

The means: to change places for the better.

Crawley Skills and Employment Needs Study

Final Report

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1. INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

1.1 The project brief

Crawley is an important economic hub in the South East. It has a strong economy, with nearly 4,000 active businesses generating more than 95,000 jobs and translating to a job density of approximately 1.46 (compared to a figure for the South East of 0.88)¹. Crawley also has a very low unemployment rate. However, local residents' average earnings are below those of commuters and they are less likely to access higher-skilled, higher-paid jobs. In a recent social mobility report, Crawley was ranked as the 21st worst socially mobile local authority in the country.

The effects of this are twofold. Firstly there is a general lack of local labour for employers, illustrated by the fact that 41% of Crawley's workforce commute in. Secondly there is a question about how to improve social mobility within Crawley, and whether Crawley residents can be helped into higher-skilled positions.

The Crawley Employment and Skills Plan was launched in March 2016, following evidence that Crawley residents are under qualified for the Crawley labour market, and as a result enter lower value, lower skilled jobs. In addition, anecdotal evidence suggests businesses may be struggling to recruit staff to fill some of the specialist and higher paid roles. The Employment and Skills Plan sets out four flagship projects which seek to help residents and businesses overcome these barriers. However since the publication of the Plan, the landscape has changed considerably with the release of new studies and government strategies, the introduction of the apprenticeship levy, the merger of Crawley College into the Chichester College Group, and the successful ballot securing Manor Royal Business Improvement District's (BID) second five year term.

This project was commissioned by a partnership of Crawley Borough Council, Manor Royal BID and Crawley College to:

- 1) Identify recruitment and skills challenges faced by local businesses and how to overcome them
- 2) Make recommendations on the configuration of local skills training provision to build more pathways for local residents into higher value employment
- 3) Review the current evidence underpinning the Crawley Employment and Skills plan and provide recommendations for how the partnership can support the local community and businesses to enhance skills opportunities

¹ ONS jobs density (2016)

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The aim of this project was therefore to highlight the most prominent skills gaps and recruitment challenges faced by businesses in Crawley; to assess whether the right skills infrastructure and support is in place; and provide recommendations for how partners might respond and what interventions are required to overcome these challenges.

There were four key objectives of the research:

- 1) Research, analysis and empirical evidence gathering, utilising as much as possible existing data
- 2) Evaluation of the evidence
- 3) Providing recommendations for action – specific actions for how partners should respond to meet the challenges faced by businesses and others to encourage local people to fulfil their potential
- 4) Presenting case studies and best practice from other areas and partnerships

Specifically, this research sought to answer a number of research questions:

- i) What are the most important skills gaps and recruitment challenges facing local businesses and why do these persist?
- ii) What catchment areas are the workforce coming from?
- iii) What is the opportunity cost of these challenges?
- iv) What types and level of training needs to be drawn up to help overcome these challenges?
- v) How can local training provider's work with businesses to help design skills training interventions that will overcome these skills gaps?
- vi) How might the needs of local businesses change in the short to medium term?
- vii) How can we ensure that all local people are represented in the workforce and how might we best improve social mobility to help both residents and businesses?

1.3 Methodology and reporting

This research constituted five main phases.

Desktop research

A significant amount of policy and data already exists in this area, particularly at the national and regional level. This research therefore sought to build on existing information as much as possible. A desktop review of the national and regional context was carried out and existing data was used to build Crawley's socio-economic profile. In addition, a light touch review of evidence underpinning the Crawley Employment and Skills Plan in light of subsequent policy announcements was carried out.

Stakeholders and training providers

Stakeholders and training providers were interviewed to gain a broader and more in-depth understanding of the local situation and the extent to which skills infrastructure and employment

related projects are in place and functioning well. The list of stakeholders and training providers interviewed is included in Appendix 1.

Business Interviews

Gaining more in-depth and nuanced views from businesses was where this research focused. Two versions of an online survey were created, one that was appropriate for Manor Royal businesses and one for those across the rest of the borough ('paper' versions of the surveys can be found in Appendix 2). Businesses were asked to complete the survey and then take part in a follow up interview to explore the issues more deeply. In some cases, businesses did one or the other, filling out the survey or taking part in an interview.

34 businesses fed back individually through this process. A list of businesses that responded can be found in Appendix 1.

The study aimed for responses from businesses of a range of sizes and sectors, as well as a representation from across the borough spatially. A variety of methods was used to target businesses:

- A target list of approximately 80 businesses was produced, of businesses representing a range of sectors. The study partners made introductions to these businesses and *The means* followed up.
- The online survey and an invitation to participate in the study was circulated via business-focussed newsletters distributed by CBC and the BID
- A sponsored twitter message focussed at users within the Crawley area was set up
- *The means* attended the Manor Royal People conference to promote the study and gather contacts

The businesses interviewed employ, in total, approximately 13,000 employees in Crawley. This represents about 14% of the Crawley workforce.

Residents focus groups

Research was carried out with two of the three identified opportunity demographics (see section 3.7), with the aim of providing qualitative insights to build up the picture of what recommendations may be relevant.

Young people

A focus group was carried out with 10 college students between the ages of 17 and 18. This focussed on exploring their awareness of employment opportunities in Crawley, their career ambitions and their concerns about work

Women returning to work

An online survey of women who have either returned to work after having children or who are currently exploring returning to work received 49 responses. An additional focus group was carried out with 12 women involved in a programme with LPK learning. This focussed on exploring the barriers that women face when considering returning to work with children.

Feedback sessions

After the majority of business surveys had been carried out, draft findings and 6 'areas for action' were presented to:

- The Local Economic Action Group (LEAG) on 7th November
- The Manor Royal Matters Conference on 15th November

Attendees at these events were asked to feedback on their impressions of the findings and where they felt priority should be placed in terms of the action areas.

Report

This report is the culmination of the different phases of research that have made up this study. It will first introduce the national, regional and local context within which these challenges sit, before going on to address each of the research questions in turn. A light-touch review of the Employment and Skills Plan is then presented, and objectives outlined relating to each of the 4 work streams. Projects and related case-studies are then presented.

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2. CURRENT CONTEXT

2.1 National and regional context

Since the launch of the Crawley Employment and Skills Plan in 2016, there have been considerable changes to the employment and skills policy landscape, which impact on future activities and interventions to address skills gaps. Employment and skills support in England is under-going major change, which will impact on the delivery of local activities in Crawley. This section considers the key recent and up-coming policy changes that will underpin actions to address skills development.

2.1.1 The Industrial Strategy, November 2017

A key national document, The Industrial Strategy (Nov. 17), has been published since the Crawley Employment and Skills Plan was published. It is particularly relevant to the development of a new plan as its core aim is to create an economy that boosts productivity and earning power throughout the UK. The Industrial Strategy is based around **five foundations of productivity**. These are:

- **Ideas** – the world’s most innovative economy
- **People** – good jobs and greater earning power for all
- **Infrastructure** – a major upgrade to the UK’s infrastructure
- **Business Environment** – the best place to start and grow a business
- **Place** – prosperous communities across the UK

In relation to people and skills, the Industrial Strategy identifies a number of skills challenges and sets out ambitions to:

- Achieve parity of esteem between technical and academic education through improving the quality of technical education, including through the introduction of new technical qualifications – such as T levels and the creation of new Institutes of Technology across all regions to deliver higher technical skills.
- Drive up digital skills – in recognition of their importance for STEM and non-STEM jobs.
- Improve the take up of maths qualifications and maths teaching across the education system.
- Continue to promote apprenticeships – with a renewed commitment to the target of achieving three million apprenticeship starts by 2020.
- Support flexible career learning to support people’s life chances.

Specific plans to achieve these ambitions include:

- Creation of a new National Retraining Scheme that supports people to reskill, beginning with a £64 million investment for digital and construction training.
- Work with employers on how the Apprenticeships Levy can be spent.

-
- Establish Skills Advisory Panels (SAPs) to inform the analysis into local industrial strategies to be rolled out in 2018.
 - Publish a comprehensive careers strategy to improve the quality and coverage of careers advice for people of all ages.
 - Devolution of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) to mayoral areas to 2019 – to help ensure that learners can gain the skills that local businesses need. (Coast to Capital is not in the 2019 round).

The Industrial Strategy sets out a requirement for LEPs to produce Local Industrial Strategies to strengthen local economic growth and productivity and reduce regional disparities. They will identify priorities to **improve skills**, increase innovation and enhance infrastructure and business growth. They will also guide the use of local and devolved funding streams. They will identify local strengths and challenges, future opportunities and the action needed to boost productivity, earning power and competitiveness. The Government intends to agree the first Local Industrial Strategies by March 2019 and will prioritise areas with the potential to drive wider regional growth, focusing on clusters of expertise and centres of economic activity.

At a regional level, work is well-advanced on establishing an Employment and Skills Board for the Coast to Capital area to assist build a productive, responsive and inclusive skills and training system that delivers growth and opportunities for local people and employers. The Board, which will be business-led, will be responsible for analysing regional employment and skills needs to feed into the local Industrial Strategy to strengthen local economic growth.

2.1.2 The Apprenticeship Levy and Reforms

The UK Government's apprenticeships reform and the introduction of the apprenticeship levy has meant fundamental shifts to the funding model with new implications for how employers interact with the apprenticeship system. Employers with a payroll of £3m or more are required to pay 0.5% of their total pay bill towards funding for apprenticeship programmes. They are able to recover £15,000 to put towards hiring and training an apprentice, but so far take-up has been limited; only £108m of the £1.39bn funding available at the beginning of April had been used.

The Government ambition is to increase apprenticeship starts by 3 million over the next Parliament term. Since the introduction of the levy and reforms, the number of people in England starting an apprenticeship this academic year so far has fallen sharply by 28% compared with the year before. The table below shows apprenticeship starts locally and in comparator regions, highlighting the drop in apprenticeships starts between 2016/17 Q1-3 and 2017/18 Q1-3 in Crawley and elsewhere. This is partly caused by the impact of the 2017 Q3 data which saw a pre-levy surge in starts thus making the 2018 figures look comparatively worse.

The drop in apprenticeship starts in Crawley is similar to the SE Region and slightly below the average in England. The levy has been criticised as being complicated or too time-

consuming to draw-down apprenticeship funding, while the requirement for 20% of training to be completed “off-the-job” has been a barrier for some employers.

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2016/17 (Q1-3)	2017/18 (Q1-3)	% change
Crawley	760	820	930	860	620	-27.9%
West Sussex	5,400	5,790	5,790	5290	3720	-29.7%
SE Region	65,030	65,290	62,850	56130	40460	-27.9%
England	494,200	503,900	485,500	434,400	290,470	-33.1%

Table 1: Apprenticeship starts. Source: ESFA's April 2018 Statistical First Release at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-apprenticeships>

2.1.3 Introduction of T-Levels

The independent Sainsbury Review of Technical Education (2016), whose recommendations have been accepted in the Government's Post-16 Skills Plan (DfE, 2016) proposed the development of 15 technical routes which learners can enter at 16 or 18. T-levels are new technical qualifications aimed at putting vocational qualifications on an equal footing with academic ones. They will enable 16-19 year olds to study in 15 sectors with the ambition of making access to the job market easier. The new 'T levels' - technical study programmes will sit alongside Apprenticeships within a reformed skills training system from 2020. The 15 sectors available to study are as follows:

- Agriculture, Environment & Animal Care
- Business and Administrative
- Catering and Hospitality
- Childcare and Education
- Construction
- Creative and Design
- Digital
- Engineering and Manufacturing
- Hair and Beauty
- Health and Science
- Legal, Finance and Accounting
- Protective Services
- Sales, Marketing and Procurement
- Social Care
- Transport and Logistics

A number of sectors correlate with many of Crawley's areas of growth and sectors potentially experiencing shortages. The ability to offer quality work placements will underpin a shift-change in employer involvement. Transition year developments for learners will be of key importance in areas with lower than average GCSE attainment at age 16, if learners are to progress to T Levels (at Level 3).

The outcomes of this Review represent a clear set of opportunities for colleges to further develop specialist pathways in close collaboration with employers. The Review also creates a clearer distinction between school provision (academic) and college/workplace provision (technical). Chichester College Group has been named as one of the first 54 institutions to teach T-Levels from September 2020.

2.1.4 The National Careers Strategy and All Age Careers Service

In December 2017, the Department of Education published a new National Careers Strategy, setting out roles for employers and education providers. The Careers Strategy is based around four key priorities:

- ensuring every school and college has a high-quality careers programme;
- providing opportunities for work experience;
- offering tailored support to students and
- utilising appropriate sources of information about jobs and careers.

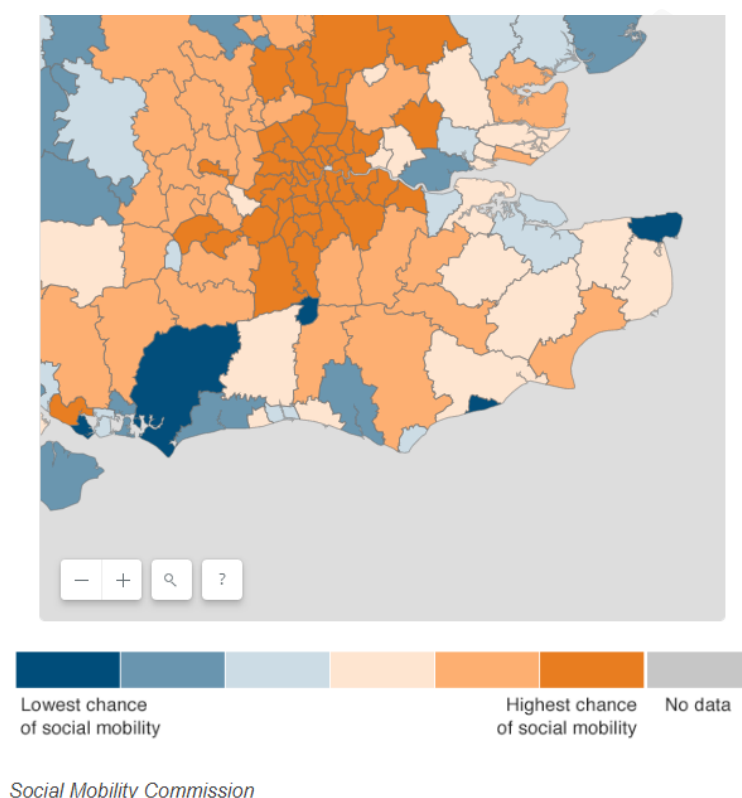
Key elements of the National Careers Strategy include offering every young person at least seven encounters with employers during their education; improving the take-up of STEM and a requirement of schools to meet the eight Gatsby Benchmarks, which form a framework for good career guidance.

The publication of the Careers Statutory Guidance for schools in January 2018 includes a broader role for the Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) to be the strategic coordinating function for employers, schools, colleges, funders and providers and to provide high impact careers and enterprise support to young people (aged 12-18).

In its first two years of operation, the CEC has worked in partnership with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) across England to build and co-fund a national network of Enterprise Coordinators. Discussions with stakeholders in Crawley confirm that an active local network is in place connecting the 7 secondary schools and colleges with employers and career programme providers to provide career advice and opportunities for young people. Each school is matched with an Enterprise Adviser (Senior Business Volunteer) to provide support and guidance to the Careers Lead and Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Since September 2018, each school now has in place a Careers Programme action plan. One issue identified is the lack of dedicated resources available in schools to support careers advice and guidance – currently, only one school has a dedicated careers 'lead'.

2.1.5 Social Mobility

A report by the Social Mobility Commission² in 2017 explored the education, employability and housing prospects of people living in each of England's 324 local authority areas to identify where people from disadvantaged backgrounds are most and least likely to make social progress. Crawley was identified as a 'cold spot' for social mobility, ranked 304 out of 324 areas. This puts it alongside some of England's former industrial areas such as Corby and Derby and some of the more remote coastal or rural areas such as Hastings and Great Yarmouth. In the South East, Crawley is unlike other boroughs close to the capital which are some of the strongest performing authorities in the country:



As the accompanying report points out, there is no direct correlation between the affluence of an area and its ability to sustain high levels of social mobility. While affluent areas tend to outperform deprived areas in the index, Crawley is one of a number of places which buck the trend, with its disadvantaged young people being left behind. More detailed analysis of the individual components of the Index show that:

- Overall Crawley's scores in relation to early years and adulthood are in or around the best half of rankings.
- In respect of the quality of its nursery providers, Crawley is in the top 10% in the country.
- It is also in the top 10 local authorities in terms of employers paying the living wage.

² State of the Nation 2017 (Social Mobility Foundation, 2017)

- Crawley performs worst in relations to schools and youth outcomes.
- In relation to schools, too many of its disadvantaged pupils are in schools that are not rated 'good' or 'outstanding' and its rankings are poor in relation to disadvantaged children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at both primary and secondary school level.
- Similarly, for post 16 youth categories it is again the attainment and progression of disadvantaged young people which give it low rankings.
- Amongst adults its worst rankings are in relation to the proportion of the population accessing the top managerial and professional jobs and in terms of home ownership.

Social Mobility Indicator	Overall rank out of 324 where 1 is the best and 324 the worst	Position
Overall score (Hot spots / Cold spots)	304	Bottom 10%
Early years	109	
Schools	318	Bottom 10%
Youth	298	Bottom 10%
Adulthood	165	
Early Years		
% of nursery providers rated 'outstanding' or 'good' by Ofsted	21	Top 10%
% of children eligible for FSM achieving a 'good level of development' at the end of Early Years Foundation Stage	211	
Schools		
% of children eligible for FSM attending a primary school rated 'outstanding' or 'good' by Ofsted	324	Bottom 10%
% of children eligible for FSM attending a secondary school rated 'outstanding' or 'good' by Ofsted	263	Bottom 20%
Average attainment 8 score for pupils eligible for FSM	270	Bottom 20%
Youth		
% of young people eligible for FSM that are not in education, employment or training (positive destination) after completing KS4	301	Bottom 10%
Average points score per entry for young people eligible for FSM at age 15 taking A-level or equivalent qualifications	320	Bottom 10%
% of young people eligible for FSM at age 15 achieving 2 or more A-levels or equivalent qualifications by the age of 19	148	

% of young people eligible for FSM at age 15 entering higher education by the age of 19	163	
% of young people eligible for FSM at age 15 entering higher education at a selective university (most selective third by UCAS tariff scores) by the age of 19	88	
Adulthood		
Median weekly salary (£) of employees who live in the local area, all employees (FT and PT)	94	
Average house prices compared to median annual salary of employees who live in the local area	216	
% of people that live in the local area who are in managerial and professional occupations (SOC 1 and 2)	311	Bottom 10%
% of jobs that are paid less than the applicable Living Wage Foundation living wage	9	Top 10%
% of families with children who own their home	276	Bottom 20%

Table 2: Crawley’s social mobility hot and cold spots Source: Social Mobility Index 2017

The report notes that, *“In a heavily resource-constrained climate, local councils are continually having to make difficult choices about where to allocate resources and focus efforts in order to get the biggest bang for their buck. But all too often schemes start up and then wither away. Initiatives often lack scale. Experience is usually not pooled. Most worryingly of all, evidence about what works to improve social mobility is, at best, not properly embedded in local policies and programmes.”*

Discussions with stakeholders in Crawley identified a number of local programmes and projects being delivered to address skills and social mobility challenges, but it is considered that there is too much duplication; a lack of partnership working and insufficient evaluation of what is being undertaken. It will be important that the Crawley Skills Action Plan provides clear direction and focus and builds on best practice to tackle social mobility by providing a targeted response to begin to direct effort and resource towards the **places and people** where it is most needed to unlock talent and fulfil potential.

In its response to the Social Mobility Commission’s report, the Department for Education published ‘Unlocking Talent; Fulfilling Potential’ in December 2017. In this plan for improving social mobility through education the government acknowledged that there is no ‘silver bullet’ but identified two key shifts that were needed in the approach to tackling social mobility, these were:

- An evidence based approach identifying and spreading ‘what works’
- Building success through partnership. It noted that: *“In particular, the role of business is vital to offer young people the direct experience of work, inform their choices about what to study and help educators to understand the needs of the local labour market.”*

Work and Health Programme

As identified by the Social Mobility Index 2017, some of Crawley's skills challenges relate to uneven growth in that not all areas or groups in the local population have been able to participate in the successes of the Coast to Capital area.

A new initiative which will impact on the support available to disadvantaged residents is the **Work and Health Programme** together with the Government's twin commitments to reducing both the minority ethnic and Disability Employment Gaps. Equal access to education and learning is a vital part in ensuring that all people from under-represented groups can participate fully in the labour market. The Work and Health Programme is an employment support programme which has been rolled out beyond the pilot areas during early 2018. It will provide specialised employment support for people with disabilities and long-term unemployed people. The Programme provides support to help people find and keep a job. It is available, on a voluntary basis, to those with health conditions or disabilities, and to various groups of vulnerable people.

It will also provide support to those who have been unemployed for over two years, and it will be compulsory for this group.

2.1.6 Coast to Capital Strategic Economic Plan

The Coast to Capital Strategic Economic Plan, Gatwick 360°, published in July 2018 has been renewed to reflect the ambitions of the Industrial Strategy: *"Our vision by 2030 is for our towns and cities to be known around the world as fantastic places to live, to grow and to succeed. We will become the most dynamic non-city region in England, centred around a highly successful Gatwick airport."*

Its drive is to ensure that by 2030, the area will be more prosperous than it is now, having caught up with its competitors. Its major urban centres – Brighton & Hove, Croydon and Crawley – will be ranked alongside the most productive places in the UK.

Skills are identified as one of its challenges due to the disruption caused by new technology, the growth of new businesses, and an ageing working population. The LEP seeks to prepare for this future disruption, particularly where there is a shortage of relevant skills, such as in Crawley, Arun and Adur, and where the skills of the existing workforce are out of date. It states that the area is typical of many, in needing to anticipate and invest in a strategy **to change attitudes and approaches to skills development among employers, workers and parents.**

The SEP identifies 8 priorities, one of which is to:

Create skills for the future: We will seek funding for training opportunities and high quality training facilities to make sure that the adult workforce has the skills for future business needs.

Aligned to this, is Coast to Capital's ambition is to boost the productivity of the economy by giving people the skills they need not only to secure and maintain high quality jobs, but also to make their way through a potential portfolio of careers over their lifetime, earning an income that allows them to remain living within the area. This opportunity should be accessible to everyone, regardless of location, age, gender, skill level or ability. To do this the LEP will form a Coast to Capital Employment and Skills Board, to build strong partnerships between education and skills providers and employers and to ensure that delivery matches the changing requirements of industry, with a particular focus on **STEM, digital and basic skills**.

In Crawley STEM Sussex is already delivering a number of projects to support and encourage young people to actively and enjoyably engage with science, technology, engineering and maths, e.g. Ambassadors programme, Big Bang Fair etc. Gatwick Airport has been running the 'Inform, Inspire, Invest' educational programme since 2017, which aims to open up opportunities at the airport and help young people to develop the right skills for future jobs with an emphasis on STEM.

The LEP will aim to bring **capital investment into further education** that can keep facilities and equipment modern and up-to-date, and encourage employers to take a greater role in training the further education teaching workforce. In order to up-skill and re-skill the adult workforce, the LEP is seeking national revenue investment, as a way of subsidising investment in training made by employers and individuals. C2C will take a greater role in coordinating all age careers advice and raising the aspirations of young people, particularly around Apprenticeships and T Levels, as well as supporting the development of the adult workforce and retention of the older workforce.

The SEP also contains an aspiration to *"establish a stronger university presence across our area; particularly to bring a new University focus on business innovation in high growth areas such as the Gatwick Diamond and Croydon."*

2.2 Setting the Context: socio-economic profile of Crawley

As well as setting out the national and regional employment and skills policy and programme context, it is important to consider the socio-economic profile of Crawley and the wider area. We set out below some of the key facts and figures about Crawley, which will shape future employment and skills interventions.

An economic driver for the region

Crawley is firmly established as one of the key economic drivers in the South East of England, benefitting from direct access to the M23 and London-Brighton railway and is recognised as a vital component in the functioning of the Gatwick Diamond Economic Area, a functional economic hub that has a combined economy of £24 billion and 368,000 jobs.

Gatwick Airport is identified within the SEP as “the beating heart of businesses in the Coast to Capital area”. The reach and importance of the airport provides a unique set of opportunities and strengths on which to build the region’s economic success. Gatwick is key to attracting investment, driving exports to global markets and nurturing innovation across different economic sectors.

