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Coventry City Council

Agenda

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Time and Date

10.00 am on Wednesday, 28th September, 2022

Place

Diamond Rooms 1 and 2, Council House, Coventry

Public Business**1. Apologies and Substitutions****2. Declarations of Interest****3. Minutes**

- (a) To agree the minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 July, 2022
(Pages 3 - 8)

- (b) Matters Arising

4. Jobs and Skills

- (a) Coventry Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 (Pages 9 - 42)

Report of the Director of Business, Investment and Culture

- (b) Coventry Skills Strategy 2022-2030 (Pages 43 - 144)

Report of the Chief Partnerships Officer/Director of Education and Skills

5. Co-option of Other Faiths Representatives to the Scrutiny Board (Pages 145 - 146)

Briefing Note of the Director of Law and Governance

6. Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Work Programme and Outstanding Issues 2022/23 (Pages 147 - 150)

Report of the Director of Law and Governance

7. Any Other Items of Public Business

Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.

Private Business**Nil**

Julie Newman, Director of Law and Governance, Council House, Coventry

Tuesday, 20 September 2022

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is Suzanne Bennett, Governance Services - Telephone: 024 7697 2299 E-mail: suzanne.bennett@coventry.gov.uk

Membership: Councillors N Akhtar (Chair), P Akhtar (By Invitation), M Ali, R Auluck, L Bigham, G Duggins (By Invitation), J Innes, AS Khan (By Invitation), P Male, C Miks, G Ridley and R Singh

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**Suzanne Bennett, Governance Services - Telephone: 024 7697 2299
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Agenda Item 3a

Coventry City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee held at 10.00 am on
Wednesday, 20 July 2022

Present:

Members: Councillor N Akhtar (Chair)

Councillor C Miks (Deputy Chair)

Councillor M Ali

Councillor J Innes

Councillor R Lakha (substitute for Councillor R Auluck)

Councillor G Ridley

Councillor R Singh

Councillor CE Thomas (Substitute for L Bigham)

Other Members: Councillor G Duggins, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Policy and Leadership

Employees (by Service Area):

Business, Investment and Culture B Willers

Law and Governance S Bennett, V Castree

Public Health and Wellbeing A Duggal (Director), S Lam

Streetscene and Regulatory Services A Walster (Director), C Hickin,

Transformation and Change D Horton-Raynor, M McGinty

Transportation and Highways C Knight (Director)

Apologies: Councillors R Auluck, L Bigham, P Male

Public Business

7. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

8. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 June, 2022 were agreed and signed as a true record.

There were no matters arising.

9. One Coventry Plan Annual Performance Report 2021-22

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive which indicated that the One Coventry Plan sets out the Council's shared vision and priorities for Coventry. The Annual Performance Report, which was appended to the report, details performance towards priorities between April 2021 and March 2022. The One Coventry Plan is currently being refreshed (Minute 10 below refers). The report sets out performance towards the current One Coventry performance metrics, but also includes the emerging metrics to provide a baseline for the new One Coventry Plan. As before, for each of the priorities the report sets out the trends, actions taken and performance metrics to provide an assessment of the progress made against previous years and with other places.

The report highlighted Coventry's year in the spotlight at UK City of Culture, which had happened during a period of continued significant national and international challenges, including Covid-19 pandemic related issues and the worst escalation in hostilities in Europe since 1991 with Russia's war on Ukraine, which is one of the reasons behind the rapid rise in the cost of living. The impact of this cost of living crisis on communities is yet to be fully realised, as people right across the City face rapidly rising energy, fuel, food and housing costs. The report highlighted the One Coventry approach, with the Council, partner organisations and community groups right across the City responding to the twin challenges of the Covid -19 pandemic and the cost of living crisis, taking on additional duties. The report also indicated that there will continue to be more indirect impacts as residents and communities who previously have never needed local authority support face difficulties.

The One Coventry Plan 2016-2024 is measured using 75 metrics, of which 32 metrics improved; 8 stayed the same; 18 got worse; can't say for 10 metrics; and progress is not available for the remaining 7 metrics. This means, 69% (40/58) of directional metrics (excluding cannot say or not available) improved or stayed the same. As with last year, several metrics are not available this year because there is limited data on school performance because of exam cancellations last summer.

Many of the Council's key priorities have an equality dimension or address an inequality caused by economic or social circumstances. Consequently, the report also sets out how the Council addresses these equality and health inequalities and also includes emerging metrics against the proposed new One Coventry Plan 2022-2030. Where available, this report detailed the current performance and the direction of travel for those metrics over the past year. This is intended to establish a baseline for comparison in future years.

Following a comprehensive presentation, the Committee asked questions, sought assurances and made comments on a number of issues including:-

- Crime rates in the City and comparatives with other Cities in the West Midlands and pre pandemic levels
- Staff sickness levels and the reasons for this
- Tree planting statistics in the City and work being undertaken by Tree Wardens
- The definition of "Healthy Life Expectancy"
- The impact that industrial action has had on household waste collection commercial and recycling rates, together with flytipping
- Recent disappointing Ofsted inspections at 2 primary schools in the City
- The evaluation of the City of Culture year, which will take place in 2024, and work being undertaken in that regard
- Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) rates in the City and how these are measured by the Office of National Statistics
- New job creation figures in the City

- Information in relation to the number of children in the City who do not have access to a computer and internet at home and the impact that this has on educational outcomes
- The impact that poverty has on inequalities
- The amount of money spent by the Council on agency workers and options to create an in house employment agency
- Data on staff profiling (it was noted that this information was currently being compiled for a separate report)
- How air quality is monitored and how this data is used to inform decision making
- In relation to Domestic Abuse, the success of the “Ask Angela” scheme and how this could be extended to cover retail premises and increasing publicity as to where those experiencing Domestic Abuse can access support
- Policing figures in the City
- Data in relation to road casualty statistics, including information on motorbikes/motor scooters/electric scooters
- Dropped kerb installation rates in the City

RESOLVED:-

- 1) **That all of the metrics in the report that have not been met be considered by the appropriate Scrutiny Board as part of their Work Programme**
- 2) **That Cabinet be recommended to review the spend on agency staff and request officers to explore the viability of creating an income generating Coventry City Council employment agency**
- 3) **That the following be recommended to be amended in the One Coventry Plan Annual Performance Report 2021-22 report:-**
 - a. **Information on how many children in the City do not have access to a computer and the internet at home**
 - b. **Additional information on air quality monitoring to highlight the robustness of the process**
 - c. **Within the road casualty statistics, information on motorbikes/motor scooters/electric scooters**
 - d. **The inclusion of a reference to poverty in the inequalities section**
- 4) **That the following actions be undertaken:-**
 - a. **That officers be requested to write to the Office of National Statistics to request that students are not included in unemployment data**
 - b. **That information on jobs created by sector be circulated to the Committee**
 - c. **That an explanation as to why sickness absence at Coventry City Council is higher than national comparator data be provided as part of the Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1) ‘s consideration of this matter**

- d. That information on rates of recycling for commercial waste and how this may have been impacted by industrial action be circulated to the Committee.
- e. That information on the data set used to define “Healthy Life Expectancy” be circulated to the Committee
- f. That in relation to Domestic Abuse, officers be requested to consider extending the “Ask Angela” scheme to retail premises and increase publicity as to where those experiencing Domestic Abuse can access support

10. One Coventry Plan 2022 - 2030: Engagement Approach and Emerging Themes

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered a Briefing Note of the Chief Partnerships Officer, together with a comprehensive presentation at the meeting, which indicated that the City Council are refreshing the Council Plan to ensure it reflects the Council's aims and ambitions. It is intended that as many opportunities are provided for everyone who lives, works or studies in the City to share their thoughts on the new Plan and help in delivering something truly impactful.

The presentation covered:-

- An introduction to the One Coventry Plan, which will provide Coventry City Council's vision and objectives until 2030
- Engagement opportunities:-
 - Survey – online and paper copies
 - Short survey - to capture quick feedback when interacting face to face
 - Workshops – online and in person
 - White boards – to leave comments at libraries and family hubs
 - Promoting and engaging when residents access frontline services
 - Attending community events to talk to people
 - Getting out and talking to people to find out what's important to them on what the Coventry of 2030 should look and feel like
- Engagement promotion:-
 - Press release
 - Internet news
 - Articles on social media
 - Screens in Broadgate, Council House, Friargate, Family Hubs and outside Transport Museum
 - Posters and hard copy surveys at libraries family hubs and other frontline service locations
 - Existing stakeholder network groups
 - Community events
 - Workforce – Intranet, Staff app, One Coventry Newsletter and team meetings

The views of the Committee were sought on the proposed engagement, together with any recommendations on other ways to engage with residents or promote the One Coventry Plan engagement with constituents and local networks.

The Committee asked questions and made comments on a number of issues including:-

- Work being undertaken with hard to reach groups via religious settings
- Approaching care homes in the City
- Managing residents expectations in relation to what can be achieved

- Use of social media, including paying for adverts on Facebook
- Leafletting every home in the City and providing pre paid responses to encourage engagement
- Engagement with Councillors and information available on the intranet
- How the new Plan will be performance monitored yearly
- Engaging the media, particularly the local press
- Encouraging and strengthening engagement with the over 65's
- Work being undertaken with partner organisations, including the NHS

RESOLVED:-

- 1) That the Committee agree to play an active role in enabling those who live, work or study in the City to have their say on the One Coventry Plan and note the approach to engagement
- 2) That officers be requested to consider the following additional ways to increase engagement:-
 - a) Include engaging with communities via religious settings and care homes
 - b) Paying for the use of social media adverts, including Facebook
 - c) Leafletting all homes in the City and consider a pre paid response
 - d) Engaging more with the local press, particularly public broadcasting companies
 - e) Using database information held by the Council (within the constraints of GDPR)

11. Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee Work Programme and Outstanding Issues 2022/23

The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee considered their Work Programme and Outstanding Issues for the Municipal year.

RESOLVED:-

- 1) That where there are Ward specific issues on an agenda, it is appropriate to invite Ward Councillors to attend the meeting for the consideration of that item
- 2) That the impact of Climate Change on Council services be included on the Work Programme

12. Any Other Items of Urgent Public Business

There were no items of urgent public business.

(Meeting closed at 12.30pm)

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Scrutiny Coordination Committee
Cabinet

28 September 2022
11 October 2022

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change – Councillor J O’Boyle

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Business, Investment and Culture

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Coventry Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027

Is this a key decision?

Yes – as it is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the city

Executive Summary:

Coventry’s new Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 will build on the achievements of the Coventry Economic Growth and Prosperity Strategy 2018-2022. It is one of the key strategies for delivering the objectives of the new One Coventry Plan 2022-2030, and also particularly strongly integrated with the new Coventry Skills Strategy.

As well as replacing the current Economic Growth and Prosperity Strategy, which expires at the end of 2022, a new Economic Development Strategy (“EDS”) is needed that provides a holistic framework for facilitating the sustainable growth of Coventry’s economy. This is vital as Coventry and the wider West Midlands region continues to recover from the recession generated by the Covid-19 pandemic, growing challenges around adjusting to new UK-EU trading regulations after Brexit and wider global supply chain disruption, inflation, and the cost of living and cost of doing business.

The new Economic Development Strategy will be integral to delivering the objectives of the 2022-2030 One Coventry Plan. It will be central to the objective of Increasing Economic Prosperity, by creating the conditions for local businesses to thrive, new investment to come into the city and the creation of new good quality job and training opportunities. Through providing the framework for sustainable economic development and enabling all residents to benefit from new employment and training opportunities created, the Strategy will also be key to tackling the causes of climate change and tackling inequalities. These actions will also cement the Council’s role as a partner, enabler and leader in shaping the local economy, and will help to improve the financial sustainability of the Council.

The vision of the Strategy is to “*deliver a strong and resilient economy, where inclusive growth is promoted and delivered, businesses are enabled to innovate and grow, and new local jobs are created.*” To achieve this vision, we will, through eight interlinked pillars:

- facilitate a sustainable economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and challenging economic climate driven by inflation and rising cost of living and cost of doing business, creating the platform for longer-term growth and prosperity
- deliver a first-class support infrastructure that responds to our businesses’ needs and opportunities
- secure maximum public and private investment to deliver infrastructure projects that create the conditions for economic growth and job creation
- secure job creation, growth and prosperity through attracting and supporting business investment from both the UK and overseas
- ensure that social value and sustainability are incorporated into all economic development work
- support the development of a skills ecosystem which provides the skills required by Coventry’s businesses, both current and future, and contributes to economic growth and the prosperity of the city
- ensure Coventry is a leader in the green industrial revolution by supporting our businesses, residents and partner stakeholders to tackle the challenges and opportunities presented by climate change
- Build on existing strong partnerships in delivering all elements of this strategy

The Strategy will aim to tackle Coventry’s rising unemployment rate as well as wages and productivity levels which are below the national average, and the West Midlands economy experiencing the highest contraction of all regions during the Covid-19 pandemic. We will seek to capitalise on the unique opportunities facing the city – not least the city’s longstanding track record in transport innovation, opening of the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre in 2021, and plans for a Gigafactory at Coventry Airport and subsequent investment in the electric vehicle and battery technology supply chains; the legacies of UK City of Culture 2021 and the 2022 Commonwealth Games; and continued transformation of Coventry City Centre through the Friargate and City Centre South schemes and schemes delivering physical enhancements to neighbourhoods across the city.

In developing the Strategy, we have consulted directly with stakeholders across Coventry City Council, key external economic development and business support partners, and members of the public through the One Coventry Plan consultation process and consultation events.

Through continued work with our partners, by 2027 the strategy aims to ensure that Coventry is a:

- Green City, both through industrial innovation and sustainable transport.
- Leading edge city in Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering industries.
- Cultural City, particularly through expanded creative and tourism sectors.
- City providing high employment levels and good quality jobs.
- City providing opportunities for all through strong universities, and education & skills ecosystems.
- City with reduced health, economic and social inequalities.

As a result of the gradual withdrawal of EU structural funds between 2022 and 2024, the grant funding available to support the delivery of the EDS has also reduced requiring the use of one-off service reserves, which are now expired. Timing and value of successor grant funding from the Shared Prosperity Fund to support the EDS is still unclear but is expected to be less than previously available EU funds.

Recommendations:

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Consider the content of the report and appendices
- 2) Identify any recommendations for Cabinet

The Cabinet is asked to:

- 1) Consider any recommendations or comments from Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee.
- 2) Approve the adoption of the Coventry Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027.
- 3) Delegate authority to the Director of Business, Investment & Culture following consultation with the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Operating Officer and the Cabinet Member for Jobs Regeneration and Climate Change to further amend edit and adapt the Coventry Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 in the future in response to subsequent review, opportunity and consultation as required.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix 1 - Coventry Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027

Appendix 2 - Equalities Impact Assessment

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents

West Midlands Combined Authority [Plan for Growth](#)

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

Yes – Scrutiny Coordination Committee, 28th September 2022.

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Coventry Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027

1. Context and Background

- 1.1 Coventry's new Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 will build on the achievements of the Coventry Economic Growth and Prosperity Strategy 2018-2022. It is one of the key strategies for delivering the objectives of the new One Coventry Plan 2022-2030, and also particularly strongly integrated with the new Coventry Skills Strategy. Its purpose is to create the strategic framework for enabling the sustainable growth and development of Coventry's economy over a five-year period that will deliver significant benefits for the city's residents.
- 1.2 The Strategy has been produced at a crucial time. The Economic Growth & Prosperity Strategy expires at the end of 2022, and the city is responding to economic challenges presented by the recession caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, growing challenges around adjusting to new UK-EU trading regulations after Brexit and wider global supply chain disruption, and ongoing cost of living and cost of doing business challenges. The extent of these challenges, plus the scale and nature of new opportunities facing Coventry and the wider West Midlands economy, requires a new holistic framework that is fully integrated into other key Council Strategies and regional and sub-regional strategic frameworks.
- 1.3 In the 10 years after the 2008/09 recession, Coventry & Warwickshire was the fastest growing local economy in England (measured by economic output in Real GVA), and Coventry was the fastest growing UK city in terms of population. However, prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, economic growth slowed, with Coventry & Warwickshire recording the slowest growth of all local economies in 2018/19. During 2020, the West Midlands economy experienced the largest contraction of all UK regions, and Coventry's Claimant Count (numbers on unemployment-related benefits) almost doubled from 3% in January 2020 to 6.6% in December 2020 (the peak unemployment rate during the pandemic).
- 1.4 The West Midlands economy is expected to take longest of all English regions to return to pre-pandemic levels, and new Bank of England economic forecasts project a recession in the UK during Q4 2022 and throughout 2023.
- 1.5 Despite the challenging economic forecasts, there are major economic opportunities that Coventry is uniquely placed to capitalise on, and this strategy will create the necessary enabling framework. For example, there are major opportunities facing the electric vehicle and automotive supply chains, after the opening of UK Battery Industrialisation Centre in July 2021, and plans for a West Midlands Gigafactory at Coventry Airport and further investment in the business, innovation and skills support ecosystem. The delivery of strong legacies from UK City of Culture 2021 and the 2022 Commonwealth Games also presents significant opportunities for Coventry to secure investment (both international and domestic) across a wide range of sectors, including creative industries, tourism and professional services. The ongoing transformation of Coventry City Centre through Friargate and City Centre South, and investment in new forms of sustainable transport through Coventry Very Light Rail and All Electric Bus City will create further opportunities for new investment and provide more Coventry residents with access to good quality employment and training opportunities.
- 1.6 In response, the Strategy's Vision is to "*deliver a strong & resilient economy, where inclusive growth is promoted and delivered, businesses are enabled to innovate and grow, and new local jobs are created*". To achieve this vision, through eight interlinked pillars of delivery, we will:
 - Facilitate a sustainable economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and challenging economic climate, driven by ongoing international trade and supply chain

- disruption, inflation and the rising cost of living and cost of doing business, thereby creating the platform for longer-term growth and prosperity.
- Deliver a first-class support infrastructure that responds to our businesses' needs and opportunities.
 - Secure maximum public and private investment to deliver infrastructure projects that create the conditions for economic growth and job creation across "Coventry".
 - Secure job creation, growth and prosperity for Coventry through attracting and supporting business investment from both the UK and overseas.
 - Ensure that social value and sustainability are incorporated into all of our Economic Development work.
 - Support the development of a skills ecosystem which provides the skills required by Coventry's businesses, both current and future, and contributes to economic growth and the prosperity of the city.
 - Ensure Coventry is a leader in the green industrial revolution by supporting our businesses, residents and partner stakeholders to tackle the challenges and opportunities presented by climate change.
 - Build on existing strong partnerships in delivering all elements of this strategy.
- 1.7 In developing the Strategy, we have consulted directly with stakeholders within Coventry City Council, key external economic development and business support partners, and members of the public through the One Coventry Plan consultation process and "Strategy Carousel" events (over 100 stakeholders in total). This consultation exercise has been received positively and has enabled us to identify the key interventions that we are expected to deliver as part of the eight pillars within the five-year period, and, as such, secure buy-in and endorsement of the strategy. Through continued work with our partners, we aspire for Coventry to be, by 2027, a:
- Green City, both through industrial innovation and sustainable transport.
 - Leading edge city in Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering industries.
 - Cultural City, particularly through expanded creative and tourism sectors.
 - City providing high employment levels and good quality jobs.
 - City providing opportunities for all through strong universities, and education & skills ecosystems.
 - City with reduced health, economic and social inequalities.
- 1.8 The new Economic Development Strategy will be one of the foremost strategies in delivering the objectives of the 2022-2030 One Coventry Plan. It will be central to the objective of Increasing Economic Prosperity, by creating the conditions for local businesses to thrive, new investment to come into the city and the creation of new good quality job and training opportunities. Through providing the framework for sustainable economic development and enabling residents across all neighbourhoods and social groups to benefit from new employment and training opportunities created, the Strategy will be key to delivering the objectives of Tackling the Causes of Climate Change and Tackling Inequalities. These actions will also cement the Council's role as a Partner, Enabler and Leader in shaping the local economy, and will help to Improve the Financial Sustainability of the Authority.
- 1.9 The success of the strategy will be measured through a set of relevant baseline and outcome indicators that are included in the One Coventry Plan, relating to business demography, wage levels and productivity, visitor levels, employment rates and skills levels. These are also set out within the strategy.
- 1.10 Partnership work will be integral to the roll-out and delivery of this strategy, involving many service areas across the Council, and through the Council working with key local regional and national level economic development and business support partners. The Economic Development Service will be responsible for overall co-ordination of the Strategy but will

collaborate particularly closely with the Employment & Skills Service in designing and delivering interventions, particularly those that will “Support All Coventry Residents to Access Jobs and Develop Skills”.

- 1.11 Our work with other sub-regional and regional partners will be critical to achieving the aspirations of this strategy. As well as working closely with our neighbouring Local Authorities, we will work collaboratively with the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), given that the objectives of this strategy are closely aligned with the new West Midlands Plan for Growth. We will influence and work with partners to shape devolved policy that will make a real difference to the economic opportunities the people and businesses of Coventry have access to and will work with WMCA colleagues to bring external resources into Coventry. Building on our track record of securing external funding, we will also influence central Government through strong engagement with Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities; Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy; Department for Culture, Media & Sport; Department for Work & Pensions; and other Government departments to ensure Coventry is at the forefront of new policy initiatives, pilot schemes and large scale funding opportunities.
- 1.12 This strategy will also aim to achieve the following:
 - complement, support and influence Coventry City Council's wider strategies, policies and planning decisions, including any potential Local Plan review although it should be noted that in relation to planning decisions, this strategy will be treated as a material consideration but will have limited weight until the Local Plan review is completed; and
 - raise current and future aspirations and opportunities on the national and international stage, due to its strategic importance.
- 1.13 As a result of the gradual withdrawal of EU structural funds between 2022 and 2024, the grant funding available to support the delivery of the EDS has also reduced requiring the use of one-off service reserves, which are now expired. Timing and value of successor grant funding from (primarily) the Shared Prosperity Fund to support the EDS is still unclear but is widely expected to be less than previously available EU funds.
- 1.14 It is imperative that CCC maintain its current level of provision in economic development activities, particularly in its business support programmes which are a key contributor to the Council's One Coventry Plan priority of creating economic prosperity. Businesses are currently facing unprecedented challenges including the huge rises in energy costs. Maintaining a similar activity and cost base will maintain a source of match funding which differentiates the Council from other business support providers which would seek 100% for their activities.

2 Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

2.1 Option 1

The Council can choose not to have an Economic Development Strategy, and to instead rely on strategic plans of the WMCA, such as the Plan for Growth. The risk with this approach is that it would most likely fail to deliver the necessary flexibility to focus on the priorities and types of interventions that are locally important to Coventry and specific neighbourhoods within the city. It would also reduce opportunities for focused interactions with key local stakeholders on the economy and how best to support local businesses and could hinder the ability of the city to secure new inward investment.

2.2 Option 2

The development of an Economic Development strategy that gives Coventry a new focus and voice in economic growth. It places Coventry businesses and people at the heart of the city's development, not least through attracting investment and new jobs, enhancing the competitiveness and resilience of existing businesses and jobs, upskilling the city's workforce and residents and improving the ability of local residents to access new employment opportunities and ability of local businesses to secure new supply opportunities. It will seek to align resources in this area to deliver the best possible economic outcomes for Coventry businesses and the city's residents.

- 2.3 It is recommended that the Cabinet supports Option 2 and endorses the Coventry Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027.

3 Results of Consultation Undertaken

- 3.1 Over 100 stakeholders were consulted to inform the focus and detail of the strategy. These included officers within the Authority, key local and regional economic development and business support partners, and members of the public through the One Coventry Plan consultation process (this included consultation with the public).

- 3.2 Stakeholder organisations consulted included:

- Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub
- Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce
- Warwick University
- Coventry University
- Coventry and Warwickshire Reinvestment Trust
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Warwickshire County Council
- West Midlands Combined Authority

- 3.3 Through the consultation process which was positively received, we were able to determine the most important opportunities and threats facing Coventry's economy, the vision for what Coventry's economy should look like by 2027, and the most important areas of intervention required in response. We presented the strategy to the One Coventry Leadership Team in July 2022 to secure endorsement of all Council Directors.

- 3.4 It is also worth noting that the Council's Scrutiny Committee will be considering the Coventry Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 on 28 September 2022.

4 Timetable for Implementing This Decision

- 4.1 The Coventry Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 is a five-year strategy. Progress will be reported annually to the relevant Cabinet Member (Jobs, Regeneration & Climate Change) and to Cabinet.

5 Comments from Chief Operating Officer (Section 151 Officer) and the Director of Law and Governance

5.1 Financial implications

- 5.1.1 A proactive and innovative approach will be adopted to finance the delivery of the Coventry Economic Development Strategy 2022-27. This will entail building on existing core Council funding to secure external resources from a variety of sources. Coventry has a track record of securing more external grant funding than its neighbours, and the Economic Development Strategy plans to keep this record intact; however, with EU Structural Funds (historically one of the most important external funds for economic and social development) due to expire in 2023, and uncertainties over the scale, longevity and detailed focus of successor funds (including UK Shared Prosperity Fund), there will be a need to apply flexibility on how the delivery of the strategy is to be funded. The decline in EU funding in recent years has required the use of all one-off service reserves to maintain service levels however these will be fully utilised in the current financial year 22/23.
- 5.1.2 In a similar vein to previous sources of external funding, the ability to provide core funding as match funds will place Coventry in a stronger position to secure the external funds. Given uncertainties over the future of much external economic development funding, particularly beyond 2024/25 (when the current parliamentary term is due to end), the continuation of a consistent level of funding will also help ensure a degree of continuity in the scale and nature of support services the Council can provide to local businesses, inward investment services, and tracking of trends affecting business and the economy to ensure business support services are designed in a way that responds to key challenges and opportunities.
- 5.1.3 UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) is expected to be less than previously received ERDF funding and this will become clearer once more details of the WMCA's commissioning framework are available, which is expected to happen towards the end of this financial year. Once the level of SPF is known, this will determine the level of available resources for the proposed strategy. No funding decision is required at this point.

5.2 Legal Implications

- 5.2.1 There are no direct legal implications arising out of this report at this stage, save for noting the Council's duty under the Equality Act 2010
- 5.2.2 Whilst there is no statutory duty to produce an Economic Development Strategy, doing so provides an important framework for helping to deliver the Council's statutory obligations and will help drive forward the One Coventry Plan 2022-2030. The Coventry Economic Development Strategy 2022 – 2027 will sit alongside other Council policies and strategies and will provide a clear and achievable economic vision therefore underpinning and reinforcing the Council's aims and objective for the City.
- 5.2.3 The Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity. The Council must further take into account its wider Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under s. 149 of the Equality Act 2010 when making its decisions. The public sector equality duty (s.49, Equality Act 2010) requires the Council when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, advance equality of opportunity between those who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not share the protected characteristic and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (this involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice and (b) promote understanding). As such, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion has been identified as a cross-cutting theme within the strategy.

5.2.4 The Council will consider the impact of any projects or changes to service delivery that might arise as a result of implementing work coming out of this strategy on those protected equality characteristics. Individual proposals will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment wherever relevant prior to any decision taken to proceed, including the identification of mitigating action, where possible.

6 Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan (www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)?

6.1.1 The Coventry Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 will be one of the foremost strategies for delivering the One Coventry Plan and its five objectives.

6.1.2 ***Increasing the Economic Prosperity of the City and Region.*** This strategy will contribute heavily towards delivering this objective, not least because creating a strong and resilient economy underpins the Economic Development Strategy's objectives and key deliverables. The strategy will provide the strongest possible enabling framework for local businesses to prosper, (notably through providing the support ecosystem and infrastructure for businesses to invest in growth, diversification and innovation), for good quality jobs to be protected, for new domestic and international investment to come into Coventry, and for new good quality jobs and training opportunities to be created.

6.1.3 ***Improving Outcomes and Tackling Inequalities Within our Communities.*** Maximising social value is a cross-cutting theme throughout the strategy, and a key objective is to ensure that Coventry residents across all areas of the city and all social groups are able to benefit from good quality employment and training opportunities. It is also crucial that local businesses (particularly small and medium sized firms) are able to benefit from new supply opportunities. This will help to improve the standard of living of Coventry's residents and tackle longstanding inequalities.

