Wiltshire Education, Employment and Skills Strategy 2014-2020

Wiltshire Council
Where everybody matters

Foreword from the Chair

The Leitch Review of Skills in December 2006, 'Prosperity for all in the Global Economy: World Class Skills' examined the UK's long-term skills needs. It set out ambitious goals for 2020 which, if achieved, would make the UK a world leader in skills. Following that the Education Act 2008, bringing a duty for young people to participate in education or training, implemented through the 'Raising of the Participation age' legislation in 2013 and 2015, and, from the change in government in 2010 numerous policies and reports centred around skills, quality in education and training, rigour and responsiveness and reform of vocational education. Furthermore, the Government's two strategies around Social Mobility (2011) and Social Justice (2012) are clear in their ambitions to ensure that people are able to get on and move up the social ladder, ensuring that opportunities brought through the globalised economy are available to all and that no one is left behind.

There has never been a busier time for the Education, Employment and Skills agenda. The current government has been driven by the need to change to ensure that the UK has a globally competitive workforce, skills needs are met and vocational education and Apprenticeships are of the highest quality. The publication of key documents such as the Review of Vocational Education (The Wolf Report 2011), Rigour and Responsiveness in Skills (April 2013, DfE and DBIS), the Richard Review of Apprenticeships (November 2012) and others have compounded the need for change and driven the agenda forwards at an unprecedented rate. Additionally, the creation of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) has been a pivotal development in the way local areas can access National and European funding to drive sustainable growth.

In order to make the education and skills system more effective and responsive to the needs of employers, the Government gave LEPs a new strategic role in skills policy in line with the recommendations of the Heseltine Review. LEPs have been given a role setting skills strategies consistent with national objectives, and chartered status for FE colleges will be linked to having taken account of the skills priorities of local LEPs. It is recognised that issues and opportunities relating to Education and Skills often cross geographical boundaries and as such collaboration between LEPs will be encouraged.

Wiltshire needs to position itself so it can respond to the challenges brought about by these policy developments and by working together we need to create an environment that will support the development of a skilled and competitive workforce, meet the needs of employers both now and in the future and drive business development and economic growth. As we approach 2020, Wiltshire is facing numerous challenges relating to employment and skills, not least the education and skills landscape is changing rapidly and there is an increasing need to improve the effectiveness of education and business liaison.

Restructuring of the employment base and an overall shift towards higher order occupations requires higher levels of education and it is anticipated that in terms of skills requirements, including replacement demand, by 2020 approximately 65% of the jobs growth will require NVQ Level 4 qualifications and above. In addition the county is facing significant demographic change including an ageing workforce coupled with the rise in state pension age and less need for 'replacement demand'.

Furthermore the county is faced with fluctuations in the population of young people and an increased birth rate which is set to impact on the capacity of educational institutions.

Finally, Wiltshire is facing a number of other strategic challenges and opportunities atypical of other counties including the Swindon & Wiltshire City Deal which aims to establish a clear and stand alone private sector led HE offer for the SWLEP area to meet the area's higher skills challenge (Level 4+). In doing so, we aim to retain Wiltshire's home grown talent who have in the past had to leave Wiltshire in order to pursue their HE ambitions. The Army 2020 rebasing project will see an influx of military personnel and their dependants relocate to the south of the county bringing around 4,000 additional Army personnel and dependants into a concentrated area in the south of the county. By 2020 almost 25% of the Army's strength will be based in this area which is in stark contrast to other bases in the UK which will see net reductions. There will be an estimated 1,800 service leavers in Wiltshire by 2016 and the successful City Deal bid aims to see military leavers' skills being used by companies who wish to locate and grow in the county.

In July 2014, Swindon and Wiltshire LEP agreed a historic Growth Deal with the government which will bring £129million investment into the region. Included in this will be a new science park at Porton Down, which will provide facilities for research, development and advanced skills training for companies specialising in life sciences and healthcare and a range of transport schemes to help people and goods move more easily around Swindon and Wiltshire's key growth zones. This will provide much welcome support required to meet the challenges outlined above. Due to its current contribution to the local economy and potential for growth, High Value

Manufacturing is high on the LEP's agenda. Research undertaken by the LEP has resulted in a '2026' vision for a thriving Swindon and Wiltshire, which emphasises the unique attributes manufacturing brings to the area. This includes exploiting the area's strong military presence and developing small and medium enterprises (SMEs) so they can respond quickly to developing opportunities. The report also suggests that High Value Manufacturing will be supported by Innovation and Technology Centres that build connectivity and local strengths.

