

A Skills for Life Strategy for Gateshead

January 2005 – December 2006



**Group Director
Maggie Atkinson – Learning and Children**

**Lead Officer
Ian Hunter Lifelong Learning Manager –
Raising Achievement Service**

Contents

	<u>Page</u>
1. Foreword	2
2. Executive summary	3
3. Introduction	4
4. Strategic, national and local contexts	6
5. Vision, outcomes, objectives and targets	9
6. Performance and review	11
7. Action Plan	1
Appendices	
A1.	14
A2.	15

1. Foreword

The Government report – ‘Skills for Life’ – compiled by Sir Claus Moser, found that seven million adults in the UK have poor literacy and numeracy skills, including approximately half a million who struggle with English because it is not their first language.

Life in today’s society is increasingly complex. We have to be able to understand and use a whole range of information tools, from I.T. to simple mathematical calculations, to keep pace with an ever-changing society. It can provide many opportunities, yet be tremendously prohibitive if we cannot read and/or write.

We depend upon basic levels of literacy, language and numeracy. Until we all have the skills that will allow us to function in everyday life, there will be a source of great inequality in our society.

I welcome this strategy because it clearly shows how the Council will be tackling the issue of basic skills and improve the lives of people in Gateshead. We are committed to helping everyone to develop learning and skills throughout their lives. The improvement of basic literacy, language and numeracy is, for many, the most important first step.

Councillor Peter Mole
Portfolio Holder Lifelong Learning
Gateshead Council

2. Executive Summary

This is Gateshead Council's first Skills for Life Strategy and is effective from March 2005 through to December 2006. The Strategy identifies the key activities that need to be undertaken during this period by the Council, in order to improve the language, numeracy and literacy skills of the adult population of Gateshead.

The strategic framework for the Strategy is provided by the Gateshead Community Strategy and the Council's corporate plan, Towards 2010. It sits alongside a range of other key plans, such as the Adult Learning Plan, Extended Schools Plan and the Raising Achievement Service Plan, which will also play a key role in addressing basic skill levels.

The overall outcome of this strategy is:

“Local people who have the literacy and numeracy skills to make the most of all the opportunities available to them and achieve their full potential”

Through the strategy we will ensure that local people have the knowledge, skills and qualifications to achieve their employment goals, and are able to maximise learning opportunities to realise their full potential. In addition we will work to ensure that local people have the opportunities to learn throughout their lives, irrespective of age or ability.

The Strategy identifies five strategic objectives, which prioritise activity in five key areas:

- Evidence basing to enhance our understanding of Skills for Life Needs
- Awareness raising
- Delivering the right opportunities in the right ways
- Partnership working and capacity building
- Establishing excellent teaching provision.

Focusing activity and targeting resources in these areas will have the greatest impact on improving basic skills in Gateshead. Identification of these areas was informed by Government guidance, patterns of basic skill levels in Gateshead and consultation with the Learning and Skills Council and the Skills for Life task group of Gateshead Lifelong Learning Partnership.

The Strategy is supported by a robust action plan, which sets out how we will address the key challenges described in the Community Strategy, key priorities for the year ahead and a phased approach to achieving the Strategy's five objectives. Performance against the action plan will be monitored by the Skills for Life Steering Group.

3. Introduction

Purpose and timescale

Many people in Gateshead lack basic levels of literacy and numeracy and as a result are unable to progress either academically or through employment. As a Council we need to do more work to improve the levels of basic skills in the borough. Work is already being done in Gateshead's schools, which has seen the Local Education Authority rising to 10th in national tables for GCSE attainment. We now need to extend this work to adult learning and help more people to achieve the levels of skills they need to reach their full potential.

The purpose of this strategy is to increase levels of numeracy and literacy skills amongst the adult population of Gateshead. The latest figures available from the Department for Education and Skills¹ show that 22% of adults in Gateshead have 'poor' literacy skills (equivalent to a reading age lower than that of an eleven year old), compared to a national average of 16%. The same source indicates that 63% of the Gateshead adult population have poor numeracy skills (beneath NVQ Level 1), compared to the national average of 46%. The strategy aims to bring both levels closer to the national average by December 2006.

