

## Maritime NW Alliance for Skills and Productivity

### Chair's Report and Draft Action Plan (Jan 2005)



#### 1 Your Views

The objective of the Alliance is to help public sector intervention be demand led. The views of people in industry are critical, as are the views of those who aim to support companies. **Please let me have your views** on the Alliance and its Action Plan. Here are some of the questions that you might like to comment on:

##### **About the Alliance:**

Have you heard of the Alliance before?  
Do you now understand the Alliance and what it is trying to do?  
Do you agree with it?  
If not, what else should be happening?  
What do you think of the action plan?  
What is missing?  
Would you like to be involved?

##### **About training and skills needs (companies):**

Do you have unmet needs?  
What are they?  
Have you ever tried to address these?  
What happened?  
Who would you ask?

##### **About business support (companies):**

Have you ever benefited from business support?  
Have you ever asked for support?  
Do you want support now?  
Do you know where to go?  
Do you know what is available?  
Do you know what to ask for?

##### **About working with the Alliance (public sector partners):**

Do you support the Alliance principles?  
Is your organisation kitted out to play its role?  
Is it relevant to you? Why?  
What needs to be done to make it more effective?

#### 2 About the Maritime NW Alliance

The Maritime NW Alliance was set up in early 2004 to lead on skills and productivity issues in the NW of England. It is part of a wider initiative spearheaded by NWDA to coordinate public sector support on key sectors, and ensure that intervention is demand led.

The Chair of the Maritime NW Alliance is NWDA's Head of Maritime – a so-called *Cluster Champion* because the role involves championing the maritime industries, and working as the fulcrum between the private sector and public sector partners on a *regional* basis. Regional means the five Northwest counties of Cumbria, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Greater Merseyside and Cheshire (also known as *sub-regions*).

The core of the Maritime NW Alliance is a small group with representatives drawn from NWDA, the Learning and Skills Council, and Business Link.

- The Northwest Regional Development Agency is responsible for the sustainable economic development and regeneration of England's Northwest.
- The Learning and Skills Councils are responsible for improving the skills of England's young people and adults, and for planning and funding high-quality vocational education and training. There is one LSC for each sub-region.
- The Business Links provide support, advice and information for businesses. There is also one Business Link for each sub-region.

The LSC and BL representatives on the Maritime Alliance come from the Merseyside organisations. These are responsible for linking with sector representatives in LSCs and Business Links in the other sub-regions. The idea is that (when appropriate) issues can be approached with everyone paddling their canoes in the same direction.

Other important contributors to the Maritime NW Alliance are national organisations that exist to develop vocational training and qualifications. More on these in the moment.

### **3 Report on 2004**

In early 2004, just after its initial formation, the Maritime NW Alliance commissioned consultants to write an Action Plan on the basis of consultation with businesses and other stakeholders. This provided the blueprint for the Alliance's work over the last nine months.

We have all been learning as we have been trying to implement this. Maritime is a fascinating collection of disparate industries, e.g. shipping, ports, seafood, marine leisure, and marine engineering. Some of the issues that affect one sector also affect others (*cross-cutting issues*). A good example of this is the need in all sectors to encourage bright young people to take an interest in working in the maritime industries.

This issue led the Alliance to focus its funding resources on a new project – the Maritime NW Schools Challenge. This aims to engage 100 schools in the current school year to undertake projects with a maritime theme. You can find out more at [www.maritimenw.com](http://www.maritimenw.com).

Some of the actions in the Alliance's action plan are being implemented by *cluster organisations*. These are companies supported by NWDA (and in Merseyside Objective One), but directed by and on behalf of the private sector, to facilitate the development of their industries. There are three of these:

- Mersey Maritime: The longest standing in the Northwest and now probably the best known maritime cluster organisation in the UK.
- Seafood NW: For the fish catching, auctioning and processing sectors.
- Sail NW: For the leisure boating sector including its supply chain. This company was just launched at the January 2005 London Boat Show.

For example, Seafood NW is developing a project on fish filleting training, and this is one of the projects in the Maritime NW Alliance's Action Plan.

