



Somerset Employment and Skills Strategy

October 2017



1. Somerset Economic Vision

(Extracted from Somerset Growth Plan, 2017 - 2030¹)

By 2030 Somerset aims to be a very productive and innovative business community and economy. The labour force will have the skills that businesses need, and the infrastructure will be in place, to achieve higher productivity and innovation. Economic prosperity will be inclusive, to the benefit of all groups within the community.

Somerset will:

- Have a nationally competitive economy driven by strong performance in all parts of the economy
- Have a well-established, high value Low Carbon Energy sector, which includes the operation of Hinkley Point and potentially tidal energy projects, and the export of goods and services to nuclear new build projects elsewhere. This should part of a national sector deal for the nuclear sector
- Have a high value Aerospace and Advanced Engineering sector with significant export markets. It will be part of a larger West of England cluster and should be part of a national sector deal for the aerospace sector
- Have an Agri-Food sector, including Food & Drink, that is high value and generates significant exports
- Have a collaborative and well networked SME community
- Have a university, which works alongside the county's higher education provision, further education colleges, schools and businesses, delivering technical education and training and broader economic benefits

- Have a business community that is growing because of its use of digital technology and infrastructure (possibly as part of a national sector deal on industrial digitalisation), particularly to drive productivity and growth in rural areas
- Have vibrant communities in rural and urban areas, with robust physical and ICT infrastructure, a high skilled population, and strong business sectors exploiting their competitive advantages

2. Employment and Skills Objectives

(Extracted from Somerset Growth Plan, 2017 - 2030)

- Somerset will be a national exemplar, largely rural, small business economy, with a strong rate of business start-ups and strong growth. Businesses will be well led and managed
- The workforce will have high levels of appropriate skills, to meet the needs of its business community and enable it to achieve its growth potential
- Somerset will have a strong future workforce. Education and business engagement will be effective, and there will be an apprenticeship culture with apprenticeships in large and small businesses.
- There will be strong delivery of FE and HE to meet businesses' needs and enable them to grow, including investments in FE capital infrastructure and a dedicated university which is based in Somerset
- The economic activity rate will continue to be above the national average. All of the residents that want to work will be able to do so.
- Social mobility and inclusive growth are taking place
- Businesses will have strong digital skills and digital will be core to their activities

¹ <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/plans/somerset-growth-plan/>

3. Employment and Skills Strategic Priorities and Interventions

Strategic Priority 1: Ensure that our future workforce is highly skilled and properly prepared and motivated for their future roles both in the workforce and as responsible citizens	Strategic Priority 2: Ensure that our current and potential workforce is aspirational and, through the ongoing development of their skills, able to make a full contribution to the economy during their working careers	Strategic Priority 3: Ensure that our businesses have appropriate leadership and management skills and knowledge which allows them to survive and grow	Strategic Priority 4: Promote and develop higher skills provision in Somerset
Education TFG	Pathways to Employment TFG	Leadership and Management TFG	Higher Skills TFG
<p align="center">Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (all TFGs)</p> <p align="center">Increase and improve the provision of careers education, advice and guidance with a view to ensuring that the diverse routes into employment, and for career progression, are fully promoted and alternative career pathways understood and accessible to all</p>			
<p align="center">Apprenticeships (Apprenticeship TFG)</p> <p align="center">Create an effective apprenticeship service for Somerset that raises awareness of opportunities, and promotes the value, of apprenticeships for both employers and potential apprentices ensuring that supply and demand are equal</p>			
<p align="center">West Somerset Opportunity Area (WSOA Business and Skills TFG)</p> <p align="center">Ensure that appropriate priorities and interventions are incorporated into the WSOA Strategy and Delivery Plans with the aim of improving low social mobility in West Somerset</p>			
<p>Raise awareness of post 16 pathways/options with young people, parents/carers and teachers</p> <p>Make business and education business partnerships a central tenant of the Education Vision, building a comprehensive strategy for school/business engagement</p> <p>Support all schools to be career and employment focused ensuring that young people have opportunities for meaningful engagement with business</p> <p>Work in partnership with national CEIAG agencies and the voluntary and third sector to promote and develop skills for living and citizenship</p>	<p>Support those not in work, whether they be furthest from the labour market or within a vulnerable group, into meaningful, sustainable and fulfilling employment through a variety of accessible routes and programmes</p> <p>Promote and celebrate diversity and equal opportunity in recruitment practice, supporting employers to re-evaluate recruitment practice where appropriate</p>	<p>Promote and develop the skills of enterprise and business leadership to improve business performance</p> <p>In conjunction with employers support in-work progression through on-going skills development and re-skilling – celebrate those employers who are effective at investing in their workforce</p> <p>Ensure effectiveness and value of labour market intelligence; ensure business skills challenges and needs are effectively articulated</p>	<p>Ensure Somerset has a cohesive and appropriate higher education offer that meets the needs of business and the community, and also to develop aspiration across the population, including amongst its older population</p> <p>Promote and support the development of higher skills in shortage areas such as STEM</p> <p>Develop the role of R&D within Somerset and particularly in relation to priority sectors</p>