy.

Our Strategic Plan for 2012-15 is the result of a fundamental review of the College’s priorities led by the Governing Body and involving students, staff, employers and local stakeholders. Given the significantly changed political, educational and social landscape, this plan presents a new and ambitious way forward for the College which puts high quality teaching, learning and assessment at its heart and articulates this through a revised Mission Statement, an ambitious Vision and new Strategic Objectives reflecting the challenges, priorities and opportunities ahead.

Our core values, however, remain true to the spirit of a college which is the ‘dynamic nucleus’ at the heart of its community. They describe what we as an organisation believe in, what we stand for and how our employees and students behave.

\[ A \text{ dynamic nucleus - Colleges at the heart of local communities: The Interim Report of the Independent Commission on Colleges in their Communities (NIACE, July 2011)} \]
MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

COLLEGE MISSION: Raising aspirations, maximising potential and changing lives.

OUR VISION: An outstanding college at the heart of a thriving community that is first choice for learners and employers.

OUR VALUES: Staff, Students, Governors and Partners of Knowsley Community College collectively value:

Respect: Equality, diversity, inclusiveness, and respect for all individuals and their unique talents.

Self-Discipline: Responsible behaviour, self-discipline and positive citizenship.

Enterprise: Innovation, creativity and enterprise.

Support: A strong ethos of guidance and support for students throughout their learning journey.

Community: A strong identity and sense of belonging to our local community.

Responsiveness: Listening to our customers, external partners and stakeholders and being proactive and responsive to their changing needs.

Quality: The highest standards of teaching, learning and customer service.

Achievement: Recognition and celebration of success for students and staff.

Development: Continuous professional development and support for all our staff.

Wellbeing: A safe, healthy and sustainable environment for students, staff and visitors.

Public Value Statement: We seek to add value to the social, economic and physical well-being of the community we serve by educating our students in accordance with our college values, so that they become positive citizens and enrich the lives of others.
Our strategic objectives articulate what the College hopes to achieve:

1. Improve teaching, learning and assessment and deliver outstanding success rates.
2. Develop a culture of high expectation and aspiration.
3. Address future employment and skills priorities to meet the needs of individuals, businesses and the local community.
4. Enhance the employability skills of all learners and encourage innovation, creativity and enterprise.
5. Increase the number of young people and adults successfully progressing into higher learning and employment.
6. Promote and embed equality and diversity in all aspects of the organisation.
7. Enhance our reputation, brand and image through effective communication and marketing.
8. Improve financial performance, diversify income sources and explore new business partnerships.
9. Transform the structure to create a responsive, efficient and effective organisation with a skilled and flexible workforce.
10. Build and maintain high-quality learning environments, IT systems and facilities.
BACKGROUND

Knowsley Community College was formed in 1990 from the merger of Kirkby College of Further Education, Knowsley Central Tertiary College and the Sixth Forms of Kirkby schools. The College is based in one of the most economically deprived boroughs in the country.

The College operates on two main campuses situated in Roby and Kirkby. The curriculum offer at Roby includes:

- Art & Creative Media Technologies
- Hairdressing & Beauty Therapy
- Essential Skills (Key and Functional Skills)
- Hospitality & Catering
- General Education (A Levels and GCSEs)
- Sport, Public Services & Performing Arts
- Supported Learning (LLDD)
- Leisure & Tourism

The curriculum offer at Kirkby includes:

- Health Care & Education
- Engineering (Mechanical, Electrical & Automotive)
- Management, Computing & IT
- Construction
- Hairdressing & Beauty Therapy
- Essential Skills (Key and Functional Skills)
- Business Administration

The range of courses extends from Pre-Entry, GCSEs, A Levels, Diplomas and NVQs to Higher Education and professional qualifications, with the highest percentage of enrolments being at Entry and Level 1.

The College also operates in the community and on employers’ premises as well as providing part-time and evening course provision. The College remains one of the largest providers of apprenticeships in Merseyside, and through its Business Development and Employer Engagement Unit, responds proactively to the needs of employers across the region addressing the workforce development agenda.

