

Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)

Essex, Southend
and Thurrock

Business driven
- employer led



Funded by
UK Government

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This Local Skills Improvement Plan has been approved by the Secretary of State in line with the approval criteria set out in the [Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022](#), and in accordance with the [LSIP statutory guidance](#).

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All images used within this report are of local educational facilities (supplied with permission for use by the Federation of Essex Colleges) and Essex engagement events.



1. Executive Summary

This Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) for Essex, Southend and Thurrock, has been produced to provide an employer-led articulation of local skills priorities and has been achieved through extensive consultation, data analysis and evidence collection.

For Essex, this has included a strong collaborative approach with all key stakeholders joining forces and committing to action. Alongside the core remit of the LSIP itself, this will help ensure the success and sustainability of the work outlined. Key components of this report include:

- **Introducing Essex** – all references to Essex in the report include Essex, Southend and Thurrock. As one of the largest LSIP areas nationally (a population of 1.9 million) and an entrepreneurial location (home to nearly 81,000 businesses), skills and recruitment is at the forefront for employers. The LSIP represents an exciting opportunity to address these and to put the structures and resources in place to respond. As a diverse geography, with rural, coastal, urban and deprived areas, regular data and intelligence will be vital in order that resources can be applied where they will have most impact. A proposed Essex Employment and Skills Board and supporting sector groups will drive delivery

across Essex and be representative of the local economy. This will also enable strategic direction for other key areas of work, such as Devolution.

- **The LSIP priorities and local strategic context** reflect the nationally significant growth occurring locally, which is set to continue through factors such as housing and the presence of a large number of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs). Sectors impacted will include construction, engineering, digital, health and care – all of which are already big local employers experiencing recruitment challenges. Across all sectors, certain skills needs are dominating,

such as communication, leadership, management, digital and planning skills. This is evident through data, employer feedback in the survey and roundtable events supporting this report. The need to keep pace with digital change and net zero is also at the forefront of many employers' minds, but with further support required. A strong partnership approach with skills providers and colleges is already evident in Essex, with many leading-edge facilities, equipment and courses already in place and responding to industry demand. The priorities established to respond to the local economy and unlock current challenges include:

Skills priorities

- Soft skills and behaviours.
- Basic English, Maths and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages).
- Digital skills and 'Digitech'.
- Green skills.
- Leadership and Management skills.

Skills system priorities

- Skills planning system for Essex.
- System access and flexibility.
- Information, Careers Advice and Guidance.
- Tutor shortages and capacity of providers to respond.
- Inclusive employment.
- Barriers to engagement.

Essex Sectors and Technical Skills

- Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering & Aviation.
- AgriTech & Food Tech.
- Community & Voluntary.
- Construction.
- Creative and Cultural.
- DigiTech.
- Education.
- Health, Care & Med Tech.
- Professional Services.
- Transport and Logistics.

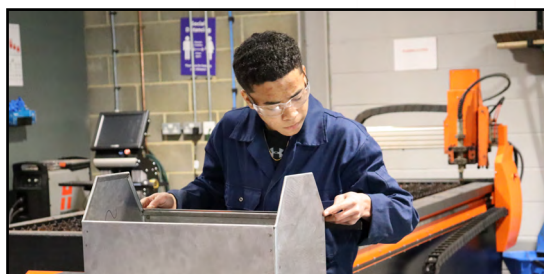


1. Executive Summary

- In taking the **skills priorities forward**, it is important to understand the challenges and opportunities in more depth and the work already underway to address them, as is explored through the report. This includes, for example, an Essex Careers magazine, Electrical Vehicle Facilities (recently launched at Harlow College) and an emerging partnership approach to inclusive growth. There is a wealth of work already underway through various stakeholders to respond to the fundamental challenge of tutor shortages, and it will be important to build on this.



- In exploring **how the skills priorities will be delivered against**, the Essex Employment and Skills Board, sector groups and supporting Labour Market Information (LMI) will be key. These will provide a focal point and strategic steer for skills in Essex and oversee the action to ensure that delivery takes place. Proposals outlined include an employer toolkit to help businesses to navigate the skills system and to equip them in areas such as net zero and inclusive growth. Ensuring that existing local programmes, funding and schemes are working effectively and are engaged in is also key – from the apprenticeship levy, through to opportunities for employers to engage in and support providers and colleges. The Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) will enable some new delivery / innovation and utilising and tapping into other funding will be a priority also.



This is an ambitious plan which will be delivered in partnership for employers and led by Essex Chambers of Commerce. It will ensure an action-based approach, able to respond to the changing demands of the local economy and future growth. With activity to commence within a few months and initial sector deep dives and mapping to start progressing immediately, the Essex entrepreneurial spirit is already in evidence. The main report will be refreshed annually, which will enable a review to check that these ambitions have been met.



2. Introduction

The Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) has been led by Essex Chambers of Commerce and represents a consensus across a range of local stakeholders. An **employer-led** approach has been central to development of this plan. Discussions have generated ideas about what is needed in Essex to deliver the best outcomes for businesses locally. The plan has been overseen by an employer-led LSIP Board, which also includes representatives from key stakeholders such as the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), Local Authorities and Job Centre Plus.

The plan aims to set out a new approach to the understanding of the local landscape and to set out how we collectively can bring about change.

This LSIP is one of 38 led by Employer Representative Bodies (ERBs) nationally. The plan is intended to inform the work of local skills providers and funding bids including the Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) and Strategic Development Fund (SDF).

The LSIP is supplemented by annexes supporting this plan, which go into further detail on many aspects, including data and intelligence and the process for agreeing the priorities.

This plan will explore the LSIP priorities, how

these will be taken forward and the delivery approach, which is demonstrated in a “roadmap for change”.

The key strength in Essex has been collaboration, with strong commitment and joint working already in place. Key stakeholders including the local authorities, LEP, employers, other ERBs and providers have joined forces to make the LSIP a success and build on what works well, ensuring resources are maximised. This approach should avoid potential duplication and confusion for local businesses and individuals. From existing capital investments through to future Section 106 skills pots being secured through Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) and potential devolution, **the combined capacity and capability of this partnership is significant and powerful**. It also benefits from a long-term perspective, further cementing the sustainability of the work of the LSIP.

The proposed Employment and Skills Board will draw together these constituent parts. It will provide the foundation for delivery, inform the various funding pots and give strategic, employer-led direction for skills work locally. Additionally, this will provide a useful focal point for broader engagement which will be necessary, such as with

the pre-16 landscape and to help inform learning decisions as early as possible.



3. Foreword

It is with immense pleasure that we share the Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock LSIP and supporting documents. This is the result of a lot of hard work, engagement and collaboration. We have been amazed and enthused at the support across Essex for this work and appreciate all the time employers and stakeholders have spent feeding into it. The collaborative approach has been second to none, with everyone joining forces in a shared determination to make this a success. We have listened to the business community and believe this report reflects their feedback throughout.

As home to a wide range of employers from sole traders and small businesses, through to national and international companies, Essex is very well placed to take a truly employer-led approach to skills. Before embarking on development of this plan, it was clear through our membership and engagement across Essex, as well as our national work through the British Chambers of Commerce how important it is to respond to employer needs.

We know first-hand the challenges and opportunities experienced by local businesses, particularly regarding skills and recruitment. Our proposed initiatives, such as an employer toolkit, will make the landscape easier to navigate for everyone.

With our population set to increase, housing growth, some of the largest national infrastructure projects, as well as two new Freeports, there couldn't be a better time to embark on this plan. With a whole host of other developments, such as the digital revolution, net zero and the cost of living it is imperative that we work together. We have no doubt on our ability to deliver and innovate. Essex is famously entrepreneurial, and this spirit has shone throughout this journey. Over the past few months, I have been overwhelmed by the fantastic collaboration with our colleges, providers and public sector partners. This provides an excellent foundation. Thank you to everyone involved so far and together we will make a difference!

Denise Rossiter, Chief Executive, Essex Chambers of Commerce



“Essex is famously entrepreneurial, and this spirit has shone throughout.”

