



WAVERLEY TRAINING SERVICES

BUSINESS PLAN

2008-2013

Building on 25 years of achievement

"SUCCESSFULLY DEVELOPING AND SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS AND EMPLOYERS"

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Mission statement

'Developing and Supporting Individuals and Employers' through high quality training and employment opportunities tailored to the needs of employers and individuals, through Schools alternative curriculum programme, Entry to Employment and Apprenticeships programmes.

Objectives

Provide value for money training and employment opportunities through:

- Apprenticeships (meeting the needs of local businesses and their staff in the workplace) through NVQ's, Key skills and underpinning knowledge.
- Entry to Employment (preparing young people for the world of work or further education)
- Alternative Curriculum Programme (supporting the needs of individual who can better achieve their potential outside of the traditional school environment)

Background

Waverley Borough Council has been involved in the training of young people since the days of 'manpower service and YTS' going back to 1981 when Waverley Training Services was instigated. At this time most council's had training arms, this is still the situation in the North of England but it is a rarity in the South. Some council still run a training organisation for their own staff (e.g. SCC has Hospitality and Catering for school meals staff) but few deliver training for the wider community.

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WTS moved to the Pump House in 1983 and will celebrate 25 years of training young people in Farnham and surrounding areas, this September. We could not have achieved this without the support of the Councillors and Council. We intend to acknowledge this achievement by holding a celebration event for local businesses, employers, councillors, press and our learners in early 2009.

We are a division of the council expected to cover all our overheads and 'on costs' such as IT support, Personnel Support etc from Waverley Borough Council and usually do.

There are three strands to the work we do, two are funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the third is paid for by the participating schools and pupil referral units who are charged an hourly rate. Responsibility for the LSC funding programmes for under 19's will transfer to Surrey County Council from 1st September 2010, whilst 19+ programmes will become the responsibility of the Skills Funding Agency.

Context – area and programmes

Surrey has a high proportion of school leavers who either stay on for the sixth form or go into further education. In 2006 86% of 16 year olds were in education compared to a national average of 83%.

The borough of Waverley has a lower than average minority ethnic population. The Surrey Community Review published in November 06 shows Waverley consists of 96.4% white British were as Surreys average is 87% white British. The number of young people 'not in education, training or employment – NEET) in Surrey is lower than National average. WTS has focused on meeting the needs of this challenging and disadvantage group.

Principles and approach

Our strategic plan for the next five years is to grow the business cautiously ensuring quality of the provision remains, putting particular emphasis on employer involvement and engagement.

We are keen to improve the service we offer, opening up our programmes to a larger audience whilst keeping the quality and achievement rates high. We are presently named as a 'good' provider by OFSTED (inspected Sept 2005 by OFSTEDs predecessor ALI (Adult Learning Inspectorate and credited in its annual report as being "one of the best providers in the country". We are keen to maintain and improve on this grade when we are next inspected which will probably be sometime during 2009.

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We are particularly keen to move into the Eastern or Southern side of the borough with our Entry to Employment programme offering this high quality provision to those less able to commute to Farnham and to develop better relationships with employers across the Borough.

Quality

From OFSTED Inspection Report in September 2005 – “WTS’s leadership and management are good as are its arrangements for quality improvement”. Overall grade for all areas was grade 2 – good.

WTS achieved the Matrix standards for IAG (Information Advice and Guidance) in 2007. This is a key quality standard for work based training providers and WTS is one of 5 WBL providers in Surrey to hold this award.

Areas identified as good practice	Areas for further improvement
Self Assessment Report was fully endorsed by WTS staff (excellent staff involvement)	Observation of teaching and learning needs to be consistent
The three and six monthly review of quality improvement plans was above the norm	Improve the retention and achievement for learners on Horticulture programmes by working with Internal Verifier and External Verifier to reduce paperwork and generally help learners to achieve in a timely fashion
Good retention and achievement rates across all vocational areas	

Strands of work undertaken

Waverley Training Services offer three very separate strands of work:

The school programme – an alternative curriculum for those young people who have found the classroom education difficult. We offer several options under this programme, including literacy and numeracy though ‘unconventional’ teaching tailored to the needs of the learners.