The College has extended the range of support available to adults who are unemployed and has established an innovative new service called WorkWorld operating from new premises on Princess Drive in Huyton and delivering specialist courses at the main college sites in conjunction with JobCentre Plus and local employers.

Curriculum activities are underpinned by Student Services which includes Learning Support. Other cross-college functions are quality improvement, finance, personnel and welfare, information services, examinations and estate management.

The College has taken decisive action to manage reductions in funding and has moved from a substantial deficit position in 2010-11 to a surplus in 2011-12. The College is currently rated as “Satisfactory” by the SFA for financial health, but will move to “Good” in future years.

The delivery of a high quality service is of prime importance. The College has achieved the Matrix Standards and Investor in People Standards and will continue to work towards such kitemarks in the future. In 2011 the College received an adverse Ofsted inspection report and has implemented substantial quality improvements that are already yielding positive outcomes for learners. Improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and improving our Ofsted rating remains the most important immediate priority for the College.
KNOWSLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE   STRATEGIC PLAN 2012-15   PAGE 7

ECONOMY AND LABOUR MARKET

Demographic Profile
Knowsley has a population of 149,100 and is home to around 3,000 businesses. Latest population estimates from the 2011 Census show that the number of people living in Knowsley has fallen by around 4,500 since 2001. An important implication for Knowsley is that the Borough has experienced a reduction in the key economically mobile age group of 22-44 year olds, but (in line with a national trend) an increase in the proportion aged over 75. The ageing of our dependent population, combined with the loss of some of our younger working age people, underpins many of the social and economic challenges facing the Borough.

The index of multiple deprivation ranks Knowsley as one of the most deprived areas in the country. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average. Knowsley also has a higher than average proportion of lone parent households particularly in North Huyton and South Kirkby but a lower than average proportion of single person households.

The proportion of Knowsley residents from Black and Minority Ethnic groups has risen slightly to 3.5%, largely as a result of population decline in White residents, but this still represents a small minority compared to the North West (9%) and England (12.5%)

Unemployment rates in Knowsley have continued to rise and at 11% (in 2011) was higher than the North West (8.2%) and England (7.8%) The highest unemployment rate in Knowsley is in the 20-24 year-old age group which at 23% is 7% higher than the North West and England. More than a third of the 6,250 JSA claimants in the Borough are under the age of 25, compared to 29% nationally. In keeping with trends across the country, more than half of Knowsley’s benefit claimants are in receipt of ESA / Incapacity Benefits.

The potential earnings of the working age population are not currently being realised and the Borough’s higher paid jobs tend to go to non-residents. This is largely because local residents lack the higher level skills and qualifications required for emerging technical and professional jobs. Full-time earnings for Knowsley residents have risen in recent years to £430 (gross) per week in 2011 but this remains significantly lower than national average of £506 and is £23 lower than the average wage of someone in a Knowsley workplace (as opposed to a resident).
Knowsley is part of the Liverpool City Region, that has made major achievements in attracting investment and its economy has grown at a faster rate than that of the UK. In Knowsley we have seen a rise in economic activity and the local economy has proved to be more resilient to the impacts of the recent recession, compared to that experienced in the 1980s. However, despite these successes, Knowsley and the City Region have further to go to meet the UK average on a number of important economic indicators such as the employment rate, business start ups and productivity rates. Added to this, we are entering a new and challenging era of economic development that requires a different economic strategy to one that we have pursued in the past.

The UK economy is making a slow and difficult recovery from the global financial crisis and business confidence remains uncertain. The Government’s response centres on rebalancing the economy, ensuring that growth is more evenly spread across the country and driven by the private sector. This in itself presents challenges for a community more heavily reliant on the public sector employment than others and one whose population is heavily dependent on public services.

**We are entering a new and challenging era of economic development that requires a different economic strategy to one that we have pursued in the past.**

**Regeneration Projects**
The regeneration of Kirkby town centre is estimated to bring in £190m of investment to the area and create over 1,000 jobs. The 50,000 square metre mixed use development includes a new Tesco food store, a replacement library, town centre regeneration and the associated transport and highway improvements.