— Denise Rossiter



4. Part One: LSIP Priorities and Strategic Context (Why)

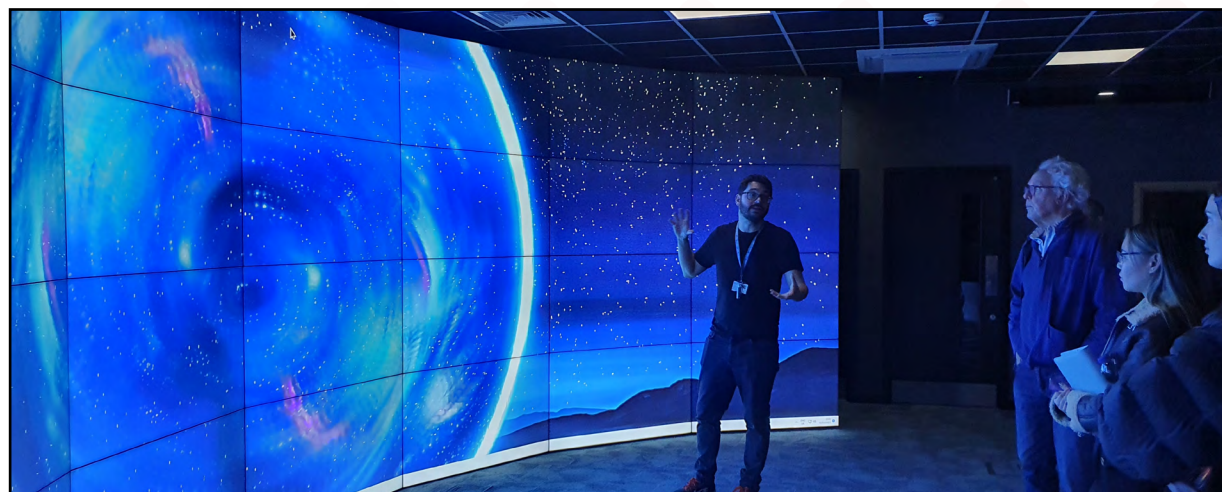
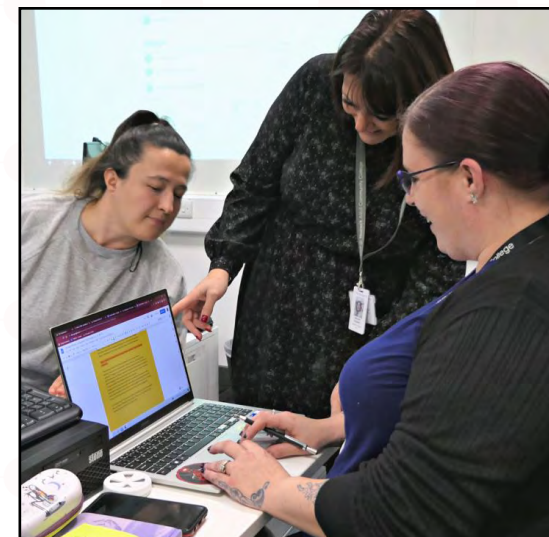
The LSIP is fundamentally seeking to set out actionable priorities, informed by employer need and that of the local economy. These priorities will be flexible to enable colleges and providers to respond to changing demands and will be achieved in collaboration. Agreement of priorities has been achieved through a combination of employer feedback at roundtable events, employer and provider surveys, data, evidence and working with key stakeholders. The LSIP considers both the here and now, and projects up to three years ahead by taking into consideration local priorities, what works well and what needs to change. This section explores that further, including information already gathered for other reports and strategies.

Some local priorities for skills have already been established through the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) and local authorities, as well as through the provider landscape, all of which align with the LSIP priorities and recommendations. These stakeholders, alongside the LSIP Board, are also key to delivering against the identified priorities. It will be important to build upon this existing work in taking the LSIP forward. Some notable examples of existing work considered are expanded upon in the annex section.

These include:

- [SELEP's Skills Strategy and Skills Report](#)
- [The Essex Skills Plan](#)
- Southend Skills Strategy
- Thurrock Skills Plan

Broadly, some themes and priorities have emerged across all existing plans and strategies - the LSIP will take these forward. These include raising awareness of local sectors, simplifying the landscape for SMEs and increasing apprenticeships and industry relevant qualifications for all ages.





4.1. Introducing Essex, Southend and Thurrock – ‘Greater Essex’

This LSIP covers the local authority areas of Essex, Southend and Thurrock. All references to ‘Essex’ within this plan include these three areas.

Essex is one of the largest areas in England, with a population of 1,862,800, of which 61.2% are of working age. It is diverse, with one of the longest coastlines, rural and urban areas and some of the wealthiest and the most deprived parts of the country. Proximity to London is significant to the labour market, with high levels of commuting into the capital and other areas (10% of Essex residents travel more than 10km to work). Home working is now sizeable, with 32.1% of residents working from home. Proximity to areas such as Cambridge, Hertfordshire and Suffolk are also factors for people commuting in and out of Essex.



Essex at a glance – key facts and figures (see annex reports for more detailed data)

	Essex	Southend	Thurrock	Region (East)	UK
Population (2021)	1,506,300	180,600	175,900	6,2348,100	65,121,700
Working age population (2021)	915,100 (60.8%)	111,900 (62.0%)	112,400 (63.9%)	61.6%	62.9%
Workless households (and as % of all households) 2021	51,000 (11.1%)	4,900 (9%)	4,300 (8.6%)	218,100 (11.2%)	2,866,800 (14%)
In employment (16-64) – Jan – Dec 2022	77.9%	75.7%	78.1%	78.3%	75.6%
Self-employed (16-64) 2022	9.8%	10.3%	14.1%	9.7%	9.3%
% working age with level 1+ qualification (2021)	88.6%	88.4%	82.8%	88.5%	87.5%
% working age with level 2+ qualification (2021)	74.5%	76%	68.6%	76.7%	78.1%
% working age with level 3+ qualification (2021)	53.6%	56%	45.2%	58.2%	61.5%
% working age with level 4+ qualification (2021)	35.2%	37.9%	27%	39.6%	43.6%
% working age with no qualification (2021)	4.9%	5.6%	7.1%	5.8%	6.6%
Weekly earnings (residence based) 2022	£689.90	£697.70	£702.00	£667.60	£642.20
Weekly earnings (work based) 2022	£622.20	£600.80	£632.20	£632.40	£642.20
Job density (2021)	0.77	0.73	0.75	0.84	0.85

As the table above illustrates, skills levels have generally improved locally in recent years, but remain below the regional and national average and with variations at district level, which the supporting data and intelligence pack annex will explore more fully. Data and statistics will be updated and published regularly, as part of LSIP priorities and to support local colleges and providers to respond to economic need. These statistics are therefore a snapshot in time, to provide a view of some of the key aspects of the local economy and skills landscape.



4.1. Introducing Essex, Southend and Thurrock – ‘Greater Essex’

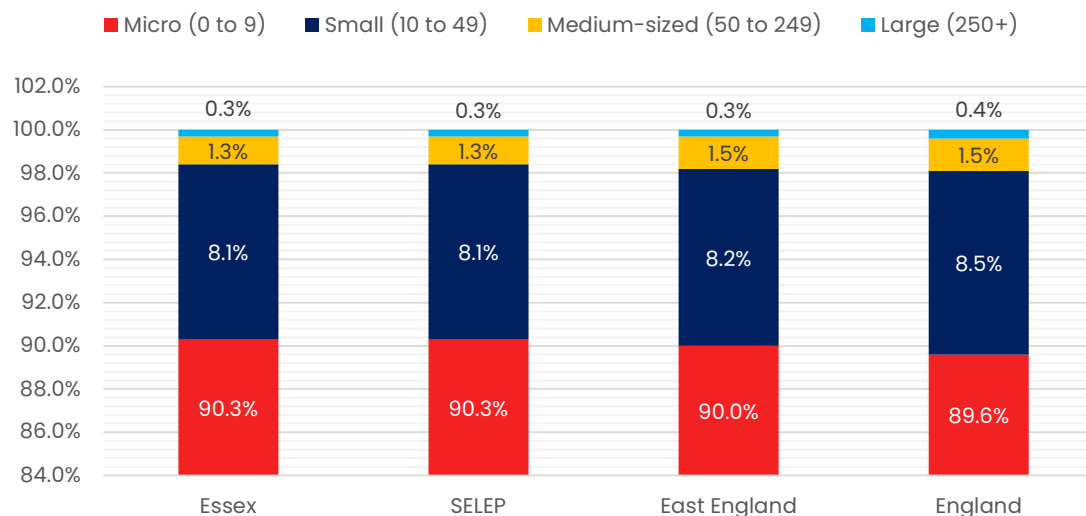
Essex has a flourishing SME sector. Of a total of 80,910 businesses, 73,025 are in the ‘micro’ category employing 0–9 people. At 90.3%, Essex has slightly more than the national and regional percentages in this category. It is also home to some world-renowned employers already working to support skills in a variety of ways. In general, the number of businesses in Essex has steadily increased in recent years, although the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a slowing down of enterprise start-ups.

Further information on enterprises (including at district level) is included in the data annex supporting this report.

Small businesses often require additional support to engage with the skills system and to provide opportunities such as apprenticeships, something which the survey and roundtables have further highlighted. Businesses also fed back that more flexible training options would be beneficial such as short courses, modular options and a mix of online, in person and on-site training.

Businesses would welcome flexible training, including short and modular options and a mix of online, in person and on-site.

Enterprises by employment band size – 2022





4.2. Unprecedented growth

Essex is experiencing major growth on a nationally significant scale and much larger than in other parts of the country. This will further impact local skills needs and future jobs and is already increasing demand in sectors like construction and engineering. Pages 12-13 include a table capturing Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects happening in Essex. Green technologies and developments are also coming to the fore in projects such as windfarms and solar energy. Some of this work also crosses geographical boundaries, emphasising the importance of working with neighbouring LSIPs.

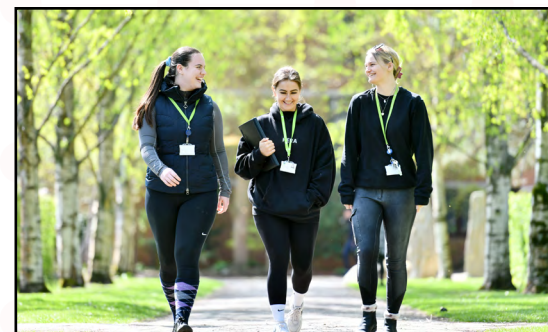
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Below is a summary of some of the most notable infrastructure developments. Some skills planning work is already underway and in collaboration with SELEP and their Major Projects Skills Group. In 2021, SELEP, commissioned MACE to produce a [report](#) on the skills and employment requirements of major projects. £30bn of potential investment would create demand for over 117,000 roles between 2025-2028 and over

67,000 between 2029-2038. Nearly 40,000 of these are due to be in Essex.

