

Adult Education Budget Devolution Evaluation

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November 2020

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INTRODUCTION

Devolution of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) was agreed in the Devolution Agreement of November 2015. The AEB is a single funding stream replacing what had previously been three separate budget lines:

- The Adult Skills Budget (namely skills provision for adults aged 19 years and above),
- Community Learning,
- and Discretionary Learner Support.

It encompasses a range of statutory entitlements for learners, including the right to fully funded provision for basic English and maths qualifications and, depending on the resident's age and employment status, an entitlement to a first full level 2 and first full level 3 qualification.

The Devolution Agreement gave the Combined Authority responsibility for ensuring high quality adult education is available for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough residents from 1 August 2019 for the 2019-2020 academic year and beyond.

The primary purpose of the CPCA AEB fund is to engage adults and provide them with the skills and learning needed for work or further learning. In addition, it will improve employability skills including communication, self-confidence and attitude to work and enable people to contribute to the social wellbeing of their community. It will enable more specific programmes of learning to help those furthest away from the market place of work and learning.

The Combined Authority, in line with local devolution, aim to enable a closer link between employers, local communities and the education and training curriculum offer.

Evaluation

This evaluation was first and foremost a formative exercise, designed to help the Combined Authority and wider stakeholders and partners understand how the first year of devolution of the budget has gone, what works, lessons to be learnt and the potential for impact.

There were three main stages involved in the work:

- Desk review of background documentations
- Analysis of monitoring data
- Stakeholder survey and follow up consultations with providers

The online stakeholder survey was sent to all 17 providers and a response was received from 16 providers. To ensure that detailed feedback was gathered from a range of different providers, a purposive sampling approach was used to select providers for in-depth telephone consultations. Factors which informed sampling included:

- Provider size (contract value)
- Type of contract (grant/ITP)
- Provider delivery (adult skills/community learning)
- Previous experience of AEB delivery.

Telephone consultations were carried out with five providers. All fieldwork was completed between June – August 2020.

OVERVIEW OF FUNDED ACTIVITY

CPCA were awarded £11,513,052 in AEB funding for delivery in the 2019/20 academic year by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

Without robust and reliable information about delivery locally, and wanting to reduce the impact on providers, the CPCA decided it would not be practical in the first year of operation to make significant changes and therefore adopted the same funding policies and models in 2019/20 as the ESFA.

First year changes

Previous pre-devolution data showed a 176 ESFA provider base in 2016/17 delivering to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough residents.

Of the 176 providers:

- the top ten funders made up 84% of the total AEB funding;
- 107 providers had 10 or less learners resident in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough;
- 158 providers were based out of the CPCA area by more than 10 miles;
- and 38 providers were delivering to only 1 resident learner.

Based on this information, and in line with local devolution, the Combined Authority decided to make a change for the 2019/20 year and reduce the number of delivery providers.

2019/20 Bidding Process

For the 2019/20 year, the CPCA decided to allocate £8.9million in grant funding arrangements with further education colleges and local authorities based in the CPCA area or with substantial delivery sites and with a main office within a 10 miles radius which currently deliver AEB funded provision.

In addition, a procurement process was undertaken in autumn 2018 to allow independent training providers to come forward with flexible and innovative approaches which will maximise the opportunities presented by AEB devolution.

Following completion of a procurement process, for the 2019/20 year, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority awarded contracts to:

- Five independent training providers; Back 2 Work Complete Training, Nacro, Steadfast, The Consultancy Home Counties (TCHC) and The Skills Network.
- Twelve colleges and local authorities; Cambridge Regional College, Cambridgeshire County Council, Central Bedfordshire, College of West Anglia, Peterborough City Council (City College), Peterborough Regional College, New College Stamford, North Hertfordshire College, Rutland County Council, Hills Road Sixth Form, West Suffolk College and Bedford College.

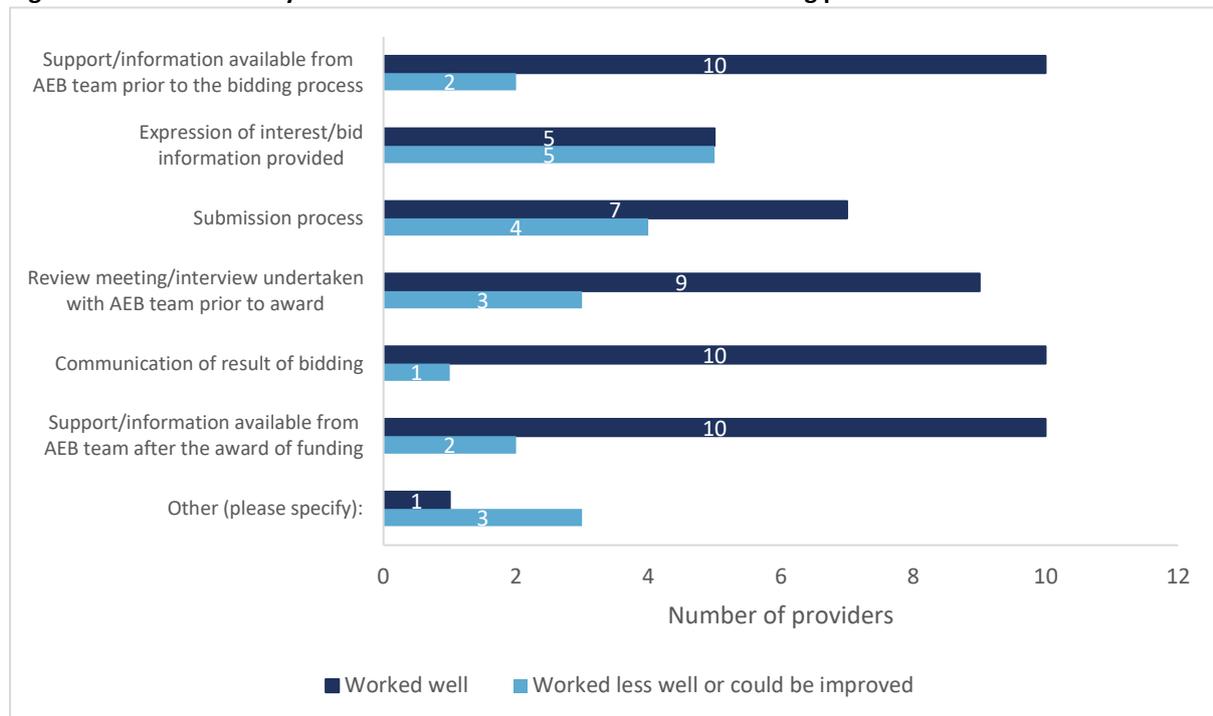
Feedback on the bidding process

The CPCA received 35 applications during the ITP bidding process.

In the survey the majority of providers (nine) reported being satisfied overall with the bidding/application process, with just two providers reporting that they were somewhat unsatisfied. The survey also asked respondents which elements worked well and which elements worked less well or could be improved for specific stages of the bidding/application process. The chart below

summarises the results of these two questions and shows that for all but one element of the bidding process more providers stated that it worked well than stated that it worked less well/could be improved.

Figure 1: Providers survey feedback on how well elements of the bidding process worked



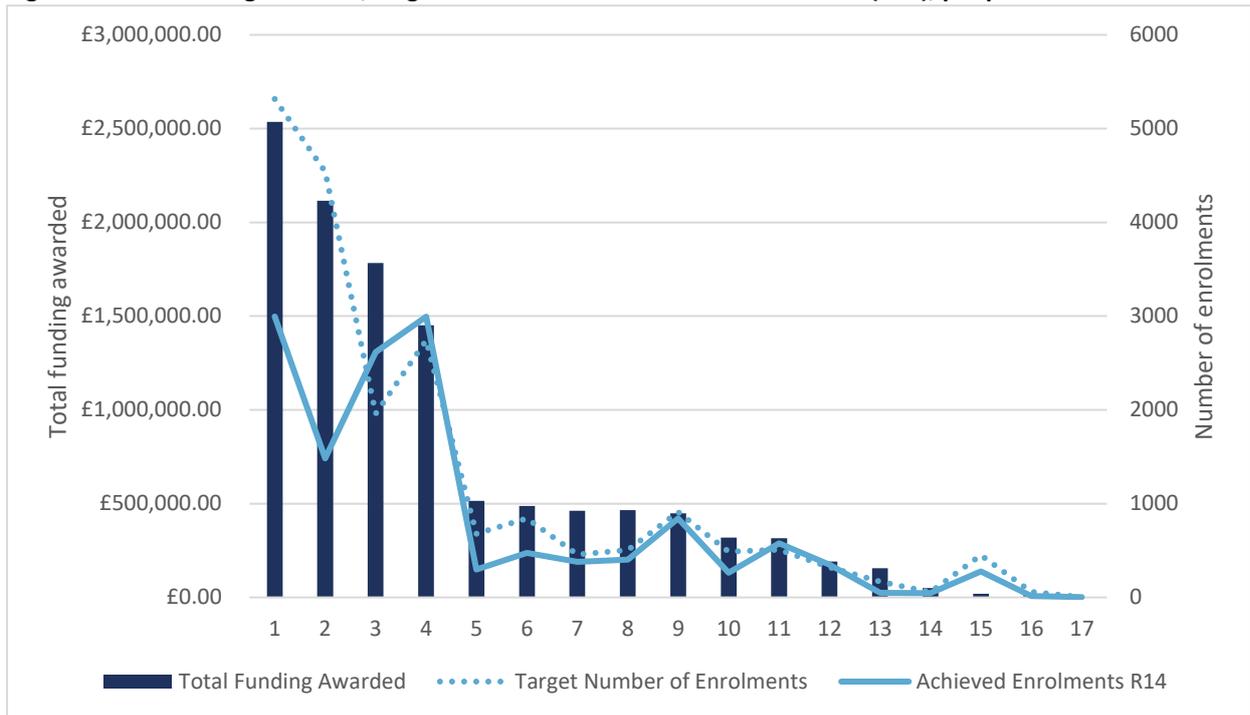
The ‘support/information available from the AEB team’ both prior to the bidding process and after the award of funding as well as the ‘communication of the result of the bidding’ were the elements with the highest number of providers who stated that they worked well (10 providers). Qualitative comments relating to elements that had worked well mostly constituted positive feedback about the guidance and communication from CPCA.

The ‘expression of interest/bid information provided’ was the element with the lowest number of providers (5) stating it worked well and the highest number of providers stating it worked less well or could be improved. Qualitative feedback in both the survey and the consultations highlighted issues with the requirement to provide individual proposals for each learning aim/programme. Providers found that this was an onerous process which involved duplication and limited their ability to provide information on their delivery offer as a whole. It was also suggested that this requirement at the bid stage limited provider’s flexibility to respond to needs as they develop throughout the year. A suggestion for improvement was to have general questions on provision and then information on the delivery model specific to an area, such as sector or qualification level, rather than specific to each individual programme.

