

Camden Local Strategic Partnership

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| Meeting | 9 October 2008 |
| Report Title | Camden's Community Strategy: Camden Together 2007-2012 Progress report on "Increasing access to skills, education, training and jobs" subtheme |
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| Purpose | This is the latest in a series of reports looking at how we are delivering the commitments in the community strategy <i>Camden Together 2007-2012</i> . |
| Recommendations | The LSP is asked to note and comment on the report. |

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Camden's labour market is successful across a range of measures. There are nearly two jobs for every resident. Wages are higher than the national and London averages. The employment rate is high with many people working in the knowledge economy, in sectors such as law, academia and finance.
- 1.2 However not all Camden residents share in this success. 13% of the population claim out-of-work benefits. 11% have no qualifications. Being out of work and/or lacking skills are at the root of many other social disadvantages. This is why the LSP chose "Increasing access to skills, education, training and jobs" as one of the themes of Camden Together.
- 1.3 The Community Strategy goal is to enable more Camden residents to get involved in education, training and employment. There are six specific commitments:
 - transform secondary education across schools in Camden including the building of a new secondary school
 - expand the take-up and provision of basic and key skills training, family learning and English language tuition
 - promote vocational learning and other opportunities to ensure people, including young people, have access to employment, further education and training opportunities
 - increase opportunities for people to get into and stay in the job market, including older people, carers, parents returning to work, and

those facing other barriers to employment, such as disability, or ill health

- make sure good quality, accessible and affordable childcare is available
- maximise the local employment and training opportunities, including apprenticeships, generated by the King's Cross Development, the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and the London Olympics

1.4 As this report shows, the LSP has made real progress on these commitments since April 2007 and, although there are risks, there is every chance it will meet them by 2012. This is all the more of an achievement because many workless and unskilled people must overcome multiple barriers to find a job or get a qualification. For this reason, partnership working is crucial to this success, as it is for all Camden Together themes.

1.5 Nevertheless many more people could be in work or training with the right support. The continued importance the LSP attaches to this area is reflected in the Local Area Agreement (LAA), with 8 of the 39 targets relating to employment and skills:

- NI 91 - Participation of 17 year olds in education or training
- NI 118 - Take up of formal childcare by low-income working families
- NI 152 - Working age people on out of work benefits
- NI 153 - Working age people claiming out of work benefits in the worst performing neighbourhoods
- NI 161 - Number of Level 1 qualifications in literacy (including ESOL) achieved
- NI 162 - Number of Entry Level qualifications in numeracy achieved
- Local E - Proportion of working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher
- Local I - English language skills

1.6 The commitments and LAA targets are the responsibility of two of the four thematic partnerships which sit underneath the LSP; the Economic Development Partnership and the Children and Young People's Partnership, specifically its Economic Wellbeing sub-board. They are reflected in the two key strategies in this area; the 14-19 Strategy and the Economic Development Strategy. The latter is in development and should be presented at the LSP soon.

1.7 School attainment is obviously also crucial to the achievement of the goal of this subtheme. However this report will focus just on commitments included in this subtheme, particularly as the LSP received a full update on the work of the Children and Young People's Partnership at its previous meeting on 4 July.

1.8 This report aims to be a comprehensive but concise account of work that all LSP partners are undertaking to meet the goals of the Community Strategy. As with previous reports, it reflects the "Compact for Camden" framework agreement between the local public and voluntary sectors.

However there are gaps in the information available, most notably concerning the work of businesses based in the borough. The council and the LSP are looking at ways to engage the business sector in a more systematic way. The Camden Business Summit held in June was a first step towards this.

- 1.9 The report is structured around the six commitments and describes progress made since the launch of Camden Together in April 2007 and activities planned for 2008/9 and beyond. It also makes links to relevant LAA targets and highlights key risks to the achievement of the commitments. It has been endorsed by the Economic Development Partnership and the Children and Young People's Partnership.

