

Review of Training and Skills in the Dover District

**Report of the Scrutiny (Community and
Regeneration) Committee**

February 2006

Contents

	<u>Page Nos</u>
1. Foreword	
Introduction on behalf of the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee by the Chairman, Councillor Helen Bartolo and Controlling Group Spokesperson, Councillor Paul Le Chevalier.	3
2. Scope and Process Report	
Overview of the process adopted in conducting the review.	7
3. Research Reports	
Part A: Summary of KPMG Research Part B: New Primary Research by Dover District Council Part C: Direct Influence by Dover District Council	13
4. Recommendations	
The recommendations of the Committee to Cabinet and Council and the views of Corporate Management Team.	39
5. Appendices	
Additional material relating to the review.	45

Section 1: Foreword by the Chairman and Controlling Group Spokesperson

***An introduction to the review on behalf of the Scrutiny
(Community and Regeneration) Committee by the Chairman,
Councillor Helen Bartolo and Controlling Group
Spokesperson, Councillor Paul Le Chevalier***

Foreword



Councillor Helen Bartolo

Chairman of the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee

"Developing and encouraging training and skills within our Community is a key priority for the regeneration of our District. The Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee is pleased to provide the evidence within this report to contribute to the current discussion on what now needs to be done.

The findings from the interviews with learners, employers and community representatives need to be placed before the appropriate forum to ensure that the needs of all are addressed.

We at Dover District Council need to support the recommendations of this review and ensure that we have a voice in raising the skill level of our District.

I would like to thank all of those who took part in this project and gave their time to providing their views. I would particularly like to thank Linda Dorsman, Scrutiny Support Officer, who has worked so hard to bring this report together."



Councillor Paul Le Chevalier

Controlling Group Spokesperson of the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee

"This review has enabled the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee to listen to the views of our young people and our local employers. We hope that these views will now have a wider platform and hearing.

Our findings within this review point to serious gaps in the provision of training for young people, the employed and the unemployed and I am particularly concerned at the standard of guidance given to young people in helping them make informed decisions about their future careers.

I commend this review as an important contribution to developments at the local level to ensure not only that the citizens of Dover District can catch up but that they can become part of a higher skilled and competitive workforce.

Our thanks are due to all those who have contributed to the report and to Linda Dorsman, Scrutiny Support Officer, who has assisted in pulling together all the evidence on our behalf. We would also like to thank the Learning and Skills Council for their support of this review."

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "H Bartolo".

Chairman of the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P Le Chevalier".

Controlling Group Spokesperson of the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee

Section 2: Scope and Process Report

Overview of the process adopted in conducting the review

Scope and Process Report

Introduction

2.1.1 The Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee has identified that a review of Training and Skills should be undertaken as part of its work programme for 2005/06. This review has been match funded by the Learning and Skills Council as part of a wider piece of work that has also involved research by KPMG.

Stage 1: Methodology

2.1.2 The terms of reference for the review have been:

- (a) To consider how the Council's Corporate Agenda (including Major Regeneration Projects) will address the perceived shortage of training and skills provision within the District.
- (b) To obtain the views of a cross section of employers within the District regarding recruitment, retention and development of staff and the need to expand workplace training and development.
- (c) To understand the perspective of learners about the reasons for the low skill base and why students travel outside the District to access training.
- (d) To achieve an insight into the perceived issues in both rural and urban areas of the District that may have contributed to the low skill base.

Stage 2: Process

2.1.3 A structured approach has been adopted in conducting the review as follows:

- (a) A project plan has been approved by the Committee identifying the scope and proposed time scale of the review as well as the consultation to be undertaken.
- (b) Regular progress reports have been submitted to the Committee during the review and there has been close liaison with the Council's Projects Director.
- (c) The Scrutiny Support Officer has attended the Steering Group which oversaw the development and review of the KPMG study.
- (d) The Scrutiny Support Officer has conducted interviews with job seekers and employers and conducted focus groups with young people at Canterbury College and key stakeholders at a workshop at Aylesham.

2.1.4 The findings have been submitted to the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee at its meeting on 13 February 2006 and it has developed recommendations to the (Cabinet and) Council.

Investigation

2.1.5 The Scrutiny Support Officer has conducted interviews with appropriate Members and Officers of the Council as identified by the Committee. The following persons have been interviewed:

- Councillor Paul Watkins, Leader of the Council
- Roger Madge, Projects Director
- Roger Walton, Head of Property and Procurement
- Mike Ebbs, Forward Planning Manager

2.1.6 Interviews have been conducted with the following regarding education and training issues for young people and work based learning:

- Eslami Ahmad (Learning and Skills Council)
- Joshua Coleman (Assistant Principal, South Kent College)
- Nicholas Fowler (Learning and Skills Council – consultant on construction skills)
- Maureen Irving (Assistant Principal, Canterbury College)
- Sally McPherson (KPMG)
- Mark Styles (Learning and Skills Council)
- Gabrielle Wilson (Vocational Training, KCC)
- Connexions
- Dover and District Chamber of Commerce
- Home Builders Federation

2.1.7 Directors or Human Resources Managers of local businesses have contributed to the review with representatives of the following companies being interviewed:

- Bates Roofing
- Cavendish Ships Storage
- County Hotel
- Hillreed Homes
- Viking Recruitment
- London Fancy Box
- Priority Freight
- Punch Taverns
- Tesco Stores

2.1.8 The Scrutiny Support Officer has also gathered information from attending meetings of the following:

- The Steering Group on the Construction Skills Initiative
- The Steering Group on the KPMG study for the Learning and Skills Council

2.1.9 A Focus Group meeting has been held with learners from the District who travel to study at Canterbury College.

2.1.10 A workshop has been conducted with local community representatives at Aylesham.

Stage 4: Final Analysis

- 2.1.11 The findings of the Review have been presented to the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee at its meeting on 13 February 2006. The Committee has made a number of recommendations to the (Cabinet and) Council which are set out at pages 41 to 42.

Section 3: Research Report

Details of the issues examined by the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee:

Part A: Summary of KPMG Research

Part B: New Primary Research by Dover District Council

Part C: Direct Influence by Dover District Council

Part A: Summary of KPMG Research

Introduction

3.1.1 Following the Kent and Medway Strategic Area Reviews by the Learning and Skills Council on Education and Skills for Young People aged 16-18 and for adults, KPMG was engaged to undertake further research into provision of education and training for 14 –19 year olds in the Dover District and to make recommendations on action to improve achievements locally.

3.1.2 A brief overview of the report is given below at paragraphs 3.1.3 to 3.1.38.

Government Policy

3.1.3 The Government White Paper "21st Century Skills" sets out the agenda for change in adult skills provision and the recent 14-19 Implementation Plan sets out clear goals and targets against a tight timeframe.

3.1.4 The KPMG study notes that the White Paper "states in no uncertain terms, that a wide range of bodies will need to work together to deliver the new entitlement including the national bodies, local authorities and local Learning and Skills Councils, and 'most important of all' schools, colleges and work-based learning providers.

