



Adult Education

Lead director: Mike Dalzell

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Kerry Gray
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- Report version number plus Code No from Report Tracking Database:

Suggested content

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of the report is:

- To provide a review of the 2019-2023 Adult Education service plan
- To present the 2022-23 Adult Education self-assessment plan
- To consult on the draft Accountability Agreement which lays out planning priorities and targets for 2024-25 and will form the basis of the service's Adult Education Budget contract with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

2. Summary

Despite the impact of the pandemic the service delivered well on the majority of the objectives set out in the **2019-23 Service Plan** (Appendix 1)

The **Self-Assessment Report for the 2022-23** Academic year (Appendix 2) indicates that the service remains Good and continued to rebuild. Good progress was made the areas for improvement set the previous year:

- Learner numbers have increased by 28%,
- Achievement rates have increased by 4.9%
- There has been good development of new initiatives and diversification of funding to secure the long-term viability of the Service.

Key strengths

- The broad and diverse Community Learning curriculum provides accessible learning opportunities including those with severe mental health difficulties, impacted by the cost-of-living crisis and/or digitally excluded.
- Learner retention and achievement are excellent.
- Staff work effectively with learners, employers and other partners and provide a diverse range of enrichment activities to ensure that teaching, learning and assessment enable learners to develop personal, social and employability skills that prepare them well for their intended job role, career aims and/or personal goals.
- Partnership working is outstanding. Effective and innovative partnerships are developed with a wide range of local stakeholders.

Key Areas for Improvement

- In some areas attendance is below expectations.
- In a few curriculum areas a shortage of tutors limited the programme delivered.

The service is required to produce an **Annual Accountability Agreement** (Appendix 3) to inform planning for the 2024-25 academic year. Comments and suggestions are invited from the committee on the draft document which includes a set of proposed new commitments.

3. Recommendations

To note

- the achievements of the service over the last 5 years and in rebuilding participation following the disruption of COVID.

Members are invited to comment and make suggestions on the Accountability Agreement to inform curriculum developments in 2024-25 and beyond, in particular in relation to the development of the Skills Bootcamp programme.

4. Report/Supporting information including options considered:

4.1 ESFA Accountability Agreement

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) accountability agreements are part of a wider system of quality assurance in FE, and they are designed to help ensure that public funding is being used effectively to support high-quality education and training. They also provide a framework for monitoring and evaluating the performance of FE providers, which helps to identify areas for improvement and support further development.

The Adult Education service is required to submit an Accountability Agreement for 2024-25 by the end of May 2024 and the targets identified in it will form part of the annual contract. This replaces the previous Service Plan.

The draft objectives and associated targets laid out in the agreement are based on the seven purposes of Adult and Community Learning:

1. improved confidence and willingness to engage in learning.
2. acquisition of skills preparing people for training and further learning
3. acquisition of skills preparing people for employment or self-employment
4. improved digital, financial literacy and/or communication skills - includes English (including English for speakers of Other Languages), maths, and digital provision.
5. parents/carers better equipped to support and encourage their children's learning.
6. improved/maintained health and/or social well-being.
7. develop stronger communities, with more self-sufficient, connected, and pro-active citizens, leading to increased volunteering, civic engagement, and social integration; reduced costs on welfare, health and anti-social behaviour;

increased online learning and self-organised learning; the lives of our most troubled families being turned around.

These objectives align well with the needs of the city and the recommendations of the Leicester and Leicestershire Learning and Skills Improvement Plan, produced by the East Midlands Chamber, which identifies the knowledge, skills and behaviours local employers identify as priorities for growth. These are embedded in all Adult Education courses and include:

Knowledge - Across all sectors, technical and vocational knowledge areas are the most important to a business's success. The next four top areas are: Basic literacy; Basic numeracy; Health & Safety; Basic IT.

Skills - Team working is the most important skill across all sectors, followed by, verbal communication, specific occupational skills, written communication, and time management.

Behaviour - Being a team player is the most important behaviour, followed by; being hard working, reliable, resilient, and honest.