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We offer the National Skills Profile – again literacy and numeracy but in a vocational context; Key Skills, particularly the wider key skills of team working, improving yourself and problem solving; Business Administration Level 1 and Horticulture level 1 for those young people who are more practical.

We work with seven secondary schools, including two special needs schools as well as the Guildford and Woking Pupil Referral Units and the Linden Centre, all are key partners in encouraging young people to take part in our schools programmes.

Entry to Employment – for those aged 16 -19 who have lost their way for various reasons (undeveloped social skills, unfulfilled potential and achievement, limited parental support, specific learning needs) in education and/or their career expectations. This is a programme with three core outcomes: into employment: into further education: or into apprenticeship. The emphasis is on the individual's need. Learners are reviewed regularly and the programme changes as their needs change.

This is a very successful programme with a retention and achievement rate of over 56% progressing into employment, education or apprenticeships in the contract year 2007/08, against the national average of 40%.

Following a previous inspection in November 03 WTS has been in partnership with Guildford College for the E2E programme. The partnership includes Surrey Care Trust, the Prince's Trust and the YMCA as well as WTS. However WTS performance has been significantly better than the Guildford College partnership's performance as a whole.

From August 1st 2008 WTS has its own contract for E2E which means WTS can now be recognised individually for the success of this programme. This also means the learner numbers in the LSC contract have increased from 56 to 88 for this contract year.

Apprenticeships – work based learning arm. This is where we go out to employer's premises to see learners in their work place and help them through the qualifications. There is no restriction on age anymore so anyone from 16 to 65 can be an apprentice. The only condition is they must be employed for 16 hours or more per week.

Our occupationally qualified assessors visit the learners on a regular basis, mentoring, helping and supporting them whilst keeping their line managers informed of their progress.

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Apprenticeships include an NVQ, Key Skills and Technical Certificates and Employees Rights & Responsibilities; we offer apprenticeship in a wide range of subjects including:

- Business and Administration
- Team Leading
- Customer Services
- Contact Centre (Call Handling)
- Management
- Retail
- IT (Using)
- Horticulture
- Motor Vehicle Repairs

Apprenticeships vary in length according to the vocational subject e.g. 12 months for an office-based apprenticeship such as Business Administration and twenty-four months for a more technical apprentice e.g. Horticulture.

Train to Gain – we also have the opportunity to offer Train to Gain in partnership with ALPS (Association of Learning Providers Surrey). Train to Gain is a national programme primarily aimed at those with basic skill needs in literacy and/or numeracy and for those who do not have a level 2 or equivalent qualification. Qualifications gained through this route are a Level 2 or Level 3 NVQ.

Private Training – we have the facilities to offer private non funded training whereby the employer or employee pays, this is usually in higher level qualifications for example Management level 3 & 4, Personnel Support, Diagnostic Testing L4.

Waverley Training Services has chosen to concentrate on apprenticeships since they deliver the best outcomes for learners and employers. The NVQ tests existing knowledge whilst an apprenticeship tests existing and extends learning through underpinning knowledge projects.

Partnership working

WTS works with the LSC, local schools, the school networks, PRU (pupil referral units), YOT (Youth Offending Team) Connexions Service, job centre plus, employers, Guildford College and ALPS.

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ALPS, the Association of Learning Providers Surrey, is a consortium of training providers who bid on a collective basis for larger contracts for its members where an individual organisation could not take the risk in delivering the volume over a wide geographic area. In 2007/08 WTS income from ALPS contracts totalled just under £60,000.

Timescales

The contract with LSC runs from 1st August to 31st July each year and the schools contracts run from 1st September until 31st July.

LSC contracts are by negotiation, which starts around April time and are usually confirmed around June. This year due to massive changes in the funding methodology the contracts were not confirmed until the end of July. This leaves us with a very short time span to get the contracts up and running. This usually results in programmes being behind for the first couple of months however historically numbers catch up over the contract year.

