

<b>Item No.</b> N/A	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 11 September 2023	<b>Decision Maker:</b> Cabinet Member for Jobs, Skills and Business
<b>Report title:</b>		Southwark Skills Delivery Plan 2023-25	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		All wards	
<b>From:</b>		Senior Strategy Officer, Local Economy Team	

## RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Skills and Business approves the Southwark Skills Delivery Plan 2023-25.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The Southwark Skills Delivery Plan 2023-25 ('Skills Delivery Plan') sets out a programme for delivering the shared priorities of the Southwark Skills Partnership (the 'Partnership'). It builds on the ambitions of a fairer, greener and more resilient borough as set out in Southwark's emerging Economic Strategy 2023-30, and supports the council's broader ambitions as articulated in the Council Delivery Plan and Southwark 2030.
3. Central to a fairer, greener and more resilient borough is an economy that works for all, with a first-class and accessible skills offer that supports every resident to pursue and progress in their career of choice. The purpose of the Partnership and the Skills Delivery Plan is to ensure that such a skills system exists in Southwark.
4. Chaired by the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Skills and Business, the Partnership has a core membership of education, skills and employment providers, large employers and business groups, which draws upon the knowledge and expertise of a wider network of stakeholders. The Partnership is responsible for the delivery of the actions set out in the Skills Delivery Plan, ensuring it continues to be reflective of, and responsive to, current skills needs.
5. This iteration of the Skills Delivery Plan sets out the Partnership's priorities and actions for the next two years, to 2025. A copy of the Skills Delivery Plan can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.

## KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

## Structure

6. The Skills Delivery Plan is structured around nine themes that align with broader council ambitions, including a focus on key sectors of our economy. The nine themes are split into those that are sector-focussed:

- Life sciences
- Digital
- Green
- Health and social care
- Creative and cultural
- Hospitality

And those that are cross-cutting:

- Apprenticeships
- Careers information, advice and guidance
- Essential skills

7. For each theme there is a set of priorities and actions, including detail on what will be delivered and by whom.

8. In addition to the skills themes are two objectives that cut across everything the Partnership intends to do. (1) Ensure the local skills system is equitable and inclusive and aligned to the ambitions of Southwark Stands Together. (2) Collaborate with employers on the design and delivery of activities.

9. Across all of the skills themes, the Partnership will deliver a range of communication activities to promote new and existing opportunities and increase engagement with the local skills offer. Further information on this and the two overarching objectives can be found on pages 1 and 2 of the Skills Delivery Plan.

10. An indicative delivery timeline for the two year period can be found on pages 19 to 22 of the Skills Delivery Plan.

## Development

11. The Skills Delivery Plan is evidence-based and has been developed in close collaboration with a wide range of skills partners. Key council services involved in the Partnership include the Local Economy Team, Southwark Adult Learning Service, Post-16 service, Organisational Development, and the Southwark Information, Advice and Support Team.

12. External membership of the Partnership consists of employers (including Guys & St Thomas's, development partners and Business Improvement Districts), FE providers (including Southwark College and Morley College) and HE providers (including London South Bank University, Kings College London and University of the Arts London).

13. Between September 2022 and May 2023 the Partnership met extensively to agree priorities and actions for each skills theme. At each session, council officers put to the Partnership for discussion a set of proposed priorities based on data relating to the skills theme, along with information on existing skills activities.
14. On 30 May 2023, a first draft of the Skills Delivery Plan was presented to the Partnership for discussion and further input. Since then officers have been finalising the plan, including consulting members of the Partnership and council departments on further drafts.

### **Implementation and delivery**

15. Activities to be commissioned by the council using existing skills budgets are set out in paragraph 18. An estimated budget has been provided for each of the activities, based on the cost of previously commissioned activities, where this information is available. Final budgets will be determined as detailed specifications are developed for each of the activities.
16. The estimated total budget of £475,000 is the maximum available for the commissioning of the activities set out in paragraph 18. This will be met from available Section 106 employment and skills contributions.
17. In addition to these new activities agreed by the Partnership to be commissioned, the plan also recognises existing activities already committed to by partners, and others still to be confirmed but expected to commence during the two-year period. The council estimates that this additional activity will contribute at least £1.5m to the local skills response over the period.
18. Activities to be commissioned by the council:

<b>Skills theme</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Estimated budget</b>
Digital	Entry to digital careers programme	£100,000- £150,000
Creative and cultural	Expand offer of creative sector insight opportunities	£25,000
	Creative and cultural careers programme	£100,000- £150,000
Careers Information, Advice and Guidance	Explore options for a digital CIAG offer	£50,000
	Develop a CIAG+ offer	£25,000
	Pilot an all-age work experience model	£25,000

Essential skills	Workplace learning pilot	£25,000
Communications	Budget for to-be-confirmed communications activities and materials that will enable the promotion and delivery of the skills delivery plan	£25,000
<b>Maximum Total</b>		<b>£475,000</b>

19. As commissioning specifications are developed for each of the activities, the council will seek to secure match funding from partners and/or other funding streams, which may either reduce the proportion to be contributed by the council or enable the scaling-up of activities.
20. Each activity will be taken through the council procurement process and be subject to approvals in accordance with the council's Contract Standing Orders.
21. Where for any reason substantive changes are required to the Skills Delivery Plan during the delivery period, the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Skills and Business will be consulted on the proposed revisions through lead member briefings at the appropriate time. Subsequent decision making will be in accordance with the appropriate council process.
22. The Local Economy Team will be responsible for monitoring progress against the Skills Delivery Plan and the performance of commissioned activities. The Partnership will be updated on progress and performance periodically.

