Luton’s Skills and Employability Strategy
2016-2020

Introduction by Sian Timoney Portfolio Holder for Transformation

Luton has big ambitions. We launched the Luton Investment Framework, a 20 year strategy for major transformation of the town through £1.5bn inward private sector investment set out how Luton will achieve strong, sustainable and balanced growth and, importantly, create jobs for local people.

Luton is committed to the development of a skilled workforce, creating better opportunities for its residents and supporting a vibrant and thriving business economy. Updating our all-ages Skills and Employability Strategy gives a strong partnership platform to work with employers, training providers and education settings to create a culture of learning, aspiration and high achievement that provides the skills employers are seeking and which will support the goal of sustained growth in Luton’s economy.

Luton has a significant part to play in the national and regional growth agenda. It has the capacity, opportunity and responsibility to harness its economic impact, mobilise its community and improve the health and ambition of Luton’s residents and businesses to meet the highest levels of economic growth.

Proximity to London, the South and the South-East creates an opportunity to support the development of Luton as a place that is connected to all of the benefits of London (22 minutes by train from St. Pancras station and 31 miles from the very heart of central London) and the South, with the added advantage of available affordable land and housing values, affordable commercial rents and commercial property, an increasingly skilled workforce, superb broadband connectivity and proximity to the European and Asian international markets through London Luton Airport.

Over the next 10 years we have opportunities to grow our airport and its European business links and to create over 18,000 new jobs. We will dedicate additional resources to work with employers and businesses in the town to match the skills pipeline and identify and develop emerging skills necessary to meet employers’ needs.

Luton will continue to grow, both in jobs and in population. With strategic investment in Luton’s assets and its people, we can begin to offset some of the effects of current economic pressures, and with an expanding, fast-growing airport we will, over the next 20 years, continue to deliver jobs, prosperity and economic opportunity.

Luton has a track record of success and is ambitious for its future. We will continue to work with our partners to establish Luton as a destination for success, with increased aspirations and a culture of life-long learning for all.
Executive Summary

The refreshed Skills and Employability Strategy takes an honest look at our successes and strengths, as well as some of the challenges and barriers to growth and development that some of our young people, our adult residents and our businesses are facing. This strategy links to the Council’s Prospectus, Luton’s Investment Framework, the Flying Start Initiative, the Apprenticeship Strategy, the work of Luton’s Stronger Families team and the Family Poverty Strategy.

It clearly sets out our plans to overcome each barrier to progression, the outcomes we expect to have achieved by 2020 and how we will measure our success. None of this will be possible without joint working with our partners.

Working with the Progression and Transition Board we will increase qualifications and skills levels for all pupils, in the relevant areas that match employers’ emerging needs; link business partners to schools, colleges and higher education providers to shape and prepare tomorrow’s workforce and meet employer demand; and develop innovative curriculum solutions to meet employer and learner skills needs.

Collaboration between employers and Luton’s schools, academies and further and higher education facilities will enable the development of work-based teaching in emerging employment areas and we will work to secure extra funding for training for Luton residents and employers through initiatives such as traineeships and all age and higher level apprenticeships.

We will develop employability and training networks to identify training opportunities for residents and to connect candidates from Luton postcodes with Luton jobs. We will align European Social Funding to match-fund proposals to close the skills gap and to support development of small business and enterprise. We will use labour market intelligence to develop high quality, informed careers guidance to enable Luton residents to aim high and enter appropriate career pathways.

We will work with our colleges and training providers to develop a tailored and flexible approach to learning with an awareness of skills requirements and the specific needs of different people and communities and accredit 500 community volunteers in training and development opportunities that will improve their employment chances.

The town has earmarked 8 strategic sites for development, including a new Enterprise Zone, and we will focus very carefully on what our priorities are for land use and resources, ensuring that we adopt only those policies that work well together to promote the ambition for Luton’s residents and businesses and for the region, socially, economically and educationally.
Part 1

Luton’s Vision for Skills and Employability 2016 – 2020

Luton will have a skilled and qualified workforce that will support a vibrant business economy and meet the requirements of its employers, specialist sectors and high growth businesses.

There will be a culture of life-long learning, aspiration, participation and high achievement that will help to provide the opportunities to improve the life chances for residents and the sustained development of the town’s economy.

The Strategic Priorities

These priorities are focussed on the local population and will be delivered through a number of strands of activity and overseen by the Skills and Employability Steering Group.

1. To improve young people’s transition from education to employment and to provide a more comprehensive vocational offer for young people aged up to 24 years old.

2. To increase the range and take up of vocational training offered, including the number of apprenticeships being created and taken up, for all ages and at all levels.

3. To improve opportunities for learning, self-development and employment progression for all, but particularly for the low paid and the low skilled.

4. To remove barriers and improve pathways into work for the unemployed.

5. To facilitate work with employers and training providers to ensure Luton’s residents are equipped to meet the skills needs of local business needs now and in the future and to provide good quality jobs for local people.

The Strategy sets out issues and outcomes in the following areas:

- Luton’s young people (focusing on strategic priorities 1 and 2)
- Adult residents and social mobility (focusing on strategic priorities 2 and 3)
- Unemployment and social mobility (focusing on strategic priority 4)
- Skills for Luton’s economic growth (focusing on strategic priority 5)

The high level outcomes will be supplemented by a detailed action plan, agreed and regularly reviewed by partners and through the appropriate governance arrangements. The Progression and Transition Board will continue to oversee initiatives to improve opportunities for the development of Young People in the town. The Welfare Reform Board will oversee the work to be carried out to remove barriers to progression for the unemployed, the low skilled and the low waged. The Skills and Employability Steering Group will continue to oversee the work carried out to encourage business growth and economic development.
Methodology

The 2016 Skills and Employability Strategic Review began with partners and stakeholders coming together in a series of workshop settings in 2015 to consider how to measure achievements of the 2012 Skills and Employability Strategy and action plan. The delivery of the action plan was overseen by the Skills and Employability Steering Group, with partners taking responsibility for delivering projects and reporting progress on a quarterly basis. All projects were delivered successfully and some are still ongoing.

It was agreed to refresh the 2012 strategy examining the current barriers to progression and social mobility for Luton residents, and the opportunities for, and constraints to growth for the local economy and local business. It was agreed that the vision and strategic priorities should stay the same but new outcomes and an action plan that would allow for more specific measurement in terms of success and achievements be developed.