Awards

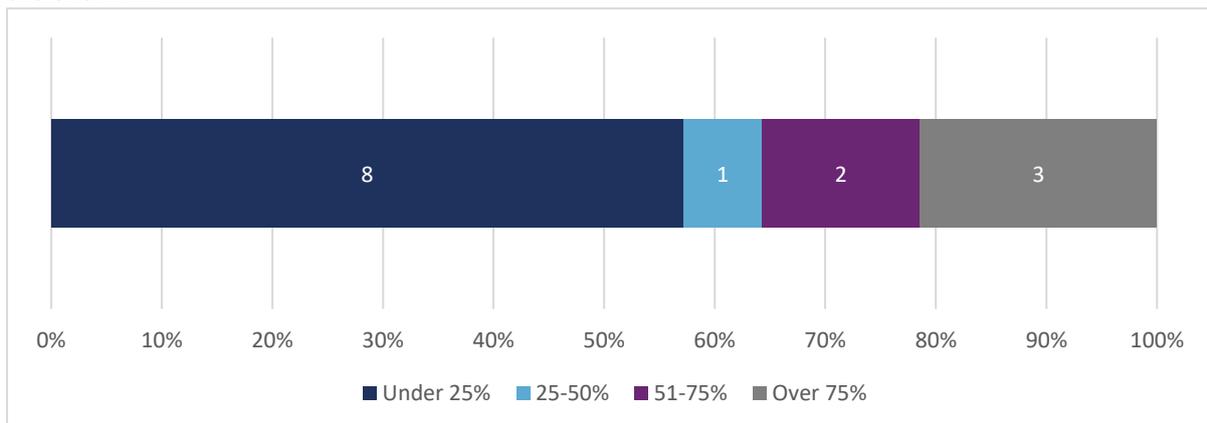
AEB funding was awarded to 17 different providers in 2019/20. Of these, 12 were grant providers (existing providers within a 10 mile radius) and 5 were Independent Training Providers (ITP’s), all had previous experience of AEB delivery with one ITP having previously been a subcontractor. The total amount of funding awarded ranged from £2,535,600 to £2,259 for grants and from £515,325 to £154,731 for ITP’s. The chart below shows the total funding award amount for each provider along with the total number of targeted and achieved enrolments.

Figure 2: Total funding awarded, target enrolments and achieved enrolments (R14), per provider



The profile of providers varied in terms of the extent to which they delivered in the CPCA delivery area versus elsewhere, their previous experience of delivering AEB in the CPCA and the extent to which they subcontracted. The survey asked providers what proportion the CPCA AEB made up of their total Adult Education budget. Of the 14 providers who answered this question just over half (eight providers) stated that it made up under 25% of the overall budget, illustrating that a number of providers have significant delivery elsewhere. Three providers stated that the CPCA AEB made up over 75% of their total budget, these providers are all in the top four for contract size with total budgets of over £1 million. The fact that the CPCA AEB accounts for the majority of provision for these providers with high value contracts mitigates risk for the CPCA.

Figure 3: Provider survey response on the proportion of their total Adult Education budget accounted for by the CPCA AEB



In response to the survey question on the amount of funding received, half of providers (eight) indicated that they received the same amount of funding as they had expected, with one provider receiving more than expected and the remaining seven providers receiving less than expected. The proportion of providers indicating that they had received less funding than expected was lower for ITP's with just one provider reporting this. In the consultations providers who had received less

funding than expected discussed the impacts which included not being able to expand provision in the way they had hoped or having to wind back provision. Some providers expressed frustration with receiving less funding than they had bid for and consequently not being able to meet existing learner demand. A concern was raised that moving the additional delivery to later years due to funding not being received in year one could lead to pressures from the condensing of learners into later years.

Just over half of providers who responded to the survey indicated that they would like to receive more funding in year 2 (2020/21), with the remaining seven providers indicating that they would like to receive the same amount of funding. Providers were asked about their plans for any additional funding, specifically whether they would: increase provision, provide alternative provision, or anything else. Half of providers indicated that they would use additional funding to both increase provision and provide alternative provision. Five providers would use the funding just to increase provision. Qualitative feedback from providers highlighted that they would like more funding to meet existing (primarily employer-led) demand, with specific areas of demand including digital skills programmes and pathways onto apprenticeships. Providers expressed the view that funding was needed to ensure new courses did not come in at the expense of existing provision.

Additionality

Providers were asked what would have happened to their delivery if their bid to the Adult Education Budget had been unsuccessful. The findings were that the majority of providers (nine) would not have delivered provision at all, five would have delivered but at a smaller scale and two would have delivered provision as intended. Looking specifically at grants, seven out of 11 providers would not have delivered provision at all had their bid been unsuccessful which points to a reasonably high level of additionality associated with the budget.

DELIVERY AND OUTPUTS

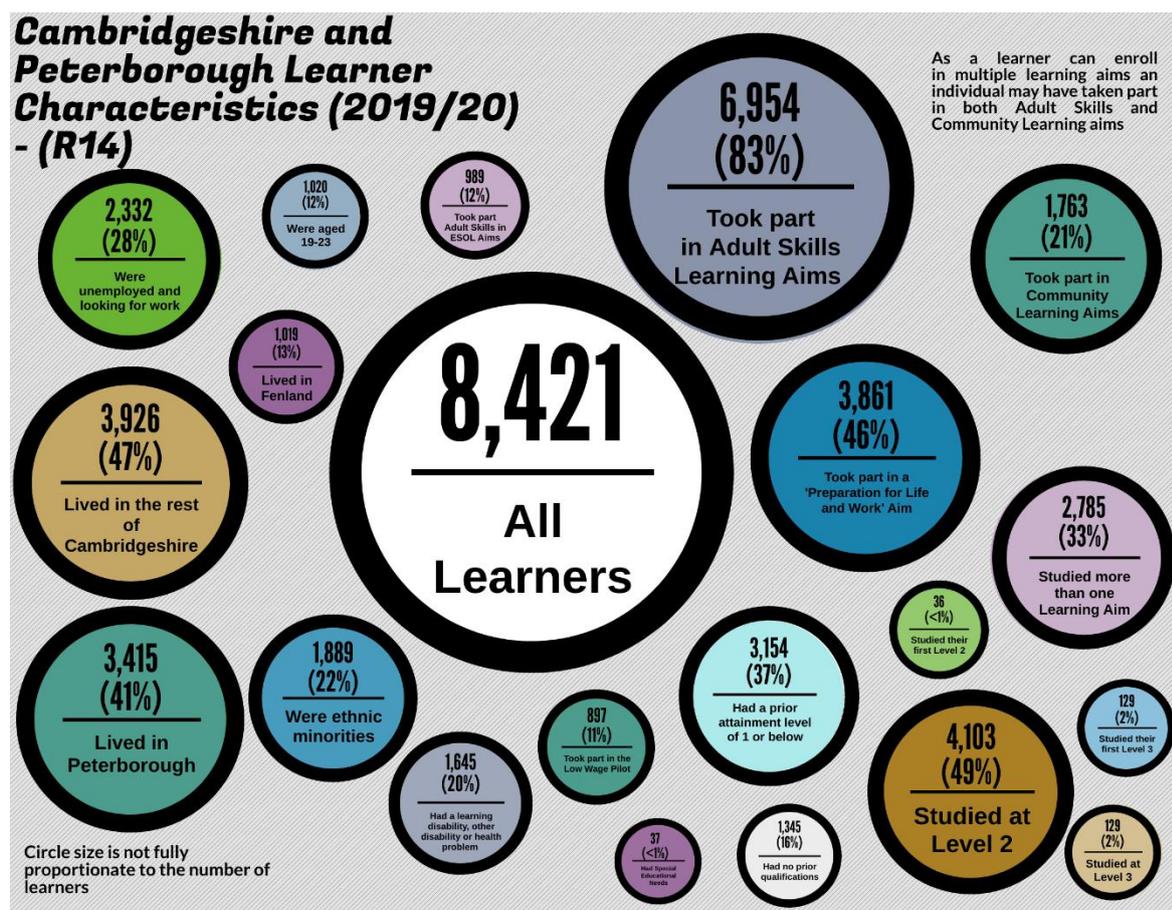
Delivery

The following section provides an overview of AEB delivery based on data at quarter 4 (R14). The data for quarter 3 and 4 will include impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- £7,838,039 spent so far¹
- 14,067 enrolments
- 8,421 learners

CPCA Adult Education Budget money has reached a total of 8,421 people. The key characteristics across these learners were as follows:

- 83% took part in Adult Skills learning aims and 21% took part in Community Learning aims²
- 12% were aged 19-23
- 22% were ethnic minorities
- 28% were unemployed and looking for work
- 37% had a prior attainment of 1 or below
- 33% studied more than one learning aim
- 46% took part in a 'Preparation for Life and Work' aim



¹ Includes estimated Community Learning funding per enrolment

² As a learner can enrol in multiple learning aims an individual may have taken part in both Adult Skills and Community Learning aims

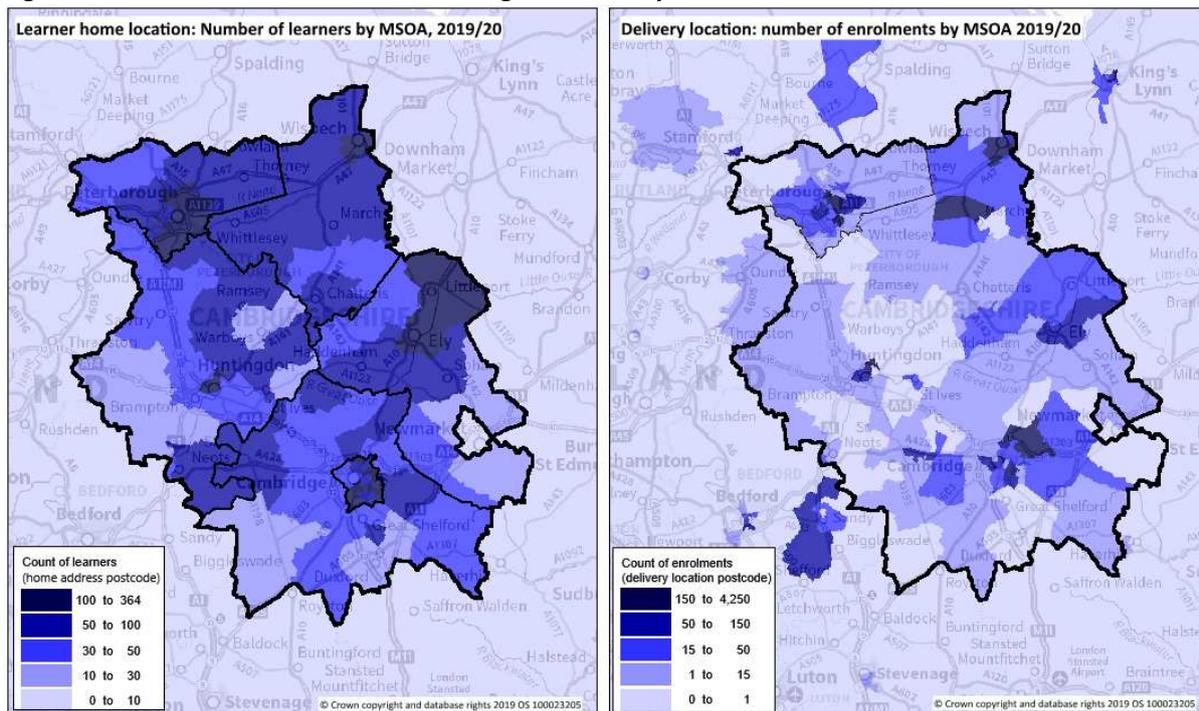
Just under half of all enrolments in 2019/20 were for learners whose home postcode was in Peterborough, as illustrated in the table below.