2 Transform secondary education across schools in Camden including the building of a new secondary school

- 2.1 Building Schools for the Future (BSF) is an ambitious initiative to transform how secondary aged students in Camden learn with personalisation at its heart. Funded by central government, BSF is supported by a massive capital investment programme to rebuild or remodel every secondary school in the borough.
- 2.2 The council has developed its BSF proposals over the past year in a document called *Strategy for Change*. The vision is for Camden to operate as a Campus for Learning, with schools, multi-agency teams, further and higher education institutions and other partners working together to provide the expertise to ensure the needs of every child and young person are identified and appropriately addressed. This flexible curriculum will be supported by the Managed Learning Environment, a centrally managed ICT service which will allow greater access to innovative and engaging pedagogical practice and enabling all learners, teachers and their parents and carers to have access anywhere and at any time without the use of transport.
- 2.3 The cornerstone of the capital investment programme will be the building of a new academy on Adelaide Road in the north-west of the borough, sponsored by University College London with a co-located special school.
- 2.4 The *Strategy for Change* was developed in two parts. Both parts have now been approved by the Department of Children, Schools and Families. It will be delivered by the Local Education Partnership, a joint venture company 80% owned by the eventual private contractor, 10% by the council and 10% by Partnership for Schools (the government agency leading BSF nationally). An outline business case will be submitted at the end of October. The procurement period will end in March 2010 and contracts signed by Summer 2010. Therefore we will begin to see the benefits of BSF towards the end of the Community Strategy period.

- 2.5 Inevitably for such a large-scale project, there are a number of key risks which the council has nonetheless taken steps to mitigate:
- The funding from central government for the project will not be confirmed until Autumn 2008. The council's capital programme is filling the gap until then.
 - Costs will not be finalised until contracts are signed in 2010. However the cost model will be periodically updated as the project develops. The council is able to draw on the experience of other Inner London boroughs to provide more realistic cost estimates than those of Partnership for Schools.
 - The sites, particularly Adelaide Road, pose a number of risks relating to surveying, planning, design and conservation. One major issue has been resolved by confirmation that Frank Barnes School, which currently occupies the site, will move elsewhere.
 - A successful procurement process resulting in the appointment of a suitable private sector partner. Soft market testing with potential bidders has already begun.
 - The capacity of schools, as the major stakeholders, to engage with the programme. Schools have nominated senior staff to lead on BSF and the council is providing them with financial support.

3 Expand the take-up and provision of basic and key skills training, family learning and English language tuition

Basic and key skills

- 3.1 Although Camden's population are among the best qualified in the country, at the other end of the spectrum, 11% have no qualifications whatsoever. This percentage increased slightly in 2007, meaning that the target in the previous LAA was missed. Therefore developing basic skills is still a major area of concern, reflected by the inclusion of targets for literacy and numeracy qualifications (NI161 and NI 162) in the new LAA.
- 3.2 The Learning and Skills Council funds "Skills for Life" basic skills courses at the four Camden-based further education colleges; City Lit, Mary Ward Centre, Working Men's College and Westminster Kingsway College. Together they had 1039 enrolments on these courses in 2007/8¹. In addition, voluntary sector providers deliver targeted Skills for Life provision for disadvantaged groups. The Camden Society's Employment and Learning Centre for people with learning and physical disabilities provides social and care services that ensure clients' ability to train and work is not impaired by other needs not being met. 40% of students go on to paid employment of over 16.5 hours a week. Similarly, the Cranstoun Drug Service offers Skills for Life courses alongside

¹ LSC data does not identify learners' borough of residence. Some enrolments in Camden will be non-Camden residents and vice versa. Although the main Westminster Kingsway campus is not in Camden it is nearby and many Camden residents study there. Attainment data will be available in December.

specialist treatment, rehabilitation and support services to people affected by drug and alcohol misuse.

- 3.3 In 2008/9, the LSC is continuing to fund the four FE colleges to deliver a number of literacy and numeracy courses. It is also funding the Access to Employment programme commissioned by the council. The programme is delivered by a number of smaller local organisations such as Camden Job Train, Camden ITEC and the Camden Society mentioned above which focus on “hard to reach” groups such as young people, people from BME communities and people with learning disabilities.
- 3.4 Camden Council also has an important role to play in improving the basic skills of its residents as a large local employer of low-skilled staff. Its approach is set out in its Skills for Life Strategy launched in February 2007. Working with trade unions and local training providers such as City Lit and Camden ITEC, the council offers Level 2 skills provision in literacy and numeracy to its staff. It is currently targeting care workers, transport depot workers, those in frontline customer care roles and caretakers.

