

South Gloucestershire Economy & Skills Strategic Partnership

Annual Report 2016/2017

This report was compiled by Antony Merritt, Snr. Economy Development Manager and Julie Cathcart Strategic Advisor for Skills both of South Gloucestershire Council. The Economy and Skills Strategic Partnership closed in May 2017 therefore this report – written in November /December 2017 has not been endorsed formally by ESSP partners.



Contents

1	The purpose and aims of the partnership.....	3
2	Partnership achievements	4
3	Progress against key strategic objectives.....	5
4	Future challenges and areas of work	15
5	Resources used or consumed by the partnership	15
	Appendix 1 – Member organisations 2016/2017.....	16
	Appendix 2 – Terms of reference for the Economy and Skills Partnership.....	17

1 The purpose and aims of the partnership

1.1 The Economy and Skills Partnership (ESSP) is made up of partners from a range of disciplines to ensure a coordinated approach to supporting sustainable economic development in South Gloucestershire, Partners ensure actions are consistent with the South Gloucestershire Sustainable Community Strategy (the local long-term vision for the area developed by the South Gloucestershire Partnership), the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership Strategic Economic Plan and the wider national economic agenda.

1.2 The ESSP has developed an Economy and Skills Strategy 2016-2020 to encourage, support and purpose actions that will help achieve the economy and skills vision and objectives set out below.

1.3 The vision for Our Economy is

for all in South Gloucestershire to access first class education; reduce the attainment gap and prosper through a balanced economy, a well-trained workforce and sustainable jobs

1.4 To achieve this the South Gloucestershire Economy and Skills Partnership will focus on delivering on seven key strategic objectives:

Support local business growth – *to improve productivity and competitiveness*

Support major employers to stay in the area – *to safeguard and increase jobs in key sectors and strengthen the local supply chain*

Help new businesses to form – *to increase the number, survival and growth rates of starter and small/medium enterprises*

Promote South Gloucestershire to Inward Investors – *to generate new job opportunities for South Gloucestershire residents*

Improve training, skills and workforce development – *to raise aspirations and skills levels through our education and training providers; involving local employers to ensure their workforce needs are met*

Share the benefits of economic growth – *to ensure that all parts of South Gloucestershire and all groups share the benefits of economic development*

Education in our schools – *to improve standards so young people realise their ambitions and are well prepared for the future*

1.5 Details of membership are shown in appendix 1

1.6 Terms of reference for the partnership is attached as appendix 2

2 Partnership achievements

- 2.1 Key items of the partnership meetings from the past year
 - 2.1.1 7th June 2016
 - Election of Chair and vice chair
 - Local Market overview
 - Devolution briefing
 - Apprenticeship trends in the West of England
 - LEADER update
 - 2.1.2 21st September 2016
 - Employability and Skills Plan evaluation
 - Impact of Brexit/change of Government
 - Area review: Local Enterprise Partnership
 - 2.1.3 7th December 2016
 - Introduction to Futurespace
 - Joint Spatial Plan/ Joint Transport Plan consultation
 - Employability and Skills Plan evaluation and People and Skills workstream update
 - Update on Local networks
 - Nuclear update
 - Impact of Government changes on the West of England Financial sector
 - Annual report
 - 2.1.4 1st March 2017
 - Mayoral Combined Authority including the role of the LEP and Skills agenda
 - Oldbury Power Station
 - EU funded projects
 - Closure of the Economy and Skills Partnership and the future of the economy and skills agenda (see 4 below)
- 2.2 At all the partnership meetings, partners have the opportunity to update the group on successes and challenges within their own sectors and organisation; to share information and good practice and network with other partners to facilitate joint working and mutual understanding.
- 2.3 There is also a written report received from the Local Enterprise Partnership updating partners on the activities of the LEP Sector groups; and a verbal report on economic development and employability and skills issues.
- 2.4 The Economic Development Plan, the Skills Employability Plan and the Education Plan which underpinned the Economy and Skills Strategy would remain in place and it was anticipated that partner organisations would still work together on these specific themes using a more focussed approach. Consideration was also being given to having regular gatherings of providers and business support organisations for a more general overview of economy and skills activity.
- 2.5 The Chair concluded the meeting by thanking all the partners and the officers for their work in support of the Partnership.