A small working group comprising officers from Luton Borough Council’s Economic Development Service, Research and Geospatial Information, Children and Learning’s Support Challenge and Intervention 16-19 team, Social Justice Unit and Luton Adult Learning and the Princes Trust undertook the research and re-writing of the strategy.

The strategy began its journey of consultation in February 2016. Suggestions and feedback from the consultation have been included in the strategy. A new detailed action plan with baseline statistics and information to allow for measurement of success is being prepared, to be delivered through a range of partnerships drawn together through the Steering group and Investment Framework activity.

A Spotlight on Progress and Success

The launching of the 2012 Skills and Employability Strategy enabled a town wide group of partners to work together for the first time to share information and resources and use a co-ordinated approach to tackle skills and employability. Skills have increasingly become a major priority for the Council and notable successes include the following:

- **The Progression and Transition Board comprising** 14-19 provision, including secondary Head Teachers, and FE college principals are working to improve careers education and guidance and focus on employability and future skills needs, with a view to bringing about curriculum change.

- The formation of the **Luton Technology Network (LTN)**, led by engineering and aerospace businesses in the town and facilitated by Luton Borough Council, the aim being to identify coordinated activity to address skills gaps and improve links with local schools.

- Through LTN a **Business Engagement Pilot** with three schools and local employers was introduced, to encourage young people in to the engineering Sector. Further work is planned with employers having ‘open days’ for school visits.
‘Tokko’, a new £4.75million youth facility, opened its doors in June 2013. TOKKO has provided services and activities to more than 2,000 young people who have come to learn and develop new skills and talents, get training, advice, information and guidance and have fun and relax together. TOKKO work with a range of partners including the Princes Trust whose Fairbridge Programme is currently running at TOKKO, helping 100 young people a year to progress their skills, confidence and gain qualifications.

**European Social Fund:** Since 2008 Luton Borough Council has attracted and match funded **£5m of ESF funding** that has been spent in providing support and training to help residents develop new skills, gain qualifications and move into or progress within employment. Over 40 projects have been supported helping 575 people in to employment, 935 in to education and 205 to gain level 2 or 3 qualifications.

The biannual Luton Employment Training and Skills Fair began as a direct result of the 2012 strategy and is a highly successful partnership between the Department of Work and Pensions, Luton Borough Council’s Economic Development Service and Luton Community Interest Company. The LETS Fair continues to grow in size with over 50 stands of employers and training providers. Over 1,300 people attended the fair in February 2016.

**A highly successful Annual Apprenticeship Event** is organised by a partnership of the National Apprenticeship Service and Luton Borough Councils 16-19 Team and Economic Development Service alongside other ongoing work with schools and colleges. The 2015 event had over forty stands providing information about apprenticeship programmes.

**Luton Adult Learning:** Since 2012 LAL has provided ESOL training to over 2400 learners and, through their work with the Community Learning Trust, has supported an additional 8000 learners via 24 local organisations. In addition they have delivered apprenticeships to Luton Borough Council and external employers. Their apprenticeship success rates are 14.2% above the national rate. They hold a National Career Service contract which has worked with over 5000 people.

**Luton’s Investment Framework**

Luton’s Investment Framework is a 20 year strategy for major transformation of the town through £1.5bn inward private-sector investment and outlines how Luton will achieve strong, sustainable and balanced growth and create over 18,000 new jobs for local people.

The Framework underpins how the council is working with key partners to drive improvements to prosperity, health and wellbeing across the town. Plans over the next 20 years include:

- Growth of London Luton airport to 18m passengers per year.
- The development of an enterprise zone around the airport that will attract new businesses.
- The building of a mass passenger transit system from Luton Parkway Station to the airport.
- At least 10 new major businesses locating to Luton.
- The building of 2 new schools.

Central to the success of the investment plans is the availability of a local, skilled workforce able to compete for and get the new jobs that are created. To achieve this, the Council recognises that it needs a revised strategy that, along with a range of partners including schools, colleges, training providers and businesses themselves, focuses activity on enabling Luton’s residents to get improved skills, new qualifications and the best opportunity to succeed in getting a job, a better job or a career.

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Part 2

Skills and Employability - Luton’s Young People

Learning and skills development begins at an early age. This is recognised in Luton with the ‘Pregnancy to Five’ primary prevention and early intervention programme, which aims to give young children the best possible start in life, a ‘Flying Start’.

There is a shared ambition to develop Luton into a ‘Learning Town’ and to break the cycle of poverty of aspiration and low skill levels which currently exist, to support growth in the economy, and to give young people the opportunity to progress to further, including higher study to access productive employment and to meet the economic needs of the area.

It is important that all young people (not just high or low achievers) are supported in school to achieve their full potential. This includes helping young people to prepare for their transition from school to work. This can be met by continuing to support aspiration and achievement by providing preparation for the world of work with quality careers advice and comprehensive information about the full range of post 16 options, from apprenticeships at advanced and higher levels to employability training and work experience.

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<th>Strategic Priority 2</th>
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The latest round of Ofsted Inspections of Luton schools (2015/16) show that 91.5% of Luton secondary pupils now attend a school that is good or better. Luton is the second highest of the 13 Eastern Region authorities and well above the England average of 79.2%. This ranks Luton 30th out of 162 LAs nationally. Luton Schools are also now achieving 53% of young people gaining five or more GCSE exam results at A* – C (2015) (the national average figure is 57%).

Consultation Feedback

- Consultation responses suggest that early identification of talent, barriers to learning and developing aptitudes for learning would benefit some young people.

- The continual work to raise standards in English and Maths is crucial for all young people, providing the gateway to apprenticeships and employment.

What We Will Do

Luton has an ongoing commitment to its young people and will continue to strive to improve performance and raise the standards of achievement to at least the level of the national rate especially in core curriculum subjects.

Actions will include:

- The introduction of a key worker scheme for education, in order to attract and keep teachers in key subject areas including Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)
- Seeking to link schools and businesses to maximise opportunities for teachers and students to see skills and knowledge gained is applied in the workplace.

