

The means: to change places for the better.

Crawley Skills and Employment Needs Study

Final Report

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5 EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PLAN 2016

It is important that any future activities to address the employment and skills needs of the area build on the current Crawley Employment and Skills Plan, which sets out four Priority Themes, each supported by a Flagship Project for action. We have undertaken a light-touch appraisal of the current plan. Each section includes suggestions for future work where appropriate, and wider objectives that relate mainly to that theme are then outlined. An action plan of potential projects to achieve these objectives, and how they relate, is then outlined in section 6.

5.1 Work stream 1: Development and infrastructure Flagship Project: Town Centre Skills Academy

The borough continues to benefit from a number of major construction projects, which provide a wide range of employment opportunities for local residents. A key driver is the Crawley Growth Programme, which will see more than £60m invested to support growth in Crawley. Progress is being made, including:

- transforming the business and living environment in the town centre and Manor Royal;
- delivering much-needed new Grade A office space;
- unlocking private funds for a new Crawley railway station;
- enabling 1,000 new town centre homes to be built;
- growing new retail investment, and
- improving sustainable transport infrastructure in the town centre, at Manor Royal and at three railway stations.

The work stream aims to strengthen collaboration between the council, developers, education providers and the construction industry in order to boost the numbers of site jobs, apprenticeships and opportunities going to local residents. The work stream takes forward the principles of the Crawley Developer and Partner Charter, i.e.:

- Aim to source labour from within the local community
- Contribute to raising aspirations, educational attainment and skills levels
- Improve the competitiveness and sustainability of smaller and locally based firms
- Inspire residents, visitors and potential investors in Crawley with the intentions, plans, progress and outcomes of development and investment
- Promote good and sustainable development and construction practices
- Encourage your sub-contractors and suppliers to commit to the principles of the charter

To date, 16 companies have signed up to the Charter. The Town Centre Skills Academy aims to strengthen opportunities within the construction sector by linking the Charter to the approved CITB system and connect future training requirements with local training providers, particularly Crawley College.

Progress is being made and it is hoped that the application to the CITB will be approved in the near future, which will enable the council to utilise support from the CITB to improve monitoring through accessing their reporting systems.

There is still work to be done to raise the profile and perception of local career opportunities within the construction sector and, in particular, to encourage female representation within the sector at all levels (for example through participation in the Inspire Me campaign).

Construction is also one of the first T-levels in development and could be invaluable in addressing the barriers the sector has faced in repositioning construction as a career of choice for young people. The work placement element sets T-Levels apart from other classroom-based offers. Work placements will need proper investment and support to succeed and the Town Centre Skills Academy and Charter programme is well placed to work with employers to ensure that this new pathway works for employers and young people.

The Construction Sector Deal aims to substantially boost the sector's productivity, through greater investment in innovation and skills, creating new and well-paid jobs and maximising its export potential and reduce the environmental impact, improve the efficiency and reducing whole-life costs of new projects and buildings to help build the houses, schools, hospitals and major transport projects. Increasing skills demands driven by these trends, major infrastructure projects, growing interest in off-site construction, the digitalisation of construction and the green agenda are driving a new generation of future skills. An important factor is the perception of the sector (as providing low-paid, low-skilled jobs) as well as a perceived lack of learning and development offered by employers. The construction sector is therefore facing growing skills shortages and is in particular struggling to attract and retain young workers and women.

Finally, the current Employment and Skills Plan focusses heavily on the opportunities arising from developments to improve access by local residents to jobs, apprenticeships and work experience in the construction sector. However in addition, development and infrastructure are important for impact that they have on placemaking, and the perception of Crawley. This theme can therefore be broadened to include physical elements of the attraction and retention of talent in Crawley.

This research suggests the following objectives relevant to this workstream

PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 1) **Further raise the profile and perception of local career opportunities within the construction sector; in particular to STEM students and women**
- 2) **Increase female representation within the construction sector at all levels**
- 3) **Ensure T-Level work experience works well for construction employers and young people and is adopted** - Construction is one of the first T levels in development and could be invaluable in addressing the barriers the sector has faced in repositioning construction as a career of choice for young people. The work placement element sets T Levels apart from other classroom-based offers. Work placements will need proper investment and support to succeed and the Town Centre Skills Academy and Charter programme is well placed to work with employers to ensure that this new pathway works for employers and young people.
- 4) **Ensure the employment and skills agenda continues to be an integral component of regeneration activities and a key consideration in planning and infrastructure development** – The provision of the necessary labour and skills pools are integrally linked to the ability to attract and house target groups in Crawley, including the provision of adequate affordable housing for those who continue to be employed in Crawley’s foundation sectors

5.2 Work Stream 2: Education and Schools

Flagship Project: Crawley Young Workers Scheme

No progress has been made to expand the number of 6 month placements under this scheme within the local authority. The main reason has been difficulty in recruiting, specifically within the 16-24 age group. However, the number of council apprenticeships have increased and it is keen to create higher apprenticeships (Level 4) for local graduates within the authority.