Table 1: Proportion of all enrolments by learner’s home district

Learner’s home district	Percentage of all enrolments
Cambridge	13%
East Cambridgeshire	6%
Fenland	11%
Huntingdonshire	13%
Peterborough	48%
South Cambridgeshire	9%
Unknown	1%

The maps below displays the count of learners by home location (left) and count of enrolments by delivery location (right) at the Middle Super Output Area (MSOA) level. Comparison between these maps illustrates that learners are more evenly distributed across the CPCA area compared to delivery, which is more concentrated in a few hotspots around Peterborough, Cambridge, and the East Cambridgeshire and Fenland market towns of Ely, Littleport, Wisbech Chatteris and March. Learners are also concentrated in the Cambridge, Peterborough, Fenland and northern part of East Cambridgeshire with cold spots for learners in the South and West of the region.

Figure 4: Learner home locations and learning aims delivery locations³



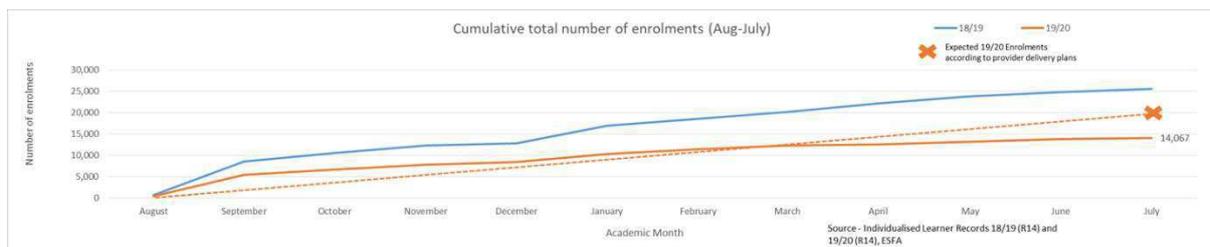
³ 18% of learning aims did not have a delivery location postcode attached

Performance against targets

Of the total 14,067 learning aims recorded in the 2019/20 (R14), 78% had been achieved. Of the learning aims which were recorded as completed, 94% had been achieved.

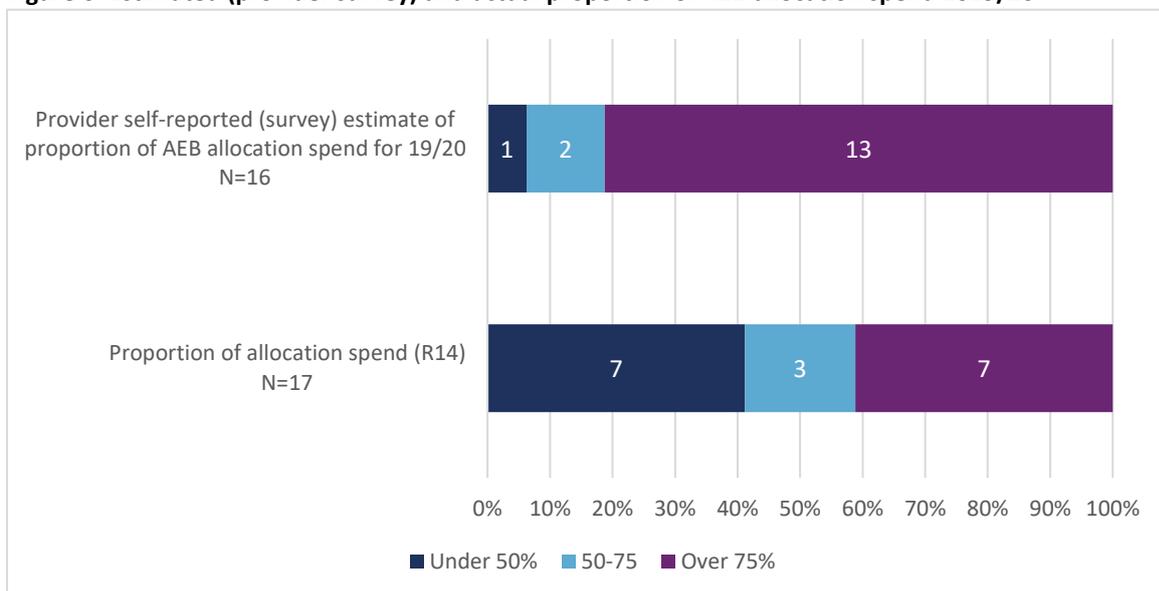
The chart below shows the cumulative total number of enrolments between August and July for 2018/19 and 2019/20. The dotted orange line shows the projected target number of enrolments required to reach the total target of 20,002 enrolments by July 2020, and shows that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic the cumulative monthly number of enrolments was consistently ahead of target. Since April the number of enrolments has plateaued meaning the total of 14,067 cumulative enrolments for July is below target.

Figure 5: Cumulative total number of enrolments (Aug-July), 2018/19 and 2019/20



The majority of providers (13 out of 16) stated in the survey that they anticipated spending over 75% of their year one allocation. The actual allocation spend for 2019/20 shows a mixed picture across providers with seven providers having spent under 50% of their allocation and seven having spent over 75%.

Figure 6: Estimated (provider survey) and actual proportion of AEB allocation spend 2019/20⁴



Provider Feedback on Delivery

Providers were asked in the survey how they felt their delivery was going in the year-to-date, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The majority of providers felt that their delivery had been going either 'very well' (five providers) or 'quite well' (seven providers). Two providers felt that their delivery was going moderately well and two felt it was going not very well. No providers selected the 'not at all well' option. Qualitative feedback in relation to delivery working well included providers indicating that

⁴ Includes estimates of Community Learning spend

they were on track to deliver their profile or deliver ahead of profile. The factors which were highlighted during consultations as being key to successful delivery primarily centred on the identification of demand (for example through employer, stakeholder, community and learner engagement) and the targeting of provision to appropriately meet that demand.

A few providers raised challenges in relation to delivery which included: matching delivery to demand (demand being higher than expected, uncertainty around whether enough funding would be received to meet demand), transitioning to a new service and employer engagement.

COVID-19 Impact

Provider feedback in the consultations indicated that the impact of COVID-19 had varied between providers depending on their circumstances. Some providers felt that their delivery model had protected them from negative impacts, for example, being involved with sectors that had seen employment demand remain stable or even grow, or through having a delivery model which easily adapted to online learning. Providers who specialised in mostly face-to-face provision referred to the difficulties involved in having to rapidly scale up for online provision but were hopeful that their new systems would be sustainable in the long term.

An increase in demand due people being furloughed and spending more time at home was highlighted as a possible opportunity for Adult Education. The main challenge raised was in learner engagement to gain new enrolments, with providers mentioning investing in marketing channels such as social media to reach learners where typical engagement methods such as through the job centre were no longer available. Concerns were also raised about the supply of new learners as residents focused on coping with the economic impact of the virus rather than learning new skills.

[Other feedback from providers](#)

The majority of providers (13 out of 16) were satisfied with the support available to them from the AEB team with 11 of these providers indicating they were very satisfied. During the telephone consultations most providers expressed positive feedback about their relationship with the AEB team, particularly highlighting levels of communication, access to support and the opportunity to work more closely than under the pre-devolution system. One issue highlighted as an area for improvement was the communication of short-notice changes to guidance and rules, providers suggested that earlier engagement and communication would be beneficial to mitigate the impact of such changes on them.

The majority of providers (11 out of 15) were satisfied with the level of administration involved in the process. The majority of providers (12 out of 18) indicated that they found the quarterly reviews helpful, rating between 6-10 on a scale of 1 (not helpful) to 10 (extremely helpful).

In the survey and in the telephone consultations providers were asked if they had any recommendations for the CPCA for future commissioning. Recommendations included: an online portal where providers could access all documentation relating to their bid, an ITP/AEB group to network and cross-refer, more flexibility to change learning offers to meet local demand, allowing more than 20% of contract to be sub-contracted, more clarity and guidance on performance measurement and adequate funding for ESOL.

[Notable changes to delivery 2018/19 \(pre devolution\) – 2019/20](#)

Devolution has led to an active shift in the provision of adult education in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough which is evidenced by the figures in table 2 (below) which relate to pre-devolution (2018/19) and during devolution (2019/20). Whilst specific funding changes were not introduced in 2019/20 there was an encouragement under devolution for providers to deliver adult education in

line with local priorities outlined in the CPIER and this is reflected in some of these changes noted below.

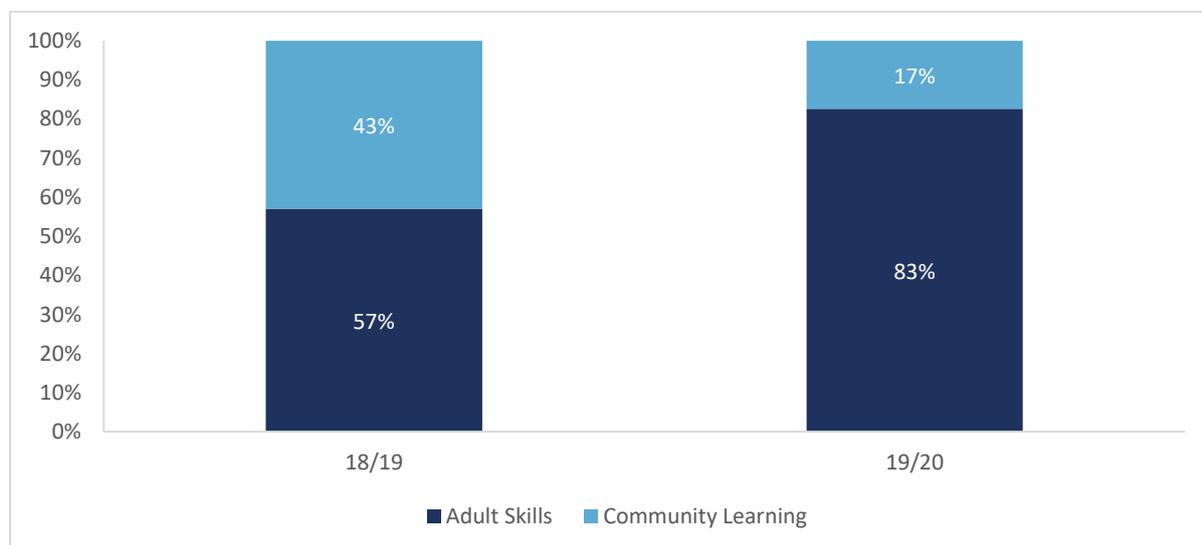
Table 2: Comparison of provision between 2018/19 and 2019/20

	2018/19 (pre-devolution)	2019/20 (first year of devolution)
Average Funding per learner*	£909.85	£914.67
Number of providers	190	17
Proportion of learning aims subcontracted	41%	17%
Proportion of Community Learning	43%	17%
Proportion of Adult Skills	57%	83%
Proportion of learning aims delivered to learners who reside in areas of deprivation ⁵	22%	34%

* data only available for Adult Skills learners.

