

The 'New' Place-shaping: The Implications for Leaders in The Further Education Sector

Dr John Gibney, Carol Yapp, Lisa Trickett and Chris Collinge
Centre for Urban and Regional Studies
Birmingham Business School, University of Birmingham

The logo graphic consists of several overlapping, flowing, brush-stroke-like lines in shades of orange and red, creating a sense of movement and energy.

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Contact Details

LSIS London
t 0870 060 3278
s 0207 929 8700
e enquirieslondon@lsis.org.uk
Fourth Floor, 47 Mark Lane
London
EC3R 7QQ

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John Gibney
Carol Yapp
Lisa Trickett
Chris Collinge

The Centre for Urban and Regional Studies (CURS)
The Birmingham Business School
University of Birmingham
Edgbaston
Birmingham B15 2TT
United Kingdom

j.gibney@bham.ac.uk
Tel: 0121 414 3051/5028

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Preface

What is place-shaping? How is it different from what has gone on before? What are the implications for leaders in the Further Education (FE) sector? This study draws on research and experience related to the leadership of place. We set out an initial understanding of the rich variety of place-shaping experiences around the FE sector. The project enables the sharing of practice across the FE sector and seeks to develop the debate. Ultimately, it aims to help FE sector leaders to prepare for a more demanding leadership role that is transcending traditional FE organisational and thematic boundaries and concerns.

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Executive Summary

- The idea of sustainable place-shaping – the continuing shaping and re-shaping of where we live and work – is central to contemporary debates about urban and regional futures, and it has profound implications for all parties that are involved in the design and delivery of public policy;
- Arguably, for a variety of reasons, the FE sector has not maximized its purchase on the ‘new’ place-shaping agenda. As the debate around place-shaping is rapidly evolving (and particularly in the context of economic recession) there is now a significant opportunity for the FE sector to engage assertively with these agendas in order to influence outcomes for their student body, but also for their wider communities and economy;
- FE sector leaders need to develop a more coherent proposition that is able to translate across, and influence economic development and regeneration practice at all spatial scales. National – regional – sub-regional and local;
- The FE sector needs to better articulate its pivotal role. Why should - and how can the sector contribute to the continuing shaping and re-shaping of effective places?
- In addition to their role in leading their own organisations FE leaders need to contribute to the collective development of place and recognise the demands of this role;
- The continuing uncertainties around regulation and funding of the FE sector in England have not facilitated FE leadership engagement with the most recent round of local place-shaping activity at the sub-national scale - and indeed may well have constrained Colleges from making a bigger contribution;
- However, our research has found that FE sector leaders are working across a significant variety of localised place-shaping activities both in their formal capacity - but also informally. At the most basic level across the three case study areas, this involves their ensuring that learning and skills perspectives are fully considered and incorporated into economic development and regeneration plans at the earliest stage of their development - and on a continuing basis;
- Sometimes this involves FE leaders adopting a very proactive role - investing much time and resource (both institutional and personal) into promoting the case for the learning and skills sector generally and how this can contribute to the overall development dynamic in an area. At other times this means needing to react without much lead-time to major ‘unforeseen’ external challenges (e.g. business closures) that require an informed response from the sector at short notice;
- In the context of place-shaping as we have defined it, the role of FE sector leaders at the local and sub-regional level is not solely restricted to ‘classic’ economic development and regeneration agendas - but is moving beyond these into other aspects that impact on local economy and society such as neighbourhood crime and security issues, and the more generalised agendas around improving health outcomes and the quality of life for local communities;

- FE College Principals, their senior management teams and FE governors report that they are being stretched beyond their core learning and skills role. This core role itself is characterised by heightened strategic and operational complexities - but is now combined with an ever-widening remit that is encompassing localised economic development and regeneration in its broadest sense. The acceptance of this new context means that FE is moving to a more integrated role in local and sub-regional working that requires different skills and support from within the sector;
- Leadership skill sets and competencies will need to be developed within a local and sub-regional context to reflect the challenges associated with transforming places at different times in the life cycle of place - developing FE sector leaders who can transcend organisational concerns, work across professional boundaries and leverage the power of networks in a constantly changing policy environment;
- Navigating FE Colleges through the complex relationships and interdependencies that characterise local and national place-shaping agendas – often a very crowded and contested political space at times of economic and social crisis – is a significant leadership challenge;
- Principals are aware of the danger of being too absent from their own organisation which can lead to unsettled internal relations within the College. Smaller Colleges are finding this balancing act more difficult than larger Colleges that have the staff resources to handle both internal operational issues and external liaison activity. Accommodating the contradictions between internal and external leadership roles is a key challenge for Principals in particular;
- There remains a degree of lack of understanding of the potentially pivotal role of the sector which is at the bridging point between local communities and the formal institutions and agencies of government that are delivering economic development and regeneration;
- All of this means that at times FE sector involvement in place-shaping activity appears somewhat downstream - where the strategic vision for a locality and key outcomes have been discussed and agreed by the key local enabling agencies;
- Although there are generalised experiences with place-shaping activities across the three very different case contexts addressed in the research, the interview programme points up that different (nuanced) FE leadership engagement (timing, tone, style and so on) is required in the differing development contexts;
- FE leaders consider that leadership development needs to accommodate the idea of ‘whole team’ development and offers leadership learning that is bespoke to the tasks and challenges they face in their particular localities;
- The sector has to further develop its collaborative and co-operative working skills – this dimension needs to be integral to leadership development programmes – this cannot be left to individual Colleges as for various reasons ‘good practice’ around leadership of place experience (what works and why) may not be being readily/rapidly exchanged across sector;
- It is important to find ways of working with a variety of individuals, organisations and groups over which FE sector leaders have no authority and who may need to be convinced of the contribution of the learning and skills sector;

- For knowledge transfer purposes within FE, the sector needs to consider making better use of the experience of their most effective leaders where place-shaping is concerned; looking at (say) extending coaching, mentoring, and learning networks across the sector;
- To engender greater understanding across disciplines, FE leaders feel that elements of their leadership development should be undertaken in a more integrated fashion with other professions (economic development, planning, regeneration and so on) with whom they work closely on local programmes and projects;
- We remain optimistic that there is a timely opportunity for the sector to engage with and influence the new agendas around the continuing and integrated development of our neighbourhoods, towns, cities and regions - with a view to contributing to positive generational change across communities at a time of rapid economic and social transformation.

Introduction and Context

This project forms part of the leadership research and knowledge transfer activities of the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS). It is concerned with helping FE sector leaders prepare for new and emerging leadership tasks around the *'leadership of place rather than of functions'* (CEL, 2007a).

In this study we are looking to better understand the leadership dynamics and challenges for the FE sector in relation to the place-shaping agenda in England. The project starts from the premise that, in the context of the new place-shaping paradigm, we need to equip current and future FE sector leaders so that they can operate effectively in increasingly complex policy environments - working across institutional, thematic, territorial, community and professional boundaries - and with long-term, vision-led agendas. These generational agendas are designed to transform places so that they develop and are maintained in ways that attract and sustain economic activity. The project will build upon the previous and current research and leadership learning activity being undertaken by LSIS and their partners around the role and potential for the FE sector to contribute to, influence and deliver new and emerging place-shaping agenda(s).

