

**From:** Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director for  
Education and Young People's Services

**To:** Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Education and Health  
Reform

**Subject:** Revised 14 – 24 Learning, Employment and Skills  
Strategy 2017 – 2020

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Future Pathway of  
Paper:** Cabinet Member Decision

**Summary:** This report explains the refresh and refocus of the 14 – 24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy from 2017 to 2020 and details of the NEETs and Not Knowns performance for 2016/17.

**Recommendation:** The Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform is asked to approve the revised strategy towards achieving the new priorities and new key performance indicators of the 14 – 24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy from 2017 to 2020.

## 1. Introduction

1.1 The ambition of the 14 – 24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy is for all young people in Kent to become better qualified and more employable, to be able to participate and achieve success in education and work based training at least until the age of 18 and to ensure that more 18 – 24 year olds can access higher levels of learning or sustained employment that is appropriate to their needs and to the relevant local and national economy. The Strategy was launched on the 25 February 2013 and was updated in February 2015 to further develop a range of new collaborations and active partnerships. However, because of changes to headline performance measures for both Key stage 4 and post 16 education and training, a number of the key performance indicators have been adjusted and revised. In this period we have also developed the NEET Strategy to achieve a more coordinated approach to reducing the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training. This work on NEETS is now incorporated more clearly into this revised 14-24 Strategy, for consideration by Members at this Cabinet Committee meeting.

1.2 The role of the KCC Skills and Employability Service has been to support the delivery of the 14 – 24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy. The

outcomes this year are very positive and this improvement has been achieved by working collaboratively with schools, colleges and work-based training providers to develop effective partnerships and increase the involvement of employers.

- 1.3 Through the use of robust data and detailed analysis of the performance of schools in the Districts, the Strategy has supported learning providers to match their provision to the needs of young people and employers. The planning of 14-19 provision is now considered on a regular basis within schools, colleges and work based learning providers at District Participation meetings. For example the Ready to Work offer in each district provides a realistic option for those learners looking for alternatives to schools or college. This employability offer has been a significant success over the past year and has made a significant contribution to NEET reduction.
- 1.4 The Skills and Employability Service working with schools, colleges and training providers ensures that young people are fully informed of the post 16 opportunities available to them, including information about opportunities for apprenticeships through a range of activities within the Kent Choices brand. The use of online information has increased with the development of dedicated websites e.g. Apprenticeship Kent and increasing the use of social media channels to keep in regular contact with all post16 learners.
- 1.5 The Local Authority has a statutory duty to track the destinations of all young people at ages 16 and 17 during the two academic years of Year 12 and Year 13. This data is used to target resources and provide additional coordinated support to the most vulnerable young people, through the Early Help and Preventative Service, Virtual School Kent and the Care Leavers Service. This year there has been a significant reduction in NEETs and Not Knowns for vulnerable learners because of this targeted collaborative work.

## **2. Partnerships**

### The Kent and Medway Skills Commission

- 2.1 The Learning Employment and Skills Partnership Board agreed the key findings of the previous refresh of the Strategy in July 2015 and agreed to continue to monitor the impact on the partnership priorities set out in the document. Following this it was agreed to increase employer representation on the Board and develop a new communication strategy to engage employers in the training and skills agenda. The Partnership Board was then reshaped to become the Kent and Medway Skills Commission, which has an increased role in determining and delivering training skills priorities and projects and enhancing employer engagement. The Commission is the Kent and Medway Skills group for the South East Local Enterprise Partnership.
- 2.2 The membership of the Kent and Medway Skills Commission includes senior officers from KCC, representatives from the 8 priority employment sector Guilds, which cover Sciences, Creative and Media, Land Based Industries, Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing, Construction and the Built

Environment, Hospitality and Tourism, Health and Social Care and Financial Services, the Federation of Small Businesses, Invicta Chamber of Commerce, Canterbury Christ Church University, Kent Further Education Colleges, Kent Association of Training Organisations, Kent Association of Headteachers, and Medway Council and District Council representatives.

- 2.3 The Deputy Cabinet Member and Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services attend these meetings. Meetings are held quarterly and they receive reports on current strategic activity including activities which support the objectives and key priorities of the 14 to 24 Strategy

#### Joint Partnership Meetings

- 2.4 Day to day issues relating to joint working between all partners are managed through an operational Joint Partnership group, meetings are held monthly, comprising of representatives from Kent Association of Training Providers, Kent Further Education Colleges, the Skills Funding Agency, Education Funding Agency, Jobcentre Plus, Education Business Partnership Kent, CXK and KCC. This group deals with a range of issues and focuses on developing appropriate post 16 provision, which has included developing a successful campaign to increase the take up of 16 – 18 apprenticeships, identifying gaps in provision, the development of the Kent Choices Local offer and the implementation of a wide range of SFA funded projects.

