A free interpreting service is available if you need help with this information. Please telephone Stockport Interpreting Unit on 0161 477 9000. Email: eds.admin@stockport.gov.uk

If you would like this document in large print, on audio tape, in Braille or on disk, please contact:

Planning Policy Team
Place Directorate
Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
FREEPOST
Stockport
SK1 3YQ

Telephone: 0161 474 4395
Fax: 0161 474 4337
1 Introduction

This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been published to provide guidance and assistance to developers and end users of developments, outlining how Stockport Council intends to work with and support employers to maximise local employment and skills benefits from new developments. This will support the implementation of Policy AED-5 in the Core Strategy for Stockport.

Stockport Council and its local partners is committed to working with developers and new employers to assist them with their recruitment and training needs. As a Local Authority we also want to ensure that our residents, particularly those unemployed and resident in our more disadvantaged areas are able to share in the economic prosperity of the Borough. This means we need to invest in, and promote the use of, initiatives to increase the skill levels and employability of individuals to meet the clear identified needs of employers.

The Stockport Chapter of the Greater Manchester Local Economic Assessment (produced by New Economy), which was published following the Manchester Independent Economic Review (MIER), highlights that economically Stockport is one of the strongest Boroughs in Greater Manchester\(^{(1)}\), and that around 10,000 additional people in employment are expected in the period between 2010-2020\(^{(2)}\).

However, the Borough has some areas of high unemployment, such as Brinnington, Lancashire Hill & Heaton Norris, the Central area, Adswood & Bridgehall, and Offerton, where the benefits of economic growth have not been fully experienced. Brinnington ward, for example has the 2nd highest unemployment rate of any ward in Greater Manchester\(^{(3)}\). These areas are priorities for employment and skills initiatives, and all have unemployment levels in excess of national averages.

This SPD includes the range of options for employment and skills benefits that the Council will seek to include within S.106 agreements, such as Apprenticeship numbers, involvement in designing pre-employment training, awareness raising of opportunities within priority areas, and where appropriate, contributions towards the costs of pre-employment training. As with all S.106 agreements, the emphasis is on realistic and reasonable negotiation with developers, on a case-by-case basis.

The Council has utilised national research to help to put this SPD together, so as to ensure proposals and policy developed benefits employers and local communities. We have considered the good practice from elsewhere, and where appropriate adapted these approaches to suit the needs of Stockport, its residents, employers and developers. The key to this SPD is that it provides guidance for both the Council and developers. It is intended to be flexible, and a starting point for discussions between the Council and developers during the Planning Application and pre-application stages. It should in no way be seen as acting as a barrier to development.

---

1. Para 1.1
2. Table 2, Section 5
3. Data from Department of Work & Pensions, provided via NOMIS.
Local Employment & Skills Objectives

The Employment & Skills objectives for Stockport are the economic and social justification and reasoning for the Policy AED5 in the Core Strategy that this Supplementary Planning Document supports. They set out what local partners are seeking to achieve in the Borough, and hence provide the rationale and local employment and skills policy perspective to support initiatives, such as seeking to secure local labour agreements.

Our Strategic Priorities for Employment & Skills are aspirational. These are set out in the Stockport Adult Education, Skills & Employment Action Plan, produced by the Stockport's Adult Education, Skills and Employment (AESE) Partnership, a thematic partnership that is directly accountable to Stockport Partnership (Stockport's Local Strategic Partnership). Achieving these objectives depends on partners working together, bending available resources, designing services and projects that are effective, understanding the causes of issues and the impact of the national economy and changing social trends. The AESE Partnership is responsible for delivering actions towards achieving these priorities. These actions are set out in the Action Plan which is updated regularly.

The key relevant strategic priorities are as follows:

**Strategic Priority 1 - To help to reduce levels of worklessness in the borough.**

**Strategic Priority 2 - To meet the future demand for skills and learning from individuals and employers in Stockport and the sub-region.**

The proposals within this Supplementary Planning Document will provide a significant support to contribute towards achieving these strategic priorities, by ensuring we work with developers and subsequent end users to meet their recruitment and skills needs, and ensure local unemployed residents have the skills relevant to help them compete for jobs that become available.

The Action Plan will continue to evolve on an annual basis, with new actions, but the strategic priorities will continue to set out the key objectives, hence meeting employers needs and tacking worklessness are high priorities.

Stockport also works closely with the 9 other Greater Manchester Local Authorities, including through a Combined Authority that addresses employment and skills issues across the sub-region. A Greater Manchester Skills & Employment Partnership has recently been set up to help identify and address employers and individuals needs. The development of effective local employment and training agreements is a direct way that the Local Authority can help to address needs identified by the Partnership.
Why use a Local Employment & Skills SPD

Using Planning Obligations for Targeted Recruitment & Training

Despite having a clear mandate to promote the economic wellbeing of residents, the use of Planning Authority powers to negotiate employment and training benefits through s.106 agreements has been limited within the UK. There are though examples of such use, including in Stockport. This SPD is trying to ensure there is more consistency of approach to such use of s.106, by ensuring policy (through the Core Strategy) is supported with guidance in place to explain how and why this is needed. This SPD provides a framework for the use of such agreements. It is particularly important that developers have the confidence that a consistent approach will be taken. Likewise, Stockport Council needs to support the economic wellbeing of its residents, which includes seeking to maximise local economic benefits from new developments.