These roles were wide ranging but included higher concentrations of engineers, multiple construction trades, project managers, architects, manufacturers and logistics. This further illustrates that the scale of demand in major infrastructure development is vast and requires labour and skill sets in areas where there are already significant shortages. The report also concluded that the issue considered most critical is tutor shortages, as it presents a 'bottle neck', and impacts the ability to achieve other aims. Recent SELEP research found that there were 130 teaching vacancies in local colleges and providers in construction and 57 in engineering, which illustrates the scale of the challenge. Further information on this and work underway is included in the annex reports.

Addressing tutor shortages and the skills needs of these projects is a priority for action going forward, with further detail on proposed actions in section 5. Work with the major infrastructure projects to scope the specific jobs attached to developments and timing will happen regularly.





4.2. Unprecedented growth

A SELEP report found that the most critical issue facing major projects and their ability to recruit was that of local tutor shortages.

[The Essex Housing Strategy](#) says that **emerging local plans in Essex will bring forward land to deliver some 148,000 homes by the mid-2030s** – around 9,700 a year. Therefore, even within the lifespan of this report, there are sizeable targets, impacting on the skills needs of the construction sector. The strategy also points to the changing skills needed to build new homes and upgrade existing housing stock, such as retrofitting and modular housing. There is also a commitment to increasing construction skills and aspects such as modern methods of construction, sustainable energy and heat generation as well as increasing apprenticeships. As part of this, **garden communities** are large developments which create well-planned, sustainable places to live. Plans are in development across Essex, including Harlow and Gilston Garden Town, and Tendring and Colchester Borders Garden Community. In South Essex, a joint infrastructure and strategic plan will develop a blueprint for new homes, jobs and infrastructure. In Southend, large scale developments include

the Better Queensway project, creating housing and outdoor space in a central location.

Essex will also be a shared home to **two new Freeports. Thames Freeport** is an economic zone connecting Ford's Dagenham engine plant to the global ports at London Gateway and Tilbury, with an emphasis on introducing electric and autonomous vehicle technology along the A13 corridor into London. This highlights the role of the River Thames and plans include a Skills Accelerator and the potential for 20,000 new jobs. **Freeport East** is a partnership between Hutchison Ports, Harwich Haven Authority New Anglia LEP, SELEP and local authorities. This will be centred on the Port of Felixstowe and Harwich International Port.

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA – previously Public Health England) is developing a site in Harlow, as part of its vision for a network of facilities essential to the future health security of the nation. Central to this will be the re-provision and enhancement of ageing high containment facilities supported by other science and research functions with data and genomic science capabilities. Quite apart from potential construction and engineering skills opportunities, this will help grow science and technology skills in Harlow. However,

approval and implementation plans are being reviewed so it is too early to give any dates for staff deployment.

Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) impacting locally and set to commence within the next few years include those as below. It is important to note that due to their size, the timing and nature of these projects can vary – they can be paused, delayed or cancelled. It is therefore important to view them in this context and with an ongoing commitment as part of the action plan to gather more detail on jobs and skills needs as and when it becomes available. The following is therefore a snapshot at the time of writing this report and **references to the sector needs are indicative only**, but illustrate the additional demand there will be on the key sectors identified for Essex and the skills system. In addition to those included, there would of course be impact on skills needs more broadly in areas such as digital and hospitality: [\(see next page\)](#)



4.2. Unprecedented growth

Project	Description	Impact on local sectors (example / indicative only)
Longfield Solar Farm	Located on land north-east of Chelmsford and north of the A12 between Boreham and Hatfield Peverel. This will be a new solar photovoltaic array generating station, co-located with battery storage, together with grid connection infrastructure. The generating capacity will be up to 500MW.	Energy, green, engineering, installation, construction
Rivenhall IWMF and Energy Centre	Located at the former Rivenhall Airfield, off Coggeshall Road (A120), Braintree. This will be an Integrated Waste Management Facility (IWMF) and Energy Centre development is for extension to a generating station to enable electrical generating capacity of up to 65MW together with associated development.	Energy, green, engineering, installation, construction
A12 Chelmsford to A120 Widening Scheme	From Junction 19 of the A12 to the East of Chelmsford to Junction 25 with the A120 at Marks Tey. This will widen where necessary the A12 from two to three lanes in each direction. This will also include the removal of junctions 20a, 20b and 23 and moving junctions 21, 22 and 24 to make them all movement junctions and; create two bypasses.	Engineering, construction, planning
Bradwell B new power station	Located in Bradwell-on-Sea in Maldon, this would be a new nuclear power station capable of generating up to 2.2GW of electricity. This would replace the former power station which has now been decommissioned. This project is currently paused and with Sizewell C (Suffolk) likely to have significant skills and employment opportunities, particularly for north Essex.	Nuclear engineering, welding, construction, engineering, project management
Lower Thames Crossing	A new tunnel / road connecting Essex, Thurrock and Kent. Approximately 14.5 miles (23km) in length, it will connect to the existing road network from the A2/M2 to the M25 with two tunnels (one southbound and one northbound) running beneath the River Thames. The scheme also includes improvements to the M25, A2 and A13, where the scheme connects to the road network, new structures and changes to existing ones (including bridges, buildings, tunnel entrances, viaducts, and utilities such as electricity pylons) along the length of the new road and a free-flow charging system through the tunnel.	Engineering, construction, tunnelling, robotics, project management, electrical
M25 Junction 28 improvements	To the west of Brentwood, an upgrade of the junction between the M25 anti-clockwise and the A12 in Essex, including the provision of a dedicated link for this right-turn movement and minor improvements of the existing roundabout.	Engineering, construction, planning
Thurrock Flexible Generation Plant	North of the existing Tilbury National Grid substation, off station Road in Thurrock. This development comprises the construction and operation of Gas Reciprocating engines with up to 600 MW electrical capacity and Battery Storage with up to 150 MW electrical capacity.	Electrical Engineering, construction

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4.2. Unprecedented growth

Project	Description	Impact on local sectors (example / indicative only)
Tilbury 2	Located at the site of the former Tilbury Power Station, 1km east of the existing Port of Tilbury. This will involve the extension of existing jetty facilities and the dredging of berth pockets in the River Thames, and land works and facilities for: a "Roll-On / Roll-Off" (Ro-Ro) terminal for importing and exporting containers on road trailers; a facility for importing and processing bulk construction materials; and areas of external storage for a variety of goods such as imported cars. The project also involves the construction of road and rail links to the site from adjacent networks.	Construction, engineering, logistics
North Falls Offshore Wind Farm	A wind farm, off the Essex Coast near Clacton-on-Sea (and also impacting on Suffolk).	Engineering, turbine technicians, construction
Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm	A wind farm, off the Essex Coast near Clacton-on-Sea – to include wind turbine generators and associated foundations and array cables.	Engineering, turbine technicians, construction
Electric Lines: Bramford to Twinstead	A 29km linear route between the Bramford Substation, Suffolk and 1.5km south of Twinstead Tee, Essex. Construction and operation of a new double circuit electricity transmission network reinforcement of c.29km, consisting of overhead lines, underground cables, a grid supply point substation and associated development.	Engineering, construction, electrical
Oikos Marine & South Side Development	Located at Oikos Storage Terminal, Canvey Island, this will be the alteration of existing harbour facilities by the installation of additional import and export infrastructure and equipment on two of the Terminal's jetties to improve their operational efficiency together with the construction of new storage tanks and related services on the Terminal's land side.	Construction, engineering, logistics
Sea Link	Construction of a new offshore HVDC cable between Suffolk and Kent, with a converter station in Suffolk and Kent and including some of the Essex coastline.	Electrical engineering, construction
East Anglia Green Energy Enablement (GREEN) project	A reinforcement of the electricity transmission network between Norwich and Tilbury Substations. This would reinforce the 400k high voltage power network in East Anglia to include a new substation in Tendring district.	Electrical engineering, construction
Purfleet Regeneration	A £1bn regeneration project in partnership with Thurrock Council to include a creative hub on the River Thames, new town centre with shops and restaurants, up to 2,850 new homes, integrated medical centre, improved transport infrastructure, new primary school and over 1,000,000 square feet of film and TV production studios. Later phases will deliver a new university campus with a focus on health and the creative arts.	Construction, engineering, planning

The construction sector is already large in Essex, employing above the national average and set to see significant growth, given the housing and infrastructure developments outlined. **Working closely with these projects through the Essex Employment and Skills Board to understand the timing and scale of this demand in Essex will be vital.**



4.3. Sectors – the big hitters

As this report sets out, many of the skills required locally are cross-cutting, such as green, digital, soft skills, leadership and management.

Alongside these, there are some sector specific skills and occupations resulting from the needs of the economy, now and in the future, as described above. Certain sectors are also particularly prevalent and set to see growth. For example, construction

will dominate due to factors such as housing and infrastructure growth as set out and health & care will continue to offer a lot of employment given projected population increases.

Some headlines for the biggest sectors are included below, which will be explored in more detail in the annex reports along with training already offered, facilities in place (with support from SELEP and Essex

County Council) and with a commitment to mapping this more fully and sector deep dives for the next phase of the LSIP process. The skills required by the sectors further illustrate some of the cross-cutting skills required by all sectors and which have informed the priorities for action. Further information on skills sought by employers is also included in the LSIP priorities document published by the Chambers in March 2023 and updated in June 2023.