3 Progress against key strategic objectives

- 3.1 Following the refresh of the South Gloucestershire Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy in February 2016, changes in the economic environment and the continuation of budget cuts and restructuring within partner organisations, members reviewed the Economic Development Strategy 2012-2016. The new strategy (Economy and Skills Strategy 2016-2020) continues to look at the wider economic area and support the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership's objectives.
- 3.2 The strategy details the Partnership's economy and skills ambition and sets out objectives, priorities and actions aimed at ensuring the economic prosperity of South Gloucestershire remains sustainable and ensuring that all communities in South Gloucestershire share the benefits of good education, access to skills and a strong local economy.
- 3.3 The ambitions set out in the South Gloucestershire Economy and Skills Strategy 2016-2020 will be delivered through the following action plans:
- Economic Development Action Plan
 - Skills and Employability Action Plan
 - Apprenticeship Strategy
 - Adult Community Learning Plan
 - Child Poverty Strategy
 - Education Strategies to include: Early Years Strategy; Closing the Gap Strategy (Disadvantaged Pupils); Primary Schools Strategic Plan, Secondary Schools Strategic Plan
- 3.4 Economic Development Action Plan
- 3.4.1 Support local business growth
- 3.4.1.1 West of England Local Growth Fund (Growth Deal) Schemes
- The West of England LEP submitted a proposal to Government for Growth Deal round 3 in July 2016. In addition to a package of £26m LGF funding for skills and transport, 5 of the 6 innovations schemes proposed are directly relevant to South Gloucestershire. These schemes seek £44.1m of LGF funding and could generate 4,900 jobs.
- a. updated outline business case submitted for BBSP Grow-On Centre (GO2) –
 - b. updated outline business case submitted for iAero – Aerospace Innovation Centre; now co-sponsored by YTL and leading aerospace industry representatives -
 - c. a full business case led by Bath University has been accepted for an Institute for Advanced Automotive Propulsion Systems
 - d. Quantum Innovation Factory, promoted by the University of Bristol
 - e. NUCLEATE – Nuclear Futures Open Innovation and Technology Centre, promoted by the University of Bristol.

3.4.1.2 Business Support

The council's business support programme for 2017/18 was launched in April. Four business advisors will deliver a total of 24 half-day workshops throughout the year covering topics including business planning, marketing, social media and sales. A number will also focus on new business start-ups. This programme will be highlighted at the South Gloucestershire Annual Business Forum Breakfast, which this year focusses on Innovation.

Some of the summer workshops of the current business support programme were rescheduled due to a lack of interest (possibly due to businesses waiting to see the outcome of the Brexit and Devolution decisions). Officers reviewed the effectiveness of the free to access council sponsored local independent business support programme.

3.4.1.3 Social Enterprise Innovation Programme (SEIP) is an European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funded programme being delivered in partnership led by Bath University. The consortium applied for £1.8 million to develop and support social enterprise in the region. This is a 3 year project which started in 2016.

3.4.1.4 The Economic Development team awarded a number of local business networks 'Small Business Saturday' grants to promote the initiative through a variety of events. In the autumn, officers reviewed whether capacity building and Small Business Saturday awards could be provided to the networks/groups in order for them to deliver relevant activity to encourage footfall into the high street.

3.4.1.5 Open 4 Business

The Open 4 Business system (previously Grant Net) enables local businesses to search for grant funding opportunities. During the year to March 2017 there were 654 unique visitors to the Open for Business grant search portal. The most used searches being for 'business support' and 'research and development'.

All new visits to the Open 4 Business grant portal are followed up with an email within a few weeks of site visit. Very few of those contacted respond to inform us if they have applied for and/or won grant funding.

3.4.1.6 Events

Economic Development officers continue to organise and support a small and diminishing number of corporate events including Armed Forces Day, Yate International Festival, Job Fairs and the Model Climate Conference for schools.

3.4.2 Support major employers to stay in the area

3.4.2.1 Partnership work

Destination Bristol – Service Level Agreements are in place to represent South Gloucestershire visitor economy and continue to work with South Gloucestershire Council.

New Work Trust - Station Road Workshops currently running at 90% occupancy. Finalising full repairing lease renewal for a further 15 year lease.

WoE LEP Retail sector group – This partnership is stable and looking to formalise and introduce terms of reference. Still exploring avenues for promoting the West of England following the successful launch of the retail map.

WoE LEP Social Enterprise Partnership – Less and less people turning up to these meetings so it was decided to formalise this group with terms of reference and to explore ways it can go beyond a talking shop to a pro-active support information and guidance body for social enterprises. The Social Enterprise Innovation Programme (SEIP) group still form part of this partnership but since winning the bid for £1.8 million are immersed in the social enterprise innovation project and give less time to the partnership.

WoE LEP Visitor Economy (tourism) group – The visitor economy sector is a major employer in the west of England region and this group is constantly looking at ways of improving and promoting the WoE offer. We are all currently working on a tourism project for which we have gained funding from ACE.

School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) – The School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) is progressing well and their take up is reasonable but we would like to see more happening in South Gloucestershire. We are in discussion with them regarding how this can be achieved. We have sat on the selection panel for potential candidates.

Quartet/Fredericks Foundation Enterprise Finance - This is working well and although it took a little time getting off the ground in South Gloucestershire it has made some good loans to local businesses, one in particular in Thornbury is thriving due to the support received from a Fredericks loan.

3.4.3 Help new businesses to form

3.4.3.1 Officers continue to participate in the development of a collaborative West of England proposal to deliver pre-start up and early growth business support. **Enterprising West of England** is a £4 million (50% ERDF) fully integrated business start-up and early growth support programme that started in January 2017 and runs to December 2019. It will be delivered by a consortium of funding and strategic partners led by Business West including the 4 local authorities, YTKO Ltd and The Prince's Trust.

3.4.3.2 Officers are working to increase South Gloucestershire's exposure within the West of England **retail and visitor economy activities**. The visitor economy in South Gloucestershire is on the increase, as evidenced by the increase in new hotels in the area and their regular high occupancy. We have in recent years had a number of new visitor attractions developed in South Gloucestershire.