Family learning

- 3.5 The Council runs family learning courses which offer parents and carers the skills and knowledge to support their children's learning as well as develop their own learning. It is offered through the Council's Adult and Community Learning service in the Children, Schools and Families Directorate and funded by the LSC. In the academic year 2007/08 there were 824 individual learners involved in the courses.
- 3.6 There are two main types of provision – family language, literacy and numeracy courses, focused on Skills for Life which had 696 enrolments and other courses such as ICT and art, which had 328 enrolments. Funding has been static for the last three years which has limited the capacity to increase the provision.

English language tuition

- 3.7 English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) training provision is included in the delivery plan for the national literacy indicator (NI191). However the issue is such a priority for Camden that there is a specific local target for English language skills (Local I) in the LAA.
- 3.8 The majority of ESOL provision in Camden is funded by the Learning and Skills Council and delivered through the four local FE colleges. The council commissions additional provision from the FE colleges and smaller local training providers through its Access to Employment and Adult and Community Learning programmes (funded by the LSC) and Working Neighbourhoods Funding (for 2008/9 only). ESOL is also provided by the voluntary sector, the council's Sure Start service and the UK Online partnership based in community centres. Programmes are

also delivered on the premises of local employers such as the Royal Free Hospital.

- 3.9 In 2007/8, there were 3630 enrolments on ESOL courses at the four FE colleges. Approximately 250 people attended ESOL courses commissioned by the council and funded through the LAA. 2008/9 enrolment data is not yet available.
- 3.10 Despite a good supply of ESOL provision, it does not always meet demand. This is because it does not always address individual needs, particularly for workplace language skills, or because of a lack of awareness and co-ordination between partners. The council and its partners in the public and voluntary sectors have recognised these serious issues and are developing an ESOL Strategic Action Plan to address them. It will map existing provision, improve links between providers and with potential learners and employers and improve the quality and range of provision, in particular advanced and vocational ESOL. The sustainability of LSC funding is a major risk in addressing these issues and is discussed in more detail in 4.19 below.

4 Promote vocational learning and other opportunities to ensure people, including young people, have access to employment, further education and training opportunities

Young people

- 4.1 Vocational learning is integrated with the mainstream of secondary education through the Children and Young People's Partnership and the 14-19 Strategy. This is expressed through the 2007/8 improvement priority to "enable all young people to achieve well at 14-19 whether in school, college or through work-based learning". Another priority was to ensure that young people aged 16-19 remain in employment, education or training on leaving school. Clearly the two are interlinked since a strong vocational offering is more likely to appeal to young people at risk of not being in employment, education and training (NEET).
- 4.2 There was very encouraging progress on both of these priorities in 2007/8. A curriculum audit for the year 2006/7 showed a growth in the number of vocational courses available for 14-16 and 16-19 year olds. Young Apprenticeships in Performance Arts and Catering and Hospitality began at Westminster Kingsway College in September 2007. In January 2008, Camden Job Train started a foundation learning course, a mid-year entry point leading to apprenticeships. The percentage of young people NEET fell to 6.5% in 2007/8 in due partly to targeted provision e.g. job readiness courses delivered by Connexions and proactive efforts to engage young people NEET e.g. improved information, advice & guidance (IAG), door knocking evenings.
- 4.3 Improving vocational provision and reducing young people NEET remain priorities for the Children and Young People's Partnership in 2008/9. It is reflected in the Delivery Plan for the LAA target for the participation of 17

year olds in education or training (NI91). LAA targets for GCSE attainment targets are also relevant.