This strategy targets both residents of the Borough and Council employees. The Basic Skills Agency has stated that adult literacy, language and numeracy needs apply equally in the workplace.

Through the strategy we will ensure that local people have the knowledge, skills and qualifications to achieve their employment goals, and are able to maximise learning opportunities to realise their full potential. In addition we will work to ensure that local people have the opportunities to learn throughout their lives, irrespective of age or ability.

Consultation

Members of the Skills for Life Task Group of the Gateshead Lifelong Learning Partnership have been consulted on the development of the Council's Skills for Life Strategy. Residents' needs have been incorporated into the plan as identified from The Basic Skills Agency Consultancy report. Funding to support the achievement of Skills for Life targets is the responsibility of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The local LSC and the representatives from the LSC's National Skills for Life Quality Initiative have both been actively involved in producing the strategy.

Definition

Skills for Life refers to adult literacy, language and numeracy skills. The Basic Skills Agency defines Skills for Life as:

"The ability to read, write, speak in English and to use mathematics at a level necessary to function and progress at work and society in general."

¹ 'Readwrite Plus' web site, 2005

People can experience basic skills problems regardless of their social group, ethnic background, age, disability or lifestyle. However, there is a proven correlation between deprivation and poor basic skills levels. In addition, some sections of society have especially acute needs. For example people coming to Gateshead from other countries may not speak English as a first language or at all.

The Government has set national targets for the achievement of Skills for Life qualifications. The qualifications framework is as follows, showing progression from pre-entry level in which an individual will have a 'very-poor' level of literacy or numeracy, demonstrated for example by an inability to write his/her name.

- Pre-Entry Level
- Entry 1
- Entry 2
- Entry 3
- Level 1: equivalent to a GCSE Grade D – G
- Level 2: equivalent to a GCSE Grade A – C

Only qualifications at Entry 3 and above count towards the Government's national test targets. However, it is critical to engage with adults beneath Entry 3 to help them to develop skills and progress towards Entry 3 and beyond.

4. Strategic, national and local contexts

National context

The 'Skills for Life Strategy' was launched by the Government in March 2001. This national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy, evolved as a response to Sir Claus Moser's 1999 landmark report *A Fresh Start – improving literacy and numeracy*. This stated that up to seven million adults in England are unable to read or write at the level expected of an 11 year old. Various measures were devised to demonstrate the impact of literacy at this level.

There are a number of national targets built into the national strategy. For example, 'The Skills for Life Strategy' has met its 2004 target to increase the skills of 750,000 people. It is now aiming to achieve a national target of helping 2.25 million adults to improve their literacy, language or numeracy skills by 2010. Public sector employees and low skilled people in employment are priority target groups in the Government's strategy.

As a result of the 'Breaking the Language Barrier' report on English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), published in October 2000, the Adult Core Curriculum for ESOL learners was launched. This will ensure consistent standards in English teaching for ESOL learners in line with the national Skills for Life Strategy.

In 2003 the White paper *21st Century Skills* announced that basic ICT would be recognised as a Skill for Life alongside literacy, language (ESOL) and numeracy. It is not yet clear what infrastructure will be in place to include ICT as a Skill for Life, when it becomes clear the strategy will be amended accordingly.

In 2004, the Basic Skills Agency conducted a study of Skills for Life issues in the Council. The report concluded that: *"There is a clear role for the Council within the Skills for Life agenda. If this role is to be fulfilled, there is a need for a strategic plan."*

Strategic context

In its overarching corporate strategic plan, 'Towards 2010', the Council describes its aspirations for lifelong learning:

"Local people who learn throughout their lives and have the life skills to realise their full potential as individuals and active citizens."

This means that the Council aims to ensure that people in Gateshead:

- Get the most from educational opportunities, maximising their attainment levels
- Have the knowledge, skills and qualifications to achieve their employment goals and realise their full potential and maximise learning opportunities
- Have opportunities to learn throughout their lives, irrespective of age or ability

This aspiration cannot be realised without a corresponding drive to improve the poor levels of adult literacy, language and numeracy skills. We want local people to get the most out of lifelong learning opportunities available in Gateshead, starting with improving their levels of basic skills.