The Borough also accommodates the Manor Royal Business District, which is home to over 600 businesses generating in excess of 30,000 jobs. The area is a major contributor to the West Sussex, Gatwick Diamond and wider south east economy, generating over £1.76bn GVA.

A strong performing economy

Crawley is one of the stronger performing economies in the UK. Ranked 83rd out of 379 local authorities on the UK Competitiveness Index 2016, it occupies a prime position as the gateway to London and it has considerable competitive advantages. Crawley contributes £5 billion to the economy and has the 8th highest GVA per head in the UK³

A growing workforce

Unlike other local economies its working age population is growing, with a 2.2% increase between 2011 and 2015 compared with growth in West Sussex of 0.6%. At 84% (2016) its economic activity rates are well above those of the South East (81%) and England (78%) and just 1015 people are unemployed and claiming benefits

The business base and employment sectors

The number of active businesses in Crawley is growing. There is a strong trend of steady increase year by year. In 2009 there were just over 2,900 active enterprises whereas in 2014 the number rose to 3,380 active enterprises. This number continued to rise subsequently year on year to 3605 in 2015 and 3,900 in 2016. Amongst this number are a high and increasing number of businesses that employ 20 or more staff.

Using IDBR data on employees by industrial category, Crawley has significant employment in transport and storage and business administration & support services. The presence of Gatwick Airport in particular drives this large concentration. Figure 1 shows the breakdown by broad industry category of employment in the borough of Crawley.

³ Centre for Cities Outlook Report, 2017

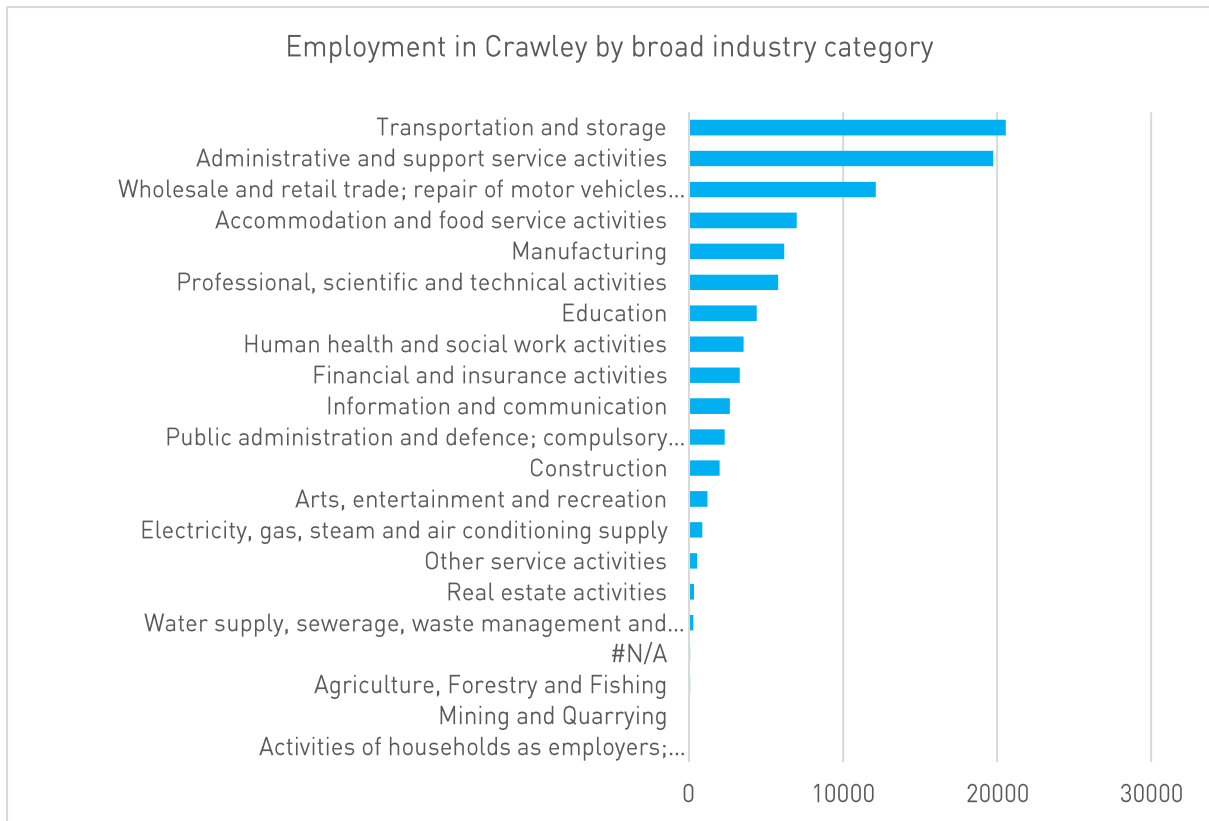


Figure 1: Employment in Crawley by broad industry category

In addition to the large employment sectors, sector analysis undertaken by Coast to Capital⁴ identifies a range of economic sub-sectors in Crawley that offer future growth potential and high economic output:

Crawley Sector Specialisation
Med Tech
Computer Software Programming and Publishing
Data Processing & Hosting
Insurance and Financial Services
Visitor Economy and Support Services
Air Transport
Communications & Navigation Equipment
Electric Power Generation and Transmission

Employment and unemployment

Crawley has a tight labour market with high employment and low unemployment. Latest data shows its employment rate to be 77.9% (June 18), well above the UK average of 75%. However, this rate is well below its peak in 2017 when the rate reached 86.7%.

At September 2018, 1160 Crawley residents were claiming Jobseekers Allowance or were out of work but claiming Universal Credit, equivalent to an unemployment rate of 1.5%. This

⁴ Coast to Capital Strategic Economic Plan 2017

is below the rate before the financial crash when it was 1.9%. As can be seen the unemployment rate has been rising since 2015, but by any standards unemployment levels are low, and well below the national average (2.2%).

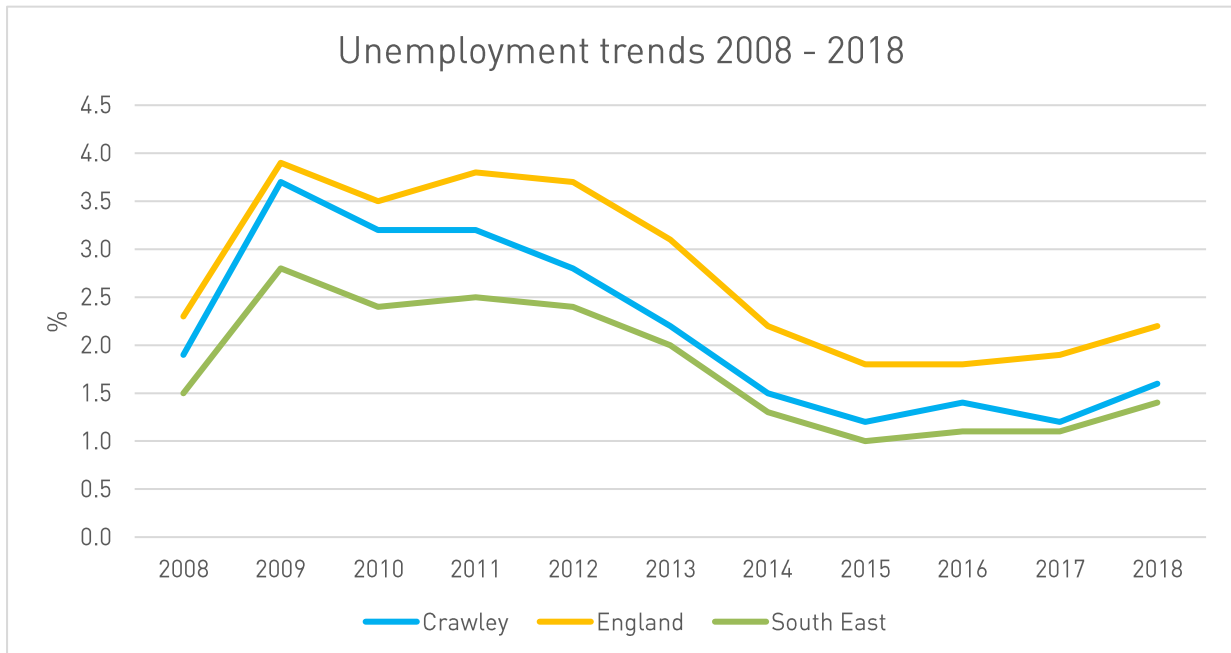


Figure 2: Unemployment trends Source: NOMIS Claimant Count data in September of each year (%)

Jobs growth and productivity trends

Crawley has a strong economy contributing significantly to the productivity of the UK. Its GVA was worth £4977m in 2016. Its GVA per head is equivalent to £44,691 making it the 15th most productive economy in the UK, outperforming Oxford, Cambridge and Reading. Trends have been consistently upwards and GVA per head has increased by 50% over the decade 2006 to 2016.

According to the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), employment in Crawley has grown substantially and in 2017 is estimated to stand at 95,290. This represents an increase of 11% since 2015. Growth has been driven by expansion of the Administrative and support services sector (+5000 jobs); Manufacturing (+1500 jobs) – although this has seen some downturn in the past year; Construction (+1000 jobs) and Professional, scientific and technical services (+1000 jobs).

Levels of qualification

A comparison of the qualifications of the workforce relative to the resident working population at the time of the Census shows that the workforce is generally better qualified than the resident population particularly at lower and higher levels. Thus 24.8% of the workforce are qualified below Level 2, compared with 28.6% of residents. In terms of advanced skills 32.5% of the workforce have qualifications at Level 4 and above compared with 26.4% of residents:

Highest Level of Qualification	Highest qualifications of the workforce	Highest qualifications of residents in employment
No qualifications	7.8	9.3
Level 1 qualifications	17.0	19.3
Level 2 qualifications	18.2	19.0
Level 3 qualifications	14.6	14.0
Level 4 qualifications and above	32.5	26.4
Apprenticeships and other qualifications	9.9	12.1

Table 2: Highest level of qualifications: workforce and residents compared *Source: Census 2011*

Reflecting the different jobs and qualifications of the workforce and residents trend data shows that workforce wages have been consistently above the wages of residents in the past 7 years:

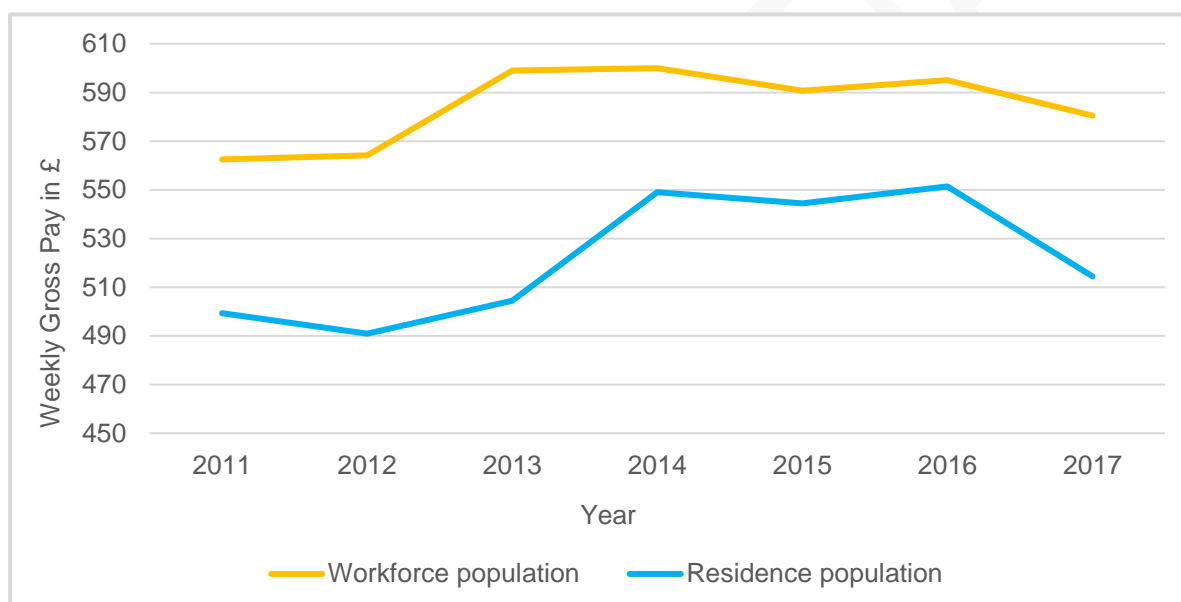


Figure 3: Difference in weekly pay between workforce and resident population. *Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings; workplace and residence analyses*

An area of inequality?

However, not all its residents share in its prosperity and the Social Mobility Index 2017 identified the Borough as a 'cold spot' for social mobility, ranking it amongst the bottom 20 authorities in England. Further detail shows that its position is worst in respect of Schools (ranked 318 of 324) and Youth (298 out of 324). For adults, e.g. unemployment and wages its ranking is mid- range (165 out of 324).

Crawley's rankings were particularly poor in relation to:

- The quality of its primary schools
- The proportion of children eligible for free school meals attaining good A levels or Level 3 qualifications
- The proportion of local residents in managerial or professional occupations

Further credence is given to this latter finding in that although full time *workers* in Crawley earn the highest gross weekly wage in West Sussex (£633 per week up to October 2018)⁵, the *residents* in full time work earn £559 per week. This is below the South East (£615) and English average (£575) suggesting that local people are not accessing the high paying jobs available in Crawley.

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⁵ 2018 data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

3. RESEARCH OUTCOMES

3.1 What are the most important skills gaps and recruitment challenges facing local businesses and why do these skills gaps persist?

Section 2.2 outlines Crawley’s key business sectors. These sectors have different needs. This section focuses on the different *levels* and the different *types* of skill gap.

3.1.1 Level of skills gaps

Businesses are able to recruit from different locations for different types of jobs. Workers will typically commute further for higher-skilled, higher-paid jobs with flexible working conditions. It is therefore easier to recruit from further afield for these types of positions. For labour-intensive, lower-skilled, or service jobs it is easier to recruit within a smaller locale and Crawley has a number of strong foundation sectors reliant on lower-skilled jobs. However, a number of businesses interviewed for this study identified that they were also keen to recruit more locally for higher-skilled positions if possible because they viewed local candidates as more likely to build a career in Crawley, rather than be attracted by lifestyle or job offers in London. One professional services firm, for example, described a number of younger candidates who come to Crawley having missed out on a position in London, but who “keep one eye on moving away”.

The respondents to this survey identified in total 96 vacancy types for which they struggled to recruit, split into three different skills categories:

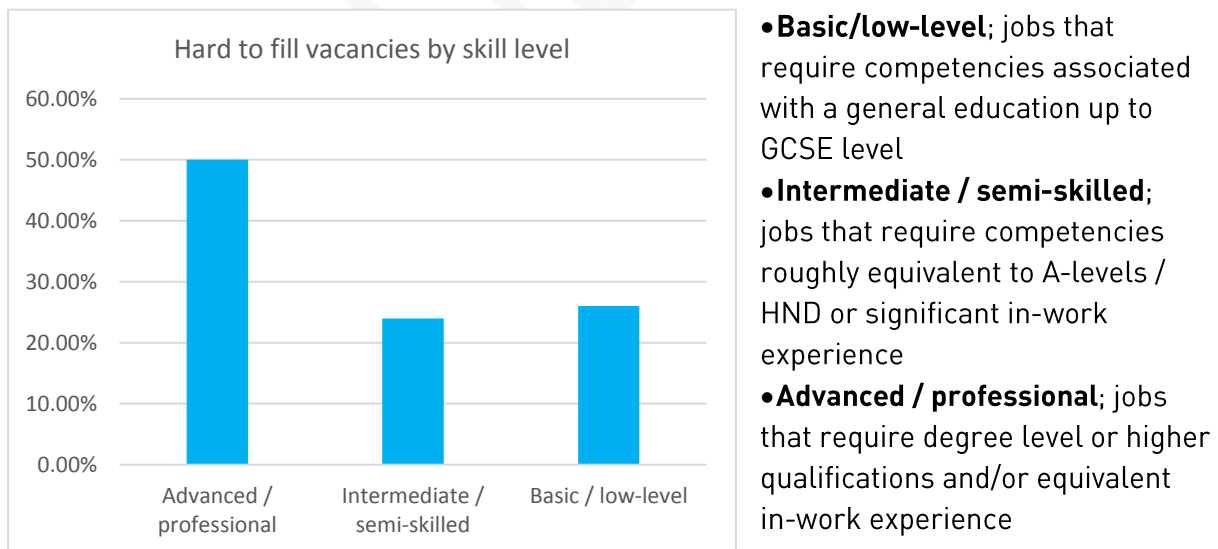


Figure 4: Hard to fill vacancies by skill level,

Source: Business survey

Figure 4 shows that amongst those interviewed, the level at which there is the greatest difficulty with recruiting is for those jobs requiring advanced skill levels.

Additionally, the top reasons given by businesses for why they are struggling to recruit can be correlated with the most common skill level they are struggling to recruit for. Table 3 shows the top reasons given by companies for struggling with recruitment, weighted by how many of each skill-level position they are struggling with. The top five reasons correlating with each skill level are listed.

ADVANCED skill-level positions	INTERMEDIATE skill-level positions	BASIC skill-level positions
Low number of applicants with the required skills	Too much competition from other employers	Too much competition from other employers
Too much competition from other employers	Not enough people interested in doing this type of job	Not enough people interested in doing this type of job
Lack of work experience the company demands	Low number of applicants with the required attitude, motivation or personality	Low number of applicants generally
Low number of applicants generally	Low number of applicants generally	Low number of applicants with the required attitude, motivation or personality
Terms and conditions are uncompetitive	Low number of applicants with the required skills	Terms and conditions are uncompetitive

Table 3: Top rated reasons given by businesses for struggling to recruit, correlated with main level of position being recruited for

The table demonstrates that for the ‘advanced’ positions with which many businesses are struggling, the main challenges identified by businesses relate to a low number of applicants with the required skills and experience. This is as opposed to ‘intermediate’ and ‘basic’ positions, for which the availability of job-specific skills appears to be a secondary consideration in comparison to a number of other factors. These factors will be discussed further in section 3.1.3, but these findings reinforce that the job-specific skills gap faced by businesses is most acutely felt at the level of high-level skills.

In addition to advanced level, job-specific skills, another level of skills gap is identified by this study. Those struggling to fill ‘intermediate’ and ‘basic’ positions regularly cited a shortage of candidates who possessed basic employability skills. This is reflected in table 3, with ‘*low number of applicants with the required attitude, motivation or personality*’ scoring in the top 5 for both of these skill levels. An interviewee from one life sciences company, for example, said they struggled to “*find people with the necessary self-motivated attitude and ability to think on their feet, particularly younger people [those recently leaving education]*”.

In summary, feedback from businesses suggests that the key skills gaps facing businesses in Crawley are in:

- 1) Basic employability skills and motivation
- 2) High level skill provision (NVQ level 4 or equivalent and above)

3.1.2 Skill types

The Industrial Strategy 2017, described in section 2.1.1, emphasises a focus on productivity to boost the economy in the face of low unemployment. It identifies in particular STEM skills, technical education and digital skills that are important to both STEM and non-STEM jobs.

Businesses in Crawley were asked to identify skills that they found it most difficult to recruit for. The results are categorised in figure 5. Blue indicates technical and practical skills, whilst yellow indicates personal / people skills. The largest category relates to specialist, job-specific skills and knowledge required to perform a specific role. This, for example, could be knowledge of risk and compliance within a financial services context. The most important job-specific skills gap will likely correlate to the most important sectors and growth sectors within Crawley.

Figure 5 also reinforces the findings of section 3.1.1 and identifies a more general skills gap cutting across sectors, in that the second largest category relates to employability skills such as motivation, enthusiasm and ability to take responsibility.

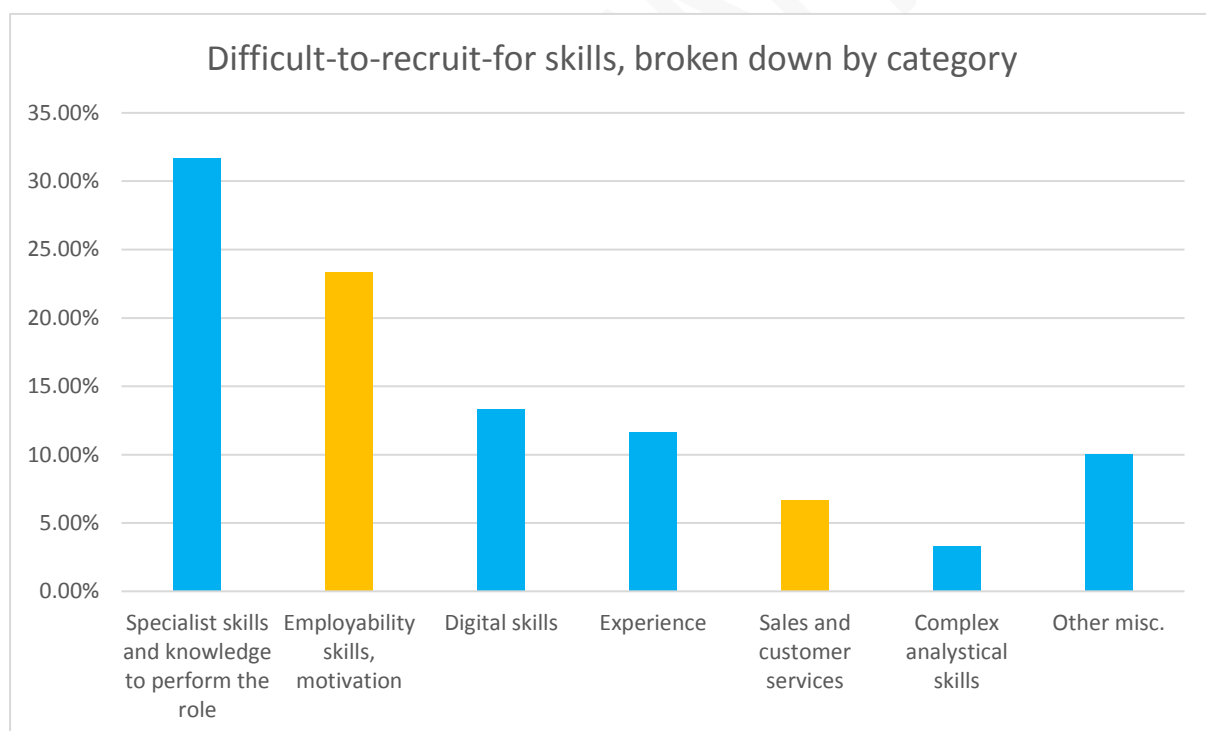


Figure 5: Difficult-to-recruit for skills, broken down by category. *Source:* Business survey

This survey identifies three key skill types where businesses in Crawley are facing difficulties:

- 1) Specific technical knowledge or experience relating to a company's sector. In particular this study notes STEM and finance related skills

-
- 2) Employability skills that enable people to operate well in the working environment
 - 3) In addition, digital skills (at all levels) are identified by the Industrial Strategy and the Coast 2 Capital's revised SEP as being important to the future of both STEM and non-STEM jobs. They are therefore key skills for future training strategies to focus on and are likely to be the focus of funding opportunities. When asked where they felt their skills needs may change in the future, almost all interviewees expected engagement with new digital technologies to become an increasing part of employees' roles.

The sectors identified by the Coast to Capital LEP as key future specialist sectors for Crawley are medical technology, computer software programming and publishing, data processing and hosting, insurance and financial services, visitor economy and support services, air transport, communications and navigation equipment, and electric power generation and transmission. These sectors are therefore where sector-specific skills gaps are likely to affect Crawley the most.

NESTA⁶ have recently published the nation's first publicly accessible and open data-driven skills taxonomy for the UK, clustering thousands of unique skills advertised for by businesses into job type and sector. This is a useful tool for identifying skills that are important in these sectors, and for those job titles identified by respondents as hard-to-fill, in order to compare them with provision currently provided.