There are a number of sector based national organisations that are important in trying to develop skills. The main ones that are working with Maritime NW Alliance projects are:

- British Marine Federation
- Merchant Navy Training Board
- Port Safety and Skills
- Royal Yachting Association
- Sea Fish Industry Authority
- Sector Skills Council for Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies

In general, a modus operandi has emerged whereby relevant people participate in project groups that are of interest to them. Because of the industry's disparate nature, not everybody is interested in everything.

#### **4 The Next 12 Months**

Action Plans should be living and developing documents. We must use the experience of the last nine months, and revise our plan into a document to guide next year's activities. The two main ideas that lie behind the restructured Maritime NW Action Plan are reducing it to fewer more flexible generic actions, and maintaining the small core of the Alliance with a number of sub-groups for specific actions and projects. There are now four key actions:

1. Links with schools.
2. Links with FE and HE institutions and professional organisations.
3. Meeting industry training needs.
4. Focussing business support on maritime.

Each of these actions provides an umbrella for several projects, and these are detailed on the following pages. These four actions are at different stages:

1. The Maritime NW Schools Challenge is well underway, and it is anticipated that this will morph into a wider "links with schools" programme.
2. Little headway has so far been made with better understanding or coordinating the regional picture for FE and HE, although specific sub-regional agendas are much in evidence.
3. Some progress is being made on meeting industry training needs. In truth we have so far grasped only the tip of this iceberg. We still know little about unmet needs, and substantial procedural barriers remain to be overcome.
4. With respect to business support, there is potential for a step change in the level of business support offered to the maritime industry.

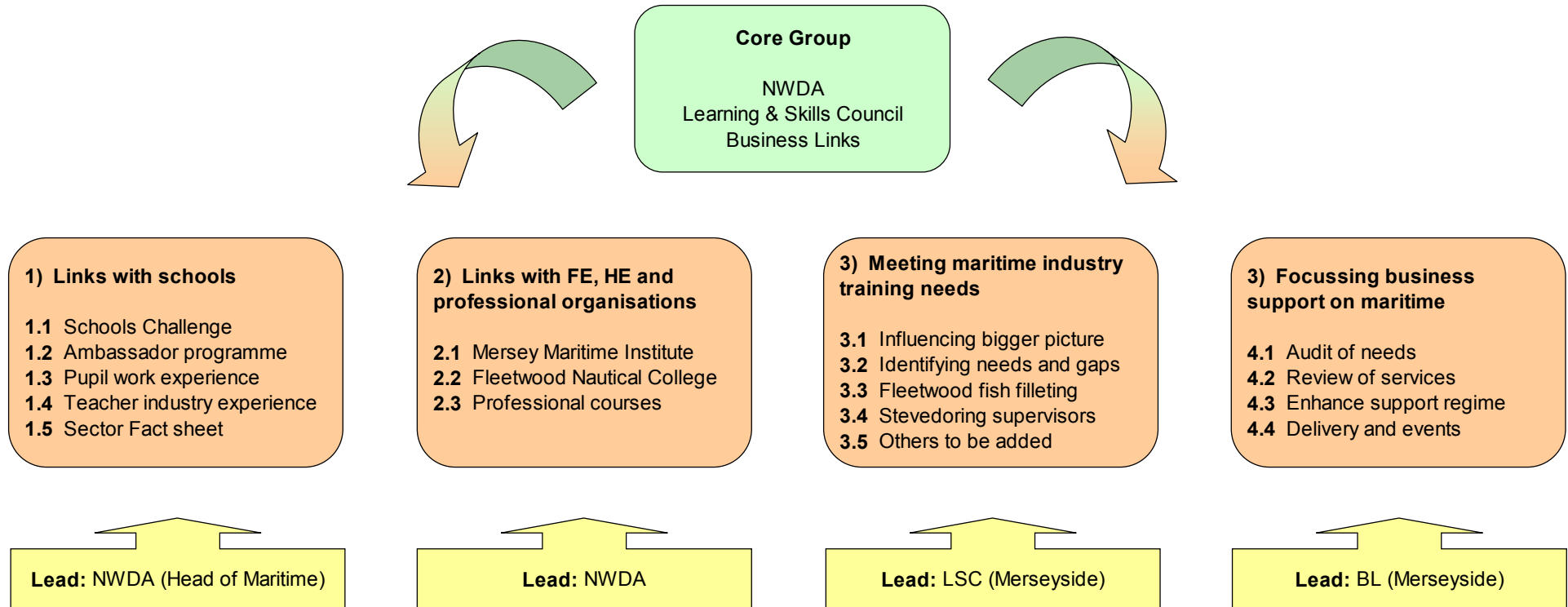
There is plenty here for the Maritime NW Alliance to attempt to shape and influence. The diagram overleaf summarises the key points. We all look forward to your comments.