The overall outcome for this strategy is set out below and supports the vision in Towards 2010:

“Local people who have the literacy and numeracy skills to make the most of all the opportunities available to them and achieve their full potential”

This strategy will contribute to a partnership document that is being developed to tackle low levels of skills amongst adults in Gateshead. This partnership document is being produced by the Skills for Life Task Group of the Gateshead Lifelong Learning Partnership. The Partnership is responsible for the challenges and actions set out in the Gateshead Community Strategy and is overseen by the Gateshead Strategic Partnership.

Gateshead Community Strategy challenges for lifelong learning:

- Easily accessible opportunities for improving Basic Skills
- Increased participation from those living in deprived areas in community learning programmes
- Accessible and affordable IT-based learning for everyone in Gateshead

Actions within this strategy will help to support these and initiatives including the Adult Learning Plan, Extended Schools Plan, the Raising Achievement Service Plan and the Council's e-Government statement. Without adequate literacy, language and numeracy skills, there is a democratic issue concerning access to the Council's services.

Local Context

Tyne and Wear

Funding responsibility for Skills for Life in Tyne and Wear rests with the Tyne and Wear Learning and Skills Council. The Skills for Life target for 2004 for the Tyne and Wear region was to help 18,580 people to achieve Skills for Life. The actual achieved up to September of 2004 was 11,960. In addition, there is a stretching target of 38,300 to be reached by 2007. Therefore it is essential that the regional LSC maintains or increases the current level of Skills for Life achievements to meet the targets. In the region over the next five years, significant investment will be made to address Skills for Life to meet the target.

£1.5m has been allocated for the Skills for Life Voluntary and Community Sectors project, which aims to achieve 2,700 referrals across Tyne and Wear by December 2006. One North East, The Regional Development Agency has also allocated £1.5m over the next 3 years to build upon the capacity of tutors to support Skills for Life.

In Tyne & Wear 21% of adults have literacy skills below level one. 28% of adults have a numeracy need at entry 3.

Gateshead

Educational attainment in Gateshead is lower than the national average. According to the 2001 Census 38% of Gateshead residents have no qualifications. This compares to an average of 29% across England and Wales. This can have economic implications for the Borough as people lack the skills they need to access employment opportunities. In March 2005 4.2% of people in Gateshead were unemployed, this is higher than the national average of 2.8%.

In Gateshead, Gateshead College is the main provider of literacy, language and numeracy. Within the Council, the Organisational Development Service has actively pursued the development of Essential Skills for the workforce. Through the EQ8 Workforce Development Project and the support of the Union Learning Representatives, employees from a range of Council services have been able to improve their literacy, language and numeracy skills.

In addition, Skills for Life teaching is a key feature of the Council's Family Learning programmes delivered in schools and community centres throughout the Borough. The Family Learning Service has been delivering family programmes since 2001 where the primary aim has been to improve the literacy, language and numeracy skills of parents and children. All parents/carers on these programmes are working within the Skills for Life curriculum with some of them gaining qualifications.

However, there is a lack of coherence. There is a need to develop a whole-organisation approach if the Council is to meet the challenges and opportunities to support people with Skills for Life needs amongst Council employees and residents.

Following an inspection of Gateshead Council's adult learning provision in 2003, the Adult Learning Inspectorate awarded a grade one for "outstanding achievement" in the area of Community Learning. As a result of this, funding was obtained by the LSC and ESF for the Basic Skills for Community Capacity Building project. This aims to support and train staff in the adult learner support certificate and engage adult learners in need of literacy, language and numeracy in pursuance of the national and regional targets. An abundance of opportunities has been identified from the start of this project. However, it is evident that there are issues concerning capacity and a great need to increase tutor support.

This strategy aims to draw together new and existing strands of Skills for Life in Gateshead to ensure a coherent and consistent approach. It will contribute towards the Councils' performance indicators and subsequent targets agreed with the LSC.

