

# **“Nottinghamshire – Working & Skilled”**

**The Strategic Plan for the  
Nottinghamshire: City & County  
Employment and Skills Board  
2010 to 2015**

## Chairperson's Foreword



***“Employment and skills will play a key role in the future development of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire economy.”***

As the Chairperson for the Nottinghamshire: City & County Employment and Skills Board I present our new strategy: “Nottinghamshire - Working and Skilled”.

The last two years have been tough economically for local businesses and people across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Though to an extent we have benefited from the diversity of our local economy, enabling us to weather the storm relatively well; new and ongoing challenges remain. Unemployment for young adults has increased, the level of skills and qualifications across some of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is low and we experience deep rooted unemployment in some of the more deprived parts of our area.

As we emerge from recession and into recovery we must ensure that we introduce practical measures aimed at tackling these challenges and getting the very best value from our local employment and skills services. Measures that will in particular aim to deliver the employment and skills outcomes we wish to see. These include ensuring that local people have the skills that meet the needs of local industry now. Furthermore, that we are able to develop a workforce that meets the needs of skills demands in the future. In addition, we must develop the accessibility and effectiveness of local services to ensure we can promote economic inclusion across our area.

As Chairperson for the Board I am keen to develop the leadership role local employers can play, working alongside our other partners, to address these challenges we now face.

I look forward to working with you to achieve our aims and priorities.



Caroline Maley  
Chief Operating Officer of the National College &  
Independent Chair- Nottinghamshire: City and County  
Employment and Skills Board

## Introduction

Employment and Skills are widely regarded as being of critical importance to our economic recovery and future. It is also one of the most complex and demanding aspects of local economic development, with employment and education services undergoing significant reform as the Coalition Government implements significant reforms and reductions in public sector expenditure. Local action is critical to make services more efficient; maximise growth and link people to job opportunities.

This document provides a summary of the agreed Strategy of the Nottinghamshire: City and County Employment and Skills Board in response to local challenges, but operating within the new political and economic context.

**“Our vision is for Nottinghamshire – both its city and its county – to achieve long term sustainable employment and business growth, supported by a first class skilled workforce.”**

*Nottinghamshire- Working & Skilled*

### The Employment & Skills Board exists to:

- Provide strong employer leadership to the delivery of employment & skills support across Nottinghamshire;
- Challenge each other to develop a coherent, collective understanding of employment and skills issues;
- Influence funding from both national and local budgets so that it delivers on these agreed priorities for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire and thus contributes to national competitiveness; and
- Ensure that together we are more than the sum of our parts and deliver a multiplier effect for businesses and individuals.

For businesses this will contribute to higher productivity, increased innovation and faster growth, as well as greater resilience to the effects of future economic shocks. For individuals, including our young adults, having the right skills acts as a ladder into employment and a route to greater achievement.

### The Nottinghamshire ESB's membership includes:

1. Key local businesses such as Experian, Capital One, Laing O'Rourke and Alliance Boots;
2. Strong representation from the small business sector and business representative organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses;
3. Public Sector funders & employers, including Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council, the NHS, Jobcentre Plus & the Skills Funding Agency;
4. Key local providers of further and higher education and employment support.

## Our strategic priorities are:

**1- Employer Leadership** *“Putting employers at the core of what we do; championing Our Vision, Our Aims and Our Priorities”*

**2 - Economic Recovery and Growth** *“Accelerating the potential in existing industry and supporting the emergence of sunrise industries”*

**3 - Higher Skills for Nottinghamshire** *“Focusing on high quality vocational training to grow and attract a more knowledge intensive economy and developing enterprise skills across the workforce.”*

**4 - Employment for All** *“Supporting young adults and other potentially vulnerable groups to succeed.”*

These priorities are described in more detail in this document. This strategy forms a central thrust of local efforts to not only promote a competitive local economy but to combat poverty and deprivation in a significant number of local communities.