West of England retail and visitor economy statistics for July 2016 include:

Retail Centre Footfall up 0.2% on July 2015 down 2.2% on year to date

Rural Visitor Attraction up 4.9% on July 2015 up 7.6% on year to date

Guest Accommodation - overall occupancy down 2.9%, however room sales up by 3.8%.

This is due to the new hotels opening in South Gloucestershire and Bristol increasing room stock.

South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) will be hosting the West of England Visitor Economy Board meeting in November. We will also be hosting the Destination Bristol Board meeting in September, and attending the Cotswold Conservation Annual Forum in September.

Information on the Defra Rural Food Tourism Grants scheme was circulated to partners through the West of England Rural Network and to businesses through the website and via mail-outs.

Also Destination Bristol, SGC, North Somerset and Bath DMO applied to the Arts Council England for £150k to develop the second round of a current project to promote the regions' visitor economy through working successfully with our key visitor destinations to raise their profile and attract more visitors.

3.4.4 Promote South Gloucestershire to Inward Investors

3.4.4.1 In March 2017 there were 92 live enquiries from businesses relating to investing in South Gloucestershire alone, with a further 336 live enquiries in the West of England that included South Gloucestershire in their search. These enquiries provided a potential pipeline of circa 7,000 new jobs.

There is also more interest from investors based outside the UK and since Brexit, there has been a renewed vigour from foreign owned businesses (either already based in the UK or not based in the UK yet) to expand in the region.

3.4.5 Enterprise Areas

Filton

- The development of the Airbus Wing Integration Centre (AWIC) is on track. Contractors are on site and ground works are well underway including the large concrete floor plinth to attach a wing structure to now complete. The steel frame for the building is expected to be complete sometime over the summer in 2017.

- The developers of Horizon 38 have almost completed the first phase of their speculative development and are actively engaged with a number of potential occupiers. Work to start the hotel development is expected later this year along with a car show room once final negotiations have been completed with the occupier.
- The owners of Filton Airfield YTL Land and Property are about to submit a revised planning application for the whole site. We are actively engaged with YTL and the aerospace industry to bring forward the proposal for an aerospace innovation centre. Proposals from industry suggest that the centre should focus on High Value Design. This line of thinking is supported in the Science and Innovation Audit and a number of responses to the Government Industrial Strategy consultation.
- A number of planning consents have recently been granted in Cribbs Causeway within the Filton Enterprise Area. Permission has been granted for a scheme that will see an ice rink, indoor ski centre, hotel and other retail units built. Asda has also had the green light to redevelop a site adjacent to its existing store at Cribbs Causeway to include another 150,000 sq ft of new commercial space. The approval for the Mall's £300 million whole scale remodelling of the current environment has been called in by the Secretary of State.

Emersons Green

- South Gloucestershire Council have submitted a bid to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to purchase the Science Park. The bid was made jointly with the University of Bath. We are awaiting a response from the HCA who have referred the tendered bids to Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) for consideration. If successful, SGC will take ownership of the SPARK1 building that currently operates the Forum, Innovation Centre and Grow-on space at the Park.
- The Science Park's innovation and Grow-on space is now operating at absolute capacity with no further space available. This continues to be a challenge as some tenants are desperate for expansion space.
- The Bath University business case for the Institute for Advanced Automotive Propulsion Systems (IAPPS) has been successful in achieving funding. If the bid to purchase the Science Park is successful, it is hoped that work on the IAPPS building will commence soon after. There are also currently a number of other occupiers interested in plots at the Science Park.
- ALD Automotive have moved from their existing headquarters in Fishponds to their new state-of-the-art 36,000 sq ft offices at Vertex Park. We have recently been alerted to the fact that ALD have an imminent expansion requirement and require further space at Emersons Green.
- DHL's new parcel distribution hub at Vertex Park is almost complete and DHL hope to take practical completion within the next couple of months.
- WDM have purchased land at Vertex Park to develop a 50,000 sq. ft. industrial unit and a separate 15,000 sq ft office building
- Chancery Gate have purchased land at Vertex Park to bring forward a speculative industrial scheme consisting of a mix of 13 production, distribution and trade units totalling 108,390 sq. ft. of floorspace.

