

## Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

All Members of the Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission are requested to attend the meeting of the Commission to be held as follows:

**Monday, 12th March, 2018**

**7.00 pm**

**Room 102, Hackney Town Hall, Mare Street, London E8 1EA**

**Tim Shields**

**Chief Executive, London Borough of Hackney**

Contact:

Tracey Anderson

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**Members:** Cllr Anna-Joy Rickard (Chair), Cllr Mete Coban (Vice-Chair),  
Cllr Patrick Moule, Cllr Deniz Oguzkanli, Cllr M Can Ozsen,  
Cllr Clare Potter and Cllr Nick Sharman

## Agenda

**ALL MEETINGS ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

- 1 Apologies for Absence**
- 2 Urgent Items / Order of Business**
- 3 Declarations of Interest**
- 4 Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 1 - 12)
- 5 The Adults Skills System** (Pages 13 - 186)
- 6 Hackney Learning Trust Adult Community Learning Service** (Pages 187 - 200)
- 7 Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 2017/18 Work Programme** (Pages 201 - 212)
- 8 Any Other Business**

## Access and Information

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### Further Information about the Commission

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<http://www.hackney.gov.uk/individual-scrutiny-commissions-governance-and-resources.htm>



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Providing oral commentary during a meeting is not permitted.

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<p><b>Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission</b></p> <p>12<sup>th</sup> March 2018</p> <p><b>Minutes of the previous meeting and Matters Arising</b></p>	<p>Item No</p> <p><b>4</b></p>
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## **OUTLINE**

Attached are the draft minutes for the meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

## **ACTION**

The Commission is requested to agree the minutes and note any matters arising.

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London Borough of Hackney  
Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission  
Municipal Year 2017/18  
Date of Meeting Monday, 5th February, 2018

Minutes of the proceedings of  
the Working in Hackney  
Scrutiny Commission held at  
Hackney Town Hall, Mare  
Street, London E8 1EA

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<b>Chair</b>	<b>Councillor Anna-Joy Rickard</b>
<b>Councillors in Attendance</b>	<b>Cllr Mete Coban (Vice-Chair), Cllr Patrick Moule, Cllr Deniz Oguzkanli, Cllr M Can Ozsen and Cllr Clare Potter</b>
<b>Apologies:</b>	<b>Cllr Nick Sharman</b>
<b>Officers In Attendance</b>	<b>Paul Horobin (Head of Corporate Programmes), Andrew Munk (Head of Employment and Skills) and Stephen Haynes (Director – Strategy, Policy and Economic Development)</b>
<b>Other People in Attendance</b>	
<b>Members of the Public</b>	
<b>Officer Contact:</b>	<b>Tracey Anderson</b> ☎ 020 8356 3312 ✉ <a href="mailto:tracey.anderson@hackney.gov.uk">tracey.anderson@hackney.gov.uk</a>

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## Councillor Anna-Joy Rickard in the Chair

### **1 Apologies for Absence**

- 1.1 Apologies for absence from Cllr Sharman.
- 1.2 Apologies for lateness from Cllr Moule.
- 1.3 Apologies for leaving early Cllr Ozsen.

### **2 Urgent Items / Order of Business**

- 2.1 There were no urgent items and the discussion was as per the agenda.

### **3 Declarations of Interest**

3.1 None.

#### 4 Minutes of Previous Meeting

- 4.1 Cllr Coban advised his apologies for the last meeting were not recorded. Minutes to be amended for point 1.1 to note Cllr Coban's apologies for absence.
- 4.2 Minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2018 were agreed subject to the amendment noted in point 4.1.

<b>RESOLVED</b>	Minutes were approved subject to the amendment in point 4.1.
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#### 5 Economic and Community Development Board Update

- 5.1 At the last Working in Hackney (WiH) Scrutiny Commission meeting the revealed the Economic Community Development Board was still in the development phase for their Economic Development Strategy. In replace of the scheduled update the Commission was given the opportunity to provide critical challenge to the development phase of this strategy.
- 5.2 The Chair welcomed to the meeting Stephen Haynes, Director, Strategy, Policy & Economic Development, Paul Horobin, Head of Corporate Programmes and Andrew Munk – Head of Employment and Skills from London Borough of Hackney.
- 5.3 The Chair opened the discussion by explaining the Commission was holding a workshop style session to look at the officer's work on the draft economic strategy in advance of the officers presenting the final draft to the Economic Community Development Board for agreement. The Chair explained the Commission had the opportunity (unusually) to engage at a very early stage in the process. The aim from this discussion was not to co-produce the strategy, because the Commission does not want to compromise its role as a critical friend, but to review the progress made and provide critical challenge to the proposed content.
- 5.4 In the meeting Members reviewed with officers the draft strategy and split into 2 groups to discuss the following 2 questions:
1. Members were asked to identify any gaps in the Strategy?
  2. Members were asked if the strategy content identified with Hackney and addressed the challenges specific to Hackney.
- 5.5 The Director, Strategy, Policy & Economic Development commenced the session with the following opening comments:
- 5.5.1 The Council and Mayor of Hackney are committed to an economic development approach that is about ensuring no one gets left behind and that has tackling inequalities at the heart of the strategy.



- 5.5.2 The Council is focusing on inclusive growth and this is explained in the strategy. The Centre for Local Economic Strategy has commented marrying growth with social inclusion is like 2 sides of the same coin. It's not just about income and developing an area from a purely economic prospective; but also about making sure the community is involved in the process; can benefit from that process and sees where the value lies in taking this approach. The Council is developing its community strategy and makes reference to the themes in this approach.
- 5.5.3 The officer explained the council is making efforts to communicate vigorously about this inclusive approach to economic development. Highlighting it was the first time the council combined structural change – services shifting their focus – with a strategic approach so they can have the right team, doing the right things, for the right reasons. This is a strong set of drivers and it is being communicated to officers these are top mayoral priorities.
- 5.6 The Council is holding a number of discussion on:
- In work poverty
  - The role of the council and partners to support residents to move and progress in their career
  - Skills and the hollowing out of the labour market
  - The impact of welfare reform, Universal Credit and employment support.
  - The groups facing employment challenges: over 50s, disabled, long term unemployed, young black men and women in certain professions.
- 5.7 The Economic and Community Development Board was established November 2016. The Board is focusing on the long term vision and has identified 3 thematic areas for the work of the strategy.
- Theme 1 - Helping to create liveable, sustainable and economically resilient places where economic growth and change can benefit everyone.
  - Theme 2 - Encouraging and support diverse businesses to thrive across a dynamic borough.
  - Theme 3 - Supporting people to live well and develop skills that are fit for the future, allowing them to connect with employment opportunities across London.
- 5.8 The Board will review the development of the strategic framework and give feedback at their next meeting in March 2018. The comments from the Scrutiny Commission's workshop will feed into the framework being drafted. After the Board has signed-off the strategy it will be made public.
- 5.9 Members enquired if Brexit was being viewed as an opportunity as well as a challenge?**
- The Head of Employment and Skills advised it is a key feature of the regional and sub regional work for skills devolution.
- The Head of Corporate Programmes pointed out the strategy will have to evolve because economics is changing. Therefore the strategy would not be a static document. The officer highlighted the Council was monitoring the Brexit factors closely. It was noted that a study commissioned by the Mayor of London has anticipated Hackney will lose 2111 jobs.
- 5.10 Group 1 – comments

- I. Members commented the gaps stated are aspirational and do not give the reader any sense of the action to be taken to address the gaps identified.
- II. Members queried how councillors would use this strategy when they have a person asking for help with employment.
- III. Members highlighted in terms of access to work Hackney has special groups they need to focus on like: care leavers, ex-offenders, long term unemployed and residents with a disability. Members wanted the strategy to give them a better understanding of how the council priorities these groups and the criteria they used.  

Officers explained the strategy will not meet the needs of all community groups. The focus is on identifying, using the information available, the groups they will target and to implement specific interventions where there are challenges to address.
- IV. Members liked the focus on place and officers explained the focus could be on place, cohort or a mixture of both.
- V. Members highlighted the strategy did not give them a sense of where resources would be focused. Members asked of it would be on need or where input could create success; an opportunity for a win.
- VI. Without more detailed information about the specific action to be taken, Members expressed difficulty in advising if the Council should spread themselves thinly or focus on particular groups.
- VII. Members wanted to see more about partnership working in the strategy because the council does not have unlimited resources. Members highlighted some of the actions will required a more joined up approach between agencies. Members suggested the strategy states which agency will be responsible for what.
- VIII. Members referred to areas in their ward that have been regenerated and other areas that have not. They talked about residents continually expressed the feeling of being left behind and pushed out. Long term residents were of the view the new residents coming into the borough were better educated, resourced and have the ability to shape council policies, town centre developments, markets etc. Members suggested the strategy should seek to address how they can get long term residents - those who have lived on council estates for 50 years – involved in shaping their local area.
- IX. Members referred to the successful campaigning to reopen the Chatsworth Road market. Members pointed out at the time of campaigning it was not envisaged that this would turn into a food market but would be a mixed market. The officers pointed out Chatsworth Road market was community led.
- X. Members acknowledged the limits of the council in being able to shape or influence economic development a particular way. However they asked if there was a role for the council to help shape a space/place so it better meets the needs of the local community. For example Members suggested the Council could state the Market's Traders Association membership should include 3 or 4 members from x communities to help keep the diversity in the space.
- XI. Members pointed out they have residents who come to them asking for help to get access to a market stall. Requesting for support with the

charges for a stall and acquiring goods for their business and asking for general business support information. Members asked if the council could make allowances for those individuals with limited resources to access the business opportunities.

- XII. Members suggested a way local people can contribute to economic development is through a local plan but for one Ward this process has been stopped and started.
- XIII. Members highlighted another challenge with economic development is a space can become an exclusive space when it has shop units. They have noticed it is harder for the Council to shape places like this. They suggest the council thinks about how it can add flexibility to the use of the space for shop units in regeneration areas.
- The officers advised the council recognises more could be done. Particularly in relation to how they use their own assets.
- XIV. Members referred to the corridors referenced in the strategy and noted it does not include wards like Brownswood to the north of the borough and suggested the strategy could talk more about tri-borough borders and how to address the issues with places like Seven Sisters Road and Blackstock Road. Making reference to how there could be better integration with other boroughs. Officers pointed out these parts of the borough require strong advocacy from local councillors within the local area too.
- XV. Members commented the strategy has the ingredients you would expect to find in any strategy, the challenges outlined represent a broad picture it does not currently stand out as Hackney specific. Members were of the view the strategy currently highlights actions/challenges that could be applied to neighbouring boroughs. Members advised to answer this question about the strategy being Hackney specific they needed to see the evidence that underpins the strategy. Members thought highlighting challenges or concerns about the gig economy and young black men were Hackney specific challenges.
- XVI. Members suggested the Council should be more innovative in relation to its use of Section 106 powers with developers. The Council should encourage developers to not just employ but educate local people too. Presenting a stronger social impact for the local community.
- XVII. Members highlighted the perception of the council with small business is that the council is only an enforcer. Members were of the view having the statement 'working with businesses' was not specific or did not give an indication of the action to be taken to achieve the board statement. E.g. it could state 'use the Council's contact through regulatory services as a building block for further engagement'.
- XVIII. Members were of the view the strategy should reflect the impact of housing costs in the borough as this is a unique challenge to Hackney.
- The officers explained in the strategy they acknowledge the challenge but do not address it with solutions. The strategy acknowledges that just getting a job does not enable the person to cover their costs because the cost of living in London is high. So the focus is on how they can help people into work but work that pays well.
- XIX. In general Members liked the direction of travel for the strategy; but highlighted currently it was aspirational and they wanted to see more

information about what success would look like when the desired outcomes were achieved. Members discussed an example of what a more meaningful statement would say Members' highlighted older workers have experience but have difficulty accessing the job market and young people have a lack of experience and find it difficult to enter the job market. The aspirational action would state "work with young people to provide employment opportunities or work with older people to access the labour market." A practical action would be a statement about implementation of an initiative that brings these 2 groups together.

- XX. Members highlighted it is important to acknowledge in the strategy the Council cannot provide all the resources. The Council is well placed to facilitate and the council should focus more on the role of a 'facilitator' and do more in that sphere. The strategy should place emphasis on this role. Using other levers to influence and not just assume the role of a service provider.

#### 5.11 Groups 2– comments

- I. Members agreed with the 3 thematic areas identified for the strategy and commented they require separate attention and agreed with splitting the themes.
- II. Members referred to the action about involving local residents in visions and plans for local areas. Members suggested this needs to be in a meaningful way so residents can relate to the plans. Members asked officer to describe what this will look like in the strategy.
- III. Members advised there are currently gaps in the methods used for consultations with residents and businesses. Members highlighted from their conversations with local businesses in Stoke Newington, who have been there for 40 years, they express the view of having no say and feeling pushed out. Members suggested the Council's current communication channels with local businesses needed to go further than the current methods used.
- IV. Members liked the proposal for the introduction of area steering groups. Members were of the view the ECDB or a similar structure needed to expand into the local community bringing in the voice of key stakeholder in the community. Members queried if the area steering group would be officer led. Members were of the view if the area steering groups were set up and included officers it should also have members of the community on it to create a sense of shared ownerships.
- V. Members highlighted the council is in a time where it has limited resources and therefore needs to create shared ownership to tackle some of the social challenges they face. This would also help to target the voice of the groups the council was trying to reach. Members pointed out it is not simply about communicating a message.
- VI. Members pointed out through their campaign work they noticed a number of BME businesses that were not digital or active on social media. Members pointed out this section of the business community did not seem to be reflected or highlighted in the draft strategy. Members commented the number of businesses that operate like this is unknown and the council needs to remember they represent a percentage of micro businesses in Hackney. Member's instinct is they make up a big group of that segment. Some of the

micro businesses are not digital, speak little English but can have international links and this is not necessarily known by the council. The Council needs to look at this and think about how the strategy can capture these businesses. This group could represent a high percentage of micro businesses not included or thought about. Members suggested there is some kind of check carried out for this group.

The officers explained the council recognises that there are a number of businesses that do not use digital services and they are conscious they capture visible businesses such as retail.

- VII. Officers pointed out for the recent business survey the Council used their economic regeneration officers to help access these businesses by going out with the paper survey to fill it in. However this is quite labour intensive and cannot be replicated by the council often. The council is thinking about how they can encourage them to engage and the different ways to do this.
- VIII. Offices pointed out 9 out 10 businesses in Shoreditch are micro businesses meaning they employ less than 10 people. The challenge for the council is building a relationship with so many micro businesses.
- IX. Members pointed out the challenge for Hackney is how to deliver a more positive message about apprenticeships. Members suggested the Council contributes to the delivery of a more positive message about apprenticeships. Helping to change the narrative and views about the value of apprenticeship. Delivering this message to employers and parents. It was pointed out that currently parents can view the encouragement of apprenticeships to mean the young person is not doing well in school. The Council recognises that parents do not place the same value on technical education like academia.
- X. Members pointed out the council is doing work to identify the thriving industries and growing work sectors for the strategy. Members commented this should lead to more emphasis on careers information and should be incorporated into careers advice so young people are being steered into the right careers. Relevant stakeholders should be thinking about the message communicated in career guidance. Member commented it may seem obvious but it is not highlighted in the strategy.
- XI. Members pointed out there is no reference to social entrepreneurship and social enterprise. This is important given the social problems in Hackney and limited council resources. Members suggested the strategy looks at how the council can help social enterprises tackle these problems. Members pointed out in relation to business support often social enterprises fall between the gaps. Viewed primary as a provider of resident views and not as an organisation that provides input or solutions for business support. Members suggested the strategy could identify their barriers and consider how they could be support. Members commented maybe social enterprise falls in the shared ownership group.
- XII. Members commented Hackney is very diverse and this needs to feature strongly in the strategy.
- XIII. Members referred to Stoke Newington Business Associations and pointed out its membership mainly consisted of shop owners on Church Street. Members highlighted the shops on Church Street are very different to the shops on Stoke Newington High Street in terms of the demographic they serve. At the time when the council was engaging with the Stoke Newington Business Associations they thought they were representative of businesses but they

were not. Members wanted to make sure the strategy helps ensure these groups are representative.

- XIV. Members referred to Stoke Newington High Street's one way system and described how Church Street is at one end and has developed into a niche space with a specific clientele and the Dalston end of the high street is more active. However the businesses in the middle of the high street are struggling. Members advised the Council's place shaping work needs to incorporate effective change for all. Members talked about this being achieved through things like the local plan which allows residents and businesses to feed in their views about change.
- XV. Member commented place shaping is new and not something everyone understands. Officers advised Hackney Council is ahead of the curve when it comes to place shaping to meet local need. Officers explained the aim is for all places to have their own identify and sense of direction that everyone can relate to – residents, businesses, ward councillors etc.
- XVI. Members were of the view this is still new thinking - how Hackney does creative space. Officers explained the council is trying to align different services and interests e.g. planning, transport, economic development, employment interests and estate regeneration so it has one coherent prospective in relation to place shaping in the borough.
- XVII. Members highlighted in relation to employment the strategy could be more ambitious and forward thinking. The view is the strategy is focused on the current work and has less focus on the future achievements it wants to see too. Members suggested there is a bigger section on the direction of travel.
- XVIII. Member referred to Brexit and suggested the council could be communicating this as an opportunity to help with skills development locally and to encourage larger organisation with the resources to support social enterprises with up skilling. For example a social enterprise could be teaching coding to girls and an organisation could provide business support in the form of resources to help them do their work. This in Members opinion would help the skills system in Hackney to be more business led. This needed to be emphasised more in the strategy. Members commented this could help to create a shorter distance between business and skills.
- 5.12 The Chair thanked officers for their attendance and for supporting their workshop discussion.

Officers agreed to take away the comments from the Commission to feed into the development of the strategy.

## **6 Future World of Work and Skills - Event Notes**

- 6.1 The notes from the Working in Hackney (WiH) evidence event held on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2017 were noted on pages 21-46 of the agenda.
- 6.2 The Chair commenced the discussion with a recapped of the review to date. The Chair highlighted the Commission has heard from Resolution Foundation, Fabian Society, IPPR and Central London Forward about the predications, challenges and future impacts on the future world of work and skills in the next 5-10 years.

- 6.3 The Commission would be conducting an afternoon of site visits on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2018 to 2 workspaces in the borough. The visits would be to the Bootstrap in Dalston and The Brew in Shoreditch.
- 6.4 The Chair explained the aim of the site visits was to get a better understanding of self-employment in Hackney and the changing work environment. Members agreed to send out questions in advance to the businesses being visited.
- 6.5 In addition to site visits to the Commission would be hosting a focus group discussion with residents on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February to talk about employment and obtain their views about the world of work and skills.
- 6.6 The site visits and focus groups would give the Commission information about local views and experiences and they could compare this to the expert's views they have heard from. Members agreed to send out questions in advance of the focus group so that residents could be prepared for the session. The focus groups would be grouped as follows:
- Self employed
  - Part time and Full Time employment
  - Casual/temporary and zero hours contract.
- 6.7 The Chair suggested the Commission holds a further evidence session focusing on skills to hear from skills providers. In response to this a Member suggested this may duplicate the work carried out by Community Safety and Social Inclusion Scrutiny Commission (CSSI) in their Apprenticeship Review recently. It was noted this review heard from skills providers. It was suggested this report was reviewed for any significant gaps to follow up on.
- 6.8 The Chair pointed out the focus on skills was to consider how the Council could maximise employers input into skills.
- 6.9 The Chair advised the WiH review report would focus on the following areas which they have identified are specific to Hackney, in relation to the future world of work and skills.
- A rise in self-employment.
  - Local Employers and their involvement in skills.
  - Housing and land values and the impact of Hackney's property prices and land values on local employment.
  - Polarisation of jobs between high and low.
  - Brexit Impact the anticipate impact on sectors like construction, hospitality and retail.

## **7 Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 2017/18 Work Programme**

- 7.1 The next WiH is scheduled for Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March and the Chair suggested this meeting date was moved to Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

Members present at the meeting agreed to move the meeting date.

<b>ACTION</b>	Members agreed the date change. The WiH meeting would be moved
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	to 12 <sup>th</sup> March 2018.
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- 7.2 The Members discussed the work programme and considered the next session scheduled in the work programme. The session scheduled was a discussion on inequalities. The Chair proposed they move the inequalities discussion to the new municipal year and hold a further evidence session for the review on skills.

<b>ACTION</b>	Members agreed.
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**8 Any Other Business**

- 8.1 None.

**Duration of the meeting:** 7.00 - 8.45 pm





<p><b>Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission</b></p> <p>12<sup>th</sup> March 2018</p> <p><b>Future World of Work and Skills – Adult Skills System</b></p>	<p>Item No</p> <p><b>5</b></p>
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## Background

The Commission has been conducting a review looking at the future world of work and skills over the next 5-10 years. This review has been exploring the trends of the changing labour market, changing skills system and its impact on London’s economy; to consider how residents could be supported and prepared for the future economy both in London and locally.

The aim of the review is to identify the impact of the changes to London and the local economy to identify the policies and practices that could help to overcome the challenges ahead. As part of this review the Commission aims to identify the support needed in the skills system to enable local residents to progress and change careers if required.

This review will also feed into the Economic and Community Development Board’s work developing the Council’s economic strategy.

## Outline

For this discussion item the Commission will refer to the information they have heard about the adults skills system and explore some of the thinking about the polices, framework and practices an effective adult skills system should entail; to consider how local employers can be involved in up skilling their workforce and the provision required for residents to upskill or change careers.

A presentation from the Local Government Association about their work on *Work Local - our vision for an integrated and devolved employment and skills service*. The LGA is recommending a new model for a local integrated employment and skills system that will be effective to meet the labour market and skills challenges of the future. This model would be organised at the level of combined authorities and groups of councils – simplifying and aligning the myriad of existing boundaries, and creating a coherent system locally and nationally.

In addition to the above report are further reports for back ground reading in relations to recommendations being made for an effective adult system.

## Action

The Commission to note the presentation and ask questions.

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# Work Local

Our vision for an integrated  
and devolved employment  
and skills service

## Foreword

Across the country, there are significant employment and skills challenges which we believe the fragmented national system is at best failing to address and, at worst, contributing to. So the Local Government Association (LGA) is consulting on a practical plan to integrate and devolve employment and skills services which would help thousands of people back into work, inject hundreds of millions of pounds into local economies, close the widening skills gap, and deliver better outcomes at lower cost by taking into account local circumstances.

All councils, working with local businesses and partners, want to build strong, resilient economies where residents contribute to, and benefit from, growth. Fundamental to achieving this is a steady supply of skills and jobs, fostering local business growth and effective support to help people get on in life. This is especially important as every area looks to contribute to the delivery of a successful industrial strategy in a post Brexit Britain.

But new research commissioned by the LGA reveals that the skills gap is worsening. By 2024 there will be more than four million too few high-skilled people to take up available jobs, two million too many with intermediate skills and more than six million too many low-skilled. Failure to address these gaps puts at risk four per cent of future economic growth, while the average worker will be £1,176 a year worse off. Nine million people lack literacy and numeracy skills, more than half of all unemployed people do not claim benefits or receive employment support from Jobcentre Plus, while 5.5 million people want a job or more hours. All of this is bad for the economy, employers and individuals.

And importantly, the picture varies between areas – with some places at or close to full employment and with skilled workforces, while others are still recovering from recession and facing challenges in employment, pay and productivity.

Yet both the employment and skills systems are highly centralised, with little or no scope for local areas to influence priorities or funding so they can target support. National agencies lack a common plan on how to work together and have no duty to discuss with democratically elected councillors how services will join up in their areas around service users and reflect local economic priorities.

At the same time, accountabilities between national agencies are highly fragmented – with £10.5 billion of employment and skills funding commissioned nationally by Whitehall or its agencies, scattered across 20 different national schemes. We can ill-afford this fragmented approach to employment and skills services.


This is why the LGA is putting forward **‘Work Local: our vision for an integrated and devolved employment and skills service’**. Combined authorities and groups of councils, in partnership with local stakeholders, will plan, commission and have oversight of the service. It would bring together advice and guidance, employment, skills, apprenticeship and business support around place, providing a more coherent offer for the unemployed and low skilled of all ages, while supporting local economic growth by forging better links between training providers and employers. We recommend practical steps that should be taken now to make our vision a reality. **Across a local area, Work Local could each year result in 8,500 more people in work, additional fiscal benefits of £280 million and a benefit to the economy of £420 million.**

There are clear benefits – for the economy, residents and delivery organisations – in improving how employment and skills services respond to local needs and how they are organised and delivered locally.

Local government is ready to lead. Our vision is ambitious, and we recognise it requires everyone involved to think and act differently, but the potential gains are significant for the local and national economy and for our residents and businesses. We believe it can be achieved if there is the political will to do so.

We recognise that no one organisation has all the solutions. That's why we are keen to hear your views on our proposal over the summer, to build a coordinated partnership with a clear vision for the future.

And finally, a special thanks to the councils that shared their expertise, knowledge and ideas with us and to L&W that helped with the development of this vision.



**Councillor Sir Richard Leese CBE**  
Chair, LGA City Regions Board



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Chairman, LGA People and Places Board

### **Acknowledgements**

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## Executive summary

### The employment and skills system needs reform

**We have one of the most centralised employment and skills systems in the developed world – with central government and its agencies directly responsible for employment and skills policy, design, funding and oversight. For most of the system, local areas have little ability to influence priorities, funding and delivery, with services having different objectives, accountabilities and ways of working; and often operating to different boundaries and timescales.**

This means that the employment and skills systems are also fragmented with 17 funding streams managed by eight departments or agencies and spending more than £10 billion a year. Despite this level of investment, they often fail to meet local need, address economic and social challenges, or make a decisive impact on outcomes for people or places.

This is bad for the economy, for employers and for individuals. It has resulted in nine million people lacking literacy and numeracy skills, 16 per cent of England's workforce – or 5.5 million people – who want a job or more hours, more than half of all unemployed not claiming benefits and so do not receive employment support, while, one in 10 of those in work in insecure employment. On current trends, by 2024 there will be more than four million too few high skilled people to meet demand for high skilled jobs; and more than six million too many low skilled.

Failure to address these gaps puts at risk up to four per cent of future economic growth – equivalent to a loss of economic output of £90 billion. At an individual level, this means an average worker would be on average £1,176 a year worse off (or around £60,000 over a working lifetime).

Fixing the skills and employment systems are today's business. However despite this pressing case for change, progress on devolution has been slow and piecemeal. Successive governments have experimented with giving local areas more control over aspects of the employment and skills systems, through a model of 'earned autonomy' – where areas negotiate devolution of specific funding streams or programmes but with strings attached. Governments of all colours have struggled to let go.

There is now a clear case for going radically further and faster. Local areas want more influence and control, and devolution to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland shows that more radical approaches are possible. A new settlement is needed, that will be:

- **good for the economy** – by integrating services, responding to local economic needs, and delivering better outcomes at lower costs
- **good for people** – with more personalised, joined-up and responsive services
- **good for employers** – by delivering a locally rooted, demand led and integrated approach.

# ‘Work local’ – a new model for integrated employment and skills

This proposal draws on research, analysis and engagement with local areas led by L&W. It describes a vision for an integrated, effective and locally responsive employment and skills system that can meet the labour market and skills challenges of the future.

This new service, Work Local, will be organised at the level of combined authorities and groups of councils – simplifying and aligning myriad existing boundaries, and creating a coherent system locally and nationally.

## A ‘one stop’ service that is rooted in place

At the heart of a reformed model will be a new, ‘one stop’ service bringing together information, advice and the delivery of employment, skills and wider support for individuals and for employers.

This Work Local service will:

- **Bring together and localise support** that is currently fragmented across business support, local growth, careers services, JCP services, adult skills, apprenticeships support and employment programmes. By bringing these together it will reduce costs, complexity and duplication; improve services; and respond to local needs.
- **Make full use of physical assets** across the range of services that host or deliver employment and skills services – including colleges, councils, universities, JCP offices, Chambers of Commerce, children’s centres, libraries, schools and many more. Services will work together to provide a co-ordinated, locally tailored, physical presence and a digital presence to broaden access to services.
- **Have a clear offer for individuals and for employers, which** for individuals means a single system that can help with improving skills, preparing for work, finding work, changing careers and progressing in work. For employers, this means going beyond just placing vacancies and helping with recruitment. It means also helping businesses to grow: to develop their workforces, navigate the system, access funding, and deliver training, work placements, apprenticeships and other opportunities.
- **Connect to wider services, partners and support** so that Work Local not only integrates employment and skills, but must also act as a gateway to more specialist services and support that individuals and employers may need – including health services, budgeting support, housing and welfare. It will create the opportunities to co-locate services, join up with other council services and work in partnership with the wider public, voluntary and community sectors.

## With clear and responsive local leadership

Successful public service reform relies on effective local leadership: committed local leaders, shared objectives, and a positive approach that empowers operational staff to work together and overcome problems.



Councils are best placed to take this convening and leading role, as we are doing through Devolution Deals from Teesside to the West of England. This clear local leadership would work with national government as full partners, as councils have done in the Universal Support trials to support the rollout of Universal Credit.

Employers in both the public and private sector must also play a central role in Work Local. Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) boundaries should be aligned with Work Local and be fully involved in advising on service design and delivery, support on investment decisions, and convene key employers and partners.

This model will build on the lessons from a number of countries. For example in Denmark, municipal governments lead on developing annual employment plans and overseeing local delivery, working with a range of local partners. In the United States, a network of 600 employer-led Workforce Investment Boards lead on employment and skills investment and oversight.

### **That is driven by local opportunities and needs**

Devolution of funding and control will free up local areas to design services that meet local needs and respond to local priorities rather than to one-size-fits-all rules.

- **Different jobs.** The nature of employment is different in different areas. For example, manufacturing accounts for more than one in five jobs in Burnley but fewer than one in 50 jobs in Cambridge; while public sector employment varies between 11 per cent and 31 per cent of employment locally. Locally designed and led services can be driven by and respond to local demand.
- **Different people.** Local areas have different residents with different needs. The proportion of residents with low qualifications ranges from one in three residents in Sandwell to one in 17 in Richmond on Thames; and while more than a quarter of residents of Blackpool have a work limiting disability, just one in 10 residents of Waltham Forest do. These differences matter, with disabled people more than twice as likely to be out of work as those who are not disabled. Work Local would enable services to address these local needs, by adjusting rules that get in the way of reaching specific groups, or of creating incentives to support those most in need locally.
- **Different economies.** Most starkly, there are wide variations in incomes and opportunity between different parts of the country. For example, weekly wages are 50 per cent higher on average in Cambridge than they are in Southend; while worklessness is twice as high in Rochdale as it is in Surrey. Some areas have emerged strongly from the downturn but many more still face significant challenges. Addressing these needs requires different responses from public services and areas.
- **Different geographies.** What works in delivering services in major cities will be different to what is needed in suburbs, towns, rural areas and more mixed communities. So Work Local needs the flexibility to meet these needs, from integrated centres in urban areas to 'hubs' and 'spokes' delivering services rurally.

Local areas have different priorities and needs. Effective, responsive employment and skills services will need to target different groups and different employers with different provision and in different ways. The current, top-down model cannot possibly be expected to meet the needs of areas as varied as from Blackpool to Brentford, and from Bassetlaw to Bath.

## **Within a common national framework for devolution of strategy, financing and delivery of employment and skills**

Delivering this vision requires a new settlement on the political and fiscal levers for employment, skills and growth. This means devolving:

- **financial control** – with funding devolved through block grants to combined authorities and groups of councils
- **strategy** – with these areas then able to set objectives, agree policy and design responses that meet local needs
- **delivery** – so that the commissioning, delivery and oversight of provision happens locally and can be integrated and aligned across services.

It is envisaged that Work Local would be funded through a combination of continued national grants, progressive devolution of existing funding streams and local revenue-raising – creating a single, seamless system with the following being fully devolved:

### **Employer support**

- investment and growth support (including current European funding and successor arrangements)
- growth hubs.

### **Careers and transitional support**

- careers services, including National Careers Service
- Careers and Enterprise Company
- Youth Obligation

### **Education and skills**

- post-16 skills funding
- adult skills – including Adult Education Budget, Advanced Learner Loans and current European funding and successor arrangements
- control over non-levy apprenticeships funding and apprenticeship grants, and co-commissioning of the Register for delivery of apprenticeships for larger, Levy-paying employers
- National Citizen Service.

### **Employment**

- JCP employment support – including employment support for benefit claimants, and Flexible Support Fund
- employment programmes – including Work and Health Programme.

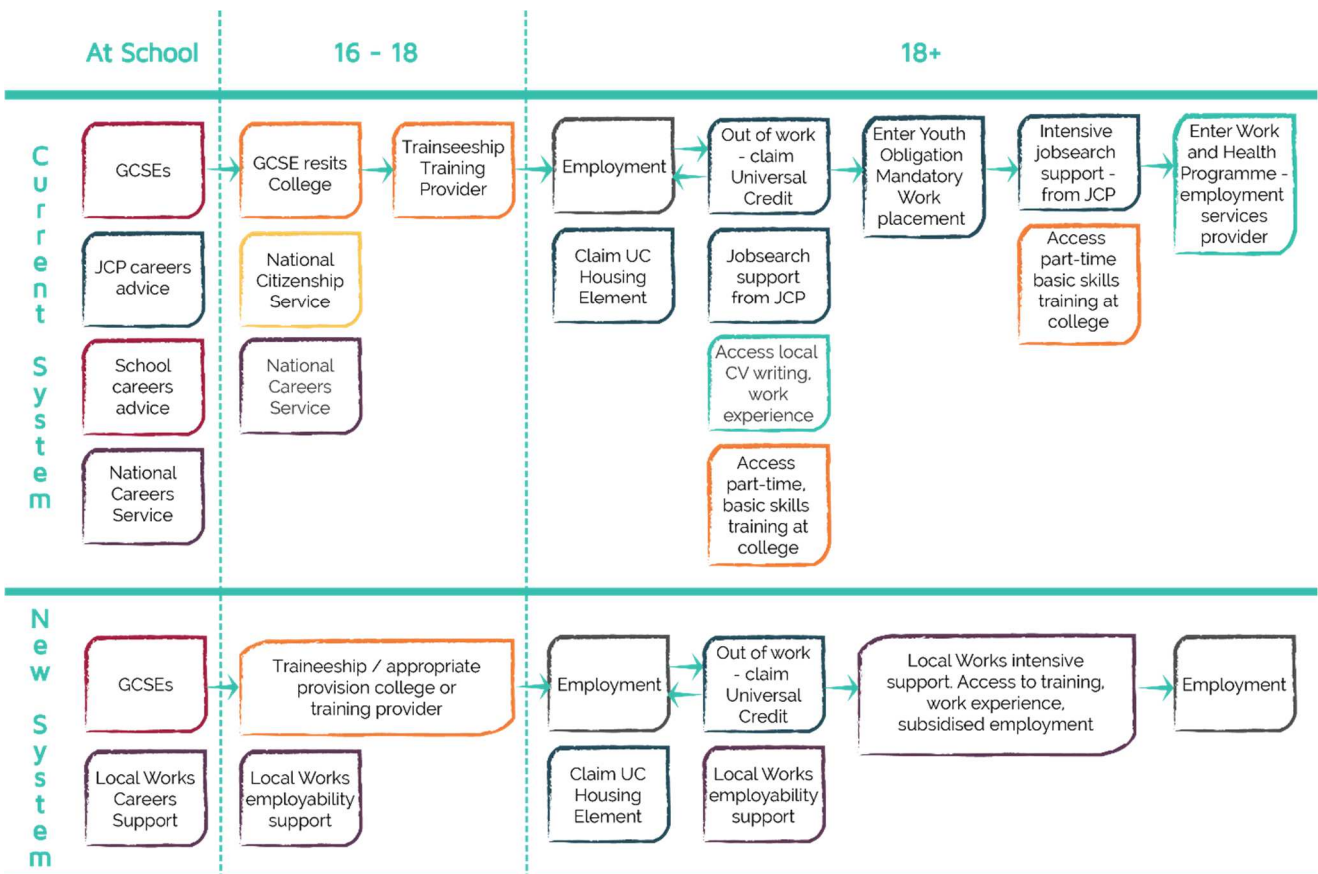
This devolution deal would be within a clear national framework, to recognise those areas where there are benefits – for employers and citizens – in maintaining a national approach. In particular, it would maintain national approaches to:

- qualifications, levels and standards in education and skills
- apprenticeships frameworks and the Apprenticeships levy
- Universal Credit, including core conditionality rules and a national agency to administer entitlements.

This national framework for devolution would also set clear common entitlements where those are appropriate – in particular entitlements to access support with basic and digital skills, English and Maths; to careers advice; and to employment support for disadvantaged groups. These entitlements would be transparent, measured and reported on.

### Improving the experiences of individuals and employers

Work Local will deliver more accessible, responsive and integrated support for individuals, employers and partners. This will make the system easier to navigate, and ensure that those using it can get the right support from the right place at the right time. So for a young person making the transition from learning to employment, this will draw together and integrate support in a single place that is currently delivered through at least six different services – as is set out below.



For both employers and individuals, those accessing Work Local will have guaranteed service levels, that are determined locally but that incorporate national minimum entitlements.

## **Governed by Local Labour Market Agreements**

To make these reforms possible, central government and each combined authority or group of councils will agree a long-term, Local Labour Market Agreement (LLMA). This will set out the transfer of powers and the key requirements of the new system described above.

Underpinning these will be annual Service Level Agreements describing:

- **key outcomes** that will be achieved – with four common headings:
  - jobs and investment – employment levels, growth and composition
  - employment – entry and sustainment for key groups, including young people, Universal Credit claimants, and targeted disadvantaged groups
  - skills – improvements at different levels and responsiveness to demand
  - service satisfaction – for employers, individuals and partners.
- **responsibilities** – between Work Local, central government and other key local partners
- **funding commitments** – how Work Local employment, skills and growth funding will be used
- **delivery plans** for Work Local and commissioned services
- **partnership agreements** – with clear line of sight through to partner services, for example in health, justice and the voluntary and community sector; and employer compacts to support local delivery.

These agreements would be governed locally by joint boards, building on the Integration Boards being developed in current devolution deal areas, and drawing together local and national public services, employers and key local partners.

## **Delivering better outcomes at a lower cost**

By pooling budgets, aligning objectives and removing silos, Work Local will deliver significant economies of scale in what services are delivered, for whom and how. It will be able to commission more intelligently and responsively, with less duplication and a clearer focus on outcomes.

Using data for an anonymised combined authority, analysis by L&W estimates that an integrated, Work Local model with current funding could lead to additional fiscal benefits for a local area of **£280 million** per year, with a benefit to the economy of **£420 million**.

## Making this vision a reality

Local government is ready to lead. With commitment from central government, this vision for employment, skills and growth can be put in place within five years. To make it happen, we need:

### This year:

1. **For central and local government to create the conditions for devolution.** Putting in place the key principles, core requirements and one set of employment and skills readiness criteria.
2. **Agreement to a stronger local role in current employment and skills policy and delivery** – including in apprenticeships, technical education reform, local adult skills planning, the successor to the European Social Fund (ESF), and oversight of employment services including Job Centre Plus (JCP) and the Work and Health Programme. A key first step would be to halt the replacement of National Careers Service, and that the long awaited review of careers advice devolve the co-ordination, commissioning and funding of all-age careers advice to local areas.

### By 2020:

3. **Local and national investment in building the capacity for devolution** – knowledge transfer, capacity building and developing the systems and governance to support Work Local
4. **Progressive transfer of funding and powers** – including adult skills funding, the replacement to European Social Fund and future employment programmes.

### By 2022:

5. **Trialling of the first Work Local areas** – with Local Labour Market Agreements (LLMA), ‘one stop’ services and joint oversight and governance.

# 1. Introduction

To meet the challenges of the future, the employment and skills system needs fundamental reform. In 2015, the LGA's 'Realising Talent' programme set out the case for reform and the principles that should guide future devolution of employment and skills.<sup>1</sup> For the last six months, the LGA has been further developing these proposals – commissioning the L&W to explore how modern, more integrated and localised employment and skills services could be funded, designed and delivered, drawing on insights from the British Isles and lessons from overseas.

This report sets out a detailed proposal for Work Local – a new, devolved and modernised system for employment, skills and local growth.

Alongside this report, we are also publishing a detailed report from L&W to the LGA, which sets out key findings from its research and options for reform<sup>2</sup>. Both papers draw on five linked areas of work, which are set out in more detail in the accompanying report:

1. **An evidence review** looking at good and bad practices in delivering local employment and skills services – covering international approaches (in Canada, Denmark, Germany, The Netherlands and the USA) as well as current and historic initiatives in the UK.
2. **Consultation and engagement with councils** – in particular, through in-depth interviews and workshops with twelve areas<sup>3</sup>, three of which have provided more in-depth case studies (Lincolnshire, Liverpool City Region and Solent).
3. **A survey of all councils** to seek their views on the extent to which services meet local needs and are joined up locally.
4. **New data analysis** to explore the extent to which future skills will meet future labour market needs, and the impacts on the economy of any imbalances.
5. **Options development** – drawing together the above strands to develop potential models for how services could be reformed and improved.

The project is guided by six key principles, set out below.

1. **This project should build directly on Realising Talents.** This called for **Local Labour Market Agreements (LLMA)** between national and local government; the devolution of employment support for the most disadvantaged and of skills funding for adults; and a more locally integrated approach to jobs brokerage for the unemployed.
2. **We are seeking transformational change rather than more tinkering.** The narrow, 'earned autonomy' approach that has been followed in previous devolution agreements is primarily intended to fix problems created by failures in the mainstream employment and skills system. Addressing these root causes requires more fundamental and transformational change.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/employment-and-skills/realising-talent-case-devolved-employment-and-skills>

<sup>2</sup> Interim report from the L&W to LGA, May 2017

<sup>3</sup> These areas are: Bradford, Cheshire West and Chester, Cornwall, Lincolnshire, Essex, Gateshead, Greater Manchester, Islington, Liverpool City Region, Southampton, Staffordshire and Suffolk

3. **The scope of this work – and any local employment and skills service – should include economic development, local growth, employment support and adult skills.** This must be more than just JCP contracted employment programmes and the Adult Education Budget (AEB).
4. **There won't be a 'one size fits all' approach to devolution.** LLMAAs may be different in different places, but they will all set out how the employment and skills system will be tailored to meet local needs, and will all be within a common national framework.
5. **To achieve the benefits of devolution, services need to be integrated and not just co-located.** So integrated hubs or One Stop Shops need to bring services together in the front and back office, rather than just share premises.
6. **Our proposals should be cost neutral.** This may require co-funding between central government and local government, revenue raising (eg from renting space or providing services) and private investment through the involvement of LEPs, recruitment agencies and other partners.

Chapter 2 sets out the headline case for changing the employment and skills systems, which is explored in more depth in the accompanying report. It describes the significant challenges in the labour market and in adult skills that are not being met or are being made worse by the current system; the impact of how services are organised and delivered; and the potential benefits of a more devolved and better integrated system.

Chapter 3 then describes the key features of the new, devolved system – built around a 'one stop' service, clear local leadership, local responsiveness, a common framework for devolution, and LLMAAs. This will improve the experiences of individuals and employers, and deliver improved outcomes at a lower cost.

Chapter 4 describes the steps that need to be taken over the next five years in order to achieve this vision, before Chapter 5 sets out a number of questions on which we would welcome input and views from key partners and stakeholders.

#### **What do we mean by 'local'?**

**In this report, as in the previous Realising Talents reports, by 'local area' we mean combined authorities and groups of councils which can work together at a wider spatial level.**

Currently there is a complicated landscape of boundaries, including LEPs, combined authorities, 'multi-borough areas', Work and Health Programme areas, JCP districts and Education and Skills Funding Agency regions. It is now widely accepted that wider functional economic areas are the most appropriate level at which local economic planning should take place, with local government as the democratic, accountable body.

**We recommend that the new government review LEP areas**, aligning with new groupings of councils (such as combined authorities) that provide the economies of scale for devolved powers, and which consider ongoing transformation of public services and their governance.<sup>4</sup> **At the same time central government should review JCP districts, Work and Health Programme contract areas, and Education and Skills Funding Agency regions to align with new boundaries.** This requires significant changes, so a move towards it should not halt progress on moving the devolved employment and skills agenda forward.

<sup>4</sup> Recommended by the Independent Commission on Economic Growth and the Future of Public Services in Non-Metropolitan England, March 2015

## 2. Why the system needs reform

While successive national Governments have sought to reform both the employment and skills systems, over the last two decades they have continued to face significant strains in addressing economic and social challenges, and have failed to make a decisive impact on improving outcomes for people or places.

The Government's Industrial Strategy<sup>5</sup>, Green Paper on work, health and disability<sup>6</sup> and Post-16 Skills Plan<sup>7</sup> set out a range of new economic and social challenges which the systems need to urgently address.

On employment, this includes in particular a need to improve outcomes for those further from work, reduce long term and youth unemployment, tackle the gap in employment outcomes for disabled people in particular, and to address significant differences in opportunity between areas. On skills, we face a range of challenges at different levels – including large numbers of adults with poor basic skills and capabilities; shortages of higher-skilled technical and vocational workers; geographical differences contributing to lower growth, poor productivity and low pay in many areas; an assumption that Brexit will result in less access to EU migration - affecting both the supply of workers and demand for skills and the extent to which automation and technology will change the world of work and the jobs that we do.

Meeting these challenges will require the employment and skills systems to be well co-ordinated, high performing, responsive to the needs of employers and local areas, and focused on growth and productivity with an ability to anticipate and respond to change quickly. Brexit is making sectors and employers consider their skills requirements, and is likely to be an incentive to engage more with the skills system.

### Labour market and skills challenges

#### Meeting employment needs

Employment in England has recovered strongly from the global downturn, with the employment rate now higher and unemployment lower than before the recession began. Overall, 74.6 per cent of the working population are in work. However, beneath this headline success story there are significant challenges.

First, a large proportion of the unemployed **do not claim unemployment benefits**<sup>8</sup>. JCP is in effect a Claimant Employment Service rather than a public service, so those not claiming benefits do not receive support. We estimate that **52.1 per cent** of all of the unemployed do not claim unemployment benefits – a figure that has risen from 40.2 per cent in 2010.<sup>9</sup> While this saves the Government from spending more in welfare benefits, it not only fails to provide unemployed non-claimants with the right support they deserve to get into a job but it also reduces the tax paid into the public purse, further harming local and national productivity.

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<sup>5</sup> Building our Industrial Strategy, January 2017

<sup>6</sup> Improving Lives: Work, Health and Disability Green Paper, October 2016

<sup>7</sup> Post-16 Skills Plan, BIS and DfE, July 2016

<sup>8</sup> 'Unemployment benefits' refers to Jobseeker's Allowance and those in the Full Conditionality group of Universal Credit

<sup>9</sup> Source: L&W monthly "Labour Market Live" briefing, April 2017

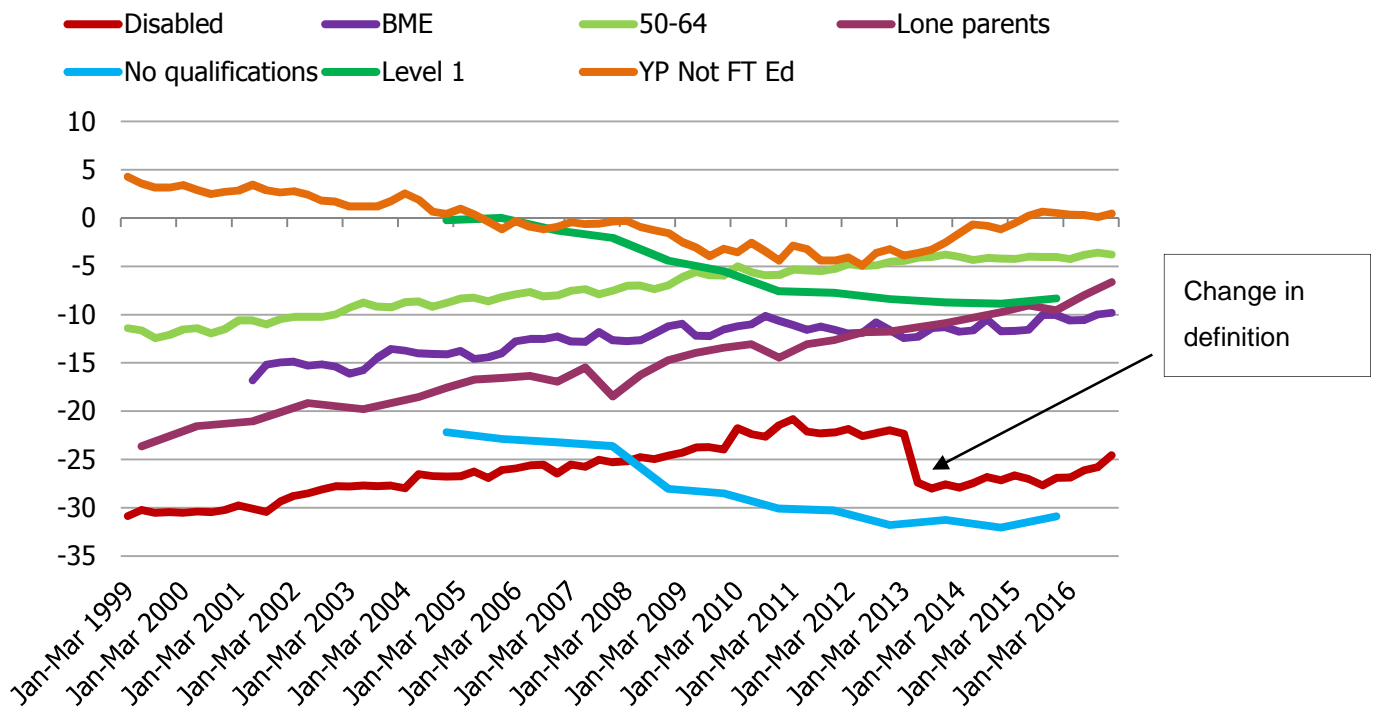


Secondly, certain **groups face significant penalties in the jobs market**. Figure 2.1 below sets out the 'gap' between the national employment rate and the employment rates of key groups. While gaps have narrowed slowly for some groups, for others they remain stubbornly wide – most notably for disabled people, ethnic minorities and the lowest qualified.

For disabled people specifically, the government has set an objective to halve the employment gap between disabled people and those without an impairment by 2020. We estimate that this would be equivalent to supporting an additional **1.1 million disabled people** into work, and that on current trends the gap will take decades to close.