The total number of providers has decreased markedly, as previously outlined, and the proportion of learning aims that are subcontracted has reduced from 41% in 2018/19 to just 17% in 2019/20, simplifying provision in the area. There has also been a significant shift in the type of provision delivered between 2018/19 and 2019/20 with the proportion of Adult Skills provision rising from 57% to 83% and Community Learning decreasing correspondingly from 43% to 17%, as illustrated in figure 7. Community Learning provision in 2019/20 has become more evenly spread across the CPCA area, having previously been disproportionately focused in South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire prior to devolution.

Figure 7: Proportion of learning aims which were Adult Skills/Community Learning



One further change observed between 2018/19 and 2019/20 is an increase in the proportion of learning aims delivered to learners who reside in areas of deprivation from 22% to 34%. This shift has in part been driven by an increase in Community Learning in Fenland and particularly Peterborough,

⁵ Enrolments where learner resided in top 20% most relatively deprived areas (2019 IMD)

which are the CPCA districts that have the highest number of areas falling in the top 20% most deprived nationally.

These changes to provision were discussed during the consultation with one provider which had gone through a substantial transformation in 2019/20. This provider explained that achieving a significant shift in provision from Community Learning to Adult Skills had involved a major service transition. A new model was developed based on the foundation of programmes meeting CPCA skills needs and being tailored to the needs of local learners. The shift in provision was achieved through an active reduction in 'leisure style' offers within Community Learning (including from subcontractors) and the development of relationships with stakeholders and community groups, including through geographically based development workers, to help tailor the delivery offer to local skills needs. A particular focus on the development of relevant programmes in areas of high deprivation was also discussed.

Impacts

Providers were asked in the survey whether they had seen any impacts of the devolution of the Adult Education Budget to date. There was an even split in providers with half stating that impacts were already being seen locally and the other half stating that it was too early to see impacts. In the follow up consultations providers were asked to elaborate on any impacts that were already be seen as well any impacts anticipated for the future. Impacts already being seen could broadly be split into positive impacts of provision in the year-to-date on learners and the impact of devolution on ways of working.

Positive impacts on learners had been identified from a range of sources including: the number of learners who had gone into work, anecdotal feedback from employers/stakeholders/tutors and feedback from learners both anecdotally and through formal course completion surveys. Providers mostly felt that it was too early at this stage to attribute these impacts to devolution.

Providers discussed how devolution had led to greater communication when compared to the ESFA which was felt to be beneficial. Some providers highlighted that devolution had allowed them to have a better evidence base and facilitated more focused local delivery. There was a discussion about how longer-term these changes to ways of working had the potential to impact positively on both learners and the local economy.

Learner destination data

Providers were asked whether they were collecting feedback or destination data from individual students and all 15 providers who answered this question indicated that they were. The follow-up consultations showed that the feedback being gathered varied notably between providers, ranging from feedback forms on course completion to structured follow up's up to 6 months after course completion. Providers emphasised the challenges associated with making contact with learners after they had exited programmes, with resource implications highlighted.

CONCLUSIONS (KEY FINDINGS)

Assessing the impact of the first year of devolution on the Adult Education Budget is very challenging due to the impact of COVID-19 on all adult education provision nationwide. The number of enrolments had been on track prior to the pandemic and the vast majority of providers felt that their delivery was going well, with many providers delivering at or ahead of profile for the first part of the year. **As of July 2020, across all providers, £7.8 million of funding had been delivered to 8,421 learners.**

The key findings of the AEB devolution evaluation were:

- **The total number of providers has reduced significantly from 190 in 2018/19 to 17 in 2019/20, with an additional notable reduction in the subcontracting of learning aims. Providers reported being satisfied with the processes associated with the devolution of the budget and particularly highlighted the beneficial impacts of a closer working relationship with the AEB team.** The more localised network has helped providers tailor their provision successfully to existing employment and skills-based demand. There was a suggestion that this localised approach could be built on in the future through greater communication between providers, potentially through the formation of an AEB group, to work together in developing quality provision across the CPCA area.
- **Adult education delivery in the CPCA area has shifted considerably with a lower proportion of Community Learning and a higher proportion of Adult Skills learning in 2019/20.** Whilst COVID-19 has likely played a role with a reduction in Community Learning enrolments for the summer months, provider consultations identified an active shift away from the previous 'leisure/pleasure' provision and towards provision targeting local skills needs. **Community Learning provision in 2019/20 has become more evenly spread across the CPCA area having previously been disproportionately focused in South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire prior to devolution.**
- **The proportion of all learning aims which were delivered to learners from areas of high deprivation increased from under a quarter (22%) in 2018/19 to just over a third (34%) in 2019/20.** This shift has in part been driven by an increase in Community Learning in Fenland and particularly Peterborough, which are the CPCA districts that have the highest number of areas falling in the top 20% most deprived nationally. Provider feedback in consultations described active community engagement in deprived areas and the targeting of specific relevant programmes in these locations.
- The majority of providers (over 80%), would not have delivered provision to the same extent if their bid had been unsuccessful, pointing to **a reasonably high level of additionality associated with the budget.**

The challenge for the CPCA AEB team, local providers and adult education delivery going forward into year two will be understanding skills demand within the post-Covid labour market, and matching provision to local skills need to help continuing to engage individuals to retrain, upskill or into learning.

ANNEX – AEB EVALUATION PROVIDER SURVEY: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Question 1: Please select your institution from the list below

All 16 respondents answered question 1, which asked which institution they belonged to.

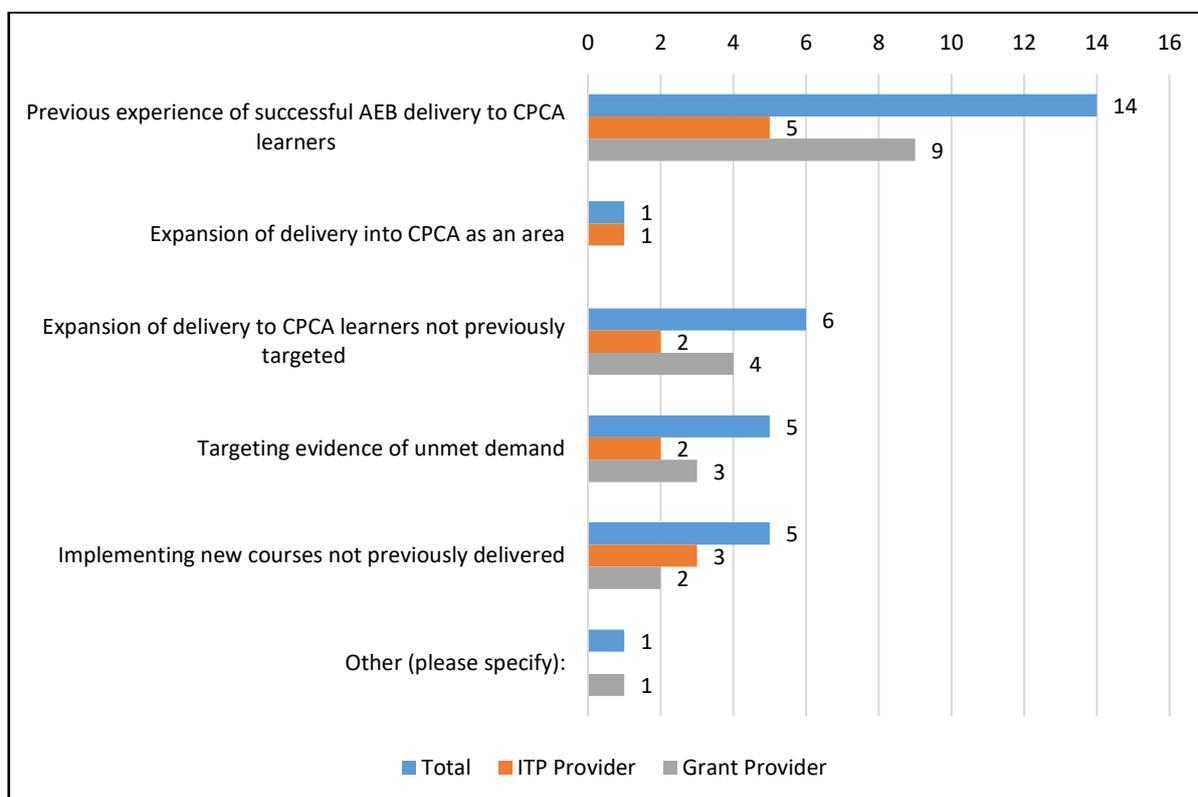
- 5 respondents were **ITP providers**
- 11 respondents were **Grant providers**

Question 2: What was the reason behind your initial bid for funding from the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Adult Education Budget?

Please tick all that apply

15 respondents answered question 2⁶, which asked them to select what the reason behind their initial bid for funding from the CPCA AEB Budget. Respondents could select multiple answers.

Figure 1: Reasons for initial bid for funding from CPCA AEB Budget



- The majority of respondents indicated they initially bid for funding due to **‘previous experience of successful AEB delivery to CPCA learners’ (14 respondents)**
- Over a third of respondents indicated they initially bid due to **‘expansion of delivery to CPCA learners not previously targeted’ (6 respondents)**
- A third of respondents indicated they bid due to **‘targeting evidence of unmet demand’ (5 respondents)**

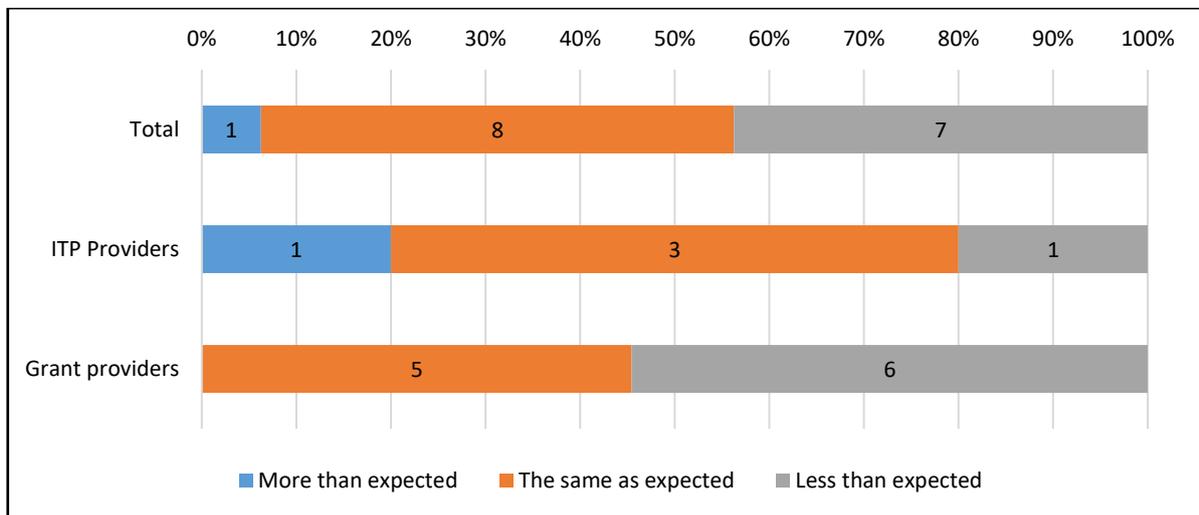
⁶ One respondent was removed at their request

- A third of respondents indicated they bid due to **‘implementing new courses not previously delivered’ (5 respondents)**
- **1 respondent** indicated they bid due to **‘expansion of delivery into CPCA as an area’**
- **1 respondent** indicated they bid due to **‘other’** reasons. The comment they left for this answer was “Devolved area response”

Question 3: How did the amount of funding received compare to what you would have hoped for?