The project's general overall aims are:

1. To advance our understanding of the key features and dimensions of the place-shaping agenda for the FE sector;
2. To improve our understanding of the leadership challenges (and opportunities) for the FE sector in and around the place-shaping agenda;
3. To develop a framework to research the key dimensions of place-shaping as these relate to leadership in the FE sector;
4. To carry out research across 1 urban, 1 extended rural area and 1 growth area to identify learning that can help to develop new perspectives on effective FE leadership in different places, and which can generate stimulus and learning materials;
5. To propose further steps to build on the initial perspectives that are developed, and to develop activities to disseminate and share experience.

Rationale for the project

Recent contributions to the literature (see for example Stough, 2003; Gibney et al., 2009; and Sirak, 2009 forthcoming) and recent research completed for the Academy for Sustainable Communities (Gibney and Murie (eds), 2008)¹ have begun to articulate a new perspective on territorial leadership that differs from traditional organizational leadership. This has been identified as a 'new' relational leadership of place associated with debates about economic and political change in the UK and other advanced economies.

1 Now the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) Academy

While it has been initially linked with the development and stimulation of the knowledge-based economy, the analysis and its implications connect with other emerging issues. It connects with government agendas about cross boundary working in public services and in place-shaping in particular. In England, new policy approaches are consistently urging 'joined-up' thinking and holistic, integrated approaches that cross boundaries within the public, private and voluntary sectors and also between them (from the Single Regeneration Budget, City Challenge, neighbourhood renewal and social exclusion, to the strategies formed by regional development agencies and the recommendations of the 2007 Lyons review).

These new approaches now emphasise the importance of place and the importance of outcomes in terms of the sustainability of neighbourhoods, cities or sub-regions. They have given rise to the idea that the development of competitive, sustainable and inclusive places needs to be underpinned by cross-boundary relational leadership. In summary, the 'new' leadership of place is concerned with:

- Facilitating interdisciplinary working across institutional boundaries, technology themes, sub-territories and professional cultures to promote the development of sustainable local economies;
- Ensuring the comprehensive engagement of local communities so that they can both contribute to and benefit fully from the outcomes (avoiding the danger of exacerbating social polarisation).

This new agenda means that leaders across various organizations are now faced with a challenging dual task: to lead their own organization in achieving service delivery and effective performance and to share in the leadership of place that will ensure that good organizational performance translates into effective outcomes for places.

Arguably, the FE sector has not maximized its purchase on the new place-shaping agenda. As the debate around place-shaping is rapidly evolving (and particularly in the context of economic recession) there is now a significant opportunity for the FE sector to engage assertively with these agendas in order to influence outcomes for their student body, but also for their wider communities and economy. Following on from the Local Government White Paper (2006), the Leitch Review of Skills (2006) and the Lyons Report (2007) (and conscious of the impact of Local Development Frameworks on their operational partnerships), research and learning instigated by the Lancaster Centre for Excellence in Leadership through 2007 has underlined the strategic significance of the ongoing debate around place-shaping for the FE sector. Critically, CEL has flagged up the need for an improved understanding of the nature (complexities) of the challenges of the 'new' place-shaping so that FE sector leaders can engage effectively at all levels of the debate (local, regional and national) and with a wider variety of partner bodies across both the public and private sector (CEL, 2007a; and 2007b).

The FE sector has a key contribution to make to local place-shaping. Promoting education and learning and intimately connected to local communities, the FE sector is ideally placed to link local communities to the new employment opportunities that are foreseen from the current and proposed round of public investment across local economies. But it is important for FE sector leaders to understand the strategic and operational implications of the new place-shaping agenda. They must recognise and develop the leadership skills necessary to operate effectively within it - and so that they can capitalise upon the opportunities afforded by the changed operating environment at local, regional and national level for their student body and wider communities.

The government's aspirations for localities across England are introducing the FE sector to 'whole place' - 'whole system' - 'whole life' approaches. FE sector leaders will need to combine the development of technical attributes (eg: strategic understanding and 'spatial literacy') with 'softer' relational skills required to build inclusive coalitions. Skill sets and competencies will need to be developed within a local context to reflect the challenges associated with transforming places at different times in the life cycle of place - developing FE sector leaders who can (as and when necessary) transcend organisational concerns, work across professional boundaries and leverage the power of networks in a constantly changing policy environment.

Research Methodology

The project comprised a mix of desk-based and three purposively selected FE leadership case studies. The methodology has been essentially qualitative in nature and included three discrete but interconnected work packages (WPs):

Work Package 1:

WP1 entailed a review of the most recent academic and policy literature on place-shaping and its relevance to leaders (and leadership) in the FE sector. This desk-based research exercise fed into and informed a synthesis of the literature review findings and the development of the topic guides for the interview programme.

Work Package 2:

In WP2 the research team:

- Established the scope of the FE sector for each case and the variety of institutions and functions within this, as the population of the study;
- Identified a sample of appropriate FE sector leaders and appropriate leaders in partner bodies;
- Developed the interview topic guide; piloted the topic guide;
- Conducted interviews with FE sector leaders to find out their perspectives on the changing nature of their task; and interviews with other local partners directly involved in the shaping of place with/and alongside FE colleagues to ascertain a wider view of the FE leadership role/opportunity in place-shaping;
- Analysed and compared interviews within and between case studies in initial interpretation.

Three 'types' of purposively selected places were investigated. One urban area in economic transition (central/south Birmingham); one extensive rural area (Shropshire); and one new growth area (Milton Keynes).

The purpose behind the choice of the case studies was to consider the implications for FE leadership across a variety of types of place as well as across a variety of geographical scales in England (a dense urban setting in south Birmingham, the geographically extensive rural setting of Shropshire, and a growing new town in Milton Keynes). This is because although there were likely to be generic lessons to be drawn from this study for FE sector leaders, it was our contention that different geographical scales and different place-shaping contexts (places that are growing as compared to places in transition, places that are being maintained or declining places and so on) were likely to present 'differentiated complexities' in regard to the FE leadership task at local level. Moreover, FE sector leaders across England will find themselves throughout their careers in a wide variety of place-shaping contexts.

Consequently, there was a requirement to develop a dynamic and multi-perspectival understanding of the place-shaping task and their role(s) in it.

When settling on the final choice of the three case studies, we considered the importance of generating an evidence base that would allow us to broaden and deepen our understanding. Further, the very different development contexts (economic and social) of the three case studies helped the project to present insights from a wide experience - and this helped the research team to develop thinking around the integration of FE leadership development with the 'idea' of place-shaping.

