

Skills Committee – 5 September 2022

Overview and Scrutiny Questions

	Question from:	Question to:	Question
1.	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Skills Committee	<p>Agenda Item 2.1 – Adult Education Budget (AEB)</p> <p>a) Although it is good to now see an increase in the number of providers, can officers clarify what was done to offer support to applicants who submitted applications that were eventually rejected?</p> <p>b) Some of the new providers do not seem to have a footprint in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Would part of the proposals be to ensure that they had a local footprint?</p>
	Response from:	Response to:	Response
	Councillor Lucy Nethsingha – Chair of the Skills Committee	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<p>a) All unsuccessful applicants are always offered feedback on their application and on how they could improve future applications. The AEB and Skills Bootcamp teams have been working together to see whether any of the unsuccessful bidders could be suitable to deliver Skills Bootcamps – discussions are ongoing. This is due to being over subscribed for the AEB procurement.</p> <p>b) Yes. As part of the application process, providers specified where their provision would be delivered. Some of the tender specifications set out the geographic targeting of potential learners – weighted towards Peterborough and Fenland. In addition, during contract negotiation, discussions about geographic focus across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough were undertaken. The outcome will be better geographic targeting. This mapping work will be shared with Skills Committee</p>

			once finalised. (Action- in the minutes to circulate to the Committee once finalised)
2.	Question from:	Question to:	Question
	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Skills Committee	<p>Agenda item 2.2 – Addressing Further Education ‘Cold Spots’ in East Cambridgeshire and St Neots.</p> <p>a) Will the building of two £40m (?) FE colleges actually deliver what is proposed and will it have a negative impact on existing FE providers, both inside and outside of the CPCA area?</p> <p>b) What do we know about our FE learners who receive their FE education outside of the CPCA area?</p>
	Response from:	Response to:	Response
	Councillor Lucy Nethsingha – Chair of the Skills Committee	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<p>a) The first stage of the Addressing Further Education ‘Cold Spots’ programme is to undertake a feasibility study. This will take in consideration a number of factors to assess whether there is a need for new provision which is sustainable. The study will analyse scope and purpose as well as consider the wider system impact.</p> <p>b) We hold data on both FE enrolments who either study or live in the CPCA area. Further detailed information can be provided in a paper if this is required. (Action in the minutes to circulate to the Committee)</p>

3.	Question from:	Question to:	Question
	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Skills Committee	<p>Agenda item 2.3 – Multiply – the approach to programme delivery (additional question)</p> <p>Can officers please explain why the allocation of funds doesn't appear to fit the regions in most apparent need for funding? (Comment from Cllr Coles - Having looked more closely at the figures I'm concerned that Peterborough and Fenland have significant needs for numeracy training but the funding is not aligned to the analysis and providers in these areas. In the meeting Cllr Coles gave an example of the Military Academy – MPCT and queried whether this organisation had a footprint in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough)</p>
	Response from:	Response to:	Response
	Councillor Lucy Nethsingha – Chair of the Skills Committee	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<p>At the time of writing, the report does not specify the specific geographies where Multiply will be delivered. As shown in the Numeracy data analysis shared with members, Peterborough and Fenland are areas of focus for Multiply. Now that DfE has confirmed acceptance of the Investment Plan, Providers will be submitting detailed delivery plans, including geographies to be targeted. A similar model to AEB, identifying a 'hive of delivery' is being taken forward to ensure equitable coverage across the sub-region.</p> <p>MPCT are a 16-18 Study Programmes provider, judged 'outstanding' by Ofsted, who prepare young people for careers in the uniformed public services including armed forces. They have been acquired by the Learning Curve Group, who do have delivery in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.</p>

4.	Question from:	Question to:	Question
	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Skills Committee	<p>Agenda Item 3.2 – Skills Bootcamp</p> <p>We’ve significantly underspent in the past – what reassurance do we have that this will not happen again and that the bootcamps will be delivered?</p>
	Response From:	Response to:	Response
	Councillor Lucy Nethsingha – Chair of the Skills Committee	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<p>Wave Two provision is still being funded and outcomes are expected until December 2022 where completion payments will be paid.</p> <p>Wave Three provision is different and provides the CPCA with more flexibility and control over delivery. We have recently concluded a procurement exercise to contract with new providers. Wave three provision is also in the CPCA region only. A new project team has been established and we are implementing a new mechanism to contract manage all training providers.</p>
5.	Question from:	Question to:	Question
	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Skills Committee	<p>Agenda Item 3.3 – Employment and Skills Implementation Plan</p> <p>What specifically is being done to focus on the 50+ cohort?</p>
	Response From:	Response to:	Response
	Councillor Lucy Nethsingha – Chair of the Skills Committee	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<p>There is significant support across the system to support 50+ cohort. For instance DWP have recently created a new role in all regions to focus on the 50+ cohort. The CPCA will, as with a number of other areas of focus, partner with key organisations to ensure a system wide approach to coordinate the provision available to this cohort. At this stage there is no additional funding to support this work at the CPCA and therefore it will require more joined up approach to ensure greater impact.</p>

6.	Question from:	Question to:	Question
	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Skills Committee	<p>Agenda Item 3.5 - Budget and Performance Report</p> <p>With the current financial situation is there a risk of current funds being clawed back by central Government if there is underspend?</p>
	Response From:	Response to:	Response
	Councillor Lucy Nethsingha – Chair of the Skills Committee	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<p>The AEB is a devolved and ring-fenced budget. Therefore this is not at risk of clawback.</p> <p>Other programmes are based on performance and therefore either funds will only be received on delivery or where funds have been received already, clawback is a possibility. Any provision for clawback will usually be set out in the grant funding terms and conditions.</p>