- 4.4 September 2008 saw the start of young apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship courses in several areas, most notably a construction apprenticeship delivered by Carillion, a major contractor for the King's Cross development. Three new vocational diplomas developed in partnership with local businesses and funded by central government will start in September 2009 along with a Foundation Learning Tier course for young people with no or low qualifications. IAG, particularly for vulnerable groups such as young people in or leaving care, also remains a priority.
- 4.5 The 14-19 Strategy covers the entire Community Strategy period. Over the longer term, strategic aims include closer collaboration between partners and greater personalisation of learning, both of which are supported by the Camden Campus for Learning and the rest of the Building Schools for the Future programme. There will be a major institutional change in 2010 with the transfer of funding responsibilities for 16-18 education from the Learning and Skills Council to local authorities. This change should facilitate the aims of the 14-19 Strategy by increasing local influence on post-16 provision. The already close partnership working in the borough should minimise any disruption. However there is a risk that Camden's provision may become less well integrated with that of surrounding boroughs.

Adults

- 4.6 Adult vocational skills provision (basic skills and ESOL are discussed in section 3) is aimed at helping workless Camden residents become "job ready" or, increasingly, to improve the skills of people already in work. Nationally, everyone is entitled to free training to qualify them to Level 2 (equivalent to 5 GCSEs), funded by the Learning and Skills Council. In addition to LSC-funded activities, the council also commissions provision using national and regional funding and many employers provide training for their staff. Although Camden has a comparatively high percentage of the population qualified to Level 2, it remains a priority because the labour market is so competitive and few low skill jobs are available. Therefore it is included in the new LAA as local target E.
- 4.7 Skills for Jobs is the LSC's umbrella term for programmes designed to give workless people the skills they need to find a job. It includes tailored training for Camden residents delivered by Working Men's College.
- 4.8 Training to "up-skill" people already in work to Level 2 or 3 may be fully or partly funded by the LSC through its Train to Gain programme and delivered in workplaces or at providers' premises. There is no data available solely for Camden although there were 613 starts on Train to Gain programmes across the LSC London Central district in 2007/8. One Camden-based employer, Addison Lee, began Train to Gain courses in Level 2 transport and logistics in February and by the end of

July reported 332 starts across London. Camden PCT has recently signed up to Train to Gain which will be delivered by Communities into Training and Employment (CITE), a local voluntary organisation.

- 4.9 The LSC has recognised that local FE colleges need to improve their offer to employers and commissioned a project led by Camden Working to address the issue. As a result, they are beginning to market their services to employers under a single umbrella.
- 4.10 The LSC are also working increasingly closely with Job Centre Plus to ensure that skills provision meets the needs of jobseekers through the Employability Skills Programme and, from Spring 2009, through the piloting of an Integrated Employment and Skills (IES) approach in the Central London district. Job Centre Plus customers will receive a skills “health check” followed by a skills action plan, possibly involving personalised training for specific roles through Local Employment Partnerships.
- 4.11 In 2007/8, LSC funded programmes were complemented by provision commissioned by the council using LAA/NRF and LDA funding. This provision tended to be targeted at specific disadvantaged groups (e.g. people with disabilities) or sectors (e.g. construction) and integrated with other services such as information, advice and guidance and job brokerage. The majority of these programmes are continuing into 2008/9 although some provision has yet to be commissioned.
- 4.12 Many providers in the voluntary and community sector are grouped under the Camden Training Network umbrella. Their publically-funded work is captured elsewhere in this section but not necessarily the provision which is funded in other ways. This issue is discussed further in section 5.13 below.
- 4.13 Volunteering is an important way for people from disadvantaged groups to develop vocational skills. It helps people to formalise and develop existing skills and life experiences at the same time as delivering services to some of Camden’s most vulnerable residents. Often people start as service users before becoming a volunteer and eventually a paid employee. Refugee volunteers at the Manor Gardens Advocacy Project receive training to become bilingual health advocates. About 30% go on to paid employment, a significant achievement considering the multiple barriers to employment faced by refugees. Another example is Kilburn Youth Centre where young volunteers train as peer health educators. There is a target for volunteering in Camden’s LAA and its role in developing skills and employment will be acknowledged in Camden’s forthcoming Volunteering Strategy.
- 4.14 Camden’s employers play an important role in developing the skills of their employees. As mentioned above, the LSC has funding and other support available through Train to Gain and other programmes. As well as formal training, companies often use volunteering as a way to develop leadership and people skills. Member companies of the Holborn

Partnership work with locally based charities such as Coram Family and Breakthrough Breast Cancer in this way. Volunteer Centre Camden runs projects such as Community Accountancy and ICT Volunteers which allow employees to transfer their specialist skills to the voluntary sector, while gaining skills themselves.

