



Summary

Strategic Approach

Hull Business Forum welcomes and supports the development of a new Community Strategy for Hull but believe that it needs to be a marked improvement from previous such strategies and that it must 'think big' for Hull over the next 10-15 years.

This process is about much more than producing a new document, it should instead be about developing a much needed shared vision and priorities from which future actions across the city can be shaped. Transforming Hull will not be quick and there are no simple solutions. One single big decision will not on its own change Hull, but lots of small ones can. That is why partners must fundamentally believe the Community Strategy is something they believe in, and shape their activities to support.

It also important that once the new strategy is agreed, the city should move decisively into delivery mode and focus very clearly on implementation demonstrating clear progress to businesses and local people.

Vision

Hull is a great city which is suffering from some major problems. This Community Strategy should focus on tackling the fundamental causes of Hull's socio-economic problems. This means a clear emphasis on creating more and better quality jobs, which can only be achieved in parallel with a radical improvements in education and skills.

Getting these two big issues right will go a long way towards resolving many of the other problems in the city such as high crime, low aspirations, poor housing and poor health which are largely symptoms of economic under-performance. If Hull could meet its broad targets of 15,000 new jobs and 1,600 new businesses over the next decade, we would see a city that was more prosperous, with better education, improved health, lower crime, better standards of living and a stable or growing population. That should be our over-riding aim.

What would Hull look like if we could achieve our vision:

- Hull would be the **sub-regional capital** which punches its economic weight in the region.
- It will have an improved **A63 Castle Street** opening up access to the Port and reuniting the city centre with its waterfront.
- Visionary projects such as **River Hull impoundment** and/or a **light rail system** would be a reality.
- There would be at least **15,000 extra jobs** and **1,600 more businesses**, many in the most deprived communities offering local employment and enterprise.
- Every young person in Hull would reach their own potential in a **first class education system**.
- Hull's people and businesses would be **prouder of their city** and people from outside the area would recognise the city as prosperous and dynamic.
- The city would have a **fantastic cultural offering** including museums, cafes, theatre, sport and leisure pursuits.

Objectives

We are suggesting five key objectives to underpin the vision:

- To support a growing and diverse economy with excellent job opportunities
- To ensure every young person gets a first class education and fulfils their individual potential
- To give all Hull's people a great quality of life with lower crime, improved health and a better environment

- To regenerate Hull by transforming our physical environment and renewing our communities
- To foster a genuine pride in Hull

Priorities

The Community Strategy will only be successful in achieving these high level objectives if partners can focus on key priorities. We are suggesting a number of priorities on key issues such as:

Economy

- Supporting Hull's existing businesses in their growth and development.
- Targeting investors based on our economic strengths and presenting them with an integrated package.
- Implementing a more business friendly planning system.
- Getting public procurement right to capture economic benefit and jobs locally.
- Develop a much better integrated support package for enterprise, especially youth entrepreneurship.
- Producing a more imaginative transport strategy focused on tackling congestion and an improved A63.

Education/Skills

- Sustain improvements at primary level.
- Rapidly accelerate progress in GCSE attainment.
- Embed enterprise education in the curriculum and build deeper links between schools and business.
- Retain and attract more graduates within the local economy.

Regeneration

- Deliver the City Centre Masterplan and encourage major schemes such as River Hull impoundment.
- Support neighbourhoods by supporting retailers and promoting enterprise in deprived communities.
- Develop a Pride in Hull campaign designed to improve the image of Hull within Hull.
- Reclaim and renew Hull's public realm and green spaces in the city centre and communities.

Actions

We are proposing a series of more specific actions which would help to deliver these objectives and priorities. However, we fully recognise that there is no simple or easy solution to tackle Hull's problems. The acid test of the success of the Community Strategy will be in the actions that follow it not the words within it.

We believe the actions to support the Community Strategy must be much more targeted and focused in the future. More intensive effort to tackle key priorities should replace lots of activities and projects across a range of themes which only scratch the surface. Nonetheless, we are supportive of major eye-catching projects such as the A63 Castle Street improvements or the impoundment of the River Hull which can be catalysts to make things happen.

Conclusions

Hull's businesses are committed to playing an active role in the progress of the city. There is a fantastic opportunity over the period of the new Community Strategy to regenerate many physical, economic and social facets of the city.

This paper presents a series of objectives, priorities and actions which we in the business community believe are important and relevant to the Community Strategy. We fully accept that a wide range of other partners and stakeholders in Hull will want to provide similar input and that they will give a different emphasis and expertise.