3.1.5 Fully "joined-up", collaborative approaches are emphasised, with the Plan making it plain that local education authorities will need to demonstrate how they will enable the 14-19 entitlement to be delivered in developing their visions for Building Schools for the future."

3.1.6 The Government's aim is to increase Further Education participation of 17 year olds progressively from the current level of 75% to 90% by 2015 and to improve achievement at levels 2 and 3.

3.1.7 Every young person will have a curriculum and qualifications entitlement to include:

- the 'basics' of functional English, Maths and ICT;
- a broad education enabling progression into further education or employment; and
- a choice of routes from the age of 14 of either 'general qualifications' through GCSEs and A levels (including 'General Diplomas' for achieving the equivalent of 5 A-C grade GCSEs including English and Maths) or one of 14 sets of employer designed 'specialised diplomas' at 3 levels.

3.1.8 The entitlement to choose between the general qualifications or one of the 14 'specialised diplomas' will apply to every individual 14-19 year old regardless of which area they live in or which school or college they attend. This means that each of the 14 specialised diplomas, when available, will have to be accessible to every 14-19 year old in England. This will only be achieved in many cases through collaboration and partnership working between institutions. The entitlement will be in full operation in 2013 when all the new diplomas will be available.

3.1.9 This presents a huge challenge for local Learning and Skills Councils, local authorities and for schools, colleges and work-based providers.

3.1.10 The 2006 Education Bill will place duties upon local education authorities and the Learning and Skills Councils which will require:

- sufficient provision for 16-19 year olds in local areas and duties on schools to ensure that young people on their rolls have access to all the diplomas available locally;
- every area to establish a 14-19 partnership led by the local education authority and the Learning and Skills Council;
- drafting by local education authorities and local Learning and Skills Councils of a prospectus during 2006 setting out in full the courses available to young people in the area;
- decisions by all schools, colleges and other providers about which courses they wish to include in the local prospectus;
- 14-19 partnerships to decide on key local delivery partnerships including governance arrangements, a common curriculum framework, transport, underpinning systems, data, complaints procedures etc.

3.1.11 Provision will also be expanded through allocations from the capital fund, 400 Centres of Vocational Excellence by March 2006, 200 Vocational Specialist Schools and 12 National Skills Academies by September 2008, new providers by September 2007, and local education authorities demonstrating how they will enable the 14-19 entitlement to be delivered in developing their visions for building schools for the future.

3.1.12 The White Paper emphasises that a wide range of organisations will need to work together to deliver the new entitlement including the national bodies, local education authorities, local Learning and Skills Councils and 'most important of all' schools, colleges and work-based learning providers.

The Employment Market and Trends

3.1.13 The KPMG study has confirmed that employment in the district is typified by low skills employment exacerbated by recent redundancies at P&O Ferries and Hoverspeed.

3.1.14 Higher skills are not in such demand which means the loss to the District of highly qualified individuals. The consequence is that these skills now tend to be imported when needed.

3.1.15 This affects inward investment because of the lack of a ready made local labour market with high skills. If the regeneration plans for the district are to come to fruition then increasing the level and variety of skills to match the increased diversity of the new economy will have to be addressed. This can only be achieved if the education and training infrastructure is in place for the needs of future learners and their employers.

- 3.1.16 Population growth is expected in the 65+ age range and the population that is of working age will not grow in line with the anticipated increase in jobs and may actually decrease in size.
- 3.1.17 Labour required to fill the expected additional jobs in the next 10-15 years will come from reducing unemployment (which is currently low by historical standards but significantly higher than county and regional averages) and/or by increasing the employment rate.
- 3.1.18 This means getting more of the working age population into employment which will have training implications if improved or new skills are required.
- 3.1.19 A visionary local planning policy is being tested through the preparation of the Local Development Framework aimed at generating housing based growth to complement employment initiatives and, if successful, will generate an increase in population. Therefore, the amount of new housing and the age profiles of households will influence to some extent the impact upon the size of the local labour market.
- 3.1.20 The current regeneration initiatives of Dover are focused upon two major developments. Phase 2 of the White Cliffs Business Park which could lead to a third phase and a total of 3,000 new jobs in a mix of occupations and sectors. The other major development currently in planning is the Dover Town Investment Zone in central Dover which could create 500 jobs in the retail and leisure industries.

Participation in Education and Training

- 3.1.21 It was confirmed in KPMG's study that there are low levels of attainment at level 2 in some schools combined with a low participation rate in Further Education (FE) and work based learning. There is widespread acknowledgement of past under-performance of FE in the area. Dover has been a district of low aspirations which is related to the historical lack of diverse employment opportunities as well as a number of socio-economic factors reflected in some of the most deprived wards in the South East.
- 3.1.22 The KPMG study calculated that "participation among 16-18 year olds and the 19+ cohort in the District is currently at 7%, around a third below what could reasonably be expected ... and that the proportions appear set to remain more or less the same over the next few years without some form of intervention."
- 3.1.23 The District needs to "catch up" with county, regional and national averages in terms of attainment in addition to preparing its citizens for opportunities if regeneration plans are to be implemented successfully.
- 3.1.24 Also there is a significant amount of people travelling to study out of the district to access post-16 provision FE provision at Canterbury and in the Thanet District. Over 2250 students leave the District each year to study at these colleges.

South Kent College

- 3.1.25 The KPMG study acknowledged that South Kent College "is located in a very sustainable location in the town centre, although there are issues around poor visibility, security and the poor state of some accommodations." However, the College Property Strategy identified significant capacity for new build and improvement potential.

3.1.26 The study also acknowledged that South Kent College has not generally been held in high esteem. It goes on to observe that:

"The college itself is keen that it is not judged on the past, and that the future is what counts. It is making substantial changes – managerial, administrative and curriculum – and is keen that its legacy of poor performance in the past is not used to hamper its progress in the future."

3.1.27 There is evidence that the College has managed to increase its enrolments recently with specifically:

- the curriculum offer being expanded in September 2005 to include: Care, Early Years, Construction, Sports Therapy and Skills for Working Life.
- the January 2006 curriculum has included additional Care Courses, Construction Courses and additional Sports provision.
- from September 2006 the further intake will include Travel, Hospitality and Catering; Hair and Beauty and Marine Engineering.
- recently the campus has significantly improved and expanded its learning facilities and overall appearance.
- re-branding has taken place in the form of "your college in Dover, SKC".

3.1.28 This has resulted in a 50% increase in 16-18 enrolments, and more was expected with the intake in January 2006 of a further 15%-20%.

3.1.29 It should be noted that South Kent College is the largest provider of Work Based Learning in the Dover District followed by Kent County Council.

Preferred Option for Delivery: Dover Delivery Model

3.1.30 The Dover Delivery Model consists of a collaborative forum of all key stakeholders in the Dover District under the name of the Dover District Collegiate, acting as:

"a central conduit as the 'hub' (this could be South Kent College, specifically the Dover site, or another body formed for the purpose) and schools, other providers (including HE) and employers as the 'spokes'.

The central body would act as a conduit for the alignment of supply with demand.

It would hold primary responsibility for ensuring delivery appropriate to demand, but would not necessarily be the provider.