Wiltshire is already making good progress in terms of supporting growth. The Wiltshire Business Hub is designed to provide a gateway to all available national and local business support, marshalling the best of Government Agency support and commercial expertise delivered along with free, expert and impartial advice and direction. It provides expertise on Strategy & Planning, Customers & Markets, People & Skills, Finance & Assets, Innovation and Sustainability & Environmental Protection. The aim is that by the end of 2015, the majority of Businesses in Wiltshire will be aware of the Hub and know that it provides a central point of contact and advice on all business support available in the county.

This Strategy will guide the way in which key partners work together to respond to Wiltshire's economic growth priorities whilst supporting the development of an inclusive economy. Through implementation of this strategy we aim to put employers at the heart of the employment and skills/education system to drive growth in the Wiltshire economy and provide a structured and co-ordinated partnership approach to sustained engagement in education, training or work across all age and client groups.

Steve Stone, Chair, Wiltshire Education, Employment and Skills Board

Glossary and definition of key terms

Academisation - The conversion to Academy status (a school which is independent of any local authority or democratically elected accountability).

Aspire Centre - Wiltshire Council's Aspire Centre provides a range of learning programmes and development opportunities for children in care and care leavers.

City Deal - City Deals are agreements between government and a 'city' that give the city control to: take charge and responsibility of decisions that affect their area, do what they think is best to help businesses grow, create economic growth and decide how public money should be spent.

CEIAG - Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance

DFE - Department for Education

DBIS - Department for Business Innovation & Skills

EET - Education, Employment or Training

Enterprise Education - The provision of learning opportunities which help students develop the attitude, knowledge and skills of the entrepreneur. The enterprising individual both initiates and thrives on change. Enterprise education enables students to develop confidence, self-reliance and a determination to succeed.

Entrepeneur - A person who organises and manages any enterprise, especially a business, usually with considerable initiative and risk.

EVER 6 FSM - Used by the DfE this is a measure to allocate the pupil premium based on whether pupils have been eligible for FSM in the past 6 years.

FE - Further Education

Free Schools - A Free School in England is a type of Academy, a non-profit-making, independent, state-funded school which is free to attend but which is not controlled by a Local Authority. They are subject to the School Admissions Code as all other State-funded schools.

FSB - Federation of Small Businesses

FSM - Free School Meals

GVA - Gross Value Added

HE - Higher Education

HEIs - Higher Education Institutions

IAPT - Improving Access to Psychological Therapies

IMPRESS - Project IMPRESS offers dedicated support to people in Wiltshire aged 16+ who have recently returned to work after 6 months or more of being out of work, or who have just started their first job. Support is offered to both the employee and employer to help the individual stay in work for the long term.

Key Stage 4 - A stage in the state education system and the legal term for the two years of school education which incorporate GCSEs, and other exams, in maintained schools in England. Also referred to as Year 10 and 11 (in England) when pupils are aged between 14 and 16.

KPI - Key Performance Indicator

LEP - Local Enterprise Partnership

Level 1 - Level 1 is equivalent to GCSE at grade D-G

Level 2 - Level 2 is equivalent to GCSE at A*-C

Level 3 - Level 3 is equivalent to A Level

Level 4+ - Level 4 is the start of the Higher Education qualification framework which progresses up to Level 8. Ranging from Certificate of Higher Education up to Doctoral Degrees.

NAS - National Apprenticeship Service

NEET - Not in Education, Employment and Training. Evidence shows that more vulnerable

children and young people including those looked after, Care Leavers, and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are more likely to be at risk of becoming NEET. Whilst certain characteristics such as poor educational performance, disaffection with education and low socio- economic status, are more prevalent, many young people who are NEET have average levels of attainment, live at home supported by their family and, as such, can become 'invisible'. (Sue Maguire, April 2013 Centre for Education and Industry, University of Warwick).

NQF - National Qualification Framework

NVQ - National Vocational Qualification

RPA - Raising the Participation Age, legislation passed through the 2010 Education Act which requires young people to participate in education, or employment with training such as an Apprenticeship until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 from 2013 and until their 18th birthday from 2015.

SEN - Special Educational Needs

SEND - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

SFA - Skills Funding Agency

Social Exclusion - http://www.poverty.ac.uk/definitions-poverty/social-exclusion Social exclusion is a complex and multi-dimensional process. It involves the lack or denial of resources, rights, goods and services, and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities, available to the majority of people in a society, whether in economic, social, cultural or political arenas. It affects both the quality of life of individuals and the equity and cohesion of society as a whole. As defined by Levitas et al. (in their report The Multi-dimensional Analysis of Social Exclusion for the last government's social exclusion task force).

SIB - Social Impact Bond

Social Mobility - Social mobility is a measure of how free people are to improve their position in society. (Opening Doors, Breaking Barriers: A Strategy for Social Mobility Vulnerable groups HM Government April 2011).