Some 24 interviews were conducted across the case areas with local FE College Principals and other relevant senior FE College staff, as well as with senior individuals involved in the local/regional economic development and regeneration partnerships as appropriate (across local authorities, the Learning and Skills Council, local schools, Regional Development Agencies and so on). An anonymised list of individuals interviewed is set out in Annex I.

A broadly common format was adopted for the three case studies – but with encouragement for researchers to capture the distinctive features associated with urban, rural and growth settings. Ultimately, the purpose of the case studies was to identify general as well as specific insights into the FE leadership experience in relation to the 'new' place-shaping agenda – and to reveal lessons that might be relevant to FE sector leaders in other urban, rural areas or growth areas across England.

The interview topic guide addressed the following main research questions:

1. What are the complexities inherent in the new place-shaping agenda for the FE sector?
2. What are the subsequent challenges and implications of the new place-shaping agenda for FE sector leaders?
3. How do FE sector leaders engage currently with the 'new' place-shaping agenda?
4. Going forward, what role is there for the FE sector in local place-shaping and why?
5. What does this mean for leadership development in the FE sector?
6. What further implications are there for the FE sector's offer to various groups of potential students?

Work Package 3:

WP3 involved the synthesis of findings and conclusions. This final work package drew together all the elements of the project and identified key findings, conclusions and next steps. It involved the research team thinking through proposals for leadership development activity within FE.

Research Team

The study was undertaken by an interdisciplinary research team involved in ongoing research and knowledge transfer activity around the theme of the 'leadership of place' at the University of Birmingham. The project was coordinated by Dr John Gibney (CURS). The team included Carol Yapp (INLOGOV), Lisa Trickett (CURS) and Chris Collinge (CURS),

Situating the Further Education Sector: Policy and Institutional Context

Arguably, a re-oriented education policy has been a core feature of New Labour's economic competitiveness, regeneration and knowledge-based economy policy aspirations since the administration came to power in 1997. The FE sector in England is consequently undergoing a widespread review and reconfiguration that is presenting a host of new and unfamiliar challenges for FE sector leaders.

In the context of England, the argument for better incorporating the education sector into the design and delivery of (knowledge-based) competitiveness and regeneration policy connects with government agendas about cross-boundary working in public services and sustainable local development. In England, new area-based policy approaches are consistently urging 'joined-up' thinking and holistic, integrated approaches that cross boundaries within the public, private and voluntary sectors and also between them (from the Single Regeneration Budget, City Challenge, neighbourhood renewal and social exclusion, to the KBE strategies formed by regional development agencies and the recommendations of the 2007 Lyons review). These refreshed approaches are emphasising the importance of shaping sustainable communities – in the sense of the importance of the overall competitiveness and attractiveness of neighbourhoods, cities or sub-regions. They have given rise to the idea that the development of competitive, sustainable and inclusive places requires to be underpinned by the effective integration of previously disparate policy fields - including Further Education (see further, Gibney et al, 2009a).

It is not the purpose of this study to address the wide range of strategic and operational implications that much of the ongoing review entails - but it is useful to summarise selectively the current policy context. The policy and regulatory frameworks that inform the activities of the Further Education sector in England are highly complex - and the institutional architecture and curriculum 'offer' to the student body and employers varies to some extent geographically. In terms of the target interview sample, and in terms of its organization at the time of the interviews, the research study settled upon the Further Education sector as comprising those FE Colleges that serviced the 16-19 student body in their given case study area. Further Education (FE) Colleges can be described as educational institutions generally providing more vocationally oriented education and learning programmes for the 16-19 year old student cohort. They are, however, organized around both academic and vocational 'specialisms'.

For the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), the FE sector is:

"...the statutory further education college sector which includes all those colleges created or designated under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 (s91(3) of the Act refers)".

And:

“Colleges vary considerably in size. Analysis of 06/07 data shows huge differences in total income between the smallest colleges (£1.9m) to the largest (£82m). There are similarly big differences in student numbers” (DIUS, 2008).

And:

At 1st April 2008, there were 376 colleges. Using informal (historic) classifications, these are identified by DIUS (2008) as:

Designation/Theme/Specialism	Numbers of Institutions
Agriculture and Horticulture	17
Art, Design and Performing Arts	4
General FE	196
Tertiary	49
Sixth form colleges	96
Specialist designated colleges	14

DIUS (2008) summarises the key anticipated outcomes for government from the ongoing reform of the sector as requiring the sector to:

- Develop innovative and collaborative learning routes for young people and adults, maximising the opportunities afforded by technology, so that they are truly encouraged and supported to achieve their full potential;
- Listen and respond to the needs of employers; building specialised networks that deliver the skills they need, now and in the future;
- Reach out to those that are least likely to engage in learning, who lack the skills and confidence they need for success. We want to give these individuals a second chance: give them the opportunity to learn new skills, to move into work and, in doing so, unlock the talent in our communities;
- We (DIUS) also want colleges to be recognised for the valuable role they play within their local communities, offering a wide range of opportunities and resources from which local people and businesses benefit.

All of these policy aspirations play directly into the ongoing wider cross-sector debate around place-shaping - and the leadership issues that flow from this.

CEL/LSIS (CEL, 2007a; 2007b; 2008) have previously highlighted a number of areas requiring the attention of FE sector leaders that emerge from the ongoing policy reviews and that connect with the topic of this present investigation. To avoid repetition, we read across from these and paraphrase selectively below:

- FE sector leaders need to better understand what place-shaping means in both conceptual and practical terms beyond the policy rhetoric. How can/do the 'place-shaping mission' and the FE sector's 'people-shaping mission' come together?
- The FE sector will need to engage effectively at the strategic level with the emerging local economic development, regeneration, social cohesion and well-being policy frameworks;
- The FE sector will need to engage with a wider range of local delivery partners - including with the business sector, local government, schools, the Third sector, the NHS, a variety of arms length economic and regeneration delivery vehicles and so on;
- More than ever before, FE sector leaders will be operating in a more complex and multi-dimensional environment;
- The FE sector has the opportunity to develop an influential and 'distinctive leadership' offering in the context of local place-shaping;
- FE sector leadership development may need to incorporate (or be incorporated into) other parallel approaches to the 'leadership of place' that are being developed by, and for, other local partners in England.

Understanding Place-Shaping

By 'place shaping' and 'leadership of place' - we mean approaches to the long term development of competitive, sustainable and inclusive places – where formal leaders help to shape a locality both in terms of its economic base, the quality of life of its citizens, and ultimately its social cohesion and identity.

Whilst many places may be officially designated administrative units (such as Cities, Counties and Regions in England), places are more generally areas which are accorded some measure of popular recognition (including the ascription of certain recognised attributes and qualities including location and limits). Indeed the relationship between official designation and popular mandating of places is an important issue for people and for administrators, contributing to a range of political and social conflicts over the years. For most of its history, however, the concept of place has been regarded as a bounded unit of space, an area to which people and institutions are attached and by which they define themselves.

