



SOUTH EAST LEP (SELEP) SKILLS STRATEGY

2018-2023

A partnership approach to skills for a flourishing, inclusive economy



SOUTH EAST
LOCAL ENTERPRISE
PARTNERSHIP

1 FOREWORD FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

It is an exciting time for the South East LEP, the largest in the country. This is an area of national and international significance. We are instrumental to keeping goods and services moving and our productivity impacts on the national picture. We look to the future with enthusiasm and skills is absolutely fundamental to our response.

Across our LEP area, there are so many tangible examples of growth; Public Health England's forthcoming relocation, a new Entertainment Resort in north Kent, one of Amazon's largest warehouses at the Port of Tilbury, Southend Airport growth, Bradwell Power Station plans, Newhaven Enterprise Zone, North Kent Enterprise Zone and Gatwick Airport growth. Our LEP area will see up to 300,000 new homes to 2030, requiring a skilled construction workforce on a significant scale. Likewise, sectors like health and care have current shortages, set to increase with an ageing and growing population. This year so far, our LEP area has advertised over 7,500 nursing vacancies, nearly 8,000 programmers and web developers and over 4,000 care workers. Our sectors are advertising a range of skills needs from entry level to post graduate.

This is in the context of some challenging statistics. Although our skills levels are improving, we have nearly 180,000 people with no qualifications. 33% of people have a degree level qualification compared to 38% nationally and nearly 42,000 people are claiming out of work benefits. We have 178,000 workless households.

When we talk about size and scale, it is useful to remind ourselves that we have a population of 4.1 million, set to grow to nearly 5 million by 2039. That is bigger than Croatia, Panama, Georgia and Lithuania and double the size of countries like Estonia and Cyprus.

Our 165,000 enterprises employ over 2 million people and in sectors such as construction, our LEP employs nearly double that of other LEPs outside London (98,000 compared with 58,000 in Leeds and 51,000 in Birmingham). For virtually all sectors, **the South East LEP has far greater numbers of employees than most other LEP areas outside London.** There are over 100,000 in manufacturing, 42,000 in finance and 222,000 in health and social work. Our creative and IT sector is flourishing and influential on an international level. We are seeing growing success and economic impact of our wine industry. This is an area of diversity, home to the longest coastline in England, large rural areas and urban concentrations and a close relationship with London. Our communities are among the most prosperous but also most deprived nationally and we have world beating international companies as well as burgeoning SMEs.

We are doing much already. **Our 29 skills capital projects and ESF programmes totalling £100m of investment are already delivering apprenticeships,** employment training and growth. Local Skills Board initiatives also respond to the skills shortages and illustrate a joined up, consistent approach. Nearly £15m Local Growth Funding allocated to skills projects, such as the Canterbury Christ Church University EDGE Hub will continue to support strong partnerships between education and employment. There is much more to do and I am pleased to introduce our shared approach to building a first class, locally driven skills system, aligned to the government's industrial strategy.

Christian Brodie,
South East LEP Chair



"This is an area with national and international significance; quite simply it is instrumental to the UK's success."



2 THE SOUTH EAST LEP AREA AT A GLANCE

The South East LEP area is the largest in the country by virtually all measures, with a population of over 4 million, nearly 170,000 enterprises and 1.9 million people in work. By 2039 over a fifth of the population will be aged 70+. SELEP has a vast coast line, extensive rural and urban spaces, international gateways and close proximity to London. It has some of the most prosperous as well as some of the most deprived locations nationally. It will also see among the largest growth in the UK. This makes it an ideal test bed for a wide range of national skills and employment initiatives aligned to the industrial strategy.

The SELEP area has large numbers of employees and enterprises in health, care, manufacturing, construction, finance, IT & creative, logistics and finance. The land-based, tourism and hospitality sectors are also significant. These sectors contribute to large numbers of vacancies (nearly 370,000 in 2017/18) across the SELEP area. However, as is illustrated below and in our supporting evidence base, for productivity to increase, we collectively need to address our poorer skills levels, lower earnings and higher workless households than other LEP areas. We are confident we can deliver.

SOUTH EAST LEP NOW (2018)



POPULATION:

4.2m

PROJECTED
POPULATION
TO 2030:

4.6m



NUMBER OF WORKLESS
HOUSEHOLDS:

178,400

NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN
WORKLESS HOUSEHOLDS:

83,300



TOTAL JOBS:

1,907,000

GVA OVERALL: **£85,794M**
GVA PER HEAD: **81.9**

WORKING AGE (16-64)
POPULATION:

2,542,000



NUMBER OF
SECONDARY SCHOOLS: 271
PRIMARY SCHOOLS: 1,132
FE COLLEGES: 17
UNIVERSITIES: 9



JOBPOSTINGSIN
LAST 12 MONTHS:

367,000

NUMBER ON OUT OF WORK BENEFITS: **40,070**

% WORKING AGE

LEVEL 1+ QUALIFICATIONS: **86.5%**

LEVEL 2+ QUALIFICATIONS: **72.6%**

LEVEL 3+ QUALIFICATIONS: **52.8%**

LEVEL 4+ QUALIFICATIONS: **33.3%**

**16-64 YEAR OLDS WITH NO
QUALIFICATIONS: 7.5%**

SKILLS CAPITAL
EXPENDITURE
(33 PROJECTS)
2017-18:

£36.6m



WEEKLY EARNINGS BY
RESIDENCE: **£574.90**
WEEKLY EARNINGS BY
WORKPLACE: **£528.70**

TOTAL NUMBER OF
APPRENTICESHIP
STARTS 2012/13:

32,870

TOTAL NUMBER OF
APPRENTICESHIP
STARTS 2015/16:

32,430



EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUNDING CONTRACTED: **£53M**
EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUNDING TO BE CONTRACTED: **£17M**
NUMBER OF SCHOOLS ENGAGED IN THE CAREERS
'ENTERPRISE ADVISOR' NETWORK: **159**
NUMBER OF ENTERPRISE ADVISERS (EMPLOYERS)
WORKING WITH SCHOOLS: **152**



TOTAL CURRENT
HOUSEHOLDS:
1,283,500



TOTAL NUMBER
OF ENTERPRISES:

169,545

TOTAL NUMBER
OF SMES:

169,045

3 SELEP'S FIVE YEAR AMBITION



| SHORT-TERM AMBITIONS – ALREADY UNDERWAY |
|--|
| ✓ A Careers Enterprise Network Linking Education and Industry (Underway) |
| ✓ £37M Capital Programme Delivering Industry Relevant Training (Underway) |
| ✓ £51M European Social Fund Supporting People into and in Work (Underway) |
| ✓ Raising the Profile and Understanding of Apprenticeships (Underway) |
| ✓ Piloting an Online Portal for Skills (Adults, Young People, Employers) (Underway) |
| ✓ Explore and Showcase Innovative New Skills Solutions (e.g Virtual Reality) (Underway) |
| ✓ Work with Industry Bodies to Respond to Growth (Underway) |
| ✓ Communicate Across The Lep – Networks, Working Groups, Growth Hubs (Underway) |
| ✓ Inform Delivery & Commissioning of National Programmes (E.g. National Careers Service) (Underway) |
| ✓ Communicate and Share the Skills Strategy Locally and Nationally |
| ✓ Support Government Initiatives for Adults (e.g. Fuller Working Lives, Disability Confident) |

| MEDIUM-TERM AMBITIONS – A CALL TO ACTION |
|--|
| Support SMES to Skill and Upskill (e.g. Apprenticeships, T-levels, Leadership) |
| Pilot Government Initiatives (e.g. Digital Partnerships, Inclusive Employment) |
| Secure Public ‘Skills Commitments’ with Employers Across the LEP |
| Play a leading role Government Sector deals (e.g. Construction) |
| Establish a LEP wide employer led Skills Advisory Panel (Underway) |
| Continue to attract capital and Revenue Funding to deliver growth |
| Respond to Industrial Strategy Opportunities (e.g. National Retraining Scheme Funding) |
| Inform and Support the Introduction of T-Levels |
| Expand the Careers Enterprise Network for full coverage across the SELEP Area |
| Launch Tenders for Remaining European Social Funding (to 2023) (Covering Areas such as Leadership, Returnships, Digital, Inclusivity and Sectors) |
| Work with neighbouring LEPS to tackle Common Areas of Ambition |
| Raise awareness of our growth sectors and opportunities |
| Tackle the barriers (e.g. Tutor Recruitment Challenges) |

| LONG TERM AMBITIONS – DELIVERING A FIRST CLASS SKILLS SYSTEM |
|--|
| Achieve greater local control of Skills Funding to deliver growth |
| Have the Right Tools in Place to Deliver – A Skills Portal, Virtual Reality, Facilities |
| Be an Established Partner to Test / Input to Areas of National Policy |
| Have a skills system delivering for all regardless of geography or background |
| Ensure a proportionate share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund |
| Achieve increased skills levels and productivity across SELEP |

4 VIEW FROM OUR LOCAL BOARDS

The South East LEP operates as a fully devolved model, working closely with local partners and deliverers. **SELEP's Skills Advisory Group**, formed of colleges, universities, local authorities, training providers and voluntary sector representatives has been the driving force for this skills strategy. Additionally, there has been ongoing consultation and engagement with SELEP's federated business and skills boards who will assist in delivering against the vision and priorities.





SELEP Skills Advisory Group

'We are thrilled to have a vision and priorities set out for the next five years. We're really grateful for the extensive engagement and input from colleagues across the LEP area to ensure that this truly reflects our shared aspirations. Most importantly, we look forward to delivering against our ambitions over the next five years and working with government to achieve this.'

Graham Razey, Principal and Chief Executive East Kent College Group, Chair LEP Skills Advisory Group



Kent and Medway Economic Partnership and Kent and Medway Skills Commission

'As businesses, we welcome the focus on employer led skills in the strategy. As home to the Eurotunnel and Port of Dover, our international connectivity is excellent and our considerable tourism finance, creative, agri-tech, logistics, manufacturing, life science and ICT sectors require the right skills in order to grow. Through our sector Guilds, we are already seeing close working relationships forming between education and industry and we're looking forward to working with SELEP partners in order to do more.'

Paul Winter, Wire Belt Co Ltd, Chair Kent,
Geoff Miles, Maidstone Studios Ltd, SELEP Vice Chairman, Chair Kent and Medway Economic Partnership



Team East Sussex and Skills East Sussex

'Developing a skilled workforce is a top priority for East Sussex, and is embedded in our economic and community activity. Having piloted exciting initiatives such as 'STEAMfest' and 'Open Doors' which provide young people with direct experience of local businesses and with the launch of our 'Industry Champion' badge for businesses that promote careers in their sector, we are committed to working with SELEP to do more. From award winning wine grown in our beautiful landscape to the £54 million Devonshire Park transformation of Eastbourne Town Centre, this is a special and exciting place to live, learn and work. We look forward to working with partners across the LEP to deliver the skills strategy.'

Graham Peters, SELEP Vice Chairman, Chair Team East Sussex, **Catherine Tipton**, Jacobs, Chair Skills East Sussex



Essex Employment and Skills Board (ESB), Opportunity South Essex and Essex Business Board

'We welcome the approach outlined in the skills strategy to respond to the opportunities and challenges growth presents. The ESB has pioneered a range of initiatives to bring employers and educators closer, from industry taster days for college tutors to STEM programmes in schools and local careers information for adults and

young people. With committed employers across all of our businesses, from construction and manufacturing to health and IT; such as Stansted Airport, DP World, Coast Digital, Countryside Properties and Konica Minolta; it's superb to be able to work with the LEP to do more and a marvellous example of businesses, the education sector and LEP working together to deliver more for the people and businesses of Essex.'

Adam Jones, Teledyne e2v, Chair Essex Employment and Skills Board, **David Rayner**, Birkett Long LLP, Chair Essex Business Board



'As businesses across South Essex, we are regularly experiencing skills shortages at first hand. There needs to be an increased focus on essential, employability skills alongside technical. We would welcome further local control of skills funding to ensure the needs of our priority sectors are met. With significant growth happening across our geography, from Southend Airport and our sea ports to advanced manufacturing, construction and finance, there are a wide range of exciting opportunities. We are keen to continue working with government, SELEP and the Essex Employment and Skills Board to ensure that we are ready for these.'

Kate Willard, Stobart Group, Chair Opportunity South Essex



5 A SHARED SKILLS VISION AND PRIORITIES FOR SELEP

The skills strategy consultation and supporting documents outlined above have provided a clear direction of travel and need for the SELEP area, with consensus from partners. To this end, a vision, principles and priorities have been agreed to help inform work and action planning going forward. These are as follows, with further sections outlining the background to determining these areas of focus. It should be noted that the South East LEP also has an economic plan, which will deliver against related areas such as business support, investment and innovation. There will be continued alignment between the two strategies.

SELEP's vision for skills:

To help deliver a flourishing and inclusive economy across the biggest LEP in the country by equipping employers, adults and young people with the skills, conditions and aptitudes required for significant growth today and tomorrow.

SELEP's skills principles:

To achieve our vision, we will continue to use evidence, consultation and partnership to understand, respond and deliver across our geography of Kent, Medway, Essex, Southend, Thurrock and East Sussex. We will continue to develop innovative responses to the skills challenges facing the SELEP area. We would like to pilot new initiatives and expand our delivery in partnership with Government.