SME - Small and Medium Enterprises (micro: 0-9 employees, small: 10-49 employees, medium: 50-249 employees).

STEM - Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths

SWLEP - Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership

SWOT - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

UTC - University Technical College. University Technical Colleges are academies for 500 - 800 14-19 year old students which provide an education that meets the needs of employers. They offer technical courses and work-related learning, combined with academic studies. UTCs are sponsored by a local university and employers. It is also usual for FE colleges and other educational institutions such as established academy trusts to work in partnership with them.

VCS - Voluntary and Community Sector

Vunerable - Groups that experience a higher risk of poverty and social exclusion than the general population. In relation to employment, the concept of vulnerable groups denotes the risk of marginalisation from the labour market and social exclusion. There is no universal or common definition of vulnerability but the term is generally held to refer to those individuals or groups who, due to age, ill-health, infirmity, minority status or their otherwise disempowered position in society may be open to exploitation (whether physical, emotional or psychological).

Workless - Having no work/unemployed

Worklessness - Unemployment/the state of being without paid work

Purpose and benefits of the strategy

The Wiltshire Education, Employment and Skills Board met for the first time in January 2014 following the merger of the 13-19 Strategic Board and the Employment and Skills Board. Our Education, Employment & Skills Strategy for Wiltshire will enable us to take a holistic and prioritised approach towards the aim of integrating the Education, Employment & Skills agenda in Wiltshire. This new strategy aims to identify a shared vision, strategic objectives and priority actions to help Wiltshire Council and its partners on the Education, Employment and Skills Board to create an environment that will:

- support schools, the Further Education (FE) sector, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and training providers to increase participation in education, training and employment

- support the development of a skilled and competitive workforce that meets the needs of employers both now and in the future

- drive business development and economic growth

- co-ordinate collaborative partnership working to achieve common goals

- provide synergy between emerging education and skills policies translating into practice.

Benefits of having a single integrated Education, Employment & Skills Strategy include:

- clarify key issues and identify objectives

- identify partner responsibilities

- coordinate resources and effort

- create the environment for employers to influence and inform the skills agenda and education and training provision

- develop a co-ordinated offer for employers and individuals that is appropriate and accessible shared/joint influencing of external/national policy and resources.

The Education, Employment and Skills Challenge in Wiltshire

As a county, Wiltshire is facing a number of challenges which need addressing:

Economy

- Challenge to Gross Value Added (GVA) through skills shortages/gaps in some sectors and in some geographic areas.

- Global competition - Wiltshire's economy needs to be as efficient and flexible as possible in order to seize the opportunities that global markets present.

- Whilst wages in Wiltshire are low, house prices remain above average making it more of a challenge for first time buyers and young people to get on the property ladder. In addition high rental prices are also an issue for young people to afford to rent which may prove a barrier to them staying or relocating to Wiltshire. Both resident and workplace pay rates in Wiltshire have lagged behind national averages and in-work poverty is becoming a real issue. Data on pay levels and commuting flows indicates that the outward commuting of higher skilled workers from Wiltshire has long been a feature of the economy.

- Wiltshire needs to continue re-structuring and moving up the value chain so that it can remain competitive, attracting sectors/businesses that are big contributors of economic output.

Employment and skills

- The South West has the highest proportion of employees in micro, small and medium businesses in England and one of the lowest proportions employed by large firms. According to the 2013 Local Economic Assessment, the Wiltshire economy is dominated by small and micro businesses. Looking at business unit data there were 21,258 operations in Wiltshire of which 97.4% employed fewer than 50 people. The majority of these, 87.2%, were micro businesses i.e. employing up to 10 people. Medium sized firms (50-199 employees) account for just 2% of the business base and large firms (200+ employees) represent 0.5%.

- Many successful micro businesses reach a point where growth comes to an end. This is usually because the business owner needs support and advice to restructure the business for further expansion and often occurs at around £500K turnover or 10 employees. The Wiltshire Business Hub is designed to assist with building a broader based management team and to conduct a complete strategic review of how the business can grow to the next level.

- Restructuring of the employment base and an overall shift towards higher order occupations requires higher levels of education. Therefore it is anticipated that in terms of skills requirements, including replacement demand, by 2020 Wiltshire's economy is projected to have: 38,300 jobs that require Level 4 qualifications (i.e. degree level); 24,700 with Level 3; 31,000 with Level 2; and 9,000 with Level 1.

- It is projected that by 2020 employers in Wiltshire will demand that approximately one in three of the workers they recruit should have a Level 4 qualification, there are currently limited Level 4 provision in the county.

- Professional occupations, Associate Professional and Technical occupations and Managers, Directors and Senior Officials feature strongly in Wiltshire's workplace economy and by 2020 these occupations will have the highest expansion demand. Professional occupations are projected to grow by another 8,900 jobs. Managers, Directors and Senior Officials are projected to grow by another 6,000 jobs. Associate Professional and Technical occupations are projected to grow by another 5,200 jobs.