There was during the 1980s a debate about the significance of locality which arose in part from a sense that localities were becoming more vulnerable to global change - and from the desire to make local government and other public agencies more closely related to local communities. Arguably, during the 1970s and 1980s, place-shaping policies produced 'uneven development' between different localities. Leadership for place-shaping at the local level was in this context regarded as a largely administrative responsibility exercised in a hierarchical fashion by a battery of local agencies including local government; an approach which to some extent was adapted to variations in local circumstances. It was nevertheless characterised by policies conceived centrally in London or Brussels, and then subsequently organised and implemented by function at the local level.

More recently, however, there has been a radical shift in perspective. Rather than thinking of places as areas with formal administrative boundaries, they are to be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings (what Massey, for example, refers to as an extroverted sense of place and which includes an acknowledgment of its links to the wider world). Massey considers that a progressive sense of place does not rely on some essentialist notion of spaces as internally determined, nor does it require boundaries; nor does it presuppose that they have a single unique identity; nor finally does this deny the specificity of place which may change and be reproduced from one period of time to the next:

“the specificity of place also derives from the fact that each place is the focus of a distinct mixture of wider and more local social relations and, further again, that the juxtaposition of these relations may produce effects that would not have happened elsewhere. And, finally, all these relations interact with and take a further element of specificity from the accumulated history of a place, with that history itself conceptualised as the product of layer upon layer of different sets of linkages both local and to the wider world” (Massey 1993, p.68).

Although perhaps not described in these detailed conceptual terms, place-shaping has been a focus of attention amongst policy-makers for many years. But the nature of the approach to area-based policy has changed dramatically from one period to the next. In the Victorian era it was the leadership of big cities (such as Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham) that undertook the development of these as centres of economic power and civic pride, introducing state-of-the-art amenities such as clean drinking water, sewers, electricity and public transport. During the twentieth century central government took over much of the leadership role in driving area-based policy through a web of centrally managed agencies, one of which was local government. More recently, however, the need to achieve 'joined up' working has shifted the emphasis towards locally focussed partnerships. Healey, for example, has argued that many initiatives now involve *horizontal* linkages with an interactive quality, involving a variety of different stakeholders, and necessitating more collaborative ways of developing and implementing policy. In particular, Healey argues that "*hierarchical forms of articulating public policies and firm boundaries between public and private action are being displaced by more fluid and horizontal relationships*" (Healey 1998, p.4). In England, the Local Strategic Partnership may in this context become the lead player and (increasingly) the responsible body - but there is a whole web of other partnerships around this, dealing with specific issues of local concern, from Looked After Children to Urban Regeneration.

It is well-understood today that contemporary policy in urban and regional development, if it is to be effective, requires interventions to be more genuinely 'joined-up' across boundaries within and between different geographies, agencies and sectors. In England over recent years approaches to joined-up working have evolved particularly from the early 1990s with City Challenge and the Single Regeneration Budget, and they have influenced thinking in relation to the formation of local strategic partnerships, the establishment of regional development agencies, the creation of Local Area Agreements and Sustainable Community Plans. These approaches have also evolved in response to public concerns over the dramatic systems failures that have been implicated in the deaths of Victoria Climbié and Baby P, and they are reflected in the ensuing reorganisations of local governance as well as in the recommendations of the 2007 Lyons Review. Taken together these policy approaches have emphasised the importance of place as the nexus in which different agencies intersect, and have pointed to the effects of these intersections in terms of place-shaping. They have in particular highlighted the need to cultivate a new style of leadership for place-shaping (of neighbourhoods, cities, sub-regions and regions), a leadership that is attuned to the fuzzy decentred world of partnerships and networking.

The idea of sustainable place-shaping – the continuing shaping and re-shaping of where we live and work – is therefore central to contemporary debates about urban and regional futures, and it has profound implications for all the parties that are involved. The leadership dimension is further heightened at times of economic 'crisis' – and where the effects are felt disproportionately at local level (for example, the collapse of MG Rover in Birmingham).

Consequently, the leadership of contemporary place-shaping is a more complex interdisciplinary task than has been experienced in previous eras, and it draws upon an expanding range of policy areas beyond economic development, planning and regeneration to include education and skills, housing, sustainable communities, health, environment, crime and security and so on.

All of this implies that the FE sector – whether it likes it or not - will increasingly be called upon to contribute to and shape the debate around policy to deliver effective places as well as help secure the intended beneficial outcomes. Figures 1 and 2 below highlight some of the tensions inherent in this new role for FE sector leaders.

FE sector leaders find themselves today stretched in a number of potentially conflicting directions and across policy fields. They are located at the bridging point between local place-shaping policy and policy for learning and skills (Figure 1) – and in the context of the knowledge-based economy agenda they connect local communities with new employment and well-being opportunities (Figure 2).

Figure 1: Leadership ‘Stretch’ Across Policy Fields

Localised Place-Shaping Policy - FE leaders - Learning and Skills Policy

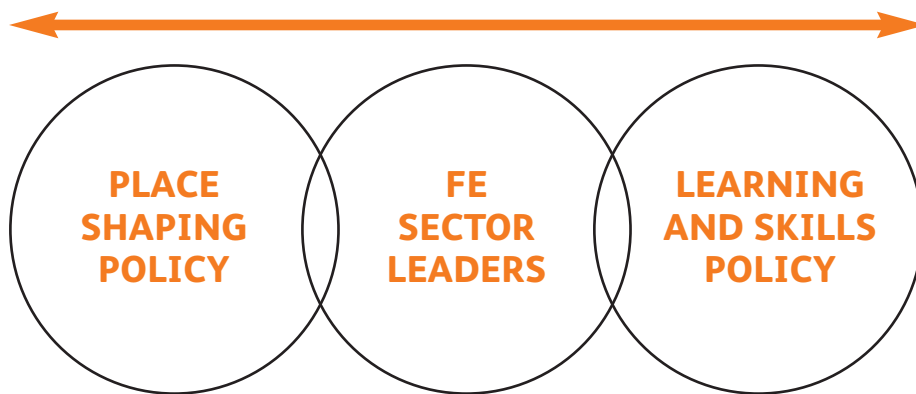
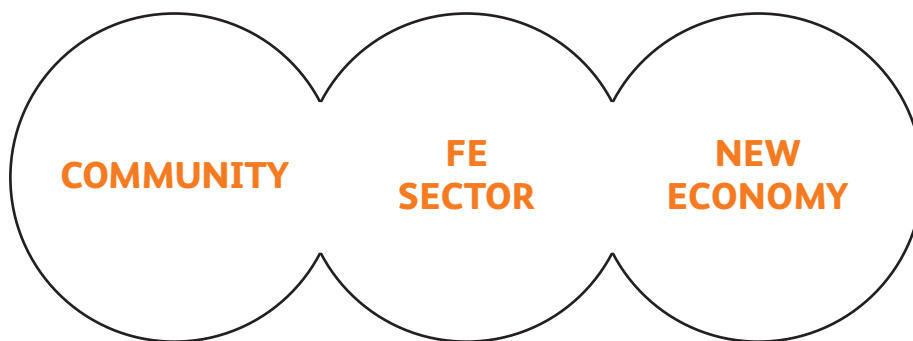