Stockport’s Core Strategy has policy AED5 underpinning the inclusion of local employment and training benefits within s.106 agreements, and has been used as the basis for the development of this SPD.

Policy Background on use of S.106 Agreements

1. Planning Obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Act 1990 must be:
   a. Relevant to planning
   b. Necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms
   c. Directly related to the proposed development
   d. Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development
   e. Reasonable in all other respects

2. S.106 Obligations are not part of the LDF. But they must be subject to consultation and may be taken into account as a material consideration in determining a planning application.

3. Where the Council does not own the land, S.106 Obligations provide Local Authorities with an opportunity to work with developers and end users to secure local outcomes, arising from developments. S.106 are robust, as they are linked to title of the property.

4. Predominantly, the Council will be seeking to secure commitment in negotiation with developers to the training offer they will make, in terms of numbers of Apprenticeships and Pre-Employment training. This will involve working with training providers that have mainstream Government funding for delivering training.

Designing & Implementing S.106 Obligations

1. Targeted Recruitment and Training requirements as expressed in S.106 obligations must be:
   a. Clearly defined: they don’t assume definitions or knowledge that may not be understood at some point in the delivery of the development
   b. Durable: they will be capable of being delivered by the developer in the circumstances that prevail at some unknown point in the future; and
   c. Are able to be monitored without a major allocation of public resources.
2. Requirements must also be appropriate to the proposed development, related in scale and kind to the proposed development. Requirements should only be sought where appropriate, viable and feasible. Appropriateness can be evaluated against two criteria:
   a. The employment – in construction and end-use – that will take place on the site, including the numbers of people and skill requirements;
   b. The needs and capacity of the targeted community, including the numbers of people that will be seeking opportunities on the development and their skills and experience.

3. Negotiations to secure a S.106 agreement follow a three stage process:
   a. Relevance to the proposed development in scale and kind to resolve an issue which needs to be overcome;
   b. An internal bidding and negotiation process – within the Planning Authority – to determine the Authority’s priorities for the use of a Planning Obligations to address identified needs which arise from the development; and
   c. A negotiation between the Authority and the Developer that results in the Planning Obligation.

4. Targets need to be clear and based on a robust rationale. Targets will be flexible, but could include:
   a. New entrant trainee person-weeks in the construction period
   b. New entrant trainee person-weeks in end-use employment

5. Determining what requirement is appropriate to each development is complex but must be consistent. Following consultation, the Council’s preferred method for calculating Targeted Recruitment and Training requirements within negotiations is:
   Training Requirements based on a proportion of the estimated total number of jobs to be created on site, at construction and end user stage.

6. Given that Targeted Recruitment and Training requirements must be transparent and consistent, it may not be possible to set a single formula that could apply to every kind of development.

7. To ensure that Targeted Recruitment and Training is successfully incorporated into a S.106 obligation, Employment & Skills officers should be involved in the negotiations with the developer from an early stage.

8. In order to ensure the SPD’s objectives sufficiently focus on commercial developments with significant job creations, it is proposed that only commercial developments in excess of an estimated 20 end user jobs are considered for inclusion of training and targeted recruitment targets.

9. The requirements for each development would be agreed through an Employment & Training Statement.

10. Developers need to be aware of these expected employment and training commitments as part of the overall development costs, and hence considered by developers as part of the overall viability of schemes.
4 Key Partners and Initiatives

There is no set 'standard' in terms of the organisations or specific initiatives that will be used, as this will be on a case-by-case basis, as part of the negotiation, however obvious partners that are likely to be involved to support developers and end users will be:

- Stockport Council (including Employment & Skills, local Employment & Skills Advisers, Planning, 14-19 Team, Services for Young People)
- Jobcentre Plus
- Local Colleges and training providers
- Work Programme providers
- European Social Fund providers

We will be looking to support developers and end users to access Apprenticeships, pre-employment training (Work focused Academies), and work experience placements as key areas for unemployed residents. Our network of Work Clubs, delivered in Learning & Employment Lounges in our priority areas will also be an important route to access our target residents. We will also be looking to identify how we can ensure all skills development needs for any existing employees can be addressed through local providers.

Stockport Council, along with Jobcentre Plus will lead the co-ordination of supply side support in terms of unemployed residents developing skills needed by employers.

Section 106 agreements will set out the agreed commitments of the developer, and how the Council and other partners will work to support the developer to achieve those commitments. These will be set out in an Employment & Training Statement, to be agreed between the Council and the developer. This statement will be regularly reviewed to track progress and outcomes.