- The Defence industry requires Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) graduates, which are in short supply across the country while the number of STEM graduates has risen it has not kept pace with the increase in demand.

- There is a need to increase the vocational training including Apprenticeships available for the Life Sciences industry, as well as ensuring that education institutions are working with the industry so that graduates are entering the labour force with the appropriate skills. There is a need for a minimum of 10% more staff to be trained within the next 10 years. Additional pathways need to be developed to help provide additional routes into the life sciences sector. This is particularly important at technician level. The further usage of Higher level Apprenticeships is considered an important way of ensuring a pipeline of technicians equipped to meet the needs of the Life Sciences sector.

- 26.3% of employment by Wiltshire's businesses is in the knowledge intensive sectors, higher than that of England and Wales. Moreover, 2.7% of employment is in Medium and High Technology Manufacturing, just above the England and Wales average of 2.5%. These industries have a very strong demand for high levels of

employability skills and education especially in Bachelors and Masters of Science degrees and considerable research skills. The knowledge intensive sectors are services and business operations heavily reliant on professional knowledge and their employment structures are heavily weighted towards scientists, engineers, and other experts.

- Manufacturing accounts for 9.3% of all workplace employment, above the England and Wales average. There will be a continuing shift to higher order occupations: more managers, professionals, associate professionals. For SMEs one of the key challenges is the need to acquire the strategic management skills needed to grow and prosper. While investment in innovation and Research and Development is strong in the Manufacturing sector, it requires high-level technical skills and quality management skills to capitalise on that investment. Like many others, the Manufacturing sector will increasingly be competing for STEM graduates. This is particularly an issue amongst SMEs, which do not enjoy the same brand recognition as many of the

large, well-known manufacturers. The ageing workforce, particularly of highly-skilled engineers, is creating a short-fall in the supply of technicians and engineers trained to NQF Levels 3 and 4, which may lead to a variety of highly-specific skills shortages across the sector, including mechanical engineers, chemical engineers, design and development engineers, production and process engineers and buyers and purchasing officers. Higher levels of flexibility, agility and a broader range of soft skills across the whole workforce are considered key attributes in the future Advanced Manufacturing workforce.

• Financial Services employs around 8% of the workforce and is regarded locally as a 'growth industry and a major economic driver.' Across the sector there is likely to be a continual need for more Professional, Associate Professional and Technical staff and for existing employees to continually develop their specialist and technical skills. Key professions include actuaries, underwriters, investment accounting and insolvency. Management skills and leadership qualities are likely to be in continual demand as the sector and the economy recovers from recession. In terms of sectors, there is a need for better training and recruitment for the retail banking and insurance industries, as presently these areas are least attractive to the best applicants. The sector's demand for specialist IT skills, data security, compliance skills, customer service skills and managerial skills including collaboration and partnership skills at management level are all likely to increase in the coming years. By 2020 it is projected that more than 1 in 4 jobs will be at the higher end of the occupational spectrum requiring more employees qualified from A Level upwards (Level 3 +) and especially to Degree level and above in the coming years.

- The Low Carbon sector will also be competing for high-quality STEM graduates over the next few decades. Other higher level skills in short supply for the sector include: leadership and management, project management, lean manufacturing and business improvement techniques. Also demands for generic low carbon skills such as sustainable procurement; carbon accounting; performance reporting; environmental management systems; risk management; whole life costing; cost benefit analysis and commercialisation skills. Effectively tackling the demographic time bomb facing many Low Carbon and Manufacturing industries is one of the most important issues. With large numbers of skilled people forecast to leave these industries over the course of the next decade the sector needs to find new sources of recruits to fill the looming gaps. Links to skills needs in key construction occupations around the growth in retrofit include: dry liners; plumbers; PV installers; gas installers; as well as general builders. Also links to skills needs in Automotive; Logistics & Distribution; ICT and mainstream Construction.

- Tourism related jobs equate to 7% of employment in Wiltshire and the visitor economy is worth 8.2% of Wiltshire Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and supports over 27,000 jobs. The main job growth at an occupational level will be in managers, directors and senior officials. The continuing shift in the occupational profile of the Accommodation and Food sector in the area over the course of the decade towards higher-order occupational groups will have a significant impact on the required qualifications profile of the workforce. The

sector suffers from skills shortages in key areas, particularly chefs, customer service staff and hospitality management. There is also a need to improve sector specific marketing skills, particularly on line/digital/ social media marketing.