- 4.15 Local employers also help to enhance the skills of Camden residents not just their employees. Examples include pre-employment training through Job Centre Plus's Local Employer Partnerships and the NHS Jobshop, Section 106 agreements and Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives such as the work of the Education Business Partnership.
- 4.16 Voluntary Action Camden (VAC) helps voluntary and community organisations to improve the skills of their workforce, the majority of whom are volunteers. For example, VAC has secured lottery funding to deliver training for their management committees and trustees. 150 people over three years will receive accredited training in areas such as strategic planning, operational management and legal responsibilities. In parallel, the project will train trainers from groups that work with BME communities to cascade the training.
- 4.17 Camden PCT identified a need for greater BME representation in its workforce at all levels of the organisation and so developed a BME Staff Development Strategy as part of its HR Strategy for 2006-2009. Through the NHS Job Shop, training and coaching is provided to help local BME people apply for jobs in NHS trusts in Camden. There are also a number of programmes to support existing BME staff develop their careers from mentoring to the Black and Ethnic Leadership scheme.
- 4.18 Camden has one of the highest proportions of the labour force working in the knowledge economy in the country. It is therefore crucial that local residents have access to higher education. Birkbeck College, London's only specialist provider of part-time higher education, is located in the borough. It attracts many non-traditional students by allowing them balance study with paid work, offering a wide range of courses including entry level certificates and foundation degrees and through attractive financial support packages. 11% (2260) of Birkbeck's student body are Camden residents. Half of them are on courses that will allow them to access to higher education. The college has recently begun to develop its outreach and widening participation activities. Along with the council and FE colleges, it is a member of the Aimhigher Central London Partnership which aims to increase participation in higher education by young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. Working with Connexions, in the near future Birkbeck will run a series of tasters and tours for Camden residents of all ages who may not have considered higher education before.
- 4.19 The strategic direction for future skills and employment provision at a London level (i.e. LSC, LDA and JCP) is set by *London's Future: The Skills and Employment Strategy for London 2008-2013* published by the London Skills and Employment Board in July. However there is not yet

clarity about funding beyond this financial year. This is also true for council-commissioned provision. The LAA funding pot has been widened to the completely un-ringfenced Area-Based Grant (ABG) from central government. Camden's Working Neighbourhoods Funds (WNF) allocation within the ABG is considerably lower than the NRF which preceded it. In 2008/9, the WNF is being supplemented by underspend from the 2007/8 LAA and the council is currently appealing against this allocation. If the appeal is unsuccessful, WNF will drop to £1.4m in 2009/10 and nil in 2010/11. Coupled with the end of LDA funding for current programmes in April 2009, funding for all skills and employment programmes (including ESOL and basic skills) from 2009/10 may well be significantly reduced.

5 Increase opportunities for people to get into and stay in the job market, including older people, carers, parents returning to work, and those facing other barriers to employment, such as disability, or ill health

- 5.1 LSP members can be proud of the progress made in 2007/8 on worklessness. The employment rate went up, in no small part thanks to the 3000 plus people who found work through services delivered by LSP partners. However the overall picture masks increases in working age benefit claimants in Camden's most deprived areas. Worklessness remains a priority in the new LAA with the inclusion of targets for working age people claiming out of work benefits across the borough and in the worst performing neighbourhoods (NI152 and NI153).
- 5.2 Worklessness interventions can be broadly divided into supply side, making workless people more employable, and demand side, encouraging employers to employ local people.

Improving labour supply: supporting workless people

- 5.3 Mainstream employment support for workless people in Camden is delivered by Job Centre Plus and the organisations it commissions. It is complemented by a number of services mostly targeted at specific groups, delivered largely by the voluntary sector with funding from the council. In 2007/8, 3251 people found work with the help of these services, of which 369 were lone parents, 499 on Incapacity Benefit and 799 were long term unemployed.
- 5.4 Job Centre Plus provides information, advice and guidance to help workless people become more employable through a number of programmes, some directly delivered and some commissioned from the voluntary and private sectors. In 2007/8, it focused its activities on three client groups: lone parents, Incapacity Benefit (IB) claimants and people unemployed for 6 months or longer.
- 5.5 In 2008/9, Job Centre Plus in Camden is continuing to deliver programmes such as the New Deal and Pathways to Work targeted at these client groups along with initiatives aimed at other workless groups

e.g. disabled people and workless partners of BME people in work. Its work will become increasingly focused on the more deprived parts of the borough in order to meet the NI153 targets.