Multidisciplinary skill-sets

Interviews with businesses also highlighted that for a number of companies it is not specific skills that are difficult to recruit for, but rather a combination of skills. For example, technicians dealing with oncology equipment require in-depth scientific and technical knowledge relating to radiation and the equipment, but also of the healthcare environment and procedures. This was a trend from the business interviews that affected not only highly technical jobs, but also lower and intermediate skill levels. One interviewee from a bank informed us they are no longer recruiting cashiers, but instead are recruiting 'local bankers' in order to provide an evolving customer service experience. They need to be able to perform the traditional role of a cashier as well as the "face on the floor", and take customers through a customer service experience from beginning to end. One logistics firm that was interviewed expressed difficulty in finding warehouse operatives who were also able to meet the customer service demands of a bespoke delivery service to differentiate them from competitors, and were therefore considering opening a warehouse 150 miles away near other industries with similar requirements in order to get the right candidates.

3.1.3 Why do these skills gaps and recruitment challenges persist?

In section 2.2, the current economic context of Crawley is outlined, highlighting that Crawley, along with the nation as a whole, is currently enjoying historically low levels of unemployment. In addition, Crawley has a high concentration of jobs; 1.46 for every Crawley resident aged 16-64. It is estimated that the number of vacancies in Crawley at any one time is approximately three times the number of Crawley residents who are unemployed and

⁶ NESTA, national skills taxonomy: <http://data-viz.nesta.org.uk/skills-taxonomy/index.html>

seeking jobseekers allowance or universal credit. These factors combined mean that the supply of available local labour for businesses is low and businesses have no choice but to recruit a significant number of candidates from further afield.

This requires businesses to be able to attract and retain talent from outside Crawley, and this brings with it a number of challenges that became apparent through surveys and interviews with businesses and stakeholders:

- **Competition with nearby economies** - a common theme amongst interviewees was difficulties in competing with London and other surrounding conurbations for employees. There were multiple factors influencing this, mainly; the ability to earn more in London and lifestyle choices. There were however also mitigating factors, such as commute times or Crawley being seen as a place to settle down for older workers with families. A building services firm, for example, found that skilled tradesman could earn significantly more as contractors in London and thus tended to receive applications from older applicants with families who were no longer willing to make the commute. This demonstrates that whilst some factors may be difficult to address, such as salary difference, others may be within the gift of interested partners to take action on, such as the wider package advertised by businesses, differentiating businesses' brand, and the experience of living in or travelling to Crawley. This links to the next point; the perception of Crawley.
- **Perception and awareness** – businesses regularly expressed concern that there was a lack of awareness outside and inside Crawley of the diversity of job opportunities available and of its dynamism as a place to work. This was seen as exacerbating difficulties in competing with other nearby economies for employees. There is a need for other work streams such as cultural programming, housing provision and place branding to work together minimise this

In addition, even those who were attracted, with the right qualifications on paper, had not always learned relevant skills through their education. One company involved in data management for example suggested that even computer science graduates were not coming to them with the skills they required for their business. Students were failing to learn core skills and knowledge about, for example, network management, commercial software development processes and basic hardware required for physical data storage.

A lower level of qualifications amongst Crawley residents (see section 2.2) exacerbates the challenge that businesses who require higher-level skills face, further increasing the importance for them of being able to attract and retain talent from outside of Crawley. By the time young people in Crawley reach the age of 19, 7% fewer than the national average currently achieve level 3 qualifications. For those that do, and who wish to gain higher qualifications, the lack of Higher Education in Crawley means there is little choice but to move away. As such, Crawley currently has a significant outflow of 16-21 year olds each year (see figure 6), depleting the potential workforce in this age-range. Crucially, just one-third of those students return to Crawley. Amongst towns and cities without a university considered

by the Centre for Cities only Slough, Basildon and Aldershot have a worse return rate⁷. Whilst Crawley is successful at attracting new graduates from elsewhere, this still represents a significant lost opportunity for Crawley businesses.

The provision of more vocational higher education by local training providers, such as Crawley College, presents an opportunity to simultaneously increase the availability of higher level skills locally, equip people with the skills and experience that will help them build careers in Crawley businesses and increase the local pool of labour by retaining a greater number of university-aged residents. A crucial question here is how these can be made viable and most relevant to businesses. Sector collaboration on shared training needs is an important option here and the concept of Digital Skills Partnerships as an example is introduced in section 3.5.

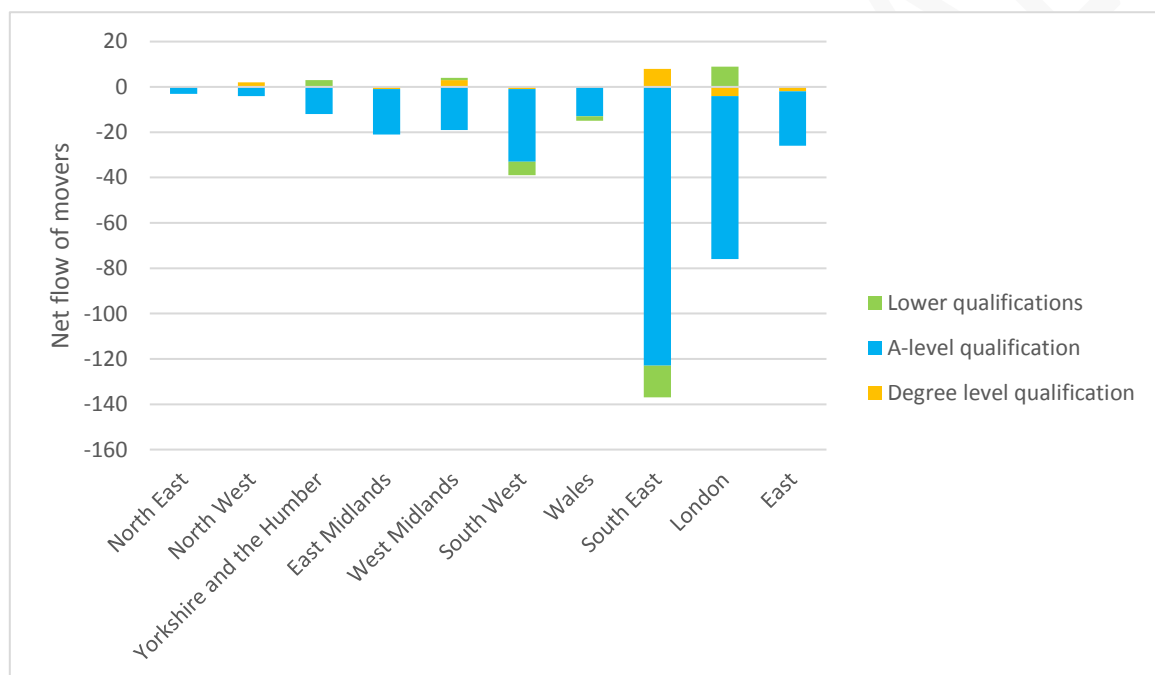


Figure 6: The net flow of 16-21 year olds to and from Crawley by qualification level. *Source: Data reproduced from a 2017 Centre for Cities report in footnote 7*

Finally, this section has also identified a number of issues driving difficulties with recruiting for basic and intermediate skill-level positions, namely a lack of 'employability skills' amongst young people in Crawley, a lack of awareness of the extent of job opportunities available and a generally highly competitive market with a large number of foundation sector jobs drawing on the local population. These appear to be driven by a number of factors:

- **Awareness raising and ambition building in the education system** – Businesses and other stakeholders regularly expressed opinions that their willingness to work with schools to widen the educational experience and improve awareness of job opportunities was not well-enough utilised by schools. Section 2.1.5 discusses the

⁷ Centre for cities - *The great British brain drain – an analysis of migration to and from Crawley*, July 2017

Social Mobility Commission (2017) report and section 2.1.4 reflects on recent changes to careers advice that may help to change this, but highlights some areas for focus, such as the level of resourcing of dedicated careers leads in schools and the need for a structure that more effectively facilitates coordination and cooperation between education providers and businesses. This is further explored in section 3.5.

- **The attractiveness of businesses' offers** – Whilst some businesses struggled with good applicants for lower-skilled, lower-paid positions, a number of businesses were immune to these difficulties. The differentiating factors seem largely to be the awareness and perception of a company's brand and their reputation as an employer. Gatwick Airport for example was cited by a number of respondents as a well-known good local employer with whom it is difficult to compete for applicants. One financial services firm reported recruiting regularly for their call centre without difficulty due in large part to their well-known local brand, their co-operative structure and wider benefits package. In a competitive environment, businesses may benefit from help with how to differentiate themselves from the crowd. This may be through better promotion of career progression opportunities, developing the awareness of their brand, focussing on the values of employees or reviewing the wider employment package offered to staff.
- **Underemployment v unemployment** – Finally, although there is a low unemployment rate in Crawley, it may well be the case that there is a significant amount of underemployment. It is difficult to get data on this locally, but national data suggests that currently about 7.5%⁸ of employees report being underemployed and wanting more hours. Applied to Crawley this would imply approximately 4,500 underemployed residents who may be looking for increased work⁹.

⁸ August 2018 figures from ONS based on the Labour Force Survey

⁹ Based on Nomis employee numbers, Jul 2017 – Jun 2018

3.2 What catchment areas are the workforce coming from?

Due to its location and high density of well-paid, knowledge intensive employment, Crawley experiences large daily population flows both into and out of the borough. Data from the Census in 2011, shows that over **43,200** workers commuted in to Crawley, while over 19,100 residents travelled to work outside the area, resulting in a total net inflow of 24,089 workers. In other words, 41% of the Crawley workforce are commuters. There are 1.46 jobs in Crawley to each resident, so Crawley is relatively dependent on the inflow of workers to meet its labour demands.

Main flows in are from:

- Mid Sussex (7119 in-commuters)
- Horsham (6159)
- Reigate and Banstead (4735)
- Brighton and Hove (3715)

Main outward flows are to:

- Reigate and Banstead (3468 out commuters)
- Mid Sussex (2651)
- Horsham (2438)

In terms of travel, by far the greatest mode of travel is the private car. Commuting generates an inflow of 33,688 inward car journeys and 13,000 outward journeys compared with just 4,710 train journeys in and 3,396 out of the borough. Almost half of those travelling out of Crawley (46%) travel more than 10km to their place of work.

Despite this, difficulties with accessibility by car (12% of respondents) or public transport came low down on the list of reasons recruiters felt they faced challenges. Where concerns were raised about accessibility by car they were around availability of parking as well as congestion. Crawley has a good railway link to Brighton and London and the stations are served by the Fastway bus network linking the train stations, the Town Centre, Manor Royal, Gatwick Airport and a number of residential areas. However, only approximately 6% of in-commuters to Crawley are from Brighton, a similar number who commute from Brighton to London (through Crawley). There is potentially an opportunity for Crawley businesses to seek to increase the number of employees they draw from locations with good public transport links. This requires a focus on the themes raised under 3.1.

With its already high job density Crawley's ability to attract workers from the surrounding districts is crucial to its businesses' operations. As well as looking to the coast, Crawley needs to raise awareness and attract workers from new developments planned in the surrounding districts, such as the 4,000 new homes planned for a new Garden Village in Tandridge.

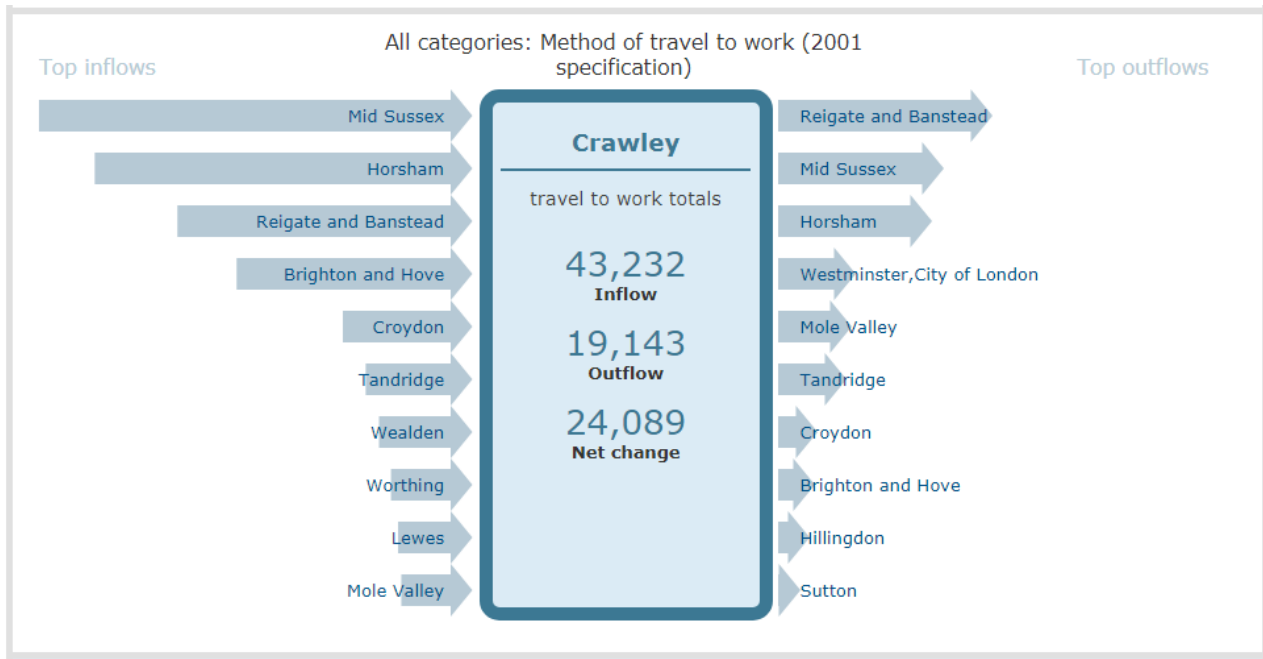


Figure 7: Location of usual residence and place of work¹⁰

¹⁰ Source: Census 2011

3.3 What is the opportunity cost of these challenges?

These recruitment headwinds manifest themselves in many ways. These are inter-related and in practice indivisible. In the analysis that follows we have considered them from two perspectives – economic and, briefly, social costs

3.3.1 Business health and future outlook

The survey of Crawley businesses suggests that business health is currently strong.

50% of respondents reported an increased sales turnover over the last 12 months, while none of the respondents reported a down-turn. Businesses were equally optimistic about the future, with 69% of respondents reporting that they expected their turnover to grow over the next 12 months. These attitudinal responses are borne out in the responses on recruitment, with 46% of respondents reporting that their staff numbers had increased over the last 12 months compared to only 8% reporting a decrease.

Despite the macro-economic and local market challenges, Crawley businesses are managing to recruit and to grow. However, if growth continues in line with business expectations, challenges around recruitment and skills are likely to become more acute. 44% of businesses are expecting their workforce to grow in size over the next 12 months, whilst none anticipated a decline. This indicates two difficulties in the future. Firstly, this will squeeze the available pool of labour further. Secondly, a number of businesses are clearly expecting to grow their sales turnover without increasing staff size. Such growth will depend on sufficient skill levels to support higher productivity and automation, placing a further premium on skills.

3.3.2 Economic costs

Employers in Crawley are facing challenges recruiting for the staff and skills they require. This is likely to become more acute as businesses in Crawley seek to continue to grow and external factors such as Brexit take hold. What are the implications of doing nothing in this situation?

Figure 8 shows the impact on businesses of challenges with recruitment. The most commonly cited impact is an increased workload for other staff members. The knock-on impact of this in the longer term is higher levels of strain and potentially staff turnover. 31% of businesses reported increased operating costs stemming from increased recruitment costs or having to pay higher salaries to attract talent, while 28% reported a hindrance to their growth and delays in realising new business opportunities. This has the potential to impact on the ability of sectors to compete in the future. Meanwhile, 21% of respondents reported needing to outsource work. One financial services business reported that in the last year they had spent in the region of £2.1m outsourcing work, predominantly software development, which they

“We have one vacancy that has been open now for 250 days”

An advanced engineering company

would otherwise have carried out in-house if they were able to easily recruit the right skills. In reflecting on this the respondent stated “*there just aren’t the right skills in Crawley*”.

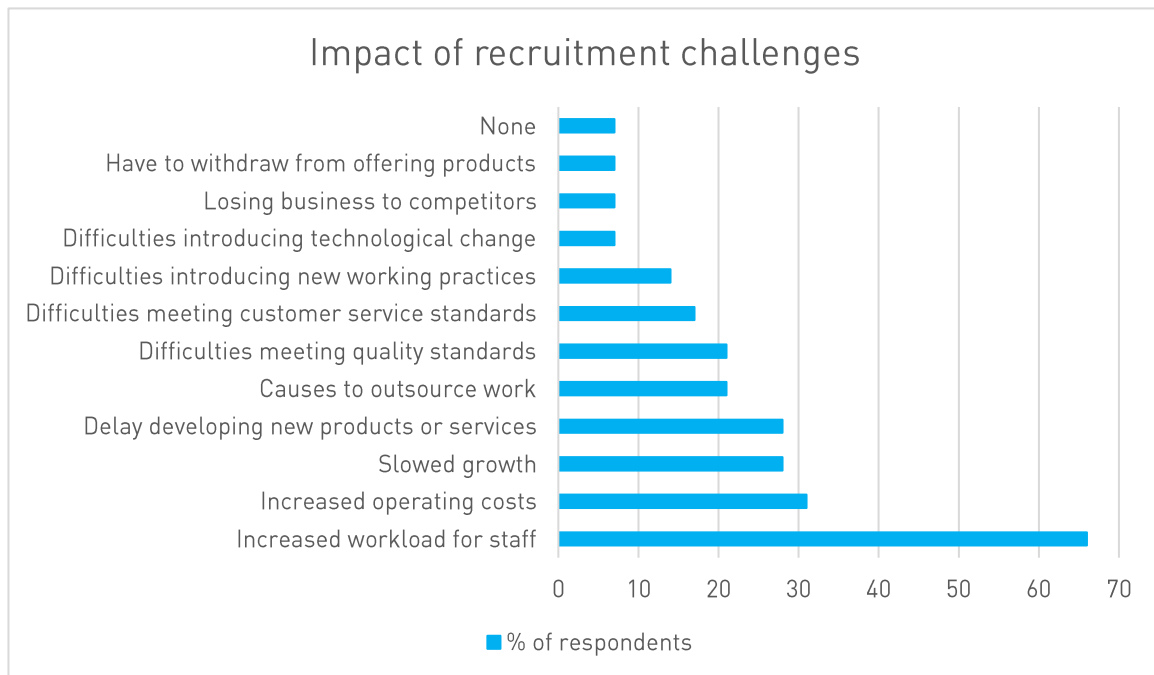


Figure 8: Impact of recruitment challenges in Crawley. Source: Business survey

Results from this business study suggest that the number of hard-to-fill vacancies in Crawley currently run at approximately 1% of the total number of jobs. This is in line with analysis of data from the National Employer Skills Survey¹¹ suggesting that in West Sussex this figure is approximately 0.9%.

Based on average GVA per employee for Crawley, this suggests that delays in recruiting by themselves lead to a lost annual GVA output of about **£49m**¹².

As noted already, this is in addition to:

- Increased operating costs due to outsourced work. The example of a financial services firm spending £2.1m outsourcing work shows that these operating costs may be more than short-term expenditure until an employee is found. Ongoing recruitment issues can lead businesses to outsource on a structural basis rather than continue to seek recruits.
- Additional operating costs such as time and resources in the recruitment process
- Missed opportunities to compete for new business or to take advantage of new IP and growth areas

¹¹ Data from the National Employer Skills Survey, 2017 (table 17 and 18) combined with job numbers from nomis (2016)

¹² This calculation is based on the following assumptions: 1) Crawley’s GVA is approximately £5billion per year 2) The number of employees in Crawley is approximately 93,800 3) the figure of 0.98% hard to fill vacancies can be applied to the number of employees as a whole 4) hard-to-fill vacancies are produced at approximately the same rate they are filled throughout the year

Ultimately, these costs may lead to businesses seeking growth opportunities elsewhere. Respondents to the business survey were asked to indicate whether the challenges they were facing were likely to have implications for their decision to be located in Crawley. Figure 9 shows the responses. Many factors affect where a business chooses to locate and relocating can be a big move. The presence of Gatwick Airport for example makes Crawley the obvious location for a number of its supply chain businesses, whilst various large businesses have invested in their premises and facilities for the long-term. Whilst the majority of businesses are not therefore considering moving as a result of recruitment and skills challenges, a small number stated that it was something that they would consider as a solution.

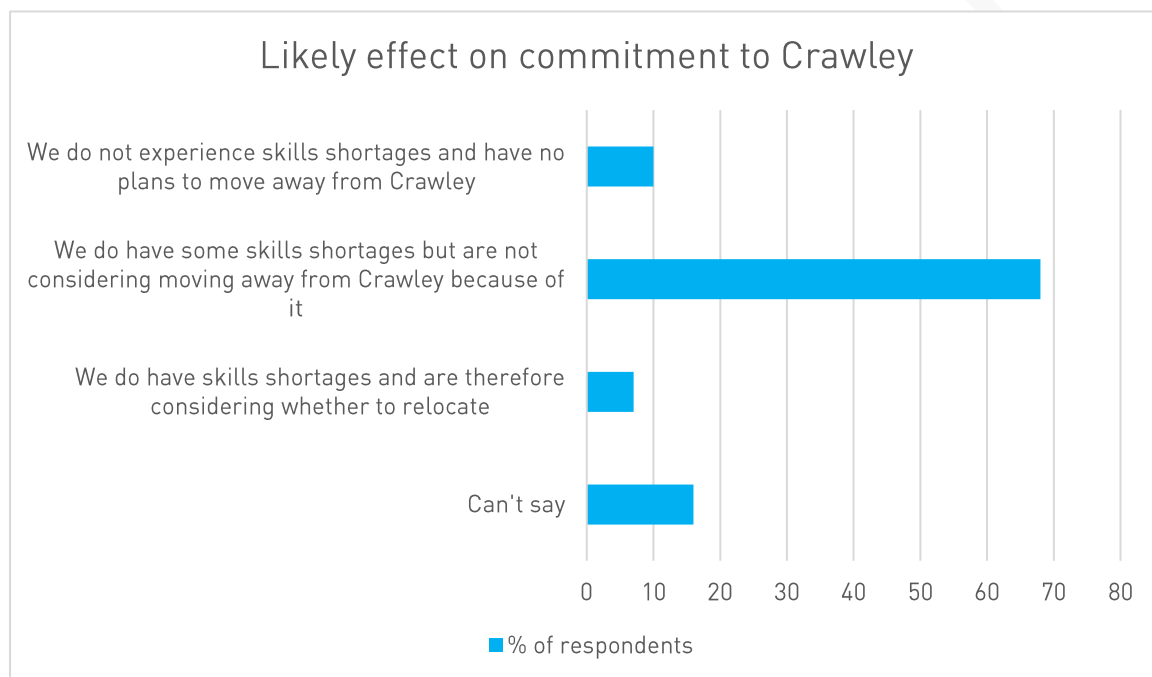


Figure 9: Likely effect of challenge on commitment to Crawley. *Source:* Business survey

3.3.3 Social costs

Social mobility is discussed more substantially elsewhere in this report (see in particular section 2.1.5 and 3.7). This section therefore briefly outlines, in monetary terms, one measure of the impact of the current situation on Crawley residents. Section 2.2 discusses the wage gap between Crawley residents and the average Crawley worker when in-commuters are included. For residents of Crawley, the situation as it is, in which low social mobility means that residents are less likely to gain higher qualifications or progress into higher-paid, higher-skilled positions, represents a reduced income of approximately **£230m¹³** per year compared to if the average earnings of a Crawley resident were equivalent to the average earnings of a worker in Crawley.

¹³ This is based on the weekly gross wage gap between residents and workers, and Nomis employment numbers

3.4 What types and level of training need to be drawn up to help overcome these challenges?

The opportunity costs suggest that the current situation is a drag on business growth and linked to issues of social mobility. This raises two main issues. Firstly, to explore addressing the balance of supply and demand of labour generally. This is a difficult proposition because unemployment is historically low, but includes attracting and retaining staff from outside Crawley, as discussed as part of the response to 3.1, and targeting initiatives at particular opportunity demographics who may face additional barriers to accessing work, as will be discussed in response to question 3.7. The second avenue is providing the training infrastructure and links with employment that allow local residents to best meet the needs of local businesses, and businesses to develop necessary skills within their workforce. This second avenue is what will be discussed under this heading.

This report indicates some areas of deficiency within the skills system and where resultant interventions should be targeted. It highlights some potential areas of mismatch between the supply of and demand for skills, alongside wider areas in which stakeholders may seek to improve the skills and employment system. The realities behind these are likely to be complex and will require close partnership between businesses, training providers, local authorities and strategic agencies to deliver changes.