Avonmouth / Severnside

- South Gloucestershire Council, Bristol City Council and the Environment Agency are working together to improve flood defences and create new habitats for important wildlife species. This project will help to ensure that economic development can continue within the Local Enterprise Partnership's designated Enterprise Area without harming the environment. In addition, improving the flood defences and biodiversity will also have benefits for the local community.
- Tidal Flood Defences - Our vision is to improve flood defences to protect against a 1 in 200 year tidal flood event, allowing for predicted sea level rise due to climate change. This standard of flood protection will help encourage businesses to locate in the Enterprise Area and protect existing communities from flooding. Over the last few months we have:
 - developed computer models to help understand how high the tidal flood defences need to be and examined options for raising their height
 - assessed the capacity of the large tidal outfalls
 - discussed the options with stakeholders
 - started to develop a Business Case, which will be the basis of funding bids
 - drafted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Opinion which we will send to South Gloucestershire Council and Bristol City Council for comment. This is the start of the process for how we will assess the environmental impacts of any construction works required.
- Ecology Mitigation - We are looking to create a minimum of 80 hectares of new wetland habitat in the Hallen Marsh and Northwick areas. This will help replace habitat affected by development within the Enterprise Area. This ecological mitigation is required to ensure the area can continue to fulfil its economic potential without impacting on the wildlife of the Severn Estuary. Over the last few months we have:
 - undertaken surveys to understand how the land is drained and assess its suitability for wetland habitat
 - liaised with landowners and tenant farmers
 - looked at different options for wetting the land and discussed these with stakeholders
 - drafted an EIA Screening Opinion.
- Work continues with businesses in Severnside and Wessex Bus to provide an extension to the Coastal Communities funded pilot bus. Though still a long way to go before completely sustainable, recent patronage data from Wessex Bus shows on average over 650 journeys take place weekly. Continuing this service is considered a key enabler for the current known 4 million sq. ft. of development in the next few years that could generate in excess of 3,000 new jobs. This coupled with a forecast 3% (c. 500 jobs) growth in the existing businesses means that our primary focus moving forward must be to ensure we understand and develop the labour market pool to satisfy demand.
- Through dedicated employment hub and support services, over 260 local individuals have been provided, specific job related training, advice and support. Also, over 300 job seekers have benefited from receiving advice, information and mentoring over the past 16 months. As a result of the SevernNet initiative, over 90 local individuals have been supported in getting a job.
- In excess of 400 businesses to date have been supported through attending business breakfast networking meetings or events such as the Sustainable Transport Forums, as well as 1 to 1 meetings with businesses. Through our enterprise support services over 40

local businesses or social enterprises have been assisted to start or grow in the past 16 months.

3.5 Skills and Employability Action Plan (and related Plans or Strategies)

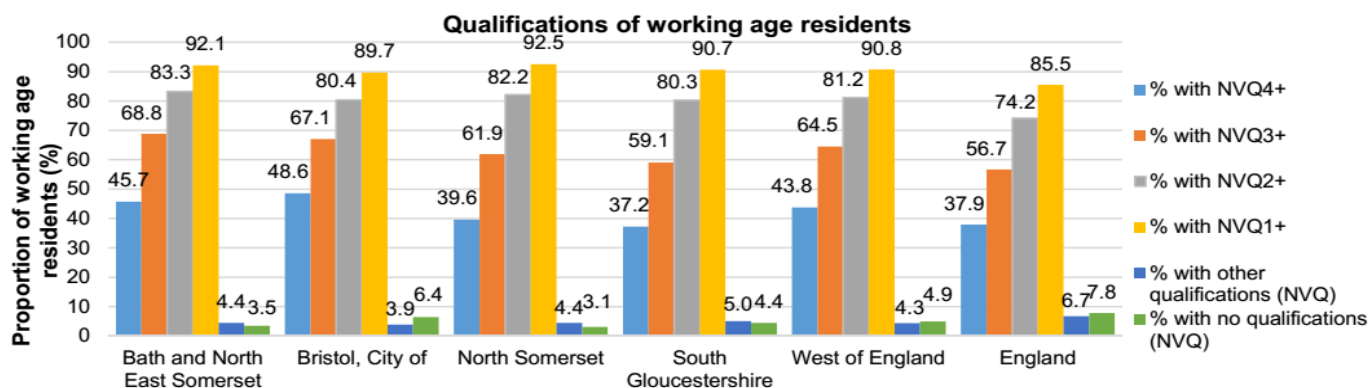
3.5.1 Improve training, skills and workforce development

The key priority for Skills and Employability is to improve training, skills and workforce development: raise aspirations and skill levels through our education and training providers; involving local employers to ensure their workforce needs are met. In 2016 four main objectives were agreed and action plans have pursued their delivery:

1. Securing high quality Careers Education Guidance (CEG) and Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) for young people
2. Reducing NEET and worklessness
3. Developing skills and increasing employability of all age groups
4. To increase the number of adults gaining higher level technical skills.

The delivery of the Skills and Employability action plan links closely with the Education and the Economic Development action plans. Key highlights include the following:

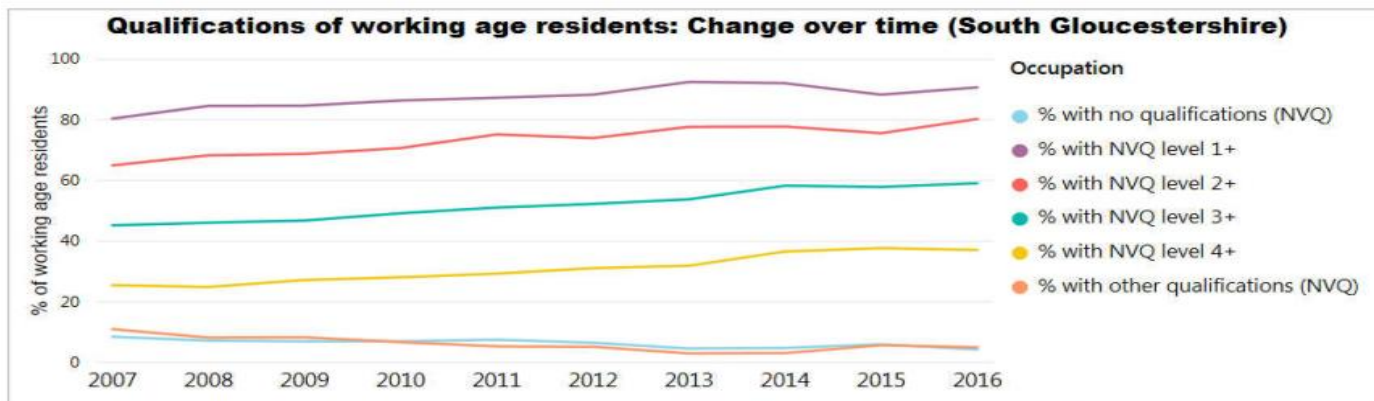
Figure 1.
The percentage of working age (16-64) adults with a qualification (by level) and no qualification.