Under this model, the college, schools, KCC/DDC, private training providers and employers would be eligible to act as delivery mechanisms."

- 3.1.31 The Dover District Collegiate would act as a forum for the alignment of supply with demand. It would also be responsible for gathering and ensuring action is taken based upon demand intelligence but would not necessarily be the provider. Its exact terms of reference have yet to be decided.
- 3.1.32 The providing organisation would be determined by an assessment of suitability and capacity to deliver, for example facilities, equipment, and teacher/tutor expertise.
- 3.1.33 Using this model, KPMG suggests that the college, schools, KCC/DDC, private training providers and employers would be eligible to act as delivery mechanisms. It is envisaged in the study that the majority, but not all, of post-16 vocational provision would be delivered by the College and private training providers. It would be preferable for one body, perhaps the College, to take responsibility for the co-ordination of all work based learning.
- 3.1.34 KPMG's study acknowledged that the option may necessitate investment in the current Dover site of South Kent College to improve facilities and to expand the range and breadth of the curriculum offer to improve the District's post-16 vocational curriculum should this prove to be the best and most cost effective option to do this.

Representation on the Dover District Collegiate

- 3.1.35 KPMG has recommended that the minimum representation to the Collegiate should be:

- Learning and Skills Council (Kent and Medway)
- Secondary School representatives
- Further Education College(s)
- Work-based Learning Provider(s)
- Connexions Kent and Medway
- The Local Education Authority

- 3.1.36 Additional representatives could be co-opted or invited, for example, from:

- Specialist schools and institutions
- Employers
- Local authorities
- Business organisations

- 3.1.37 Other stakeholder representatives could participate as appropriate.

- 3.1.38 The Learning and Skills Council for Kent and Medway Strategic Area Review (StAR) project identified the need for local strategic groups (14-19 Planning Forum) to ensure clear linkages between the planning of 14-19 learning and community/labour market need and to link key employers and providers in order to address issues of common concern. In Dover District, the 14-19 Planning Forum role could take two forms:

- To act as an advisory body to the conduit agency.
- To act as the central conduit, as a virtual entity with no delivery obligations.

Part B: New Primary Research by Dover District Council

Executive Summary of Findings from Interviews, Focus Groups and Community Workshop

3.2.1 Focus Group Findings from Canterbury College:

- The college route is preferred by some students rather than school.
- South Kent College needs to increase its curriculum range to cater for a wider student intake.
- Should South Kent College offer wider curriculum choices, students may continue to choose Canterbury College because of:
 - the attraction of Canterbury as a city
 - the desire to seek a change of routine
 - a high level of customer satisfaction which will tend to lead people to return to the college
 - the college attracts a more diverse range of students
- South Kent College has to rebuild its reputation and advertise more widely.
- The career guidance given in local schools is poor.

3.2.2 Findings from Jobcentre Plus Interviews:

- A positive experience of education and training is more likely to prepare you throughout your lifetime for a flexible and pro active approach to your career.
- A negative experience of education and training is more likely to limit your career potential and financial reward.
- A negative experience at school encourages a poor attitude to further education and training in later life.
- A traditional school/college learning experience is not appropriate for all and there is often a strong preference for work based learning and other more creative means to bring learning into more appropriate and accessible settings for the learner.
- Numeracy and literacy is a major barrier to potential learners but there is a demand for intervention in this area.
- Individuals with numeracy and literacy skills are motivated to improve these skills but the training should be appropriate to their level.
- Training is not always recognised as an investment by the employer on the part of the employee but many employees have benefited from raising their skills in the work place.

- Guidance and advice for career choices delivered by Connexions or local schools is not perceived to be effective in the Dover area
- If people are excluded from education and training at an early age, routes back in are not apparent

3.2.3 Findings from the Employers' Survey:

- Companies in Dover benefit from the lack of competition in the labour market and can easily fill vacancies from the local population at the current time.
- Higher skilled employees are often recruited from outside of the district.
- Young people's employability is poorly perceived by local employers and work experience has not been a success.
- Schools need to take more responsibility for developing life skills and knowledge about the "world of work".
- In times of high demand for labour, employers will seek out employees from a range of age groups or experience.
- Guidance to employers is very poor about training, qualifications and demographic and labour trends.
- Employers do not always appreciate the amount of 'training' that takes place in the work place, which is informal in approach that they have instigated.
- Employers acknowledge the relationship that exists between skills and profit.
- Employers are positive about assisting their employees to gain literacy and numeracy skills.
- Employers believe they are pivotal to the design of training for their sectors.
- Employers want to see more work friendly training packages which are accessible in the work place and are cost effective.

3.2.4 Findings from the Aylesham Community and District Workshop:

- The Learning and Skills Council need to listen to views of the community outside of the main urban conurbations.
- There is a need for more vocational training and more locally based training to come to the community.
- Young people have to be engaged very early on as children in the education process.
- The facilities at the Aylesham Community Workshop could be utilised more effectively with long term rather than stop start initiatives.

- The Collegiate forum needs to be more visionary and not just train for today.
- Life skills and employability skills need to be part of the curriculum offer to young people before they leave school.
- Access to transport is an issue in terms of cost and availability.
- There should be targeted training to match employer needs.
- Good labour market information from community level needs to be collected by the Dover District Collegiate including the undertaking of skill audits across the District.
- Employers need to be encouraged to invest in their employees and community roadshows, workshops and school events are actively encouraged.
- There is a need for more family learning so that cycles of deprivation are stopped and parents can be involved in their children's futures.
- Connexions is recognised as effective for young people with multi disadvantages but in terms of careers guidance and advice there appears to be poor access to information

Focus Group Results

3.2.5 All the students who were interviewed for the Focus Group at Canterbury College were resident in the Dover District, and were undertaking full time study in the following areas:

- Advance National Certificate in Floristry
- Basic Carpentry
- BTEC National Award In Business
- City & Guilds – Electrical Installation
- First Diploma in Construction
- HND Business
- HND Computing
- Introduction Diploma In Land & Environment
- Pre-Access
- VTCT Hairdressing Level 2

3.2.6 The schools which the students had attended prior to full time education were:

- Astor
- Dover Grammar
- St Edmunds

3.2.7 Eleven students attended the focus group at Canterbury College and responded to the following issues:

- **Why have you attended Canterbury College and not South Kent College or used another FE route such as staying on at school?**

The importance of gaining qualifications to increase their job prospects was a key factor in their desire to undertake further education. However, no student had wanted to stay on at school and preferred the College route, which was considered as more empowering in treating them as adults.

For the majority of these students, Canterbury College was the first College which came to mind when considering further education. South Kent College was not perceived as an option with the reasons posited being:

- Canterbury College is the only College to offer the course.
- Canterbury is preferable to Dover or Folkestone in terms of its environment, attractiveness and vibrancy.
- Travelling outside of the district offers a complete change to the usual routine.
- The reputation of Dover and Folkestone campus is very poor.
- Previous positive experiences of Canterbury College resulted in students returning for further study.
- Canterbury College is likely to attract a wider and more diverse selection of students which offers a more varied experience for the student.
- Canterbury College is seen in a very positive light by the students present in terms of its student support and range of courses/facilities.