### **Policy framework implications**

23. The Skills Delivery Plan is a recalibration of the council's skills priorities in the context of the 2022 Council Delivery Plan, and emerging Economic Strategy 2023-2030 and Southwark 2030 strategy.
24. Southwark's new economic strategy to 2030 sets out how the council will shape a more inclusive economy – one that is fairer, greener, more resilient and benefits all our residents. Central to an economy such as this is a first-class and accessible skills offer that supports every resident to pursue and progress in their career of choice.
25. Under the strategic delivery theme *Skills for now and the future*, the economic strategy commits to the following delivery ambitions, which the activities set out in the Skills Delivery Plan are fully aligned with:
  - Bringing employers and training providers together to develop and invest in innovative skills programmes to address skills shortages in key sectors.

- Supporting education and training providers to offer high quality, accessible skills training in line with employer needs.
  - Offering clear, accessible careers information, advice and guidance to people at all stages of life.
  - Providing more apprenticeship opportunities locally, particularly for our young and disadvantaged residents.
  - Supporting residents to engage with local essential skills support at formal education institutions and within our neighbourhoods.
  - Establishing new skills pathways to employment opportunities arising from the SC1 Life Science District.
  - Developing local capacity to meet the growing demand for green skills.
  - Inspiring and helping residents from disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue careers in our creative, digital and cultural sectors.
  - Improving access to health and social care jobs locally, helping to address longstanding workforce challenges and unlock local opportunities for our residents.
  - Increase the take-up of hospitality jobs locally, by raising the profile of the sector and improving local hospitality skills provision.
26. The Skills Delivery Plan will also directly support delivery of the following Council Delivery Plan commitments relating to skills:
- Create 2,000 green jobs for local people.
  - Create more careers and jobs within Southwark's big employers for local residents, including in our council, NHS, big businesses and universities.
  - Support residents to gain skills for work, creating 2,000 apprenticeships and 3,000 training opportunities so local people can take up careers in our borough's growth industries.
  - Support residents who face the most barriers to employment into jobs; delivering free support to get a job for people who face the most barriers, including young people, people with disabilities and parents and carers returning to work and third sector organisations.

## **Community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impacts**

### **Community impact statement**

27. Where activities are commissioned by the council, support will be made available solely to Southwark residents. In all other cases the council will secure access for Southwark residents.
28. Community benefits will accrue through the direct outputs of the activities set out in the Skills Delivery Plan. They will also accrue indirectly through such things as increased engagement between employers and training providers, and improvements to the quality and accessibility of the local skills offer.

29. Effective community outreach and engagement will be key to the success of the skills delivery plan. A range of outreach and engagement activities will be carried out, utilising new and existing channels, to ensure all communities are aware of and able to access relevant opportunities.

**Equalities (including socio-economic) impact statement**

30. Southwark Stands Together is the council's commitment to tackling racial inequality here in the borough, which is preventing the great diversity of the borough from being reflected in all parts of our economy. In addition to racial inequalities, and often intersecting with them, are barriers to engagement such as mental and physical health conditions.
31. The Skills Delivery Plan is guided by the central ambition of the council's new economic strategy: to shape a more inclusive economy here in Southwark. Issues of equality have therefore been at the forefront during the development of the Skills Delivery Plan.
32. The Equality Impact and Needs Analysis for the forthcoming economic strategy sets out how it and aligned plans, such as the Skills Delivery Plan, will address equalities issues. Steered by this, the evidence base for the Skills Delivery Plan (see Background Papers #1) identifies inequalities that improvements to the skills system can help to address. These include:
- Acute underrepresentation of black, Asian and minority ethnic in the life sciences sector.
  - Overrepresentation of black, Asian and minority ethnic workers in areas of the green economy where the greatest level of reskilling is expected.
  - Significant gender and ethnicity imbalances and a lack of people from low-income backgrounds in the digital, creative and cultural sector.
  - Lack of engagement with essential skills provision amongst the over 50s and men.
33. The council's employment service, Southwark Works, supports populations most likely to face the aforementioned barriers, including vulnerable young people, those with mental and physical health conditions, and those at risk of homelessness. The Partnership will work closely with the Southwark Works service to support these groups to access opportunities arising from Skills Delivery Plan.
34. All commissioned providers will be required to report on equalities outcomes, which will then be reported to the Partnership as per paragraph 22. Where commissioned activities target specific populations, appropriate targets will be set that providers will be expected to meet and report on.