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey (via NOMIS)

* It should be noted that due to the sample size, there are often wide confidence intervals associated with this dataset at local authority level. For example, the confidence interval for those with NVQ level 4+ qualifications is 3.5% for South Gloucestershire, meaning the rate could be between 33.7% and 40.7%.

Figure 2
The profile of change in the Level of Qualifications for working age (16-64) resident population.



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey (2008 onwards) - via NOMIS

In September 2017, the proportion of young people aged 16 and 17 years old (academic age) Not in Education, Employment and Training, across South Gloucestershire, was low at 1.4%. This compares favourably to the national figure of 1.9% and the South West average of 2.0%.

Figure 3 Apprenticeships Starts

Headline apprenticeship data starts full year to October 2017:

Geography	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17 provisional	Numbers down 16/17 from 15/16	% down on 16/17 from 15/16
B&NES	990	1080	1100	1030	70	6.4
Bristol	3010	3180	3290	3220	70	2.1
North Somerset	1770	1850	1830	1790	40	2.1
South Glos	2350	2560	2640	2600	40	1.5
West of England	8120	8670	8860	8640	220	2.5
South West	45960	51480	54160	53340	820	1.5
England	434600	494200	503900	485500	18400	3.7

Extracted from FE Data Library – Apprenticeships data. October 2017

The headline data profiles in figures 1, 2 and 3 alongside the latest NEET data shows a steadily improving picture and the evidence of impact of a number of activities over time. Of note is the significant reduction of the proportion of young people aged 16 and 17 year old who are considered NEET. Latest available figures confirm at 1.4%, South Glos. is below both national and regional comparators. The number of apprenticeship starts (figure 3), whilst slightly down on the previous year, has not fallen as significantly as neighbouring authorities and nationally. While in terms of learning outcomes (figures 1 and 2) the previous gains made at Level 4 and above have been maintained and improvements are particularly being seen in 2015-16 at level 2 where for the first time 80.3% of the working aged population now hold a level 2 qualification. Whilst across all levels of adult qualifications challenges remain, especially at level 4 and above, improvement is being made.

Contributing to the improvements over the last year have been a wide range of activities, the following are particular highlights, key developments and successes:

- Planned and delivered a wide range of skills and employability initiatives for primary and secondary pupils (Ambitions, Ambitions Plus, Bloodhound, Children’s University and support to access the Career Pilot tool);
- Continuation of improved curriculum and qualification pathways for young people 14-19, especially young people with lower levels of attainment who cannot progress onto level 3 courses. The opening of Post 16 provision at Warmley Park Special School. The planning of specialist vocational learning provision with South Glos and Stroud College, The Chase, opening in 2018.
- The development of an Employability strategy targeted to support Children in Care and especially those leaving care. This builds on and extends the lessons learnt from the HYPE programme.
- Continuation of the leadership of high quality careers education, information, advice and guidance in schools and settings through Employability and Skills Network attended by

representatives from all schools and FE across South Glos. Through regular meetings and an annual conference, this group has continued to focused on the following priorities:

- Insight into working in the new economy –allowing staff to be informed and confident in supporting students with opportunities to investigate both the local and global economy and consider implications for their personal career pathways to ensure students leave school equipped for the modern labour market.
 - Provide staff with the tools to make greater use of business people’s skills and resources to enhance students learning and employability – placing learning in the context of the world outside school and investigate the changing concept of a career moving away from job for life to the expectation that individuals will work for a variety of employers and may well have several career changes.
 - Supporting teachers to actively consider the links between their subjects and future careers, utilise careers information and applied learning (contextualise) in lesson planning to help combat mismatch between skills provision and employment opportunities in growth sectors and raising students’ aspirations.
- Development across the West of England and especially the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) of skills priorities and action plans. Subsequently the successful application to the DWP for funding to support in work career progression through the Employment Support Innovation Fund. The pilot is due to start in the spring of 2018.
 - Adult Community Learning continued to deliver learning opportunities to over 1300 South Gloucestershire residents. This includes high levels of success rates in Functional Skills, especially Maths at Level 1 and 2 with over 96% achievement.

3.5.2 Share the benefits of economic growth

3.5.2.1 We have been supporting the following Business Networks to achieve the following:

Thornbury Town Council began work on their Neighbourhood Plan. The Economic Development team (EDT) will work with the town council to draft a new town centre strategy to feed into this.

Patchway: EDT supporting Southern Brooks who are leading on the development of a Patchway Community Economic Development Plan.