- **What measures would have to be taken by South Kent College to encourage greater student numbers?**

- Increase 'A' level and vocational course provision.
- Advertise more effectively and build a better reputation – the College is seen as not connecting with local schools and in particular prospective students at local schools.
- Build a better reputation of caring for its students.
- Dover town needs to be regenerated and become more attractive.

- **Travelling as an issue**

Some students would prefer not to travel because of family commitments and cost and would have chosen South Kent College if the course had been available.

Some students would travel to Canterbury for the experience, even if South Kent College offered the course they wished to undertake.

Therefore travel was not seen as an impediment and students were prepared to travel if:

- the cost was not a concern; or
- the course was not available locally; or
- there were concerns about the quality of the learning experience; or
- the domain of the place of study was not considered to be attractive

There was a perception that students who attend South Kent College might choose a course which is not necessarily suitable but would avoid the expense and inconvenience of travel. This gave rise to a view that students at South Kent College were not particularly selective or motivated..

- **Making the choice**

All the students had negative views about guidance given to them in their schools.

Connexions was consistently criticised as being invisible and of no benefit to young people.

No student had any experience of co-ordinated guidance or support. Career guidance within the schools was considered to be very poor. The students expressed a strong view that they should have been provided with appropriate and effective guidance at their school.

A few students had discussed options with family and friends but overall their impression was that they felt they have been solely responsible for their choice of course and where to study.

Most students had investigated options for FE on their own initiative.

The Learn Direct advertisements on the TV had prompted some students to pursue the FE option.

Few employers had been active in promoting career opportunities in schools and in advertising in the town of Dover although the RAF is an exception to this.

Interviews with Job Seekers at Dover Jobcentre Plus

3.2.8 Jobcentre Plus replaced the Employment Service in April 2002. The Employment Service ran Jobcentres, and those parts of the Benefits Agency which provided services to people of working age through social security offices. The Jobcentre Plus network is made up of Jobcentre Plus offices, Jobcentres and social security offices. Its aim is to help:

- more people into work;
- employers to fill vacancies; and
- give people of working age (18-65) the help and support which they are entitled to if they cannot work.

3.2.9 For the purpose of this review, 50 job seekers have been interviewed using the questionnaire as a basis for discussion (see Appendix A).

Opportunities for Training for Job Seekers

3.2.10 Job seekers aged between 18-24 automatically join the Government's "New Deal" after signing on for a period of 6 months. Once on the New Deal job seekers can access additional help through three possibilities:

- **Full time education and training**

Opportunities vary and depend partly on what the college can offer and at what time of year the job seeker wants to join a course because of the academic cycle. This is the only route for individuals to access full time learning whilst receiving benefits.

- **Environmental Task Force**

There is an opportunity to gain experience by being placed in a practical work base in the outdoors. Training is provided by KCC and funded by the "New Deal".

- **Community Work**

There is an opportunity to have a placement in the voluntary sector but further community work is being developed to provide alternative placements. Training is provided by KCC and funded by the "New Deal".

3.2.11 For those job seekers over the age of 24, entry to the "New Deal" can only occur if they have been unemployed for 18 months. These individuals are offered a variety of training opportunities to increase their employability.

Other Training Opportunities

3.2.12 All job seekers can access other training at any time provided that it does not exceed 16 hours per week. However, if a suitable job becomes available they are expected to discontinue the training.

3.2.13 There are a variety of courses which South Kent College or other private training providers offer which job seekers have accessed and they are funded in a variety of ways including through the European Social Fund. The programme team at Jobcentre Plus co ordinate the information on these courses which are often targeted at the very low skilled and includes literacy and numeracy training.

Literacy and Numeracy Training

3.2.14 All job seekers are assessed for their literacy and numeracy skills at 6 months and 12 months of their unemployment. Jobcentre Plus was part of a pilot scheme until April 2005 which required those of low literacy and numeracy to undertake training in these areas. This pilot scheme has now ended and job seekers are not required to undertake literacy and numeracy training but are offered the opportunity for such training.

3.2.15 Feedback from the pilot initiative has suggested that the method of delivery of thirty hours per week on a full time basis is encountering resistance from the students involved. YMCA is currently involved in providing numeracy and literacy training but it is delivered on a 30 hour per week, full time basis. Jobcentre Plus in Dover has registered its concern over the method of delivery as a result of the evaluation of the pilot scheme and await the national response in terms of future guidelines for the delivery of this training.

Findings

3.2.16 Eighteen to 24 Year Old Age Group – 14 (28%) out of the 50 respondees are in the 18-24 age group:

- **Those with qualifications**

Seven of these young people had academic qualifications ranging from degree level to GCSEs and all expressed an interest in supplementing their current qualifications with additional training and understood the link between qualifications/training and future job prospects. The additional training sought was in the area of IT, which they believed would provide them with skills required in the work place.

The interviewee with GCSEs had lost interest in 6th form education and received no guidance or counselling about career choices. This individual expressed concern that FE on a full time basis might not be appropriate for them.

The other 6 interviewees with higher qualifications were seeking work as a back stop before gaining employment in their chosen professional field but were very positive about finding work and expected to be involved themselves in the search process.

A further interviewee had gained a qualification in the workplace (NVQ in food hygiene).

These individuals had not been "signed on" for 6 months at the time of interview and therefore, were not eligible for the New Deal.

- **Those with no qualifications**

These interviewees were not seeking to raise their level of qualification. When asked about possible training for the future they were either not interested in training or were very vague about the areas of training which might be useful for future job prospects. They had no clear idea of alternative routes to qualification and the majority had a negative view of their school experience, and careers guidance received at school. This group was less motivated in seeking work but the sectors which attracted them were construction, hospitality and retail.

3.2.17 Twenty five years of age and over – 36 (72%) of the 50 respondees were in the age group 25 or over:

- **Those with academic qualifications**

Ten of the respondees in this group had academic qualifications such as 'O' and 'A' levels, HND's and degrees. The reasons for their unemployment were cited as redundancy, early retirement, health problems, women returning to work and a recent move to the area.

All were interested in further training to enhance their job prospects and were seeking to increase their qualifications. IT Training had clearly been identified by the majority of this group.

Also training in order to change careers had been identified such as teacher training, plumbing or skills to become self employed.

Individuals within this group had identified advancing age, responsibility for caring for others and lack of funds to travel to courses as impediments to gaining further qualifications or work.

Individuals within this group appeared to be ready and willing to accept personal responsibility for further training.

- **Those with work based training experience**

Nineteen of the respondees in this group had acquired vocational qualifications rather than academic qualifications or have undertaken on the job training, which may or may not lead to a recognised qualification.

Within this group, the individuals had had experience of a working life with employers who had invested in their workforce but they themselves did not necessarily perceive that their employer had trained them. Therefore, 'Training' was connected within their mind to a school or college based course.

This group was heavily represented in construction, ferries, warehousing, railway maintenance, care work, retail and secretarial and administrative work.

Qualifications ranged from NVQ level III in childcare to forklift truck certification and the PTS card for manual labourers on the railway. Within this group some individuals expressed concern about their literacy and numeracy skills.