*Chris Fisher*

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### Maritime NW Alliance: Structure



<b>Draft Action Plan Jan 2005</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Links with Schools</b>
<p><b>Background</b></p> <p>Knowledge that we remain a maritime nation, and that there is a range of rewarding careers in the sector, is low throughout Britain, and consequently numbers of young people applying for vacant positions - across the sector - are low. Unless more young people are attracted to the sector, there will be serious labour shortages.</p> <p><b>Objective</b></p> <p>Greater interest from brighter young people in all the maritime sectors because they have been introduced to the range of possible careers open to them.</p> <p>There are five initiatives to be combined in this action:</p> <p><b>1.1 The Maritime NW Schools Challenge:</b> an exciting curriculum-related project, operating every year, in various guises, with lots of scope for imagination and variety, and for high profile publicity. Effective integration into the curriculum is key.</p> <p><b>1.2 Ambassadors programme:</b> bringing young people from within the maritime sector into schools.</p> <p><b>1.3 Structured pupil work experience programme:</b> develop a structured work experience programme.</p> <p><b>1.4 Industry experience for teachers:</b> exposure to the industry and commerce.</p> <p><b>1.5 Maritime sector fact sheet:</b> local delivery of careers material to relevant people.</p>		
<p><b>Key issues that the project addresses</b></p> <p><b>1.1 Maritime NW Schools Challenge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maritime is poorly integrated or represented in the curriculum.</li> <li>• Many existing initiatives fail to win room in a crowded school day because priority goes to what is curriculum-related.</li> <li>• Many existing initiatives do not capture the imagination of young people.</li> </ul> <p><b>1.2 Ambassador Programme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges stereo-types within the maritime sectors</li> <li>• Providing industry role models</li> <li>• Effective communication of the range of job opportunities at all levels</li> </ul> <p><b>1.3 Structured Pupil Work Experience Programme</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build links between schools and industry</li> <li>• Support industry in developing the capacity to host pupils on a structured work experience programme</li> </ul> <p><b>1.4 Industry Experience for Teachers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising teacher awareness of the maritime industry</li> <li>• Support industry in developing the capacity to host teachers on structured industry experience programmes</li> <li>• Communicating placement opportunities to EBP's</li> </ul> <p><b>1.5 Maritime Sector Fact Sheet</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too few young people – or their advisers – understand the full range of maritime career opportunities open to them</li> <li>• Sectors with a high proportion of craft and hand skills – such as maritime – consequently suffer because too few young people consider them as suitable careers</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Relevant parallel or partner national / regional initiatives</b></p> <p>South West Maritime Challenge – a partnership of SW RDA and BMF. Careers Northwest, EBLO, Teacher Placement Service, Sea Vision, Merchant Navy Training Board, Port Safety and Skills, Seafish Industry Authority, British Marine Federation, SEMTA, RYA, Sail NW, Seafood NW, Mersey Maritime.</p>		