The town of Prescot has benefited from significant public and private sector investment in recent years. This includes the development of 412 new houses; a new purpose built joint library and museum facility, town centre events including producers markets and 7 play pathfinder schemes which have transformed the local parks.

The town centres of Huyton and Halewood have both seen major retail investment, and Stockbridge Village has recently seen a major investment with a new village centre and new community facilities.

**Education and Skills**
The skills base of the workforce is critical to the economic development of the region. The North West has a large proportion of people with no qualifications and this is linked to worklessness. The proportion of Knowsley residents with no qualifications has reduced by 5% since 2008, but is still one of the highest at 19.5%, 2% higher than Liverpool and 8% higher than England.

Knowsley’s skills base reflects an area where there are higher than average number of people in lower paid occupations and lower than average school attainment levels. Fewer people than average are qualified to degree level while the number of people qualified to level 1 and 2 also lags behind national averages.

On key social and economic indicators most trends are moving in the right direction, but closing the gap on national averages in some areas is proving more difficult. The gap with the national average for 5 or more GCSE at A*-C including English and Maths remains an issue and in 2011 was 18.1%. In 2010 the number of people qualified at NVQ2 or above stood at 62.9% compared to the national average of 72.7%, a gap of 9.8%. This has improved by 14.5% since 2001, but still lags behind regional and national averages. **Other factors which impact on the College are:**

- The high number of young people who are educated outside of the Borough, with over 650 Year 7 pupils choosing secondary schools outside Knowsley in 2010-11 and only half of 16-18 year-old residents attending colleges and sixth forms in the Borough.

- A high percentage of adults with low literacy skills, 22% compared to 15% nationally and low numeracy skills at 20% compared to 12% nationally.
Currently, only 16.6% of Knowsley’s adult population are educated to degree level compared to 24.9% across the wider City Region and 31% in the North West and 33.5% nationally. Substantial improvements have been made in raising educational attainment and adult employment, but workforce skills need to better reflect the requirements of the Liverpool City Region’s four transformational growth sectors in order to capitalise on growth across the area.

The main challenge for the College is to equip local residents with higher level skills and qualifications required for higher paid jobs being created in new and emerging industries, whilst addressing local intermediate skills shortages in manufacturing, distribution, retail, social care and other service sectors.


**NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)**

Youth unemployment is particularly high in Knowsley where significantly higher numbers of benefit claimants are under 25 years of age compared to national averages.

Data from a range of sources highlights the context in which services for children and young people are delivered and thereby identifies the challenges facing all agencies within Knowsley.

The effect of the Government’s decision to withdraw publicly funded incentives for young people to continue in education post-16 is just being seen. The curtailment of the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA), combined with changes to household benefits has had an adverse effect on participation rates with rates of NEET rising from a low of 8.84% in January 2010 to 9.94% in July 2011.

The NEET cohort in Knowsley is high with particularly high numbers in the Longview, Northwood, Page Moss and Park areas of Knowsley.
POLITICAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

The new educational landscape is characterised by both great opportunity and a need to change. Colleges have opportunities to have greater impact on the educational and employment outcomes of the nation than ever before, but the common theme is significantly reduced funding and tighter budgets. Therefore to survive and prosper, all FE Colleges will need to change the way in which they operate and respond to their learners and stakeholders nationally, regionally and locally.

This requires a more flexible, responsive, approach from the College and the sector as a whole. Our approach to working independently or in partnerships will be entirely driven by what is the most effective and productive model in each circumstance. Therefore the College will position itself to work effectively within these new parameters and with organisations that continue to share our overall social mission and values.

The main policy influences shaping the new educational landscape are:

Skills for Sustainable Growth
Secretary of State for Business Vince Cable and Skills Minister John Hayes launched the Government’s strategy for skills, Skills for Sustainable Growth, and its parallel publication, Investing in Skills for Sustainable Growth, on 16 November 2010.