Reasons given for their unemployment were redundancy, ill health and advancing age.

Their expectations of future employment were more likely to be in the sectors that they had worked in before rather than retraining for other sectors of employment. Equally, any desire for training was more likely to be in the areas where they had been employed previously.

Many of the respondents within this group did not have a positive experience of school and did not want to go back into any full time traditional learning environment either in school or college.

Individuals within this group were overwhelmingly of the opinion that it was the employer's responsibility to ensure that employees were trained and they had no personal responsibility to make this happen.

- **No qualifications or experience of work based training**

Seven respondents had no qualifications and no experience of work based training. Six of these respondents admitted to having had either current or previous problems with numeracy and literacy but all of them were very positive about undertaking training to assist them in acquiring these skills.

Getting a job to earn money had been a top priority since leaving school for the majority of this group and they had a perception that jobs had been more plentiful in the past.

This group was more likely to have been employed in manual and low skilled jobs in construction, which were commonly of a temporary nature and were seeking jobs in the same area from which they had been released or made redundant in the past. One individual was a woman returning to work who was interested in gaining qualifications to allow herself eventually to work with young children.

In terms of further training, this group was vague about the further training they might wish to undertake and they were the least likely to be attracted to a change of career.

Employer Survey

3.2.18 Employers have been interviewed on a face to face basis and a questionnaire was used to stimulate discussion (see Appendix B).

3.2.19 The companies that have been interviewed are from the following sectors:

- Construction
- Hotel, Catering and Licensing
- Manufacturing
- Recruitment in the Marine Sector
- Retail
- Transport, Distribution and Storage

3.2.20 Current staffing and retention situation:

Question: How many employees does your company have? Are they spread over particular age ranges?

Responses: All the employers interviewed employed over 20 staff with the largest employer Tesco employing 560 staff at their branch. Most companies had employees ranging from 16 year olds recruited from school to those of retirement age.

Punch Taverns employed staff in particular age ranges. Their licensees were more likely to be individuals from 35 years onwards who were moving into a secondary career as a lifestyle choice. Punch Taverns also trained bar staff, who tended to be younger and to be more transient staff.

Question: What would be the turnover of staff? How do you recruit staff? Have you had problems recruiting staff?

Responses: The turnover of staff was not perceived as a problem. One company that was confident of the benefits package it could offer nevertheless commented that part of their success in keeping staff in Dover was because 'there is no where else for them to work'.

Recruitment was primarily from the Job Centre and advertisements in the local press.

The County Hotel had a high recruitment rate of low skilled workers from Poland. Recent publicity about the Hotel being pulled down as part of the regeneration of the town centre had made it difficult to recruit workers from Dover.

Viking Recruitment was based in Dover but recruited from the whole of the United Kingdom for cruise ships and luxury yachts worldwide. The success of this business was based upon its ability to source appropriately trained and competent staff for its clients. Currently, there was a shortage of skills and manpower for this industry because of the particular fusion of maritime, hotel and catering skills required. This company had been at the forefront of trying to develop a learning academy which catered for the key elements for working in the hospitality sector at sea.

Priority Freight intended to recruit higher skilled employees from across Europe to provide additional knowledge of other European regions.

Punch Taverns found that in the rural areas of the district it was difficult to recruit chefs (which is a national trend).

Recruitment in the construction sector was a current issue for developers and for local authorities who were involved in major regeneration initiatives. A company in the construction sector was experiencing problems in recruiting skilled labour and believed that it would have to develop its own skilled workforce.

The construction sector nationally was fragmented and depended upon a lot of sub contracting to smaller companies but these small companies had not in the past had the resources or inclination to be involved in training. Some of these companies were very mobile with only short term commitments to developments.

Hillreed Homes was fully conversant with the industry owned scheme to qualify the whole construction workforce to adopt a carded scheme by 2007, focussing on assessing competency on site. This company expressed the view that future problems will not be about shortage of labour at the craft level but rather land supply, planning difficulties and the need to qualify and train site managers to a professional level.

The construction sector in the South East had particular demands being made upon it and the view of Hill Reed Homes was that imported skills from overseas would continue to meet the requirement for a skilled workforce.

3.2.21 Employing young people from school:

Question: If you recruit young people – what are your views of their ability to fit into the workplace and their overall employability?

Responses: A majority of the companies interviewed were not positive about employing young people from school. Some companies preferred their staff to be already qualified in the vocational skills which schools did not provide. The reputation of young people's employability was not high and in general, young people were perceived as being somewhat difficult to fit into the workplace.

Those companies that had employed young people from school had looked for the particular personal attributes of enthusiasm and the willingness to adopt a good attitude to work. Young people who were personable and positive were more likely to find work with these companies. Their behaviour is critical in terms of whether they would be offered a job. Some companies would not consider employing a school leaver and had no confidence in the school system to prepare young people for work.

The representatives of the hospitality and construction sectors found it particularly difficult to attract young people into their sectors. Tesco Stores also had problems when young people had wider opportunities for jobs elsewhere and cited Ashford as a town where they were having particular problems of recruiting school leavers. Nevertheless

falling rolls in schools were only really recognised as a potential threat by Tesco Stores.

Questions: **To what extent do you think employers should assist young people at school to earn about the world of work? Are you involved in any Business/Education link – work placement, attendance at any Business and Enterprise days?**

Responses: Those companies which had offered work experience had found it to be disheartening. One comment that was representative of the views expressed was: "no one seems to have prepared them for working here, even for a short time – they turn up in jeans and they turn up late".

Concern was expressed about the apparent lack of life skills amongst young people and that schools were not doing enough to prepare them for working life. Some companies had actively worked/liased with schools but others were firmly of the view that it was the responsibility of the education system to prepare young people for employment. This preparation should include, in their view, developing appropriate vocational curricula.

Question: **Do you support the apprenticeship scheme?**

Responses: There was a low level of understanding about the Modern Apprenticeship scheme but a wish to know more about it. There was a general desire to see more traditional apprenticeships whereby young people were tutored in the workplace by an older experienced worker.

In the construction sector there were a number of initiatives to promote apprenticeships particularly in light of the difficulty in accessing work experience to achieve vocational qualifications.

3.2.22 Skill levels of employees:

Questions: **Do you believe that your staff are able to do the job? How would you rate the skill levels of your staff – basic, generalist, specialised. How would you rate their customer handling skills? Management supervisory skills?**

Do you expect your staff to have IT skills? If not might there be a need in the future?

Responses: The skill levels of employees across the companies ranged from basic through to highly skilled. Several companies had noted that literacy and numeracy was an issue for some of their employees. Where literacy and numeracy was an issue all the employers involved in the research expressed a wish to be involved in intervention measures but had no knowledge of how this might be done.

Companies who were expanding understood the need to provide extra support for their current staff in terms of further training. Also updating IT skills was generally recognised as part of future needs.

3.2.23 Employers attitude to raising skill levels:

Questions: Do you think that 'training' might improve their performance and therefore your profit base? What sort of skills that you currently don't have within your workforce may you have a need for in the future?