<p><b>Physical / practical actions / key steps</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Successful role out and delivery of the schools Challenge via the Schools Challenge Group up to September 2005</li> <li>2. Obtain funding for future years</li> <li>3. Widening of the remit of the schools working group to cover all areas within the project from September 2005.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Lead:</b> NWDA</p> <p><b>Supporting organisations</b>                  EBLO consortia                  Schools                  Employers                  SSCs / Maritime Skills Alliance                  Professional and trade bodies</p>
<p><b>Indicate resources for key steps</b></p> <p>Funding in place for the 12 months to September 2005, £100,000 from NWDA and an anticipated £20,000 from Objective 1. Used to fund a full time Project co-ordinator, marketing costs, contribution to school costs and prizes.</p> <p>In 2005/2006 a further £120,000 will need to be secured to continue the programme of work outlined in this project.</p> <p>In future years we will be looking for increased value added by widening the remit of the group and what it delivers.</p>	
<p><b>Project performance and success criteria</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of school engaged in the Challenge</li> <li>2. Number of pupils participating in the Challenge</li> <li>3. Ambassador visits to schools</li> <li>4. Pupils and teachers taking up work experience programmes and industry experience days</li> <li>5. Profile generated – e.g. column inches in local press / time on regional TV, etc</li> <li>6. Circulation of maritime sector fact sheets to all schools within the region</li> </ol>	

<b>Draft Action Plan Jan 2005</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Links with FE and HE institutions and professional organisations</b>
<p><b>Background</b> There is potential to facilitate the improvement in the availability of education and training, and to encourage positioning of the Northwest as an area of maritime education expertise.</p> <p><b>Objective</b> Growing the capacity for maritime training and education within the region to obtain world leading status, and encouraging provision of the full range of courses to meet industry needs. The three main ideas that could currently fall within this project are:</p> <p>2.1 Mersey Maritime Institute 2.2 Fleetwood Nautical College development 2.3 Extending availability of professional courses in the Northwest Other ideas should develop.</p>		
<p><b>Key issues that the project addresses</b></p> <p><b>2.1 Mersey Maritime Institute</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chris to complete</li> </ul> <p><b>2.2 Fleetwood Nautical College</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fleetwood Nautical College is a successful institution providing professional training for seafarers and courses related to offshore safety.</li> <li>• It is not located in an area with favourable funding regimes, and it will be important to ensure that public funding for projects elsewhere in the region does not compromise its future position.</li> <li>• There may also be opportunities to help it to develop its services</li> </ul> <p><b>2.3 Extending availability of professional courses in the Northwest</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most professional organisations are based in the South (usually in Greater London) and tend to run their courses in the South. Participation by NW-based employees is therefore expensive, necessitating train fares and accommodation costs – which probably reduces participation.</li> <li>• Yet professional bodies will not run courses in the Northwest unless assured of a large enough market.</li> <li>• This project would break into that by offering risk-sharing agreements with professional bodies – i.e. they would be guaranteed (say) 50% of any shortfall between course costs and income for courses run in the NW. The Maritime SSPA, NWDA and partners would also use their contacts to promote the courses, thus making full take-up more likely.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Relevant parallel or partner national / regional initiatives</b></p>		
<p><b>Physical / practical actions / key steps</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This is a new project and the first is to see if the key organisations think it will add value and want to participate.</li> <li>2. Invite organisations to a workshop to discuss.</li> <li>3. Develop this into a regular sub group of the Alliance if appropriate. This group would develop a modus operandi.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Lead:</b> NWDA</p> <p><b>Supporting organisations</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. NWDA</li> <li>2. Mersey Maritime</li> <li>3. Fleetwood Nautical College</li> <li>4. JMU/Lairdside</li> <li>5. Laird Foundation and Barrow Marine Engineering CoVE</li> <li>6. NWUA</li> <li>7. Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers</li> <li>8. British International Freight Association</li> </ol>	

	9. Institute of Freight and Logistics 10. Other professional bodies
<b>Indicate resources for key steps</b>  1. Resources for major projects will emerge from the proposals for funding 2. Resources maybe required to provide guarantees for the hosting of courses by professional organisations.	
<b>Project performance and success criteria</b>  1. Made an effective contribution to realising major projects 2. No of training places provided which would not otherwise have been provided 3. No of NW-based professionals taking up training who would not otherwise have done so	