Despite the lack of progress regarding the specifics of the ‘flagship project’, significant activity is being undertaken at a local level to deliver against the government’s Careers Strategy and statutory guidance to deliver high-quality careers provision and boost the employability of local young people. The Enterprise Adviser Network is now live and working with all secondary schools and colleges to design and develop enhanced careers advice and help prepare young people for future jobs and careers. The IAG Group, facilitated by the local authority, provides an important platform for schools and skills and training providers

to work collaboratively towards the goal of helping schools to deliver effective careers education strategies that are tailored to local employers' needs.

A number of other programmes and projects are being delivered to create stronger links and bridge the gap between education and the workplace. Activities such as the Crawley STEMfest actively engage and work with local schools to raise local aspirations and skills particularly in increasing interest among school children regarding STEM subjects. Now in its seventh year, Crawley STEMfest is a series of interactive shows, workshops and demonstrations that take place in schools and colleges, in STEM Clubs and at a major public event in the town centre during May and June.

It is important that the Borough Council 'leads from the front' in offering apprenticeships and paid placements to young people wishing to enter the world of work. Further research is required to review apprenticeship opportunities in Crawley and design an action plan to boost apprenticeship numbers, and to maximise the potential offered by top slicing 10% of levy funds to support apprenticeships in supply chains and SMEs.

Additionally, although Crawley seems to be in the early stages of a step-change in the design and implementation of careers guidance and support for young people, it is still a confusing picture with a number of programmes to connect schools and the world of work delivered by the public, voluntary and private sector, which creates the potential for confusion and duplication. A mapping exercise needs to be undertaken to understand current interventions in schools and to support greater collaboration and partnership working.

This research suggests the following objectives relevant to this workstream:

PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 5) To simplify the landscape** of employment and skills initiatives for employers and residents
- 6) To improve the awareness amongst young people of the career opportunities** in different sectors in Crawley, and raise levels of ambition and basic employment skills
- 7) To retain more degree level students** and improve graduate returner rate

5.3 Work Stream 3: Business and Employers

Flagship Project: Gatwick Skills Laboratory

The Gatwick Skills Laboratory was an attempt to bring FE and HE training providers together with Gatwick Airport Ltd and local business to design and roll-out new higher-level skills training to help businesses overcome the skills gaps and shortages of skilled labour which

restrict growth. The idea of creating physical / shared training 'space' at the airport was not supported by GAL as a commercial proposition. The area review and restructuring of the post-16 education and training sector (2017) also contributed to the lack of progress in developing the business case for the Gatwick Skills Laboratory.

However, Gatwick Airport Limited is keen to explore new ways of working with local providers, including Crawley College, to look at ways of bringing together local employers, business partners and a range of service providers to offer bespoke services built to attract, retain and develop the best people for the job. Discussions need to take place between Crawley College and GAL to investigate new ways of designing and delivering bespoke services to attract, retain and develop local people for future job opportunities in the locality.

More broadly then, this workstream is about improving the link between employers and local training providers to ensure that their skill requirements are met and that local people are able to exploit career opportunities in Crawley. Given the density of jobs, it is also important that businesses are supported with attracting and retaining talent from outside of Crawley

This research suggests the following objectives relevant to this workstream:

PLAN OBJECTIVES:

- 8) To increase the ease with which businesses can compete with nearby economies** to attract and retain talent from outside, as well as from within Crawley
- 9) To improve the local provision and take up of training of most relevance to employers:**
 - Vocational training (e.g. apprenticeships, T-Levels, short and professional courses)
 - High-level, sector-specific skills
 - STEM and digital skillsand to ensure the skills provided on these courses prepare students for work
- 10) To support businesses generally with attracting and retaining talent with the right skills**
- 11) To ensure work experience is well-promoted, high quality and works well for businesses and students** – In particular, to ensure that the work-experience element of new T-Levels works for employers and students

5.4 Work stream 4: Employability and Social Inclusion

Flagship Project: Employ Crawley

A number of Crawley neighbourhoods and communities have concentrations of residents with lower skills / income and higher unemployment. This work stream sets out a series of actions to address the barriers preventing Crawley residents from fully participating and benefitting from the economic prosperity of the Borough. The work stream relies on collaboration between public and voluntary sector agencies (including the council's Community Development Team) to design and deliver outreach initiatives and support services so residents can access tailored skills support to enable them secure better jobs.