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Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance

Young Peoples Outcome 2

By 2020 all young people will be better informed and supported to make choices about career pathways

An audit of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) provision in May 2015 of Luton Educational Establishments found that some young people making the transition from education to employment are not receiving adequate careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) in schools and colleges. This could lead to young people making inappropriate choices on their career pathways.

Although there is some good (although often uncoordinated) work taking place, very few institutions reviewed, monitored or evaluated their CEIAG in a systematic way and the majority are not embedding CEIAG in to curriculum areas. Therefore institutions are sometimes missing opportunities to develop young people’s knowledge of career pathways within subject areas.

The offer of CEIAG varies considerably in each institution. Some have invested time and resources internally and externally, however other institutions are making slower progress in meeting the new Ofsted requirements which have imposed a duty on schools, to secure independent careers guidance for all year 8-13 pupils, although in Luton we think there is a need for CEIAG for year 7 onwards (when children start considering their options). Some professionals believe that CEIAG should be embedded into subject areas from primary school age.

The recommendations from the Careers Audit have been agreed by all schools. There is now a working group looking at the implementation of the action plan for CEIAG, with representatives drawn from both Local Authority maintained schools, and each of the academy trusts. A ‘minimum standard’ for implementation of CEIAG has been agreed to be delivered by all Luton Schools and monitored effectively.

Consultation Feedback

- Consultation responses suggest schools are under pressure with not enough time or resources to organise CEIAG, recruit a Careers Co-ordinator or provide activities against increasing content in the curriculum. It was acknowledged that any standards set for educational establishments to deliver CEIAG would need to be monitored to be effective.

- There was a strong message from consultation feedback for a central dedicated co-ordination of CEIAG. The role of the Progression and Transition Board (PTB) to develop a strong education and training system which operates across and within organisations in the
borough is crucial. Membership of the PTB includes the principals of all secondary schools and FE colleges in the area as well as the CEO’s of each the two academy trusts.

- Further feedback from the consultation recommended free local labour market information be linked in to schools for use in CEIAG and less reliance on websites as a learning tool, particularly for those young people who are already disengaged.

What We Will Do

Action will include:

- Encouraging schools through the Local Careers Network to use the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) Careers and Enterprise Advisors, local employers and training providers to maximise awareness of career opportunities in the local area.
- Developing a suite of career and jobs case studies from businesses located in the town and link this to careers information and job opportunities online.
- In partnership with local employers, introduce a skills and jobs hub to publicise jobs and training opportunities.
- Commissioning research to forecast the future jobs and skills pipeline, to inform curriculum development and career choices.
- Offering Continual Personal Development opportunities for teaching staff and to raise their understanding of the needs of industry particularly in the growth sectors in Luton.

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Employability

**Young Peoples Outcome 3**

By 2020 all young people will have raised aspirations and are better prepared for the world of work

Employability training is part of ongoing ‘careers education’, and is often delivered as part of Personal, Health and Social Education. Employers in Luton tell us that many young people leaving school, college and even university need more preparation for the world of work with ‘employability training’, for example, basic communication skills, the right attitude, initiative, self-reliance and self-discipline. There is more work to be done in this area.

It has been identified that employers in the engineering sector are looking for a higher standard of physics and maths skills from young people and ‘hand skills’, such as technical drawing or metal work. This is needed as preparation for ‘in house’ or sector training in engineering.
Further work needs to be done to develop opportunities for work experience for under 16s, which are in short supply. Schools say some employers engage well, but reliance on personal contacts is a model that does not help schools overcome social mobility barriers.

Schools in Luton are now working with the SEMLEP Careers and Enterprise Advisors to engage with employers, to bring them in to schools to help develop sustainable relationships and assist teaching staff and pupils to understand the needs of industries.

Consultation Feedback

- It is suggested that volunteering with training is more helpful for young people than one or two weeks work experience and should be encouraged by schools from year 11. This is something that can be continued throughout school life. Volunteering is also a key route to employment and employers can give young people the skills they really need to get into the careers that they would like.

- Consultation feedback also suggested more employer engagement is needed, including asking employers to pledge to take one longer term work experience placement per year, or an apprentice, or person with a disability will be included in the action plan.

What We Will Do

We will be bringing employers and schools together to ensure that young people have the skills that employers need and to provide tomorrow's workforce with the skills required locally and nationally. To do this we will:

- Continue to run and develop a network of business engagement meetings to focus on skills and links with local schools and colleges.
- Concentrate on engaging senior council officers with local businesses, to better understand their needs and promote opportunities to engage with schools on solving employability issues.
- Encourage schools to take advantage of offers made by businesses to visit their sites.

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Not In Employment Education or Training

Young Peoples Outcome 4

By 2020 more young people will be self-aware, self-confident and contributing to community life

Young Peoples Outcome 5

By 2020 all young people under 21 will be able to access employment, apprenticeships or work experience within four months of leaving a job, education or training

The numbers of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) remain low at just 4.1% of 16 – 19 year olds in the town in March 2016.

The 2015-16 Luton Youth Service figures show a higher proportion of White British young people who are NEET compared to the proportion of White British learners in secondary schools (47% compared to 32% source DfE). NEET numbers have been consistently higher in the South ward of Luton.

Characteristic of NEET’s (Source Luton Borough Council Youth Advice 2015/16).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of NEETs</th>
<th>Nos</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
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Gender of NEET’s (Source Luton Borough Council Youth Advice 2015/16).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>56.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
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The numbers of young people who we don’t know about is also low at 3.7%, compared to 8.8% for our statistical neighbours.

Among the ‘hidden unemployed’ could be young people who are currently ‘Out of Borough’ by virtue of being in prison, secure accommodation, secure welfare placements and also ‘Looked After Children’ who are still the responsibility of the Local Authority, or who are likely to return to the area.

Consultation Feedback

- It is recognised that many of the young hidden unemployed will become linked with illegitimate incomes and employment, vulnerability and exploitation. Not enough is known about this and further work to find out more needs to be undertaken into the 'black economy' linked to Outcome 4 under the Adult Residents section of the strategy. Organisations currently working with offenders and young people at risk include the Job Centre Plus Work Coaches who work with Probation services and the Princes Trust.

What We Will Do

✓ Luton Borough Council’s Advice Service will continue to provide careers advice, guidance and support to young people who become NEET and via their traded service, they can support schools with their careers programme. They also continue to track Luton’s young people’s destinations up to age nineteen.