<b>Draft Action Plan Jan 2005</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Meeting Industry Training Needs</b>
<p><b>Background</b></p> <p>There are training needs within the industry that are unmet, particularly for low volume training. A root and branch approach is needed to identify the unmet training needs, take on funding issues and bureaucratic barriers, and ultimately get provision for these in place.</p> <p><b>Objective</b></p> <p>To influence the public sector machinery so that is more flexible and responsive, and to develop specific training needs projects. There are four initiatives to be progressed</p> <p>3.1 Working with other Alliances and partners to influence the bigger picture</p> <p>3.2 Identification of specific training needs and gaps</p> <p>3.3 Fleetwood Fish Filleting School</p> <p>3.4 Stevedoring Supervisors Apprenticeship</p> <p>Additional projects will emerge e.g. there is believed to be a shortage in ship repair/building e.g. shipwrights and laminators, marina management, others.</p>		
<p><b>Key issues that the project addresses</b></p> <p><b>3.1 Working with other Alliances and partners to influence the bigger picture</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LSC's funding formulae and mechanisms make it very difficult for low volume training needs to be met. This is a particular problem in sectors such as the NW marine leisure sector, which needs training to take advantage of good growth prospects, but where likely participation levels in any training programme in the region are low.</li> <li>• Subsidised training programmes are tied to qualifications but these are not always necessary and qualifications may not exist.</li> <li>• Training needs to be tuned to needs of the sector in terms of content, location, appropriate level, and qualifications.</li> </ul> <p><b>3.2 Identification of specific training needs and gaps</b></p> <p>There is no proper research or statement of what these are, but there are numerous examples of comments on this issue from the private sector. A full picture of the training needs and gaps must be developed so that new specific projects can then be enacted either by the core alliance or cluster groups.</p> <p><b>3.3 Fleetwood Fish Filleting School</b></p> <p>Fish is caught onto a vessel, and then it undergoes various levels of processing. It is first gutted on the vessel. The fish is then landed and graded before being sold at auction. Fish is then filleted. It may be sold as wet fish, or undergo further processing such as smoking or cooking.</p> <p>The filleting stage is a key stage of adding value in the process. It is a skilled job and relatively well paid. The quality of the filleting affects the price that the fillet can be sold for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A fish that has been hacked about looks less appetising.</li> <li>• It is also sold by weight, and it is therefore important to avoid as much wasted flesh as possible.</li> <li>• Larger fish fetch better prices per kilo, and are most sensitive to quality of filleting.</li> <li>• Skilled filleters are also quick and thus more productive.</li> </ul> <p>There is a shortage of skilled fish filleters in the NW and in Fleetwood in particular. In broad terms, this results in fewer boxes of fish bought, fewer vessels calling, and lower prices. It is effectively constraining growth of the seafood industry and reducing profitability of companies.</p> <p>A shortage of skilled labour prevents Fleetwood from taking advantage of the recent fish supplies from the Faroes. An increase in the number of skilled filleters would avoid this.</p> <p>The prime aim of the project is to reduce and, ultimately, eliminate the shortage of skilled fish filleters in the North West and in the Fleetwood area in particular. This will remove one of the constraints currently limiting growth and profitability in the fish processing industry.</p>		

### 3.4 Stevedoring Supervisors Apprenticeship

Prior to the abolition of the Dock Labour Scheme the prime responsibility for training in cargo handling skills lay with the national Dock Labour Board. Supervisors were almost exclusively drawn from the ranks of the Registered Dock Workers, and had the necessary level of training and experience in cargo handling skills to thoroughly understand the requirements of the task. Their training, if any, in supervisory skills was the responsibility of the employer and varied widely from port to port.

Since the abolition of the Dock Labour Scheme in 1989 the industry, through British Port Industry Training and its successor Port Skills and Safety Ltd (PSS), have developed a Modern Apprenticeship in Stevedoring, which has been accredited at S/NVQ Level 2, but as yet there has been no national agreement on a supervisors training programme. The uptake of this S/NVQ Level 2 programme by the industry has been patchy. In many cases the ports have been able to rely upon the continuation of skills gained in the days of the National Dock Labour Scheme for their cargo handling operations, but these skills are being lost by natural wastage. There is now a pressing need for a structured training programme.