However, we do strongly believe that the Community Strategy must have an over-riding aim of tackling the root causes of some of Hull's most long standing socio-economic problems and in practice that means a relentless focus on creating the 15,000 new jobs and 1,600 new businesses needed for our economy, in parallel with the essential accelerated improvements in education and skills required to make this a reality.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Hull Business Forum was set up to provide strong business input into the work of the Local Strategic Partnership, Cityvision. We are committed to playing an active and positive role in the development of the city and see the Community Strategy as a potentially a crucial overarching framework for Hull.
- 1.2 The LSP and Community Strategy are important because they have the potential to link together the too often disparate work of agencies and partnerships across the city. This paper has been developed following consultation with many local businesses culminating in a major Forum event held on 13 April 2005. Details of the discussions and written feedback are available on request.

2. Where we are now

- 2.1 We agree that the current Community Strategy is desperately in need of major review. The current document is too generic with no attempt to prioritise on key areas. The actions are not clearly enough focused on the outcomes needed for the city to be more successful.
- 2.2 The city has many great strengths. It has proud traditions and a generally good quality of life. Concepts such as the Northern Way and opportunities offered by EU expansion should mean that the city no longer worries about being 40-60 miles from the nearest other cities. We have some world class businesses and a real commitment in the city to change.
- 2.3 The challenge for Hull is substantial. The city's performance is riddled with contradictions as highlighted in the statistical profile in Annex A. The new Community Strategy therefore must be radically different to the current document. The city has key targets such as 15,000 new jobs and 1,600 new businesses as well as challenging floor targets. We would like the Community Strategy to be the document which explains *how* and *when* the city intends to meet these targets and other priorities for Hull.
- 2.4 We recognise that real progress has been made in Hull in recent years. Primary school attainment is good, physical regeneration is happening and the city's image is slowly changing. The question the city should ask itself is not whether it is making progress, but whether this progress is fast enough and if it isn't, what can be done to accelerate change? There is an opportunity for this process to produce the shared vision that Hull so desperately needs.

3. Vision & Context

- 3.1 We welcome the process to bring together key opinion formers in the city to develop a shared vision beneath which the details of the Community Strategy will be shaped. We would suggest that the vision should be distinct to Hull and outline clear priorities to radically improve education/skills and the economy to drive Hull forward. The statement below is simply to articulate the thrust of what the business community would like to see.

"Hull will be an outward looking, pioneering and confident city which offers first class education and learning opportunities for its people to support a growing enterprise economy with more jobs. Hull's transformation should include both high quality physical development with a strong community focus which engenders a new pride in the city to match our rich and proud heritage."

What would Hull look like if we could achieve our vision:

- Hull would be the sub-regional capital which punches its economic weight in the region.
- It will have an improved A63 Castle Street opening up access to the Port and reuniting the city centre with its waterfront.

- Visionary projects such as River Hull impoundment and/or a light rail system would be a reality.
 - There would be at least 15,000 extra jobs and 1,600 more businesses, many in the most deprived communities offering local employment and enterprise.
 - Every young person in Hull would reach their own potential in a first class education system.
 - Hull's people and businesses would be prouder of their city and people from outside the area would recognise the city as prosperous and dynamic.
 - The city would have a fantastic cultural offering including museums, cafes, theatre, sport and leisure pursuits.
- 3.2 The visioning and context should also take a step back and look at the city's role in the region and wider world from a longer term perspective. Hull has recently celebrated its 700th birthday and has a rich, diverse and proud history. During this period it has been through a number of ups and downs, periods of relative prosperity and poverty.
- 3.3 It would be fair to say that many of Hull's current problems stem from the major transitional stage which our economy is going through at the moment. Hull has a strong fishing heritage, but even at its height, Hull's economy was also very strongly based on other port activities and a strong manufacturing sector as well. The decline of the fishing industry has been followed by sharp reductions in employment in traditional manufacturing and port related activity.
- 3.4 Whilst we still have a strong and thriving port and a number of world class businesses small and large, Hull still has a challenge in terms of employment, both its quantity and quality. The jobs gap, estimated to be 15,000, has led generational worklessness and a dependency culture. The Community Strategy must address the fact that over the next decade, the economy will probably shed further jobs in certain high employing sectors. Hull cannot buck global trends, what we can do is look for where the new opportunities will be in the future and move quickly to make Hull an attractive place to invest, both by new and existing companies.
- 3.5 At the same time as a clear focus on economic improvement, Hull should give the highest possible priority to radically improving education and skills across the city. We recognise the improvements that have been made in recent years, particularly at primary level, and also acknowledge that Hull's educational problems are deep-rooted and will take time to resolve.
- 3.6 However, all partners in the city must have a very clear and shared focus on closing the gap with our competitor cities much quicker than we are doing at present. We recognise that there is role for the business community to play in this agenda. Businesses will clearly have a role to play as employers, but also to work with schools to raise aspirations and entrepreneurial skills of Hull's young people. Hull's employers want to be proactive in this regard.
- 3.7 The Community Strategy should follow a number of clear principles:
- The Business Forum view is that the new Community Strategy should clearly **tackle causes, not symptoms** and should therefore concentrate on creating jobs through economic/business growth and drive forward radical improvements in education and skills.
 - **Ownership is also important.** It must not be the Council's strategy, or the even the LSPs strategy. It must genuinely be the partners Community Strategy. Consensus building around priorities and shared action is central to the LSPs future success. It must be owned by partners, who feel it is their strategy and are prepared to shape their activities as a result. It is critical, as Kim Ryley has pointed out, for the city to come to a shared view about its future.
 - **Leadership** is above all the most significant determining factor about the successful implementation of the Community Strategy. It is vitally important that the City Council plays a leading role and we welcome its commitment to do this so far. However, other partners from the public sector, businesses and the community must also have leaders that take responsibility for the strategy and elements within it.