Thirdly, critically, while employment overall has recovered we have seen an acceleration in the growth of **low pay and insecure employment**. Recent analysis by L&W for the TUC has shown that the incidence of insecure employment has risen by 25 per cent since 2011, and that one in 10 workers are now in insecure work<sup>10</sup>. Research by the Resolution Foundation has found that more than one in five workers are low paid, and that for every four workers that are low paid just one will have escaped low pay 10 years later. Overall, Britain has one million more people in low pay than the OECD average.

**Figure 2.1 – Employment rate 'gaps' for disadvantaged groups (2016)**



Source: Annual Population Survey and L&W analysis

This low pay and insecure employment has also fed through into significant **spare capacity in the jobs market**<sup>11</sup>. So even as headline unemployment has fallen to 4.8 per cent of the workforce, our analysis finds that spare capacity is more than three times that rate, with **16 per cent of the workforce**

<sup>10</sup> [TUC website](#), February 2017

<sup>11</sup> Spare capacity is defined by the Office for National Statistics as comprising all of those in the workforce who are: unemployed (actively looking for work and available for work); not actively looking for work and/ or available for work but who want to work; and working part time but who want to work more hours.

**in England – or 5.5 million people – who want a job or more hours**<sup>12</sup>. Critically, as noted, the vast majority of these people receive no support at all through JCP. This figure is comprised of:

- 1.4 million unemployed people
- 1.8 million people who want a job but are not currently looking for work
- 2.3 million who are working part-time but want to work more hours.

These trends in employment, combined with rising costs of living and cuts in financial support for low-income working households, has also manifested itself in significant growth in **working poverty** – with now more than half of all non-pensioners that are poor living in working households, for the first time since comparable records began.

### Meeting skills needs

The skills system has undergone continual change. For instance, a recent Institute for Government report<sup>13</sup> charted that the further education (FE) sector has been defined by more or less continuous change over the last three decades. Since the 1980s, 48 secretaries of state have been responsible for it and no organisation has survived longer than a decade.

On workforce and adult skills the challenges are if anything more stark, across all levels. On essential skills, **nine million people** lack basic skills like literacy or numeracy while **13.5 million people** lack basic digital skills. This is poor compared with our international peers – with the UK ranked 19<sup>th</sup> out of 34 countries in the OECD.<sup>14</sup> This locks people out of the chance to work and to build a career, with those qualified below Level 2 (equivalent to five good GCSEs or equivalent) nearly three times more likely to be out of work than those qualified at Level 4 or above (degree level).

On intermediate skills the UK is weaker still, coming 24<sup>th</sup> out of 34 OECD countries. For instance, there are significant **inequalities in access to apprenticeships** – with young people who are eligible for free school meals half as likely as those not receiving free meals to start a Level 3 apprenticeship in some parts of the country<sup>15</sup>; black and minority ethnic applicants are half as likely to be successful in applications as their white peers; and women over-represented in low-paying sectors and under-represented in Science, Technology, English and Maths (STEM). Of further concern is that **97 per cent of young apprentices are studying at the same level as their previous qualification** – which may give them more work-relevant skills, but is not advancing their skills or those of the economy.<sup>16</sup>

Importantly, funding rates for Apprenticeships are set nationally, so there is no scope for local areas to change the price incentives to encourage provision in particular sectors to reflect local needs. The Government is seeking to address these challenges and redress the balance between academic and vocational pathways through apprenticeship policy and funding reforms, and new Technical Levels and Institutes of Technology. At the same time, other elements of the skills system have arguably failed to meet the needs of individuals, employers or local economies. In particular the low take up of Adult Learner Loans and the streamlining and reductions to adult skills funding leading to pressures on the

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<sup>12</sup> Source: Annual Population Survey, ONS and Learning & Work Institute Estimates

<sup>13</sup> [All Change: Institute of Government, 2017](#)

<sup>14</sup> Source: Education at a Glance, OECD, 2015

<sup>15</sup> State of the nation 2016: social mobility in Great Britain, Social Mobility Commission, 2016.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

Adult Education Budget have led to significant drops in the number of adults participating in learning – falling by 1.5 million compared with 2010. European funding (through European Social Fund) has so far struggled to fill these gaps.

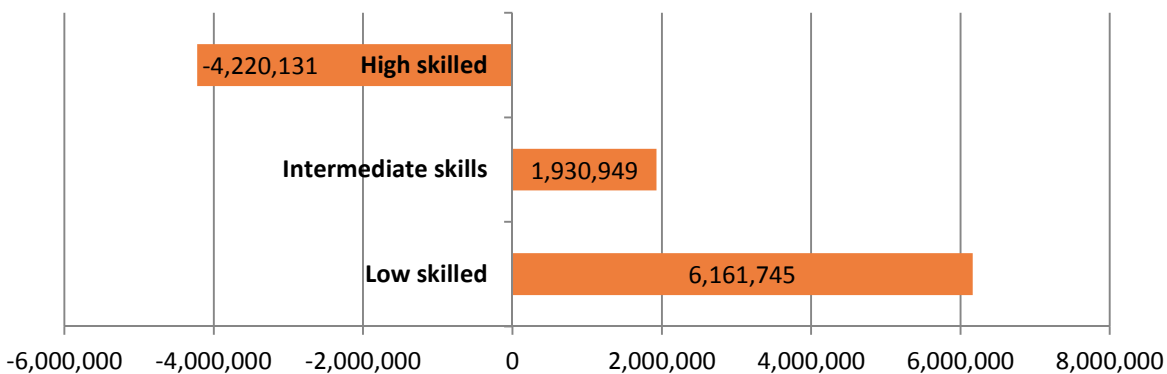
Area Based Reviews of post 16 education and training across England (2015-2017) aimed to achieve a “better responsiveness to local employer needs and economic priorities”<sup>[1]</sup>, yet focused primarily on securing the financial stability of the Further Education (FE) sector. While the process stimulated relationships between groups of local authorities, LEPs and colleges about what provision was needed when and where so colleges could better match local skills demand, these considerations were rarely reflected in final decisions, leaving provision unchanged.

This poor record on low and intermediate skills risks holding back the potential of the UK economy. Using the latest forecasts of employment and skills needs in 2024 (taken from the UKCES Working Futures series) and forecasts of workforce skills at that point, we estimate that on current trends, by 2024 there will be:

- 9.2 million low skilled people chasing 3.1 million low skilled jobs - a surplus of 6.2 million low skilled workers
- 12.6 million people with intermediate skills chasing 10.7 million jobs – a surplus of 1.9 million people
- 16.1 million high skilled jobs with only 11.9 million high skilled workers – a deficit of 4.2 million.

This is set out in Figure 2.2 below. More details on the methodology and approach are set out at **Annex 1**.

**Figure 2.2 – Projected gap between skills needs and population skills levels in 2024**



Source: L&W estimates

Since this analysis was last conducted in 2014, the surplus of low skilled workers has increased by 0.7 million, driven by continued decline in demand for low skill levels, at the same time as rises in State Pension Age mean more low qualified people are remaining in the labour market, while the shortage at higher skills has increased by 1.3 million, driven by continued trends towards demand for higher skills.

With a third of all workers being over-50 by 2020, meeting the future needs of the economy means investing in the skills of those who are in work today – not just in the future skills of young people. It

<sup>[1]</sup> Reviewing post-16 education and training institutions, BIS, 2015

follows that without action, the current pattern of high employment rates for the high skilled and low (and falling) employment rates for the low and intermediate skilled groups are likely to continue.

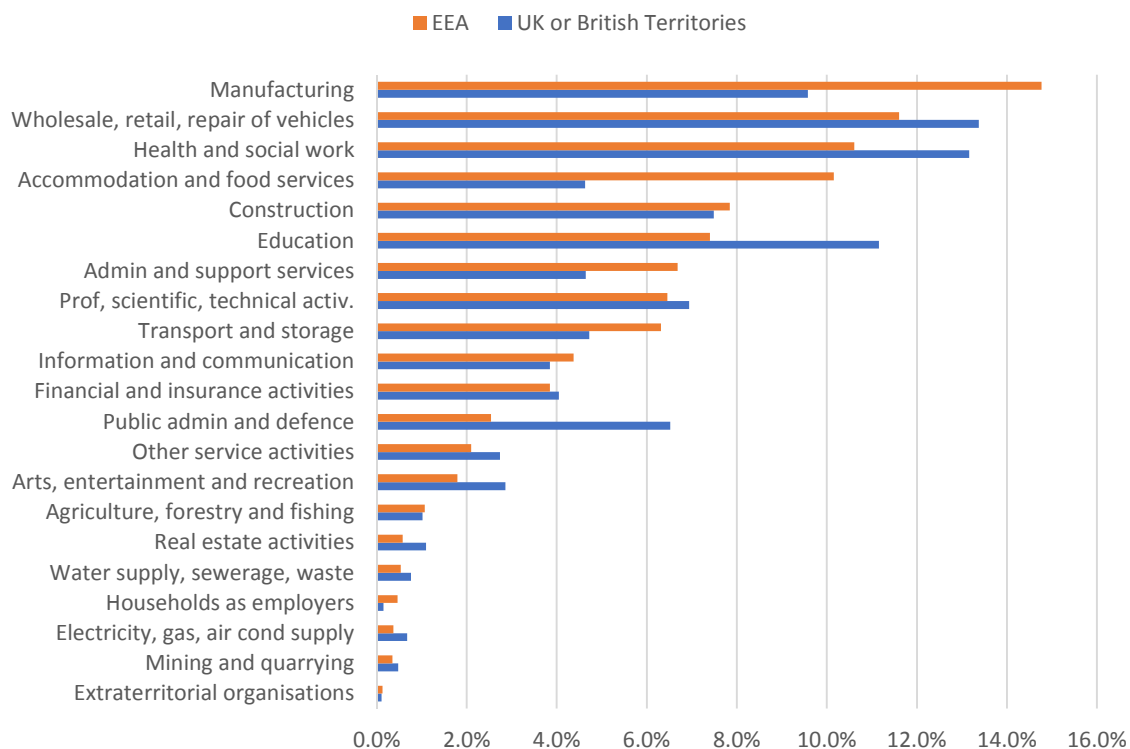
Higher-skilled migration has historically played an important role in helping to address these skills gaps. Our analysis of ONS data found that 53 per cent of those born overseas have Higher Education qualifications, compared with 40 per cent of those born in the UK. Just 16 per cent of those born overseas are qualified at GCSE level or below, compared with 27 per cent of those born in the UK.

Looking at European migration in particular, 740,000 workers in highly skilled jobs are from the European Economic Area (EEA), while at least 1.2 million EEA nationals are qualified at the equivalent of degree level or higher. By contrast, 454,000 work in low skilled jobs while 337,000 have low or no qualifications<sup>17</sup>.

As figure 2.3 below shows, EEA nationals work in a range of sectors. More than one in ten work in manufacturing, the automotive industry, health and social care or in accommodation and food. EEA nationals are particularly over-represented within the manufacturing industry (where nearly 300,000 EEA nationals work) and in food services.

With the forthcoming exit from the European Union, limits on EU migration could therefore exacerbate the skills challenges set out above. It will be more important than ever to address these gaps by retraining and upskilling the current workforce.

**Figure 2.3 Sectoral employment by Country of Birth, UK**



Source: Labour Force Survey and L&W analysis

<sup>17</sup> Source: L&W analysis of the Labour Force Survey

Failure to address these gaps puts at risk up to 4 per cent of future economic growth – equivalent to a loss of economic output of £90 billion. At an individual level, this means an average worker would be on average £1,176 a year worse off (or around £60,000 over a working lifetime).

Skills gaps also have consequences for productivity, or the amount that each worker produces. **The average UK worker produces 25 to 35 per cent less per hour than the average French, German and US worker** and this gap has widened since the financial crisis. Productivity is the key determinant of prosperity, in that long-term living standards cannot rise without increasing productivity. Raising skills is one of the main drivers of achieving this, with those qualified to Level 3 earning 10 per cent more than those not. Overall, households would be £21,000 per year better off if UK productivity matched that in the US.

More broadly, there have been significant concerns raised that **the skills system is not responsive enough to employer needs and future demand**. In apprenticeships for example, Policy Exchange have estimated that up to £500 million per year may be being spent on training that does not give recipients the skills that they need to work in a range of roles across their sector.<sup>18</sup> The lack of responsiveness both to current and future needs was also a common theme in our interviews and workshop with council case studies.

The employment and skills system must be underpinned by a good independent careers advice and guidance system. But the current system is complex and fragmented. In any one area, schools, colleges, councils and national agencies like the National Careers Service, Careers and Enterprise Company, JCP and Education and Skills Funding Agency deliver initiatives for different age ranges and groups, with no one organisation responsible or accountable for coordinating it with limited reference to the local jobs market. A House of Commons sub-committee report<sup>19</sup> concluded that ‘recent years have seen a whole host of policy changes, initiatives and new bodies: none has led to any serious improvement in provision; some have proved counter-productive’; it recommended ‘the forthcoming careers strategy offers a much-needed opportunity for consolidation.’

### **Different areas have different needs**

Importantly, **the employment and skills picture varies significantly between areas**, with a wide variation between employment rates across local authorities – from 62 per cent in Rochdale to 89 per cent in Stroud.

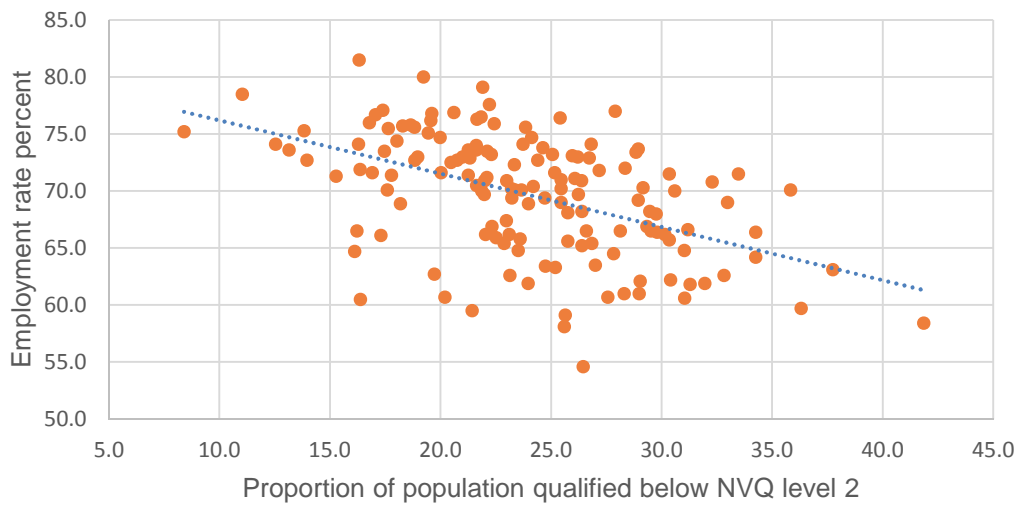
In total there are 33 areas where fewer than two thirds of the 16-64 population are in work. Areas with lower employment also tend to have lower qualified workforces, as Figure 2.3 sets out. This compares, for each upper tier local authority, their employment rate with the proportion of the population qualified below Level 2.

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<sup>18</sup> Richmond, T. (2016) ‘The skills we need and why we don’t have them’, Policy Exchange

<sup>19</sup> [House of Commons sub committee report July 2016](#)

**Figure 2.3 – Local authority employment rates compared with the share of population qualified below Level 2**



Source: Annual Population Survey and L&W analysis

Looking at the highest skilled (Level 4 and above) there is an even wider variation in employment rates – ranging from 20 per cent of the adult population (in Sandwell) to 70 per cent (in Richmond upon Thames).

Within our case studies of 12 local areas we also found significant differences in their labour markets and skills profiles, and therefore different challenges, opportunities and priorities – with many identifying gaps around health and disability, older people and tackling low skills; while others that have recovered more strongly from the downturn seeking to prioritise higher level skills and growth industries.

## The employment and skills systems

Despite these challenges across both employment and skills, and the wide variations between areas in how these are manifested, there is only limited scope for local areas to shape or even influence the employment and skills systems. Both systems are highly centralised in their funding and in how priorities, policy and strategy are set. The employment system is also centralised in its management and operational delivery (reporting to central government); while the skills system has no national coordination, more autonomy for colleges and providers in what they deliver, but no direct accountability to local areas.

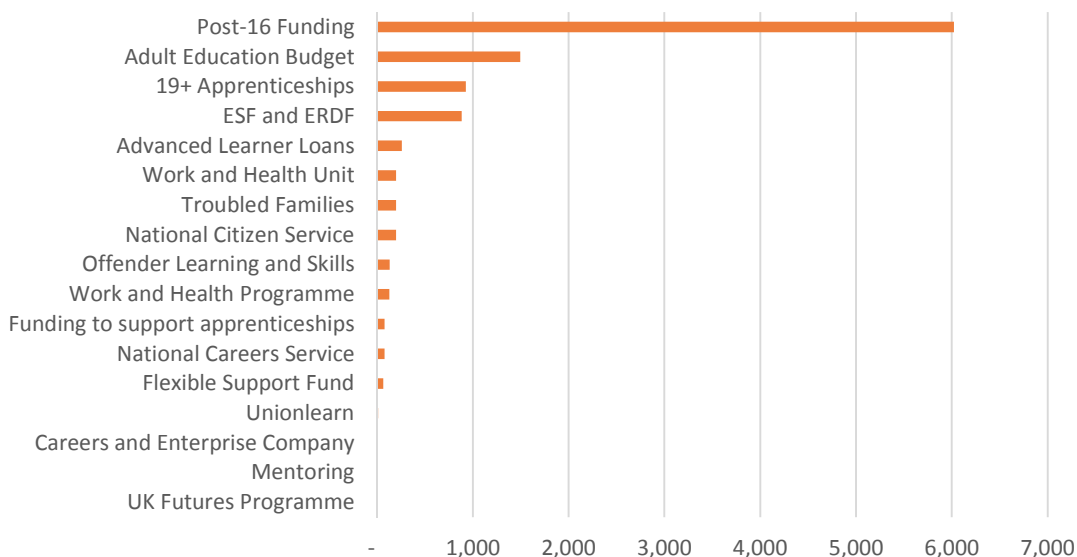
Throughout this section, we reference interviews and case studies of the twelve local areas involved in the project, and an LGA survey of councils. Those interviewed for this research, and survey respondents, were clear that overall these systems are not responsive to local priorities – with a ‘one size fits all’ approach whether a local economy has full employment or high unemployment, and little scope to influence spending or strategy to align with need. These problems are rooted both in how services are organised, and in how they are delivered – set out below.

## How services are organised

The overall employment and skills landscape is characterised by complexity and reform. Recent work for the LGA finds that across the wider economic development landscape there are at least 70 different funding streams, managed by 22 delivery agencies or government departments and responsible for £23.5 billion in public spending.<sup>20</sup>

Looking at employment and skills specifically, the analysis finds 20 funding streams managed by eight departments or agencies and £10.7 billion of spending. These are set out below.

**Figure 2.4 – Central government employment and skills funding, 2016/17**



Source: Shared Intelligence, 2016

This fragmentation is exacerbated by services often having **different objectives, priorities, eligibility criteria, accountabilities and ways of working** – with limited scope to align these with local priorities nor to join services up locally.

Respondents to the survey conducted for this research felt that some government departments, agencies and providers had a good understanding of local priorities – in particular JCP and those providing employment and skills services. However they reported that others did not understand priorities – with particularly poor scores for some education and skills services. This is shown in Figure 2.5.

<sup>20</sup> Shared Intelligence (2016) 'Is the grass greener...? Fragmented Funding for Growth 2016/17 – An independent report for the LGA'

## INCREASING EMPLOYMENT

- YOUTH ENGAGEMENT FUND (14-17)
- YOUTH EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE (15-24)
- JOBCENTRE PLUS WORK COACH SUPPORT (18+)
- DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT ADVISER SUPPORT (18+)
- FLEXIBLE SUPPORT FUND (18+)
- WORK AND HEALTH UNIT TRIALS (18+)
- EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT FOR EX-OFFENDERS (18+)
- YOUTH OBLIGATION (18-21)
- WORK AND HEALTH PROGRAMME (21+)
- COUNCIL EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVES (18+)
- NHS-FUNDED EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT (18+)
- IAPT MENTAL HEALTH EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT (18+)

## IMPROVING SKILLS

- WORK EXPERIENCE (18-24)
- TRAINEESHIPS (16-24)
- POST 16
  - GENERAL FE COLLEGES
  - SIXTH FORM COLLEGES
  - FREE/STUDIO/UTCS
- TECHNICAL LEVELS (16-19)
- LEVY & NON LEVY APPRENTICESHIPS (16+)
- ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET (19+)
- HIGHER EDUCATION (18+)
- ADVANCED LEARNER LOANS (19+)
- SECTOR BASED WORK ACADEMIES (18+)
- COUNCIL SKILLS INITIATIVES (18+)
- CAREERS ADVICE AND GUIDANCE (12+)



## FRAGMENTED EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS SERVICES

for young people and adults

## NARROWING GAPS

- BUILDING BETTER OPPORTUNITIES (16+)
- NATIONAL CITIZENSHIP SERVICE (16-17)
- TROUBLED FAMILIES
- INNOVATION FUND (14+)
- FAIR CHANCE FUND (18-24)
- TARGETED SUPPORT FOR YOUNG CARELEAVERS, SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) AND YOUNG OFFENDERS
- PREVENTION AND SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING (NEET)
- HIGHER EDUCATION ACCESS (18+)

**DELIVERED BY**

**COMMISSIONED BY**

**ACCOUNTABLE TO**

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Skills providers	Councils
Employment providers	JCP
Careers and Enterprise Company	Schools
Education Business Partnerships	
National Careers Service	Colleges

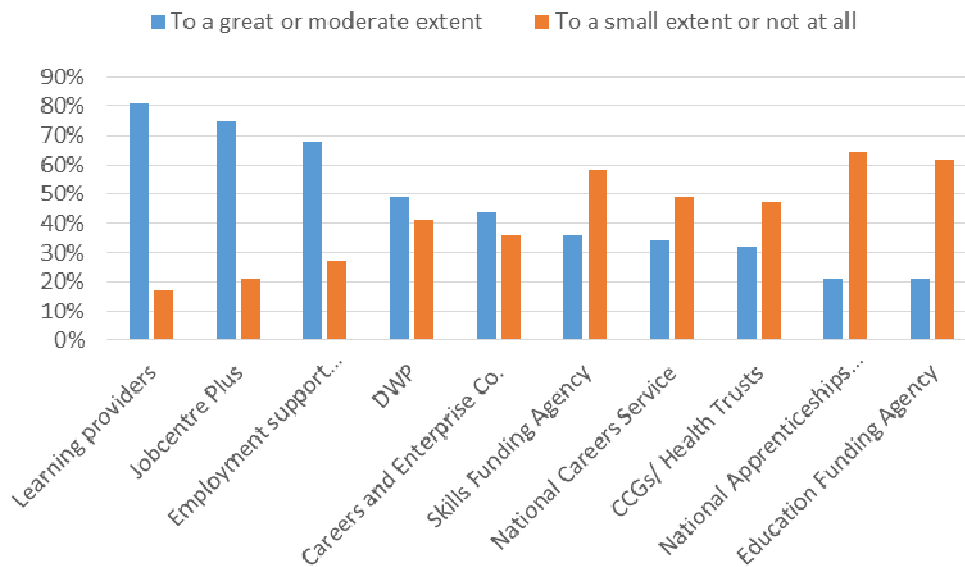
DH	Councils	DfE
DWP	DCLG	Cabinet Office
Employers		

Employers / LEPs	JCP/DWP	DCLG
Councils	CCGs	Cabinet Office
DfE/Education and Skills Funding Agency		
National Offender Management Service		
Big Lottery	National Apprenticeship Service	
Careers and Enterprise Company		





**Figure 2.5 – Extent to which councils consider that organisations understand the current employment and skills priorities of local area**



Source: LGA survey of councils. N = 53

However even where services may understand priorities, those interviewed for this research reported that they were often powerless to act under their own initiative. In JCP for example, case study areas reported that the system remains highly centralised with clear national (vertical) accountability to national targets. Local offices deliver or refer to a range of nationally designed support measures, with only very limited local sourcing or purchasing of support.

“We have excellent working relationships with JCP, but they are hamstrung by central government.”

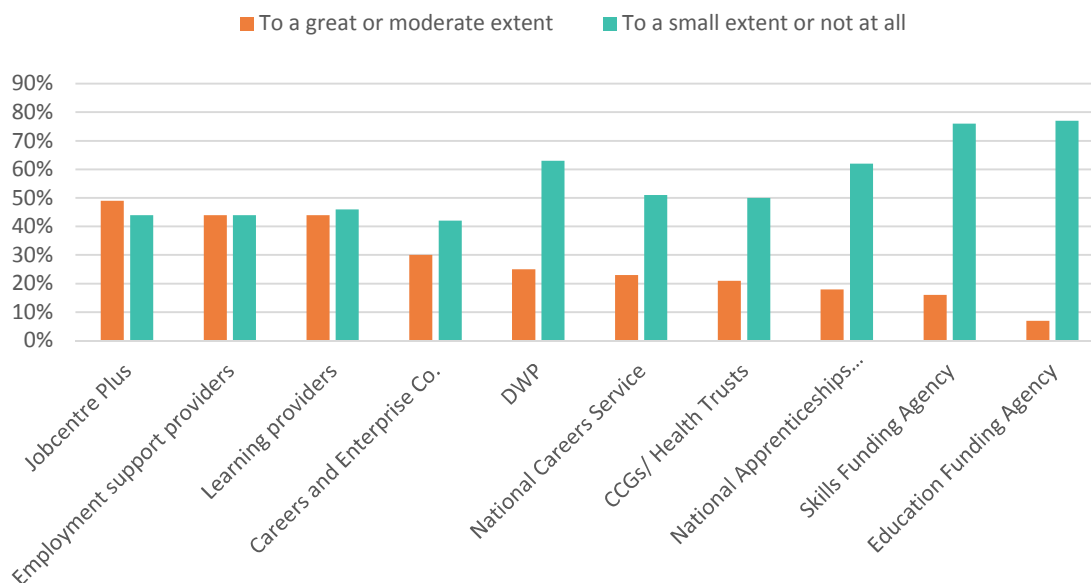
Across the wider network of local employment and skills providers, there was a general perception that there was little that providers could do to respond to local needs within their current commissioning and delivery constraints. As one put it:

“Providers get paid for delivery, whether it meets economic needs or not.”

This was also reflected in survey responses. More than 60 per cent of respondents felt that they had little or no scope to influence Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Education Funding Agency (EFA) and Skills Funding Agency (SFA)<sup>21</sup> provision. Even for the highest organisation, JCP, just half of respondents felt that there was moderate or greater scope to influence provision.

<sup>21</sup> <sup>21</sup> Survey conducted prior to the merger of the EFA and SFA.

**Figure 2.6 – Extent to which councils consider that local services are flexible and responsive**



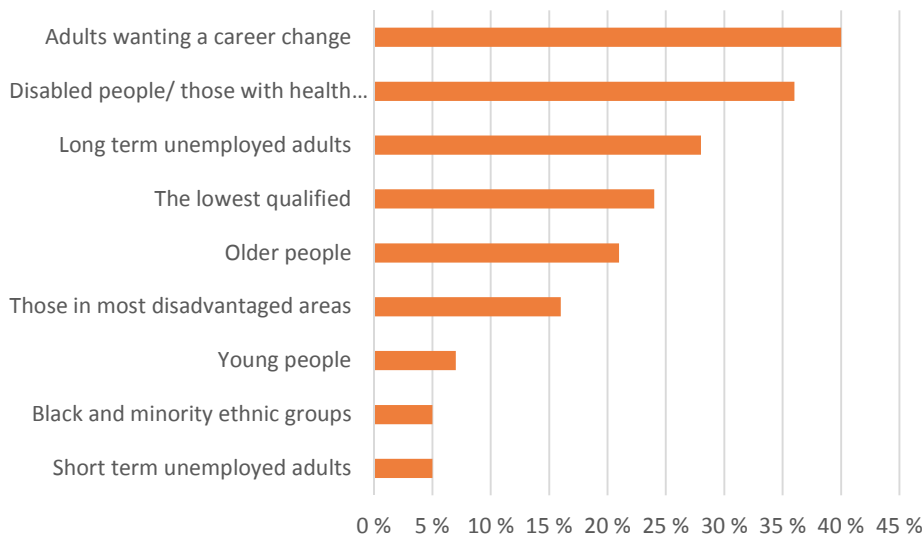
Source: LGA survey of councils. N = 57

Overall, 80 per cent of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they had sufficient opportunity to discuss with DWP, EFA and SFA contracts that affected their areas before they were awarded. More broadly, commissioning and delivery remains highly complex – with **different departments funding provision according to different eligibility criteria, rewarding different outcomes and delivering across differing geographical areas**. Within adult skills, SFA provision continues to be commissioned separately from employment programmes according to national funding rules and priorities. One case study area also gave the example of the Careers Service specifically, where:

“The Careers Service have their own performance standards to meet. For example one of their outputs is CVs, so they have to meet their targets whether it is what people need or not. So when they are brought into a partnership they are limited in what they can do because of their contract.”

At a local level, services are often even more fragmented and complicated – with national agencies and nationally commissioned programmes overlapping with local provision, other public services and wider voluntary and community provision (most notably, Big Lottery-funded support). This is often most pronounced in services for young people, with one case study area describing “a glut of provision in relation to NEETs” (young people not in education, employment or training) and another stating that they have counted over one hundred separate programmes or initiatives in their area alone. The council survey also identified a number of significant gaps in provision – set out below. In particular, respondents identified more limited support locally for those seeking career changes and disabled people as a particular issue.

**Figure 2.7 – Groups considered less well supported in local areas**



Source: LGA survey of councils. N = 52

With other client groups or services, despite a range of provision there are often significant **gaps in coverage**. Health was the most common example where case study areas described relationships with Clinical Commissioning Groups and Health Trusts as patchy.

More broadly, **boundary issues** were a common theme with a number of areas – with organisational or administrative boundaries not aligning. There is no alignment between the boundaries of JCP districts, combined authorities, LEP areas, health and wellbeing boards, Sustainability and Transformation Plans nor the Contract Package Areas for specific programmes like the Work and Health Programme. This makes for a complex system, which is exacerbated in **rural areas**, where it is critical that services align so that economies of scale can be realised and transaction costs reduced.

In the north east for example, the seven councils within the combined authority straddled two JCP districts, making it harder to communicate and to share information across boundaries, with these boundaries not aligning with health services. At the same time, the north east is in the same single Contract Package for the Work and Health Programme (and will have the same single provider) as Yorkshire and Humber and a large part of the East Midlands.

There were nonetheless good examples where services were organised in a more aligned way – most notably in some of the **European Social Fund (ESF) provision**, where areas had opted in to co-financing of employment support. In one case, this had led to local co-design of a specification (although the procurement process reduced some of this local variation and there remain barriers to sharing information between partners). Often however, it was reported that ESF was ‘shoe-horning’ support in order to fill gaps caused by not being able to influence mainstream skills spending and priorities.

In addition, there have been some moves recently to further align employment and skills support – with JCP now screening claimants for basic and English language skills and delivering ‘sector based work academies’ with training providers, targeted at improving the skills and job prospects of younger claimants in particular.

Finally, a consequence of local areas having little or no scope to influence local employment and skills provision is that **local employers, who should have significant input**, are limited to their role in setting the direction for European funding – via employer-led LEPs. It was felt by a number of areas that this led to a disconnect between the needs of local employers, particularly in growth industries, and the employment and skills services that are commissioned. Two thirds (67 per cent) of survey respondents considered that skills provision was only responsive to local employer demand to a small extent or not at all.

### How services are delivered

The consequences of this fragmentation and lack of influence over how services are organised is also reflected in how local services are delivered. Most significantly, interviewees consistently reported that **services are often standardised, with little flexibility for local circumstances**. In particular the move to more commercially-driven contracting at the centre, including larger single contracts, was felt to have led to providers being less likely to tailor their approach to local priorities and circumstances. As one interviewee described:

“They made up their minds as to how they were going to do it and that was it.”

Commissioning approaches more broadly were seen as a key barrier to delivering locally responsive services. For example, while DWP’s 2014 Commissioning Strategy committed to better alignment “at the national, sub-national and local level, especially to support those furthest from the labour market”, in practice **commissioning has been highly centralised** – and there are numerous examples where provision has cut across other initiatives (for example around support for families); has duplicated (with one example given where two parts of government issued three unconnected tenders for careers services in a single week); or has simply operated to different timescales, boundaries and criteria to related provision.

On employment services specifically, 69 per cent of survey respondents reported that national programmes tied in with local services to a small or no extent at all; and no respondents reported that they tied in with local services to a great extent.

These difficulties are often exacerbated by **a lack of common measures of success** between services. So while contracted employment programmes focus on job outcomes and sustained employment, JCP is measured operationally on the numbers leaving benefit – and neither measure progress towards work. In skills provision, the focus is on attaining qualifications with then a wider inspection regime to measure quality and management. And often, performance is not open to public scrutiny – with JCP in particular not publishing its performance data for districts or local offices. As one interviewee described:

“The elephant in the room is that there is no real understanding of how JCP performs.”

Even where information is available to those delivering services, it is **often not shared with wider partners locally** – either at an aggregate level to support local planning, or at an individual level where the same individuals are being supported across services. So in one example, where local provision was intended to support former Work Programme participants, the failure to share aggregate data on participants’ characteristics and needs made it harder to line up the right provision and to target support. More broadly, as one respondent described:

“We don’t know what support is being provided, what interventions are taking place and what it costs. We don’t know what works.”

This also means that councils do not have oversight of the performance of employment and skills services in their areas. In the council survey, 70 per cent of respondents disagreed or disagreed strongly that they had sufficient oversight to enable them to hold organisations to account for their local delivery.

## The devolution debate

Successive governments over the last two decades have tried to make employment and skills provision more responsive to local needs. However these have often been fixed-term and relatively targeted initiatives – ranging from the **New Deal for Communities** in the late 1990s, which in many areas included neighbourhood-based job brokerage, ‘one-stop shops’ for careers advice and jobsearch, and access to local training; through to **Action Teams for Jobs** with a strong focus on outreach, partnership working, colocation and cross-referrals; and **Employment Zones** which were the first attempts to test outcome-based, contracted out and flexible employment support. Even where local control has been more significant, as with **Training and Enterprise Councils** from 1990 to 2001, while responsibility for training was held locally in practice the key decisions were still made centrally. From the mid-2000s, there was a far greater focus on trying to integrate and co-ordinate between the employment and skills systems – with **The Leitch Report** (2006)<sup>22</sup> concluding that fragmentation of services was exacerbating poor outcomes both in the labour market and in productivity. This led to a greater recognition of city regions and sub-regional partnerships as drivers of growth, and the development of new **Employment and Skills Boards** – with a loosely defined role to engage employers, assess labour market needs, review local provision and make recommendations for how employment and skills could be aligned.

However, it has only been in more recent years that there have been attempts to devolve funding, design and/ or delivery of employment and skills. Arguably the forerunners for this were the **City Strategy Pathfinders**, which ran from 2007 to 2011 in 15 areas with a focus on improving employment, raising skills and unlocking local partners and funding. However even in these early days, there were two common problems: Pathfinders received less autonomy than they had expected; and they were generally weak on engaging employers.

Since then, the approach to devolution in practice has been one of ‘**earned autonomy**’ – with local areas granted limited flexibilities often over single programmes or budgets for a limited time and after a process of negotiation with central government over terms.

This began with **Total Place** at the end of the Labour Government, and continued with the Coalition through Community Budgets, City Deals, Growth Deals and now Devolution Deals. In some cases, the gains from this approach have been far-reaching – most notably with the devolution of health and social care to Greater Manchester, and with the devolution of Work and Health Programme design and funding to Greater Manchester and London. However, even in these cases devolution has usually come with strings attached.

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<sup>22</sup>[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/354161/Prosperity\\_for\\_all\\_in\\_the\\_global\\_economy\\_-\\_summary.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/354161/Prosperity_for_all_in_the_global_economy_-_summary.pdf)

Interestingly, at the same time the UK also provides a model for more radical devolution through its relationship with the devolved nations. In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, education and skills policy and funding is fully devolved – there is no ring-fenced funding; and no requirements from Westminster on what is delivered, for whom and how.

On employment and welfare, Northern Ireland has significant autonomy from Westminster – with a benefits system and conditionality rules that mirror those in Great Britain, but full control over the design and delivery of employment services, and devolved funding without ring-fence. And since 2016, Scotland has had devolved authority over employment support for disabled people and for those on benefit and at risk of long-term unemployment – again with funding devolution.

## The benefits of devolution

Drawing this together, then, the centralised model for employment and skills has failed to deliver an integrated, ‘whole systems’ approach.

We see a clear case for improving how employment and skills services respond to local needs, and how they are organised and delivered locally. However despite this pressing case for change, progress on devolution has been slow and piecemeal. Local areas want more influence and control, and the devolved nations show that more radical devolution from Westminster is possible – but governments of all colours have struggled to truly let go.

Those interviewed for this project were clear on the potential benefits of going further and faster. Broadly, three key benefits of devolution were identified:

- **for the economy** – where devolution brings the opportunity for a clearer, longer-term and more integrated vision locally; with better value for money (economies of scale, efficiency and outcomes) and better meeting local economic needs
- **for residents** – with more effective, personalised, timely, and seamless support
- **for delivery organisations** – through a clearer, more collaborative system; more integrated and better organised commissioning; and a more user-centred approach.

So by better integrating services locally, there is scope to improve outcomes and reduce waste and transactional costs. By better aligning funding to local priorities, services can be more responsive to local employment and skills needs. For residents, more personalised and joined up services can be better targeted, more effective and less duplicative. For employers, better alignment should open up the potential for a skills system that responds better to demand and employer’s needs. And improving employment and skills outcomes also has wider benefits – in terms of residents’ wellbeing, social cohesion, improved educational attainment, better housing, reduced pressure on health services and so on.

Respondents were also clear on the benefits that local areas can bring to bear in convening partners and joining up support.

“You can’t underestimate what a local area can bring in terms of partnerships, knowledge and expertise, and the opportunities there are to bring together inward investment, adult health and social care and capital projects.”

### 3. Work Local – a new model for integrated employment and skills

#### Summary

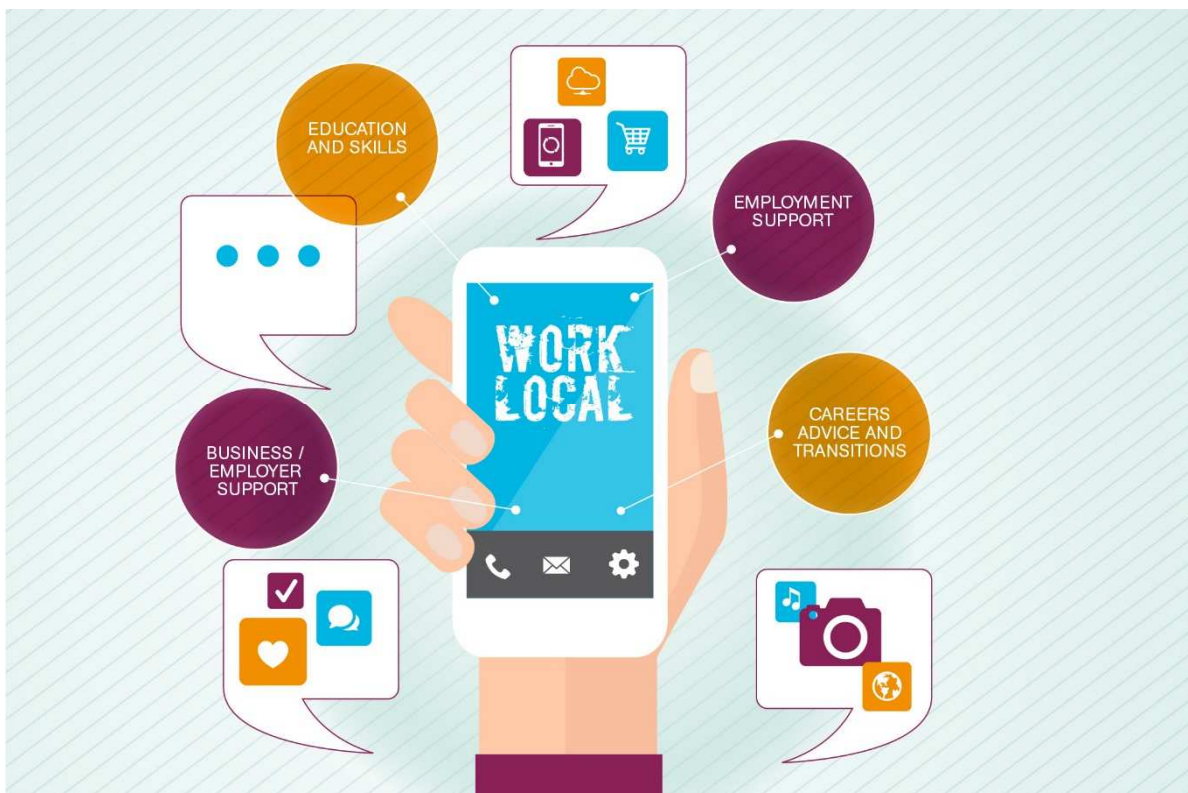
The proposal below sets out a vision for an integrated, effective and locally responsive employment and skills system that can meet the labour market and skills challenges of the future.

At its highest level, this means:

1. A 'one stop' service that is rooted in place
2. With clear and responsive local leadership
3. That is driven by local opportunities and needs
4. Within a common national framework for devolution of strategy, financing and delivery of employment and skills
5. Improving the experiences of individuals and employers
6. Governed by LLMA's
7. Delivering better outcomes at a lower cost

These seven elements are set out in detail below.

This new service, Work Local, will be organised at the level of combined authorities and groups of councils – simplifying and aligning myriad existing boundaries, and creating a coherent national system locally and nationally.



## 3.1 A ‘one stop’ service that is rooted in place

At the heart of a reformed model will be a new, ‘one stop’ service bringing together information, advice and the delivery of employment, skills and wider support for individuals and for employers.

Work Local will bring together and localise support, making full use of physical and digital assets to deliver a clearly branded, integrated offer for employers and individuals, which connects to wider partners and support.

### Bringing together and localising support

As Chapter 2 sets out, the current employment and skills system is fragmented across employer engagement, business support, local growth, careers services, employment support, adult skills, apprenticeships support and employment programmes. Bringing these services together into one integrated system will reduce costs, complexity and duplication; improve services; and respond to local needs.

Integrated, ‘one-stop’ services are a key feature of nearly every international system explored as part of this project. In addition, they have been a feature of trials in the UK going back to the New Deal for Communities in the 1990s. Well designed ‘one stop’ services work, and should be the starting point for future reform.

#### One Stop Shops and service integration

In the **Netherlands**, the ‘Employee Insurance Implementing Body’ (UWV) and municipalities co-locate and co-ordinate service delivery through a national network of ‘**Work Squares**’. These are co-managed by local UWV and Social Services Directors and include a range of agencies which could include other municipal services, welfare organisations, reintegration companies, private employment agencies and temporary work agencies.

In the **United States**, a national network of ‘One Stop Centers’ bring together employment, training and careers support for individuals and employers. There are around 2,500 centres nationwide, operating at state, regional and local level. This has also led to greater co-ordination and integration, in particular with welfare and related services, blending of funding streams, and integrated case management, assessment and information sharing.

In **Germany**, federal and municipal government deliver integrated one-stop services for uninsured claimants in most of the country – which combine benefit administration, employment support, and access to training and other local services. These ‘joint agencies’ incorporate employment and benefit delivery as well as wider social services (eg debt advice, drug and psychological counselling and childcare provision).

In the UK, JCP has at times fulfilled a similar ‘one stop’ role, although this has been less common in recent years. Currently, the council-led **MyGo service in Suffolk** is the best example of a one-stop service. It integrates JCP support within a locally-led, one stop employment, skills and careers service for young people. As well as integrating JCP and new contracted employment support, MyGo also co-locate careers, skills, apprenticeships and other local public and voluntary services.



The '**Universal Support delivered locally**' (USdl) trials from 2014/15 also tested approaches to integrating and aligning support between councils, DWP and local partners for those likely to be less able to manage under Universal Credit. This pointed to key critical success factors around setting clear and common success measures; putting the right governance in place; working in partnership; co-locating and where possible integrating support; and having clear processes to underpin joint delivery.

**Cornwall's Inclusion Hub** Established by JCP and Cornwall Council, Inclusion Hub brings together over 60 partners and their 120 local projects, programmes and services to redefine the back to work offer for disengaged young people in Cornwall – it has helped 10,000 people into work since 2006. It mitigates incentives in the national funding system that encourage organisations to work in isolation on the ground by taking a programming approach, brokering providers to share funding and incentives for the benefit of the individual – making clear the role of different organisations in the progression of people towards work. The model has been successful in areas with high levels of long-term worklessness, where provision is plentiful but uncoordinated. Inclusion Hub links social enterprises working with young people unlikely to otherwise engage, slowly brokering progression into back-to-work services.

Additional schemes have been routed through the model. For instance from 2008 to 2011 it received £1.5 million to help people with learning disabilities, with five specialised organisations within the partnership delivering provision in line with existing services. Over three years 600 people were supported, with 100 securing employment. Since 2013 Inclusion Hub takes all customers applying to Cornwall Council's discretionary funds (the most excluded) through a 'Cornwall Works Conversation' providing support and signposting to remove barriers.

### **Making full use of physical assets**

There are a range of services that deliver employment and skills support within local communities and have a visible local presence – including colleges and training providers, universities, JCP offices, centres run or funded by councils and often voluntary and community services. In many towns and cities, the 'footprint' for employment and skills services is significant. However, services have different target groups, different rules for who can use them, are branded differently and are often not welcoming environments.

All of these services could provide the basis for delivering integrated, outward-facing Work Local – where the physical presence is driven by what services are available and needed locally, and where the 'wiring' is hidden by local partners.

### **Consistent branding – the MyGo Centre**

The MyGo Centre in Ipswich town centre provides a dedicated, physical site presence for delivering the integrated MyGo service for young people. The MyGo branding was co-designed by young people themselves, who also inputted on the layout, look and feel of the centre. It combines public access computers and jobsearch facilities, with drop-in and pre-booked courses and support; alongside providing work spaces and meeting rooms for more intensive engagement with work coaches and support. JCP staff supporting young people are also branded as MyGo staff, and deliver the range of Universal Credit interventions and support from the MyGo centre and offices.

This consistent branding has created a welcoming, engaging service that has increased access to services for young people and made it easier to get the right support at the right time. This has also reduced the stigma of accessing support – with 60 per cent of those using MyGo not claiming any benefits.

In addition, a range of services in local areas also act as a base for hosting employment and skills support – for example children’s centres, libraries, council premises and community venues. These too could provide bases for delivering Work Local, particularly in more rural areas, or to reach specific groups who may not otherwise engage with mainstream support. In the **Universal Support delivered locally** trials, these ‘hub and spoke’ models were used as part of wider partnerships between central government, councils and voluntary services.

### **The Universal Support hub and spoke model**

The evaluation of USdl<sup>23</sup> found that a number of areas delivered welfare support through a network of ‘spokes’ mainly in the voluntary sector that engaged residents provided elements of support and referred residents on, with ‘hubs’ in both the public and voluntary sector then delivering co-located and often more integrated services. This was common in rural areas like West Lincolnshire, but some cities with wider catchment areas also found that this was a more effective way of delivering joint working (in particular Derby City).

For employers too, there are opportunities to make better and more consistent use of existing infrastructure and services. This should include ensuring the Work Local centres are accessible and useful to employers – for example providing the space for employers to meet, network and receive support. But it also means working as full partners with those organisations that support employers and have a strong local presence – including Chambers of Commerce.

### **Using technology to broaden access to services**

A number of UK and international services have made increasing use of technology to broaden access to, and improve the effectiveness of, employment and skills support. The introduction of Universal Credit is enabling claimants to manage their job search activity and to interact with work coaches online.

However by drawing together funding and responsibilities across employment and skills services, Work Local will enable these online services to be extended to those not on Universal Credit, and integrated with skills and careers support. Devolution will also allow areas to develop more innovative and integrated approaches to engaging employers and individuals.

### **Online delivery of Dutch employment services**

A number of countries, including the UK, Canada and the United States, have increasingly used digital technology to deliver employment services at lower cost. In the Netherlands, online delivery through werk.nl has also led to a range of service innovations for employers and claimants.

As well as providing an online account, online jobsearch and access to an ‘e-coach’, online tools also enable claimants to identify barriers to work and potential support needs (the ‘Work Explorer’) and for advisers to identify improvements that can be made to claimants’ CVs based on analysis of vacancies and similar jobseekers (the ‘CV quality tool’).

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<sup>23</sup> Bennett, L., Cameron, C., Colechin, J., McCallum, A., Murphy, H., Patel, A. and Wilson, T. (2016) ‘Evaluation of the Universal Support delivered locally trials’. DWP ad hoc research report 33

## **A clear offer for individuals and for employers**

**For individuals**, Work Local will enable areas to design a coherent pathway through employment, skills and careers support – meaning that individuals can access the right support at the right time through a single, integrated, accessible service. This means that the service can be more than the sum of its parts, supporting people to improve their skills, prepare for work, find work, change careers and progress in work.

For example in **careers support**, rather than accessing different services through colleges and training providers, JCP (for benefit claimants and those at school), the National Careers Service, councils (for young people not in education, employment or training) and voluntary and community sector provision, Work Local will be able to bring together a single, coherent and integrated offer – that is governed by one set of objectives and outcome measures, and that can draw on a single set of evidence and insight on the labour market and employer needs.

On **employment and skills support**, rather than accessing disparate provision with different eligibility rules and objectives across JCP, centrally-commissioned employment programmes, nationally funded skills support, adult learner loans and a plethora of provision funded through European, local and charitable trusts, Work Local will be able to offer an integrated offer with coherent commissioning and objectives, and again respond to employer and individual needs.

**For employers**, Work Local will be able to go beyond the existing support that employment and skills services offer around placing vacancies, helping with recruitment and delivering pre-employment training and apprenticeships. By providing a single, responsive and employer-facing presence that brings together business support, growth hubs and employer services it will be able to deliver a coherent offer to help businesses grow: to develop their workforces, navigate the skills and employment system, access funding and public contracts, and deliver training, work placements, apprenticeships and other opportunities.

## **Connecting to wider services, partners and support**

Finally, Work Local will integrate employment and skills but must also act as a gateway to more specialist services and supports that individuals and employers may need. This will include health services, budgeting support, housing and welfare – as well as making full use of the opportunities to link up services within councils, including housing, local welfare and social care.

The physical presence of Work Local will create opportunities to co-locate services, and to work in partnership with the wider public, voluntary and community sectors. This has been a feature of integrated models overseas – for example in **Germany**, ‘joint agencies’ provide access to a range of social services including debt advice, drug and psychological counselling and childcare provision; while in the **US** ‘one stop shops’ often co-locate welfare support and other local government services. In the UK too, councils have taken a leading role in joining up services locally.