### Employment & Skills Board Operating Principles

- *Business led* – putting employers at the core of what we do;
- *Partnership focussed* – sharing expertise & knowledge to promote more joined up action to achieve a greater impact for clients & customers;
- *Adding Value & avoiding wasteful duplication* – we will not reinvent the wheel. Where groups, organisations or initiatives exist, we will work with and alongside them, not in competition;
- *Action oriented* – promoting a culture where partners continuously seek to improve what they do in partnership, building collective capacity that adds value for all parties and achieves results;
- *Evidence based* – a commitment to using the best data and adding intelligence as to what it means in Nottingham & Nottinghamshire;
- *Transparency & openness* – we will work in a way that is inclusive and provides equality of opportunity and involvement from all partners. We will further this by communicating effectively and clearly;
- *Respect for agencies governance & responsibilities* – we will fully support all we can and occasionally challenge if needed, but not seek to usurp agencies own lines of accountability;
- *Accountability* – we will set out clearly what we seek to achieve and be accountable to all stakeholders to the outcomes that result;
- *Monitor and evaluate progress* – we will scrutinise activities through regular monitoring and evaluation of work, and track what is being achieved in a way that is meaningful to a variety of audiences.

## Strategic Priority 1- Employer Leadership

*“Putting employers at the core of what we do; championing Our Vision, Our Aims and Our Priorities”*

Meeting the needs of employers is one of the key elements to achieving sustainable economic growth and helping disadvantaged people succeed in the workplace. We also need employers to work with our education and skills providers to ensure that provision is tailored to their needs and improves productivity. As key customers they have an important role to challenge how we work and what partners deliver.

We recognise the need to provide more opportunities for employers to influence the employment and skills agenda and we will be developing a range of actions to deliver this.

Up to date intelligence from employers will be an important driver of our activity. We will explore a variety of ways of seeking this intelligence including direct input to the Board and its associated activities and working much more closely with representative bodies, including Sector Skills Councils. Where needed, we will also consider commissioning specific surveys as part of developing our Labour Market Intelligence.

Integration of support for employers is a key theme and critical to success. We will provide advice on the perspective and priorities of employers to those who commission skills, employment and business development activities.

**Skills will play a pivotal role in the future economic development of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.** It is critical that work on Employment and Skills is fully integrated with parallel work to develop the local economy through physical regeneration, business support and inward investment. Work is underway in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire to develop new inclusive governance structures for providing strategic direction to economic development which in time may lead to a new Local Enterprise Partnership, which the Government propose will replace Regional Development Agencies. It will be vital for us to both inform and be informed by this activity and support the creation of streamlined partnership structures with a strong employer voice.

### **We will:**

- **Strengthen employer leadership at the ESB and strengthen the employer voice in the work of the ESB’s partnership;**
- **Strengthen the role of the ESB in economic development governance both nationally and in sub regional and local partnerships;**
- **Advocate for localism through statutory powers and devolved resources where they add value for employment and skills across Nottinghamshire.**

## Strategic Priority 2 - Economic Recovery and Growth

*“Accelerating the potential in existing industry and supporting the emergence of sunrise industries”*

Our challenge, as an ESB, is to harness the potential of our public sector partners who achieve more by working together. This gives us the best chance for our full economic potential to be realised and to connect Nottinghamshire residents to the jobs created. Specifically, there is a task to support those most in need – both the individual and the companies – to achieve **Economic Recovery and Growth**.

We have commissioned expert advice to understand the opportunities available in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire within the context of national and regional policies. This collective analysis has helped to identify the best mix of sectors that are important to the future economic health of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. These sectors need to be able to cope well with external pressures and have the resilience to grow quickly once overall economic conditions improve.

The priority sectors *for promoting economic growth* in future will be:

- Business services and finance;
- Advanced manufacturing.
- Science and technology;
- Green technology;
- Creative and digital;

At the same time a number of existing sectors with less demanding entry standards remain critically important for *providing employment opportunities and connecting our more disadvantaged to the world of work* – these are:

- Retail and distribution,
- Health
- Construction.

For each of these sectors there will be a need to address a range of cross-cutting issues. These issues, which include the importance of transferable skills and entrepreneurial behaviour, are addressed in the subsequent strategic priorities.