Addressing Equalities and Diversity Issues

Gateshead has a vibrant and diverse population in terms of age, ethnicity and religion. According to the 2001 Census, there are 191,151 people living in 84,267 households in Gateshead. Of the total number of people that live in the borough, 10% are over 75 years old, a figure that is continuing to rise. There is also an increasing number of residents in the borough belonging to Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups. According to the last Census, 1.6% of Gateshead's population belong to a range of different ethnic and religious groups.

Gateshead is proud of its diverse communities and acknowledges that the different social groups living in the borough may have specific Skills for Life needs. This will have an enormous impact on the types of courses and programmes that are delivered, how they are publicised and how they are taught. This is why the Strategy's first strategic objective seeks to gain a much clearer understanding of the needs and desires of basic skills needs of residents throughout the Borough.

5. Vision, outcomes, objectives and targets

The overall outcome for this strategy is:

“Local people who have the literacy and numeracy skills to make the most of all the opportunities available to them and achieve their full potential”

This outcome is underpinned by the following five strategic objectives:

Strategic Objective 1: Gather a comprehensive evidence base about the basic skill needs of those who live and work in the borough

Strategic Objective 2: Raise awareness of Skills for Life across the Council and externally, and support employees to recognise and respond appropriately to service users with Skills for Life needs

Strategic Objective 3: Deliver effective, relevant and appropriate Skills for Life opportunities to those who live and work in the borough

Strategic Objective 4: Develop partnership working to enhance the range of Skills for Life opportunities available to those that live and work in Gateshead and target resources more effectively

Strategic Objective 5: Ensure that all Skills for Life teaching is excellent quality, tailored to individual needs and delivers results

How will we achieve these objectives?

A number of priorities have been identified that will help us to achieve our objectives.

Strategic Objective 1: Gather a comprehensive evidence base about the basic skill needs of those who live and work in the borough

Priorities:

1. Establish a baseline of Gateshead residents with Skills for Life needs
2. Establish a baseline of the distinct Skills for Life needs of different social groups in the borough (ethnicity, age, social class, gender, disability, geographical)
3. Establish a baseline of the Skills for Life needs of Council employees

Strategic Objective 2: Raise awareness of Skills for Life across the Council and externally, and support employees to recognise and respond appropriately to service users with Skills for Life needs

Priorities:

1. Establish a Council working group on Skills for Life to coordinate activity across the Council and develop understanding of the issues
2. Deliver training to relevant employees to ensure they can screen, signpost and provide information to Council service users with Skills for Life needs
3. Integrate good literacy and numeracy resources in Council services to improve the literacy, language and numeracy levels of service users e.g. Home skills project has been piloted through working in partnership with Gateshead Housing

Company. This supports tenants in running their own home by improving their literacy and numeracy skills

4. Raise awareness of Skills for Life through corporate and local media to encourage residents and employees to recognise their own needs and act upon them

Strategic Objective 3: Deliver effective, relevant and appropriate Skills for Life opportunities to those who live and work in the borough

Priorities:

1. Provide targeted Skills for Life opportunities in all five neighbourhood management areas
2. Embed Skills for Life in the Council's adult learning programme to improve the literacy, language and numeracy levels of adult learners
3. Embed Skills for Life in the Council's workforce development programme to improve the literacy, language and numeracy levels of employees
4. Continuously seek new resources to support the Council's Skills for Life delivery to develop capacity, and use current IT resources to deliver Skills for Life programmes

Strategic Objective 4: Develop partnership working to enhance the range of Skills for Life opportunities available to those that live and work in Gateshead and target resources more effectively

Priorities:

1. Clarify the Council and partners' role in delivering Skills for Life in Gateshead
2. Explore opportunities to develop Skills for Life opportunities with a range of new partners from the public, voluntary and private sectors
3. Support local partnerships, projects and initiatives such as the 'Skills for Life for the Voluntary and Community Sector' project
4. Contribute to wider regional initiatives to address Skills for Life to enable residents and employees to benefit from best practice and resources elsewhere

Strategic Objective 5: Ensure that all Skills for Life teaching is excellent quality, tailored to individual needs and delivers results

Priorities:

1. Develop a quality assurance framework to guarantee the effectiveness of Skills for Life delivery
2. To evaluate the Council's delivery of the Skills for Life Core Curriculum to be certain that delivery meets national standards and that residents and employees are offered the best possible service

The Action Plan in Chapter 7 sets out in detail how we will achieve these objectives.