All 16 respondents answered question 3, which asked how the amount of funding received compared to what they would have hoped for.

Figure 2: Funding received compared to expectations

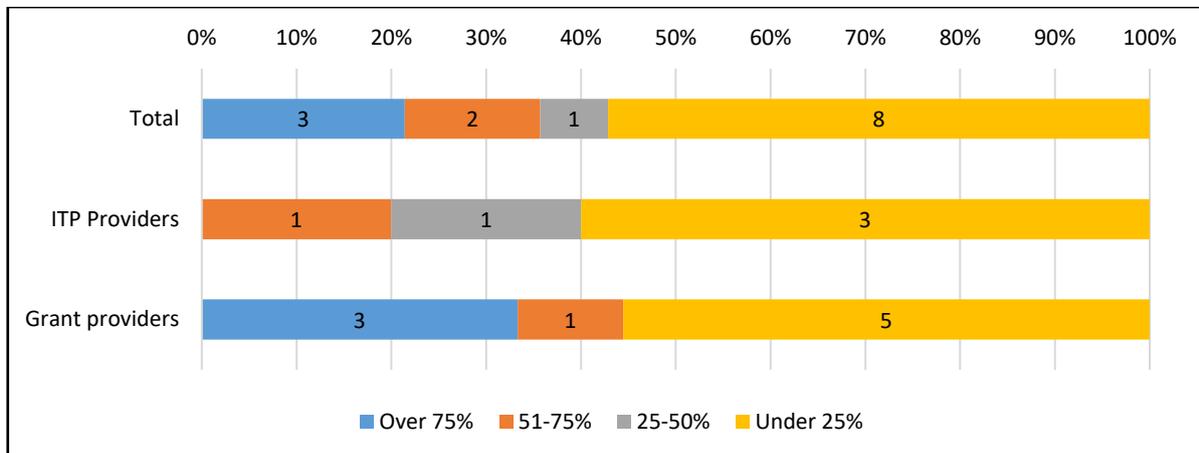


- Half of respondents indicated the funding they received was **‘the same as expected’ (8 respondents)**
- Just under half of respondents indicated the funding they received was **‘less than expected’ (7 respondents)**
- **1 respondent** indicated the funding they received was **‘more than expected’**

Question 4: What proportion of your overall Adult Education budget does the CPCA AEB budget make up?

14 respondents answered this question, which asked what proportion of their overall Adult Education budget the CPCA AEB budget made up.

Figure 3: Proportion of AEB made up from CPCA AEB

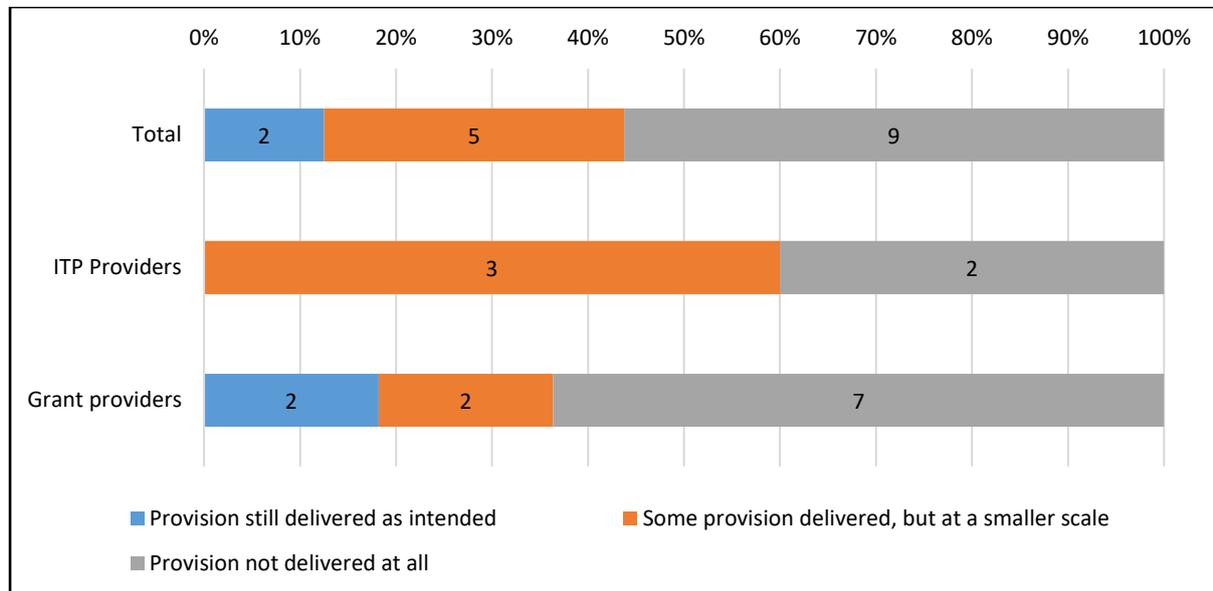


- The majority of respondents indicated the CPCA AEB made up '**Under 25%**' of their overall AEB (**8 respondents**)
- Just over a fifth of respondents indicated it made up '**over 75%**' of their overall AEB (**3 respondents**)
- **2 respondents** indicated it made up '**51-75%**' of their overall AEB budget
- **1 respondent** (an **ITP provider**) indicated it made up '**25-50%**' of their overall AEB budget

Question 5: What would have happened if you had been unsuccessful in your bid to the Adult Education Budget?

All 16 respondents answered question 5, which asked respondents what would have happened if their bid to the AEB had been unsuccessful.

Figure 4: Situation had AEB bid been unsuccessful

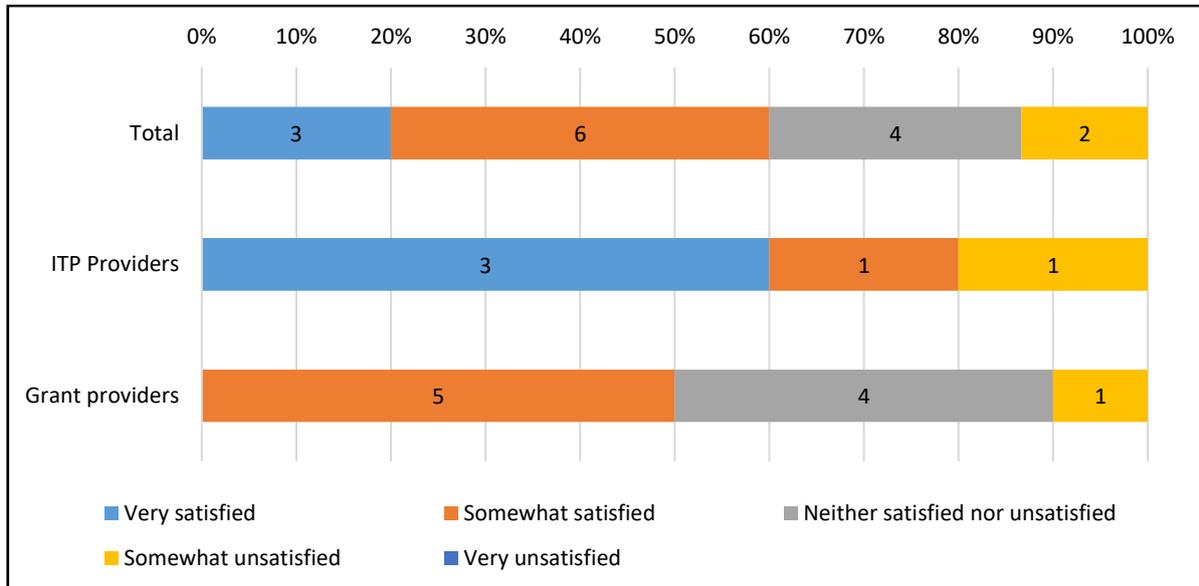


- The majority of respondents indicated that, had their bid to the AEB been unsuccessful, **'provision not delivered at all' (9 respondents)**
 - Less than a third of respondents indicated **'some provision delivered, but at a smaller scale' (5 respondents)**
 - **2 respondents** indicated **'provision still delivered as intended'**

Question 6: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the original bidding/application process?

15 respondents answered question 6⁷, which asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the original bidding/application process.

Figure 5: Satisfaction with original bidding/application process



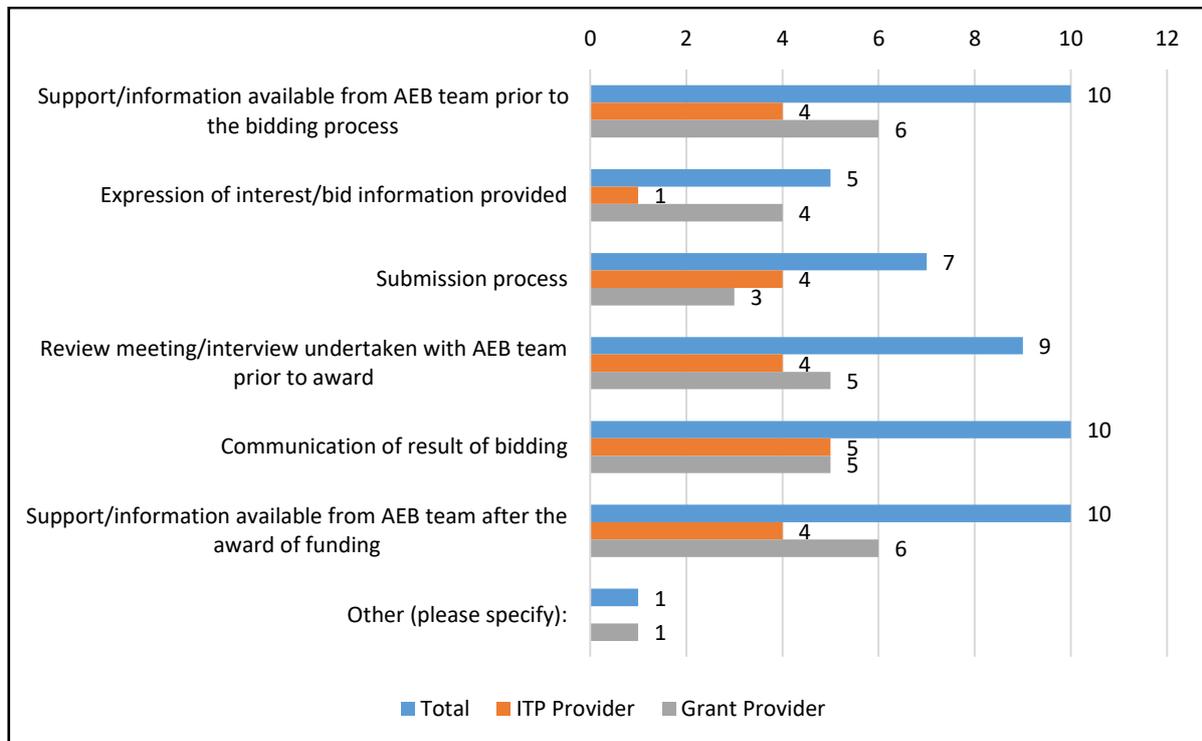
- The majority of respondents were **either 'very satisfied' or 'somewhat satisfied'** with the original bidding/application process (**9 respondents**)
 - Just over a quarter of respondents were **'neither satisfied or unsatisfied'** with the process (**4 respondents**)
 - **2 respondents** were **'somewhat unsatisfied'**

⁷ One respondent was removed at their request

Question 7: Which elements worked well? Please tick all that apply

13 respondents answered question 7⁸ which asked which elements worked well and 2 respondents indicated in the 'other' option for this question that they were unable to answer due to a lack of involvement in the process. Respondents could select multiple answers.

