
Executive Decision Report

Skills Bootcamp 2025-2026

Decision to be taken by: City Mayor

Decision to be taken on: 16 April 2025

Lead director: Mike Dalzell

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All wards
- Report author: Joanne Ives
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- Report version number: 1

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report is seeking approval to accept grant funding for the delivery of Skills Bootcamps across Leicester and Leicestershire for delivery from April 2025 to March 2026.

2. Recommended actions/decision

- 2.1 The City Mayor is recommended to:
- (a) accept Department for Education (DfE) revenue grant funding of £3m, and
 - (b) agree for the City Council to act as Accountable body for the financial management of these funds.

3. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement

Economic Development, Transport and Climate Emergency (EDTCE) Scrutiny committee on 21st September 2023.

Economic Development, Transport and Climate Emergency (EDTCE) Scrutiny committee on 12th March 2025.

4. Background and options with supporting evidence

Background

- 3.1 Skills Bootcamps were introduced in September 2020 to support a national government manifesto commitment to give adults the opportunity to build sector-specific skills and to help employers by giving people the skills they need to move into jobs in sectors with skills shortages. These were initially piloted in digital skills but are being rolled out across a range of other sectors.
- 3.2 Skills Bootcamps are flexible courses, of up to 16 weeks in duration and typically at Levels 2 to 5, providing a minimum of 60 Guided Learning Hours. The bootcamps are intended to address in-demand skills and aim to give people the opportunity to build up sector-specific skills and be fast-tracked to an interview with a local employer. Employer links are essential as it is anticipated that 30% of learners should move into work following completion of the bootcamp.
- 3.3 A cost subsidy, based on the size of the business, is available to employers looking to re-skill existing staff and significantly develop their role/ responsibilities (small and medium businesses pay 10%, large businesses pay 30% of the cost).

- 3.4 Training will be fully funded for the self-employed, career changers/returners or those unemployed where they can demonstrate a readiness to return to work. All learners will progress on to a guaranteed job interview upon the completion of the Skills Bootcamp and will need to be compliant with OFSTED regulations.
- 3.5 The training is intended to help fill medium or higher-level vacancies and bring individuals closer to better paid jobs, by providing a linked line of sight to a specific job role with additional responsibilities or new opportunities/contracts.
- 3.6 The following topics/subjects demonstrate the current range of programmes that can be delivered as part of Skills Bootcamp in a local area:

Category	Core Subject Areas	Suggested Possible Skills Bootcamp Subject
Digital Core	Cloud	Cloud computing, cloud engineering, cloud services
	Computer aided design	3D, electrical, diagnostics
	Cyber	Security, intrusion analysis, technology, readiness, engineering
	Data	Analytics, engineering, database, design, science, technology
	DevOps	DevOps
	Digital marketing	Social media, design, analytics
	Games	Design, technology, UI, UX
	Network	Engineering, technology, infrastructure
	Software development	Programming, agile computing, coding
	Software engineering	Software engineering
	Support	Specialist, IT solutions
	Web	Full stack development, engineering, production
Digital Bespoke	Digital Skills Bootcamps not falling within the above nominated core subject areas	
Technical Core	Advanced Manufacturing	Engineering
	Design	Construction, marine
	Electronics & electrotechnical	Manufacturing, engineering
	Engineering	Civil, engineering construction, marine
	Welding	Coded, MIG, TIG
Technical Bespoke	Technical Skills Bootcamps not falling within the above nominated core subject areas	
Construction	Construction management	Site supervision, project co-ordination