### **Health impact statement**

35. Mental and physical health conditions are barriers to engagement with the skills system and employment, and evidence has shown that not being work can worsen people's health. A more accessible skills system here in Southwark will enable more of our residents to acquire the skills needed to (re-)enter the workforce and progress in their career of choice.

### **Climate change implications**

36. The recommendation as set out in this report is not considered to have any adverse effect on climate change.
37. An area of focus of the Skills Delivery Plan is the green economy (skills theme 2). The objectives under this skills theme are to (1) support residents to access training and employment opportunities within the green economy, and (2) support the skills system to respond to emerging green skills needs. Delivering on these objectives will help meet sector demand for skilled labour, encourage sector growth and, in turn, support the council's climate ambitions.
38. The council's climate action plan sets out how the council will deliver a sustainable future for the borough. The ambitions of the skills delivery plan are well aligned with those of the climate action plan, with the above objectives helping to achieve the following goals:
  - Create 2,000 new green jobs by 2026
  - Grow the local economy and innovative new green businesses

### **Finance implications**

39. The maximum available budget of £475,000 will be met from available section 106 employment and skills funds approved for the purpose of commissioning employment and skills programmes in the borough.
40. All other costs associated with the implementation of the skills delivery plan will be met within existing council resources.

### **Legal implications**

41. Please refer to the concurrent below from the Assistant Chief Executive for Governance and Assurance.

### **Resource implications**

42. Staffing requirements associated with the implementation of the Skills Delivery Plan will be met within existing council resources.

### **Consultation**

43. The Skills Delivery Plan has been developed in close collaboration with the Partnership, comprising a number of council departments, skills and employment providers, large employers and business groups, which draws upon the knowledge and expertise of a wider network of stakeholders. The Skills Delivery Plan therefore reflects and responds to the skills needs of learners, providers and employers.
44. Beyond the Partnership, a range of council departments (in addition to those that sit on the Partnership) were also consulted. The Skills Delivery Plan is therefore appropriately aligned with broader council priorities that relate to skills.
45. The council also consulted extensively on its new economic strategy, which the Skills Delivery Plan is guided by. In late 2021, a wide range of external stakeholders were invited to give their views on a proposed set of priorities and an initial vision for change. The council then consulted on a draft strategy, receiving over 100 responses via an online survey and a series of face to face feedback sessions.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS**

### **Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance**

46. This report seeks the approval of the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Skills and Business for the proposed Southwark Skills Delivery Plan 2023-25 as outlined in this report, in particular the key issues for consideration in paragraphs 6 to 22 and Appendix 1 of this report.
47. The Cabinet Member for Jobs, Skills and Business's attention is drawn to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010, and when making decisions to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation or other prohibited conduct, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. The relevant characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The duty also applies to marriage and civil partnership but only in relation to the elimination of discrimination. The Cabinet Member for Jobs, Skills and Business is specifically referred to the community, equalities (including socio-economic) and health impact statements in paragraphs 27 to 35 of this report and consultations that have taken place in paragraphs 43-45, setting out the consideration that has been given to the community, equalities and health impact issues and the extensive consultation undertaken in order to inform the development and detail of the Delivery Plan.
48. Any procurement arising from the delivery of the strategy must be in accordance with the council's Contract Standing Orders and the procurement rules. Any resultant services contracts must be in a form

approved by the Assistant Chief Executive for Governance and Assurance.

### **Strategic Director of Finance (SC23/023)**

49. This report is requesting Cabinet Member for Jobs, Skills and Business to approve the Southwark Skills Delivery Plan 2023-25, as detailed in the report.
50. The strategic director of finance notes that the estimated cost of the delivery plan can be contained within the funding, as detailed in the financial implications section.
51. Staffing and any other costs connected with this report to be contained within existing departmental revenue budgets.

### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

<b>Background Papers</b>	<b>Held At</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Southwark Skills Partnership papers	Local Economy Team, Tooley Street	<a href="mailto:Matthew.Rolfe@Southwark.gov.uk">Matthew.Rolfe@Southwark.gov.uk</a>
Fairer, Greener, Safer: Southwark Council Delivery Plan 2022-2026	<a href="https://www.southwark.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/fairer-future/fairer-greener-safer-southwark-s-council-delivery-plan">https://www.southwark.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/fairer-future/fairer-greener-safer-southwark-s-council-delivery-plan</a>	<a href="mailto:Matthew.Rolfe@Southwark.gov.uk">Matthew.Rolfe@Southwark.gov.uk</a>

### **APPENDICES**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Title</b>
Appendix 1	Southwark Skills Delivery Plan 2023-25

## AUDIT TRAIL

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Danny Edwards, Head of Economy, Local Economy Team	
<b>Report Author</b>	Matt Rolfe, Senior Strategy Officer, Local Economy Team	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	29 August 2023	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments Included</b>
Assistant Chief Executive – Governance and Assurance	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance	Yes	Yes
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Yes	Yes
<b>Date final report sent to Constitutional Team</b>		8 September 2023

# Southwark Skills Delivery Plan 2023-25

## Introduction

This document sets out the shared priorities of the Southwark Skills Partnership and its intended response to them over the next two years.