6. Performance and review

“Local people who have the literacy and numeracy skills to make the most of all the opportunities available to them and achieve their full potential”

How will we know when we’ve achieved this? We can identify stages ... over, say, three years ...

We need to be clear about what targets we would expect to achieve that will tell us whether we’re making progress.

Performance against the action plan will be monitored by the Skills for Life Steering Group. The Lifelong Learning Manager within the Raising Achievement Service will evaluate progress on a weekly basis.

The Strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis in the context of the wider work being undertaken to address poor Skills for Life levels across the borough.

The Strategy will contribute towards achieving a local indicator in relation to adult education:

- The number of enrolments on adult education courses per 1,000 adult population.

This is an annual indicator, for which the final audited figure for 2003/04 was 51.88 and the target for the 2004/05-year end is 53.

The Strategy will also contribute towards achieving three performance measurements in the Gateshead Community Strategy 2004-2007 in relation to Skills for Life:

Can we add some baseline information in for these and future targets?

- Improvement in Skills for Life – Reduce the percentage of people with low literacy
- Improvement in Skills for Life – Reduce the percentage of people with low numeracy
- Increase the number of adults engaged in adult, family and community learning programmes.

Progress on these Performance Indicators will be reported through the Lifelong Learning Partnership to the Gateshead Strategic Partnership.

Skills for Life

Action Plan 2005 - 2006

Strategic Objective 1- Gather a comprehensive evidence base about the basic skill needs of those who live and work in the borough

Community Strategy Challenges	Priorities	Achievement date & officer responsible	Milestones	Impact	How will we know when we have achieved our priority?
Easily Accessible opportunities for improving Skills for Life	Establish a baseline of Gateshead residents with Skills for Life needs	March 06 Skills for Life Co-ordinator	a. Survey of Skills for Life needs complete (Feb 06) b. Data collated about Skills for Life needs (Mar 06) c. Research carried out into the links between lifelong learning and employability (Mar 06)	Better understanding of the Skills for Life needs of Gateshead residents	Accurate database containing relevant baseline data on residents with Skills for Life needs
Easily Accessible opportunities for improving Skills for Life	Establish a baseline of the distinct Skills for Life needs of different social groups in the borough (ethnic, age, social class gender, disability)	Mar 06 Skills for Life Co-ordinator	a. Baseline established on data on the different social groups in the borough (Feb 06) b. Survey conducted to determine individual needs (Feb 06) c. Analyse findings of survey (Mar 06)	Good understanding of the different needs of diverse groups in the borough	Baselines for key target groups
Easily Accessible opportunities for improving Skills for Life	Establish a baseline of the Skills for Life needs of employees	Dec 05 Skills for Life Co-ordinator/ Organisational Development	a. Survey undertaken of employee skills (Dec 05)	Better understanding of the Skills for Life needs of employees	Accurate data set containing relevant baseline information about Council employees with Skills for Life needs

Strategic Objective 2: Raise awareness of Skills for Life across the Council and externally, and support employees to recognise and respond appropriately to service users with Skills for Life needs

Community Strategy Challenges	Priorities	Achievement date & officer responsible	Milestones	Impact	How will we know when we have achieved our priority?
Easily Accessible opportunities for improving Skills for Life	Establish a Council working group on Skills for Life to coordinate activity across the Council and develop understanding of the issues	Feb 06 Skills for Life Co-ordinator	a. Cross Council steering group established (Mar 05) b. Skills for Life seminar held for elected members and officers (Mar 05) Seminars been held for elected members and officers with excellent feedback given c. Skills for Life website set up to include important resources for the Council (Feb 06)	Greater understanding of Skills for Life by elected members, and Council officers, with better co-ordination of Skills for Life provision Residents and employees are able to access information on Skills for Life news, targets, training and qualifications.	Working Group meets with appropriate representatives Launch Skills for Life website and measure hits per year.
Increased participation from those living in deprived areas in community learning programmes	Deliver training to relevant employees to ensure they can screen, signpost and provide information to Council service users with Skills for Life needs	December 06 Adult Learning Manager, Skills for Life Co-ordinator	a. Employee training programme prepared (Mar 05) b. Training target as specified in the BS4CCB Project ² achieved (Dec 06) e.g. employees from	Skills for Life ambassadors across Gateshead, signposting learners with literacy, language and numeracy needs Tutors and Council employees will be aware	On hand relevant training information and manual in place 60 frontline employees gaining at least unit one of the adult learning support certificate, and 50% of those achieving

