1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document sets out a Skills and Enterprise plan which is designed to feed into the Gatwick Diamond Business Plan 2018 - 2021. The recommended strategy involves a collaborative approach working with a range of organisations in the Gatwick Diamond to act as a catalyst to influence and shape the improvement of relevant skills to meet employer demand. Building on successes achieved to date the Inspire Group will:

a) **Coordinate:** By using its authority and oversight to act as a major collaborative force to identify, stimulate, endorse and promote GD skills and enterprise initiatives. The weight of the individual brands of the partners will be used to leverage resource.

b) **Influence:** Recognising that the partners already have resources and programmes at their disposal and that INSPIRE itself, whilst it has limited resources will have a key role in influencing to secure best outcomes and value in the delivery of employment and skills services.

The mission statement of the Inspire Group is:

‘To contribute to the achievement of the vision of the Gatwick Diamond as a good location for businesses to start up, recruit skilled employees and grow thereby increasing the area’s GVA’.
THE CURRENT SITUATION

The Gatwick Diamond Initiative is a business led private/public sector partnership formed in 2003 to make a real difference to the performance of the sub region’s economy. By working collaboratively and concentrating on critical strategic issues, it has succeeded in bringing together all the key local authorities, government agencies and private sector partners to address the economic needs of the functional economic area.

In 2008 to develop the Gatwick Diamond Futures Plan of 2008 defining the overall direction, strategic initiatives and the actions needed to deliver the area’s vision of:

‘To be a world-class, internationally recognised business location achieving sustainable prosperity’

It is now 2017 and new research has been commissioned from the Centre for Cities. The Gatwick Diamond has a productive, service-based economy. In 2015, the Gatwick Diamond had a total gross value added (GVA) of £24 billion. This accounted for almost 10 per cent of the GVA of the South East region. Productivity was also very high. At £63,500 per worker, the area was 16 per cent more productive than the British economy as a whole – above the SEMLEP (£56,200 per worker) and close to Enterprise M3 (£64,800 per worker). It was, however, less productive than the Thames Valley area, which at £71,600 of output for every worker was one of the most productive areas of the UK.

The Gatwick Diamond has a high share of high-skilled jobs accounting for 48 per cent of total jobs and a low share of unskilled jobs at 19%. High qualification levels in the Gatwick Diamond are above average when compared to the other comparator areas and the rest of the UK, and low qualification levels are below average. 46 per cent of the Gatwick Diamond working age population held NVQ4+ qualifications or equivalent (equivalent to a degree or higher), compared to 38 per cent at the national level. This was just below the Thames Valley Berkshire, where 48 per cent of the population was highly educated.

The number of business start-ups in 2015 was high, with 67 new businesses per 10,000 residents which is about the same as the SEMLEP and Enterprise M3, and considerably higher than the UK average (59 new businesses per 10,000 inhabitants).

Gatwick Airport continues to grow fast serving more than 228 destinations in 74 countries for 45.6 million passengers a year on short and 63 long-haul point-to-point services. (December 2017)
Regarding additional employment land, WSCC is making progress with the development of the first science/research/ technology park in Horsham, we now have several new office developments and large new business parks in North Horsham, Horley and Burgess Hill are planned.

However....

The Gatwick Diamond is suffering from its highest employment rate ever and its biggest lack of skills according to clearly articulated business needs. We have one university presence, the University of Creative Arts in Epsom, but no STEM university.

The Gatwick Diamond has a high share of knowledge intensive jobs but the growth of those jobs has been slower in the Gatwick Diamond than the UK average and every other comparator except Greater Medway.

Crawley itself has been identified as having a relatively weak skills base and a comparatively low level of further and higher education qualifications. At Higher Education level, the participation rate for Crawley is low at 38% in line with the English average but behind the Gatwick Diamond 46% average. Research suggests that there is considerable scope to grow the progression market from FE and the CPD higher skills market. Low skill levels and low take up of higher skills are a recognised constraint on achieving sustainable economic growth.