Launched in October 2017, **Employ Crawley** helps local people access support, advice and guidance from specialist organisations in the town whilst providing one-to-one tailored support from a dedicated staff. Employ Crawley is open to all local residents and aims to make navigating the world of work simpler. Together with a support officer, customers can create a plan which is unique to them, helping them move into work or progress into the next stages of their career. Support includes:

- One to one support
- Advice about finding work and how to secure jobs, direct from employers
- Links to key businesses and specialist employment services in Crawley and the Gatwick Diamond
- Continuing support when in employment, offering advice on the next steps
- Unique workshops and courses delivered by specialists.

To date, Employ Crawley has supported around 200 people and is seen by stakeholders to provide an important service. Funding is currently in place until March 2019 and discussions are on-going with the Department of Work and Pensions and neighbouring authorities in West Sussex regarding a succession planning.

Our analysis and discussions with stakeholders suggests that Employ Crawley is seen as an important programme to support local people access job opportunities, addressing the core social mobility issues and complementing other partners' activities, particularly Job Centre + . Intensive support and resources are needed to support the small number of Crawley's residents who are not competing and accessing as successfully as they might be local, and wider, employment opportunities. Low skills is a major issue; other challenges include lack of aspiration, credible work, and non-work experience. Having said that, to increase the effectiveness of resource allocation, a number of target demographics of particular opportunity have been identified in this report.

A deliverable succession plan needs to be designed to ensure future delivery of the project. The roles and responsibilities of local partners need to be clearly defined, particularly the role of the Community Development Team, which acts as the main outreach vehicle to engage with hard-to-reach residents. The project may act as a conduit to deliver some of the recommendations relating to this section.

This research suggests the following objectives relevant to this workstream:

PLAN OBJECTIVES:

- 12) Improve the employability and skills of disadvantaged adults and young people**
- 13) Help local people access higher paid jobs and progress through career pathways**
- 14) Increase the pool of local skilled labour available to local businesses**

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6 PROJECTS AT A GLANCE

	Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
1a. Sector Collaboration on Recruitment – Option 1	1, 6, 7, 8, 10	L	M	Short
1a. Sector Collaboration on Recruitment – Option 2	1, 6, 7, 8, 10	M	H	Med
1b. Advice on differentiating a businesses' offer	8, 10	L	L	Short
1c. App / website targeting Crawley residents leaving for university	7, 10, 14	L	M	Med
2a. Foundation Sector Support	1, 2, 6, 8, 10, 13	M	M	Med
3a. Skills partnership pilot	7, 9, 13, 14	H	L	Med
4a. Business-Education Forum	3, 5, 6, 9, 11	M	L	Short
4b. Tour your local...	1, 6, 10	L	L	Short
4c. VIP Head Teacher tour	6, 11	L	L	Short
4d. Resourcing careers leads in schools	6, 7, 10, 11, 13	L	M	Med
4e. Summer school option	6, 11, 12, 14	M	L	Short
4e. Extended format	6, 11, 12, 14	H	M	Med
5a. Taking the lead to support SMEs to take up apprenticeships	7, 9, 10, 14	M	L	Med
5b. Developing more HE-level vocational training locally	7, 8, 9, 13, 14	H	H	Long
6a. Mapping and review	5, 12, 13	L	L	Short
6b. Employ Crawley succession plan	12, 13, 14	M	L	Short
6c. Manor Royal Training Programme – Use of empty spaces	9, 10, 12, 13	L	L	Short
7a. Responsibility for advancing this action plan	All, in particular 4	L	L	Short
7b. Influencing the LEP's Employment and Skills Board	All	L	L	Short - Medium

7 PROJECTS

This section outlines 6 key projects, each of which contributes towards multiple objectives. Each project contains multiple elements. The link between each element and the objectives in section 5 is highlighted. Some of these could be chosen to be delivered in isolation. They are worked up to varying degrees of detail depending on the level of discussion that has been had and information received throughout the study. The intention is to provide a series of actionable options for partners to follow up on. Some indicators as to their importance and deliverability are included in order to help with prioritisation.