3.4.1 Types and level of training

In section 3.1 the following were identified as important levels and skill areas to be targeted by local interventions:

- Skill level:
 - Basic level employability skills and motivation
 - High level skill provision (NVQ level 4 or equivalent and above)
- Skill types:
 - Job-specific technical knowledge or experience relating to a company's sector. In particular this study notes STEM and finance related skills
 - Employability skills that enable people to operate well in the working environment
 - Digital skills (of all levels)

In addition, businesses were asked how they felt their training needs could be met better. The largest response, shown in figure 10, was that they would like to see training that is more relevant to their working context. Businesses were also asked what format of training was their preference. Those expressing an interest in working with the local college on courses to meet their training and skills needs (62% responded 'yes' or 'maybe') were asked what type of courses they would be interested in. The results are shown in figure 11 and reinforce the results in figure 10, suggesting a preference for formats of learning with strong elements of work experience or that are tailored specifically to employment needs, such as apprenticeships and short courses developed for businesses. These allow people to

develop skills that are more relevant to businesses' working context. Although they were not offered as an option in the survey, this suggests that T-levels, which include a significant portion of work experience, may also be popular with businesses once they are introduced. Combining this with the level of skill gap identified, the low return rate of people that leave Crawley to study higher education elsewhere, and the poor progression through qualifications of disadvantaged young people in Crawley, suggests that degree-level vocational training such as apprenticeships are a key area for further development in Crawley.

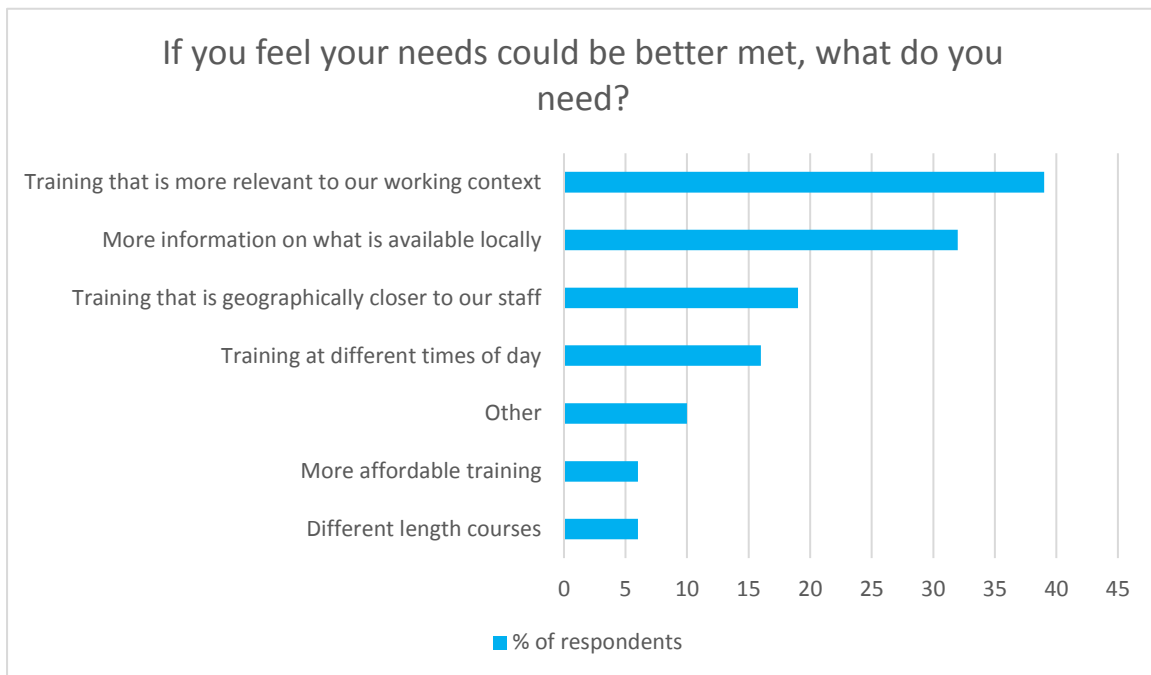


Figure 10: How businesses would like their training needs better met. *Source:* Business survey

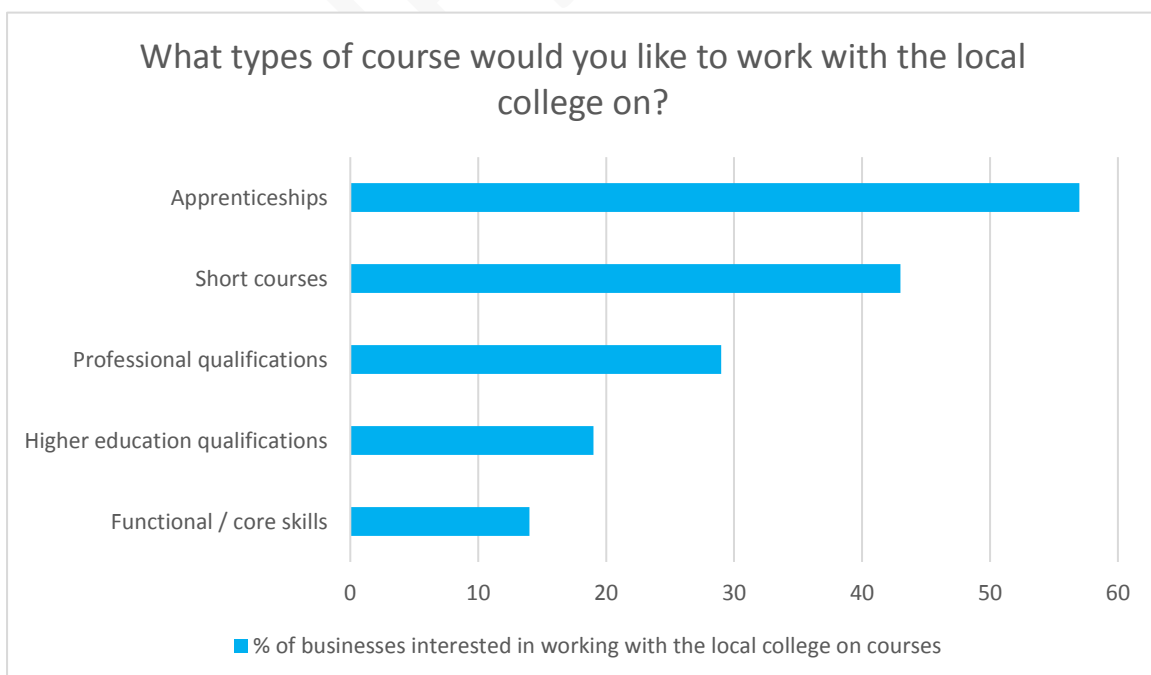


Figure 11: How businesses would like to work with the college. *Source:* Business survey

The second-most popular response in figure 10 is that businesses would like more information on what training is available locally. Achieving this, and achieving the development of relevant new vocational higher education courses, raises an important question of how training providers and businesses can best work together, which will be explored in section 3.5.

A further comment made by a number of interviewees, although not captured through the survey questions, was about the regularity of course start dates. Businesses who were open to employing staff that would need to undergo training on the job were keen to be able to start training as close to their employee’s start date as possible, which of course may be at any point throughout the year.

3.4.2 The right training for the right needs

Table 4 lays out the key identified needs against areas of training for continued development

	Training types on which to focus development			
	Degree—level apprenticeships	T-Levels	Short courses aimed at those in work	Learning for students through extra-curricular clubs
Higher level qualifications and specialist skills developed locally	X			
Greater retention of university-aged residents	X			
Developing skills more relevant to the workplace	X	X	X	X
Basic digital skills			X	X
Advanced digital skills	X			X
Improved employability skills	X	X		X
STEM delivery	X	X		

Table 4: Matrix of target training types against outcomes

Degree-level apprenticeships – Recent changes to the apprenticeship system, including the introduction of the apprenticeship levy, are outlined in section 2.1.2. As indicated in table 4, growing the number of degree-level apprenticeships delivered locally in Crawley presents a key opportunity. However, section 2.1.2 shows an initial decrease in the number of apprenticeship starts with the new system and a significant amount of the available apprenticeship levy nationally remains unspent. At a local level, training providers and some businesses told us that they are concerned about how the reforms to apprenticeships are operating. While there was broad support for an employer-led approach to apprenticeships, there was some concern that the system is complicating rather than helping to facilitate their ability to design new apprenticeship standards and get them on stream. There was also concern amongst some businesses that it was an administratively burdensome process. Whilst 63% of businesses surveyed for this study currently had at least one apprentice, there was a significant difference between smaller and larger businesses (see figure 12). Whilst over 75% of businesses with 51 or more employees were using apprenticeships and indeed a number of them were planning to increase their use of apprenticeships further, nearly two-thirds of those businesses with fewer than 50 employees were not hiring apprentices. This can be partly explained by the availability of resource in HR teams amongst larger businesses compared to small. Additionally, SMEs who do not pay the apprenticeship levy do not have access to funding directly, although larger businesses can, as of October 2018, transfer up to 25% of their funding towards other employers such as smaller companies in their supply chain.

There is a further concern that was raised by training providers and, at times, by businesses. Although apprenticeships may be being made available by businesses, take up of these opportunities is low. It was thought there is a perception issue amongst students and their parents that meant few people were willing to consider taking up an apprenticeship. This was reinforced by the focus group held with students at Crawley College, none of whom intended to explore an apprenticeship and only one of whom thought they were a positive option. Reasons cited included that they weren't a good way to earn money and that they limited ones experience to a single company.

T-levels – The introduction of T-Levels is described in section 2.1.3. Chichester College Group has been named as one of the first 54 institutions to teach T-Levels from September 2020. Business interviews have shown that there is an appetite amongst businesses to engage with work experience and the education system so the opportunity to connect students with a wide variety of Crawley businesses through the work-experience element of T-Levels should not be missed. However, such a significant period of work experience will be a new commitment for businesses and strong coordination will be required to ensure the process works for them. The college will need to decide which T-levels to introduce first and how these will be delivered across the group. Key sectors within Crawley should be used to determine the area of greatest need

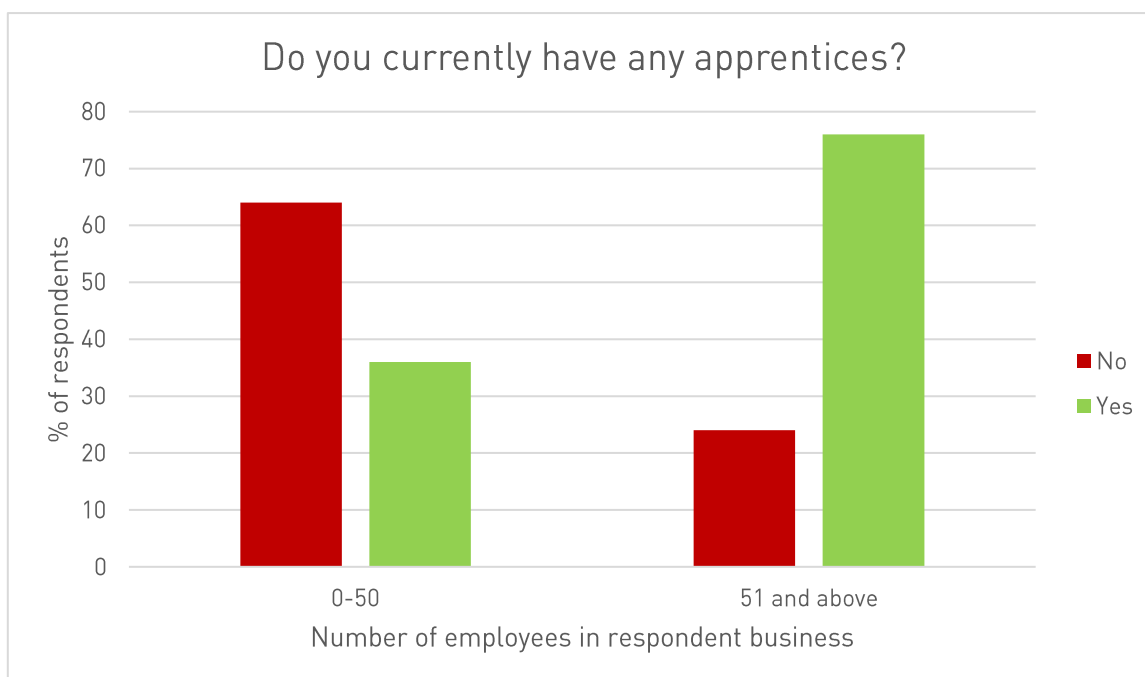


Figure 12: Difference in apprenticeships between small and large businesses. *Source:* Business survey

Short courses aimed at those in work – 56% of respondents said they were ‘always’ sending staff on off-the-job training, whilst 37% reported doing this on an ad-hoc basis. Schemes such as the Manor Royal Training Programme were well received by those who had heard of it and businesses were keen on flexible courses and start dates, which short courses can offer.

Extra-curricular activities – For those in the education system, extra-curricular activities can also be a good way to informally build helpful skills; both employability skills and more specialist knowledge. For example, coding clubs that develop soft skills alongside digital skills, or entrepreneur clubs that encourage self-drive and innovation. Code clubs for example already exist in various schools in Crawley and in the college. It may be useful to assess what is already being provided by schools and the college in Crawley to see if broader provision could be made.

3.4.3 In addition to training needs: the under use of skills

Additionally, alongside developing the needed skills it is equally important to ensure good pathways into employment to ensure these are well utilised. According to a 2017 report¹⁴, the proportion of graduates working in low-skilled jobs has increased over the last decade since the financial crisis. The 2017 Employers Skills Survey published in August 2018 provides some insight into skills imbalances that occur when the skills and qualifications held by employees are not used optimally within the labour market. In the survey, the under-use of skills was measured by asking employers how many staff, if any, had both qualifications and skills more advanced than required for their current job role.

¹⁴ Taylor Review of Modern Working Practices, 2017

Across the UK, just over one-third of all establishments (35%) reported that at least one employee had both qualifications and skills more advanced than required for their current job role. In volume terms, this means that 2.5 million workers, or 8.7% of the workforce, have under-utilised skills. Furthermore, this has been on a rising trend since 2015 when 30% of businesses reported under-used skills. In West Sussex, 33% of employers reported that they had at least one employee who was over qualified for their work, broadly in line with the national average.

According to the OECD, the UK could boost its productivity by 5% if it reduced the level of skill mismatch to OECD best practice levels¹⁵. Advice and awareness about qualifications and careers is therefore very important before and whilst young people are making decisions about training routes. This interface between education, careers advice and businesses is explored in the next section; 3.5.

¹⁵ OECD, *Labour Market Mismatch and Labour Productivity: Evidence from PIAAC Data*, April 2015

3.5 How can local training providers work with businesses to help design skills training interventions that will overcome these skills gaps?

This section will explore options for working together on training interventions, but also the wider business-education interface, including careers advice and work experience.

3.5.1 The current context

Alongside traditional training providers such as the school network and Crawley College, there are a wide range of education, employment and skills projects and programmes being delivered in the Crawley area, some of which are publicly funded and many of which are funded by the private (and voluntary e.g. Princes Trust) sectors. It is clear that there is already a lot of effort being put into this area but the question this raises is how effective is this use of resource when it comes to delivering outputs. There is limited analysis of the impact of many of these projects and the question should be asked of whether rationalisation may provide more efficient results in some cases. Some of these projects are outlined below. A comprehensive mapping of initiatives would be a first step towards reviewing where future efforts are focussed.

Crawley Borough Council

Crawley Borough Council published its current Employment and Skills Plan in 2016. Through this the Council has either launched, or planned, a number of flagship projects across four main work streams. A light touch appraisal of the current situation with this plan is presented in section 4.

ESF Projects

Coast to Capital is responsible for co-ordinating, facilitating and managing the delivery of the £25m ESF programme to support people skills and employment and an inclusive and cohesive society. Priority Axes include: ESF PA1: Inclusive Labour Market and ESF PA 2: Skills for Growth. A number of ESF projects are being delivered in the Crawley area, as set out in the table below.

Project	Project Aim	Target beneficiary	Project dates
"Make TRAX" Barnardo's	Support NEETS and those at risk of becoming NEET through a programme of targeted support offered by a key worker service focused on hotspot areas	15-25 years old young people	November 2016 – December 2019
"Inspiring the working people of tomorrow" RBLI	Reduce worklessness by working with long-term unemployed and wider family units to tackle entrenched issues	6 months + unemployed	July 2016 - December 2019
Working Together for Work (WT4W) Aspire Sussex Ltd	Intensive support for disadvantaged unemployed and economically inactive members of families most at risk of social exclusion	Disadvantaged unemployed families	October 2016 – December 2019

Pathways to Employment East Surrey Raven Housing Trust	Intensive support for people facing housing insecurity to move closer to the job market through a tailored 'pathway to employment' programme	People living in insecure housing	October 2016 – December 2019
Help to Work Kennedy Scott Ltd	Support participants within C2C into sustainable employment through a personalised programme	Long term unemployed or those economically inactive with more than one barrier to employment	January 2017 – January 2020

Table 5: ESF projects relevant to the Crawley area

To date, little evaluation is available on the outcomes and impact of the programmes. Discussions with stakeholders indicate a lack of coordination and communication among partners in the design and delivery of projects.

Other Programmes and Projects

In addition to the projects identified above, a range of education, employment and skills projects and programmes are being delivered in the Crawley area many of which are funded by the private (and voluntary e.g. Princes trust) sectors.

Gatwick Airport Limited is responsible for resourcing and delivering a range of employment and skills programmes including:

- One Destination Employability programme
- Graduate Engineers
- Apprenticeship Engineers programme
- Learn Live
- Job Search
- An annual jobs fair

As part of its services to its members, Manor Royal BID delivers a number of employment, training and skills programmes including:

- Bespoke Training courses
- Manor Royal Careers EXPO
- Manor Royal People Conference
- HR Forum
- Talent & Training Group (a steering group of businesses for projects related to Talent & Training)

Manor Royal BID also runs a jobs board in conjunction with LoveLocalJobs, as a one-stop-shop for people looking for jobs in Manor Royal, and employers looking to advertise.

STEM Sussex is actively involved in working with schools and colleges supporting and encouraging young people to actively and enjoyably engage with Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (*STEM*). It also collaborates with Crawley Borough Council and Crawley College on the 'STEMfest' and Big Bang Fair South East, festivals aiming to inspire the next generation of scientists, engineers and mathematicians. All primary and secondary schools and over 200 employers are invited.

Other programmes have been developed by a range of providers to help people into work, for example:

- LoveLocalJobs and Humanutopia have partnered to deliver Be the Change, a programme working with 13 and 14 year olds to bridge the gap between education and employment. It involves volunteer mentors from the local business community providing guidance, support and advice for the young people throughout the programme
- Beta Futures, building confidence with over 50s – supported by the council
- LPK Learning CIC – a social enterprise part-funded by the council based around the Family Learning Model. They aim to encourage parents to upskill through the motivation of wanting to be able to help their children. They also work with women who are beginning to explore whether it is right for them to return to work, helping them to build confidence and skills

3.5.2 Further education current situation

Following financial and performance issues highlighted in the 2017 post-16 area reviews, Crawley College (formerly Central Sussex College) merged with Chichester College to form the Chichester College Group. Further Education establishments across the board are facing financial pressures and in November of this year (2018), the new Chichester College Group announced a consultation on a further merger with Worthing College. Interviews with stakeholders in the education sector have suggested that issues remain with required investment to upgrade Further Education facilities in Crawley, and the ability of further education establishments generally to compete with the better-paying private sector for experienced practitioners to teach. In the long term these are important structural issues that will need to be dealt with. In the immediate future, improved links with businesses may provide some relief through initiatives such as associate lectureships and the opening of high-quality business facilities to student groups for learning experiences.

In terms of the delivery of Higher Education, Crawley College currently delivers a small number of level 4+ courses, predominantly apprenticeships and BTECs in Electronic Engineering, Construction, a small number of digital subjects, Teaching, Tourism and Art & Design.

3.5.3 Business and stakeholder feedback: Careers advice, awareness of work opportunities and the interface between education and businesses

- The new National Careers Strategy (discussed in section 2.1.4) has stimulated various changes in the way schools seek to approach work-experience and their connections with employers, including being matched with an active network of Enterprise Advisers, and a Careers Programme action plan for each school. However, interviews with businesses suggested that they struggled to engage with Crawley schools to the extent that they would like, about careers talks and work-experience, and that many were willing to do more with schools to engage students and make them aware of the wealth of work opportunities available in Crawley.
- Many businesses felt that children going through the education system in Crawley did not gain enough awareness of the opportunities on their doorstep and that this

could lead to a lack of ambition and difficulties for businesses recruiting further down the line. The new Careers Programme action plans are relatively recent and therefore it may take some time for it to be clear if this has changed for businesses. However it is clear that having a good channel for communication between the education system and businesses will be very important, in particular with the current development of T-Levels.

- A common theme from business interviews was that the education system is not providing students with the skills required by businesses, both in terms of basic employability skills and specialist skills relevant to their work.
- There is currently no forum dedicated to partnership between training providers and businesses in Crawley, either for careers advice or the development of training or work experience. Crawley Council also facilitates a local IAG Group (Information and Guidance), which includes representatives from all schools (career 'leads') and other core stakeholders, including STEM Sussex, CEC, WSCC and National Careers Service. This is seen as an excellent platform for information sharing and coordinating career advice and guidance in terms of future workforce needs but has limited remit with engaging the private sector (for example around work experience). In addition, one issue raised was the need to secure greater buy-in from head-teachers to the new career agenda.

3.5.4 Collaborating on training interventions and the wider business-education interface

Previous paragraphs have outlined the current situation and some of the issues arising out of business and stakeholder interviews. This section focusses on models for partnership between businesses and training providers.

- **Local education-business interface:** Findings from this report suggest that a forum for collaboration between businesses and training providers in Crawley would be helpful for a variety of reasons. It's remit could include:
 - Involving businesses in the design of T-Level work experience and getting businesses signed up
 - Regular communication, for example feeding back where there are deficiencies in training provision
 - Sharing best-practice case-studies for work-experience etc.
 - Involving businesses in careers advice
 - Organising initiatives such as a VIP tour of businesses for head-teachers to inspire them and get them more involved in careers advice and work experience, and more engaged with the group.

This could be a new group or, if deemed suitable, the remit of the existing IAG could be expanded and its Terms of Reference updated. As well as training providers and the council, the BID should attend, as should CEC Enterprise Advisers and a selection of other large and small businesses (from inside and outside of Manor

Royal) and potentially other stakeholders such as representatives of the Town Centre Skills Academy programme.

- **Sector-based collaboration:** Training courses require a critical mass to become viable. Sectors in Crawley should consider collaborating on developing training courses that meet their shared needs, to enable them to be provided locally. Digital Skills Partnerships (DSPs) are currently being trialled in Devon and Manchester as sector-based approaches to partnership, working with education providers to develop local training provision tailored to the shared needs of a sector. DCMS has invited all Local Enterprise Partnerships and Mayoral Combined Authorities to submit Expressions of Interest to form further DSP pilots. Three will be selected by April 2019. Crawley should consider whether to lobby the LEP to submit an application for this.
- **LEP Employment and Skills Board:** As part of its response to the Industrial Strategy, the C2C LEP intends to introduce an Employment and Skills Board “to build strong partnerships between education and skills providers and employers and to ensure that delivery matches the changing requirements of industry, with a particular focus on STEM, digital and basic skills”. There is a need for Crawley businesses and providers to fully engage with and influence this to ensure it takes account of the needs of employers in Crawley Borough.

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3.6 How might the needs of local businesses change in the short to medium term?

The needs of local businesses are likely to be affected by political, economic, social and technical changes that will either change the way in which businesses operate, or change the makeup of businesses that are operating in Crawley.

3.6.1 Political and social

Brexit and other external factors

The UK's decision to leave the EU and the delay in agreeing the precise terms of withdrawal is raising concerns for businesses and employees regarding the impact of Brexit on working life and the economy.

A recent survey of 1,000 employers by City and Guilds¹⁶ found that nine in 10 employers struggle to recruit the skilled staff they need, with Brexit set to have a "disastrous" impact on the UK's ability to compete. Two thirds of UK employers think that the skills gap in their business are likely to get worse or remain the same post Brexit. 46% of respondents said that Brexit will hamper business growth going forward. Crawley itself was listed by a Centre for Cities report¹⁷ to be one of the towns likely to be least negatively affected by Brexit, due to its sector makeup. However the report warns that the model used may underestimate losses in sectors such as air transport, on which Crawley has a heavy reliance.