### Councils in the lead to join up services and support

The evaluation of the **Universal Support delivered locally trials** found that the thirteen local trials “successfully demonstrated how local authorities, JCP and wider networks of local partners can work together to identify, engage, assess, refer and support claimants to address digital, personal budgeting and often wider support needs.”<sup>24</sup>

It pointed to a number of critical success factors that will be relevant for Work Local, including having clear and common success measures; having the right partnership arrangements in place; maximising the benefits of co-location and integration; and putting in place the right systems to share data and information.

In **MyGo**, the service works closely with a range of wider partners including council services, health and the voluntary and community sector. This includes using the MyGo centre to co-locate the delivery support, and using partner facilities to conduct outreach and engage those more disadvantaged.

## 3.2 With clear and responsive local leadership

Successful public service reform relies on effective local leadership. Councils are best placed to take this convening and leading role, as we are doing through Devolution Deals from Teesside to the West of England. These Devolution Deals, and City Deals before them, have been characterised by local government taking the lead, bringing partners together and developing innovative solutions to local challenges.

### The London Devolution Deal

London borough leaders, London Councils and the Mayor of London have worked effectively together to secure devolution agreements across a wide range of services. These include devolved funding for the Work and Health Programme, a commitment to devolve skills funding via the Adult Education Budget (AEB) by 2019/20; a health and care devolution agreement and discussions around about piloting 100 per cent business rates retention from 2018.

In March 2017 the government signed a second Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the GLA and London Councils which confirmed the Government’s commitment to health and care devolution and an intention to explore devolution of criminal justice services and other employment, transport, and infrastructure services and funding streams in the capital. Services have been devolved at both a regional and local level and the range of devolved services will allow for better integration around places and communities.

Work Local would build on and extend this approach, learning from international models where local government plays the central role in convening partners across employment, skills and growth – like in **Denmark** and the **Netherlands**, where the funding and delivery of employment services are devolved to municipalities, who then lead on drawing together partners and services to meet local and national needs.

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<sup>24</sup> Bennett, L., Cameron, C., Colechin, J., McCallum, A., Murphy, H., Patel, A. and Wilson, T. (2016) ‘Evaluation of the Universal Support delivered locally trials’. DWP ad hoc research report 33

Work Local will also ensure that the right structures and ways of working are in place in order to maximise the benefits of devolving and aligning services and funding. This means having committed local leaders, shared objectives, and a positive approach that empowers operational staff to work together and overcome problems.

In practice, this means that in each Work Local area there would be a **joint board**, bringing together councils, central government representative(s), employer representatives, key voluntary and community sector representatives (for example housing, advice services and representative groups) and the wider public sector (including under-16 education and health). This board would build on the integration boards put in place in current devolution deal areas. It would:

- **set the direction** for the local area – identifying and agreeing local priorities, agreeing the strategic direction for Work Local, and agreeing key outcomes, responsibilities and local accountability for delivering this
- **make decisions** on the design and delivery of Work Local – agreeing how services will be designed to reflect the local strategy and needs, how these will be commissioned and delivered, and the funding strategy
- **oversee implementation** of Work Local – reviewing its performance against objectives and outcome measures, ensuring that implementation continues to meet employer and resident needs, and providing a means to escalate and resolve issues where needed
- **provide a forum** for bringing together partners – to work collaboratively, to share experience and practice, and to engage and influence wider public and community services.

Work Local joint boards would be chaired by local government, reflecting the formal transfer of accountabilities set out in sections 3.4 and 3.6 below. However this local leadership would work with national government as full partners.

### **Employer leadership**

Employers in both the public and private sector must also play a central role in delivering Work Local. The best example of employer leadership in the employment and skills system is in the United States, set out below.

#### **United States Workforce Investment Boards**

A network of Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) span the United States, with each Board chaired by a business leader and comprising a majority of employer members. In addition, WIBs also include leaders from local government, economic development and unions. The 2014 Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act gives WIBs a more strategic focus and allows them a greater role in fostering partnerships between workforce development, education and economic development.

WIBs are responsible for planning how local funds will be invested, and must produce plans that set these out alongside performance targets negotiated between the local board and the state governor.

So as well as having employer representation through the joint boards described above, it is also proposed that Work Local would take responsibility for oversight of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). This would give employers a central role in the leadership of Work Local. They would have a clear role in inputting on strategic and local priorities, deciding on investment priorities, advising on the design and delivery of Work Local, and also convening key employers and partners. Aligning

accountabilities would also mean that existing LEP responsibilities – particularly Growth Hubs and European commissioning – could be integrated and aligned with Work Local.

In the long term, it would be up to Work Local areas, working with LEPs, to agree the local footprint for LEPs within those areas. As now, in some cases that may mean more than one LEP in a single combined authority to reflect local labour markets; in others it may mean coterminous boundaries. However in the short to medium term, it is not anticipated that LEP boundaries would need to change.

### **3.3 That is driven by local opportunities and needs**

Devolution of funding and control will free up local areas to design services that meet local needs and that respond to local priorities rather than to one-size-fits-all rules. This will help to address the challenges and disparities set out in Chapter 2 above.

#### **Different jobs**

The nature of employment is different in different areas. For example, manufacturing accounts for more than one in five jobs in Burnley but fewer than one in fifty jobs in Cambridge<sup>25</sup>. At the same time, areas are seeing growth in different sectors as the economy changes. Councils interviewed for this research wanted more scope to flex the employment and skills system to support local growth in sectors as diverse as manufacturing of renewable energy, advanced automotive engineering, digital gaming, distribution and logistics, and financial services.

Local areas also face different levels of reliance on public sector employment, which varies between 11 per cent and 31 per cent of employment locally<sup>26</sup>. In some areas, the public sector can play a key role in providing opportunities and convening employers, but this can also present challenges where areas need to rebalance towards private sector employment.

Locally designed and led services can be driven by and respond to these differences in local demand, for example by convening employers locally to support sector initiatives, in-work training or progression support for employees; or by changing funding incentives to support investment in the right training and skills.

#### **Different people**

Local areas have different residents with different needs. The proportion of residents with low qualifications ranges from one in three residents in Sandwell to one in seventeen in Richmond on Thames; and while more than a quarter of residents of Blackpool have a work limiting disability, just one in ten residents of Waltham Forest do.<sup>27</sup> These differences matter, with, for example, disabled people more than twice as likely to be out of work as those who are not disabled.

The current system makes it harder to address these local needs. Devolution Deals and City Deals have created opportunities for local areas to influence design and delivery so as to meet local priorities, and this has led to a range of innovative local programmes.

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<sup>25</sup> Source: Cities Data Tool, Centre for Cities

<sup>26</sup> Source: Annual Population Survey

<sup>27</sup> Source: Annual Population Survey

## **Portsmouth and Southampton – the Solent Jobs Programme**

The Solent Jobs Programme is part of the City Deal agreement between Portsmouth and Southampton Councils and central government. It aims to provide support to at least 1,200 long term unemployed adults with health conditions across the Solent LEP area. The programme comprises intensive case management, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and health support, a subsidised job and post-employment support.

The programme is tackling long term unemployment linked to poor health, using a bio-psycho-social model to deal with deep rooted and complex problems. The programme will work across many agencies to help individuals with substantive barriers to work including offering support in areas like housing, debt, mental and physical health problems, substance misuse, learning difficulties and low skills. The programme is focused on increasing employment entry and sustainment, but with a range of potential benefits including financial inclusion, wellbeing, health and reduced demands on services.

The programme aims to do things differently – developing locally rooted solutions to long standing social issues around worklessness, and moving towards a model of integration and harnessing the resources of a range of agencies in the area.

Programme funding is approximately £3.5-4.0 million, from the European Social Fund and City Deal/ locally-matched funds.

However, this happens on an ‘earned autonomy’ basis rather than as a matter course. Work Local would enable local design and delivery to reflect the needs of local residents – for example by changing rules that get in the way of reaching specific groups; or by creating incentives to support those most in need locally.

### **Different economies**

Most starkly, there are wide variations in incomes and opportunity between different parts of the country. For example, weekly wages are 50 per cent higher on average in Cambridge than they are in Southend<sup>28</sup>; while worklessness is twice as high in Rochdale as it is in Surrey<sup>29</sup>.

While skills funding rules provide an ‘uplift’ on funding rates for the most disadvantaged areas, these are typically modest – on average a 14 per cent uplift on funding applied to provision in around one in four areas<sup>30</sup>. It is also a relatively blunt instrument, only targeting the most deprived areas, and not providing incentives to tailor provision to local economic needs.

In employment provision, the funding formula for the Work Programme takes no account of the strengths or needs of local economies. As a consequence, lower outcomes for the Work Programme in weaker areas means that funding is lower in these places than in more prosperous economies. The Work and Health Programme funding rates similarly do not take account of local needs.

Some areas have emerged strongly from the economic downturn but many more still face significant challenges. Addressing these differences will require Work Local to be able to target support and incentivise provision to meet local economic needs.

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<sup>28</sup> Source: Cities Data Tool, Centre for Cities

<sup>29</sup> Source: Annual Population Survey

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-education-budget-funding-rates-and-formula-2017-to-2018>

## Different geographies

What works in delivering services in major cities will be different to what is needed in suburbs, towns, rural areas and more mixed communities. Work Local need the flexibility to meet these needs.

As noted in section 3.1, the Universal Support trials showed how service alignment and integration could be achieved in very different geographies, from the Scottish Highlands to central London. Funding rules and service requirements need to reflect these differences.

## Different priorities

Drawing this together, local areas have different priorities and needs. Effective, responsive employment and skills services will need to target different groups and different employers with different provision and in different ways. The current, top-down model cannot possibly be expected to meet the needs of areas from Blackpool to Brentford, or from Bassetlaw to Bath.

## 3.4 Within a common national framework for devolution of strategy, financing and delivery of employment and skills

Delivering this vision will require a new settlement on the political and fiscal levers for employment, skills and growth. This means devolving:

- **financial control** – with funding devolved through block grants to combined authorities and groups of councils
- **strategy** – with these areas then able to set objectives, agree policy and design responses that meet local needs
- **delivery** – so that the commissioning, delivery and oversight of provision happens locally and can be integrated and aligned across services.

Devolved services would be brought together into a single, seamless system, funded through a combination of continued national grants, progressive devolution and local revenue raising. This would go with the grain of how international employment and skills systems have been reformed over the last two decades.

### International good practices on devolving employment and skills

It has been increasingly common internationally in recent decades for funding and control of employment and skills to be devolved from central to local government.

- In **Canada**, support for those eligible for Employment Insurance (EI) has been gradually devolved to provinces and territories since the 1990s, alongside the transfer of federal staff and assets. This is tied to Labour Market Development Agreements, set out in more detail in section 3.6.
- In **the Netherlands** municipal employment services are funded by block grants, with recent reforms combining this with budgets for adult education, integration, youth and social care as a single 'participation budget'. The Dutch model also includes devolution of benefit expenditure for social assistance claimants. Benefit eligibility is centrally regulated, with areas permitted to keep under-payments (and liable for overpayments) of the grant – creating strong incentives to increase



employment and/ or enforce eligibility rules. While these reforms have had challenges, research suggests that they have been broadly successful.

- The **United States** model is similar. Employment and skills funding is devolved to states and municipalities through block grants; as is welfare funding (to states), with incentives that in practice have often led to restrictions in eligibility or tougher enforcement of conditions.
- In **Denmark**, the funding and delivery of employment services was fully devolved to municipalities in 2009, with over 2,000 employees transferring to local and regional government. Municipalities are also responsible for paying means-tested benefits, and refunded a proportion of this by central government.
- Even the least devolved system examined – in **Germany** – operated a mixed model with federal employment services for the insured unemployed, municipality-funded services for those on means-tested benefits (often operated jointly with the federal service) and local ‘joint agencies’ determining how funding for labour market programmes is used.

In England, the ‘earned autonomy’ model has seen local areas striking deals for significantly increased responsibility for previously centralised funding and systems. For example in the **Work and Health Programme**, both Greater Manchester and London have secured funding devolution and as a consequence been able to double the funding by aligning locally held European money. On skills, Devolution Deal areas will be responsible for the **Adult Education Budget** from 2018/19. This could be up to 10 times larger than Work and Health Programme funding.

Through Work Local, we propose broadening and deepening this approach – devolving funding and control in all parts of the country, and loosening the strings that make it harder to use devolved funding to address local priorities.

**Financial control** would be devolved to areas through a funding formula based on need – for example comprising measures of employment, economic development, benefit caseloads, skill levels, demographics and disadvantage. Areas would receive this funding as a block grant through which new ‘one stop’ services and support would be commissioned.

**Strategy and delivery** would be devolved within a clear national framework setting out the high-level priority groups and outcomes that will be achieved, and specific ground rules around the entitlements that specific groups should expect to receive (set out in more detail in section 3.6). Work Local services would then work with local and national partners to determine objectives, policy and service design within these parameters, driven by local need.

### **Devolution of current employment and skills provision**

The Work Local model will devolve existing funding and delivery streams as follows.

#### **Employer support**

All current **investment and growth support** (including current European funding and successor arrangements) would be fully devolved, as would **Growth Hubs**. This would enable business support and local economic growth to be fully integrated within the service, and to forge better links between education and training providers (skills supply) and employers (skills demand) so as to meet skills needs and support career progression.

## Careers and transitional support

An early priority for devolution should be **careers services and funding**, which are currently fragmented across schools, colleges, councils, National Careers Service, Careers and Enterprise Company and JCP. Alongside this, **Youth Obligation** and **National Citizen Service** funding and responsibility would be devolved – enabling local areas to put in place seamless transitional support for young people, and ‘all age’ careers support that meets local needs.

## Education and skills

Building on the proposals for Devolution Deals, responsibility for both **adult skills** – comprising Adult Education Budget, Advanced Learner Loans and current European funding (and successor arrangements) – and **16-19 skills** would be devolved. Work Local would be able to use funding and commissioning levers to reflect local needs, and work with local partners including employers and service providers to develop locally responsive services.

Core skills entitlements, for example for school leavers but also for adults with low qualifications, would continue to be set by national government; as would qualification frameworks and the regulation of education and training. However there would be value in increasing local input into these areas, for example to ensure that understanding of local employer needs are reflected in Ofsted inspections.

On Apprenticeships, **non-Levy apprenticeships** would be fully devolved along the same principles as for other skills provision, as would funding and policy for **apprenticeship grants**. The Register of Apprenticeship providers would in future be cocommissioned by both central government and Work Local, ensuring that it can respond both to local and national needs. For the Apprenticeship Levy itself, which is only paid by employers with payroll costs of greater than £3 million a year, eligibility and funding rules would continue to be set nationally. This reflects the fact that the majority of the Levy is paid by large employers that operate across areas.

## Employment

Work Local would fully devolve **JCP employment support**, including employment support for benefit claimants and the Flexible Support Fund. This would be in line with international devolved models, which usually devolve funding and administration of employment services but maintain joint oversight between municipal and central government. Devolving JCP employment support is central to delivering the integrated, ‘one stop’ model set out in section 3.1. It would also be in line with how employment services operate in Northern Ireland. Alongside this, **employment programmes** – including the Work and Health Programme – would also be devolved.

However, we recognise the arguments for maintaining national benefits rules, and that there are economies of scale in delivering this through a single system. We therefore propose that national government continues to operate a benefits system for the delivery of Universal Credit, with strong links between this and Work Local for information sharing, performance management and co-ordination.

Drawing this together, as Chapter 2 sets out, these funding streams have a combined value of up to £10 billion. Devolution would bring with it significant opportunities to better prioritise, target and integrate that funding according to local circumstances and to support national economic and social objectives.

This national framework for devolution would also set clear common entitlements where those are appropriate – in particular entitlements to access support from basic and digital skills, to English and

Maths; to careers advice; and to employment support for disadvantaged groups. This is explored further in section 3.6.

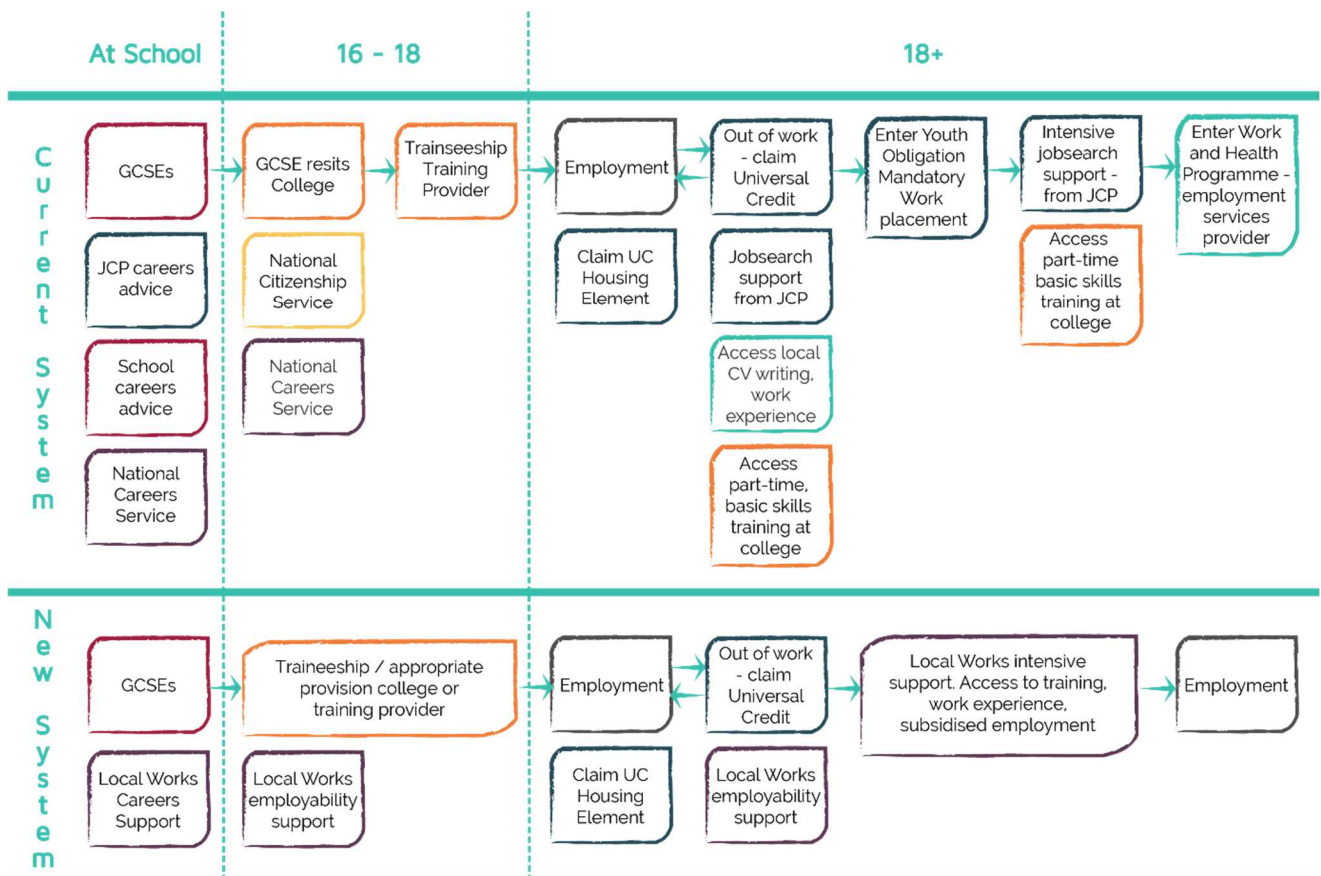
### 3.5 Improving the experiences of individuals and employers

Work Local will deliver more accessible, responsive and integrated support for individuals, employers and partners. This will make the system easier to navigate, and ensure that those using it can get the right support from the right place at the right time. This will build on approaches taken in a number of local areas already, to improve services for individuals and employers, and ‘hide the wiring’ behind this.

#### The Liverpool City Region Youth Employment Gateway

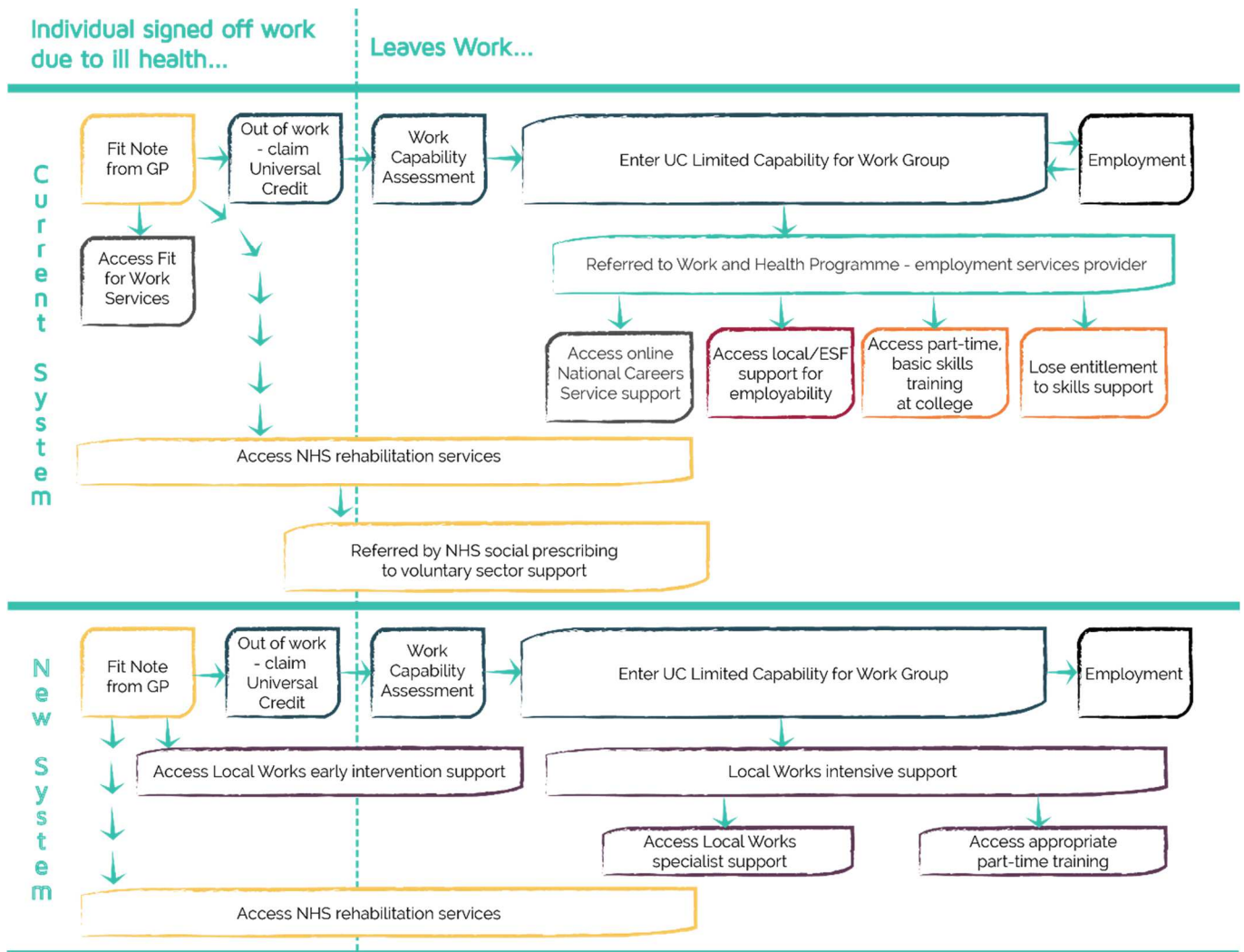
Youth Employment Gateway runs between October 2014 and December 2017, is delivered across six councils and funded from underspends from the Coalition Government’s Youth Contract for Cities. The programme provides access to a dedicated adviser and up to £500 of flexible funding in the form of a personalised budget available to each individual. This can be used to help pay for goods or services that might improve their job prospects, with responsibility for purchasing decisions assumed by the young person. A website has also been developed which gives participants access to a personalised budget planning tool, which helps the young person better manage their funding. The website also provides access to a range of resources that can help improve the young person’s chances of finding and sustaining employment.

So for example for a young person making the transition from learning to employment, Work Local will draw together and integrate support in a single place that is currently delivered through at least six different services. This is set out below.



Work Local will also radically simplify and reform support for the most disadvantaged, which again has been a key priority for local areas.

For someone signed off sick for example, the current system can see individuals passing between health services, Fit for Work, the benefits system, employment services and a range of specialist provision. This can lead to fragmentation, delayed support and perverse incentives – with different bits of the system encouraging different behaviour. With Work Local, there is an opportunity to significantly reform and improve this, with tailored, integrated early intervention and more specialist support sitting alongside health services and the benefits system. This is illustrated below.



For employers, councils are often in the lead in convening employers, service providers and local partners when there are major new developments or job openings. This has often led to innovative local partnerships that bring together key employers, JCP and training providers. A good example of this is the 'intu' recruitment model in Gateshead, set out below.

#### **intu Metrocentre Recruitment Model – Gateshead Council**

This is a partnership between 'intu' (the owners of Metrocentre), Gateshead Council, JCP and Gateshead College. It aims to service the recruitment needs of the centre, which with 340 outlets and over 7,000 staff is the largest shopping and leisure centre in Europe.

The partnership, set up in 2009, has grown and evolved to meet employer need. A key feature is that all services operate under the 'intu' brand rather than their own, with recruitment staff 'badged' as such and operating from the centre's management offices.

This approach has brought many benefits. The centre's employers appreciate the convenience of having the recruitment team on site and their extensive local expertise. Doors previously closed to the council or JCP are now open and early access is obtained to new developments and future employers. The number of vacancies handled has increased by 400 - 600 per year to 1,200 per annum.

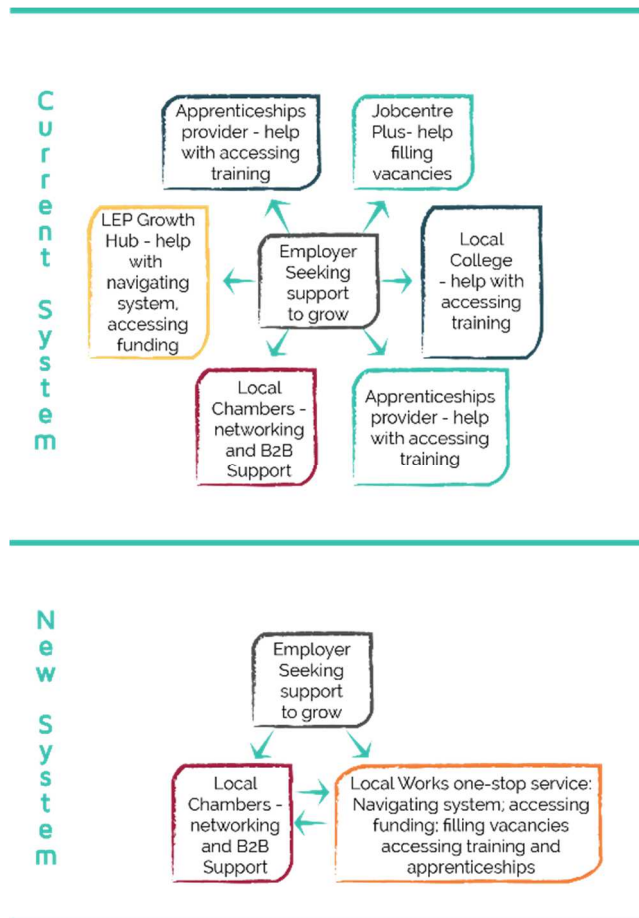
The initial partnership focus was on direct recruitment to identified vacancies and this work continues. However in 2011 the partnership expanded to include Gateshead College and the council's 'LearningSkills' Team. This led to the 'intu Retail Gold Academy' – a retail, hospitality and customer service Sector Based Work Academy run by the college and providing training, qualifications, work trials/ placements and guaranteed interviews. LearningSkills also promote apprenticeships to companies and tie these in to recruitment and training opportunities.

Each year, 1,200 vacancies are serviced with 90 per cent of these converted into job starts and 55-60 per cent of these filled by Gateshead residents.

The flexibility provided by this innovative, integrated and transferable model allows for normal recruitment churn, expansions or new openings and the huge seasonal recruitment, all to be handled effectively.

By devolving control and funding to Work Local, there is the potential to extend the sorts of models described above and to do this for more employers and sectors in more places more of the time.

As the illustration below sets out, employers currently have to engage with a plethora of organisations and services in order to get support to grow or to meet skills and employment needs. Through Work Local, we can bring this together into a single, integrated system.



### 3.6 Governed by Local Labour Market Agreements (LLMAs)

To make these reforms possible, central government and each combined authority or group of councils will agree a multi-year LLMA. These will be long-term agreements that set out:

- **the transfer of powers and funding from central to local government** allowing for the new policy, management and financial responsibilities around employer support, employment services, skills and careers described in section 3.4 above.
- **the core entitlements for employers and individuals within the new, Work Local system.** These would be agreed between central and local government as part of the devolution deal, but would likely include:
  - employer entitlements to access to skills support, vacancy services and apprenticeships
  - individual entitlements to basic skills, English and Maths where this is needed; to high quality careers advice and guidance for young people and those making transitions into work; and to employment support for the most disadvantaged (for example the long-term unemployed and disabled people)

- entitlements to regular, one-to-one jobsearch advice and support for those who are actively looking for work and available for work, including in the Full Conditionality group in Universal Credit
- **The key responsibilities of local and national government.** This would be framed around the delivery of the Work Local model described in this paper. It would also set out how this will fit with – and the responsibilities of – those elements of the employment and skills system that will not be devolved, including:
  - the administration of Universal Credit and other national benefits – including commitments on accuracy and timeliness of payment, information sharing and partnership working
  - education and skills – including qualification frameworks and accreditation
  - national apprenticeships policy – including on apprenticeships frameworks and the Apprenticeships levy.

This will build on and learn from the Canadian Labour Market Development Agreement model.

### **Canadian Labour Market Development Agreements**

Labour Market Development Agreements (LMDAs) were first implemented in Canada in the late 1990s, to accompany the transfer of responsibilities and funding for employment from federal to provincial government. All provinces and territories have had in place LMDAs since 2010. LMDAs set out in detail the transfer of responsibilities (including federal assets and staff), rules around how devolved and federal services would operate, and key objectives and outcome measures for new services.

LMDAs also required provinces and territories to co-operate with other partners, including employers and community-based organisations; reduce overlap and duplication; encourage personal responsibility for finding employment; and evaluate their impact and outcomes.

The Canadian system, in common with other international approaches to devolution, also put in place annual local plans and performance agreements. So we propose that underpinning these LLMA would be annual **Service Level Agreements** which would describe in more detail how services would operate and what they would achieve. These would be grouped around five headings, set out below.

#### **1. Key outcomes that will be achieved**

In a number of devolved systems, key outcomes and measures are agreed regularly between local areas, partners and national government. In **Denmark**, municipalities are required to develop an annual employment plan, which analyses local needs and reflects national goals set by the Ministry (with some flexibility to adapt these and to supplement them with further local targets). In the **United States**, 'Workforce Investment Boards' set performance targets negotiated between the local board and the state governor. In **Canada**, LMDAs also include annual targets for participants served, employment outcomes and benefit savings.

Within England, City Deals and now Devolution Deals also create a framework within which areas can agree with central government their local priorities around growth, employment, skills and inclusion.

For Work Local, we would propose a set of national outcome indicators where performance targets are negotiated between local and national government, supplemented with locally determined measures. These would need to recognise that labour market performance is driven by wider economic and national trends as well as by local responses, but could cover:

- **jobs and investment** – measures of employment growth, and the composition of employment between sectors
- **employment** – measures of employment entry and sustainment for key groups, including young people, Universal Credit claimants, and targeted disadvantaged groups such as those with low qualifications, the long-term unemployed and disabled people.
- **skills** – improvements in basic, intermediate and higher level skills, depending on the needs of the local area and economy; and measures of responsiveness to employer demand for skills
- **service satisfaction** – awareness of the service among employers, individuals and partners; and the extent to which those that use the service consider that it meets their needs.

These targets would also need to be underpinned by a clear evidence base, setting out a common understanding of the needs of the local area. This should build on the leading role that local government is already taking in a number of local areas.

### The Essex Evidence Base

In 2013 Essex County Council established the Essex Employment and Skills Board, covering Essex, Southend and Thurrock, and brought together, for the first time, employers, primary and secondary education, further and higher education and employer bodies. Employers were and continue to be at the centre of the board and are the driving force for employment and skills across Essex. Through the federated LEP model the board, supported by Essex County Council, advise and make decisions on funding priorities across the area. Underpinning the Board is an annually refreshed Evidence Base<sup>31</sup>, detailing the economic needs of the area, skill levels, vacancy and job profiles. Crucially, it provides local intelligence that informs policy decisions and enables providers to respond to what employers need. As a direct result of the Evidence Base, two Essex colleges have secured LEP Capital funds to purchase specialist equipment, and build two state of the art training facilities – The STEM Innovation Centre, Braintree and the Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Centre, Harlow. These are real examples of how local intelligence, driven by the local authority, in partnership with employers, can secure and improve opportunities for local residents, thereby supporting economic growth.

## 2. Responsibilities

Delivering the Local Labour Market Agreement (LLMA) and the annual outcome measures would require Work Local, central government and wider local partners to work together. So the Service Level Agreement will also set out the responsibilities that national government will undertake – including around:

- its stewardship of the wider economy and labour market, including the migration system
- the smooth and efficient delivery of Universal Credit
- its delivery of the non-devolved elements of the education and skills system, including the Apprenticeships Levy and the qualifications system
- alignment of national policy in related areas, such as health, welfare and justice.

<sup>31</sup> <https://www.essexesb.co.uk/our-research>



### 3. Funding commitments

The agreement will also set out how Work Local funding will be deployed across employment, skills and supporting local growth.

### 4. Delivery plans

Alongside this, the annual agreement would describe at a high level what services would be delivered, where, how and by whom in order to achieve these objectives.

### 5. Partnership agreements

Finally, other key local partners would also be expected to sign up to the annual agreements, setting out how they will work alongside Work Local to improve outcomes for employers and individuals. This should provide a clear line of sight through to services for example in health, justice and the voluntary and community sector, describing how local funding, commissioning and provision will be aligned.

Local and national employers will also be key partners in oversight and delivery. So, local agreements could also provide a mechanism for agreeing Employer Compacts setting out how employers and local services will work together to support local economies and residents.

### Governance

As section 3.2 sets out, local leadership will be key to delivering this vision for reform. LLMA and progress against annual Service Level Agreements would be overseen by the joint boards set out in section 3.2 – drawing together local and national public services, employers and key local partners.

## 3.7 Delivering better outcomes at a lower cost

By pooling budgets, aligning objectives and removing silos, Work Local will deliver significant economies of scale in what services are delivered, for whom and how. It will be able to commission more intelligently and responsively, with less duplication and a clearer focus on outcomes. The integrated, partnership-based approach, drawing on local insight and intelligence, will mean that the system will be able to respond to the challenges and opportunities set out in Chapter 2.

### Transforming employment and skills– the difference Work Local could make

Work Local areas will be able to:

- **increase take-up of employment and skills services** – an integrated, locally branded ‘one stop’ approach will provide a more accessible and engaging service for those who want to work, want more or better work or want to improve their skills, fixing the current system where fewer than half of the unemployed receive employment support
- **design services that meet local priorities and needs** – for example, targeting commissioned services on particular disadvantaged groups, changing eligibility criteria in employment and skills services, or adapting financial incentives for individuals or employers, so that local provision reflects differences in need, for example of young people, the long-term unemployed, disabled people or minority ethnic communities

- **remove artificial boundaries and silos** – through more intelligent commissioning between services and more responsive and integrated design, so depending to local priorities, areas would be able to deliver ‘all age’ careers and information services; provide integrated routes through pre-employment skills, employment support and support in-work to upskill and progress; and integrate the replacement for European Social Fund with mainstream services
- **redesign employer services and support to fully meet employer needs and local priorities** – with flexibility to invest in and develop apprenticeships and skills hubs, integrated advice services for employers, forums to convene key local sectors and bring partners together, start-up and self-employment support, and future growth funding – improving the investment climate, reflecting employer needs, and meeting industrial and Brexit priorities
- **speak with one voice with the education system** – so that pre-16 employability skills, work experience and careers guidance can reflect local employer and Work Local priorities
- **Bring together wider local services in partnership, to support jobs and growth** – to improve engagement and outcomes for employers and residents – for example aligning Work Local support with housing support, health services and Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships, financial and digital support and wider local recruitment and employment services.

### **The costs, benefits and impacts of a Work Local approach**

In order to estimate the potential impacts of Work Local, L&W have modelled the costs and benefits of the current employment and skills system and what could reasonably be achieved through an integrated and devolved approach.

This has used current financial and performance data for an anonymised combined authority with a population of around 1.5 million people (of whom around 1 million are aged 16-64) and with current spending of around £275 million on the main employment and skills services (post-16 education and skills; Adult Education Budget; Apprenticeships; JCP employment services and the Work and Health Programme).

The fiscal and economic benefits of the current system were modelled using current performance rates, with the benefits then modelled using an assumed five percentage point increase in performance as a consequence of devolution and integration (which is a conservative assumption based on the performance gains associated with effective active labour market programmes). Full details on the methodology and results are set out at **Annex 2**.

Overall, the analysis by L&W estimates that an integrated, Work Local model with current funding could lead to additional fiscal benefits for an anonymised combined authority of **£280 million** per year, with a benefit to the economy of **£420 million**. This would be associated with an additional 8,500 people leaving benefits; an additional 3,600 people achieving Level 2 skills; and an additional 2,100 people achieving Level 3.

## 4. Making this vision a reality

Local government is ready to lead. With commitment from central government, this vision for employment, skills and growth can be put in place within five years. Delivering on it will enable central and local government to better meet the challenges set out in Chapter 2, building a strong economy, supporting the industrial strategy, and extending opportunity to areas and groups that have too often been left behind.

We set out below a timetable and key actions for achieving this. The timetable focuses in particular on the quick wins that can be implemented in the next two to three years without the need for new primary legislation; and leading the way in those areas that are most ready and able to take on new powers and responsibilities. It sets out a roadmap to having new, Work Local Pathfinders ready to roll out by the end of a five year Parliament.

### **This year:**

#### **1. Agree the vision for devolution**

Central and local government can work together this year to agree the principles of the Work Local model. This would include agreeing: to the future scope, roles and boundaries of Work Local; to establish Work Local Pathfinders by 2022; a single set of employment and skills readiness criteria for future devolution; and the boundaries for Work Local areas.

Alongside this, central and local government could agree to extend the current 'Devolution Deal' approach on employment and skills devolution to all areas, subject to meeting a common set of readiness criteria, across all of the employment and skills system and for all areas. This would include agreeing the steps needed for all areas to take on local commissioning of the Adult Education Budget, local responsibility for Apprenticeship support funding, joint oversight of the Work and Health Programme, and more.

The geography for future devolution can also be agreed this year – based around combined authorities and groups of councils, with a commitment to bring the oversight of LEPs into line with these as devolution is implemented.

#### **2. Agree a stronger local role in the current employment and skills system**

A number of steps can be taken this year to lay the foundations for local leadership and responsibility for employment and skills. This should include:

##### **On apprenticeships:**

- codesign apprenticeship support funding with local areas, so that areas can vary financial incentives and eligibility to support local needs
- co-commission with local areas updates to the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers, so that provision can reflect local as well as national priorities
- relax rules on how Apprenticeship Levy funds can be used by public sector employers, including enabling these to be pooled between local public sector employers, and for local areas to be able to use these funds to establish Apprenticeship Training Agencies

- codesign and co-commission non-levy apprenticeship provision – enabling areas to vary rates and rules for smaller employers within their areas, again to ensure that provision is responsive to employer demand and meets residents’ needs
- devolve any underspends on Levy and non-Levy apprenticeships to local areas.

On **adult skills**:

- agree a new outcomes framework to demonstrate that provision meets evidenced, local need and is underpinned by common local economic assessments
- place local areas in the lead on implementing technical education reforms – with councils convening and co-ordinating this locally
- trust local areas to get on with managing devolved Adult Education Budget.

On **employment services**:

- extend local oversight of the Work and Health Programme to all areas, not just Devolution Deals, so that local public services and programme providers are brought together locally to ensure that services meet needs
- commit to co-commission future programmes under the new Umbrella Agreement for employment- and health-related services, and open up the Work and Health Innovation Fund for locally-led partnership bids
- co-commission between JCP and local areas for future funding of local employment support through the Flexible Support Fund, so that it meets employer and resident needs and the Department for Work and Pensions radically increase JCP co-location with other local services.
- establish joint boards to oversee and integrate the ‘Universal Support’ offer that will be implemented alongside Universal Credit rollout – building on the good practices in council and JCP partnership working in the USdI trials
- explore the scope to pilot the integration of Universal Credit Full Service through joint, ‘one stop’ JCP/ council hubs where there is capacity and capability to do this – for example in the MyGo service in Suffolk
- reform JCP performance reporting, so that it is measured on its performance in supporting claimants into sustained employment (not just off benefits) and so that these measures are reported transparently, regularly and consistently for all local areas.

On **support for young people**:

- evolve funding and responsibility for the Youth Obligation and the Careers and Enterprise Company – this, alongside existing local responsibility for young people not in education, employment or training, will allow areas to better co-ordinate and align services, reduce complexity and introduce more innovative, integrated models to meet local needs
- change operational guidance for centrally funded organisations, including JCP and training providers, so that they are expected to co-operate with these new local services.

**On information, advice and guidance:**

- use the long-awaited review of careers advice to put local areas in the lead for co-ordinating and commissioning careers information, advice and guidance
- halt the commissioning of new National Careers Service contracts and devolve the funding to local areas alongside a top-sliced element of the Adult Education Budget
- require local areas to then put in place all-age, locally responsive careers advice and guidance services, which can offer high quality independent advice and guidance to support people to make the right decisions at key stages in their lives.

Finally, on the **replacement of the European Social Fund:**

- place local areas in the lead for the Shared Prosperity Fund – with devolution of funding and responsibilities
- in the meantime, commit to devolution of future underspends on the 2014-2020 ESF programme to local areas.

**By 2020:**

**3. Invest in building the capacity and capability for devolution locally and nationally**

A key insight from devolution overseas has been the need to ensure knowledge and capacity transfer between central and local government. So between 2018 and 2020, this should include:

- increasing the capacity in central government to deliver devolution – in particular in the Cities Unit, Department for Work and Pensions and Department for Education
  - the progressive transfer of expertise and staffing from:
    - central into local government – in particular policy expertise and staff from agencies including JCP and the ESFA
    - local into central government – there is extensive expertise in local government both from previous efforts at devolution and in integrating local services, which could be tapped in to by seconding local experts into central government departments
  - working with the employment and skills sectors and the Education and Training Foundation to develop a programme of workforce development for commissioners, managers and delivery staff to ensure that devolution of powers is accompanied by changes in the culture, effectiveness and responsiveness of services
  - developing the information systems and governance arrangements that will support full devolution.
- 4. Begin the transfer of employment and skills funding and powers** – from central to local government, and going faster with those areas most ready to take the lead, including:

**Creating Work Local areas:**

- establish the boundaries for Work Local – based on combined authorities and groups of councils

- put in place a joint integration board in each Work Local area to oversee the progressive transfer of powers, bringing together councils, central government, employment and skills services, employer representatives and key local partners
- bring responsibility for funding, oversight and boundary-setting of LEPs within the remit of Work Local areas, so that LEPs are accountable to these joint boards
- ensuring that Regional Schools Commissioners and Further Education Commissioners operate to a Work Local footprint.

**On Apprenticeships:**

- devolve non-levy funding and commissioning, with freedom for local areas to use a proportion of this to support local brokerages or hubs, Apprenticeship Training Associations and measures to improve access, and to vary rules and eligibility to support local growth and needs
- give local areas the freedom to widen access to this funding to cover a range of workplace skills provision and not just apprenticeships, in line with resident and employer needs
- devolve control of Levy funding for local public sector employers so that public sector Apprenticeship provision can be locally co-ordinated and targeted.

**On Adult Skills:**

- devolve the Adult Education Budget and Adult Learner Loans, with freedom to vary eligibility and funding rules subject to common national entitlements (for example on access to literacy, numeracy and digital skills support)
- allow an element of AEB funding to be used to support Work Local integration so as to contribute to funding information, advice and guidance as well as local employer brokerage and support.

**On employment services:**

- establish at least one integrated, JCP and council 'one stop' pathfinder in every Work Local area, testing and delivering operational integration that builds on the MyGo model, in advance of full devolution
- use the 2018 expiry of JCP estates contracts to go radically further than currently planned on co-location of JCP within council and other public service buildings
- place local areas in the lead for future commissioning of all employment programmes and Flexible Support Fund provision.

**On local growth:**

- fully devolve Growth Hubs, so that these can become the basis for fully integrated services to support employer growth, employment and skills needs.

On the **successor to the European Social Fund**:

- kick off the commissioning of an integrated, devolved Shared Prosperity Fund

**By 2022:**

**5. Roll out the first Work Local Pathfinders**

By 2022, the first combined authorities and groups of councils should be given the responsibility, funding and powers to locally design and commission all employment, skills and careers services through a single, integrated, localised system built around place.

These areas would agree the first LLMA with central government; establish the first fully devolved 'one stop' services to implement this vision; and oversee their implementation through Work Local joint boards.

# Consultation questions

The proposals in this paper depend on building effective local and national partnership across services and sectors. So we would welcome views on this vision and on the specific recommendations made in this report.

Consultation questions are set out below. These can be answered online, at [www.local.gov.uk/worklocal](http://www.local.gov.uk/worklocal), or by email, to [research@local.gov.uk](mailto:research@local.gov.uk).

We would welcome responses by 5 September 2017.

## **Current employment and skills system** (see pages 14-28)

1. Do you agree that the current employment and skills system needs reform?
2. Do you agree with the analysis of the issues and conclusions set out in this report?
3. What challenges, if any, does the current system pose for your sector or organisation?
4. Do you agree that services need to be more integrated and relevant to the needs of the local economy and residents?

## **Work Local** (see pages 29-48)

5. Do you think an integrated, devolved employment and skills service could be made to work?
6. Do you agree with the proposals in the report for devolved and integrated One Stop Services?
7. What do you see as the key strengths of the proposals?
8. What do you see as the key risks for the proposals?
9. What are your views on the proposals for further devolving funding for employment and skills? (see pages 38-40)
10. What are your views on the proposals for local governance and partnership? (see pages 44-47)



# Annex 1 – Calculating the skills gap and impact on growth

## Calculating the skills gap

The government publishes forecasts of employment demand through its Working Futures series. The most recent publication, from April 2016, makes estimates of employment numbers through to 2024 by, among other analyses, qualification at national, regional and LEP levels<sup>32</sup>.

L&W estimated 2024 employment by skills levels using the Working Futures forecasts for England. They then estimated the skills distribution of the population in 2024 by 'bringing forward' the 2011 census pattern of qualifications to 2024. Those over 25 in 2011 were assumed to have reached their qualification level that applied in 2024, when they would be over 38. Those over 55 in 2011 were assumed to have retired in 2024. The qualification distribution of those under 35 in 2024 was assumed to be the qualification pattern of under-35s in 2016 (the latest figures) to apply to 2024.

As the source data for Census and 2016 data (Annual Population Survey) uses qualifications up to 'Level 4 and above', L&W summed the Working Futures estimates for NQF Levels 4 to 8 to give a Level 4 and above figure. They then presented the charts as 'low skilled' – qualifications under Level 2 or none, 'intermediate skills' – qualifications from Level 2 to Level 3 including trade apprenticeships (which here are those with no equivalence level known), and 'high skilled' – Level 4 and above.

This produces Census based population estimates and Working Futures based employment estimates for 2024. For the skills distribution charts, L&W have presented these as percentages of the respective totals, and the skills gap as the difference between the percentages in the categories.

## Estimating the impact of the Skills Gap on Gross Value Added

L&W estimated a summary 'average qualifications' measure, treating qualification levels as numbers.

Gross Value Added estimates were derived from the Income measure of GDP – so earnings plus profits are the core of the measure. It is normal practice to then add a multiple to employee earnings to cover the earnings of the self-employed, profits of businesses, additional labour costs from pension contributions etc. Therefore GVA in total is slightly more than double total employee pay (this also draws on research by the Resolution Foundation on the changing relationship of total wage income to GDP, and the reasons for this).

L&W have assumed earnings differentials by qualification remain the same over the period to 2024.

The modelling was then based on total earnings (plus the multiple) given Working Futures projected skill requirements, and the Census population skills brought forward (assuming stable employment rates by qualification). This then gives total earnings and hence GVA (Income) for both projections.

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<sup>32</sup> Wilson, R., Sofroniou, N., Beaven, R., May-Gillings, M., Perkins, S., Lee, M., Glover, P., Limmer, H. and Leach, A. (2016) *Working Futures 2014-2024*; Warwick Institute for Employment Research and Cambridge Econometrics; UK Commission for Employment and Skills Evidence Report 100

The total GVA estimates are of the same size as the projections by the Office for Budget Responsibility.

The model used is a relatively simple one and the relationships identified are not perfect. Therefore, the estimates are indicative of the consequences of the skills gaps identified rather than fully verified.

# Annex 2 – Calculating the fiscal and economic impacts of ‘Work Local’ for an anonymised Combined authority

## Scope

L&W included in the cost-benefit analysis the main current employment and skills funding streams, as follows:

1. Post 16 education/ skills funding
2. Adult Education Budget
3. Apprenticeships (all ages)
4. JCP employment services (job search)
5. Work and Health Programme.

These comprise the majority of employment and skills funding, and are the main funding streams for which costs and outcome data are available. However because there are additional funding streams that are in scope but not included, the analysis overall is likely to slightly under-estimate both the costs and benefits of the employment and skills system (and therefore under-estimate the overall benefits of devolution).

The Work Local proposal is to devolve all of those funding streams in full, with the exception of Apprenticeships where non-Levy funding and public sector Levy funding would be devolved. However the whole of Apprenticeships funding was included by L&W, as it is assumed that the benefits of devolution and integration overall will feed through into positive impacts on the residual of Apprenticeship Levy provision.

## Estimating costs

The funding allocations for each of these five areas were apportioned to the anonymised combined authority as follows:

- for Post 16 education and skills funding, Adult Education Budget and Apprenticeships – Skills Funding Agency allocations for 2016/17
- for the Work and Health Programme – the forecast share of individual starters in the combined authority, based on the Invitation to Tender contract value for the relevant Contract Package Area
- for JCP employment services – the cost of ‘job search support’ transactions from the 2013 Government Digital Service ‘cost per transaction’ dashboard (now discontinued) multiplied by the estimated number of job search support transactions based on combined authority caseloads.