To meet the current and future skill demands, employers are forced to recruit from outside the area, leading to high levels of in commuting and traffic congestion. 100,000 workers leave the Gatwick Diamond every day, of whom 23% commute to central London and 112, 000 commutes in (Census 2011).

Although new large high-quality office developments are being built and there is now availability, there is an all-time high demand for industrial property which cannot be filled. At the other end of business stage, there is not nearly enough small office space available from the incubation stage and co working through to 3 to 5,000 sq. ft. workspace

2. STRATEGY

Proactive and meaningful partner and stakeholder engagement has been a key strength of the Gatwick Diamond Initiative since its inception. This approach has delivered strategic added value benefits. It is through local engagement with the wide variety of businesses and partners that we will be able to collect market intelligence, gain input into consultations and conduct market research. Our whole operational concept has been to work closely with partners and stakeholders to lobby and influence strategy that is currently or will be relevant to businesses in the Gatwick Diamond. We will continue to leave networking to the local membership organisations to avoid overlapping services and potential waste of resource, ensuring we deliver ‘best value’ both economically and operationally. Continuing engagement and strengthening of relationships with the two upper-tier and six lower-tier local authorities will be integral to our public-sector stakeholder and partnership relationship management strategy.
The Gatwick Diamond Initiative largely relies on volunteer and public and private sector partner support, usually resource in kind. The Inspire Strategy will be to use that resource to best effect. It is also recognised that the scale of the task is so great that priorities will be agreed. There will be quick wins and short-term tactics but only when these clearly contribute towards our long-term vision. We also must ensure that we do not duplicate or replicate excellent work already being carried out by our partners including local business membership organisations. At all times we will collaborate.

**ACTIVITY**

The Gatwick Diamond Strategic Plan for 2017 – 20 has five Strategic Aims of which three falls within the remit of the INSPIRE Group

### Strategic Aim 3

**TO MAXIMISE THE BENEFITS OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE**

**Objectives and Actions**

- **Innovation workspace**
  - Lobby and identify locations for Enterprise Hubs and managed workspace
  - Support the development of the Novartis Technology Park
  - Support developments of the Horley and the North Horsham Business Parks
- **STEAM Skills**
  - Promote and encourage the take up of all level apprenticeships and in particular:
    - Digital Technology Higher and Degree Apprenticeships
    - Engineering Higher and Degree Apprenticeships
  - Identify employer needs for Trail Blazer Degree Apprenticeships and enable their development with partners
- **Collaboration**
  - Lead the partners in the INSPIRE Group
  - Build strong relationships with Universities and FE Colleges
  - Work with the Coast to Capital and the Enterprise Company
Strategic Aim 4
TO CONTRIBUTE TO PUBLIC SECTOR DECISION MAKING AT A LOCAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL LEVEL

Objectives and Actions
- Platforms
  - The Overview Forum
  - The Economic Forum
  - Blogging and social media
- Lobbying and influencing the public sector i.e. local authorities, councillors, MPs and government departments
- Working with the C2C LEP and contributing to the new SEP
- Providing employers views on Brexit
- Lobbying government funded skills organisations

Strategic Aim 5
TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN THE HIGHEST TALENT

Objectives and Actions
- Employers
  - Promoting to employers Digital Technology and STEAM higher and degree apprenticeships
- Education
  - Lobbying Universities to deliver STEAM degree apprenticeships
  - Encouraging FE colleges and universities to work together to deliver STEAM degree apprenticeships
  - Work with Tomorrow’s Engineers and STEMFEST to promote Gatwick Diamond career opportunities
  - Lobby Careers and Enterprise Advisers in the Enterprise Company to promote vocational training and degree apprenticeships to schools and parents
- Lead INSPIRE Group collaboration to share and learn

End
Rosemary French, Executive Director, Gatwick Diamond Initiative