- 5.6 Job Centre Plus's work fits in a wider context of the government's welfare reform programme. Changes to the benefits system will begin in October with IB claimants moving to the new Employment Support Allowance and some lone parents moving to JSA. This is designed to give greater impetus to find work. The Flexible New Deal will replace the New Deal for long term unemployed people claiming Job Seeker's Allowance from April 2009.
- 5.7 The Council's Labour Market and Economy team is responsible for the externally-funded services commissioned by the council. It has re-commissioned many of the projects funded through the previous LAA. These projects provide information, advice and guidance or an integrated service based on clients' needs including things like outreach, job brokerage, employability and referrals to skills and childcare providers. Camden Working is the generic core service with more specialist services serving lone parents, BME communities, refugees, people with a disability or mental health problems and older people. For example, Highgate Newtown Community Centre provides individualised guidance, employability training and referrals to lone parents and women, particularly those from BME communities. They helped nearly 60 people find work in 2007/8.
- 5.8 The team also commissions a number of services to help local people set up their own businesses, many of which are explicitly targeted at workless people. For example, the council has provided training and resources to local BME voluntary organisations to provide business support to people who find it difficult to access mainstream services.
- 5.9 Other council directorates provide, commission and co-ordinate services for particular client groups. Services for lone parents in the borough are co-ordinated by the Lone Parent Working Partnership hosted by the Children, Schools and Families directorate. The Camden Housing and Employment Project does outreach work with social housing tenants to offer them support with finding training and jobs. The council was recently awarded £350,000 of "trailblazer" funding by the government to expand on this work by piloting a "Pathways" approach from March 2009 which tackles some of the underlying causes of worklessness among social housing tenants such as low confidence and lack of skills. Registered Social Landlords are important partners in this area, helping their residents to access training and employment opportunities. For example, 25 tenants of the One Housing Group have found employment through its employment and training schemes.
- 5.10 Employment support services are an increasingly important part of the social care services provided jointly by the PCT and council. A recent review of day opportunities for people with learning disabilities recognised the need for more emphasis on helping people find paid

employment. The Learning Disabilities Commissioning team is in the process of commissioning new employment services focusing on developing vocational skills and individualised job brokerage aimed at getting more people into mainstream employment.

- 5.11 In 2008/9, Camden secured funding to pilot the Individual Placement Support (IPS) approach to helping people with mental health problems find and remain in employment. It has a strong emphasis on early intervention and provides a range of services available at all levels of mental health provision appropriate to the level of need. IPS will form the core of the mental health employment strategy currently being developed by the council and PCT, with consultation taking place this autumn. The council and PCT held a conference on mental health and employment entitled “Working Towards Recovery” in July which will feed into the strategy. One of the main messages was the need for employer engagement. St James House, through its Jobs in Mind service partially funded by the council, works with employers to help people experiencing mental health problems remain in employment.
- 5.12 The council updated the Carers Strategy in 2007. It has a strong focus on helping Camden’s carers find or stay in employment, particularly younger carers under 30 and carers employed by the council and the PCT. The NHS Jobshop has won funding from London Councils to help carers over 50 formalise their experiences into a City and Guilds qualification and support them in looking for work. It is underpinned by a time-banking scheme which provides respite care while carers study.
- 5.13 As with skills provision, the voluntary and community sector in Camden delivers a wide range of services which are often not publically funded and not captured in the Economic Development Partnership’s planning and performance processes particularly around the LAA. The Partnership recognises the need for better mapping of this provision and better co-ordination with the statutory sector, bearing in mind that voluntary organisations have no duty to cooperate with the public sector. Indeed, feedback from the voluntary sector suggests that organisations sometimes avoid tendering for public sector contracts because contracts are too small in relation to the administrative requirements attached to them or because they can have a distorting effect on the organisation’s objectives, outcomes or future sustainability.