Investing in Skills for Sustainable Growth sets out how Government seeks to achieve its objectives through investing strategically in FE and skills over this Spending Review period. Savings will have to be made, but the Government understands the importance of continuing high levels of participation and performance. Public funding for skills provision will continue to be reduced, with government backed Advanced Learning Loans replacing all public funding for adults aged 24+ studying on Level 3 courses or above from 2013. The extent to which adults are willing to take out loans is unknown and may significantly affect College enrolments on popular advanced level subjects such Accountancy, Engineering, etc.

New Challenges, New Chances and the associated skills investment statement contain proposals to take this strategy a stage further by making detailed proposals in areas ranging from informal adult and community learning to data requirements on colleges. Legislation giving colleges new freedoms and flexibilities has emerged from this, allowing Governing Bodies new powers to change their governance arrangements and to develop new alliances, federations and companies.

NEET and Provision for the Unemployed
An increasing priority will be engaging NEET young people and 19-24 year-old unemployed adults in learning which leads to sustainable employment and Apprenticeships. Government funding priorities will increasingly support this and give much greater freedom and flexibilities to Colleges to address individual needs and work with partner agencies to support local communities. Provision for this target group must serve the requirements of key referring agencies such as Jobcentre Plus.

In response to this demand, the College has established its WorkWorld provision, which has continued to expand its operation and build effective working relationships with Jobcentre Plus to develop highly responsive and bespoke learning programmes. These are designed to assist with applying for jobs, preparing for interviews, brushing up maths, English and IT skills as well as address specific vocational qualification and skills requirements directly linked to local job opportunities and vacancies. Sector-based Work Academies and other employer-led recruitment initiatives will increasingly be a feature of the Colleges response.
The Wolf Report A review of Vocational Education, published in March 2011 put forward significant proposals to reform the vocational curriculum in schools and colleges. A significant recommendation is that more 16-19 year olds should be given opportunities to spend substantial periods in the workplace, undertaking genuine workplace activities, in order to develop the general skills which the labour market values. This has led to new plans for study programmes for 16-19 year-olds aimed at preparing young people better for further learning and employment and a new funding methodology to be introduced in. The development of maths and English skills to GCSE level is also a priority for all learners regardless of study route and Apprenticeships are recognised as the key route to skilled employment.

**Apprenticeships**

Apprenticeships at all levels including Higher Apprenticeships continue to be one of the main areas of priority for Government funding and growth. The College is well placed to expand this provision if it can source the employment required for young people and adults required for this provision. Effective sales and employer liaison structures will be essential to support this work and must deliver on challenging targets for growth as we simultaneously expand our own capacity to deliver a greater volume of apprenticeships across a wider variety of occupational frameworks.

The College has had to become much more responsive and quicker in meeting the needs of new and emerging business sectors and improve the standard of personal and professional skills of our learners entering the workplace. The Business Development and Employer Engagement Unit has been radically restructured and transformed to support an expansion of Apprenticeships, Workplace Learning, full-cost courses and services to business and is anticipated to be a important area of growth and development for the College over the next few years.

**Higher Education**

The HE White Paper: Students at the Heart of the System has created a more diverse and responsive HE sector with a critical aspect being the diversity and choice for students. This has opened up the market and made it easier for providers such as FE colleges or private providers to deliver Higher Education courses. This has enabled the College to be directly funded by HEFCE for the first time in its history and expand provision with a small number of HNDs alongside its existing Foundation Degrees with Edge Hill University. Although this represents relatively small numbers, the College intends to develop affordable new provision in niche markets where there is demand and local needs.

**City Deals and the Liverpool City Region**

On the 5th July 2012, John Hayes (Minister for Skills) visited Liverpool to formally announce the outcome of our discussions with Government over the devolution of significant funds and powers to the City Region, its Local Enterprise Partnership and the Employment and Skills Board (ESB). The Deal agrees a number of proposals with Government covering skills, transport, trade and inward investment, low carbon economy as well as harnessing the City Region’s natural assets. One of the most significant proposals is:

- To increase employment by combining £80m public and private employment and skills investments and empowering businesses to create more jobs, tackle skills gaps and raise productivity, supporting 17,400 people into work and creating 6,000 apprenticeships;

With an elected Mayor now in post, Liverpool, like London and other large cities, is now beginning to have much greater influence over employment and skills and there are emerging discussion about the possibility of more powers in future. The significance of these new structures is not be underestimated and therefore the College intends to play an active part in supporting the strategic priorities of the LEP and Employment and Skills Board who will take forward one of the most ambitious and radical Skills Deals in the country.
growth sectors and economic conditions

**GROWTH SECTORS AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS**

Knowsley contains several major industrial and business parks including one of the largest in Europe (Knowsley Industrial Park) and provides employment for 56,000 people, many of whom live outside the Borough.