This led to estimates of between 2.2 and 4.7 per cent of the total national budgets for each of the five funding streams.

## Estimating the current benefits

Estimates of the outcomes achieved for each of the five funding streams were estimated as follows:

- for Post 16 education and skills funding, Adult Education Budget and Apprenticeships – attainment rates for level 2 and level 3 qualifications
- for the Work and Health Programme – estimated job outcomes based on Invitation to Tender for that Contract Package Area
- for JCP employment services – off-flow rates from JSA.

This then generates estimates for each funding stream for the number of individuals achieving these outcomes. Note that this analysis therefore does not include estimates of additional employment outcomes from education and skills funding; nor or additional skills outcomes from employment funding – so again may under-estimate impacts.

These volumes were then inputted by L&W into the Manchester New Economy Cost Benefit Analysis model<sup>33</sup> so as to estimate fiscal and economic benefits of each funding stream on current performance levels.

### The impact of improved skill levels

The Manchester model includes a fiscal value for increased skill levels for those with a qualification level below level 2 reaching a level 2 qualification and those already with a level 2 qualification reaching a level 3 qualification. The proportions for each level come from participant and achievement statistics from the SFA. The economic benefit of ‘upskilling’ is based on the percentage uplift in wages as identified in BIS and IER research findings.<sup>34</sup>

The fiscal value is calculated using the up-front costs of supporting qualification attainment, and the change in tax revenues (increase in income tax, national insurance contributions and VAT payments) associated with qualification attainment. The source quotes the benefit over an average working lifetime of 40 years, from which an average annual benefit has been calculated by dividing by 40 (multiply by 40 to return to the working lifetime figure).

The economic value represents the additional annual earnings gain per employee as a result of achieving the qualification. The lower estimate was used, which reflects an assumption that 50 per cent of the employment benefit is attributed to the qualification, following the approach of McIntosh (2007)<sup>35</sup>. As with the fiscal value, an annual benefit has been calculated by dividing the economic value for an average working lifetime (40 years) by 40.

All figures have been updated to present values.

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<sup>33</sup> <http://www.neweconomymanchester.com/our-work/research-evaluation-cost-benefit-analysis/cost-benefit-analysis/cost-benefit-analysis-guidance-and-model>

<sup>34</sup> Returns to vocational qualifications. Research Paper 53, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2011.

<sup>35</sup> <http://docplayer.net/27985514-Research-a-cost-benefit-analysis-of-apprenticeships-and-other-vocational-qualifications.html>

## Welfare benefit savings from entering work

The given values for JSA, ESA and Income Support are illustrative estimates by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) of the costs and benefits that would occur if a hypothetical 'typical' claimant (who would otherwise have remained on benefits) were to move into employment for one additional year. The in-work wages and working hours of 'typical' claimants are assumed to be consistent with those reported by relevant former benefit claimants<sup>36</sup>. Changes in income tax and National Insurance payments are estimated by applying a simplified model of the tax and NI systems to the relevant in-work wage estimates. Changes in tax credits, indirect tax and benefit payments are estimated using the DWP's Policy Simulation Model.

The fiscal value comprises savings in benefits payments accruing to the DWP's Annually Managed Expenditure, and savings to the NHS related to a reduction in health care costs associated with being out of work. The economic value again includes assumed additional earnings gains.

## Estimating the additional benefits of 'Work Local'

To estimate the additional impact of Work Local, L&W have assumed that the costs of the employment and skills system remain the same, but that the outcomes achieved by each stream are improved by 5 percentage points. This is a plausible assumption based on the performance gains associated with effective active labour market programmes (which are typically in a range of 5 to 15 percentage points).

These revised outcome figures were then inputted into the Manchester model, to generate new estimates of fiscal and economic impact. These new estimates were then subtracted from the 'current' benefit estimates to give estimates of additional fiscal and economic impacts. These are set out in Table A2.1 below

**Table A2.1 – Additional impacts of Work Local**

Funding stream	Additional job outcomes	Additional off-flows from benefit	Additional learners reaching Level 2	Additional learners reaching Level 3	Additional fiscal benefits (£m)	Additional economic benefits (£m)
Post 16 provision			1,477	292	£0.30	£1.00
Adult Education Budget			1,638	1,485	£1.00	£2.30
Apprenticeships			507	350	£0.20	£0.60
Work and Health Programme	88				£0.80	£1.30
JCP job search		8,472			£278.00	£414.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>8,472</b>	<b>3,622</b>	<b>2,127</b>	<b>£280.30</b>	<b>£419.20</b>

<sup>36</sup> See [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/214578/rrep791.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/214578/rrep791.pdf)



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## Points to consider for the design of an effective Adults Skills System

Karen Adriaanse is the co-author of *Adult Education – too important to be left to chance* and *Adult Education – important for health and wellbeing*. These reports contributed to the evidence base for the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) inquiry into adult education.

Below are some points to consider in relation to the design of the adults skills system.

### The System

- Lifelong learning needs to be inspiring to encourage people to aspire to achieve and progress. There is no longer a job for life and self-employment will increase.
- The adult skills system needs to give people the skills to help them prepare for the jobs of the future but as we do not know what the future jobs will be. Therefore the skills should not be job specific but transferable across sectors.
- The skills system needs to provide people with a scaffolding structure (framework around them) that enables them to move up, down, sideways and to progress in the work place.
- The skills system needs to enable people to develop skills that help them to be flexible in the work place.
- The skills system designed should help people to be resilient to the following: hired, fired, made redundant (get up and find a new job) and retraining.
- Where local authorities fit into the system is their ability to do really good outreach and their partnership links locally.

### Skills

- CBI developed an employability skills framework that can be applied to the design of the adults system. [CBI Skills framework](#)
- Below is an example (DG employability skills framework) of an employer-led framework that has identified the employability skills needed for sustainable long-term success in the workplace.
  - **A Positive Attitude:**
  - **Self-Management:**
  - **Team Working:** co-operating, negotiating, persuading, contributing to discussion
  - **Business and customer awareness**
  - **Problem Solving:** Analysing facts and circumstances and applying creative thinking to develop appropriate solutions
  - **Communication and Literacy:** Application of literacy, ability to produce clear structured written work, oral literacy
  - **Application of Numeracy:** Manipulation of numbers, mathematical awareness and application in practical contexts

- **Application of Information Technology:** Basic IT skills, familiarity with word processing, spread sheets, file management and the use of Internet search engines
- **Leadership and Entrepreneurship.**

### The role of Local Authorities

- Local authorities are good at outreach but their work needs to be supported by career information and clear progression pathways to further learning, employment, self-employment, as well as progression within the world of work.
- Adult learning should be a provision of learning, training and employment and there needs to be a policy outlining the council's role in the first segment of adult learning.
- Local authorities have a role in reaching out to the groups not currently engaging, thinking or considering lifelong learning.

### Measuring outcomes

- There have been comments about measuring success for the hard to reach groups accessing adult education. It is often hard to produce tangible results. It is recognised the journey for those furthest from the job market does not lead straight into a job so this can be hard to measure. However the progress of their journey needs to be measurable. Maybe society needs to have higher expectations of the group at the low end of lifelong learning to make it measurable.
- It is Important that the impact of adult learning is measurable and that there is a national system for measuring development. Nationally there needs to be consideration as to how this can be measured.

### Economy

- The economy needs level 2. Level 2 work, careers and qualifications need to be given more value and status than it is given now by the system and employers.
- The new T levels being introduced by Government will be level 3 and above. Again missing out level 2.
- The economy needs to understand it should invest in level 2 tech training too.



## Appendix A - Recommendation made in ***Adult Education – too important to be left to chance***

### **Recommendation 1**

Establish a national and regional strategy for adult education, health, employability and wellbeing – bringing together the different departmental interests led by a senior Minister to provide an accountability and quality assured framework at a national and regional level. There needs to be clear criteria for providers to capture, collate and disseminate the full benefits of adult education, including improvements to their health and well-being and participation as an active citizen against the accountability and quality-assured framework.

### **Recommendation 2**

The new commissioning system needs to have an adult education framework that seeks to rebuild and rebalance resources fairly for adults across the different life-stages – national and local provision for adults' needs to reflect a coherent view of our changing social, economic and cultural context. The matter of identity, of how people describe who they are and the values they hold is an important conversation to be had with Commissioners in local areas. We learned from adults who were not engaged in adult education that many felt vulnerable, had limited choice on what was available when it comes to addressing their feelings of isolation, loneliness, mental and physical challenges.

### **Recommendation 3**

Provide careers information, advice and guidance in local communities and build capacity in the adult education workforce to make greater use of labour market intelligence and midlife reviews. There is a need to broaden and strengthen the capacity of the adult education workforce, thus raising the profile of this important work. Training and professional support should be available for all those involved in delivering education and training in various capacities.

### **Recommendation 4**

Ensure a systematic approach to identifying and gathering evidence on the full impact of adult education. Data on the outcomes achieved by adult learners should not be overly bureaucratic, but it needs to be openly available for individuals, employers and commissioners to enable informed choices.

### **Recommendation 5**

More employers need to step up and offer opportunities to adults, particularly older adults keen to remain active in employment. Employers could offer so much more by offering adult education experiences on their premises through local partnerships.

Over the next five to 10 years, there is a need to build on outstanding practices that are often unique to current adult education provision. **Adult education should be a national priority.** A series of policies and practices are needed so that the benefits of adult education are not taken away from those who need it most.

## Appendix B – ***Adult Education – important for health and wellbeing.***

### **Six Key Recommendations**

- 1.) The Institutes of Adult Learning and other adult education providers should work together with the health and social care sectors make most of the significant scope to produce portfolios of podcasts, videos, case studies and conclusive statistics to bring the evidence alive and readily available and so that this work is at the forefront of national policy dialogue. This should be supported through an organisation such as the Education and Training Foundation.
- 2.) Government and leading research bodies should support adult education, health and well-being organisations to develop a national tool(s) for measuring the impact of adult education on improving individuals health and well-being as a priority.
- 3.) The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Adult Education should work with the Institutes of Adult Learning and partners, including other relevant APPGs to disseminate policy briefings on specific aspects of this work to Ministers and health and well-being agencies and professional bodies.
- 4.) The Institutes of Adult Learning and regional adult education networks should be invited by those responsible for NHS 'Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships' (STPs), Health and Well-Being Boards, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCGs), Local/Combined Authorities and Local Enterprise partnerships (LEPs) to contribute to the development and delivery of health and well-being objectives at regional and local level and should present their findings to NHS Improvement.

The benefits of adult education for health and well-being are not widely known within health provision, particularly working with vulnerable groups in our society. To increase the demand and take-up of for adult education through links with the health sectors, we recommend that:

- 5.) The Institutes of Adult Learning (IALs) and adult education networks, work with Healthwatch, the Patients Association, trade unions and other representative organisations, who work with adults and family learning initiatives to advocate the health and well-being benefits of adult education to wider public.
- 6.) Adult education should be incorporated onto the Prescriptions for Patients systems across all NHS England. This needs to be promoted to all healthcare practitioners through local and national initiatives.

# Adult Education

## Too important to be left to chance

Dr Deirdre Hughes OBE, Karen Adriaanse and Dr Sally-Anne Barnes



Research Report for the All Party Parliamentary Group for Adult Education (APPG) – Inquiry into Adult Education

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We would like to thank representatives from the research project Steering Group, as well as nine Specialist Designated Institutions (SDIs) - City Lit, Morley College, Hillcroft College, Northern College, Ruskin College, Working Men's College, Mary Ward Centre, Fircroft College and the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) - who each contributed and supported the research. Additionally, we are indebted to the following individuals and organisations who participated in telephone interviews and/or gave us permission to share their views within the report: Nick Bell, Chief Executive, Prospects Group Ltd; Neil Carberry, Senior Policy Adviser, Confederation of British Industry (CBI); Caroline Fairbairn, Director General, Confederation of British Industry (CBI); David Hughes, Chief Executive, Learning & Work Institute; Scott Knowles, Chief Executive, East Midlands, British Chamber of Commerce; Bob Harrison, Chair of Governors Northern College & Education Adviser, Toshiba, Northern Europe; Dr Sue Pember OBE, Director of Policy, HOLEX; David Russell, Chief Executive, Education Training Foundation (ETF); Baroness Sharp of Guildford, House of Lords; Rachael Egan, West Midlands, Combined Authority; Ruth Spellman OBE, Chief Executive, Workers' Educational Association (WEA); Steve Stewart, Chief Executive, Careers England; Mary-Vine Morris, Senior Policy Director (London), Association of Colleges (AoC); Trevor Phillips OBE, Chair of Trustees, Workers' Educational Association (WEA); and Andreas Schleicher, Director for the Directorate Education and Skills, (OECD). Also, a special note of thanks to Stef Poole and Sally Wright at IER for their invaluable input and support. Finally, we would like to thank Chi Onwurah MP for her input and review of the findings and the commitment she and other Parliamentarians have made to keeping the spotlight on adult education.

## **University of Warwick, Institute for Employment Research (IER)**

Established in 1981 by the University of Warwick, the Institute for Employment Research (IER) is a leading international social science research centre. Its research is interdisciplinary and made relevant to policy makers and practitioners. It is renowned for consistently delivering high quality research. The work of IER includes comparative European research on employment and training as well as that focusing on the UK at national, regional and local levels. IER is concerned principally with the development of scientific knowledge about the socioeconomic system rather than with the evolution and application of one particular discipline. It places particular emphasis on using social science in the effective development of policy and practice and in collaborating with the policy and practitioner communities, to bring this about.

## Executive summary

The APPG for Adult Education commissioned the Warwick Institute for Employment Research at the University of Warwick (April – June 2016) to conduct research into the needs of adult learners.<sup>1</sup> This work was managed by nine Specialist Designated Institutions (SDIs) including: City Lit, Morley College, Hillcroft College, Northern College, Ruskin College, Working Men's College, Mary Ward Centre, Fircroft College and the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) – each has its own identity, mission and distinctive approach, which adds to the rich diversity of adult education.

Our primary focus is on adult education, and on adults returning to learn. Learning can occur in education or training institutions (offline or online), the workplace (on or off the job), the family, or cultural and especially, community settings.

The research team collected evidence through the following channels:

- **A literature review:** Some 45 sources of research and analysis have been identified and reviewed, spanning practice and experience across the UK and internationally. The main purpose was to inform and complement the core project research on the need, reach and areas for policy and practice development for adult education. The findings can be downloaded from:  
[http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/adult\\_education/](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/adult_education/)
- **A formal call for evidence:** There were 34 responses received to a formal 'Call for Evidence', ranging from individual adult education tutors to major organisations. The detailed responses can be accessed from:  
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- **An online survey of adult learners:** This aimed to engage as diverse a group of adult learners as possible to cover all key demographics and life stages. There was a particular focus on disadvantaged or disengaged students. The online survey attracted responses from 543 adults, all but 2 per cent of whom had attended adult education courses and spanning age groups from under 30 to over 65 years.
- **Fieldwork:** This included a total of 169 adult learners currently or previously attending programmes run by six SDI providers and 39 adults not currently learning, but who were attending a private provider for a programme of support for people who are unemployed.
- **Town Hall meetings:** Two open meetings were held in the Wirral and Newcastle, attended by some 60 people interested or involved in adult education in a wide variety of roles. The findings from the Town Hall meetings captured the voices of adult learners featured throughout the report.
- **Telephone interviews:** A total of 12 key stakeholder interviews were conducted with leaders from education, employment and community sectors to ascertain their views on and experience of adult education provision in England.

### **How can a greater priority be given to adults' views to support a demand-led approach?**

Nationally, adult education providers indicate there is a government policy 'lopsided fixation' on both young people and apprenticeships, at the expense of other forms of adult education. Yet, the evidence base shows adult education often plays a significant role in reaching out and engaging people in learning through often outstanding partnerships with community groups, local authority departments and public services (Ofsted, 2015). The very wide range of provision offers a first step back into learning for so many and leads them onto pathways into work, including where appropriate, apprenticeships.

Local and newly Combined Authorities will be accountable for the allocation of funds with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) in setting the agenda and identifying priorities within local communities. It is therefore critical that the contribution of adult education including its contribution to improving health and well-being (which are pre-requisites for progression into and within employment) must not be lost or forgotten within current and any new devolution arrangements.

It is clear that most providers of adult education have invested in reaching out to people who are disadvantaged one way or the other. Many of whom would not otherwise know about adult education and what it could do for people in their circumstances. Yet, adult education providers have developed the expertise, teaching skills and resources to deliver non-qualification provision and/or bite-sized units that successfully engage these adults in learning again, offering a stepping stone to success. Any policy or practical interventions need to reflect this and provide flexibility.

Post-devolution, local Skills Commissioners will be required to make investment decisions - which is why their role is so central to the sustainability of adult education now and in the future.

### **What practices and models of learning best motivate non-traditional students to keep on going with their studies, while other from a similar background drop-out?**

- Good quality provision demonstrated by high achievement rates and positive Ofsted outcomes nationally for local authority providers and many further education (FE) colleges and Specialist Designated Institute (SDI) providers
- Inter-generational learning is starting to grow, involving parents and grandparents learning alongside children
- Partnership work with trade unions where workplace and community learning centres have been able to reach learners who face major barriers in accessing adult education and training
- Community-based adult education, such as University of the Third Age (U3A), which is filling gaps in other provision. Local authorities, further education (FE) colleges, universities and Specialist Designated Institute (SDI) providers are also making significant contributions to outreach and community activities.
- In the adult survey, when asked their reasons for taking part in an adult learning course, respondents provided a range of reasons, but an overwhelming proportion reported that it had been for their own personal development (75 per cent). The 39 people either on the work programme or referred to the provider from Jobcentre Plus to work on their Curriculum Vitae (CV) were familiar with colleges and training providers, but not Adult and Community Learning providers, such as the SDIs, local authorities and not-for-profit providers with



charitable status. None had a written job or career plan. Nearly all were looking for low level work, mostly because that was all that they deemed available to them. Those over 50 years old were very concerned that they were unlikely to find work because of the attitudes of employers.

### **What do we know already about the added value, cost-effectiveness and impact of adult education?**

The UK Government's Foresight report on mental capital and well-being highlighted the costs of over £100 billion for mental ill-health in the UK, and £27 billion to UK plc in terms of sickness absence, presenteeism (i.e. the practice of being present at one's place of work for more hours than is required, especially as a manifestation of insecurity about one's job) and labour turnover. In addition, nearly 40 per cent of all incapacity benefit at work is due to the common mental disorders of depression, anxiety and stress. The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2014)<sup>2</sup> links well-being to social connections, economic security and income, natural and built environment, and education. We found that attending adult education courses could directly improve the lives of individuals and contributed positively to all these areas.

Many participants in the fieldwork felt that many policy makers did not understand the true benefits of adult education. They were keen that the money for adult learning should be protected and that MPs and their advisers should understand the wider social benefits of attending a community-based class and the money it can save the health service, social services and other departments. They felt that having a pay policy for adult learning was fair - so that those that can pay do and support those that can't. However, the service still needs to be subsidised so that more people can attend, especially those who have significant barriers to work or being active in their communities.



## What policy development is needed to secure the future of adult education?

### Recommendation 1

Establish a national and regional strategy for adult education, health, employability and well-being – bringing together the different departmental interests, led by a senior Minister to provide an accountability and quality assured framework at a national and regional level. There needs to be clear criteria for providers to capture, collate and disseminate the full benefits of adult education, including improvements to their health and well-being and participation as an active citizen against the accountability and quality-assured framework.

### Recommendation 2

The new commissioning system needs to have an adult education framework that seeks to rebuild and rebalance resources fairly for adults across the different life-stages. National and local provision for adults' needs to reflect a coherent view of our changing social, economic and cultural context. The matter of identity, of how people describe who they are and the values they hold, is an important conversation to be had with Commissioners in local areas. We learned from adults who were not engaged in adult education that many felt vulnerable, had limited choice on what was available when it comes to addressing their feelings of isolation, loneliness, mental and physical challenges.

### Recommendation 3

Provide careers information, advice and guidance in local communities and build capacity in the adult education workforce to make greater use of labour market intelligence and mid-life reviews. There is a need to broaden and strengthen the capacity of the adult education workforce, thus raising the profile of this important work. Training and professional support should be available for all those involved in delivering education and training in various capacities.

### Recommendation 4

Ensure a systematic approach to identifying and gathering evidence on the full impact of adult education. Data on the outcomes achieved by adult learners should not be overly bureaucratic, but it needs to be openly available for individuals, employers and commissioners to enable informed choices.

### Recommendation 5

More employers need to step up and offer opportunities to adults, particularly older adults, keen to remain active in employment. Employers could offer so much more by offering adult education experiences on their premises through local partnerships.

Over the next five to 10 years there is a need to build on outstanding practices that are often unique to current adult education provision. **Adult education should be a national priority.** A series of policies and practices are needed so that the benefits of adult education are not taken away from those who need it most. **A national debate** can forge that sense of shared national purpose for adult education. And it is a debate in which, as well as the local commissioners of adult education, many more citizen voices should be heard – the voices of those for whom the services should be designed and those adults who have most to gain from them. This really is **too important to simply be left to chance.**

# I. Introduction

“ Adult education can help change lives and transform societies – it is a human right and common good.”

(European Adult Education Manifesto for the 21st Century)

“ The provision and quality of adult learning remains patchy, and those who need it most currently get the least of it. More work is needed to support adult learning in local communities – this should be a key ingredient in adult education developments in the 21st century.”

(Andreas Schleicher, Director for the Directorate of Education and Skills, OECD).

‘A broad highway that all could travel.’ That’s how Keir Hardy – Britain’s first Labour MP – envisaged education for all back in the 1890s.<sup>4</sup> Since then, there is a mountain of evidence – be it in government data, books, reports and millions of individual case studies – that prove adult education has significantly changed so many people’s lives. Many adults have found their way onto the highway and have made up for lost time by discovering their potential and skills, achieving things they did not know they were capable of. Many have developed self-belief and resilience enabling them to be more active citizens or support their families and communities in a way they would not have believed possible. However, still not everyone finds it easy to get on that highway or to navigate their route along it. Too many of those who could benefit most from making the journey are missing out. That’s why the newly formed All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Adult Education is making educational provision for adults the focus of its first priority. As the APPG’s Chair explained at the Group’s launch:

“ We need more opportunities and support for adults to learn throughout their lives, whatever their circumstances. Our world is constantly changing and learning helps many people to make the positive changes they need – whether it’s finding a better job or broadening cultural horizons.”

(Chi Onwurah MP)<sup>5</sup>

## I.1. Project overview

The APPG for Adult Education commissioned the Warwick Institute for Employment Research at the University of Warwick (April – June 2016) to conduct research into the needs of adult learners.<sup>6</sup> This work was managed by nine Specialist Designated Institutions (SDIs) including: City Lit, Morley College, Hillcroft College, Northern College, Ruskin College, Working Men’s College, Mary Ward Centre, Fircroft College and the Workers’ Educational Association (WEA) – each has its own identity, mission and distinctive approach, which adds to the rich diversity of adult education.

3. European Association for the Education of Adults (2015) Manifesto for Adult Learning in the 21st Century. Brussels: 5th December 2015. Accessed on: 4th May 2016. Available from: <http://www.eaea.org/en/policy-advocacy/manifesto-for-adult-learning-in-the-21st-century.html>

4. Gillard, D. (2001) Education in England: A Brief history. Available from: <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/history/chapter03.html>

5. Available from: <http://wea.org.uk/news/New-Parliamentary-Group-for-Adult-Education.aspx>

6. Available from: <http://wea.org.uk/news/New-Parliamentary-Group-for-Adult-Education.aspx>

Our primary focus is on adult education, and on adults returning to learn. Learning can occur in education or training institutions (offline or online), the workplace (on or off the job), the family, or cultural and especially, community settings. We use ‘learning’ to refer to all kinds of formal education and training (organised/accredited). We also include non-formal (organised unaccredited) and informal approaches (not organised, e.g. learning from colleagues or friends) provided these have a degree of adult education focus.

The aim of the study was to scope the need, reach and areas for policy and practice development for adult education concerning disadvantaged adults. Four key research questions emerged:

- How can a greater priority be given to adults’ views to support a demand-led approach?
- What practices and models of learning best motivate non-traditional students to keep on going with their studies while others from a similar background drop-out?
- What do we know already about the added value, cost-effectiveness and impact of adult education?
- What policy development is needed to secure the future of adult education?

## 1.2. Methodology

The research team collected evidence through the following channels:

- **A literature review:** Some 45 sources of research and analysis have been identified and reviewed, spanning practice and experience across the UK and internationally. The main purpose was to inform and complement the core project research on the need, reach and areas for policy and practice development for adult education. The findings can be downloaded from: [http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/adult\\_education/](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/adult_education/)
- **A formal call for evidence:** There were 34 responses received to a formal ‘Call for Evidence’, ranging from individual adult education tutors to major organisations. The detailed responses can be accessed from: [http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/adult\\_education/](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/adult_education/)
- **An online survey of adult learners:** This aimed to engage as diverse a group of adult learners as possible to cover all key demographics and life stages. There was a particular focus on disadvantaged or disengaged students. This included:
  - Existing adult students from a range of localities drawn from the SDIs; and
  - Students who had started a course of learning, but not completed it.

The online survey attracted responses from 543 adults, all but two per cent of whom had attended adult education courses and spanning age groups from under 30 to over 65 years.

- **Fieldwork:** This included a total of 169 adult learners currently, or previously, attending programmes run by six SDI providers and 39 adults not currently learning, but who were attending a private provider with support for people who are unemployed. Focus groups were conducted with learners and local community representatives to examine the impact of learning, what works and challenges. Where possible, it was ensured that men and women were represented equally, disadvantaged groupings and drawn from both urban and rural areas. The fieldwork activities captured the voices of adult learners which are featured throughout the report.

- **Town Hall meetings:** Two open meetings were held in the Wirral and Newcastle, attended by some 60 people interested or involved in adult education in a wide variety of roles. The findings from the Town Hall meetings captured the voices of adult learners which are featured throughout the report.
- **Telephone interviews:** A total of 12 key stakeholder interviews were conducted with leaders from education, employment and community sectors to ascertain their views on and experience of adult education provision in England. The main purpose was to capture their voices and identify key emerging policy priorities.

By drawing on these varied sources, the aim has been to develop a full picture of the benefits of adult education for individuals, employers and communities focusing on what works well and what needs to be improved to make best use of the resources available for adult education, particularly in addressing the needs of those most disadvantaged in our society. This research provides an opportunity to relate recent research into adult education policy and practice of 2016 and look forward to the next five to ten years.

### 1.3. Report structure

Chapter 2 discusses why adult education matters in the context of a changing landscape across England.

Chapter 3 reviews what's happening in the current landscape, including devolution, area reviews and the opportunities that lie ahead, drawing upon participants' experiences and their views of the current and future direction of adult education.

Chapter 4 captures the voices of adults participating in learning and those who are currently not engaged in formal adult education to illustrate their motivations, the barriers they face and ways in which they overcome barriers to learning.

Chapter 5 explores what leads to successful outcomes and provides some brief illustrations of good and interesting policies and practices to feed into future developments.

Chapter 6 focuses on what needs to change now and in the future in order to maintain and further strengthen adult education across England.

Chapter 7 sets out five key recommendations for implementation at a national, regional and local level.

## 2. Adult learning: Why does it matter?

“ Adult education at its best connects people, helps to reduce loneliness or feelings of isolation within communities; it can instill a sense of empowerment through the joy of learning and/or help people get back to work or positively change direction. ”

(Baroness Sharp of Guildford)

In this section, we explore the changes in society that are impacting on the lives of adults, the current landscape, evidence from Ofsted, on adult education providers performance and challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

### Key findings

- The ageing society is upon us and services will need to adapt accordingly
- There is an urgent requirement for more adults to be economically active for much longer than in previous generations due to changes in state pensions and increased lifespans
- Everyone’s lives involve transitions, but for a growing number the frequency and scale of these are increasing
- Adult education provides many opportunities to equalise societies on a larger scale
- The quality of provision of the 238 community and skills providers is high; 86 per cent of them were judged to be good or outstanding at their latest Ofsted inspection.

### 2.1. Traditional patterns, changing transitions

Latest figures from the Office of National Statistics (ONS, June 2016)<sup>7</sup> indicate the UK population grew by half a million last year to 65.1 million. The largest percentage increase was in England and the lowest in Wales. The older population has continued to rise, with more than 11.6 million people (17.8 per cent of the population) now aged 65 years and over, and 1.5 million people (2.3 per cent of the population) aged 85 years and over in mid-2015.

“ All regions of England are projected to see an increase in their population size over the next decade, with London, the East of England and South East projected to grow faster than the country as a whole. The population is also ageing with all regions seeing a faster growth in those aged 65 and over than in younger age groups. ”

(Suzie Dunsmith, Population Projections Unit, Office for National Statistics)

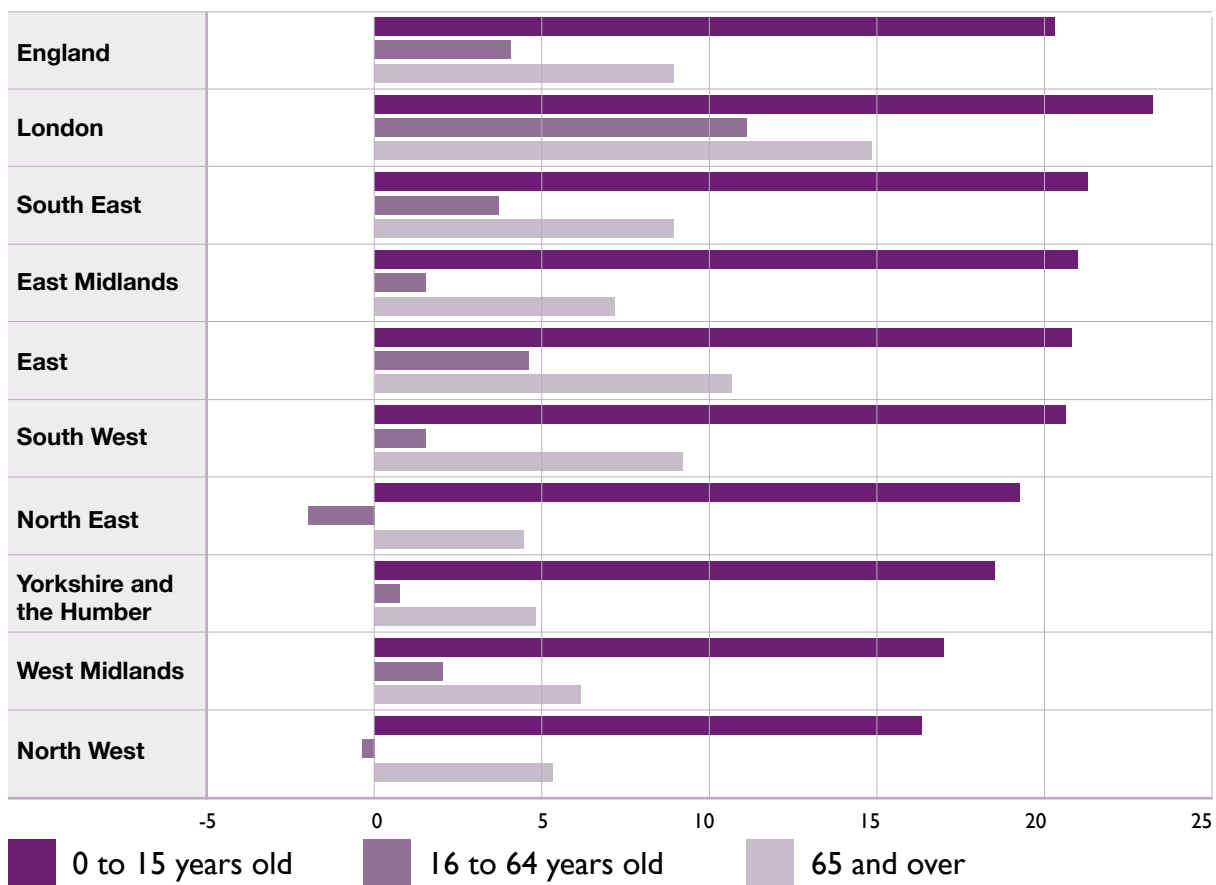
**Table 1.1** Population change in English regions: mid-2014 to mid-2024

	Mid-2014	Mid-2014	Projected change over 10 years	Projected percentage change over 10 years
England	54,316,600	58,396,300	4,079,700	7.5
London	8,538,700	9,708,000	1,169,300	13.7
East	6,018,400	6,554,300	535,900	8.9
South East	8,873,800	9,596,200	722,400	8.1
South West	5,423,300	5,816,500	393,200	7.3
East Midlands	4,637,400	4,950,200	312,800	6.7
West Midlands	5,713,300	6,052,400	339,100	5.9
Yorkshire and the Humber	5,360,000	5,608,900	248,900	4.6
North West	7,133,100	7,409,100	276,100	3.9
North East	2,618,700	2,700,600	81,900	3.1

Source: Office for National Statistics – Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding

Clearly, there is an urgent requirement for more adults to be economically active for much longer than in previous generations due to changes in state pensions and increased lifespans (Eurostat, 2014).<sup>8</sup> The employment rate for women (69.2 per cent) was the joint highest since comparable records began in 1971, partly due to on-going changes to the state pension age for women resulting in fewer women retiring between the ages of 60 and 65 years (ONS, op. cit). Data from the Office for National Statistics (op.cit) shows that the number of 18 year olds in England is projected to decline overall between 2012 and 2020 and it will be 2024 before the 18 year old population recovers to 2015 levels. Focusing on older age groups, Figure 1.1 below shows that the number of people aged 65 and over is projected to increase in all regions by an average of 20 per cent between mid-2014 and mid-2024 as a result of the general ageing of the population as projected in the national population projections. The fastest growth in those aged 65 and over is seen in London, where the number is projected to increase by 23.6 per cent from slightly under 1 million to 1.2 million over the 10 year period.

**Figure 1.1** Percentage population change in English regions by age groups: mid-2014 to mid-2024



Source: Office for National Statistics

With a shrinking population of traditional “working age” supporting a growing retired one, we all will need to do things quite differently from previous generations and learn to structure our lives, as well as public, private and third sector services, in new and differing ways.

“ The traditional notion of a three-stage approach to our working lives - education, followed by work and then retirement is beginning to collapse: life expectancy is rising, final-salary pensions are vanishing, and increasing numbers of people are juggling multiple roles. ”

(Lynda Grattan, Professor of Management Practice, London Business School & Andrew Scott, Professor of Economics, London Business School)<sup>9</sup>

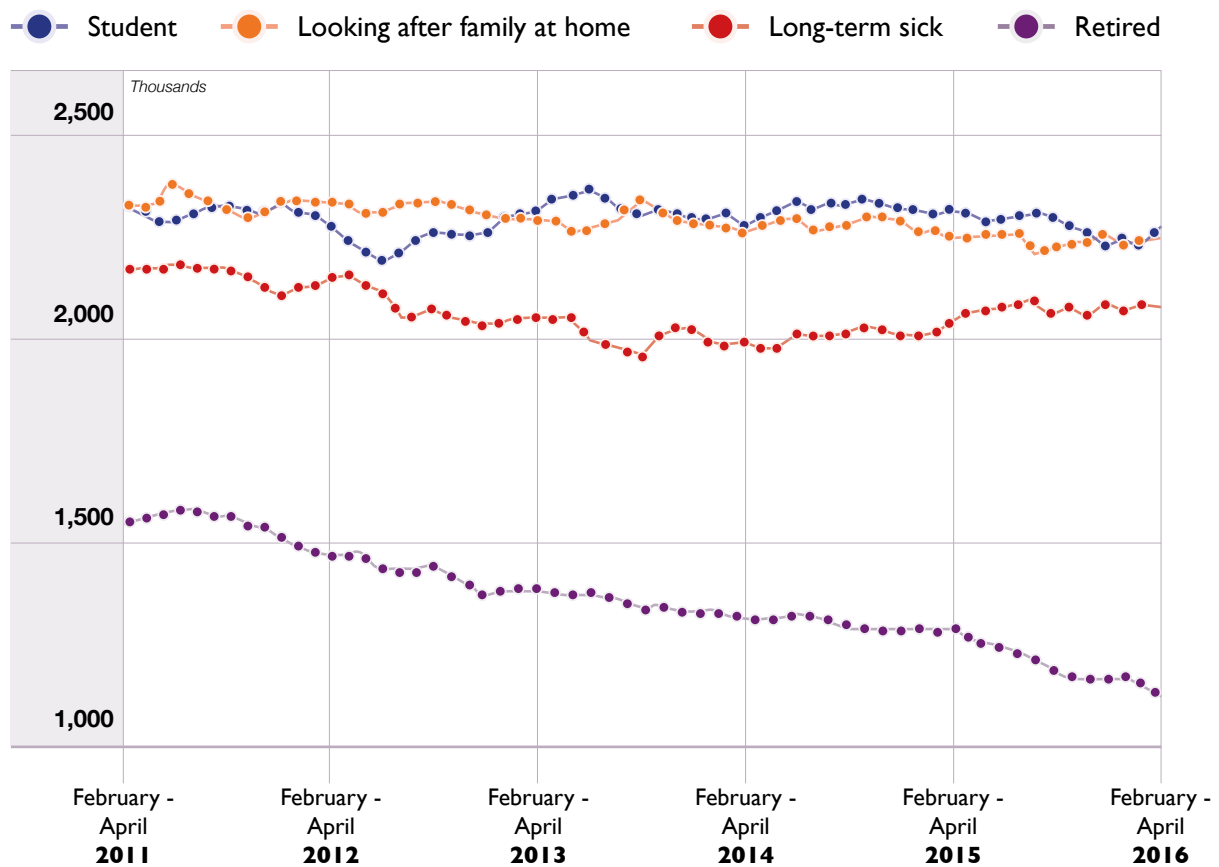
Everyone’s lives involve transitions, but for a growing number the frequency and scale of these are increasing. Changes in the economy mean people are having to change jobs and fields of work more often than in the past.<sup>10</sup> Portfolio work is on the increase: for example, someone might be driving a taxi part of the day, renting out the driveway for somebody who wants to park their car, looking after an elderly relative and working for a delivery company in the evening. We are all more likely to have to be far more versatile in coping in changing roles and changing personal circumstances.

9. Grattan, L. and Scott, A. (2016) *The 100 Year Life: Living and Working in An Age of Longevity*. Bloomsbury Publishing, London. Available from: <http://www.100yearlife.com/>

10. Eurostat (2015) *Population Structure and Ageing*, Brussels, June 2015. Available from: [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Population\\_structure\\_and\\_ageing](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Population_structure_and_ageing)



**Figure 1.2** Economic inactivity by main category in the UK (aged 16 to 64), seasonally adjusted – February to April 2011 to February to April 2016



Source: Office for National Statistics

Some responses to the Call for Evidence highlighted:

“ A slowness to realise that as people work longer, they are less likely to stay in the same career for their whole working life and therefore need access to funding to re-train, at both undergraduate and post-graduate level. ”

(The Open University)

“ Individuals' identities are changing and we see more portfolio working and/or self-employment for people of all ages. Individuals have to adjust to new ways of living their lives. ”

(Call for Evidence)

Some people are on journeys of personal transition, for example, coping with a disability, mental health or domestic issues, or addiction problems, recovering from an accident, being made redundant or preparing to leave prison. Adjusting to a new phase in life, such as retirement, represents another form of transition, which can be aided by the support, new skills and new interests that adult education can offer. Increasing migration has seen more adults arriving in England with more varied backgrounds and a wider range of educational needs to help smooth the path to cultural integration. There are plenty of reasons – economic, social and moral – to help adults reconnect with education. As the then Prime Minister, David Cameron put it earlier in the year:

“ The economy can't be secure if we spend billions of pounds on picking up the pieces of social failure and our society can't be strong and cohesive as long as there are millions of people who feel locked out of it. ”

(David Cameron, Prime Minister, January 2016)<sup>11</sup>

## 2.2. The adult education landscape

Ofsted's (2015)<sup>12</sup> Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector praised the adult education sector for the way that it provides educational benefits to disadvantaged communities and breaks cycles of low achievement by helping adults who may have often felt that learning was not for them to gain skills and qualifications. Inspections demonstrated that many adult education providers were successful at working with partners best placed to deliver a wide range of courses to support adults from disadvantaged communities.

In its official statistics Ofsted (June 2016)<sup>13</sup> identifies 238 community and skills providers whose core aim is generally to provide adult education, including in some cases work-based learning for young people and adults. These are mostly local authority providers, not-for-profit providers with charitable status and specialist dedicated institutions (SDIs) that receive funds directly from the Skills Funding Agency. These providers typically provide courses at designated learning centres and they also use a wide variety of community-based venues such as schools, community halls, libraries and children's or health centres; many of these are based in areas of deprivation. Local authority provision often takes place on many hundreds of different locations and the WEA runs hundreds of courses in different sites across the country. Some of these providers, especially the local authorities, sub-contract some of their provision to small organisations that have expertise in supporting specific client groups, such as adults with mental health or drug or alcohol issues or those with specific learning difficulties or disabilities. A few local authorities subcontract a significant proportion of its adult education budget to the local general further education (FE) colleges and many FE colleges also have a direct contract with the Skills Funding Agency to deliver adult education. They also use community venues as well as their main college sites.

Ofsted's findings (op cit.) show that the quality of provision of the 238 community and skills providers was high; 86 per cent of them were judged to be good or outstanding at their latest inspection, although not all of these grades were specifically for adult learning. The Common Inspection Framework (CIF) for education, early years and skills<sup>14</sup> for inspections from September 2015 restructured the inspection of further education and skills, requiring a separate grade and report for each of the follow types of provision: 16 to 19 study programmes; adult learning programmes; apprenticeships; traineeships; provision for learners with high needs; and 14 to 16 full-time provision. From September 2015<sup>15</sup>, the further education and skills inspection handbook requires inspectors to consider how well each strand of a provider's adult learning programme(s) – such as vocational training, employability training and community learning – has a clearly defined purpose that is well met through each relevant learning programme. Another of the eight points listed asks inspectors to consider how well learning programmes enable learners to overcome

11. Prime Minister's Speech on Life Chances, London: 11th January 2016.

Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-ministers-speech-on-life-chances>

12. Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector 2014/15 page 68.

Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofsted-annual-report-201415-education-and-skills>

13. Further education and skills inspections and outcomes as at 29 February 2016: data, charts and tables: Table 4.

Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/further-education-and-skills-inspection-and-outcomes-as-at-29-february-2016>

14. The Common Inspection Framework. Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/common-inspection-framework-education-skills-and-early-years>

Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/common-inspection-framework-education-skills-and-early-years>

15. Further education and skills inspection handbook from September 2015.

their barriers to employment and/or to becoming more independent in their communities. The most recent management information from Ofsted<sup>16</sup> show there is significant inconsistencies in how well the providers have met these and the other criteria in the inspection handbook. Of the 97 grades awarded for adult learning programmes, just over half were judged to be good or outstanding. The three providers with outstanding provision were a not-for-profit organisation, an FE college and a local authority provider. However, the five providers judged to have inadequate adult learning programmes were also from a similar mix of providers. All of the nine specialist designated institutions for adult learning were judged to be either good or outstanding at its latest inspection.

## 2.3. Challenges and opportunities

Recent findings from the OECD (June 2016) outlines:

“ There are an estimated 9 million working aged adults in England (more than a quarter of adults aged 16-65) with low literacy or numeracy skills or both. This reflects England’s overall performance in the Survey of Adult Skills - around average for literacy, but well below average for numeracy relative to other OECD countries in the Survey (OECD, 2013). These 9 million people struggle with basic quantitative reasoning or have difficulty with simple written information. They might, for example, struggle to estimate how much petrol is left in the petrol tank from a sight of the gauge, or not be able to fully understand instructions on a bottle of aspirin. Here they are referred to as ‘low-skilled’. Weak basic skills reduce productivity and employability, damage citizenship, and are therefore profoundly implicated in challenges of equity and social exclusion. ”  
(OECD, 2016, p.9)<sup>17</sup>

Digital technology is transforming almost every aspect of our public, private or work life (Davos, 2016)<sup>18</sup>. For every individual – the learner, the worker and the citizen – the natural consequence of technological innovation is a requirement to continue learning throughout life. Adult education has brought computing skills to millions of adults who thought they would be left behind forever, through courses in village halls, libraries and community centres. But there are still millions more people who are unlikely to be able to book a doctor’s appointment online, keep up with their children’s work at school or have a good chance of sustained employment because of their lack of skills and/or confidence in using technology. There is significant scope to do more:

“ Don’t force new technology into old pedagogy [...] it’s not about technology, it’s about new ways of thinking ”  
(Bob Harrison, Chair of Governors Northern College & Education Adviser, Toshiba – Northern Europe, 2016)<sup>19</sup>

Millions of people define their well-being in terms of health (DoH, 2014).<sup>20</sup> The UK Government’s Foresight report on mental capital and well-being highlighted the costs of over £100 billion for

16. Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/monthly-management-information-ofsted-further-education-and-skills-inspections-outcomes-from-december-2015>

17. OECD (2016) Building Skills for All: A Review of England – Policy Insight from the Survey of Adult Skills, Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Economic Development. Available from: <https://www.oecd.org/unitedkingdom/building-skills-for-all-review-of-england.pdf>

18. Davos World Leaders Conference, Switzerland, 14th January 2016.

Available from: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/the-fourth-industrial-revolution-what-it-means-and-how-to-respond/>

19. For further information. Available from: <http://www.setuk.co.uk/>

20. Department of Health (2014) *Well being: Why it matters to health policy – Health is the top thing people say matters to their well being*. London. Available from: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/277566/Narrative\\_January\\_2014\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277566/Narrative_January_2014_.pdf)

mental ill-health in the UK, and £27 billion to UK plc in terms of sickness absence, presenteeism (i.e. the practice of being present at one's place of work for more hours than is required, especially as a manifestation of insecurity about one's job) and labour turnover. In addition, nearly 40 per cent of all incapacity benefit at work is due to the common mental disorders of depression, anxiety and stress. The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2014)<sup>21</sup> links well-being to social connections, economic security and income, natural and built environment, and education. We found that attending adult education courses could directly improve the lives of individuals and contributed positively to all these areas.

“ I hated maths at school but now I know I will need to improve my skills and get the qualification so I can train to be a nurse. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ It is good to have a safe and helpful learning environment. It is easy to stay at home. Being 'forced' to go out of the house once a week is not a bad thing at my age. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ My English has improved so much that I can make phone calls on my own now and speak to my daughter's teacher. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ I have gained so much knowledge. I can understand grammar. At last I know what a comma is. My text messages make more sense. When I write I can say what I want to say and not just what I can spell. ”

(Adult Learner)

Adult education provides many opportunities to equalise societies on a larger scale. In this context, education and skills deficits need to be addressed as a priority to improve the economic and social prosperity of all citizens. While the number of jobs in the UK is expected to rise by about 1.8 million over the period 2014 to 2024, that growth will be strongest for highly qualified managers and professionals. (UKCES, 2014; Störmer et al., 2014)<sup>22</sup> In contrast, the jobs that have traditionally enabled those with little in the way of qualifications to get into work and get on will be in decline. For example the number of openings for process, plant and machine operators, skilled tradespeople, and administrative and secretarial roles will all be in decline over the coming years. By 2024, it is expected that only 2 per cent of those in employment will have no formal qualifications (op cit.)<sup>23</sup>. In the years ahead, skills and qualifications will play an increasingly central role in determining individual employability, career progression and earnings potential (CBI, 2014 & 2015)<sup>24</sup>.

21. World Health Organisation (2014) Second joint meeting of experts on targets and indicators for health and well being in Health 2020, London, 3-4 April 2014. Available from: [http://www.euro.who.int/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/253673/Meeting-Report-April-meeting-final-WEB.pdf?ua=1](http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/253673/Meeting-Report-April-meeting-final-WEB.pdf?ua=1)

22. UKCES (2014) *Working Futures 2014 – 2024*. Wath-upon-Deane: UK Commission for Employment and Skills. Available from: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/514285/Working\\_Futures\\_Headline\\_Report\\_final\\_for\\_web\\_PG.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/514285/Working_Futures_Headline_Report_final_for_web_PG.pdf)  
See also: Störmer, E., Patscha, C., Prendergast, J., Daheim, C., Rhisiart, M., Glover, P., and Beck, H. (2014) *The Future of Work, Jobs and Skills in 2030* (Evidence Report 84). Wath-upon-Deane: UK Commission for Employment and Skills. Available from: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/303334/er84-the-future-of-work-evidence-report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/303334/er84-the-future-of-work-evidence-report.pdf)

23. Op cit.

24. CBI (2014) *Building a Better Off Britain: Improving Lives by Making Growth Work for Everyone*, November 2014. Available from: <http://news.cbi.org.uk/news/our-package-of-measures-to-build-a-better-off-britain/> See also: CBI (2015) *The Path Ahead*, CBI/Accenture Employment Trends Survey 2015, London, December 2015. Available from: <http://news.cbi.org.uk/news/job-creation-up-but-skills-shortages-rising-labour-costs-start-to-bite-cbi-accenture-survey/the-path-ahead/>

All adults already beyond school age should have the chance and encouragement to start accumulating skills and qualifications that will lead to better, more fulfilling life chances. They should also be better equipped to support their families and local communities. However, there is a serious decline in the numbers of students participating in Level 3 courses<sup>25</sup>, as well as enrolment of part-time and mature students in higher education<sup>26</sup>, mainly as a result of funding and policy decisions. The number of 24 years and older adults participating in education at Level 3 and Level 4 (A-level / Diploma) in 2013/2014 fell to 57,100 from 400,000 in 2012/2013, a drop of 86 per cent (Hughes, 2014)<sup>27</sup>.

## A fixation on apprenticeships?

“ It feels like apprenticeships are the only show in town at the moment and whilst these are absolutely important, so too is adult education embedded in our local community. ”

(Town hall participant)

Nationally, adult education providers indicate there is a government policy ‘lopsided fixation’ on both young people and apprenticeships, at the expense of other forms of adult education. Yet, the evidence base shows adult education often plays a significant role in reaching out and engaging people in learning through often outstanding partnerships with community groups, local authority departments and public services.<sup>28</sup> The very wide range of provision provides a first step back into learning for so many and leads them onto pathways into work. For so many and this can lead them onto pathways into work, including where appropriate, apprenticeships.