SELEP's priorities:

As educators, local authorities, employers, voluntary sector, employers and providers we agree our priorities are to -

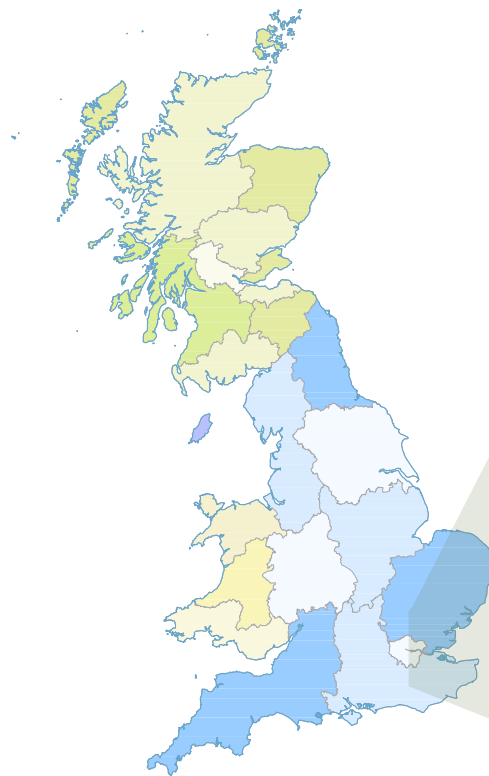
- Increase apprenticeships and industry relevant qualifications for all ages, particularly in priority sectors and at higher and degree level
- Simplify the landscape for employers, stakeholders and individuals
- Build an inclusive economy and reduce polarisation
- Raise awareness of jobs and growth across SELEP and the area's size, scale, national and international significance
- Foster and support the spirit of pride, entrepreneurship innovation and enthusiasm across SELEP to bring about change

Alignment to LEP Economic Plan

- Increase productivity driven by innovative businesses and people skilled for the future

6 THE SOUTH EAST LEP CONTEXT

“The largest LEP outside London and covering a very diverse area, it is impossible to categorise SELEP”



One of 38 LEPs nationally, geographically, the South East LEP includes Kent, Essex, East Sussex, Medway, Southend and Thurrock. By far the largest LEP area nationally, it has a population of 4.1 million and covers 35 local authority areas, including 29 districts. The map below illustrates that it includes one of the largest coastlines in the country and borders on Greater London, Cambridge, Hertfordshire, West Sussex and Suffolk.

SELEP covers a very diverse area, made up of rural, coastal, urban, wealthy and deprived populations. From areas such as Jaywick in Essex (the most deprived ward in the country) to Tunbridge Wells in Kent, with low-level unemployment and high qualification levels, it is impossible to categorise the SELEP area and different areas often require different approaches. This diversity makes the area applicable to a wide range of government policy.

The SELEP is home to some world-beating companies and is an area to be proud of including household names such as Ford, Saga, Stansted Airport, P&O Ferries, Konica Minolta, Eurotunnel, Royal Opera House, Turner Contemporary, Maidstone Studios, DP World and Amazon as well as a wide range of start-ups in sectors such as digital, creative and construction. The area is soon to be home also to Public Health England, a new Bradwell Power station, Entertainment resort and expanded ports and airports.

The SELEP area is nationally and internationally important –SELEP's sea, rail, airports and roads provide a gateway to the world and the rest of the UK. This area is vital and instrumental in keeping people, goods and services moving and enabling international trade.

Overall, SELEP has lower than average skills levels and though improving, these are failing to keep up with the national average at every level, except level one. Generally, SELEP falls within the bottom half of LEPs for skills levels.

As a diverse and large area, SELEP has areas well above and well below the national average.

Nearly 190,000 (7.5%) adults have no qualifications; the highest number of any LEP nationally after London and Leeds. 90,000 people in employment do not have a qualification and 237,000 have a level one only. FE participation has also fallen in recent years.

This area will see significant housing and infrastructure growth, with up to 300,000 new homes projected to 2030. This has clear consequences for the construction sector but also for sectors serving a growing population, such as health, tourism and care. This is coupled with nationally important infrastructure schemes such as the Lower Thames Crossing.

There will also be significant population growth, increasing to nearly 5 million by 2039. This will include a sizeable ageing population, impacting upon sectors such as health and care.

SELEP has large volumes of both high value and entry-level jobs, building on a strong IT, creative, construction, manufacturing, care, tourism, agriculture and health base and with nearly 400,000 vacancies advertised from August 2016-July 2017. New entrants often require support to get into these sectors.

SELEP has the second highest of all LEP areas of workless households; there are 178,000 workless households and 83,000 children living in workless households. Over 46,000 people were claiming out of work benefits as of March 2018 – among the highest nationally.

Apprenticeship start numbers have fluctuated in recent years (around 32,000 annually), with a population of nearly half a million 15-24 year olds. Quarter one figures for 2017/18 show a 21% fall

from the same period last year. SELEP applying a proportionate target to the government's ambition for 3 million apprenticeships (from 2015-2020) would equate to SELEP contributing 210,000 over this time period.

SELEP enjoys a close relationship with London, which has both positive and negative impact on the area in sometimes drawing skills out of the South East, offering higher salaries and affecting house prices (i.e. the average house price in Sevenoaks is £409,256), which has implications for lower paid jobs, in sectors such as care. However, some London companies are seeing opportunities for relocations to SELEP, in sectors like finance and creative.


Across SELEP, there is a growing need to support disadvantaged groups such as benefit claimants, ex-offenders and increasing numbers of homeless people. Some areas within SELEP are now nationally considered 'hotspots' for homelessness including Medway, Basildon, Dartford, Chelmsford and Colchester. Across SELEP, latest local authority statistics show that in 2016/17 there were nearly 2,150 homeless or threatened with homeless households. Hastings has been identified by the government as an 'opportunity area' whereby additional focus and resource is provided to improve social mobility.









7 SECTOR, GROWTH AND BUSINESS CONTEXT





The skills evidence base supporting this strategy illustrates the significant size of SELEP compared with other LEPs. 101,000 (6.4%) people are employed in construction compared with 62,000 (4.6%) in Leeds and 48,000 (3.8%) in Greater Manchester. It is a similar picture for sectors such as health and care. The SELEP area also has the fourth highest number of manufacturing sector employees (108,000 or 8.5%) of any LEP area nationally. 90.1% of SELEP's enterprises are micro – the highest proportion of any LEP outside London and the highest number at nearly 153,000 showing significant growth from 123,000 in 2010. Across all sectors therefore there is a growing need for more start-up / entrepreneurial, leadership and management skills as well as digital. Across all sectors, the speed and level of change mean that the nature of work is changing and therefore training needs to adapt accordingly. More people are working flexibly and so may require different sorts of support, such as short-term office hubs and space.