The uncertainties caused by Brexit are likely to have a significant impact on employment within specific foundation sectors, particularly health and social care, hospitality and tourism and construction. For example, the hospitality and tourism sector is heavily reliant on EU nationals (a local hotel group in Crawley employs over 70% of EU nationals). KPMG, in a research report for the British Hospitality Association, estimated that with Freedom of Movement ending, the British hospitality sector would need to recruit an additional 62,500 UK workers each year to be able to maintain current activities and to grow. The hotel sector is a significant employer in the Crawley area and discussions with representatives from the sector confirm difficulties in recruiting entry-level, lower skilled jobs. Leaving the EU means that the sector faces a challenge in recruiting enough workers to meet its needs.

Additionally, the potential for divergence of regulatory systems outside of a single customs union means the possibility of increased demand for skills and experience in product development and regulatory compliance, cross-border sales and procurement, international trade law, international logistics and the exploration of new markets.

The wider UK education and skills system faces uncertainties including the potential loss of programme funded via the European Social Fund.

¹⁶ People Power: City & Guilds Group 2018

¹⁷ Centre for Cities, 2017 – *Brexit, trade and the economic impacts on UK cities*

3.6.2 Economic

Industries of growth and decline

Industries come and go as technology advances and society changes. Growth sectors in the UK are likely to be based around wider social and technological shifts.

As digital technology continues to break barriers, there is a new generation of 'digital-born' companies that are ready configured to adapt to swiftly changing digital capabilities, while larger organisations seek to find ways to large-scale change. One industry of particular relevance to Crawley is the Fintech sector, expected by the CBI to go through large growth in the coming years¹⁸. Crawley has a large established financial services sector and their requirements are likely to be influenced as they seek to compete in this changing market place. This is likely to require multi-disciplinary skillsets across previously siloed financial services and software development areas. Nesta have published a skills taxonomy based on 10,500 unique skills split into 143 clusters. This identifies a number of specific skills that currently sit within these different areas including skills as diverse as risk management, credit analysis, business modelling, cryptography, coding languages and handling big data.

Coast to Capital's SEP identifies a number of other potential growth industries important to Crawley that will be driven by servicing the rise in digital technology, including computer software programming and publishing, and data processing & hosting.

Gatwick airport has recently announced intentions to use its emergency runway to increase flight capacity. A report by Oxford Economics estimated in 2016 that Gatwick Airport directly supports 23,800 jobs. This same report estimates increased traffic due to intensification of use of Gatwick's single runway will contribute an additional £2.8billion in GDP to the Gatwick Diamond area by 2025, and increase the direct supply of jobs by about 3,000 in addition to the indirect on its supply chain and induced wage-consumption impacts on the wider economy. There is therefore likely to be an increase in demand for skills relating to operations at Gatwick Airport.

Crawley's employment will also be affected by a decline in some industries; the most obvious being its retail offer. Retailers are seeking ways to reduce costs and large retailers are struggling with the costs of operating stores that are too big for the new world of online retail. Jobs in this sector are likely to decrease. However, with Crawley's strong concentration of transportation and storage businesses, at least some of these positions may be made up for by a growth in logistics. One logistics company interviewed, for example, expected the number staff they required to continue to grow, despite elements of automation, as the number of packages being processed by their site continues to increase significantly.

¹⁸ See for example CBI annual Future of Fintech conferences

3.6.3 Technological

AI and high productivity

The impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been talked about for a number of years with discourse ranging from the possibility of wealthier populations working shorter hours, to a dystopian future of joblessness and wealth disparity. In reality, while automation and AI are already displacing, and will continue to displace jobs, they also create jobs in different sectors. A report by PwC¹⁹ in July of this year predicts that over the next 20 years, the share of jobs displaced by AI (approximately 20% of the UK's current jobs) is likely to be approximately balanced by the additional jobs created. While overall this is a zero-sum picture for employment, there are likely to be 'winners' and 'losers' across different sectors. They predict the largest winners in the long run to include health; professional, scientific and technical services; and education. Meanwhile those sectors that will face the largest job losses due to AI are likely to be manufacturing, transport and storage and public administration. This will mean a need to reskill workforces as jobs become available in different sectors, and to focus on skills for high productivity in those sectors most affected by AI.

Based on work by PwC in this area, the think-tank Future Advocacy predicted that Crawley is the second most vulnerable constituency in the country, due in large part to the potential for automating jobs in the Gatwick supply chain and its logistics sector. Analysis of the Business Register and Employment Survey suggests that growth in jobs in Crawley between 2015 and 2017 has been significantly driven by expansion in areas susceptible to replacement by AI, such as the administrative and support services sector (+5,000 jobs) and manufacturing (+1,500 jobs).

Future Advocacy predicts that AI means that jobs of the future are likely to revolve around certain key skills including:

- In the short-term, computational and technical literacy and the ability to interpret data, as well as mechanics and technicians to maintain and repair systems
- Complex manual jobs requiring significant dexterity and human interaction such as hairdressers, dentists etc.
- Creative roles requiring complex and creative thinking such as entrepreneurs, creative writers and scientists
- Roles where social interaction, social skills and bespoke approaches are of particular importance such as carers and teachers
- New areas such as overseeing and setting up systems and protecting security and privacy
- Jobs that remain may be transformed, with employees focussing more on cognitively demanding areas rather than routine tasks

¹⁹ PwC, *UK Economic Outlook*, July 2018

Digital skills at all levels

Digital skills are becoming increasingly important in more and more jobs. As automation increases and systems processes become the norm, a general competency will become a minimum standard. More advanced digital skills will enable employment in higher growth, higher-paid jobs²⁰. Digital skills are seen as a key part of the national skills agenda, as outlined in the new Industrial Strategy, because of their importance to both STEM and non-STEM jobs.

Multidisciplinary

As noted in response to 3.1, jobs that require non-traditional combinations of specialist skills are becoming more common. Employers will need people that are used to drawing on a cross-section of skills, either their own or from within a team, and who have the flexibility to adapt to new situations and learn new skills as their sectors evolve.

Virtual reality

Improvements in virtual reality provide opportunities to change the way that businesses operate. One respondent, involved in facilities management, suggested that within the next ten years virtual reality will play a significant role in the training of trades people. This may also be the case in other sectors and presents an interesting opportunity for training providers, who may be able to provide training on a large range of systems through virtual reality without the physical investment that would traditionally have been required to house the facilities.

²⁰ Nesta

3.7 How can we ensure that all local people are represented in the workforce and how might we best improve social mobility to help both residents and businesses?

Section 2.1.5 shows that there is an issue with social mobility in Crawley. There is also very low unemployment. Figures from the ESS 2017 suggest that, if vacancy rates as a percentage of jobs in Crawley is similar to that in the wider West Sussex area, there are in the region of 3,750 job vacancies in Crawley at any one time, far outweighing the number of unemployed residents. Initiatives aimed at helping the small number of unemployed into work are important but also likely to be highly resource intensive. However there are a number of groups in the labour market who face issues that need addressing if no-one is to be left behind in Crawley's growth. In this section we highlight three particular demographics who face complex barriers to work and career progression, which present alternative opportunities to improve social mobility²¹. In section 4, we go on to explore barriers to work and best practice example of addressing these.

3.7.1 Women, particularly those returning to work

According to ONS population estimates, in 2015 there were just under 56,000 females resident in the borough. Of these 66% (36,700), were of working age (16-64). The local age profile is considerably younger than nationally with 30% aged 20-39 compared with 26% in England (figure 13). This may well explain some of Crawley's lower female employment rates, with women in this age group facing particular difficulties in combining childcare responsibilities with work.

The data shows that in Crawley **there is a larger gap between men and women's employment rates than elsewhere**. As is commonplace, the female employment rate of 72% is 14% lower than the male employment rate (86%). However, this gap is wider than in the South East where women are more likely to be in work and men less likely to be in employment creating a 9% gap between the two compared with the 14% gap in Crawley.

Trend analysis shows that the employment rate for women is the same as it was a decade ago, having fallen back in the past year, whereas the male employment rate in Crawley has risen by 4.4% since the 2008 recession. Over the same period, the female employment rate in the South East has increased by 3.4%, suggesting that locally, Crawley female residents are less able to take advantage of growth opportunities than their male counterparts (figure 14).

²¹ NOTE: The ONS provides official statistics on economic activity, employment and unemployment through the Annual Population Survey (APS). But in a small borough like Crawley confidence intervals are wide when looking at subsets such as age bands and ethnicity and data is often suppressed. This limits the analysis that can be undertaken.

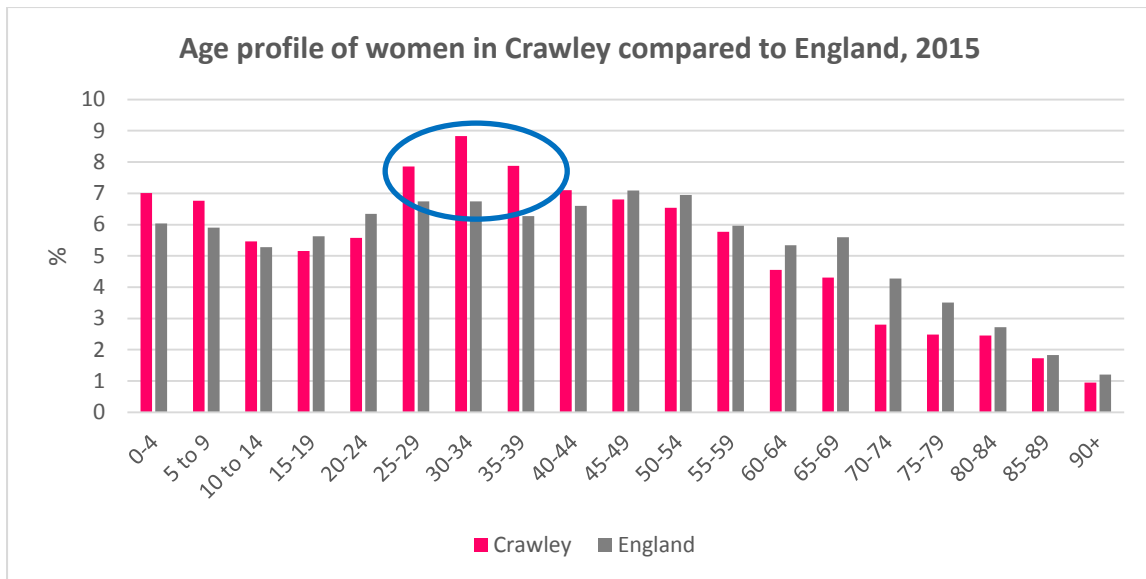


Figure 13: Age profile of women in Crawley compare to England, 2015. *Source: APS*

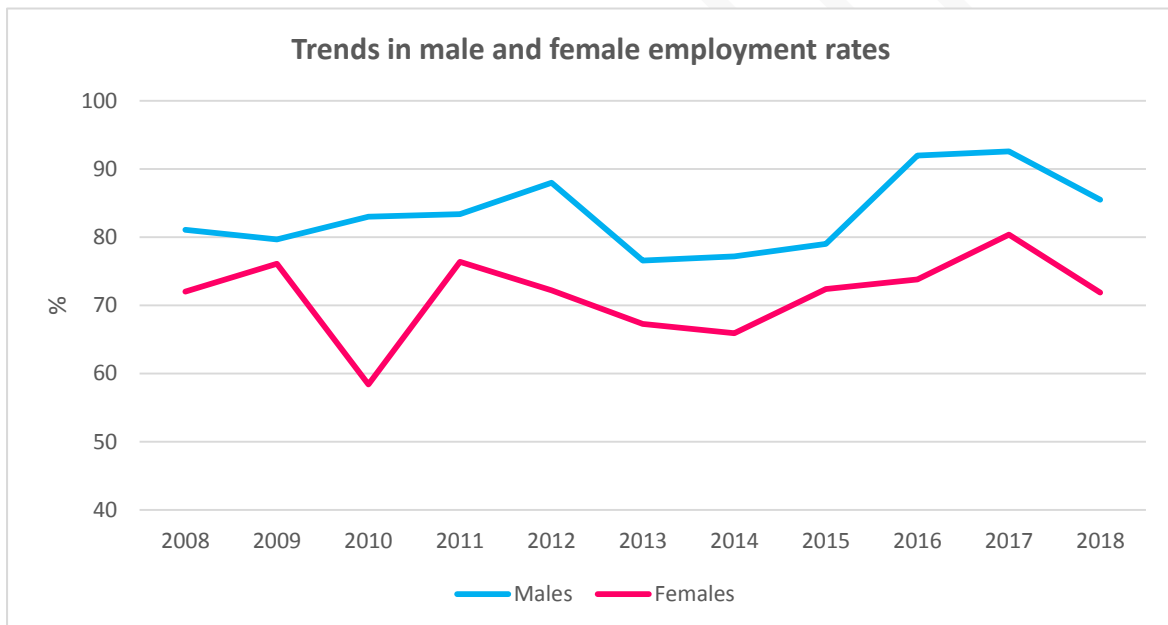


Figure 14: Trends in male and female employment rates. *Source: APS*

Qualifications

Further analysis shows that whilst having lower employment rates overall, women in the workplace are more likely to be qualified to Level 4+ (39%) than men (30%). However, women’s qualifications are also more polarised than for men with more women being highly qualified but also more poorly qualified, i.e. their qualification profile is hourglass shaped. Thus, 33% of men are qualified to Level 2 or below compared with an estimated 42% of women. Women are also less likely to have Level 3 qualifications (19%) compared to men (28%) and with the increasing demand for higher level skills in the workplace this should be a key focus for upskilling.

Salary Levels by Gender

Women full time workers in Crawley earn more than their counterparts in the South East and UK, reflecting the success of the economy. However, the gender pay gap of £129 in Crawley is higher than the pay gap in South East region at £118 and the UK at £100.

Economic inactivity

Turning to those outside the labour market, the data shows a significant difference in activity rates. Whereas 5% of working age men are economically inactive in Crawley, amongst women the rate is 24%, the highest rate since 2014. Significantly, whilst none of the economically inactive men want to work, 48% of women (4,200) would like a job, almost twice as high as the rate in the South East (25%). Due to small sample sizes the data is not considered robust, however, the long term trend shown in the dotted line does suggest that rising numbers are seeking but not able to find work:

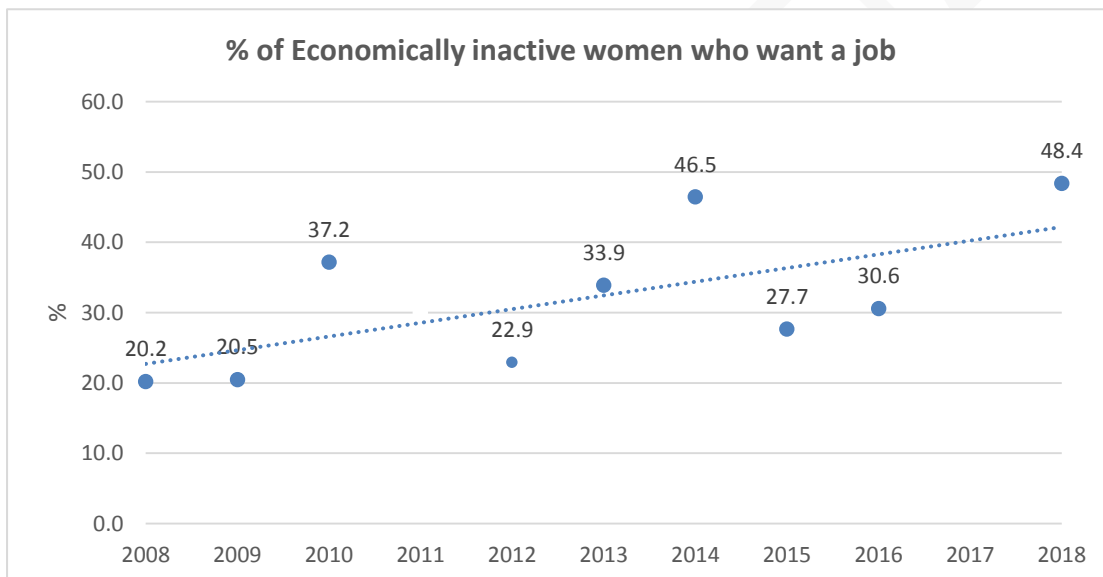


Figure 15: Percentage of economically inactive women who want a job. Source: APS April to March of each year Note: No data for 2011 and 2017 = Trend line

3.7.2 Older workers

The Government's Industrial Strategy identifies meeting the needs of an ageing society as one of its four 'Grand Challenges', and commits the Government to support industry to adapt to an ageing workforce. The extended working life is now a reality for many, and over the next decade the working population over 65 is expected to increase by a third as a result of increases in the state pension age and improving life expectancy.

The Government's *Fuller Working Lives* strategy itself acknowledges that "There are almost one million individuals aged 50–64 who are not in employment but state they are willing to or would like to work." ²²

Locally, the West Sussex County Council Economic Growth Plan Evidence Base identifies the ageing population and workforce as a priority issue. Crawley differs somewhat from the wider area in relation to the make-up of its workforce as its share of working age people aged 16-64 is above the national average with 65% of the population aged 16 to 64 compared to 59% in West Sussex and 63% in England.

Nevertheless, the population is ageing and a rising share of the workforce in Crawley are over 50 – a trend which is expected to strengthen over the next decade. Analysis of population projections to 2026 shows that the fastest growing age group is the over 65s (+21%), followed by the over 50s (+12.1%) compared with a fall in the numbers of 25-49 year olds:

Projected Change 2016-26					
	All Ages	Aged 16 to 24	Aged 25 to 49	Aged 50 to 64	Aged 65+
Numbers	6,086	786	-693	2,302	3,107
% change	5.5	7.3	-1.6	12.1	21.1

Table 6: Project change in demographics 2016-26. Source: ONS MYPE 2016

In response to these trends, the future make-up of Crawley's workforce will shift significantly with more older people expected to be economically active. This shift will also be strengthened by any reduction in inward migration following the UK's exit from the EU which will mean fewer young workers migrating into the borough.

²² Fuller Working Lives Strategy – DWP, Feb 2017

3.7.3 Young People

The future competitiveness and capacity for growth of Crawley will in part be determined by the benefit gained by young people from the local education and training infrastructure. Crawley has 6,080 15 – 19 year olds (2025 mid-year estimates).

Attainment at 16 has improved

National research²³ has shown that attainment at 16 is the key to future success and that GCSE attainment can predict the likelihood of progression to Higher Education. Therefore, performance and success at 16 is an integral part of Crawley's ambitions to secure high value economic growth. Reflecting this, the LEP has a strategic priority to ensure that GCSE attainment (including English and maths) is above the national average.

Latest data shows that overall in 2016/17, the attainment of 8 score²⁴ per pupil in Crawley is 42.9%, well below the West Sussex average of 46.8% and the English average of 46.3%.

Crawley had the lowest percentage of students within West Sussex who achieved a score between 9-5 in GCSE English and Maths in 2016-17 (34.8%). This compares poorly with West Sussex (45.3%) and 42.6% in England.

Attainment at 19

Reflecting this lower level of attainment, fewer pupils progress to Level 3 qualifications. 49.3% attain Level 3 by the age of 19 (2015/16 data) compared with 57.1% in England. Disadvantaged pupils fare particularly poorly with just 29.7% achieving Level 3 compared with other pupils in Crawley, of whom 54.4% achieved Level 3. Both these figures are well below the national averages and this performance is one of the key factors behind Crawley's position on the Social Mobility Index.

Of the 16-19 year old EFA funded learners in 2016/17 almost 1 in 2 (49%) attended Chichester college; 26% school sixth forms and 15% sixth form colleges. 31% study at Level 3, with the majority studying below this level. This compares to 68% studying at Level 3 in Coast to Capital region.

Reflecting prior attainment, the most commonly studied subject by young people between the ages of 16-19 is Preparation for Life and Work. ICT is the most popular vocational subject:

²³ University Challenge: How Higher Education can Advance Social Mobility, by the Independent Reviewer on Social Mobility and Child Poverty (October 2012)

²⁴ This score shows how many pupils made between expected progress between the end of key stage 2 and the end of key stage 4. This is based on results in up to 8 qualifications, which include English, maths, 3 [English Baccalaureate qualifications](#) including sciences, computer science, history, geography and languages, and 3 other additional [approved qualifications](#).

Subject of study	Numbers
Preparation for Life and Work ²⁵	1010
Science and Mathematics	550
Humanities, Languages, Social Sciences and General Education	350
Information and Communication Technology	280
Business, Administration and Law	240
Sport, Leisure and Recreation	200
Health, Nursing and Social Care	190
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	110
Leisure, Travel and Tourism	110
Engineering	90
Performing Arts	90
Art and Design	80
Media and Communication	70
Hospitality and Catering	60
Child Development and Well Being	50
Motor Vehicle and Transportation	50
Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	40
Hair and Beauty	40
Public Services	10

Table 7: Most commonly studied subjects. Source: Data prepared for the Post 16 Review

Apprenticeships in West Sussex

Following year on year increases in the uptake of apprenticeships, 2017/18 has seen a reversal of this trend. This is partly caused by the impact of the 2017 Q3 data which saw a pre-levy surge in starts thus making the 2018 figures look comparatively worse. The

²⁵ As a course this is equivalent, in the size and demand placed on students, to a GCSE short course. It is an inter-disciplinary course which covers aspects of careers, health, personal safety, employment opportunities, applying for jobs and personal finance.

downturn is a national phenomenon and in fact the decline in Crawley (down 27.9%) is less than the decline in England (-33.1%)

There is still debate about what the underlying cause might be but the real question is to what extent the drop in starts is a one-off reaction to the implementation of the apprenticeship reforms or a reflection of more permanent systemic issues impacting on employer demand and provider agility.

At the same time, there has been a year on year Q1-Q3 drop of 50,000 16-24 year old starts in West Sussex which in turn will reduce the social mobility impact of apprenticeships. Employers' focus is increasingly on training older people in work to higher levels; whilst this will have a positive impact on skill levels, it does little in terms of pathways for young people.

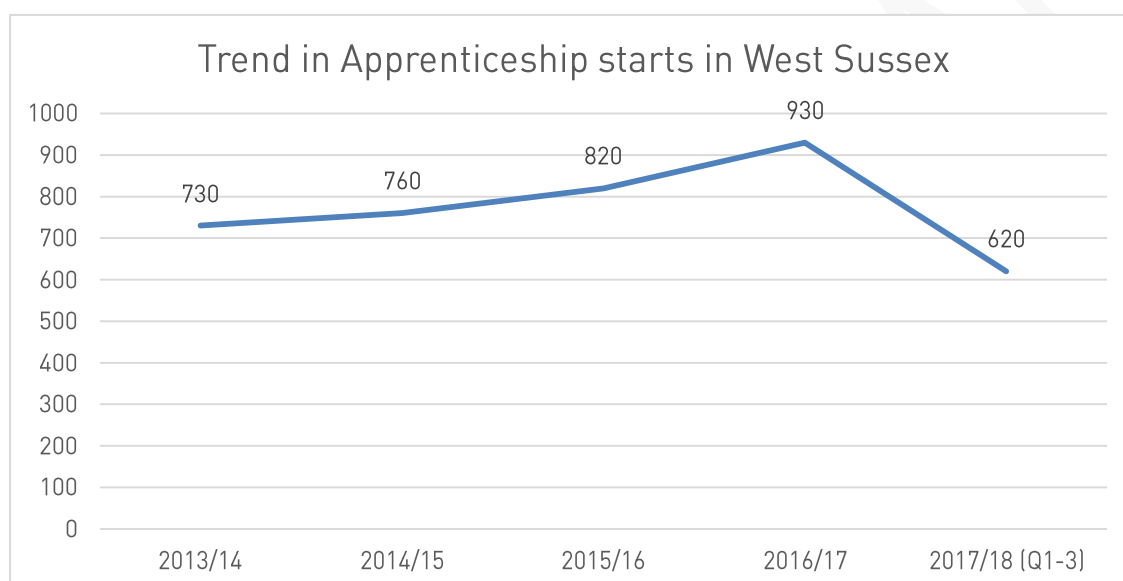


Figure 16: Trend in apprenticeship starts in West Sussex. Source: Provisional figures sourced from the ESFA's April 2018 Statistical First Release at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-apprenticeships>

Of the 620 apprenticeships in 2017/18, 29% involve under 19s; 27% are for 19-24 year olds and the remaining 44% involve over 25s.