Figure 6: Elements that worked well



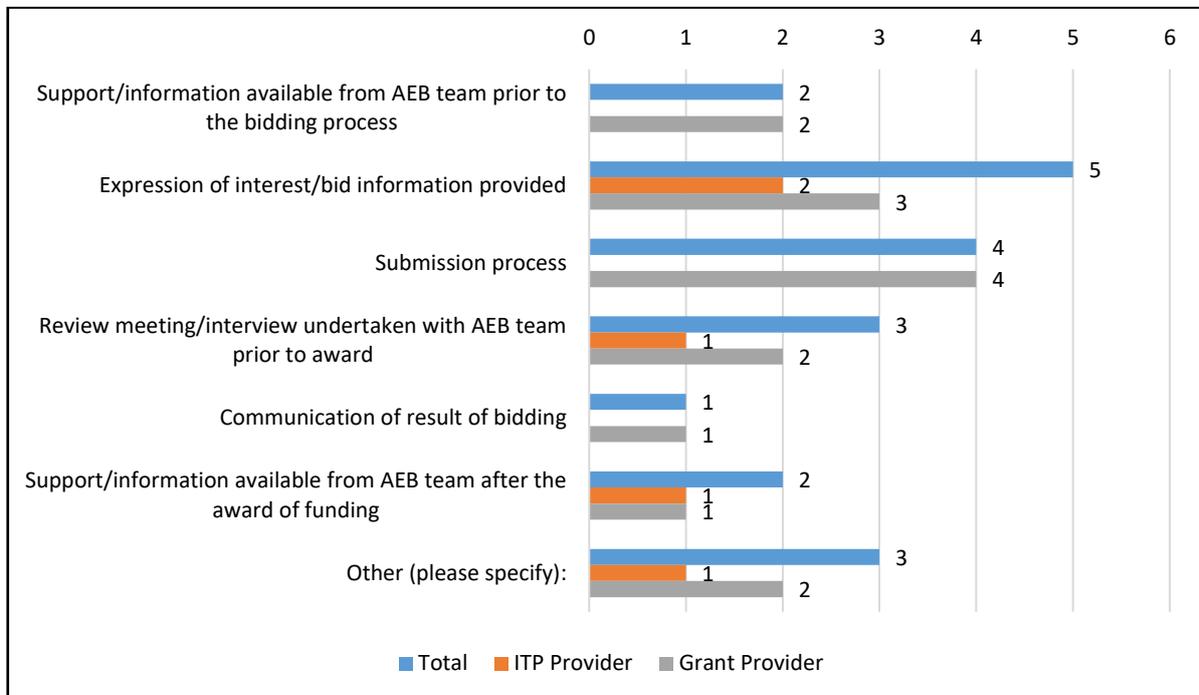
- The majority of respondents felt the following elements went well:
 - **'Support/information available from AEB team prior to the bidding process'** (10 respondents)
 - **'Communication of result of bidding'** (10 respondents)
 - **'Support/information available from AEB team after the award of funding'** (10 respondents)
 - **'Review meeting/interview undertaken with AEB team prior to award'** (9 respondents)
- Just over half of respondents felt that the **'Submission process'** went well (7 respondents)
- Over a third of respondents felt that **'Expression of interest/bid information provided'** went well (5 respondents)
- **1 respondent** (a **Grant provider**) selected the **'other'** option. They commented that the grant allocation was very smooth.

⁸ One respondent removed at their request

Question 8: Which elements worked less well or could be improved? Please tick all that apply

13 respondents answered question 8⁹, which asked about elements that worked less well/could be improved. 2 respondents indicated in the 'other' option for this question that they were unable to answer due to a lack of involvement in the process. Respondents could select multiple answers.

Figure 7: Elements that worked less well or could be improved



- **2 respondents** felt that ‘**Support/information available from AEB team prior to the bidding process**’ worked less well or could be improved
- Over a third of respondents felt that ‘**Expression of interest/bid information provided**’ worked less well or could be improved (**5 respondents**)
- Just under a third of respondents (**4 respondents**) felt that ‘**Submission process**’ worked less well or could be improved
- Just under a quarter of respondents felt that ‘**Review meeting/interview undertaken with AEB team prior to award**’ worked less well or could be improved (**3 respondents**)
- **1 respondent** felt that ‘**Communication of result of bidding**’ worked less well or could be improved
- **2 respondents** felt that ‘**Support/information available from AEB team after the award of funding**’ worked less well or could be improved
- **3 respondents** selected the ‘**other**’ option.
 - Qualitative responses included:

⁹ One respondent removed at their request

- Comments on issues with the bid process, specifically relating to the requirement to submit separate proposals for each learning aim (leading to lots of duplication) and insufficient guidance on the important placed on case studies
- A comment about allocation not reflecting discussions around levels activity.

Question 9: Is there anything that you would like to highlight as an example of where the process has worked particularly well, or anything that you would like to see done differently in future bidding processes?

11 respondents left comments on question 9, which asked if there was anything respondents would like to highlight as an example of where the process has worked particularly well, or anything that they would like to see done differently in future bidding processes.

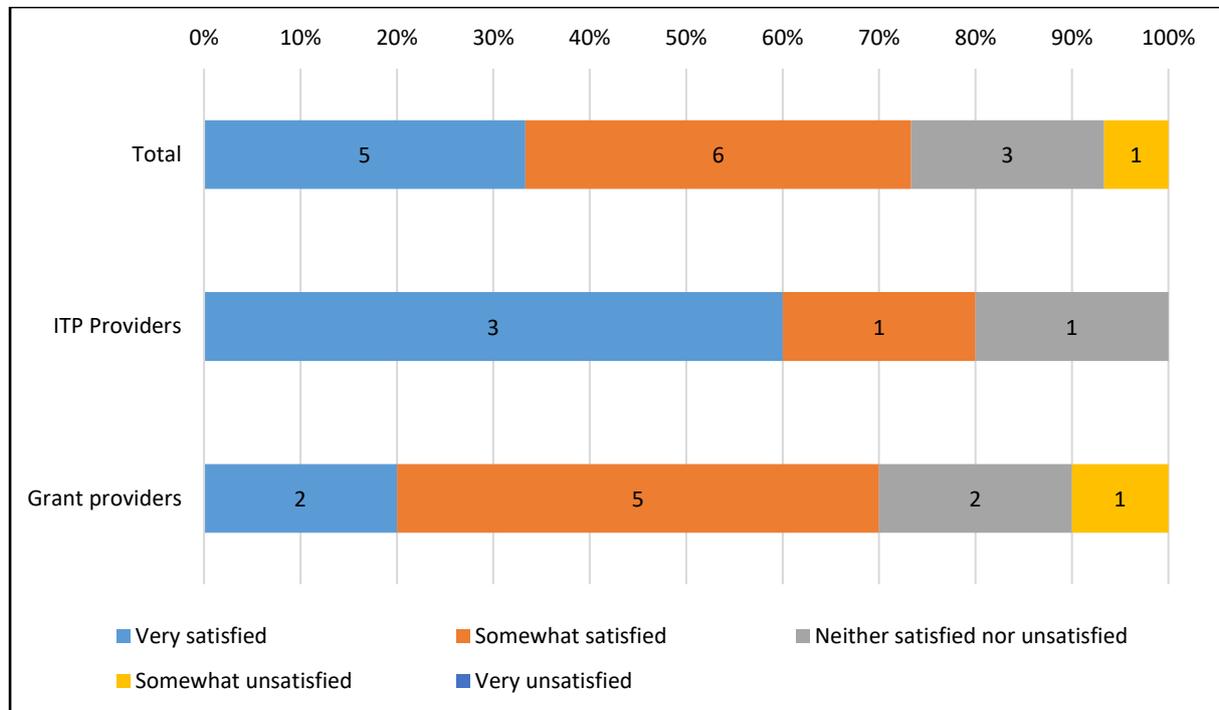
Summary of main themes

Comment theme	Respondent comments
Separation of learning offers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents who discussed this theme felt there were issues with the process of submitting tender for each learning offer, as it was overly time consuming, lead to significant duplication of information, and made it difficult to provide information around their delivery offers as a whole
Guidance and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most of the respondents who discussed this theme left positive comments about the guidance and communication from CPCA. • A few of the respondents who discussed this theme indicated there had been some issues regarding the guidance provided, including initial incorrect paperwork and a lack of guidance on marketing.

Question 10a: How satisfied are you with the level of administration (for example, forms relating to subcontracting, EAS, delivery plans etc)?

15 respondents answered question 10a, which asked how satisfied they were with the level of administration.

Figure 8: Satisfaction with level of administration



- The majority of respondents were **either ‘very satisfied’ or ‘somewhat satisfied’** with the level of administration (**11 respondents**)
 - A fifth of respondents were **‘neither satisfied nor unsatisfied’** (**3 respondents**)
 - **1 respondent** was **‘somewhat unsatisfied’**

Question 10b: Are there any ways in which you feel these processes could be improved?