Figure 2: FE and the New Economy



Three Case Studies

For background, the very different development contexts across the three case areas - which both influence FE leadership approaches and are influenced by local FE sector leaders - are summarised below

Case Study 1: Shropshire

Case themes and features: extensive geography; dispersed population; weak employer base; infrastructure challenges

Shropshire is a rural County in the West Midlands with a population of 290,000 and covers 1,235 square miles. It is both the largest inland county and the most sparsely populated in England. The dispersed nature of the County is one of the most significant challenges for the FE sector. Until April 1st 2009 the County had a two tier administrative structure which included 5 District Councils of Bridgnorth, North Shropshire, Oswestry, Shrewsbury and Atcham, South Shropshire and Shropshire County Council. Significant changes are in the process of being made to the administrative substructures of the Council as well as those of the Shropshire [Strategic] Partnership. The intention of these changes is to better align policy to the needs of local people and devolve resources to meet these needs.

The County actively promotes the quality of life to be enjoyed in the rural setting, and the population is growing above the national rate fuelled by the inward migration of 'green shifters'. Shropshire's traditional economic activity was agriculture, manufacturing, quarrying and mining but now has a predominantly service-based industry. The main sectors are tourism, food and drink production and processing, enterprise and innovation, environmental technologies and the creative industries. It is described as being ranked as the number one location for technological start-ups in the West Midlands region with entrepreneurial activity exceeding the national average. Eighty-five percent of businesses employ less than 10 people.

The formal vision for the area as stated in the Shropshire County Council's Corporate Plan, and in the vision for the Shropshire Partnership Community Strategy, is 'to improve significantly the quality of life for Shropshire People by working together' – emphasizing the intention and need to work collaboratively. Key policy aspirations relate to the sustainable communities agenda and the ambition to 'build a strong and diverse economy with jobs for a skilled and competitive workforce'. Local economic development policy aims to support the area's growth sectors in technology and creative enterprises, entrepreneurial start-ups - and to support diversification across farming and rural businesses. Important local economic development initiatives include an Eco Business Park, an Environmental Technology Centre, the Shropshire Food Enterprise Centre, and an Enterprise HQ (to support rural home-working). However, there are significant infrastructure issues, particularly around transport provision, and though much has been achieved through the 'Switch-on-Shropshire' initiative (an initiative to address the digital divide), there are still 'weaknesses' to be overcome relating to broadband access across the County.

Compared to Birmingham and Milton Keynes, this case area is characterised by its dispersed population, 'weaknesses' in its transport and ICT infrastructure, the geographical scale of the County, the lack of a solid employer base with which to engage, and proximity to the Welsh border (raising issues of perceived unequal competition). These features may not be typical of all rural areas per se, and may produce potentially unique local difficulties in aligning national learning and skills policy and funding to local rural needs.

Case Study 2: Birmingham

Case themes and features: large core urban area; knowledge-based economy; localised social deprivation

Birmingham is a relatively young, ethnically diverse city and growing economically away from its traditional manufacturing base. But it is still facing a number of policy challenges in terms of the pace and effectiveness of its economic diversification programmes and in addressing localised social deprivation.

The Birmingham economy remains at risk due to its over-dependence on low-value manufacturing sectors and employment linked to a fragile automotive sector and retail sector. This fragility has been heightened by the current recession in the UK economy. Significant efforts are being made to diversify the local economy, although the manufacturing sector is still important, towards creative and knowledge-based activities. In particular, the Eastside quarter of the city is one of the largest current regeneration programmes underway where the development of multi-media, graphic design, visual arts and music production and performance activities is being favoured. To the south of the city, along the route of the A38 (Bristol Road), the Central Technology Belt (CTB) Company has been established by the Regional Development Agency, Advantage West Midlands to engender a “corridor of regeneration”. The objectives of the CTB Company are to stimulate a more diverse economy by capitalising on the knowledge-intense opportunities afforded by existing universities, the new University of Birmingham NHS ‘Super Hospital’ and other research centres in the area. As the CTB Company’s promotional material puts it, the ambition is to,

“create technology rich business opportunities and bring about key economic benefits for people living and working in the [West Midlands] region” (CTB company website 2007).

For the local FE sector, Birmingham’s desire to re-orient the local economy towards higher value-added creative and knowledge-based activities has a number of immediate as well as medium term implications. The approach being adopted by policy makers and practitioners working across the city in the economic development, planning, regeneration, education and skills fields implies the adroit integration of ‘place-shaping’ and ‘people shaping’ features - And where this is about promoting collective endeavour, interdisciplinary and cross boundary working - and sustaining all of this over a long period of time.

Given that the city has expressed formal policy intent around its aspiration(s) to become a ‘world class’ Science City, Digital City and Creative City - it is critical that the FE sector ensures that it is fully incorporated into these new economic regeneration agendas and is able to influence the shape of the development trajectories going forward - and can connect the student body, and through them their local communities, to the new employment opportunities that may emerge.

Case Study 3: Milton Keynes

Case themes and features: growth town; economic renewal; learning and skills improvements

Arising from the London overspill as a new town some forty years ago, Milton Keynes is now one of the UK’s fastest growing urban areas. Between 1981 and 2006, the urban population increased by some 81 % compared to 8 % in the rest of the UK. It is set to become the 10th largest city in the UK by 2031.

It is situated in what is now referred to as the 'Milton Keynes and South Midlands Growth Area' - the largest growth area in the UK – and incorporates 3 regions, 16 Local Authorities and 6 Delivery Vehicles which are grouped together as the Milton Keynes Partnership.

Historically from the public policy perspective, the area has been characterised by the broadly effective development of partnership working between civic bodies, the private sector and the third sector – and this has helped shape Milton Keynes (MK) into a successful growth town. The area has also attracted significant inward investment. This success story has to be set against a population that has high levels of people in low skill and low paid employment - with 23% of the population having difficulties with their basic numeracy and literacy. The economic downturn has seen some companies fail and leave behind premises that are no longer 'fit for purpose'; and where the current built form and design do little to reflect the civic aspiration to move from *New Town to International City status*. Utilising the downturn as an opportunity to pause and reflect, the Local Partnership is presently thinking through what needs to be regenerated as well as generated. Despite the MK 'success story' - it is proving harder for Local policy makers to regenerate than generate and particularly beyond the classic built environment agendas where community regeneration and the shaping of broader citizen opportunities are concerned. Whilst there is a clear focus on jobs and housing, the Local Partnership places a very strong emphasis on skills and access to higher education – seeking to develop these elements as a means of creating a vibrant local economy. 2008/2009 has also seen a very important start to the development of a new University Centre in the heart of the Milton Keynes business district. Milton Keynes College of Further Education has played a key role in this initiative - providing the knowledge and leadership role around curriculum development (with support from the Open University). The aim is to re-energise the Higher Education sector in Milton Keynes. The MK Higher Education Strategic Board is developing a vision for the establishment of a new local university - a 21st century university capable of stimulating a strong, vibrant local economy. Other opportunities to realise the economic potential of the city are being pursued. In particular the partnership is working closely with the Regional Development Agency (SEEDA) to better integrate local economic development resources and provide focused delivery around initiatives such as higher education and skills development, enterprise and innovation, knowledge transfer, research and investor support.