Building on the ambitions of [Southwark's Skills Strategy 2018-2022](#), the 2023 Skills Delivery Plan supports the council's vision for a greener, fairer and more resilient borough, central pillars of our forthcoming economic strategy and [Borough Plan](#). Central to a greener, fairer and more resilient borough is an economy that works for all, with a first-class and accessible skills system that supports every resident – regardless of age, circumstance or background – to pursue and progress in their career of choice. The purpose of the skills partnership and this delivery plan is to ensure that such a skills system exists here in the borough.

Chaired by the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Skills and Business, the Southwark Skills Partnership has a core membership of council departments, skills and employment providers, large employers and business groups, which draws upon the knowledge and expertise of a wider network of stakeholders. The partnership is responsible for the delivery of the actions set out in the delivery plan and the plan itself, ensuring it continues to be reflective of, and responsive to, current and emerging skills needs.

The partnership's focus is the skills system here in Southwark, however it recognises the need to align with skills initiatives that have a broader geographic focus. [The central-London Local Skills Improvement Plan](#), for example, which will make recommendations for improving the post-16 technical education system in the central-London area, is fully aligned with this plan.

## An equitable and inclusive skills system

Sadly, the great diversity of our borough isn't reflected in all sectors of our economy. [Southwark Stands Together](#) is the council's commitment to tackling racial inequality and helped shape this delivery plan, and ensuring residents from all backgrounds have access to our skills system, enabling them to access employment opportunities within key sectors of our economy, is an overarching objective. In addition to racial inequalities – and all too often intersecting with them – are barriers such as mental and physical health conditions, financial difficulties, and caring responsibilities, which our response will also pay attention to.

[Southwark Works](#) supports populations deemed furthest from the labour market, including vulnerable young people and care leavers, older-aged

residents with physical health conditions, residents with mental health conditions, learning difficulties or disabilities, and the homeless. The partnership will work closely with Southwark Works to ensure these residents, who face the most significant barriers to employment, are supported by the local skills system.

## **Working with employers**

Effective employer engagement will be key to the success of each of the actions set out in this plan. To implement the changes we propose, and for residents to benefit from them, employers must be willing to invest in their workforce and work collaboratively with skills providers to help improve the local skills offer. In return, they need access to training provision that responds to their needs and allows them to recruit locally. They also need advice and support to engage with the skills system and provide more work-based learning opportunities.

## **The Southwark skills system**

The borough's skills system supports residents of all ages and provides a wide range of learning options.

Preparing our youngest residents for life and further study are our schools and academies located throughout the borough, including a number of schools supporting residents with special educational needs and disabilities. Further Education is delivered by our Sixth Forms and colleges, including [Southwark College](#) and [Morley College](#). Residents looking to advance to Higher Education have on their doorstep a number of top universities, including [London South Bank University](#), [University of the Arts London](#), [King's College London](#), and [The Engineering and Design Institute](#). Operating alongside our formal educational institutions are providers such as [Southwark Council's adult, family learning and skills service](#), the [Southwark Construction Skills Centre](#), and a network of community-based organisations offering a range of accredited and un-accredited learning options.

## **Communications**

Across all of the skills themes, the partnership will deliver a range of activities to promote new and existing opportunities and increase engagement with the local skills offer. To maximise reach and impact, communications may be geographically and/or demographically targeted and a variety of media will be utilised, including social media.

Work will also be undertaken to ensure our digital offers are accessible and engaging. This is about more than just keeping information relevant and up to date, it's also about exploring new and innovative options, like virtual work experience and automated information and advice services.

# Sectors

The following six skills themes focus on key sectors of our economy: those that support our ambitions for a fairer, greener and more resilient economy here in Southwark.

In each section we set out our priorities and what we intend to do and when. We also list which members of the Southwark Skills Partnership have put themselves forward to help deliver each action. Support will also be provided by organisations that are not yet part of the partnership, so the lists are not exhaustive.

## 1. Life sciences

With an annual turnover nationally of £90bn, the life sciences sector is a key driver of economic growth. It is also a sector that has the potential to fundamentally improve the length and quality of life of our residents. Southwark and Lambeth's emerging life sciences district, SC1, is expected to generate approximately 9,000 jobs in the next 3 years and 33,000 once fully established. To meet the demand for a skilled workforce, the local skills offer will need to cover a range of new areas and our life sciences sector will need to provide sufficient opportunities for work-based learning. Across the UK, Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are underrepresented in the sector, with Black employees occupying less than 1% of roles. Thus, the sector will bring not only jobs to the borough, but equality and diversity issues too. Addressing these challenges must therefore be a key priority for SC1.