- High priority skills requirements to meet the immediate issues affecting the Food and Drink sector include setting up structures to demonstrate, record and promote the professionalism of the sector; succession planning for small businesses; environmental management skills; risk management; scientific knowledge and technology transfer; and better ICT skills. Other high priority but not crucial skills needs are marketing; market analysis; planning and project management; woodland management; crop agronomy and pest and disease identification and control; as well as practical conservation skills. There is an urgent need to ensure there are sufficient numbers of staff being trained for the sector to replace those who are expected to leave

by 2020 as almost half of the workforce is predicted to retire from the sector within the next 7-10 years. It will also be important to ensure that there are sufficient highly skilled STEM workers for the sector, who can understand and use increasingly complex biotechnology. Increases in efficiencies are linked with decreasing numbers of agricultural staff. Those who remain in the sector will increasingly have to develop STEM skills for aspects such as biotechnology and GM crops. Already, 24% of the agricultural workforce in the UK is trained to NQF Level 4 or above. Managers are the most likely to require these higher level skills. Skills will need to change and adapt, given the need for diversification and compliance with legislative, technological and climate change needs. It is possible that increasing environmental and food security concerns may lead to further government regulation of the agricultural sector. In order to respond to this, managers in the sector will need to familiarise themselves with the new laws, and ensure that the regulations are met and the processes are managed. The growing global population will require increased productivity of agricultural businesses in order to meet the increasing demand. Skills will be required in resource management, nitrate applications, soil management and technical and scientific skills to change farming practices to a model where precision farming is commonplace. It will be increasingly important to understand the issues affecting sustainability of agriculture. These will require skills in business planning with financial and environmental constraints, environmental management and diversification strategies. There will also be increasing demand for conservation,

scientific and community engagement skills as farmers need to understand new systems of production, apply scientific principles and engage better with their local communities to aid the transition to greater sustainability.

- There is a need to apply a focus on sectors with skills shortage vacancies and 'hard to fill' vacances, such as the Care sector. The biggest challenge facing the Care sector is the inability to attract health and social care staff to work in Wiltshire. This is felt across statutory services, care home and homecare operators. The sector is experiencing significant shortfalls in social workers and managers across both adult and children's social care settings.

- Wiltshire will see an additional 8,000+ personnel leaving the forces in the next 4/5 years as a result of the first phase of the down-sizing required to meet the Army 2020 objectives. This will inevitably put pressure on the Career Transition Service as it is more than doubling the numbers of people seeking new challenges over this period. Rather than seeing this as a challenge, the availability of highly-skilled and motivated people – who are expressing a desire to remain in the area[1] - we regard as a key enabler in developing a highly-skilled workforce as many military leavers have already reached Level 3 in their education path and gained valuable transferable skills due to their military careers. Increased local provision of Higher Education through the City Deal would enable Wiltshire's labour market to enjoy the rewards that military leavers can generate.

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[1] Wiltshire & Hampshire are the top two preferred re-settlement areas identified by service leavers – Army Statistics 2012

Education

- The lack of effective Information, Advice and Guidance in many schools has been highlighted nationally by OFSTED as a concern since the responsibility for careers moved to schools from the Local Authority (Going in the Right Direction? – OFSTED, Sept 2013 Ref NO 130114). This could impact on the choices and options being made available to young people in Wiltshire schools. The challenge is to ensure consistency so that all young people have access to high quality, effective and appropriate information and guidance.

- Closing the achievement gap between disadvantaged pupils (those eligible for the pupil premium - ever6FSM (pupils who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last 6 years) and others is an important challenge to recognise and respond to. It is a high priority for Wiltshire and indeed the South West region as a whole. Wiltshire's performance at narrowing the achievement gap is behind national, regional and statistical neighbours and requires improvement in order to achieve better outcomes for all our pupils especially those at most risk of underachievement. There is a focus on the impact of the pupil premium and where gaps are widening or not closing quickly enough during Ofsted inspections.

- The latest published destinations measures for 2011 to 2012 show that as a county progression into education, employment or employment with training destinations following key stage 5 is only 77%, with 2% moving into an Apprenticeship. Progression at 18 presents a challenge hindered by

the lack of a physical Higher Education Institution within the county.

- From 2015, young people are required to participate in education, training or employment with training (ideally an Apprenticeship) until their 18th birthday; currently the requirement is for participation until the academic year in which they turn 17. A challenge remains to ensure that there is a sufficient breadth and quality of provision across this age range to ensure full participation.

- Tracking of young people has been and continues to present a challenge across the county and whilst the number of 'unknown' young people has decreased significantly more recently due to the implementation of successful tracking strategies, this needs to be sustained.

- There is a need for collaboration with partners to identify young people leaving education or training courses early and support them into suitable alternatives, ensuring that information about early leavers is communicated to the Local Authority, supporting tracking process and enabling early intervention to prevent NEET.