✓ We will continue to work with partners to develop work experience placements and community enrichment programmes in schools and colleges. The National Citizen Service currently runs volunteering programmes for year 11 students. In Luton 400 young people are already signed up and our target is 1800 volunteers per year by 2021.

✓ We will actively seek to secure external funding, e.g. European Social Fund, to enable projects focusing on moving NEET or pre-NEET into training and employment.

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Vocational Training and Apprenticeships

**Young Peoples Outcome 6**

By 2020 all young people will be benefiting from more progression opportunities both in school and through independent training providers

**Young Peoples Outcome 7**

By 2020 increased numbers of apprenticeships will be available, valued and being taken up by young people especially at higher levels and in the growth sectors
The introduction of Raising the Participation age, means that young people are required to participate in education, training, or employment with training until they reach the age of 18. It is considered necessary to increase the breadth of vocational training on offer in the borough to reflect both young people’s careers aspirations and local labour market opportunities. Participation post 16 can be in a school sixth form, at the sixth form college, in an FE College or with a local alternative private or VCS training provider. Alternatively young people may choose to work for a local employer whilst undertaking part-time study.

Currently some of the provision on offer is considered to be of a similar nature, low level and within a limited number of core subjects. Some providers have very few external employer links to enable young people to undertake sustained periods of work experience and there is generally no specified progression route into sustained employment or onto a higher level of FE study. Young people often access a number of such courses without achieving a positive outcome.

In spite of the growth in apprenticeships remaining a national and local priority, there is still a reluctance shown by parents, schools and young people themselves, with many preferring the traditional academic route of college and university into employment.

There are further funding issues for colleges and training providers regarding installation of new infrastructure. For example, it is expensive to provide machinery in a college for STEM teaching. In comparison it costs much less to provide a hairdressing course. Hair and beauty courses are also popular with students but are not the skills or qualifications needed to meet the jobs pipeline.

The University of Bedfordshire is actively considering higher and degree apprenticeships and will focus on giving opportunities that align with evidence of the needs of Luton’s employers.

Many employers are unaware how Higher Level Apprenticeships (at Level 4 and above) could work in their business. Low salaries are also an issue for apprentices, with many paid the minimum, rather than a living wage. Parents of apprentices do not qualify for child benefit. The living wage that came into effect in April 2016 only applies to workers aged 25 and over.

At the time this strategy was prepared, details were beginning to emerge on how the new Apprenticeship Levy\(^1\) will work when it is introduced in 2017. All large employers, with a payroll of £3m or more will pay a 0.5% levy which is then made available in the form of credits to pay for apprentices.

**Consultation Feedback**

- There is a view that more needs to be done to improve the perception of vocational education and show that it is valuable in its own right and not seen solely as an option

\(^1\) [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-levy](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-levy)
for those deemed less academic. Promotion of apprenticeships was supported especially for young people.

**What We Will Do**

- A new Apprenticeship strategy for the town will be prepared, focusing on a step change in the number of apprentice placements in the town.
- We will prioritise the creation and promotion of apprenticeships for young people with employers, especially Higher Apprenticeships, those in the growth sector and the new developments in and around the town.
- We will encourage a perception of a ‘Pathway to Professionalism’ rather than ‘low cost labour’.
- We will actively publicise the Apprenticeship Levy to businesses and seek to work with them to ensure the maximum amount of investment is made in securing additional apprenticeship placements.

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**Part 3**

**Skills and Employability, Adult Residents and Social Mobility**

Social mobility is about progression in society irrespective of social background. It means that an individual’s ability and effort can determine their social success. In order to progress however, there must be real opportunities to do so.

One of the main reasons that education is valued so highly in modern societies is the role it plays in relation to social mobility. The European Commission specifies that learning opportunities should be available to all citizens on an ongoing basis. Lifelong learning is also about providing second chances to update basic skills and to offer learning opportunities at more advanced levels.

Those who are furthest away from the labour market need the most support and are less able to help themselves. The emotional effects of long-term unemployment are well documented and can bring about depression, anger, stress, and a lack of self-confidence, resulting for some people in relationship problems and self-destructive habits such as excessive drinking, smoking and substance misuse.
Apprenticeships and Vocational Learning

With the reduction in Skills Funding Agency (SFA) funding, the range of non-apprenticeship vocational learning opportunities has reduced. Available resources are directed more towards lower level qualifications in core subjects with no progression route.

Whilst apprenticeships for those aged 16-18 years are fully funded, this is reduced by 50% for those over age 19 years, and further still for those aged 24 and over making it less attractive to employers. The government has unveiled a package of measures to help it meet its target of creating 3 million apprenticeships by 2020 with an introduction of a levy for all employers with a wage bill in excess of £3m, regardless of whether apprentices are currently employed.

Apprenticeships are open to adults, but evidence suggests few adults actually apply for them. There may be two reasons for this: Firstly, national advertising for apprenticeships is aimed at young people and therefore adults do not see this as a viable route to employment for them; secondly, the average hourly rate for an apprentice is not sufficient for an adult with a family and higher accommodation expenses.

The government announced last year, the roll-out of 9 new industry designed Degree Apprenticeships - an innovative new model bringing together the best of higher and vocational education. Degree Apprenticeships will be offered in key areas including Chartered Surveying, Aerospace Engineering, and Nuclear. Other work based learning has

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<th>Adult Residents Outcome 1</th>
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fallen by 57% in Luton in 2014. Contributing factors are likely to include cost, employer contributions or the impact of Advanced Learning Loans.

**Adult Residents Outcome 2**

By 2020 more residents will be aware of and accessing learning, re-training and self-development opportunities, gaining new skills, becoming better educated and more qualified.

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**Qualifications**

Research by Luton Borough Council’s Research and Geospatial Information Team on Child Poverty (Jan 2015) shows that the population of Luton are becoming more skilled. All ethnic groups are obtaining more qualifications with the biggest increases in the level of education in black and minority ethnic groups.

However, Luton has a higher proportion of people without any qualifications than the national average (14.8% with no qualifications, compared to 8.6% for Great Britain) and a lower proportion of people with degree level and above qualifications (29.8% compared to a GB figure of 37.1%)².