In 2024-25 the service proposes to use its Adult Skills Funding to:

- Review curriculum design and delivery in line with the local Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour requirements of businesses as evidenced in the LSIP.
- Offer easy access, short courses for Digital Skills in business, with a specific focus on digital marketing, social media, cloud computing and data analytics.
- The development of green skills and support of the Council's Net Zero strategy through the development of new community and family learning courses.
- Increase the provision of English Language training, including more advanced and technical language skills.
- Contribute to the development of the Local Skills Accountability Board
- Support for the continuation of the work of the Fashion Technology Academy and the Construction Hub through Skills Bootcamps and, if permitted, the subcontracting of ESFA Adult Education Budget for specialist and technical skills delivery.

4.2 Skills Bootcamps

The Authority has recently signed a contract with the Department for Education to manage a pilot programme of Skills Bootcamps previously presented to the committee.

Three programmes will be delivered by the end of March 2023:

- Level 5 Digital Marketing
- Level 3 Cyber Security
- Level 2 Construction

We have now been invited to submit a proposal for a larger 2024-25 programme and invite committee members to make suggestions for priority sectors and skills needs in the city, to be considered in the development of the programme.

A [skills bootcamp](#) is an intensive programme of learning for adults age 19+ (at least 60 hours delivered over a maximum of 16 weeks) Programmes are designed in partnership with employers, in order upskills new or existing staff and fill existing vacancies.

5. Financial, legal, and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Stuart McAvoy – Head of Finance

5.2 Legal implications

There are no apparent adverse legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

Advice may be sought from legal Services as required in relation to the negotiation and of the ESFA Accountability Agreement for 2024-25.

Emma Young
Qualified Lawyer
28/11/23

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

As noted within the report, within the 2024-25 programme it is proposed to enable the development of green skills, which will have a positive climate impact through supporting the council's ambition to reach net zero carbon emissions for the city and the council. Further climate implications are expected to be limited. In general, however, as the provision of services by the council and partners contributes to council carbon emissions any potential impacts can be managed through service delivery. This could include measures such as enabling sustainable staff and service user travel options, providing remote participation options for services and ensuring buildings are utilised efficiently, as appropriate and applicable to the service.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284

5.4 Equalities Implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in making decisions and carrying out their activities they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to

foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. The report provides an update for stakeholders on the key achievements of the Adult Education Service, Skills Bootcamps are developed in partnership with local employers, providers and authorities to help fill skills gaps and vacancies in local areas, there are no direct equalities implications arising from the report.

Leicester City Council Adult Education provides learning opportunities that aim to engage and support the most disadvantaged in our diverse communities while remaining open to all and supporting wellbeing and prosperity in the city whilst fostering good relations and advancing equality of opportunity.

Adult learning is particularly powerful in bringing together people from different walks and stages of life, in developing mutual understanding and respect, and in contributing to personal development and well-being. Collection of equalities data, will better enable us to understand the experiences of learners from different protected characteristics. The Education and Skills Funding Agency provide a framework for monitoring and evaluating the performance of FE providers, which helps to identify areas for improvement and support further development.

Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh, Ext 37 4148

5.5 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

6. Background information and other papers:

7. Summary of appendices:

Appendix 1: Review of the 2019-13 Adult Education service plan

Appendix 2: 2022-23 Adult Education self-assessment plan

Appendix 3: 2024-25 Draft Annual Accountability Agreement

8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicated the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

9. Is this a “key decision”?

No

10. If a key decision, please explain reason

In determining whether it is a key decision you will need consider if it is likely:

- to result in the Council incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the Council’s budget for the service or function to which the decision relates.
- to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working *in two or more wards in the City*.

Expenditure or savings will be regarded as significant if:

- (a) In the case of additional recurrent revenue expenditure, it is not included in the approved revenue budget, and would cost in excess of £0.5m p.a.;
- (b) In the case of reductions in recurrent revenue expenditure, the provision is not included in the approved revenue budget, and savings of over £0.5m p.a. would be achieved;
- (c) In the case of one off or capital expenditure, spending of over £1m is to be committed on a scheme that has not been specifically authorised by Council.

In deciding whether a decision is significant you need to take into account:

- Whether the decision may incur a significant social, economic, or environmental risk.
- The likely extent of the impact of the decision both within and outside of the City.
- The extent to which the decision is likely to result in substantial public interest
- The existence of significant communities of interest that cannot be defined spatially.