- Knowing the cohort is a further challenge including gaining a better understanding of the needs and aspirations of young people and those who are vulnerable and/or disengaged to include earlier identification.

- Improving outcomes for children, young people and families and reducing demand on statutory and specialist services through the implementation of the Wiltshire Children and Young People's Trust and Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board.

- Joining up local services to work with troubled families to address family problems as a whole, with a focus on getting children back into schools and adults back on the path to work.

- Securing a mix and balance of provision for young people which offers a range of progression pathways, encourages realistic aspirations, reflects local economic priorities and converts more jobs without training into jobs with training or Apprenticeships.

- Responding to and implementing the Children and Families Act reforms which include a new approach to Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability with a focus on early help and holistic assessment.

- Responding to the whole system change of the education landscape including autonomous schools and a focus on improving standards. Including developing the Local Authority's strategic role as champion for parents, families and vulnerable pupils and promoting educational excellence by ensuring a good supply of high quality places, coordinating admission and developing school improvement strategies to support local schools.

- There is an urgent need to raise the quality of Further Education (FE) provision to reach a consistent high standard across all campuses and to improve the condition of the FE estate in Wiltshire which is currently the 2nd poorest nationally.

Rurality

- Wiltshire is the 5th most rural county in the South West with approximately 40% of its population living in towns or villages with fewer than 5,000 people. The Census 2011 data shows that the population of Wiltshire as at 27th March 2011 was 471,000. This is an increase of 38,000 people or 8.8% from the 2001 Census, a rate of growth that is the highest of any of the rural counties in the South West region. Due to this rurality, transportation for all people of all ages presents a significant challenge, due not only in terms of the cost of accessing education, training or employment but also the logistics regarding public transport availability where car ownership may not be an option.

Our way of working

Wiltshire Education, Employment and Skills Strategic Objectives

Encourage appropriate aspiration, increase employability and attainment within current and future workforce so individuals can achieve their potential and meet current and emerging skills needs

Reduce barriers to engagement/participation and increase social mobility

Reduce the incidence of repeat NEET/workless episodes and prevent sustained disengagement

Support employers to develop their workforce to sustain and grow their business

Foster a culture of enterprise and innovation to develop the future generation of entrepreneurs

Priorities

- Improve quality and choice of education and training provision to meet current and emerging needs
- Increase participation in education or employment (RPA)
- Support skills development, employability and progression at all levels through effective and impartial CEIAG and promote a culture of lifelong learning and opportunity for all
- Develop employability and soft skills to provide a better balance between attitudinal values, vocational skills and academic achievement

- Develop targeted interventions/programmes for vulnerable groups
- Address institutional/ system/cultural/ infrastructure barriers

- Support the transition from NEET to EET
- Develop innovative activity to prevent the revolving door effect and improve retention of employment

- Support employers with workforce development upskills and succession planning
- Deliver Apprenticeship growth
- Maximise opportunities across the Apprenticeship family
- Increase uptake of Apprenticeships by young people
- Support growth sectors and opportunities through improved access to HE facilities and courses
- Ensure an adequate supply of future STEM skilled employees

- Encourage enterprise education to develop the future generation of entrepreneurs
- Encourage innovation in public and voluntary services through supporting the development of Social Enterprise and other models for addressing socio-economic issues

Vision: To put employers at the heart of the education, employment and skills system, drive growth in the economy, provide a structured and coordinated approach to sustained engagement in education, training or work across all age and client groups

A robust evidence base   Strong and effective leadership   Alignment of resources in line with strategic priorities

Enabled by 7 Key Strands

Early intervention/ prevention

Raising aspiration/ attainment

Employability/ preparation for work

Progression: KS4/FE/HE

Up-skill the workforce

Appropriate, accessible provision

Sustainable employment/ participation

Figure 1: Our Way of Working

Wiltshire Education, Employment and Skills Strategy 2014-2020

A summary of Strategic Objectives, Priorities & High Level Actions (as outlined in the Action Plans)