6.1.4 ***Tackle the Causes and Consequences of Climate Change.*** One of the pillars within this strategy is to place Coventry as a leader in the green industrial revolution. One of the primary objectives is therefore to grow important "green" sectors of the economy (including electric vehicles, renewable energy and sustainable construction) and secure further inward investment into these sectors. Indeed, the Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 will be fully integrated with the new Coventry Climate Change Strategy and supporting more Coventry businesses to understand and tackle the causes of climate change, and capitalising on opportunities presented by the circular economy are two further key objectives.

6.1.5 ***Continued Financial Sustainability of the Council.*** The strategy provides a framework that will enable businesses across a wide range of sectors to prosper and for local residents to improve their standard of living. All of this should help to support the financial sustainability of the Council by providing income generation opportunities, not least through business rates and Council tax revenues.

6.1.6 ***Council's Role as a Partner, Leader and Enabler.*** Partnership working is integral to the delivery of all elements of this strategy. As such, the Council will have a vital role to play in facilitating strong partnerships with other local economic development and business support organisations, and also acting as an important partner to regional and national organisations in delivering priority actions.

6.2 How is Risk Being Managed?

6.2.1 The Council has a strong track record of managing risks and maintaining significant financial controls and well-established procedures when handling public funds. The key risks associated with the strategy, and how they will be managed include:

- **Economic uncertainty.** With the Bank of England forecasting a recession for late 2022 and throughout 2023, the Council will need to act flexibly and be able to adapt projects and services to support businesses, and deliver the necessary infrastructure schemes, through both times of economic contraction and times of economic recovery and expansion.
- **The changing public funding environment.** With the UK no longer able to access EU Structural Funds beyond June 2023, the way many business, skills and employment support activities will be funded in Coventry and other areas of the UK will change. This could also entail changes in the quantum of funds, focus of the funds, and how the funding is administrated. Coventry City Council is proactively responding to these changes through identifying more innovative ways of funding its priorities (including both through core and external funding sources), and further strengthening partnership approaches to delivery.
- **Securing commitment of partners to work jointly on delivery of the strategy.** Stakeholders both internal and external to the Council have responded very positively to the strategy, and we envisage that already strong partnership working arrangements will be enhanced in delivering the strategy.

6.3 What is the Impact on the Organisation?

6.3.1 HR Implications

The implications of this strategy in terms of funding the staff that will be directly responsible for delivering many of the activities, and facilitating successful partnership work, has been covered in Section 5.1. In respect of the wider Council, the Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 will have wide reaching positive impacts on the residents of Coventry. These include improving health and wellbeing, targeting vulnerable groups and boosting local businesses and job creation. This should reduce reliance on other Council services (thereby mitigating against risks of the need to find extra financial resources for additional staff) and have public health benefits.

The staff impact within the strategy is positive. Any matters arising that impact staff as the strategy progresses will be dealt with in accordance with the appropriate policies that relate to specific matters arising.

6.3.2 Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECAs)

One of the key aspirations of the Economic Development Strategy is to have a positive impact on people who are identified as more vulnerable in terms of economic wellbeing and gaining sustainable employment. Initiatives, projects and programmes will be tailored to meet those vulnerable groups. Data is regularly collected and analysed to ensure continuous improvement and effective identification of the most vulnerable groups and

areas of the city. It should also be noted that Diversity, Equality and Inclusion is detailed as a cross-cutting theme within the strategy, underpinning all elements of strategy delivery.

In ensuring that Equality and Diversity is integrated into all elements of strategy design, we undertook a widespread consultation process to inform the content of the strategy, which included engagement with over 100 stakeholders across all Council Divisions, key local economic development and business support partners, and members of the public as part of the One Coventry Plan development process (including through the Strategy Carousel event).

Additionally, an Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out in accordance with Council guidance.

6.3.3 Implications for (or impact on) Climate Change and the Environment

As detailed above, the strategy will have positive impacts on climate change and the environment and will be one of the most important strategies in achieving the One Coventry Plan's objective of "Tackling the Causes and Consequences of Climate Change". This strategy will also be strongly aligned with the new Coventry Climate Change Strategy.

Fundamentally, one of the Pillars of the strategy is to position Coventry as a leader in the Green Industrial Revolution. This will entail growing "green" sectors of the economy (e.g. low emission vehicles) and securing more inward investment (domestic and international) into these sectors, which will ultimately create new good quality "green" jobs and training opportunities. We will also deliver business support activities that will support small and medium sized firms in particular to better understand the causes of climate change and be able to tackle these (including through improved energy efficiency and adoption of renewable energy). The strategy also seeks to capitalise on opportunities presented by growing the circular economy. From an infrastructure standpoint, a core priority of the strategy is to ensure that new capital infrastructure schemes are designed in a way that protects the environment as much as possible (for example through creating sustainable drainage systems and protecting nature).

6.3.4 Implications for Partner Organisations?

The Strategy will be delivered in partnership with stakeholders across the city, sub-region and West Midlands region. It is a strategy that the Council cannot deliver on its own. Engagement with partners to align programmes, investments and collaboration on key projects and services will be required if we are to see its successful implementation. In many cases, it will involve the Council enhancing what are already strong partnerships.

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This report is published on the council's website: www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings

Appendix 1 - Coventry Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027

Appendix 2 - Equalities Impact Assessment

COVENTRY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2022-2027

FRONT COVER

OUR VISION AND ASPIRATIONS

Foreword from Cllr Jim O Boyle, August 2022

The decade between 2010 and 2019 saw many successes for Coventry's economy. We saw a rejuvenation of our automotive sector, with the city at the forefront of the electric vehicle revolution, culminating in us securing the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre. We have also seen the city and region continue to be successful in securing new investment, notably Foreign Direct Investment. Securing UK City of Culture 2021 has also provided huge opportunities for boosting Coventry's profile to further position ourselves to attract new investment, as well as grow our creative, cultural and tourism sectors.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic, the rising challenges with inflation and the cost of living and cost of doing business, disruption to global supply chains, and new UK-EU trade regulations post-Brexit, have all presented many challenges to Coventry's economy and the city's businesses and residents. They have also caused longstanding inequalities between the richest and poorest in our society to grow. We are uniquely positioned to tackle these challenges, led by a strong legacy from UK City of Culture 2021 and the 2022 Commonwealth Games, the delivery of new development sites that provide unrivalled connectivity, and our world class innovation assets and education institutions. Building on the publication of our 10 strategic priorities on how we make [levelling up](#) a reality for Coventry, the publication of our new Economic Development Strategy for Coventry is very timely. It will create the framework to enable a local economy that delivers sustainable growth for the city and region, and crucially deliver an economy that residents across all our communities can benefit from.

The time has once again come to build on Coventry's longstanding tradition of innovation and reinventing itself, as we rise to the challenges of delivering a sustained economic recovery post-pandemic; delivering net zero and leading the way in the green industrial revolution; and ensuring that Coventry's residents and businesses can drive this through developing new skills and training opportunities in a way which systematically seeks to reduce inequalities right across our social gradient and addressing widening inequalities. We know and understand our communities; we work effectively with our businesses, third sector and other local public sector partners to deliver results, and we will once again work effectively with our partners to deliver necessary change that this Strategy is seeking to achieve.

Vision for this Economic Development Strategy

We will create a strong and resilient economy, where inclusive growth is promoted and delivered, businesses are enabled to innovate and grow and new local jobs are created.

To achieve this vision, we will:

- Facilitate a sustainable economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and challenging economic climate driven by inflation, the rising cost of living and cost of doing business, and international trade and supply chain challenges. thereby creating the platform for longer-term growth and prosperity.
- Deliver a first class support infrastructure that responds to our businesses' needs and opportunities.
- Secure maximum public and private investment to deliver infrastructure projects that create the conditions for economic growth, job creation and that can "level up" Coventry's neighbourhoods.
- Secure job creation, growth and prosperity for Coventry through attracting and supporting business investment from both the UK and overseas.
- Ensure that social value and sustainability are incorporated into all of our Economic Development work.
- Support the development of a skills ecosystem which provides the skills required by Coventry's businesses, both current and future, and contributes to economic growth and the prosperity of the city.
- Ensure Coventry is a leader in the green industrial revolution by supporting our businesses, residents and partner stakeholders to tackle the challenges and opportunities presented by climate change.
- Build on existing strong partnerships in delivering all elements of this strategy.

We will measure progress made against the strategy objectives through the monitoring of the overall One Coventry Plan, and some of our key measurements of success include:

- Increase in Gross Domestic Product per head from £28,699, and reduce gap with national average.
- Increase in number of active businesses from 10,120 (or 330/10,000).
- Increase Coventry's employment rate from 71.2% (adding to the 161,000 jobs currently in the city).
- Reduce Coventry's unemployment rate from 5.5%, and reduce gap with national average.
- Increase median annual pay from £24,645 and reduce gap with national average.
- Increase in visitor trips from current level of 4.028m and pre-pandemic level of 10m.

OUR STORY

In the 10 years after the 2008/09 recession, Coventry & Warwickshire was the fastest-growing local economy in England, with economic output (measured in real GVA) growing by 33.4% between 2008/09 and 2016/17. This was driven significantly by major investments in Research & Development and production in the automotive sector and its supply chain, as well as continued expansion of the professional services sector and creative economy. Coventry had the fastest growing population of UK cities from 2009-2019 and its economic progress was exemplified by the award of UK City of Culture for 2021, being a host venue for the 2022 Commonwealth Games, and being part of the West Midlands 5G Test Bed – the first in the UK.

However, the local economy has encountered significant challenges in recent years. After growth of the Coventry & Warwickshire economy slowed to 1.24% growth (the lowest of all local economies) in 2018/19, the COVID-19 Pandemic had a severe impact on the economy, with the UK economy contracting by 9.9% in 2020 and the West Midlands estimated to have experienced the greatest contraction of all regions. This had a major impact on the local labour force, with the claimant count rising from 7,525 (3.0%) recorded in January 2020 to 16,490 (6.6%) in December 2020 (the peak during the pandemic). Longstanding inequalities across Coventry have been exacerbated, with 14.4% of neighbourhoods ranked in the most deprived 10% in England and life expectancy varying by 10.7 years for men and 8.3 years for women between the city's most affluent and most deprived neighbourhoods. The Council played an important role in helping to protect businesses and jobs, awarding over £80m in Government COVID-19 grants to over 4,500 Coventry businesses either mandated to close or adversely affected by public health restrictions, and ensuring that over 7,300 local businesses accessed over £300m in Government loans.

Further challenges have emerged in 2021 and 2022, with inflation (driven heavily by energy and component cost increases), labour shortages, and new regulations and document requirements for UK-EU trade post-Brexit all of which have slowed economic recovery, and the Bank of England's forecast of August 2022 projecting a recession for the UK during Q4 2022 and throughout 2023. It is therefore crucial that Coventry is able to deliver a strong and sustainable economic recovery from this challenging economic climate, and that foundations are put in place for longer-term economic prosperity. This includes building on the unique opportunities presented by the opening and roll-out of the £136m UK Battery Industrialisation Centre, maintaining Coventry's track record of leading edge innovation, the potential to secure a Gigafactory at Coventry Airport and subsequent investment in the electric vehicle and battery technology supply chains. There are also unique opportunities presented by the legacies of UK City of Culture 2021 and the 2022 Commonwealth Games, continuing the transformation of Coventry City Centre through the Friargate and City Centre South schemes, and the city's outstanding digital and transport connectivity. Through continued work with our partners, we aspire for Coventry in five years' time to be a:

- Green City, both through industrial innovation and sustainable transport
- Leading edge city in Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering industries
- Cultural City, particularly through expanded creative and tourism sectors
- City providing high employment levels and good quality jobs
- City providing opportunities for all through strong universities, and education & skills ecosystems
- City with reduced health, economic and social inequalities.

Alignment with Other Local Strategies

This Economic Development Strategy is one of the key strategies for delivering the One Coventry Plan's approach of enabling people to live their best lives in a vibrant and prosperous city. The actions within this strategy will be central to achieving the One Coventry Plan objective of "Increasing the Economic Prosperity of the City and Region". They will also contribute significantly to achieving the objectives of "Improving Outcomes and Tackling Inequalities in Communities" and "Tackling the Causes and Consequences of Climate Change". As such, this strategy is therefore closely aligned with many other strategies that feed into the One Coventry Plan, as well as feeding into the development of Coventry's Local Plan.



STRATEGIC PILLARS FOR DEVELOPING COVENTRY'S ECONOMY

We will achieve our objectives through 8 inter-related themes of activity, of which 4 are cross-cutting.

1. Delivering a Sustained Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic and Global Economic Challenges

The Covid-19 pandemic has delivered a seismic shock to the UK economy as many businesses were forced to close by the government throughout much of 2020 and the first half of 2021, or had their revenue generation capacity constrained. Businesses in Coventry were able to access significant support over this period in the form of c£100m of Covid grants and £300m of loans. This support proved to be a lifeline to many businesses, although it is notable that despite 13,000 new business registrations across Coventry & Warwickshire between Q2 2020 and Q3 2021, over 7,000 businesses failed.

As our economy continues to recover, many businesses have faced multiple economic challenges, including new trading regulations with the EU following Brexit (which also impacted on labour supply), disruption to global supply chains; and challenges created by inflation, and the rising costs of living and costs of doing business (with rises in energy prices and costs of materials particular challenges). Many businesses are still in the process of repaying Covid loans, and with the Bank of England forecasting a recession for late 2022 and 2023, we will need to show flexibility to continue supporting businesses to respond to these challenges. It is therefore vital that we provide the **necessary support ecosystem to enable businesses and jobs to be sustained and for businesses to be more competitive longer-term and grow and create jobs**.

In the short-term, we will continue to pro-actively communicate new areas of government support to protect businesses and jobs, and ensure those businesses and sectors that have been hardest hit by the pandemic and challenging economic conditions are in the best possible position to recover. However, to sustain the competitiveness of our business base, we will provide the ecosystem to stabilise the city's larger anchor firms, and will prioritise supporting the city's small and medium sized businesses to innovate and diversify. This will include adapting to changing market dynamics both domestically and internationally, including adjusting to new trading regulations between the UK and EU.

We will also prioritise maximising the scale of public funds we secure to sustain and enhance the services we are able to provide in providing support as often as needed to the widest number and range of businesses possible, and also in making the necessary capital investments that will drive business and jobs growth.

2. Providing a First Class Support Service for Local Businesses

In order to maximise levels of prosperity to Coventry's citizens, it is crucial that working alongside local business support, education and skills partners, we provide a strong support service that is responsive to the needs and opportunities faced by the city's 10,210 businesses, which currently support 161,000 jobs.

We will continue to create the ecosystem to enable the city's large anchor businesses to continue to thrive and create job and training opportunities; however, it is notable that 98% of Coventry's businesses are small or micro-businesses and it is vital that our support services are able to foster innovation and growth within these firms. We will build on the city's first class innovation and skills support assets, including through the universities, catapults and colleges, and strong partnerships between the Council and key business bodies. We will maximise public and private investment in enhancing our widely acclaimed business support services in the areas of start-ups, business growth, innovation, skills, and the low carbon economy.

An important priority is to support local Small & Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) to expand their markets and supply chain opportunities, including supplying public sector bodies, large businesses, or other SMEs – this may include supplying other economic sectors that they had not previously worked with. We will also support SMEs to innovate and diversify to safeguard longer-term competitiveness and protect jobs. A further priority will be to work with the Department for International Trade to increase awareness of exporting and expand the number of Coventry businesses that are accessing international market opportunities.

Other important areas of focus include:

- Building on Coventry's competitive advantage as a leader in **Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering**, not least through supporting investment in new technologies, products and major capital investments in the automotive, aerospace & energy generation sectors that will create new supply chain and market opportunities and ultimately the creation of high value jobs.
- Create a successful economic legacy from UK City of Culture 2021 by developing support activities that will boost the competitiveness of businesses in and suppliers to **creative sectors**, resulting in new jobs and training opportunities, and businesses diversifying to supply new emerging sub-sectors.
- Supporting the growth of other sectors creating good quality jobs in response to new ways of working and new market opportunities. These include **Professional Services**, building on the next stages of Friargate, **Education** on the back of the universities' expansions, and **Health & Life Sciences**.
- Support the growth of a vibrant **visitor economy** through strengthening Coventry's cultural and leisure offer, and **conference tourism** sector through Coventry being leading edge in innovation.

- Facilitating further investment in **5G & digital connectivity** and maximising take-up levels amongst businesses to further foster innovation and business competitiveness.
- Supporting the development and growth of **social enterprises** across a range of sectors, and boost their capacity to tackle social and environmental needs and provide training and job opportunities.

3. Creating the Infrastructure to Enable Sustainable Economic Growth

We will continue to secure maximum levels of public and private resource to finance and deliver vital infrastructure projects that will create the conditions for economic growth and job creation, and also “levelling up” Coventry’s neighbourhoods through maximising economic opportunities. Priorities include:

- Innovating with multi-use developments, including delivery of Friargate and City Centre South to support **Coventry to adapt to the new role of 21st century city centres**, reflecting the new work, leisure and retail patterns that have been accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic. To “level up” Coventry, this will also involve enhancing the vitality of our suburban centres, including the Foleshill Road corridor.
- Realise **development of priority commercial sites that will enable the creation of good quality jobs**. These include the West Midlands Gigafactory at Coventry Airport that will strengthen the West Midlands Automotive sector and build on the opening of UK Battery Industrialisation Centre (UKBIC).
- Deliver **physical enhancements to Coventry’s culture and tourism assets** to increase footfall, dwell times and spend and further build the city’s reputation for hosting major national events and destination for leisure and tourism. Central to achieving this objective will be to complete the development of the Collections Centre as a focal point for arts and creative sectors, as well as realising the Arena Quarter Masterplan, which will be crucial to realising the economic potential of the North East of the city.
- Enable Coventry to be an attractive, cleaner and greener city, **building a sustainable transport infrastructure**, including pedestrian walkways, cycleways, green public transport and electric vehicle charging points. Central to this will be the delivery of All Electric Bus City and the roll out of the first Very Light Rail route, which will connect people in North Coventry with job opportunities at University Hospital Coventry & Warwickshire, the city centre and area around Warwick University and UKBIC.
- Develop **green spaces and improved streetscape** that support a wider range of communities to live and work across Coventry, promoting accessible spaces and increasing equality of access for all.
- Investing in the necessary **renewable energy infrastructure and power supply** to enable clean economic growth and innovation, and service new housing and commercial developments. This will include investing in solar farms and clean energy hubs.
- Build **new homes** to service Coventry’s population growth and service the economic growth.
- Continue to develop fast and reliable **broadband and 5G infrastructure** to ensure the city’s businesses and residents have access to leading-edge digital technologies and networks.

We will continue to maintain a live pipeline of aspirational projects and work closely with key sub-regional and regional partners, including West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), and relevant central government departments to ensure we are in the best possible position to secure the necessary funds to realise important projects, deliver against the **10 strategic priority areas for “Levelling Up Coventry”**, and ultimately deliver vital objectives of the One Coventry Plan and the Government’s Levelling Up White Paper.

We will also continue to work with capital and infrastructure projects that have been funded through the Local Growth Fund and Getting Building Fund up to 2025, to realise the outputs and impact of these projects, ensuring that Coventry will receive the full benefit of these funding programmes.

4. Securing UK and Foreign Investment to Support Jobs and Prosperity

Coventry is a city built on inward investment. For centuries, the city’s strengths in manufacturing and innovation have attracted international businesses and ambitious people. We will therefore seek to further build on our global reputation for welcoming creators, designers and makers to work alongside our homegrown talent to shape new industries and technologies, as well as attracting, retaining and growing new and better jobs that will drive the city’s future.

Our Inward Investment Strategy sets out our approach to securing job creation, growth and prosperity for Coventry through attracting and supporting business investment, which is a vital element of the city’s economic development. We will deliver these benefits through a multi-faceted approach designed to establish and promote opportunities in Coventry to businesses and markets regionally, nationally and globally. Our key priorities for securing UK and Foreign Investment include:

- **Product Development** - developing and promoting the key Coventry offer to inward investors to drive competitiveness in an ever-changing marketplace.
- **Business Retention & Expansion** - to safeguard, support and grow the business base and seek to identify potential opportunities for securing further investment from existing businesses.
- **Investor Targeting** - pursuing target businesses, projects and opportunities that deliver more jobs, companies and investment for local people.

- **Capital Investment** - promoting opportunities to attract the investment that will unlock new developments in the city or bring forward key infrastructure projects.
- **Talent Development, Attraction & Retention** - promoting the city's fantastic talent nurturing assets (not least the city's universities, colleges and schools) and ensuring that Coventry is a place that works for businesses wanting a physical presence as well as a workforce that chooses to work from home, or in hybrid ways.
- **Partnership Leverage** - working closely with partners at the local, regional and national levels. Coventry will play an active role in supporting partnerships to achieve greater reach in order to deliver greater investment.
- **Place Promotion** - targeted place promotion to create engagement and deliver investment. We will be promoting the city's key target sectors which include, but are not limited to Mobility (automotive, aerospace and rail); Energy (renewables, battery technologies and storage); Creative & ICT (software, design, games, e-sports, digital infrastructure), Business Professional & Financial Services (headquarters, consulting & sales); and Retail & Leisure. This will also include realising the potential of *key physical assets* in the City Centre to secure aspirational investment (to include Friargate and City Centre South) as well as capitalising on the Gigafactory initiative and the established UKBIC investment to deliver a battery manufacturing supply chain and associated investment.

CROSS CUTTING THEMES

5. Achieving Social Value & Sustainability in all Facets of Economic Development

The Council is committed to engaging with social value across the whole organisation, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and embedding it in all threads of our activity. Social value is already well established in our work with developers on construction projects and in procurement but it needs to be developed across other elements of Economic Development across the Council and our partners. Growing our social value offer is ambitious but maximises the opportunity for local people and communities in the city. Working with internal and external stakeholders we will encourage social responsibility within procurement, development, and key services such as Education and Public Health and ensure the benefits of this are being realised well into the future within the city.

We will continue to raise awareness of social value, promote the social value taking place, encourage collaboration, improve understanding, and empower local people and communities. In line with our Social Value & Sustainability Policy, we will achieve this by working in a One Coventry approach Council-wide.

Key actions we will take to ensure social value is a key thread across all our work include:

- **Continue our already successful work with key development sites in the city**, notably through working with developers to promote contracting opportunities for local businesses, as well as employment, apprenticeship and training opportunities for local residents.
- **Signposting businesses we are supporting to the Social Value Forum** to maximise awareness of how engaging in social value principles can significantly benefit themselves and the wider economy.
- **Strengthening support to enable local SMEs to access more procurement opportunities**, particular from public bodies and major publicly funded projects in Coventry and beyond. This is in the form of both business advice and making stronger use of e-portals such as Find it in CW.
- **Developing a stronger circular economy in Coventry**. Initial steps will include working with the city's universities on use/reuse of materials, further developing the Coventry Food Network, continuing to roll out the City of Culture 2021 Green Code for the arts and cultural sectors as part of the future legacy, and creating the ecosystem for social enterprises that focus on waste minimisation to grow – all of this has potential to create significant employment and training opportunities for disadvantaged groups.
- **Ensuring we are recording and communicating where we're achieving social value**. This will entail further developing our new internal recording function.
- **Developing a directional approach that is broader, embedded and concrete**, ensuring that CCC staff and partner stakeholders are engaged and making social value a core priority.

6. Support All Coventry Residents to Access Jobs and Develop Skills

Together with partners, we will ensure that local people benefit from new employment and training opportunities are created through future economic recovery and growth. This will help support education and skills issues that restrict the labour market progression of both people in work and the unemployed (7.1% of Coventry's working age population have no qualifications compared to 6.4% nationally). Any failure to match the local workforce's skills to employer's needs risks harming the economic recovery of key sectors, and we will continue to support local businesses to tackle challenges with recruitment and labour supply, engaging Unions and Trade Bodies in the process to create attractive terms and conditions and promote career progression paths (where appropriate). Moreover, those without work or low paid are vulnerable to poorer health and life expectancy, and we will work with businesses to tackle longstanding health inequalities, through increasing investment in skills and apprenticeships, implementation of fairer working practices and paying more staff the real living wage, engaging Trade Bodies and Unions in the process.

We will therefore prioritise the upskilling and reskilling of the local workforce and ensuring local people access new jobs emerging. This strategy is fully integrated with the new Coventry Skills Strategy, not least its objective of *"Skills for business: A skills system which provides the skills required by Coventry's businesses, both current and future and contributes to economic growth and the prosperity of the city"*.

Through our Skills Strategy and Economic Development Strategy, we will achieve three things together:

- **Getting the Skills and Opportunities Right for Investment:** Develop a 'team around' approach for investments and large developments with expertise brought together from across the Council to ensure early, comprehensive planning better meets business need and ensures maximum benefit for Coventry. This is particularly key for emerging sectors, such as smart mobility, vehicle electrification, green energy/renewables, ICT and e-sports.
- **Co-designing Skills Solutions with Businesses:** designing together with industry and skills partners to ensure the skills system is responsive, innovative and produces the right skills mix for now and the future. This includes supporting employers to maximise social value commitments.
- **In-work Upskilling with Local Employers:** collaborations which encourage access to skills and workplace development at all levels.

We aim to achieve economic growth in Coventry that is inclusive and accessible to all communities across the city, including creating the right environment for more inclusive employment opportunities to flourish. We will continue to deliver tailored support to local businesses to upskill and reskill their workforce and create new opportunities for enhancing growth and productivity, whilst also promoting progression in the workplace. We will also continue to facilitate the transfer of CCC Apprenticeship Levy monies to local SMEs, and thereby support the creation of new Apprenticeship opportunities for local residents across all sectors of the local economy. We will also work with local businesses and training providers to enable the unemployed to acquire new skills and qualifications that will enable them to progress into employment.

We will also continue work alongside both Coventry University and University of Warwick, as important economic drivers within the city. They are economic assets in their own right, employing c11,000 people, and also have over 66,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students, which are key potential assets to the city's businesses. We will continue to work with the city's businesses to create the conditions to deliver high value employment opportunities and to retain more graduates in the city than the 15% last recorded in 2015.

7. Coventry as a Leader in the Green Industrial Revolution

To become a leader in the race to net zero, we will work with Coventry's businesses and industry leaders to lower emissions and ensure green innovation is driving Coventry's economic growth. We have played a leading role in green economic development and green innovation for many years, with Coventry's previous Climate Change Strategy (one of first of its type in the UK) achieving its target of reducing Carbon emissions by 27.5% five years early. Coventry's strong history of innovation and first-class support ecosystem means the city is well placed to lead the way in delivering a "Green Industrial Revolution", given that it produces the fourth highest number of patents per head of all major UK cities (75.6 per 100k population).

However, there is further work for the Authority to do, working with public and private sector partners to ensure industry can meet the challenge and position Coventry as a leader and flagship city for net zero and sustainability. Through this strategy and our new Climate Change Strategy, we will support Coventry businesses and other economic stakeholders to drive green innovation through:

- **Helping business and industry to understand the challenge and need to act and providing access to relevant support** – for example, just 36% of small businesses nationally currently have a plan to combat climate change and 69% not knowing how to measure their carbon footprint.
- **Seeking opportunities to develop jobs, skills, growth and innovation in industries which address the net zero and circular economy challenge**, such as building energy efficiency retrofit solutions or installation of low carbon heating technologies.
- **Mobilising opportunities in the energy sector to secure low carbon and renewable supply**, both in terms of servicing local businesses and residents and potential new investors to Coventry.
- **Enhancing our support offer to enable local businesses to improve energy efficiency, adoption of renewable energy sources and develop new innovative low carbon products and services**, by building on Coventry & Warwickshire Green Business Programme and our Business Sustain service.
- **Ensuring that our inward investment offering highlights our net zero activity to potential investors**. Specifically, we will seek to attract investment from businesses with their own ambitions to deliver net zero.
- **Working on circular economy opportunities that minimise waste across all sectors of the economy and support social enterprise**. We will seek solutions that address both food and fuel poverty, creating jobs and community activity.
- **Ensure Coventry's future Local Plans do not worsen the causes and impacts of climate change**, including not building on flood plains and conserving natural ecosystems.

