



Skills & Employment Committee		Agenda Item
4 September 2023		3
Title:	Public Questions	
Public Report:	Yes	

Question 1 – from Cllr Alex Bulat (Cambridgeshire County Council)

To	Skills & Employment Committee
Question:	<p><i>Due to historical changes in Government policies on adult education and lifelong learning over the past half-century, Cambridge no longer has a specialist adult education and lifelong learning centre - a function that was previously undertaken by the Cambridge Collect for Arts & Technology (CCAT) on East Road until the late 1980s. In December 2020, the House of Commons Education Select Committee concluded: "Adult community learning providers are the jewel in the crown of the nation's adult education landscape.... We are not persuaded that the Department fully grasps the value and purpose of community learning. Nor does it appear that the Department has a vision or strategic approach for boosting this vital area of lifelong learning." I thank the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for previous conversations on adult education and how communities like my division in Abbey could benefit from further investment in this area. Now that Marshall's Airport is consulting about what to do with its site, and now that Hills Road Sixth Form College is consulting about opening a new college north of Cambridge, what consideration has the CPCA given towards establishing a lifelong learning centre in Cambridge that is easily accessible by public transport? Furthermore, what conversations is it having with both developers and large employers on both their skills needs and their willingness to contribute towards the costs of refurbishing an existing site or building a new bespoke site for lifelong learning in Cambridge - one that again is accessible to residents living in surrounding villages via public transport? Thank you.</i></p>
Response:	<p>This response is from a CPCA point of view as support for adult learning capital infrastructure mainly sits with Local Authorities and the learning providers or community groups where they are the key delivery bodies.</p> <p>Community learning is funded via our Adult Education Budget and we provide these funds via our FE Colleges, Cambridgeshire Skills and Independent Training Providers (ITPs). Each provider seeks to deliver in many differing formats where there is need and this isn't always from a dedicated permanent skills centre.</p> <p>Investment in the infrastructure is the responsibility of the Department for Education (DfE) and/or Local Authorities. The redevelopment of Marshalls airfield spans Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, and these Local Planning Authorities are served by a shared planning department led by Stephen Kelly. Any procurement process will take into consideration local infrastructure requirements and within this process is the possibility of the inclusion of social value clauses which could include a request for infrastructure.</p>

	<p>Employers' skills needs are something that the CPCA are continuously monitoring, via a variety of means including, but not limited to, the Local Skills Implementation Plan (LSIP), regular insight data sources locally and nationally, focus groups and system wide stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>The CPCA currently has no mandated remit over sixth form colleges or schools. Our devolved budget responsibility and target for delivery is from age 19+ and is for the delivery of learning and not investment in the infrastructure.</p> <p>The CPCA can of course take forward discussions, and lobby and add their support, but to repeat, this primarily sits with the schools, trusts and academies working in partnership with Local Authorities.</p> <p>To note, the Combined Authority has however invested in some 16-19 infrastructure in parts of the region via some of its other funding programmes mainly to support the FE provision and Apprenticeships, including the University in Peterborough and the Advanced Manufacturing Technology Centre in Chatteris.</p>
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Question 2 – from Cllr Sam Davies (Cambridge City Council)

To	Skills & Employment Committee
	<p>Question:</p> <p><i>"Research by the Queen Edith's Community Forum in 2019 identified that institutions in Queen Edith's ward host more than 50% of all sixth form students in Cambridgeshire.</i></p> <p><i>To give you an idea of the scale, Hills Road and Long Road Sixth Form Colleges now each host over 2600 students. Abbey College, The Perse and The Oakes (Netherhall) now each have around 400 sixth form students while CAST has around 140.</i></p> <p><i>The evidence suggests that facilities to meet the needs of these students has not kept up with the expansion in their numbers. For example, staff at Addenbrooke's have told me of their frustration that students use the food outlets on the concourse there at lunch time, delaying staff on breaks. Similarly, the issue of student overcrowding at the Cambridge Leisure Park during the day was raised at the recent city council elections. And if you speak to the students themselves, they tell you that they don't have sufficient independent study space, with long enough opening hours, and so many are relocating either to the Central Library, cafes or - if over 18 - to pubs and bars</i></p> <p><i>What conversations has the CPCA had with students, staff, and managers at Hills Road & Long Road Sixth Form Colleges, CAST Cambridge, The Perse and Abbey College regarding their student numbers and lack of sufficient facilities? What are the policy options available? Please could officers report back with an update at the next board meeting."</i></p>
	<p>Response:</p> <p>The Combined Authority does not have a remit for sixth form colleges or schools and as such, no conversations have taken place.</p> <p>Our budget responsibility is from 19+ and is for the funding of learning and development and not for infrastructure.</p> <p>The responsibility of capacity is dependent on the type of provision as in many cases the college, academy or school are no longer run by the Local Authority and therefore the responsibility falls to individual sites.</p> <p>The educational establishments your question refers to are either independent, part of multi academy trusts or are self-governing.</p> <p>If an organisation is looking to expand it will consult with their local authority regarding capacity to scope need which will then support the decision making with the Department for Education.</p>