PROJECT 1 - Support to help businesses attract and retain talent

This project includes a number of elements aimed at helping businesses attract and retain talent

Elements

a. Sector collaboration on recruitment

A number of businesses expressed a willingness to explore collaborating on recruitment with other businesses who have similar recruitment needs. This would rely on businesses being willing to set aside short-term competition for the sake of long-term gain. If this is to be delivered, a pilot should be trialled with one particular sector. This might be of particular interest to sectors that are both struggling with recruitment and who have less predictable patterns of employment needs, such as the health and social care sector.

Two options of varying degrees of complexity are outlined here.

	Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
Option 1	1, 6, 7, 8, 10	L	M	Short
Option 2	1, 6, 7, 8, 10	M	H	Medium

Option 1 – Advertisement and Marketing

Businesses could work together on developing joint messages about their sector in Crawley, aimed at raising awareness of the opportunities and the dynamism of Crawley as a place to work. They could use these to develop a series of advertisement campaigns to target specific groups. Advert targeting may be at specific locations e.g. major conurbations with good transport links to Crawley such as Brighton, or at specific target demographics.

This would require three main types of collaboration to be arranged:

- 1) Developing the campaign

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- 2) A central location for people responding to adverts to be directed where they would be able to find out information about the multiple businesses who have collaborated on the campaign
 - 3) Funding for the campaign – this could either be delivered by an interested party that represents all of those collaborating, such as the BID, or through pooling of companies’ marketing resources

Option 2 – Shared recruitment agency

Businesses could go one step further, as in the case of Case Study 8, and jointly fund a recruitment agency to work on behalf of all businesses in the area. In the case of Case Study 8, this is a collaboration between three BIDs in London. In Crawley, this model could be evolved to be a partnership between the BID and the Council, possibly evolving an existing structure such as Employ Crawley or Manor Royal’s Job Board collaboration with LoveLocalJobs. If this was the approach taken, it would be important to ensure that each partner had a genuine stake in the governance of the model.

The aim of such a structure would be to:

- Provide a central focal point for people looking for jobs in Crawley – for example this structure could fulfil the requirement for a central advertisement location noted in option 1
- Provide a portal through which businesses could post jobs, with the agency looking to match suitable local candidates with local jobs
- Facilitate the efficient transfer of employees between employers in Crawley in the case of redundancies
- Help ensure all advertised roles receive similar profile and facilitate collaboration between employers where some roles receive too many applicants and others receive few
- Facilitate other appropriate projects from this action plan

b. Advice on differentiating a businesses’ offer

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
8, 10	L	L	Short

Provision of an advice pack, and the option of a session with an adviser, for businesses who are struggling with recruitment and would like to understand how, beyond raising the salary, they can make their offer more attractive.

c. **App / website to target Crawley residents leaving for University**

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
7, 10, 14	L	M	Med

Innovating how employers are able to keep in touch with employee residents who have left Crawley to go to university. The creation of an app would allow employers to be part of a constant careers fair in students' pockets, and would allow students to keep in touch with what opportunities are available to them in their hometown. The app / website would:

- Be promoted to all Crawley students before leaving for university
- Promote summer work experience options relevant to their degree
- Promote case-studies of individuals and their career journey in Crawley
- Promote positive and exciting news stories about businesses, targeted to students' degree subjects and interests
- Promote full-time roles and graduate schemes to final year students

To ensure that this functioned well, this would need to be owned by a partner who was well-enough resourced to keep it maintained and promoted.

It would also require buy-in from careers advisers in the education system and key stakeholders such as head teachers, as this would be the most effective way to ensure wide adoption. One option would be to roll this out through the group discussed in project 2a.

Case Studies

CASE STUDY 8: London south bank BIDs - Employ SE1

What is it?

Employ SE1 is effectively a job brokerage acting on behalf of the 2000 or so members of the three BIDs that stretch London's south bank. It is jointly funded by three BIDs and employs 2 members of staff who circulate to the different BID offices day by day, ensuring that the emphasis is fairly shared around and that good communication between employ SE1 personnel and the BIDs' own staff teams is maintained.

The impetus for the project initially came from businesses' confusion and complaint about how many external agencies were approaching them for vacancies. Employ SE1 now offers to post every vacancy that businesses submit onto a single web portal accessible only by those employment agencies who are dealing with local job candidates from the Lambeth and Southwark area.

Continued....

...Employ SE1 will also run bulk vacancy recruitment for larger companies arranging venues and is now in its eighth year of operation. Hundreds of candidates have been placed into jobs, but currently with the number of jobs notified growing steadily, concerns are around the tightening of the candidate supply.



