

Southwark Skills Strategy Delivery Plan 2021-22

Introduction

The Southwark Skills Strategy sets a vision to deliver a high quality, local skills offer that is accessible and responsive to learner and employer needs by 2022. The Skills Strategy delivery plan was agreed by the Southwark Skills Partnership in 2018 and has been reviewed and updated annually.

The Skills Partnership met in May 2021 to review delivery plan priorities in the context of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as Brexit. The pandemic has had a profound impact on the local, regional and national economy, affecting certain sectors particularly negatively and creating new growth in others. At the same time, it is considered likely that a potential reduction in EU citizens working in the UK will have an adverse impact on existing skills shortages particularly in key local sectors such as construction, hospitality and health & social care.

The updated delivery plan below represents a continuation of many of existing Skills Strategy priorities, recalibrated to respond effectively to new economic challenges in order to support residents to achieve the skills they need to access current and future opportunities.

The plan below sets out the objectives for Skills Strategy delivery over the coming year. There are also a number of overarching objectives which cut across the entirety of the delivery plan:

- Supporting residents to access sustainable skills and employment opportunities in the context of the economic impact of COVID-19
- Supporting employers to employ local people and offer high quality skills development and employment
- Supporting and promote high quality skills and training provision across all sectors
- Integrating Southwark Stands Together objectives across the delivery plan, supporting residents from diverse backgrounds to access skills training, employment opportunities and careers advice

Delivery Plan

Theme	Background & context	Objectives	Lead organisation	Anticipated delivery date
Apprenticeships	Promoting apprenticeship creation locally and supporting access to these opportunities has been a central part of the Skills Strategy. The impact of the pandemic has presented new challenges to the apprenticeship landscape as many businesses have become more reluctant to take on an apprentice during an economic downturn, while a rise in unemployment and the need for many to re-train is increasing demand for apprenticeships. There is a continued need to improve access to good quality apprenticeship opportunities through both employer engagement and pre-apprenticeship support.	1. Review the Southwark apprenticeship programme to understand changes in the apprenticeship landscape and recommend next steps	Southwark Council (Local Economy)	October 2021
		2. Commission a pre-apprenticeship support offer to help more residents to access apprenticeships	Southwark Council (Local Economy)	Contract delivery to start in early 2022
		3. Promote apprenticeship opportunities through Southwark's youth opportunities campaign	Southwark Council (Local Economy)	Ongoing
		4. Southwark residents to complete high quality apprenticeships through the Passmore Centre in 2021/22	LSBU	March 2022
		5. Support young people from low income backgrounds to get paid internships through the Council's ongoing internal and external internship programmes	Southwark Council (Local Economy)	Ongoing
Hospitality skills	A hospitality skills study was completed in early 2020, showing continued strong employment growth in the local hospitality sector with a large recruitment and skills gap that was not being met locally. Key recommendations included establishing a delivery vehicle such as a skills centre to improve local provision and deliver high quality careers. The pandemic has had a profound impact on the sector and, coupled with Brexit, there are early indications of significant labour shortages	1. Monitor impact of COVID-19 and Brexit on labour and skills shortages in hospitality sector and consider opportunities for immediate action	Southwark Council (Local Economy) with Skills Partnership	June – September 2021
		2. Review the four borough hospitality skills study originally completed in early 2020, revisiting recommendations to address skills challenges in the sector	Commissioned by Southwark Council (Local Economy)	October 2021
		3. Develop plans for implementing the recommendations of the hospitality skills study review	Skills Partnership	October – November 2021

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	and continued skills challenges as the sector re-opens.			
Health & social care skills	The Skills Partnership identified a need to explore how to support improved access to opportunities and progression with the health & social care sector. The pandemic has highlighted this longstanding challenges, despite ongoing high vacancy rates.	1. Launch the Southwark Health Skills Centre providing residents access to career pathways in health & social care, integrated into wider referral networks	LSBU & Guys and St Thomas' Trust	September 2021
		2. Explore scope for delivery of jobs and skills pathways as part of the development of the SC1 health sciences innovation district	SC1 & Skills Partnership	Early 2022
Workplace digital skills & digital careers	The Skills Partnership explored challenges and opportunities for skills development within the local digital sector in 2019, identifying access to the sector as a key challenge. The pandemic has led to growth for many businesses in the sector and the rise in remote working has further increased the demand for workplace digital skills across a range of sectors.	1. Ongoing delivery of the Stride talent development programme to address underrepresentation in the creative and digital sectors	Stride partnership	March 2022
		2. Explore further opportunities to improve access to workplace digital skills and skills for digital careers	Skills Partnership	Initial scoping in late 2021
Essential skills provision	Skills Partnership organisations have continued to deliver essential maths, English and digital skills provision to ensure that residents can access the skills needed for everyday life and for work. The pandemic has also highlighted the scale and impact of digital exclusion across the borough which is linked to a need to strengthen essential digital skills provision.	1. Support more residents to achieve basic qualifications in English and maths	All delivery organisations within Skills Partnership	Ongoing
		2. Ongoing delivery of the Southwark Essential Digital Skills Action Plan, developing a shared understanding of need, delivering accessible provision and developing new relationships to drive innovative delivery	Southwark Council (Local Economy)	Ongoing

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		3. Explore potential to develop a transferable and fusion skills programme, delivered in partnership	Morley College	September 2021
All age careers information, advice and guidance	The Skills Partnership previously identified a need to improve access to and the effectiveness of local careers information, advice and guidance for people of all ages. A range of careers advice projects across partner organisations are now in place to address these challenges.	1. Monitor delivery and outcomes of current careers advice projects including Skillsbot (Better Placed), the 'no wrong door' pilot (GLA & CLF), the Southwark Works careers tool and the digital hub for young people	Southwark Council (Local Economy)	October 2021
		2. Ensure careers advice projects are integrated into wider referral networks including education and local employment support provision.	Southwark Council (Local Economy)	Ongoing
Green skills	As Skills Partnership organisations embed climate change commitments into their delivery, there is an opportunity to support the growth of the local economy and deliver new jobs and careers.	1. Central London Forward to commission research into green jobs and skills, delivering a shared definition of 'green jobs' and 'green skills' for central London and analysing the green economy labour market and skills needs	Represented by Southwark Council (Local Economy)	October 2021
		2. Develop a Green New Deal framework for Southwark, including the delivery of green skills	Southwark Council (Local Economy)	November 2021