Summary of the Findings: The Experience of FE Sector Leadership

The interview programme conducted across the three very different case study areas has produced a set of rich and informative observations from both FE sector leaders and also from leaders across economic development and regeneration who are currently working with the FE sector. It is impossible in this report to present all of this material – and so we return to our original research questions in order to synthesise and interpret the most pertinent features below.

How do FE sector leaders engage currently with the ‘new’ place-shaping agenda?

Our research has found that FE sector leaders are working across a significant variety of localised place-shaping activities both in their formal capacity - but also informally. At the most basic level across the three case study areas, this involves their ensuring that learning and skills perspectives are fully considered and incorporated into economic development and regeneration plans at the earliest stage of their development - and on a continuing basis.

Sometimes this involves FE leaders adopting a very proactive role - investing much time and resource (both institutional and personal) into promoting the case for the learning and skills sector generally and how this can contribute to the overall development dynamic in an area. At other times this means needing to react without much lead-time to major ‘unforeseen’ external challenges (e.g. business closures) that require an informed response from the sector at short notice.

In the more formal institutional setting, College Principals and members of their senior management teams are required to attend an increasingly broad range of formal meetings across regionally based fora, local strategic partnerships, more localised area-based learning forums, as well as local economic development and regeneration partnership meetings.

This is bringing them into contact with a far greater number of organisations and agencies (and their different professional cultures) than has hitherto been the case at neighbourhood, town, city, sub-region and regional level (for example, Regional Development Agencies, local authorities, Chambers of Commerce, the NHS, local Universities, arms length development entities and so on); as well as with UK and international small and large private sector employers across a wide range of industry sectors.

They also interface with local schools on curriculum development issues; and local community, voluntary groups, national and local politicians on issues concerning the delivery of training, access and inclusion. Elsewhere, FE leaders are at a more informal level making a ‘softer’ civic contribution through their attendance at local cultural festivals, local business fairs, faith-based events and so on.

In the context of place-shaping as we have defined it above, their role at the local level is not solely restricted to ‘classic’ economic development and regeneration agendas - but is moving beyond these into other aspects that impact on local economy and society such as neighbourhood crime and security issues, and the more generalised agendas around improving health outcomes and the quality of life for local communities.

Although FE sector leaders report that they are more included in the continuing discussions around the shaping of local areas - it remains the case that at times they are having to work hard to ensure the FE voice is heard. This is put down to a number of factors:

- The principal strategic role in relation to local level partnerships for economic development and regeneration purposes has been the remit generally to date of the LSCs;
- The lack of funding - or rather funding regimes that do not adequately reflect differing local needs or allow for the development of an innovative and bespoke localised response;
- The tension between delivering to national learning and skills targets - and at the same time thinking through how best to respond to local requirements and local opportunities;
- The continuing uncertainty around the nature of regulation of the sector going forward (full autonomy, central regulation or co-regulation?);
- A degree of lack of understanding of the potentially pivotal role of the sector which is increasingly at the bridging point between local communities and the formal institutions and agencies of government that are delivering economic development and regeneration.

All of this means that at times FE sector involvement in place-shaping activity appears somewhat downstream - where the strategic vision for a locality and key outcomes have been discussed and agreed by the key local enabling agencies.

Although there are generalised experiences with place-shaping activities across the three very different case contexts addressed in the research, the interview programme points up that different (nuanced) FE leadership engagement (timing, tone, style and so on) is required in the differing development contexts. Geographical scale, local demographic patterns, local culture, the localised nature of the economic development and regeneration challenges across different places suggest that there is variety to be observed across the FE sector leadership response. The place-shaping agenda appears to be ever-changing at local level and requires significant adaptability on the part of local FE sector leaders.

What are the complexities inherent in the new place-shaping agenda for the FE sector?

Not surprisingly given the above, FE College Principals, their senior management teams and FE governors report that they are being stretched beyond their core learning and skills role. This core role itself is characterised by heightened strategic and operational complexities - but is now combined with an ever-widening remit that is encompassing localised economic development and regeneration in its broadest sense. At the same time, the relative 'instabilities' and uncertainties that exist (at the time of writing) around FE structures and funding regimes going forward are making it difficult for FE sector leaders to engage fully with, and to maintain a coherent institutional trajectory, when it comes to place-shaping discussions. A number of common features of this heightened complexity recur throughout the three case studies:

- ***FE leaders have to manage the contradiction between competition and collaboration***

The overlap of learning and skills priorities, opportunities and themes in certain areas means that FE Colleges can find themselves both collaborating and competing at the same time. Occasionally they compete on each other's patches. Unless it is handled well, this can place FE sector leaders in a contradictory and sometimes weakened position locally when it comes to contributing to wider and more generational economic development and regeneration agendas. Engaging in place-shaping means that they are constantly balancing the short term needs of the institution - its economic survival - with the longer term and sometimes less well-defined needs of the local area.

However, it is relatively well-understood across the sector that it is essential to spend time and resources working externally – the future shape and scope of the local College is intimately bound up with the economic success of the local area. Though Principals are aware of the danger of being too absent from their own organisation which can lead to unsettled internal relations within the College. Smaller Colleges are finding this balancing act more difficult than larger Colleges that have the staff resources to handle both internal operational issues and external liaison activity. Accommodating the contradictions between internal and external leadership roles is a key challenge for Principals in particular.

- ***'Fuzziness' around FE policy and funding***

There is a misalignment between the idea of local place-shaping (policy aspirations), its 'operationalisation' and current FE funding streams. The recent history of the FE sector has been characterised by understandably opportunistic responses to a variety of government funding programmes that have emerged over recent years. The inability to flex funding to local needs and to shape programme design and delivery for the special circumstances of the communities they serve has been a systemic problem for the sector. Demand-led funding and the requirement to deliver government targets have driven FE behaviours; and have arguably produced an environment that does not encourage ready collaboration. Neither have the continuing uncertainties around regulation and funding of the FE sector in England facilitated FE leadership engagement with the most recent round of local place-shaping activity at the sub-national scale - and indeed may well have constrained Colleges from making a bigger contribution. Uncertainty around the future of capital projects, the patchwork of different funding models (and their different performance criteria) for different client groups complicate the contribution to place-shaping that FE Colleges can make - and particularly for example where national priorities mean that 'social exclusion' initiatives are funded but not 'social inclusion'. Whether the funding regimes will become sufficiently flexible to enable the FE sector to develop its role in the shaping and transforming of localities is unclear. These particularly complexities may not go away and will require considerable adaptability on the part of FE leaders.