Financial

Financially WTS is viewed positively by funding agencies as having sound financial systems and limited risk being part of Waverley Borough Council. WTS covers all its financial costs and corporate recharges and has returned a surplus to the Council over the last five years in the region of £112,000. It aims to at least cover its costs each year.

Performance Targets and focus

Short term

- Increase employer engagement through various marketing activities and employer involvement in all areas of delivery. With a view to raising the number of employers taking on apprentices by 5% in the first six months of the contract year and then by 10% as a whole for the year ending July 2009. For every year thereafter the aim is to improve on the previous performance by 6%.
- To improve our overall retention and achievement rates by minimum of 5% in contract year 2008/09 across all vocational areas.

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- Increase the number of learners in the 16-19 year old group with emphasis on the Government targets to increase participation particularly for those without a level 2 qualification, to take up Apprenticeships or Entry to Employment places. The target for 2008/09 is challenging with the contract levels at approximately 65% higher than the 2007/08 contract levels.

Medium Term

- To strengthen our offer to local schools including opportunities presented by the Young Apprentices programme in Administration and Law, and alternative curriculum opportunities.
- To continue as a partner of choice following the transfer of E2E and the apprenticeship programmes from the LSC to SCC in 2010.

Communications strategy

WTS needs to strengthen its relationships with both employers and learners if it is to achieve its new contractual targets agreed with the LSC. This can only be achieved with a focus on marketing opportunities and achievements. The priorities to increase both learner and employer participations are:

Marketing our provision to both learners and employers, publishing what we do to a greater extent than previously. Looking at ways to raise our profile in local communities, schools and with employers.

Organisation structure

There is a small but highly skilled, stable workforce, all vocationally competent in their field (see organisation chart annexe A). Most of the relevant WTS staff have or are working towards a recognised teaching qualification in accordance with contractual requirements. We have an excellent training centre with grounds and access to further grounds for our horticulture learners.

All staff are registered with the 'Institute for Learning' and are required to complete a minimum of 30 hours CPD (Continual Professional Development) each year. WTS is a division of the Community Services department and operates from its base at the Pump House in Farnham.

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Working with partners and stakeholders

The achievements of WTS have not had a high profile within Waverley over recent years. Following the restructuring in 2007 and under a new head of service leadership we are better integrating into the Council and at present also have 9 learners working on apprenticeships in Business Administration at the Burys.

The present manager is a director of ALPS and as such enables WTS to have early warning of any opportunities or changes to funding as well as access to various funding pots, which would not be easily accessible to individual providers.

Funding

The Learning & Skills Council (LSC) funds WTS for Apprentices and Entry to Employment learners. The work we do with local schools is either paid for direct by the School or via one of the school networks.

The LSC will not exist after 1st September 2010 and this side of the current contracts will go to local authorities, in our case Surrey County Council. A key target for 2009/10 is to strengthen already established good working relationships with the new funding agencies in preparation for the handover.

Monitoring and control

There is a good performance management culture in place the manager prepares monthly reports on performance against profile for team meetings; this cover starts, average number in learning, qualifications gained and negative leavers. Trends are reviewed to see if any changes are necessary.

Also produced monthly is the LSC 'performance review', again these measure are starts and outcomes but also income generated against profile.

The LSC prepares a provider financial report each year which not only looks at finances but at the risks to them if providers were not performing. WTS had a completely 'green' report against all areas in its most recent 'traffic light' style report.

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Performance management (Appraisal)

Waverley Training Services staff, have had six monthly appraisals since 2005. Both of these appraisals have performance development plans, which are reviewed to at the next appraisal, continuing the cycle and informing the CPD activities required of teachers (Continuous Personal Development – CPD).

WBC introduced a new appraisal cycle so these are now completed in July and with an interim appraisal in January.

Programme performance is managed as described under monitoring and control above.

Objectives for 2008/09 and 2009/10

The first objective is to effectively deliver the contract for 2008/09 which is both challenging and tough with the increase in number of learners to bring in this Government's initiatives with regards to staying in education and learning for longer.