If skill levels were increased would that benefit your business?

Have you ever had to introduce new working practices – if so how did staff accommodate this?

What would encourage you to train staff?

Responses: All the companies interviewed were very positive about the need for skilled employees at various levels. Clearly, some workers required a level of skill, such as holding an HGV licence, before they could be employed.

Some companies said that they would only recruit trained staff and would then provide further 'training' in order to ensure that their employees were ready for the job or were updated in areas such as health and safety requirements.

A great deal of 'training' was undertaken by employers themselves but because it was not formalised or provided by an outsider, it was not recognised as 'training'.

National companies such as Tesco Stores and Punch Taverns had comprehensive in-house training schemes and packages to develop their employees. Every company interviewed was aware that the skills and abilities of their employees correlated directly to their profitability but some felt constrained in undertaking training by their lack of resources. Most companies did not have a training budget as part of their business plans.

Older workers were seen as more resistant to changing work practices and training requirements than younger workers.

None of the companies interviewed wished to release their staff for training off site but a number showed interest in Learn Direct and accessing training on-line at their desk.

Although there was a clear understanding that training and better skills were linked to profitability most of the businesses did not account for this in terms of business planning. Undertaking the liP process could assist employers to understand this link but most of the companies interviewed felt that this was too time consuming for them.

3.2.24 Employers perception of "training":

Questions: What is your experience of training and training providers? How beneficial has it been? If you are the owner/manager, what training have you accessed? How do you think your staff view or value training?

Responses: Tesco Stores and Punch Taverns, as national companies, provide their own extensive training programmes for their staff. Punch Taverns expressed an interest in Learn Direct. Tesco Stores will be introducing NVQ level III training and awards for shop floor staff. Tesco also recruit from the shop floor into management roles and invest heavily in the development of staff.

Where companies developed their own in-house training programmes this had been done to achieve internal control and ensure customised training.

A small amount of training had been accessed from South Kent College. Some training had been accessed from private training providers.

Those Directors/Managers who had undergone training themselves were very positive about the experience. Where training had been given to employees their perception was that it had been well received. The research showed that there appeared to be a lack of knowledge about training opportunities for employers and their employees.

A respondent cited an experience of an FE College which he felt was not responsive to the needs of employers.

Knowledge of the activities of Business Link was poor and any experiences of Business Link that existed were perceived negatively with business advisors seen as inadequate for the task.

The construction sector seemed to be spearheading a number of initiatives to make training quicker, more cost effective and more flexible.

Question: What would you like to see happen?

Responses: The following responses were given by employers, which indicated the urgent needs they perceived should be addressed:

- Schools had to turn out better qualified students in vocational areas and must address issues such as attitude to work.
- Pupils need to feel that they have an obligation to maximise the opportunities arising from work experience both from a personal perspective and because they are representing their schools.
- Colleges of FE must be more responsive to employer needs.

- There must be better information supplied to businesses to help them understand any help or guidance which may be available.
- More apprenticeships are required.
- There is a need and opportunity to develop a Maritime Hospitality Academy in Dover.
- Dover itself needs to improve its image overall in order to attract more wealth.
- More language skills are required.
- There is a need to support the raising of numeracy and literacy skills.
- More information is sought on the opportunities provided by Learn Direct.
- Employers have to lead any discussions on how to improve the training of the workforce – it was stated that "we need to influence the delivery mechanisms".

Report on the Community Workshop

3.2.25 A meeting was held at the Aylesham Community and District Workshop involving community leaders and elected representatives. The needs of the community of Aylesham were specifically investigated in order to establish whether the concerns expressed in interviews in Dover were duplicated in the district outside of the urban areas.

3.2.26 The following representatives attended:

- Councillor Helen Bartolo
- Sam Bennett, Aylesham Neighbourhood Centre Manager
- David Blackburn, Democratic Services Manager, Dover District Council
- Granville Cosier, Aylesham Resident
- Linda Dorsman, Scrutiny Support Officer, Dover District Council
- Derek Garrity, Aylesham & District Community Workshop Trust Manager
- Brinley Hill, Senior Community Development Officer
- Councillor Lawrence Knight
- Tim Springett, Zingaro Technology Limited
- Patrick Sutcliffe, Aylesham Youth Centre Manager

3.2.27 The Agenda for the day can be found at Appendix C.

3.2.28 The discussions at the workshop focussed on the following issues:

- **Broaden the Skills Agenda to include the outlying areas around Dover**

A key concern expressed by those present at the workshop was that the proposed Dover District Collegiate should address the training needs of individuals in outlying areas of the District who may find it difficult to travel to study either in Dover, Folkestone, Thanet or Canterbury. This difficulty might be due to expense of travel, lack of a co-ordinated transport or simply because the impetus from individuals themselves to upskill was not there.

Aylesham had benefited from the coalfields funding initiatives which had established the Aylesham Community and District Workshop as a facility which could be further exploited for training within the community. Training rooms with computer equipment were available but there had been a history of the Colleges of FE not being able to continue outreach work because it was not financially viable for them and therefore, the resources available were under-utilised.

Many of those present were concerned about the need for detailed information from the area to be fed into the Collegiate forum and that further research should be carried out in terms of:

- Carrying out a skills audit
- Establishing future opportunities for employment in the immediate vicinity.

It was recognised that there was a need to bring together employers and the community in Aylesham and that better guidance and advice should be provided.

- **Widening the expectations of young people**

There was general agreement about the need for more vocational training – and more locally based training coming to the community. There was also an appreciation that children had to be involved at an early age in positive experiences at school. It was acknowledged that low aspirations often were a product of cycles of deprivation within families which were transferred to the children. Therefore, some form of 'family learning' which encouraged wider inclusion into the process of education was badly needed in areas of deprivation and low achievement.

The experience of schools careers advice was criticised by the group and concern expressed that important initiatives such as work experience were not being properly resourced. Connexions was praised for its work with young people with multiple deprivations but it was not seen as active in providing wider advice and guidance on choices for further education and careers for young people.

There was a general call for schools to be more responsive in terms of preparing young people for work and having specific employability skills as part of the school experience.

Part C: Research into Direct Influence by Dover District Council

Dover District Council's Influence on Skills Development in the District

Regeneration and the Local Development Framework in the Dover District

- 3.3.1 The District has been facing deep-rooted social and economic issues for many years. Until recently, these have been approached through a series of separate initiatives; Dover Town Investment Zone, Buckland Mill, North Deal, Aylesham and the former coalfields and Sure Start. The Dover Pride Regeneration Strategy has made recommendations for tackling these issues in Dover in a more co-ordinated way. As work on Dover Pride continues, the new Local Development Framework is taking this approach forward in the planning context on a district wide basis.
- 3.3.2 Planning is no longer an exercise in land use alone. Under the new system brought in through the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, it must take full account of social and economic issues and produce a wider "spatial Plan" (the Local Development Framework). Low skills in the population have already been recognised as a major issue for the LDF. The question is what contribution can the development process make to skills training and what role might the planning system have in this?
- 3.3.3 This is a potentially important matter because the LDF is proposing options that involve much greater levels of development than in the past, centred upon Dover where there is also the greatest concentration of low skills.