- ***There is a need to understand and engage with multiple sectors and themes***

In the context of local place-shaping, FE sector leaders working beyond their traditional organisational boundaries raise the issue of needing to better understand what drives (and influences) the growing number of parties involved. As they are increasingly drawn into the place-shaping conversation locally, they find they are called upon to master new and emerging developments across a multiplicity of sectors (public and private) and

new business models and policy fields (from economic sustainability through to social inclusion, innovation policy and knowledge-based economy). At the same time, bilateral relations clearly exist outside the formal collaborative forums which can complicate interpersonal as well as inter-organisational dynamics - and joining established economic development and regeneration groups and moving between policy and professional 'silos' can be difficult.

FE sector leaders and their teams across the three case areas are working hard to develop a strategic overview beyond their sector - looking to develop both economic and spatial literacy; and an understanding of the dynamics of place-shaping. Mastering this 'bigger picture' is seen as critical for FE Colleges if they are to connect with the right debates at the right time - and in order to communicate their contribution effectively at all levels locally. It implies a greater breadth and depth of work for FE sector leaders and suggests that effective organisation within (and between) Colleges for this new context is crucial. In many ways, the FE sector is becoming increasingly politicised at local level and with implications for leadership skills.

At a very practical level, it means knowing what needs to be said and when - and of finding ways of communicating without damaging key relationships. It is a form of FE sector leadership that at its best is engaging effectively with the interdisciplinary and group-based dynamics inherent in place-shaping both for the benefit of the sector as well as the local area. Navigating FE Colleges through the complex relationships and interdependencies that characterise local and national place-shaping agendas – often a crowded and contested political space at times of economic and social crisis – is a significant leadership challenge.

What are the subsequent challenges and implications of the new place-shaping agenda for FE sector leaders?

Effective FE Colleges have sought to root themselves in their locality reflecting and responding to local needs and opportunities. However, the 'language' of the sector and the need to gain a greater commonality of understanding is an additional complexity with other organisations reporting that they find the learning and skills sector almost impenetrable. This 'confusion' may work against the FE sector being invited to the "*right table at the right time*" and suggests that some further work is required to improve the image of the sector as a whole and render its activities more accessible to other professional groups across economic development and regeneration.

FE sector leaders need to work from a base of institutional stability in an inherently unstable operational environment in order to create and maintain the space required to participate in collaborative agendas. Well-run organisations are a pre-requisite for effective engagement with wider local policy. A good track record of delivery (for example, successful inspections and delivering what you say you will deliver) helps to develop credibility and people listen better.

A general message from the interview programme is that FE sector leaders need to "*get out more*" - whilst at the same time avoiding the danger of too much detachment from core College business. And that their engagement has to be authentic and consistent - and not solely when there is an external crisis to be dealt with, or resources are being handed out. FE sector leaders need to be seen as directly concerned and interested in the collaborative place-shaping dialogue over extended timescales.

Although it is difficult to delegate attendance at important collaborative forums – as this often must be for the Head of the institution – a ‘whole College team’ approach is thought to be required given the range of technical and thematic complexity (from new capital building projects on campus through to the why’s and wherefore’s of learning and skills agendas around high technology corridors and integrated community projects). Continuity, coherence and a good level of technical understanding are critical.

It is important to find ways of working with a variety of individuals, organisations and groups over which FE sector leaders have no authority and who may need to be convinced of the contribution of the learning and skills sector. Often schedules and priorities may be dictated by others and irrespective of internal College priorities. Place-shaping for all involved increasingly means operating outside traditional organisational roles and comfort zones. Governors and senior management teams have to be brought along and this can be problematic where institutional gains may not be clear over the short term. Ultimately, it requires the development of a combined set of skills and knowledge that are strategic, balanced between inward and outward looking and highly relational.

Going forward, what role is there for the FE sector in local place-shaping and why?

The general consensus across the interview programme is that the FE sector has a critical role to play in place-shaping – and one that goes beyond the pure skills and employment agenda. FE Colleges are often the first port of call for people looking to connect or re-connect with the economy and society more generally. The sector has the potential to motivate and inspire those who have found the more classic and formal routes into learning and personal development difficult to access or navigate. In this sense, FE Colleges have the potential to contribute to the general well-being of their localities.

There are many potential barriers to the development of open access and community focused initiatives – for example, the constraints of working to national policy agendas which at a time of economic recession are focussing more heavily on skilling and up-skilling for the ‘new’ economy. This is important of course. But finding the time and resources to develop a more holistic and inclusive approach to continuing learning (in the broadest sense of learning) across localities and communities, is also critical. This is not easy for FE sector leaders – it is a role, however, that plays directly into the bigger idea that effective neighbourhoods, towns, cities and regions cannot be brought about solely by improvements in the quality of their built environment and economy. For example, in the context of the knowledge-based economy, there is a growing understanding that it is important that local people without the ‘new’ skills are not left behind, but are helped to access and experience the wider beneficial and more generalised quality of life effects.

Working at the human interface, FE Colleges in this sense are well-placed to motivate place. This day-to-day human interface with local people is what sets them aside from other government bodies involved in economic development, planning and regeneration – and in the context of place-shaping offers potential that can be further developed.

Conclusions

Too often in the past the learning and skills agenda has been shaped at national level without full reference to the needs of particular localities - the link between local economic development and regeneration policy on the one hand and learning and skills policy on the other has not always been seamless. The potential role of the FE sector to act as a bridge between economy and community has not been understood across the piece. We have stressed at the outset of this report that the FE sector has an important role to play in the effective shaping and re-shaping of localities that are facing very different development challenges at the beginning of the 21st century. However, for a variety of reasons, the picture remains patchy. In some of the case areas - and for some projects - FE engagement in collaborative place-shaping activity has been effective and significant; at other times it has been minimal. We remain optimistic, however, as there is a timely opportunity for the sector to engage with and influence these new agendas around the continuing and integrated development of our neighbourhoods, towns, cities and regions - with a view to engendering positive generational change across communities at a time of rapid economic and social transformation. Through their student body, the FE sector can bring local people together with the economic and social opportunities that current government policy across learning and skills, economic development and regeneration aspires to promote.