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PROJECT 2 – IMPROVE CAREER PATHWAYS IN SPECIFIC SECTORS

a. Foundation sector support

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
1, 2, 6, 8, 10, 13	M	M	Med

Explore similar models to the Town Centre Skills Academy to encourage employers to design and implement improved training and career progression pathways to improve the profile and perception of entry-level opportunities within key foundation sectors e.g. health and social care; hospitality; retail.

In the construction sector in particular, continue to run projects under the existing Town Centre Skills Academy to enable and promote training and work opportunities to new groups of residents; in particular to women, who are under-represented in the sector; and to STEM students, who will be needed to fill skills gaps as the construction industry develops technologically. Inspire Me is a good example of a campaign that Crawley can get involved with to help attract more females to explore career opportunities within the construction sector. There is significant investment planned in infrastructure in Crawley through the Crawley Growth Programme. We have therefore included a case-study from Birmingham showing how they exploited the opportunity of construction jobs arising from HS2 (see Case Study 9).

Case studies

CASE STUDY 9: HS2 and the STEM Progression Pathway

The impact of HS2 in the West Midlands region has been valued at £4.4 billion. This includes employment forecasts for Birmingham estimating an additional 29,000 jobs created by 2026, with more at the start of HS2. Many of these will be high-skilled STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) jobs associated with the development of HS2 and other related industries.

The National College for High Speed Rail, which has been established to train the future HS2 workforce, is located across two campuses in Birmingham and Doncaster. Given the scale of this estimated impact, Birmingham City Council and the West Midlands Combined Authority have developed the Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy. At the heart of this is an ambition for inclusive growth. This aims to deliver an efficient, high-skilled economy in ways that reduce social and economic inequalities.

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To actively manage this aim, a strategy was developed to enable the lowest-skilled and least-advantaged residents in these areas to progress towards high-skill, high-value jobs. A STEM Progression Pathway project developed the following model:

- Routes into the National College for High Speed Rail at all different starting points, from a Level 2 feeder course to a diploma course at Level 5 leading to a postgraduate certificate.
- A particular focus on entry into STEM for local people with the lowest levels of qualifications and skills, and the highest levels of disadvantage. Using a Citizens' Curriculum approach, this is an adult skills offer which gives people a broad set of skills in employability more generally; with the inclusion of STEM skills.
- Outreach and engagement activities targeted at specific groups under-represented in the industry, as well as those facing higher levels of exclusion from the workplace. This also includes people recently made redundant from the local manufacturing sector and public sector workers who are at risk of redundancy.
- An interface with employers, including talks from local employers, work experience placements, ongoing careers guidance, action planning, and taster sessions to enable learners to gain an understanding of learning opportunities.

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PROJECT 3 – SECTOR SPECIFIC COLLABORATION ON TRAINING COURSES

The research highlighted that there was justification for developing courses that deliver new skills locally, particularly high-level job specific skills, and that these should be developed for key sectors.

Elements

a. Partnership Pilot

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
7, 9, 13, 14	H	L	Med

Training courses require a critical mass to become viable. Sectors in Crawley should consider collaborating on developing training courses that meet their shared needs, to enable them to be provided locally. Local Digital Skills Partnerships (LDSPs) are currently being trialled in Devon and Manchester as sector-based approaches to partnership, working with education providers to develop local training provision tailored to the shared needs of a sector. DCMS has invited all Local Enterprise Partnerships and Mayoral Combined Authorities to submit Expressions of Interest to form further LDSP pilots. Three will be selected by April 2019. Crawley should consider lobbying the LEP to submit an application for this.

This is linked to project 4b

PROJECT 4 – IMPROVE THE EDUCATION-BUSINESS INTERFACE

Elements

a. Business-Education Forum

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
3, 5, 6, 9, 11	M	L	Short

Case study 10 talks about a business-education forum in Reigate. Findings from this report suggest that a similar model in Crawley would be helpful to increase coordination between businesses and training providers. It is important that its remit includes:

- Involving businesses in the design of T-Level work experience (and a general high-quality approach to other work experience) and get businesses signed up
- Monitor the effectiveness of work experience
- Provide a forum for regular communication, for example feeding back where there are deficiencies in training provision or other concerns
- Sharing best-practice case-studies for work-experience etc.
- Involving businesses in careers advice
- Organising initiatives such as the VIP tour of businesses for head-teachers (see project 3c)

This could be a new group or, if deemed suitable, the remit of the existing IAG could be expanded and its Terms of Reference updated. As well as training providers and the council, the BID should attend, as should CEC Enterprise Advisers and a selection of other large and small businesses (from inside and outside of Manor Royal) and potentially other stakeholders such as representatives of the Town Centre Skills Academy programme.

b. Tour your local.....