8. Building on Successful Partnerships

In delivering all actions within this strategy and achieving positive outcomes for Coventry's businesses and residents, we will collaborate closely with key local partners operating in the economic and social development landscape and further strengthen existing working relationships. This will include (but not limited to) local business support and membership bodies (e.g. Coventry & Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses), the universities in Coventry and wider West Midlands region, Further Education Institutes, specialist skills providers, Unions and Trade Bodies, and finance providers. We will also continue to apply a collaborative approach with the WMCA and UK Government. These relationships will play an important role not only in ongoing service delivery but on enhancing our understanding of the key needs and opportunities facing Coventry's businesses and residents on an ongoing basis and in informing how we design and deliver our services to enable us to realise these ambitions.

Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI)

DEI is a core value that will underpin all aspects of delivering this strategy. From the materials used, the services leveraged through to the organisations engaged and attracted, DEI is a non-negotiable principle that will ensure all activities are delivered fair and responsibly. Together with our partners, we will safeguard and enhance the competitiveness of the city's businesses and create employment and associated opportunities without discrimination that will benefit all aspects of our diverse city.

BASELINE AND OUTCOME INDICATORS

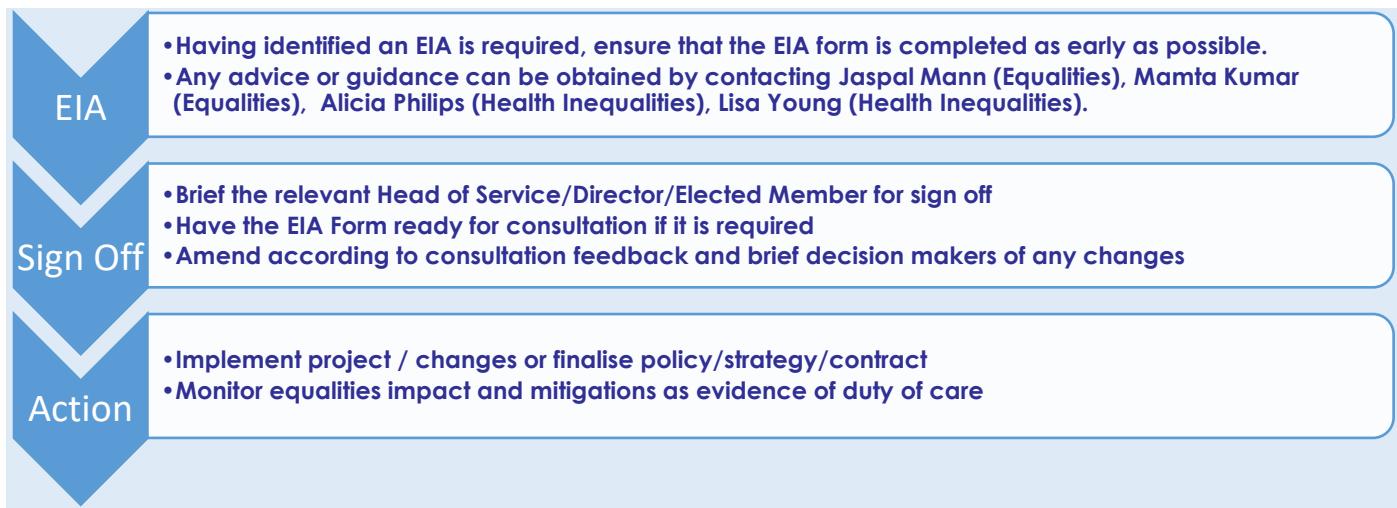
This section summarises indicators used in the One Coventry Plan 2022-2030, where the Council shows progress made towards its priorities that are most relevant to economic development. Through working with our partners, we summarise the improvements we intend to make from baseline positions during the strategy implementation period. Through the One Coventry Plan monitoring process, we will track the performance of the city's economy against these indicators.

Indicator	Previous	Current	Comparators	Progress	Target	Status
Regional gross domestic product (pound per head)	£30,168 (2019 revised)	£28,699 (2020 provisional)	West Midlands Region £26,281 (2020 provisional), England £32,866 (2020 provisional)		To increase	
City centre footfall (year-on-year % change)	-63.0% (2020/21 revised)	+94.7% (2021/22)	UK Index +59.5% (2021/22)		To increase	
Visitor trips	10,030,000 (2019)	4,028,000 (2020)	N/A (No data), England N/A (No data)		To increase	
Resident employment rate	71.2% (Jan-Dec 2020 revised)	71.2% (Jan-Dec 2021)	West Midlands Region 73.6% (Jan-Dec 2021), England 75.1% (Jan-Dec 2021)		To increase	
Unemployment (model-based)	5.9% (Jan-Dec 2020)	5.5% (Jan-Dec 2021)	West Midlands Region 5.0% (Jan-Dec 2021), England 4.5% (Jan-Dec 2021)		To decrease	
16-17-year-olds not in education, employment, or training (NEET) including not knowns	5.0% (NEET 3.0%, Not known 2.0%) (2020)	4.4% (NEET 2.3 %, Not known 2.1%) (2021)	West Midlands Region 5.7% (NEET 2.6%, Not Known 3.1%) (2021), England 5.5% (NEET 2.8%, Not Known 2.7%) (2021)		Below (better than) national average	
Median annual pay (all employee types) of residents	£24,645 (2020 revised) – not adjusted for inflation	£25,795 (2021 provisional) – not adjusted for inflation	West Midlands Region £25,000 (2021 provisional), England £26,192 (2021 provisional) – not adjusted for inflation		To increase	
Gross disposable household income per head	£15,225 (2018)	£15,350 (2019 provisional)	West Midlands Region 18,350 (2019 provisional), England £21,978 (2019 provisional)		To increase	
Apprenticeship levy transferred to support non-levy paying firms in Coventry	£74,734 (2020/21 transferred)	£97,976 (2021/22 transferred) £364,617 total pledge to end 2021/22	N/A		To increase	
Residents qualified to level 4 or above (working age population)	39% (Jan-Dec 2020 revised)	40% (Jan-Dec 2021)	West Midlands Region 39% (Jan - Dec 2021), England 43% (Jan-Dec 2021)		To increase	
Active enterprises (number and rate per 10,000)	330 (10,120) (2020 revised)	333 (10,120) (2021)	WMCA 394, Warwickshire 581, 2021		To increase	
Investment income secured	£1.1m (2020/21)	£2.2m 2021/22	N/A		To increase	
Business rates tax base (change from 2002 base)	138.70 (2019/20)	137.83 (2020/21)	WMCA 124.98 (2020/21),		To increase	



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Title of EIA		Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027
EIA Author	Name	David Hope
	Position	Business Development Manager
	Date of completion	6/9/2022
Head of Service	Name	Steve Weir
	Position	Head of Economic Development
Cabinet Member	Name	Cllr Jim O Boyle
	Portfolio	Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change



PLEASE REFER TO [EIA GUIDANCE](#) FOR ADVICE ON COMPLETING THIS FORM

SECTION 1 – Context & Background

1.1 Please tick one of the following options:

This EIA is being carried out on:

- New policy / strategy
- New service
- Review of policy / strategy
- Review of service
- Commissioning
- Other project (*please give details*)

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)



1.2 In summary, what is the background to this EIA?

This is an Equality Impact Assessment of the new Coventry Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027. This is primarily to ensure that the strategy, and more detailed interventions that are developed after rolling it out, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advances equality of opportunity between different groups; and fosters good relations between different groups.

1.3 Who are the main stakeholders involved? Who will be affected?

The strategy and its roll out will affect and involve a wide range of stakeholders and partners. Although its implementation will be co-ordinated by CCC's Economic Development Service, it will involve and affect multiple Service Areas across the Council. The other key stakeholders that the strategy and its roll out will impact on include Coventry businesses, as well as Business Representative Bodies and business support organisations who will need to deliver interventions as part of the Strategy's roll-out. In light of this, the aforementioned stakeholders have all been consulted to agree the Strategy's priorities and key areas of focus.

Coventry residents will also be affected by the strategy, in that it will provide the framework for creating new good quality employment and training opportunities, both for residents not in employment and residents employed by Coventry businesses and seeking career progression, new skills and potentially increased wages. Again, we have consulted with the public in shaping the Strategy's priorities and focus, as part of the One Coventry Plan consultation process.

1.4 Who will be responsible for implementing the findings of this EIA?

Although Coventry City Council's Economic Development Service will be responsible for co-ordination and monitoring of the roll-out and implementation of this Strategy, the delivery of all interventions will entail partnership work with local, regional and national Economic Development partners. As such, all of these organisations will need to take responsibility for implementing the findings of this EIA.

SECTION 2 – Consideration of Impact

Refer to guidance note for more detailed advice on completing this section.

In order to ensure that we do not discriminate in the way our activities are designed, developed and delivered, we must look at our duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conflict that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between two persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)



- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

2.1 Baseline data and information

Please include a summary of data analysis below, using both your own service level management information and also drawing comparisons with local data where necessary (go to <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/factsaboutcoventry>)

The local economy has encountered significant challenges in recent years, after having the highest growth rates in the UK between 2008/09 and 2016/17. After growth of the Coventry & Warwickshire economy slowed to 1.24% growth (the lowest of all local economies) in 2018/19, the COVID-19 Pandemic had a severe impact on the economy, with the UK economy contracting by 9.9% in 2020 and the West Midlands estimated to have experienced the greatest contraction of all regions. This had a major impact on the local labour force, with the claimant count rising from 7,525 (3.0%) recorded in January 2020 to 16,490 (6.6%) in December 2020 (the peak during the pandemic). The most recent Claimant Count from July 2022 shows that Coventry's unemployment rate of 4.6% exceeds the national average of 3.7%. When examining age breakdowns, although Coventry's youth unemployment rate (under 25s) is below the national average, the unemployment rates for those aged 25-49 and over 50 exceed the national average.

The Strategy identifies other areas of underperformance in the local economy against national averages that need addressing. As a measure productivity, GDP per head in Coventry (£28,699) is lower than the national average of £32,866. As an indicator of the standard of living, the median annual wage in Coventry (£25,795) is also lower than the national average of £26,192.

Longstanding inequalities across Coventry have been exacerbated, with 14.4% of neighbourhoods ranked in the most deprived 10% in England and life expectancy varying by 10.7 years for men and 8.3 years for women between the city's most affluent and most deprived neighbourhoods.

2.2 On the basis of evidence, complete the table below to show what the potential impact is for each of the protected groups.

- Positive impact (P),
- Negative impact (N)
- Both positive and negative impacts (PN)
- No impact (NI)
- Insufficient data (ID)

**Any impact on the Council workforce should be included under question 2.6 – not below*

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Protected Characteristic	Impact type P, N, PN, NI	Nature of impact and any mitigations required
Age 0-18	P	The interventions that will be delivered through the implementation of this strategy will lead to the creation of new good quality employment and training opportunities that would increase aspirations for young people in Coventry and would provide them with strong future career pathways.
Age 19-64	P	The interventions will be delivered through the implementation of this strategy will lead to the delivery of business support activities that will benefit entrepreneurs, business managers and employees within this demographic, and further activities that will lead to the protection and creation of good quality employment and training opportunities that would improve labour market prospects and most likely the standard of living amongst residents within these groups.
Age 65+	P	The interventions will be delivered through the implementation of this strategy will lead to the delivery of business support activities that will benefit entrepreneurs, business managers and employees within this demographic, and further activities that will lead to the protection and creation of good quality employment and training opportunities that would improve labour market prospects and most likely the standard of living amongst residents within these groups.
Disability	P	The interventions will be delivered through the implementation of this strategy will lead to the delivery of business support activities that will be accessible to and benefit disabled entrepreneurs, business managers and employees, and further activities that will lead to the protection and creation of good quality employment and training opportunities that would improve labour market prospects and most likely the standard of living for Coventry's disabled residents.
Gender reassignment	p	The interventions will be delivered through the implementation of this strategy will lead to the delivery of business support activities that will be accessible to and benefit entrepreneurs, business managers and employees within this group, and further activities that will lead to the protection and creation of good quality employment and training opportunities that would be accessible to Coventry residents within this group, and would improve labour market prospects and most likely the standard of living.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	P	The interventions will be delivered through the implementation of this strategy will lead to the delivery of business support activities that will be accessible to and benefit entrepreneurs, business managers and employees of all types of marriage/civil partnership

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

		characteristics, and further activities that will lead to the protection and creation of good quality employment and training opportunities that would be accessible to all Coventry residents, and would improve labour market prospects and most likely the standard of living.
Pregnancy and maternity	P	The interventions will be delivered through the implementation of this strategy will lead to the delivery of business support activities that will be accessible to and benefit entrepreneurs, business managers and employees that fall within this group, and further activities that will lead to the protection and creation of good quality employment and training opportunities that would be accessible to all Coventry residents, and would improve labour market prospects and most likely the standard of living.
Race (Including: colour, nationality, citizenship ethnic or national origins)	P	The interventions will be delivered through the implementation of this strategy will lead to the delivery of business support activities that will be tailored in a way that will be accessible to and benefit entrepreneurs, business managers and employees of all types of racial/ethnic groups, and further activities that will lead to the protection and creation of good quality employment and training opportunities that would be accessible to Coventry residents of all ethnic groups, and would improve labour market prospects and most likely the standard of living.
Religion and belief	P	The interventions will be delivered through the implementation of this strategy will lead to the delivery of business support activities that will be tailored in a way that will be accessible to and benefit entrepreneurs, business managers and employees of all religious beliefs, and further activities that will lead to the protection and creation of good quality employment and training opportunities that would be accessible to Coventry residents of all religious beliefs, and would improve labour market prospects and most likely the standard of living.
Sex	P	The interventions will be delivered through the implementation of this strategy will lead to the delivery of business support activities that will be tailored in a way that will be accessible to and benefit both male and female entrepreneurs, business managers and employees, and further activities that will lead to the protection and creation of good quality employment and training opportunities that would be accessible to both male and female Coventry residents, and would improve labour market prospects and most likely the standard of living.
Sexual orientation	P	The interventions will be delivered through the implementation of this strategy will lead to the delivery of business support activities

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)



	that will be tailored in a way that will be accessible to and benefit entrepreneurs, business managers and employees of all types of sexual orientation, and further activities that will lead to the protection and creation of good quality employment and training opportunities that would be accessible to Coventry residents of all types of sexual orientation, and would improve labour market prospects and most likely the standard of living.
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HEALTH INEQUALITIES

2.3	<p>Health inequalities (HI) are unjust differences in health and wellbeing between different groups of people which arise because of the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age. These conditions influence our opportunities for good health, and result in stark differences in how long we live and how many years we live in good health.</p> <p>Many issues can have an impact: income, unemployment, work conditions, education and skills, our living situation, individual characteristics and experiences, such as age, gender, disability and ethnicity</p> <p>A wide range of services can make a difference to reducing health inequalities. Whether you work with children and young people, design roads or infrastructure, support people into employment or deal with welfare benefits – policy decisions and strategies can help to reduce health inequalities</p> <p>Please answer the questions below to help identify if the area of work will have any impact on health inequalities, positive or negative.</p> <p>If you need assistance in completing this section please contact: Alicia Philips or Lisa Young in Public Health for more information. More details and worked examples can be found at https://coventrycc.sharepoint.com/Info/Pages/What-is-an-Equality-Impact-Assessment-(EIA).aspx</p>
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Question	Issues to consider
2.3a What HIs exist in relation to your work / plan / strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Explore existing data sources on the distribution of health across different population groups (<i>examples of where to find data to be included in support materials</i>)Consider protected characteristics and different dimensions of HI such as socio-economic status or geographical deprivation
	Response:

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

The Health Inequalities most pertinent to this area of work are similar to those baseline challenges identified when Coventry secured Marmot City status. Namely that where someone is born, where they live, whether they work or not and what they do all affect how long someone will live, how healthy they will be and what quality of life they will experience. Men in the most affluent areas of the city will live, on average, 10.7 years longer than men in the most deprived areas, while for women the difference is 8.4 years.

The Economic Development Service, working with key local and regional partners, and other Service Areas within the Council, has played an active part in forming the Council's response to the Call to Action, and will continue to do so through the implementation of this new Economic Development Strategy and the interventions that will be delivered as part of this.

<p>2.3b How might your work affect HI (positively or negatively).</p> <p>How might your work address the needs of different groups that share protected characteristics</p>	<p>Consider and answer below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Think about whether outcomes vary across groups and who benefits the most and least, for example, the outcome for a woman on a low income may be different to the outcome for a woman a high income ● Consider what the unintended consequences of your work might be
	<p>Response:</p> <p class="list-item-l1">a. Potential outcomes including impact based on socio-economic status or geographical deprivation</p> <p>We expect the implementation of this strategic to deliver positive benefits for areas of geographic deprivation, notably by creating the conditions and support services to enable businesses in these areas to prosper, and create new good quality employment and training opportunities (the latter, alongside implementation of the new Skills Strategy). This will also potentially deliver positive benefits to those unemployed and economically inactive, by providing them access to new employment and training opportunities that would facilitate positive labour market progression. It will also deliver positive benefits to those in employment (particularly the lower paid) by providing access to training opportunities or new jobs that would again facilitate labour market progression and potentially access to higher wages.</p> <p class="list-item-l1">b. Potential outcomes impact on specific socially excluded or vulnerable groups eg. people experiencing homelessness, prison leavers, young people leaving care, members of the armed forces community.</p>

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)



As detailed above, an important emphasis of this strategy (alongside implementation of the new Skills Strategy) will be to create the conditions that will enable traditionally socially excluded groups to access new or improved employment and training opportunities.

2.4 Next steps - What specific actions will you take to address the potential equality impacts and health inequalities identified above?

In co-ordinating the implementation of this Strategy, we will continue to be actively involved in supporting Public Health and other Service areas and partners to reduce health inequalities. Indeed, the Strategy (alongside implementation of the Skills Strategy) pledges to work with businesses to tackle longstanding health inequalities, through increasing investment in skills and apprenticeships, implementation of fairer working practices and paying more staff the real living wage, engaging Unions and Trade Bodies in the process. We will also continue to support businesses in addressing recruitment challenges, which will entail co-designing training programmes alongside training providers, and (where possible) matching local jobseekers with new vacancies to reduce risks of worklessness widening health inequalities.

DIGITAL INCLUSION

- 2.5** The Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the uptake of digital services nationally, whereby people who are digitally enabled have better financial opportunities, can access new information and are better connected to others (Lloyds Consumer Digital Index, 2021). However, for those who are digitally excluded, the digital divide has grown during the last two years, and without intervention people will be left behind with poorer outcomes across employment, health and wellbeing, education and service access. Some people are more likely to be excluded including: older people, people from lower income households, unemployed people, people living in social housing, disabled people, school leavers before 16 with fewer educational qualifications, those living in rural areas, homeless people, or people whose first language is not English ([NHS Digital](#).)

Some of the barriers to digital inclusion can include lack of:

- **Access** to a device and/or data
- **Digital skills**
- **Motivation** to get online
- **Trust** of online safety

Digital exclusion is not a fixed entity and may look different to different people at different times.

Example 1. Person A, has access to a smartphone and monthly data and can access social media apps, however lacks the digital skills and confidence, and appropriate device to create a CV, apply for jobs and attend remote interviews, and/or access educational and skills resources.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)



Example 2. Person B, is digitally confident and has their own laptop, however due a lower household income and other financial priorities, they cannot afford their monthly broadband subscription and can no longer get online to access the services they need to.

Example 3. Person C has very little digital experience and has heard negative stories on the news regarding online scams. Despite having the financial resource, they see no benefit of being online and look for alternatives whenever possible. A new council service requires mandatory online registration, therefore they do not access it.

It is important that we all consider how we can reduce digital inequalities across our services, and this may look very different depending on the nature of our work.

Please answer the questions below to help identify if the area of work will have any impact on digital inequalities, positive or negative.

**If you need assistance in completing this section please contact: Laura Waller (*Digital Services & Inclusion Lead, CCC*). More details and worked examples can be found at
[https://coventrycc.sharepoint.com/Info/Pages/What-is-an-Equality-Impact-Assessment-\(EIA\).aspx](https://coventrycc.sharepoint.com/Info/Pages/What-is-an-Equality-Impact-Assessment-(EIA).aspx)**

Question	Issues to consider
2.5 What digital inequalities exist in relation to your work / plan / strategy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Does your work assume service users have digital access and skills?● Do outcomes vary across groups, for example digitally excluded people benefit the least compared to those who have digital skills and access?● Consider what the unintended consequences of your work might be.
	<p>Response:</p> <p>We anticipate that the interventions that would be delivered as part of the implementation of this strategy would target individuals and business managers with varied levels of digital skills. Indeed, we envisage that support to businesses to digitise in some form and support to improve the digital skills of the workforce will be featured within the interventions. As such, we do not anticipate that any interventions will be exclusively delivered in digital format.</p>
2.5b How will you mitigate against digital inequalities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● If any digital inequalities are identified how can you reduce these? For e.g. if a new service requires online registration you may work with partner organisations to improve digital skills and ensure equitable processes are available if someone is unable to access online.
	<p>Response:</p>



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

As detailed above, we envisage that support to businesses to digitise in some form and support to improve the digital skills of the workforce will be featured within the interventions that will be delivered as part of the roll-out of the strategy. As such, we anticipate that many of the interventions will be delivered in hybrid formats (some in person and some digitally).

2.6 How will you monitor and evaluate the effect of this work?

We will continue to consult with local businesses, business representative bodies and Trade Bodies on the extent to which there is a need to continue tackling the “digital divide” in terms of digital skills and the extent to which there is a need to provide additional digitisation support for businesses. We will also continue to consult with these bodies on the most appropriate format of delivery of our Economic Development and business support services to maximise take-up, notably the balance between digital and physical delivery.

2.7 Will there be any potential impacts on Council staff from protected groups?

There will be no additional impacts on Council staff from protected groups.

You should only include the following data if this area of work will potentially have an impact on Council staff. This can be obtained from: Nicole.Powell@coventry.gov.uk

Headcount:

Sex:

Female	
Male	

Age:

16-24	
25-34	
35-44	
45-54	
55-64	
65+	

Disability:

Disabled	
Not Disabled	
Prefer not to state	
Unknown	

Ethnicity:

Religion:

Any other	
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EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)



White	
Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic	
Prefer not to state	
Unknown	

Buddhist	
Christian	
Hindu	
Jewish	
Muslim	
No religion	
Sikh	
Prefer not to state	
Unknown	

Sexual Orientation:

Heterosexual	
LGBT+	
Prefer not to state	
Unknown	

3.0 Completion Statement

As the appropriate Head of Service for this area, I confirm that the potential equality impact is as follows:

- No impact has been identified for one or more protected groups
- Positive impact has been identified for one or more protected groups
- Negative impact has been identified for one or more protected groups
- Both positive and negative impact has been identified for one or more protected groups

4.0 Approval

Signed: Head of Service: Steve Weir, Head of Economic Development	Date: 9th September 2022
Name of Director: Andy Williams, Director Business Investment Culture	Date sent to Director: 9th September 2022
Name of Lead Elected Member: Cllr Jim O'Boyle.	Date sent to Councillor: 15th September 2022

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Scrutiny Coordination Committee
Cabinet

28 September 2022
11 October 2022

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills – Councillor K Sandhu

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Chief Partnerships Officer/ Director of Education and Skills - Kirston Nelsen

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Coventry Skills Strategy 2022-2030

Is this a key decision?

Yes – as it has the potential to positively affect all wards within the city.

Executive Summary:

This is Coventry's first ever citywide Skills Strategy. The Coventry Skills Strategy takes a holistic approach to the skills system from early years through to lifelong learning to achieve the best outcomes for our residents and businesses. It plays a pivotal role in delivering on the ambitions of the 'One Coventry 2022-2030 Plan' in helping to increase the economic prosperity of the city, addressing climate change and tackling inequalities within our communities. The approach reflects collaborative principles of the One Council Plan with shared work across Council teams and services, residents, education/skills providers, employers, other public sector bodies and community organisations. It serves as a 'framework for action' with partners learning and developing creative solutions to skills challenges together to meet our three Strategic Ambitions and the eight Priority areas within them:

Strategic Ambition 1: A comprehensive, citywide skills offer that raises aspirations and allows each and every resident throughout their lives to reach their full potential.

1. Skills Levels: To improve the overall skills levels of Coventry residents.

2. Aspiration: Further develop a skills system that inspires residents to achieve from primary school through to lifelong learning.

3. Progression Pathways: Providing a clear line of sight for people to progress through Coventry's skills system.

Strategic Ambition 2: A skills ecosystem which ensures that all, including those most in need, are able to participate in, progress and achieve success.

4. Community: A skills system which meets the needs of all residents and is widely accessed by all Coventry communities, including newly arrived communities.

5. Inclusion: A skills system which is fully inclusive and representative of our diverse City.

6. Highest Needs: A skills system which supports those most in need, with a ‘proportionate universalism’¹ approach, helping people out of poverty and creating a more equal City.

Strategic Ambition 3: A flexible and responsive system that works together with our growing, investing and local businesses to deliver the right skills mix for our dynamic labour market.

7. Skills for business: A skills system which provides the skills required by Coventry’s businesses, both current and future and contributes to economic growth and the prosperity of the City and Region.

8. Social Value and Sustainability: A skills system which is well positioned to maximise increased commitment to social justice, respect, community, and responsibility including Coventry’s commitment to tackling climate change.

Shared goals with the Economic Development Strategy

The Skills Strategy is fully integrated with Coventry City Council’s new Economic Development Strategy 2022-2025.* Through the two strategies we will achieve three common goals:

1. **Getting the skills and opportunities right for investment:** Develop a ‘team around’ approach for investments and large developments with expertise brought together from across the Council to ensure early, comprehensive planning better meets business need and ensures maximum benefit for Coventry.
2. **Co-designing skills solutions with businesses:** Designing together with industry and skills partners to ensure the skills system is responsive, innovative and produces the right skills mix for now and the future. This includes supporting employers to maximise social value commitments.
3. **In-work upskilling with local employers:** Collaborations which encourage access to skills and workplace development at all levels.

Recommendations:

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee is recommended to:

¹ ‘Proportionate Universalism’ is an approach developed by Sir Michael Marmot and applied throughout health and other services in the UK. The resourcing and delivering of universal services is at scale and intensity proportionate to the degree of need.

- 1) Consider the content of the report and appendices
- 2) Identify any recommendations for Cabinet

The Cabinet is asked to:

- 1) Consider any recommendations or comments from Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee
- 2) Approve the Coventry Skills Strategy 2022-2030.
- 3) Receive an annual monitoring report on the progress towards the Strategy's aspirations and the progress each 'Action Group' has made against the 8 priorities.

List of Appendices included:

Coventry Skills Strategy 2022-2030

Background papers:

None

Other useful documents

West Midlands Combined Authority Regional Skills Plan 2016
West Midlands Combined Authority AEB Plan 2022-2025
West Midlands Combined Authority Plan for Growth 2022.

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

Yes – Scrutiny Coordination Committee, 28th September 2022.