	Construction trades	Bricklaying, plumbing, gas, dry lining, joinery
Pathway to accelerated apprenticeships	Apprenticeships Paths	Any of the sector skills specified in all other categories that map to a recognised apprenticeship
Green Skills	Green Power	Renewables, Nuclear Power, Grid Infrastructure, Energy Storage and Smart Systems Technology
	Green Construction & Buildings	Retrofit, energy-efficiency installation, insulation installation, smart devices and controls, low carbon / net zero heat networks, heat pump installation, hydrogen boiler installation, electric vehicle charge point installation
	Green Transport	Electric vehicle manufacture, maintenance and recycling, low / net zero carbon public transport including rail, sustainable aviation fuel manufacture
	Green Protection of Natural Resources	Nature restoration, woodland management, arboriculture, decarbonising agriculture, waste management and recycling
	Green Business & Industry	Hydrogen production and industrial use, carbon capture, utilisation & storage and industrial decarbonisation
Logistics	HGV Driving	Novice to Cat C Notice to Cat C and Cat C+E Novice to Cat C or Cat C and Cat C+E + employer specific elements Cat C to Cat C+E Additional Qualifications in ADR packages Additional Qualifications in ADR packages and ADR Tankers Additional Qualification in ADR Tankers + PDP Back to the Wheels Refresher to existing category Back to the Wheels Refresher Cat C to Cat C+E
Other	<p>LCC can pilot a different Skills Bootcamp area, providing sufficient local data and labour market information, as well as evidence of strong employer demand, support the pilot.</p> <p>Others areas we are particularly interested in receiving applications are for early year provision/ health & social Care and textile / fashion sectors.</p>	

The subject areas which are highlighted would be a key priority for applications for Leicester & Leicestershire.

Application Process

3.7 The Department for Education invited applications from local areas to deliver either a single bootcamp or a range of thematic bootcamps. Proposals can be submitted by a single legal entity to deliver bootcamps individually, or on behalf of a consortium of organisations.

3.8 Leicester City Council submitted a proposal to deliver an initial programme of skills Bootcamps across Leicester and Leicestershire, focusing on Digital and Construction skills. The project covered delivery for an initial 6-month pilot from October 2023 to March 2024 and was awarded £700k of funding. Three providers were awarded delivery of the following activities.

Provider	Course	Level	Individuals Supported	Funding Allocation
Annica Digital	Digital Marketing Skills	5	140	£405,000
Twin Training	Cyber Security	3	30	£110,000
Construction Hub with Construct Training Ltd	Groundwork / Highways Course	2	30	£100,000
Leicester City Council	Accountable Body			£85,000
				£700,000

3.9 A further bid for £2.1m was submitted and approved in December 2023 to continue delivery of these types of courses but to broaden the remit as outlined below.

- **Digital** (min 100 hours, specific digital course to be demonstrated, potential around enhanced admin roles)
- **Highway/Groundwork** (level 2)
- **Retrofit/ Green Skills / Construction** (level 2 or above) – building on existing provision, concentration potentially around heating.
- **HGV**: level 2 proposed – limited local provision noted.
- **Creative**: Targeted around production
- **Textile**: Targeted around creative design/graphic design; Leadership & Management
- **Other** (level 3) Support for tutor training i.e. customer service (hospitality/ retail sector); technical support in the space sector.

3.10 Following approval, a call was launched at the end of January 2024 for training providers to propose delivery of a Skills Bootcamp, demonstrating need and demand for the proposed courses. Applications were then assessed in March 2024 for delivery from April / May 2024 onwards.

3.11 The allocation for 2024-25 was £1.7m. To date, ten colleges and training providers have been commissioned to provide 12 Skills Bootcamps in 2024-25.

Provider	Bootcamp Title	Target starts
Annica Training	Digital Marketing	130
Construct Training	Construction	45
Fashion - Enter	Garment Production	30
Fashion - Enter	Sewing & Repair	20
Skills 4 Pharmacy	Pharmacy	40
Moulton College	Agriculture	50

Moulton College	Solar Installation	50
NW&SL College	Teaching	50
Peterborough Environment City Trust	Environmental Management	40
SMB College	Agriculture	15
Tech Educators	Software Development	40
Twin Training	Cyber Security	60

3.12 All 2024-25 Bootcamps must complete delivery by the 31st of March 2025 and positive outcomes reported within 6 months of completion (31st September 2025)

3.13 To date 235 starts (43% of target) and 52 positive outcomes (16% of target) have been reported. 25% of funding allocated has been earned.

3.14 For 2025-2026, applications will be invited from the across the range of areas in para 3.6. Taking lessons learnt from the 2024-25 delivery, a two stage application process will be undertaken to enable a broader selection of bootcamps to be provided and also for potential new bootcamps to come on board during the 2025-26 delivery timeframe.