25. Skills Funding Agency & Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (2016) *Statistical First Release, SFA/SFR34*, Coventry /London, Released 23rd June 2016. Available from: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/530819/SFR\\_commentary\\_June\\_2016\\_final.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/530819/SFR_commentary_June_2016_final.pdf)

26. Office for Fair Access (2016) *Outcomes of Access Agreement Outcome Monitoring for 2014/2015*, London: May 2016, p. 7. Available from: <https://www.offa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/2016.04-Outcomes-of-access-agreements-monitoring-1.pdf>

27. Hughes, D. (2014) In Ed. Coryton, D., *Basic Skills Bulletin*, 169, Education Publishing Company, Crediton.

28. Ofsted (2015) *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2014/15* Presented to Parliament pursuant to section 8 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. December 2015. Available from: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/483347/Ofsted\\_annual\\_report\\_education\\_and\\_skills.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/483347/Ofsted_annual_report_education_and_skills.pdf)

## 3. What's happening in the current system?

“ Adult education isn't simply a leisure activity – it is the life blood for conversation in any vibrant community and local economy ”

(David Hughes, CEO, Learning and Work Institute)

In this section, we review what's happening in the current landscape, including devolution, area reviews and the opportunities that lie ahead, drawing upon participants' views and experiences on the current and future direction of adult education.

### Key findings

- Devolution of political and financial powers is creating new partnerships and delivery arrangements
- Employers and adults do not have a sufficient role in determining demand for adult learning
- Provision is influenced too much by funding regimes – often to the disadvantage of those who would benefit most
- There are some worrying trends regarding adult education participation rates
- Evidence is available on the economic and social returns on investment
- Adult education is deeply rooted in local communities; therefore, new funding and delivery arrangements should be a priority for Skills Commissions.

### 3.1. Post-16 sector – major change and transition

As the post-16 sector moves into a period of major transition and uncertainty, *New Challenges New Chances* (BIS, 2011)<sup>29</sup> remains a key reference point for adult education providers in England. The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) is currently developing a new Skills Vision document. It is crucial that this new policy document recognises the positive impact of adult education (in all its forms), especially provision that takes place in community based settings. There is a potential risk of a narrow (employment-focused) definition of outcomes that fails to recognise individuals and communities also benefit greatly from social, education and health-related outcomes.

### 3.2 Devolution

Devolution of political and financial powers is creating the emergence of strategic partnerships and new delivery arrangements at both a local, and sub-regional/regional level.<sup>30</sup> As of March/April

29. OBIS (2011) *New Challenges, New Chances: Further Education and Skills System Reform Plan: Building a World Class Skills System*, London 1st December 2011. Available from: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/145452/11-1380-further-education-skills-system-reform-plan.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/145452/11-1380-further-education-skills-system-reform-plan.pdf)

30. There are around 150 local authority providers, most of the GFE colleges have adult skills budgets and community learning funding – as will third sector providers and a few independent learning providers.

2016, devolution deals with nine areas had been agreed (p.3).<sup>31</sup> Discussions have also taken place on further devolution to Greater London. For example, London has recently appointed a new 'Skills Commissioner'. Similar approaches are likely to emerge in other geographical areas with Commissioners influencing the use of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) from 2017-18, followed by full devolution of the budget from 2018-19 in those areas that have skills in their devolution deals and meet the required readiness conditions.

“ These plans aim to align adult education arrangements to local economic priorities. However in doing so, there is a danger that individual skills interests and priorities will be overlooked which could lead to greater disengagement from education. Devolved budgets also run the risk of distancing locally funded provision, aimed at preparing adults for employment and apprenticeships, from the nationally funded, sectorally divided apprenticeship offer. The local offer may not reflect national priorities. ”

(Association of Colleges)

A more optimistic viewpoint was highlighted:

“ New flexibilities within the AEB may help the direction of delivery to meet local needs. This needs to be balanced against the ability to respond to national/global trends.

Adult education provision needs to be comprehensively mapped locally and nationally.

Consistency in and improvement of financial commitment to more locally organised educational structures and policies as opposed to greater central Government control.

Funding streams that allow for 5-year local authority-led adult education strategic plans, accountable to the Community Learning Trust Board, which identify the needs and aspirations of an area and how these will be addressed. ”

(Call for Evidence)

A recent National Audit Office (NAO, 2016)<sup>32</sup> report highlights the following key facts:

- 10 devolution deals agreed to date, 34 devolution proposals received from local areas in England by September 2015.
- £246.5m additional investment funding per year, as part of devolution deals (£7.4 billion over 30 years)
- 16.1 million people living in areas subject to devolution deals, 9 new mayors of combined authorities to be elected in 2017.
- 155 staff in the Cities and Local Growth Unit
- 7 HM Treasury staff in their central team supporting devolution deals, supported by its departmental spending teams and other specialists 25 per cent real-terms reduction in local authorities' income between 2010-11 and 2015-16, taking account of both central government funding and council tax, as estimated in November 2014
- 8 per cent real-terms reduction in local authorities' income from 2015-16 to 2019-20, taking account of both central government funding and council tax, based on current estimates. (p.4)

31. House of Commons Library (2016) *Devolution to Local Government in England*, London, 5th April 2016. Available from: <http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN07029>

32. National Audit Office (2016) *English Devolution Deals*, Report to the Comptroller and Auditor General, Department for Communities and Local Government and HM Treasury. Available from: <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/English-devolution-deals.pdf>

Local and newly Combined Authorities will be accountable for the *allocation of funds* with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) in setting the agenda and identifying priorities within local communities. It is therefore critical that the contribution of adult education including its contribution to improving health and well-being (which are pre-requisites for progression into and within employment) must not be lost or forgotten within current and any new devolution arrangements.

### 3.3. Area Reviews

Area Reviews are well underway across England. These aim to ensure colleges, local councils, employers and other training providers determine the Further Education model for young people and adults that works best for their area (BIS, 2016)<sup>33</sup> – working towards fewer, larger colleges. All areas are required to undertake a full review of further education and skills provision, and to have agreed arrangements with the Government for managing financial risk. There is a clear expectation from the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills:

“ Ultimately we would expect funding agencies, local areas with devolution powers and Local Enterprise Partnerships only to fund institutions that are taking action to ensure they can provide a good quality offer to learners and employers, which is financially sustainable for the long term. ”  
(Nick Boles MP, Minister of State for Skills)

Whilst some Area Reviews include adult education providers, such as SDIs and local authority providers, it is widely considered prudent for these providers to be pro-active in this regard - new local models for adult education and skills will emerge beyond 2017-2018. Some respondents to the Call for Evidence reported that:

- Localism – the drive to get providers to work more collaboratively to use their funding in a more aligned way to meet local needs is gathering momentum.

Some brief examples of what is currently working well in adult education include:

- Good quality provision demonstrated by high achievement rates and positive Ofsted outcomes nationally for local authority providers and many further education (FE) colleges and Specialist Designated Institute (SDI) providers;
- Inter-generational learning is starting to grow, involving parents and grandparents learning alongside children;
- Partnership work with trade unions where workplace and community learning centres have been able to reach learners who face major barriers in accessing adult education and training;
- Community provision for adult education, such as University of the Third Age (U3A), which is filling gaps in other provision, local authorities, Further Education (FE) colleges, universities and Specialist Designated Institute (SDI) providers are also making significant contributions to outreach and community activities.

In the absence of adult education providers being involved systematically in all the reviews throughout England, there is real danger that provision for adult community learning could be easily overlooked – simply left to chance.

33. H M Government (2016) *Reviewing post-16 education and training institutions: Updated guidance on area reviews*, London, March 2016. Available from: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/520838/BIS-16-118-reviewing-post-16-education-and-training-institutions-updated-guidance-on-area-reviews.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/attachment_data/file/520838/BIS-16-118-reviewing-post-16-education-and-training-institutions-updated-guidance-on-area-reviews.pdf)



“ Constant changes to funding also contribute to the unsettled nature that can prevent some learners from engaging with adult learning. The outcomes of Area Reviews and Devolution are eagerly anticipated; however these could also have wide reaching implications for the sector which could be both opportunities and threats to adult learning. ”

(Call for Evidence)

**The voices of adult learners need to be heard so that planned provision is relevant and linked to their individual needs.**

“ We work in local communities with young mothers and new arrivals to the area to make sure they feel part of our local community. ESOL provision is in high demand. ”

(Town Hall participant)

“ In some Scandinavian countries greater attention is given to involving adults in service design and delivery – why do we not do more of this? ”

(Town Hall participant)

### **3.4. What’s working well?**

Feedback from learners (via survey responses and fieldwork visits) found that their adult education courses gave them opportunities for improving mental health and well-being, intercultural and community relations, family and parenting, physical health and new attitudes and behaviours derived from both informal and formal learning.

“ I had a motorbike crash and lost hope – coming here has changed my life. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ I couldn't write when I left school. I had no certificates. At last I'm waking up my brain and this should help me get a better job ”

(Adult Learner)

Some respondents indicated that many things are working well in the sector for adult learners. For example, the West Midlands Combined Authority and the Adult and Community Learning Alliance (ACLA) indicated:

“ The contribution of adult learning to improving health and well-being (which are prerequisites for progression into and within employment) is very significant and needs to be recognised in future devolution arrangements. Partnerships are strong, particularly to support unemployed adults with low skills and low/no qualifications into work. Strong partnerships with Public Health are essential for improved health and well-being for adults and their families. Achievement rates, wider outcomes and learner satisfaction rates are all high in Adult Learning and the Pounds Plus model works well in Community Learning to demonstrate added value. ”

**The Trade Union Congress (TUC) Unionlearn pointed out:**

“ The TUC welcomes the existing funding provision to level 2 literacy and numeracy and vocational level 2 progression and qualification for unemployed learners but the TUC is very concerned that many learners are left out because there is no funding for workplace ESOL or enough employer appetite to support their staff’s learning. ”

**Trade unions have been successful in engaging disadvantaged learners by building networks union learning reps (ULRs) to provide peer-learning support. The peer support and establishment of workplace learning centres and partnership work with employers have been instrumental in motivating adult learners to take up learning opportunities.**

**HOLEX<sup>34</sup> reported the sector is working well, for example:**

“ Providers and services leaders know what is needed in their community and how to meet it. As evidence by Ofsted and recent BIS studies into cost, the Adult Community Learner provider base is good and cost effective and, although there has been a reduction in national funding which has resulted in reduced overall adult participation, the services remain committed to their adult learners and still continue to educate and train over 700,000 students annually. ”

**The NCFE<sup>35</sup> indicated:**

“ The recent expansion in Advanced Learner Loans policy, and plans around maintenance loans for learners undertaking Technical and Professional Education are positive steps in encouraging more adult learners to undertake courses to increase their skills or earning potential!”

**The Workers’ Education Association (WEA) reported it welcomes:**

“ The introduction of the Adult Education Budget and the continuation of support for community and non-accredited learning, but they noted that the current SFA funding formula is complex and doesn’t always support the delivery of English and maths to harder to reach groups. ”

**Employers such as the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) reported:**

“ The Government’s commitment to maintain the Further Education budget in cash terms for the next 4 years gives certainty to training providers. This certainty should help to ensure that the increased focus on apprenticeships does not detract from other adult education provision, meaning apprenticeships are part of a diverse skills mix. ”

**Overall, it was reported that open access programmes of short courses, accredited and non-accredited, are providing excellent opportunities for adult learners. Preparatory and foundation level programmes, including blended learning and online provision, to develop skills and capabilities for progression to degree level study are highly effective in supporting adult returners.**

34. HOLEX represents a network of 120+ adult and community learning providers and is the sector membership body for Local Authority Community Learning (ACL) services, Specialist Designated Institutions (SDIs) and independent third sector providers.

35. NCFE is a national Awarding organisation. For further details visit: <https://www.ncfe.org.uk/>

### 3.5. What's not working well?

Many respondents highlighted the need for stability and joined-up approaches:

“ Constant change and instability in adult education provision is a hindrance in engaging disadvantaged learners. It is difficult to maintain partnerships when funding and policy goalsposts keep changing. Long-term government skills strategies and emphasis on engaging stakeholders, trade unions and provides as well as employers, are likely to reap benefits in providing learning opportunities to disadvantaged learners. ”

(Trade Union Congress)

“ It is made difficult for providers to operate when there is no national strategy and/or policy framework for adult education, the infrastructure keeps changing and resources are limited. There is a national adult education policy vacuum, which needs to be filled. It is essential that the Government takes the lead and determines a strategy for adult learning, employability and well-being that brings together the different departmental interests. To ensure effective implementation, the strategy needs to be underpinned by policy frameworks for key areas such as ESOL, basic skills and digital inclusion, clearly stating who is entitled and who pays. There also needs to be national recognition for adult learning, promoted through a new adult career and guidance service that builds on present initiatives. ”

(HOLEX)

Shrinking resources and uncertainty at both a national and regional/local level were identified as a real concern:

“ Lack of funding stability over past 5 years has not been helpful in ensuring continuity of service and a positive image for the sector. The Autumn Spending Review in November 2015 provided a welcomed opportunity to stabilise, but failed to take account of rising employer costs (including apprenticeship levy). ”

(West Midlands Combined Authority)

“ The Adult Community Learning (ACL) infrastructure is generally under resourced – strapped Local Authorities, no access to capital funding in past, no financial reserves to draw on, salaries low. ”

(Town Hall participant)

“ The implications of Brexit have yet to be fully understood – many community organisations benefit from European Social Funds – will replacement funds be available if and when needed for adult education community programmes? ”

(Telephone interview)

Evidence shows funding for adult education has slipped down the policy agenda of successive governments and therefore has not been seen as a high priority.

Now, after almost ten years of consistent cash cuts the adult education budget is fixed, in cash terms, for the next four years at £1.5 billion.<sup>36</sup>

### 3.6. Trends

Financial support is increasingly moving towards loan funding for adult education at level 3 and above. From 2016-17, the Skills Funding Agency will merge with the two strands of funding: (i) adult skills funding, which broadly supports accredited provision for adults; and (ii) community learning funding, which broadly supports non-accredited provision for adults and families into a single 'Adult Education Budget'.<sup>37</sup> Funding in 2016-17 for apprenticeships will be separate from the Adult Education Budget. The new single budget includes regulated and the more flexible non-regulated provision so that learners can, if required, get a foothold into learning before progressing to the next stage at a higher level which then must be accredited. Traineeships are also within this budget. The arrangements for provision aimed at the most disadvantaged who are more likely to benefit the most, have yet to be agreed at a local and regional level.

Across England, there are some worrying trends such as:

- Analysis of the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) of 2013-14 indicates that, compared to the 2012/2013 academic year, there has been a drop by 31 per cent in the volume of learners aged 24+ on courses eligible for 24+ Advanced Learning Loans funding (BIS, 2016)<sup>38</sup>;
- A high number of adults with low English and maths skills (OECD, 2016)<sup>39</sup>;
- An increasing demand for provision in ESOL with long, often unmanageably large waiting lists (AoC, 2015)<sup>40</sup>.

“ In England, an individual over the age of 25 and in possession of a level two qualification is not eligible for public assistance to update their skills or change occupation, even if they are experiencing working poverty. Their only option is to take out a learning loan, but the offer has not proved popular. The high course costs-even where concessions apply - is a big deterrent to attracting disadvantaged students. ”

(Joseph Rowntree Foundation)

“ Many of the most disadvantaged people need better access to adult learning. Participation rates in adult learning have been decreasing over the years, and participation from disadvantaged groups and those with no qualifications is lower than for other groups. ”

(Workers' Education Association)

In higher education, although improvements to widening participation and fair access continue, absolute disparities in higher education participation between advantaged and disadvantaged areas remain large. These differences remain even when prior attainment and ethnic background are taken into account, suggesting that there might be other barriers to higher education progression, beyond GCSE attainment and ethnic profile (Hefce, 2015)<sup>41</sup>. Professor Les Ebdon CBE, Director of Fair Access to Higher Education responded to the Call for Evidence by highlighting:

37. Skills Funding Agency (2016) *Adult education budget funding and performance management rules Version 3 Document reference: E For the 2016 to 2017 funding year (1 August 2016 to 31 July 2017)*. Coventry. Available from: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/534080/Adult\\_education\\_budget\\_funding\\_and\\_performance\\_management\\_rules\\_2016\\_to\\_2017\\_V3.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/534080/Adult_education_budget_funding_and_performance_management_rules_2016_to_2017_V3.pdf)

38. BIS (2016) *Evaluation of 24+ Advanced Learning Loans: An Assessment of the First Year*, May 2016, London, p.16. Available from: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/522875/BIS-16-22-evaluation-of-24\\_-advanced-learning-loans-an-assessment-of-the-first-year.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/522875/BIS-16-22-evaluation-of-24_-advanced-learning-loans-an-assessment-of-the-first-year.pdf)

39. OECD (2016) *Building Skills for All: A Review of England – Policy Insight from the Survey of Adult Skills*, Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Economic Development. Note: The OECD concluded that low attainment in basic skills was “profoundly implicated in challenges of equity and social exclusion”.

40. AoC (2015) *The experience of colleges using new ESOL QCF Skills for Life Qualifications*, London, p.14. Available from: <https://www.aoc.co.uk/sites/default/files/The%20experience%20of%20colleges%20using%20new%20ESOL%20QCF%20Skills%20for%20life%20qualifications.pdf>

41. Higher Education Funding Council (2015) *Higher Education in England 2015 Key Facts*, London, July 2015.2015/15. p.3. Available from: [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/HEFCE,2014/Content/Analysis/HE,in,England/HE\\_in\\_England\\_2015.pdf](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/HEFCE,2014/Content/Analysis/HE,in,England/HE_in_England_2015.pdf)

“There has been a deeply concerning reduction in part-time and mature student numbers. There were just over half the number (52 per cent) of mature entrants in 2014-15 compared with 2009-10 levels.

Mature learners are twice as likely to drop out in their first year of study, compared with young entrants. It is therefore vital for universities and colleges to consider what more they can do to attract and support mature learners.

They also experience challenges accessing relevant information, advice and guidance (IAG) about entering higher education. Policy developments that can help to secure the future of adult learning include: revising the fee and support regulations to encourage flexible modular provision, and encouraging credit accumulation and transfer between recognised awarding institutions.”

Evidence also shows a decline of much of the broader programmes of adult education, notably local authority and University extra-mural departments, for example, during this research we learned the University of Leicester had announced that they were undertaking a consultation with the intention of closing the long-standing Vaughan Centre for Lifelong Learning.<sup>42</sup>

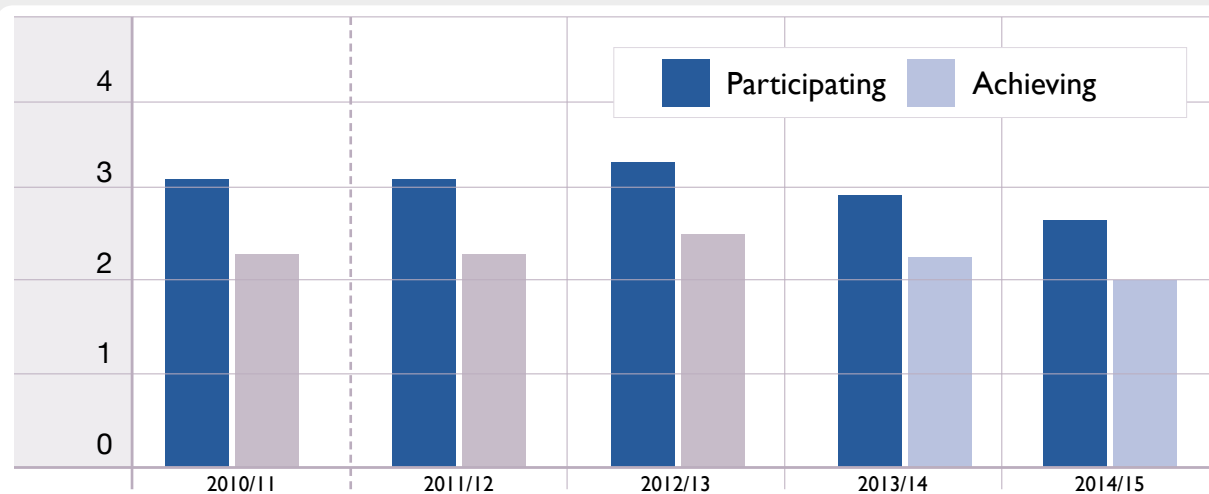
Dr Tony Ellis, Chair of the UALL England<sup>43</sup> (Strategy Group) and Director, Lifelong Learning Centre, University of Leeds in his response indicated:

“There is significant provision of adult learning in higher education, including work that is focussed on widening participation. Numbers of part-time entrants to HE have fallen sharply in recent years and continue to drop. Full-time mature entrants have fallen less steeply and began to increase from 2013/14.”

(UALL and LLC, University of Leeds)

Recent trends below indicate signs of downward adult learner participation in Government-funded Further Education and achievement rates, including English and maths.

**Figure 3.1** Adult (19+) Learner Participation in Government-funded Further Education by Level 2

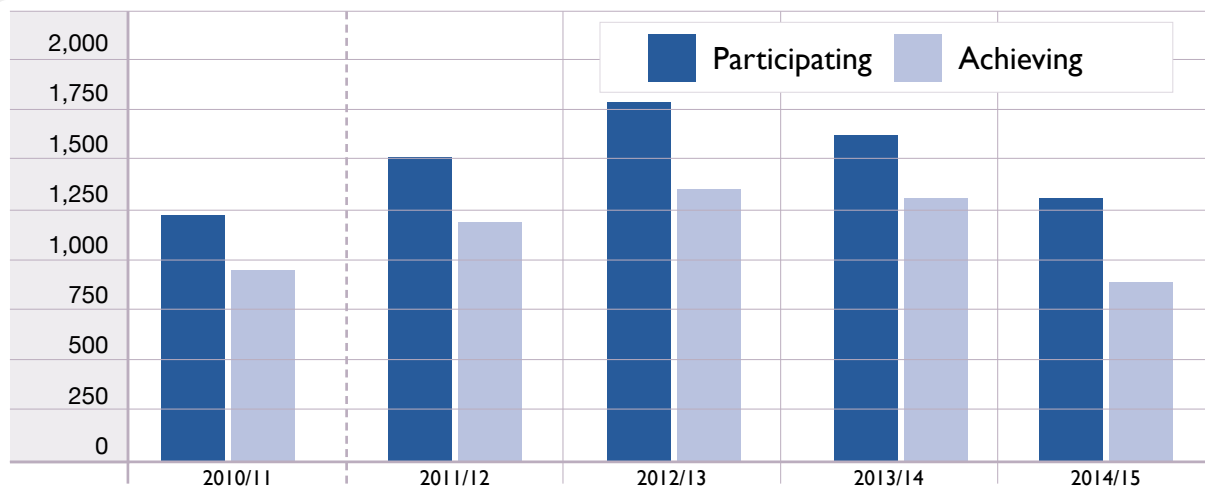


Source: Skills Funding Agency & Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (2016) Statistical First Release, SFA/SFR34, June 2016

42. For more details visit: <https://www2.le.ac.uk/institution/unions/ucu/news/round-up-of-opposition-to-the-proposed-closure-of-vaughan-centre>  
 43. The Universities Association for Lifelong Learning (UALL) is a professional association for the lifelong learning community within higher education.

Figure 3.1 shows that the total number of adult learners participating in government-funded further education in 2014/15 was 2,613,700, a decrease of 10.8 per cent on 2013/14. The total number of adult learners achieving a government-funded further education qualification was 1,983,200 in 2014/15, a decrease of 12.4 per cent on 2013/14.

**Figure 3.2** Adult Learner (19+) Participation and Achievement in Education and Training

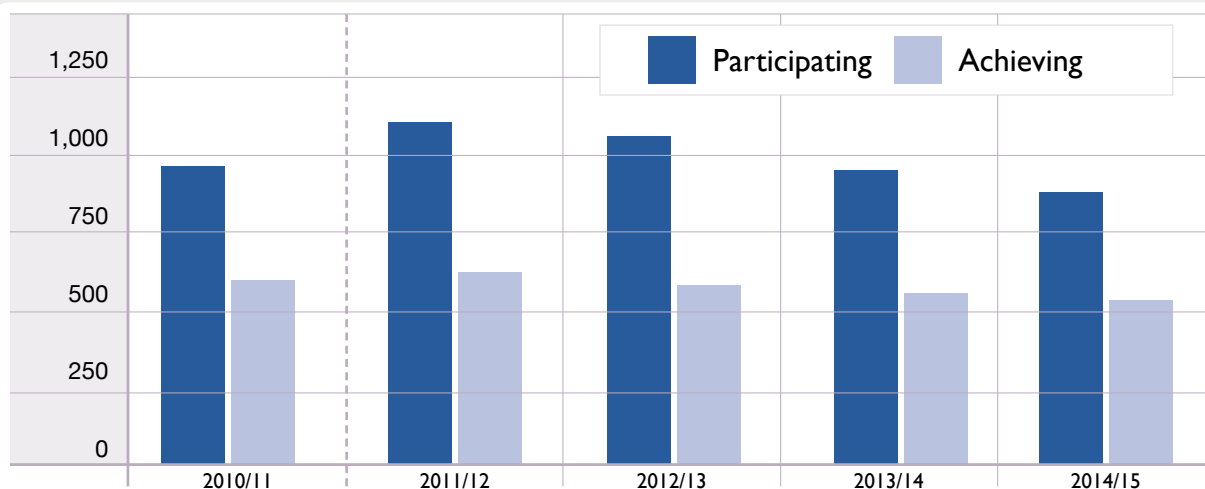


Source: Skills Funding Agency & Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (2016) Statistical First Release, SFA/SFR34, June 2016.

Figure 3.2 shows that the number of adult learners participating in government-funded Education and Training in 2014/15 was 1,355,000, a decrease of 15.5 per cent on 2013/14. The total number of adult learners achieving a government-funded further education qualification was 1,114,600 in 2014/15, a decrease of 16.6 per cent on 2013/14

The number of learners participating in an English course fell by 5.5 per cent between 2013/14 and 2014/15 to 668,600; the number of learners participating in a maths course fell by 6.6 per cent to 623,900 and numbers participating in an ESOL course fell by 5.8 per cent to 131,100.

**Figure 3.3** Adult Learner (19+) Participation and Achievement on English and Maths Courses



Source: Skills Funding Agency & Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (2016) Statistical First Release, SFA/SFR34, June 2016.

Figure 3.3 shows that adult learner participation on English and maths courses rose between 2010/11 and 2011/12, but has since fallen from 1,083,000 in 2011/12 to 905,600 in 2014/15.

The number of learners participating on an English course fell by 5.5 per cent between 2013/14 and 2014/15 to 668,600; the number of learners participating on a maths course fell by 6.6 per cent to 623,900 and numbers participating on an ESOL course fell by 5.8 per cent to 131,100.

“ Valuable vocational courses such as Health and Social Care at level 2 have been withdrawn e.g. by Leeds City College in the adult education centres due to limited funding. This makes it more difficult for adults to gain the necessary qualifications that are in demand in the local economy. Funding is needed for valuable vocational courses for adults who are motivated to learn and progress. ”

(Adult Education Provider)

### 3.7. Economic and social costs

There are economic and social costs to not providing basic skills and significant gains in providing them. Field (2015)<sup>44</sup> highlights:

“ We have, in recent years, seen a remarkable expansion in serious research attention to lifelong learning and its benefits. Economic factors such as income and employment play an important part in lifelong learning. They can provide people with reasons for joining learning programmes, as well as featuring in policy decisions on financing provision. The direct economic effects of lifelong learning potentially include impacts on earnings, on employability, and on the wider economy. And since higher incomes or steady employment tend to have further effects on health, well-being and sociability, it also follows that the economic effects of learning have indirect outcomes. ”

Some selected examples include:

- A Canadian study showed that among adult workers who participated in education, there were clear wage effects for those who received a certificate, but minimal returns for those who did not (Zhang and Palameta 2006).<sup>45</sup>
- A British study showed that women who were inactive in the labour market and then obtained qualifications as adults were much more likely to find paid employment (Jenkins 2006).<sup>46</sup>
- Another study showed a marked impact of education on moving out of non-employment into employment for women and men, along with a smaller impact on the tendency to remain within the workforce for women (Jenkins, Vignoles, Wolf and Galindo-Rueda, 2003).<sup>47</sup>

44. Field, J. (2012) Is lifelong learning making a difference? Research-based evidence on the impact of adult learning, In Aspin, D., Chapman, J., Evans, K., and Bagnall, R. (eds.) *Second International Handbook of Lifelong Learning*, Springer, Dordrecht, 2012.

45. Zhang, X. and Palameta, B. (2006) *Participation in Adult Schooling and its Earnings Impact in Canada*, Ottawa: Statistics Canada

46. Jenkins, A. (2006) Women, lifelong learning and transitions into employment, *Work, Employment & Society*, 20, 2, pp.309-28

47. Jenkins, A., Vignoles, A., Wolf, A. and Galindo-Rueda, A. (2003) The Determinants and Labour Market Effects of Lifelong Learning, *Applied Economics*, 35, pp. 1711-21.

- A study in 2010 examined the combined effects of learning on earnings and employability. The authors argue that previous studies have tended to examine each in isolation. Their work, based on longitudinal labour force data, shows evidence of an employability effect; people who learn are more likely to be in work, especially if they have been out of the labour market for some time. When taken together with wage effects, the employability benefits help produce quite significant increases in overall earnings (Dorsett, Liu and Weale 2010).<sup>48</sup>

It is important to bear in mind that any attempt to measure impact is inevitably reductive. Any educational activity such as adult education leads to a range of impacts, many of which are difficult to predict or measure. However, from an adult learner perspective:

“Adult learning has a direct impact on cost savings [...] especially social services and those funding mental and physical health. I would have been on anti-depressants if I didn't come here for the writing group. It has given me a sense of belonging and purpose.”

(Adult Learner)

There is very little research on the monetary value of adult education and almost certainly nothing on the value of the impact of adult education on different domains in life. A recent BIS report (2016)<sup>49</sup> notes available evidence on employment and earnings returns to Community Learning is sparse. Some European studies<sup>50</sup> highlight both the economic and social returns on investment. A few examples of added-value savings identified from the literature review include:

- Adults participating in a part-time course leads to: improvements in health, which has a value of £148 to the individual; a greater likelihood of finding a job and/or staying in a job, which has a value of £231 to the individual; better social relationships, which has a value of £658 to the individual; and a greater likelihood that people volunteer on a regular basis, which has a value of £130 to the individual. (Fujiwara, 2012)<sup>51</sup>
- Using a well-being valuation method, researchers' estimate that the value of undertaking a part-time course has a positive effect on people's life satisfaction which is equivalent to £1,584 per year. The corresponding value of one part-time course is £754.37.<sup>52</sup>
- In the 2011 census, more than a third (37.6 per cent) of those who were economically inactive with no qualifications were long-term sick or disabled. While it's hard to pin down the nature of the link, US research shows people with better levels of education have lower levels of chronic health conditions.<sup>53</sup>

48. Dorsett, R., Liu, S., and Weale, M. (2010) Economic benefits of lifelong learning. London: National Institute of Economic and Social Research.

49. BIS (2016) *Mapping investment in adult skills – which individuals, in what learning and with what returns?* Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, London. Available from: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/523037/bis-16-47-mapping-skills-investment.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/523037/bis-16-47-mapping-skills-investment.pdf)

50. European Association for The Education of Adults (2015) *Adult Education in Europe: A Civil Society View*. Brussels. Available from: [http://www.eaea.org/media/policy-advocacy/adult-education-policy-in-europe-country-reports/country-reports\\_2015.pdf](http://www.eaea.org/media/policy-advocacy/adult-education-policy-in-europe-country-reports/country-reports_2015.pdf)

51. Fujiwara (2012) draws on the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS). On average people who undertake part-time learning take two courses per year and therefore the researchers divide the annual values by two to get a per-course unit of value. Available from: <http://www.learningandwork.org.uk/content/valuing-impact-adult-learning>

52. Dolan et al (2012) *Valuing Adult Learning: Comparing Wellbeing Valuation and Contingent Valuation*, London. Available from: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/34598/12-1127-valuing-adult-learning-comparing-wellbeing-to-contingent.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/34598/12-1127-valuing-adult-learning-comparing-wellbeing-to-contingent.pdf)

53. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2012) *Health United States 2011*, USA. Available from: [http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2012/p0516\\_higher\\_education.html](http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2012/p0516_higher_education.html)



- Family learning and supporting parents with their children’s education increases the overall level of children’s development by as much as “15 percentage points for those from disadvantaged groups [...] It embeds changes in attitudes, behaviour, understanding and skills in the family. Evidence from the USA shows that for every \$1 spent on family learning there is a \$12 return.”<sup>54</sup>

Most studies of the economic effects of adult learning are broadly in line with what human capital theories might lead us to expect. That is, those who invest in new skills tend to reap a return in higher wages.

“ Skills are the number one business priority.They’re crucial for raising our productivity and staying globally competitive.”

(Caroline Fairbairn, Director General, Confederation of British Industry)

“ Having a clear focus on apprenticeships is absolutely necessary for economic wellbeing to help boost business and improve opportunities for young people and adults, but we also need to make sure the wider aspects of adult education are not overlooked – we need both.”

(Scott Knowles, East Midlands Chamber of Commerce)

Some respondents expressed their concerns:

“ With the changes in funding providers are increasingly concentrating on apprenticeships and this is having a detrimental impact on adults that need to access vital courses and qualifications (e.g. English and maths qualifications). ”

(Town Hall participant)

Findings from the research Call for Evidence, Town Hall meetings and interviews with senior leaders, indicate there is a stated danger that national policy for adult education could disappear by 2020. The negative consequences of this for individuals’ well-being and active citizenship are apparent. Also, after the vote to leave the European Union (EU), there is now even greater expectations for British citizens to fill skills gaps, skills shortages and job vacancies in the labour market. Overall, more will need to be done across England to upskill, reskill and support adult learners in their life and work experiences over time.

### 3.8. Unique characteristics of adult education

“ Only the providers who invest time and resources in reaching out to their communities and building trusted partnerships can be truly effective in providing a first step to re-engagement in learning. Adult learning is critical to helping many people turn their lives around.”

(Dr Sue Pember OBE, Director of Policy, HOLEX)<sup>55</sup>

The unique characteristic of many adult education providers (though not all) is that they prioritise taking adult education out to the community and in doing so, are particularly successful at engaging those who benefit from this the most. They do this because they:

54. TBaroness Howarth of Breckland, OBE (2013) *Family Learning Works: The Inquiry into Family Learning in England and Wales* – see also: J. J. Heckman et al. (2010) ‘The rate of return to the High Scope Perry Preschool Program’, *Journal of Public Economics*, Elsevier.

55. The HOLEX network of Community Learning and Skills providers draws its membership from local authority services, specialist designated institutions and voluntary, community and social enterprise organisation

- use sub-contractors with local / specialist expertise e.g. voluntary service organisations working on specific housing estates or with specific disadvantaged groups;
- use local venues for learning (libraries, community centres, children’s centres, hostels);
- have detailed demographic information regarding local wards and local learning needs;
- have good links with local elected members, including Health and Wellbeing Board members;
- use ‘Pound Plus’ approaches to add value to the public purse;
- have close links with key local services, e.g. Job Centre Plus, mental/physical health services, social housing, Troubled Families, and/or community development teams.

“ I live mostly in a “white” village and I’m beginning to make friends with learners from other cultures that I would not normally meet. At first I was worried about talking to Bangladeshi students, in case I said anything to upset them. ”

(Adult Learner)

The literature review findings gave strong insight to specific areas of adult education and how these make a positive impact. These headlines below may be valuable for local Skills Commissioners to utilise as part of their strategic dialogue on opportunities and gaps in local provision. Key components of adult education and its positive impact include:

**Active citizenship, democracy and participation:** People who participate in adult education have more trust in the political system, participate more in society, by voting, by volunteering or taking active roles in communities.

**Life skills for individuals:** Adult learners feel healthier, lead healthier lifestyles, build new social networks and experience improved well-being.

**Social cohesion, equity and equality:** Adult education provides many opportunities to equalise societies on a larger scale and to create fairer societies as well as more economic growth.

**Employment and digitalization:** Workplace learning is one of the key drivers for adults’ participation in lifelong learning. At the cusp of enormous digital changes, adult education can help in closing the digital gap.

**Migration and demographic change:** Civic education and intercultural learning can create integration-friendly cultures. Language and basic skills training will enable migrants to become active citizens in their new home countries. Learning seniors are more active, volunteer more, work longer and are healthier.

**Sustainability:** From environmentally friendly consumption and transport to energy efficiency, citizens need a lot of information and innovative spaces to develop new lifestyles, new projects, and new approaches. Adult education can help provide the information, the debate spaces and the creativity

*Source:* Adapted extract taken from the European Association for the Education of Adults (Manifesto for Adult Learning in the 21st century), Brussels, December 2015.

### 3.9. Preparing learners for a successful life in Britain

Ofsted inspection handbook for further education and skills requires that inspectors examine how well providers prepare learners for a successful life in modern Britain and promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different backgrounds, faiths and beliefs. Inspectors found that staff at Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council received regular and well-targeted training to widen their understanding of new topics, such as the promotion of British values in the curriculum.<sup>56</sup>

A new 'Citizen Skills Entitlement' for adults, proposed by the Learning and Work Institute, merits further consideration by policymakers and practitioners.<sup>57</sup> Building on this, the idea of an education savings account for adults recently mooted by a Specialist Designated Institute (SDI) for adults to draw upon through the course of their lives, as and when necessary, is also worthy of further exploration. For example:

“ An Education Savings Account (ESA) would enable individuals to save for their future education and skills needs to meet the changing requirements of the labour market. This could also encourage and attract employer contributions, particularly if government were to allow tax relief on employer contributions. In a practical way this would create longer-term and more stable funding streams to support vital investment to improve productivity and economic growth. ”

(Ruth Spellman, CEO & General Secretary, Workers' Educational Association)

Life design models such as those found in Australia, Canada and New Zealand can also provide stimuli material for further discussion. For example:

- The Australian Blueprint for Career Development is a framework for designing, implementing and evaluating career development programmes for adults (and young people) Visit: <https://cica.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Australian-Blueprint-for-Career-Development.pdf>
- The Blueprint is Canada's national learning outcome framework of the competencies (skills, knowledge and attitudes) citizens of all ages need to improve lifelong to prosper in career and life in the 21st century. It has its origins in the U.S. National Career Development Guidelines. Visit: <http://www.lifework.ca/lifework/blueprint.html>
- Healthy Families New Zealand aims to improve people's health where they live, learn, work and play in order to prevent chronic disease. Visit: <http://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/preventative-health-wellness/healthy-families-nz>

Most importantly, profiling the current life design work delivered by SDIs will demonstrate to new local Commissioners and local strategic partnerships. There is also an opportunity to review progress being made with Individualised Learner Records (ILRs) to assess the take up rates at a regional or sub-regional level.

These ideas should act as a trigger for meaningful policy dialogue about the role of lifelong learning - for example, there is a new Skills Agenda for Europe and a move towards a recently proposed. Whichever model is taken forward, this requires an agency with integrity and credibility to ensure the right checks and balances are put in place, for those who need this most. (Skills Guarantee (June 2016)).<sup>58</sup>

56. Available from: <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/53722>

57. Learning and Work Institute (2016) *Citizen Skills Entitlement for Adults*, Leicester. Available from: <https://www.learningandwork.org.uk/our-work/life-and-society/citizens-curriculum>

58. [http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/2016/0610-education-skills-factsheet\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/2016/0610-education-skills-factsheet_en.htm)

With their new commissioning role, Combined Authorities, Local Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships' (LEPs) are likely to have planning strategies that focus on employability skills and employers' needs. However, these strategies would benefit greatly from closer scrutiny on the importance of engaging more adults (and families) in learning i.e. finding ways to connect with non-participants in education and training to help prepare them for work-readiness and/or active citizenship.

Whilst adults (particularly older learners over 65 years) may not be an immediate priority for the LEPs, it is clear that local (and national) partnerships that co-invest in adult education are likely to see significant returns on investment and productivity over time. Recent work undertaken by Bimrose et al. (2015)<sup>59</sup> on women's career development throughout the lifespan: an international perspective provides strong insight to inter-sections of social disadvantage sometimes identified as a single social variable when in reality it is often multi-dimensional disadvantage that needs to be addressed. The works examine the career stories of older women (age 45 – 65) and the implications for policy, research and practice. From a geographical perspective, a lack of access to private transport and/or the difficulties posed by the cost of public transport in rural areas presents major challenges for low income adults. In many cases, a lack of confidence or exposure to networks or opportunities strongly militates against adult learner participation.



## 4. Adult learner participation or non-participation

“I was lucky to have a friend who knew about this college. It should not be left to luck!”

(Adult Learner)

In this section, we capture the voices of adults participating in learning and those who are currently not engaged in formal adult education to illustrate their motivations, the barriers they face and ways in which they overcome barriers to learning.

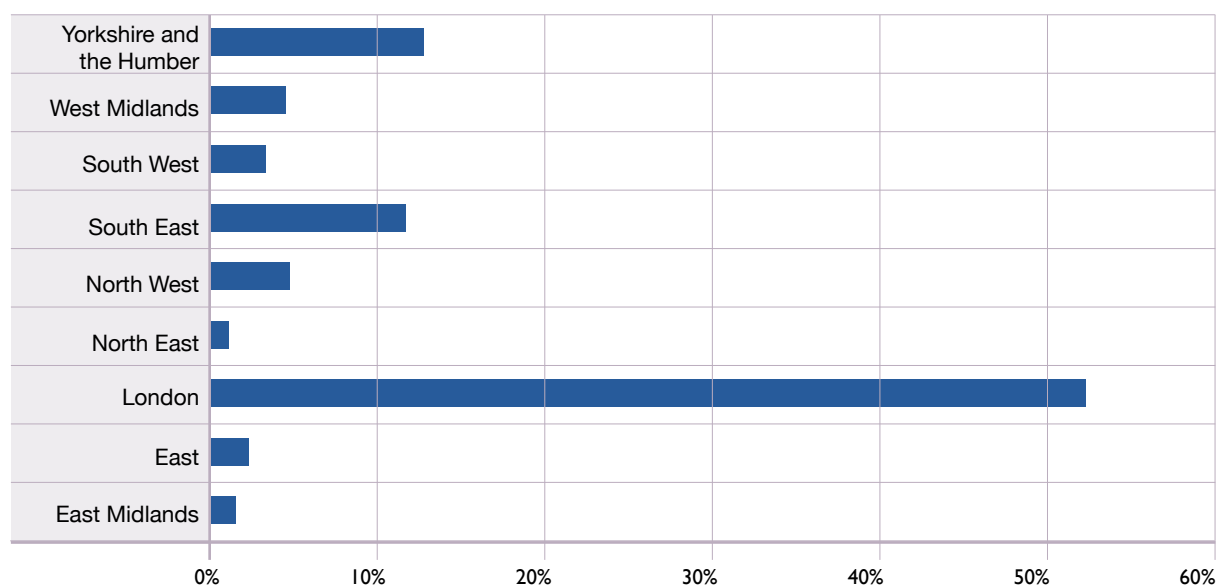
### Key findings

- The voices of adult learners need to be heard and used more to ensure that national and/or local provision is relevant and linked to individual needs.
- Age discrimination and other inequalities could be a significant barrier to extending the working age of the population and must be tackled.
- Lessons need to be learned on how to reduce barriers to engaging in adult learning and ways to overcome these.
- The benefits of adult learning need to be promoted better. What adult learning can offer and the benefits need to be promoted to potential learners and disseminated to policy makers better.

In total, 543 respondents completed the online survey. The main results are presented in a separate report – available from [http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/adult\\_education/adult\\_education\\_too\\_important\\_to\\_be\\_left\\_to\\_chance\\_survey\\_report.pdf](http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/adult_education/adult_education_too_important_to_be_left_to_chance_survey_report.pdf). The majority of survey respondents (65 per cent) were qualified at Level 6 or above, engaged regularly with learning (98 per cent) and, over the last three years, had attended between 1 and 5 adult education courses (73 per cent). A total of 169 adult learners currently or previously attending programmes were interviewed in focus groups on the premises of six SDI providers (Mary Ward, London; Morley College; Northern College, Barnsley; WEA, Scunthorpe; Fircroft College, Birmingham; WEA, Liverpool). The aim was to capture the voices of those who may not have completed the online survey due to access issues. Where possible, it was ensured that the learners interviewed represented the full range of backgrounds, development needs and learning goals at each of the providers, including learners from disadvantaged groups. They were drawn from both urban and rural areas and where possible, men and women were represented equally. The fieldwork also included interviews with 39 adults in London and Sheffield not currently in formal adult learning, but who were attending a private provider for a programme of support for people who are unemployed.

From the survey results, around half of all respondents lived in London (52 per cent), 16 per cent in Yorkshire and the Humber, 13 per cent in the South East and small numbers across other English regions. Two respondents lived in the devolved nations. Figure 4.1 below shows the geographic profile of respondents.

**Table 4.1** Geographic profile of respondents (n=543)



Fieldwork participants were drawn from London, Yorkshire & Humber, West Midlands and the North West regions.

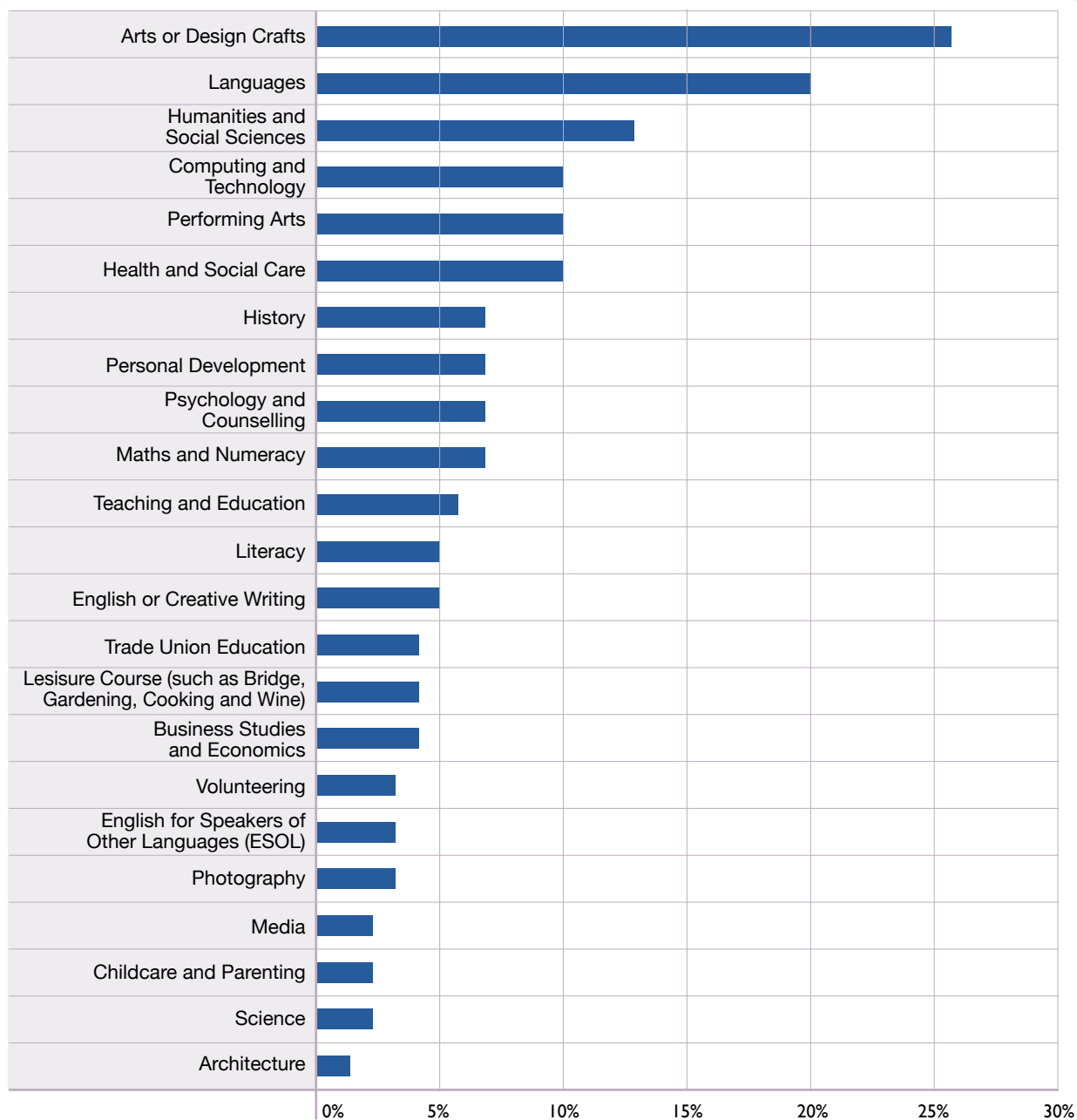
The current situation or status of the survey respondents shows many reporting different status. The majority of respondents are employed full-time (31 per cent) or retired/semi-retired (28 per cent). Table 4.1, below, shows the current situation or status of all respondents.

**Figure 4.1** Current situation/status of all respondents (n=543)

Current situation/status	Number of responses	Percentage
Full time employed	168	31%
Retired/Semi-retired	150	28%
Volunteer/charity work	67	12%
Part time permanent	52	10%
Self-employed	47	9%
Unemployed and seeking work	39	7%
Unemployed not seeking work due to health	33	6%
Full or part time education or training	32	6%
Part time temporary	22	4%
Full time temporary	14	3%
Unemployed and not seeking work (due to personal circumstances, in a caring role, personal choice)	11	2%

Fieldwork participants were drawn from the full range employment status and backgrounds: from people not working, on benefits, to part-time/full-time employed, self-employed and retired.

**Figure 4.2** Types of course(s) undertaken by survey respondents (n=484)



In addition to the types of courses mentioned above, fieldwork participants attending adult education were engaged on a wide range of courses such as: maths; English; sewing; quilting; using computers; computer maintenance; multi-media editing; experiencing classical music; gaining self-confidence; creative writing; line drawing; drawing and painting in different media; counselling; French; Hindi; Italian; archaeology; sculpturing; sociology; social science; peer mentoring; Access to HE in humanities, social sciences, midwifery or nursing.

**Figure 4.3** Type of course undertaken by region (n=484)



The backgrounds of students engaged in adult learning from the fieldwork visits included:

- Older students were mostly attending to develop an interest and meet people, many also said that this was helping combat loneliness, depression, mental health – most were able to pay. Most of the older learners felt that the courses had given them a purpose and had kept them active.
- Most of the short residential courses and some of the day courses attracted people with a history of drug and alcohol dependency, mental health issues, domestic issues and disabilities.
- Courses in social sciences, peer mentoring, computing skills and other technology attracted people who had been made redundant, injured at work, developed long-term illnesses and wanted or needed a new direction.
- Access to HE courses, either generic courses in humanities or social sciences or more specific courses in midwifery or nursing, gave adults a chance for a new career in an adult learning environment.