**We will:**

- Ensure the ESB has a clear understanding of the Nottinghamshire Economy and develop a robust Labour Market Intelligence framework;
- Promote economic growth through a sector based approach including sectors which will provide employment opportunities and connect disadvantaged people to world of work.

### Strategic Priority 3 - Higher Skills for Nottinghamshire

*“Focusing on high quality vocational training to grow and attract a more knowledge intensive economy and developing enterprise skills across the workforce.”*

Our research identified priority sectors for promoting economic growth. These are recognised as being ‘knowledge intensive’ and are currently constrained by the availability of skills. It is clear that skill levels are related to productivity: more highly skilled people produce more high value goods and services more efficiently and can offer higher wages as a result. Higher pay can then support other local jobs in services through consumption spending.

The availability of high skilled jobs places a number of demands on local priorities for economic development:

- retaining and providing the talent required to fill those jobs;
- attracting graduates to work in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire; and
- providing the necessary skills support and training suited to the job opportunities available, including support to raise the skills of those already in employment.

The economies in the City and County areas will need to increase their productivity over the medium term to ensure they can compete in the market. This is likely to be relevant for both high and low value sectors in the economy. Many jobs will be subject to technical and organisational change. Creating sustainable employment is dependent upon ensuring that there is a mix of employment by industrial sector which is able to keep pace with change in the UK and international economy.

Developing a more enterprising culture is a significant element of building a more adaptable economy, particularly where there is legacy of an employment base dominated by large firms in traditional industries. This is important both to use enterprise as a tool to help businesses to grow and to create new jobs but also to encourage more enterprising behaviour across the workforce.

**We will:**

- **Promote a focus on high quality vocational training to grow and attract a more knowledge intensive economy and ensure it is served by a skilled workforce;**
- **Support Nottinghamshire as a net importer of graduates;**
- **Encourage the development of enterprise skills and capability across the workforce and an innovative Nottinghamshire economy.**

## Strategic Priority 4 - Employment for All

*“Supporting young adults and other potentially vulnerable groups to succeed.”*

In order for us to achieve our vision of delivering long term sustainable employment and business growth driven by a first class skilled workforce, we must address the inequalities around employment and income levels across Nottinghamshire. This needs to focus on both individuals and communities, investing in social capital and promoting community empowerment. There is a substantial track record of achievement to build upon. For example, since 2006 we have delivered the Department for Work and Pension’s **City Strategy Programme**, which focuses on achieving higher levels of employment and lower levels of economic inactivity. Furthermore, our **Making the Connection** programme was seen as an early success, in integrating employment and skills delivery. We are now delivering the second stage of our City Strategy programme, which involves building on previous success by:

- Expanding our geographical coverage so that good practice can be embedded across appropriate areas of the County;
- Maintaining a focus on vulnerable groups; and
- Developing our relationship with central government by jointly commissioning services that aim to support more people to find and stay in employment.

Analysis of economic inactivity in Nottinghamshire identifies a number of key groups, which reflect the nature of disadvantage across the county. These are:

- **People with Health Problems** - tackling the cause and effect of health on work and long term unemployment is a key challenge for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.
- **Young Adults** - by working together, the Board and its partners have the potential to develop co-ordinated campaigns to motivate young adults and facilitate better informed career choices linked to opportunities presented by the local economy. Raising the participation age for full time education is a significant opportunity here.
- **Black and Ethnic Minority Groups** - the disparity in the employment between ethnic groups remains significant and there is a need for a twin track approach that looks at the barriers to employment and training for BME communities against a series of pro-active employer-led measures, which could increase the opportunities available.

**We will:**

- Identify the right support for young adults aged 18-24 to contribute to the Nottinghamshire economy;
- Tackle the cause and effect health has on employment and economic inactivity across Nottinghamshire;
- Promote access to employment and skills opportunities for vulnerable adults including black and minority ethnic groups;
- Increase the competitive advantage of local industry by encouraging businesses to recruit local people and develop their workforce.