It is therefore a major location for employment in the City Region. Around 49,000 of the Borough’s residents work in the City Region; it is therefore also an important source of workforce. The Borough’s employment role has developed since 1945 and has traditionally been provided by manufacturing industries. These have primarily been located in the Borough’s Industrial and Business Parks and the Ford (now Jaguar / Land Rover) car plant at Halewood. During the late 1970s and 1980s, however, over 20,000 jobs were lost from Knowsley Industrial Park alone and thousands of local people faced unemployment. Since the 1990s, employment levels have increased again but are still short of the former levels.

The manufacturing sector (which accounts for 10% of businesses and 20% of total employment) has declined as a proportion of total jobs in recent years but still accounts for a higher proportion of jobs in Knowsley than it does at the national level. This is reflective of the Borough’s role in the automotive industry and its supply chain, as well as advanced manufacturing and engineering sub-sectors.

Knowsley is an important source for the workforce of the City Region. It is also a major location for employment with 53,102 people employed in Knowsley in 2001, of whom 44% also lived in the area, and 48% lived in the remainder of Greater Merseyside. The Borough’s links with Liverpool are particularly strong with around 18,000 of Knowsley’s residents commuting to work each day.

Companies in Knowsley do business throughout the world. Their products and services are internationally recognised. The level of investment in the Borough has reached almost £1 billion over the last decade. This includes investment from major household names such as:

- Jaguar Land Rover
- QVC
- News International
- Vertex

Smaller companies also thrive, with more than 2,990 small and medium sized businesses investing in the area. The Borough boasts significant assets including major business and industrial parks, such as Knowsley Industrial Park (KIP).

The Mersey Partnership’s Economic Review 2012 identifies a number of major projects that will help drive wealth and realise future growth in the Liverpool City Region. Schemes such as Liverpool Waters, the Mersey Gateway, Port of Liverpool, the expansion of Liverpool Airport; Wirral Waters and the continued redevelopment of Liverpool City Centre aim to take advantage of private sector led investment which will help the Region swiftly recover from the impacts of the recession. Given the Borough’s close economic links with the City Region, these developments will undoubtedly have a positive impact on Knowsley’s own economy – particularly in the creation of new jobs for local residents.

The Public Administration, Education and Health sector forms a large part of the Borough’s economy but this is expected to reduce due to public sector spending cuts.

The Liverpool City Region has benefited from improved economic performance in recent years. Nonetheless, City Region partners acknowledge that a step change is necessary to rebalance the local economy away from over-reliance on the public sector and to close the considerable gap in economic value, size of business base and skill levels between the City Region and UK. The Local Enterprise Partnership for the Liverpool City Region has a pivotal role in making this happen. The LEP is a locally owned partnership between local authorities and businesses to drive economic growth across the area. Broad estimates predict that through growth in these sectors, 95,000 - 130,000 jobs could be created in the City Region by 2020.

**The Liverpool City Region Employment and Skills Strategy identifies key transformational themes and areas for growth in:**

- Liverpool Super Port
- The Knowledge Economy
- Low Carbon Economy
- Culture and the Visitor Economy

The related plan for the Knowledge Economy recognises the importance of harnessing our educational, training and entrepreneurial assets and sets out a framework for achieving growth and development in these areas across Merseyside for the benefit of all communities including Knowsley. Development of the knowledge and skills infrastructure to support future growth has been prioritised for the following areas:

- Life Sciences
- Creative and Digital Industries
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Financial and Professional Services

**Knowsley has many exciting opportunities for investment and development across the four transformational growth areas.**

**Super Port**

Knowsley Industrial Park (KIP) is strategically located to major transport infrastructure including the M57 and the A580, Knowsley’s Rail Freight Terminal and is close to the Liverpool and Manchester airports. A study supporting the SuperPort work stream has identified a need for warehousing and available land for development that is suitable for logistics operations.