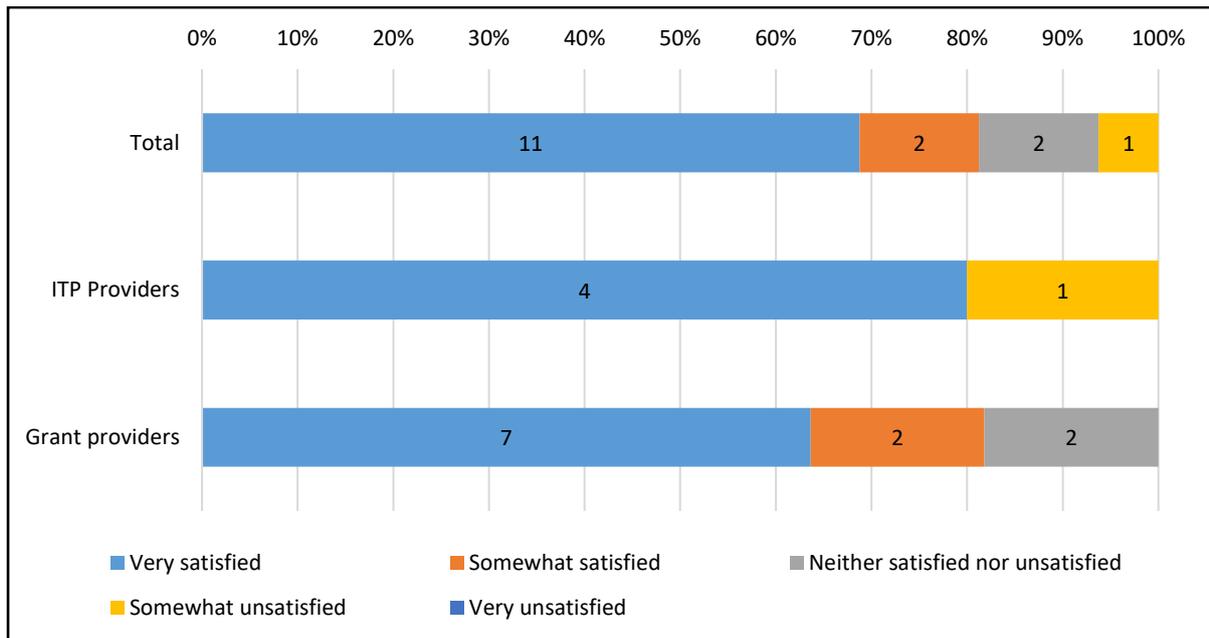
3 respondents left comments on question 10b, which asked if respondents felt the processes could be improved. Comments were too singular to be grouped together for analytical purposes. These comments included;

- concerns that too much information was required for bidding
- the smooth operation of the grant funding
- an issue relating to an amendment being required due to the contract being initially issued with the incorrect organisation’s name

Question 11a: How satisfied are you with the support available to you from the AEB team?

All 16 respondents answered question 11a, which asked how satisfied they were with the support available to them from the AEB team.

Figure 9: Satisfaction with support from AEB team



- The majority of respondents were **‘very satisfied’** with the support available from the AEB team (**11 respondents**). **2 respondents** were **‘somewhat satisfied’**
 - **2 respondents** were **‘neither satisfied nor unsatisfied’**
 - **1 respondent** was **‘somewhat unsatisfied’**

Question 11b: Are there ways in which you feel this support could be improved or elements that you would like to see more of?

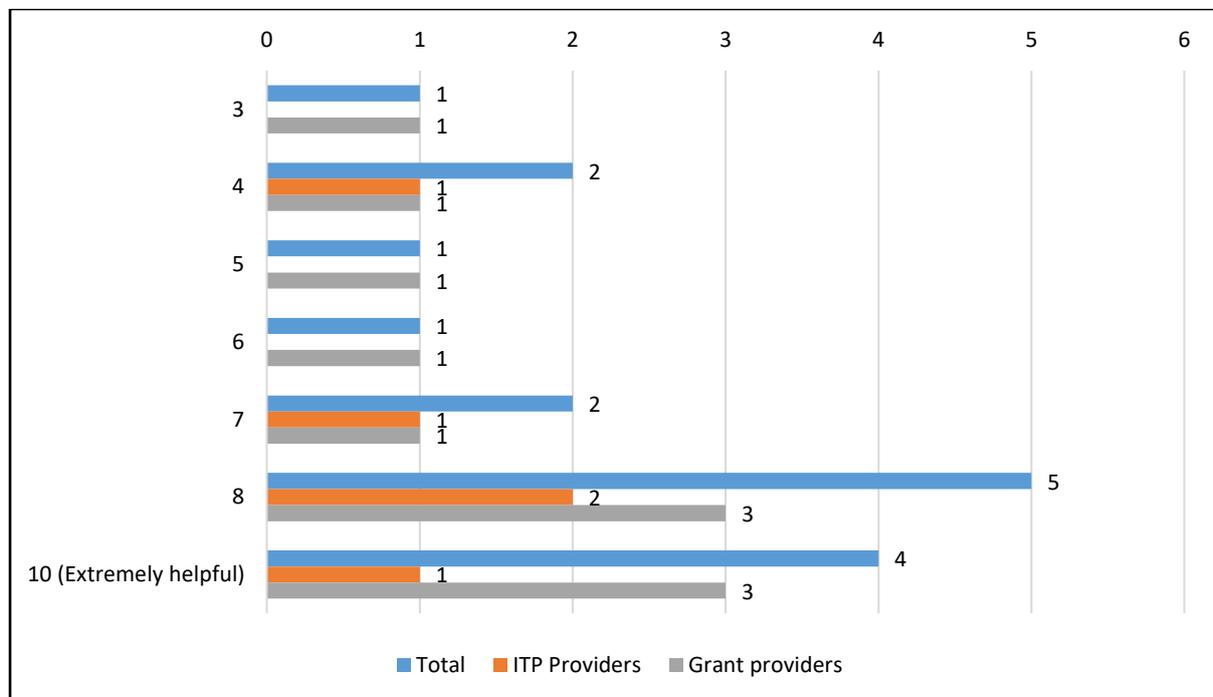
3 respondents left comments on question 11b, which asked if respondents felt support could be improved or elements that they would like to see more of. Comments were too singular to be grouped together for analytical purposes. These comments included;

- concerns about a lack of ITP or AEB group in order to network or cross refer
- concerns about a lack of process for changing or expanding on learning offers to facilitate local demand
- concerns about a lack of August to March or May to July allocation agreement pre-contract
- concerns about a lack of guidance on how performance was to be judged
- some respondents commented that there were no ways for support to be improved or that their small allocation required little support

Question 12: On a scale of 1-10, how helpful have you found the quarterly reviews?

All 16 respondents answered question 12, which asked respondents to rate how helpful they found the quarterly reviews on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being 'not at all helpful' and 10 being 'extremely helpful'.

Figure 10: Scale of how helpful the quarterly reviews were found

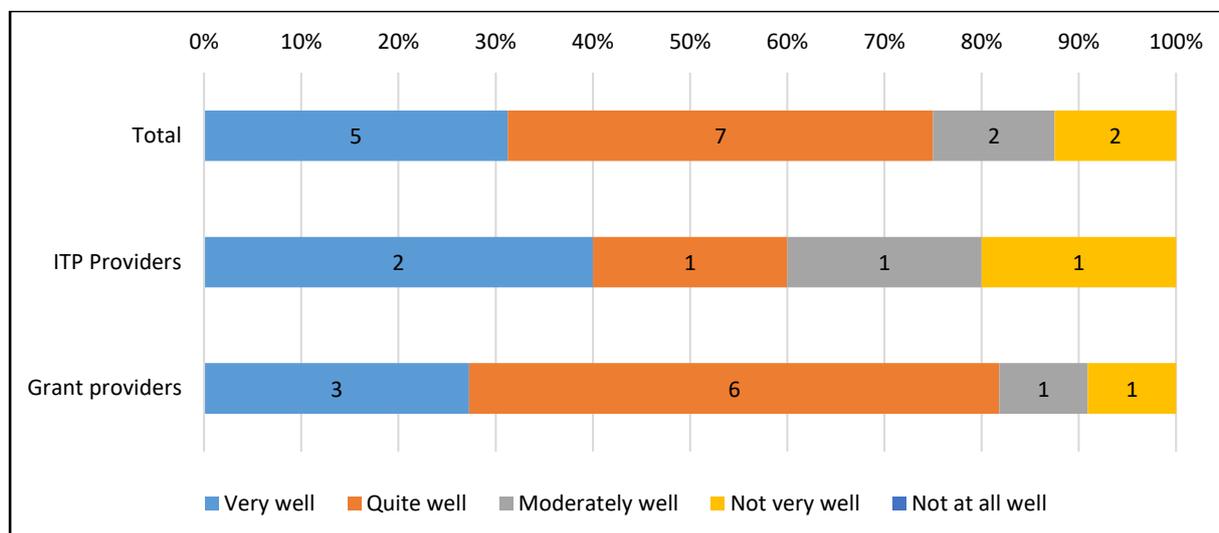


- The majority of respondents answered on the **positive** side of the scale (6 to 10), finding the quarterly reviews helpful (**12 respondents**), with over half of respondents selecting '8' or '10' on the scale (**9 respondents**)
 - A quarter of respondents answered on the **negative** side of the scale (1 to 5) (**4 respondents**). The lowest rating was '3' from **1 respondent**

Question 13a: How do you feel that your delivery was working in the year-to-date, prior to COVID-19?

All 16 respondents answered question 13a, which asked how they felt about how their delivery was working in the year-to-date, prior to COVID-19.

Figure 11: Delivery performance for year-to-date prior to COVID-19



- The majority of respondents felt that their delivery, for the working year-to-date prior to COVID-19, was working **either ‘very well’ or ‘quite well’ (12 respondents)**
 - **2 respondents** felt it was working **‘moderately well’**
 - **2 respondents** felt it was working **‘not very well’**
 - **No respondents** felt it was working **‘not at all well’**

Question 13b: Please explain why this is the case:

11 respondents left comments on question 13b, which asked respondents to explain their answer to question 13a (‘How do you feel that your delivery was working in the year-to-date, prior to COVID-19?’).

Summary of main themes

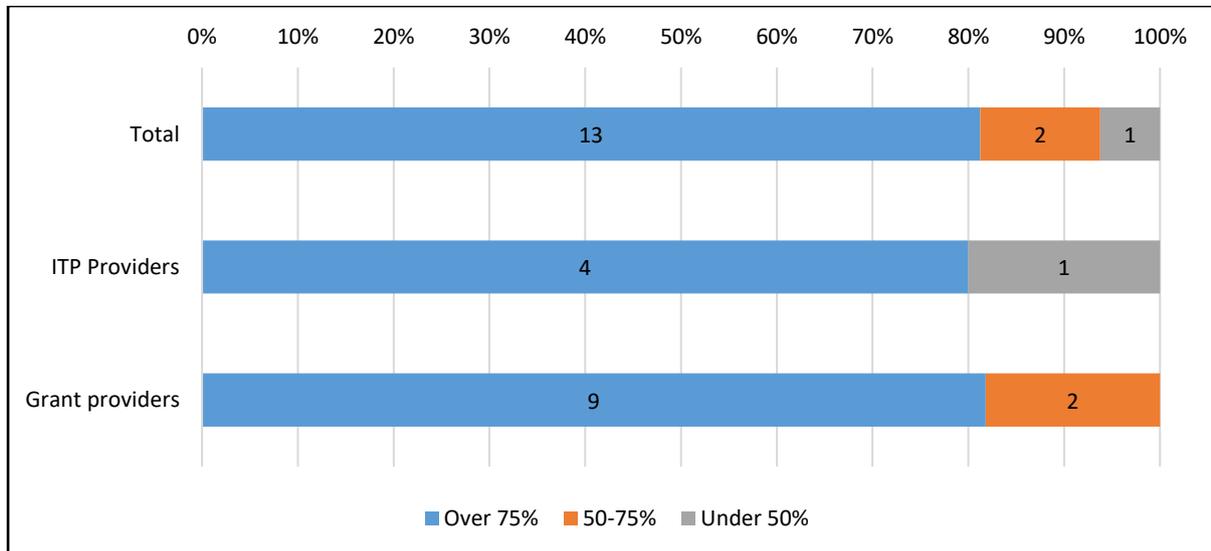
Comment theme	Respondent comments
Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents who discussed this theme left comments regarding some of the limitations they had faced <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Two of these respondents indicated they had more demand than they were expecting to deliver, with one respondent indicating they were unsure they could secure funding to meet that demand and one respondent indicating they had turned down employers in anticipation of the final cohort reaching their allocation ○ Two respondents indicated they had issues that CPCA were aware of. One of these respondents indicated they had made changes to staffing, engagement, and course

	<p>offers which had resulted in improvements prior to COVID-19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ One respondent discussed issues with low referrals and not recruiting enough employers. Although this had changed with employers engaging with their full contract value which had been booked in for March to July
On track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respondents who discussed this theme indicating they had been on track to deliver their profile
Expanding on allocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respondents who discussed this theme indicated they either were delivering ahead of their profile or had the potential to do so

Question 14: How much of your AEB allocation do you anticipate spending this year?