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Coventry Skills Strategy 2022-2030

1. Context and Background

- 1.1 This is the first ever citywide skills strategy, taking a holistic approach to the skills system from early years through to lifelong learning to achieve the best outcomes for our residents and businesses. It is one of the key strategies for delivering the objectives of the new One Coventry Plan 2022-2030, and is strongly integrated with the new Coventry Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027. Its purpose is to serve as a framework for action with partners learning and developing creative solutions to skills challenges together.
- 1.2 In the last 5 years Coventry has successfully raised skills levels driving down the numbers of residents with no qualifications by 14,700 and achieved a substantial increase in the numbers of residents qualified at NVQ2 with 43,700 more residents qualified to NVQ2 or above. We have also made significant progress in becoming a more highly skilled City with 37,000 more residents qualified to NVQ3 or above. Coventry's school Ofsted results have also significantly improved with 92% of Primary Schools and 86% of Secondary Schools now rated as good or outstanding.
- 1.3 However, like any major city Coventry still faces challenges. The city is responding to economic challenges presented by the recession caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, growing challenges around adjusting to new UK-EU trading regulations after Brexit and wider global supply chain disruption, and ongoing cost of living and cost of doing business challenges. We trail national averages for skills levels and this strategy considers ways to level up in order to provide the skills we need to meet the challenges we face.
- 1.4 We want Coventry residents to have skills that match the needs of local employers, not only for now, but also for the vacancies of the future. We want to ensure learning and skills provision meets the needs of all Coventry's communities, is fully inclusive and plays a key role in reducing poverty. We want to build aspiration throughout all educational levels, with Coventry's young people inspired to learn, seeing clear pathways to the jobs they strive towards.
- 1.5 In developing the Strategy, we have consulted directly with a wide variety of stakeholders including officers across Coventry City Council, key external partners including skills providers and voluntary and community sector organisations and members of the public through the One Coventry Plan consultation process and Strategy Carousel events (over 100 stakeholders in total). In addition, we held a Citywide Skills Survey which was open between 16th November 2021 to 11th January 2022 and was completed by 259 residents. The Skills Survey played a key role in informing the priorities for the Skills Strategy. A full list of stakeholder engagement is attached in **Appendix D**.
- 1.6 The Skills Strategy will be one of the foremost strategies in delivering the objectives of the 2022-2030 One Coventry Plan. It will be central to the objective of Increasing Economic Prosperity by ensuring businesses have the skills they need to survive, thrive and grow. It will improve outcomes and tackle inequalities for communities by ensuring those who need it most get the skills needed to secure good quality employment and progress within the workplace. The strategy will be key to delivering the objectives of Tackling the Causes and Consequences of Climate Change by providing the green skills needed both now and in the future. The Council's role as a Partner, Enabler and Leader will be crucial in working collaboratively with funders such as WMCA, external skills providers, universities, employers and the voluntary and community sector. Finally, by supporting more residents into better jobs the Skills Strategy plays a crucial role in Improving the Financial Sustainability of the Council by increasing Council Tax income and reducing costs associated with unemployment/low paid employment.

1.7 Partnership work will be integral to the roll-out and delivery of this strategy. This strategy serves as a 'framework for action' and the Action Groups formed to achieve our priorities will involve many Service Areas across the Council, and work with external skills providers, universities, employers and the voluntary and community sector. In addition, the Council will work closely with regional funders such as WMCA and national funding bodies such as ESFA. Coventry City Council's Employment and Skills Service will be responsible for overall co-ordination of the Strategy but will collaborate particularly closely with the Economic Development Service on our shared priorities. In addition, the Employment and Skills Service will work closely with colleagues from Education, the Migration Team, Climate Change and Sustainability and Early Help amongst others.

2 Options Considered and Recommended Proposal

- 2.1 Option 1: The Council can choose not to have a Coventry Skills Strategy, and to instead rely on the strategic plans of WMCA such as the Regional Skills Plan 2016 and the AEB Plan 2022-2025. The risk with this approach is that it does not have a local focus which considers the needs of Coventry residents and businesses and the priorities that are locally important to specific neighbourhoods within the city. It would also reduce opportunities for focused interactions with key local stakeholders.
- 2.2 Option 2 is the development of a Coventry Skills Strategy that gives Coventry a new skills focus and takes a holistic view of Coventry skills system. It places Coventry residents and businesses at the heart of the skills system focusing on getting the best outcomes for our City – increasing skills levels, raising aspiration, building effective progression pathways, ensuring the skills system serves our communities, is inclusive and supports those with highest needs, and ensuring we get the right skills for our businesses and the green skills needed to protect our climate.
- 2.3 It is recommended that the Cabinet supports Option 2 and endorses the Coventry Skills Strategy.

3 Results of Consultation Undertaken

- 3.1 Over 100 stakeholders were consulted to inform the Skills Strategy Priorities and detail. These included officers within the Authority across all Divisions, key local and regional skills partners (these included local universities, colleges and independent training providers), voluntary and community sector organisations, and members of the public through the One Coventry Plan consultation process (this included attendance at the Strategy Carousel event) and the Skills Survey. A full list of the stakeholders consulted is attached in **Appendix D**.
- 3.2 Through the consultation process, we were able to determine the most important priorities for Coventry's Skills System. We presented the strategy to the One Coventry Leadership Team in July 2022, alongside the new Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 to secure endorsement of all Council Directors.
- 3.3 It is also worth noting that the Council's Scrutiny Committee will be considering the Coventry Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 on 28th September 2022.

4 Timetable for Implementing This Decision

- 4.1 The Coventry Skills Strategy 2022-2030 is an 8-year strategy in line with the One Coventry Plan. Progress will be reported annually to the relevant Cabinet Members (Jobs, Regeneration & Climate Change, and Education and Skills) and to Cabinet.

5 Comments from Director of Finance and the Director of Law and Governance

5.1 Financial implications

- 5.1.1 Coventry City Council will take the lead role as an enabler for change with the Skills Strategy, working with funders to shape skills resources and with delivery partners to ensure city-wide provision leads to a comprehensive and quality skills offer for our residents. Implementation of the Strategy will be led by Employment & Skills Service officers who will co-ordinate the Collaborative Action Plans agreed across the network of skills providers.
- 5.1.2 The ability to deliver the skills strategy will depend on sufficient available resources across the city. The vast majority of skills funding is from grant, either direct from Government departments or via devolved administrations such as West Midland Combined Authority (WMCA). Funding sources are currently in a period of transition as WMCA seeks to further align skills funding to an employment focus but the City Council is already working closely with WMCA in order to influence funding policy, minimise potential funding turbulence and shape the commissioning of skills provision across the FE sector. It is impossible to guarantee the consistent availability of grant funding over the longer-term life of this strategy, but as set out above Council officers will continue to liaise with appropriate funding bodies and seek to maximise funding opportunities to support the Skills Strategy from external grant sources.

5.2 Legal Implications

- 5.2.1 There are no direct legal implications arising out of this report at this stage, save for noting the Council's duty under the Equality Act 2010
- 5.2.2 Whilst there is no statutory duty to produce a Skills Strategy doing so provides an important framework for helping to deliver the Council's statutory obligations and will help drive forward the One Coventry Plan 2022-2030.
- 5.2.3 The Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity. The Council must further take into account its wider Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under s. 149 of the Equality Act 2010 when making its decisions. The public sector equality duty (s.49, Equality Act 2010) requires the Council when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, advance equality of opportunity between those who share a 'protected characteristic' and those who do not share the protected characteristic and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (this involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to (a) tackle prejudice and (b) promote understanding). As such, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion are key priorities within this strategy, and cut across all other priorities.

A full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is attached in **Appendix E**.

- 5.2.4 The Council will consider the impact of any projects or changes to service delivery that might arise as a result of implementing work coming out of this strategy on those protected equality characteristics. Individual proposals will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment

wherever relevant prior to any decision taken to proceed, including the identification of mitigating action, where possible.

6 Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan (www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)?

6.1.1 The Coventry Skills Strategy 2022-2030 will be one of the foremost strategies for delivering the One Coventry Plan and its five objectives:

6.1.2 ***Increasing the Economic Prosperity of the City and Region.*** The Coventry Skills strategy will contribute heavily towards delivering this objective, by ensuring that businesses get the skills they need to survive, thrive and grow. In addition, supporting residents to get the skills they need to enter work increases their spending power, contributing to Coventry's circular economy. This will increase further for residents supported to upskill within the workplace and move into higher paid roles.

6.1.3 ***Improving Outcomes and Tackling Inequalities Within our Communities.*** The Coventry Skills Strategy plays a key role in achieving this objective. It does this by ensuring that our skills system meets the needs of all Coventry's communities and is fully inclusive. This includes ensuring that we improve job outcomes and skills levels for communities from more deprived areas of the city and for residents from ethnic minorities, including newly arrived communities. The strategy also ensures that we continue to shape our skills system to provide the most support for those with the highest needs such as disabilities, health conditions, single parents, substance misuse issues and ex-offenders using a 'proportionate universalism' approach. Finally, the strategy considers how we support businesses to maximise their social value commitments, especially employing more Coventry residents with higher needs.

6.1.4 ***Tackle the Causes and Consequences of Climate Change.*** The Coventry Skills Strategy makes a significant contribution to this objective by ensuring that we provide the green skills that businesses need both now and in the future. In addition, we will ensure schools, colleges and adult education providers are embedding climate change content into their curriculums. We will shape school and college careers advice to inspire young people to see the potential of green jobs and inspire the 'green' innovators of the future.

6.1.5 ***Continued Financial Sustainability of the Council.*** Supporting residents to gain the skills they need to get into work will increase Council Tax revenue and decrease other costs to the Council. The Manchester New Economic Toolkit (2019), a Government approved tool, estimates that the average economic value to the local economy of a long term unemployed person entering work is £14,790 per annum. In addition, supporting businesses to get the skills they need will help more businesses to survive, thrive and grow which has a positive impact on Business Rates revenue.

6.1.6 ***Council's Role as a Partner, Leader and Enabler.*** Partnership working is integral to the Coventry Skills Strategy. The Coventry Skills Strategy serves as a 'framework for action' with action groups formed to achieve our priorities. These action groups will be led by Coventry City Council Employment and Skills Service and include colleagues from the Economic Development Service, Education, The Migration Team, Climate Change and Sustainability and Early Help amongst others. In addition, we will include a range of external partners such as schools, colleges, universities, independent training providers, WMCA, DWP and the voluntary and community sector.

6.2 How is Risk Being Managed?

6.2.1 The Council has a strong track record of managing risks and maintaining significant financial controls and well-established procedures when handling public funds. The key risks associated with the strategy, and how they will be managed include:

- **Economic uncertainty.** With the Bank of England forecasting a recession for late 2022 and throughout 2023, the Council will need to act flexibly and be able to adapt projects and services best support residents and businesses.
- **The changing public funding environment.** With the UK no longer able to access EU Structural Funds beyond June 2023, the way many business, skills and employment support activities will be funded in Coventry and other areas of the UK will change. This could also entail changes in the quantum of funds, focus of the funds, and how the funding is administrated. Coventry City Council is proactively responding to these changes through identifying more innovative ways of funding its priorities (including both through core and external funding sources), and further strengthening partnership approaches to delivery.
- **Securing commitment of partners to work jointly on delivery of the strategy.** Stakeholders both internal and external to the Council have responded very positively to the strategy, and we envisage that already strong partnership working arrangements will be enhanced in delivering the strategy through our Action Groups.

6.3 What is the Impact on the Organisation?

6.3.1 HR Implications

The implications of this strategy in terms of funding the staff that will be directly responsible for delivering many of the activities, and facilitating successful partnership work, has been covered in Section 5.1. In respect of the wider Council, the Coventry Skills Strategy 2022-2030 will have wide reaching positive impacts on the residents of Coventry. These include improving health and wellbeing, targeting vulnerable groups and boosting local businesses and job creation. This should reduce reliance on other Council services (thereby mitigating against risks of the need to find extra financial resources for additional staff) and have public health benefits.

6.3.2 Equality and Consultation Analysis (ECAs)

One of the key priorities of the Coventry Skills Strategy is to ensure that our skills system meets the needs of all Coventry communities. In addition, there is a priority around ‘inclusion’ ensuring that our skills system is fully inclusive including good destinations for all ethnic groups. Finally, the strategy has a priority of ensuring that the skills system meets the needs of those who may be considered to have ‘higher needs’ such as health conditions, disabilities, single parents, care leavers, those with substance misuse issues and ex-offenders.

A full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is attached in **Appendix E**.

6.3.3 Implications for (or impact on) Climate Change and the Environment

As detailed above, the strategy will have positive impacts on climate change and the environment, and will be one of the most important strategies in achieving the One Coventry Plan’s objective of “Tackling the Causes and Consequences of Climate Change”. This strategy will also be strongly aligned with the new Coventry Climate Change Strategy.

6.3.4 Implications for Partner Organisations?

The Strategy will be delivered in partnership with stakeholders across the city, sub-region and West Midlands region. The strategy serves as a 'framework for action' and the actions will not be able to be delivered by the Council on its own. Engaging partners will be crucial to the success of the strategy's Action Plans.

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This report is published on the council's website: www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings

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Forward

(Cllr Duggins/Cllr Sandhu?)

I am proud to launch our first ever Citywide Skills Strategy which provides a 'framework for action' across all educational stages working collaboratively to get the best skills outcomes for our residents, from early education through to lifelong adult learning.

In the decade between 2010 and 2019 Coventry achieved great economic growth and reduced inequalities. Coventry made significant progress in driving down unemployment - particularly youth unemployment which since 2015 has remained well below the national averages. Coventry's flagship Job Shop has supported over 1000 residents each year into employment and the model has been replicated by other Local Authorities. Coventry's successes were reflected in the securing of City of Culture 2021 as well as acting as host venue for the 2022 Commonwealth Games and the International Children's Games. Coventry significantly raised its skill levels, and its school Ofsted results with 92% of primary schools and 86% of secondary schools now rated as good or outstanding.

Unfortunately, the combined impacts of Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic have presented many new challenges to Coventry's economy and the city's businesses and residents. We have now entered a cost-of-living crisis which is putting significant pressure on household budgets and presenting a growing challenge of in-work poverty. Building on the publication of our One Coventry Plan 2022 – 2030 priorities¹ the Skills Strategy is very timely. It supports an increase to the economic prosperity of the city in ensuring that businesses have the right skills to grow. It tackles inequalities by making sure skills provision is equally accessed by all Coventry's communities, with our residents gaining the skills they need to secure good employment and progress within it. Finally, the Skills Strategy plays a key role in tackling the causes and consequences of climate change by ensuring residents gain the right skills to support green jobs growth.

¹ Hyper-link to One Coventry Plan to be added

Executive Summary

Coventry has made significant progress in becoming a higher skilled City in the last 5 years.

We have driven down the numbers of residents with no qualifications by 14,700. We have achieved a substantial increase in the numbers of residents qualified at NVQ2 with 43,700 more residents qualified to NVQ2 or above. We have also made significant progress in becoming a more highly skilled City with 37,000 more residents qualified to NVQ3 or above.

Coventry is a diverse city both in terms of its resident population and its business base. Coventry has the second highest resident average pay in the WM region and the lowest levels of youth unemployment. There are a wide range of vacancies with particular strengths in the public sector and advanced manufacturing, and a growing ‘culture, tourism and leisure’ sector boosted by City of Culture 2021.

Like any major city Coventry still faces challenges. We trail national averages for skills levels and this strategy considers ways to level up. However, we do not want to improve skills levels for the sake of comparisons and measures. We want Coventry residents to have skills that match the needs of local employers, not only for now, but also for the vacancies of the future. We want to ensure learning and skills provision meets the needs of all Coventry’s communities, is fully inclusive and plays a key role in reducing poverty. We want to build aspiration throughout all educational levels, with Coventry’s young people inspired to learn, seeing clear pathways to the jobs they strive towards.

This Strategy plays a pivotal role in delivering on the ambitions of the ‘One Coventry 2022-2030 Plan’ in helping to increase the economic prosperity of the city, addressing climate change and tackling inequalities within our communities. The approach reflects collaborative principles of the One Council Plan with shared work across Council teams and services, residents, education/skills providers, employers, other public sector bodies and community organisations. It serves as a ‘framework for action’ with partners learning and developing creative solutions to skills challenges together to meet our three Strategic Ambitions and the eight Priority areas within them:

Strategic Ambition 1: A comprehensive, citywide skills offer that raises aspirations and allows each and every resident throughout their lives to reach their full potential.

- 1. Skills Levels:** To improve the overall skills levels of Coventry residents.
- 2. Aspiration:** Further develop a skills system that inspires residents to achieve from primary school through to lifelong learning.
- 3. Progression Pathways:** Providing a clear line of sight for people to progress through Coventry’s skills system.

Strategic Ambition 2: A skills ecosystem which ensures that all, including those most in need, are able to participate in, progress and achieve success.

- 4. Community:** A skills system which meets the needs of all residents and is widely accessed by all Coventry communities, including newly arrived communities.
- 5. Inclusion:** A skills system which is fully inclusive and representative of our diverse City.

6. Highest Needs: A skills system which supports those most in need, with a ‘proportionate universalism’² approach, helping people out of poverty and creating a more equal City.

Strategic Ambition 3: A flexible and responsive system that works together with our growing, investing and local businesses to deliver the right skills mix for our dynamic labour market.

7. Skills for business: A skills system which provides the skills required by Coventry’s businesses, both current and future and contributes to economic growth and the prosperity of the City and Region.

8. Social Value and Sustainability: A skills system which is well positioned to maximise increased commitment to social justice, respect, community, and responsibility including Coventry’s commitment to tackling climate change.

Shared goals with the Economic Development Strategy

The Skills Strategy is fully integrated with Coventry City Council’s new Economic Development Strategy 2022-2025.* Through the two strategies we will achieve three common goals:

1. **Getting the skills and opportunities right for investment:** Develop a ‘team around’ approach for investments and large developments with expertise brought together from across the Council to ensure early, comprehensive planning better meets business need and ensures maximum benefit for Coventry.
2. **Co-designing skills solutions with businesses:** Designing together with industry and skills partners to ensure the skills system is responsive, innovative and produces the right skills mix for now and the future. This includes supporting employers to maximise social value commitments.
3. **In-work upskilling with local employers:** Collaborations which encourage access to skills and workplace development at all levels.

² ‘Proportionate Universalism’ is an approach developed by Sir Michael Marmot and applied throughout health and other services in the UK. The resourcing and delivering of universal services is at scale and intensity proportionate to the degree of need.

Setting the Scene: The need for a more Equal Coventry and Sustained Economic Recovery

The Economy

Challenging Economic Climate, Following a Decade of Success:

In the 10 years after the 2008/09 recession, Coventry & Warwickshire was the fastest-growing local economy in England, with economic output (measured in real GVA) growing by 33.4% between 2008/09 and 2016/17. This was driven significantly by major investments in Research & Development and production in the automotive sector - providing a platform for the creation of new good quality jobs and training opportunities. During this period, Coventry also secured UK City of Culture 2021, was selected as a host venue for the 2022 Commonwealth Games, and was part of the West Midlands 5G Test Bed (the first of its type in the UK) – all of these were expected to provide the conditions for creating new job and training opportunities in other sectors, including creative industries and tourism & hospitality.

However, the performance of the local economy has slowed, reducing the capacity to create new employment and training opportunities. For example, in 2018/2019, Coventry & Warwickshire recorded the lowest growth rate of all local economies (1.24%) and in 2020, the West Midlands experienced the biggest economic contraction of all regions due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This led to a significant increase in the Claimant Count (numbers claiming unemployment related benefits) from 7,825 (3.2%) in February to 16,490 (6.6%) in December 2020 (the peak pandemic level). This exacerbated longstanding inequalities in the city, with the highest increases in the Claimant Count seen in Coventry's most deprived wards.

The economy's capacity to recover and has also been constrained since this date with inflation, increases in the cost of energy and materials, labour shortages, and supply chain disruption for key components and materials, all being key factors limiting economic growth. The regulations for trade between the UK and EU post Brexit and additional document requirements, have also slowed the recovery. With the Bank of England's forecasts from August 2022 projecting a recession during Q4 2022 and all of 2023, there are risks that this could create further structural economic challenges and widen inequalities. An important objective of this Skills Strategy is to therefore ensure that Coventry's labour force is able to secure the necessary skills to enable them to access new opportunities that will emerge from structural economic change, and thereby enhance their standard of living. As an enabler of change, the Council will help our businesses to better reflect the communities they serve, encouraging employers to look at alternative methods of recruitment and to appoint more diverse workforces.

Demographics

Coventry's has a dynamic and adaptable labour force that could play an active role in supporting the economic recovery:



A young population: Coventry has a median age of 32 years compared to the UK average of 40. The pandemic in 2020 had a disproportionate impact on younger workers, due to the sectors most impacted by lockdowns, but through upskilling of the labour force (one of the central priorities within this strategy), this demographic could have an important role to play in accelerating the growth of emerging and expanding sectors of the economy.



Expected growth in 65+ age group: The 65+ age group is expected to become the fastest-growing demographic over the next 15 years, and the transferrable skills and experience of this demographic could again have an important role to play in facilitating economic restructuring. Those 75+ represent 6% of the city's population compared to a UK average of 9%. However, by 2043 there is expected growth in 75+ residents of 8%.³



A diverse City: 33% of Coventry's population are from ethnic minority backgrounds, compared to 20% for England as a whole.⁴ Coventry's population is expected to become more diverse: among schoolchildren, 48.7% of pupils are from ethnic backgrounds other than White British, and it will be essential that we ensure that any barriers these groups face in accessing employment and training opportunities are tackled within Coventry's skills system.



Becoming less economically deprived and more equal: The 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) report⁵ showed significant improvements compared to 2015. Coventry moved from 34th most deprived Local Authority area to 64th. The number of neighbourhoods ranked within the most deprived 10% in the UK also decreased from 36 to 28. This improvement was driven in part by improving schools, a significant decrease in unemployment, supported by Coventry City Council's Job Shop, and rising resident wages. This Skills Strategy will contribute towards further reducing the number of neighbourhoods ranked within the most deprived 10% by providing residents in these areas with more access to good quality jobs and training opportunities.



Inequalities for women: Average weekly wages for women in Coventry are £173 less than those of male residents. This compares unfavourably to the national average gender pay gap of £97. Coventry also has statistically high numbers of economically inactive women with a gap of 9.6% between economically inactive women and men in Coventry which is larger than the National Average of 5.7%.⁶ A key focus of this Skills Strategy is ensuring that women in Coventry can access the best skills provision to help them into work or to progress to better paid roles, with courses delivered with the right flexibility.



Improving outcomes for disability and health conditions: Coventry has just over 10,000 residents claiming Employment Support Allowance, the main out of work benefit for people with disabilities and health conditions. This number has decreased in the last 5 years. Coventry has proportionally less people economically inactive due to long term sickness than the national averages.⁷ Coventry has been particularly successful in supporting residents with learning disabilities to progress straight from education into employment through our innovative Supported Internship programmes with University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire (UHCW) and Warwick University, which have seen over 70% progress into paid work. This Skills Strategy seeks to increase innovative provision such as Supported Internships and ensure mainstream provision is sufficiently flexible to support the needs of people with disabilities and health conditions leading to good outcomes for these groups.

³ One Coventry (draft)

⁴ [Coventry City Council Website - Facts About Coventry](#)

⁵ [Coventry City Council IMD Summary Report](#)

⁶ [Nomis \(ONS\)](#)

⁷ [Nomis \(ONS\)](#)



Still challenges in health outcomes: The Covid pandemic has exacerbated longstanding inequalities, especially in health outcomes with life expectancy varying by 10.7 years for men and 8.3 years for women between the City's most affluent and most deprived neighbourhoods.⁸ In delivering this strategy, we will work with businesses to tackle longstanding health inequalities, through increasing investment in skills and apprenticeships, implementation of fairer working practices and paying more staff the real living wage, engaging Trade Bodies, Unions and other relevant stakeholders in the process

Labour Market

The characteristics of Coventry's labour force will influence the focus of where our skills support activities need to be over the next five years:



High employment in professional occupations: 26.4%, compared to a National Average of 23.3%. There is a high concentration of public sector employment: Coventry City Council, one of the largest Job Centres in the country, a large regional hospital and offices for several national civil service bodies such as The Department for Education and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. Also, two large Universities which combined employ over 11,000 people, many in Professional Occupations, including engineering specialisms in support of Coventry's advanced engineering research and development. There will continue to be a need for labour with the requisite generic, leadership and management, and technical skills to fill new roles, so it is vital that we enable the local education and training system to produce a local labour force with these vital skills.



Strong employment in manufacturing sector: 6.1% of Coventry's workforce compared to a national average of 5.6%. Although the Covid pandemic caused a contraction of 2,300 jobs in this sector, advanced manufacturing & engineering is a sector where we aspire to create further growth (notably through growing electric vehicle and battery supply chains). It is therefore crucial that our skills system continues to produce a supply of local labour with the required high-level technical skills.



Low proportion of residents employed as Managers, Directors and Senior Officials: 5% compared to a national average of 10.9%, although this is in partly due to many of those working in these roles in Coventry businesses commuting from outside the city. A key objective within the Skills Strategy is to raise aspirations of Coventry residents across all neighbourhoods, and expand provision and maximise take-up of Leadership & Management training to enable more Coventry residents to progress into these types of roles.



Higher than average vacancy numbers: As with much of the UK over the last year Coventry has had higher than average numbers of vacancies. Employers particularly struggled to fill roles in hospitality and logistics, Health & Social Care (notably nursing roles in the NHS), and programme and software development roles across a range of sectors. This is a further challenge slowing the economic recovery, especially as many of these sectors employed high volumes of "EU nationals", who have since left the UK labour market. We will therefore work with employers, trade bodies unions, and training providers to ensure that training courses are designed in a way that delivers the skills the sectors need, and to

⁸ Coventry City Council Website - Facts About Coventry

identify Coventry residents that could potentially benefit from upskilling and fill the vacancies.



Many vacancies are low skilled/low paid and insecure: Skills solutions can support sectors experiencing labour shortages, however for many of the roles available the issue is more 'labour' as opposed to 'skills' shortage. Many roles in logistics, hospitality and care for example require elementary skills, have limited entry requirements, are lower paid and more insecure and struggle to attract candidates as a result. We will therefore work with employers, trade bodies and unions to drive improvements in the terms of employment within these sectors and develop and promote clearer career development paths. We will also provide support to these businesses in tackling recruitment challenges, and through the Job Shop, match local residents that could potentially fill new vacancies.

Making Our Priorities Happen:

Each of our Priorities will have an Action Plan, developed in collaboration with relevant partners across the city and setting out key performance indicators. These Collaborative Skills Plans will provide the basis for partners, residents and employers to explore challenges and create innovative responses which lead to the improvement of our local skills offer. By encouraging experimentation and learning, this approach will allow the city to better respond to significant economic and societal challenges. It also represents an ask of Coventry's stakeholders to work in a different way, collaborating and designing solutions with the voice of our communities at the centre.

As such there will be actions resulting from this Strategy which are not yet known but will be developed within the Collaborative Skills Plans. The information below sets out some of the existing and planned activity which will help this Strategy's approach come alive and begin our journey towards a more comprehensive and responsive skills offer: one which ensures all our communities can progress and achieve success.

Further detail on the evidence base and how we have arrived at these priorities is contained in Appendix (B).

1. Overall Skills Levels: Improve the overall skills levels of Coventry residents

Our Aim: Bring skills levels for number of residents with no qualifications and numbers with NVQ1, 2 and 3 and above in line with National Averages.

We will achieve this by:

- **Building on the success of Coventry City Council's Education Partnership:** This has supported primary schools to improve from 42% good or outstanding in 2013 to 92% good or outstanding in 2021.
- **Ensuring Coventry's children fulfil their potential:** We will continue to ensure that education is focusing on giving every child and young person the skills they need to fulfil their potential and reach the right successful destination in adulthood. We will continue to invest in our collaborative approach working in partnership with all schools and delivering on local and national priorities. We will use additional investment available for Education Improvement Areas to support this and continue to secure attainment improvements and close the gap with the national position.
- **Providing holistic support for whole families:** Working in our communities and in collaboration with key partners to support families with wider issues which affect educational attainment. Includes parenting support, mental health support for children and parents, healthy eating guidance, money advice and increasing access to digital devices to support learning. These actions are described in more detail in Coventry's Early Help Strategy 2020-22 and the Multi Agency Parent Strategy 2020-2023.
- **Supporting families from newly arrived communities:** We are proud to be recognised as a City of sanctuary and continue to welcome refugees and asylum seekers from war-torn countries to live in the city. We will continue to work with refugee and migrant families to help overcome barriers, especially language barriers that can affect educational attainment.
- **Supporting our Further Education providers to provide a high quality offer:** Ensuring high levels of participation and a high quality offer at all levels.
- **Continuing to Increase participation in adult education, ensuring quality:** Supporting Skills Providers to provide courses of the right quality, marketed well and meeting resident need. Employment Support Providers such as the Coventry Job Shop providing high

quality advice and guidance, including bespoke careers guidance from the National Careers Service (NCS). In addition, community organisations and libraries act as both a referral route and also as providers of lower level/unaccredited skills courses as a key progression pathway into higher level courses.