- **No blame, no excuses.** We cannot change Hull's location, and the EU expansion and Northern Way reinforces that our location is a potential strength not weakness if we are prepared to look outwards rather than inwards. Similarly, we should not use the city's boundaries as an excuse despite the fact they distort our statistical profile when compared to other cities.
- **Simple, concise and understandable.** Yorkshire Forward are talking to John Godber about how the new Regional Economic Strategy can be written in a language which is easily understood by anyone who would be interested in reading it. We believe it is important that the Community Strategy be written in a similar manner.

4. Objectives

4.1 We are suggesting five key objectives to underpin the new Community Strategy:

A. To support a growing and diverse economy with excellent job opportunities

We can deliver more and better jobs in three ways: grow existing businesses, attract new ones or increase the number of start-ups. Ideally Hull should do all of these, but in reality the city is unlikely to attract major single transformational inward investment and should focus on how it can generate new jobs from the companies here and enterprise from our population.

B. To ensure every young person gets a first class education and fulfils their individual potential

In education the challenge is clear. Progress is being made but not nearly quickly enough. The city cannot wait for Building Schools for the Future, nor can that investment be any guarantee of success. Our target should not be the national league tables, but ensuring all our young people meet or exceed their own potential.

C. To give all Hull's people a great quality of life with lower crime, improved health and a better environment

Whilst we advocate an economy and education led Community Strategy because they are fundamental to everything else the city wants to achieve, we fully recognise the need to tackle crime, health and environmental issues as well. Quality of life is an important factor in investment decisions as well as community pride.

D. To regenerate Hull by transforming our physical environment and renewing our communities

Hull is in the early stages of a multi-billion pound physical regeneration over the period of the new Community Strategy. The priority should be to deliver this regeneration, particularly the City Centre Masterplan, by bringing Hull's people and communities with it and giving them access to the jobs and facilities the regeneration will bring.

E. To foster a genuine pride in Hull

Hull is a great city and we should be proud of it. If we can get objectives A-D right, pride will in part naturally follow. We shouldn't be shy about being positive, about succeeding or about celebrating. We shouldn't waste time talking about what we can't do rather than doing what we can.

5. Priorities

5.1 Our key priorities under each of these objectives are as follows:

A. To support a growing and diverse economy with excellent job opportunities

- Develop a 'grow local' strategy to build on strengths of existing Hull companies.
- Package a high quality offering for both inward and secondary investment including business friendly planning, site and premises and skills.
- Ensure Government investment in transport infrastructure, particularly the A63 Castle Street.
- Clearly focus on encouraging entrepreneurial activity in Hull's young people.
- Derive maximum economic benefit from public investment – Northern Way, Pathfinder etc.

B. To ensure every young person gets a first class education and fulfils their individual potential

- Sustain improvement in primary school achievement.