A More Creative Use of the Planning System and Section 106 Agreements

- 3.3.4 How far Dover District Council is able to impose conditions on developers who are successful in their bids to acquire land for development is open to question. Nevertheless, as part of the development of the LDF, one of the pillars of the proposals is the need to increase the skills level of the District. It is pointless to include this as a desirable outcome of the long term planning framework without suggesting the means with which the LDF can achieve this.
- 3.3.5 The use of Agreements under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act is currently restricted by government advice. However, a number of London Boroughs and the Thames Gateway are seeking to relate the provision of training to the grant of planning permission for larger scale development proposals. The London Development Agency has also produced guidelines for its legal officers to review their Section 106 Agreements and to introduce more requirements for developers to include vocational training plans into their development proposals.
- 3.3.6 In addition, where a Council such as Dover District Council owns development land, additional influence can be exerted. Therefore, it may for example, be possible to require the chosen developers to identify vocational training for a specified percentage of their workforce.
- 3.3.7 It is suggested by developers interviewed for this review that in the construction sector there are major training initiatives being developed to assist this sector to grow its own skills. Co-operation should be encouraged between developers and clients

such as local authorities to work together to achieve the same aim of upskilling the local construction workforce.

3.3.8 Where SEEDA or English Partnerships are partners in any regeneration initiative there are sustainability checklists which clearly identify the need to provide training for the workforce and which we could invoke.

3.3.9 We could explore with SEEDA how critical this upskilling requirement of the checklist is in terms of regeneration and how they would expect to see it actioned in any future planning proposal.

Kent Construction Skills Strategy

3.3.10 The construction sector has some difficulties in determining its training requirements. It is a very fragmented sector relying heavily on sub contracting to small firms who are unable to support training, particularly apprenticeships. We should seek to consider how we can encourage greater local training provision when we engage with the construction industry.

3.3.11 A major new initiative being developed is the Kent Construction Skills Strategy which aims to support the development of appropriate construction skills in Kent. It is built on the active involvement of all parties in construction in making work-based training opportunities available to those wishing to enter the industry. The guidance for clients (such as Dover District Council) entering into the pilot scheme is given below:

"The ability of the industry to deliver cost effective construction solutions is seen as a key concern of clients. As a Local Authority client, the role will be instrumental in encouraging contractors and their supply chain to actively engage in providing site based-training.

To ensure that your project fully supports site-based training it is advisable to consider a number of key issues in the early stages of the project development process. A checklist is set out below:

1. *Involve a local training provider to assist with assessing the scope for site-based training on the project.*
2. *Consider what arrangements should be made for including a requirement for work-based training in any tender/enquiry documentation.*
3. *Consider using a Kent construction skills training protocol as the basis for reaching a common understanding with your contractor(s) and other supply chain partners (ideally this protocol would be incorporated within the contract documents or framework agreement. Copies are available from the Learning and Skills Council Kent & Medway (LSC)).*
4. *Work with a college, your contractor and other supply chain partners to develop a skills training plan appropriate for your project.*
5. *Continue to support the skills training plan throughout the life of your project (your continuing involvement and support of the*

training strategy on the project will be an important factor in ensuring its success).

6. *Tell other clients about your involvement and commitment to the work-based learning and the Kent Skills Construction Strategy (Your project can act as a powerful example to other clients)."*

3.3.12 Dover District Council has recently signed up to supporting this initiative and as part of the commitment to the pilot programme the Council's Property Services Section has inserted a clause in our documentation for suppliers.

3.3.13 The clause is included in the preliminaries section of minor works, standard and measured term forms of JCT contracts and reads as follows:

"As a performance and safety measure the employer wishes to improve skills training within the Industry. To this end contractors must agree to provide work based training for the duration of the project. Such work based training must comply to the Kent Construction Skills and Local Employment Protocol (latest edition) as issued by the:*

*Learning Skills Council (Kent & Medway)
29 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill
West Malling
Kent ME19 4AE*

It will be a requirement that the "Weekly Training Reporting Schedule", as defined in the above protocol is submitted by the contractor to the CA within 7 (seven) days of the relevant work."

3.3.14 This is potentially a very strong initiative in securing work based learning as part of our contractual arrangements and the Property Services Section is to be congratulated upon this approach.

3.3.15 The level of compliance is of course crucial and would require further investment of already scarce resources in order to maximize the benefits of the initiative. This might involve discussions with local colleges to establish the potential work-based training opportunities on the various works programmes of the Council and discussions with our potential suppliers so that they fully understand the implications of agreeing to the protocol.

3.3.16 An interview with one of the Council's suppliers established that the company was keen to comply with the protocol and to discover more about training opportunities.

3.3.17 *The Kent Construction Skills and Local Employment Protocol can be found at Appendix D.

Section 4: Recommendations

Summary of the recommendations of the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee to Cabinet and Council and the views of Corporate Management Team

Recommendations

4.1.1 The recommendations of the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee are as follows:

- (1) That the report be submitted to (Cabinet and) Council for approval.
- (2) That the Dover District Collegiate model be endorsed as an operational means to provide greater collaboration in the co-ordination of training for young people of the District.
- (3) That at least one representative of Dover District Council be appointed to serve on the Dover District Collegiate.
- (4) That the findings of the interviews and community workshop are released to the Learning and Skills Council in fulfilment of the match funding contract and forwarded to Jobcentre Plus in Dover and Connexions in Dover.
- (5) That the findings contained within the Review be submitted to the Dover District Collegiate at its inaugural meeting by the representative(s) of Dover District Council.
- (6) That representatives of Connexions in Dover be asked to attend a scrutiny session to outline their services and how they meet the White Paper requirements to provide "better information, advice and guidance on skills, training and qualifications, so that people know what is available, what the benefits are, and where to go". This should be undertaken in light of the views expressed by persons interviewed as part of this review at Canterbury College and Jobcentre Plus in Dover.
- (7) That the Council's Property Services Division be commended for its collaboration in the construction skills pilot strategy and the strategy be strengthened by:
 - (a) Developing links with the two local colleges, South Kent College at Dover and Thanet College, in order to raise awareness of the training delivery issues and assist Dover District Council in understanding what is important to include within any work experience arrangement.
 - (b) Reviewing the strategy with some of Dover's contractors involved with maintenance or other long-term contracts with a view to piloting the strategy within the requirements for a capital project.
- (8) That the Forward Planning Team be asked to:
 - (a) Consider how Section 106 Agreements and the LDF can be utilised to promote skills development with local employment.
 - (b) Consult with SEEDA on how critical the upskilling requirement of their checklist is in terms of regeneration and how they would expect to see it actioned in any future planning proposal.

- (9) That a follow up report be submitted to Scrutiny after a period of twelve months.

Comments of the Corporate Management Team and relevant officers

4.1.2 The Corporate Management Team welcomes the work that has been undertaken by the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee and asks the (Cabinet and) Council to note the following specific observations that are made below.

4.1.3 Comments of the Head of Property and Procurement:

I have considered the report, support the contents and have no additional comments to make.