- **Working to improve graduate retention:** Coventry currently retains approximately 15% of graduates, the 4th lowest in the UK. We will work with our Universities and local employers to improve the graduate retention offer and to increase the volume and quality of graduate level jobs. We will continue to support Coventry University's aspiration to expand their employability offer helping their graduates to secure careers locally (Coventry University 2030 Group Strategy⁹)
- 2. Aspiration: An aspirational skills system that inspires residents to achieve from primary school through to lifelong learning**

Our Aim: For high aspirations to be built into Coventry's Skills System from a young age (primary school) and to remain all the way through to lifelong learning.

We will achieve this by:

- **Supporting our Primary Schools to increase employer interactions:** Using our Coventry City Council led networks of employers, working through 'One Coventry' partnerships to provide inspiring employer interactions – developing even higher ambitions for Coventry's children and their parents.
- **Inspiring 'green futures' programmes:** Inspiring our children and young people to want to take action and to gain the skills required to address the causes and consequences of climate change.
- **Supporting parents to have high aspirations for their children:** Parenting support, starting from early years, including helping parents to improve their own skills levels and move into or progress within employment. This can improve parental wellbeing, including self-esteem, positively impacting the aspirations they have for their children.
- **Increasing higher education engagements in our Primary and Secondary Schools:** Partnering with Coventry and Warwick Universities to encourage more of Coventry's children and their parents to see higher education as an option.
- **Building on the success of CW Careers Hub:** 30 out of 33 of Coventry's Secondary schools/colleges are signed up with the Coventry and Warwickshire Careers Hub (CW Careers Hub). This supports schools/colleges 'Careers Leaders' to embed the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks¹⁰ including increasing employer engagement, embedding careers into the curriculum, and informing students and parents of their options.
- **Using government funding to increase SME Interactions in our Secondary Schools and Colleges:** We will seek any available funding to effectively link Coventry's Small and Medium Employers to Coventry schools to help schools diversify their careers offer.
- **Building on our success in using adult skills provision to support residents into/back into work:** Working through Coventry Job Shop and its partners to promote skills offers that lead to good quality employment. Encouraging residents that 'it's never too late to learn', with adults taking advantage of the Government's 'Lifetime Skills Guarantee'.
- **Increasing the uptake of 'In Work' adult skills provision to drive upward mobility:**

⁹ [Coventry University Group 2030 Strategy](#)

¹⁰ [Information on the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks](#)

Ensuring skills providers have a flexible offer that can meet the needs of those in low paid work. Working with employers to increase skills training within working hours and effectively using any available 'in work' skills funding to drive upwards mobility.

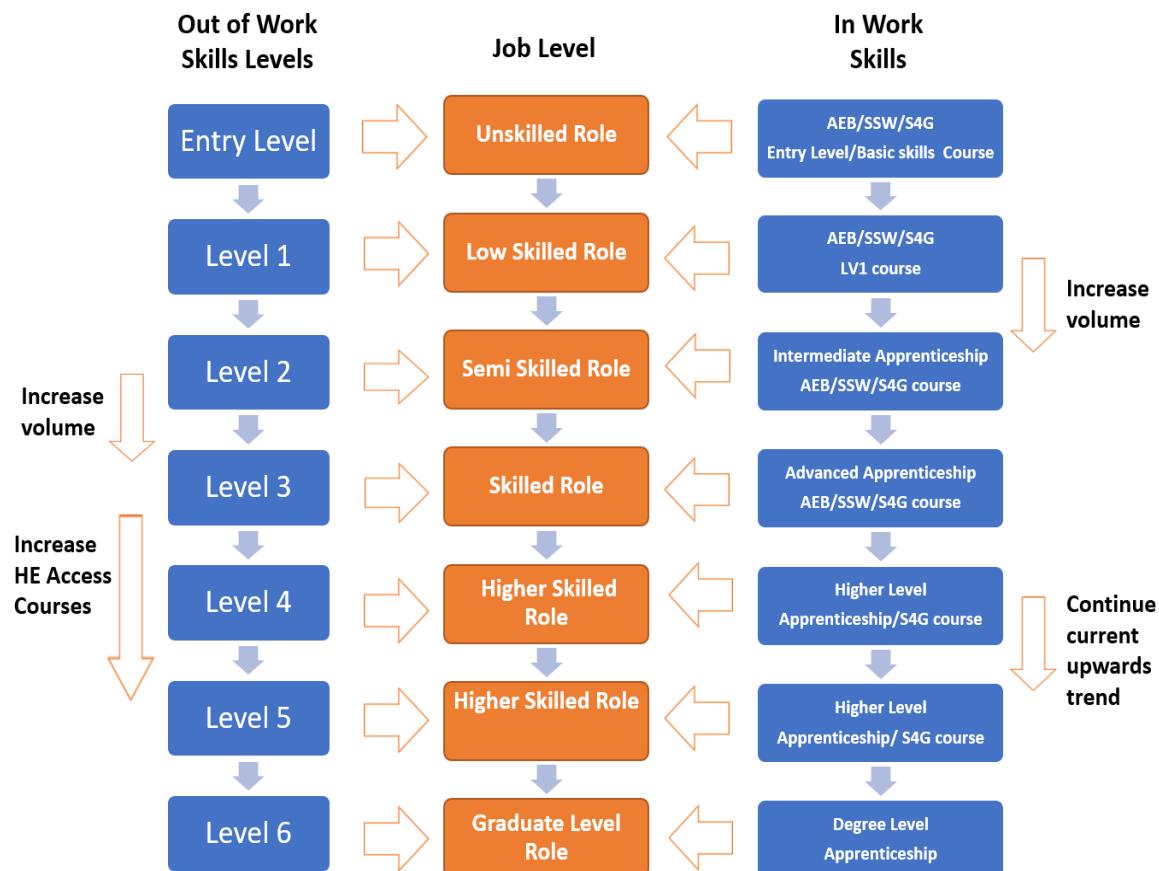
3. Progression Pathways: Providing a clear line of sight for people to progress through Coventry's skills system

Our Aim: Building clearly defined routes through all educational levels which lead into good quality employment. For residents to easily re-engage in the skills system once in employment; continuing 'lifelong learning' and increasing their earning potential and facilitating career development.

We will achieve this by:

- **Learners having clear line of sight of where courses can lead:** Learners seeing the value of continuing in education, achieving higher skills levels which can lead to higher paid work. We will work in partnership with employers, employer representative bodies and our Education and Skills Providers to develop pathways across different sectors.
- **Continue to encourage progression through 'lifelong learning' including adults who are 'In Work':** See chart below showing out of work and in work skills progression pathways:

Chart 1 - Out of work and in work skills progression pathways



4. Community: Developing a skills system which meets the needs of all residents and is widely accessed by all Coventry communities

Our Aim: Ensure all areas of the city are widely accessing skills support, at all levels and with good evidence of progression.

We will achieve this by:

- **Building on current community engagement success:** 2020-21 data from the Adult Education Budget (AEB) suggests good representation from wards with higher levels of deprivation with the two wards with highest representation being St Michaels (12%) and Foleshill (12%). We need to continue to ensure all Coventry's communities can access adult skills provision at all levels, focusing particularly on evidence of good progression to higher education levels and strong jobs outcomes for all groups.
 - **Ensure skills system is supporting communities with the cost of living:** Ensuring the Coventry skills system supports residents into good quality work and to progress within the workplace. We especially need to focus on supporting women in low paid work as there is a larger pay gap between women and men in Coventry than the national average.¹¹ The skills system can also play a role in supporting residents to budget and understand financial systems which can help with cost of living pressures.
 - **Embed findings Coventry Skills Survey 2021:** Our first ever citywide skills survey showed the main barriers to accessing adult skills provision are time restrictions (48% of respondents) and wanting more online courses (36%). We will support our Skills Providers to continue to make provision more flexible and work with partners to increase online provision and address digital poverty barriers. Course flexibility can especially support economically inactive women or women in low paid work who may have juggle caring responsibilities. The Skills Survey also showed adults find out about courses primarily online (61%) but face to face information is still key for many, especially those accessing the Coventry Job Shop (42%). We will encourage our Skills Providers to continue to strengthen their online presence and the quality of their online information, whilst continuing to promote skills provision through the Coventry Job Shop and other employment support providers.
- A full report on the Coventry Skills Survey can be found in Appendix (C)
- **Continue to engage our residents through annual skills surveys and smaller feedback groups:** We will run our Skills Survey annually to continue to learn from our residents and adjust skills delivery and promotion accordingly. In addition, working with community partners to undertake regular community engagement activities.

5. Inclusion: A skills system which is fully inclusive and representative of our diverse City

Our Aim: Ensure all ethnic groups are well served by the skills system, ensuring engagement practices reflect our communities' needs and appropriate provision and support is available to enable full participation and progression at all educational levels.

We will achieve this by:

- **Continue to narrow the GCSE attainment gap for black students:** For 2019-20 GCSE results show that black students in Coventry were 0.6% below the average for all students on the attainment 8 measure (average of 8 GCSE results). This gap is lower than the national average of 1.3% but should continue to be addressed. We will work in a 'One Coventry' way across education, health, social services, Family Hubs and community

¹¹ Coventry gap between average weekly pay for full time male and female workers is £178. National average is £97.4. Source [Nomis](#) (ONS)

organisations to ensure that this gap continues to narrow, and Coventry continues to perform better than national averages.

- **Attainment gap for unaccompanied migrants and refugees:** We will work to ensure that these groups are provided with additional support to overcome barriers.
 - **Ensure adult skills provision maintains diversity with good progression for all groups:** For AEB provision in Coventry for 2020/21 - 21% of learners described themselves as from African, Caribbean, or other Black backgrounds and 16% from Asian backgrounds. We will build on this diversity in our provision whilst ensuring that all groups progress to higher levels and good sustainable employment.
 - **'In Work' provision to support more representation from ethnic minorities in senior leadership roles:** A report by Green Park in August 2021 showed for FTSE 100 companies only 11 of 295 (3.7%) leaders in the Top 3 roles have ethnic minority backgrounds.¹² Coventry City Council is showing leadership in addressing this with the 'Ignite' programme. This was a 6-month programme, which aimed to ignite the leadership potential in employees from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. The programme ran from September 2021 to March 2022 with a quarter of participants progressing to more senior roles following completion of the programme. In our City Council role as 'enabler' we will support other businesses to develop similar programmes.
- 6. Highest Needs: A skills system which supports those more in need, with a 'proportionate universalism' approach, helping people out of poverty and creating a more equal City.**

Our Aim: Concentrating proportionally higher levels of available resources to ensure Coventry's skills system is widely accessed by local areas of higher deprivation and demonstrates progression into good quality work - especially higher paying work. Strong participation will be pursued amongst those who may be considered higher needs due to disability, health/mental health conditions, drug/alcohol misuse, lone parents, teenage parents, ex-offenders and young people at risk of gang violence.

We will achieve this by:

- **'One Coventry' partnership working to support families with barriers that can impact educational attainment:** Coventry schools to help identify children and their families where there are concerns such as mental health issues, drug and alcohol misuse, homelessness, domestic violence and gang violence - working with their designated Early Help Assessment Co-ordinator through our Family Hubs to get the right support for children and their families.
- **Building on our success in supporting SEND learners to progress into paid employment:** Coventry has had highly successful Supported Internship programmes running for a number of years, with 60-80% of SEND learners progressing directly from education into employment with host employers including University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire (UHCW) and Warwick University. We will continue to grow our Supported Internship programmes whilst exploring offer options to help SEND learners progress into meaningful paid employment.
- **Skills solutions which support adults with learning disabilities into work:** Building on the success of our supported Sector Work Academy Programme (SWAP) for adults with learning disabilities with 80% of learners progressing into paid employment with CV Life. This demonstrated the effectiveness of embedding a 'Supported Employment' approach within adult skills provision.

¹² [Green Park Annual Business Leaders Index 2021 This link doesn't work](#)

- **Using adult skills provision as a driver to reduce poverty:** Providing out of work residents with the right skills to meet the needs of the local labour market and move in to sustainable and well-paid employment. In addition, targeting skills provision at those in low paid and insecure work to address in work poverty and working with employers, trade bodies and unions to improve pay, workplace environments and opportunities.
 - **Ensuring adult skills provision is fully inclusive:** Supporting Adult Skills Providers to be inclusive in their course offers of residents who may be considered higher needs due to disability, health/mental health conditions, drug/alcohol misuse, lone parents, teenage parents, ex-offenders, and young people at risk of gang violence. Ensuring appropriate classroom and wraparound support and flexible course delivery to suit different learning needs.
- 7. Skills for Business: A skills system which provides the skills required by Coventry's businesses, both current and future and contributes to economic growth and the prosperity of the City**

Our Aim: Ensure Coventry businesses can find the skills to grow, including upskilling/reskilling existing workforces through in-work skills provision. Ensure Coventry has the skills base to attract inward investment. Maximise opportunities for residents to benefit from large developments such as the planned electric vehicle 'Battery Gigafactory'.

We will achieve this by:

Working together on our shared goals with the Coventry Economic Development Strategy: Further detail on Coventry Economic Development Strategy can be found in Appendix (A):

- **Getting the skills and opportunities right for investment:** Develop a 'team around' approach for investments and large developments with expertise brought together from across the Council to ensure early, comprehensive planning better meets business need and ensures maximum benefit for Coventry.
- **Co-designing skills solutions with businesses:** Designing together with industry and skills partners to ensure the skills system is responsive, innovative and produces the right skills mix for now and the future. This includes engaging with workplace unions and supporting employers to maximise social value commitments.
- **In-work upskilling with local employers:** Collaborations which encourage access to skills and workplace development at all levels.

In addition:

- **Supporting employers to see the skills potential of refugees and the wider migrant population:** Business engagement with targeted skills support to help overcome barriers and unlock a wider candidate pool.
- **Continuing to provide strong labour market intelligence (LMI) to Adult Skills Providers:** We will use and grow our existing networks which use EMSI labour market intelligence and other data to help Adult Skills Providers shape their delivery according to labour market need.
- **Increase SME awareness of available In-Work skills provision:** Working with partners such as Coventry and Warwickshire Chambers of Commerce (CW Chamber) and the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) to better access In-Work skills funding including ESF (UKSPF) and Apprenticeship Levy Transfer. Holding joint events and webinars and gathering clear feedback from Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) on their skills needs, especially more niche needs.

8. Social Value and Sustainability: A skills system which is well positioned to maximise increased commitment to social value and Coventry's commitment to tackling climate change

Our Aim: Aligned skills provision to support residents to capitalise on social value opportunities generated through Coventry City Council's new Social Value Strategy. Ensure skills provision is geared towards jobs growth created by sustainability actions including those linked to the Net Zero 2050 Plan.

We will achieve this by:

Ensuring skills provision supports Coventry's commitment to social value: Coventry City Council is committed to engaging with social value across the whole organisation, embedding in all threads of activity and leading partner organisations to take the same approach. This is detailed in Coventry's new Social Value and Sustainability Policy. We will ensure skills provision supports employers to meet their social value commitments, for example providing pre-employment training that helps an employer recruit local residents with the right skills or paying the 'real living wage' to address in work poverty.

- **Shape school and FE careers advice around emerging green skills needs:** Supporting Schools and FE Careers Leads to shape their advice around jobs growth in heat pumps, home retrofitting and EV vehicle production and maintenance. As well as opportunities more unique to Coventry such as our Battery Gigafactory and our Very Light Rail project.
- **Design adult skills provision around 'green' skills need:** Ensuring our Adult Skills Providers are able to provide the right courses to meet both current and future green skills need.
- **Shape In-work Skills provision to support reskilling of workers to the 'Green Economy':** Work with funders and our Skills Providers to ensure we have the right provision to support workers to reskill/upskill in sectors which will become obsolete i.e petrol and diesel mechanics, gas boiler engineers and petrol vehicle production operatives. Ensure provision is widely accessed.

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Appendix B: Arriving at the Priorities (Evidence Base)

1. Overall Skills Levels: Improve the overall skills levels of Coventry residents

Table 1: Overall Qualification Level Comparisons as of December 2021 (latest data available)¹

Measure	Coventry Score	UK Average	Comparison	WMCA Average	Comparison
No Qualifications	7.6%	6.6%	▼ -1%	7.7%	+0.1% 
NVQ1 and Above	84.9%	87.9%	▼ -3%	84.9%	Same 
NVQ2 and Above	76.5%	78.2%	▼ -1.7%	75.2%	+1.3% 
NVQ3 and Above	58.7%	61.5%	▼ -2.8%	57.2%	+1.5% 
NVQ4 and Above	40.4%	43.5%	▼ -3.1%	38.8%	+1.6% 

Table 1 shows that Coventry is performing well on overall skills levels compared to regional averages but there is a challenge to catch up with National Averages particularly around higher-level skills. This is significant considering employment demand trends; Working Futures estimates that (55.2%) of all jobs will require L4+ skills by 2027.²

To improve overall skills levels of Coventry residents we need to consider skills attainment through all stages of education - Primary, Secondary, Further and Adult Education:

Primary Performance

Table 2: Coventry Primary Performance Data³

Measure	Coventry Score	England Average	Comparison	WMCA Average	Comparison
% Pupils Meeting Expected Standard	62%	65%	-3% 	62%	Same 
% Achieving Higher than Expected Standard	7%	11%	-4% 	9.28	-2.28 
Reading Progress Score	-0.3	0	-0.3 	-0.2	-0.1 
Writing Progress Score	-0.4	0	-0.4 	0	-0.4 
Maths Progress Score	+0.1	0	+0.1 	0	+0.1 

¹ [Office for National Statistic - Nomis: Coventry Labour Market Profile](#)

² [Working Futures 2017-2027: Long-run labour market and skills projections Headline Report](#)

³ [Data from Gov.uk – 2019 data \(latest available\)](#)

Overall Coventry's primary schools perform well. 92.4% are rated as good or outstanding by Ofsted, which is the highest in the WMCA region. The number of pupils which met the expected levels is in line with the WMCA average and for Maths exceeds both WMCA and National averages. However, Coventry trails national averages for meeting expected levels and performs worse than both WMCA and National averages for reading and writing.

Secondary Performance

Table 3: Coventry Secondary Performance Data⁴

Measure	Coventry Score	England Average	Comparison	WMCA Average	Comparison
Educational Progress (KS2-KS4)	-0.12	-0.03	-0.09 	-0.10	-0.02 
Staying in Education or Employment (2017 leavers)	93%	94%	-1% 	93%	Same 
Grade 5 or above in Maths and English	38%	40%	-2% 	39%	-1% 
Achieving at least 1 qualification	97%	96%	+1% 	97.5%	-0.5% 

86.4% of Coventry secondary schools are rated good or outstanding which rates as second best in the WMCA region. Coventry is slightly below WMCA and National averages for educational progress and achieving Grade 5 (C) or above for Maths and English.

Coventry's overall good Ofsted performance suggests there are other factors to consider rather than just looking at quality of teaching or overall quality of primary and secondary schools themselves. Children from poorer families are less likely to meet or exceed expected educational levels. Analysis by Teach First found that; in 2019, 44.9% of disadvantaged pupils achieved a standard pass in GCSE English and maths, compared with 72.1% of non-disadvantaged pupils - an attainment gap of 27.2%⁵. For the West Midlands this is slightly lower at 25.8%.

A Joseph Rowntree Foundation report from March 2010 looked at the main factors that affect educational attainment for children from poorer backgrounds.⁶ For primary education these include home learning environment, parenting styles and rules, family interactions (i.e mother-child closeness) and the health and well-being of the child. Also, key are the aspirations of parents, and how far parents and children believe their own actions can affect their lives. For secondary education there is also; what parents can devote to material resources towards education - including private tuition, computer and internet access, time spent sharing family meals and outings; and that parents quarrel with their child relatively infrequently.

⁴ [Data from Gov.uk – 2019 data \(latest available\)](#)

⁵ [Teach First: 'Building a Better Future - Tackling the Attainment Gap in GCSE English and Maths'. August 2020'](#)

⁶ [Joseph Rowntree Foundation: 'Poorer Children's Educational Attainment, How Important are Parental Attitudes'. March 2010.](#)

Further Education Performance

Table 4: Further Education Performance⁷

Measure	Coventry Score	England Average	Comparison	WMCA Average	Comparison
Average Result	C	C+	- (+) 	C	Same 
Students Completing Main Study Programme	93.5%	91.3%	+ 2.2% 	92%	+1.5% 
Achieving AAB or higher, including at least 2 facilitating subjects	9.9%	14.1%	-4.2% 	11%	-1% 
Grade and points for a student's best 3 A levels	C+ 31.88	C+ 32.89	-1.01 	C+ 31.52	+ 0.36 
Students Progressing in to education or employment	81%	81%	Same 	80%	+1% 
Students Entering Apprenticeships	11%	10%	+1% 	10%	+1% 
Disadvantaged Students* Entering Apprenticeship	12%	10%	+2% 	10.5%	+1.5% 

Coventry has higher numbers than both WMCA and National averages for students completing main study programme with an average grade of 'C' - in line with the WMCA average, although trails the national average of 'C+'.

As with primary and secondary education to improve educational attainment in further education we need to look at wider issues than just quality of teaching within

Adult Education Performance

Adult Education data for the previous academic year (2020-21) shows high numbers of learners entering with either no qualifications or at entry level:

- 4500 learners (39%) enter with either no qualifications or only Entry Level qualifications.
- A further 1477 at Level 1 (13%)

In terms of learner enrolment:

- 1900 enrolled on LV1 courses (17%)
- 4300 enrolled on LV2 courses (38%)

This shows the vital role our Adult Education providers are playing in improving educational levels for adults in the City. However, as of December 2021 (latest data available) there were 19,100 adults in Coventry without any qualifications, an increase of 1500 on the previous year.

⁷ [Data from Gov.uk – 2019 data \(latest available\)](#)

21,100 Coventry residents were only qualified to LV1, this has decreased by 4000 on the previous year showing considerable success in residents gaining LV2 or above qualifications.⁸

Higher Education Performance

Coventry has 2 world class higher education institutions with over 55,000 students combined. Despite this Coventry trials National averages for residents qualified to NVQ4 and above. This can be attributed in part to higher skilled Coventry workers choosing to live outside the City in less urban areas, and commuting in. However, there is also an issue with graduate retention. A Centre for Cities study shows that Coventry retained 15 per cent of graduates in the 2014-2015 period, the fourth lowest among UK cities⁹. However almost a third of students in Coventry – 31 per cent – came from outside the UK and this should be factored in. Furthermore 42% of Coventry residents that progressed to university chose to study in Coventry which is 18th highest amongst UK Cities.

2. Aspiration: An aspirational skills system that inspires residents to achieve through from primary school to lifelong learning

Primary Aspiration

The Joseph Roundtree Foundation report highlights the key role parental aspirations have.¹⁰ The Skills Strategy highlights key actions, working in a One Coventry way to support parental aspirations for their children.

Secondary/Further Aspiration

Coventry secondary schools are making good progress in embedding the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks, with the number of schools meeting them increasing year on year. The 8 Gatsby

30 out of 33 of Coventry's schools and colleges (including special schools) are engaged with the Coventry and Warwickshire Careers Hub (CW Careers Hub). This is funded by the Careers and Enterprise Company working in partnership with Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) and Think Higher. The CW Careers Hub supports school's 'Careers Leaders' to create a high-quality careers plan that will increase employer engagement, embed careers into the curriculum and inform students and parents of their options.

There is also the ESF funded Coventry and Warwickshire; 'Collaborate to Train' project, a partnership between WCG (formerly Warwickshire College Group), Coventry City Council Job Shop, Coventry College, Coventry University and Solihull College & University Centre. The project helps small and medium enterprises (SMEs) access the right training to support the future of their businesses including; accessing apprenticeships, work experience placements, supported internships and advising on effective school engagement. The project has now entered its second phase after the first phase supported over 400 SME's.

Coventry University have advised that they are currently revising their 'Access and Participation' plan. This will lead to increased engagement with schools which will support with building aspiration amongst pupils and their parents.

⁸ [Office for National Statistic - Nomis: Coventry Labour Market Profile](#)

⁹ [Centre for Cities: 'The great British brain drain: an analysis of migration to and from Coventry'. October 2017.](#)

¹⁰ [Joseph Rowntree Foundation: 'Poorer Children's Educational Attainment, How Important are Parental Attitudes'. March 2010.](#)

Adult Education

Adults out of work can be supported by Coventry Job Shop working with public sector and community partners to promote skills offers that lead to good quality employment. This includes Sector Work Academy Programmes (SWAPs), which are continuing to increase in the City. These are short 2-8 week courses co-designed with employers, providing learners with the skills required by the host employer(s) as well as work experience and a guaranteed interview at the end of the course. Also, of great importance are apprenticeships, which are now funded for all ages. Apprenticeship data from 2019/20 shows 52% of apprenticeship starts in Coventry were for those over the age of 25.

For adults in work, in addition to supporting Skills Providers to offer flexible provision that can fit around work commitments, there is also ESF funded programmes: Skills Support for the Workforce (SSW) and Skills 4 Growth (S4G). Serco have the contract for SSW in Coventry providing a range of skills courses targeted at individuals in low paid work. Since 2016 it has provided over 2200 in work skills courses, the majority (1900) at Level 2. S4G is led by Coventry City Council and provides targeted skills funding for SME businesses across Coventry and Warwickshire with 50% funding for any level of accredited course. This enables upskilling of workforces which provides more entry level opportunities as existing employee's progress. Finally, Apprenticeship Levy can be used to upskill workforces of larger employers. Coventry City Council is leading in this, with over 450 employed apprentices undertaking over 65 different types of apprenticeship. This has been supported by workforce planning sessions mapping career pathways, utilising apprenticeships to address current and future predicted skills shortages.

3. Progression Pathways: Clearly built in throughout Coventry's skills system

As our largest provider of both FE and Adult Education - Coventry College acknowledge in their 2021-24 Strategic Development Plan that traditionally, too many learners exiting the college at LV1 and 2 didn't progress to higher levels. Their Strategic Development plan looks to address this. In addition, they plan to increase numbers progressing from Coventry College to higher education. Currently 7.2% of Coventry College provision is 'Access to Higher Education' and the strategy plans to increase this by 2024.

4. Community: A skills system which meets the needs of all residents and is widely accessed by all Coventry communities

Data from last academic year (2020/21) suggests Adult Education delivery in Coventry is doing reasonably well in serving Coventry's communities. Wards with higher levels of deprivation have higher volumes of learners such as St Michaels (12%) and Foleshill (12%). However, there could still be community groups and areas of the City that are under-represented and we need to continue to ensure our Skills Providers have good reach across the City.

5. Inclusion: A skills system which is fully inclusive and representative of our diverse City

Coventry continues to welcome large proportions of refugees. Between 2019 and 2020 Coventry saw the second highest number of international arrivals after Birmingham. This contributed to Coventry in 2020 (latest data available) having the highest percentage of foreign-born residents in the region – 25.9%.¹¹ Currently, Coventry has around 1500 asylum seekers. This is three times the number of asylum seekers Coventry had at end of 2019/beginning of 2020.

¹¹ [ONS Local Migration Indicators 2017](#)

Secondary/Further Education

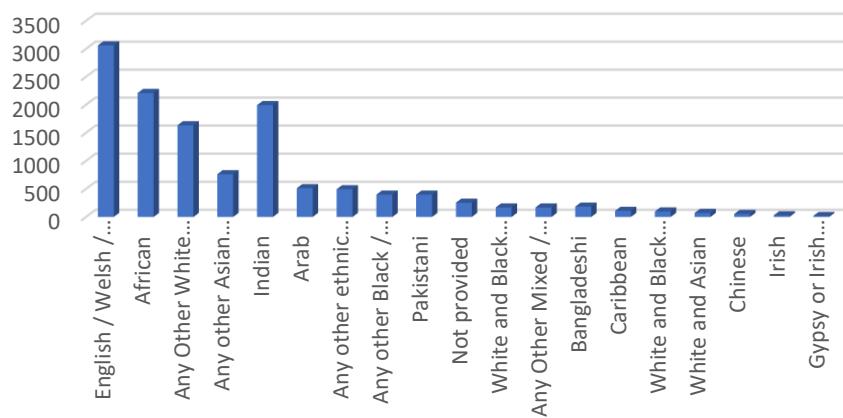
For 2019-2020 GCSE results, Black young people in Coventry scored lower than the overall average on the attainment 8 (average of 8 GCSE results) score – with a score of 47.1. The gap between this score and the average is only 0.9% and is equal to the national average gap. However, compared to the previous year, the gap has widened by 0.3% in Coventry whereas nationally it has decreased by 0.4%. Coventry performs better for mixed raced young people with scores 0.7% higher than the average. This is a large improvement from the last academic year in which scores were 2.3% below average. Asian students performed well above the average.