#### District Participation Meetings

- 2.5 District Participation meetings are held to deliver the priorities in the both the 14 to 24 and NEETs Strategies and to ensure provision is available to meet the needs of the specific profile of learners in the district and the local economy. The membership of these meetings varies but includes officers from the Skills and Employability Service, Early Help and Preventative Services, VSK, Care Leavers, CXK, local schools, training providers and colleges. These meetings also include focused activities on young people who are likely to become NEET. Activities are coordinated within the districts which meet monthly and cover the following:

- Working directly with NEET young people to enable them to access and sustain appropriate educational and training provision
- Providing additional coaching and support to young people as required
- Sharing information on young people between organisations
- Reviewing and evaluating the impact of the NEETs strategy.

- 2.6 Increasingly the range and focus of activities within each district is tailored to meet the individual profile of the young people who are NEET. Working directly with young people and coordinating the work of all KCC services and post16 providers has made a significant impact in the reduction in NEET and Not Known numbers. This work also supports a number of the activities set out in the 14 to 24 Strategy particularly for those learners with multiple barriers to learning.

### 3. Performance in the Reduction of NEETs and Not Knowns

#### 3.1. September Guarantee

All Year 11 and Year 12 aged young people are required to have an offer of further learning, education or employment with training for the beginning of the next academic year in September. This year for the first time we exceeded the South East region average and significantly increased the number of young people with a September Guarantee (offer of a learning destination) against a national decline in numbers overall. This is evidence of impact from developing effective partnerships through the 14 to 24 Strategy by ensuring the 14 to 19 local offer meets the needs of young people.

	2014	2015	2016
<b>England</b>	93.2%	94.6%	93.6%*
<b>South East</b>	90.8%	92.9%	92.7*
<b>Kent</b>	88.6%	88.3%	92.9*

DFE September Guarantee tables – September 2016. Final report published December each year. \* Provisional data

Through this revised 14 to 24 Strategy we intend to improve on this performance for 2017/18 by ensuring young people have the appropriate support to transfer from school to college to maintain their intended destination. In 2016, for the first time, the percentage for the September Guarantee came close to the national average.

#### 3.2. Participation

Young people must continue in education or training until at least their actual 18th birthday, and this is reported as young people aged 16 and 17 (Years 12 and 13). While there has been improvement, participation rates in Kent continue to be below the national average.

	2014	2015	2016
<b>England</b>	90.2%	91.2%	92.2%
<b>South East</b>	88.4%	89.4%	91.1%
<b>Kent</b>	86%	87.5%	90%

DFE Participation tables – December 2016. Tables published for three census points a year: June, December, March.

#### 3.3. NEETS

Before September 2016 a young person was NEET if they were aged 16 to 18 or SEND aged 16-24 and not in education, employment or training. In January 2016 the NEET figure for Kent was 5%, which was higher than the national and regional averages.

	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>England</b>	4.7%	4.2%
<b>South East</b>	4.3%	3.9%
<b>Kent</b>	4.7%	5%

NCCIS LA Tables – January 2016. Tables published monthly

From September 2016 a young person is NEET if they are academic age Year 12 and Year 13 (which means 16 and 17 year olds) and not in education, employment or training. We have made significant progress in reducing NEET numbers and this is an improving picture in comparison with the South East and national headlines. The slight increase in NEETs is in line with the expected trend

	<b>Sept 16</b>	<b>Oct 16</b>	<b>Nov 16</b>	<b>Dec 16</b>	<b>Jan 17</b>
<b>England</b>	2%	2.3%	2.6%	2.7%	2.8%
<b>South East</b>	1.7%	1.9%	2.2%	2.4%	2.4%
<b>Kent</b>	2.4%	2.1%	2.5%	2.9%	2.9%

NCCIS LA Tables October – January 2017

### 3.4 Not Knowns

Before September 2016 Not Knowns were young people academic age Years 12, 13 and 14 whose learning destinations were not known to the local authority. In 2016 the figure for Not Knowns was 8.3%, which was higher than the national average.

	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>England</b>	7.2%	6.4%
<b>South East</b>	9.5%	6.9%
<b>Kent</b>	11.22%	8.3%

NCCIS LA Tables – January 2015 & 2016. Tables published monthly

From September 2016 only academic age Year 12 and 13 (young people aged 16 and 17) are included in the Not Known data. For the first time Kent Not Knowns are below the average for SE Local Authorities, but still above the national average.