**Barriers To Progression for Residents in Employment**

Partners and service providers tell us that there are people who are employed who can’t progress because they lack the right skills and qualifications, for example, older workers who lack IT skills or people who don’t speak English or whose qualifications are not recognised. Not enough is known about how many people apply for jobs or are employed locally, who don’t speak English, or are without recognised qualifications. Interestingly it can be seen from the 2011 census that the percentage of people with ‘other qualifications’ in England is 5.7% compared to Luton where the figure is 10.65% indicating high numbers of people with qualifications that are not recognised in the UK. Data from the Annual Population survey shows that 12.5% of people across the UK were born outside of the country compared to 34% of people living in Luton who were born outside of the UK.

**Progression Opportunities for Those In Employment**

To achieve improved social mobility for residents in Luton there needs to be opportunities for progression and self-development. Not enough is known about how many employers support their staff with training, either by providing it in house, or part/ funding external courses and allowing staff time off to train or study. The 2014 Business Survey for Luton

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² NOMISWEB 2015 figures
http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157201/report.aspx?town=luton#tabquals
found that 58% of businesses in Luton have funded or arranged training or development for their work force at their site in the last 12 months.

Although there are some strong links between some employers and the main training providers, partners are concerned that funding is only available for smaller independent training providers to deliver low level courses in a limited number of subjects with no funded progression route. There is also a need for retraining for those being made redundant, or looking for a career change.

Self-Funded Progression Opportunities and Life Long Learning

All partners would like an emphasis on developing a culture of lifelong learning in the town. Reductions in adult learning budgets mean there is less provision. Residents willing to contribute to their own progression will find there are limited opportunities for evening and part-time study with IT skills and other vocational training and general educational qualifications at A Level/Level 3 and above in short supply. Progression pathways are difficult to identify.

Learners are also now required to take out an Advanced Learning Loan to cover tuition fees (on eligible courses). The number of loans being taken out is falling; perhaps people are reluctant to take on debt. Although from August 2016 the Advanced Learning Loans will be available to those aged 19+ and the qualifications available have been extended from Level 3 to Level 6.

Strategic Priority 4

To remove barriers and improve pathways into work for the unemployed.

Adult Residents Outcome 3

By 2020 more people aged 45 year and over, and those with disabilities, ill health and specific needs will be gaining new skills, becoming more employable and will be supported into sustainable employment.

Skills Gaps and Barriers to Employment

Many of those who are unemployed have multiple, complex and holistic needs that require more in depth help and support. The Jobcentre Plus two year work programme was designed to help the long term unemployed back into work but some people are returning to the unemployment register even after completing the Work Programme.
Jobcentre Plus has provided targeted support through the Flexible Support Fund for organisations working to provide employment support for people furthest from the job market, including people with health conditions claiming Employment Support Allowance.

Over 100 vulnerable people have been helped to move off benefits and into work by Luton Borough Council’s Stronger Families programme, including some people involved in crime or anti-social behaviour; and those affected by domestic violence and abuse. Jobcentre Plus Outreach Work Coaches work with Probation Officers to identify the skills needs of ex-offenders.

A lack of basic communication and IT skills are identified by training providers as particular barriers to employment for those furthest away from the labour market. Training providers receive the same amount of funding from the Skills Funding Agency for each learner, however those with additional needs or lower starting point require extra support which is expensive to provide.

Luton Central Library has seen an increase in job seekers and claimants since the digitisation of unemployment benefit claims. Library staff report high levels of job seekers who lack digital and functional literacy and need support, including people with learning difficulties and disabilities that are unable to use digital tools.

Although libraries offer free access to computers for members for an hour a day, free usage is limited due to demand. Applying for a job on-line can take several hours even for someone who is IT literate. There is a growing demand for places where people can have free access to computers and obtain support to learn digital skills for work and life.

Jobcentre Plus have identified lack of English as one of the main barriers to work for people in Luton and training providers say there is never enough ESOL provision to meet the need. Child care is the other main barrier to work. Jobcentre Plus continue to work with lone parents who are required to move to Job Seekers Allowance and find work when their youngest child reaches five years old.

Qualifications that are not recognised in the UK are both barriers to entering employment and progression within employment. UK NARIC\(^3\) is the designated United Kingdom national agency for the recognition and comparison of international qualifications and skills. They offer qualification conversions and advice for a fee for a basic statement of comparability. Luton Borough Council’s ESF programme funded a project that offered this service free of charge to 76 people in 3 months, indicating a high level of demand and take up. This funding has now ended with no further European funding confirmed at the time of writing the strategy.

People with ill health or disabilities but who are able to work also experience barriers to employment. Not enough is known about the attitude of Luton companies to employing local people, particularly those with disabilities, or older people. Luton has high numbers of residents with long term illness and disabilities.

\(^3\) http://naric.org.uk/naric/
There has been targeted work funded by Luton Borough Council’s ESF programme and Job Centre Plus for those aged 50+ but unemployed people aged 45+ who want to make career changes are a new and increasing group for whom there is limited support. Lack of IT skills for older residents is an issue, coupled with lack of vocational training availability due to Skills Funding Agency funding cuts.

### Adult Residents Outcome 4

By 2020 there will be increased social mobility for residents and fewer families living in poverty.

### Poverty amongst Those in Employment

Joseph Rowntree research shows the greatest growth of poverty is now amongst those in work on low incomes or with uncertain work patterns, insufficient hours and the types of employment available in any given locality. In Luton in 2013/14 there were over double the amount of ‘in work’ families claiming benefits than those out of work. People are coming off the unemployment register, but can still be victims of the poverty trap in low skilled, low paid jobs or zero hours contracts.

A new living wage came into effect in April 2016 at £7.20 an hour, rising to £9 by 2020. The new rate will apply to those aged 25 and over. The minimum wage will still apply for workers aged 24 and under. It is estimated that 20.6% of jobs in Luton pay below the living wage, compared to neighbouring Central Bedfordshire at 27%. (Office of National Statistics)

We know that approximately 16,000 children are living in families facing poverty in Luton. Child Poverty in Luton has increased by nearly 3% since 2010.

The Government has announced plans to raise free nursery entitlement to 30 hours per week from September 2017, but affordable child care is an issue for every working parent and those looking for work. Further research needs to be undertaken to build a picture of what child care is available, what is missing, what further changes are expected and where people can go for help and support.