**Knowledge Economy**

Knowsley’s infrastructure provides opportunities for growth across knowledge based industries including: Advanced Manufacturing, Financial and Professional Services and Life Sciences. Knowsley has an internationally recognised advanced manufacturing industry, Jaguar Landrover and Halewood International are amongst its greatest assets. KIP has also been identified by the City Region Knowledge Economy Action Plan as an advanced manufacturing ‘Sector Hotspot’.

The borough is home to a number of financial and professional businesses such as Vertex on Kings Business Park and Barclaycard in Kirkby. Enhanced marketing of our offer in this area could attract smaller businesses to Knowsley within this field. KIP is also recognised as a Life Sciences ‘Sector Hotspot’ and is the site of a number of life science businesses employing over 100 staff. Whiston Hospital is also based within the borough, which operates on behalf of St Helens and Knowsley Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust.
**Low Carbon Economy**
Knowsley is rapidly establishing itself as a champion for the low carbon economy, focusing particularly on green energy production. Knowsley Council is a member of the City Region Low Carbon Economy Committee which has been set up to stimulate and promote growth in this area. Priorities within the programme include:

- a feasibility study into establishing KIP as a Green Energy Hub with a combined heat and power plant
- enabling local Knowsley businesses to access supply chain opportunities for the future Irish Sea Offshore programme
- Knowsley Community College supporting local residents to gain the skills needed to secure jobs in the low carbon and green energy business sector

**Visitor Economy**
The Borough is home to Knowsley the Safari Park, the second most visited fee-paying attraction in the Liverpool City Region. It is also the place of the National Wildflower Centre, Europe’s only centre dedicated to wildflower conservation (one of only two in the world).

There are also many untapped opportunities to better utilise the borough’s rural assets for sustainable leisure and tourism. In Knowsley 52% of land is green belt, with nearly 55 km of Public Rights of Way and 5 km of bridle paths. All opportunities will give carefully considered to their potential impact on the environment.

**The College Response to Growth Sectors**
The College has expertise in many of these areas and is developing new provision that meets the educational and skills needs of new and emerging sectors. Industries and local businesses such as those being created as a result of the developing low carbon economy, advanced manufacturing, creative and digital industries, the visitor economy and financial services are already connected to the college and are influencing our strategy and the way in which we design and deliver our courses. Increasingly, representatives from industry visit the college and contribute to the teaching of courses as well as being part of our regular employer forums that inform our business decisions and quality improvements. In response to this dialogue, we have strengthened our focus on developing the personal characteristics of ‘employability,’ innovation and enterprise in order to prepare learners for their future careers.

**The College has expertise in many of these areas and is developing new provision that meets the educational and skills needs of new sectors.**

The College’s Employer Engagement and Business Development Strategy identifies the key subjects and occupational areas the college will maintain, expand and/or reduce provision in over the next few years in order to meet the current and emerging skills and employment needs described in this strategy. This strategy is outlined in the next section and articulated further through the revised Mission, Vision and Strategic Objectives.
THE COLLEGE’S FUTURE STRATEGY

The College will continue to provide a wide range of learning opportunities for young people and adults that match their individual needs and aspirations. This will include broad programmes of study for 14-19 year-olds, including full-time academic or vocational courses and apprenticeships; as well as full-time and part-time courses for adults in the college, the workplace and community settings, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. However, the College will increasingly focus on delivering only high quality provision that provides clear progression pathways through further and higher education into sustainable employment.

The development of the necessary personal, social and employability skills required for employment and positive citizenship will be key features of all courses and will be supported by a programme of curriculum enhancements and enrichment. This will include an entitlement for all students to improve their English and maths skills as well as opportunities to undertake valuable work experience, enterprise activities, community projects and voluntary work.