Recommendations

The key messages for FE sector leadership that flow from this research project are summarised below:

Some General Observations

- FE sector leaders need to develop a collective proposition that is able to translate across, and influence economic development and regeneration practice at all spatial scales. National – regional – sub-regional and local.
- The FE sector needs to better articulate its pivotal role. Why should - and how can they help with the continuing shaping and re-shaping of effective places?
- FE sector leaders need to change traditional perceptions and extend their reach locally - Colleges need to consider themselves as a destination of first choice for learners; there are examples of practice beyond the UK (in the US) that could be usefully examined for transferable lessons;
- If FE leaders are to engage at a strategic level locally, this role has to be placed at the core of both their activities as managers of the College and also promoted across other bodies (e.g. with their funding body);
- Irrespective of legacy, FE sector leaders need to appreciate the legitimacy of local authorities as agents of local change and work with them to their mutual advantage;
- A coherent plan and vision for FE and its interface with HE is required – a better understanding of how more seamless or complementary progression in learning can be achieved;

On Leadership Development

- FE leaders are keen to learn from each other's experiences of engaging effectively with local place-shaping activity;
- In some cases, FE sector leaders need to better understand the specificities of the local development context in order to be credible and to reflect in their programmes and practices the needs of the communities they serve;
- The external leadership role is highly complex and is now beyond the capabilities and competencies of any one individual. A whole FE College integrated approach is required and the role needs to be understood and shared by a leadership team;
- FE leaders consider that leadership development needs to accommodate the idea of 'whole team' development must offer leadership learning that is bespoke to the tasks and challenges they face in their particular localities;
- The sector has to further develop its collaborative and co-operative working skills – this cannot be left to individual Colleges as for various reasons 'good practice' around leadership of place experience (what works and why) may not be being readily/rapidly exchanged across sector;
- Although there are clearly generalised lessons around effective leadership approaches across the sector, different development contexts and contingencies apply in different places. Going forward FE leadership development programmes will need to help leaders consider the best way of dealing with these nuances;
- For knowledge transfer purposes within FE, the sector needs to consider making better use of the experience of their most effective leaders where place-shaping is concerned; looking at (say) extending coaching, mentoring, and networking for knowledge transfer across the sector.
- To engender greater understanding across disciplines, elements of FE leadership development should be undertaken along side other professions (economic development, planning, regeneration etc) with whom they work in collaboration on local programmes and projects.

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Annex 1

List of anonymised individuals interviewed

- 5 FE College Principals
- 1 FE College senior manager
- 1 Chair, FE College Board of Governors
- 1 Vice-Chair, FE College Board of Governors
- 2 Headteachers of 'feeder' secondary schools
- 1 Director of Regional Skills Partnership (RDA)
- 1 Chair, Local Strategic Partnership
- 2 Directors of Local Strategic Partnerships
- 1 member of the national Learning and Skills Council transition team
- 2 Learning and Skills Council (LSC) Area Directors
- 1 Learning and Skills sector coordinator
- 1 Pro-Vice Chancellor, Higher Education Institution
- 1 Dean, Higher Education Institution
- 1 Higher Education Senior Manager (responsible for relationship management with FE sector)
- 1 Head of Regeneration Policy, NHS Trust
- 1 Chair, Local Learning Forum
- 1 Local Authority skills lead officer

CEL/LSIS Research Programme Publications

Between 2006 and 2009, the CEL/LSIS research programme was directed by Professor David Collinson of Lancaster University Management School. During this time the programme published 12 edited volumes of practitioner research reports, 6 individual practitioner research reports and 20 individual HE research reports, all exploring leadership issues in the learning and skills sector. All these publications are available from LSIS (in hard copy) and from the LSIS website ([http://www.centreforexcellence.org.uk/default.aspx?Page=Practitioner Projects](http://www.centreforexcellence.org.uk/default.aspx?Page=Practitioner+Projects)) in electronic form, as follows:

Edited Volumes

Volume	Title
Volume 1	Researching Leadership in the Learning and Skills Sector: By the Sector, On the Sector, For the Sector (2005-06)
Volume 2	Developing Middle Leaders (2006-07)
Volume 3	Leading Quality Improvement (2006-07)
Volume 4	Leadership and the Learner Voice (2006-07)
Volume 5	Collaborative Leadership (2006-07)
Volume 6	Researching Disabilities (2007-08)
Volume 7	Leading Employer Engagement (2007-08)
Volume 8	Distributed and Shared Leadership (2007-08)
Volume 9	Leadership Development and Succession (2007-08)
Volume 10	New Directions in Leadership Excellence: Towards Self Regulation (2007-08)
Volume 11	Personalising Learner Voice (2007-08)
Volume 12	Researching Self Regulation in FE Colleges (2008-09)

Individual Practitioner Reports

Title	Author(s)
Routes to Excellence: Performance Management Strategies for Organisational Improvement in General Further Education Colleges (2007-08)	Reg Chapman and Nadine Cartner, Association of College Management
Leading Multi-Faith Support Teams in the Learning and Skills Sector (2007-08)	Hilary Stone, Oxford and Cherwell Valley College
Leading Local Authorities, As Providers of Adult and Community Learning and Work-Based Learning, through Ofsted Multi-remit Inspection (2007-08)	Kate Watters, NIACE
Collaboration and Competition: A Leadership Challenge (2007-08)	Simon Penhall and Richard Graham, HelmePark
Exploring the Leadership and Governance Implications of Self-Regulation for Local Authority and Third Sector Providers of Adult Learning and Skills (2008-09)	Ian Yarroll, NIACE
Self Regulation and Private Providers in Work Based Learning (2008-09)	Di McEvoy-Robinson and Peter Marples, Aspire Achieve Advance

Individual HE Research Reports

Title	Author(s)
Leading Partnerships for 14-19 Education Provision (2006-07)	Professor Ann Briggs et al., Newcastle University
Faith in the Community: Leadership Challenges in the Learning and Skills Sector (2006-07)	Margaret Collinson and Professor David Collinson, Lancaster University Management School
Overcoming Barriers to Diversity in FE Governor Recruitment: A Draft Report for Consultation (2006-07)	Professor David Collinson, Margaret Collinson and Dr Lewis Turner, Lancaster University Management School

Title	Author(s)
Investigating Collaborative Leadership in Learning and Skills (2006-07)	Dr Jill Jameson, University of Greenwich
Employer Engagement in the Further Education Sector (2006-07)	Dr Simon Kelly, Lancaster University Management School
Innovative Approaches to Employer Engagement in Further Education (2006-07)	Dr Simon Kelly, Lancaster University Management School
Barriers to Employer Responsiveness in Further Education (2006-07)	Dr Simon Kelly, Lancaster University Management School
Integrating Diversity in Leadership in Further Education (2006-07)	Professor Jacky Lumby et al., University of Southampton
Leadership, Diversity and Decision Making (2006-07)	Professor Jacky Lumby et al., University of Southampton
Diversity, Identity and Leadership (2006-07)	Professor Jacky Lumby et al., University of Southampton
Trust and Leadership in the Lifelong Learning Sector (2007-08)	Dr Jill Jameson and Dr Margaret Andrews, University of Greenwich
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**UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM**



Lancaster University
MANAGEMENT SCHOOL

London Office

Fourth Floor, 47 Mark Lane
London EC3R 7QQ
t +44 (0) 870 060 3278
e enquirieslondon@lsis.org.uk

Coventry Office

Friars House, Manor House Drive
Coventry CV1 2TE
t +44 (0) 870 162 0632
e enquiriescoventry@lsis.org.uk

www.lsis.org.uk