A table from the skills evidence base is included below, to illustrate the sector requirements and developments in the area which will impact upon skills and jobs needs in the future. Generally, there is a need to support people across all sectors with higher, technical and professional skills to increase productivity and competitiveness and enable people to progress from low and entry level jobs. Sectors that have been marked as priorities have been identified as having LEP wide significance due to large current and future jobs growth, high value jobs or strategic importance. **Supporting sector reports are also available, the following are headlines only.**

| Sector | SELEP Picture Now | Growth / Future |
|--|---|--|
|  <p>Construction (PRIORITY)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27,325 enterprises • 101,000 employee jobs • 213,973 employee jobs (construction / related sectors) • Ageing workforce • Disproportionately male workforce • Nearly 6,000 vacancies (including Electricians, plumbers, carpenters, Quantity Surveyors, Bricklayers, Production Managers) • Average national salaries include: Production Manager (£46K), Supervisor (£33k), Carpenter (£32k), Quantity Surveyor (£47k) • Competition from London offering higher salaries to people trained here | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 300,000 new homes across SELEP, so sector set to see considerable growth • Large infrastructure projects (i.e. Lower Thames Crossing) • Growing need for 'green' & low carbon skills and opportunity to establish as area of expertise • Public perception hindering growth. • Large requirements in 'off site' jobs • Carpenters, Joiners, Architects, Project Managers, Plumbers & heating & ventilation engineers and Chartered surveyors identified by UKCES as jobs of the future • Brexit impact as large migrant workforce • Trend towards pre-fabricated housing speeding up construction |

| Sector | SELEP Picture Now | Growth / Future |
|---|--|---|
|  <p>Health and Care (PRIORITY)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7,240 enterprises • 220,000 employee jobs • Disproportionately female workforce (particularly in care) • Over 45,000 vacancies (including Nurses, care workers, medical practitioners, social workers and care managers) • Average national salaries include: Nurse (£35k), Care workers (£20k), Residential home managers (£41k), Social Workers (£41k) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population growth to 4.6 million by 2030 • Increasing ageing population – both will impact on health and care needs • Public perception of sector (particularly care) hindering recruitment – good opportunity to progress to management • Care Workers, Nurses, dentists and nursing assistants identified by UKCES as jobs of the future • Potential impact of Brexit as large migrant workforce • Opportunities to use digital technologies in care |
|  <p>IT, Digital & creative (PRIORITY)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19,170 enterprises • 85,000 employee jobs • IT has a disproportionately male workforce • Over 30,000 vacancies (including Web developers, software developers, IT support, graphic designers) • Average salaries include: IT project manager (£57k), IT technician (£34k), programmer (£43k) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current 'digital revolution' means skills for this sector applies across all other sectors with digital skills needs growing • Many hard to fill vacancies in IT and creative likely to be increased by Brexit • Programmers & Software developers, IT specialist managers, IT analysts, IT project managers, web designers and developers identified by UKCES as jobs of the future • High numbers of micro businesses and freelancers which may require a different approach / support to enter sector • Sizeable Games, Entertainment and cultural part of sector likely to see growth • Aligning to government plans for Local Digital Partnerships • Ensuring local communities are aware of the new digital entitlement |
|  <p>Finance (PRIORITY)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3,020 enterprises • 43,000 employee jobs • Strong relationship to London – many SELEP residents commuting to finance jobs • Over 8,000 vacancies (including Insurance underwriters, finance analysts, sales related roles and financial managers) • Average salaries include: Finance and investment analysts (£45k), Pensions and insurance clerks insurance underwriters (£42k), insurance underwriters (£41k) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trend for some finance companies in London relocating to parts of SELEP due to available workforce / lower rents • Growing need for IT (software) skills due to online nature of industry – difficult to recruit to • Finance and investment analysts and advisers, chartered and certified accountants, sales accounts and business development managers identified by UKCES as jobs of the future • Potential impact of Brexit on international companies presence in UK, with London as Europe's main financial services hub |

| Sector | SELEP Picture Now | Growth / Future |
|--|--|---|
|  | <p>Manufacturing and engineering (PRIORITY)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 108,000 employee jobs • Nearly 12,000 vacancies including mechanical engineer, production manager, engineering manager, test engineer • Disproportionate male workforce • Ageing workforce • Internationally famous companies located here (i.e. Ford, Raytheon, e2v) • Average national salaries include: design and development engineers (£43k) engineering professionals (£33k), mechanical engineers (£38K) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public perception of sector hindering recruitment • Ageing workforce likely to impact on skills needed – high need for technical skills • Mechanical Engineers, Metal fitters, production and maintenance fitters identified by UKCES as jobs of the future • Impact of digital and robotics on future skills requirements • Decline in employment forecasts but current shortages and factors such as competition from other sectors / ageing workforce means there is continued need for skilled staff • 2018 is the year of engineering |
|  | <p>Transport & Logistics (PRIORITY)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6,270 enterprises • 93,000 employee jobs • Disproportionate male workforce • Of national and international significance – SELEP has nine ports, high speed rail links and regional airport capacity • Over 8,000 vacancies including HGV Driver, Forklift Truck driver, warehouse manager, transport manager and depot manager • Average national salaries include: managers in transport distribution (£37k), Warehouse Managers (£36k), LGV Drivers (£26k) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of digital and robotics on future skills requirements (i.e. automated warehousing) • Aircraft pilots, LGV drivers, train drivers identified by UKCES as jobs of the future • Airport expansion at Gatwick (outside LEP but providing large volume of jobs), Stansted, Southend airports |
|  | <p>Agriculture and land based (Kent & East Sussex PRIORITY)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6,000 enterprises • 1,000 vacancies including landscaper, veterinary nurse and farm estate worker • Average national salaries include farmer (£44k), veterinary nurses (£24,495) • A rich and diverse food production / manufacturing sector showcasing innovations and importance of food security – linked to tourism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important to food security and potential move to more UK production if imports become costly • Innovations in areas such as wine production could lead to further growth • Farmers UKCES jobs of the future • Growing need for farm based R&D and response to climate change |