Objectives	Actions	Supporting partners	When
<p>Ensure pathways are in place, particularly for communities underrepresented in the UK life sciences sector, to access the skills and employment opportunities arising from the SC1 Life Science District, integrating and building upon existing activities.</p>	<p>1.1 As part of the SC1 Employment and Skills Strategy Group, working alongside Lambeth Council and King’s Health Partners, develop an Employment and Skills Actions Plan informed by the recommendations from the 2023 SC1 Employment and Skills Study, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increasing levels of science capital amongst young residents;</li> <li>- development of career pathways, including an integrated, local approach to the delivery of life sciences apprenticeships;</li> <li>- upskilling careers leads and advisers on routes into the sector;</li> <li>- delivery of a local engagement and outreach programme.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- British Land</li> <li>- Morley College</li> <li>- Guy’s and St Thomas’ NHS Foundation Trust</li> <li>- London South Bank University</li> <li>- Southwark College</li> <li>- Southwark Council Adult Education Service</li> <li>- University of the Arts London</li> </ul>	TBC
	<p>1.2 Promote local skills and employment support and opportunities for life sciences careers via the SC1 Life Science District Talent Page.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Southwark Council Local Economy Team</li> </ul>	Ongoing

## 2. Green

The green sector encompasses a wide-range of activities that contribute to carbon reduction and other environmental goals. In Southwark, it is expected to be fast-growing sector and generate a significant number of employment and training opportunities over the years to come. This is good news for the borough, but if our residents are to benefit they must acquire the skills necessary to work in the sector, and our local skills system must keep pace with the growing demand for these skills. As well as those looking to enter the sector, many workers will need to reskill, with the greatest level of reskilling expected in construction, transport and manufacturing. These sectors have higher proportions of Black, Asian and minority ethnic workers and the local skills response must ensure that these communities are not further disadvantaged in the move to net zero.

Objectives	Actions	Supporting partners	When
<p>Support residents, particularly those at the greatest risk of being disadvantaged by the move to net zero, to access employment and training opportunities within the green economy.</p> <p>Responding to emerging needs, explore new ways to develop local capacity to deliver green skills locally.</p>	<p>2.1 Through the Green Skills Hub at London South Bank University, provide careers information, advice and guidance on green careers and skills pathway, and opportunities for Southwark residents to equip themselves with the skills to work in the green sector.</p> <p>2.1.1 Provide 382 jobs/apprenticeships, 119 work placements, and 1,230 qualifications.</p> <p>2.1.2 Deliver a programme of marketing and engagement, including jobs fairs, a schools programme and employer workshops.</p> <p>2.1.3 Provide virtual work experience opportunities in local green sectors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- London South Bank University / Green Skills Hub</li> <li>- Southwark College</li> <li>- Southwark Construction Skills Centre</li> <li>- The Engineering and Design Institute London (TEDI)</li> </ul>	2023-24
	<p>2.2 In partnership with Lewisham and Lambeth Councils, develop local capacity to deliver green skills.</p> <p>2.2.1 Conduct a feasibility study into establishing a retrofit skills centre.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GoodPeople</li> <li>- Morley College</li> <li>- Southwark Council Adult Education Service</li> <li>- Southwark College</li> <li>- Southwark Works</li> <li>- University of the Arts London</li> </ul>	2.2 - Ongoing  2.2.1 – 2023
	<p>2.3 Secure employment and skills opportunities for residents from the Council’s investment in net zero initiatives, including construction of low-carbon homes and energy efficiency retrofit of buildings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Southwark Council</li> </ul>	Ongoing

### 3. Digital

Digital jobs – also referred to as Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) jobs – make up over 9% of the jobs here in the borough, and over 13% of our businesses are operating in the sector. Demand for advanced digital skills is increasing, yet participation in digital skills within formal education is falling. Alternative skills pathways, such as boot-camps and self-teaching, are increasingly popular and better able to keep pace with the fast moving sector. However, integration with the skills system and access to them needs to be improved, particularly for those facing barriers to learning. Within the sector, significant gender and ethnicity imbalances exist, and people from lower-income backgrounds are underrepresented. This suggests barriers to awareness, understanding and access to opportunities, alongside challenges with recruitment and employment practices.

Objectives	Actions	Supporting partners	When
<p>Provide residents, particularly those underrepresented in the sector, with the opportunity to explore and further their understanding of the range of digital careers.</p> <p>Support those interested in a career in the sector to acquire the skills and to take their first steps.</p> <p>Explore ways to integrate alternative skills pathways, such as boot-camps, into the local offer.</p> <p>Improve employment outcomes from higher level FE and HE digital skills courses, particularly for underrepresented groups.</p>	<p>3.1 In collaboration with industry representatives, deliver a comprehensive entry to digital careers programme, aimed explicitly at widening access to the sector, encompassing the following activities.</p> <p>3.2.1 Taster sessions, covering a range of digital careers and career routes, delivered by sector representatives from underrepresented communities.</p> <p>3.2.2 A training programme that will equip residents with the skills and knowledge required to either (a) enrol on a recommended digital skills boot-camp, (b) apply for an entry-level digital position, or (c) progress through further education.</p> <p>3.2.3 Employment support for higher-level FE and HE learners from underrepresented groups to improve progression to industry employment, including support with the application process and interview preparation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Better Bankside Business Improvement District</li> <li>- Morley College</li> <li>- Southwark College</li> <li>- Southwark Works</li> <li>- University of the Arts London</li> </ul>	<p>2024-25</p>

## 4. Health and social care

Southwark’s health and social care sector accounts for 11% of the borough’s jobs, spread across a diverse range of health and social care providers, including two leading NHS Foundation Trusts. Demand for health and social care services is increasing, as is complexity of need, presenting challenges as well as opportunities. As the sector grows and adapts, new employment opportunities will emerge for those looking to enter the sector and progress within it, which the skills system must respond to. Despite high vacancy rates, the sector continues to face workforces challenges and support is needed to improve access for our residents. There are opportunities to build on sector-focussed skills programmes locally, such as the Healthcare Sector-based Work Academy Programme (SWAP) at Southwark College, and to deepen our understanding of the skills requirements of social care providers locally.