Sector	Essex now – top posted occupations	Top Specialist and cross-cutting skills	Future outlook / factors to address	Examples of courses and facilities locally
<p>Construction and the built environment –</p> <p><i>58,000 people employed across Essex</i></p>	<p>Top posted occupations –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction Helper/Worker (1975) • Labourer/ Material Handler (1656) • Quantity surveyors (1565) • Forklift/Pallet Jack Operator (906) • Manufacturing Machine Operator (451) • Carpenter (761) • Validation Engineer (575) • Land Surveyors (526) • HVAC Mechanic Installer (496) • Repair/Service Technician (496) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing • Construction • Forklift Truck • Carpentry • Project Controls • Communications • Management • Customer Service • Planning • Detail Orientated • Loading and Unloading • Self-motivation • Problem Solving • Operations • Strong work ethic • Project Planning • Warehousing • Plumbing • Painting • Procurement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male dominated, ageing workforce – need to diversify • Competition from London • Perception and awareness – a barrier • Large infrastructure and housing – significant • Growing need for green, digital, retrofit, modular and low carbon skills • Shortage of construction tutors and latest industry knowledge of existing tutors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chelmsford College Construction Centre • Colchester Institute Construction & Built Environment • Harlow College ‘Getting into Construction’

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4.3. Sectors – the big hitters

Sector	Essex now – top posted occupations	Top Specialist and cross-cutting skills	Future outlook / factors to address	Examples of courses and facilities locally	
Digitech <i>Over 37,000 people employed across Essex</i>	<p>Top posted occupations –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Support Specialist (1744) • IT Project Manager (607) • Database Administrator (336) • Software QA Engineer/Tester (282) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Security Engineer/Analyst (261) • Network/Systems Administrator (250) • Network/Systems Support Specialist (239) • Data Engineer (148) • Hardware Engineer (144) • Project Manager (73) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing • Technical Support • Help-Desk Support • Microsoft Office 365 • Active Directory • Microsoft Azure • SQL (Programming Language) • Operating System • Window Servers • Communications Management • Customer Service • Problem Solving • Trouble shooting • Detail orientated • Planning • Operations • Microsoft Office • Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on all sectors due to the 'digital revolution' as well as specialists needs • Disproportionately male • Resilient and jobs able to be done flexibly / remotely • Shortage of tutors and speed of sector change impacting on knowledge of existing tutors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USP College XTEND Campus • Centre for Digital Technologies (Basildon) • Harlow College IT, Computing and Cyber Security • The Lightbulb (apprenticeships and Bootcamps)
Health & Care <i>Over 98,000 people employed across Essex</i>	<p>Top posted occupations –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregiver/ Personal Care Aide (6064) • Registered General Nurse (RGN) (5912) • Care Assistant (4938) • Nursing Assistant/ Healthcare Assistant (1937) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physician (1395) • Nursery Nurses/ assistant and playworker (1194) • Healthcare Manager (1149) • Family/School/ General Social Worker (1042) • Nurse Practitioner (879) • Physiotherapist (655) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursing • Personal Care • Mental Health • Midwifery • Marketing • Auditing • Companionship • Clinical Governance • Risk Analysis • Social Work • Communications • Management • Planning • Leadership • Research • Teaching • Innovation • Customer Service • Compassion • Enthusiasm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population growth and ageing population (above national average) will impact on sector • Vacancies have increased – challenges recruiting and perceptions of sector as a result • Some reduction in EU and overseas care-workers • The pandemic raised the profile of health & Care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colchester Institute new Centre for Health and Care • Essex Adult Community Learning, Southend ACC and Thurrock ACC (range of Health and Care courses)

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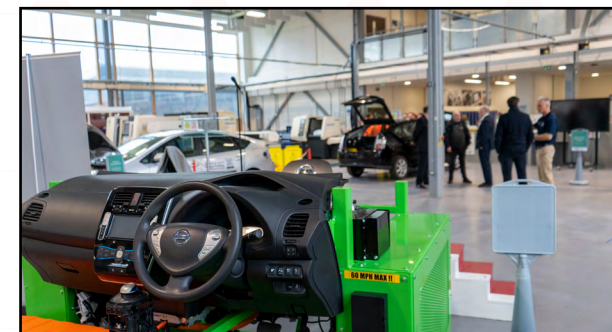
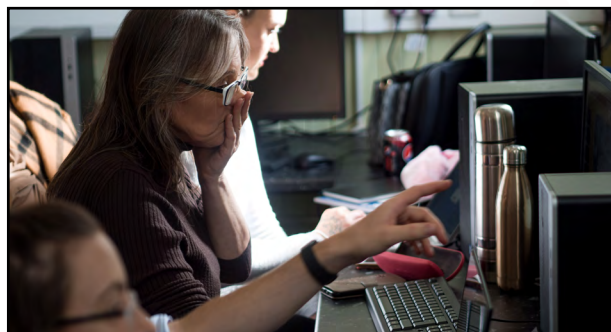
4.3. Sectors – the big hitters

Sector	Essex now – top posted occupations	Top Specialist and cross-cutting skills	Future outlook / factors to address	Examples of courses and facilities locally
Education <i>Over 71,000 people employed across Essex</i>	Top posted occupations – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Assistant (2728) • Tutor (2533) • Primary School Teacher (1612) • University Lecturer (1155) • Secondary School Teacher (694) • SEN Teacher (533) • Science Teacher (508) • Supply Teacher (471) • Vocational Education Tutor (460) • English/ Language/Arts Teacher (389) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing • Working with Children • Autism Spectrum Disorders • Special Education • Learning Support • Lesson Planning • National Curriculum • Classroom Management • Mental Health • Mathematics Education • Teaching • Communications • Management • Mathematics • Planning • Enthusiasm • Leadership • Innovation • Training and Development • Positivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently facing shortages, particularly given general recruitment challenges and in areas such as construction and engineering teaching • A continued need given population growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Essex College – FE and HE teaching courses • Colchester Institute Teacher Training courses • HE locally also offering courses– e.g. University of Essex
Advanced manufacturing, Engineering & Aviation <i>Over 47,000 people employed across Essex</i>	Top posted occupations – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production Worker (1881) • Maintenance Technician (1648) • Utilities Technician (1142) • Mechanical Engineering (1131) • Civil Engineering (1095) • Quality Inspector/ Engineering (824) • Construction Helper/Worker (417) • Industrial Engineer (409) • Scheduler/ Operations Coordinator (363) • Electronic/ Electrical Assembler (322) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing • Maintenance Engineering • Machinery • Mechanical Engineering • Field Service Management • Systems Engineering • Technical Management • Construction • Risk Analysis • Communication • Management • Customer Services • Planning • Detail Orientated • Problem Solving • Operations • Self-motivation • Sales • Computer Literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ageing workforce impacting on skills needed – high need for digital skills • Cross-over with digital and robotics and changing the skills needed • Projected reduction in overall employment in the sector, but the ageing workforce, need for digital skills and competition from other sectors means a skills shortage is still likely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harlow Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Centre (HAMEC) • South-East Institute for Technology (IoT) • Braintree STEM Innovation Centre • Stansted Airport College

continues next page

4.3. Sectors – the big hitters

Sector	Essex now – top posted occupations	Top Specialist and cross-cutting skills	Future outlook / factors to address	Examples of courses and facilities locally
<p>Transport and logistics</p> <p><i>Over 52,000 employed across Essex</i></p>	<p>Top posted occupations –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivery Driver (2965) • Automotive Service Technician/Mechanic (2367) • Warehouse/Inventory Associate (210) • Labourer/Material Handler (2035) • HGV/LGV Class 2 Driver (1817) • HGV/LGV Class 1 Driver (1041) • Storage/Distribution Manager (489) • Van/Taxi/Shuttle Driver (467) • Driving Instructions (454) • Auto Body Technician (285) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warehousing • Marketing • Forklift truck • Palletizing • Vehicle Maintenance • Manual Handling • Housekeeping • Stock Control • Order Picking • Key Performance Indicators • Customer Service • Communications • Loading and Unloading • Detail orientated • Lifting ability • Management • Strong work ethic • Operations • Self-motivation • Sales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of digital and robotics on future skills requirements and automation (e.g. warehousing) • Thames Freeport and Freeport East to grow and expand economic activity near local ports • Parts of sector (e.g. HGV driving) saw huge increase in demand throughout pandemic which has continued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Essex College automated warehouse and supply chain and logistics qualifications • South East Institute for Technology (IoT) • HE also offering courses – e.g. International Logistics & Supply Chain Management (University of Essex)





4.4. Employer feedback

Alongside this data and evidence, the consultation process for this report enabled roundtable engagement alongside a business & provider survey, which took place between November 2022 and March 2023.

61% of Essex employers who responded to the survey said they would be prepared to support colleges and providers

This engagement process has been extensive and far reaching, with in-person roundtable events happening across Essex (which the annex reports will outline in more detail). Most of these took place at colleges, helping facilitate positive early engagement with employers. Notably, a joint workshop also took place with the Essex Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) as part of this process. Engagement to date has included 11 roundtables with employers, 2 roundtables with colleges and providers, 441 responses to the employer survey, 4480 hits on the LSIP pages on the Chambers website and over 6500 recipients of the LSIP newsletter.

Feedback through the survey included:

- Nearly half experiencing difficulties recruiting.
- 70% had recruited in the last year.
- 65% were planning to recruit in the coming year.
- 61% said they would be prepared to support colleges and providers.
- Overwhelmingly, employers fed back that a lack of soft skills and work ready behaviours is their number one issue.
- Leadership and management skills were also cited, particularly for those who are making the transition into first line management.
- Employers are acutely aware of the need to transition to a low carbon economy but require support to do so.
- A near universal requirement for basic digital skills alongside more technical and advanced technological skills were highlighted.