| Sector | SELEP Picture Now | Growth / Future | |
|--|---|--|---|
|  | <p>Retail</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11,495 enterprises • 276,000 employee jobs (NB includes wholesale and repair also) • 11,000 vacancies including store manager, sales executive and retail sales person • Average national salaries include sales assistants (£21k), cashiers (£18k), retail managers (£28k) | |
|  | <p>Education (PRIORITY)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,935 enterprises • 156,000 employee jobs • 33,000 vacancies including secondary education teaching professionals, teaching assistants, primary and nursery education teaching professions • Reported difficulties recruiting and people leaving sector • Average national salaries include secondary education teachers (£31k), FE teaching professionals (£35k) & teaching assistants (£17k) | |
|  | <p>Professional, scientific & technical (cross cutting) (PRIORITY)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27,950 enterprises • 110,000 employee jobs • Reflecting the high level of technical and higher level jobs across SELEP • Reflects jobs in some of sectors as above such as IT, construction and also legal • Over 9,000 vacancies including Solicitors, legal professionals and legal secretaries • Average national salaries include Solicitors (£45k), Vets (£40k) and legal professionals (£45k) | |
|  | <p>Energy & Utilities (PRIORITY)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18,000 employee jobs • 1,600 vacancies including water and sewerage operatives, engineering technicians and business sales executives • Average national salaries include £29,000 for water and sewerage operatives and £30,000 for engineering technicians | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of online retail • Heavy reliance and inter-relation with transport and logistics sector • UKCES identifies IT skills associated with sector, such as business analysts as jobs of the future | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largely public sector so reliant on public funding • UKCES identifies Secondary School Teachers and educational support assistants as jobs of the future • General challenge in schools, colleges and universities to recruit to sector specialism especially where there are shortages in the sector itself. Essential to explore industry placements and support to address this. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical roles are increasing as reflected in the sectors described above and are reflected in UKCES jobs of the future as well as legal and medical roles • Factors such as climate change and exploring new approaches to areas such as crop growth could be an area for expertise and expansion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sector reports requirements in engineering and experiences similar shortages to the engineering sector • UKCES identifies needs for technical skills and notes that in future there will be increasing skills requirements for the expansion of intelligent energy systems that track usage as well as installation of energy technologies such as solar & wind. |

| Sector | SELEP Picture Now | Growth / Future |
|--|---|--|
|  <p data-bbox="331 263 539 459">Accommodation, Food & Hospitality & tourism (PRIORITY Kent, Medway, East Sussex)</p> | <ul data-bbox="607 263 1256 443" style="list-style-type: none"> • 112,000 employee jobs • 8,615 enterprises • Nearly 6,000 vacancies including restaurant manager, bar staff, hotel manager • Average salaries include £28,000 for a Restaurant Manager, £20,000 for a Chef & £30,000 for a Hotel Manager | <ul data-bbox="1350 263 2078 563" style="list-style-type: none"> • Current and future trends include the development of companies such as Airbnb changing the nature of the sector • Growth across the SELEP area has seen an increase in new restaurants, hotels and bars in many areas • Likely to be impacted by Brexit and potential reduced workforce. Sector has campaign to recruit more UK workers • Potential impact of climate change • Language skills important and require nurturing • A high employment turnover rate • Links to agriculture and land-based |



8

GROWTH ILLUSTRATED THROUGH DEVELOPMENTS

Future place based developments influencing these sectors

Clearly there is a lot about the future which will impact SELEP's sectors which cannot be predicted. However, there are a range of certainties in terms of forthcoming investments which will have skills and jobs implications across the area. According to the Construction and Industry Training Board, **there are over 890 projects already in the planning process for the next five years, which illustrates the scale of growth.** Some key examples are as follows with more schemes and resultant jobs and skills needs described in the accompanying Construction and Industry Board (CITB) demand led report:

| Development / investment | Further information |
|---|---|
| Public Health England relocation to Harlow (Essex) from 2019 | Jobs to include Scientists, engineers, researchers, Scientific support workers, finance, HR, IT analyst and marketing roles. These will include graduate and post graduate roles, PHD studentships, entry level roles and apprenticeships. Recruitment is expected to take place from academia, industry and the NHS. |
| Bradwell Power Station (Essex) new build (pre-planning stage only) | Jobs would be in engineering, construction, planning |
| Amazon Fulfilment Centre location (Tilbury, Thurrock) – recently opened and still recruiting (2017) | 1500 jobs including Control Systems Engineer, Senior Control System Engineer, maintenance technician and health and safety manager |
| Lower Thames Crossing (Essex, Southend, Thurrock and Kent) (timings to be confirmed) | Expected to generate up to 25,000 new jobs in construction and engineering |
| Cross Rail Essex routes – to 2020 | Generating a share of 50,000 jobs which were projected for London and the south east |

| Development / investment | Further information |
|---|--|
| Harlow Enterprise Zone (Essex) | 2,500 jobs, growing to 5,000 over 25 years |
| Southend Airport Growth | Up to 7,000 new jobs to 2020 |
| Stansted Airport (Essex) growth | Up to 10,000 new jobs to 2030 |
| Port of Tilbury (Thurrock) growth | Up to 5,500 jobs at London distribution Park and Tilbury sites |
| London Gateway (Thurrock) | One of Europe's biggest logistics parks and growing |
| Wind farms (Greater Gabbard, Gunfleet Sands, London Array, East Sussex coast) | Maintenance (Engineering) skills likely to continue to be needed |
| Better Queensway Development (Southend) | £320 million regeneration in Southend over next 15-20 years |
| Up to 300,000 new homes to 2030 across SELEP area | Large numbers of jobs in construction and engineering. Sites including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ebsfleet Garden City (Kent) • Otterpool Park Garden Town (Kent) houses and commercial land • New garden town on Essex-Hertfordshire border • Dunton Hills in Essex (to include new schools and shopping facilities) • Wealden Housing developments to 2028 |

| Development / investment | Further information |
|---|---|
| Discovery Park (Sandwich, Kent) | Up to 3,000 new jobs |
| Elwick Place Development Ashford (Kent) | Development requiring construction and engineering jobs. Leisure and hospitality jobs to be created |
| Sittingbourne Town Centre regeneration (Kent) | Development requiring construction and engineering jobs. Hotels, cinemas and shops to create retail and hospitality jobs |
| London Entertainment resort (previously Paramount) – plans only | Large scale entertainment resort would require construction and engineering skills and once up and running, large numbers of hospitality jobs |
| Growth of Gatwick Airport | Continuing jobs for people living in East Sussex and Kent |
| Swallows Business Park (Hailsham, East Sussex) | Over 500 new jobs |
| North Bexhill Access Road | Development opening up land for the development of 38,000 sqm of new employment space and the creation of over 2200 jobs |
| Lewes North Street Quarter | £180m development on brownfield site to include public spaces, off street parking, employment space and a healthcare hub |