## Implementation Plan 2010-2012

### Measures of Success

A series of measures are proposed to assess how successfully Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is “**Working and Skilled**”. These measures describe a healthy labour market that will enable us to achieve our vision. Individual partners have their own lines of accountability and have targets for some of these measures. We will support their achievement but we will monitor these indicators to ensure our collective impact is achieving its full potential and **challenge** where it will add value.

Measures will be drawn from available published data, intelligence gathered by partners or through specifically commissioned surveys. Where possible these will be compared with national and regional averages and also where relevant, with groups such as the UK Core Cities.

The indicators are:

- The perception that the employment and skills offer is understood by employers and meets their needs
- A high proportion of the population is qualified to NVQ level 2
- Significantly less people have no or low qualifications
- An increased proportion of the population is qualified to NVQ level 4
- An increase in the employment rate
- Fewer people are claiming out of work benefits and we have narrowed the gap with the UK average
- Disparities between average and lowest paid are reduced
- More people are recognised by employers as being ‘job ready’
- Forecast growth in priority sectors is being achieved
- Higher numbers of graduates are attracted to and retained in employment in the sub-region

We will publish performance updates and further analysis on our website.

## Implementation Plan

In addition a two year rolling implementation plan will be monitored, which highlights the key areas of action in order to deliver our four strategic priorities. We will measure the progress made on a routine basis and update our activity accordingly. In summary by 2012 we will:

### Employer Leadership

- Strengthen employer leadership at the ESB and strengthen the employer voice in the work of the ESB's partnership;
- Strengthen the role of the ESB in economic development governance both nationally and in sub regional and local partnerships;
- Advocate for localism through statutory powers and devolved resources where they add value for employment and skills across Nottinghamshire.

### Recovery and Growth

- Ensure the ESB has a clear understanding of the Nottinghamshire Economy and develop a robust Labour Market Intelligence framework;
- Promote economic growth through a sector based approach including sectors which will provide employment opportunities and connect disadvantaged people to world of work.

### Higher Skills and Enterprise

- Promote a focus on high quality vocational training to grow and attract a more knowledge intensive economy and ensure it is served by a skilled workforce;
- Support Nottinghamshire as a net importer of graduates;
- Encourage the development of enterprise skills and capability across the workforce and an innovative Nottinghamshire economy.

### Employment for All

- Identify the right support for young adults aged 18-24 to contribute to the Nottinghamshire economy;
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## Links to further detail

'**Nottinghamshire- Working and Skilled**' aims to set a strategic direction that is responsive to individual and employer demand and meets the strategic needs of Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

There is a substantial amount of background and evidence to this strategy, and an Implementation Plan, which can be found in the full document here: [www.nccesb.org.uk/nottinghamshireworkingandskilled](http://www.nccesb.org.uk/nottinghamshireworkingandskilled).

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Further links to key elements of the full strategy are provided below:

- [Role of the Nottinghamshire: City & County Employment and Skills Board](#)
- [Key Operating Principles](#)
- [Background and National Policy Context](#)
- [Our Economy – Past, Present & Future](#)
- [Strategic Priority 1 – Employer Leadership](#)
- [Strategic Priority 2 – Economic Recovery & Growth](#)
- [Strategic Priority 3 – Higher Skills for Nottinghamshire](#)
- [Strategic Priority 4 – Employment for All](#)
- [Delivery, Review & Evaluation](#)
- [Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference](#)
- [Appendix 2 – Glossary of Key Terms](#)
- [Appendix 3 – Summary of the City Strategy](#)
- [Appendix 4 - References](#)

## Membership of Board

As at May 2010, the Board included Members from:

Alliance Boots  
Capital One  
Experian  
Laing O'Rourke  
IKANO  
Nottingham Trent University  
Federation of Small Businesses  
Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce  
SME representatives (2)  
Nottingham City Council  
Nottinghamshire County Council  
Skills Funding Agency  
Jobcentre Plus  
Greater Nottingham Partnership  
Nottinghamshire Training Network  
ENABLE  
New College Nottingham  
Connexions  
NHS Nottinghamshire County – H&SC Community Workforce Team  
emda  
GO-EM