² Basic Skills for Community Capacity Building Co-financed LSC/ESF Project. Sept 2004.

Strategic Objective 2: Raise awareness of Skills for Life across the Council and externally, and support employees to recognise and respond appropriately to service users with Skills for Life needs

Community Strategy Challenges	Priorities	Achievement date & officer responsible	Milestones	Impact	How will we know when we have achieved our priority?
			<p>libraries, housing, leisure and economic development are already participating in the training</p> <p>c. Programme for current Adult Learning Tutors (Nov 05)</p> <p>d. Possibilities explored of screening employees using Council email system (Alternative methods will be used for those not on email) (Dec 05)</p> <p>e. Opportunities provided for employees to gain Adult Learner Support Certificate level two (Sept 06)</p>	<p>of the importance of Skills for Life support within learning</p> <p>Employees appropriately qualified to identify and sign post learners to Skills for Life Centres</p>	<p>the full qualification</p>
<p>Increased participation from those living in deprived areas in community</p>	<p>Integrate good literacy and numeracy principles in Council services to improve the literacy, language and numeracy</p>	<p>Dec 05</p> <p>Skills for Life Co-ordinator</p>	<p>a. Training seminar held for customer facing staff to demonstrate how to integrate literacy and numeracy</p>	<p>Improved literacy, language and numeracy for adult learners</p>	<p>Number of services that are employing tools of literacy and numeracy teaching in their services *</p>

Strategic Objective 2: Raise awareness of Skills for Life across the Council and externally, and support employees to recognise and respond appropriately to service users with Skills for Life needs

Community Strategy Challenges	Priorities	Achievement date & officer responsible	Milestones	Impact	How will we know when we have achieved our priority?
learning programmes	levels of service users		teaching tools within services to customers (Dec 05)		*specific targets will be included in the 2006/07 action plan, following confirmation of baselines
Increased participation from those living in deprived areas in community learning programmes	Raise awareness of Skills for Life through corporate and local media to encourage residents and employees to recognise their own needs and act upon them.	Dec 06 Skills for Life Co-ordinator Communications office	a. Articles written for the Council news (quarterly) b. Regular newsletters sent to schools across the Borough (bi-annually) c. Regular press briefings (Bi-annually) d. Article in Members Bulletin and the Gen (Dec 06)	Raised awareness amongst parents and the community in general Regular Skills for Life publicity.	More local people accessing Skills for Life courses * More employees accessing Skills for Life courses* *specific targets will be included in the 2006/07 action plan, following confirmation of baselines

Strategic Objective 3 – Deliver effective, relevant and appropriate Skills for life opportunities to those who live and work in the borough

Community Strategy Challenges	Priorities	Achievement date & officer responsible	Milestones	Impact	How will we know when we have achieved our priority?
Increased participation from those living in deprived areas in community learning programmes	Provide targeted Skills for Life opportunities in all five neighbourhood management areas	Dec 06 Skills for Life Co-ordinator	a. Skills for Life teachers for each area recruited and trained (Sept 06) b. Opportunities identified with Centre Managers for potential learners and raise awareness particularly in deprived communities (Jan 06) c. Continuous delivery of Skills for Life workshops in each Centre (Dec 06)	Effective programme of learning in place in each of the five areas	More people, including new learners, will access opportunities in each area Increased numbers accessing opportunities in deprived areas* <i>*specific targets will be included in the 2006/07 action plan, following confirmation of baselines</i>
Easily Accessible opportunities for improving Skills for Life	Embed Skills for Life in the Council's adult learning programme to improve literacy, language and numeracy levels	Dec 05 Lifelong Learning Manager /Adult Learning Manager/Skills for Life Co-ordinator	a. Training seminar held for Adult Learning tutors to demonstrate how to embed Skills for Life learning in particular subject areas (Sept 05) e.g. demonstrate how to link literacy and numeracy within a specialist subject area	Courses will meet the literacy, language and numeracy needs of their users more effectively	<i>Increased numbers achieving basic levels of literacy*</i> <i>Improved numbers achieving basic levels of literacy*</i> <i>*specific targets will be included in the 2006/07</i>