| Development / investment | Further information |
|--|--|
| Devonshire Park (Eastbourne) | £44m project to deliver new welcome building, theatre and gardens |
| Queensway Gateway Road | New road to reduce congestions on the Ridge and open up land along a corridor between Hastings and Bexhill for business investment and housing development |
| Hastings Harbour Quarter project plan | £500m project to regenerate Hastings seafront creating jobs, homes and a working marina for up to 600 vessels. Construction and jobs based at the marina as well as 1,300 homes. |
| Newhaven Enterprise Zone | Made up of eight sites covering 79 hectares and focusing on advanced manufacturing, engineering and 'clean, green and marine' sectors linked to Rampion Offshore Wind Farm (Operations and Maintenance Base currently under construction). |
| Eastbourne Arndale Centre Retail / Leisure development | £80m re-development in Eastbourne creating 22 new retail units, approximately 300 extra car-parking spaces, 7 restaurants and a cinema. |

| Development / investment | Further information |
|---|--|
| Potential High Speed One from Ashford to Hastings | High speed rail link between London St Pancras, Hastings, Bexhill and Rye via Ashford International – proposed by government |
| South Essex Vision 2050 | Ambitions for growth including housing, business and leisure development to ensure the right conditions for growth |





9 NATIONAL CONTEXT AND IMPACT UPON SELEP AREA

“We must help people and businesses to thrive through skills. Our poor performance in basic and technical skills is key to the UK’s persistently lower levels of productivity compared with other advanced economies.” UK government

9 The Industrial Strategy and skills

The government’s Industrial Strategy White paper was published in November 2017 and sets out the government’s plans for growth. This includes five foundations of productivity:

- **Ideas** – the world’s most innovative economy
- **People** – good jobs and greater earning power for all (including the establishment of a world class technical education system / additional £406m in maths, digital and technical education / new National Retraining Scheme supporting people to re-skill)
- **Infrastructure** – a major upgrade to the UK’s infrastructure
- **Business environment** – the best place to start and grow a business (including a construction ‘Sector Deal’ which SELEP will engage with)
- **Places** – prosperous communities across the UK (including a Teacher Development Premium for high-quality professional development for teachers in areas that have fallen behind).

Many of the ambitions set out in the strategy align to those in the national careers strategy and acknowledge the vital role skills plays in employment growth stating that ‘we recognise that people and the skills they have are a key driver of productivity.’

The Industrial Strategy acknowledges again the importance of investment in technical education, which it notes ‘for too long has not had the prestige it has enjoyed in other countries. The system can be complex and confusing, not always meeting the needs of individuals or those of employers.’ This complexity is also reflected by responses to SELEP’s skills strategy consultation. As the Industrial Strategy outlines, this has led to a shortage of technical-level skills and STEM take up (which is also evident across SELEP). Greater proportions of young people are still choosing academic rather than vocational study.

SELEP and partners are committed to delivering against the industrial strategy, recognising the key role skills plays in driving productivity. The Industrial Strategy commitment to supporting all in society throughout their working lives is welcomed and aligns to the SELEP ambition for an inclusive economy. SELEP is keen to deliver against the digital ambition set out and sector deals.

9b The Apprenticeship levy and reforms are one of the most significant changes in recent years. SELEP and partners are absolutely committed to working with employers to increase apprenticeships (particularly degree and technical) and ensure that they are aligned with employer need.

The levy is essentially a tax on UK employers with annual pay bills over £3 million (therefore less than 2% will pay the levy). Therefore funding will be with the employer, rather than the provider. Most non-levy payers will make a 10% contribution to apprenticeships, with 90% provided by the government, though there are exceptions to this based on business size and apprentice age.

At the time of publication, there has been speculation that smaller non-levy paying employers may be deterred by this new requirement which has likely contributed to a short-term decrease in the numbers offered. Additionally, there is a risk that employers seeking to get value for money will focus on existing training as apprenticeships, potentially resulting in lower numbers of apprenticeships offered to new entrants. This will therefore be an area for continued review.

SELEP's population is 4.1 million, roughly 7% of England. Applying this proportion to the government target of 3 million apprenticeships (from 2015-2020) would equate to SELEP contributing 210,000 apprenticeships to this target. For the last few years, apprenticeship starts have been approximately 32,000 annually. ****AREA FOR ACTION****

The reform of apprenticeships means that apprenticeship frameworks are being replaced with standards, also known as 'Trailblazers' with employer input informing their design. In the short-term new standards applicable to growth sectors will not be universally available though in the longer-term these should be more relevant and employer driven. Degree apprenticeships have also been introduced, which is welcome in addressing the arbitrary divide between academic and vocational routes. Some sectors such as creative, digital and construction with short-term contracts and freelancing may require additional support to take on apprentices, such as a consortium approach.

9c Introduction of T-levels by 2020

As with apprenticeships, SELEP is committed to achieving greater levels of technical skills, supporting educators to deliver these and responding to sector need.

T-levels are new technical qualifications aimed at putting vocational qualifications on an equal footing with academic ones. They will enable 16 to 19 year olds to study in 15 sectors such as construction, hair and beauty replacing thousands currently on offer and with the ambition of making access to the job market easier. The first T-levels will commence

from September 2020 with the remaining routes in place by 2022. The government has described these reforms as 'the biggest overhaul of post-school education in 70 years and has pledged £500 million per year to deliver them by 2022. There will be a requirement for three months high quality work experience, which is positive though additional support may be required given the high number of SMEs across SELEP. Employers will therefore need to be assisted and incentivised to prepare for this change. ****AREA FOR ACTION****

The 15 sectors / routes covered are as follows and some of these cover a range of occupational areas (those with * will primarily be delivered through apprenticeships). These correlate with many of SELEP's areas of growth and sectors potentially experiencing shortages:

| |
|--|
| Agriculture, Environmental & Animal Care |
| Business and Administrative |
| Catering and Hospitality |
| Childcare and Education |
| Construction |
| Creative and Design |
| Digital |
| Engineering and Manufacturing |
| Hair and Beauty |
| Health and Science |
| Legal, finance and Accounting |
| Protective Services * |
| Sales, Marketing and Procurement * |
| Social Care * |
| Transport and Logistics * |

To this end, alongside and in parity with A-levels this simplification may assist in responding to growth and the confusion within the landscape often cited. There are 233,000 15-19 year olds in the SELEP area, set to increase to 243,000 by 2022. With approximately a third of young people nationally choosing vocational pathways, in the region of at least 81,000 young people may choose to undertake T-levels across SELEP. A significant obstacle to achieving this is a general shortage of qualified trainers aligned to growth sectors, exacerbated by and impacting upon skills shortages in industries.

9d £170m for Institutes of Technology (IoTs) and similar initiatives

The government announced £170m capital for Institutes of Technology early in 2017, to improve attainment of technical and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) based skills required by employers.