### Adult Residents Outcome 5

More adult residents will be in employment or becoming entrepreneurs’ including those furthest from the labour market
Unemployment in Luton

Unemployment in Luton has fallen from 8.7% in September 2013 to 5.4% in April 2016. Dallow and Biscot, Farley and Northwell wards have the highest numbers of people claiming out of work benefits. They also have the highest proportion of people without any qualifications and the areas with the highest levels of deprivation.

There are also people who are ‘hidden’ from the unemployment register, either holding zero hours employment contracts, relying on the support of family and friends, crime or the ‘black economy’ This is often used by the poorest and hardest to reach, is illegal and often fed through street lending or online lenders with incredibly high lending rates. It also undermines the local economy with no rates or taxes being paid.

Earnings

On average those living outside of Luton but working in Luton have higher earnings than Luton residents. (Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings published by the Office for National Statistics⁴.) In 2013 Luton’s Gross Disposable Income per head was £13,337 which fell by 3.6% between 2012 and 2013. Luton’s GDHI per head is 24% lower than the UK average. Luton has the lowest GDHI per head in the East region. Luton is ranked 165th out of 173 local areas in the UK. Source: Office for National Statistics

Progression Opportunities

The full details of the new European Social Investment Fund (2014-2020) are still being finalised. There will be opportunities for organisations working to move people closer to the job market and help them in to work to apply for ESF funds of up to a total of £33m to deliver services across the SEMLEP area.

At the time of writing the strategy Luton has been successful in applying for the first stage of two ESIF strands of funding. Working with a consortium of voluntary and community organisations across the SEMLEP area, Luton is the lead partner in the Building Better Opportunities bid that if successful will release £2m for delivery partners to work with many of the people identified in this strategy. The Community Led Local Development Fund bid, also successful in the first stage, will help remove barriers to work for people living in the most deprived areas of Luton.

Consultation Feedback

- The feedback received on this section of the strategy was relating to people with disabilities and long term health conditions. There was a strong feeling that businesses should be

⁴ http://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/annualsurveyofhoursandearnings/previousReleases
giving individuals with disabilities the opportunity to experience life in the workplace as well as driving the need for a more skilled workforce.

- There was a suggestion that local businesses could be given more incentives to employ those who are traditionally difficult to employ such as those with severe disabilities. For example, arrangements where a carer and a disabled person could be employed side by side or employers could pick up some of the care arrangements whilst a disabled person is at work.

- Other suggestions included the Council offering a kite mark for outstanding training providers and employers.

- It was also noted that access to preparatory training for those with multiple barriers to employment is important, with some barriers needing to be addressed before progressing on employment support programmes and moving closer to the labour market.

- Finally, it was suggested that there could also be more emphasis on working with the probation service and offending teams to ensure that community service programmes are more stimulating with opportunities to pursue further education and employment attached.

**What We Will Do**

- Work with employers and training providers to develop more apprenticeship opportunities for adults, particularly at higher levels, in the business growth sectors and in the new developments in and around the town.

- Ensure services within the council are joined up to maximise opportunities to provide employment support interventions designed to move people closer to the labour market, and into sustainable jobs.

- Develop a Careers Information web site (Jobs4Luton) for residents that will provide material and links on careers progression routes and pathways, qualifications and skills required, local training, volunteering and job opportunities.

- Develop employability and training networks to identify training opportunities for residents and to connect candidates from Luton postcodes to Luton jobs.

- We will work with employers, colleges, the university and training providers to encourage and facilitate take up of funding opportunities to provide courses that ensure a tailored and flexible approach to learning, progression pathways for employees and unemployed learners, close the skills gaps and provide accessible funded progression routes for learners of all ages and abilities.
We will ensure take up of ESOL and qualification conversion programmes in the town and work together to explore how to create a culture of lifelong learning in Luton.

We will work with child care providers to understand the range and cost of child care in the town, look at what is missing, what further changes are expected from government and where people can go for help and support. We will also encourage a network of local, affordable and accessible quality provision for working parents across Luton and for those looking for work.

We will ensure that training providers work with Adult Social Care and Children’s Services to enable carers of elderly relatives or disabled children to be able to participate in training and take up return to work opportunities if they wish. We will also support and promote volunteering activities as a route to employment.

We will look into what further preparatory training is needed for those with multiple barriers to employment and encourage use of employment support services that include access to free IT provision and support.

We will work with employers to encourage the employment of people with disabilities who want to work and can do with some reasonable adjustments in the work place and explore how to develop a kite mark/award scheme for outstanding employers.

We will prioritise activities to find out more about the ‘hidden unemployed’ and the black economy. To understand and promote the financial advice, planning and employment support services in the town and continue to provide effective support for enterprise and business start up, information, advice and support services.

Part 4

Luton’s Economic Growth - Opportunities and Skills Gaps

Residents of Luton need to have the necessary skills and qualifications to ensure that they can access and sustain employment opportunities now and in the future. This will enable them to benefit from and contribute to increased economic success in the town. The town also needs to continue to attract and sustain new commercial and existing employer investment.

Strategic Priority 5

To facilitate work with employers and training providers to ensure Luton’s residents are equipped to meet the skills needs of local business now and in the future, and to provide good quality jobs for local people.
Business Growth Sectors

- Airport-related: e.g. airlines, airport operations, hotels, airport, logistics and transport
- Aerospace: aircraft engineering and maintenance, defence
- Engineering: automotive, marine, systems, advanced manufacturing and technology
- ICT: manufacturing, programming, computer services, computer supplies, technical support, digital security
- Creative Industries: for example, film, music, audio, digital media or other media production businesses, publishing, public relations, design, fashion, event management, theatre.

Luton Outcome 1

By 2020, Luton’s young people and adult residents are better qualified, upskilled and prepared to take up employment opportunities provided by the airport optimisation programme and other major developments in and around the town.

Luton’s Future Growth Opportunities

Luton’s economy has performed positively in terms of job growth, and its future economic growth prospects are good, supported by planned infrastructure improvements, Airport growth and the granting of an Enterprise Zone, encompassed in the Luton Investment Framework.

Forming part of the 8 strategic sites for development in the town, the enterprise zone comprises three linked sites surrounding London Luton Airport totalling over 300 acres. These sites have the potential to accommodate major aerospace and associated manufacturing and engineering businesses, together with a wide range of service industries supporting the airport, all of which will generate significant growth in new jobs.