- Rapidly accelerate GCSE attainment to close gap.
 - Retain more graduates from local and regional Universities in local businesses and organisations given that Hull's workforce has half the number of graduates as the national average.
- C. **To give all Hull's people a great quality of life with lower crime, improved health and a better environment**
- Reclaim and renew Hull's public realm and green spaces in both the city centre and communities.
 - Work in partnership to meet floor targets on crime, health and liveability.
 - Reduce traffic congestion to give people more family and leisure time and a better quality of life.
- D. **To regenerate Hull by transforming our physical environment and renewing our communities**
- Deliver the city centre masterplan and progress major schemes such as River Hull impoundment.
 - Attract residents and resolve key housing market failure in the city to halt population decline.
 - Support businesses and enterprise in deprived communities to create local employment.
- E. **To foster a genuine sense of pride in Hull**
- Develop a city-wide, locally owned 'Pride in Hull' campaign which ranges from iconic projects and PR work to community based initiatives such as targeting vandalism and anti-social behaviour.
 - Radically improve Hull's cultural offering including a properly co-ordinated city events calendar.
 - Implement an ambassadors scheme for local businesses to 'sell Hull' across the world.

6. Specific actions or recommendations

6.1 In addition to the priority areas listed above, there are a range of specific actions and/or recommendations which we believe are needed to deliver the Community Strategy. The following are key ones from a business perspective.

A. To support a growing and diverse economy with excellent job opportunities

- Put the enterprise agenda at the heart of Hull's Community Strategy, especially for young people.
- Develop a more ambitious long term transport strategy which clearly focuses on reducing congestion.
- Open up land for development working closely with the East Riding.
- Develop a planning framework which is business friendly and promotes economic development.
- Get public procurement right by using local firms, retaining wealth and benefiting from the multiplier effect.
- Encourage a much broader 'buy local' and 'Made in Hull' approach.
- Build upon the success of the Acorn Fund and match the funding with proper mentoring and support.
- Bring together the Council, Citybuild, Cityimage and the Chamber to develop a clear investment offering to make sure potential investors don't slip through the net.
- Regeneration agencies, employers and learning providers to develop a 10-year plan for skills in construction and development sector to create local jobs from regeneration.

B. To ensure every young person gets a first class education and fulfils their individual potential

- Embed enterprise education, using examples of Hull's successful businesses, into the curriculum.
- Focus on attitudes and skills training, not just academic qualifications (see Annex B).
- Promote deeper relationships between the businesses and local schools building on Children's University and Young Enterprise.
- Foster a culture that values skills and work to promote careers not just jobs.
- Focus on how to retain and attract more graduates to live and work in Hull.
- Improve adult skills to drive up employability.

C. To give all Hull's people a great quality of life with lower crime, improved health and a better environment

- Have more flexible targets which reflect local need i.e. focus on tackling drug and alcohol abuse as the causes of violent crime or burglary etc.
- Significantly improve the quality and diversity of the city centre night-time economy.

- Make Hull the cleanest city in the country – first impressions really do matter.
- Ensure Gateway Pathfinder delivers a properly balanced and functional housing market.

D. To regenerate Hull by transforming our physical environment and renewing our communities

- Impound the River Hull to further stimulate regeneration in what is an area of real potential.
- Continue to focus on a 'top ten' approach to design and build quality.
- Support retailers in communities to maintain critical mass of services locally by getting parking, promotion and streetscape right.

E. To foster a genuine pride in Hull

- Encourage leadership across the city and wean the city off its over-dependence on the City Council.
- Raising aspirations across people, businesses and organisations is critical.
- Develop a Pride in Hull campaign to focus on the image of Hull within Hull.
- Build a landmark structure on the entrance to the city of Hull, possibly with a concept design concept for local school children.
- Identify the city's role models and use them.
- Build stronger relationships with the local media to encourage positive but fair coverage.

6.2 To make all of this happen, recognise that a series of measures will be needed to support the change agenda. We therefore recommend the following:

- The Community Strategy can only be delivered with effective leadership from key partners.
- Rationalise and refocus Hull's partnerships to concentrate on delivering the Community Strategy.
- Make sure that Hull's partnerships and delivery vehicles, including the LSP, are fit for purpose and effective.
- Move away from the dependence on external funding with short term outputs. Target outcomes instead.
- Get the Community Strategy right and then stop strategising and start delivering. Actions not words.
- Targets should be ambitious but achievable with clear timetables to measure progress.

7. Key questions

What is Hull for?

Hull is the city it is because of the port and a significant part of our economic future lies in this part of the economy. We constantly need to be looking around the world to explore how successful port cities capture the economic benefit of their locations. The city should also seek to embed its existing major employers in the city by helping them to invest and building the clusters and supply chains so important to their long term futures. We need to find our economic niches which utilise the skills, knowledge and expertise in businesses and the wider population. For example, Hull has skills and expertise in the caravan industries which are transferable to other sectors, perhaps in modular starter homes in demand in the South East or health facilities which the NHS are investing in. There is potential to build on the strengths which we already have.