Further information on the feedback is provided in the Annex B report.

Physical activity creating opportunities for economic growth and wellbeing – in addition to the sector and occupation requirements set out above, employers recognise that a healthy population is a productive one.

Today, the mental and physical health of the workforce has never been more important to contribute to the wellbeing of those who are employed and seeking employment. Better health promotes economic growth and prosperity by expanding the workforce and boosting productivity, while also delivering immense individual and social benefits. Health is an important determinant of employment enabling Essex to attract and retain quality employees. A healthy workforce is also an important element of levelling up because people with poor health in Essex have a much lower employment rate, impacting on individual wellbeing and the county's economic prosperity.

To this end, it is important to acknowledge the significance of the economic contribution of the Essex sport and physical activity sector. This is direct, through job creation, and indirect by reducing health inequalities and increasing productivity and ultimately workability. Research also illustrates that it has a direct impact on sickness absence, even more vital at a time of labour shortages.

4.5. The training and provider landscape

The local training landscape is already responding well to much of the economic growth as set out above.

Within the annex section, further information is provided on what provision is currently available, with the map below setting out the main locations of colleges. This doesn't illustrate all the external providers operating locally and the annex reports will explore this in more detail.

Essex also benefits from two key networks, which were key in the consultation for this report. The Federation of Essex Colleges (FEDEC) brings together colleges locally and the Essex Provider Network (EPN) brings together both colleges and training providers.

A Strategic Development Fund (SDF) was made available locally by the DfE and Essex Southend and Thurrock received £2,749,795 for 2022-23. The sectoral focus for the funding in Essex was Digital, Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing, Green Construction, Green Energy and Life Sciences. Further information is in Annex A and this therefore provides an excellent foundation for further action.

There is also an Institute for Technology (IoT) covering the SELEP area, which therefore also includes Essex. This is led by South Essex College and Essex partners include Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford College, Harlow College, DP World (London Gateway), Port of Tilbury, Stansted Airport, Morgan Sindall Construction, Princess Alexandra Hospital and Leonardo. Funding for the IoT has enabled investment in high-tech equipment alongside similar equipment for engineering,

which will enable sharing of expertise across the partnership. Specialist engineers at each college will be able to teach easily across the partnership using the same equipment, also helping alleviate some of the tutor shortages described through this report. Methods such as video conferencing will also allow students to be taught by one tutor in partner colleges, with other students in situ in other colleges. Working with the IoT will therefore clearly be important in taking the LSIP forward.



Full version of map available at <https://essexopportunities.co.uk/essex-careers-magazine/>

4.6. Priorities

This information gathering has helped to establish a set of priorities, which this report will explore further, with clear actions to address them.

These were [also published on the Essex Chambers website](#) and agreed with local providers and LSIP Board. These included:

Skills priorities:

- Soft skills and behaviours.
- Basic English, Maths and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages).
- Digital skills and 'Digtch'.
- Green skills.
- Leadership and Management skills.

Skills system priorities:

- Skills planning system for Essex.
- System access and flexibility.
- Information, Careers Advice and Guidance.
- Tutor shortages and capacity of providers to respond.
- Inclusive employment.
- Barriers to engagement.

Essex sectors and technical skills:

- Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering and Aviation.
- AgriTech and Food Tech.
- Community and Voluntary.
- Construction and the Built Environment.
- Creative and Cultural.
- DigiTech.
- Education.
- Health, Social Care and Med Tech.
- Professional Services Transport and Logistics.

Section 4.3 above explores some of these sectors further. Establishing sector groups and carrying out sector deep-dives will enable progress against sector specific requirements. All sectors will be supported through the cross-cutting skills and skills system priorities set out.





5. Part Two: Taking the LSIP Priorities Forward (What)

Further insight and information on the skills priorities which have been agreed for Essex are outlined below, with some further detail on the specific issues relating to these skills.

These should be viewed in conjunction with the sector table in section 4.3 which looks at some of the specific issues within sectors. (Section 6 will look at the actions to address these in more detail).

5.1. Skills priorities:

Soft skills and behaviours – new entrants, existing and returning employees often lack appropriate soft skills and behaviours for work and often do not understand what is expected of them. Employers have identified that individuals either lack, or have poorly developed skills in listening, speaking and presenting, problem solving, creativity, staying positive, aiming high, and teamwork. Leadership is also mentioned here, but it is treated as a priority in its own right due to its complexity.

As is illustrated through the report and supporting data, this is something that employers have fed back strongly through the employer roundtables and in the business survey. It is further shown in the data and with many current vacancies including reference to soft skills and behaviours.

Basic English, Maths and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) – Businesses have identified that new entrants, existing and returning employees often lack basic English and Maths skills that they need in the workplace. Often, this is linked directly to how these skills are applied day to day in work and the issue can be exacerbated where English is not an individual's first language. A need for more advanced English language has also been highlighted, whereby an individual has basic English skills, but requires further development in order to utilise their existing skills (e.g. many Ukrainian residents are trained as doctors or nurses but can't currently utilise these skills). It will, clearly, be important to work with existing schemes in this area also, such as the Multiply programme which is helping adults to improve their numeracy skills.

Digital skills and 'Digitech' – Baseline digital skills have become a near-universal requirement for employment and are insufficiently developed across the workforce. Generic digital skills such as Microsoft Office and other productivity software tools are commonly required in jobs across all skills levels and are often fundamental to entering the labour market. The curriculum does not often cover these skills in detail, instead focussing on equally valuable, but more specialist digital skills like coding and cyber-security. There needs

to be a provision for generic digital skills also. Furthermore, with the advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI), workplace digital skills are likely to become much more advanced. There is a difference between the everyday digital skills needed to order food etc, compared to more advanced workplace skills like the use of apps, technical support etc. Specific digital skills are key to enabling career progression and the move from low to high skilled jobs. Furthermore, in the future, more advanced digital skills, including the ability to use AI, will become part of everyday work. Therefore, it is important that employees at all levels have effective digital skills.

Leadership and Management skills – many Essex businesses identified a lack of leadership and management skills in their organisations at all levels. With an ageing workforce and higher than normal staff turnover there is a need to train, support and develop all aspects of leadership and management. Most identified a specific gap for new entrants and existing employees who are making their first step into supervisory roles. This has also been a key feature of current vacancies and skills required by employers who are advertising.

5. Part Two: Taking the LSIP Priorities Forward (What)

5.1. Skills priorities Continued:

Green skills – The transition to a low carbon economy will require the reskilling and upskilling of existing members of the workforce with training in green skills. New entrants and returners will also need an educational understanding of green skills. Green skills can be categorised as knowledge, experience, values, attitudes and abilities that support carbon reduction and resource efficiency to increase climate resilience and enhance natural assets. Green skills are relevant to all sectors in the economy. Data produced through Data City explores companies identified as being ‘Net Zero’ or in the Net Zero supply chain. These include: Agritech, Building Technologies, Carbon Capture, Diversion of Biodegradable Waste from Landfill, Energy Cooperatives, Energy Storage, Green Finance, Grid, Heating, Low Carbon, Low Carbon Consultancy Advisory and Offsetting Services, Low Emission Vehicles, Pollution Control and Mitigation, Renewables, Renewable Energy Planning Database, Waste Management and Recycling. For Essex, this includes 446 companies and with the largest proportion (22%) in construction.

Green skills and preparing for net zero have also been a strong aspect of feedback from employers and is illustrated in the data also. This cuts across sectors and with SMEs often requiring further information on the actions they can take to contribute. Much work is already underway, with an Essex Green Skills Summit taking place and some resources and support already in development. Joining forces with this will maximise impact and use of funding. Facilities are also being invested in, so supporting the use of these is clearly important.



Example of existing action to build on: Harlow Electric Vehicle Centre opened by Robert Halfon MP in Feb 2023– Local Authority investment has enabled Harlow College to adapt their garage to equip it for electric vehicle and maintenance and to teach respective accreditation. As well as equipment, this will train 50 automotive technicians over the next 2 years to develop the skills and attain the accreditations of IMI L2 Award in Electric / Hybrid Vehicle Routine Maintenance and IMI L3 Award in Electric / Hybrid Vehicle System Repair and Replacement. It will also enable 100 Harlow residents the opportunity to attend workshops. To date 14 people have completed the L2 and 11 are in process. 38 are undertaking L1. Tutors have completed the L4 accreditation. Local business engagement has been strong.

5. Part Two: Taking the LSIP Priorities Forward (What)

5.2. Skills system priorities:

Skills planning system for Essex – There is no formal process for skills planning across Essex. This results in a lack of co-ordination, fragmentation, and poor ownership of Essex wide skills planning and delivery. The development of a local skills planning system involving employers across the geography (including Essex County Council, Thurrock Council and Southend Council) is key to driving and enabling change. Furthermore, effective and regular labour market information letting employers and providers know about future skills needs and the support available to provide them, will be invaluable. This will ensure that the skills system is fit for purpose and meets the needs of all stakeholders.