Airport Optimisation Programme

Luton is home to one of the UK’s fastest growing airports: London Luton Airport, which is the UK’s fifth busiest airport transporting over 14 million passengers a year. London Luton Airport currently employs around 8500 people, making it the largest private sector employer in the town.

In July 2014 the airport was granted planning permission for a £110 million redevelopment that will increase passenger capacity to 18 million, generate up to 5000 new jobs and bring £218 million a year into the county’s economy by 2026. In addition, funding for a mass
passenger transit system was announced as part of the Luton Investment Framework launch in April 2016, which will see, by 2021, a new and efficient system linking Luton Parkway Station with the airport.

Accelerated growth now means that the airport aims to reach 18 million passengers per annum by 2020. Forecasted employment growth at the airport predicts that by 2028 there will be an additional requirement for 650 managers, directors and senior officials, 350 professional occupations, 350 associate professional and technical occupations, 550 administrative and secretarial, 750 skilled trades, 300 caring, leisure and other services, 950 elementary occupations and 1100 process, plant and machine operatives. Directors/Senior Officials and Machine Operatives have been identified as areas of skills shortage currently.

**Luton Outcome 2**

Improved relationships and more joint working between employers, the council, schools, the university and training providers to address the skills needs of business

Luton is home to one of the UK’s fastest growing airports. Currently, 40% of Airport employees live in Luton. The Halcrow Report 2012\(^5\), identified 2 current areas of critical skill shortage (Directors or Senior Officials and Machine Operatives).

The 2015 SEMLEP Business Survey for Luton found that around 2 in 5 Luton businesses report skill gaps within their existing workforce (39%; 41% in 2014). This is a higher proportion than the South East Midlands average (33%; 38% in 2014).

Skills lacking within existing workforces are most likely to be job specific skills (17%) and technical or practical skills (15%). Skills in IT, sales and marketing, and planning and organisation are mentioned by fewer businesses this year compared with last, suggesting some success in addressing them. Poor quality staff is most frequently cited as a reason for skill gaps (13% of those with skill gaps), in addition to a lack of investment in staff training and development (12%) and a lack of job specific skills (11%).

Employers from all sectors report that there is a reluctance and inflexibility amongst older workers to retrain for new roles and many older workers lack IT skills. Employers in the SEMLEP research on skills needs in the Cultural and Creative sector (July 2015) are concerned about retention of key staff, finding and keeping staff with management and leadership skills and finding the right training for workforce development. It also revealed an under-investment in training with only 2 in 5 companies having funded or arranged any training or staff development. The sector is a dynamic environment of fast-changing skills needs but risks becoming outdated unless the demand for new skills training is met.

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Luton is now one of 24 areas across England which has secured enterprise zone status. This significant development opportunity is being delivered by Luton Borough in partnership with London Luton Airport Limited. It comprises three sites surrounding or connected to London Luton Airport: Century Park and adjacent land; Airport Business Park and adjacent land and Stirling Place.

The Employment Land Review 2013

The assessment of future employment space requirements in Luton using the East of England Forecasting Model predicted 17,825 jobs between 2011-31. This could underplay Luton’s economic growth potential although it is one that it is likely to be able to achieve. 10,000 jobs created will be service/commercial jobs and 8000 B1 – B8 jobs which include office, industry and warehousing.

The Luton Investment Framework

The LIF sets targets to attract 10 new large businesses to the town by 2024, to increase revenue from growth in business rates by 17.5% and increase economic output by nearly £10 for every £1 invested in Luton. The substantial inward investment will require joined up skills and careers activities and the Framework therefore includes Luton Skills and Jobs4Luton projects that will provide advice and support to Luton residents, investors and businesses looking to locate to the town.

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**Luton Outcome 3**

More business of all sizes including self-employed trades people, taking on more all age apprenticeships particularly at higher levels and in the business growth sectors

**Luton Outcome 4**

More inward investment, including major employers relocating to the town, providing ‘better quality’ employment opportunities

**Luton Outcome 5**

Increased local business growth and development, more new enterprises starting up, and less business closure or business re-locating elsewhere
Five New Hotels

The growth of 5 new hotels over the next five years will increase the number of available hotel beds in line with the demand for provision for conference facilities and travel will provide jobs in hospitality, catering and hotel management (Luton Investment Framework 2015-2035)

New homes to be built in Luton by 2020

The Investment Framework has targets of 2225 new homes to be built in Luton by 2020. This includes initial developments of 400 homes at Marsh Farm, 625 at Napier Park and 350-400 at High Town. There are also plans for maintenance and improvement to council stock to ensure energy efficiency and a new Day Centre built in Stopsley, all creating job opportunities in construction and related industries.

Major Development Sites

Sites for development at Napier Park, Butterfield, Century Park, Power Court, Marsh Farm and High Town, will create quality employment and more homes for residents and leisure and business opportunities.

Land North of Luton and Sundon Rail Freight Interchange is identified in the emerging Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire, to provide new homes, jobs, community facilities, open spaces, a strategic link road between the M1 and A6 and a Rail Freight Interchange. Both developments will help meet the home and job needs of Central Bedfordshire and Luton.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Luton Outcome 6</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased numbers of employers recruiting locally and investing in work based learning programmes, training and development and career progression for their employees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Difficulty recruiting people with the right kind of skills

The 2015 SEMLEP Business Survey in Luton found that more than half the businesses (58%) in Luton that had vacancies in the last year experienced difficulties filling them, compared to 41% in 2014. Skilled trade occupations are those in which businesses are most likely to have experienced hard-to-fill vacancies (23%) followed by elementary administration and service occupations (19%) and associate professional and technical occupations (16%).

The predominant reason for recruitment difficulties has been the low number of applicants with the required skills (46%), while 16% cited a lack of applicants with the required
attitude, motivation or personality and slightly fewer cited lack of people interested in doing this type of job (14%).

Job specific and technical or practical skills are the two most frequently mentioned skills that have been difficult to obtain amongst all businesses that have had vacancies in the last 12 months (cited by 47% and 45% respectively).