What are the key drivers for Hull's economy?

Much of the analytical work done by Cityeconomy partners, Humber Trade Zone and Yorkshire Forward in the Regional Economic Strategy has gone a long way to defining where our economic future lies in terms of port and logistics (15,000 related jobs), food (14,000 related jobs), ICT/digital (3,500 related jobs), engineering (12,000 related jobs) and tourism (3,500 related jobs). Other sectors such as chemicals and leisure are also of strategic importance and growth potential.

Ports and logistics are rightly at the heart of Hull's current economic thinking along with added value manufacturing to capture more economic benefit from port traffic. Retail and leisure will become even more significant once key city centre developments come on stream and the city needs to do more to improve customer service skills and get Hull's marketing right to make sure people are attracted to the new facilities. Getting this offering right will bring more wealth back into the city which currently seeps away to regional competitors.

If Hull is serious about the digital city agenda, particularly from an economic point of view, it needs to start delivering quickly. Technology is moving so fast that the city and its advantages in this field could soon be lost if we don't get it right. Manufacturing will continue to play an important role in the economy. The challenge for Hull is to avoid wasting energy resisting global economic forces, but to concentrate on developing competitive manufacturing for the future with a greater emphasis on skills and innovation.

What needs to be delivered and by who?

The critical success factor for the Community Strategy will be the key partners owning and sharing the thrust of the strategy. It seems to us that at present, there is a commitment to work in partnership, but sometimes this is done in a tokenistic manner with partners sat around the same table but working to different agendas. In part that is because there are too many 'tables' to sit around and so the Community Strategy should be a context for devising a structure that works and rationalising the plethora of partnerships and organisations where there is a need to do so.

We believe the Community Strategy itself must be owned by the Cityvision partners, and all of them must take their relative responsibilities to deliver. The Community Strategy should have an accompanying Action Plan or Investment Plan, which includes NRF but looks much wider at the resources across the city.

At this stage it would not be possible to say who should deliver each action in the Strategy. The critical part now is to identify those organisations or partnerships responsible for delivering the wider objectives of the new Strategy. There needs to be clear lines of accountability about which organisations or partnerships are responsible for delivery on key outcomes rather than just specific projects.

How can local businesses contribute?

Local businesses can continue to contribute to the success of the city by employing more people, improving career opportunities and generating wealth circulating around the economy. Businesses are well placed though the Chamber of Commerce and Business Forum to contribute both the strategic development of the city and at a practical level to support key priorities such as education by developing proactive and mutually productive links with schools. Many businesses are already engaged at a variety of levels in positive work across the city, be it at a strategic and policy level or work 'on the ground'. We should recognise their contribution and seek to increase such participation.

What are the 'quick wins' to show progress?

An effective quick win would be to develop a really high quality strategy which partners genuinely share and commit to deliver. If this could be allied to revised fit for purpose partnerships, the city will be well placed to deliver. There are of course specific actions that can be taken to demonstrate progress including building a pedestrian footbridge over Castle Street or upgrading the signalling for the rail line into Hull docks or smartening up the entrances into Hull including lighting the Humber Bridge and perhaps building a new landmark structure as visitors enter the city. In addition, there needs to be evidence that the direction of travel in terms of educational attainment, levels of enterprise etc is right and progress is accelerating. Finally, we recommend an annual State of the City publication and event which sets out clear and shared targets from the Community Strategy and progress on an annual basis. This could be done in an apolitical way which is understandable to the people, businesses and stakeholders of Hull.

8. Conclusions and Summary of Recommendations

- 8.1 Hull has a great opportunity and is at the early stage of an exciting phase of regeneration. We should learn the lessons of those cities which have progressed before us such as Leeds and Newcastle which have very successfully developed but at times have left some of their communities behind.
- 8.2 We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Community Strategy but strongly believe that it needs to be a radical improvement on previous attempts. We need to get the shared vision and objectives right and then stop strategising and start focused delivery.
- 8.3 This Community Strategy gives Hull the chance to be visionary and forward thinking. To do this we must look at the city's development over a period of decades not just react to current issues. The Strategy must also

focus fundamentally on the causes of Hull's under-performance by improving Hull's economy to create more successful businesses and employment and then equipping the city with the well educated, skilled and work ready people we need for the future.