Comparative data is not available for further education at Local Authority level but national data suggest that far few students from black backgrounds go on to achieve 3 A Levels.¹²

Adult Education

Data from the academic year (2020/21) suggests Adult Education delivery in Coventry is doing reasonably well in serving Coventry's ethnic minorities. 21% of learners described themselves as from African, Caribbean, or other Black backgrounds. 16% as from Asian backgrounds. This is shown below in table 5:

**Table 5: Coventry
Adult Education Enrolment Ethnicity Data**



However, we need to consider learner experiences particularly how different ethnic groups progress and achieve.

6. Highest Needs: A skills system which supports those most in need, supports people out of poverty and helps create a more equal City.

Disability

There are many adults in Coventry with learning disabilities and other disabilities who are not in employment, for all adults with disabilities the ONS estimates around 53.6% are in employment but for those with learning disabilities only between 19-34%.¹³ However, for those

¹² [Gov.UK: Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, Independent Report](#)

¹³ [ONS: Outcomes for disabled people in the UK - 2020](#)

with learning disabilities who receive a service from Adult Social Care this decreases to around 5.6%, with the West Midlands having the lowest rates at 3.2%.¹⁴

Poverty

Coventry had very low levels of unemployment with 3% of 16-64 year olds claiming out of work benefits in February 2020. This increased significantly due to the pandemic but is decreasing month on month and is now at 4.7%. Despite this there are still significant areas of economic deprivation the City. The 2019 IMD report showed Coventry still ranks as the 64 most deprived out of 317 Local Authority areas. This suggests that there are issues with in-work poverty, which is also something local support agencies - Coventry Citizens Advice and Coventry Independent Advice Service are reporting. December 2021 data for DWP Mercia District (Coventry and Warwickshire) shows the highest proportion of in work Universal Credit claimants in the region at 41% compared to a regional average of 39%. There is a larger gender gap between female and male pay in the City than most of the UK. The gap in gross weekly pay is £172 compared to the national average of £97 and the West Midlands average of £102.

Other Barriers

Alcohol/Substance misuse: Coventry has the highest levels of alcohol hospital admissions in the WMCA with 2976 per 100,000 compared to a WMCA average of 1999 per 100,000. Coventry also has high rates of Alcohol dependency with 18.8 residents per 1000 struggling with alcohol dependency compared to a UK average of 13.7 per 1000. Coventry also has high rates of 15-24 substance misuse hospital admissions which are the 2nd highest in WMCA at 199 per 100,000 compared to the WMCA average of 190 per 100,000.¹⁵

Victims of domestic violence: Domestic violence crime rates are only reported regionally, but the West Midlands has a comparatively high rate with 37.27 per 1000 crimes which is higher than Greater Manchester at 34.25 and London at 35.14. In 2019 15% of the 350 families supported by Coventry City Council for homelessness were victims of domestic violence, with the actual number likely to be higher as women who are victims of domestic violence often stay with wider family before seeking support from statutory services.¹⁶

Homelessness- Coventry City Council supported 340 families who had been made homeless in 2019 compared to 40 in 2015. Rising rents and increased bills from the current cost of living crisis are likely to see this rise continue.¹⁷

Ex Offenders- Coventry has slightly lower crime rates than the WMCA average and lower rates for youth offending with 16.79. 17 year olds per 1000 entering the youth justice system compared to a WMCA average of 17.67.¹⁸

7. Skills for business: A skills system which provides the skills required by Coventry's businesses, both current and future and contributes to economic growth and the prosperity of the City

The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) 'Small Business Confidence Survey' from December 2021 reports 39% of SME's in the West Midlands believe access to the right staff is holding them back and close to a quarter state challenges finding individuals with the right

¹⁴ [BASE: Employment Rates Rates for People with Disabilities 2020-21](#)

¹⁵ [CCC Citywide Intelligence](#)

¹⁶ [CCC Citywide Intelligence](#)

¹⁷ [CCC Citywide Intelligence](#)

¹⁸ [CCC Citywide Intelligence](#)

skills in their area. A similar proportion say hiring is a struggle because they require individuals with niche skill sets.¹⁹

8. Social Value and Sustainability: A skills system which is well positioned to maximise increased commitment to social value and Coventry's commitment to tackling climate change

The Government's Net Zero Strategy, October 2021 formalises plans to ensure the UK is fully carbon neutral by 2050 with plans to create up to 440,000 jobs. A proportion of these will involve re-skilling existing workers from carbon intensive industries but there will also be a need to train new people.

The areas of opportunity for Coventry are set out below with actions to both re-skill existing workers and train new people to benefit from new 'green' jobs.

-Heat and Buildings (Heat Pumps and Retro-fitting): All new heating appliances installed in homes by 2035 to be either electric heat pumps or hydrogen boilers. This in combination with continued plans to better insulate homes, will create 100,000 jobs in the middle of the 2020s and up to 175,000 by 2030.

Traditional gas boiler engineers will steadily see their skills become obsolete, therefore a large proportion of the 100,000 jobs will involve retraining. There will also be a requirement for FE colleges and other skills providers to reshape their curriculum away from training traditional gas boiler engineers and into training heat pump or hydrogen boiler engineers.

Transport (EV vehicle production and maintenance): The Government's 'zero emission vehicle mandate' bans the sale of new petrol or diesel cars by 2030. In addition, there is £620 million of funding for zero emission grants and electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure and a £1 billion Automotive Transformation Fund. Combined these measures plan to create 22,000 jobs by 2024 and 74,000 by 2030.

Coventry is uniquely positioned to benefit from job growth in 'green' transportation. Coventry already has the largest number of electric vehicle (EV) charging points outside of London²⁰ and has the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre (UKBIC), which employs over 100 people in high skilled roles. There are plans to build a Battery Gigafactory which will put Coventry at the heart of the UK's EV industry and create over 4000 jobs locally.

¹⁹ [FSB: West Midlands SBI 2021 Q2 Report](#)

²⁰ [Guardian Article- August 2021](#)

Appendix C: Skills Survey Results and Analysis

Section 1: Profile of respondents



Completed by 259 people

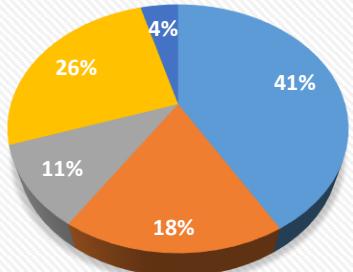


37% Male and 62% Female



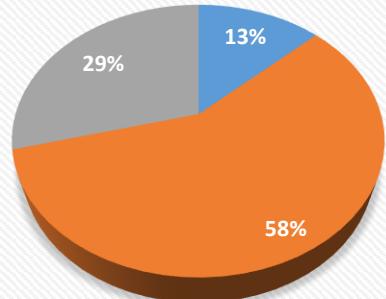
11% declared a disability

Table 1.1 Overall Ethnicity Split



■ White British* ■ Other
■ Black Backgrounds* ■ Asian Backgrounds*
■ Prefer not to say

Table 1.2 Overall Age Split



■ 16-24 ■ 25-49 ■ 50+

Section 2: Key Findings and Overall Conclusions

Why adults engage in skills courses:

The survey only asked about ‘most recent qualification’ which will not capture all reasons respondents may have engaged with adult skills courses. This will be addressed in future surveys. In addition, for younger respondents their ‘most recent qualification’ may have been statutory education. There was also not the option of ‘to gain skills for work’ which may have affected the results.

Taken into account these limitations, we can learn:

- **Personal development:** High numbers of adults take courses for personal development – wanting to ‘learn something new’ (27.8%) or to ‘gain confidence’ (18.5%).
- **Hobbies:** Undertaking courses for ‘hobbies and interests’ is still important for many with 11.3% of overall respondents and 25% for respondents with a declared disability. However only 2.4% of respondents from Asian Backgrounds* selected this option and also lower proportions of the 25-49 year old age group (8.3%).

*Black Backgrounds includes – Mixed White and Black Caribbean, Black/African, Caribbean Black or Black British Caribbean, Black or Black British, Black African Other, Mixed White and Black African

*Asian Backgrounds includes - Asian or Asian British Chinese Asian, Asian British Bangladeshi, Asian or Asian British Pakistani, Asian or Asian British Indian, Mixed White and Asian

* White British includes - White English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British

- **Career Change:** Selected by 10.3% overall respondents with higher proportions of White British* respondents (12.3%) and 24-49 year olds (12.6%). No 16-24 year olds selected this option.

How to promote skills courses:

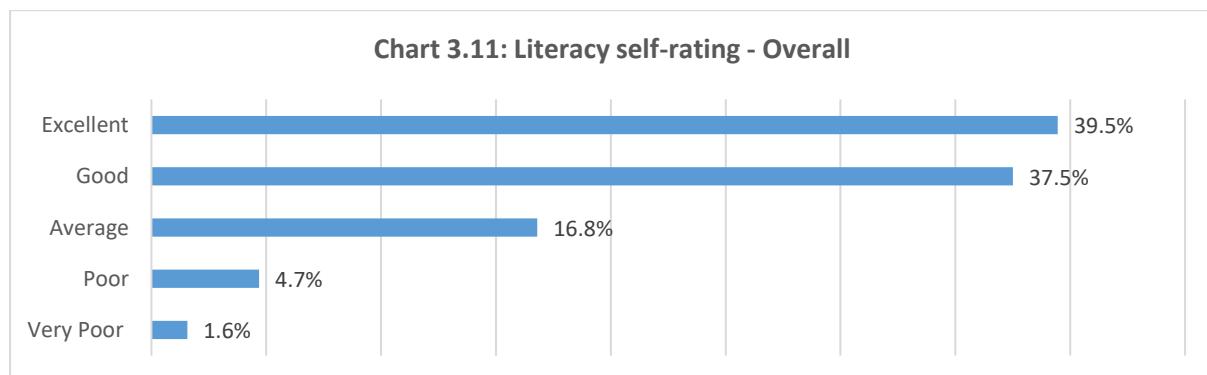
- **Online:** Good online information is key with 60.6% of respondents finding they found out about courses this way.
- **Face to Face:** Still important for many, especially the Job Shop with 41.5% stating they would use the Job Shop to find out about skills courses.
- **Younger people favoured Face to Face:** Lower proportions of 16-24 year olds said they would find out about courses online (42.1%) with higher proportions from this age group selecting the Job Shop (54.5%) and Job Centre plus (33.3%- compared with only 10.49% of 25-49 year olds and 13.7% of those who were 50+).

How to remove barriers:

- **Flexible course provision:** 47.6% of survey respondents stated that 'time' was a barrier to accessing skills courses, with this rising to 48.3% of 25-49 year olds and 58.7% of White British* respondents. 49.6% of survey respondents stated that 'more flexible course solutions' would remove barriers for them. Comments from survey respondents included; 'more evening courses', 'more weekend courses' and 'being able to do courses flexibly in my own time'.
- **Address concerns around fees:** 41.9% of survey respondents stated that 'low/no fees' would support them to access more courses with this rising to 49.2% of respondents from Asian Backgrounds*. This could be reflective of the high percentage of respondents who were 'employed full time' (58.9%), as the majority of those who are out of work can access courses for free, as can many who are in low paid work. This may also relate to respondents needing 'better information on courses' as it may be that some are not aware of what they can access for free, for a low fee or options to use the student loans system.
- **Increase online provision:** 37.8% of survey respondents wanted more online courses. However, when asked how they preferred to learn 54.5% wanted 'blended' learning with only 22.2% opting for solely online.
- **Childcare:** 21.5% of survey respondents stated childcare was a barrier with most of these being respondents from Asian Backgrounds*.

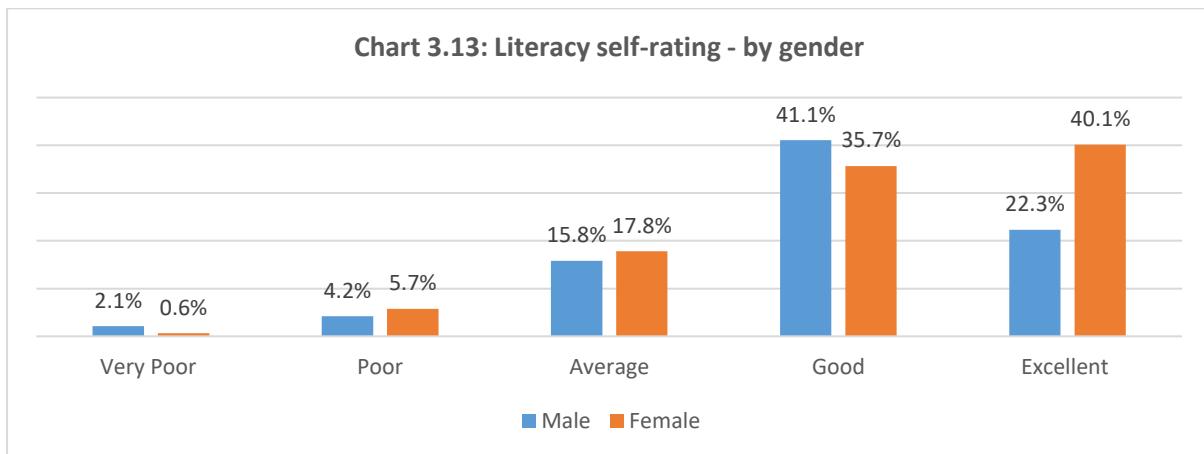
Section 3: Learning levels and employment status of respondents

3.1 Literacy self-rating – overall: The majority of respondents rated their literacy as either excellent or good (77%):

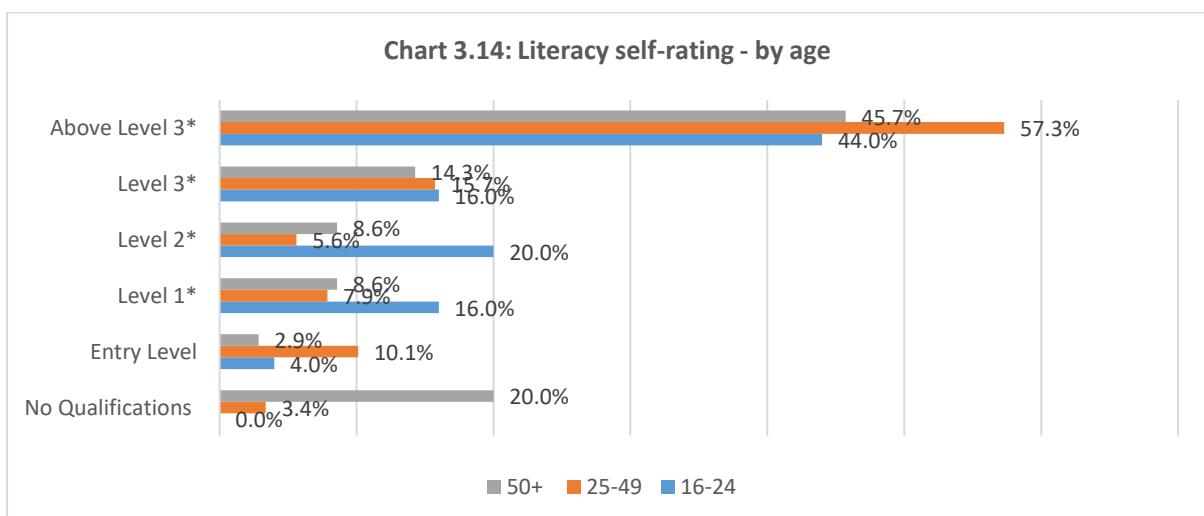


3.12 Literacy self-rating for respondents with a declared disability: For respondents with a declared disability the pattern of responses is broadly the same as in Table 3.11.

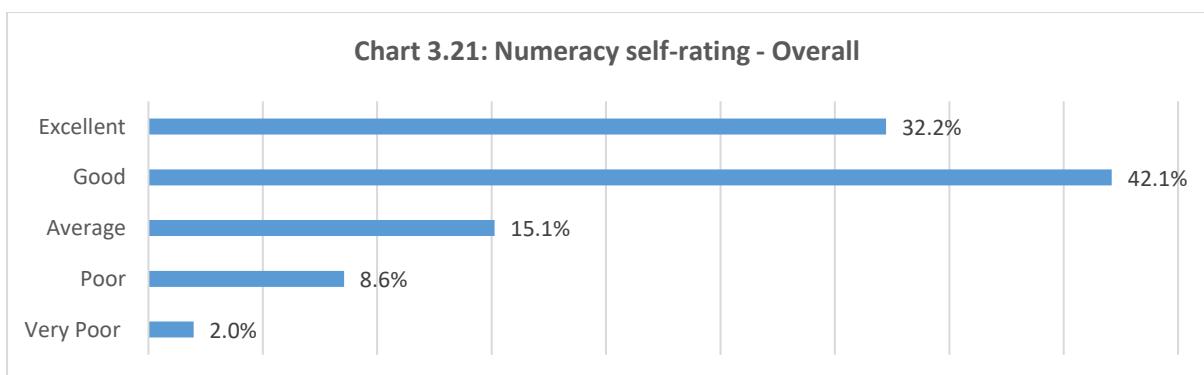
3.13 Literacy self-rating by gender: A much higher percentage of female respondents rated their literacy as 'excellent' than males:



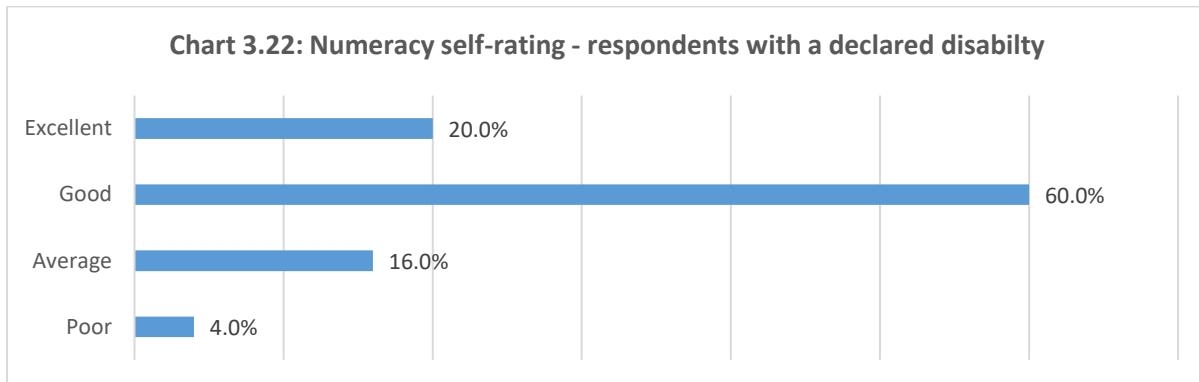
3.14 Literacy self-rating by age: Significantly lower numbers of 18-24 year old respondents rated their literacy as 'excellent' with 76% in this age category instead opting for 'average' and 'good':



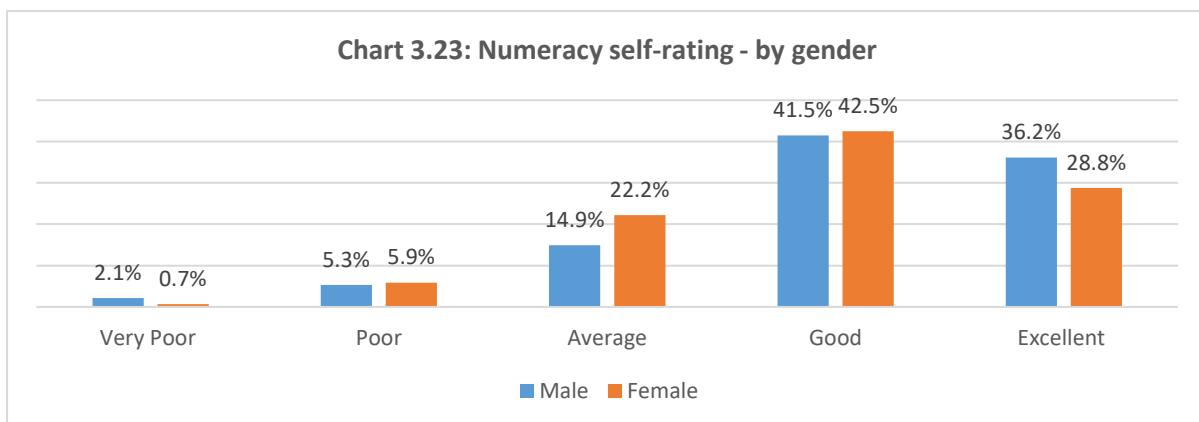
3.21 Numeracy self-rating: Overall, most respondents (74%) rated their numeracy as either 'excellent' or 'good'. This is a lower % than for literacy (77%) and also far fewer rated their numeracy skills as 'excellent' – 32.2% compared with 39.5% for literacy:



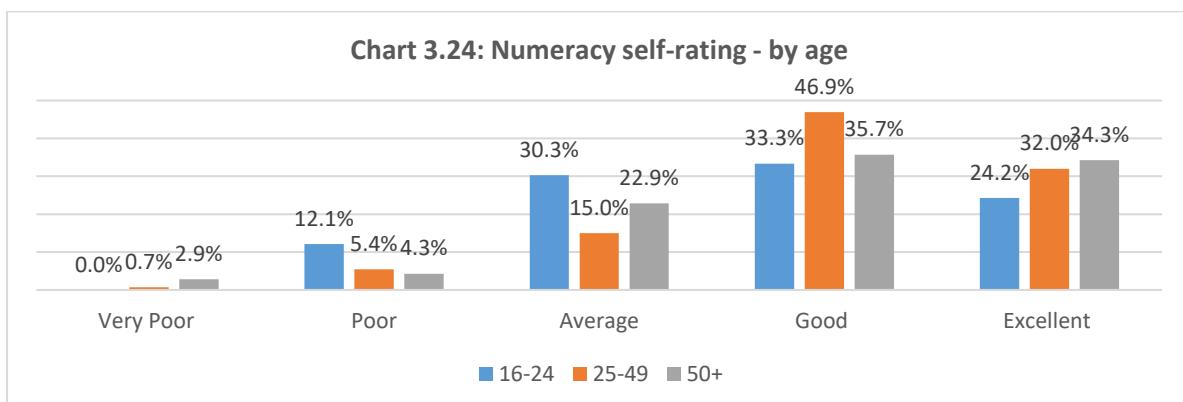
3.22 Numeracy self-rating for respondents with a declared disability: A far higher proportion of respondents with a declared disability rated their numeracy as ‘good’, although less rated their numeracy as ‘excellent’:



3.23 Numeracy self-rating by gender: A lower percentage of female respondents rated their numeracy as ‘excellent’ than male respondents. This contrasts with literacy self-rating which showed the reverse:

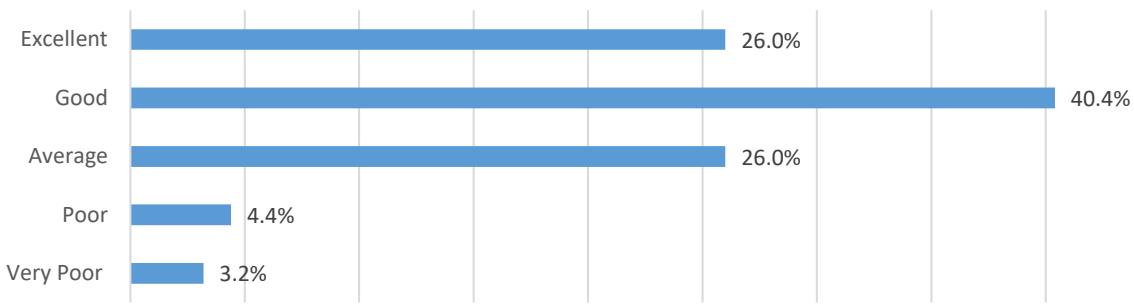


3.24 Numeracy self-rating by age: Higher proportions of young people (16-24) rated their numeracy as either ‘poor’ or ‘average’ – 40.4% compared with 20.4% of 25-49 year olds and 27.3% of those who are 50+. The 25-49 year old group rated their numeracy the highest with 78.9% rating themselves as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’:



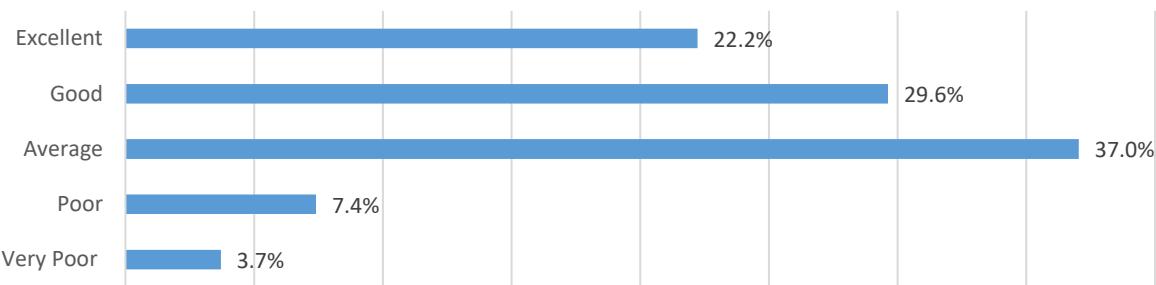
3.3 Digital skills self-rating: Overall, 66% of respondents rated their digital skills as either ‘good’ or ‘excellent’. This is lower than both the self-rating for numeracy and literacy:

Chart 3.31: Digital skills self-rating - Overall



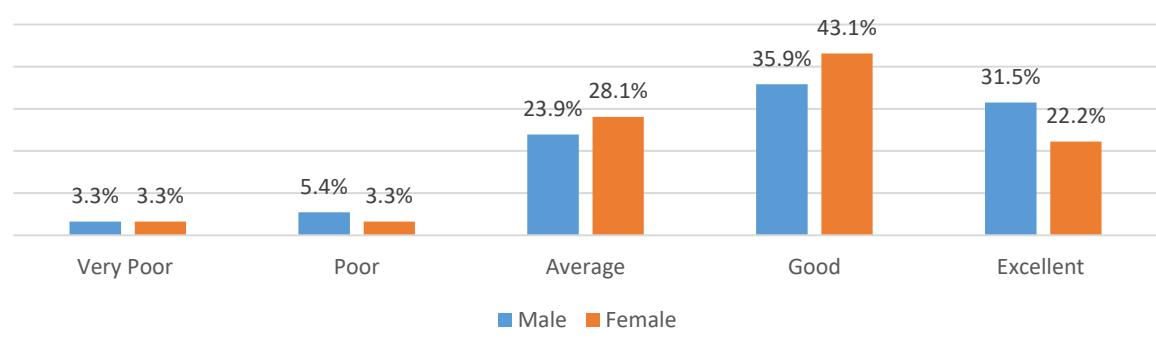
3.32 Digital skills self-rating for respondents with a declared disability: For respondents with a declared disability a lower percentage rated their digital skills as either 'excellent' or 'good' with a higher percentage opting for 'average':