The changing labour market for young people

Nationally, the number of workless young people (not in employment, full-time education or training) is 1,004,000, down by 1,000 on the quarter, representing 14.3% of the youth population (July 2018). Since records began (in 1992) the unemployment rate of those aged 16 to 24 has been consistently higher than older age groups.

Much of this is down to changes in the makeup of the labour market, which in turn has impacted on entry and progression routes. Young people of today face increased competition from more experienced workers to access entry level positions, and progress through the labour market has become more difficult for non-graduates²⁶. While the labour market has

²⁶ Skills Commission: Still in Tune? The Skills System and the Changing Structures of Work (2015)

changed, the job preferences of non-graduates have not, and many are pursuing opportunities in declining markets and low-paid sectors.

The share of jobs in sales and elementary roles – the positions where young people tend to find employment – have contracted, whilst the type of occupations best suited to more experienced and skilled workers have expanded their share of the market. As a result, young people in recent times have found themselves in an increasingly competitive job market, often competing against older and more experienced workers for lower and mid-level jobs.

Technological and business innovation is also impacting on job roles and Level 2 is widely regarded as the minimum qualification needed for jobs in the modern workplace. As has been noted above, young people in Crawley are less likely to achieve this benchmark. Strengthening local school performance as well as the development of T-levels will provide new pathways to training and employment for Crawley's young people - particularly for STEM related subjects where growth opportunities are likely to be significant – and for pathways to some of the foundation sectors such as hospitality. Traineeships and apprenticeships will also play an important role in developing the skills and work experience of young people and will help to better matching workforce skills with the needs of employers.

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4 Target demographics: barriers and best practice

4.1 Women

Barriers to women in the workplace nationally

Research by the Resolution Foundation, conducted for the Social Mobility Commission, looked at the extent to which individuals in low paid jobs are able to move into higher-paid work or remain 'stuck' in low pay (where low pay is defined as having earnings below two thirds of median hourly pay).

The report found that women are more likely to be low paid than men and are also far more likely to get stuck in low pay. It is particularly difficult for women in their early twenties to escape low pay, with the lack of good-quality, flexible work to fit alongside childcare responsibilities as the most likely barrier. This is borne out in responses from businesses who, while willing to provide flexible and part-time working solutions to accommodate women returners, highlighted a number of positions that required set hours, shift work, regular travel or were set within a competitive work culture and long hours.

With local employers experiencing skills shortages and high numbers of women wanting to work, the House of Commons Inquiry²⁷ into the gender pay gap has some relevant findings as to the actions needed to bridge the gap between the two:

- Witnesses to the Inquiry, including UNISON and Age UK, drew attention to the difficulty that older women face in accessing training opportunities. The CIPD raised concerns about the "decline in funding in further education and adult skills in recent years" and the impact on older women in particular.
- Whilst the introduction of Advanced Learning Loans for people 24 or over do provide a means for people to invest in their own skills at levels 3 and 4, evidence to the Inquiry heard that the system isn't working. Since its introduction, learning by the eligible age groups has fallen by around one third. Nevertheless, these loans were identified by the Minister of State for skills as one of the main routes into retraining for women returners.
- Many of the witnesses suggested that a more coherent approach to supporting women returners was needed, rather than simply expecting them to find, and pay for, the right training opportunities for themselves. The solutions proposed included: women returner schemes; apprenticeships for older workers; and improving careers advice and guidance for older workers, including mid-life career reviews.

In relation to apprenticeships, the Inquiry concluded that: *"There is clear Government support for the use of apprenticeships as a mechanism to help women return to work. However, they will need to be better designed and branded to appeal to this group, particularly in terms of access. For women looking to increase their skills, or change occupation, apprenticeships could be a good solution. However, it should be remembered*

²⁷ <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/women-and-equalities-committee/inquiries/parliament-2015/gender-pay-gap-15-16/>

that many women returners will already have the skills and experience they need to function well in the job market and different measures are needed to help them.”

CASE STUDY 1: Women Returnships

What is it?

Returnships are an evidence based solution to the difficulties faced by women coming back into the labour market. They are higher-level internships for experienced professionals which create a supported bridge back to senior roles. The programmes typically run for 10-12 weeks, are paid at a professional level and have the possibility of an ongoing role on completion.

The schemes first began in the banking sector in the USA in 2008 and since 2014 the schemes have expanded their use in the UK to other sectors including, IT, construction, law and accounting. One example where this was put into practice was in the Women Returners Scotland programme. This was a six-month pilot supporting women to return to work in the STEM industries after a career break. It was delivered by Equate Scotland in partnership with Prospect, the trade union for professionals, and funded by Skills Development Scotland. It ran between December 2015 and May 2016. As well as offering opportunity to individual women and to businesses, the wider context for the project was a STEM skills shortage in Scotland and getting some of the many professional women who have taken a break in their STEM careers back into the workforce had the potential to play an important part in addressing that shortage.

The project achieved high levels of engagement with the women participants and good engagement with the employer partners. Both participants and employers valued the work done by the project. The women returners reported gains in confidence and valuable learning on practical issues related to returning to work. As a result of its success, the programme has recently been extended

An explicit goal for future projects in Scotland is to present Returnships as something that is seen as very much a 'mainstream' option for recruitment, that can sit alongside graduate recruitment programmes, apprenticeships and internships. By providing clear templates for Returnship schemes, support programmes for returners, and case studies of successful Returnships from a range of large and small companies, future projects would act an accelerator helping to build momentum for Returnships in Scotland.

What are the benefits?

- The key advantage of returnships to employers is access to a pool of talented individuals
- For women they provide a clear route back into a job at the right pay and skill level in a way that allows them to build confidence and trial working patterns

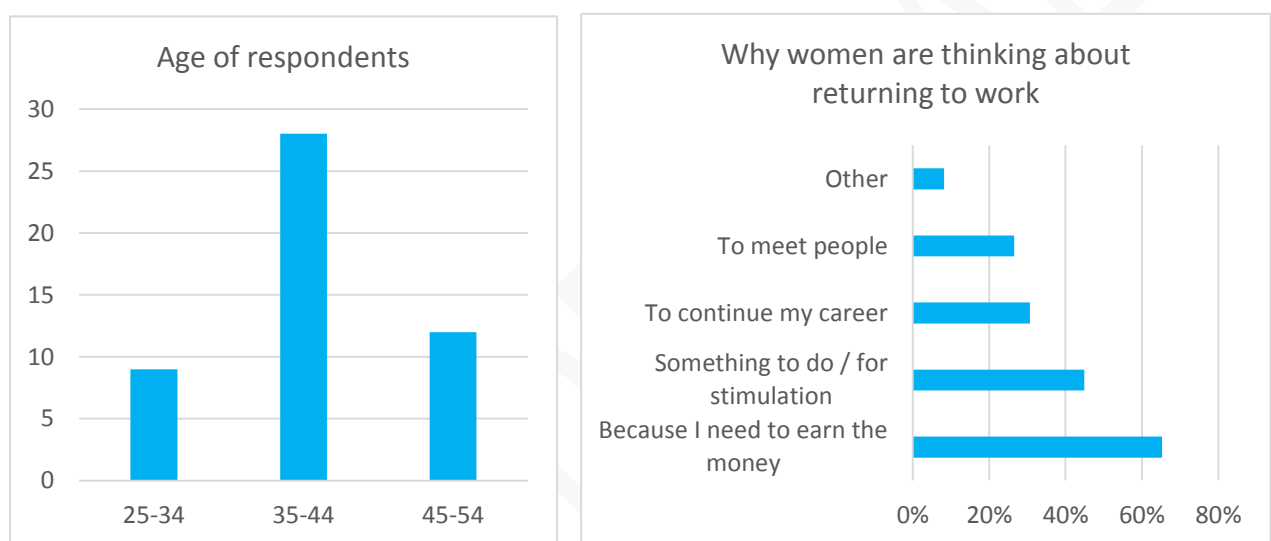
In Crawley

This works particularly well for experienced highly-skilled professionals so may be helpful in Crawley for particular areas where women are underrepresented, for example at a high level in the construction industry, or in software engineering

In addition, an online survey and focus group was carried out with women in Crawley as part of this research. The findings support some of those of the House of Commons Enquiry but also raise a number of other issues. The findings of this research are outlined here with the intention that they can provide a reference for partners in Crawley when designing initiatives to help this group.

Findings from discussions with women returners in Crawley

Respondents to the online survey varied between the ages of 25 and 54, with the largest group sitting in the 35-44 age group bracket (see figure 17). They were qualified to a varying degree and, in line with analysis in 3.7.1, were likely to be either highly qualified or hold a low level of qualifications, with few women in the middle categories (see figure 19).



Figures 17 & 18

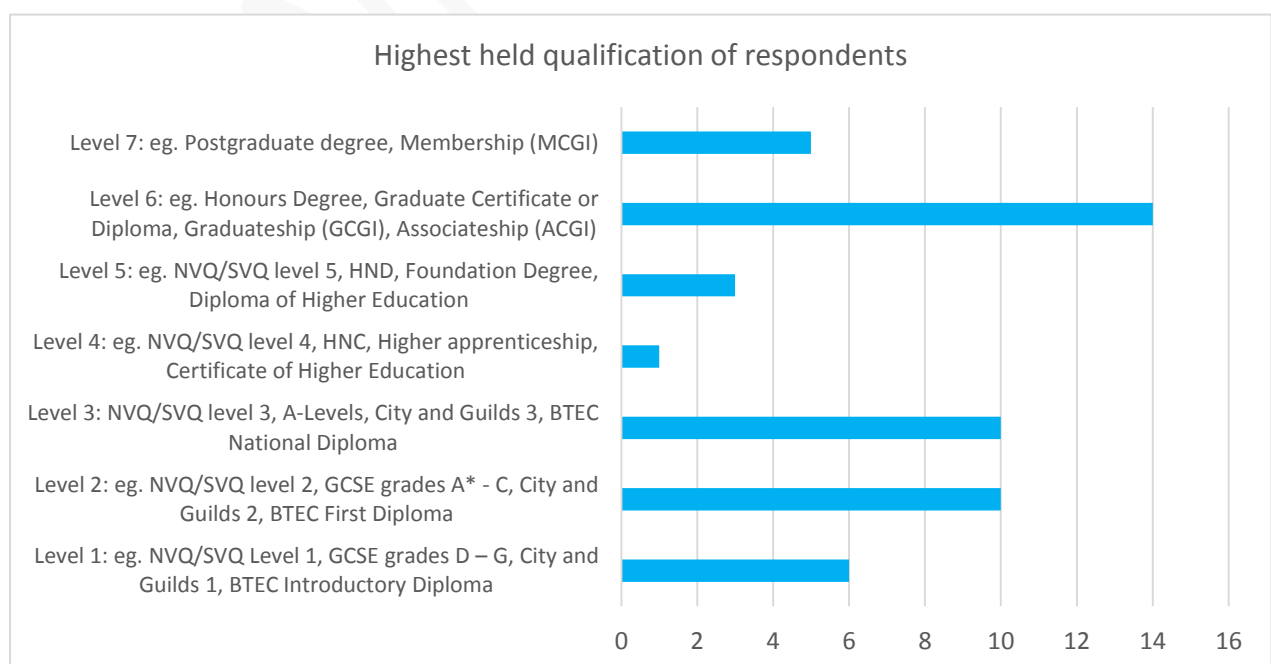


Figure 19: Highest held qualifications of respondents. *Source:* Women returners survey

When asked about their motivations for returning to work, the largest motivation was for financial reasons. However there were also significant other motivations such as career progression and wanting something to do.

In the focus group, women discussed in some depth whether or not returning to work was the right thing for them. Figure 18 demonstrates that for a lot of people it is a financial necessity but even then, discussion in the focus group suggested that the cost of childcare, loss of benefits for single mothers, transport costs and other considerations meant that at times, returning to work was not financially viable or worth the time spent away from family. There was a recognition amongst many that time with their children was valuable, to both them and their family. This was played out further in the discussion, which suggested, perhaps unsurprisingly, that the type of work that was right for women depended on their individual circumstances and the stage of life their family was in. Childcare responsibilities meant that for at least some women their first priority was being able to fit their work within bounded and planned hours and this may explain figure 20, which shows that most of the survey respondents had returned, or were looking to return to work that was either of a similar or lower level of responsibility to that which they did before having children.

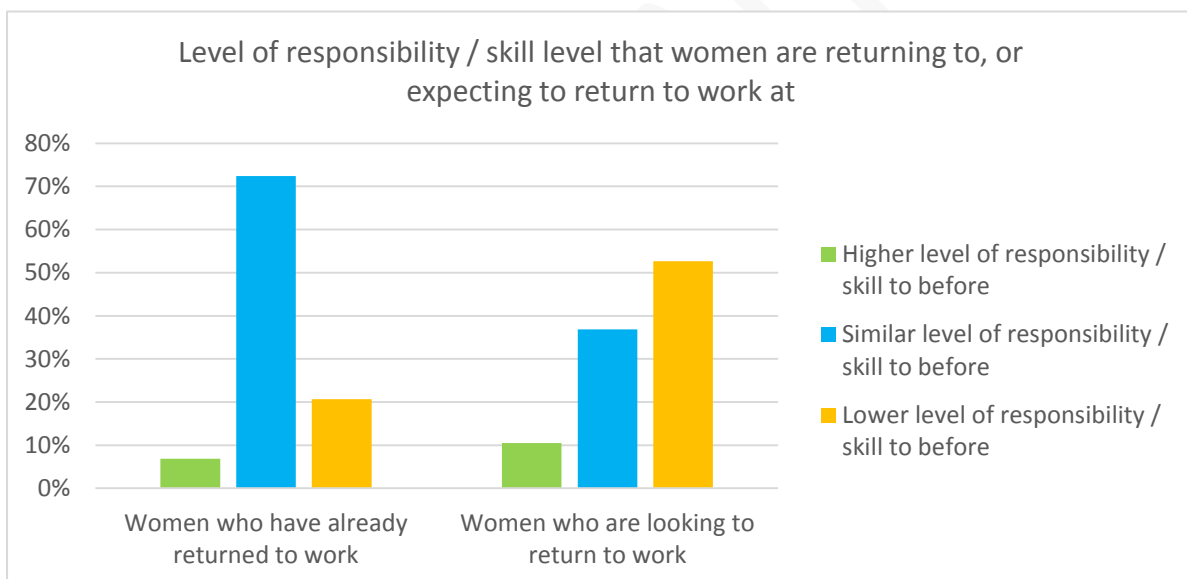


Figure 20: Level of responsibility / skill level that women are returning to, or expecting to return to work at. Source: Women returners survey

The survey asked women whether they were looking to / had already returned to work in a field that was the same or different to the work that they did before having children. Figure 21 suggests that going back to work can be seen by many as an opportunity to think about doing something new. However, the difference between those who are looking to return to work and those who have already returned to work in Crawley suggests that the realities may make this difficult. The focus group discussion suggests that the cost of training in addition to childcare, awareness of training, or the realities of the flexibility of jobs on offer may end up making this a secondary consideration.

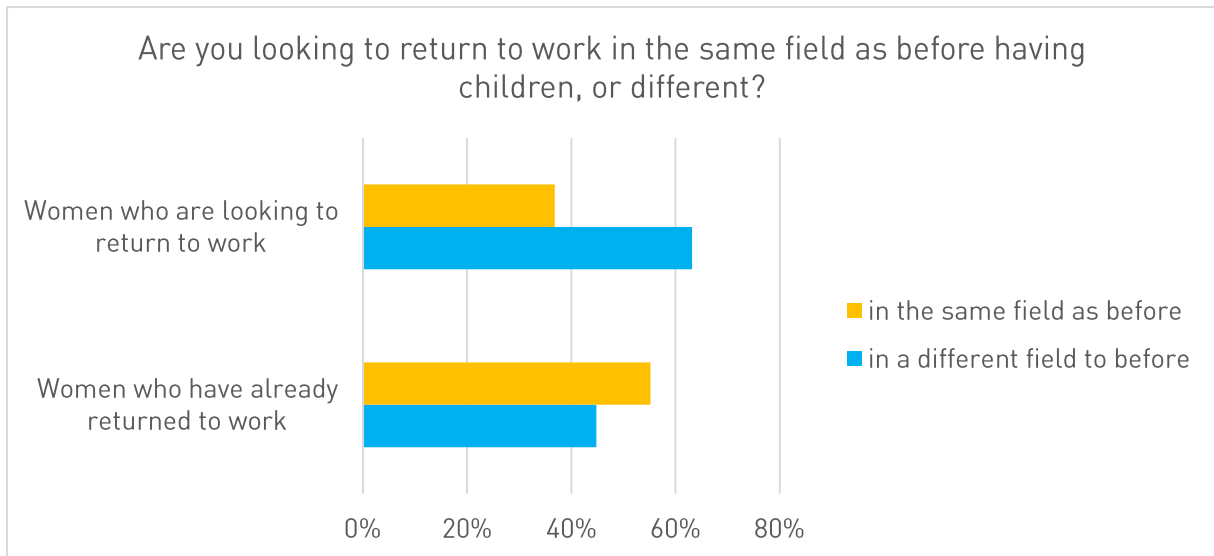


Figure 21: Number of women returning to work in the same v different field as before having children. *Source: Women returners survey*

In fact, a lot of the discussion highlighted that difficulties with finding work to fit around childcare responsibilities, or that pays well enough to make it worthwhile, meant that women in this situation often find they have to be willing to sacrifice aspirations around the *type* of work they do if they are to find work that fits well with their family. Figure 22 shows that a significant proportion of women felt that employers in Crawley could do more to accommodate their needs. The focus group discussion on this subject highlighted an awareness that employers may have concerns that offering flexible working would result in employees taking advantage. However it also highlighted a keenness to repay this trust with hard work. If more employers were able / willing to offer more accommodating jobs then more women would be able to bring choice of the type of work they do back into their equation, choosing work more suited to their interests and skills.

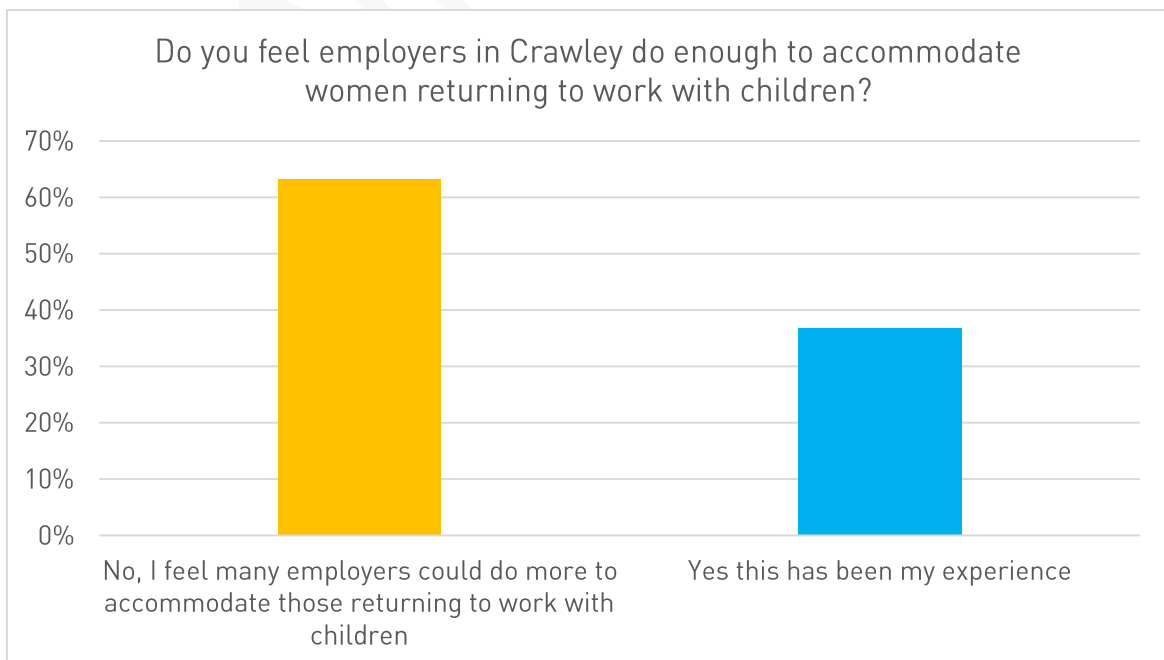


Figure 22: satisfaction with the actions of employers. *Source: Women returners survey*

Respondents to the survey were asked what the main things were that employers could do to accommodate people returning to work with children. This was an open response-type question so responses have been categorised for ease of display. By far the most common response related to the flexibility of working hours. This included flexibility to work from home when needed, flexibility with changing hours; for example in the school holidays, the ability to fit work around school hours, and making more part-time and job-share positions available. Most of the other suggestions are linked to work culture and the understanding of employers. This was reinforced in the focus group discussions, where, for example, women told stories of managers who frowned on those who had to look after sick children or of being asked last minute to change their shift hours to times that clashed with their childcare. The business survey also suggested that this might be the case. Whilst most employers expressed a keenness to accommodate women returning to work, this was sometimes accompanied by 'but' statements around the expectations on working hours or the competitive environment.

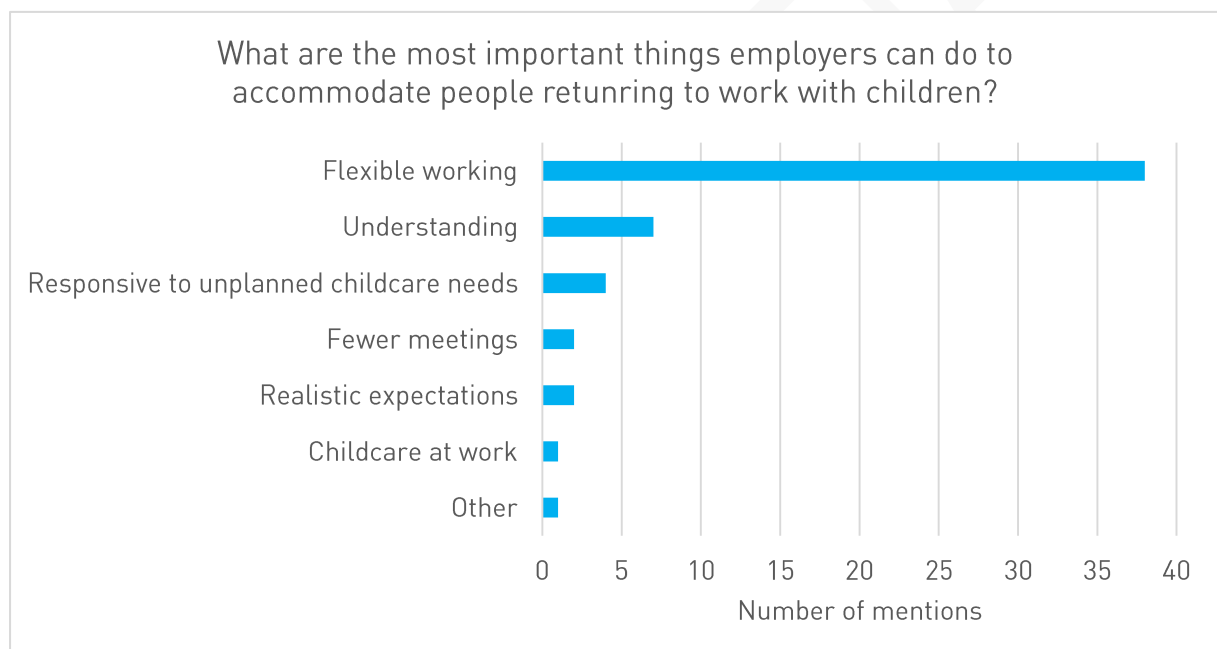


Figure 23: Most important actions employers can take. *Source: Women returners survey*

Additionally, survey respondents and the focus group discussed what might make their search for work easier. The key priorities here were:

- Making sure that employers consider whether positions can be part time or job-shares and stating this up-front in job adverts
- More information in a central place (online and in the library were suggested) about available training
- Working with employment agencies, who often carry out a lot of recruitment functions on employers' behalf and sometimes act as advisers, to ensure they understand the needs of women returning to work and the value of accommodating them
- Help with confidence building, refresher training, CV writing and interview skills

4.2 Older workers

At 86% the economic activity rate of 50-64 year olds in Crawley is already very high relative to the regional (77%) and national averages (74%) suggesting that the key challenge for the borough will be to ensure that the skills of older workers are kept up to date so that they are retained in work. Traditionally, employers are more likely to train their younger workers rather than older workers, but with the pace of change in the workplace through digitisation; automation and technological disruption it will be essential that lifelong learning opportunities are available.