8.4 Specific recommendations include:

- The development of a clear and realistic, jargon free vision and strategy which is genuinely shared by key partners not simply signed up to on a tokenistic basis.
- An over-riding emphasis on tackling the long term causes of Hull's socio-economic problems. This means the jobs/economy and education/skills.
- It is critical that Hull and the East Riding work even more closely together (and not just the Councils). Hull's 'economic' boundary bears no relation to its administrative one and the Community Strategy must recognise this.
- Get the leadership, structures and delivery vehicles in place to turn vision into reality.
- Key agencies such as regeneration agencies, learning providers and employers agreeing a 10-year skills strategy for the development sector and start training now for the construction related skills needed in the coming years.
- A focus on youth should be an over-riding theme. For example, youth enterprise should be at the core of Hull's emerging economic strategy with the encouragement of new business start ups, self-employment and entrepreneurial skills in the city's young people.
- Publication of an Annual State of the City report featuring key statistics, intelligence and analysis which honestly sets out Hull's progress.

Appendices

Annex A: Hull's Statistical Contradictions

Annex B: Hull Business Forum Education Perceptions Survey

Annex C: Survey Evidence of Business Priorities

Annex D: Hull Business Forum Strategic Priorities

Hull's Statistical Contradictions

Population

420,000 people live in Hull's travel to work area and 5 million people live within an hour of the city

The city of Hull's population is 247,900 and fell 7.5% in last decade

Enterprise

Recent figures on business start ups showed a healthy increase in the number of businesses in Hull registered for VAT

2001 figures show that 17.8 business started up in Hull per 10,000 population. This is half the national average

Transport

47.6% of Hull residents travel to work by car compared to 55.2% nationally. Bus (50%) and bicycle usage (400%) are well above national average

Hull has been waiting for an improvement scheme for Castle Street for nearly 20 years

Employment

Hull's key clusters are ports/logistics (15k related jobs); food processing manufacturing (14k); ICT/digital (3.5k); engineering (12k) and tourism (3.5k)

27.2% of local jobs are in public administration, education and health - 3% above the national average and the fastest growing sector

Ports

The port of Hull is well positioned to take advantage of the expanding EU market

163 Hull people are now employed in the fishing industry

Learning

The University of Hull is 'top ten' ranked for chemistry, drama and electronic engineering

41.2% of people aged 16-74 have no qualifications and a third of residents are functionally illiterate or innumerate

Economy

Hull has 5,010 VAT/PAYE registered businesses (7,500 total enterprises) with many more in the wider economic area

Unemployment is nearly twice the national average

Regeneration

Hull has started a '£1billion' regeneration programme

100,000 people in Hull are 'income deprived'

Hull Business Forum Education Perceptions Survey 2004

Hull businesses want 'attitude' ahead of 'qualifications'

Businesses have said that the attitude of young people entering the workforce is more important than their qualifications, and worryingly they believe that the attitudes of young people are worsening. The survey of members of Hull Business Forum was designed to provide a snapshot of business perceptions and was carried out in July/August 2004.

Key results revealed that:

- **91%** of employers expressed the view that **attitude** was the most important attribute in young people looking for work, with 9% citing qualifications.
- No respondents felt that specialist skills or experience were top priority.
- **88%** of employers believe the quality of young people entering the world of work was **not meeting the needs of their business**.

These figures are explained in part when we examine employers perceptions of the academic standards and attitudes of young people. Business opinion was split on the direction of travel for academic standards (see right) but there was a majority view that the attitudes of young people was worsening (-21% balance).

Nick Pontone, Manager of Hull Business Forum commented: *"Local businesses have clearly expressed a view that the attitudes and personal qualities are what they are looking for in potential employees and means the education system needs to focus on issues broader than academic standards. It suggests that perhaps Government targets so rigidly focused on GCSE attainment do not necessarily correlate to the aptitudes employers are seeking."*

Businesses felt that the priority for Hull in terms of education was secondary schools (60%) reflecting the fact that city-wide attainment continues to be amongst the lowest in the country. Vocational training (26%) was the second priority followed by primary education (6%) and graduate retention (6%).

