



Education and Skills Board
8 June 2016

Surrey Area Review

Purpose of the report: To update the Education and Skills Board on the Surrey Area Review of Post-16 education

Introduction:

1. In September 2015, the Government announced a programme of Area Reviews for post-16 education. Surrey is part of the second wave of reviews which commenced in March 2016 and will conclude in July 2016.

Area Review

2. The purpose of the Area Review is to review post-16 provision to ensure that the balance is right to meet local, regional and national skills needs and deliver the national target of three million additional Apprenticeships from 2015 to 2020.
3. The Review will also focus on developing institutions that are financially viable and resilient, with the potential of rationalisation to fewer colleges, although not necessarily fewer sites.
4. A new network of prestigious Institutes of Technology is proposed, delivering provision at levels 3 to 5 (vocational equivalent of A Level to undergraduate) to address skill gaps highlighted by businesses.
5. The review covers General Further Education (FE) colleges and Sixth Form colleges. School sixth forms, training providers, University Technical Colleges and Higher Education providers are not required to be part of the review, although they are invited to feed-in.
6. Recommendations of Area Reviews are not binding on colleges as they are independent corporations, but governors are expected to follow the recommendations, with implied implications for future funding otherwise.

Surrey Area Review

7. The Surrey Area Review includes the following colleges:
 - a) Brooklands College
 - b) East Surrey College
 - c) Esher College
 - d) Godalming College
 - e) Guildford College
 - f) North East Surrey College (NESCOT)
 - g) Reigate College
 - h) Strode's College
 - i) Woking College
 - j) The College of Richard Collyer
 - 7.1 The College of Richard Collyer, in Horsham, is included as it was not part of the first wave Sussex Coast Area Review and would otherwise not be included in the national review programme.
 - 7.2 Across the Surrey Area Review and the Sussex Coast Area Review, the full 3SC area will have been covered, this is in line with national expectations that Area Reviews would generally align to areas with devolution proposals.
8. The Surrey Area Review is being led by a local steering group, chaired by Peter Mucklow, Sixth Form College Commissioner and including the County Council, the two Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), Chairs and Principals of each college, Education Funding Agency, Skills Funding Agency, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Further Education Commissioner and the Regional Schools Commissioner.
9. The first Steering Group meeting was held on 10 March and three steering group meetings have now taken place. The review process is moving at considerable pace and the fourth meeting on 7 June is expected to consider some broad options for the future.
10. To support the process Surrey County Council working with the Employment and Skills' Board, Coast 2 Capital and Enterprise M3 LEPs provided an information submission to the Area Review team looking at the economic need of the area, existing FE capacity and demographic growth. The Chairman of the Employment and Skills Board asked the Area Review team that the following areas be addressed:
 - a) The need for a range of high quality provision, matched to areas of significant employment, such as finance, IT and construction
 - b) The need to increase and develop provision to support high growth sectors, particularly through STEM skills
 - c) The need for high quality information advice and guidance based on the needs of employers
 - d) The need to plan ahead for demographic growth
 - e) The need for more local provision and pathways to employment for young people with Special Education Needs or Disabilities (SEND).

11. Surrey County Council, Coast 2 Capital and Enterprise M3 LEPs have drawn together an outline proposal to improve the skills match between employers' needs, curriculum offer in schools and colleges and information, advice and guidance. This will be discussed at the Area Review on 7 June 2016 and the Surrey Employment and Skills Board on 8 June 2016, where it will be further developed. There is the potential for Area Review transition funding to provide year one start up finance for this proposal.
12. The Area Review team will develop a report on findings and recommendations with a summary report expected to be published in August 2016. Implementation of changes is due to start in September 2016.
13. This is an opportunity for Surrey County Council to influence the future shape of further education in Surrey and the learning offer for young people, adults and employers. This links strongly to the 3SC Devolution programme and the focus on developing an improved match between the skills needs of the Surrey economy and the learning offer.
14. A presentation will be given to the Education and Skills Board to outline key issues.

Conclusions and next steps:

15. The view of Education and Skills Board will be fed in to the Area Review to influence findings and recommendations. The Area Review report will be published in August 2016 and will be communicated to all Members and partners. This is expected to link to the development of devolution proposals, particularly in relation to skills.
16. If the proposal for development of greater skills match between employers' needs, curriculum offer and information, advice and guidance is progressed, then this would be expected to start in 2016/17.

Recommendations:

17. The Education and Skills Board is asked to agree any key issues it wishes to refer to the Area Review Team for consideration in the Area Review, in particular in relation to the potential for a development to improve the skills match between employers' needs, curriculum offer in schools and colleges and information, advice and guidance for young people.

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Sources/background papers:

Reviewing post-16 education and training institutions, 2015

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