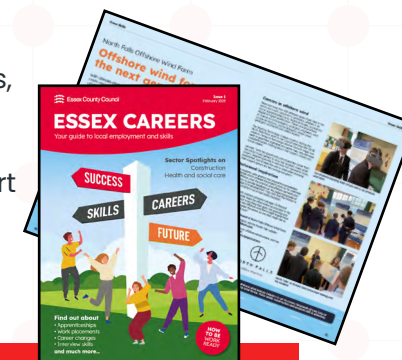
System access and flexibility – Feedback indicates that there is a general lack of awareness of how the current education system works and that many struggle to access it effectively. Both employers and providers have indicated that the education system is difficult to navigate, and that more flexible training options would be useful in meeting current and future skills needs. The ability to break larger qualifications into smaller pieces is popular with many employers, such as completing individual units of qualifications at a time (unitisation), bite-sized qualifications, online and hybrid

delivery models. This issue permeates through all layers of the current system including new entrants and reskilling of the existing workforce.

Barriers to engagement – Many new entrants, existing and returning employees face significant barriers when accessing work or training. These barriers include low levels of aspiration, availability of childcare, complexities in the application and onboarding process, technical language, lack of equipment and the cost and availability of transport.

Information, Careers Advice and Guidance – To ensure that appropriately skilled labour is available to industry, it is vital that careers advice and guidance is of high quality and consistent across all levels of the education system throughout the whole county. Employers have fed-back their experiences with inconsistencies. They are primarily pre-16, but post-16 and adults would also benefit from joining up to local initiatives and improvements to ensure they are reflecting the needs of the local economy. This includes ensuring that vocational pathways (including apprenticeships) are presented as a credible alternative to university. With new emerging sectors and skills, there is a general lack of awareness of specific roles and career paths. Employers frequently describe the challenges of trying to influence young people to enter

specific occupational sectors at a local level, with limited or no support from overarching national sector bodies. Additionally, many employers do talk proactively about engagement with local schools and colleges for visits, industry talks, careers fairs, work experience and work placement opportunities. Furthermore, there is a need to fully engage prime influencers, teachers, parents and caregivers, in new and emerging vocational sectors so they are able to support young people to make fully informed career decisions.



Example of existing action to build on: Essex Careers magazine

A quarterly all age Essex Careers magazine has been developed to raise awareness of key sectors locally and support and training available to enter them. This is available in colleges, schools, Job Centre Plus and libraries and demand has been high. Utilising resources such as this, along with working with the existing Greater Essex Careers Hub will be important in taking this priority forward.

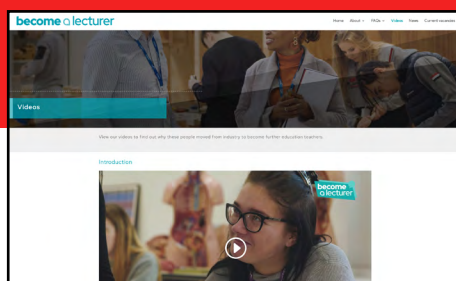
5. Part Two: Taking the LSIP Priorities Forward (What)

5.2. Skills system priorities continued:

Example of existing action to build on:

There is a range of work underway to address the tutor shortage issues, including through SELEP, the IoT and Strategic Development Fund (SDF) Knowledge Exchange work.

A '[Become a Lecturer](#)' site is already in place showcasing tutors in Essex aligned with key sectors. These include construction, health, care and logistics. Such resources will be an excellent foundation to build upon.



Tutor shortages and capacity of providers to respond – Colleges and Training Providers all feedback that they struggle to employ and retain high quality staff. This issue is more pronounced in skills shortage areas / emerging sectors where there are extreme

tutor and assessor shortages. Additionally, with the fast pace of change in industry, it is becoming increasingly difficult for providers to ensure that tutors and assessors are up to date with existing practices and emerging technologies. When dealing with new and emerging skills priorities, many providers cite a lack of capacity to respond as a fundamental barrier. Such issues are varied, but most providers describe a lack of staff capacity to develop and teach new provision, general space constraints, a lack of capital investment in new technology and the ability to support very small group sizes in new subject areas. There are also issues with take-up, as learners are less likely to take up evening and weekend training due to childcare and other commitments, which limits the courses providers can put on. SELEP and the three LSIPs of Essex, Kent and Sussex are working together on sharing best practice and building solutions to this issue, with further information in the annex reports.

Inclusive employment – Labour shortages are encouraging employers to fill vacancies with more diverse candidates from a complex labour market including those from non-traditional backgrounds, high needs, neurodiverse, Autism, SEND, the over 50's returning to work, ex-service personnel and ex-offenders. Employers frequently indicate that once employed, they are unable to effectively support these employees without

having access to the correct training and support mechanisms and subsequently retention is an issue and staff turnover is high. Equally, employers need support with signposting and managing their own mental health when working with staff with additional needs and do not always know where to look.

Example of existing action to build on: Essex Inclusive Employers Networking Event

An event to engage employers on inclusive employment was held in Colchester with Essex County Council, local employers and chaired by the Essex LSIP Lead. This included talking through the support that is available and the vast benefits that being an inclusive employer can bring through unlocking 'hidden talent'. This included employers talking about the benefits this has brought to aspects such as their productivity. The [Inclusive Employer Network Video](#) showcases the event further.



6. Part Three: Delivering the LSIP priorities and the roadmap for change (How)

6.1. Having determined what the priorities are as outlined in this report and with evidence as to how these were reached, this section will set out clear, simple and achievable actions to help to address them, along with indicative timescales. At this stage, these are preliminary and will be worked on in more detail with colleges, providers and stakeholders. The intention is to keep these deliberately flexible and agile, in recognition of the changing economy, skills needs and support programmes which may be introduced. Across all priorities and “areas to build on” (in section 5), there is a commitment to capture good practice already happening, maximise resource and ensure join-up. Impact measures have been included and which will be developed in more detail and in conjunction with Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) bids.

6.2 Emerging actions and next steps to help address the skills priorities outlined in section 4:

Soft skills and behaviours – Chambers and local authorities to lead in conjunction with colleges, providers, awarding organisations and sector bodies

ACTION	IMPACT	TIMESCALES	EXISTING WORK / PROGRAMMES/ FUNDING
Map out what is already available and ensure employers are aware	To ensure current provision of training is captured and utilised before embarking on any new programmes and courses	To commence from August 2023	Capturing those that are relevant – (e.g. Mid-Life MOT, AEB courses, Restart, 16-19 Study programmes)
Explore the development of a sector/ Essex-based programme	Specific to Essex ‘pathways to work’ to support new and returning entrants to the workplace and covering core components	2023/24	Ensure no duplication with existing programmes such as Princes Trust ‘Get Into’ and DWP’s Sector Work Based Academies
Explore the use of a framework to systematically develop soft skills and behaviours and post 16	To utilise tools and frameworks to ensure soft skills and behaviours are embedded in learning and will therefore equip individuals for employer needs	2023/24	Tools such as Skills Builder and Universal Framework to be explored
Embed a focus on employability skills throughout the skills system	Equip individuals and learners with the skills they need and build aspirations to work. Tailor this for Essex	2023/24	Existing college and provider approaches to be explored
Review and enhance (where necessary) industry specific soft skills and behaviours content within all vocational programmes	To ensure that any sector specific needs are met and to best equip individuals with the skills required	2023/24	To be reviewed in conjunction with sector groups and sector bodies
IMPACT MEASURES: MAPPING COMPLETED / PROGRAMME AND FRAMEWORK SCOPED & OPERATING / EVIDENCE OF EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS IN DELIVERY AND THROUGH EMPLOYER FEEDBACK			



6. Part Three: Delivering the LSIP priorities and the roadmap for change (How)

Basic English, Maths and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) – **Chambers, other ERBs and local authorities to lead** in conjunction with colleges, and providers

ACTION	IMPACT	TIMESCALES	EXISTING WORK / PROGRAMMES / FUNDING
Map out what is already available and ensure employers & individuals are aware	To ensure current provision of training is captured and utilised before embarking on any new programmes and courses	2023/24	e.g. 16-19 Study Programmes, Apprenticeships, Multiply, AEB Funded courses
Review and enhance curriculum integration of English and Maths	To ensure that learners understand how they are applied within specific industries	2023/24	e.g. 16-19 Study Programmes, Apprenticeships, Multiply, AEB Funded courses
Review and improve access and funding for all to ESOL provision across Essex	To ensure that all those that require ESOL are able to access this	2023/24	AEB Funded programmes
IMPACT MEASURES: MAPPING AND CURRICULUM REVIEW COMPLETED / MEASURE ACCESS TO ESOL PROVISION			

Digital skills and 'Digitech' – Chambers, other ERBs and local authorities to lead in conjunction with colleges, and providers. Also to involve corporates where appropriate (e.g. Google, Microsoft)

ACTION	IMPACT	TIMESCALES	EXISTING WORK / PROGRAMMES / FUNDING
Review current digital curriculum	Ensure that the current digital curriculum is up to date with relevant industry practice and identify any gaps. Align with occupations and skills needed as per section 3 of this report	From September 2023, to support digital sector group	Engage corporates (e.g. Microsoft, Google) and relevant partnerships (e.g. Digital Skills Partnership)
Review and enhance (where necessary) industry specific digital skills content within all vocational programmes	To ensure the digital elements of all vocational programmes are addressed and enhanced to best equip the learner for industry	2023/24	In conjunction with sector groups
Ensure learners (and tutors) have a sufficiently well-developed understanding of the use of specific software packages used within their industries	To ensure knowledge of the digital and software aspects of all industries	2023/24	In conjunction with sector groups
Investigate and develop resource to co-ordinate, develop and share digital training solutions across Essex	To ensure access to all digital training solutions available and to maximise existing resources	2023/24	Including local digital training hubs offering free, up to date digital technologies and skills training, signposting to apprenticeships etc
IMPACT MEASURES: REVIEW OF CURRICULUM COMPLETE / EVIDENCE OF DIGITAL CONTENT ADDED AS APT / RESOURCE PRODUCED (IF APT)			