Increasing demand for local workers

- 5.14 LSP partners have levers they can use to stimulate labour demand or at least reorient it towards local people even though they have little direct control over Camden’s labour market.
- 5.15 Regeneration is an important source of employment and the council can use training and employment clauses in section 106 agreements to ensure that local people benefit from major development projects. The most important section 106 agreement relates to King’s Cross and is discussed in section 7. Another example is the Langdales Jewellery

Centre in Hatton Garden. Since opening in January 2007, the centre has supported 9 business start-ups and provided training for over 500 people. The use of section 106 agreements for training and employment opportunities is a priority in the council's corporate plan for 2008-2012. Although still at an early stage, the Euston redevelopment is likely to provide significant opportunities.

- 5.16 Effective employer engagement was identified as a major issue at the LSP's worklessness seminar in January 2008. Job Centre Plus is working increasingly closely with employers, most notably through Local Employment Partnerships (LEPs). LEPs supply local employers with candidates trained specifically for their roles in return for a commitment to employ local people; employer partners in Camden include Whole Foods Market. Employer engagement is also an important of the council-funded Camden Working job brokerage service.
- 5.17 Many LSP members are also major local employers in their own right and can help to tackle worklessness by employing local people, particularly those from disadvantaged groups. For example, the voluntary sector is a key employer for groups who are most likely to be workless such as young people under 25, BME communities and people with disabilities, according to recent research carried out in the borough.
- 5.18 The public sector is working hard in this area. NHS Job Shop, co-funded by the LDA and the local NHS, helps local people find and stay in jobs in the health and social care sector. 62 people found work through this programme in 2007/8 and it is continuing in 2008/9. It is the operational arm of the Health Employment Partnership (a subgroup of the Economic Development Partnership) which acts as the hub for activities such as NHS engagement with Local Employment Partnerships. The Council is participating as an employer in the new young apprenticeships mentioned in section 4 above in business administration and health & social care. It also provides community work placements and graduate internships to provide work experience for local people.
- 5.19 Many businesses in Camden recognise the importance of employing local people can make both to their bottom line and to corporate social responsibility. Some examples where they involve partnership working with the public sector have been mentioned in this report. In addition, the Holborn Partnership is making supporting local corporate social responsibility initiatives by disseminating best practice and sharing information between members a priority for the months ahead.
- 5.20 LSP partners have a crucial wider role in maintaining labour demand in the wider economy by ensuring the borough remains a good place to do business. Progress in this area was set out in the Community Strategy progress report on "A Strong Local Economy" presented to the LSP on 1 February. The two business improvement districts and other business organisations are important channels for the public sector LSP members to understand the needs of businesses. The council and LSP are

developing plans for a forum for businesses and LSP members to discuss issues of strategic importance.

Risks

- 5.21 As with skills provision, the major risk for worklessness programmes is funding after March 2009 when the funding for a number of LDA projects is due to finish. However there are steps LSP members are taking to reduce its impact. They include looking for new sources of funding where worklessness may be part of a wider agenda, such as the social housing "Pathways" pilot, better co-ordination at a strategic level through the Economic Development Strategy to fully understand need and ensure flexible funding complements mainstream funding effectively, and closer operational working to make better use of existing resources across the public, private and voluntary sectors.
- 5.22 The other major risk is a serious economic downturn. Interventions are now very concentrated on hard to reach groups and specific geographic areas because the general employment rate is high. A prolonged recession could change some of the assumptions behind these interventions and make the LAA targets much more difficult to achieve. Nevertheless the current concentration of interventions may well still be appropriate since people who are currently workless will have even greater need of support in order to compete in a labour market were there are more people looking for work.