From 2008/09 the LSC has allocated additional funds for 'enhancement' activities for E2E learners. They can include day trips, activity days, paint balling, high/low ropes etc. We have already put forward our intentions to LSC and will claim back the costs as and when these activities are completed.

In 2009, we plan to find premises in the eastern or southern side of the borough to enable us to offer E2E from there as there and meet local needs. This will enable us to fulfil our contractual commitments and maximise the potential income for 08/09, enhancing both the offer and reputation of the service provided

For contract year 2009/10, we are keen to introduce new programmes, looking at level 1 Media Studies and Carpentry mainly for school learners but also for our E2E learners.

Years 2010 onwards involve the transition from LSC to SCC (Surrey County Council); we are currently looking at years 2010 onwards as a result of this transition to ensure opportunities for consolidating the work of WTS are maximised.

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SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
Strong team	Loss of expertise if someone leaves
Dedicated workforce	Struggling to get new employers on board because of the lack of marketing resources
Good quality controls	Lack of research/planning time
Good achievement rates	Lack of staff cover because of the nature of programmes and part time staff.
Employers stay with us	
Good reputation with funding partners	
Opportunities	Threats
Extending E2E (in other parts of the Borough where there is a defined need)	Farnham (Guildford) College could move into same vocational areas as us
Level 1 Carpentry	Lack of contingency post 2010
Level 1 Media	Income reductions if not delivering targets
High contract values	Staffing levels need to be maintained/increased to increase/maintain income levels
Large numbers of untapped employers	Investment needed in maintaining the Annex at WTS
Build on reputation with Schools	

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Risk analysis

Risk Area	Key Risk	Financial Impact	Contingency
Stand alone contract for E2E	Failure to achieve this and/or reduction in achievement rates Existing staff leaving	Reduced income Inability to deliver	Introductions of other E2E options alongside our existing generic option Recruit other staff (NB time lag)
Late issue of contracts	Start new contract year behind target	Reduced income	We didn't stop canvassing for new starts even though we were not 100% sure of our delivery areas
Learners not finishing on time	If learners do not finish on time we have unfunded learners which we still need to support Existing staff leaving (assessors)	Reduced income Lack of or a change in assessor will increase the time learners take to complete	Ensuring we set smart targets for learners and visit regularly Recruit other staff (time lag) Approach other assessors to cover (may not understand our business)
Early leavers on Horticulture programme	Negative outcomes Reduction in our achievement rates	Reduced income and possible failure to gain this programme area in future years	We have reviewed all paperwork, assessment activities to make life easier for the learners and so aid achievement. New horticulture assessor appointed and reviewing programmes

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Risk Area	Key Risk	Financial Impact	Contingency
Staffing and staff training	Existing staff leaving All staff must do minimum of 30 hours CPD per year to stay licensed to practice	Reduced income and failure to meet contracts Recruitment and training of new staff, training of existing staff	Recruit replacement staff None
Failure to meet contract for apprenticeships	Lack of learners and employers to increase participation Lack of dedicated marketing person, marketing is just an add on to people role's	Reduced income Reduced income and possible failure to obtain further contracts	Looking at ways to market ourselves better, including looking into tele-marketing companies Recruit dedicated marketing and recruitment person
Transfer of funding from LSC to Surrey County Council in September 2010	Failure to secure contracts with new funding body	No income and consequent staff reductions	Keeping up to date with all changes, raising WTS profile with SCC as much as possible. Keeping a high profile with good achievement and retention rates

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Glossary

ALPS	Association of Learning Providers Surrey
IV	Internal verifier
EX	External Verifier
MLP	Minimum level of performance
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
App	Apprentice level 2
AAp	Advanced apprentice level 3
WBL	Work based learning
SAR	Self assessment report
E2E	Entry to employment
CPD	Continuous professional development
PFR	Provider financial report
PFA	Provider financial assurance
LSC	Learning and skills council

Level 2 = equivalent of 3 GCSE at grades A-C

Level 3 = equivalent of 2 A levels

Level 4 = degree level

Level 5 = higher degree level

Comms/exec/2008-09/201