An outlined for this has been scoped. But to date no progress has been made in getting provision in place despite several meetings including within NWDA, with PSS and with the QCA.

#### Relevant parallel or partner national / regional initiatives

Skillworks programme in Merseyside (funded until 2006)

New Seafood Fisheries Industry Authority course on fish filleting

Proposed Port Safety & Skills programme for Stevedoring Supervisors March 2006

Seafood NW Development Study

Sail NW Development Study

#### Physical / practical actions / key steps

1. Discussion to raise potential for a regional fund based on the "Skillworks" concept
2. Work with existing cluster groups and other key stakeholders to identify skills gaps in the various sectors i.e. shipping, ports, marine engineering, marine leisure and seafood.
3. Add new projects to the list
4. Monitor projects and deal with barriers to implementation

**Lead:** LSC

#### Supporting organisations

NWDA  
SEMPTA and former NTOs  
Cluster organisations  
Industry Bodies e.g. BMF, RYA

#### Indicate resources for key steps

1. Identify regional funding to develop the Skillworks concept across the region
2. Identify resources and provision to meet the unmet needs

#### Project performance and success criteria

- 1 Did the system become more responsive and flexible
- 2 Unmet needs identified
- 3 Projects implemented

<b>Draft Action Plan Jan 2005</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Focussing Business Support on the Maritime Sector</b>
<p><b>Background</b></p> <p>Business support is generally focused through the use of diagnostic tools and “themed” products such as IT, health and safety etc, and Business Link staff are generally not industry specialists. Feedback from Business Links is that their customers are satisfied, that they are not focused on sectors, and do not have the resources to develop a sector focus and support specific cluster organisations and their initiatives.</p> <p>Feedback from the industry is that it does not know what assistance is available, who to ask for it, what to ask for, and that businesses prefer to talk to specialists who have a background in their sector.</p> <p>There is at least a partial a mismatch between what businesses say they want, and what and how Business Links deliver business support.</p> <p><b>Objective</b></p> <p>To develop a focussed programme of business support that is more tailored to the maritime industry, and specifically works with cluster organisations and other industry organisations to support their initiatives.</p> <p>4.1 Review of business support needs          4.2 Review of business support services          4.3 Enhance support regime          4.4 Delivery and events</p>		
<p><b>Key issues that the project addresses</b></p> <p><b>4.1 Review of business support needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with cluster groups and industry organisations across the sector to identify needs</li> <li>• Link with Sail NW and Seafood NW development studies</li> </ul> <p><b>4.2 Review of business support services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the structure of business support services – who does what and how</li> <li>• Identify which maritime companies have been supported and what was provided</li> </ul> <p><b>4.3 Enhance support regime</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a plan to better focus support onto the needs of maritime businesses</li> </ul> <p><b>4.4 Delivery and events</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate networking meetings and events</li> <li>• Provide a focussed proactive service with dedicated people</li> <li>• Produce sector updates</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Relevant parallel or partner national / regional initiatives</b></p> <p>Shipbuilding and Shiprepairers Association masterclasses          Lean engineering initiative by Marine South West          Initiatives / networking support through Marine South East</p>		
<p><b>Physical / practical actions / key steps</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Market research on needs in the industry, map provision onto this, and identify gaps</li> <li>2. Collaborative regional discussion amongst Business Links and others on how they can respond to better supporting the industry</li> <li>3. Develop programmes to respond</li> </ol>	<p><b>Lead:</b> Business Link</p> <p><b>Supporting organisations</b></p> <p>NWDA and sub regional delivery organisations          Seafood NW / Sail NW / Mersey Maritime          BMF, SFIA, SSA and others</p>	

**Indicate resources for key steps**

1. Funding for market research - £25k
2. Need for funding to develop specific support programmes and put in place resources needed to provide enhanced support

**Project performance and success criteria**

- Research undertaken
- Cluster companies and industry organisations supported
- Numbers of businesses seeking advice, agreeing action plans and achieving goals