	<b>Sept 16</b>	<b>Oct 16</b>	<b>Nov 16</b>	<b>Dec 16</b>	<b>Jan 17</b>
<b>England</b>	29.2%	12%	5.2%	4.1%	2.9%
<b>South East</b>	29.8%	10%	5.8%	4.6%	3.6%
<b>Kent</b>	53.9%	12%	6.5%	4.7%	3.2%

NCCIS LA Tables – September 16 – November 2016

3.5 The NEETs Strategy and Action Plan is designed to ensure that there is a coordinated approach across all KCC services and key partners to support young people into positive destinations post 16 and beyond. The new systems and approaches introduced as part of the strategy will continue to significantly reduce the number of NEETs and Not Knowns. The tracking and data capture of all 16 to 19 year olds (19 to 24 for SEND learners) provides detailed information on a young person's progress which ensures that appropriate support and learning programmes

can be put in place for some of our most vulnerable young people.

#### **4. Consultation with partners on the revised 14 to 24 Learning, Skills and Employment Strategy.**

During the summer of 2016, the Skills and Employability Service consulted with partners on which new activities facilitated by the Service and supported by the 14 to 24 Strategy they felt would be beneficial to securing better outcomes for young people. The key actions have been aligned to the four priorities of the strategy, which are outlined in the table below:

Raise Attainment and Skills Levels	Provide regular local curriculum provision updates with successful exemplars of appropriate collaborative 14 – 19 (24) pathways in order to ensure progression and links with local employment.
	Provide regular updates on curriculum information from the DfE, qualification news, resources and funding in order to best plan a financially sustainable 14 to 19 programme with better outcomes.
	Ensure young people have access to on-line learning either to consolidate post 16 provision based learning or offer alternatives to the school provision.
	Provide a district profile including destination data, post 16 provision data, participation data, a local economic profile and a vulnerable learner profile in order to support 14 to 19 curriculum planning.
	Ensure young people have access to on line revision lessons for core subjects.
Improve and extend Technical Education, Training and Apprenticeships	Provide advice and support in ways of delivering level 1 and pre apprenticeship within the study programme which support continued progression and participation.
	Provide advice and support in delivering work experience as part of study programmes, in order to enhance learning and skill development.
Increase Participation and Employment	Provide Labour Market Intelligence to inform curriculum offer and learner destinations by identifying sector skills shortages.
	Ensure there are direct links and engagement with employers through the Guilds to enhance aspiration and develop awareness of the sectors roles.
	Ensure young people have access to a more developed KentChoices4U site for Years 11, 12 and 13 and other CEIAG

	software packages for key stage 4 and key stage 5.
	Ensure young people have access to a strengthened Careers Coordinated Network supplying support and information for careers guidance professionals in order to improve participation and progression.
Target Support for Vulnerable Young People	Provide information on English and Maths working towards level 2 GCSE/Functional Skills and for KS5 teachers to be guided on how improve outcomes for learners thus providing them with a passport to further learning and employment.
	Provide support for vulnerable learners' programmes including access to assisted Apprenticeships and Supported Internships for vulnerable learners.
	Ensure young people have access to bespoke Careers Guidance for SEND learners.
	Ensure there is specialist support for parents and carers.
	Ensure providers have the opportunity to take part in an Employability Health Check and in order to develop employability programmes to enhance skills and work readiness of their learners.

## 5. Current Performance against Key Performance Indicators

5.1 Performance against the Strategy is determined by Key Performance Indicators that are measured four times a year. A number of these indicators have been revised in line with changes to national headline performance measures at Key Stage 4 and post 16. A number of indicators have also been added as new activities have been identified for inclusion of the revised Strategy for 2017/2020. The KPIs have been categorized into three groups so resources can be targeted to improve performance across all the indicators.

The following section explains the changes to the previous KPIs and sets out the new revised 21 KPIs for 2017 to 2020.


5.2 Strategic KPIs over achieving

KPI 8 has been amended to reflect the new post 16 progression priority.

KPI 13 has been emended to stress the contribution of Maths and English progression to employability skills for which data is available.

KPIs 17 and 18 have been amended to represent the Public Sector

apprenticeship target of 2.3%.