6 Make sure good quality, accessible and affordable childcare is available

- 6.1 An absence of appropriate childcare is a major barrier to employment for parents and carers and thus to reducing child poverty. The Childcare Act 2006 gave local authorities a strategic role in ensuring there is sufficient childcare in their area. The take-up of formal childcare by low-income working families (NI118) is included in Camden's LAA and is also a priority for 2008/9 in the Children and Young People's Plan.
- 6.2 In January 2008, there were 3813 childcare places for under 5s in the borough, 46% local authority, 34% private, 15% childminders and 5% voluntary. Local authority provision is expanding as part of the roll-out of Children's Centres. In 2007/8 the council opened five Children's Centres in the most deprived wards which include nursery provision during working hours against a target of six; Agar Children's Centre will open later in the year. In addition, 36 Camden schools now offer extended services for 5-16 year olds, including "wraparound" childcare between 8am and 6pm, exceeding the target for 2007/8 of 28. Voluntary sector organisations such as Highgate Newtown Community Centre and Women Like Us play an important role in advising parents seeking work and providing childcare for interviews, training courses etc.
- 6.3 Despite the childcare element of the Working Tax Credit and the government subsidies for nursery education administered by the council,

the costs of childcare in Camden remain high. Additional support is available to more deprived families. Over 2007/8, the council gave 104 parents financial support through the Camden Childcare Support Fund and 31 parents were helped through the LDA-funded Childcare Affordability Programme targeted at lone parents and parents of children with learning disabilities or difficulties. Many employers in the borough, including the council, operate tax-free childcare voucher schemes or other childcare support. However, in the case of the council, the take-up of the voucher scheme is low, a situation reflected in national surveys.

6.4 In 2007/8, as part of its duties under the Childcare Act, the council published its Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. Camden's Childcare Strategy published in January 2008 will address the supply-side issues identified:

- Deliver more after-school provision
- Encourage a greater diversity of providers
- Increase the flexibility of provision
- Ensure free early education provision

6.5 The Childcare Strategy also has a number of actions designed to stimulate demand for childcare. A NI118 strategy is also being developed to provide a sharper focus in this area. Activities include outreach work, raising awareness of funding and benefits available and working with Job Centre Plus and Camden Council as an employer to promote childcare opportunities.

7 Maximise the local employment and training opportunities, including apprenticeships, generated by the King's Cross Development, the Channel Tunnel Rail Link and the London Olympics

7.1 The redevelopment of the King's Cross area is an exciting opportunity for Camden. It is one of the largest regeneration projects in the country and will eventually provide up to 25,000 jobs. To ensure local people benefit from employment and training opportunities, the council negotiated a section 106 agreements with the developers, led by Argent. Its main vehicle is King's Cross Working, a multi-agency partnership covering job brokerage, information, advice & guidance, training and engagement with local schools through the Camden Education Business Partnership. It also receives LAA and LDA funding. About 780 local people received training through these programmes in 2007/8, 83% of the target. As mentioned above, Carillion have been involved in the development of a diploma in construction and Argent hosted a visit to the King's Cross site by secondary pupils as part of Enterprise Week 2007.

7.2 The Channel Tunnel Rail Link has now been completed but St Pancras Station retail, the hotel development and other work continue to generate employment opportunities.

- 7.3 Camden's Olympics Plan was launched in March 2007. It aims to increase volunteering particularly as a route to developing new skills and to maximise the economic benefits with a focus on young people and small businesses. Part of the volunteering work is the LDA-funded Personal Best programme delivered by the Camden Training Network and City Lit resulting in a NVQ Level 2 qualification in volunteering.
- 7.4 Most employment opportunities associated with the Olympics will be in the construction, creative and hospitality sectors. There are a number of initiatives in these sectors described elsewhere in this report e.g. King's Cross Working, so the focus of the Olympic Plan is on joining this work up with Olympic opportunities through skills development and job brokerage.

8 Key documents

- [Camden 14-19 Strategy 2007-2013](#) (September 2007)
- Economic Development Strategy (forthcoming)
- Local Area Agreement Delivery Plans (forthcoming)
- [Compact for Camden](#)
- [Strategy for Change Part 1: Report to Executive and Appendices](#) (November 2007)
- [Strategy for Change Part 2: Report to Executive and Appendices](#) (March 2008)
- ESOL Strategic Action Plan (forthcoming)
- [Camden's Children and Young People's Plan: Annual Review](#) 2008 (June 2008)
- [London's Future: The Skills and Employment Strategy for London 2008-2013](#) (July 2008)
- [Camden Childcare Sufficiency Assessment](#) (2008)
- [Camden's Olympics Plan](#) (March 2007)