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
1, 6, 10	L	L	Short

Businesses should be encouraged to develop short tour experiences for classes of children with the aim of:

- Allowing them to see and experience facilities and working environments that they would not normally experience
- Teaching students about how businesses develop and operate
- Raising their awareness

- Allowing them to question people working in the industry

Businesses should develop short packs explaining clearly what they can offer and, if possible, students should be encouraged to engage with research beforehand to maximise the benefit they gain from the trip.

This should be advertised to schools through, amongst other mediums, the group discussed in project 3a.

See Case Study 12 for a local example of good practice.

c. VIP Head Teacher tour

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
6, 11	L	L	Short

A curated tour of businesses across Crawley, to excite and inspire Head Teachers and other stakeholders involved in the delivery of Careers Advice to Crawley's students. The target outcome would be to encourage participants to become more involved with groups such as the IAG and to be more proactive in delivering improvements in careers advice in schools.

Manor Royal BID would seem an obvious partner to lead on the logistical organisation of this, building on their investors tour and their close link with a large number of businesses. However, it's important that this action also allows involvement from businesses outside of Manor Royal. Therefore whoever is chosen as the lead needs to be willing to work with businesses from across the borough and this could be done in collaboration with the group discussed in project 3a.

d. Resourcing careers leads in schools

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
6, 7, 10, 11, 13	L	M	Med

Providing resource and support to ensure that more schools have dedicated careers 'leads' and are able to proactively engage with businesses for work experience and education opportunities.

This is particularly important given schools' roles in improving awareness of opportunities, raising levels of ambition, and tackling the negative perception of apprenticeships.

e. **Options for consideration: Summer school or other format**

	Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
Summer school option	6, 11, 12, 14	M	L	Short
Extended format	6, 11, 12, 14	H	M	Med

Businesses at the Manor Royal Matters conference³¹ discussed improving the link between young people and businesses by engaging them in programmes of work experience and fun projects over summer holidays. We include an example in Case Study 11 of an ‘Events Academy’, which involves businesses in a similar concept. However have also developed this concept further. Offering work experience and internships will be a useful means of encouraging indigenous young people to look positively at a future career within Crawley, but the potential challenges are such that it is worth exploring what the shape of more ambitious plans to retain and grow talent may look like.

The first impediment to be encountered is to overcome the likely inertia for employers to engage in collective as opposed to individual remedies to recruitment blockages. The default position is for companies to compete rather than collaborate in the jobs market. It may take a crisis in recruitment, or the realisation that as the job market tightens wage inflation will become a common problem, before attitudes will decisively change. In Penang, where *The means* were asked to explore the scope for a Business Improvement District, skill shortages had led several major international players in the semi-conductor and bio-medical sectors to establish a jointly funded training centre. This took the form of a large physical facility located at the free-port. How might such an approach manifest itself in Crawley?

1. Run a **pilot** as proof of concept. Begin with modest numbers and higher aspirations. At the outset make sure that the specification and complexity of the scheme don’t make it too difficult to initiate. However, consider scalability of all aspects and all stages.
2. Sign up a **group of employers**, say five to ten in number. If possible these should include different sizes of company.
3. Establish an **advisory body** which will include training and employment specialists but also representatives of the local community such as an elected politician. Their task would be to support and promote the scheme and foster an atmosphere of continuous improvement.
4. Appoint a **management agent** who would be responsible for implementing the programme. Their task would include recruiting the employers, administering the programme, commissioning the off-the-job training and providing pastoral support for the candidates. It is envisage that a dedicated amount of staff management time would be required, alongside certain aspects that could be out-sourced e.g. training and pastoral care. Manor Royal BID should be considered for this role

³¹ Employment and Skills Workshop, 15th November 2018

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5. Recruit a **cohort** of 20, 16-18 year olds (or could be older) who could be referred from agencies or given the opportunity to apply through adverts on social media etc
 6. Create a strong **brand**. This is a club that employers and young people will want to be part of. Weave in non-financial incentives e.g. gym membership, cultural events
 7. Develop a strong and relatively diverse **curriculum** including:-
 - a. structured work experience blocks with say 5 different employers
 - b. pastoral support coupled with forward looking career counselling
 - c. off the job learning which will encompass
 - i. life skills – incorporating a residential element,
 - ii. STEM, and
 - iii. Specific vocational input
 - d. Other than modules requiring workshop or laboratory facilities deliver the off-the-job learning in non-college settings, albeit often with college input
 8. **Guarantee** all graduates job interviews
 9. Celebrate completion through a graduate award **ceremony**
 10. Seek **funding** through a delegated portion of the Apprentice Levy. And preferably reward participants financially over the course of the programme

Case Studies

CASE STUDY 10 – REIGATE EMPLOYER AND EDUCATION GROUP

What is it? The town of Reigate holds quarterly forums between businesses and the education sector. About 12 businesses are invited, including the largest employers as well as a selection of smaller ones. The group discusses issues relating to skills and recruitment

What are the benefits?

