

Skills Committee – 10 November 2021

Overview and Scrutiny Questions

	Question from:	Question to:	Question
1.	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Skills Committee	<p>Item 2.1 - Adult Education Budget Commissioning Strategy 2020-2025</p> <p>What is the relevance of the loneliness strategy referenced in the Adult Education Budget Commissioning Strategy 2020-2025 to the delivery of the Adult Education Budget in particular the skills to work?</p>
	Response from:	Response to:	Response
	Councillor Lucy Nethsingha – Chair of the Skills Committee	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<p>Loneliness is a universal public health issue that significantly impacts health and wellbeing and generates demand for social care and health services. It is indeed recognised that Adult Education does play a role to support individuals and communities to make social connections, and for individuals to build their social and communication skills, confidence, and self-belief. Colleges and Adult Learning Centres also play a vital role as civic institutions, providing a neutral and trusted space for citizens from diverse backgrounds to meet in the pursuit of learning.</p> <p>The Department for Media, Culture and Sport, published the Loneliness Strategy under Teresa May's government and to note that this is, in fact not referenced in the report. However, the wider outcomes of adult education in improving the quality of life for individuals and the community are well-documented in academic research and national best-practice. Therefore, the AEB Commissioning Statement will reference the wider outcomes of both formal and informal learning, in helping to address wider societal issues. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tackling loneliness • improving community connection and cohesion • enhancing civic engagement through volunteering • environmental sustainability awareness • boosting mental health and wellbeing • creating 'cultural' buzz' in communities through increasing foot-fall

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> raising aspirations by connecting citizens to opportunities. <p>Employment is also a lifeline for social contact. The role of good jobs in addressing loneliness and supporting good mental health is also well documented in research literature and AEB commissioning will continue to fund skills support for the unemployed through both grant-funded colleges and adult and community institutes and commissioned training providers.</p>
2.	Question from:	Question to:	Question
	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Skills Committee	<p>Item 3.1 - Employment and Skills Strategy</p> <p>How many companies have been approached and could the criteria used to select the companies be shared?</p>
	Response from:	Response to:	Response
	Councillor Lucy Nethsingha – Chair of the Skills Committee	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<p>To reach as many companies as possible we used a number of channels to engage with a wide range of business. This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contacting existing employers within the CRM Members of the Employment and Skills Board and the Business Board attended engagement sessions All of the Employment Representative Boards we work with were approached along with Economic Development Officers at the local authorities An open call for evidence was pushed out through social media channels and through emails via the CRM

3.	Question from:	Question to:	Question
	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Skills Committee	Item 3.1 - Employment and Skills Strategy What is the projected membership uptake for apprenticeships at these companies?
	Response from:	Response to:	Response
	Councillor Lucy Nethsingha – Chair of the Skills Committee	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<p>We do not currently hold a figure for predicted apprenticeship uptake of companies in the Combined Authority. We have recently undertaken an employer survey on apprenticeships with Cambridge Ahead – analysis of this is due soon.</p> <p>Growth Works with Skills, through the Business Growth Service are engaging with businesses daily, to promote apprenticeships as a way to attracting talent. They have 50 large companies as their key accounts whilst also continuing to work with SMEs.</p> <p>We are expecting a significant rise in the number of apprentice starts this quarter. Data will be available to confirm this at the beginning of December.</p>
4.	Question from:	Question to:	Question
	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Skills Committee	Item 3.1 - Employment and Skills Strategy What is the Combined Authority doing to encourage those who wish to pursue vocational careers?
	Response from:	Response to:	Response
	Councillor Lucy Nethsingha – Chair of the Skills Committee	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<p>The Combined Authority are actively informing residents through a variety of ways to continue to raise awareness of vocational careers. Examples of which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the Careers and Enterprise Company contract (all secondary schools and Colleges in the CPCA) we inform students of all options available to them, often working with partners to deliver talks on the range of vocational career pathways available. Including but not limited to traineeships/t-levels/apprenticeships. We also work closely with the National Careers Service who also promote vocational pathways.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through our Growth Works with Skills contract we are engaging with local business to raise the awareness of different routes to attracting talent to their businesses, through apprenticeships/internships - therefore also creating the opportunities for our residents.
5.	Question from:	Question to:	Question
	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Skills Committee	<p>Item 3.2 - ESOL Local Planning</p> <p>In reference to the table in the report which shows the total adult skills spend on ESOL against the number of enrolments in Peterborough, Fenland and the rest of Cambridgeshire for 2019/20 could a breakdown of the figures for the rest of Cambridgeshire be provided and the disproportionate amount of spend in Peterborough be explained?</p>
	Response From:	Response to:	Response
	Councillor Lucy Nethsingha – Chair of the Skills Committee	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<p>For 2019/20, a breakdown of ESOL spend and enrolment figures for the rest of Cambridgeshire are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Cambridgeshire - 47 enrolments (Spend: £11K) South Cambridgeshire - 67 enrolments (Spend: £38K) Huntingdonshire - 69 enrolments (Spend: £20K) Cambridge City – 251 enrolments (Spend: £146K) <p>The spend in Peterborough is greater, due to the demography and diversity of the city and greater demand for ESOL courses. There is also long-established provider capacity in Peterborough, with City College Peterborough recognised as ‘outstanding’ for ESOL delivery in past Ofsted Inspection.</p>