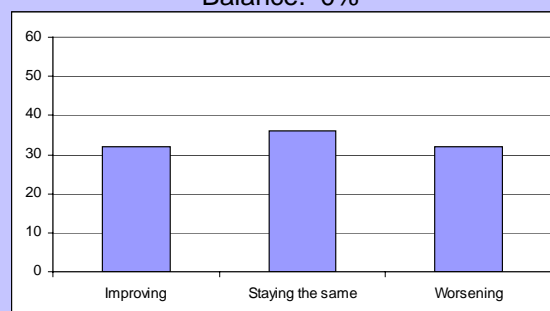
Big role for employers in developing young people

Employers recognise that they have a major responsibility in the development of young people entering the workforce at 16 or 18. When asked who had the biggest role to play, employers were second with 27% behind parents 33%. Learning organisations were surprisingly ranked lower, schools (23%) came third, the LEA fourth (13%) and LSC (3%) fifth.

It is pleasing that employers are prepared to play a leading role in developing the potential of young people. The results reinforce the need for Hull to have a properly integrated partnership approach to tackling under-performance in education. The problems do not simply belong to schools or the LEA, but they belong to the city with a range of people and organisations having key roles to play.

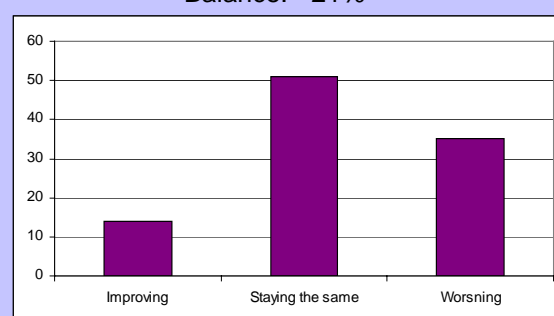
Academic standards

Balance: 0%

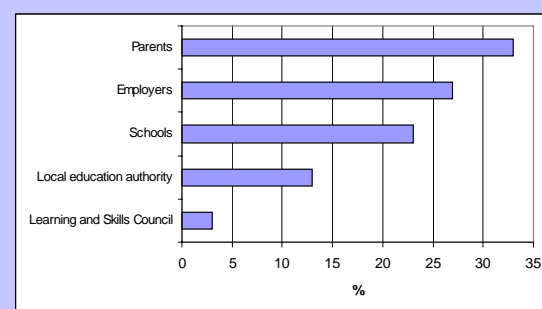


Attitude

Balance: -21%



Who has the biggest role in developing young people entering world of work



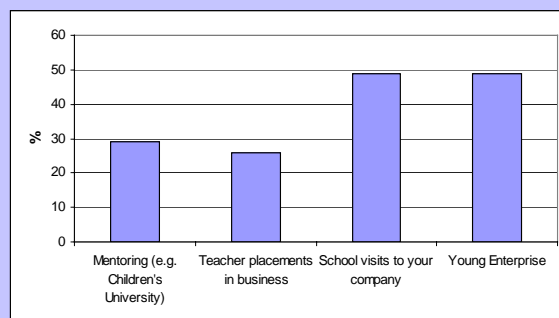
Employers welcome strong links with schools

Many local businesses enjoy strong relationships with schools and they are keen to support young people in practical ways. 54% of respondents currently have a proactive link with a local school (over and above work experience placements) and a further 11% have done so in the past.

The results suggest that initiatives such as the Children's University and Young Enterprise have provided a very welcome and positive channel to engage business skills and experience with schools and offer a platform for further partnership work in the future. Employers expressed support for a range of measures to facilitate this future engagement, with Young Enterprise and school visits to their companies finding particular favour (see right).

Nick Pontone, Hull Business Forum Manager commented: *"Whilst the survey suggests businesses are not satisfied with the quality of young people entering the workforce, it also shows that they are keen to play a role in resolving some of Hull's education problems. In particular, initiatives such as Young Enterprise which develop the personal skills so valued by employers fit closely with local businesses preference for the right attitude in young people."*

Would you consider you or your company getting involved in any of the following?



What would improve standards in schools?

Respondents were asked for their thoughts about what single measure would help improve standards of education. A selection of the edited responses are detailed below and are representative of the comments received:

"Design relevant 'hidden educational' courses that appeal to the 'truancy group' that attracts them to step back into education. These courses should be delivered in a non-academic/educational environment and involve mentors."

"Change learning (for some) to skills-based rather than academic."

"Encourage positive approach to schools/learning by students and their parents."

"Change the curriculum so that children want to attend schools and learn. Do not let them move on without basic literacy and numeracy."

"Recruit excellent teachers and pay them by results for GCSEs. Extend the school day to 5.30pm to teach pupils and help them to 'catch up' – homework clubs should be the norm for all pupils."

"Prepare pupils for the reality of work."

"Parental attitude and support are absolutely essential. Involved and committed parents make all the difference."

"Investment in infrastructure and buildings to create a pleasant environment to work."