6. Part Three: Delivering the LSIP priorities and the roadmap for change (How)

Green Skills – Chambers, other ERBs and local authorities to lead in conjunction with colleges, providers and relevant sector bodies

ACTION	IMPACT	TIMESCALES	EXISTING WORK / PROGRAMMES/ FUNDING
Map out what is already happening	To ensure current provision of training is captured and utilised before embarking on any new programmes and courses	To commence from September 2023 to support sector groups	E.g. retrofit academy, Essex Green Skills Action Plan, Electric Vehicle facilities
Review and enhance current Essex wide green skills and low carbon training offer	To ensure that it adequately meets the needs of both individual and industry upskilling (prospectus also already in development)	To commence from September 2023 in conjunction with work underway	E.g. retrofit academy, Essex Green Skills Action Plan, Electric Vehicle facilities
Integrate green skills and low carbon awareness training into all study programmes, at all levels	To ensure that all training includes an element of 'green' upskilling and which helps to illustrate its cross-cutting nature	2023/24	In conjunction with sector groups
Build on the Essex Green Skills Summit (June 2023) by developing an annual conference	To ensure that stakeholders and businesses are regularly updated and engaged given how fast moving this area of work is	Annually (following June 2023 event)	Existing Green Skills Summit
Explore training and CPD for tutors across different subject areas	To ensure up to date knowledge of green skills is applied – e.g. Industrial, Domestic, Installation and Maintenance Electricians Solar PV, battery storage, heat pumps, domestic mechanical ventilation	2023/24	Ensure sharing of and learning from other ERB / LSIP approaches to this
Include guidance on green in the toolkit for SMEs	To ensure that employers have up to date knowledge and understand how they can contribute to net zero	2023/24	Existing resources – e.g. Essex Carbon Cutter App for businesses
Explore specific qualification needs via sector groups to be established with colleges	To increase apprenticeships, T Levels and industry relevant qualifications as required (Building services, Engineering (Electrical installations))	From September in conjunction with sector groups	Building on information from sector bodies (e.g. CITB 'Building Skills for Net Zero' research)

IMPACT MEASURES: MAPPING AND REVIEW COMPLETE / ANNUAL SUMMIT HELD / TOOLKIT IN PLACE AND INFLUENCING BEHAVIOUR / EVIDENCE OF GREEN IN ALL PROGRAMMES (AND AS INFORMED BY LSIF)



6. Part Three: Delivering the LSIP priorities and the roadmap for change (How)

Leadership and management – Chambers, other ERBs and local authorities to lead in conjunction with colleges, and providers

ACTION	IMPACT	TIMESCALES	EXISTING WORK / PROGRAMMES/ FUNDING
Map out what is already available	To ensure employers and individuals are aware and utilising existing provision	From September 2023	E.g. college and Adult Learning Leadership & Management courses
Explore sector specific needs	To address any specific needs within sectors	To commence from September 2023 in conjunction with work underway	Utilise existing research on shortages within sectors
Integrate green skills and low carbon awareness training into all study programmes, at all levels	To ensure that all training includes an element of ‘green’ upskilling and which helps to illustrate its cross-cutting nature	From September 2023 in conjunction with sector groups	In conjunction with sector groups
Investigate and develop short courses	To specifically support new entrants and existing employees who are promoted to first line management –e.g. emerging leadership course so that they will be effective in their roles	2024/25	AEB Funding Full cost training
Review and enhance current curriculum offer for leadership and management	To ensure it adequately meets the needs of industry with specific reference to hybrid and remote working	From September 2023 in conjunction with sector groups	AEB Funded courses Apprenticeships Full cost training
IMPACT MEASURES: MAPPING COMPLETE / SECTOR NEEDS IDENTIFIED / SHORT COURSES OFFERED (AS REQUIRED)			



6. Part Three: Delivering the LSIP priorities and the roadmap for change (How)

6.3. Emerging actions and next steps to help address the skills system priorities outlined in section five

Skills planning system for Essex (Chamber led, with LEP and local authorities and including all key stakeholders and employers)

ACTION	IMPACT	TIMESCALES	EXISTING WORK / PROGRAMMES/ FUNDING
Re-establish an employer-led Employment and Skills Board (ESB) for Essex, evolving from the LSIP Board	A strategic lead for the LSIP and to link with areas such as devolution in Essex to help ensure sustainability. To oversee the work of the LSIP and bring in broader opportunities through devolution and other funding (e.g. Skills Bootcamps)	To commence from September 2023 to support sector groups	E.g. retrofit academy, Essex Green Skills Action Plan, Electric Vehicle facilities
Establish sector and cross-cutting task and finish groups – in collaboration with colleges and providers	To support the work of the ESB (groups to be led by employers and sit on / report into ESB) and drive forward action informed by evidence	By end 2023 and informed by sector deep dives	Ensure links to sector bodies (e.g. Skills for Care, Construction and Industry Training Board (CITB / Essex Construction Training Association (www.ecta.co.uk))
Develop a labour market information (LMI) resource, to be regularly published and accessible	To inform colleges, providers and other stakeholders (e.g. employers, district authorities) of local economic need on a regular basis and to support the work of the ESB/ Sector Groups	To commence from August 2023	Essex CC providing LMI information which could be adapted for this purpose To also include and utilise the Future Skills Unit Dashboards
To produce sector deep dives to support the next phase of the Essex LSIP Report	To give colleges, providers and other stakeholders a more detailed insight into sectors' skills needs now and in the future and also drawing from national reports and intelligence	To commence immediately after LSIP report sign off to help inform the Sector Group development	Essex CC providing LMI information which could be adapted for this purpose To also include and utilise the Future Skills Unit Dashboards
IMPACT MEASURES: ESB AND SECTOR GROUPS FULLY OPERATIONAL / SECTOR DEEP DIVES COMPLETED / REGULAR LMI PUBLICATIONS – ALL INFORMING PROVISION			



6. Part Three: Delivering the LSIP priorities and the roadmap for change (How)

System access and flexibility (Chambers and other ERBs to lead supported by local authorities, LEP, colleges and providers)

ACTION	IMPACT	TIMESCALES	EXISTING WORK / PROGRAMMES / FUNDING
Explore the types of short and modular training courses required by employers	To understand how more flexibility could help achieve the best outcomes for employers	2023/24	Ensure sharing of and learning from other ERB / LSIP approaches to this
Develop an Essex employer toolkit	To assist with navigating the skills landscape and unlocking existing support and training	From September 2023 to start development with other ERBs (e.g. FSB)	Adapt / utilise existing resources – e.g. (Strategic Development network national employer guide educationlandscapes.org.uk)
Ensure employers are utilising the apprenticeship levy and transfer opportunities	To increase apprenticeships locally and maintain maximum apprenticeship levy for deployment in Essex	From September 2023	Explore with DfE any options for flexibility with the levy
IMPACT MEASURES: TOOLKIT COMPLETED / INCREASE IN LEVY UPTAKE / CLEAR OVERVIEW OF SHORT COURSES REQUIRED			

Information, Careers Advice and Guidance (local authorities / Greater Essex Careers Hub, National Careers Service, Chambers to lead supported by colleges and providers)

ACTION	IMPACT	TIMESCALES	EXISTING WORK / PROGRAMMES / FUNDING
Work with the Greater Essex Careers Hub and other key stakeholders	To work with stakeholders such as the Greater Essex Careers Hub, National Careers Service and local authorities to take forward actions and a programme of work to support this agenda	From September 2023	As per the stakeholders listed – CEC / NCS programmes
Support in the promotion of schemes already underway to employers	To maximise employer engagement in schemes already available and generate closer industry / education links	From September 2023 – and through the Employer Toolkit	E.g. Enterprise Adviser Network, STEM / STEAM Ambassadors, Essex Careers magazine
IMPACT MEASURES: INCREASE IN EMPLOYERS ENGAGED IN EXISTING SCHEMES / JOINT WORK WITH CAREERS HUB EVIDENCED			



6. Part Three: Delivering the LSIP priorities and the roadmap for change (How)

Tutor shortages and capacity of providers to respond (Chambers, LEP, local authorities working with employers, providers, colleges, sector bodies and awarding organisations)

ACTION	IMPACT	TIMESCALES	EXISTING WORK / PROGRAMMES/ FUNDING
Build on the SELEP work already underway across three LSIP areas to build solutions with employers	A range of work to address the shortages of tutors impacting on local growth – further detail in Section 5.2. and Annex B and including some actions outlined here	From September 2023 – 2025	SDF, IoT, SELEP, national programmes, Become a Lecturer website
Further utilise immersive classrooms and virtual learning	To use technology where possible to overcome the need for more tutors and to explore if further investment is required	From September 2023	Corporate support such as Microsoft / SDF, IoT, SELEP, national programmes, Become a Lecturer website
Explore solutions such as deploying staff differently	To maximise existing teaching staff where possible – e.g. use of learning facilitators and coaches, targeting graduate recruitment, pre-programmes to prepare for the role	From September 2023	
Utilise employer / employee expertise to teach specialist content	To embed industry expertise in teaching (and possible reciprocal arrangements) – e.g. 50+, virtual, in person, live v recorded content	From September 2023	In conjunction with sector groups and existing work being explored (e.g. Morgan Sindall looking at a programme to support colleges)
Enhancing and sustaining access to technical CPD	To improve retention of staff and support the relevance of the curriculum	From September 2023	
Training tutors as assessors where possible	To help address the shortages of assessors	2023/24	
IMPACT MEASURES: EVIDENCE OF PROPOSED SOLUTIONS IN PLACE AND IMPACTING SHORTAGES / ABILITY TO SUPPORT KEY SECTORS			