- English and maths provision, mostly at a lower level, was attended either by people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who were gaining greater independence or those who wanted to catch up after failing to succeed in these subjects at school.
- Learners attending ESOL provision were either referred by the jobcentres to develop their English language skills or to increase their employability. Some adults had joined (and often paid for themselves) in order to help their children be more independent in their everyday lives, and eventually gain employment.
- Those who were retired wanted the discipline of the subject such as creative writing, sewing, quilting, sculpturing or to keep an interest going, such as archaeology. They also typically wanted to gain confidence by meeting people and have something to focus on and make the most of the time they now had to do things they couldn't do when they were younger. More specific examples include, 'I joined because I wanted to':

“ Improve the quality of my life. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ Open up new segments of my life. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ Learn to use clay to express myself and improve my dexterity (has MS and could no longer hold a pen) ”

(Adult Learner)

“ Have a purpose when I was at a low ebb ”

(Adult Learner)

“ Get help with dexterity after a brain injury ”

(Adult Learner)

“ Get out of the house - a break from caring for my husband ”

(Adult Learner)

“ Re-engage after an injury ”

(Adult Learner)

- Those in work had specific reasons for joining:

“ got bullied at work and needed to get on track so I decided to improve my literacy and maths skills ”

(Adult Learner)

“ I'm working with vulnerable adults and joined the counselling at level 3 course because I needed more in-depth work ”

(Adult Learner)

“ I couldn't write when I left school. I had no certificates. At last I am waking up my brain and this should help me get a better job ”

(Adult Learner).

## 4.1. Motivation<sup>60</sup>

The importance of developing resilience is already acknowledged in European policy, but the key is how to develop practical measures which will help individuals overcome setbacks, engage in continuous learning and, if necessary, adopt new identities, which in some cases almost amounts to individual reinvention (Field, 2010)<sup>61</sup>. Support for the development of certain coping strategies, including emotional capacities, to overcome structural and/or dispositional barriers (Bimrose et al., 2008<sup>62</sup>; Cardoso and Moreira, 2009<sup>63</sup>; Fuller and Unwin, 2006)<sup>64</sup> is important in this respect. Adult education supports individuals to consider their return to education, enhance their skills and employability, and utilise their skills effectively in the labour market. Researchers suggest there are at least six key factors influencing participation in adult learning:

- Social relationships: make friends and meet others;
- External expectations: complying with the wishes of someone else with authority;
- Social welfare: desire to serve others and/or community;
- Professional advancement: striving for job enhancement or professional advancement;
- Escape/stimulation: alleviate boredom, escape home or work routine;
- Cognitive interest: learning for the sake of learning itself.

There are many beneficiaries of such adult education, including individuals, their families and communities, and the organisations where they study and work, as well as society as a whole. As set out in ‘Changing Lives’ (WEA, 2015)<sup>65</sup> adult education impacts upon individuals’ educational; economic and employment; and/or social outcomes in many different ways, The benefits to individuals can be far reaching, impacting positively on their health and wellbeing, as well as improving their chances of sustained employment.

The focus groups with learners revealed that there was often a strong personal history behind their reasons for joining an adult education course. This was sometimes: a dramatic change in circumstances through, for example, illness, injury, redundancy or grief; a determination to escape from personal conflicts, be they an addiction or difficult circumstances at home; or a personal determination to achieve personal goals, including entrepreneurial activities and/or to continue to be active in their retirement. Some adults involved in the fieldwork stated:

“ I wanted to re-engage after my injury.”

(Adult Learner)

“ I was a stay-at-home Mum and wanted to do something for myself. I was getting depression. I started with literacy and I've done 6 short courses and now I'm doing peer mentoring. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ I'm future proofing. Who knows what will happen to me. I want to be independent as long as possible – shopping and booking services online may not be just nice things to have [...]. ”

(Adult Learner)

60. It is known that quite a few people start adult learning courses, but then drop out. It is of course not possible to talk to these people, so the question to current learners is ‘what has kept you on your course, or enabled you to complete previous courses?’

61. Field, J. (2010). Preface. In: Ecclestone, K. et al. (eds). *Transitions and learning through the life- course*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. xviii-xxiv.

62. Bimrose, J. et al. (2008). *Adult career progression and advancement: a five-year study of the effectiveness of guidance*. Coventry: Warwick Institute for Employment Research

63. Cardoso, P. and Moreira, J.M. (2009). Self-efficacy beliefs and the relation between career planning and perception of barriers. *International journal of educational and vocational guidance*, Vol. 9, No 3, pp. 177-188.

64. Fuller, A. and Unwin, L. (2006). Expansive and restrictive learning environments. In: Evans, K. et al. (eds). *Improving workplace learning*. London: Routledge, pp. 27-48.

65. WEA (2015) *WEA Adult Education, Changing Lives: Impact Research Report*, 2015, London: Workers' Educational Association. Available from: <http://www.wea.org.uk/download.aspx?id=3509>

“ This short course on digital technology will help me grow my small media business. It has been a life-line. The equipment seems excellent and the tutor has very good expertise and explains the techniques very well. ”

(Adult Learner)

The 39 people either on the work programme or referred to the provider by Jobcentre Plus to work on their Curriculum Vitae (CV) were familiar with colleges and training providers, but not Adult Community Learning providers. None had a written job or career plan. Nearly all were looking for low level work, mostly because that was all that they deemed available to them. Those over 50 were very concerned that they were unlikely to find work because of the attitudes of employers.

In the adult survey, when asked their reasons for taking part in an adult learning course, respondents provided a range of reasons, but an overwhelming proportion reported that it had been for their own personal development (75 per cent).

**Table 4.2** Reasons for taking part in an adult education course (n=531)

Reasons for taking part in course	Number of Responses	Percentage
Own personal development	408	75%
Own enjoyment	163	30%
Improve my health and wellbeing	162	30%
Improve job prospects	150	28%
Meet new people	144	27%
Improve qualifications generally	138	25%
Active contribution to society	92	17%
Change in personal or family circumstances	78	14%
Meet people wouldn't normally mix with	76	14%
Study close to home	66	12%
Reduce loneliness and isolation	57	10%
Take part in community activities	56	10%
Assist in recovery	44	8%
Get onto further education course	42	8%
Support children's or grandchild's learning	40	7%
Get into higher education	38	7%
Equip from discrimination	17	3%
ESOL, Improve basic skills	16	3%
Get into apprenticeship	6	1%
Other	4	1%

## 4.2. Barriers

A significant proportion of respondents face barriers to starting and/or completing an adult education course. The survey findings highlighted this can be about finances and low confidence and/or self-esteem. Regional differences are evident; in the East of England lack of transport was a barrier; and a lack of housing in the North East, and Yorkshire and the Humber was a barrier.

It is clear that attending a course has a positive impact on improving: knowledge and skills for personal goals (84 per cent); motivations to keep learning (71 per cent); being able to make well informed decisions about next steps (58 per cent); and confidence in dealing with new situations (51 per cent). Around half of respondents thought that hearing from others who had already done the course would attract others to take up learning (51 per cent). More government financial investment (40 per cent) and more adult education opportunities were also suggested.

Survey respondents were also asked about the barriers that they might have experienced making it difficult to start and/or complete an adult education course. Fifty per cent of respondents reported no barriers – this is hardly surprising given the majority were already enrolled on an adult learning programme(s). Whilst others reported a wide range of barriers. Finance was the most significant barrier reported (27 per cent), with low confidence and/or self-esteem reported next (14 per cent). Table 4.4, below, lists further barriers. Respondents also cited barriers in addition to those listed. A significant barrier was the timing of courses; some with a disability were unable to travel early in the morning, for others the timing did not fit with working full-time or fit with personal circumstances with working full-time or fit with personal circumstances. Other barriers reported included: courses not running or closing after one term; tutors being unavailable for the course; and the lack of subject options.

Across all regions, financial problems were the most reported barrier to starting or completing an adult education course. Other barriers noted of significance by region, include:

- The East of England was the only region where lack of transport was cited as a barrier;
- Lack of housing was only reported as a barrier in the North East, and Yorkshire and the Humber;
- Cultural or linguistic barriers were only reported as a barrier in London, the West Midlands, and Yorkshire and the Humber; and
- Time pressures were only reported in the South West, the South East and London.

Table 4.3, below, shows reported barriers by region with colour coding to represent the intensity of reporting; red reports high proportions and green low proportions.

**Table 4.3** Barriers that make it difficult to start and/or complete a course by region (n=543)

Barrier	East Midlands	East of England	London	North East	North East	South East	South West	West Midlands	Yorkshire & The Humber
No barriers	19%	8%	43%	34%	23%	46%	18%	10%	16%
Financial barriers	12%	21%	19%	8%	23%	14%	25%	11%	15%
Low confidence or self esteem	4%	4%	7%	15%	9%	6%	4%	16%	12%
Mental health issues	4%	8%	3%	15%		3%	7%	8%	11%
Personal health issues	15%	17%	5%	8%	3%	1%		5%	5%
Caring commitments	8%	4%	5%	8%	9%	3%	11%	5%	5%
Age	8%	8%	4%	8%		2%	0%	9%	7%
Put off education at school	4%	4%	1%		11%	5%	7%	13%	8%
Lack of study skills	8%		2%	8%	9%	3%	7%	9%	5%
Few opportunities to progress in work	4%	4%	4%		11%	1%	7%	6%	3%
Lack of transport	8%	17%	2%			3%	7%	1%	6%
Fitting around work	4%		2%			5%	4%	1%	2%
Discrimination	4%		2%			1%		4%	3%
Time pressure			1%			3%	4%		
Cultural or linguistic barriers			1%					1%	1%
Lack of housing			1%						1%
Other		4%	1%		3%	3%			1%

Nearly all the adults interviewed in the fieldwork who were not in learning and/or were unemployed had little awareness of adult and community learning. Many knew about vocational and employability courses run by colleges or private training providers and felt that these were low level courses that might not help them gain employment. Very few of them said that they had a written career or job plan and they were unaware of the role adult and community learning could have in increasing their chances of sustained employment. Disadvantaged adults are not a homogenous group. The examples from the learners above show that disadvantage can strike at any time, as well as be ingrained through life-long poverty, disability, depression, learning difficulties and/or isolation.

For example, it is clear that most providers of adult education have invested in reaching out to people who are disadvantaged one way or the other. Many of whom would not know about adult education and what it could do for people in their circumstances. Yet, adult education providers have developed the expertise, teaching skills and resources to deliver non-qualification provision and/or bite-sized units that successfully engage these adults in learning again, offering a stepping stone to success. Any policy or practical interventions need to reflect this and provide flexibility.

“ When I developed arthritis a couple of years ago, I knew I couldn't continue in construction. I felt on the scrap heap. I started a few adult learning courses to help me look for a new direction and found social sciences. I build my way up to level 3 and I am now at university, with a career ahead of me. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ Many of the tutors have been adult learners on similar courses, so they know what you are going through. They emphasise/not sympathise. The supportive learning environment they create allows you to go beyond what you believed to be your boundaries. ”

(Adult Learner)

Finally, both survey and focus group respondents were asked their views on what would attract more adults to take up learning, particularly those who may not think adult learning is for them. Around half of the survey respondents thought that hearing from others who had already done the course would attract others (51 per cent). More government financial investment (40 per cent) and more adult education opportunities were also suggested.

### 4.3. Overcoming barriers

In the fieldwork, many of those who had stipulated that they had joined adult learning because of challenging personal experiences, said that they would like to put something back by being a volunteer, paid tutor or peer mentor. The vast majority of the fieldwork participants said that they had chosen their course because of the friendly and non-threatening learning environment. They often cited that this helped them overcome the real fear of returning to learning. Many of them had not achieved at school or had not been in a formal learning environment for many years. They therefore typically felt that they were not ready to go to the large FE college and preferred to be among other adults only. This included those on the Access to HE courses. The residential courses provided ‘a break from life at home’ and an opportunity to ‘have time for me’. The community-based venues also had a significant impact on enabling learners to attend easily, as these classes were conveniently situated in residential areas or on bus routes. Just over one third of the learners were recommended to attend a specific course or a provider by family or friends or someone in their community who had attended or were attending an adult learning course. This personal insight into what to expect often made it easier to make the first step into a classroom.

The quality of teaching and the progress that they were making were the most common reasons learners gave for remaining on their course and turning up for each session. They also all had clear learning goals which motivated them to attend. Those who had paid for the course said

that the financial commitment also helped. They all liked learning and felt that the teaching was important to help them stay on. They understood that some people dropped out because of personal reasons or the cost of attending or because they felt they were not making the progress they had hoped to.

“ I had a bad experience of education in the past but here teacher listens to me and didn't judge so I felt included and have therefore stayed. I am treated with respect. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ I know that I'm on my way to a better life. I am therefore determined not to give up. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ I like the idea of improving my maths and English skills. People are very friendly and approachable. Why would you not want to come? ”

(Adult Learner)

“ I have learning difficulties, but at the FE college, we were just in K Block - we couldn't learn with other people. Here, you feel normal. The feedback they give you is very helpful and encouraging but they also set you high standards - at school, they kept giving me tidying up and photocopying tasks to do to keep me quiet. No-one there expected me to achieve. Here everyone notices when I have made even small steps. ”

(Adult Learner)

The online survey explored how the learners found out about their courses, what encouraged them to join, any barriers they have had to accessing the provision and the impact or benefits of taking part. The findings showed that attending a course can have a positive impact on improving: knowledge and skills for personal goals (84 per cent); motivations to keep learning (71 per cent); being able to make well informed decisions about their next steps (58 per cent); and confidence in dealing with new situations (51 per cent).

“ Adult learning keeps you young and it keeps your brain active – especially when you're learning something new – stretching yourself. This is important for your well-being. Attending classes can also combat loneliness. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ Fear of failure and the financial and personal commitment will make me see this course to the end. This Access to HE course is the last opportunity to change my life, so I'm not going to let it go. The support, personal coaching, peer support have all made a difference. The tutors put in the effort, so must you ”

(Adult Learner)

Respondents were also asked what had encouraged them to join their course. A significant proportion reported that the course subject had been a source of encouragement (80 per cent), whilst location and transport links were a further important factor (42 per cent) together with the reputation of the college, course or tutor (42 per cent). Table 4.4 provides an overview of the range of sources of encouragement reported by respondents.

**Table 4.4** Sources of encouragement for adult learners (n=531)

Reasons encouraging individual to join course	Number of	Percentage
Subject	432	80%
Location or Transport Links	228	42%
Reputation of the college, course or tutor	228	42%
Affordable or financial support available	166	31%
Fitted around family or personal circumstances	166	31%
Personal recommendation or connection	105	19%
Guidance and support from an organisation	62	11%
Other	9	2%

About a fifth of respondents reported that as a result of their course they had become involved in voluntary activities and a further 10 per cent were planning to do some voluntary work as a result of their studies.

Nearly all the adults interviewed who were not in learning who were unemployed had little awareness of adult and community learning. Many knew about vocational and employability courses run by colleges or private training providers and felt that these were low level courses that might not help them gain employment. Very few of them said that they had a written career or job plan and they were unaware of the role adult and community learning could have in increasing their chances of sustained employment. Disadvantaged adults are not a homogenous group. The examples from the learners above show that disadvantage can strike at any time, as well as be ingrained through life-long poverty, disability, depression, learning difficulties and/or isolation.

For example, it is clear that most providers of adult education have invested in reaching out to people who are disadvantaged one way or the other. Many of whom would not know about adult education and what it could do for people in their circumstances. Yet, adult education providers have developed the expertise, teaching skills and resources to deliver non-qualification provision and/or bite-sized units that successfully engage these adults in learning again, offering a stepping stone to success. Any policy or practical interventions need to reflect this and provide flexibility.



Both survey and focus group respondents were asked their views on what would attract more adults to take up learning, particularly those who may not think adult learning is for them. Around half of the survey respondents thought that hearing from others who had already done the course would attract others (51 per cent). More government financial investment (40 per cent) and more adult education opportunities were also suggested.

The fieldwork participants also emphasised the importance of easy access to courses enhanced by central or community-based venues, flexible course timing and good physical access for those with restricted mobility. When asked their views of other measures needed to increase participation in adult learning, two strong messages emerged:

1. Policy makers needs to understand the difference adult learning can make so that they make it a priority for funding; and
2. The promotion of adult education needs to be improved.

### ***Heartfelt messages from adult learners to policy makers***

Many participants felt that many policy makers did not understand the true benefits of adult education. They were keen that the money for adult learning should be protected and that MPs and their advisers should understand the wider social benefits of attending a community-based class and money it can save health, social services and other departments. They felt that having a pay policy for adult learning was fair - so that those that can pay do and support those that can't. However, the service still needs to be subsidised so that more people can attend, especially those who have significant barriers to work or being active in their communities.

“ A day at this adult learning college should help anyone understand the difference it makes to individuals. People without English like me need to learn the language to get a job. Twice a week is not really enough. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ Adult learning has direct impact on saving cost for other departments - especially social services those funding mental and physical health. I would have been on anti-depressants if I didn't come here for the writing group. It has given me a sense of purpose. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ This learning centre is saving the cost of social services. There are so many social issues that adult learning is dealing with that would otherwise cost the government a great deal. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ More politicians should understand that it is important to be able to retrain as an adult. Not everyone sticks to the same job - especially like me if you have had a break from employment to have children. I need help to be as employable as I was before. ”

(Adult Learner)

### **Getting the message out to more potential adult learners**

The fieldwork participants, including those who were not currently in learning, all felt that adult learning was poorly marketed at government level. They felt it a lost opportunity for the many who do not realise that adult learning is truly for all adults.

“ I was advised by my GP to come.They need more information to attract more people to adult learning. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ It is notable how adult learning is not just for retired people. More younger people should know about it. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ More must be done to attract more people to adult learning. Many people do not have a clue how the system works.This could be reached through mother and toddler groups - or schools, libraries etc. ”

(Adult Learner)



## 5. Leading to successful outcomes

“ The quality of teaching is so important ”

(Adult Learner)

“ They found out I was dyslexic and the support has made all the difference. At last I know I am not stupid! ”

(Adult Learner)

“ Knowing that I'm on my way to a better life. I will not give up. ”

(Adult Learner)

This section explores what leads to successful outcomes and provides some brief illustrations of good and interesting policies and practices to feed into future developments.

Recent theories and practices have emphasised the importance of personal agency leading to successful outcomes. Savickas et al, (2009)<sup>66</sup> ask: “How many individuals design their own lives in the human society in which they live?” Systematic interventions indicate the need to take holistic views of individuals with emphasis on the cultural and contextual location of adult education. Richardson and Schaeffer (2013)<sup>67</sup> indicate it is necessary to have a course of action about learning and/or work that advantages individuals and has potential for satisfaction, success and meaningful careers.

### Key findings

- Life design models and personalised accounts merit closer scrutiny
- Upskilling the adult education workforce is a prerequisite for economic growth and social mobility
- Increased promotion of the range, availability and benefits of adult learning is needed at a national, regional, sub-regional, local and adult learner level
- Better informed careers guidance provision on progression pathways is needed for all adults, including those in work

Respondents were asked a number of questions in the online survey on the outcomes of attending an adult learning course. First, respondents were asked about what skills they had improved as a result of their learning. A significant number reported that their subject knowledge had improved (68 per cent). Improvement in softer skills was also reported, as well as improving their learning and study skills. Table 5.1, below, presents the range of skills improved as a result of attending an adult learning course.

**Table 5.1** Skills improved as a result of attending an adult education course (n=531)

Skills	Number of Responses	Percentage	Skills	Number of Responses	Percentage
Subject knowledge	368	68%	Research	109	20%
Confidence	254	47%	Problem solving	108	20%
Creative	197	36%	Teamwork	96	18%
Self esteem	189	35%	Analytical	86	16%
Learning	182	34%	Computing or digital	84	15%
Communication	164	30%	Organisational	76	14%
Critical Thinking	145	27%	Reading	72	13%
Language	120	22%	Numeracy	55	10%
Study Skills	110	20%	Other skills	50	9%

The most significant outcome reported was an improvement in:

- Knowledge and skills for personal goals (84 per cent);
- Motivations to keep learning (71 per cent);
- Being able to make well informed decisions about next steps (58 per cent);
- Confidence in dealing with new situations (51 per cent).

Learners in the focus groups were asked about what motivated them to stay, for example:

“ The teachers are very good and patient. They are good at relating English and maths into your everyday life. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ The fact that the peer mentoring course is 2 days over 6 weeks gives you a chance to reflect on your learning. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ I didn't fit into a FE college, but I fit in here. It feels less stressful – more liked a 'little learning break' – but you know you're learning. ”

(Adult Learner)

As a result of attending adult learning courses, significant outcomes are reported by the survey respondents. For the majority, they had improved their subject knowledge and a range of soft skills, whilst others had become involved in voluntary activities. Respondents also, significantly, reported that attending a course had positively impacted on their knowledge and skills for personal goals, motivations to keep learning, ability to make well informed decisions about their next steps, and their confidence.

Participants in the survey and fieldwork reported evidence of adult education providers' responding directly to their needs in a wide range of community settings. For example:

- *Community and collective learning*: provision ranging from archaeology to volunteering with strong elements operating in disadvantaged constituencies.
- *Cultural awareness*: highlighted by some as enriching and essential during the fieldwork activities.
- *Co-construction of meaningful curriculum between tutors and adult learners*: specialist support for those able to pay and those most disadvantaged – various types of adult education providers, including the SDIs, do many of these well and to the benefits of many.
- *Co-development of training*: adult education tutors, parents, health advisers, employment specialists, employers/employees, mentors and administrators coming together within communities, though there is significant scope for more to be done in this regard.

In some cases, we found evidence of students dropping out of their course mainly for financial and/or family reasons. But reaching into local communities is something adult education providers are particularly good at. While the research has identified the full benefits of adult education to so many individuals, providers do not generally collect this information as a matter of course. Many learners may know privately that the course has helped them overcome significant barriers to learning, work and participating in their daily lives, but this may not be recorded or discussed with the tutor or provider. This means that the true value of what leads to successful outcomes for adult learners is generally unknown by the general public and key policy makers.

## 5.1. Professionalism and partnerships

“ Cross boundary working between institutions and professional bodies is essential, creating a single teaching profession from early years, through schools, FE, adult education and HE. Without this professional interchange adult education will never come out of the rock from which it is under and get the support it merits from the wider profession and the establishment. ”

(David Russell, CEO, The Education Training Foundation (ETF)).

Moving forward by bringing together the skills and assets of all partners to deliver a public service (both online or offline) for adult learners' consumption is now essential. New local, regional and national arrangements must rely heavily on a range of collaborative and partnership activities, with both a national (top-down) and regional/local (bottom-up) level. Success lies in having a clear mandate and set of priorities that capture the voices of adults, particularly those most in need of support. Front-runner devolution areas may choose to share frameworks

of this type with other geographical areas, including activities with professional bodies and membership organisations. Community-based adult education providers widely recognised for their professionalism should be included – and their bids taken seriously – given their unique contribution to community engagement and active citizenship. There should be real opportunities ahead to build on the expertise and capacity to deliver in local communities. Post-devolution, local Skills Commissioners will be required to make investment decisions - which is why their role is so central to the sustainability of adult education now and in the future.

Since the Inquiry into the Future for Lifelong Learning (Schuller and Watson, 2009)<sup>68</sup> much has changed in the education and employment landscape; however, many of their initial observations remain highly relevant today. New evidence gathered as part of this research shows the era of an ageing population is truly upon us. Disadvantaged adults can be brought back to learning, and encouraged to develop, through their families, in differing community settings, including in the workplace. But this needs leadership and coherent policies along the lines of those found in countries such as: Australia, Austria, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and New Zealand. These countries have adult education policies and frameworks that provide examples of innovative policies and practices. For example, it is easy to locate an overview of the development and ‘state of art’ in adult learning and education in Australia.<sup>69</sup> The Parents Next Project helps parents to identify their education and employment goals, develop a pathway to achieve their goals and link them to activities and services in the local community. Canada’s progress report for the UNESCO Global Report on Adult Learning and Education (2012) sets out a coherent overview of key policies, practices and challenges.<sup>71</sup> Croatia’s country report on Adult Education, prepared for the European Association for the Education of Adults, highlights this is an important component of the education system, which is confirmed in a number of strategic documents (p.5).<sup>72</sup> Lifelong learning is an important principle of Norwegian education policy. Basic skills training and validation of prior learning play a significant part in its adult education policies.<sup>73</sup> The Swedish government supports adult education providers in organising guidance courses to facilitate the Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL)<sup>74</sup>. New Zealand’s national careers service working closely with adult education providers to provide culturally relevant information, advice and guidance to indigenous groups.

Selected further examples of innovative policies and practices:

- One Stop Guidance Centers in Finland (Ohjaamo) – Ministries of Employment, Education, Social and Health working closely to provide seamless services to adult under 30 years old<sup>75</sup>.
- IBOBB-Café in Austria – An information platform and access point for anyone who has questions concerning educational and vocational options, including support with social issues. This is a cross-sectoral co-operation platform.<sup>76</sup>
- Regional Guidance Centres (Denmark) – A blended online and offline support service for young people and adults in transition, particularly those interested in higher education.<sup>77</sup>

68. Available from: <http://www.learningandwork.org.uk/lifelonglearninginquiry/docs/IFLL-summary-english.pdf>

69. Available from: [http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/INSTITUTES/UIIL/confintea/pdf/National\\_Reports/Asia%20-%20Pacific/Australia.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/INSTITUTES/UIIL/confintea/pdf/National_Reports/Asia%20-%20Pacific/Australia.pdf)

70. Available from: <https://www.employment.gov.au/parentsnext>

71. Available from: <http://www.collegesinstitutes.ca/file/adult-learning-and-education-canada-progress-report-for-the-unesco-global-report-on-adult-learning-and-education-grale-and-the-end-of-the-united-nations-literacy-decade/>

72. Available from: <http://www.erisee.org/downloads/2013/2/b/Country-Report-on-Adult-Education-in-Croatia%202011%20ENG.pdf>

73. Available from: <http://www.vox.no/English/Adult-learning-in-Norway/>

74. ELGPN (2012) *Lifelong guidance policy development: A European Resource Kit*, Finland: University of Jyväskylä, p. 31.

75. Available from: [http://www.euroguidance.nl/\\_images/user/evenementen/2016-06-13%20-14%206th%20LLG%20conference%20NL/Workshop2-Ari-pekka-One%20Stop%20Shop%20Ohjaamo.pdf](http://www.euroguidance.nl/_images/user/evenementen/2016-06-13%20-14%206th%20LLG%20conference%20NL/Workshop2-Ari-pekka-One%20Stop%20Shop%20Ohjaamo.pdf)

76. Available from: [http://www.euroguidance.nl/\\_images/user/evenementen/2016-06-13%20-14%206th%20LLG%20conference%20NL/Workshop3-PeterHartel-IBOBB\\_Cafe\\_STVG.pdf](http://www.euroguidance.nl/_images/user/evenementen/2016-06-13%20-14%206th%20LLG%20conference%20NL/Workshop3-PeterHartel-IBOBB_Cafe_STVG.pdf)

77. Available from: [http://www.euroguidance.nl/\\_images/user/evenementen/2016-06-13%20-14%206th%20LLG%20conference%20NL/Workshop%204-Regional%20Guidance%20Center-TorbenFaarup-DK.pdf](http://www.euroguidance.nl/_images/user/evenementen/2016-06-13%20-14%206th%20LLG%20conference%20NL/Workshop%204-Regional%20Guidance%20Center-TorbenFaarup-DK.pdf)

- The Bridge Project – Guidance for Lower Skilled Adults (Germany, France & Sweden) – A multiple access strategy designed to reach lower skilled adults including mobile guidance and adult education in the workplace.<sup>78</sup>
- The TLC Pack, Germany – An approach involving occupational specific, language resources to support migrants already working – or aspiring to work – in the care giving sector. It recognises the necessity to develop intercultural competences among migrant care givers and offers a number of activities to achieve this aim. The TLC Pack offers a practical response to an existing problem: while the number of migrant caregivers across Europe is growing, many of them lack the necessary language and intercultural competences.<sup>79</sup> We found many examples of engaging and life changing adult education in the regions of England, but these are largely hidden to the general public, policy-makers and Ministers with very uneven provision, particularly in disadvantaged areas.

## 5.2. Tracking progress and outcomes

The skills, training and dispositions of the practitioners who deliver adult education are critical to ensuring quality and extending the evidence-base for local, regional and national provision. Having up-to-date knowledge of and expertise in education and labour markets are becoming more essential. A recurring theme throughout the research is that the success of adult learner outcomes is strongly influenced by the initial training, continuing professional development, competencies and personal capacities of the professionals that deliver it. There is currently no national adult education workforce development framework to guide future planning and investments in this regard.

“ As the largest prime provider of the National Careers Service and a prime contractor for the Work Programme we are acutely aware how important it is for adults to continue to access good advice, education and training throughout their working lives. Understanding local labour markets and informing skills agendas is essential if adults are to maintain and improve their living standards. Adult education policy must feed into local skills agendas and link to existing policies and practices so that innovation and effective local partnership working is not lost in new and evolving policy development at a local and/or national level ”

(Nick Bell, Chief Executive, Prospects).

Adult education providers recognise diversity and inclusivity and are therefore particularly skilled at engaging with a variety of people and groups within local communities and involving them in making decisions about the relevance and quality of adult education policies and practices. Their goals are to improve the experience for individuals, contribute to social justice, develop effective and efficient services and strengthen accountability. Identifying ways to track and support adults as they progress in and out of differing modes of learning is a contemporary challenge that needs to be addressed. The extent to which Individualised Learner Records (ILRs) are proving effective requires closer scrutiny, particularly in relation to the take rates of 24+ student loans.

78. Available from: <http://www.euroguidance.nl/images/user/evenementen/2016-06-13%20-14%206th%20LLG%20Guidance%20NL/Workshop5-Jugatx%20Ortiz-EARLALL%20-%20BRIDGE.pdf>

79. Available from: <https://www.vhs-cham.de/>

In many cases, the face-to-face channel remains a preferred option, especially if the presenting problem is complex, conditional or requires a confidential and empathic approach, particularly for vulnerable individuals. Online facilities with the option of telephone, email, web chat and/or crowdsourcing are rapidly expanding.

Other key challenges to be met include: realizing the full potential of web 2.0 and 3.0; how quality-assured data is collected, what kinds of data collection are now needed how might the results be used to inform service design and improvement as part of evidence-based policies and practices. This should not be overly bureaucratic but need to be openly available for individuals, employers and commissioners to enable informed choices. There was a clear aspiration for different providers to work together to offer adult learning programmes in ways that make the best use of specialised knowledge of the worlds of education, social care, health services, well-being, training and employment.

### 5.3. Top policy priorities

We invited all participants in the research to identify at least three top priorities for policy development that could improve adult education over the next 5 to 10 years. Respondents identified the following policy areas for development.

- Greater policy attention with clear national and regional/local frameworks for adult education
- Funding for vulnerable and/or disadvantaged adults should not be solely based on a student loan system
- ESOL and basic skills investment is urgently required
- Employers need to step up and offer more opportunities to older adults
- Increased access to careers information, advice and guidance for adults and young people.





## 6. What needs to change?

In this section, focus on what needs to change now and in the future in order to maintain and further strengthen adult education across England.

### Key findings

- Strengthen the infrastructure for adult education
- Focus on lifeskills and prosperity
- Improve awareness of and access to careers Information, advice and guidance
- Develop a more robust evidence-based system
- Greater involvement of employers in adult education is needed to improve skills and productivity at local and national levels.

### Strengthen the infrastructure for adult education

Current government policy for adult education in England has failed to respond to the major demographic challenge of an ageing society, to growing cultural diversity and variety in life, and changing employment patterns as young people take longer to settle into jobs and older people take longer to leave work. There is a need to **halt the significant reductions in adult education provision** by ensuring that adult education is appropriately funded beyond 2020 and to further safeguard the Adult Education Budget, as part of on-going settlements between the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and HM Treasury. With the likelihood of further cuts to government budgets since the vote to leave the EU, local Skills Commissioners (who will hold the Adult Education Budget purse strings once a locality's budget is devolved) will need robust data to identify key priorities and investment decisions.

“ We are acutely aware how important it is for adults to continue to access good advice, education and training throughout their working lives. Understanding local labour markets and informing skills agendas is essential if adults are to maintain and improve their living standards. Adult education policy must feed into local skills agendas and link to existing policies and practices so that innovation and effective local partnership working is not lost in new and evolving policy development at a local and/or national level ”

(Nick Bell, Chief Executive, Prospects).

Planned local commissioning for adult education within **devolved responsibilities should be based on a set of broad national adult education standards and priorities** that recognise the wider social, cultural and economic benefits of adult education and not just focus on training in employment skills.

A national adult education framework that brings together health, social care, well-being, cultural and scientific development, alongside skills and employability would be a major step forward.

The devolved and locally-led strategic plans for adult education could then be linked to both local and national accountability and quality frameworks. A ministerial champion working at a cross-departmental level would add gravitas, authority and connectivity to disjointed policies.

“ We’re living here so we need to speak English [...] it’s better for the country and for the society that we have English skills. There are therefore high returns for the investment in helping us all improve our language skills. ”

(Adult Learner)

Devolution is creating a patchwork quilt of very uneven provision. The role of a national organisation(s) within a national adult education framework is important for accountability and equity purposes. Transparent policies and practices are necessary for key areas such as basic skills, ESOL and digital inclusion. The adult learners on ESOL courses highlighted the importance of provision that directly helps learners achieve their personal goals, be it to support their children in school, gain a job or participate in their communities. ESOL provision is also essential for those whose English is above Level 2 and who may, in some cases, need sector-specific language support.

“ We are obviously a society in the midst of tremendous turmoil, working against a background of globalisation, technological change and demographic transformation. All of these changes are demanding a level of personal reinvention that we haven’t seen for a century or more, and the need for readily available adult education is growing every day. ”

(Trevor Phillips, OBE, Chair of Trustees, Workers’ Educational Association (WEA))

There is no **ESOL policy in England** - instead ad hoc guidelines are being developed at a grass roots level. In Scotland (June 2015)<sup>80</sup> and Wales (June 2014)<sup>81</sup> a national ESOL policy exists. In England, there is also a need for **‘parity of entitlement’ for ring-fenced funding** for ESOL provision to be considered part of basic skills funding and workforce development arrangements. Many adult learners are looking for **flexible ‘step on step off’ provision**, yet the move has been to reduce flexibility by suppliers. As it currently stands, a single institution has to be responsible for awarding a qualification. This leaves little incentive for institutions to collaborate around credit accumulation and transfer. Making progress in this area would be a significant boost to flexible learning. For example, changes might support mixed modes of study through different providers to add up to a qualification – allowing a student to combine distance learning delivered by one provider with more traditional on-site provision through another. While government motivation for promoting regional/cross-sectoral strategic partnerships may initially be financial, there are further opportunities for adult education to be embedded in differing types of partnerships and delivered locally. That is particularly the case if it is to stretch out successfully into communities to reach more of the most disadvantaged, those who have become lost to education. Some examples might include:

80. Available from: <http://www.esolscotland.com/>

81. Available from: <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/20373/1/140619-esol-policy-en.pdf>

- **Co-operation** on providing adult education through innovative approaches e.g. working on employer premises, outreach, mobile delivery and/or blended learning and educational guidance for careers and other life issues, such as mid-life reviews, parenting, inter-cultural relations, community engagement or retirement, particularly for targeted or marginalised groups in their local communities.
- **Collective actions** between and across agencies on tracking adult learner progress, using open source data, intelligence sharing, information exchange and pooling of resources to achieve maximum impact for adult learners. In some cases, clustering provision and/or sharing expertise across institutions or membership bodies may become more necessary.

## 6.1. Focus on life skills and prosperity

Some 5.9 million adults in the UK have never used the internet although between 75 per cent and 90 per cent of jobs require at least some computer use and offline households are missing out on estimated savings of £560 per year from shopping and paying bills online (RGS, 2015).<sup>82</sup> Individuals with poor numeracy tend to take longer to leave the family home if they are men, have children younger in life if they are women, and are more likely to live in disadvantaged housing and to experience homelessness. Patterns are often replicated in subsequent generations.<sup>83</sup> With an ageing population and as retirement ages rise, people are facing longer working lives with the consequent need to update skills and add to their knowledge. Adult learners feel healthier, lead healthier lifestyles, build new social networks and experience improved well-being. **Life design models** such as those found in Australia, Canada and New Zealand can provide stimuli material for further discussion at a local level, as discussed earlier. Life skills now include new ways of thinking about careers and the dynamic context in which they evolve. And the pace of change can only increase in the years ahead.

Most importantly, **profiling the current life design work delivered by SDIs** will demonstrate to **new local Commissioners and local strategic partnerships** the real value of its impact. For example, it is effective in getting people hooked on learning through ‘bite-sized’, short and/ or residential courses that can transform outcomes for people in deprived communities, reduce social exclusion, increase social mobility and enable families to break the cycle of deprivation.

A new ‘**Citizen Skills Entitlement**’ for adults, proposed by the Learning and Work Institute, merits further consideration (see also: Mid-Life Health Check below).<sup>84</sup> The idea of an **education savings account (ESA)** for adults recently mooted by a Specialist Designated Institution for adults to draw upon throughout their life, as and when necessary, is also worthy of further exploration.

**Blended and online learning** offers many students the vital skills they need in their everyday lives. According to ‘Go on UK’, 23 per cent of people in the UK lack digital capability and it is as important as literacy and numeracy. A highly effective way to develop and keep up-to-date the digital skills of adults is to embed use of digital into face- to-face teaching and to offer a blended approach to learning. While many courses include some form of multi-media resources, there is a lack of investment in adult education tutors, many of who are part-time workers) who need to be equipped and trained to provide differing forms of ‘blended learning’ e.g. webinars, massive open online courses (MOOCs) etc.

82. Royal Geographical Society (2015) Digital Divide in the UK. Online Available from: <https://21stcenturychallenges.org/what-is-the-digital-divide/>

83. Lister, J. (2013) *The Impact of Poor Numeracy Skills on Adults, Research Review*, London: National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy (NRDC), Institute of Education (IOE), University of London

84. Available from: <http://www.learningandwork.org.uk/content/mid-life-career-review-%E2%80%93-niace-proposals-endorsed>

“ Technology-enhanced learning is opening up opportunities to reach adults in new ways which don't require full-time attendance. ”

(The Open University)

## 6.2. Information, advice and guidance

“ I'm willing to do something different but this needs to interest me. I have no idea where to go for this sort of advice. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ Other people have a negative view about me returning to education and going to University. I have been outside education for so long, now I have found a way in because this college gave me self-belief. ”

(Adult Learner)

Adult learners involved in the fieldwork and the survey highlighted the importance of knowing where to find opportunities and where their course might lead to, particularly those who had been reignited with the joy of learning.

Many of the adults interviewed, including those in learning, had long term plans that motivated them to attend a course or look for a job. These included wanting to work with disadvantaged people, start their own business or work in health or social care. However, most of them found it difficult to describe their next stages to achieving this, including those who had planned to go to university after the Access to HE course. The majority were not fully aware of all the services provided by the National Careers Service. Highly visible and accessible information and career guidance is crucial in achieving educational support for career transitions and other life issues, such as mid-life reviews, parenting, community engagement, or retirement. Levels of awareness of student loans was moderately low, particularly when it came to older adults. This concurs with earlier findings from the BIS (2016) Evaluation of 24+ Advanced Learning Loans where two-thirds of learners (64 per cent) had not heard of the loans at the point where they had first started thinking about learning.

“ More adults are in need of good quality information and guidance to help them make the right choices about the study options available to them, particularly those wanting to progress in work or looking for a career change. Adult education is vital on a lifelong basis and individuals need support to continue to learn and to acquire new skills in order to escape low pay jobs and to help businesses grow. ”

(Mary Vine-Morris, Policy Director, Association of Colleges (AoC))

The world has changed fundamentally over the last decade. We have seen the disappearance of the job for life, the emergence of the knowledge economy and loss of many unskilled and semi-skilled jobs. Millions of people work in jobs today, which did not exist when their parents left education and first went into work. New types jobs are beginning to emerge e.g. urban farmer, virtual reality experience designer, remote health care specialist, end of life planner and many more. We learned from adults that many felt they had limited choice on what was available when it comes to addressing feelings of isolation, loneliness, mental and physical well-being.

“ We are heading for huge problems with skills gaps and skills shortages – if we don't get our citizens young and old in the right place doing the right things then everyone will suffer. Hence, we need to ensure there is high quality information, advice and guidance for everyone. ”

(Steve Stewart, CEO, Careers England)

### 6.3. An evidence-based system

An evidence-based system is required to gather robust information on the take-up rates of adult education loans by disadvantaged groups, and more policy dialogue and critique is needed on the effectiveness of this practice. The voices of adults needs to be captured regularly, particularly those not engaged in adult education. Data on the outcomes achieved by adult learners should be openly available for individuals, employers and commissioners to enable informed choices – not just formal qualifications achieved. This is probably the weakest aspect of adult education and needs to be a priority for development. As the learners interviewed indicated, far too few people that have a say in policy and funding for adult learning really understand its true impact on individuals and communities and in turn, national and local economies. Many providers understandably feel that gathering data on course, completions, progress, and destinations can be time consuming, bureaucratic and above all expensive. National and local systems need to be developed to facilitate the collection and dissemination of this critical evidence on the impact of adult education. Some providers' practice in recognising and recording learners' progress and achievement is very effective, but this is the minority. In far too many providers, Ofsted inspection reports show that the process is too narrow and the good practice needs to be shared more widely.

### 6.4. Employers, skills and productivity

So called “skills shortage vacancies” now make up nearly a quarter of all job openings in the UK, leaping from 91,000 in 2011 to 209,000 in 2015 (UKCES, 2016).<sup>85</sup> Some 2 million additional jobs are likely to be created for managers, professionals and associate professional groups by 2022. Together these occupations are expected to increase their share of total employment from 42 per cent to 46 per cent (op cit.). Over half of UK businesses (55 per cent) are not confident there will be enough people available in the future with the necessary skills to fill their high-skilled jobs (CBI, 2015)<sup>86</sup>. Half of businesses report they are aware of current problems among at least some of their employees in basic literacy (50 per cent), numeracy (50 per cent) and IT skills (46 per cent). Between a third to a half of employers with a basic skills gap report an increase in the number of errors made by staff, a constraint on the introduction of new and/or more efficient processes, and/or a reduction in product or output quality (BIS, 2016).<sup>87</sup> The cost of outcomes associated with low levels of adult numeracy is estimated to be around £20.2 billion per year, or about 1.3 per cent of the UK's GDP (National Numeracy, 2014). Adult education providers can and do reach many adults who are far away from the labour market.

85. UKCES (2015) UK Employer Skills Survey, 2015, Evidence Report 97, Sheffield: Wath-Upon-Dearne  
86. Available from: <http://news.cbi.org.uk/reports/education-and-skills-survey-2015/education-and-skills-survey-2015/>

87. BIS (2016) *Impact of Poor Basic Literacy and Numeracy on Employers*, Research Paper 266, London: Department for Business, Innovation & Skills, February 2016.

Where employers and trades unions identify basic skills needs among their workforce they should be able to arrange for adult education provision in the workplace. Cedefop (2011)<sup>88</sup> and Unionlearn (2016)<sup>89</sup> already demonstrate this can be achieved, but this requires investment. The use of incentives to skill, reskill and upskill employees, including releasing them to continue training, was identified in the research as a priority. The great majority of jobs already require digital skills to some level and the proportion will rise further in the years ahead. Those seeking to take up apprenticeships and other work opportunities will need to be equipped with the basic skills to learn and progress successfully.

Over the next five to 10 years there is a need to build on outstanding practices that are often unique to current adult education provision. **Adult education should be a national priority.** A series of policies and practices are needed so that the benefits of adult education are not taken away from those who need it most. **A national debate** can forge that sense of shared national purpose for adult education. And it is a debate in which, as well as the local commissioners of adult education, many more citizen voices should be heard – the voices of those for whom the services should be designed and those adults who have most to gain from them. This really is **too important to simply be left to chance.**



88. Cedefop (2011) *Learning while working: Success stories on workplace learning in Europe.*

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2011

89. Available from: <https://www.unionlearn.org.uk/english-maths-and-ict>

## 7. Five key recommendations

The research has identified that adult education is indeed important to individuals and local communities and that it has a pivotal role to play in supporting local and national social and economic agendas. However, we are at a turning point with seismic change taking place across England to the policy and funding mechanisms for post-19 education. Over the next five to 10 years there is a need to build on the sometimes outstanding practices that are often exclusive to the current adult education provision. Currently there are too many adults who are not able to reach their potential, or who are unable to cope with their current circumstances. Adult education has many of the answers. A series of policies and practices are needed so that the benefits of adult education are not taken away from those who need it most.

From the research, we highlight five key recommendations as follows:

### **Recommendation 1**

Establish a national and regional strategy for adult education, health, employability and well-being – bringing together the different departmental interests led by a senior Minister to provide an accountability and quality assured framework at a national and regional level. There needs to be clear criteria for providers to capture, collate and disseminate the full benefits of adult education, including improvements to their health and well-being and participation as an active citizen against the accountability and quality-assured framework.

### **Recommendation 2**

The new commissioning system needs to have an adult education framework that seeks to rebuild and rebalance resources fairly for adults across the different life-stages – national and local provision for adults' needs to reflect a coherent view of our changing social, economic and cultural context. The matter of identity, of how people describe who they are and the values they hold is an important conversation to be had with Commissioners in local areas. We learned from adults who were not engaged in adult education that many felt vulnerable, had limited choice on what was available when it comes to addressing their feelings of isolation, loneliness, mental and physical challenges.

### **Recommendation 3**

Provide careers information, advice and guidance in local communities and build capacity in the adult education workforce to make greater use of labour market intelligence and mid-life reviews. There is a need to broaden and strengthen the capacity of the adult education workforce, thus raising the profile of this important work. Training and professional support should be available for all those involved in delivering education and training in various capacities.

## Recommendation 4

Ensure a systematic approach to identifying and gathering evidence on the full impact of adult education. Data on the outcomes achieved by adult learners should not be overly bureaucratic, but it needs to be openly available for individuals, employers and commissioners to enable informed choices.

## Recommendation 5

More employers need to step up and offer opportunities to adults, particularly older adults keen to remain active in employment. Employers could offer so much more by offering adult education experiences on their premises through local partnerships.

Over the next five to 10 years, there is a need to build on outstanding practices that are often unique to current adult education provision. **Adult education should be a national priority.** A series of policies and practices are needed so that the benefits of adult education are not taken away from those who need it most. **A national debate** can forge that sense of shared national purpose for adult education. And it is a debate in which, as well as the local commissioners of adult education, many more citizen voices should be heard – the voices of those for whom the services should be designed and those adults who have most to gain from them. This really is **too important to simply be left to chance.**



## Appendix I Call for Evidence respondents

- Adult and Community Learning Alliance (ACLA), West Midlands Combined Authority
- Association of Colleges, London
- Celia Kelly, Liverpool
- CITB, London
- Compass
- Dr Roberta Jacobson OBE, Hon.
- Senior lecturer, IHE, UCL
- Greg Coyne, Director for Curriculum and Quality, Workers' Educational Association, London
- Horex, Worcestershire
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation, London
- Margaret Greenwood, MP
- Martin Yarnit, retired, Worcester
- NCFE, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- OECD, Paris
- OFFA, Bristol
- Ofsted, London
- Olive Home, retired teacher, London
- Open University, Milton Keynes
- QAA, Gloucester
- The Co-operative College, Manchester
- The Reading Agency, London
- The Universities Association for Lifelong Learning
- Tom Schuller
- TUC unionlearn, London

Please note in addition, eight responses were marked 'confidential' which have not been included in this listing.

## Appendix 2 Key stakeholder interviewees and other contributors to the report

### **Nick Bell**

Chief Executive, Prospects Group Ltd

### **Baroness Sharp of Guildford**

House of Lords

### **Neil Carberry**

Senior Policy Adviser, Confederation of British Industry (CBI)

### **Rachel Egan**

Director, West Midlands Combined Authority

### **Caroline Fairbairn**

Director General, Confederation of British Industry (CBI)

### **Ruth Spellman OBE**

Chief Executive, Workers' Educational Association (WEA)

### **David Hughes**

Chief Executive, Learning & Work Institute

### **Steve Stewart**

Chief Executive, Careers England

### **Scott Knowles**

Chief Executive, East Midlands, British Chamber of Commerce

### **Mary-Vine Morris**

Senior Policy Director (London), Association of Colleges (AoC)

### **Bob Harrison**

Chair of Governors Northern College & Education Adviser, Toshiba, Northern Europe

### **Trevor Phillips OBE**

Chair of Trustees, Workers' Educational Association (WEA)

### **Dr Sue Pember OBE**

Director of Policy, HOLEX

### **Andreas Schleicher**

Director for the Directorate Education and Skills, OECD

### **David Russell**

Chief Executive, Education Training Foundation (ETF)



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# Adult Education: Important for Health and Well-Being

**Dr Deirdre Hughes OBE and Karen Adriaanse**  
University of Warwick Institute for Employment Research (IER)

**October 2017**

University of Warwick, Institute for Employment Research (IER) Established in 1981 by the University of Warwick, the Institute for Employment Research (IER) is a leading international social science research centre. Its research is interdisciplinary and made relevant to policy makers and practitioners. It is renowned for consistently delivering high quality research. The work of IER includes comparative European research on employment and training as well as that focusing on the UK at national, regional and local levels. IER is concerned principally with the development of scientific knowledge about the socioeconomic system rather than with the evolution and application of one particular discipline. It places particular emphasis on using social science in the effective development of policy and practice and in collaborating with the policy and practitioner communities, to bring this about.

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## **References**

## Executive Summary

This paper, commissioned by the Institutes for Adult Learning, aims to increase awareness of the benefits that adult education<sup>1</sup> can bring to the nation's health and well-being. It also aims to stimulate further dialogue on how authoritative central and devolved government policies and practices can ensure that adult education remains a strategic priority so that there is increased demand for, access to and take-up of provision.

It is high time for greater recognition of the powerful contribution adult education makes to individuals and families' health and well-being. There is compelling evidence on the far-reaching benefits (World Health Organisation, 2016; UNESCO, 2016; Hughes & Adriaanse, 2016). Over the next fifteen years and beyond, countries will face a complex set of challenges relating to issues such as an ageing population, mass migration, employment, inequality, environmental sustainability and accelerating technological changes. Adult education is "a central component of public policies that can help address these challenges." (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning). The message is clear - individuals who continue to learn throughout life are likely to build additional brain reserves - this can lead to healthier lives and healthy lifestyle choices. The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Well-being (July 2017) also highlights that arts and creative activities can make an invaluable contribution to a healthy and health-creating society.