Research undertaken for Nesta²⁸ highlights the uncertainty that currently exists around the impact of technological disruption. It estimates that around 10% of the workforce are in occupations that are likely to grow as a percentage of the workforce by 2030, while around 20% are in occupations that will likely shrink by 2030. More localised estimates based on this methodology and undertaken by Centre for Cities estimate that 20% of jobs in the Crawley urban area are in occupations likely to shrink by 2030.

For those jobs where the impact is currently uncertain, Nesta reports that occupation redesign coupled with workforce retraining could promote growth in these occupations. The report also finds that, while those in low to medium skilled occupations are at greatest risk of being impacted by automation, the skills that are likely to be in greater demand include interpersonal skills, higher-order cognitive skills, and systems skills.

While there are many benefits to extended working lives, the data suggests that in Crawley there will be increasing challenges around occupational health and retraining. For instance, those that leave the lower end of the labour market for retirement in their 50s due to health reasons may need new forms of support to find new types of employment, particularly if they have had long careers in one sector or occupation that is in decline. Additionally, many older people act as carers for grandchildren and parents and will therefore require more flexible working patterns. With increased flexibility and more people working in insecure and part time jobs, the issue facing employers and employees alike is who is responsible for training and upskilling?

The Skills Commission²⁹ reports a long term trend of declining rates of discretionary training for employees and particularly for workers with lower levels of education. As the labour market changes the individual is being left with a greater responsibility for sourcing and funding their own training. Older workers will need support to invest in their own skills development and guidance as to which courses are most appropriate to their needs. This requires good quality, tailored careers advice, not a one-size-fits-all approach designed on the assumption that only young people start new careers.

The Parliamentary Inquiry into Older workers and Employment³⁰ published earlier this year heard evidence about the particular issues facing older workers wishing to train. As with

²⁸ West Sussex County Council Economic Growth Plan Evidence Base, 2018

²⁹ The Skills Commission: Skills in Tune, the changing structure of work

³⁰ <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmwomeq/359/35904.htm>

careers advice, it was considered that learning needs to be tailored to older learners. For instance:

- Age UK argued that older workers did want to progress and learn new skills, but that many did not take up training as it was designed for younger people. They stated that older people appreciated learning in a different way, with less emphasis on gaining formal qualifications.
- UNISON identified problems for older women accessing training due to caring responsibilities. The time available for training and development had also shrunk, especially with the increased use of zero hours contracts, variable hours or fixed minimum hours. UNISON had tried to be flexible in when and how they ran courses, but were often having to make them shorter—one or two-hour sessions instead of a full day—and run them in the evenings and on weekends.

The Adult Skills Budget and National Training Programme will help provide essential resources to help residents acquire the skills needed to take advantage of jobs arising in the future and partners in Crawley will wish to ensure that the specific needs of older workers are taken into account when provision is commissioned.

Good practice

The Parliamentary Inquiry into Older People and Employment, July 2018 identified 3 main issues to be addressed in supporting older people in the workforce. These were:

- tackling age bias and discrimination, particularly in recruitment;
- making workplaces and working practices more flexible and adaptable to the changing needs of older workers in all their diversity; and
- access to skills development, career advice and support throughout people's lives.

Good practice case studies relating to these three points are given below.

CASE STUDY 2: Tackling Discrimination

What is it? Aviva has won its Ageing Workforce award 2018 with a 33% increase in new over-50s hires and a 32% jump in new business.

Their approach has been to team up with charities and organisations to develop a pioneering careers policy, mid-career MOTs and ambitious recruitment campaigns. As a result, the firm is not only attracting and retaining older workers, but setting a blueprint for others. The company also works hard to support and retain carers, which make up one in nine of Aviva staff. By partnering with Mercer, Employers for Carers, the Department of Health, Age UK and Carers UK, it has developed a pilot, known as #wecare, across Aviva UK. This includes: 35 hours paid leave a year for planned events, like hospital appointments; 35 hours paid leave for emergencies a year; extended carer leave, unpaid up to four weeks a year; flexible working; and 'carers' passport' allowing carers to retain flexibility should they change roles.

....Continued

What are the benefits?

- Creating a working environment within which older workers feel valued, and enabling more to stay on in the workforce, increasing the supply of labour and experience for companies

In Crawley

This approach is one which major employers in Crawley could be encouraged to emulate, with best practice guidance being circulated. Some services, such as mid-career MOTs may be offered by third parties (see Case Study 3), but most of the costs for this approach would be picked up by employers. However employers should feel the benefit in their workforce. An existing agency such as Employ Crawley could act as a liaison between businesses and charities that are able to help them develop this approach

CASE STUDY 3: Mid-life MOTs

What is it? To help provide opportunities for retraining, the National Careers Service until recently delivered a pilot scheme of mid-life career reviews via employers. However these rely on employers taking up the offer.

What are the benefits? An evaluation of the pilot by LWI showed that more than 8 in 10 people felt their self-confidence and belief in their skills and experience were boosted, along with other positive outcomes. As a result:

- 1 in 3 took action as a direct result of their review;
- 1 in 5 found work after being unemployed
- 1 in 3 felt motivated to find work, change career, or take up learning; and
- Almost half felt they knew more about possible work or career opportunities

In Crawley - The DWP is currently exploring the level of demand and potential delivery options and state that the final decision on how to progress the mid-life MOT requires further discussion with other government departments. The Government Inquiry into Older People and Employment cited companies based in Manor Royal, Crawley, as amongst those that had taken up the pilot. Depending on the DWP's decision, this good practice could be built on and access to these reviews promoted using local exemplars. Such mid-life career reviews can act as an effective tool in financial and career planning, both of which are important to preventing people leaving the workforce, or finding themselves trapped in unfulfilling employment.

CASE STUDY 4: Careers advice for those seeking work

What is it?

Open Age's Work Routes 50+ has been recognised as being effective in helping older jobseekers to find sustainable employment. They operate in 3 London boroughs and offer free, confidential advice and job brokerage for unemployed people over the age of 50. Advice includes one to one guidance, support with job search and in-work support for the first six months in work.

What are the benefits?

- People are more likely to overcome barriers to re-entering employment
- The labour pool is increased for businesses with experienced older workers

In Crawley

Beta Futures already runs a 50+ skills exchange club. Crawley could explore building on this to link with Employ Crawley to introduce a jobs brokerage element. This would also link to project 1a in section 7

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4.3 Young People

Evidence from the focus group and business surveys

A focus group was carried out with ten students at Crawley College. These were members of the student executive whose role it is to represent other students on their courses.

Businesses had raised concerns that awareness of job opportunities in Crawley is low amongst local students, and that career ambitions are also low. The focus group therefore focussed on three main areas: 1) the level of awareness of Crawley's job market and career ambitions, 2) students' perceptions of Crawley and 3) their concerns about their working futures.

The focus group suggests the following:

Awareness and ambition

Awareness of the types of companies based in Crawley was mixed, but awareness of the types of jobs that might be available in those companies was low. Some particular examples of companies stood out. Virgin Atlantic and Thales for example were uniformly well-known as Crawley employers and have clearly built a local reputation. Some brands, such as Creative Technology, were specifically known through their attendance at careers fairs. A number of other specialist companies such as CGG or Eleka were little known. This is perhaps unsurprising given that there are over 3,000 businesses in Crawley. However, more notably, participants expressed surprise that the type of work these companies carry out was done in Crawley. The students also expressed surprise at the number of jobs that were available in Crawley, expressing opinions that they thought job availability was low and that jobs disappear quickly.

Students were asked what work they were aiming to do and responses included mid-wifery, travel, police officer and kitchen assistant. One response was particularly notable as the student had grown up wanting to follow her mother into hairdressing but, after *work experience*, had decided that she wanted to work with children. This had informed her choice of course at college. Another had always wanted to be a paramedic but had had to change direction after not getting good enough grades at GCSE.

Students were asked, as a group, to rank towns and cities from across the UK by the average salary of a job in that location. Crawley was ranked near the bottom, whilst economies such as London, Oxford, Cambridge and Manchester were ranked at the top. Students were surprised to learn that Crawley in actual fact ranked third in the list, behind only London and Reading.

Finally, most students intended to go directly into work after leaving college, while 2 (and possibly a third) planned on going to university. No students were planning to take up an apprenticeship. When asked about this only one student thought they were positive but believed they weren't offered for her career choice. Others felt that they were not well paid,

or that they would be limiting in their experience because of working for one company throughout the course. Students expressed surprise that apprenticeships could be a way of gaining qualifications to degree level and above, thinking instead that they were only suitable for lower skilled positions. They therefore didn't recognise them as a good route for building their skills.

Perception of Crawley

Students were asked to describe what they felt about Crawley. Responses were generally either neutral or complimentary. However a number of people had negative feelings about certain parts of Crawley and concerns for safety. This was enough to influence some students to say that they would want to move out before bringing up children. This is interesting in light of Crawley's low return rate for graduates.

Concerns about work

The group discussed what concerns they had about their working futures. The main theme that emerged was around qualifications. The group recognised the importance of qualifications in making it easier to get into work but expressed some concern that this may be a barrier to them. One student for example was concerned that a need for qualifications may be a barrier to their progression in work later in their career.

Other discussions included: some concern over interacting in the working environment, and fears about selling themselves short in application processes.

Good practice in initiatives for young people

Evidence of 'what works' to reduce the proportion of young people NEET, to raise aspirations and develop effective apprenticeship routes focuses on early intervention and tackling the barriers that young people face when attempting to move into education or employment. It also requires working across organisational and geographical boundaries and the involvement of local employers. There have been many initiatives focused on young people over the years. Those acknowledged as good practice include:

CASE STUDY 5: Surrey - NEETS

What is it and what are the benefits?

In Surrey, the County Council undertook a scheme that helped to reduce youth NEET rates by 59% through holistic support for attainment, aspiration and the transition from school to work. Their 14-19 plan addressed barriers to participation through financial assistance and early intervention. Interventions focused on health and wellbeing as well as attainment and participation. Action takes place via partnership between local schools, colleges, employers, voluntary organisations and higher education. Additionally, the Council uses commissioning opportunities to reduce youth NEET rates, by ensuring that all contractors meet an agreed...

....number of apprentices under the age of 24. A scheme that offers grants for employers hiring apprentices under the age of 19 also generated a lot of demand.

The programme includes one-on-one support for young people at risk of becoming NEET in Years 11 and 12, and this has a 92 per cent success rate. It also includes case management for all young people who become NEET. This involves one-on-one support from a family officer who takes young people to look at colleges or universities, plus a 'ready for work' re-engagement programme.

In Crawley

Employ Crawley already operates in this area. This case study should serve as useful material for an upcoming review and succession plan

CASE STUDY 6: Hartlepool: Dyke House College's horizon-widening programme

What is it and what are the benefits?

Dyke House College is situated in Hartlepool, a coastal town in the North East suffering from low social mobility, with students often displaying low aspirations and their progression defined heavily by offerings in the immediate area. Similarly to Crawley the area had lower than average levels of pupils continuing onto A-level study and low levels of progression to Higher Education outside the Tees Valley.

The school's Aspirations Programme works across Years 4 to 13 to combat the impact of coastal isolation on students. It includes a programme of targeted interventions to embed higher education in the school culture, for example:

- Year 4 students are involved in a project that introduces the concept of higher education and skills-based learning.
- The Future Scholars programme invites academics to give lectures for the highest-attaining pupils as part of a weekly programme to encourage a love of learning and introduce academia beyond the curriculum
- The Aspire to Be programme works with Durham University to link up student mentors with Year 8 pupils to create personal relationships and dispel myths regarding higher education.
- Partnerships with charities such as the Brilliant Club provide extra opportunities for super-curricular learning.

In Crawley

Qualification attainment in Crawley is low and this impacts on residents' career progressions. Ensuring links with Higher Education and expanding this model to include links with employers throughout the education system could address issues of low awareness of opportunities and ambition amongst disadvantaged children. This would require dedication from schools and could be overseen by the group discussed in project 4a, section 7.

CASE STUDY 7: Behaviour and attitude change: Think Forward

What is it and what are the benefits?

Success is often due to activity that promotes positive behaviour and attitude change; particularly increased self-esteem in young people.

ThinkForward is a programme created in 2010 by Impetus – The Private Equity Foundation (Impetus-PEF) and delivered by Tomorrow's People, a national employment charity. The programme aims to act early to ensure young people make a successful move from education into employment. The programme places coaches in schools, where they work with those who are most at risk from the age of 14, providing one-to-one coaching. Support is provided long-term for up to five years, and includes linking young people to existing services in the community and facilitating contact with local employers. The programme is based on a pilot delivered in Tower Hamlets, East London, which placed coaches in five schools for two years, helping 320 young people and achieving an 88% reduction in those NEET at age 18. Currently, ThinkForward operates in 14 schools in East London, working with 1,100 young people: 88% of these young people have improved their behaviour or attendance at school; 95% of participants continue into further education, employment or training at age 16.⁷³ The intervention is funded in part by a three-year Social Impact Bond, which is commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions' Innovation Fund, backed by the Private Equity Foundation and Big Social Capital.

COMING

5 EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PLAN 2016

It is important that any future activities to address the employment and skills needs of the area build on the current Crawley Employment and Skills Plan, which sets out four Priority Themes, each supported by a Flagship Project for action. We have undertaken a light-touch appraisal of the current plan. Each section includes suggestions for future work where appropriate, and wider objectives that relate mainly to that theme are then outlined. An action plan of potential projects to achieve these objectives, and how they relate, is then outlined in section 6.

5.1 Work stream 1: Development and infrastructure

Flagship Project: Town Centre Skills Academy

The borough continues to benefit from a number of major construction projects, which provide a wide range of employment opportunities for local residents. A key driver is the Crawley Growth Programme, which will see more than £60m invested to support growth in Crawley. Progress is being made, including:

- transforming the business and living environment in the town centre and Manor Royal;
- delivering much-needed new Grade A office space;
- unlocking private funds for a new Crawley railway station;
- enabling 1,000 new town centre homes to be built;
- growing new retail investment, and
- improving sustainable transport infrastructure in the town centre, at Manor Royal and at three railway stations.

The work stream aims to strengthen collaboration between the council, developers, education providers and the construction industry in order to boost the numbers of site jobs, apprenticeships and opportunities going to local residents. The work stream takes forward the principles of the Crawley Developer and Partner Charter, i.e.:

- Aim to source labour from within the local community
- Contribute to raising aspirations, educational attainment and skills levels
- Improve the competitiveness and sustainability of smaller and locally based firms
- Inspire residents, visitors and potential investors in Crawley with the intentions, plans, progress and outcomes of development and investment
- Promote good and sustainable development and construction practices
- Encourage your sub-contractors and suppliers to commit to the principles of the charter

To date, 16 companies have signed up to the Charter. The Town Centre Skills Academy aims to strengthen opportunities within the construction sector by linking the Charter to the approved CITB system and connect future training requirements with local training providers, particularly Crawley College.

Progress is being made and it is hoped that the application to the CITB will be approved in the near future, which will enable the council to utilise support from the CITB to improve monitoring through accessing their reporting systems.

There is still work to be done to raise the profile and perception of local career opportunities within the construction sector and, in particular, to encourage female representation within the sector at all levels (for example through participation in the Inspire Me campaign).

Construction is also one of the first T-levels in development and could be invaluable in addressing the barriers the sector has faced in repositioning construction as a career of choice for young people. The work placement element sets T-Levels apart from other classroom-based offers. Work placements will need proper investment and support to succeed and the Town Centre Skills Academy and Charter programme is well placed to work with employers to ensure that this new pathway works for employers and young people.

The Construction Sector Deal aims to substantially boost the sector's productivity, through greater investment in innovation and skills, creating new and well-paid jobs and maximising its export potential and reduce the environmental impact, improve the efficiency and reducing whole-life costs of new projects and buildings to help build the houses, schools, hospitals and major transport projects. Increasing skills demands driven by these trends, major infrastructure projects, growing interest in off-site construction, the digitalisation of construction and the green agenda are driving a new generation of future skills. An important factor is the perception of the sector (as providing low-paid, low-skilled jobs) as well as a perceived lack of learning and development offered by employers. The construction sector is therefore facing growing skills shortages and is in particular struggling to attract and retain young workers and women.

Finally, the current Employment and Skills Plan focusses heavily on the opportunities arising from developments to improve access by local residents to jobs, apprenticeships and work experience in the construction sector. However in addition, development and infrastructure are important for impact that they have on placemaking, and the perception of Crawley. This theme can therefore be broadened to include physical elements of the attraction and retention of talent in Crawley.

This research suggests the following objectives relevant to this workstream

PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 1) **Further raise the profile and perception of local career opportunities within the construction sector; in particular to STEM students and women**
- 2) **Increase female representation within the construction sector at all levels**
- 3) **Ensure T-Level work experience works well for construction employers and young people and is adopted** - Construction is one of the first T levels in development and could be invaluable in addressing the barriers the sector has faced in repositioning construction as a career of choice for young people. The work placement element sets T Levels apart from other classroom-based offers. Work placements will need proper investment and support to succeed and the Town Centre Skills Academy and Charter programme is well placed to work with employers to ensure that this new pathway works for employers and young people.
- 4) **Ensure the employment and skills agenda continues to be an integral component of regeneration activities and a key consideration in planning and infrastructure development** – The provision of the necessary labour and skills pools are integrally linked to the ability to attract and house target groups in Crawley, including the provision of adequate affordable housing for those who continue to be employed in Crawley’s foundation sectors

5.2 Work Stream 2: Education and Schools

Flagship Project: Crawley Young Workers Scheme

No progress has been made to expand the number of 6 month placements under this scheme within the local authority. The main reason has been difficulty in recruiting, specifically within the 16-24 age group. However, the number of council apprenticeships have increased and it is keen to create higher apprenticeships (Level 4) for local graduates within the authority.

Despite the lack of progress regarding the specifics of the ‘flagship project’, significant activity is being undertaken at a local level to deliver against the government’s Careers Strategy and statutory guidance to deliver high-quality careers provision and boost the employability of local young people. The Enterprise Adviser Network is now live and working with all secondary schools and colleges to design and develop enhanced careers advice and help prepare young people for future jobs and careers. The IAG Group, facilitated by the local authority, provides an important platform for schools and skills and training providers

to work collaboratively towards the goal of helping schools to deliver effective careers education strategies that are tailored to local employers' needs.

A number of other programmes and projects are being delivered to create stronger links and bridge the gap between education and the workplace. Activities such as the Crawley STEMfest actively engage and work with local schools to raise local aspirations and skills particularly in increasing interest among school children regarding STEM subjects. Now in its seventh year, Crawley STEMfest is a series of interactive shows, workshops and demonstrations that take place in schools and colleges, in STEM Clubs and at a major public event in the town centre during May and June.

It is important that the Borough Council 'leads from the front' in offering apprenticeships and paid placements to young people wishing to enter the world of work. Further research is required to review apprenticeship opportunities in Crawley and design an action plan to boost apprenticeship numbers, and to maximise the potential offered by top slicing 10% of levy funds to support apprenticeships in supply chains and SMEs.

Additionally, although Crawley seems to be in the early stages of a step-change in the design and implementation of careers guidance and support for young people, it is still a confusing picture with a number of programmes to connect schools and the world of work delivered by the public, voluntary and private sector, which creates the potential for confusion and duplication. A mapping exercise needs to be undertaken to understand current interventions in schools and to support greater collaboration and partnership working.

This research suggests the following objectives relevant to this workstream:

PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 5) To simplify the landscape** of employment and skills initiatives for employers and residents
- 6) To improve the awareness amongst young people of the career opportunities** in different sectors in Crawley, and raise levels of ambition and basic employment skills
- 7) To retain more degree level students** and improve graduate returner rate

5.3 Work Stream 3: Business and Employers Flagship Project: Gatwick Skills Laboratory

The Gatwick Skills Laboratory was an attempt to bring FE and HE training providers together with Gatwick Airport Ltd and local business to design and roll-out new higher-level skills training to help businesses overcome the skills gaps and shortages of skilled labour which

restrict growth. The idea of creating physical / shared training 'space' at the airport was not supported by GAL as a commercial proposition. The area review and restructuring of the post-16 education and training sector (2017) also contributed to the lack of progress in developing the business case for the Gatwick Skills Laboratory.

However, Gatwick Airport Limited is keen to explore new ways of working with local providers, including Crawley College, to look at ways of bringing together local employers, business partners and a range of service providers to offer bespoke services built to attract, retain and develop the best people for the job. Discussions need to take place between Crawley College and GAL to investigate new ways of designing and delivering bespoke services to attract, retain and develop local people for future job opportunities in the locality.

More broadly then, this workstream is about improving the link between employers and local training providers to ensure that their skill requirements are met and that local people are able to exploit career opportunities in Crawley. Given the density of jobs, it is also important that businesses are supported with attracting and retaining talent from outside of Crawley

This research suggests the following objectives relevant to this workstream:

PLAN OBJECTIVES:

- 8) To increase the ease with which businesses can compete with nearby economies** to attract and retain talent from outside, as well as from within Crawley
- 9) To improve the local provision and take up of training of most relevance to employers:**
 - Vocational training (e.g. apprenticeships, T-Levels, short and professional courses)
 - High-level, sector-specific skills
 - STEM and digital skillsand to ensure the skills provided on these courses prepare students for work
- 10) To support businesses generally with attracting and retaining talent with the right skills**
- 11) To ensure work experience is well-promoted, high quality and works well for businesses and students** – In particular, to ensure that the work-experience element of new T-Levels works for employers and students

5.4 Work stream 4: Employability and Social Inclusion

Flagship Project: Employ Crawley

A number of Crawley neighbourhoods and communities have concentrations of residents with lower skills / income and higher unemployment. This work stream sets out a series of actions to address the barriers preventing Crawley residents from fully participating and benefitting from the economic prosperity of the Borough. The work stream relies on collaboration between public and voluntary sector agencies (including the council's Community Development Team) to design and deliver outreach initiatives and support services so residents can access tailored skills support to enable them secure better jobs.

Launched in October 2017, **Employ Crawley** helps local people access support, advice and guidance from specialist organisations in the town whilst providing one-to-one tailored support from a dedicated staff. Employ Crawley is open to all local residents and aims to make navigating the world of work simpler. Together with a support officer, customers can create a plan which is unique to them, helping them move into work or progress into the next stages of their career. Support includes:

- One to one support
- Advice about finding work and how to secure jobs, direct from employers
- Links to key businesses and specialist employment services in Crawley and the Gatwick Diamond
- Continuing support when in employment, offering advice on the next steps
- Unique workshops and courses delivered by specialists.

To date, Employ Crawley has supported around 200 people and is seen by stakeholders to provide an important service. Funding is currently in place until March 2019 and discussions are on-going with the Department of Work and Pensions and neighbouring authorities in West Sussex regarding a succession planning.

Our analysis and discussions with stakeholders suggests that Employ Crawley is seen as an important programme to support local people access job opportunities, addressing the core social mobility issues and complementing other partners' activities, particularly Job Centre + . Intensive support and resources are needed to support the small number of Crawley's residents who are not competing and accessing as successfully as they might be local, and wider, employment opportunities. Low skills is a major issue; other challenges include lack of aspiration, credible work, and non-work experience. Having said that, to increase the effectiveness of resource allocation, a number of target demographics of particular opportunity have been identified in this report.

A deliverable succession plan needs to be designed to ensure future delivery of the project. The roles and responsibilities of local partners need to be clearly defined, particularly the role of the Community Development Team, which acts as the main outreach vehicle to engage with hard-to-reach residents. The project may act as a conduit to deliver some of the recommendations relating to this section.