Strategic Objective 3 – Deliver effective, relevant and appropriate Skills for life opportunities to those who live and work in the borough

Community Strategy Challenges	Priorities	Achievement date & officer responsible	Milestones	Impact	How will we know when we have achieved our priority?
			e.g. art b. Skills for Life included in the Council's proposal to obtain funding through the new first steps learning funding stream (Mar 06)		action plan, following confirmation of baselines
Easily Accessible opportunities for improving Skills for Life	Embed Skills for Life in the Council's workforce development programme to improve the literacy, language and numeracy levels of employees	Oct 05 Skills for Life Co-ordinator, Human Resources and other Council services	a. Union Learning Reps consulted on implementation of strategy (Mar 05) b. Workforce development targets met in EQ8 and BS4CCB projects (Dec 06) c. Skills for Life testing into recruitment and training programmes piloted, with a view to rolling it out across the Council (Oct 05) e.g. currently working with Human Resources to develop an assessment	Improved adult literacy/numeracy levels amongst Council employees Raised awareness and contribute towards national and local targets	Achievement of project target * (December 2006) Achievement of Skills for Life workforce development targets* Number tested on Skills for Life through recruitment and training processes* *specific targets will be included in the 2006/07 action plan, following confirmation of baselines

Strategic Objective 3 – Deliver effective, relevant and appropriate Skills for life opportunities to those who live and work in the borough

Community Strategy Challenges	Priorities	Achievement date & officer responsible	Milestones	Impact	How will we know when we have achieved our priority?
			tool for the selection of Business Administration trainees		
Accessible and affordable IT – based learning for everyone in Gateshead	Continuously seek new resources to support the Council's Skills for Life delivery to develop capacity and use current IT resources to deliver Skills for Life programmes	Dec 06 Lifelong Learning Manager/ Skills for Life Co-ordinator	a. Appropriate funding bids written (Dec 06) b. S4L4VCS Project ³ supported by the Council (Dec 06)	Greater capacity to address need and demand. Local people and employees are able to access Skills for Life opportunities through improved IT resources	Number of IT resources will increase May 2005 to Dec 2006 Number of people accessing IT resources for Skills for Life will increase* <i>*specific targets will be included in the 2006/07 action plan, following confirmation of baselines</i>

³ Skills for Life for Voluntary and Community Sectors project – LSC Project January 2005.

Strategic Objective 4 – Develop partnership working to enhance the range of Skills for Life opportunities available to those that live and work in Gateshead and target resources more effectively

Community Strategy Challenges	Priorities	Achievement Date and Officer Responsible	Milestones	Impact	How will we know when we have achieved our priority?
<p>Easily accessible opportunities for improving Skills for Life</p> <p>Increased participation from those living in deprived areas in community learning programmes</p>	<p>Clarify the Council and partners role in delivering Skills for Life in Gateshead</p>	<p>July 05</p> <p>Skills for Life Co-ordinator</p>	<p>a. Discussion held with Gateshead College Skills for Life unit (Jan 05)</p> <p>b. Development of an appropriate referral system to monitor signposting activity (July 05)</p> <p>c. Meeting with other providers throughout Tyne and Wear to clarify respective roles (May 05)</p>	<p>Appropriate delivery of Skills for Life learning in Gateshead</p> <p>To monitor the effectiveness of the training and encourage the signposting of potential learners</p> <p>Appropriate referrals in Skills for Life learning</p>	<p>Close working between College and Council</p> <p>Numbers successfully referred*</p> <p>*specific targets will be included in the 2006/07 action plan, following confirmation of baselines</p> <p>Up to date knowledge of provision in Tyne and Wear</p>
<p>Easily accessible opportunities for improving Skills for Life</p>	<p>Explore opportunities to develop Skills for Life opportunities with a range of new partners from the public, voluntary and private sectors</p>	<p>Sept 05</p> <p>Skills for Life Co-ordinator</p>	<p>a. Links with public sector organisations including The Employment Service (Sept 05) e.g. links already been made with Gateshead Housing Company and project piloted to improve skills of council</p>	<p>Sharing best practice between public and private sector organisations</p> <p>Skills for Life delivered by Council within various partnerships including the voluntary sector</p>	<p>Raised awareness of Gateshead Council as a provider of Skills for Life delivery *</p> <p>*specific targets will be included in the 2006/07 action plan, following confirmation of baselines</p>