3.12 The grant application process is as follows:

- Open Stage 1 grant application form – details of organisation, demand and need for bootcamp identified.
- Stage 2 application – details of the specifics of the bootcamp being proposed.

3.13 Both stages will be assessed and scored and if applications are successful at each stage a bootcamp grant will be awarded. Stage 1 will remain open until all of the funding has been committed.

3.14 If successful, applicants will be awarded a grant for delivery of specific number of learners, a unit cost is agreed with applicant for each learner supported. Payments are then processed on delivery of each milestone example set out below.

- Milestone 1 (40%) of unit cost:
 - 10 Guided Learning hours achieved by the individuals
- Milestone 2 (30%) of unit cost
 - Completion of course plus
 - If unemployed learner offer of job interview
 - If self-employed learner completion of action post on how course will support business
- Milestone 3 (30%) of unit cost:
 - If unemployed learner offer of job or job secured
 - If self-employed learner evidence of new work secured as result of the skills bootcamp

3.15 Applicants will be monitored to ensure learners targets are being met and where this is not occurring, funding will be reallocated.

5. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

This report proposes that Leicester City Council act as accountable body for £3m of revenue grant funding from DfE. The grant conditions and mechanisms for reimbursing training providers have been reviewed and these do not expose the Council to financial risk. The Council will only pay providers in arrears, once performance targets have been validated, so any repayment of grant back to the funding body will not result in a loss to the Council.

The £3m includes a sum to cover the administrative cost to the Council of acting as Accountable Body. As such, it is not anticipated that there would be any net cost to the Council of the proposed arrangements.

Signed: Stuart McAvoy – Head of Finance

Dated: 11th March 2025

5.2 Legal implications

A subsidy control assessment has been carried out by Legal Services which concluded that the receipt of the grant funding from DfE by the Council does comply with the Subsidy Control Act 2022 and accompanying guidance and international obligations.

Any new/additional funding to be assessed against subsidy rules.

The DfE terms and conditions have been reviewed by Legal Services and comments have been provided to clients.

Legal to review any new terms and conditions or grant agreements

The Council proposes to carry out a call for competition to appoint partners to carry out the training required under the DfE grant funding terms and conditions. Care should be taken when carrying out the call for competition and entering into grant funding terms and conditions, to ensure that any ensuing agreements could not be seen as being services contracts which require a compliant procurement process to be undertaken. Clients are liaising with Legal Services in this respect.

It is recommended that ongoing legal advice should be sought as and when necessary.

Signed: *Meera Patel, Solicitor (Commercial) Ext. 37 4069*

Dated: 13th March 2025

5.3 Equalities implications

Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, 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 is looking to accept funding for the delivery of Skills Bootcamps across Leicester and Leicestershire for delivery from April 2025 to March 2026. There are no direct equalities implications arising from the paper. Skills Bootcamps are developed in partnership with local employers, providers and authorities to help fill skills gaps and vacancies in local areas. Accessible initiatives that are designed to help learners develop their skills and equip them with the knowledge to find a job or apprenticeship should lead to positive impacts for people from across all protected characteristics. And are likely to support positive equalities outcomes and provide an opportunity to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Giving people the opportunity to build up sector-specific skills, gain knowledge and experience and fast-track to an interview or progress in their current role can also help improve vocational skills. Some people may not be able to afford similar commercial courses to that offered by Skills Bootcamps, having free courses should make them more accessible.

Signed: Equalities Officer, Surinder Singh, Ext 37 4148

Dated: 11th March 2025

5.4 Climate Emergency implications

Green Skills is one of the categories of training within the Skills Bootcamps programme, covering a wide range of potential areas for skills training. As noted within the report, applications will be invited from the across the range of areas in para 3.6.

If successful applications are made for green skills courses, delivery of these should have a positive climate impact within the city, helping to develop vital skills for enabling net zero within Leicester. Providers should also be encouraged to explore opportunities to embed sustainability-related skills within the other courses to be delivered, as relevant to those skills areas.

Signed: Duncan Bell, Change Manager (Climate Emergency). Ext. 37 2249.

Dated: 13th March 2025

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:

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

9. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why?

No