Objectives	Actions	Supporting partners	When
<p>Integrating existing skills programmes, explore how pathways to health and social care employment can be improved to help address longstanding workforce challenges and unlock local opportunities for our residents.</p> <p>Work with social care employers to raise the profile of the sector locally and align local skills provision with local skills need.</p>	4.1 Healthcare Sector-based Work Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Southwark College</li> <li>- Guy’s and St Thomas’ NHS Foundation Trust</li> </ul>	Ongoing
	4.2 Trial a programme of job application support integrated with the SWAP at Southwark College. Learnings to inform a longer-term solution for both health and social care.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guy’s and St Thomas’ NHS Foundation Trust</li> <li>- Southwark Works</li> <li>- Southwark College</li> </ul>	2023

	<p>4.3 Mayor's Academies Health and Care Hub. Working alongside five other London Boroughs, support the South East London Integrated Care System with the design of activities to be delivered through the hub, including working with employers to understand their needs and improve the local skills offer, increase take-up of local roles, and raise the profile of the sector.</p> <p>4.3.1 Explore developing a bespoke SWAP linked to entry-level vacancies with local health and social care employers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Department for Work and Pensions (Job Centre Plus)</li> <li>- Guy's and St Thomas', King's Hospital, and South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trusts</li> <li>- London South Bank University</li> <li>- Southwark College</li> <li>- Southwark Council Adult Education Service</li> <li>- Southwark Council Public Health Team</li> <li>- Southwark Works</li> <li>- Southwark-based social care providers</li> </ul>	<p>2023-25</p>
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## 5. Creative and cultural

The creative and cultural sector covers television, film and video, music, the performing arts, and plenty more. It's the reason why many people choose to live, work and visit our borough, which is considered a centre of creative excellence. However, "straight, able-bodied white men dominate London's creative sector", and only 16% of the workforce are from lower-income backgrounds ([Creative Majority Report](#)). A likely reason for this lack of diversity is the level of risk involved with entering the sector, for those wishing to establish a business as well as those seeking employment, whose first step may well be an unpaid internship. Those with greater financial capital are better able to bear the associated risks and find their way into the sector, putting those from low-income backgrounds at a significant disadvantage.

Objectives	Actions	Supporting partners	When
<p>Inspire residents from disadvantaged backgrounds to pursue a career in the creative and cultural sector, including inspiring school-age residents to progress to FE, HE and other learning.</p> <p>Help those from disadvantaged backgrounds mitigate the risks associated with establishing themselves within the creative and cultural sector, as an entrepreneur or an employee.</p>	<p>5.1 Working with industry representatives, expand the offer of creative sector insight opportunities available locally, such as paid work experience and internships, with a focus on young and underrepresented residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Better Bankside Business Improvement District</li> <li>- London South Bank University</li> <li>- Morley College</li> <li>- Southwark College</li> <li>- Southwark Council Culture Team</li> <li>- Southwark Council Public Health Team</li> <li>- Southwark Education Business Alliance</li> <li>- University of the Arts London</li> </ul>	<p>2024-25</p>
	<p>5.2 Deliver a programme of support for residents looking to enter or progress within the creative and cultural sector, as an employee or entrepreneur, targeting underrepresented groups. Activities may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- mentoring and advice around career development and sustainability;</li> <li>- show-casing local examples of creative leadership</li> <li>- networking opportunities</li> <li>- a programme of paid work experience and employment opportunities with Southwark-based creative organisations.</li> </ul>		<p>2024-25</p>

## 6. Hospitality

As a central-London borough, Southwark is home to a diverse and bustling hospitality sector catering to a wide range of tastes, enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. Despite continued strong employment growth in the sector, large recruitment and skills gaps still exist. The sector also has a poor reputation, with many citing low pay, long hours and a lack of opportunities for progression as reasons not to pursue a career. Despite this negative perception, many good jobs and careers exist within the sector, but awareness of these and of the pathways to them is lacking. These issues of reputation and awareness sit alongside an issue of provision, with the local skills offer currently unable to meet sector demand for skilled labour.