Strategic Objective 4 – Develop partnership working to enhance the range of Skills for Life opportunities available to those that live and work in Gateshead and target resources more effectively

Community Strategy Challenges	Priorities	Achievement Date and Officer Responsible	Milestones	Impact	How will we know when we have achieved our priority?
			tenants b. Development of further partnerships with organisations including GVOG (July 05)		
Increased participation from those living in deprived areas in community learning programmes	Support local partnerships, projects and initiatives such as the 'Skills for Life for the Voluntary and Community Sector' project	April 05 Skills for Life Co-ordinator	a. Established links with the Engagement manager of the Skills for Life for Voluntary and Community Sector project (April 05) b. Representation of the Council in relevant partnerships (Continuous)	Increased Skills for Life provision in Gateshead Raise the profile of Gateshead Council in terms of delivering Skills for Life	Numbers of local partnerships, projects and initiatives supported will increase * *specific targets will be included in the 2006/07 action plan, following confirmation of baselines
Easily accessible opportunities for improving Skills for Life	Contribute to wider regional initiatives to address Skills for Life to enable residents and employees to benefit from best practice and resources elsewhere	Dec 06 Skills for Life Co-ordinator	a. Production of delivery plans in support of region wide Skills for Life projects (Dec 06)	Improvement in regional Skills for Life levels	Increase delivery by the Council * *specific targets will be included in the 2006/07 action plan, following confirmation of baselines

Strategic Objective 5: Ensure that Skills for Life teaching is excellent quality and tailored to individual need					
Community Strategy Challenges	Priorities	Achievement Date and Officer Responsible	Milestones	Impact	How will we know when we have achieved our priority?
	Develop a quality assurance framework to evaluate the effectiveness of Skills for Life delivery.	Sept 05 Skills for Life Co-ordinator	a. Production of Quality Assurance measures appropriate for Skills for Life learning (Sept 05)	Tools in place to gain a better understanding of the effectiveness of Skills for Life delivery	Quality Framework in place.
	Evaluate the Council's delivery of Skills for Life Core curriculum to be certain that the Council's delivery meets national standards and that residents, employees and adult learners are offered the best possible service.	Dec 06 Skills for Life Co-ordinator	a. Production of a schedule of measures to guarantee continuous improvement in Skills for Life teaching and learning (Dec 06)	A quality service that meets national standards in its implementation	By following the quality measures set out in the Learning and Skills Council Skills for Life Quality Initiative.

GCS4LSG – Gateshead Council Skills for Life steering group

RAS– Raising Achievement Service

LSC – Learning and Skills Council

ESF – European Social Fund

GVOC – Gateshead Voluntary Organisation Council

Bibliography

Analysis of Basic Skills Delivery in Tyne & Wear. Joe Carr, LSC Tyne & Wear. Sept 04

A Fresh Start - improving literacy and numeracy (DfEE 1999, ref: CMBS 1) Sir Claus Moser

Towards 2010 – A Vision for Gateshead. Gateshead Council 2004

Learning and Skills Council Annual Plan. 2004/05

BS4CCB Project bid. September 2004

S4LFVCS Project bid. January 2005

21ST Century Skills: Opportunity to Excellence (Dfes, 2003)

The Skills for Life strategy (Dfes, 2001)

The Skills for Life survey (Dfes, 2003)