Chart 3.32: Digital skills self-rating - respondents with a declared disability

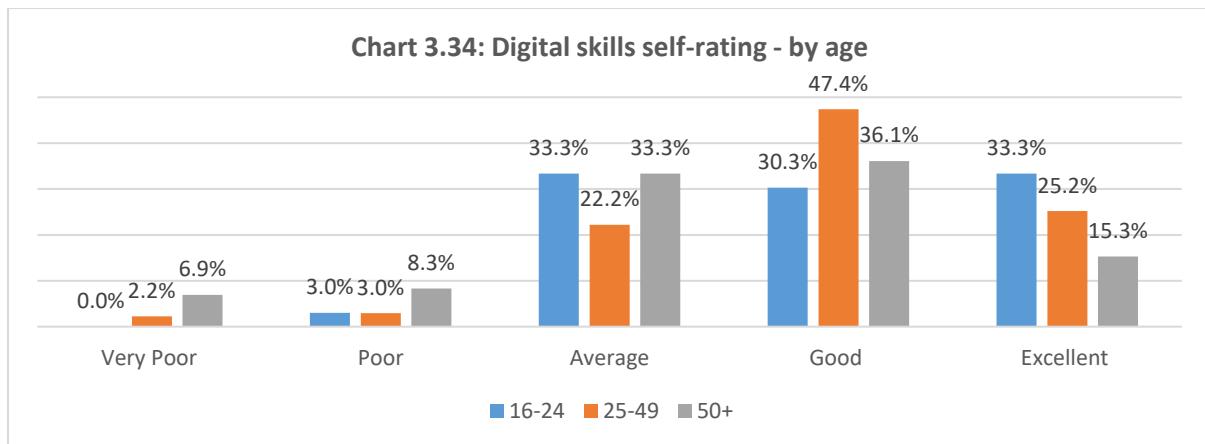


3.33 Digital skills self-rating by gender: A higher proportion of male respondents rated their digital skills as 'excellent', although when combining 'good' and 'excellent' male and female self-ratings are nearly inline:

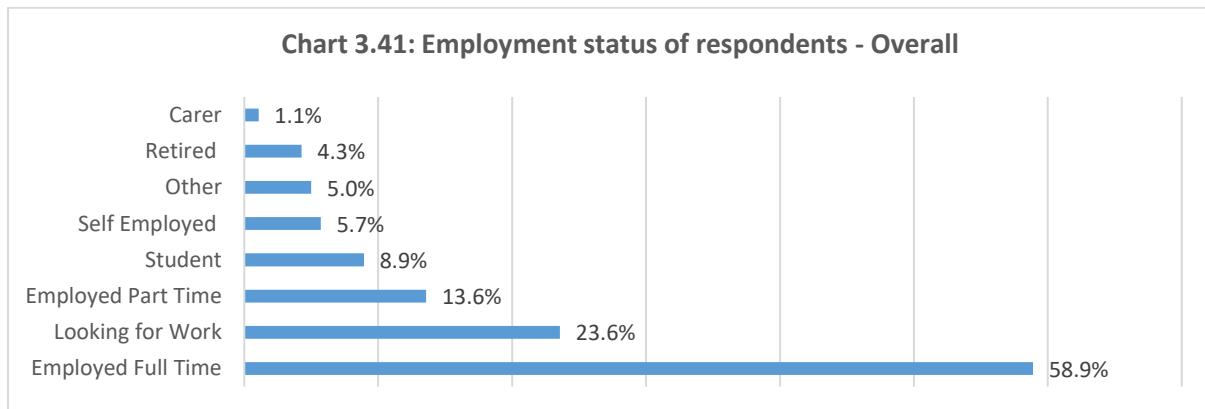
Chart 3.33: Digital skills self-rating - by gender



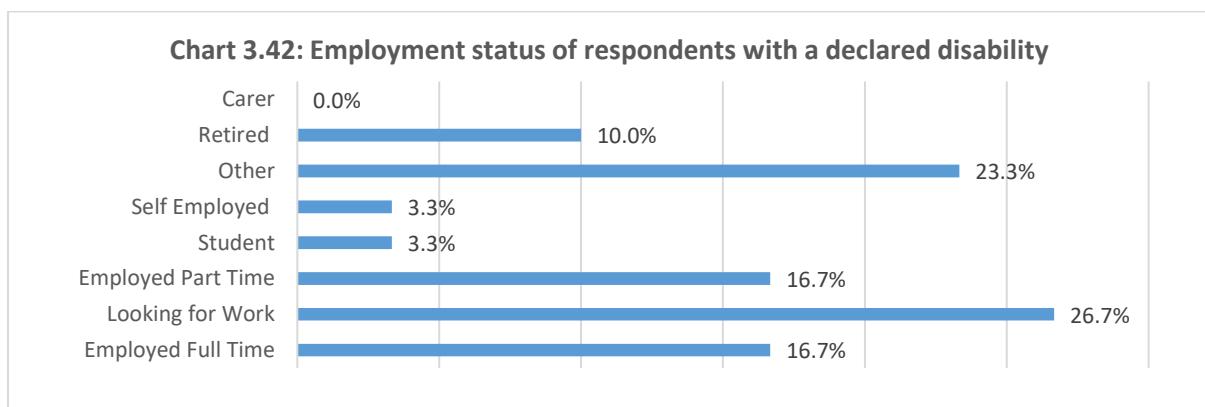
3.34 Digital skills self-rating by age: Significantly lower proportions of respondents who are 50+ rated their digital skills as either 'good' or 'excellent' with a combined total of 50.4% compared to 67.6% of 25-49 year olds and 63.6% of 16-24 year olds:



3.41 Employment status of respondents – overall: The majority of respondents (58.9%) were employed full time. However, a significant proportion were either looking for work or employed part time – combined this makes up 37.2% of responses:

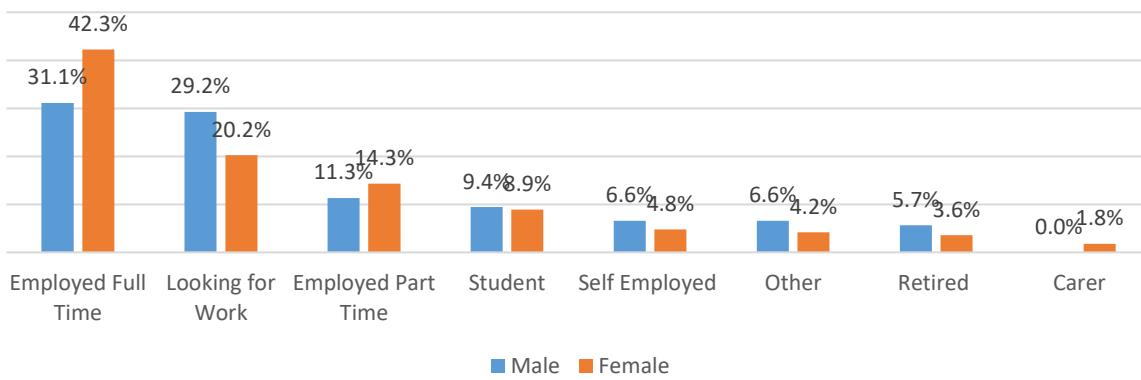


3.42 Employment status of respondents with a declared disability: Far fewer respondents with a declared disability were ‘employed full time’. Slightly higher proportions were ‘employed part time’ and ‘looking for work’:



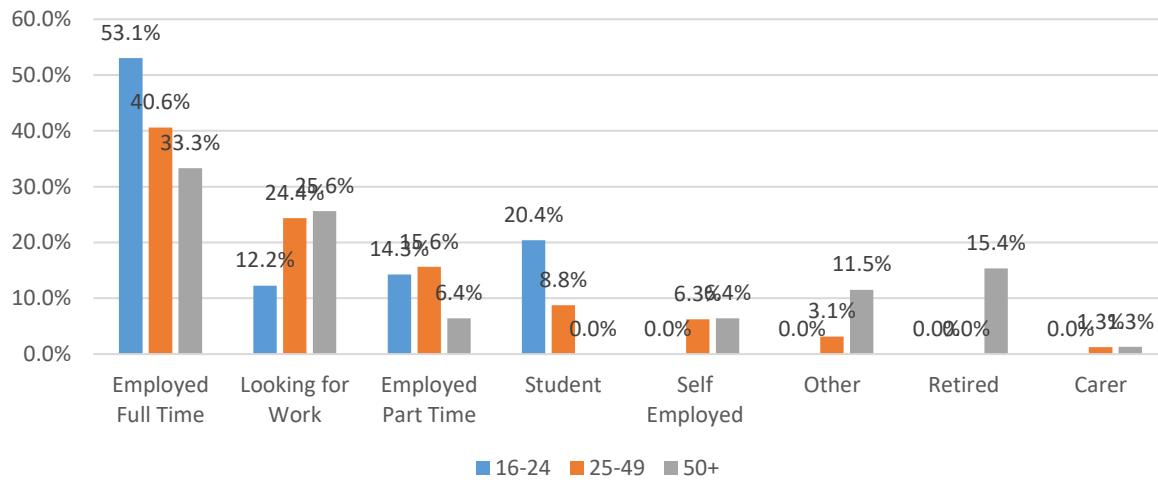
3.43 Employment status of respondents by gender: A lower proportion of male respondents were in full time work, with a higher proportion ‘looking for work’:

Chart 3.43: Employment status of respondents - by gender



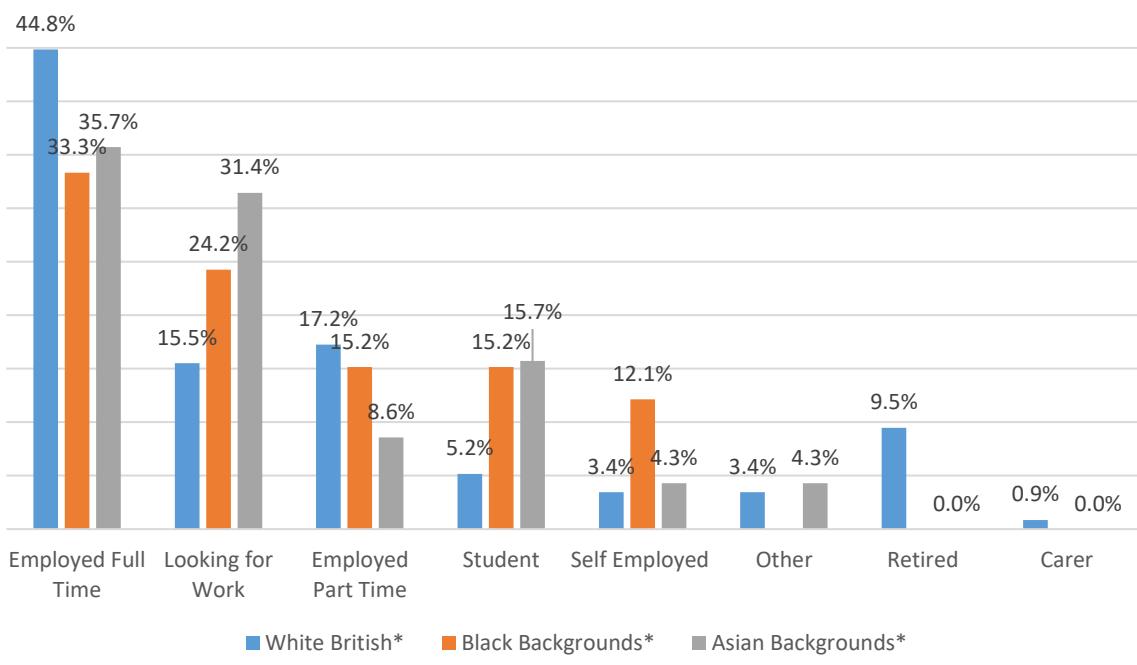
3.44 Employment status of respondents by age: Significantly more 16-24 year old respondents were ‘employed full time’ with a higher proportion of those who were 50+ ‘looking for work’:

Chart 3.44: Employment status of respondents - by age



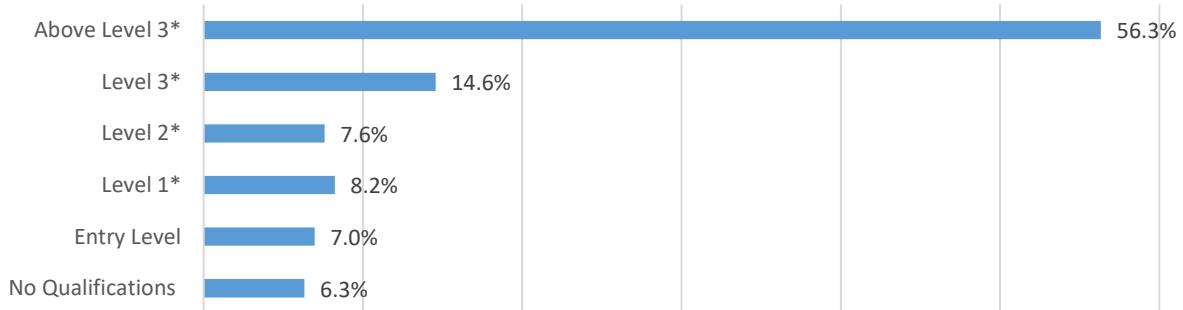
3.35 Employment status of respondents by ethnicity: A higher proportion of White British* respondents were ‘employed full time’ and also ‘employed part time’. Respondents from Asian Backgrounds* were the most likely to be ‘looking for work’:

Chart 3.35: Employment status of respondents - by ethnicity



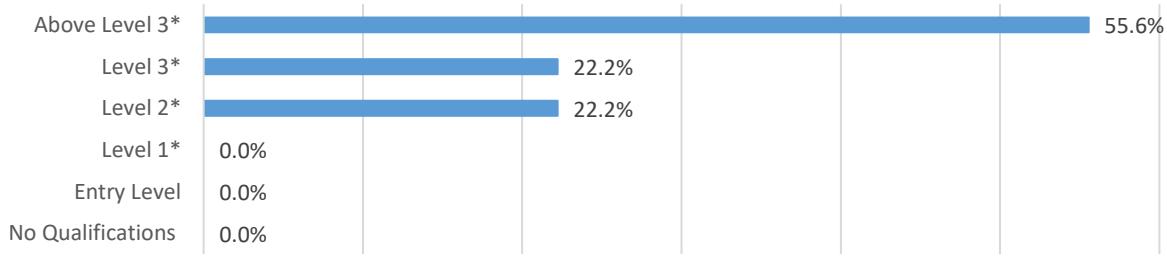
3.5 Highest Level Qualification – Overall, the majority of respondents were qualified to above Level 3. However, a significant proportion (21.5%) were below Level 2 (GCSE Grades A-C/9-4):

Chart 3.51: Highest Level of Qualification - Overall

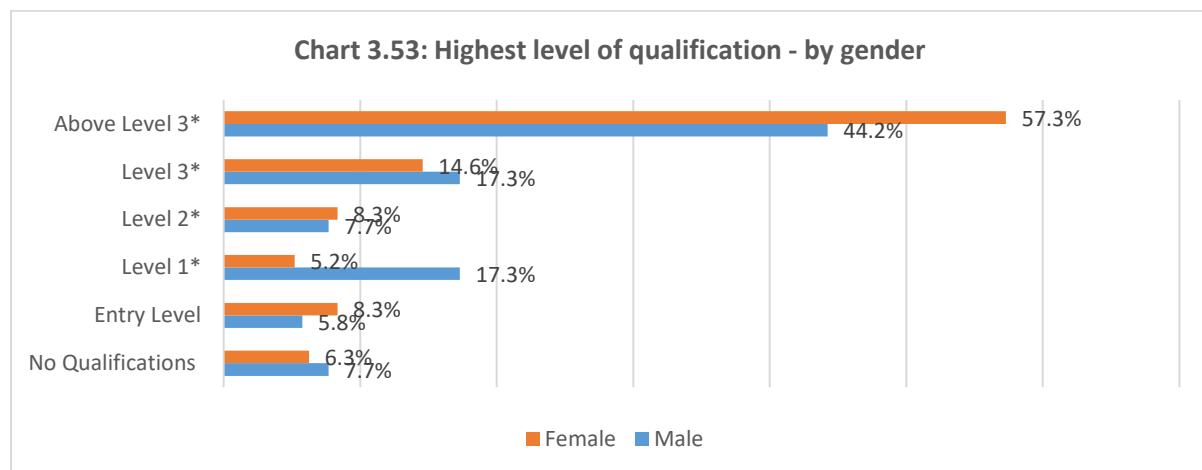


3.52 Highest level of qualification for respondents with a declared disability: No respondents with a declared disability were qualified below Level 2:

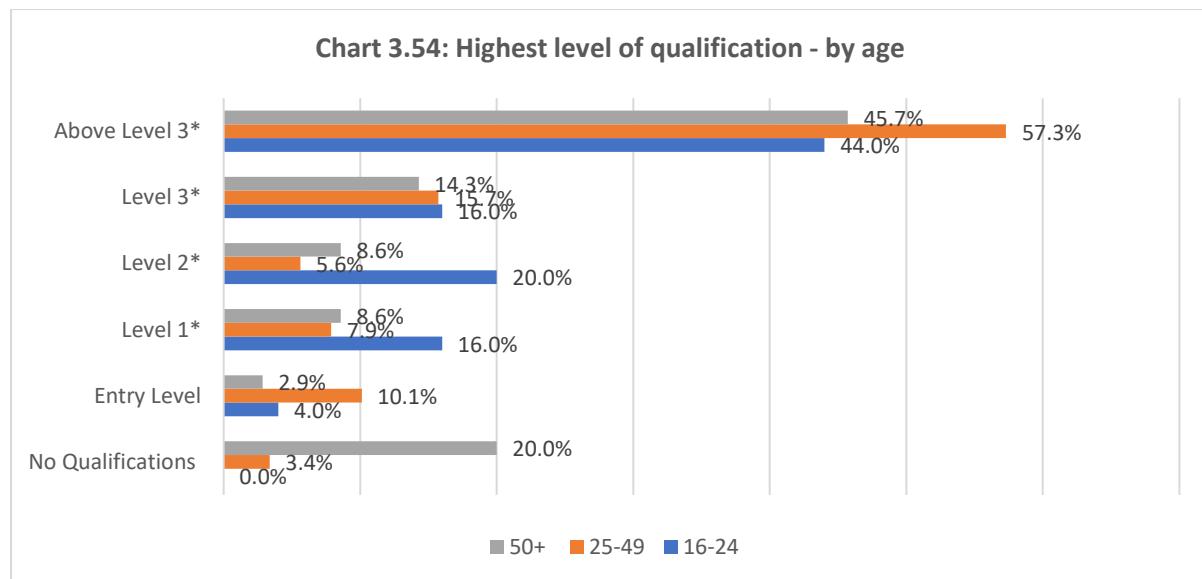
Chart 3.52: Highest level of qualification for respondents with a declared disability



3.53 Highest level of qualification by gender: A higher proportion of female respondents were qualified to above Level 3 with higher proportions of male respondents being below Level 2:

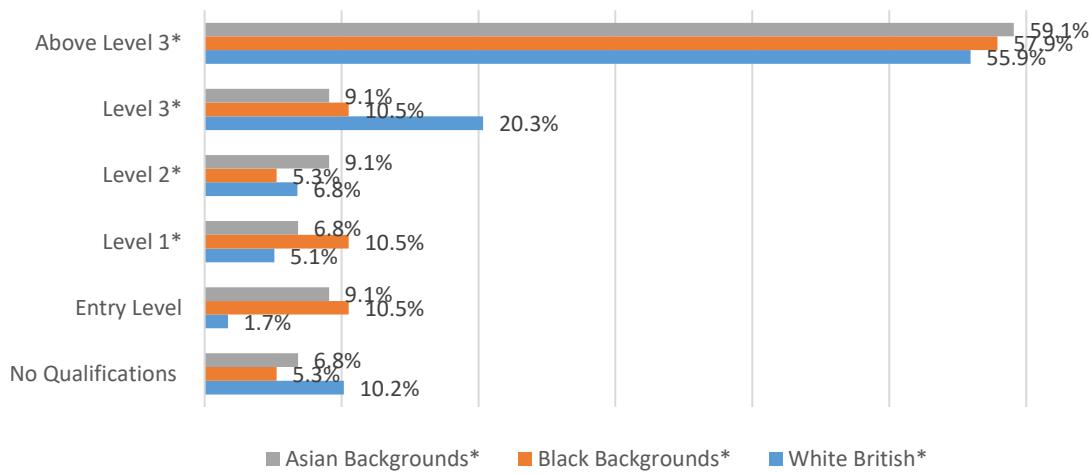


3.54 Highest level of qualification by age: A higher proportion of 25-49 year old respondents were qualified to above Level 3, although it should be noted that some of those in the 16-24 year old category would not have reached an age where it is possible to achieve above Level 3. Significantly higher proportions of the 50+ group had no qualifications:



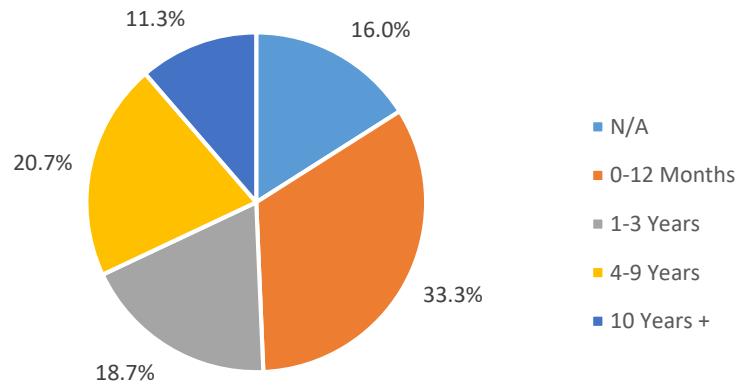
3.55 Highest level of qualification by ethnicity: Respondents from Asian Backgrounds* proportionality were most likely to be qualified to above Level 3, although taken together with those qualified to Level 3, White British* respondents were the highest qualified overall with 76.2% qualified to Level 3 or above:

Chart 3.55: Highest level of qualification - by ethnicity



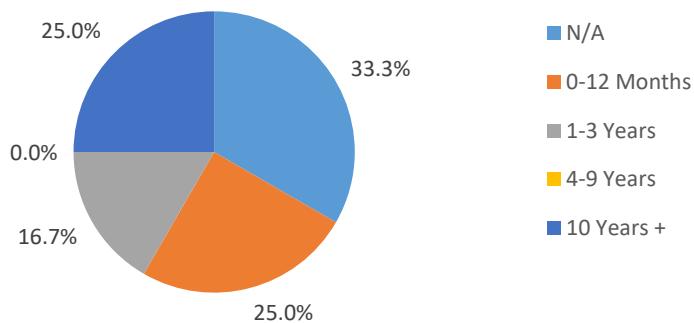
3.6 When most recent qualification was taken - The majority of respondents (52%) have taken their most recent qualification within the last 3 years, with 33.3% having taken a qualification within the last 12 months:

Chart 3.61: When most recent qualification taken - Overall



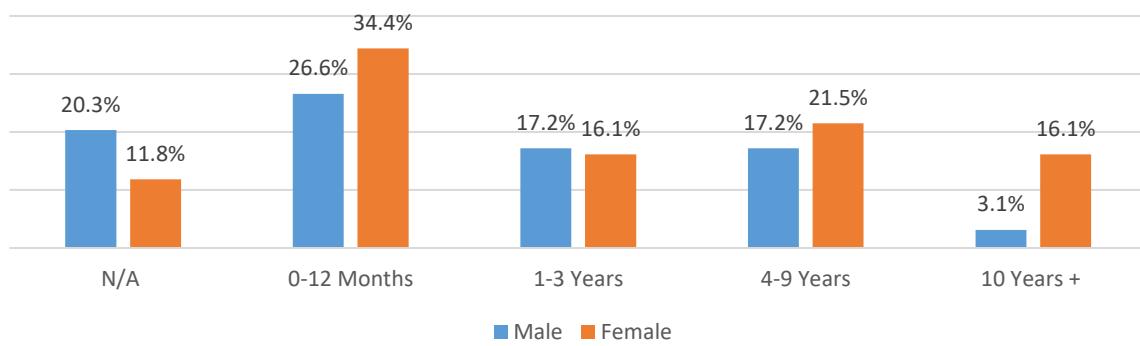
3.62 When most recent qualification taken - respondents with a declared disability: Higher proportions either answered 'NA' or that their last qualification was undertaken 10 or more years ago:

Chart 3.62: When most recent qualification taken - respondents with a declared disability



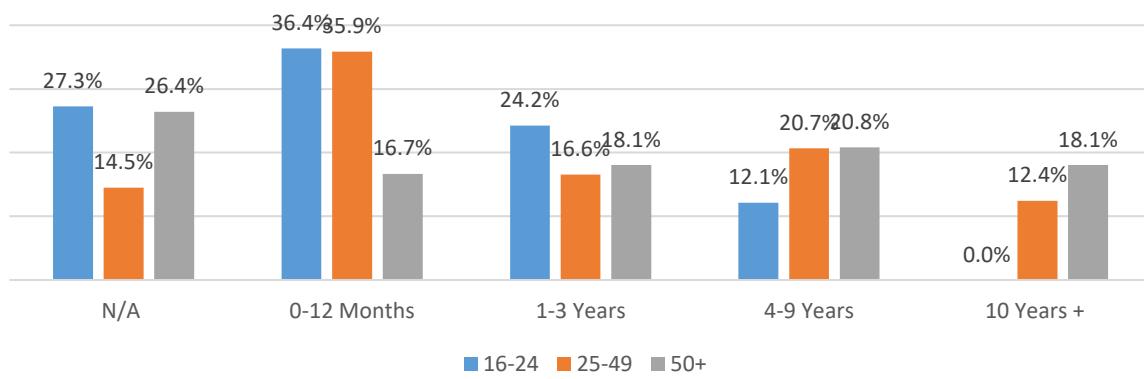
3.63 When most recent qualification taken – by gender: More female respondents have taken their most recent qualification in the last 12 months although there were also a large group of female respondents who took their last qualification more than 10 years ago.

Chart 3.63: When most recent qualification taken - by gender



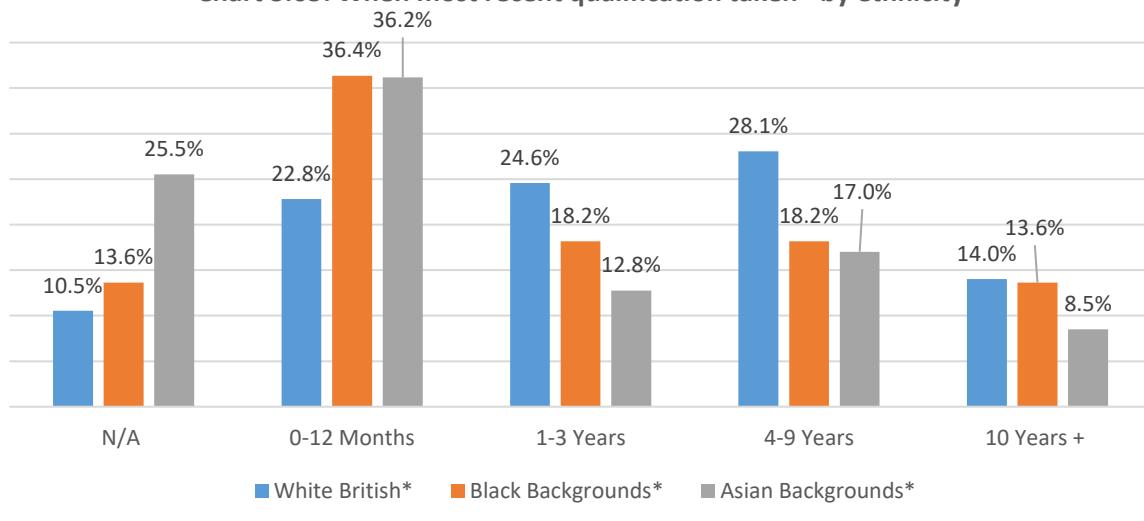
3.64 When most recent qualification taken – by age: Respondents who were 50+ were least likely to have taken a recent qualification. Understandably, 16-24 year olds were most likely to have taken a recent qualification, which is reflective of those within this age category who would have recently left statutory education (or still be within statutory education). However, a large percentage of 16-24 year olds selected N/A despite non from this age category stating they had ‘no qualifications’ on the previous question. This suggests some 16-24 decided not to include their statutory education for this question and took the question to mean any qualifications gained since leaving statutory education:

Chart 3.64: When most recent qualification taken - by age



3.65 When most recent qualification taken - by ethnicity: Higher proportions of respondents from Black Backgrounds* and Asian Backgrounds* had taken a course in the last 12 months compared with respondents who were White British*. A high proportion of the White British* respondents had taken their last course 4 or more years ago.