- Better coordination of the interface between education providers and businesses
- Regular communication between businesses and training providers allows feedback on where there are deficiencies in training
- It enables businesses and training providers to share the challenges they are facing and work collaboratively on solving them

In Crawley, a group such as this could take specific things under its remit, such as the design and coordination of T-Level work experience, as is discussed in this section.

CASE STUDY 11: Better Bankside – Events Academy

What is it?

The results from the Better Bankside 2016 attitudinal sampling of its membership caused some surprise by lifting Air Quality up to one of the major concerns for employers in the area. This level of concern has persisted but in the 2018 version the biggest increase was around the recruitment and retention of personnel. Better Bankside had anticipated that this was a growing concern which could only be accentuated by Brexit, and had developed two quite different remedies. One was of a scale that required partnership working (see Case Study: London south bank BIDs - Employ SE1)

The other was much more manageable and relatively easy to get off the ground, and has just completed its seventh successful year. Christened the **Events Academy** the project, which runs for 6 weeks in the summer holidays, challenges a group of 8-10, 16-20 year olds to organise and run an event for employers in the Bankside area through tapping into the skills and resources available through the local business community.

The young people's efforts are facilitated by a co-ordinator appointed for the period and supported by a mentor drawn from the previous year's intake. The response from the business community has been varied and fulsome:-

- Marketing companies supporting the design and delivery involve in promoting the event
- PR companies running sessions on dealing with the press and public speaking
- F&B outlets providing expertise on catering for events
- Venues themselves training the participants on risk assessment and event logistics

And so forth. The young people are encouraged to invite friends and family to the event itself, alongside the business attendees. The room on the night is at a heightened level of emotion as the young people shock themselves as much as others in the way they play their unaccustomed parts. Personal growth during those six weeks has to be seen to be believed.

What are the benefits?

- Increased confidence and skills for those young people taking part
- Increased awareness of local work opportunities
- Increased preparedness for work
- Opportunities for employers to connect with and prepare potential candidates
- Development opportunities for employees as they interact with training young people

CASE STUDY 12: 'TOUR YOUR LOCAL....' – WORKPLACE VISITS FOR STUDENTS

4D, a local Data Centre operator, are one example of good practice in business engagement with the education system.

What is it? Schools are invited to send groups of students on a tour around a live data centre. This includes being shown the data floor and the infrastructure so that they can see in reality how things like the internet function. The tour lasts about 1 hour and is followed by up to an hour for questions with the Managing Director.

Before the tour, students are given a set of questions to research in order to put their visit in context. 4D have developed a small pack to give to schools to explain what they can offer.

What are the benefits?

- It raises awareness amongst students of job opportunities and provides a way for the company to meet prospective candidates
- It excites students and provides a learning experience that cannot be gained in the classroom
- It allows students to see how a company operates and to learn about the skills they require

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PROJECT 5 – FOCUS ON APPRENTICESHIPS

Vocational training was identified as an important priority to fill the skills gaps experienced by employers. At the same time some issues affecting the take up of apprenticeships were identified. This is the focus of this project.

Elements

a. Taking the lead on supporting SMEs to take up apprenticeships

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
7, 9, 10, 14	M	L	Med

The current skills and employment plan identifies a role for the council to take a lead in taking on more apprenticeships and workplace students. This project suggests the council take this one step further and take the lead in demonstrating the ability of larger organisations to redirect a slice of their apprenticeship levy funding to support apprenticeships in smaller companies in their supply chain who do not have access to the funding. The aim would be to increase the take up of apprenticeships by SMEs. This approach, and associated advice, may be promoted wider through initiatives such as Employ Crawley and Manor Royal's Jobs Board, whilst careers advice in schools should be made pivotal to changing the perception of apprenticeships amongst students and parents.

See Case Study 13 for an example from Norfolk County Council.

b. Developing more Higher Education-level vocational training locally

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
7, 8, 9, 13, 14	H	H	Long

More vocational Higher Education, such as degree-level apprenticeships, should be delivered locally in Crawley. These should be developed to deliver skillsets required by Crawley employers and as such should be designed through a model of sectoral collaboration such as in project 2a.