6. Part Three: Delivering the LSIP priorities and the roadmap for change (How)

Inclusive employment (Chambers, LEP, DWP, local authorities working with employers, providers, colleges)

ACTION	IMPACT	TIMESCALES	EXISTING WORK / PROGRAMMES/ FUNDING
Map out what is already happening	Identify any gaps/ opportunities and ensure employers are aware of existing support to increase inclusive employment	From September 2023	Essex Inclusive employment conference, Disability Confident programme. Access to Work/ Armed Forces initiatives
Employer toolkit to include inclusive support	To equip employers with clear and accessible information to be inclusive employers	From September 2023	
Explore best practice in other areas	To learn from what has worked well	From September 2023	E.g. the Cornwall Beacon project (cornwallbeacon.co.uk)
IMPACT MEASURES: MAPPING COMPLETED / TOOLKIT PRODUCED / INCREASE IN INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT EVIDENCED			

Barriers to engagement (Chambers, LEP, DWP, local authorities working with employers, providers, colleges)

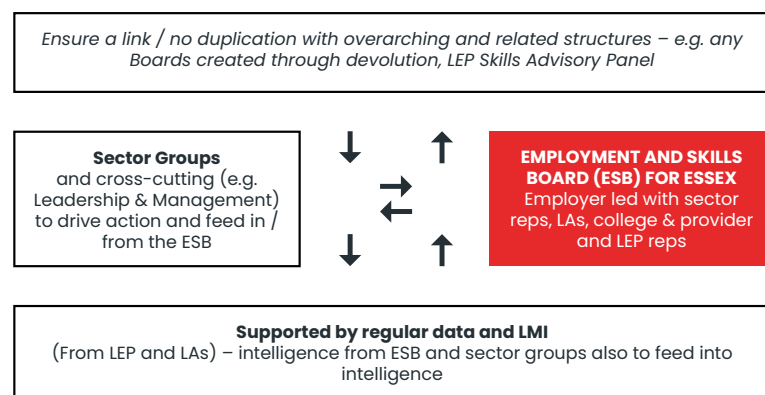
ACTION	IMPACT	TIMESCALES	EXISTING WORK / PROGRAMMES/ FUNDING
Explore support and solutions for any key barriers – e.g. childcare, transport	Removal of barriers will help more individuals to participate in learning and access employment	2023/24	Transport schemes such as Essex Pedal Power
Build on what is already there	Utilising resources and platforms already accessed will maximise reach	From September 2023	E.g. Essex Careers Magazine, Essex Opportunities , Thurrock Opportunities
IMPACT MEASURES: INCREASED ACCESS TO SUPPORT EVIDENCED			



6.4. Roadmap for change – key dates and milestones

Through the priorities set out above, key stakeholders, timescales and next steps are included which will form part of the roadmap for change and how the LSIP will be delivered against. Some of the key dates, milestones, stakeholders and structures are also set out here, to help illustrate how delivery is proposed to take place over the next year and three-year period which LSIPs will cover.

As per section 5.2, it is proposed that an Employment and Skills Board (formed from the LSIP Board) is set up with supporting sector groups and specialist groups, which will bring key partners together and drive actions. Such a Board could also oversee other aspects of work relating to the skills agenda, such as devolution of skills and Section 106 and would help ensure a joined-up approach, which maximises resources. An early version of what this could look like is included here, with phase two to consider this in more detail with relevant stakeholders. The Board and sector groups would be supported by regular LMI and data, which would be provided by a combination of local authorities and LEP and linking in with key stakeholders such as the DfE's Unit for Future Skills.



Key forthcoming milestones:

Milestone	Date	Comments
DELIVERY: Phase 2 delivery of the LSIP begins		
Stage 2 of the LSIP begins	August 2023	Stage 2 – ongoing review and development funding for the LSIP runs from August 2023 until March 2025 (full LSIP duration of 3 years)
LAUNCH: Publish and socialise the LSIP with key stakeholders and areas of action		
Forming of the LSIP delivery team and agreement of roles	August 2023	Building on work to help inform the LSIP development, with local authority and LEP involvement. To support the work and administration of the ESB and sector groups
Following publication of LSIP report and annex reports, produce sector deep dives for publication	From early September 2023	To establish an approach to regular data and LMI to be published and shared locally, in support of the LSIP delivery – build on existing tools such as data.essex.gov.uk
Establishing sector and cross-cutting groups	From early September	In conjunction with colleges and employers and building a picture of existing specialisms
Start transition from LSIP Board to an Essex Employment and Skills Board and sector groups	From September / October 2023	Ensure alignment with SELEP's Skills Advisory Panel and any local business boards developed through devolution
Essex Devolution: Deal agreed and announced	26th October 2023 (Target Date)	Example local governance activity – Negotiations conclude successfully and a deal can be announced, supported by "Heads of Terms"



6.4. Roadmap for change – key dates and milestones (continued)

Milestone	Date	Comments
Continued delivery against priorities as outlined	October 2023	As much delivery as possible will take place as outlined and with some activity dependent on the LSIF and other funding pots / opportunities
First sector groups established and meeting regularly thereafter	October / November 2023	To be informed by the LMI regularly provided and updated
Mapping exercises underway and informing progress	From September / ongoing	To feed into sector groups and work as appropriate
Employer toolkit – start scoping	From September	To incorporate elements from various priorities as per tables above
First Essex ESB meeting (and quarterly thereafter)	November 2023	To be core group if necessary with new members to be added as appropriate apt
Monthly LMI updates established	November 2023	In place as regular updates to inform Board, sector groups and wider stakeholders
Sector deep dives published	November 2023	To be updated annually and sector updates also as part of regular LMI updates
ONGOING REVIEW AND MONITORING: Start to review benefits of LSIP and if delivery is happening as expected		
Progress and action review	December 2023	To review work undertaken so far and whether this is delivering to planned timescales – to take place quarterly thereafter)
Employer toolkit first version	January / February 2024	To be produced in consultation with employers and with the option to update as and when required

Milestone	Date	Comments
Second Essex ESB Meeting	March 2024	To be given a progress update against actions / LSIF / data updates/ mapping exercises / sector group updates
Employer toolkit launch	April 2024	Essex-wide event
Progress and action review	April 2024	
Regular meetings of sector groups	Ongoing – quarterly	Linked to ESB
LSIP report refresh and review	From May 2024	Pending timeframes
Third meeting of Essex ESB	July 2024	To sign off and comment on the LSIP annual report refresh and review
Progress and action review	August 2024	
Fourth meeting of Essex ESB	September 2024	Pending timeframes
Fifth meeting of the Essex ESB	December 2024	Pending timeframes
Progress and action review	March 2025	
LSIP Delivery reviewed	February 2025	Local delivery reviewed against LSIP plan – has delivery taken place as expected
LSIP Next steps for sustainability of innovations agreed	March 2025	Agree opportunities to take innovations developed within LSIP forward
Essex Devolution: Elections Begin	May 2025 (TBC)	Example local governance activity – Elections will begin for leadership (e.g. Mayor) governance tbc

7. Conclusions and next steps

7.1. The road map sets out the key forthcoming dates to enable delivery against the LSIP and with some of these, such as mapping and sector deep dives, to commence immediately. Establishing structures such as the Employment and Skills Board and sector groups will also be a priority, alongside engaging and informing the broader landscape and stakeholders. Engagement with other LSIPs will also be undertaken regularly to ensure best practice sharing and opportunities to work collaboratively.

7.2. Next steps and Stage 2 of the LSIP: ongoing review and development

As is outlined in the roadmap for change, the LSIP will run for a three-year period, with Stage 2 funding available from August 2023 until March 2025. This will include ongoing review and development funding, enabling continued facilitation of the work required and capacity to deliver it. This also coincides with the end of the current comprehensive spending review period.

Stage 2 will include: *'embedding the LSIP process in the local skills system. Designated ERBs will be expected to galvanise collaborative action with employers, providers and local stakeholders to support the delivery of the actionable priorities and the roadmap set out in the LSIP, keep the LSIP reviewed and report*

annually on progress. This will help to achieve better alignment of the local skills system with employers' needs and help to sustain the alignment in the longer-term.'

Activities will include those:

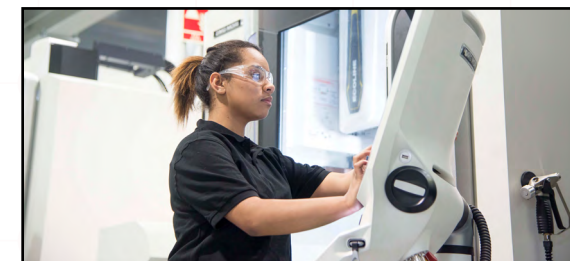
- related to reviewing and articulating employers' skills needs
- related to promoting employer engagement in the local skills system
- related to providers' response
- related to engaging other stakeholders relevant to the skills system
- related to data and analysis
- related to project management
- reporting on progress and sharing updated intelligence - Designated ERBs are expected to produce and publish a progress report in years two and three (2024 and 2025).



7.3. Annex reports supporting this plan:

- Annex A – Local Strategic Context
- Annex B – Information on the methodologies and processes used to develop the Essex LSIP
- Annex C – Data and intelligence pack

The annex reports are available [here](#).





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