Objectives	Actions	Supporting partners	When
Raise the profile of the hospitality sector locally.	6.1 Establish a Hospitality Skills Centre in Southwark, designed and delivered in partnership with industry representatives, to improve and increase capacity for hospitality skills provision within the borough.	- Sea Containers	TBC
Increase awareness of the employment and training opportunities available locally and of the pathways to them.  Improve and increase capacity for hospitality skills provision locally to provide new pathways to hospitality jobs locally.	6.2 Alongside Lewisham Council, support the Mayor's Academies Hospitality Hub at Lewisham College with the design and delivery of its activities, working with employers to formalise the regional skills response, provide work-based training and employment opportunities, and inspire residents to work in the hospitality sector.	- Better Bankside Business Improvement District - British Land (Canada Water Connect) - Guy's and St Thomas NHS Foundation Trust (hospitality) - London South Bank University - Southwark Education Business Alliance	2023-24

## Cross-cutting themes

The final three skills themes cut across all sectors of our economy. They are important aspects of any skills system and key pillars of ours, serving to raise awareness of and increase engagement with the local skills system, prepare low-skilled residents for life, learning and work, and to encourage the provision and take-up of work-based learning opportunities.

In each section we set out our priorities and what we intend to do and when. We also list which members of the Southwark Skills Partnership have put themselves forward to help deliver each action. Support will also be provided by organisations that are not yet part of the partnership, so the lists are not exhaustive.

## 7. Careers Information, Advice and Guidance

Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) enables residents to make informed decisions about which learning and career pathways to follow. There is a range of CIAG support available, yet the offer is fragmented and difficult to navigate for both residents and employers. Further, work is needed to ensure CIAG is accessible to everyone who needs it, regardless of age, circumstances or career aspirations. It must also meet a range of additional needs, such as physical and mental health conditions, which act as barriers to engagement. Finally, our schools and colleges have a key role to play in providing CIAG to our young residents, but require ongoing support from the local employment and skills system to do so.

Objectives	Actions	Supporting partners	When
Support our residents to navigate the local CIAG offer, as well as regional and national offerings.	7.1 Reinstate National Careers Service support for Southwark Works advisors, better enabling them to provide higher-intensity, one-to-one support to residents who need it, particularly those furthest from the labour market.	- Southwark Works	2023
Provide residents with low-intensity needs with an easily accessible, light-touch online CIAG service.	7.2 Explore options for a digital CIAG offer, aiding navigation of existing offers and capable of providing high-volume support to residents with low-intensity needs.	- Better Bankside Business Improvement District - British Land - GoodPeople	2023-24
Ensure residents receiving employment support have access to suitable higher-intensity CIAG, where required.	7.3 Develop a 'CIAG+' offer catering for the needs of residents facing additional barriers to work, such as physical, mental and financial barriers.	- Southwark College - Adult Education Service - Southwark Council - Southwark Council - Southwark Council	2023-24
Develop the local CIAG offer so			

<p>that it accommodates the needs of residents facing additional barriers to learning and work.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for residents of all ages – not just school-age residents – with work experience opportunities.</p> <p>Support local schools and colleges to offer high-quality CIAG to all young residents.</p>	<p>7.4 Explore a work experience model for older-aged residents, including those with CIAG+ needs.</p>	<p>SEND Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Southwark Education Business Alliance</li> <li>- South London and Maudsley and Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trusts (7.4)</li> <li>- Southwark Works</li> <li>- University of the Arts London</li> </ul>	<p>2023-24</p>
	<p>7.5 Develop a more joined-up approach to the delivery of CIAG within our schools and colleges, particularly for young people at greater risk of becoming NEET.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Southwark Council Post-16 Service</li> <li>- Southwark Council SEND Team</li> <li>- Schools and College leads (incl. Morley and Southwark Colleges)</li> <li>- Southwark Education Business Alliance</li> </ul>	<p>2023-24</p>

## 8. Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a great way for residents to start their career and offer the opportunity to work in a wide range of fields. They're also an attractive alternative to more costly options such as degrees, as students can earn while they learn. Promisingly, demand in Southwark for higher-level apprenticeships is growing, however demand for intermediate-level apprenticeships is falling and overall we are seeing fewer young people taking up apprenticeships. Alongside this, the number of SMEs offering apprenticeships is also falling, with costs and difficulty navigating the apprenticeship system cited as reasons for this. Finally, preparation for an apprenticeship is crucial and pre-apprenticeship programmes have a key role to play here, yet take-up is low and the effectiveness of existing programmes is questionable.

Objectives	Actions	Supporting partners	When
Provide more apprenticeship opportunities locally, particularly for our young and disadvantaged residents, with a focus on intermediate level and our priority sectors.	8.1 Transfer up to 25% of Southwark Council's annual apprenticeship levy to SMEs based in the borough to cover training costs. Participating SMEs to also receive support with setting up an apprenticeship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Southwark Council</li> <li>- London Progression Collaboration</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Support our residents to be 'apprenticeship ready'.	8.2 Establish a Southwark Apprenticeship Levy Pot in partnership with other large employers, securing a greater share of unspent apprenticeship levy for Southwark businesses and our residents. Participating SMEs to also receive support with setting up an apprenticeship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Southwark Council</li> <li>- London South Bank University</li> <li>- London Progression Collaboration</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Better integrate pre-apprenticeship options, such as traineeships, with the apprenticeship system locally.	8.3 Southwark Council and its partners to commit to providing more apprenticeship opportunities for Southwark residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All partners</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Provide advice, guidance and			

assistance with training costs to Southwark-based businesses looking to create apprenticeship opportunities for Southwark residents.	8.4 Explore sector-specific pathways to apprenticeships, including advice and guidance, insight opportunities, pre-apprenticeship learning and apprenticeship application support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- British Land</li> <li>- Better Bankside Business Improvement District</li> <li>- London South Bank University</li> </ul>	2023-24
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## 9. Essential skills