The College is keen to influence the educational performance of young people under the age of 16 and to provide better careers guidance, alternative educational programmes and pathways into skilled employment. The new educational landscape provides opportunities for the College to influence pre-16 education and we will therefore explore potential partnerships and collaborative arrangements with other colleges, training providers, charities, LA primary and secondary schools, Academies, Free Schools, Studio Schools, University Technical Colleges and employers to extend choice. To inform the nature of future provision, the college will commission a strategic options review which will further shape the curriculum offer.

The opening up of the university market provides the college with the opportunity to further expand its Higher Education in terms of both Foundation Degrees and Higher National Certificates and Diplomas over time. Having achieved good QAA ratings for its HE provision, the college is well placed to expand its Higher Level Skills provision and provide local progression routes to higher education. We will continue to develop our higher education portfolio and range of access courses in order to provide local progression routes from Level 3 programmes directly into higher education, thus improving the very low HE participation rates of local residents.

In line with government policy with local and regional employment and skills strategies, the College has already embarked on a significant expansion of its Apprenticeship and workplace learning provision and has strengthened its capacity and staffing structures in Employer Engagement and Business Development. This strategic development is informed by a separate Employer Engagement Strategy linked to the strategic objectives in this plan, which reinforces the College’s priority to deliver provision that has a positive influence on the local economy. The priorities within this strategy are:

- To secure better long-term relationships with employers, raise employer ambition and support business success.
- To build the capacity to deliver high quality services and excellent results in priority sectors…
- To fulfil our role of providing learning and skills training to young people and adults… [which] provide employers with ‘work-ready’ candidates
As part of this strategy, Workplace Learning provision will be tailored to meet employer needs with an ‘any time any place’ approach to flexible delivery and assessment in the workplace. Links to the College’s WorkWorld team will be strengthened to ensure adults re-entering employment can continue their training in the workplace and study for qualifications including, where appropriate full apprenticeship frameworks. We will also ensure that SME employers are able to become involved in workplace learning and Apprenticeship training by informing them of subsidies and other incentives available to them for the existing workforce and new recruits.

Our provision to support young people and adults who are unemployed will continue to be strengthened with new pilot programmes developed as part of a DfE Work Experience Pilot which will provide unique approaches to preparing those furthest away from the labour market to become ‘work ready’. Our Sector Based Work Academies developed with JCP and local employers will continue to be an increasing feature of our WorkWorld offer alongside highly effective pre-employment training, professional updating, job search and recruitment services.

College courses will be continuously reviewed to ensure they meet quality benchmarks and address future employment and skills needs locally, regionally and nationally.

Employment sectors where vacancies are high and there is a demand for skilled and semi-skilled workers will be a focus of our future strategy and developments and include the following:

- Engineering and Manufacturing
- Health and Social Care
- Retail, Business Administration, Customer Service and Call Centres
- Distribution and Warehousing
- Creative and Digital Industries

Existing workforce development needs in key sectors already offered by the College and its partners include:

- Health and Social Care and Early Years Education
- Team Leading and Management
- Construction particularly Maintenance Operations
- Business Improvement Techniques
- Engineering including Automotive Engineering
- Hospitality & Catering
- Hairdressing and Beauty Therapy
- Accountancy
- IT Professionals
- Active Leisure
- Business Administration and Customer Service
- Cleaning and Support

Emerging Growth Sectors where demand for new skills is expected to increase include:

- Health and Social care
- Transport and Logistics
- Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure
- Advanced manufacturing / engineering
- Low carbon and Generation of Power (nuclear, renewables and environmental goods and services)
- Retail, Financial and Professional Services
- Leadership and Management
- Construction & Civil engineering - infrastructure projects
- Intermediate and higher level skills in STEM subjects

We will maintain intermediate level apprenticeship programmes where demand is evident and expand our provision at advanced and higher levels to meet the emerging priority sectors listed above.
PRIORITIES

The College's strategic objectives articulate our priorities and what we hope to achieve over the next three years. The linked Strategies and targets set out the plans and milestones for achieving our overall Mission and Vision.