EDT also worked with Kings Chase and Woodstock councillors to invite local businesses to an autumn event facilitated by Red Door Coaching and Training. During the event there was agreement to restart the **Kingswood Business Association (KBA)**. Approximately 15 businesses attended and discussed small projects promoting the area and increasing footfall amongst businesses. The KBA webpage has also been revamped and serves as a platform for showcasing future events and news. KBA supported by EDT worked with the Friends of Kingswood Park to plan and launch a ‘Springswood’ event to position a series of planters along the high street to improve the aesthetics and provide sponsorship opportunities for local businesses.

Hanham Regeneration Partnership continue to meet monthly to discuss issues in the town centre and plan events such as the annual Christmas Fair. EDT attends these meetings to provide support.

Staple Hill Business Association (SHBA) restarted following an event facilitated by Red Door Coaching and Training and have met regularly since then. A treasure hunt organised by the SHBA encouraged residents to visit each shop along the High Street (approx. 90 local businesses). This was followed by other events designed with the support of the EDT to generate higher footfall in the area including 'Christmas on the Hill'.

Downend Business Community have had some changes to executive members. They are now focussing on increasing high street representation amongst the group.

Chipping Sodbury Chamber of Commerce are participating in the Cotswold Hare trail beginning Easter and running through to September

Sodbury and Yate Business Association continue to meet regularly with guest speakers, providing local businesses with networking and training opportunities.

Filton - We are awaiting response from the group about taking up EDT's offer of continued support

3.5.2.2 Innovation

Venturer (a 3-year £5m project to address the barriers to deploying driverless (or highly autonomous) cars onto UK roads and create a local test site facility) and **Flourish** (a £5.5m project which started in June 2016 relating to Connected and Autonomous Vehicle (CAV) research and development) both funded by Innovate UK are now well under way with trials taking place for both projects on private property. Legislation has changed now allowing non-closure trials of a certain nature (similar to that which Venturer is planning). An external consultant as part of the Venturer and Flourish resource allocation (commissioned by SGC) has prepared a driverless car industry horizon paper, explaining how this sector fits with local authority activities and how it may address aspirations. This document is also intended to aid council decision making about collaborating on Research and Development projects and in considering how it can be open to innovation

The council is now part of a new CAV project called **CAPRI**. This focuses on a POD fleet service type scenario with trials taking place on Filton Airfield (YTL are a partner) and on a private car park in South Gloucestershire (SGC is a partner) to help facilitate this. The use-case for this service might be universities, hospitals and business parks.

Horizon 2020 - as part of a coordinated activity with relevant colleagues within highways, Streetcare, planning, communications, digital infrastructure and legal, officers reviewed the viability of becoming involved in two European funded CAV related projects, led by industry and academia. The council would look to offer its road network for traffic simulation activity and surveying on a full cost recovery basis.

The need for the public sector to take advantage of **digital innovations** has never been greater. South Gloucestershire Council are already involved in a number of innovative projects, which fall under the following three categories:

- Connected & Autonomous Vehicles
- Digital Infrastructure & Connectivity
- Innovation Hubs & Centres

The EDT are involved in a number of **collaborative innovation** projects. Our primary intention of involvement in these projects is to ascertain and maximise the full array of economic benefits that can be derived.

A profile was recently published in the South West Insider magazine explaining how South Gloucestershire is 'open to innovation' and describing how we can support and enable local innovation projects.

3.5.2.3 European Affairs

The Defra and the European Commission programme - West of England LEADER - provides funding and support through the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) to address rural development challenges within the defined West of England rural area. Locally the fund is managed by the West of England Local Action Group (LAG) which is a partnership body. The West of England LEADER Programme have been allocated around £1.5m which will run from 2015 to 2020.

There have been a number of calls for applications for grants from rural businesses and communities across South Gloucestershire and the WoE region (North Somerset, Bath & North East Somerset). Thus far four businesses have been awarded a grant.

- Hawkesbury Upton Community Shop
- M+G Countryside Development Ltd, Horton
- Winterbourne Medieval Barn, Winterbourne
- Harwood Gate Farm, Chipping Sodbury

The LEADER WoE LAG group is very active.

Post the June EU referendum there has been much uncertainty and speculation regarding EU Funded programmes. Informally we have been advised to proceed on a "business as usual" basis, but there is a lack of clarity as to what this actually means. The Chancellor's August statement gave a little more comfort.

Working with colleagues from IBB and DIT officers have started an engagement process with foreign owned businesses in the area to understand any threats and opportunities as a consequence of BREXIT.

3.5.2.4 News and information

The InSouthGlos website and regular bulletins continue to strengthen and to inform local businesses and potential investors through news articles and press clippings relevant to South Gloucestershire. It can be accessed at www.insouthglos.co.uk/news

3.6 Education Action Plans

3.6.1 Education in our schools

The five key priorities which have been the focus of this plan and the South Gloucestershire Education Partnership Board are:

- To improve the life chances of children, young people and adults in South Gloucestershire
- To reduce the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers
- Improve outcomes for all pupils at the end of KS4.
- Improve the outcomes for all students at the end of KS5
- Improve the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and more able

Over the last three years the South Gloucestershire Education Partnership Board have collectively supported and challenged institutions to tackle the above priorities. The Education Partnership Board was superseded in September 2017 by the South Gloucestershire School Standards Board. The Board includes all key partners and providers, including the SW Regional Schools Commissioner who has oversight of Academies and Multi Academy Trusts (MATs).