Degree-apprenticeships are still a relatively young phenomenon in the UK and therefore this would need to be accompanied by an awareness campaign amongst businesses, potential candidates and those involved in careers advice.

Case Studies

CASE STUDY 13 – APPRENTICESHIP LEVY TRANSFER – NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

What is it?

From July 2018, levy-paying employers have been able to transfer up to 10% of their apprenticeship funds to any other employers. On 1st October 2018 the government announced that this was increasing to 25%. This move is intended to lead to more quality apprenticeships being created and will help employers to work together in partnership, supporting them to take on apprentices who may not have done so otherwise.

Working with TrAC, Norfolk County Council have developed a pilot designed to help 30 young people to obtain and achieve an apprenticeship. This has been done by Norfolk County Council transferring its levy to TrAC to support these apprentices.

All of these apprentices are referred by the Council and are employed by TrAC, who place them with other host employers throughout their programme. Both the apprentice and the host employer receive additional bespoke support throughout the programme.

What are the benefits?

- Stimulation of apprenticeships amongst businesses who otherwise would not make this opportunity available
- Simplifying the process form SMEs with less HR resource
- Ensured quality of the apprenticeship programme

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PROJECT 6 – DELIVER A SERIES OF INITIATIVES AIMED AT OPPORTUNITY GROUPS

This project is aimed at helping to improve social mobility and pathways into work for hard-to-reach groups.

Elements

a. Mapping and review

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
5, 12, 13	L	L	Short

Existing initiatives aimed at supporting 'hard-to-reach' groups with employment and training should be comprehensively mapped and their impact reviewed. This review should also cover how they are coordinated. The aim should be to simplify how employers and residents can find out about and use initiatives and to ensure resources are being targeted effectively. This review will need to be led by the council but carried out in partnership.

b. Employ Crawley succession plan

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
12, 13, 14	M	L	Short

Develop a sustainable business and succession plan for Employ Crawley and explore whether to evolve its remit and structure to deliver, in particular:

- Collaboration under Project 1b
- Referrals for Project 5c
- Initiatives highlighted in section 4.1 to support women returning to work
- Initiatives highlighted in section 4.2 to support older workers
- Initiatives highlighted in section 4.3 to support young people

Part of this review should include further research into levels of underemployment, as opposed to unemployment, in Crawley and the potential for delivering responses to help these people gain full time employment.

c. Manor Royal Training Programme – Use of empty spaces

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
9, 10, 12, 13	L	L	Short

Empty spaces on Manor Royal Training Programme could be offered to those looking for work, as a training option for those needing to gain skills to help them in employment and as a way for them to develop links in the world of work. Alternatively companies could sponsor spaces.

This would not be a suitable option for everybody and it is important that the usefulness of the group to other attendees is not affected. Therefore a referral system should be used so that suitable candidates can be put forward. Employ Crawley may be a suitable body to play this role.

Manor Royal BID would be the obvious lead on this project, in conjunction with Employ Crawley.

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PROJECT 7 – STRUCTURE FOR DELIVERY

This report demonstrates that there is a complex array of challenges, a wide-ranging set of existing initiatives and additional actions that are proposed in this report. It is therefore recommended that responsibility for prioritising, pursuing and monitoring actions arising from this study is allocated to a partnership between businesses, training providers and the public sector that is able to oversee the broader picture.

Elements

a. Responsibility for advancing this action plan

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
All, in particular 4	L	L	Short

The Local Economic Action Group (LEAG) is currently the only group covering the whole of Crawley that is a partnership between public, private and education sectors, and whose remit includes employment and skills.

The LEAG also has key responsibilities in the development and oversight of the Borough's economic priorities and the Crawley Growth Programme.

It would therefore seem appropriate for the LEAG to have ultimate oversight of pushing this action plan forwards and ensuring it feeds into other strategic work streams such as delivery of training space, work space, affordable housing etc.

However, the LEAG is a high-level strategic body so it may be appropriate to create a working group that reports to it. Terms of Reference would need to be developed to include its membership, responsibilities and accountabilities. It should consist of public, private and education sector representation. The group should decide which individual actions to allocate to specific organisations or partnerships to deliver.

b. Influencing the LEP's Employment and Skills Board

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
All	L	L	Short - Medium

The group in Project 6a should ensure that it is fully engaged with and influencing the LEP's new Employment and Skills Board. This will be important in ensuring that funding and initiative are made available for important sectors in Crawley.