All 16 respondents answered question 14, which asked how much of their AEB allocation they anticipated spending this year.

Figure 12: Anticipated spending of AEB allocation

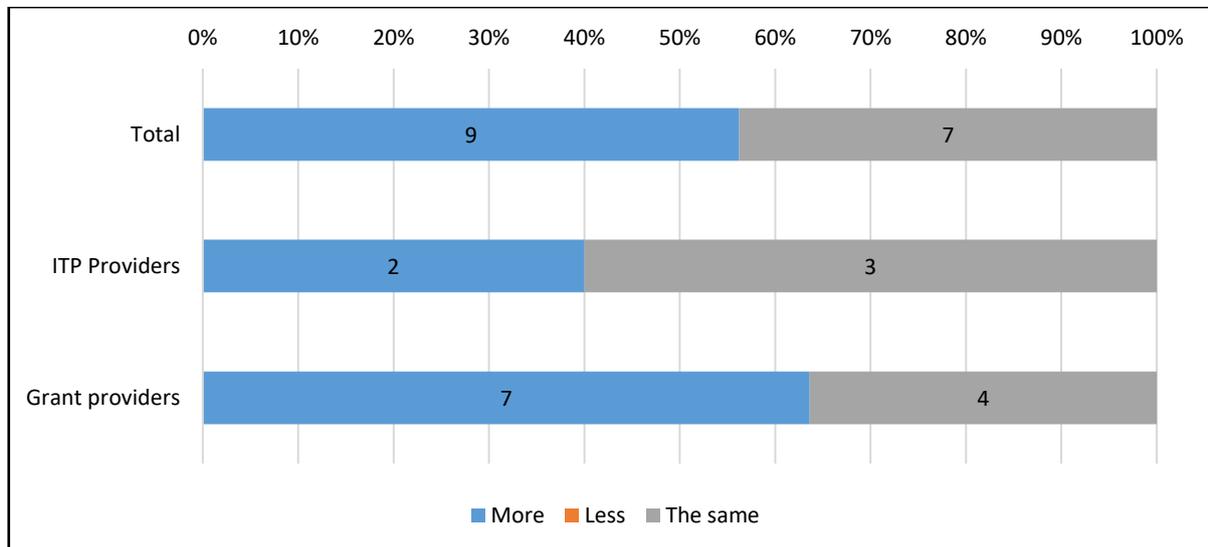


- The majority of respondents indicated they anticipated spending '**over 75%**' of their AEB allocation (**13 respondents**)
 - **2 respondents** indicated they anticipated spending '**50-75%**'
 - **1 respondent** indicated they anticipated spending '**under 50%**'

Question 15: Would you have liked to receive more or less funding for year 2 (2020/21)?

All 16 respondents answered question 15, which asked if they would have liked to receive more or less funding for year 2 (2020/21).

Figure 13: Funding preference for year 2

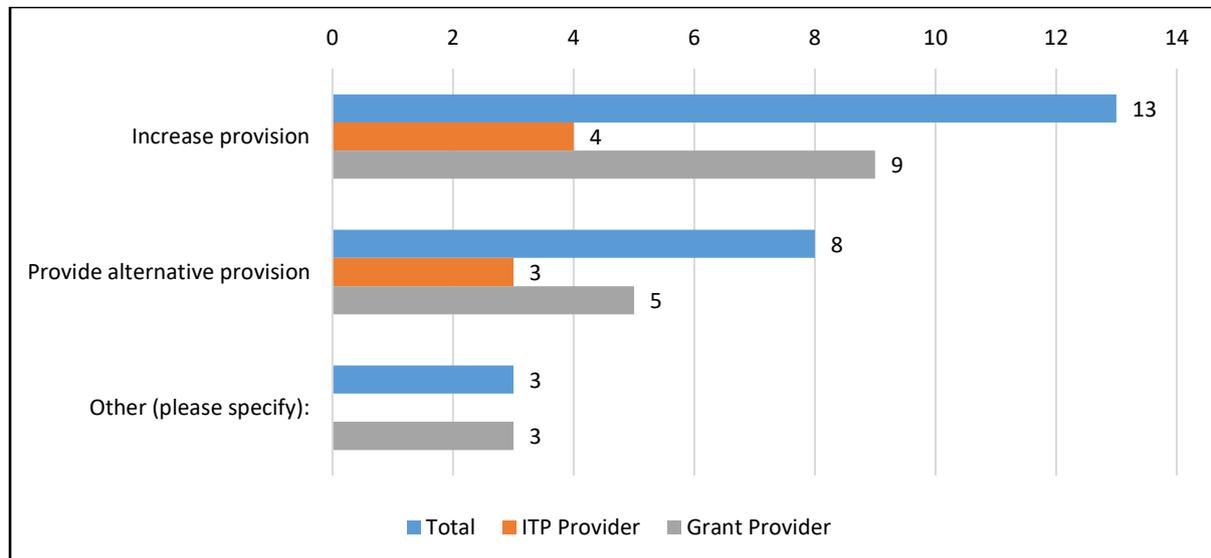


- Over half of respondents indicated they would have liked to receive **'more'** funding (**9 respondents**)
 - Just under half indicated they would have liked to receive **'the same'** funding (**7 respondents**)
 - **No respondents** indicated they would have liked to receive **'less'** funding

Question 16: What would you plan to do with any additional funding? Please tick all that apply

All 16 respondents answered question 16, which asked what they would plan to do with any additional funding. Respondents could select multiple answers.

Figure 14: Plans for additional funding

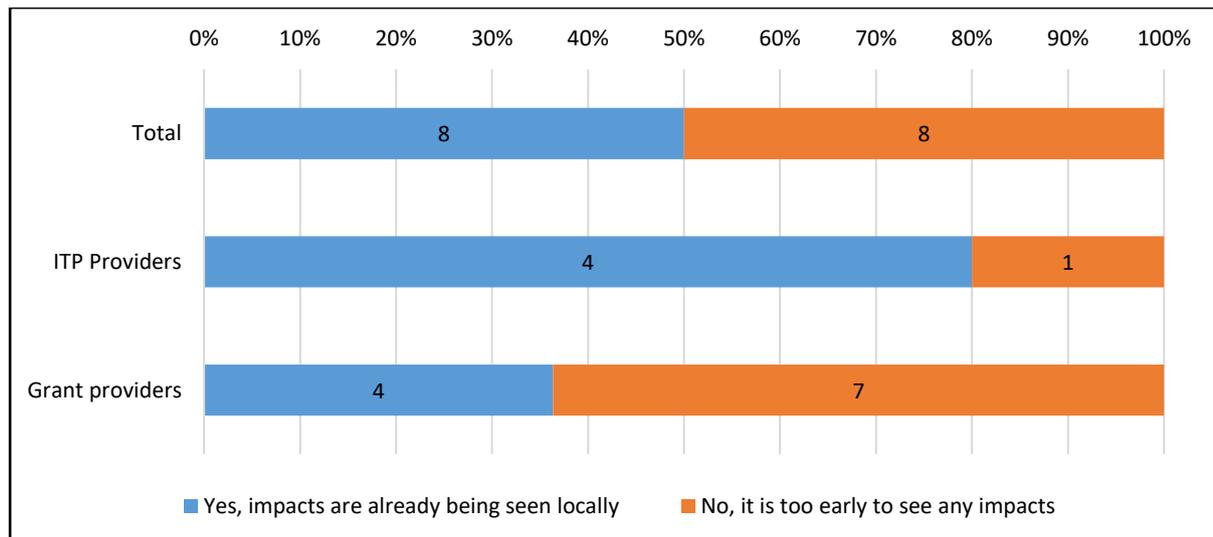


- The majority of respondents indicated they would use additional funding to **'increase provision'** (13 respondents)
- Half of respondents indicated they would use additional funding to **'provide alternative provision'**
- **3 Grant providers** selected the **'other'** option.
 - 1 respondents indicated they would use it for targeted work post Covid
 - 1 respondent indicated they would use it for employability and retraining programmes
 - 1 respondent indicated it would depend on the devolved number of learners encountered through employer delivery.

Question 17: Have you seen any impacts of the devolution of the Adult Education Budget to date?

All 16 respondents answered question 17, which asked if they had seen any impacts of the devolution of the AEB to date.

Figure 15: Impacts of devolution of the AEB to date



- Respondents were split between ‘**yes, impacts are already being seen locally**’ (8 respondents) and ‘**no, it is too early to see any impacts**’ (8 respondents)

Question 18: Do you feel that there is a need for a CPCA AEB group with all providers?

16 respondents left comments on question 18, which asked respondents if they felt there was a need for a CPCA AEB group with all providers. 3 of these respondents felt that no group was needed although did not elaborate on their answer.

Summary of main themes

Comment theme	Respondent comments
Delivery planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents who discussed this theme felt that a CPCA AEB group would be useful for delivery planning, as they would be able to co-ordinate offers, avoid duplication, and ensure demand is sufficiently being met
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents who discussed this theme felt that collaboration between groups would be necessary and a CPCA AEB group could help facilitate this. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A few of these respondents raised the need for prior agreement on aims to ensure effectiveness ○ A few of these respondents felt a group could help develop best practice between providers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ One of these respondents felt that collaboration with providers in other devolved areas could be beneficial
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Question 19: Do you have any additional comments (for example, recommendations for the CPCA for future commissioning or current gaps in provision for adult learning activities that you would like to see addressed)?

5 respondents left comments on question 19, which asked if they had any additional comments. Comments were too singular to be grouped together for analytical purposes. These comments included; the need for more flexibility to meet local demand, more clarity on performance measures, the need to allow for more than 20% of the contract value to be sub-contracted; the need ESOL to be adequately funded; concerns about reaching allocation limit and the impact that may have on local need.

Question 20: Are you gathering feedback or destination data from individual students?

15 respondents answered question 20, which asked if they were gathering feedback or destination data from individual students. All of these respondents answered **'yes'**.