Performance information for the summer of 2017, at the point of drafting this report, remains unvalidated and therefore subject to change. It is also important to note that changes in national performance tables mean that year on year comparisons against some key measures are not possible. At Key Stage 5 for Level 3 students in school sixth forms, Average Point Score (APS) per entry rose against 2016 outcomes by 1.3 to 31.0. This however remains below the national (33.0) and our statistical neighbours' average. At Key Stage 4 the percentage of students achieving a grade 5 or better in both GCSE English and Maths in 2017 was 39.2%, which is below both national (42%) and statistical neighbours' average (44%). South Gloucestershire's performance in both Progress 8 and attainment 8 reflect a similar picture.

Overall attainment in the secondary education sector continues to be below both national and statistical comparator local authorities. Improving the educational attainment of all student groups at 16 and 18/19 years of age continues to be a high priority to ensure that young people are well placed to access higher level qualifications and benefit from local economic growth.

4 Future challenges and areas of work

At its meeting on 1st March 2017, partners were advised that a report on revised council governance arrangements would be going to the full Council meeting on 22nd March 2017.

Discussions with leaders highlighted the importance of the Economy and Skills agenda and it was felt that this agenda should be guided and monitored by the South Gloucestershire Partnership (SGP) going forward. Therefore the Economy and Skills Partnership would be disbanded. A standing item on Economy and Skills at each meeting of the SGP was proposed and a review of the membership of the SGP in order to strengthen representation from the Economy and Skill sector if necessary.

The South Gloucestershire Local Strategic Partnership will provide the strategic direction to continue the work of the Economy and Skills partnership.

5 Resources used or consumed by the partnership

- 5.1 Responsibility for delivering the Strategy largely rested with
- Public sector economic agencies / bodies including the West of England LEP and Invest Bristol & Bath, Business West, Further and Higher Educational Establishments, DWP/JobCentre Plus, National Apprenticeship Service and South Gloucestershire Council
 - The private sector – businesses, financial intermediaries, training providers, developers, agents, etc.
 - Voluntary sector organisations and bodies including CVS South Gloucestershire, town centre and regeneration partnerships and specialist training and employment support organisations.
- 5.2 Each member contributes resource to the partnership and its work. Partners provide an invaluable function through their time, expertise and knowledge.
- 5.3 The partnership is serviced by South Gloucestershire Council (SGC) which covers the costs of organising meetings, hiring venues, refreshments, printing and publication of minutes, papers, promotional material, documents and leaflets; also planning, preparation and hosting of some workshops (with associated speakers/facilitators) and conferences.
- 5.4 On occasions, partners host events relating to partnership work, and present and deliver aspects of the partnerships work in a variety of arenas.

6 Appendix 1 – Member organisations 2016/2017

Business	Airbus (aerospace & advanced engineering)
	GVA Grimley (Land/property development)
	Marshfield Bakery
	New Work Trust (Light industrial SME's / Managed workspace)
	The Mall, Cribbs Causeway
Business Trade Bodies	Business West
	Destination Bristol
	Low Carbon South West
	National Farmers' Union
	The Federation of Small Businesses
South Gloucestershire Council	Conservative Councillor (Chair, and SGC vote) Liberal Democrat Councillor (non-voting attendee) Labour Councillor (non-voting attendee)
Other Public Sector Bodies	Avon Fire & Rescue Services
	Dept. of Work & Pensions / Job Centre Plus
	National Apprenticeship Service
	West of England Local Enterprise Partnership
Higher/Further Education and Schools	City of Bristol College
	South Gloucestershire and Stroud College
	South Gloucestershire Schools/Olympus Academy Trust
	University of the West of England
Voluntary and Community Sector	CVS South Gloucestershire
	The Prince's Trust
Sector Skills Councils	Sector Skills Council for Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies (SEMTA) (Vacant)
Organisations representing equality and vulnerable groups	Age UK National Autistic Society South Glos. Equalities Forum (Vacant)

Appendix 2 – Terms of reference for the Economy and Skills Partnership

1. The Purpose and Aims of the Partnership

- 1.1 As its Primary purpose, to oversee and help deliver actions that support a sustainable economy in South Gloucestershire and ensure that these actions are consistent with the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership functional economic market area priorities, and the wider national economic agenda.
- 1.2 In particular, to encourage, support and propose collaboration and action that will help achieve the aims set out in the South Gloucestershire Community Strategy and the South Gloucestershire Economy and Skills Strategy 2016-2020.

2 Terms of Reference of the Partnership

- 2.1 Within the context of the West of England Vision 2026 and the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership priorities:
 - To promote and guide the sustainable economic development of South Gloucestershire.
 - To oversee, co-ordinate, inform and influence the development of policies, strategies and action plans relating to all of the work of the Partnership.
 - To implement those aspects of the South Gloucestershire Sustainable Community Strategy that relate to Economy and Skills.
 - To monitor progress of the Partnership and its strategies and action plans and ensure equality of opportunity has been addressed.
 - To ensure effective liaison and working with other strategic partnerships to achieve shared or related objectives, including working links within the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership.
 - To be responsible for securing co-ordination between partner agencies and resolution of potential disputes, funding and service delivery issues.
 - To promote an understanding of the contribution and responsibilities of individual organisations to the shared commitments and aims of the Partnership.
 - To make recommendations to the Local Strategic Partnership, the Council and other partner organisations on matters relating to the achievement of the Sustainable Community Strategy and other Economy and Skills priorities.
 - To influence local, national and regional funding allocation decisions that help to secure a sustainable economy in South Gloucestershire and the West of England.
 - To co-ordinate economy and skills activity in South Gloucestershire that secure additional resources, synergy and add value.
 - To advise and support the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership on economy and skills matters in South Gloucestershire.