Priority	High Level Actions
Strategic Objective 1: Encourage appropriate aspiration, increase employability and attainment within the current and future workforce so individuals can achieve their potential and meet current and emerging skills needs.	
1.1 Improving the quality and choice of education and training provision to meet current and emerging needs.	• Ensure that provision meets employer needs. • Ensure that provision meets learner needs. • Narrow the gaps – secure better outcomes for those most disadvantaged e.g. care leavers, those with health and disability issues etc ensuring provision meets the needs of those who face barriers/are most vulnerable to disengagement. • Establish new relationships with schools due to changes in the provider base e.g. the formation of academies, free schools, UTCs etc.
1.2 Increasing participation in education or employment with training in line with Raising the Participation Age (RPA) legislation.	• Engage and target support to young people early using the Risk of NEET Indicator (RONI). Develop an early intervention team approach in schools liaising with parents, guardians and other influences to encourage and support progression amongst more young people. This would bring additional support outside of the formal learning offered at school. • Improve transition support for Year 11 leavers especially over the summer to ensure post-16 engagement for young people they recognise as in danger of NEET. Develop a personalised offer of PSD and key work (intensive from Spring through August as soon as young people finish exams or for most of these when the school says they are off roll) and again in the winter for those who don't end up attending college or drop out quickly but who don't get picked up or noticed for months at which point they are much harder to re-engage. • Develop a targeted offer for 18 year old NEETS to move into employment or training.
1.3 Support the delivery of effective and impartial Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) and support skills development at all levels to ensure employability, sustainability, career progression and promote a culture of continuous development and lifelong learning for all.	• Ensure CEIAG is delivered using much more experiential techniques. Develop career learning to actively get professionals and young people working together to explore and understand the career landscape. • Develop smarter pathways to employment - the pathways into some industries are not obvious. Single entity career pathways are a thing of the past, today the routes a person can take are more varied and not clear enough/promoted well enough. • Develop approaches to broaden horizons, retrain, re-skill and up-skill. Identify transferable skills and alternative occupations.

Priority	High Level Actions
Strategic Objective 2: Reduce barriers to engagement/participation and increase social mobility.	
2.1 Develop targeted interventions/programmes for vulnerable groups.	• Support young people's personal development and individual resilience. Low confidence and self esteem is a significant issue within the cohort often displayed in a variety of challenging behaviours and can and does effect young people's progression into EET post 16. • Explore developing a peer role model/mentor network of inspirational people who have successfully overcome significant barriers and are willing to share their stories and experience with others. • Explore the establishment of a NEET Prevention Social Impact Bond. This would involve a consortium of providers coming together to deliver early intervention to young people who are at risk of becoming NEET, targeting vulnerable groups and areas with high levels of deprivation. • Improve tracking and reduce the 'Not Known' rate amongst 16-18 year olds. • Identify and engage with those invisible to the labour market – explore ways to identify and engage those aged 18+ who are not participating and not claiming. • Develop specialist personalised and tailored employment support for vulnerable groups and those most disadvantaged including but not limited to those with long term and enduring mental health issues, those suffering from physical disabilities and ill health, those with caring responsibilities, those with learning difficulties and disabilities and teenage parents. • Develop provision and support to prevent offenders re-offending. • Support Wiltshire's Looked After Children and Care Leavers to raise attainment and move into education, employment and training. • Assist young people with SEND to prepare for employment and sustain varying levels of paid employment with local employers including Apprenticeships. Develop a Supported Internship programme for young people with severe learning difficulties and/ or disabilities aged 16 to 24. • Early intervention for unemployed older workers to prevent long term unemployment. • Develop more effective linkage with the troubled families agenda.
2.2 Address institutional/system/ cultural/infrastructure barriers.	• Develop ways to overcome the challenges associated with Wiltshire's rurality which hamper delivery - transport is a key barrier to EET (length of journey, availability and costs of public transport, costs of car ownership etc). • Overcome the limited availability of before and after school childcare in some communities which are too small to make it viable. Improve the availability of weekend and very late/very early opening childcare across the county. Costs of childcare are also a significant barrier. Support childcare provision to offer a high quality experience for children whose parents rely on childcare during the early years of their children's development. • Improve financial literacy and health literacy. • Support people to overcome cultural/attitudinal barriers associated with having an offender record.