Strategic KPI's over achieving		
Performance direction of travel	2015	2016
KPI 2: There will be a significant impact on unemployment among 18-24 year olds so that current levels reduce by 4000 to below 2008 levels		
KPI 4: Each district in Kent will have effective partnership working for 14-19 year olds, involving KCC, schools, colleges work based learning providers employers and other agencies		
KPI 6: Advanced level progression Kent will be above the national average on all measures		
KPI 10 Progression in English and Maths by age 19 will be above the national average, thus contributing to the development of young people's employability skills.		
KPI 12: We will have established a successful pre-apprenticeship and level 1 programme for 17 year olds who are unable to achieve a level 2 apprenticeship		
KPI 14: The KCC apprenticeship scheme will continue with at least 700 apprenticeships taken on each year, at least meeting the public sector target of 2.3%	N/A	
KPI 15 Kent's schools will meet the 2.3% public sector target of employed apprentices by December 2017	N/A	
KPI 16: To achieve at least 30% of all adult social care and autism team(18+) referrals into paid employment by 2018 to 90% into sustained employment for at least 13 weeks		
KPI 18: Engage with every special school across Kent to identify, and place 100 learners into supported work experience training for 14-18 year olds by 2018		
KPI 21: Assisted Apprenticeship KSE element for phase 3 to increase new starters by 2017		

### 5.3 Strategic KPIs achieving

KPI 3 has been amended to a percentage target to reflect fluctuations in cohort size.













KPI 5 has been amended to include age 19, since data for age 17 is not available, and also to reflect grading changes to qualifications: a good GCSE pass from 2017's exam cycle onwards will be a grade 4.

KPI 10 has been combined with KPI 12 to add contextual information to the set target.

KPI 16 has been amended to reflect the Service's advocacy of increased technical learning but will still be linked to local skills shortages.

### Strategic KPI's achieving










<b>Performance direction of travel</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>KPI 3: Decrease the numbers of SEND NEET (16-18) to 5%</b>		
<b>KPI 5: Attainment in English and mathematics will improve so that at least 50% of 16 year olds who do not attain a good pass at GCSE will achieve the qualifications by age 19</b>		
<b>KPI 7: Participation of all young people aged 16-19 will be tracked by the LA working in partnership with schools and colleges will be monitored, as required by statutory duty. There will be full participation in education and work based training for all 16-18 year olds following year on year reductions in the NEET figures to no more than 1%.</b>		
<b>KPI 9: Youth Employment and Learning Zones in Thanet, Swale, Shepway, Gravesham and Dover will reduce unemployment for 16-24 to below the national average</b>		
<b>KPI 13: The uptake of level 2 and 3 technical qualifications will increase by 10% and will be measured against local skill gaps.</b>	N/A	
<b>KPI 17: To achieve 85% of all autism diagnosis referrals into paid employment by 2018</b>		
<b>KPI 20: Increase the number of schools between 20 to 40 working with Careers Enterprise Advisors</b>	N/A	

## 5.4 Strategic KPIs requiring improvement

KPI 1 has been amended to include the new school GCSE performance accountability measures of Progress 8 and Attainment 8 and the new GCSE grading system which comes into effect this year's exam cycle.

KPI 9 has been amended to move the focus from provision to pathways and positive destinations.

KPI 14 has been amended to include FSM students.

Strategic KPI's requiring improvement		
Performance direction of travel	2015	2016
<b>KPI 1:</b> Key Stage 4 progress 8 and attainment 8 will be amongst the best for our statistical neighbours and at least 70% of pupils will attain good passes grades in maths and English (9-4 from 2017)	N/A	
<b>KPI 8:</b> There will be clear learning pathways for SEND young people from 14-24 to enable improved participation rates		
<b>KPI 11:</b> The outcomes for FSM 18year olds from disadvantaged backgrounds will be above the national average and the achievement gap between this group and other students will have reduced by 10% from the 2012 baseline		
<b>KPI 19:</b> Troubled families outcomes for Skills and Employability, is to achieve 100 apprenticeships by end of 2017		

Two KPIs from the previous document have been removed; these are:

- KPI 7 has been deleted because of this data is no longer available
- KPI 6 has been deleted due to data sourcing issues.

5.5 There has been significant progress made against the priorities set out in the Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy. Section 2 of the revised Strategy provides details of the key successes to date, explains the activities that have taken place and give details of the impact of effective partnership working.

## 6. Conclusion

6.1 The 14 – 24 Learning Employment and Skills Strategy continues to set ambitious targets for the participation and achievement of young people aged 14 – 24 in Kent. Moving forward, developing more effective partnerships and new collaborations will be key to the success of this revised Strategy. This is against the background of significant changes to the legislative framework and

reduced resources for all post 16 providers. The Skills and Employability Service will continue to develop and deliver a whole range of activities to meet the priorities and KPIs within the new document, ensuring improved outcomes for learners and employers.

## **7. Recommendation**

The Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform is asked to approve the revised strategy towards achieving the new priorities and new key performance indicators of the 14 – 24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy from 2017 to 2020.

### **Background Documents**

14 – 24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy

Review of the Kent 14-24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy  
Consultation outcomes July 2016

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