1. Improve teaching, learning and assessment and deliver outstanding success rates
2. Develop a culture of high expectation and aspiration
3. Address future employment and skills priorities to meet the needs of individuals, businesses and the local community
4. Enhance the employability skills of all learners and encourage innovation, creativity and enterprise.
5. Increase the number of young people and adults successfully progressing into higher learning and employment
6. Promote and embed equality and diversity in all aspects of the organisation
7. Enhance our reputation, brand and image through effective communication and marketing
8. Improve financial performance, diversify income sources and explore new business partnerships
9. Transform the structure to create a responsive, efficient and effective organisation with a skilled and flexible workforce
10. Build and maintain high-quality learning environments, IT systems and facilities

COLLEGE STRATEGIES SUPPORTING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The following strategies are directly linked to this Strategic Plan and will set out the actions and timescales for achieving each of the above objectives.
The College will measure the extent to which its Strategic Objectives have been achieved against the following performance indicators as well as the actions detailed in the related Strategies.

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<tr>
<th>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>RELATED STRATEGY</th>
<th>PERFORMANCE INDICATORS</th>
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</table>
| 1. Improve teaching, learning and assessment and deliver outstanding success rates. | • Teaching, Learning and Assessment Improvement Strategy  
• Maths and English Strategy | • Teaching observation grades  
• Student Feedback  
• Success Rates  
• Apprenticeship Overall Success Rate  
• Apprenticeship Timely Success Rate |
| 2. Develop a culture of high expectation and aspiration. | • Teaching, Learning and Assessment Improvement Strategy | • Student Punctuality & Attendance  
• Student Progression Rates  
• High Grades  
• Student Competitions and Awards |
| 3. Address future employment and skills priorities to meet the needs of individuals, businesses and the local community. | • Employer Engagement Strategy (Employment and Skills Strategy)  
• Curriculum Strategy | • Number of employers engaged in training  
• Employer & stakeholder Feedback Number of Apprenticeship Starts  
• Apprenticeship Participation  
• Curriculum ‘fit’ with labour market intelligence |
| 4. Enhance the employability skills of all learners and encourage innovation, creativity and enterprise. | • Curriculum Strategy  
• Maths and English Strategy | • Number of students involved in work experience  
• Number of Employability qualifications  
• Maths and English Success Rates  
• Number of enterprise projects  
• Number of small business start ups |
| 5. Increase the number of young people and adults successfully progressing into higher learning and employment. | • Curriculum Strategy  
• Employer Engagement Strategy (Employment and Skills Strategy) | • % Level 3 learners progressing to HE or Higher FE  
• Number of learners gaining employment  
• Number of job interviews secured  
• Number of Apprenticeship Starts |
| 6. Promote and embed equality and diversity in all aspects of the organisation. | • Equality & Diversity Strategy | • EDIMS Data  
• Number of staff trained in E&D & on E&D promotional events & embedding in curriculum |
| 7. Enhance our reputation, brand and image through effective communication and marketing. | • Marketing Strategy | • Enrolments  
• Campaign evaluations  
• Student, Staff & Employer Feedback |
| 8. Improve financial performance and diversify income sources. | • Financial Strategy  
• Curriculum Strategy  
• Marketing Strategy | • EFA learner and income targets  
• SFA Adult skills Income targets  
• Current Ratio (year end)  
• Operating Surplus (year end)  
• Reserves (before FR17) |
| 9. Transform the structure to create a responsive, efficient and effective organisation with a skilled and flexible workforce. | • HR Strategy | • Qualifications of all staff  
• Volume of CPD  
• HR performance data (inc. numbers, vacancies, utilisation, absence, etc) |
| 10. Build and maintain high-quality learning environments, IT systems and facilities. | • Accommodation Strategy  
• IT & Information Strategy | • Staff, student and Visitor Feedback  
• E-mandate building assessment rating  
• Building & Maintenance expenditure  
• IT Network downtime  
• Time to resolve IT faults/requests  
• Staff access to, and use of, MIS data  
• Volume of learning delivered via VLE |

**RISK ASSESSMENT**

The College's strategic risks have been reviewed and assessed in line with this plan. Details are contained in the accompanying Risk Register.