Priority	High Level Actions
Strategic Objective 3: Reduce the incidence of repeat NEET/Workless episodes and prevent sustained disengagement.	
3.1 Support the transition from NEET to EET.	• Understand more about the causes of NEET and barriers to participation. • Ensure referral processes are followed correctly and the most appropriate referral is made in the first place.
3.2 Develop innovative activity to prevent the 'revolving door' effect and improve retention of employment.	• Understand more about the difficulties of sustaining participation in provision/learning or work. • Provision of in-work support to enable people to keep a job in the early stages of transition to work and a focus on career advancement thereafter.
Strategic Objective 4: Support employers to develop their workforce to sustain and grow their business.	
4.1 Support employers with workforce development, up-skilling and succession planning.	• Create a dedicated one stop shop to offer employers support with training needs analysis and brokering the most appropriate provision. • Support SME and Micro Businesses with specialist employment skills to retain, develop and grow their workforce. • Support employers to understand and access the landscape of provision and support available. Ensure communication to employers is accessible, in a simple format, easy to understand and to the point. • Raise the profile of the benefits of skills training amongst employers. Persuade companies of the bottom-line business benefits of investing in training and development.
4.2 Deliver Apprenticeship growth.	• Working with the Skills funding Agency, Swindon Borough Council and the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership, develop a SWLEP area wide Apprenticeship Campaign. • Raise the profile of Apprenticeships and address negative stereotypes and outdated perceptions – myth busting. Enable employers to recognise the benefits of Apprenticeships in meeting current and future skills needs to support Wiltshire's economic growth priorities. • Support approaches to embed employment and skills priorities particularly Apprenticeships in Local Authority planning and procurement, work with partners to maximise opportunities for Apprenticeships from the planned increase in large scale construction schemes in the county and wider SWLEP area. • Support more schools to recognise the potential Apprenticeships hold for supporting the broad range of occupational areas commonly found in schools. • Encourage and support more Wiltshire 100 employers (strategically significant employers to the Wiltshire economy) and employers with graduate schemes or those who recruit through large scale agency work, head hunting etc to consider developing Apprenticeship programmes. • Support providers with employer engagement to ensure Apprenticeships are employer and learner focused and driven. Also support providers to use available funding in innovative ways to support growth needs (collaborative approaches). • Develop collaborative specialised support to enable SME's and micro businesses and the VCS to engage more fully with Apprenticeships. • Support employers and providers with the implementation of Apprenticeship Reform measures.

Priority	High Level Actions
4.3 Maximise opportunities across the entire Apprenticeship family.	• Maximise the progression potential from the new family of Apprenticeships from Traineeships all the way through to Higher Apprenticeships. Support progression from Traineeships into Apprenticeships. • Maximise Apprenticeship and Traineeships opportunities for particularly for 16-24 year olds. • Increase Higher Apprenticeships to contribute to meeting Wiltshire's higher level skills challenge (Level 4+) - link Higher Apprenticeship growth to priority sectors, forecast jobs growth and align with delivery of the City Deal.
4.4. Increase uptake of Apprenticeships by young people.	• Undertake further analysis into why Apprenticeship starts are not increasing amongst 16-18 year olds especially. • Raise the profile of Apprenticeships and address negative stereotypes and outdated perceptions – myth busting. • Embed the Apprenticeship message and the progression offered through the Apprenticeship family in CEIAG. • Communications with parents, guardians and other influences to encourage more young people to consider the Apprenticeship route. • Encourage and support the employment of Apprentices in schools as a fantastic way for schools to role model to pupils the benefits of Apprenticeships. • Work with employers and providers to raise the quality of Apprenticeships. Reduce the number of Apprenticeships of less than 30 hours a week/increase average weekly wage - in line with average wage. Raise the esteem of Apprenticeships so they don't undervalue them.
4.5 Improve access to HE facilities and courses which support growth sectors and opportunities.	• Encourage progression from Level 3 to Level 4 and grow higher level skills across the whole working age population particularly Level 4 and above. • Support the delivery and extension of the Wiltshire and Swindon City Deal to establish a clear and stand alone private sector lead HE offer for the SWLEP area to meet the area's higher level skills challenge (Level 4+). • Increase Higher Apprenticeships to contribute to meeting Wiltshire's higher level skills challenge (Level 4+) - link Higher Apprenticeship growth to priority sectors, forecast jobs growth and align with delivery of the City Deal. Influence and develop the capacity of the provider base to deliver Higher Apprenticeships. • Retain Wiltshire's home grown talent who have in the past had to leave Wiltshire in order to pursue their HE ambitions. • Generate a new group of learners (perhaps with a vocational partiality) that could be inspired to progress to HE who might not otherwise consider learning at higher levels as an option, or who may be discouraged by social, cultural, economic or institutional barriers.

Priority	High Level Actions
4.6 Ensure an adequate supply of future STEM skilled employees.	• Raise the profile and appeal of STEM industries facing skills shortages. Ensure adequate supply of STEM qualified recruits to meet growth needs. • Support earlier intervention in the education process and sustainable STEM development in teaching/CEIAG to encourage children and young people to see the myriad of opportunities that Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths can create.
Strategic Objective 5: Foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship within the future workforce.	
5.1 Encourage enterprise education to develop the future generation of entrepreneurs.	• Facilitate earlier engagement with the education system and collaboration between education and business and embed entrepreneurship and innovation in teaching/CEIAG to encourage entrepreneurial mindsets and stimulate ambition. • Support the Employment and Enterprise work stream of the Military Civilian Integration Programme to support the employment and enterprise aspirations of Service leavers and military spouses.
5.2 Encourage innovation in public and voluntary services through supporting the development of Social Enterprise and other models for addressing socio-economic issues.	• Secure a better understanding/evidence base for the impact of public and voluntary services on improving EET outcomes. • Research and explore effective, innovative platforms to tackling social exclusion issues.