IoTs are to be based around boosting provision at Levels 4 and 5 in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths subjects, developing a strong pipeline of provision at Level 3 with clear pathways to the IoT's level 5/5 provision and up-skilling or re-skilling the existing workforce, to keep pace with rapid technological change. Again, the Skills Evidence Base illustrates the necessity of this across SELEP, with lower than average skills levels particularly at level 4 and above, coupled with high levels of need. Employers are expected to be central and to this end, the LEP's local Employment and Skills Boards will have a key role to play. SELEP and partners would be keen to see strong Higher / Further Education and employer partnerships, responding to the growth set



out in the Skills Evidence Base. SELEP would therefore be supportive of an IoT locally and will continue to support similar government initiatives and funds. ** AREA FOR ACTION**

9e SELEP's Local Economic Plan / Industrial Strategy

Alongside the skills strategy, SELEP has an economic plan to align with the industrial strategy. The plan has set out five ambitions, which includes skills:

- Develop a creative and digital DNA connecting and energising communities
- Generate a business infrastructure fit to drive UK PLC
- Help build resilient places embracing inclusive growth
- Increase productivity driven by innovative businesses and people skilled for the future
- Demonstrate an influential collective voice leading change

The economic plan explores areas such as coastal and rural economies, digital infrastructure, entrepreneurship and supporting creatives and freelancers. Much of SELEP's interaction with small to medium sized businesses is through the Growth Hubs (co-ordinating business support) and SELEP's skills partners will continue working with Growth Hubs to provide information about the skills landscape and on joining up areas of work.

9f The national Careers Strategy

The importance of careers emerged as a key focus from partners responding to the online consultation supporting the skills strategy and the fact that ideally this would commence at primary level. There are many programmes and initiatives cluttering the landscape and a range of partners expressed the need for simplification and local determination.

In December 2017, the Department for Education published a new national careers strategy setting out roles for employers and education providers. This was followed in January 2018 with Careers Statutory Guidance for schools. This includes a key and broader role for the national Careers Enterprise Company (CEC) work which is being delivered across SELEP and described more fully below. The focus on strengthening engagement with employers and ensuring access to apprenticeship and other opportunities is positive and aligns with the ambitions set out through this strategy. There is a clear role for LEPs and partners in delivering the strategy as is reflected in our ambitions. Through the local Careers Enterprise Adviser network and beyond, SELEP is committed to delivering against the national Careers Strategy.

Key elements of the careers strategy include:

- Secondary schools to offer every young person at least seven encounters with employers during their education, supported by the CEC network
- All schools to give providers of technical education (including apprenticeships) opportunity to talk to pupils about their offer and continued work with higher education
- A strategy to communicate key aspects of the new T-levels to parents, teachers, students and careers professionals as they become available
- £2million to test careers activities including those with primary schools,
- Improving the take up of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) qualifications
- A requirement for schools to meet the eight Gatsby Benchmarks which form a framework for good career guidance including encounters with employers and linking curriculum learning to careers
- A role for Ofsted to comment on careers guidance provided in inspections
- 'Careers Hubs' in 20 areas, linking together schools, colleges, universities and other local partners.
- Support higher education students from disadvantaged backgrounds to make best use of their university careers services and offering support such as mentoring and outreach.
- Contributions to careers information from LEPs, including Local Industrial Strategies and Skills Advisory Panels and up to date information on skills and jobs in local areas

9g The Careers Enterprise Company (CEC) – connecting schools and employers

The Careers Enterprise Company (CEC) is a national network set up by government to 'connect schools and colleges, employers and career programme providers to provide high-impact career opportunities for young people.' Local Enterprise Co-ordinators work with up to 20 schools in their area to match them with an Enterprise Adviser (senior business volunteer) to work in partnership with schools and colleges to develop a careers plan and connection. The Careers Strategy includes the commitment for Enterprise Adviser to be available to every school and college by 2020 and to launch a £5 million new investment fund to support disadvantaged pupils with support to prepare for work, including mentoring and guidance.

Across the SELEP area, this represents nearly 200 secondary schools to ultimately be worked with and represents a huge opportunity to articulate LEP and local skills board priorities. In 2017, Hastings was also announced as an 'Opportunity Area.' The government established Opportunity Areas to focus local and national resources on a common goal – of increasing social mobility. Hastings has a dedicated Enterprise Co-ordinator and Partnership Board focused on four priority areas.

The LEP has also played a role in linking partners such as the National Careers Service, Job Centre Plus and others up given all now have remits to work with schools. The training provider networks and local authorities across the LEP also do a lot of work with schools, including apprenticeship promotion and information. As part of the ambition to increase apprenticeships, independent and impartial services locally for employers are important, particularly given the high volume of SMEs across SELEP's area.

9h Brexit and impact on sectors, funding and workforce

A separate report to support this strategy will consider the potential impact of Brexit more fully and the evidence base considers the impact on some sectors, with for example, higher proportions of migrant labour. With much still to be negotiated at the time of writing, it is difficult to make any predictions with certainty. The government has confirmed there will be 'UK shared Prosperity' fund to replace EU funding.

SELEP and partners have influenced European Social Funding held by the DWP and matched by the DWP, ESFA and Big Lottery. This is delivering against areas such as apprenticeships, in work training for growth sectors and supporting unemployed and disadvantaged cohorts towards employment. Partners would welcome greater control, influence, and flexibility over funding so any national pot will need to respond to local need and give local partners a leading role. For cohorts including homeless, carers, care leavers, offenders, those with mental health barriers and special educational needs and disabilities, EU funding support has been important. Additionally, the LEP and partners are able to provide a clear steer as to sector focus. Therefore, some ring fencing would arguably be a positive thing.

Reports from industry and sector bodies have outlined some of the likely challenges arising from a reduced migrant workforce. Sectors that have cited concerns include construction, health and care. With skills shortages already within these sectors and potentially set to increase, investing in areas such as skills support and apprenticeships are therefore likely to be even more important.

9i Digital revolution changing the way we work

A separate report to support this strategy will consider the potential impact of the digital revolution more fully. This now cuts across all sectors, from robotics being used in warehousing to the application of digital care. In some sectors (i.e. manufacturing and engineering) robotics have seen employers reduce their workforce. Methods of working have changed, with remote and flexible working being applied by many employers, reducing travel times and negating the need to meet in person.

These advances represent huge potential for skills development. Many schools, further and higher educational establishments now use virtual reality, drones and robotics. Virtual reality and simulators mean that people can be trained for an industry without having to actually be there. A potential area for SELEP and partners to explore would be reaching young people, adults, those in rural areas, home educated and cohorts such as prisoners though such flexible and interactive learning and promoting sectors in new and exciting ways such as virtual reality. The digital creative and gaming sector across SELEP is highly successful and growing so will have an important part to play in maximising these opportunities.