There has been strong engagement in Luton with advanced manufacturing, engineering and aerospace companies over the last 12 months and this has revealed a consistent message; difficulty recruiting people with the right skills, coupled with an ageing highly skilled workforce. This has been backed up by research carried out by TBR (2013)\(^6\). However, a number of companies have also indicated that there are opportunities for growth if skills issues can be addressed.

There is a need to ensure that schools, colleges and training providers offer the kind of training and qualifications that employers need particularly local employers. The Education Funding Agency, Skills Funding Agency, Department for Work and Pensions and Higher Education Funding Council control most of the spending of skills training in the Borough. Whilst there is a requirement to meet local needs, there is no formal way that the view of the local area is fed into the process.

**Consultation Feedback**

There was no consultation feedback on this area of the strategy

**What We Will Do**

- We will bring together the council, schools, training providers, the university and employers to increase understanding of the skills requirements of business, to match the skills and jobs pipeline, identify emerging needs and to influence the curriculum and local training provision.

- We will continue to work with the University of Bedfordshire to engage and support businesses in their research, development and training needs and to promote and increase take up of short and intense courses for company employees, particularly at a higher level, including higher level ESOL.

- We will continue to facilitate the work being carried out by the council to bring employers together through the Luton Technology Network and replicate this across all the business growth sectors to identify and address skills gaps and other constraints to growth.

- We will work with the Airport, developers, business of all sizes including self employed tradespeople, to encourage creation of apprenticeship opportunities for all ages at all

levels, linking to the jobs and skills pipeline and create and provide work experience and employment opportunities for local people through the airport optimisation programme and other major developments in and around the town. We will continue dialogue with SEMLEP and funders to raise awareness about the barriers and issues raised in the strategy with a view to influencing spend in skills gaps areas and work with SEMLEP to support and increase local business growth and development and continue to provide business start-up advice and support.

✓ We will work with partners to continue to promote an improved image of Luton in the media as a competitive place to invest and concentrate resources into making Luton cleaner, more attractive and a safer place for business and residents.
# Partners Involved in Skills and Employability in Luton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Area of Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Luton Borough Council Economic Development</td>
<td>Working with partners to further projects in the Skills and Employability Action Plan. Raising the profile of Luton to support a culture of thriving business and economic growth that will attract and sustain inward investment. Raising skills levels and reducing unemployment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luton Borough Council 16 – 19 Team</td>
<td>16-19 Team have established the Progression and Transition Board, working with Head Teachers focusing on future skills needs of Luton. Lead partner on Apprenticeship Strategy Actions and bringing schools and employers together to identify career development opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luton Borough Council Youth Advice</td>
<td>‘LBC Youth Advice Service (YAS) track the destinations of all young people in Luton aged 16 to 19. This includes additional tracking work to anyone with an ‘unknown’ destination. YAS also supports young people in Luton who are confirmed as being not in education, employment or training (NEETs)’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept of Work and Pensions/Jobcentre Plus</td>
<td>Helps employers advertise jobs through Universal Job Match. Deals with benefits for unemployed and unable to work due to health conditions/disability. Provides Flexible Support fund for local employment projects and contracts out a range of programmes to get people in to work, including the Work Programme for long term unemployed. Partners locally in Luton Employment Training and Skills Fair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Bedfordshire</td>
<td>Campuses in Bedford and Luton offering a range of under/post/graduate courses. Campus in Aylesbury, for Nursing and Midwifery. A further campus in Milton Keynes, teaching business studies, electronic engineering, and telecommunications. Approximately 24,000 students. Nearly 3,000 international students study with the university.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luton Adult Learning (LBC)</td>
<td>Luton Adult Learning delivers a range of provision to individuals and businesses across Luton and the surrounding areas including: ESOL, vocational skills, accredited and non-accredited learning with more than 5000 enrolments per year. In addition they deliver apprenticeships to Luton Borough Council and external employers (offering specialist support to small businesses). They hold a National</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organisation</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>Careers Service contract</td>
<td>to deliver information, advice and guidance and are also active in the community working with, supporting and funding local groups and organisations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Partnership</td>
<td>The Learning Partnership bids for funding for learning provision and contracts the work out to their network of local learning providers in Bedfordshire and Luton. They also deliver the National Careers Service contract locally.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Princes Trust</td>
<td>Helps change young lives by giving practical and financial support, developing workplace skills such as confidence and motivation through a range of projects available in Luton for young people aged 13 – 30 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Apprenticeship Service</td>
<td>The National Apprenticeship Service, part of the Skills Funding Agency, is the government agency that co-ordinates apprenticeships in England. NAS worked with local partners to provide support in National Apprenticeship Week in Luton.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Careers Service</td>
<td>NCS provide a website with information, advice and guidance on learning, training and work opportunities. Realise Futures continue to provide IAG in the form of employability / motivation workshops and 1:1 advice sessions to anyone who is 18+ at various locations in Bedfordshire, including from job centres, libraries, community locations, children centres. Realise Futures have also been awarded the SWWPPE (Skills and Work) contract by the Skills Funding Agency in the East of England and work closely with Work programme providers across the region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luton 6th Form College</td>
<td>Specialises in education for young adults between the ages of 16 and 19.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barnfield College</td>
<td>Offers further and higher education and training for school leavers, mature entrants and for industry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills Funding Agency</td>
<td>Funds skills training for further education (FE) in England. Supports over 1,000 colleges, private training organisations, and employers with more than £4 billion of funding each year. No local presence and unable to attend meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luton Borough Council Community Development</td>
<td>Supporting residents to participate in community life, develop skills and make improvements in their neighbourhoods. Funding community projects through Participatory Budgeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luton Borough Council Planning</td>
<td>Providing information and advice on the Local plan, future strategic developments for the economy and employment in and around Luton.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luton Borough Council Social Justice Unit</td>
<td>Promoting Equality, Community Cohesion and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social Inclusion in the work of the Council both in terms of planning policies and delivering services

**Luton Borough Council Research & Geospatial Information**

Providers of Luton’s Information Observatory; statistics, mapping and research reports on, for example, the type of people who currently live here and projected population trends, economy, deprivation levels and what the Census tells us about Luton.

**Bedfordshire Chamber of Commerce**

Helps businesses of all types and sizes to grow and connect.

**Federation of Small Business**

The Federation of Small Businesses was formed in 1974 and is the UK’s leading business organisation representing small and medium-sized businesses

For further information on this document please contact:

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01582 547227