Essential skills – namely maths, English, including for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and digital skills – enable residents to function in society and progress in learning and employment. It's fundamental that all of our residents have these skills, yet many do not. 13.9% of residents aged 16 and over have no recognised qualifications, and these residents are overrepresented in the more deprived parts of the boroughs. Demand for essential skills learning is high in Southwark, however many seek provision outside the borough, suggesting an issue of supply. Certain populations are less likely to engage with essential skills provision, such as men and the over 50s, with stigma and the intimidating nature of formal education spaces cited as reasons. Finally, essential skills provision outside of formal education spaces, such as in community settings, isn't well understood by the Skills Partnership, hindering strategic planning.

Objectives	Actions	Supporting partners	When
Improve our collective understanding of essential skills provision within the borough, enabling a more informed approach to supply-side interventions, awareness of	9.1 Provide free English, Maths and Digital Skills in Southwark Council libraries and family centres.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Southwark Council Children &amp; Adult's Service</li> </ul>	2023 – ongoing

<p>community need, and stronger links between community and formal education providers.</p> <p>Provide more opportunities locally for residents to acquire essential skills outside of formal education spaces.</p> <p>Support more of our low-skilled residents to engage with essential skills learning, focussing on underserved communities and alternative forms of provision, such as workplace learning.</p>	<p>9.2 Essential skills provision, demand and capacity across the borough to be mapped, in both community and formal education spaces, informing a set of actions for further improving the local offer and aiding referral and signposting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Southwark Council Local Economy Team (with support from appropriate partners)</li> </ul>	<p>2023-24</p>
	<p>9.3 Pilot alternative learning programmes, such as workplace learning, with a focus on supporting populations less likely to engage with the local offer.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- British Land</li> <li>- English for Action</li> <li>- Morley College</li> <li>- Southwark College</li> <li>- Southwark Council Adult Education Service</li> </ul>	<p>2024-25</p>

## Indicative delivery timeline

	Q2 23-24	Q3 23-24	Q4 23-24	Q1 24-25	Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26	
Communications	TBC								
1. Life sciences	TBC								
2. Green	2.1.1 (Green Skills Hub) 382 jobs/apprenticeships, 119 work placements, and 1,230 qualifications		Green Skills Hub (funding extension TBC)						
	2.1.2 (Green Skills Hub) Deliver a programme of marketing and engagement, including jobs fairs, a schools programme and employer workshops.								
	2.1.3 (Green Skills Hub) Provide virtual work experience opportunities in local green sectors.								
	2.2.1 Retrofit skills centre feasibility study								
	2.3 Secure employment and skills opportunities on council retrofit/decarbonisation projects								

	Q2 23-24	Q3 23-24	Q4 23-24	Q1 24-25	Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26
3. Digital					3.1 Entry to Digital Careers Programme			
4. Health and social care	4.1 Healthcare Sector-based Work Academy Programme							
	4.2 Application Support Pilot							
	4.3 Support the South East London Integrated Care System with the design of activities to be delivered through the Mayor's Academies Health and Care Hub 4.3.1 Explore developing a bespoke SWAP linked to entry-level vacancies with local health and social care employers							
5. Creative and cultural					5.1 Expand offer of sector insight opportunities			
					5.2 Creative and cultural careers programme			
6. Hospitality			6.1 Hospitality Skills Centre (TBC)					
	6.2 Support the Mayor's Academies Hospitality Hub at Lewisham College with the design and delivery of its activities							

	Q2 23-24	Q3 23-24	Q4 23-24	Q1 24-25	Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26
7. CIAG	7.1 Reinstate National Careers Service support for Southwark Works advisors.							
			7.2 Digital CIAG offer					
			7.3 CIAG+ offer					
			7.4 All-age work experience model					
			7.5 Develop a more joined-up approach to the delivery of CIAG within our schools and colleges					
8. Apprenticeships	8.1 Transfer up to 25% of Southwark Council's annual apprenticeship levy to SMEs based in the borough to cover training costs							
	8.2 Establish a Southwark Apprenticeship Levy Pot in partnership with other large employers							
	8.3 Council and its partners providing more apprenticeship opportunities for residents							
	<i>Pre-apprenticeship programme, delivered by Step Ahead (programme that 8.4 will follow)</i>							
			8.4 Explore sector-specific pathways to apprenticeships.		8.4 Take forward actions from exploration phase (TBC)			
9. Essential	9.1 Provide free English, Maths and Digital Skills in Southwark Council libraries and/or family centres							

	Q2 23-24	Q3 23-24	Q4 23-24	Q1 24-25	Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26
	9.2 Essential skills provision, demand and capacity across the borough mapped			9.2 Consider response to findings (TBC).				
							9.3 Workplace learning pilot	