This research suggests the following objectives relevant to this workstream:

PLAN OBJECTIVES:

- 12) Improve the employability and skills of disadvantaged adults and young people**
- 13) Help local people access higher paid jobs and progress through career pathways**
- 14) Increase the pool of local skilled labour available to local businesses**

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6 PROJECTS AT A GLANCE

	Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
1a. Sector Collaboration on Recruitment – Option 1	1, 6, 7, 8, 10	L	M	Short
1a. Sector Collaboration on Recruitment – Option 2	1, 6, 7, 8, 10	M	H	Med
1b. Advice on differentiating a businesses' offer	8, 10	L	L	Short
1c. App / website targeting Crawley residents leaving for university	7, 10, 14	L	M	Med
2a. Foundation Sector Support	1, 2, 6, 8, 10, 13	M	M	Med
3a. Skills partnership pilot	7, 9, 13, 14	H	L	Med
4a. Business-Education Forum	3, 5, 6, 9, 11	M	L	Short
4b. Tour your local...	1, 6, 10	L	L	Short
4c. VIP Head Teacher tour	6, 11	L	L	Short
4d. Resourcing careers leads in schools	6, 7, 10, 11, 13	L	M	Med
4e. Summer school option	6, 11, 12, 14	M	L	Short
4e. Extended format	6, 11, 12, 14	H	M	Med
5a. Taking the lead to support SMEs to take up apprenticeships	7, 9, 10, 14	M	L	Med
5b. Developing more HE-level vocational training locally	7, 8, 9, 13, 14	H	H	Long
6a. Mapping and review	5, 12, 13	L	L	Short
6b. Employ Crawley succession plan	12, 13, 14	M	L	Short
6c. Manor Royal Training Programme – Use of empty spaces	9, 10, 12, 13	L	L	Short
7a. Responsibility for advancing this action plan	All, in particular 4	L	L	Short
7b. Influencing the LEP's Employment and Skills Board	All	L	L	Short - Medium

7 PROJECTS

This section outlines 6 key projects, each of which contributes towards multiple objectives. Each project contains multiple elements. The link between each element and the objectives in section 5 is highlighted. Some of these could be chosen to be delivered in isolation. They are worked up to varying degrees of detail depending on the level of discussion that has been had and information received throughout the study. The intention is to provide a series of actionable options for partners to follow up on. Some indicators as to their importance and deliverability are included in order to help with prioritisation.

PROJECT 1 - Support to help businesses attract and retain talent

This project includes a number of elements aimed at helping businesses attract and retain talent

Elements

a. Sector collaboration on recruitment

A number of businesses expressed a willingness to explore collaborating on recruitment with other businesses who have similar recruitment needs. This would rely on businesses being willing to set aside short-term competition for the sake of long-term gain. If this is to be delivered, a pilot should be trialled with one particular sector. This might be of particular interest to sectors that are both struggling with recruitment and who have less predictable patterns of employment needs, such as the health and social care sector.

Two options of varying degrees of complexity are outlined here.

	Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
Option 1	1, 6, 7, 8, 10	L	M	Short
Option 2	1, 6, 7, 8, 10	M	H	Medium

Option 1 – Advertisement and Marketing

Businesses could work together on developing joint messages about their sector in Crawley, aimed at raising awareness of the opportunities and the dynamism of Crawley as a place to work. They could use these to develop a series of advertisement campaigns to target specific groups. Advert targeting may be at specific locations e.g. major conurbations with good transport links to Crawley such as Brighton, or at specific target demographics.

This would require three main types of collaboration to be arranged:

- 1) Developing the campaign

- 2) A central location for people responding to adverts to be directed where they would be able to find out information about the multiple businesses who have collaborated on the campaign
- 3) Funding for the campaign – this could either be delivered by an interested party that represents all of those collaborating, such as the BID, or through pooling of companies’ marketing resources

Option 2 – Shared recruitment agency

Businesses could go one step further, as in the case of Case Study 8, and jointly fund a recruitment agency to work on behalf of all businesses in the area. In the case of Case Study 8, this is a collaboration between three BIDs in London. In Crawley, this model could be evolved to be a partnership between the BID and the Council, possibly evolving an existing structure such as Employ Crawley or Manor Royal’s Job Board collaboration with LoveLocalJobs. If this was the approach taken, it would be important to ensure that each partner had a genuine stake in the governance of the model.

The aim of such a structure would be to:

- Provide a central focal point for people looking for jobs in Crawley – for example this structure could fulfil the requirement for a central advertisement location noted in option 1
- Provide a portal through which businesses could post jobs, with the agency looking to match suitable local candidates with local jobs
- Facilitate the efficient transfer of employees between employers in Crawley in the case of redundancies
- Help ensure all advertised roles receive similar profile and facilitate collaboration between employers where some roles receive too many applicants and others receive few
- Facilitate other appropriate projects from this action plan

b. Advice on differentiating a businesses’ offer

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
8, 10	L	L	Short

Provision of an advice pack, and the option of a session with an adviser, for businesses who are struggling with recruitment and would like to understand how, beyond raising the salary, they can make their offer more attractive.

c. **App / website to target Crawley residents leaving for University**

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
7, 10, 14	L	M	Med

Innovating how employers are able to keep in touch with employee residents who have left Crawley to go to university. The creation of an app would allow employers to be part of a constant careers fair in students' pockets, and would allow students to keep in touch with what opportunities are available to them in their hometown. The app / website would:

- Be promoted to all Crawley students before leaving for university
- Promote summer work experience options relevant to their degree
- Promote case-studies of individuals and their career journey in Crawley
- Promote positive and exciting news stories about businesses, targeted to students' degree subjects and interests
- Promote full-time roles and graduate schemes to final year students

To ensure that this functioned well, this would need to be owned by a partner who was well-enough resourced to keep it maintained and promoted.

It would also require buy-in from careers advisers in the education system and key stakeholders such as head teachers, as this would be the most effective way to ensure wide adoption. One option would be to roll this out through the group discussed in project 2a.

Case Studies

CASE STUDY 8: London south bank BIDs - Employ SE1

What is it?

Employ SE1 is effectively a job brokerage acting on behalf of the 2000 or so members of the three BIDs that stretch London's south bank. It is jointly funded by three BIDs and employs 2 members of staff who circulate to the different BID offices day by day, ensuring that the emphasis is fairly shared around and that good communication between employ SE1 personnel and the BIDs' own staff teams is maintained.

The impetus for the project initially came from businesses' confusion and complaint about how many external agencies were approaching them for vacancies. Employ SE1 now offers to post every vacancy that businesses submit onto a single web portal accessible only by those employment agencies who are dealing with local job candidates from the Lambeth and Southwark area.

Continued....

...Employ SE1 will also run bulk vacancy recruitment for larger companies arranging venues and is now in its eighth year of operation. Hundreds of candidates have been placed into jobs, but currently with the number of jobs notified growing steadily, concerns are around the tightening of the candidate supply.



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PROJECT 2 – IMPROVE CAREER PATHWAYS IN SPECIFIC SECTORS

a. Foundation sector support

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
1, 2, 6, 8, 10, 13	M	M	Med

Explore similar models to the Town Centre Skills Academy to encourage employers to design and implement improved training and career progression pathways to improve the profile and perception of entry-level opportunities within key foundation sectors e.g. health and social care; hospitality; retail.

In the construction sector in particular, continue to run projects under the existing Town Centre Skills Academy to enable and promote training and work opportunities to new groups of residents; in particular to women, who are under-represented in the sector; and to STEM students, who will be needed to fill skills gaps as the construction industry develops technologically. Inspire Me is a good example of a campaign that Crawley can get involved with to help attract more females to explore career opportunities within the construction sector. There is significant investment planned in infrastructure in Crawley through the Crawley Growth Programme. We have therefore included a case-study from Birmingham showing how they exploited the opportunity of construction jobs arising from HS2 (see Case Study 9).

Case studies

CASE STUDY 9: HS2 and the STEM Progression Pathway

The impact of HS2 in the West Midlands region has been valued at £4.4 billion. This includes employment forecasts for Birmingham estimating an additional 29,000 jobs created by 2026, with more at the start of HS2. Many of these will be high-skilled STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) jobs associated with the development of HS2 and other related industries.

The National College for High Speed Rail, which has been established to train the future HS2 workforce, is located across two campuses in Birmingham and Doncaster. Given the scale of this estimated impact, Birmingham City Council and the West Midlands Combined Authority have developed the Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy. At the heart of this is an ambition for inclusive growth. This aims to deliver an efficient, high-skilled economy in ways that reduce social and economic inequalities.

Continued...

Continued...

To actively manage this aim, a strategy was developed to enable the lowest-skilled and least-advantaged residents in these areas to progress towards high-skill, high-value jobs. A STEM Progression Pathway project developed the following model:

- Routes into the National College for High Speed Rail at all different starting points, from a Level 2 feeder course to a diploma course at Level 5 leading to a postgraduate certificate.
- A particular focus on entry into STEM for local people with the lowest levels of qualifications and skills, and the highest levels of disadvantage. Using a Citizens' Curriculum approach, this is an adult skills offer which gives people a broad set of skills in employability more generally; with the inclusion of STEM skills.
- Outreach and engagement activities targeted at specific groups under-represented in the industry, as well as those facing higher levels of exclusion from the workplace. This also includes people recently made redundant from the local manufacturing sector and public sector workers who are at risk of redundancy.
- An interface with employers, including talks from local employers, work experience placements, ongoing careers guidance, action planning, and taster sessions to enable learners to gain an understanding of learning opportunities.

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PROJECT 3 – SECTOR SPECIFIC COLLABORATION ON TRAINING COURSES

The research highlighted that there was justification for developing courses that deliver new skills locally, particularly high-level job specific skills, and that these should be developed for key sectors.

Elements

a. Partnership Pilot

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
7, 9, 13, 14	H	L	Med

Training courses require a critical mass to become viable. Sectors in Crawley should consider collaborating on developing training courses that meet their shared needs, to enable them to be provided locally. Local Digital Skills Partnerships (LDSPs) are currently being trialled in Devon and Manchester as sector-based approaches to partnership, working with education providers to develop local training provision tailored to the shared needs of a sector. DCMS has invited all Local Enterprise Partnerships and Mayoral Combined Authorities to submit Expressions of Interest to form further LDSP pilots. Three will be selected by April 2019. Crawley should consider lobbying the LEP to submit an application for this.

This is linked to project 4b

PROJECT 4 – IMPROVE THE EDUCATION-BUSINESS INTERFACE

Elements

a. Business-Education Forum

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
3, 5, 6, 9, 11	M	L	Short

Case study 10 talks about a business-education forum in Reigate. Findings from this report suggest that a similar model in Crawley would be helpful to increase coordination between businesses and training providers. It is important that its remit includes:

- Involving businesses in the design of T-Level work experience (and a general high-quality approach to other work experience) and get businesses signed up
- Monitor the effectiveness of work experience
- Provide a forum for regular communication, for example feeding back where there are deficiencies in training provision or other concerns
- Sharing best-practice case-studies for work-experience etc.
- Involving businesses in careers advice
- Organising initiatives such as the VIP tour of businesses for head-teachers (see project 3c)

This could be a new group or, if deemed suitable, the remit of the existing IAG could be expanded and its Terms of Reference updated. As well as training providers and the council, the BID should attend, as should CEC Enterprise Advisers and a selection of other large and small businesses (from inside and outside of Manor Royal) and potentially other stakeholders such as representatives of the Town Centre Skills Academy programme.

b. Tour your local.....

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
1, 6, 10	L	L	Short

Businesses should be encouraged to develop short tour experiences for classes of children with the aim of:

- Allowing them to see and experience facilities and working environments that they would not normally experience
- Teaching students about how businesses develop and operate
- Raising their awareness

- Allowing them to question people working in the industry

Businesses should develop short packs explaining clearly what they can offer and, if possible, students should be encouraged to engage with research beforehand to maximise the benefit they gain from the trip.

This should be advertised to schools through, amongst other mediums, the group discussed in project 3a.

See Case Study 12 for a local example of good practice.

c. VIP Head Teacher tour

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
6, 11	L	L	Short

A curated tour of businesses across Crawley, to excite and inspire Head Teachers and other stakeholders involved in the delivery of Careers Advice to Crawley's students. The target outcome would be to encourage participants to become more involved with groups such as the IAG and to be more proactive in delivering improvements in careers advice in schools.

Manor Royal BID would seem an obvious partner to lead on the logistical organisation of this, building on their investors tour and their close link with a large number of businesses. However, it's important that this action also allows involvement from businesses outside of Manor Royal. Therefore whoever is chosen as the lead needs to be willing to work with businesses from across the borough and this could be done in collaboration with the group discussed in project 3a.

d. Resourcing careers leads in schools

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
6, 7, 10, 11, 13	L	M	Med

Providing resource and support to ensure that more schools have dedicated careers 'leads' and are able to proactively engage with businesses for work experience and education opportunities.

This is particularly important given schools' roles in improving awareness of opportunities, raising levels of ambition, and tackling the negative perception of apprenticeships.

e. Options for consideration: Summer school or other format

	Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
Summer school option	6, 11, 12, 14	M	L	Short
Extended format	6, 11, 12, 14	H	M	Med

Businesses at the Manor Royal Matters conference³¹ discussed improving the link between young people and businesses by engaging them in programmes of work experience and fun projects over summer holidays. We include an example in Case Study 11 of an ‘Events Academy’, which involves businesses in a similar concept. However have also developed this concept further. Offering work experience and internships will be a useful means of encouraging indigenous young people to look positively at a future career within Crawley, but the potential challenges are such that it is worth exploring what the shape of more ambitious plans to retain and grow talent may look like.

The first impediment to be encountered is to overcome the likely inertia for employers to engage in collective as opposed to individual remedies to recruitment blockages. The default position is for companies to compete rather than collaborate in the jobs market. It may take a crisis in recruitment, or the realisation that as the job market tightens wage inflation will become a common problem, before attitudes will decisively change. In Penang, where *The means* were asked to explore the scope for a Business Improvement District, skill shortages had led several major international players in the semi-conductor and bio-medical sectors to establish a jointly funded training centre. This took the form of a large physical facility located at the free-port. How might such an approach manifest itself in Crawley?

1. Run a **pilot** as proof of concept. Begin with modest numbers and higher aspirations. At the outset make sure that the specification and complexity of the scheme don't make it too difficult to initiate. However, consider scalability of all aspects and all stages.
2. Sign up a **group of employers**, say five to ten in number. If possible these should include different sizes of company.
3. Establish an **advisory body** which will include training and employment specialists but also representatives of the local community such as an elected politician. Their task would be to support and promote the scheme and foster an atmosphere of continuous improvement.
4. Appoint a **management agent** who would be responsible for implementing the programme. Their task would include recruiting the employers, administering the programme, commissioning the off-the-job training and providing pastoral support for the candidates. It is envisage that a dedicated amount of staff management time would be required, alongside certain aspects that could be out-sourced e.g. training and pastoral care. Manor Royal BID should be considered for this role

³¹ Employment and Skills Workshop, 15th November 2018

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5. Recruit a **cohort** of 20, 16-18 year olds (or could be older) who could be referred from agencies or given the opportunity to apply through adverts on social media etc
 6. Create a strong **brand**. This is a club that employers and young people will want to be part of. Weave in non-financial incentives e.g. gym membership, cultural events
 7. Develop a strong and relatively diverse **curriculum** including:-
 - a. structured work experience blocks with say 5 different employers
 - b. pastoral support coupled with forward looking career counselling
 - c. off the job learning which will encompass
 - i. life skills – incorporating a residential element,
 - ii. STEM, and
 - iii. Specific vocational input
 - d. Other than modules requiring workshop or laboratory facilities deliver the off-the-job learning in non-college settings, albeit often with college input
 8. **Guarantee** all graduates job interviews
 9. Celebrate completion through a graduate award **ceremony**
 10. Seek **funding** through a delegated portion of the Apprentice Levy. And preferably reward participants financially over the course of the programme

Case Studies

CASE STUDY 10 – REIGATE EMPLOYER AND EDUCATION GROUP

What is it? The town of Reigate holds quarterly forums between businesses and the education sector. About 12 businesses are invited, including the largest employers as well as a selection of smaller ones. The group discusses issues relating to skills and recruitment

What are the benefits?

- Better coordination of the interface between education providers and businesses
- Regular communication between businesses and training providers allows feedback on where there are deficiencies in training
- It enables businesses and training providers to share the challenges they are facing and work collaboratively on solving them

In Crawley, a group such as this could take specific things under its remit, such as the design and coordination of T-Level work experience, as is discussed in this section.

CASE STUDY 11: Better Bankside – Events Academy

What is it?

The results from the Better Bankside 2016 attitudinal sampling of its membership caused some surprise by lifting Air Quality up to one of the major concerns for employers in the area. This level of concern has persisted but in the 2018 version the biggest increase was around the recruitment and retention of personnel. Better Bankside had anticipated that this was a growing concern which could only be accentuated by Brexit, and had developed two quite different remedies. One was of a scale that required partnership working (see Case Study: London south bank BIDs - Employ SE1)

The other was much more manageable and relatively easy to get off the ground, and has just completed its seventh successful year. Christened the **Events Academy** the project, which runs for 6 weeks in the summer holidays, challenges a group of 8-10, 16-20 year olds to organise and run an event for employers in the Bankside area through tapping into the skills and resources available through the local business community.

The young people's efforts are facilitated by a co-ordinator appointed for the period and supported by a mentor drawn from the previous year's intake. The response from the business community has been varied and fulsome:-

- Marketing companies supporting the design and delivery involve in promoting the event
- PR companies running sessions on dealing with the press and public speaking
- F&B outlets providing expertise on catering for events
- Venues themselves training the participants on risk assessment and event logistics

And so forth. The young people are encouraged to invite friends and family to the event itself, alongside the business attendees. The room on the night is at a heightened level of emotion as the young people shock themselves as much as others in the way they play their unaccustomed parts. Personal growth during those six weeks has to be seen to be believed.

What are the benefits?

- Increased confidence and skills for those young people taking part
- Increased awareness of local work opportunities
- Increased preparedness for work
- Opportunities for employers to connect with and prepare potential candidates
- Development opportunities for employees as they interact with training young people

CASE STUDY 12: 'TOUR YOUR LOCAL....' – WORKPLACE VISITS FOR STUDENTS

4D, a local Data Centre operator, are one example of good practice in business engagement with the education system.

What is it? Schools are invited to send groups of students on a tour around a live data centre. This includes being shown the data floor and the infrastructure so that they can see in reality how things like the internet function. The tour lasts about 1 hour and is followed by up to an hour for questions with the Managing Director.

Before the tour, students are given a set of questions to research in order to put their visit in context. 4D have developed a small pack to give to schools to explain what they can offer.

What are the benefits?

- It raises awareness amongst students of job opportunities and provides a way for the company to meet prospective candidates
- It excites students and provides a learning experience that cannot be gained in the classroom
- It allows students to see how a company operates and to learn about the skills they require

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PROJECT 5 – FOCUS ON APPRENTICESHIPS

Vocational training was identified as an important priority to fill the skills gaps experienced by employers. At the same time some issues affecting the take up of apprenticeships were identified. This is the focus of this project.

Elements

a. Taking the lead on supporting SMEs to take up apprenticeships

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
7, 9, 10, 14	M	L	Med

The current skills and employment plan identifies a role for the council to take a lead in taking on more apprenticeships and workplace students. This project suggests the council take this one step further and take the lead in demonstrating the ability of larger organisations to redirect a slice of their apprenticeship levy funding to support apprenticeships in smaller companies in their supply chain who do not have access to the funding. The aim would be to increase the take up of apprenticeships by SMEs. This approach, and associated advice, may be promoted wider through initiatives such as Employ Crawley and Manor Royal's Jobs Board, whilst careers advice in schools should be made pivotal to changing the perception of apprenticeships amongst students and parents.

See Case Study 13 for an example from Norfolk County Council.

b. Developing more Higher Education-level vocational training locally

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
7, 8, 9, 13, 14	H	H	Long

More vocational Higher Education, such as degree-level apprenticeships, should be delivered locally in Crawley. These should be developed to deliver skillsets required by Crawley employers and as such should be designed through a model of sectoral collaboration such as in project 2a.

Degree-apprenticeships are still a relatively young phenomenon in the UK and therefore this would need to be accompanied by an awareness campaign amongst businesses, potential candidates and those involved in careers advice.

Case Studies

CASE STUDY 13 – APPRENTICESHIP LEVY TRANSFER – NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

What is it?

From July 2018, levy-paying employers have been able to transfer up to 10% of their apprenticeship funds to any other employers. On 1st October 2018 the government announced that this was increasing to 25%. This move is intended to lead to more quality apprenticeships being created and will help employers to work together in partnership, supporting them to take on apprentices who may not have done so otherwise.

Working with TrAC, Norfolk County Council have developed a pilot designed to help 30 young people to obtain and achieve an apprenticeship. This has been done by Norfolk County Council transferring its levy to TrAC to support these apprentices.

All of these apprentices are referred by the Council and are employed by TrAC, who place them with other host employers throughout their programme. Both the apprentice and the host employer receive additional bespoke support throughout the programme.

What are the benefits?

- Stimulation of apprenticeships amongst businesses who otherwise would not make this opportunity available
- Simplifying the process for SMEs with less HR resource
- Ensured quality of the apprenticeship programme

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PROJECT 6 – DELIVER A SERIES OF INITIATIVES AIMED AT OPPORTUNITY GROUPS

This project is aimed at helping to improve social mobility and pathways into work for hard-to-reach groups.

Elements

a. Mapping and review

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
5, 12, 13	L	L	Short

Existing initiatives aimed at supporting 'hard-to-reach' groups with employment and training should be comprehensively mapped and their impact reviewed. This review should also cover how they are coordinated. The aim should be to simplify how employers and residents can find out about and use initiatives and to ensure resources are being targeted effectively. This review will need to be led by the council but carried out in partnership.

b. Employ Crawley succession plan

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
12, 13, 14	M	L	Short

Develop a sustainable business and succession plan for Employ Crawley and explore whether to evolve its remit and structure to deliver, in particular:

- Collaboration under Project 1b
- Referrals for Project 5c
- Initiatives highlighted in section 4.1 to support women returning to work
- Initiatives highlighted in section 4.2 to support older workers
- Initiatives highlighted in section 4.3 to support young people

Part of this review should include further research into levels of underemployment, as opposed to unemployment, in Crawley and the potential for delivering responses to help these people gain full time employment.

c. Manor Royal Training Programme – Use of empty spaces

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
9, 10, 12, 13	L	L	Short

Empty spaces on Manor Royal Training Programme could be offered to those looking for work, as a training option for those needing to gain skills to help them in employment and as a way for them to develop links in the world of work. Alternatively companies could sponsor spaces.

This would not be a suitable option for everybody and it is important that the usefulness of the group to other attendees is not affected. Therefore a referral system should be used so that suitable candidates can be put forward. Employ Crawley may be a suitable body to play this role.

Manor Royal BID would be the obvious lead on this project, in conjunction with Employ Crawley.

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PROJECT 7 – STRUCTURE FOR DELIVERY

This report demonstrates that there is a complex array of challenges, a wide-ranging set of existing initiatives and additional actions that are proposed in this report. It is therefore recommended that responsibility for prioritising, pursuing and monitoring actions arising from this study is allocated to a partnership between businesses, training providers and the public sector that is able to oversee the broader picture.

Elements

a. Responsibility for advancing this action plan

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
All, in particular 4	L	L	Short

The Local Economic Action Group (LEAG) is currently the only group covering the whole of Crawley that is a partnership between public, private and education sectors, and whose remit includes employment and skills.

The LEAG also has key responsibilities in the development and oversight of the Borough's economic priorities and the Crawley Growth Programme.

It would therefore seem appropriate for the LEAG to have ultimate oversight of pushing this action plan forwards and ensuring it feeds into other strategic work streams such as delivery of training space, work space, affordable housing etc.

However, the LEAG is a high-level strategic body so it may be appropriate to create a working group that reports to it. Terms of Reference would need to be developed to include its membership, responsibilities and accountabilities. It should consist of public, private and education sector representation. The group should decide which individual actions to allocate to specific organisations or partnerships to deliver.

b. Influencing the LEP's Employment and Skills Board

Objectives met	Complexity	Cost	Timescale
All	L	L	Short - Medium

The group in Project 6a should ensure that it is fully engaged with and influencing the LEP's new Employment and Skills Board. This will be important in ensuring that funding and initiative are made available for important sectors in Crawley.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendices are separate documents

APPENDIX 1 – LIST OF INTERVIEWEES (BUSINESSES, STAKEHOLDERS, TRAINING PROVIDERS, PERSONAS)

APPENDIX 2 – BUSINESS SURVEY USED

APPENDIX 3 – FURTHER INFORMATION ON CASE-STUDIES

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