So much evidence points to the fact that adult education makes a significant contribution to the health and well-being of individuals and communities. It can be relied upon to assist in addressing national policy challenges such as encouraging and enabling individuals and families to take a more active role in their own health and well-being. However, this added-value contribution is at serious risk of being lost in a policy landscape pre-occupied with apprenticeships, skills and qualification reforms. Devolution presents some real opportunities in local economies to address the skills shortages expected to follow Brexit. But it is important to recognise that there are also other key challenges such as: rising health costs, a shortage of public funding, productivity issues exacerbated by absenteeism from work, and yet most health issues are not caused by physiological problems. There is a danger that any future strategy for adult education might ignore the hundreds of courses that do not end in a formal qualification, yet are hugely beneficial to our local communities and the broader population – especially to people's health and well-being. Our evidence points to the following three key messages:

- 1. Adult education does help keep individuals well and supports longer and productive lives.**
- 2. Adult education does help meet major challenges such as: ageing, loneliness, long-term conditions, mental health and well-being and community cohesion.**
- 3. Adult education does help save money in the National Health Service (NHS) and the social care system.**

## What needs to be done?

The numbers of adults participating in formal education is in serious decline in local communities (ESFA, July 2017). Research on income inequality, social mobility and economic growth (OECD, 2015) demonstrates that dedicated provision for adults returning to the first rung of learning is highly important. This maximises engagement, retention and progression for those who might otherwise become lost in the less tailored support offered in Further Education (FE) provision. Four key themes need to be urgently addressed by Secretaries of State, Ministers, policy-makers and providers:

### A. Greater alignment of strategic priorities and funding streams

The fact that adult education is a route to improved quality of life for both individuals and families, and can also help prevent health and well-being issues and support recovery from injury and illnesses is highly relevant and should feature in national and local strategic priorities.

- There is a need to promote adult education's role in healthcare prevention strategies that contribute towards easing demand on acute health services. This needs Ministerial interest and commitment to bring about the necessary policy changes that will put adult education in a sustainable position for the future.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this research, we have defined 'adult education' as referring to community-based provision that does not normally lead to a qualification. This is often the first step for many adults returning back into the field of education for many different reasons, including for their own personal development, or preparation for further training with qualifications and/or employment.



## Executive Summary

- Greater flexibility and alignment of funding streams can support targeting individuals and groups most in need. This can bring more flexibility in provision and ensure better value for money. Changes to funding since 2010 have squeezed the social infrastructure between adult education, Further Education (FE) and wider community-based organisations. Whilst closer collaborative working is underway to share expertise and services, this remains piecemeal.

### B. Capturing the evidence

There is much evidence of the positive impact and efficacy of adult education on individuals, communities and other public services, however, it is often neglected by policy-makers.

- Secretaries of State, Ministers, and those responsible for NHS ‘Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships’ (STPs), NHS Improvement, Health and Well-Being Boards, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCGs), Local/Combined Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) need to have greater access to the evidence of successful policies and practices in improving health and well-being through adult education. There is a critical need to build upon existing health and well-being surveys to identify any gaps in research, including those that examine whether short, part-time community learning courses help people develop strategies to manage their everyday lives more effectively.
- Central government and local/combined authorities will need robust data on area-based outcomes from providers, to measure the impact of the devolved AEB. A challenge to the adult education sector is to provide leadership, prove their worth, and report more broadly and directly on the impact their work has on the health outcomes. Data on the wider outcomes of adult education should be based on national systems and there needs to be more evidence of sustained benefits in larger population groups over time.
- There are significant benefits to be gained in capturing contextualised adult education, health and well-being e.g. the Good Things Foundation and its work with NHS shows health inequalities account for well in excess of £5.5 billion in healthcare costs to the NHS annually. Based on a cost to the NHS of £45 per GP visit, ensuring everyone had the Basic Digital Skills to access health information online would provide savings of £121 million a year by 2025. The British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) analysis indicates adults’ participation in a part-time course can lead to: improvements in health, which has a value of £148 to the individual; a greater likelihood of finding a job and/or staying in a job, which has a value of £231 to the individual; better social relationships, which has a value of £658 to the individual; and a greater likelihood that people volunteer on a regular basis, which has a value of £130 to the individual (Fujiwara, 2012). As well as quantitative data, there is also significant scope to produce more podcasts/videos of adult education in care homes, healthcare centres, schools, community centres, libraries and workplace settings, to inspire individuals and family learning.

### C. Getting the message across – to policy makers and professionals in adult education, health and well-being sectors

The lack of joined up policies between the education and health and social care sectors often results in missed opportunities for collaborative and co-productive work between sectors and professionals. As a result of fragmented national policies, people often fall between the gaps in health and education practice.

- National and local policies must focus on ratcheting up the demand for adult education provision, particularly from healthcare sectors (and in healthcare contexts).
- New developments in social prescriptions that include ‘prescribing for learning’ should help partnerships to engage with the process of creating a healthy society and focusing on the health and well-being of individuals. But this will only work if there is government backing and take up by GP consortia and Trusts.

### D. All policy interventions should consider how inequality can best be addressed

The Social Mobility Commission (June 2017) indicates new divides have opened up in Britain, across geographies, income groups and generations.

- Inequalities of social and cultural capital inevitably imply unequal outcomes from informal learning in the family and home (Tuckett & Field, 2016). In considering how best to address the issue, the benefits of targeting have to be balanced against the risks of stigmatisation.

### Six Key Recommendations

#### We recommend that:

1. The Institutes of Adult Learning and other adult education providers should work together with the health and social care sectors make most of the significant scope to produce portfolios of podcasts, videos, case studies and conclusive statistics to bring the evidence alive and readily available and so that this work is at the forefront of national policy dialogue. This should be supported through an organisation such as the Education and Training Foundation.
2. Government and leading research bodies should support adult education, health and well-being organisations to develop a national tool(s) for measuring the impact of adult education on improving individuals health and well-being as a priority.
3. The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Adult Education should work with the Institutes of Adult Learning and partners, including other relevant APPGs to disseminate policy briefings on specific aspects of this work to Ministers and health and well-being agencies and professional bodies.
4. The Institutes of Adult Learning and regional adult education networks should be invited by those responsible for NHS 'Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships' (STPs), Health and Well-Being Boards, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCGs), Local/Combined Authorities and Local Enterprise partnerships (LEPs) to contribute to the development and delivery of health and well-being objectives at regional and local level and should present their findings to NHS Improvement.

The benefits of adult education for health and well-being are not widely known within health provision, particularly working with vulnerable groups in our society. To increase the demand and take-up of for adult education through links with the health sectors, we recommend that:

5. The Institutes of Adult Learning (IALs) and adult education networks, work with Healthwatch, the Patients Association, trade unions and other representative organisations, who work with adults and family learning initiatives to advocate the health and well-being benefits of adult education to wider public.
6. Adult education should be incorporated onto the Prescriptions for Patients systems across all NHS England. This needs to be promoted to all healthcare practitioners through local and national initiatives.

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Also, refer to Main Report for more information and detailed references.

# **Adult Education:** Important for Health and Well-Being

## **Main report**

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Dr Deirdre Hughes OBE and Karen Adriaanse

October 2017

# 1 Introduction

**This paper, commissioned by the Institutes for Adult Learning, aims to increase awareness of the benefits that adult education can bring to the nation’s health and well-being. It also aims to stimulate further dialogue on how authoritative central and devolved government policies and practices can ensure that adult education remains a strategic priority so that there is increased demand for, access to and take-up of provision.**

It is high time for greater recognition of the powerful contribution adult education makes to individuals and families’ health and well-being. There is compelling evidence on the far-reaching benefits (World Health Organisation, 2016 UNESCO, 2016; Hughes & Adriaanse, 2016 ). Over the next fifteen years and beyond, countries will face a complex set of challenges relating to issues such as an ageing population, mass migration, employment, inequality, environmental sustainability and accelerating technological changes. Adult education is “a central component of public policies that can help address these challenges.” (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning). The message is clear - individuals who continue to learn throughout life are likely to build additional brain reserves - this can lead to healthier lives and healthy lifestyle choices. The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Well-being (July 2017) also highlights that arts and creative activities can make an invaluable contribution to a healthy and health-creating society.

For the purpose of this research, we have defined ‘adult education’ as referring to community-based provision that does not normally lead to a qualification. This is often the first step for many adults returning back into the field of education for many different reasons, including for their own personal development, or preparation for further training with qualifications and/or employment.

‘Health’ is defined as a relative state in which one is able to function well physically, mentally, socially, and spirituality within the environment in which one is living. ‘Well-being’ is about feeling good and functioning well and comprises an individual’s experience of their life; and a comparison of life circumstances with social norms and values. (Extract taken from ONS, 2013)

References to ‘outreach’ work in the report describes any targeted activity or intervention which provides information, advice and guidance (IAG), support, and inclusive teaching in a flexible manner, with the aim of building confidence, developing soft skills and raising attainment among this underrepresented community (OFFA, 2017, p.4) .

## 1.1 A national and regional strategy for adult education

In July 2016, the All Party Parliamentary Group for Adult Education highlighted the need to:

**“Establish a national and regional strategy for adult education, health, employability and well-being – bringing together the different departmental interests, led by a senior Minister to provide an accountability and quality assured framework at a national and regional level” (p.23).<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>2</sup> There needs to be clear criteria for providers to capture, collate and disseminate the full benefits of adult education, including improvements to their health and well-being and participation as an active citizen against the accountability and quality-assured framework (p.23).

# 1 Introduction

A key challenge is how best to realise this ambition. In England, more than one year on, there still exists 'a policy vacuum' when it comes to securing informal adult education in recognition of its wider benefits on health and well-being. Therefore, the Institutes for Adult Learning (IALs) decided to commission the University of Warwick, Institute for Employment Research (IER) to carry out follow-on research with a view to making recommendations to improve policy and practice to achieve the above-mentioned recommendation. Trying to join up all the relevant national policies at once may be difficult, so the report provides analysis and some practical recommendations for joining at least health and education policy, funding and practice as a starting point.

We have drawn upon available documentary evidence and further validated the findings with key informants from education and health sectors. Our approach is informed by evidence on the ways in which adult education supports individuals, families and communities' health and well-being, as well as the wider economy. We also consider what works in enabling those people furthest from the labour market in obtaining work and continuing to progress. At a time of political change, it is hoped that our recommendations will influence and contribute to the shaping of policy and practice through greater cross-sector and cross-departmental dialogue.

## 1.2 Our starting point - two big questions

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**Two big questions have arisen from our analyses:**

1. Why, if there is so much evidence of the positive impact and efficacy of adult education on individuals, communities and other public services, is it so neglected by policy-makers? Surely this route to prosperity and improved quality of life for both individuals and families, many of whom may not have succeeded in conventional learning environments, should be highly relevant in both national and local strategic priorities?
2. Why do policy makers of different government departments and local agencies fail to make sufficient links between the benefits of adult education on health and well-being? This lack of joined up policies often results in missed opportunities for collaborative and co-productive work between sectors and professionals. As a result of fragmented national policies, people often fall between the gaps in health and education practice.

Devolution of decision-making and budgets provides an ideal opportunity for better engagement of adult education providers to work with partners to improve health and well-being on a local and regional basis. But more work is needed to join-up national policies to ensure an authoritative approach that becomes a high strategic priority across the devolved areas.

## 1.3 Challenges: finding solutions

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There is a serious decline in the numbers of students participating in adult further education, as well as enrolment of part-time and mature students in higher education. This is mainly as a result of funding and policy decisions, including student loans. According to the latest Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) statistical release for 2016/17:

### **Adult Further Education has fallen every year since 2011**

1,966,500 learners had participated in adult further education by the third quarter of 2016/17, compared to 2,032,500 reported at this time in 2015/16, a decrease of 3.2 per cent.

Participation in both English and maths and Level 2 courses have decreased, whereas participation on Level 3 and Level 4 courses have increased. Level 4+ courses have increased by 43.0 per cent from 49,200 in 2015/16 to 70,400 in 2016/17.

### **Community learning continues to fall**

430,500 adult learners have been reported as participating on a community learning course so far in 2016/17, compared to 465,600 at this time in 2015/16, a decrease of 7.5 per cent.

## Family learning – the greatest fall is in intergenerational learning

25,600 took a Family English, Maths and Language course, a decrease of 19.7 per cent from 31,800 reported in the first three quarters of 2015/16 • 37,700 took a Wider Family Learning course, a decrease of 15.0 per cent from 44,300 reported in the first three quarters of 2015/16. Source: ESFA, July 2017

There is an urgent imperative to find ways of keeping more people switched on to learning throughout their life. The negative consequences of disengagement and failure of people to connect with meaningful opportunities are apparent when it comes to their health, well-being and active citizenship. Keeping more people switched on to learning matters, not only when it comes to the government's skills agenda, but of equal importance it matters when it comes to the nation's happiness, health and well-being.

- Local/ Combined authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) face relentless pressure on planning and funding local community services. There is a potential risk of a narrow (employment-focused) definition of outcomes that fails to recognise that individuals and communities also benefit greatly from community-based adult education that lead to improved social- and health-related outcomes.

Government Secretaries of State need to fully understand and engage in adult education's role in enabling individuals and families, particularly those most vulnerable, to improve their life chances and contribute to the national economy. There is a need to find creative solutions to a national problem that currently risks more adults 'switching off' lifelong learning. There is also a need to promote adult education's role in healthcare prevention strategies that contribute to towards easing demand on acute health services.

- Currently, it is mainly left up to adult education managers and practitioners on the ground to make connections with health sector professionals and organisations so that they understand the positive impact the provision has on learners' health and well-being and promote it to their patients or clients. Few have the training and/or seniority to do this effectively. What is really needed is a more systemic approach to policy-formation and partnerships between government, public, private and third sector organisations.

National and local policies must therefore focus on 'ratcheting up the demand' for adult education provision, particularly from healthcare sectors (and in healthcare contexts). There is a need to promote adult education's role in healthcare prevention strategies that contribute to towards easing demand on acute health services. At present, there is no consistent method nationally for measuring the impact of adult education, including the wider health benefits.

- Adult education providers use many different methods to measure the wider benefits of attending adult education – be they surveys, self-assessment or more scientific impact measures – but the key messages sometimes get lost and they are not presented in a more consistent format. Where public funding is concerned, there is a need for properly aligned and evidence-based assessments to be made at a national and local level to show impact and support a more integrated agenda in adult education, health and social care.

Commissioners in adult education, health and social care sectors currently have very different priorities and use evidence in very different ways. These sectors use impact assessment methods that involve differing approaches to how evidence is gathered, assessed and presented to potential funders. These complementary approaches have significant potential to be reconciled. The Rochdale Citizens Curriculum model using the New Economy cost-benefit approach could be a useful starting point.

- The newly formed 'Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships' (STPs, 2016/2017) which cover 44 areas in England are designed to improve health and care.<sup>3</sup> Each area has developed proposals built around the needs of the whole population in the area, not just those of individual organisations. This could provide an excellent opportunity for adult education and the health and social care sectors to link more closely in order to fully understand teach other's work and to promote the potential added-value and cost-effectiveness of joint activities.

<sup>3</sup> For further details refer to: NHS Planning Guidelines 2016/2017 – 2020/2021 - <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/planning-guid-16-17-20-21.pdf>

# 1 Introduction

In this context, there are two main types of adult education provision e.g. the more traditional education classes that enable learners to develop a skill or increase their knowledge that also frequently result in wider health and well-being benefits<sup>4</sup> – and provision that specifically aims to improve learners’ well-being through - co-location, specialist curriculum or tutors, or specific referrals from health professionals. While these may also have wider health, well-being and educational benefits – they are often not fully maximised when it comes to extended links between adult education, health and care sectors.

- It is very clear that discontinuities of funding, and in some parts of the country withdrawal of funding of local adult education provision, have genuinely restricted providers from offering more seamless adult education, health and social care services.

Yet despite this, we have found many examples of inspirational approaches, some of which are presented in this report. Adult education providers are embedded in local communities, and work very successfully with a very wide range of community organisations and businesses. The House of Lords Select Committee on the Long-term Sustainability of the NHS concurred that the health system of the future needed a greater focus on prevention, supported by adequate and reliable funding. The NHS Five Year Forward View (2017) sets out the NHS’ main national service improvement priorities. Such conditions indicate a ‘green light’ opportunity for adult education, health and social care policymakers to create the essential conditions for joint approaches and co-funding mechanisms.

- The groups that are more likely to have health and well-being issues are often those furthest away from participation in training and development. In this context, health professionals need to fully understand what adult education has to offer and its added-value benefits.

## 1.4 Acknowledgments

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We are very grateful to the Institutes for Adult Learning (IALs) who commissioned this research to feed into a formal Inquiry into Adult Education across England. We are indebted to those who volunteered their time to contribute to the ongoing research. We would like to thank Chris Butcher (WEA contract manager), Iram Naz (WEA Research Manager) and representatives from the research project Steering Group, as well as nine Specialist Designated Institutions (SDIs) - City Lit, Morley College, Hillcroft College, Northern College, Ruskin College, Working Men’s College, Mary Ward Centre, Fircroft College and the Workers’ Educational Association (WEA) – who each contributed and supported the research. Additionally, we are indebted to the following individuals and organisations who contributed to the research findings, participated in telephone interviews and/or gave us permission to share their views within the report: Michael Baber, Health Action Campaign, London; Jasi Bridgman, Birmingham Education Centre; Michael Conway-Jones, Fircroft College, Birmingham; Mark Ravenhall, Still Learning Ltd; Liz Stearn, Birmingham City Council; Sara Thomas, Bromley Bow Centre; and Jill Westerman, Northern College. Finally, a special thank you to Lynne Marston, IER Administrator, who kindly supported our work.

## 1.5 Report structure

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**Section 2** discusses why adult education, health and well-being matters in the context of groups in our society who do not share in the benefits of personal, social and economic growth to the same extent as others.

**Section 3** illustrates evidence-based findings and case studies showing ways in which adult education, health and well-being practices connect with one another in their complementary roles.

**Section 4** reviews trends in health and well-being and adult education within the current policy landscape and the opportunities that lie ahead for strategic partnerships.

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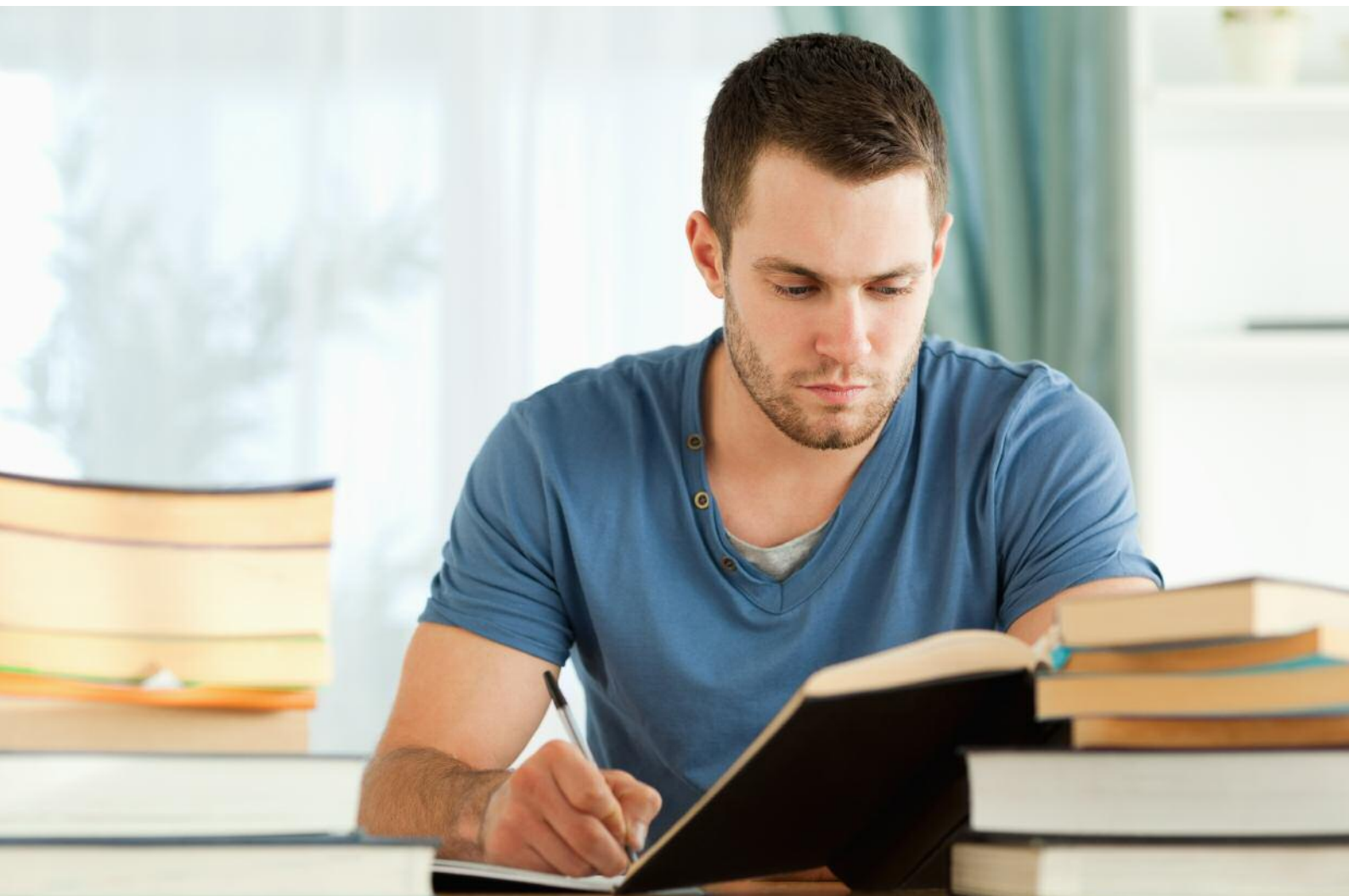
<sup>4</sup> Refer to the WEA Impact Study report 2016 – Retrieved from: - <https://www.wea.org.uk/news-events/news/wea-launches-2016-impact-report>



## 1 | Introduction

**Section 5** explores ways of leading to successful outcomes in health and well-being and provides some brief illustrations of good and interesting policies and practices to feed into future developments.

**Section 6** sets out what needs to change to stimulate demand for and access to more opportunities for all, particularly those most vulnerable in our society. It also highlights six key recommendations for implementation at a national, regional and local level.



# 2 Why adult education, health and well-being matter

**Adult education provides a route to better health and well-being and can help overcome persistent inequalities of access to opportunities.**

Adult education provides a route to better health and well-being and can help overcome persistent inequalities of access to opportunities.

In this chapter, we discuss why adult education, health and well-being matters in the context of groups in our society who do not share in the benefits of personal, social and economic growth to the same extent as others.

There is an expanding body of evidence to support the argument that adult education has an important contribution to make to health and well-being. The evidence features in scholarly work, research bodies, parliamentary reviews, professional journals, social partnerships, and other platforms. Most importantly, evidence is highly visible at grass roots level as reported by managers, practitioners and adult education participants. It spans both research and evaluation findings which indicate factors that increase the likelihood of individuals or families experiencing poor health and well-being include: unemployment, poor education, poor housing, poverty, discrimination, crime and/or family breakdown. These factors also impact on an individual's educational attainment and willingness to engage in education and learning across the life course (Barnes, Brown and Warhurst, 2016). However, these are also the groups that adult education providers are particularly successful in reaching through targeted outreach work.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) 'Commission on Social Determinants of Health' clearly recognises that material, psycho-social and political empowerment – gained through participation in society – underpins equitable health and wellbeing. It has prescribed a reduction in health inequalities across the life course – a key principle adopted within policy in the UK. The Marmot Review (2010) advocated a healthy standard of living for all and healthy and sustainable places and communities.

Whilst being sensitive to (and cautious of) over-stating the added-value contribution of adult education to health and well-being, the robust international and national evidence-base highlights:

## **Adult education can contribute to:**

- enhancing mental healthcare
- improving social care
- mitigating against social isolation
- contributing towards more cost-effective use of resources within the NHS
- helping older people to stay healthy and independent;
- improving recovery from illness;
- strengthening local services and promoting more cohesive communities;
- creating optimism and hope in the rehabilitation of prisoners; and
- contributing to equality of opportunity for people who are socially and/or economically disadvantaged.

## 2 | Why adult education, health and well-being matter

Adult education has provided a route to better health and well-being and can help overcome persistent inequalities of access to opportunities for a high proportion of learners.

### 2.1 Disadvantaged groups

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Research clearly shows there are groups in our society who do not share in the benefits of personal, social and economic growth to the same extent as others. The negative impact of this on individuals, communities and the health and social care system is clear. For example:

#### Impact on individuals

- Educational level predicts life expectancy, and disability-free life expectancy is unevenly distributed across the social spectrum.
- Older people living in deprived neighbourhoods are significantly more likely to experience difficulties than those in less deprived neighbourhoods, with high-status people experiencing the vitality of people fifteen years younger at the bottom of the social gradient. In turn, a lack of mobility exacerbates social isolation, has a negative impact upon health and diminishes participation in leisure activities.
- There is a relationship between homelessness and mortality, with the average life expectancy for homeless people being 47. As in other marginalised groups, the incidence of mental health problems among homeless people (four in five) is much higher than in the general population (one in six).
- Over half (54%) of all disabled people who are out of work, experience mental health and/or musculoskeletal conditions as their main health condition.
- Over 70 percent of prisoners have two or more diagnosable mental disorders and up to 7 percent of male prisoners and 14 percent of female prisoners have probable psychosis, 14 and 23 times the level in the general population.
- 12.6 million people in the UK lack basic digital skills and 5.3 million have never been online before. Health inequalities account for well in excess of £5.5 billion in healthcare costs to the NHS annually\*, and if the causes remained unaddressed then obesity alone would cost the NHS £5 billion in healthcare costs by the year 2025. There is a huge synergy between groups that are digitally excluded, and those at increased risk of poor health. As the shift towards digital by default services becomes more widespread throughout health services within the UK there is a danger that the inequalities in health already felt by these groups may become more pronounced. This means that those who are digitally included can more easily access services that will have positive impacts on their health; be it employment and benefits or health information and services.

#### Impact on communities

- People living in rural areas appear to have less access to training and development, as do those in deprived areas elsewhere, and those from lower socio-economic groups (Green et al, 2016).
- Almost 1 in 3 working-age people in the UK have a long-term health condition which puts their participation in work at risk. Absence from work annually costs the Government around £13bn in health-related benefits and £2bn in healthcare, sick pay and foregone taxes. Employers' share of sick pay amounts to around £9bn, while individuals lose out on earnings of £4bn per year.
- There are an estimated 5.5 million carers in England, 225,000 of whom are young and 110,000 of whom are over 85 (Carers UK, 2016). The value of unpaid care contributed to society by carers is estimated at £132bn, equivalent to spending on the NHS.

## 2.0 | Why adult education, health and well-being matter

### Impact on the health care system

- Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities are less likely to seek access to psychological therapies, therefore opportunities for early intervention are being missed. This means that the first contact members of BAME communities have with mental health services may well be detention under the Mental Health Act, causing unnecessary distress and placing pressure on acute services.
- Around 1 in 5 of the working-age population has a mental health condition. While the intended parity of esteem between mental and physical health has not yet been fully realised, recognition of this inter-relationship is highly relevant. Adult education approaches point to the inextricable link between the mental and physical aspects of education, health and social care.
- Public Health England (2016) estimates that in England there were 1,087,100 people with learning disabilities, including 930,400 adults (November 2015). The number of people with learning disabilities recorded in health and welfare systems is much lower, for example GPs identified 252,446 children and adults as having learning disabilities on their practice-based registers. (p.4) More recently, analysis of the health and well-being of adults with (predominantly mild) learning disabilities who have participated in major UK surveys (and are probably unlikely to be users of specialised learning disabilities services) has reported higher rates of physical and mental health problems and more problematic health behaviours when compared to participants without learning disabilities (op.cit. p.14).

Being marginal in society has a harmful effect upon health and well-being. Adult education has an important role in addressing marginalisation; the starkest case being new migrants and/or refugees (Bryers et al, 2014). In 2017, a survey of 2,290 people commissioned by the Mental Health Foundation found that nearly three quarters of people within the lowest household income bracket reported poor mental health (compared to three fifths in the highest bracket). We know that the causes of poor health are many i.e. a complex interaction between personal, financial, social and environmental factors. People from lower socio-economic groups are less likely to take part in education and training, especially if they have had earlier negative experiences.

## 2.2 Inter-generational factors

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Inter-generational factors, such as the relationship between parents and children, between grandparents and grandchildren, between the cared-for and their carers and between community residents of all ages, also impact significantly on people's lives. The environmental conditions in which individuals experience life have a profound effect upon their physical and mental health and well-being. There is a danger that any future strategy for adult education might ignore the hundreds of courses that do not end in a certificate, yet are hugely beneficial to our local communities and the broader population – especially to people's health and well-being.

In this report, we see many instances of the ways in which individuals and families benefit from engagement in adult education, health and well-being activities. In particular, adult education helps combat these issues through effective family learning, literacy and numeracy provision, and community classes.

# 3 Evidence-based findings and case studies

**People taking part in adult education activities are more likely to be healthier, happier and more resilient, and these positive effects can reach into the surrounding community.**

People taking part in adult education activities are more likely to be healthier, happier and more resilient, and these positive effects can reach into the surrounding community.

This chapter illustrates evidence-based findings and case studies showing ways in which adult education, health and well-being practices connect with one another in their complementary roles.

Research shows that adult education can lift people's motivation, confidence and sense of well-being. People taking part in adult education activities will be healthier, happier and more resilient, and these positive effects will reach into the surrounding community.

Adult education providers focus on reaching out to people who face many of the circumstances that are likely to have a negative impact on their health and well-being (Ofsted, 2016).

## 3.1 Preventing illness and infirmity from developing in the first place and worsening in the longer term

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Evidence presented below demonstrates that adult education has a significant role in preventing illness and infirmity from developing in the first place and worsening in the longer term. The All Party Parliamentary Group for Arts, Health and Well-Being (2017) point to 'environmental enrichment' as a strong means to improve cognitive functions, such as learning and memory, and to increase the willingness to explore. Living longer also means that more individuals are "living with long-term medical conditions, fluctuating and life limiting conditions, learning difficulties and mental illness" (JRF, 2016). People may retire and then lose a partner; or develop a chronic health condition and /or take on caring responsibilities for others. Some people are on journeys of personal transition, for example, coping with a disability, mental health or domestic issues, or addiction problems, recovering from an accident, being made redundant or preparing to leave prison.

Further evidence demonstrates that attending adult education provision can provide personal support, new skills and new interests that can support individuals through the multiple life changes adults experience throughout the lifecourse. For example:

*"Adult learning keeps you young and it keeps your brain active – especially when you're learning something new – stretching yourself. This is important for your well-being. Attending classes can also combat loneliness. (Adult Learner)*

### 3.0 | Evidence-based findings and case studies

The Worker's Educational Association (WEA) Impact Report 2016, indicates that "almost a third (30 percent) of WEA students reported having a physical health condition or illness (lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more), 14 percent a learning difficulty or a disability and 12 percent a mental health condition (lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more). Plus, a quarter (25 percent) reported being carers for their ill, disabled or elderly relatives or friends" (p.7).

Adult education can "provide people with reasons for joining learning programmes, as well as featuring in policy decisions on financing provision. The direct economic effects of lifelong learning include impacts on earnings, on employability, and on the wider economy. And since higher incomes or steady employment tend to have further effects on health, well-being and sociability, it also follows that the economic effects of learning have indirect outcomes" (Field, 2015) . For example:

" When I developed arthritis a couple of years ago, I knew I couldn't continue in construction. I felt on the scrap heap. I started a few adult learning courses to help me look for a new direction and found social sciences. I built my way up to level 3 and I am now at university, with a career ahead of me. " (Adult Learner)

#### Case study 1 – Mental Wealth Festival

##### An event that promotes 'mental wealth'

City Lit (in partnership with Books Beyond Words) has delivered the Mental Wealth Festival since 2015. This is a ground-breaking event that highlights how mental health issues impact on so many aspects of daily life, and how the arts, politics, culture, faith and the media can support our 'mental wealth'. The event celebrates and promotes activities, projects, ideas, tools and approaches that restore, support and enhance mental wealth. Whilst not shying away from addressing the problems in society that contribute to mental ill health, this festival focusses on the solutions and positive outcomes of mental wellbeing.

##### Opening up the debate

The Festival provides an open forum for debate and discussion and allows people to speak freely about their own experiences of mental health and wellbeing – with leading organisations contributing to the policy debate, including Mind and Rethink.

##### Planned outcomes for the 2017 festival

- the wide mix of people learning from one another;
- improved mental wellbeing and growth in self-confidence.
- providing a practical tool kit for wellbeing;
- care for carers;
- promoting accessibility and inclusion; and
- personal development and mindfulness.

Visit: <http://www.mentalwealthfestival.co.uk/2017-festival>



### Case study 2 – A community-centred deep dive approach

The Tinder Foundation has funded hundreds of hyper-local UK online centres to support their communities to improve their digital health literacy skills. These centres embed digital health literacy within existing digital skills provision, and form local partnerships with GPs, CCGs, other health professionals and other organisations to reach people who could benefit from improved digital health literacy skills. A smaller number of Innovation Pathfinders have also tested innovative approaches to embedding digital health literacy within existing provision, testing new technologies and working with new partners. The Tinder Foundation has also created new resources on the Learn My Way website to support people to improve digital literacy skills. Visit: <https://www.learnmyway.com/> Two courses – one focused on finding information on NHS Choice and another on using GP services online – helped local organisations to deliver digital health literacy learning, and helped individuals to improve their skills.

#### NHS Widening Digital Participation

The programme, co-ordinated by the Tinder Foundation, has seen how the use of digital technologies can drive efficiencies for doctors and the wider NHS, relieve pressure on frontline services and deliver flexibility, convenience and control for patients – ultimately improving health outcomes. Patient activation was identified as key in improving health outcomes, and digital health support was recognised for its potential role in prevention, improving the ongoing management of chronic health conditions, and building patient trust and interaction with health and social care services. The community-centred, deep dive approach trialled ways for the NHS to work more effectively with voluntary organisations to support broader health goals in local communities.

#### Results

By connecting people to online communication tools, online support networks and information on anything from benefits to hobbies – the programme supported wider wellbeing and began to address the often complex issues behind poor physical and mental health. That in turn had an impact on people's use of frontline services, giving GPs options for signposting and patients new options for information and assistance. A total of 221,941 people were supported to learn to use digital health resources and tools since the beginning of the NHS Widening Digital Participation project. A total of 387,470 people engaged to raise awareness of digital health resources and tools since the beginning of the project. People were trained in year 3 as digital health champions or volunteers to help promote the awareness and use of digital health resources. A total of 8,138 volunteers were trained since the beginning of the programme. The programme has targeted the most vulnerable patients – the heaviest users of NHS services and those also most likely to be amongst Britain's 12.6 million digitally excluded.

Visit: <http://nhs.goodthingsfoundation.org/#section3>



### 3.2 Enhancing well-being and quality of life for people of all ages

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Research into the wider benefits of learning carried out over the last ten years in Britain and Finland investigated how individuals, groups, organisations and society benefit from continued education. The results support the significance of adult education, and their general message is in line with previous studies. “Liberal adult education has a wide range of individual and social benefits” (op.cit). Ten benefit factors were identified which include: locus of control, self-efficacy, sense of purpose in life, tolerance, social engagement, changes in educational experience, health, mental well-being, work and family. In other words, the benefits of taking part in adult education are often perceived as non-economic ones but actually we know progression from ‘informal learning’ can make people more economically active and contributes to a nation’s growth.





#### Case study 3 – Wider benefits to adult learners

An adult education provider highlighted the following examples of the wider benefits of attending adult education classes, mostly funded through the community learning budget, that indicate potential savings to public funds, such as health or benefit budgets:

- A British Sign Language learner now volunteers helping deaf patients to communicate whilst in hospital.
- A learner has said she had been able to avoid/delay the need for surgery to her spine through the regular practice of yoga.
- Many learners report stress reduction through learning, especially yoga, keeping them from seeking medical support.
- 2 learners reported techniques learned through yoga help to lower blood pressure and decrease level of tablets.
- Learners on Family Learning Healthy Eating courses have developed healthier lifestyles/eating habits.
- A learner who joined a 'Confidence Building Course' -was discharged from her Community Psychiatric Nurse and had the confidence to join a computing course and has now got a job within a Care Home.
- A learner in his late 20s who had recovered from alcohol addiction completed a functional skills course at level 2 and has begun volunteering with an organisation for homeless people.
- A woman in her early 30s, administrator, was unemployed for last two years with a depression related illness resulting in loss of confidence and self-esteem. After attending adult education courses, she has re-entered the job market this summer and has secured work placement with Childline.
- Two women returned to keep fit community classes after serious accidents under the careful watch of a qualified to and care professionals. They have eventually returned to complete mobility.

### 3.3 Reducing the gap between 'the haves and have nots'

The Social Mobility Commission (June 2017) indicates new divides have opened up in Britain, across geographies, income groups and generations - and that many policies of the past are no longer 'fit for purpose'. Inequalities of social and cultural capital inevitably imply unequal outcomes from informal learning in the family and home (Tuckett & Field, 2016). It needs to be more widely recognised that using adult education in health and well-being contexts and/or with positive health and well-being outcomes can address disadvantage, discrimination and exclusion and bring communities more closely together. It can also help individuals to become more active citizens and add more value to their personal lives. There is clear evidence of a significant relationship between less diverse social networks and poverty for disadvantaged people from ethnic minority backgrounds (JRF, 2015).

#### Case study 4 – Greater Manchester’s Work and Skills Strategy

##### Strategic direction

Greater Manchester’s Work & Skills Strategy, and the emerging Outcomes Framework indicates that it will provide the strategic steer for implementing and prioritising the devolved adult education budget. Greater Manchester recognises that in the past Adult Skills funding had been a ‘catch-all’ for a whole range of provision.

##### An integrated skills system

Going forward, devolution of the adult education budget provides an early opportunity to begin to deliver the integrated work and skills system that Greater Manchester (the authority) seeks. Its ambition is that in the future, effective joint planning and decision-making between partners will ensure that all skills activity delivered will be supporting achievement of the locally developed outcomes. In particular it enables the authority to be more flexible with funding to focus more on priority outcomes, rather than outputs and qualifications.

##### Increased recognition of wider outcomes

Qualifications will continue to remain important, particularly for basic skills to Level 2 to provide a strong learning foundation, however alone they do not provide the wider measure of outcomes needed, and will not be the sole focus of funding.

##### Visit:

<https://democratic.trafford.gov.uk/documents/s6844/Item%206b%20GMCA%20Social%20Value%20Policy%20Framework.pdf>

### 3.4 Improving functional literacy, numeracy and digital skills

Five million adults lack functional literacy and numeracy skills, and 11 million do not have basic digital skills (Learning & Work Institute, 2017). They indicate that even at the current rate of enrolment in learning, and assuming all learners gain the skills they need, it would take 20 years to support all the adults that would benefit from help. This suggests a new approach is needed - one that is more focused on people’s capabilities and interests rather than a primary focus on qualifications. Instead, a greater focus by policymakers and funding bodies on prioritising meaningful outcomes and progress, such as meeting health and well-being targets that people achieve as a result of attending classes, is now needed.

#### Case study 5 - Citizens Skills Curriculum for adults

##### A holistic approach

The ‘Citizen Skills Entitlement’ for adults, is an evolving framework proposed by the Learning and Work Institute (2016). It sets out an innovative, holistic approach to ensure everyone has the English, maths, digital, civic, health and financial capabilities they need. The Citizens’ Curriculum taps into what motivates adults to learn, through giving learners a voice in co-designing curriculum content and careful contextualization, ensuring that more people are learning skills which are relevant to their lives and their work.

##### Implementing the approach nationally

The Institute calls for cities and local areas to commission a Citizens’ Curriculum approach as the Adult Education Budget is devolved and to work with providers and to design provision that embeds this approach (Learning and Work Institute, 2017). Visit: <http://www.learningandwork.org.uk/our-work/life-and-society/citizens-curriculum/>

#### 3.5 Addressing many of the challenges the health and social care system is facing

The British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) analysis indicates adults' participation in a part-time course can lead to:

- improvements in health, which has a value of £148 to the individual;
- a greater likelihood of finding a job and/or staying in a job, which has a value of £231 to the individual; better social relationships, which has a value of £658 to the individual; and
- a greater likelihood that people volunteer on a regular basis, which has a value of £130 to the individual (Fujiwara, 2012)

Health is a dominant factor in how most people define their quality of life. The UK Government's Foresight report on mental capital and well-being highlighted the costs of over £100 billion for mental ill-health in the UK, and £27 billion to UK plc in terms of sickness absence, presenteeism (i.e. the practice of being present at one's place of work for more hours than is required, especially as a manifestation of insecurity about one's job) and labour turnover. In addition, nearly 40 per cent of all incapacity benefit at work is due to the common mental disorders of depression, anxiety and stress. Other first-hand examples from adult learners include:

"I was advised by my GP to come. They need more information to attract more people to adult learning" (Adult Learner)

"This learning centre is saving the cost of social services. There are so many social issues that adult learning is dealing with that would otherwise cost the government a great deal." (Adult Learner)

Our research shows that adult education embedded within strong national and local partnerships can contribute significantly to tackling the root causes of ill-health in places where people live and work. Adult education can motivate individuals and make them 'ready to learn and/or earn – and this has knock-on health and well-being benefits. Reviewing and improving the way that education, health and well-being services are arranged and accessed within local communities is an urgent imperative. For example, health policy-makers and professionals talk about 'personalised' or 'stratified' medicine and what they really are trying to deliver in both diagnosis and treatment of a particular patient. So too, education policy-makers and practitioners talk about 'personalised' individual and family learning and new curricula designed to respond to health and well-being issues. It is therefore critical that the contribution of adult education including its contribution to improving health and well-being (which are pre-requisites for progression into and within employment) must not be lost or forgotten within current and any new devolution arrangements.

#### Case study 6 – University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust and Birmingham Adult Learning working together – Inspired Project

##### The provision

The University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust (UHB) Learning Hub in partnership with Birmingham Adult Education Service has developed a unique and successful project named 'Inspired' which offers information, advice and guidance (IAG) to patients and referrals to training courses.

##### Funding

The provision is funded through the Adult Community Learning Fund.

The IAG is offered mainly through a dedicated outreach worker who links with specific clinical departments at the hospital who have agreed to be involved.

##### How the project works

- Medical personnel refer patients to the outreach worker for a guidance session

- The outreach worker also promotes the service directly to patients attending the clinics
- The guidance sessions are used to provide patients with information and advice on relevant adult education courses that are available at the UHB Learning Hub.

#### As a result of this pilot

- Referrals to IAG sessions have now been built into the Trust's electronic prescription devices.
- Doctors or nurses can therefore prescribe a referral to IAG alongside a patient's medical prescription.
- These electronic notifications for IAG are then sent to training centre staff within the Trust Learning Hub.
- This system can continue and be extended into other clinical areas.

#### Success factors

The project draws on and extends further a good working relationships between training staff based at the UHB 'Learning Hub' and clinical staff.

### 3.6 Saving money in health and social care

Participation in adult education can reduce demand for medication and clinicians' time, thereby reducing sickness absence from work and, in many cases, delaying the need for residential care. Adult education performs a significant role in reaching out (and into) communities to bring people back into learning and to support their health and well-being but this requires policy interest and support. This proactive approach to community health and well-being is needed to enable people to be work ready, to integrate well in communities and to stimulate greater demand for learning. For example:

“Adult learning has a direct impact on cost savings [...] especially social services and those funding mental and physical health. I would have been on anti-depressants if I didn't come here for the writing group. It has given me a sense of belonging and purpose.” (Adult Learner July 2016 p29)

This case study below demonstrates how courses jointly funded by adult education and the local NHS Trust have supported a specific target group of patients and increased efficiency for the health service.

#### Case study 7 – Jointly-funding English language courses for NHS patients

##### The provision

A local authority provider worked in partnership with its local NHS Trust to run 39 English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses for NHS patients.

##### Funding

This was jointly funded by the provider and NHS Trust that enabled those patients who otherwise would not have had the possibility of learning English in a health context as the provision did not meet SFA funding criteria. The project enabled those patients who otherwise would not have had the possibility of learning English in a health context due to restrictions with the SFA.

##### The benefits for learners included:

- the ability to make and attend their GP appointments without a family member
- increased confidence and the ability to speak with clinicians

- the ability to explain their symptoms to their GP
- progression onto higher level ESOL courses

#### The benefits for the NHS Trust included:

- a reduction in the need for interpreters
- fewer problems for reception staff and clinicians i.e. less time trying to understand patients whose first language is not English
- higher level of patient understanding of NHS services
- patients accessing services at the right point
- fewer patients turning up at A&E for minor complaints.

### 3.7 Responsive to meeting adults' differing learning needs

Evidence also shows that adult education providers are particularly responsive to meeting adults' differing learning needs. With learners covering an age range of 19 to 103 adult education successfully reaches out to people at different stages of their lives and at different transition points. It has focused its attention to developing provision that has wider personal and social benefits for adults, especially those facing changes or difficult personal circumstances. Today, most brochures or websites on adult education will have courses on music, art, dance, wellbeing and mindfulness etc.

#### Case study 8 – An example of a course that targets people with actual or potential health and well-being issues

##### The provision

Oxfordshire Adult Learning, a faculty of Abingdon and Witney College, delivered a programme of courses called 'Learning for Wellbeing' aimed at people 19+ in Oxfordshire with mild to moderate mental health difficulties (such as low mood, low confidence, low self-esteem, stress, anxiety and depression) in 2015/16

##### Funding

The provision was part of a pilot project funded by the Department for Education and was free to participants. These short six-week courses are no longer funded.

The course typically offered learners:

- relaxation tips to manage stress and anxiety
- building your resilience toolkit for meeting life's challenges
- lift your mood through exercise and music
- meditation and yoga for depression.

##### The benefits to learners

- Many learners experienced an improvement in terms of mood/depression or anxiety as evidenced on mental health assessment tools.
- Some learners progressed to mainstream community learning courses, volunteering or employment.
- Many learners stated that they could resume a social life which they had previously lacked.
- Many learners developed tools which helped them to self-manage the mental health difficulties that they experienced.

#### Staff training

Oxfordshire Adult learning has provided mental health awareness training for all its adult tutors and careers guidance advisers.

See: <http://www.abingdon-witney.ac.uk.oal>

### 3.8 Targeting provision

The increased focus on targeting provision for people with actual or potential health and well-being issues has also called for more specialist training for support staff. Providers also work in partnership with niche organisations so that their learners can benefit from specialist training or activities.

#### Case study 9 - Providers frequently work in partnership with niche health organisations

##### The provision

Northern College, a residential college, plans weekly activities for their learners that include health and well-being activities, often provided by partner organisations, such as:

- Qdos (external organisation) provide workshops for physical activities for posture, body language and relaxation techniques to help students feel more confident and positive about yourself
- External organisation (Plus Me) visiting college and offering learners a rapid screening service for Blood Borne Viruses, including testing for HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C, including literature and advice and guidance
- NHS provides activities, literature and advice and guidance for Healthy Eating.

##### The benefits for learners

Participation in these activities and/or specialist training often provide multiple benefits for learners, including: greater self-confidence; specialist knowledge on specific health issues and information that support healthier lifestyles.

Visit: <http://www.northern.ac.uk/>

It is clear to see the multi-faceted benefits of these partnerships, but it is equally important to acknowledge and promote the wider benefits of core adult education, that covers a very wide range of subjects from creative writing, modern foreign languages, visual and performing arts, as well as literacy, numeracy and English as a Second Other Language (ESOL). For example:

“ We’re living here so we need to speak English [...] it’s better for the country and for the society that we have English skills. There are therefore high returns for the investment in helping us all improve our language skills.” (Adult Learner)

Often ESOL learners emphasise the importance of speaking and listening skills as these enabled them to communicate with people in their community. This places onus on health professionals as well as adult education professionals to facilitate community outreach provision and referrals to appropriate provision.

## Case study 10 – Health and Education staff improving health in the community

### Co-location and integration of education and health services

The Bromley by Bow Centre is an innovative community organisation in east London. It supports families, young people and adults to learn new skills, improve their health and wellbeing, find employment and develop the confidence to achieve their goals and transform their lives.

#### The provision

A full range of GP services across three surgeries operate side by side with almost 70 non-medical programmes including social prescribing (non-medical support for health and well-being), weight management and fitness programmes, employment and skills training, social enterprise incubation, inclusive arts, advice, money management and 'English for health' courses.

By co-locating adult education and GP services, it creates numerous opportunities for teams to work together and with the community. For example, the Centre developed a series of teaching and learning materials that allow tutors to embed health issues in ESOL courses. Fourteen packs have been developed, each consisting of a health-themed reader and teaching resources about different health topics specifically for use with Entry Level ESOL learners in English classes. For more information and access to downloadable materials visit: <http://www.bbbsc.org.uk/health-literacy-materials>

#### The approach

At the core of what Bromley by Bow does are active values, for example:

- be compassionate
- be a friend
- have fun
- assume it's possible.

And it is by co-locating services that they can create an environment where the organisation's values and an asset-based understanding of health can become a reality. The key ways that they ensure our values are living and relevant to people visiting our service is by ensuring accessibility, integrated services and understanding of an individual's long-journey.

**Accessibility:** Making it easy for people to access support by bringing services together and delivering a friendly and sensitive service in high quality buildings that are built within a three acre award winning community managed park.

**Integrated Services:** Offering a broad holistic range of services so people can find help for both their most immediate problems and longer-term deep-seated issues.

**Long Journeys:** Encouraging people to gradually build up the skills and confidence they need to progress in life and build a positive future for themselves and their families.

**The advantage of this model** is that it gives a higher priority to preventing illness and is likely to have produced significant benefits for the community's health.

#### Visit:

<http://www.bbbsc.org.uk/health-and-wellbeing>

Adult education providers are particularly effective at understanding the barriers may learners face when entering a course, often for the first time in many years and providing a very wide range of additional support.



### Case study 11: Supporting learners to access learning

#### The approach

Fircroft College, a residential college, has a 'Fitness to Study' policy. This involves providing a nurturing environment and supporting adults to make fair and transparent decisions at a point in time when they may not seem well enough to benefit from adult education. The College has been praised by its business partners for its nurturing environment and has invested in providing specialist support.

- The proportion of learners with mental health issues, learning difficulties and/or disabilities (44%) or on long-term benefits (35%) are high and have increased over the years. Consequently additional support was provided on 73% of its 2015/16 courses to 208 learners.