"Enthuse children."

"A pride in their school."

"Commitment from community and private sector."

"Build new city centre schools."

"Employ teachers who 'care'."

"Replace the LEA. Bring in a team with proven ability including: turnaround specialists, high level public school experience, high level industrial experience."

"More vocational courses in secondary schools."

"Basic skills. Respect. Citizenship."

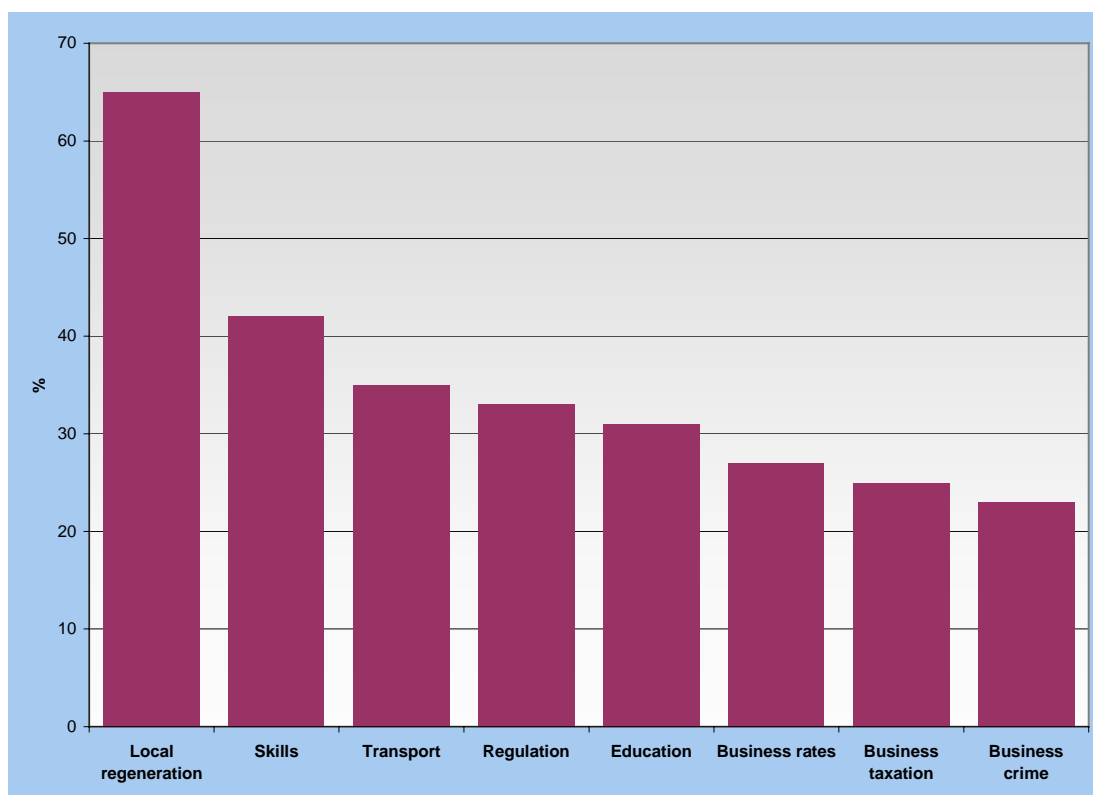
"More focus on management and leadership skills and behaviours. Raising the bar in terms of people's aspirations and encouraging entrepreneurial activity."

"We need to foster self belief and self esteem and respect for and by them to others. I would like to see an extension of the Children's University to become an academy of self-esteem/achievement. Celebrate and champion our children."

"Improve the discipline within the classroom to create a better learning environment."

"Pay good teachers more – nationally. To progress up the salary ladder, teachers have to do less teaching – yet most teachers I know went into teaching because they wanted to do classroom teaching."

Survey Evidence of Business Priorities



Priority Issues for Hull Businesses

Source: Hull & Humber Chamber of Commerce Annual Survey 2004

Do you believe the image of your local area has changed in the past year?	Humber	Hull
Improved	26	47
Stayed the same	50	42
Deteriorated	24	11
Which of the following local transport modes should be improved as a priority?		
Roads	37	54
Rail	31	25
Public transport	28	17
Air services	4	4
Which of the following local factors are of concern to your business?		
Planning	26	19
Business support	38	19
State of trade	48	62
Business Rates	59	29
Labour supply	38	29
Transport	26	33

Humber Business Survey Results

Source: Hull & Humber Chamber of Commerce, 2003