4.1.4 Comments of the Transport and Projects Officer:

The ability to transport goods, people and services through to and within the district in an effective and efficient manner is crucial to our future well being. In this connection, the importance of enabling and encouraging access to those engaged in the education sector cannot be under estimated. Although the District Council cannot make direct improvements to the transport system, it is, nonetheless, actively involved in facilitating and promoting a number of wide ranging initiatives that will provide a stronger sustainable foundation for those wishing to travel. Key projects include the development of Dover Priory Station (in anticipation of the future Channel Tunnel Rail Link Domestic Service) as a key integrated transport hub, the development of a Quality Bus Partnership and various other cycling and walking initiatives through the Local Transport Plan process.

In addition to improvements to the transport system, it is also important that consideration is given to the opportunities that exist to improve accessibility to existing and future employment opportunities and settlements. Aside from the previously identified employment sites, consideration should be given to windfall opportunities that may come along, such as Connaught Barracks, together with smaller localised opportunity sites within existing centres.

4.1.5 Comments of the Forward Planning Manager:

Current work on the District's Local Development Framework has identified a wide range of issues which includes whether to aim for higher levels of housing and jobs growth, and the need to make much more progress in addressing low skills and low aspirations amongst residents. These issues are concentrated at the town of Dover. The LDF could provide an opportunity to bring together physical development and training issues through new planning policy requirements on developers. A condition of granting planning permission for large scale development could be a requirement for the developer to commit to implementing training schemes amongst the construction workforce.

Many development companies already operate training schemes but it appears there is a diversity of approach and commitment. If the planning system was to be used to ensure that developers commit to training initiatives it would need to be done in a way that was not confrontational but understood the needs of the industry and worked with it to bring about a higher and more consistent level of training initiatives. On the other hand, there would be little point in such a planning requirement if it

achieved no more than requiring developers to carry out initiatives to which they are already committed. At this stage it would appear that it is worth proposing a new policy in order to gauge industry and training providers reaction through public consultation on the draft LDF.

Section 5: Appendices

- Appendix A: Questionnaire used for Job Seekers*
- Appendix B: Questionnaire used for Employers*
- Appendix C: Agenda used for Aylesham Workshop*
- Appendix D: Kent Construction and Local Employment Protocol*

Questionnaire used for Job Seekers

Please find below a questionnaire devised by Dover District Council in order to get your views on education and training in our District. The questionnaire is completely confidential but the responses will be used to lobby for what you feel needs to be done.

Please tick the appropriate box

Age Group 18-24 25 or over

I am trained or have qualifications in:

I think getting a job in the future will depend on qualifications/training? Yes No

I am interested/not interested in further training? Yes No

If interested what area of training would you want to have?

What has prevented you in the past or is preventing you currently from getting new qualifications/skills?

Questionnaire used for Employers

Name of Employer:

Position in Company:

Current Staffing and retention situation

- How many employees does your company have?
- Are they spread over particular age ranges?
- What would be the turnover of staff?
- How do you recruit staff?
- Have you had problems recruiting staff?

Skill levels of employees

- If you recruit young people – what are your views of their ability to fit into the workplace and their overall employability?
- To what extent do you think employers should assist young people at school to learn about the world of work?
- Are you involved in any Business/Education link – work placement, attendance at any Business and Enterprise days?
- Do you believe that your staff are able to do the job?
- How would you rate the skill levels of your staff – basic, generalist, specialised?
- How would you rate their customer handling skills? Management supervisory skills?
- If their skill levels were increased would that benefit your business?
- Have you ever had to introduce new working practices – if so how did staff accommodate?
- Do you expect your staff to have IT skills? If not might there be a need in the future?
- Do you think that 'training' might improve their performance and therefore your profit base?
- What sort of skills that you currently don't have might you have a need for in the future?

Employers perception of 'training'

- What experience do you have of training and training providers?
- How beneficial or not has it been?
- Do you support the apprenticeship scheme?
- What would encourage you to train staff?
- How do you think your staff view or value training?
- If owner/manager what training have you accessed?
- What would you like to see happen?

Agenda for Aylesham Workshop held on 10 February 2006

Agenda

12.00 onwards	Arrival
12.30 pm	Lunch
1.00 pm	Introduction to Day to cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Purpose of Scrutiny Review on Education and Skills• Expectations of workshop
1.10 pm	Group Exercise to consider Aylesham perspective on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accessing training opportunities for young people (14 –19)• Accessing work based training for employees• Accessing skills training for unemployed individuals
2.00 pm	Feedback from Group Exercise and proposed solutions from group
2.45 pm	Break
3.00 pm	Presentation on interview findings of Review
3.15 pm	Group discussion and comparison of Aylesham issues and Dover issues
3.45 pm	Recommendations for Review
4.00 pm	Finish

Kent Construction Skills and Local Employment Protocol

The ability of the industry to deliver cost effective construction solutions is seen as a key concern of clients. As a client, your role will be instrumental in encouraging contractors and their supply chain to actively engage in providing site based-training.

To ensure that your project fully supports site-based training it is advisable to consider a number of key issues in the early stages of the project development process. A checklist is set out below:

1. Involve a local training provider to assist with assessing the scope for site-based training on the project.
2. Consider what arrangements should be made for including a requirement for work-based training in any tender/enquiry documentation.
3. Consider using a Kent construction skills training protocol as the basis for reaching a common understanding with your contractor(s) and other supply chain partners (ideally this protocol would be incorporated within the contract documents or framework agreement. Copies are available from the Learning and Skills Council Kent & Medway (LSC)).
4. Work with a college, your contractor and other supply chain partners to develop a skills training plan appropriate for your project.
5. Continue to support the skills training plan throughout the life of your project (your continuing involvement and support of the training strategy on the project will be an important factor in ensuring its success).
6. Tell other clients about your involvement and commitment to the work-based learning and the Kent Skills Construction Strategy (Your project can act as a powerful example to other clients).

The purpose of this Protocol is to support the development of sustainable communities through providing training and employment opportunities to local people.

The protocol sets out a framework in which all parties involved in construction can support the delivery of work-based training and local employment. This Protocol relies on the active involvement of clients, contractors, trade contractors, suppliers and training providers.

Training is defined as attending an approved apprenticeship training programme or undertaking work experience as part of a full-time course of study.

Local employment relates to employment opportunities for people within the communities where the project is being undertaken. The precise definition of local employment will be agreed on a project specific basis

The undersigned agree to:

- Identify opportunities for site-based training on all projects to ensure that a minimum of 5% of operatives working on a construction project are trainees.
- Work with a local training provider to support the delivery of site-based training.
- Provide an appropriate level of support to trainees and ensure that they receive the relevant site based experience they need as part of their training programme.
- Allow trainees the time to attend college-based training as required.
- Work towards achieving a fully qualified workforce.
- Maintain high standards of health and safety.
- Work with locally based trade contractors and suppliers where appropriate.
- Actively promote local employment through the selection of local trade contractors and suppliers.
- Encourage trade contractors and other organisations involved with the project to provide employment opportunities to local people.

Signed _____

Signed _____

On behalf of _____

On behalf of _____

Date _____

Date _____