#### The benefit for learners

1. Their health and wellbeing are more positively and consistently managed
2. They can attend when they are best able to achieve, rather than setting them up to fail
3. Active collaboration takes place between learner, college and external support agencies
4. Solutions and support can be put in place
5. Assessments and expectations are clearly set out
6. Interventions are kept at an appropriate level
7. They have a way back into college when expectations not met

Visit: <http://fircroft.ac.uk/>





### 3.9 Evidence-base conclusion

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Too much of this good work and the personal and social benefits of adult education go unrecognised by politicians and policymakers, as well as those not directly involved in the sector. Two years ago, Ofsted made some significant changes to its inspection methodology. These included grading and reporting on types of provision, including adult education, separately, introducing a new judgement on learners' personal development, behaviour and welfare. Ofsted's first Annual Report 2015/16 since these changes found that where provision was good, learners developed the skills and confidence they needed to prepare for work because leaders worked well with employers and community groups to develop relevant courses. In particular, inspectors found that where adult education was done well, it supported wider government policies on localism, social justice, stronger families, digital inclusion and social mobility. For example, 'In providers judged good or outstanding, the shift in funding emphasis has led to vibrant and innovative approaches to community learning for those aged 60 and above' (p.101). However, there were concerns that the falling participation rates for this age group highlighted the need for local authorities, as community learning and skills providers, to develop partnerships that will stimulate community activity in areas where social networks are poorly developed because of deprivation or rural geography.

# 4 What's happening in the current policy landscape?

**There is a strong case for more joint strategic priorities and policies of intent for adult education, health and social care provision for adults**

In this chapter we review trends in health and well-being and adult education within the current policy landscape and the opportunities that lie ahead for strategic partnerships.

## 4.1 Regional inequalities

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It is clear that regional inequalities have widened despite repeated efforts to address them. For example, London and the South East have grown faster than the rest of the country. This disparity deepened after the 2008 financial crisis, leaving behind many rural and coastal areas as well as many older industrial parts of the North and Midlands (Social Mobility Commission, 2017 p. 84). Some adult education research studies are currently under way, including a partnership with the former Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) - now led by the Department for Education (DfE) - and 60 local authorities in England, to examine whether short, part-time community learning courses help people develop strategies to manage their mild to moderate mental health problems (Foresight, Government Office for Science, 2016). This is an example of a 'green light' opportunity for adult education, health and social care policymakers to create the essential conditions for joint approaches and co-funding mechanisms.

## 4.2 Cross-departmental policies

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Looking ahead to new policy formation, a brief review of current cross-departmental policy documents and other research to identify where there are potential links between adult education and health and well-being policy and practice highlight:

- The NHS Five Year Forward View (2017) which sets out the NHS' main national service improvement priorities;
- The forthcoming devolution of the Adult Education Budget has enabled co-design of the new Department for Work and Pensions Work and Health Programme;
- The 'Improving Lives: The Work, Health and Disability Green Paper (October 2016) , jointly prepared by the Department of Health and the Department for Work and Pensions, working closely with the Department for Communities and Local Government, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, NHS England, Public Health England, local government, and other partners - sets out challenges and opportunities to enable more people to reach their potential;

## 4 | What's happening in the current policy landscape?

- A new national Carers Strategy, supported by the Department of Health – focuses on the six and a half million people throughout the country who provide unpaid care and support to people who would otherwise find it difficult to manage;
- The Foresight policy research reports commissioned by the Government Office for Science.

### 4.3 Health and social care policies in England

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- The government has announced its commitment to ensuring one million more people can access mental health services by 2020

In England, trends in the health and social care policy context, include a mandate from the Government to NHS England: April 2017 to March 2018 which sets out the government's commitment to one of the most ambitious expansion plans for mental health services in Europe, ensuring one million more people can access services by 2020 (p.6). The mandate also states:

“We expect NHS England to strive to reduce the health gap between people with mental health problems, learning disabilities and autism and the population as a whole, and support them to live full, healthy and independent lives. This will require great strides in improving care and outcomes through prevention, early intervention and improved access to integrated services to ensure physical health needs are addressed too.” (NHS England 2017 -2018, p.11, para. 2.14).

In 2017, the House of Lords Select Committee on the Long-term Sustainability of the NHS concurred that the health system of the future needed a 'greater focus on prevention, supported by adequate and reliable funding' (p.9). The report recommended that responsibility for adult social care should be assumed by the DoH and pointed to an urgent need to reinvigorate the integration of health and social care and to rethink the statutory mechanisms needed to deliver it. The Government has undertaken to produce a Green Paper on this.

The NHS Five Year Forward View (2017) sets out the NHS' main national service improvement priorities. This includes work with the Department of Health, other national partners and local areas to agree and support the implementation of local devolution deals which include health proposals. The overall objective to improve outcomes for improved health and well-being outcomes, experience of care by the patients and value for money (p.21). The Health and Social Care Act (2012) provided for the creation of the NHS Commissioning Board, PHE and a series of Health and Well-being boards (HWBs). These provide a forum in which clinical, professional, political and community leaders can come together to plan how best to meet the needs of their local populations and tackle health inequalities. The Health and Social Care Act also legislated for the creation of 210 Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) across England responsible for commissioning the majority of NHS services, including elective hospital care and rehabilitative care, urgent and emergency care, most community health services, maternity services and mental health and learning disability services.

As part of the shift towards primary care in the community, CCGs are populated by and accountable to GPs. CCG representatives sit on Health and Well-being Boards, alongside directors of public health and adult and children's services, and together they formulate strategies based on Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs). CCGs play a central role in formulating strategic priorities and have a commitment to reducing health inequalities. Local/Combined authorities take the lead on improving public health and well-being, while providing advice and expertise on how to ensure that the health services (which CCGs) commission best improve the population's health and reduce health inequalities. Our evidence shows CCGs perform a key role in allocating NHS funds at a local level, therefore, surely it make sense for the purse holders

## 4 | What's happening in the current policy landscape?

of preventive health measures get together with adult education funders. Central government needs to make this happen through new incentives linked specifically to national strategic priorities that clearly address these issues.

Devolution of decision-making and budgets provides an ideal opportunity for stronger strategic impetus that facilitates better collaboration between adult education providers and organisations working in health and well-being on a local and regional basis. Partnerships with local health providers will enable providers to make their contribution to meeting major challenges in health and social care alongside the education and skills agenda. Greater Manchester is the first of the city regions with a directly elected metro mayor to have made the arts and culture integral to its health and well-being strategy. It represents a model of good policy-making that could be replicated for the adult education sector?

Social Prescribing is a means of enabling GPs and other frontline healthcare professionals to refer patients to a link worker - to provide them with a face-to-face conversation during which they can learn about the possibilities and design their own personalised solutions, i.e. 'co-produce' their 'social prescription' - so that people with social, emotional or practical needs are empowered to find solutions which will improve their health and wellbeing, often using services provided by the voluntary and community sector. It is an innovative and growing movement, with the potential to reduce the financial burden on the NHS and particularly on primary care. When it comes to adult education lessons can be learned from 'Prescriptions for Learning' and earlier research undertaken by NIACE (James, 2001).

### Case study 12 – Piloting feasibility projects in Gloucestershire

#### Exploring the impact of arts-based projects on improving health

For example, in Gloucestershire, a series of 12 feasibility projects, each costing in the region of £10,000, have been developed across the life course, exploring whether arts-based approaches could help in the self-management of a range of chronic health conditions including type 1 diabetes, dementia, cancer, chronic pain, obesity, depression and anxiety.

#### Social prescribing plus

This use of nonmedical interventions to meet medical needs is described by the CCG as "social prescribing plus". They highlight the programme has been underpinned by co-production, whereby artists, clinicians, patient representatives and commissioners worked together to design, develop and deliver interventions. It has been evaluated by the CCG, Create Gloucestershire and the University of Gloucestershire, and a report is due before the end of 2017 - (Extract taken from: All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing Inquiry Report, July 2017 – p. 27).

There are many other interesting examples of co-production activities between adult education, health and well-being professionals, taking place in differing parts of England. In Nottingham, the CCG has made a commitment to "help those who are largely well today (most of the population) stay well through prevention and health education and manage minor issues themselves in so far as it is possible.

## 4.4 Adult education policies in England

In the Chancellor's Spending Review/Autumn Statement in November 2015 and in further announcements within the Budget in March 2016, it was confirmed that the Adult Education Budget (AEB) would be devolved to the nine LEP/combined authority (CA) areas with devolution deals in place from the 2018/19 academic year onwards. The principal purpose of the new Adult Education Budget (AEB), introduced in 2017/18 is to fund learning that engages more adults and helps people to move towards work, an apprenticeship or further learning, or helps people who are furthest from learning and/or the workplace. Funding to support the Adult Education Budget (circa £311.3m) includes the National Careers Service, quality improvement, data collection and management, and financial support for learners. It is pleasing to note that this figure also includes funding for community learning health pilots.

The Government's view is that the AEB funds a local service to support local labour market conditions and future economic

## 4 | What's happening in the current policy landscape?

development. There are considerable growing pressures on demand for the AEB, such as the emerging digital skills policy, and a focus on skills. This could though have financial implications for local areas and limits what else can be funded.

Devolution of the AEB and devolution on a wider scale present real opportunities. Subject to devolution deals being in place and “readiness conditions” being met funding decisions will rest with local skills commissioners. They will play a key role in local government reform agendas, linking with other activity aimed at supporting residents into productive and sustained quality employment, as part of an integrated education, work, skills and health system. It is currently unclear if the 2018/2019 timetable is achievable and who the skills commissioners will be in all areas, but early indications suggest that there will be local variation with commissioners in place from a wide range of backgrounds.

- The commissioning of the AEB could provide a significant opportunity to cross formal departmental boundaries to meet local skills demand and improve employability and social inclusion

In order to make the case for funding to local skills commissioners, providers will need to be able to describe the role and contribution of the adult education sector in achieving local priorities. It will be important to ensure that the AEB is targeted where it can have the greatest impact and identify where other employment and skills budgets, as well as those for health and social care might be better placed to deliver, or alternatively co-finance the support.

Choices will need to be made by the combined or local authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and partners, about what and who to prioritise, particularly, when it is estimated that the AEB could easily be spent many times over on essential statutory and policy entitlements alone. ESOL is an example of how AEB funded provision will need to be prioritised for improving employability and social cohesion. Agencies will be required to have in place robust data analytics to demonstrate that they understand the patterns and levels of need in their area, are developing provision to respond accordingly to this, and can show impact and accountability. Through their individual learner record (ILR) data returns, many providers will have to evidence their performance against outcomes-based success measures.

There are significant variations between local authority areas in relation to levels of education of adults. For example, to support future integrated skills and employment commissioning in Greater Manchester against locally driven outcomes, the key partners have been developing the Greater Manchester Outcomes Framework. This will initially guide expenditure and use of AEB, and can be used to guide other skills and employment focused funded activity such as the Work & Health Programme. This approach reinforces the need to focus on access to education and training at a local level, progression, and quality outcomes

### 4.5 Moving forward

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The adult education sector is working hard to establish and further develop partnership links with key strategic players as new local arrangements gradually unfold. They are highly supportive of the TLAP philosophy and approach.

Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) – a DoH-funded partnership of central and local government, the NHS, provider organisations, people who use services and carers – defines co-production as ‘an equal relationship between people who use services and the people responsible for services [...] from design to delivery, sharing strategic decision-making about policies as well as decisions about the best way to deliver services’

This approach challenges professionals and organisations to avoid working in silos, discover shared territory and join forces, where appropriate. By commissioning this research, the Institutes of Adult Learning working with the All Party Parliamentary Party for Adult Education appear to be ready to meet this particular challenge.

# 5 Leading to successful health and well-being outcomes

**There is a national adult education policy vacuum, which needs to be filled. It is essential that the Government takes the lead and determines a strategy for adult education, health and well-being that brings together the different departmental interests.**

## 5.1 Lessons to be learned

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There is a potential risk of a narrow (employment-focused) definition of outcomes that fails to recognise that individuals and communities also benefit greatly from social, education and health-related outcomes (Gambin & Hogarth, 2016). Internationally, successful learning cities like Malmö or Shanghai have recognised the merits in sub-regional coalitions to stimulate learning across the life-span, and Glasgow and Bristol offer effective examples of the value of a learning cities approach to motivation and engagement more locally (Tuckett & Field, 2016). The academic network PASCAL shares research developments in learning cities and UNESCO's Lifelong Learning Institute has taken a lead role in co-ordinating co-operation between them.

In other devolved countries, strategic frameworks are in place to guide and support health inequalities. For example:

- For example, in Northern Ireland a strategic framework for public health (2013 -2023) was published in 2014. This aims to reduce health inequalities through action across the life course. The draft Programme for Government 2016–21 includes the reduction of health inequalities, the improvement of healthy life expectancy and increased participation in culture in its list of desired national indicators.
- In Wales, 24 per cent of the population live in poverty. In 2009, the Welsh Government launched a strategic framework, entitled 'Our Healthy Future'. Health boards cover all aspects of care and operate according to a set of principles which include the attainment of health and well-being through collaboration and co-production mechanisms. The Well-Being of Future Generations Act (2015) compels all public bodies to consider the impact of their decisions upon the social, economic, environment and cultural well-being of the people.
- In Scotland, the National Performance Framework for Scotland was published in March 2016. Prior to this, a Ministerial Task Force on Health Inequalities published a report entitled 'Equally Well' (2008). This framed and prioritised health inequalities as both a matter of social justice and a means of achieving sustainable economic growth. 'Equally Well' contained useful guidance on areas of policy that are likely to be effective in reducing health inequalities, acknowledging cultural conditions as a factor. Around this time, a new scale was launched to enable the measurement of wellbeing at a population level: 'The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale [WEMWBS]. This was funded by the Scottish Government's National Programme for Improving Mental Health and Well-being, commissioned by NHS Health Scotland, developed by the University of Warwick and the University of Edinburgh'. It is based upon the understanding that subjective well-being can be used to measure a particular programme's effectiveness.

## 5 | Leading to successful health and well-being outcomes

WEMWBS has been included in the Health Survey for England and the Scottish Health Survey. It was also inserted into the British Cohort Study 1970 (BCS70) at age 42 alongside questions about arts engagement, yielding a dataset of around 17,000 entries, which enables cross-sectional associations between subjective well-being and arts engagement to be studied at scale. There are other measures and tools that aim to capture health and well-being such as: The Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7 (GAD-7) measures that assesses learners' levels of anxiety before and after a course. For example, this was a requirement for providers on the earlier Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (now led by DfE) community learning and mental health project, as mentioned above.

### 5.2 How to best measure impact?

A key question is: to what extent are national policy-makers and local Commissioners of adult education, health and well-being in England aware of such approaches and how can good/interesting research be scaled effectively? There needs to be agreement on the measurement and assessment tools recognised by government and Commissioners responsible for national and local funding. As our evidence has shown, places such as Greater Manchester, Gloucestershire and Nottingham are focused on addressing these and other local issues.

Over the last five years or so, adult education providers in England have considered how to best measure the impact of their work in terms of the 'personal development and well-being outcomes' or added-value that is more difficult to measure than achievement of learning outcomes and qualifications.

#### Case study 13 – Measuring improvement in mental health on adult learning project

##### BIS Community Learning Mental Health Pilots

The Northern College took part in the BIS Community Learning Mental Health pilot programme, which was highly successful. A large number of college students reported having mental health issues and this pilot project enabled a focussed engagement, including some measuring of the impact of the learning at Northern College on the mental health of participants with mild to moderate mental ill health.

##### Using the GAD7 measures

Providers of this programme were required by BIS to use the Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7 (GAD-7) measures to assess learners' levels of anxiety before and after the course.

The results of a wellbeing retreat attended at Northern College by 37 students showed on average depression levels halved and anxiety levels more than halved. Nine individuals reported that they no longer had any depression or anxiety symptoms and a number subsequently came entirely off medication.

**Visit:** <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16717171> and <https://patient.info/doctor/generalised-anxiety-disorder-assessment-gad-7>

Adult education providers are making good use of learner surveys and self-assessment questionnaires to capture evidence of how their provision has improved their learners' health and well-being. This is often as a value-added component, in addition to a main learning goal or qualification. However, our evidence indicates that there is still too much reliance on individual anecdotes and too many bespoke systems that are unique to each institution



### 5.3 Joint working

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Local anchor institutions, such as adult education centres, colleges, universities, hospitals, clinical settings, community groups and local authorities, can play a significant role in improving individuals and families health and well-being. They offer great potential to implement effective policies and practices in local partnerships that promote inclusiveness and a sense of belonging in society. However, this is made difficult for providers to operate when there is no national strategy and/or policy framework for adult education, the infrastructure keeps changing and resources are limited.



# 6 What needs to change?

**Inequalities of social and cultural capital inevitably imply unequal outcomes from informal learning in the family and home.**

In this final chapter, set out what needs to change to stimulate demand for and access to more opportunities for all, particularly those most vulnerable in our society. We also highlight six key recommendations for implementation at a national, regional and local level.

## 6.1 Four key themes to be addressed

The numbers of adults participating in formal education is on serious decline in local communities. Research such as the OECD 2015 report on income inequality, social mobility and economic growth (2015) demonstrates that dedicated provision for adults returning to first rung learning is highly important. This maximises engagement, retention and progression for those who might otherwise become lost in the less tailored support offered in general Further Education (FE) provision. Four key themes need to be urgently addressed by Secretaries of State, Ministers, policy-makers and providers as discussed below.

### A. Greater alignment of strategic priorities and funding streams

The fact that adult education is a route to improved quality of life for both individuals and families, and can also help prevent health and well-being issues and support recovery from injury and illnesses is highly relevant and should feature in national and local strategic priorities.

- There is a need to promote adult education's role in healthcare prevention strategies that contribute to towards easing demand on acute health services. This needs Ministerial interest and commitment to bring about the necessary policy changes that will put adult education in a sustainable position for the future.
- Local commissioning arrangements must include a mix of grant allocations and directly procured services, including adult education, health and well-being, to enable areas to focus on targeting gaps in provision to address resident learners' needs.
- Greater flexibility and alignment of funding streams can support targeting individuals and groups most in need. This can bring more flexibility in provision and ensure better value for money. Changes to funding and skills changes since 2010 have squeezed the social infrastructure between adult education, Further Education (FE) and wider community-based organisations. Whilst closer collaborative working is underway to share expertise and services, this remains piecemeal.

### B. Capturing the evidence

There is much evidence of the positive impact and efficacy of adult education on individuals, communities and other public services, however, it so neglected by policy-makers.

- Secretaries of State, Ministers, and those responsible for NHS 'Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships' (STPs), Health and Well-Being Boards, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCGs), Local/Combined Authorities and Local Enterprise partnerships (LEPs) need to have greater access to the evidence of successful policies and practices in improving health and well-being through adult education. There is a critical need to build upon existing health and well-being surveys to identify any gaps in research, including those that examine whether short, part-time community learning courses help people develop strategies to manage their everyday lives more effectively.
- Central government and local/combined authorities will need robust data on area-based outcomes from providers, to measure the impact of the devolved AEB. A challenge to the adult education sector is to provide leadership, prove their worth, and report more broadly and directly on the impact their work has on the health outcomes. Data on the wider outcomes of adult education should be based on national systems and there needs to be more evidence of sustained benefits in larger population groups over time.
- There are significant benefits to be gained in capturing contextualised adult education, health and well-being e.g. There are significant benefits to be gained in capturing contextualised adult education, health and well-being e.g. the Good Things Foundation and its work with NHS shows health inequalities account for well in excess of £5.5 billion in healthcare costs to the NHS annually. Based on a cost to the NHS of £45 per GP visit, ensuring everyone had the Basic Digital Skills to access health information online would provide savings of £121 million a year by 2025. The British Household Panel Survey (BHPS) analysis indicates adults' participation in a part-time course can lead to: improvements in health, which has a value of £148 to the individual; a greater likelihood of finding a job and/or staying in a job, which has a value of £231 to the individual; better social relationships, which has a value of £658 to the individual; and a greater likelihood that people volunteer on a regular basis, which has a value of £130 to the individual (Fujiwara, 2012). As well as quantitative data, there is also significant scope to produce more videos/podcasts of adult education in care homes, healthcare centres, schools, community centres, libraries and workplace settings, to inspire individuals and family learning.

### C. Getting the message across – to policy makers and professionals in adult education, health and well-being sectors

The lack of joined up policies between the education and health and social care sectors often results in missed opportunities for collaborative and co-productive work between sectors and professionals. As a result of fragmented national policies, people often fall between the gaps in health and education practice.

- National and local policies must focus on ratcheting up the demand for adult education provision, particularly from healthcare sectors (and in healthcare contexts).
- New developments in social prescriptions that include 'prescribing for learning' should help partnerships to engage with the process of creating a healthy society and focusing on the health and well-being of individuals. But this will only work if there is government backing.

### D. All policy interventions should consider how inequality can best be addressed

The Social Mobility Commission (June 2017) indicates new divides have opened up in Britain, across geographies, income groups and generations.

- Inequalities of social and cultural capital inevitably imply unequal outcomes from informal learning in the family and home (Tuckett & Field, 2016). In considering how best to address the issue, the benefits of targeting have to be balanced against the risks of stigmatisation.

### Six Key Recommendations

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#### We recommend that:

1. The Institutes of Adult Learning and other adult education providers should work together with the health and social care sectors make most of the significant scope to produce portfolios of podcasts, videos, case studies and conclusive statistics to bring the evidence alive and readily available and so that this work is at the forefront of national policy dialogue. This should be supported through an organisation such as the Education and Training Foundation.
2. Government and leading research bodies should support adult education, health and well-being organisations to develop a national tool(s) for measuring the impact of adult education on improving individuals health and well-being as a priority.
3. The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Adult Education should work with the Institutes of Adult Learning and partners, including other relevant APPGs to disseminate policy briefings on specific aspects of this work to Ministers and health and well-being agencies and professional bodies.
4. The Institutes of Adult Learning and adult education regional networks should be invited by those responsible for NHS 'Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships' (STPs), Health and Well-Being Boards, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCGs), Local/Combined Authorities and Local Enterprise partnerships (LEPs) to contribute to the development and delivery of health and well-being objectives at regional and local level and should present their findings to NHS Improvement.

The benefits of adult education for health and well-being are not widely known within health provision, particularly working with vulnerable groups in our society. To increase the demand and take-up of for adult education through links with the health sectors, we recommend that:

5. The Institutes of Adult Learning (IALs) and adult education networks, work with Healthwatch, the Patients Association, trade unions and other representative organisations, who work with adults and family learning initiatives to advocate the health and well-being benefits of adult education to wider public.
6. Adult education should be incorporated onto the Prescriptions for Patients systems across all NHS England. This needs to be promoted to all healthcare practitioners through local and national initiatives.

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<p><b>Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission</b></p> <p>12<sup>th</sup> March 2018</p> <p><b>Future World of Work and Skills – Hackney Learning Trust Adult Community Learning Service</b></p>	<p>Item No</p> <p><b>6</b></p>
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## **Background**

The Commission has been conducting a review looking at the future world of work and skills over the next 5-10 years. This review has been exploring the trends of the changing labour market, changing skills system and its impact on London’s economy; to consider how residents could be supported and prepared for the future economy both in London and locally.

The aim of the review is to identify the impact of the changes to London and the local economy to identify the policies and practices that could help to overcome the challenges ahead. As part of this review the Commission aims to identify the support needed in the skills system to enable local residents to progress and change careers if required.

This review will also feed into the Economic and Community Development Board’s work developing the Council’s economic strategy.

## **Outline**

To feed into this review the Commission has asked for information about Hackney’s adult community learning service. The presentation in the agenda provides information about:

- The current adult community learning service provision provided by Hackney Learning Trust
- The budget for the service and the requirements for the budget spend
- The cohort the service provision is aimed at and the level of learning it covers
- Future options for the service provision and potential impact of adult education budget devolution.

## **Action**

The Commission to note the presentation and ask questions about the Adult Community Learning Service.

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# **Hackney London Borough Council**

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## **ADULT LEARNING SERVICES**

# Hackney ACL Overview

## Mission

To deliver outstanding education which ensures learning opportunities are accessible to residents who may face multiple barriers, responding to local demographic and socio-economic changes; to offer relevant, engaging and inspiring opportunities for Hackney residents to become involved in local activities and to progress to further learning, training or employment.

# Priority target groups

- residents with multiple support needs who live in Lower Super Output Areas of Hackney;
- adults furthest away from work due to low or no qualifications and with basic skills needs;
- adults for whom English is a second language;
- adults aged 60 plus and those socially isolated or at risk of becoming so;
- mental health service users and adults with disabilities and/or learning difficulties;
- adults from ethnic minorities with particular emphasis on:
  - (i) adults from Turkish, Kurdish and Cypriot communities;
  - (ii) migrants, refugees & asylum seekers;
  - (iii) Orthodox Jews
  - (iv) African Caribbean communities

# ESFA AEB grant

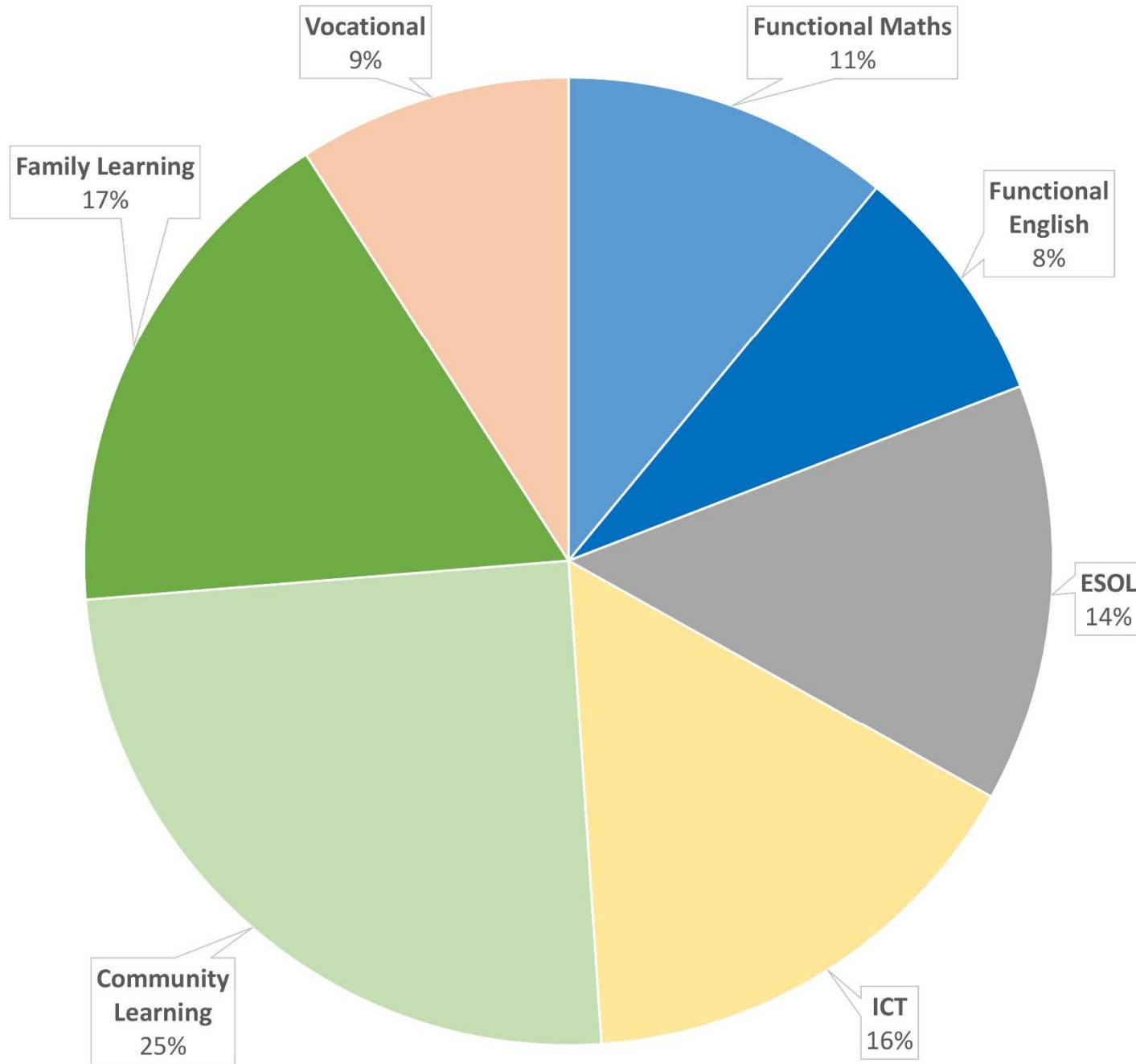
- ESFA allocates LBH around £2m to deliver adult and family learning in Hackney distributed as follows:
  - a) £.1m for HLT team 35 staff (18 teachers + QA + MIS+ IAG + contracts management + 2 office/exams admin staff)
  - b) £.600,000.00 for sub-contractors
  - c) £400,000.0 for overheads to HLT
- Funding outcomes - 5,000 enrolments
- Target learners - individuals from deprived communities to engage and support them in taking their first steps towards community involvement, personal development, formal learning, training or employment

# 2016-17 curriculum offer

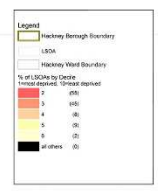
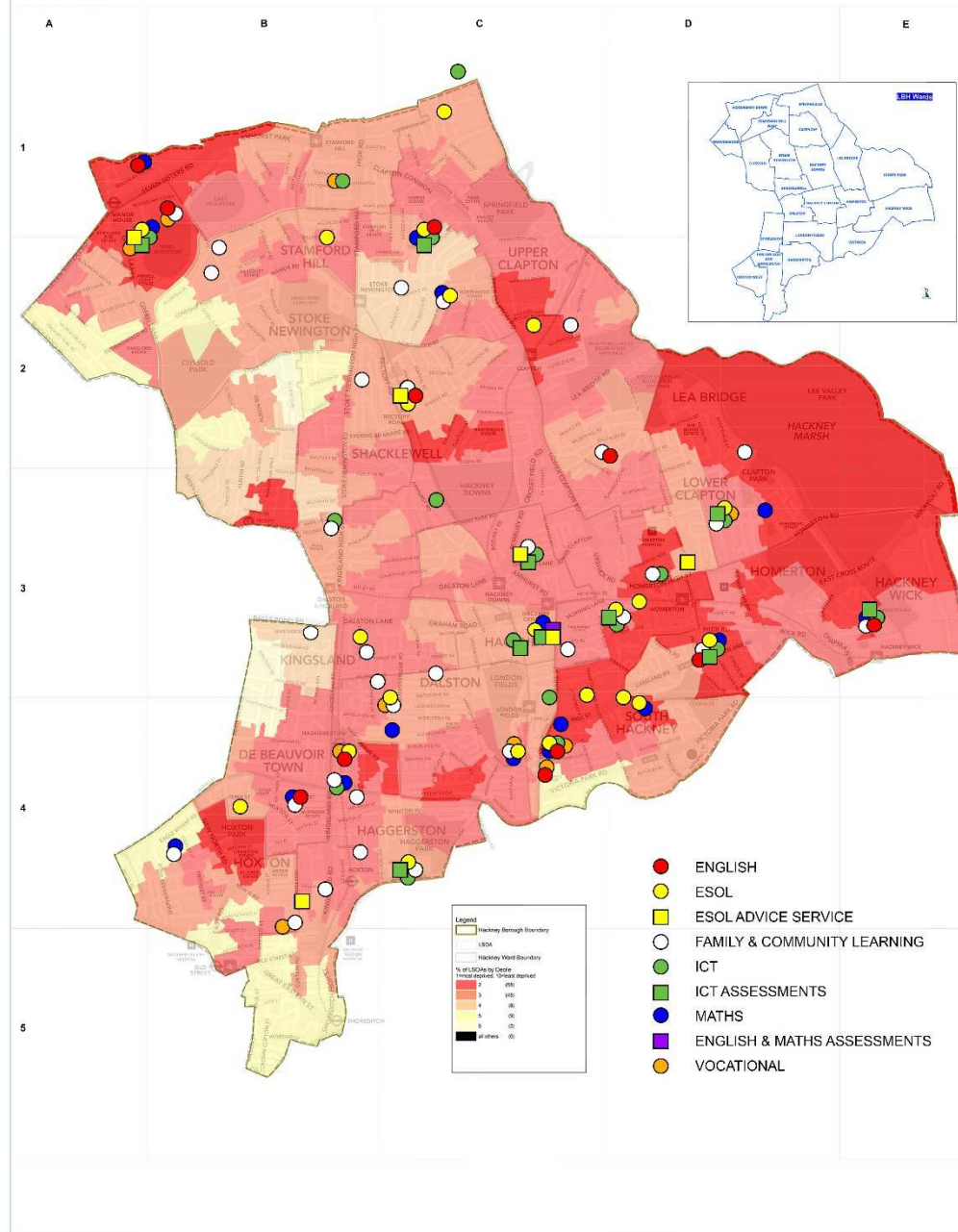
- Community Learning funds are for non-accredited engagement courses and constitute 75% of the funding.
- ASB courses are 25% of provision, they are accredited and include English, Maths, ESOL and ICT.
- Family Learning is 10% of the budget.
- The ALS also provides IAG and career advice to support learner progression.
- Commissioned providers enrol 67% of ALS learners.
- HLT Direct Teach team enrolls 33% of learners in core curriculum areas: ESOL, ICT, English, Maths and Family Learning.

# 2016-17 curriculum offer

	2016 / 17
Number of providers	33
Number of delivery venues	60
Number of tutors (HLT + sub-contractors)	103
Number of non-accredited classes	376
Number of accredited classes	121
Total number of learners	3,311
Total number of enrolments	5,285



# ADULT LEARNING SERVICES - VENUES 2017-18



- ENGLISH
- ESOL
- ESOL ADVICE SERVICE
- FAMILY & COMMUNITY LEARNING
- ICT
- ICT ASSESSMENTS
- MATHS
- ENGLISH & MATHS ASSESSMENTS
- VOCATIONAL



# Quality of Provision

- June 2016 Ofsted grade 3 (2016 SAR grade 3, 2017 SAR grade 2)
- Improvements since last inspection – Maths & English, mock inspection
- Robust quality assurance framework
- Comprehensive CPD programme for tutors – all tutors & IAG advisors are fully qualified.

# Partnership & governance

- Partnership work (e.g. EAS, ICP)
- Responding to emerging need & learner voice
- Course development & curriculum specific networking
- Local priorities – future learner need
- Specialist organisations: expertise and support for LDD learners & mental health
- Governance – monthly ESMT meetings, quarterly SLT monitoring report, LBH cabinet member monthly meetings, ECDB meetings

# Devolution: challenges and opportunities

## Challenges for ACL

- (i) Unknown future of ACL post-Brexit
- (ii) Current uncertainty regarding funding arrangements
- (iii) Commissioning model (block grant based on borough needs)
- (iv) Ofsted framework not conducive for ACL
- (v) Narrow definition of skills - likely loss of core outcomes

incl:

- (a) Health & wellbeing
- (b) Promoting integration
- (c) Reducing isolation
- (d) Strengthening families through Family Learning programmes
- (e) Developing core aptitudes (resilience, independence, communication, confidence, critical thinking)

# Opportunities for ACL

- Launch one-stop-shop hubs (ESOL, Family Learning, crèche, digital inclusion + other council services)
- Map skills provision (develop a central commissioning board)
- Align local offer to schools improvement priorities (strong families)
- Strengthen collaboration with employers - programme delivery
- Develop strong/sustainable progression pathway e.g. to employment
- Create flexibility to respond to emerging post-Brexit issues
- Explore other funding pots to sustain core ACL provision to meet local agendas not just employability skills
- Share good practice across departments e.g. Matrix accredited IAG and internal quality assurance processes



<p><b>Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission</b></p> <p>12<sup>th</sup> March 2018</p> <p><b>Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission Work Programme for 2017/18 and New Work Programme for 2018/19</b></p>	<p>Item No</p> <p style="font-size: 48pt; text-align: center;"><b>7</b></p>
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## Outline

Attached is the work programme for the Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission for 2017/18. This is a working document that is regularly updated.

### **New Work Programme 2018/19**

The Commission is asked to consider and make suggestions for the new Commission membership to consider in the new municipal year. Suggestions for a review and one off discussion items for the 2018/19 work programme.

To aid this discussion detailed below is the remit of the Commission and information about the criteria to use when deciding if a topic suggestion should be a review or one-off items discussion.

<b>Working in Hackney</b>	
<b>High level remit as per constitution</b>	Prosperity of the borough and development, in particular economic development, employment and large scale planning and transport infrastructure schemes.
<b>Statutory functions:</b>	None.
<b>Services falling into remit</b>	<p><b><u>Employment and Skills</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment and training opportunities</li> <li>• Ways into Work</li> <li>• Apprenticeships</li> <li>• Libraries element of Public Realm</li> <li>• Adult learning element of Education and Schools</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Regeneration Delivery</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting Town Centres</li> <li>• Supporting Business</li> </ul>
<b>Standing items (assuming full carry over from previous</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Question Time sessions with Cabinet Members for:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➢ Employment, skills and human resources</li> <li>➢ Planning, business and investment.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<b>Working in Hackney</b>
<b>Commissions). Once a year unless stated otherwise:</b>	

### **Action**

The Commission is asked to collate a list of suggestions for a review and/or one off discussion items for the Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission 2018/19 work programme.

# Overview & Scrutiny

## Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission

### *Rolling Work Programme June 2017 – April 2018*

All meetings take place at 7.00 pm in Hackney Town Hall unless stated otherwise on the agenda. This rolling work programme report is updated and published on the agenda for each meeting of the Commission.

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and officer contact	Comment and Action
<b>Thurs 15<sup>th</sup> June 2017</b>  Papers deadline: Mon 7 <sup>th</sup> June	The Council's Approach to Economic and Community Development	Corporate Strategy Chief Executive Directorate Stephen Haynes	Presentation about work strands and Council's current work
	Employment and Skills	Corporate Strategy Chief Executive Directorate Stephen Haynes	Presentation about Employment and Skills Service
	Work Programme Discussion	Overview and Scrutiny Chief Executive Directorate Tracey Anderson	To agree a review topic and discussion items for the work programme.
<b>Wed 5 July 2017</b>  Papers deadline: Mon 26 <sup>th</sup> June 2017	Support to Local Businesses	Various	Invitation sent out to local businesses and council service areas that support local businesses
	Work Programme Discussion	Overview and Scrutiny Chief Executive Directorate Tracey Anderson	To agree a review topic and discussion items for the work programme.

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and officer contact	Comment and Action
<b>Mon 18 Sept 2017</b> Papers deadline: Wed 6 <sup>th</sup> Sept	Employment Support and the integration of Employment Support Initiatives	Chief Executive Directorate Corporate Strategy Team and Public Health	<b>Employment support</b> for people who are not job ready. Information about the Hackney Works service and future direction of the service provision. <b>Integrated working.</b> A look at how the different employment support initiatives in the Borough work together or could work together.
	Local Economic Assessment	Chief Executive Directorate Policy and Partnerships Team	A presentation on the most recent data for Hackney covering population, work and the economy.
	Work Programme Discussion	Overview and Scrutiny Chief Executive Directorate Tracey Anderson	Commission to review their work programme to make changes or suggest changes.
<b>Wed 29 Nov 2017</b>	Future World of Work and Skills Discussion in Hackney	Chief Executive Directorate Policy and Partnerships Team	This evidence session is to give the Working in Hackney Scrutiny Commission and the Council's Economic and Community Development Board information about the changing labour market, changing skills environment, data and trends. This information will be drawn from think tanks and academics. From the information presented we want to identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What London's economy will look like in the next 10 years?</li> <li>• The nature of employment – hub and spoke model, working from home, co-location, self-employment etc.</li> <li>• Sectoral trends – what the industries will look like based on trends, external drives, Brexit, technology (automation)</li> <li>• Skills devolution and the impact the funding changes</li> <li>• Inequalities – The potential for widen inequalities from the changes to employment and skills.</li> </ul>
	Work Programme Discussion	Overview and Scrutiny Chief Executive Directorate Tracey Anderson	Commission to discuss the evidence heard and next phase.



Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and officer contact	Comment and Action
<b>Thurs 14 Dec 2017</b>  Papers deadline: Mon 4 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Cabinet Member Question Time – Cabinet Member for Planning, Business and Investment	Mayor’s Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Strategy</li> <li>• Evaluation, measures and identification of success</li> <li>• Balance of job types and benefits of large corporate organisations moving into the borough.</li> <li>• Key commitments and deliverables by May 2018.</li> </ul>
	Cabinet Member Question Time – Cabinet Member for Employment Skills and Human Resources	Mayor’s Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs strategy and the assessment of success</li> <li>• Evaluation, measures and identification of success</li> <li>• Key commitments and deliverables by May 2018.</li> </ul>
	Work Programme Discussion	Overview and Scrutiny Chief Executive Directorate Tracey Anderson	Commission to review their work programme to make changes or suggest changes.
<b>Mon 5 Feb 2018</b>  Papers deadline: Wed 24 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Economic and Community Development Board Update	Chief Executive Directorate Corporate Strategy Team	Update on the Board’s current work and strategy development.
	Future World of Work and Skills Event Notes	Overview and Scrutiny Chief Executive Directorate Tracey Anderson	Notes from the Future World of Work and Skills Discussion in Hackney on 29 <sup>th</sup> November 2017
	Work Programme Discussion	Overview and Scrutiny Chief Executive Directorate Tracey Anderson	Commission to review their work programme to make changes or suggest changes.

Dates	Proposed Item	Directorate and officer contact	Comment and Action
<b>Wed 14 Mar 2018</b> Papers deadline: Fri 2 Mar	Inequity at Work	Chief Executive Directorate Corporate Strategy Team Policy and Partnerships Team	
	Evidence Session for long review	TBC	TBC
	Work Programme Discussion	Overview and Scrutiny Chief Executive Directorate Tracey Anderson	Commission to review their work programme to make changes or suggest changes.
<b>April 2018</b>		<b>PURDAH NO MEETINGS</b>	

## Identification, prioritisation and selection of topics for in-depth scrutiny review and work programme items

### Identification

- Topics suggested through consultation with Commission members and other Non-Executive Members
- Topics arising from national legislation or other policy requirements
- Topics suggested from local residents and community groups (e.g. resident surveys)
- Issues suggested by Cabinet Members & Senior Officers within the Council
- Topics that have arisen from issues which have been covered by local or national media?
- Topics arising from local strategy or policy developments?

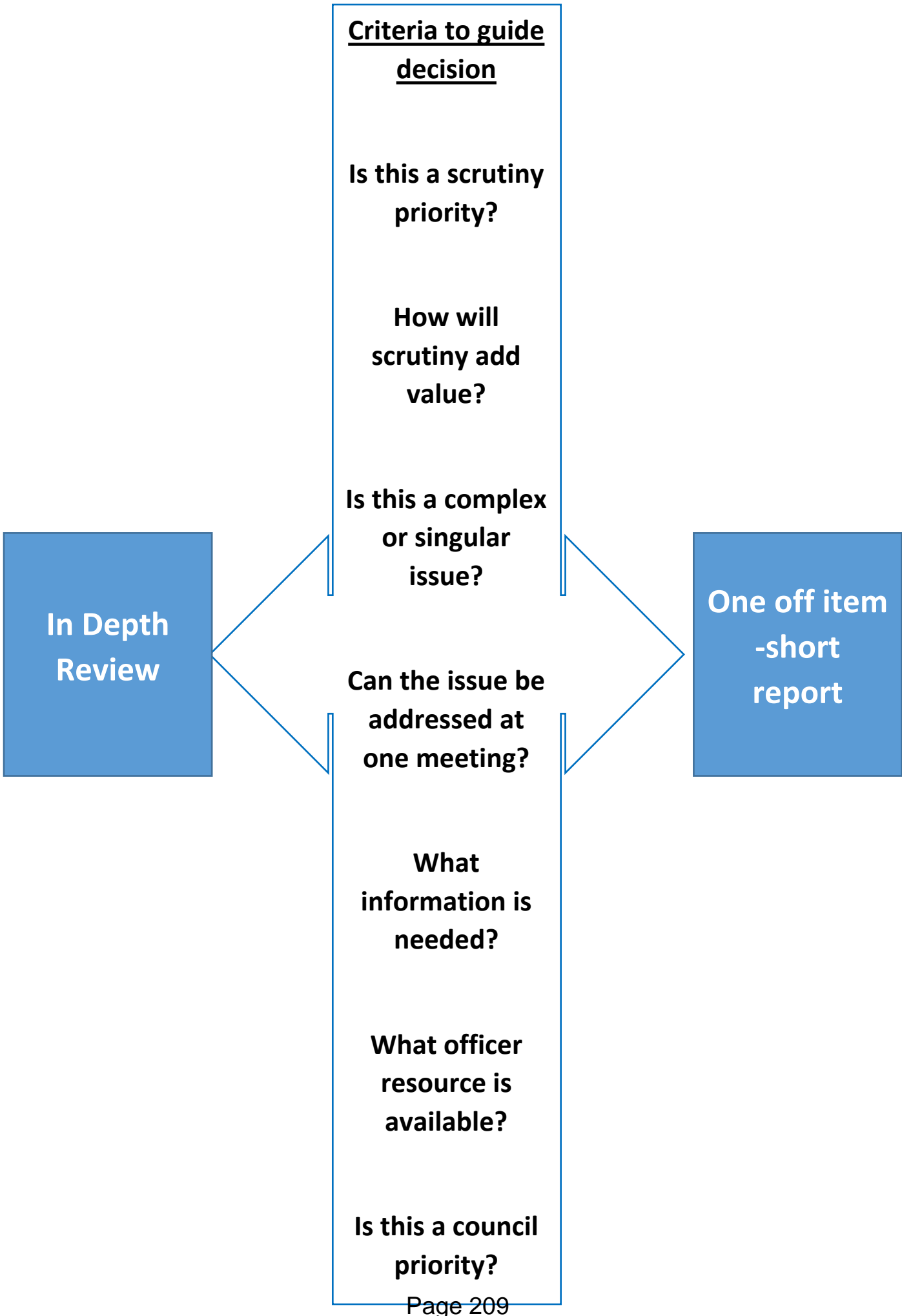
### Prioritisation

- Is the review topic a borough wide issue and important to the local community?
- Does the topic relate to a poor or underperforming service?
- Does this topic give rise to numerous / serious complaints?
- Has this topic been flagged by an inspection or audit or other assessment report e.g. Ofsted, CQC, Audit Office?
- Would this topic benefit from in depth review or better served by a one-off item (e.g. update, short investigation)?
- Is this topic cross-cutting, relevant to more than one Commission?

### Selection

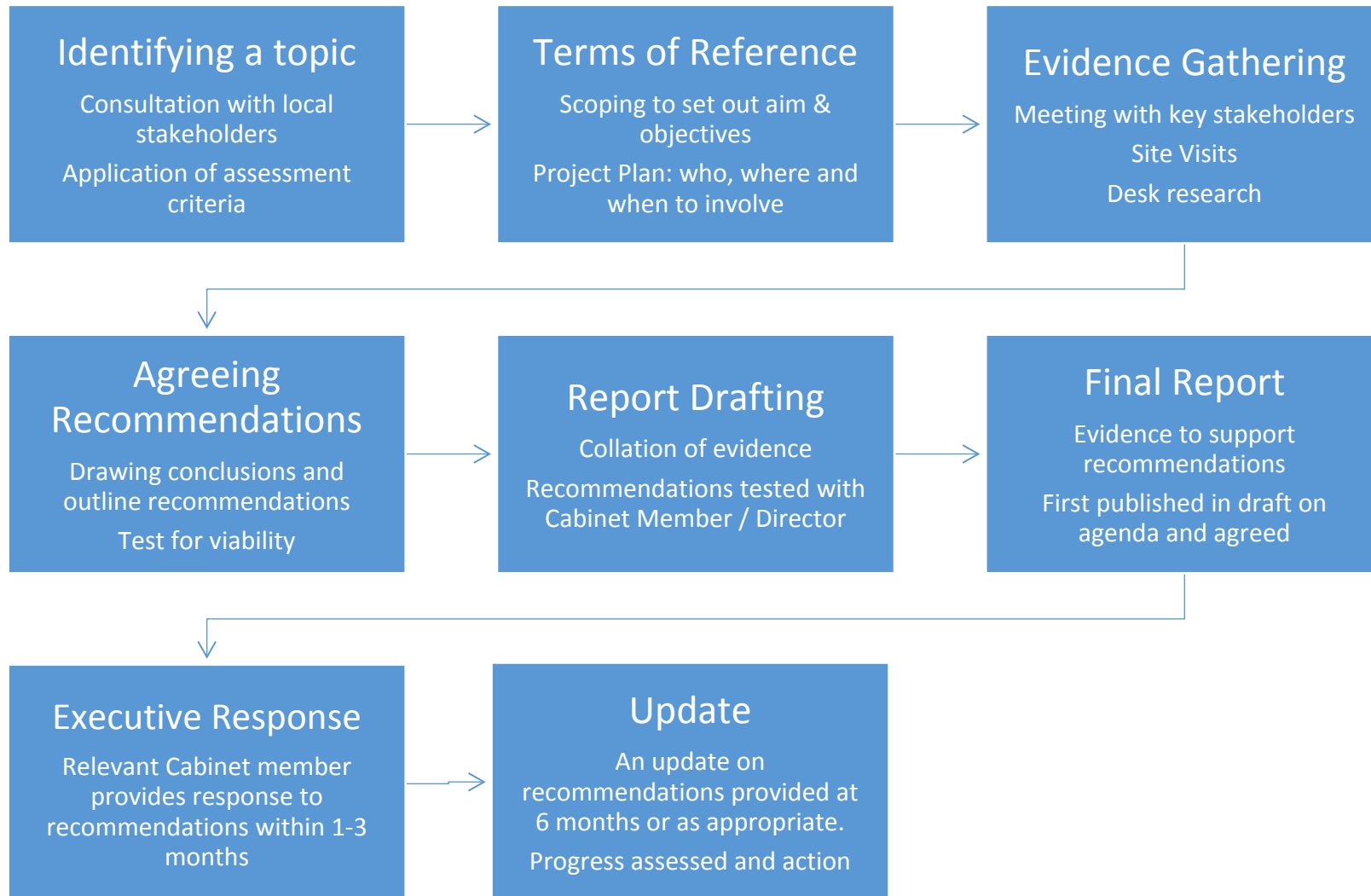
- Does the topic support priorities identified within the Council's Corporate Plan?
- Will the topic add value and deliver practical outcomes for local residents?
- Is this review feasible; is the topic adequately focused, can it be undertaken within a suitable timeframe and with the current resource available?

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## Lifecycle of a Review



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