It is predicted that this will continue to transform workplaces and with some forecasts suggesting that more than 10 million jobs could be at risk of being replaced by automation over the next ten years. This is already happening in areas such as self-service check-outs and robotics in health and care. Many of these (but not all) will be lower skilled jobs and coupled with Learning and Work Institute predictions of more than six million too many low skilled people and two million too many with intermediate skills, it

again highlights the need to improve the skills levels across the LEP. It is therefore vital to help people in work to upskill as well as new entrants. The Industrial Strategy included the ambition to create local digital skills partnerships and SELEP is already exploring this.

9j UK skills levels in an international context and on productivity

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s international table published in 2015, two in ten 15-year olds in the UK lack basic maths, science and reading skills compared to one in 10 in Vietnam. The UK is ranked 20th of 76 countries and falls behind Japan, Poland, Finland and Canada. The OECD notes that if education failings are not tackled 'economic output is lost and is a powerful predictor of the wealth that countries will produce in the long run.

A BEIS report notes that 'a nation's prosperity depends largely on its ability to raise the level of its productivity. The education level of its workforce, and how effectively the skills are used in the production processes, are considered important factors in this process.' Comparisons with other countries illustrate relatively poor productivity in the UK compared with countries such as Italy, Canada, France and Germany. The same report finds evidence of a positive link between high skills and productivity. This is evident in SELEP's lower than average GVA, earnings and skills levels and further illustrates the benefits of upskilling. It should be noted however, that employment levels are generally good currently.

It is clear that the UK's performance in productivity and skills is not keeping pace internationally and the skills evidence base illustrates that SELEP is failing to keep up with national skills levels and those of other

LEPs. This is due to a combination of factors, including availability of employment, access to training in rural areas and deprivation in coastal areas and there are disparities, with some parts of SELEP well above and others well below the national average. This is therefore an important area to address, if the SELEP area is to reach its full potential and given its size, impact upon national performance.

9k Further Education Area Reviews

In September 2015, the government commenced reviews of further education across England (33 in total), which concluded in 2017. The focus was on FE and sixth-form colleges, with participation by other institutions such as school sixth forms and training providers being voluntary. Not all post 16 provision was therefore included. Reviews were led by steering groups, chaired by the FE commissioner and including LEP and local authority representation as well as college Principals and Chairs of Governors. They explored areas such as mergers, financial resilience and responding to labour market needs.

The full reports are now available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/post-16-education-and-training-area-reviews> and key recommendations include:

- o Continued collaborative working to provide routes to higher technical and professional learning
- o Developing progression routes beyond level 3 to increase skills levels of local residents
- o Increasing delivery of apprenticeships in key sectors, particularly at higher levels
- o Supporting better careers education, information, advice and guidance through collaborative working with colleges, the LEP and local authorities

- o Colleges developing their estates to ensure facilities are suitable to support the delivery of provision in priority skills areas
- o The development of greater specialisation in key areas where colleges have expertise in order to provide level 4+ provision in priority areas
- o Effective transition arrangements between schools and colleges
- o Continued support to ensure direct links with industry, FE and HE and to inform provision

9l Work and Health programme and similar initiatives

The Work and Health programme is a Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) government welfare-to-work programme, launched in January 2018. This replaced the previous 'Work Programme' and 'Work Choice'. This provides specialised employment support for people with disabilities and long-term unemployed people. In the SELEP area this is delivered by Shaw Trust and local partners. Shaw Trust are working with SELEP and federated areas to ensure join up with local programmes and activity. Geographically, the programme is based on Job Centre Plus operational boundaries and the SELEP falls within the 'Home counties' area, which also includes parts of East Anglia. New programme areas for DWP include 'Access to Work Mental Health Support Service' which it will be important to link in with. SELEP and partners are keen to work with the DWP on initiatives to support disadvantaged people and to ensure that any gaps can be addressed.

10 ACTION PLAN – A COMMITMENT TO DELIVER

There is a strong shared commitment to deliver against the findings and conclusions in this strategy. With much excellent work happening at local level, partners have agreed that it is appropriate to focus on areas which will have meaningful impact across the SELEP area. In order for these to be successful, all partners also need to articulate the vision, priorities and actions to their networks which will help to ensure a consistent message.

A separate action plan has been developed to support this strategy, also aligning with plans in federated areas and with the industrial strategy and government policy. This will be regularly updated to show progress and to evolve in line with government policy changes, external factors and funding opportunities. This will be overseen by the LEP Skills Advisory Group and employer panel.

Headline ambitions are articulated in section three of this strategy and illustrate SELEP's desire for real, meaningful action and progress.

Alongside the ambitions set out in section three, some of the most critical actions to be delivered through SELEP and partner working:

| Headline actions include: | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1) | Ensuring that employers understand and are engaged in the skills and employability landscape |
| 2) | Promoting careers where there are current and future vacancies/gaps in key sectors of our economy to adults and young people |
| 3) | Making sure that the curriculum (content and levels) meets employer needs to support growth |
| 4) | Making sure that the right range of provision is available locally (Apprenticeships and industry qualifications to short courses) |
| 5) | Ensuring that our colleges and Higher Education Institutions have the right tutors and facilities in place to deliver this range of provision |
| 6) | Influencing national policy and directing spend to help us meet these objectives |



11 CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Fundamentally the evidence and feedback throughout this strategy and supporting documents illustrates that the key requirement across all activity is for greater alignment between education and employers. With growth forecast on an unprecedented scale accompanied by factors such as the digital revolution and population increases, employers will require support and clarity to respond. This will mean addressing the spectrum of skills needs from entry level through to higher. For the SELEP economy to become more productive and for skills levels to improve, many in SELEP's communities will require additional, in-depth support and facilities. Positively, there is already large scale commitment to respond to challenges from employers, local authorities, education providers and the voluntary sector. As the largest LEP in the country, this represents a public / private partnership on a significant scale. This is coupled with a strong current focus on skills through government policy and initiatives which the LEP and partners are keen to engage in. The time is therefore ripe to deliver against this strategy.

Moreover, there is a clear desire across SELEP to go further and to deliver more through establishing areas of expertise and innovation in areas such as free-lancing and virtual reality and to create the very best conditions for local employers and individuals.

Going forward the action plan supporting this strategy will become a working document, to be overseen by the LEP's Skills Panel and Advisory group. Regular reviews will be provided to show progress. These documents and the full evidence base will be made available on the SELEP website and added to on an ongoing basis to ensure relevance to need and government policy.

The LEP looks forward to delivering against this strategy and would like to thank all partners involved in current and future work.



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