3 Legal Status and Decision Making

- 3.1 The Partnership shall not make executive decisions or exercise executive authority over constituent members. Neither the Partnership nor any Partnership sub-groups shall have the power to take decisions that bind member organisations.
- 3.2 The Partnership may make recommendations to the South Gloucestershire Local Strategic Partnership, or where executive decisions are needed, to the Council or partner organisation that has responsibility for the function or activity concerned.

4 Membership of the Partnership (see appendix 1 above)

- 4.1 The Partnership shall have the power to co-opt other members as appropriate.

- 4.2 Each member of the Partnership can nominate a relevant substitute to attend any meeting of the Partnership on their behalf.
- 4.3 Officers from the Partnership will be available to offer support, guidance and advice as required.

5 Life of the Partnership

- 5.1 The Partnership shall be subject to review after three years.

6 Convening and Conducting Meetings

- 6.1 The Partnership shall aim to meet at least 4 times a year with additional meetings to be arranged as agreed by Members.
- 6.2 The Chair and Vice Chair will be elected by the Partnership and serve for one year. For the purpose of electing a chair or vice-chair, each partner representative has a vote, the outcome being achieved by simple majority of those present at the meeting.
- 6.3 Partnership meetings shall have a quorum of a minimum of eight partner organisations being represented.
- 6.4 The Partnership should aim to reach its conclusions by consensus. Conclusions reached are not binding on partner organisations in respect of their own executive functions and responsibilities. Conclusions will be referred to the relevant partner organisations for consideration and decision. Outcomes will be reported back to the Partnership.
- 6.5 Secretariat and legal support will be provided by South Gloucestershire Council Legal and Democratic Services, to include:-
- Co-ordination of agenda preparation
 - Convening of meetings
 - Publication and circulation of agendas and supporting papers at least five clear (working) days prior to a meeting
 - Taking of minutes
 - Procedural and legal advice
 - Monitoring and progressing actions agreed by the Partnership.
- 6.6 Partners shall have the right to submit agenda items as long as they are received at least seven working days prior to the despatch of the agenda.
- 6.7 Meetings will be open to the public and the agenda and minutes of meetings will be published.

7 Partnership Relationships and Linkages

- 7.1 The South Gloucestershire Economy and Skills Partnership are responsible to the South Gloucestershire Local Strategic Partnership. Subject to the agreement of the Local Strategic Partnership (SGP) the Economy and Skills Partnership will have primary responsibility for representing the view of the SGP on economic development and related issues.
- 7.2 The Partnership will maintain links with other appropriate partnerships and organisations relating to Economy & Skills across the West of England.
- 7.3 South Gloucestershire's Sustainable Community Strategy identifies high level strategic aims focused within themed blocks covering:-
- Health and well-being

- Place
- Economy and Skills
- Communities.

7.4 The Partnership will ensure that it supports work towards the related outcomes of the high level strategic aims across all the themes as appropriate.

8 Probity and Accountability

8.1 The Partnership will meet in public, with the same opportunities for public participation as apply to Council meetings generally. Meeting arrangements and agendas will be published so that the public may be aware of the Partnership's activities and the opportunities to engage with them.

8.2 In the interests of transparency and to ensure probity and public confidence in partnership working, all partner representatives at partnership meetings are expected to commit to the seven principles of public life as required by the Localism Act 2011 as follows:

- Selflessness
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Leadership
- Objectivity

and to abide by the Members' Code of Conduct of South Gloucestershire as amended from time to time (copies are available from DemocraticServices@southglos.gov.uk)

8.3 Partners who consider that they have an interest to declare are asked to: a) State the item number in which they have an interest, b) The nature of the interest, c) Whether the interest is a disclosable pecuniary interest, non-disclosable pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest. Any Partner who is unsure about the above should seek advice from the South Gloucestershire Council Monitoring Officer prior to the meeting in order to expedite matters at the meeting itself. This is dealt with through standard agenda item 5 Declarations of Interest under the Local Government Act 1972

9 Scrutiny of Partnerships

9.1 The activities of the Partnership will be subject to scrutiny by the relevant overview and scrutiny committee of South Gloucestershire Council. As a minimum, an annual report of the Partnership (to all partner organisations) will provide a basic opportunity for the scrutiny of partnership work to take place. However, individual overview and scrutiny committees may wish to pursue additional and specific areas of scrutiny as they consider appropriate.

10 Risk Management

10.1 Good risk management is integral to the delivery of successful partnership working. The Partnership will be guided by and take account of the document "Guidance for Managing Risk and Opportunities in Partnership" in developing aims and Objectives and in all its activities.

For information about this document please contact:

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