Chart 3.65: When most recent qualification taken - by ethnicity



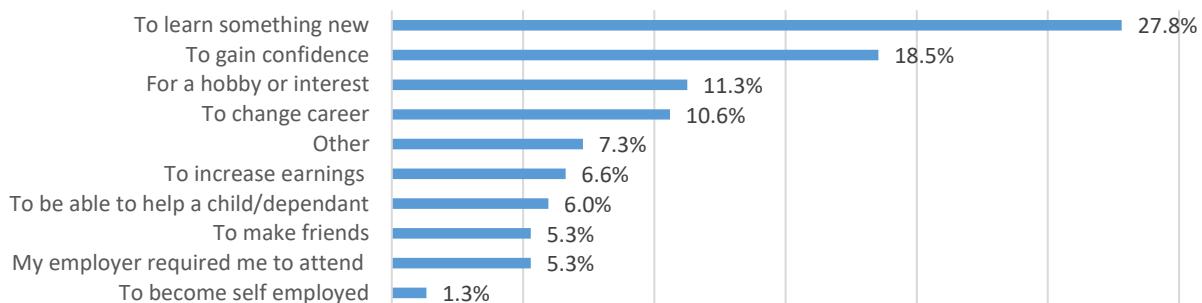
Section 4: Analysis of Individual Questions

Note questions 1-4 responses are contained in Section 3.

Question 5: Why did you take your most recent qualification (tick all that apply)

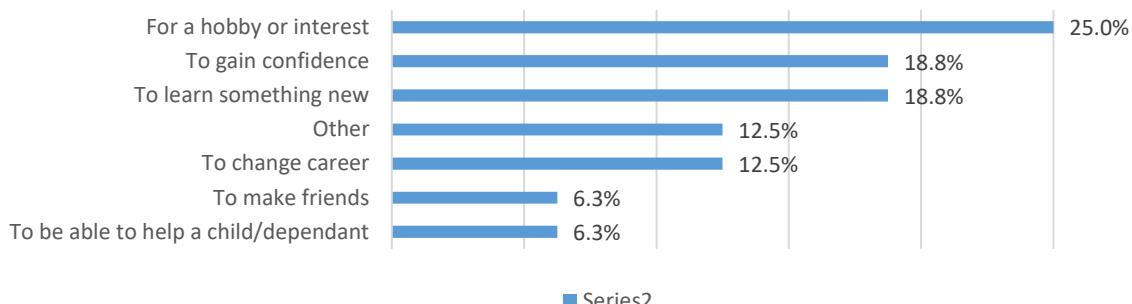
5.1 Reasons for taking most recent qualification – overall: ‘Learning something new’ was the most common response for survey respondents with 27.8% of respondents selecting this option, followed by wanting to ‘gain confidence’ – 18.5%. This focus on learning being more for personal development as opposed to ‘change career’ (10.6%) or ‘increase earnings’ (6.6%) is an interesting contrast in light of the current funding focus for Adult Education. The Department for Education (DfE) ‘Skills for Jobs White Paper’ and the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) ‘Regional Skills Plan’ focus the Adult Education Budget (AEB) much more on skills for employment. This said we need to explore more what ‘learn something new’ means for respondents and it could be that some survey respondents meant this more in terms of learning something new for work. Likewise gaining confidence could be to do with gaining confidence to gain a job, or securing a better job.

Chart 5.1: Reasons for taking most recent qualification - Overall



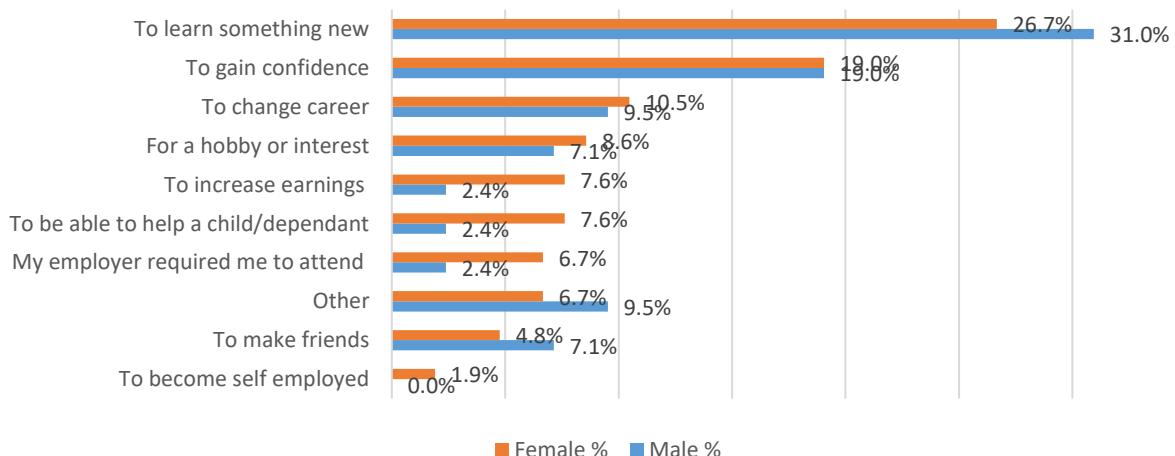
5.2 Reasons for taking most recent qualification – respondents with a declared disability: A much higher proportion of respondents with a declared disability selected ‘for a hobby or interest’ as their reason for doing their most recent course, with less selecting ‘to learn something new’ and none selecting ‘to make friends’, ‘my employer required me to attend’ or ‘to become self employed’:

Chart 5.2: Reasons for taking most recent qualification - respondents with a declared disability

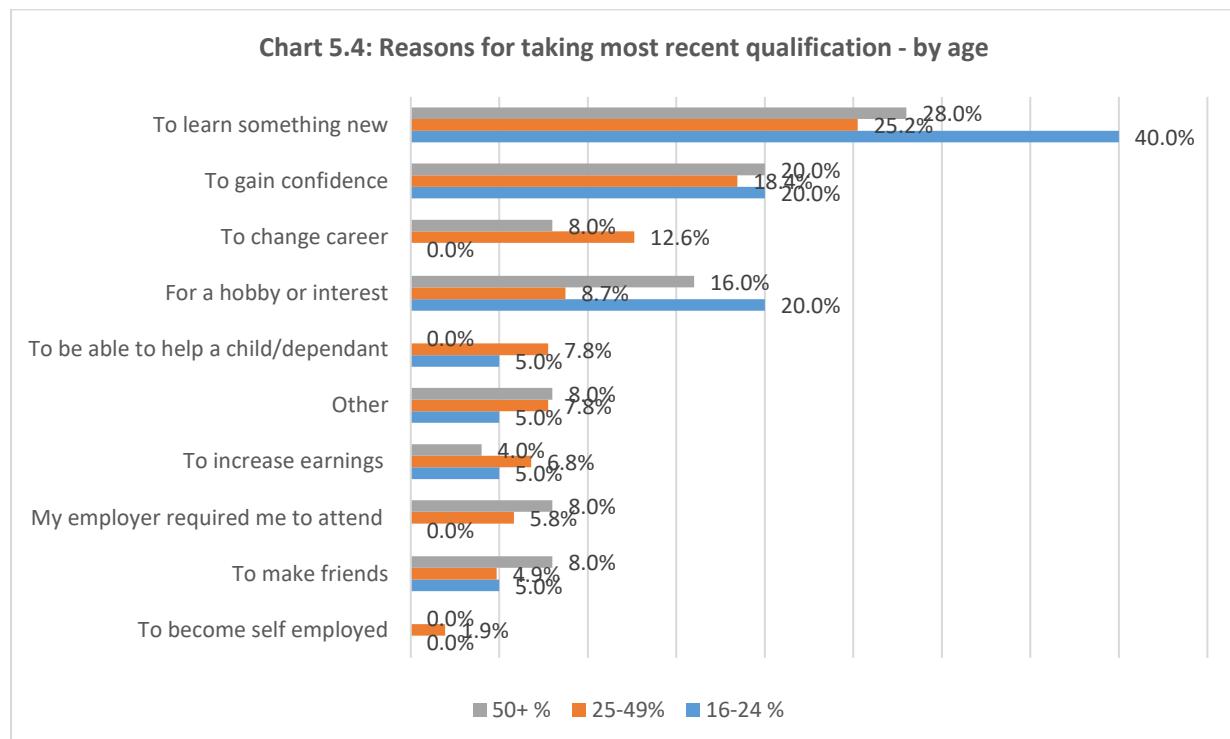


5.3 Reasons for taking most recent qualification – by gender: Slightly higher proportions of male respondents opted for ‘learn something new’, with lower proportions opting for ‘to increase earnings’, ‘to be able to help a child/dependant’ and ‘my employer required me to attend’:

Chart 5.3: Reasons for taking most recent qualification - by gender

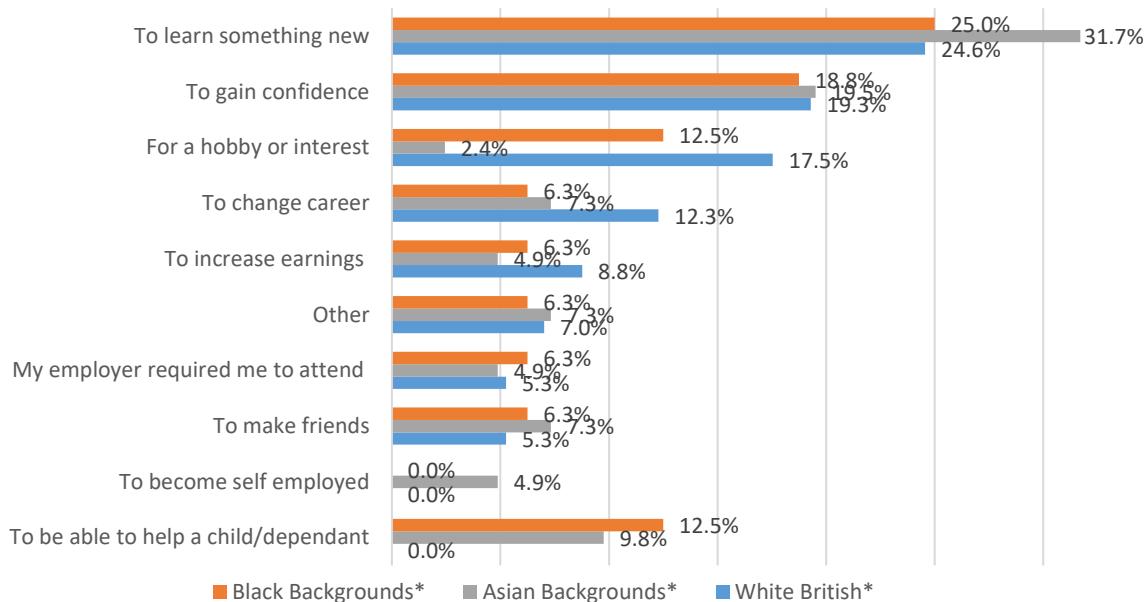


5.4 Reasons for taking most recent qualification – by age: Significantly higher proportions of 16-24 year old respondents selected ‘to learn something new’ and ‘for a hobby or interest’. Non in this age category selected ‘to change career’, or ‘my employer required me to attend’. This despite higher proportions of respondents in this age category being in full time employment. However, it may be reflective of more being at the start of their careers and doing their first jobs. Higher proportions of 25-49 year olds selected to ‘change career’ and ‘to increase earnings’ with less selecting ‘for a hobby or interest’. This perhaps shows greater focus for this age group compared to the other age groupings in using skills provision for career development and increasing earnings as opposed to more social or wellbeing related reasons:



5.5 Reasons for taking most recent qualification – by ethnicity: Higher proportions of respondents from Asian Backgrounds* selected to ‘learn something new’, although significantly less opted for ‘hobby or interest’. Respondents from Asian Backgrounds* were also the only ethnic grouping who stated that they did their last course ‘to become self-employed’. No respondents from White British* backgrounds selected ‘to be able to help a child/dependant’.

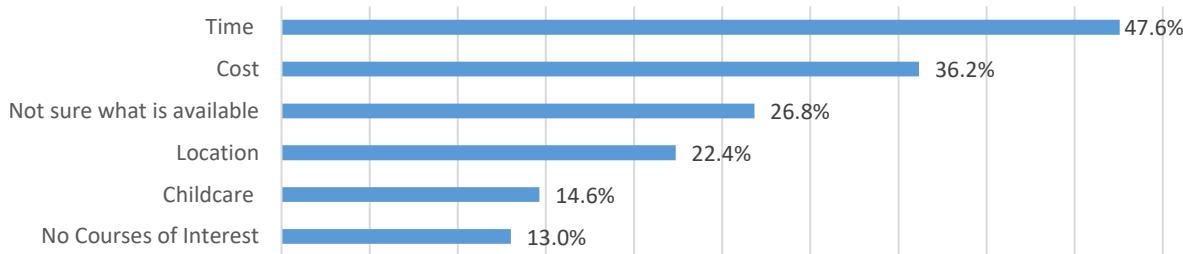
Chart 5.5: Reason for taking most recent skills courses - by ethnicity



Question 6: What has stopped you from doing a skills course in the past? (tick all that apply)

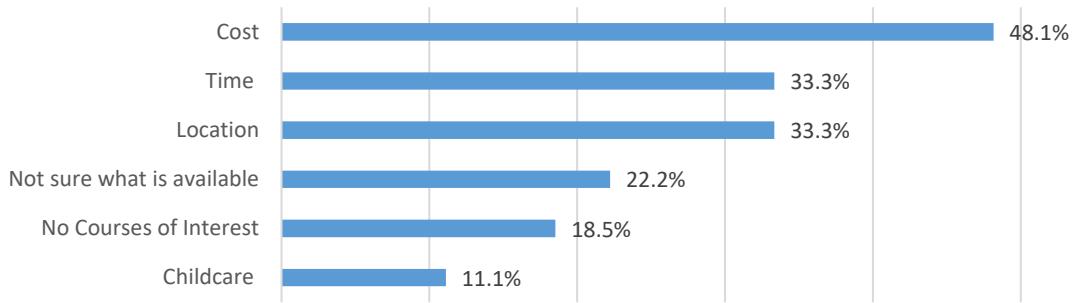
6.1 Barriers to skills courses – overall: The most common barrier was time, followed by cost and then ‘not being sure what is available’:

Chart 6.1: Barriers to skills courses - Overall



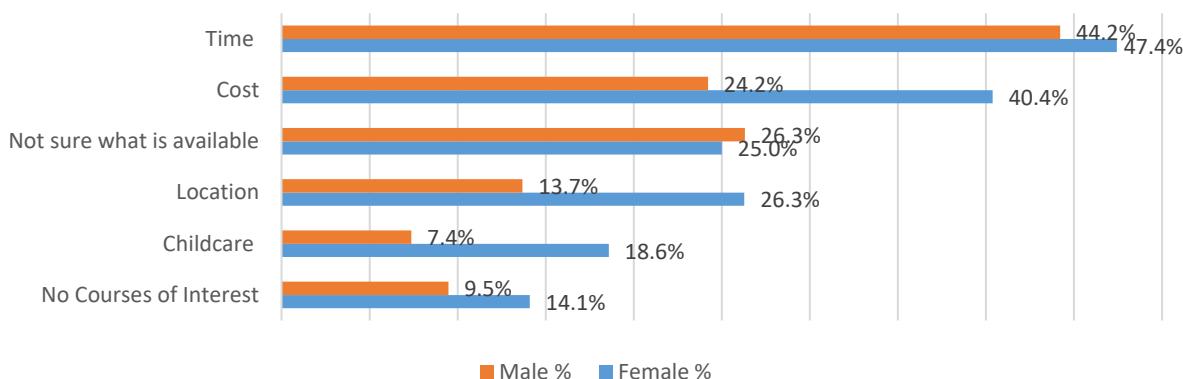
6.2 Barriers to skills courses – respondents with a declared disability: Cost was more of a barrier, with also a higher proportion of respondents with a disability stating location as a barrier (33% compared with overall average of 22.4%). More blended provision may better support those with disabilities to access courses where location is a barrier.

Chart 6.2: Barriers to skills courses - respondents with a declared disability



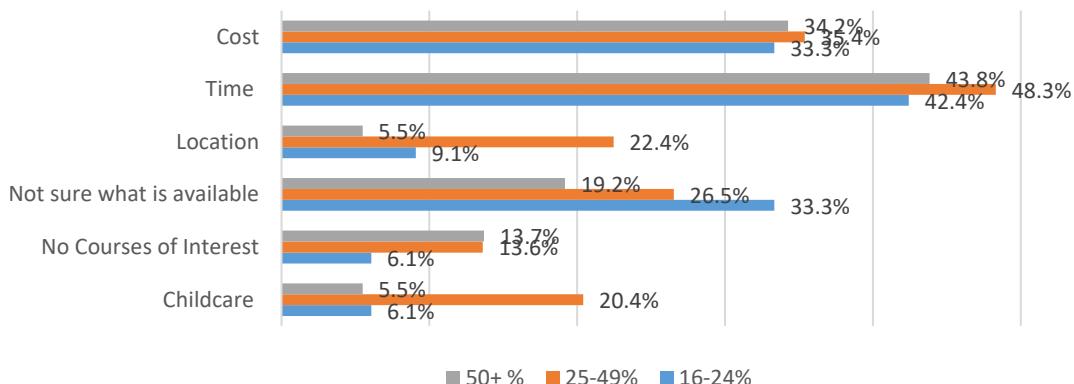
6.3 Barriers to skills courses – by gender: Cost was more of a barrier for female respondents as was the location of courses and childcare. This suggests that providers who want to attract more female learners need to think carefully about course location. It is of interest that childcare was a barrier for some male respondents as well, showing that this can be a general issue for families and more flexible provision may be needed.

Chart 6.3: Barriers to skills courses - by gender

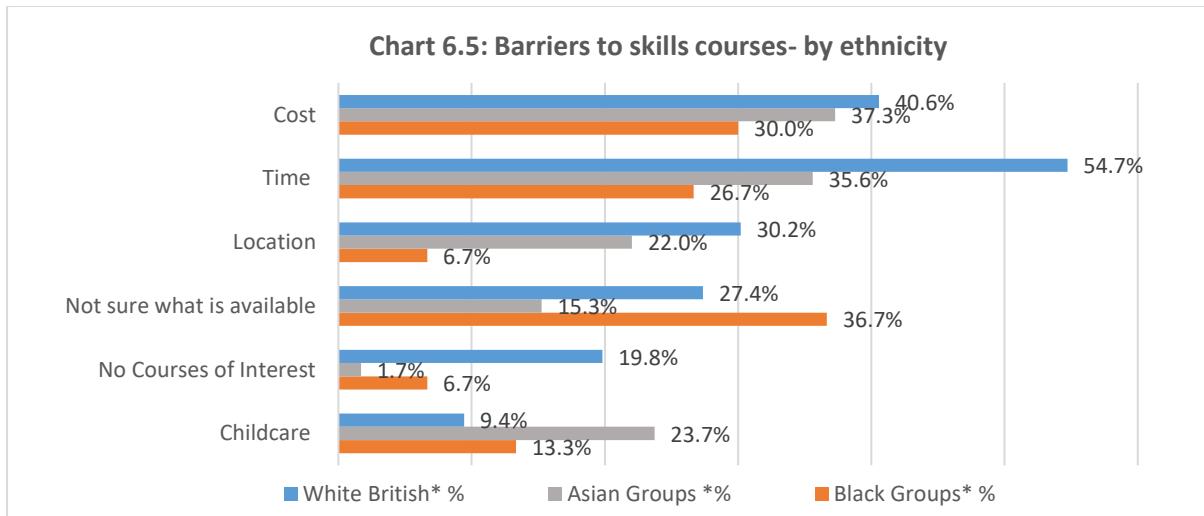


6.4 Barriers to skills courses – by age: Not being sure what was available features as a more prominent barrier for 16-24 year olds, suggesting that training providers need to work harder with this age group to promote their offers. In turn employment support providers, including careers guidance professionals need to ensure that young people understand their training options.

Chart 6.4: Barriers to skills courses - by age



6.5 Barriers to skills courses – by ethnicity: For the White British* group ‘time’ features more prominently as a barrier. This may be reflective of a higher proportion of this group being in full time employed as shown by table 3.35. For respondents from Black Backgrounds* we can see that ‘not being sure what is available’ is the most prominent barrier. This suggests that skills providers and employment support providers may need to work harder with this group to ensure their offers are clearly communicated. For respondents from Asian Backgrounds* childcare is a far more significant barrier than for the other two ethnicity groupings.



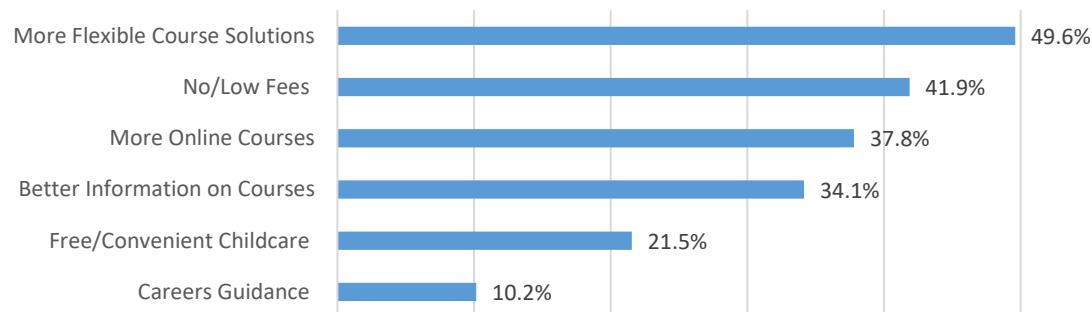
Question 7: What would help you overcome these barriers (please tick all that apply)

7.1 Overcoming Barriers – Overall: It is clear that Adult Skills Providers need to make courses as flexible as possible, with just under 50% of survey respondents stating that this would help overcome barriers. In addition they need to continue to increase their online offer with 37.8% of respondents stating this would help them. Providing good information on courses is also key and is a challenge also to Employment Support Providers such as JobCentre Plus (JCP), Coventry Job Shop and the National Careers Service (NCS) who can serve as a key referrer to adult skills courses (see Q9).

A lot of respondents have stated that ‘no/low fees’ would help them to access more skills courses. This could be reflective of the high percentage of respondents who were ‘employed full time’ (58.9%), as the majority of those who are out of work can access courses for free, as can many who are in low paid work. Also, respondents may need ‘better information on courses’ as it may be some are not aware of what they can access for free, for a low fee, or options to use the student loan system.

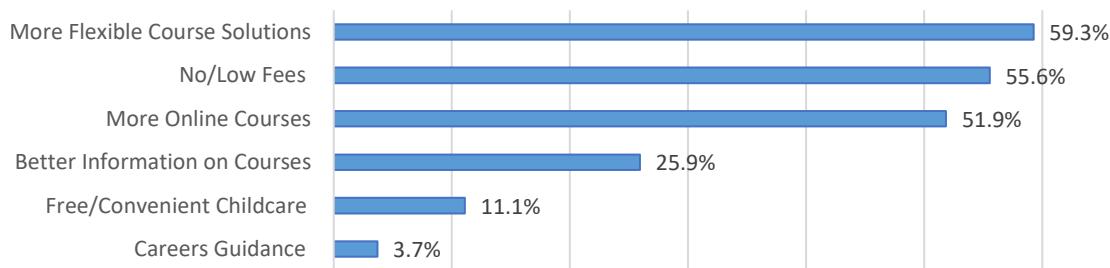
As with question 6, childcare should not be underestimated as a barrier, with 21.5% of respondents stating that free/convenient childcare would support them to access skills courses. This can be linked to needing more flexible courses solutions and more online courses as both of these could make it easier for parents to access courses:

Chart 7.1: Overcoming barriers - Overall



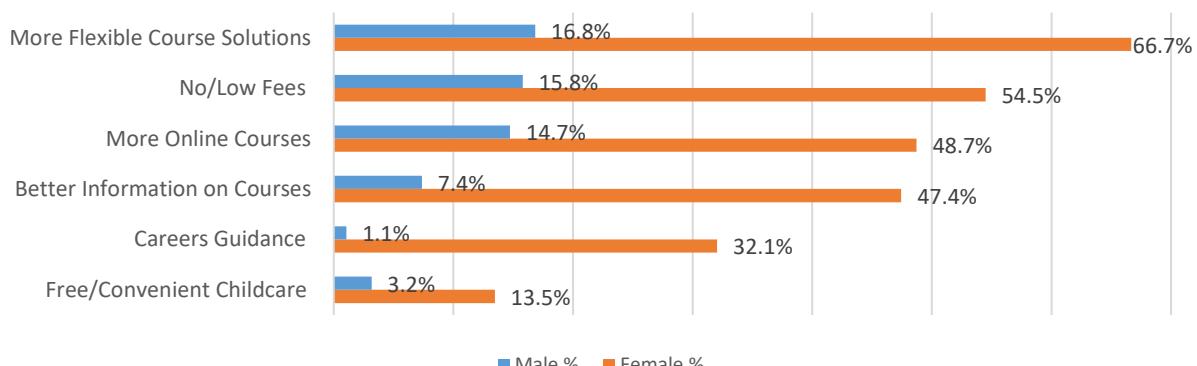
7.12 Overcoming barriers – respondents with a declared disability: For respondents with disabilities there was a significantly larger percentage who stated that they wanted ‘more flexible course solutions’, ‘no/low fees’ and ‘more online courses’. Slightly less from this group stated that they needed ‘better information on courses’ and significantly less stated ‘free/convenient childcare’ and better careers guidance.

Chart 7.2: Overcoming barriers - respondents with a declared disability

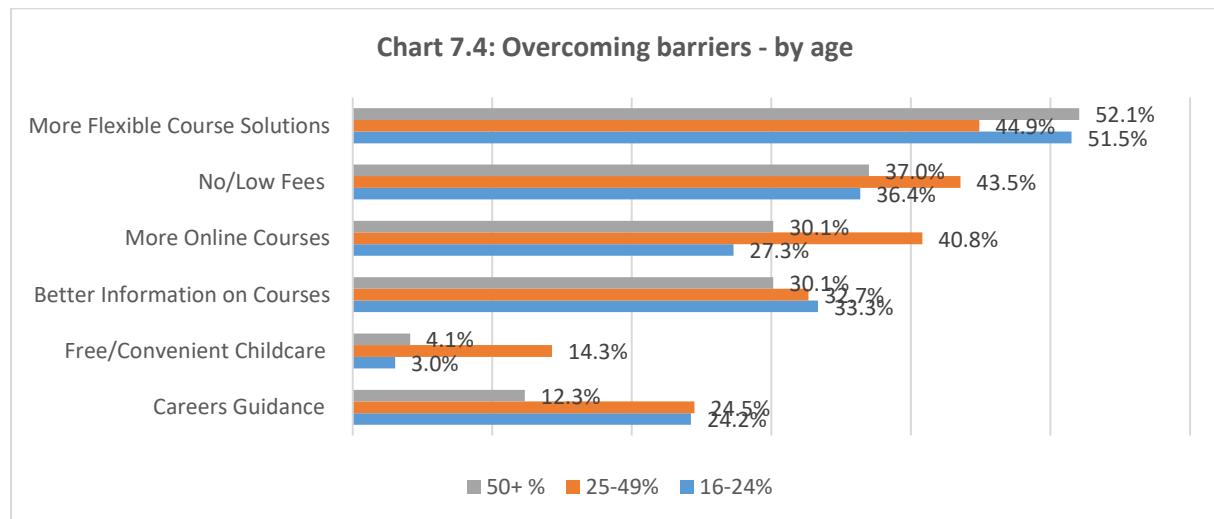


7.13 Overcoming barriers – by gender: Female respondents were more ‘vocal’ in their response to this question with considerably higher percentages responding to all barriers. This suggests Adult Skills Providers need to particularly think about barriers for female learners. This said both nationally and locally there are considerably more female respondents accessing Adult Education Budget (AEB) courses with a ratio of around 60% female to 40% male. This suggests there may be other reasons, not picked up in this survey, for males not accessing courses this is a point to address when this survey is ran again in subsequent years.

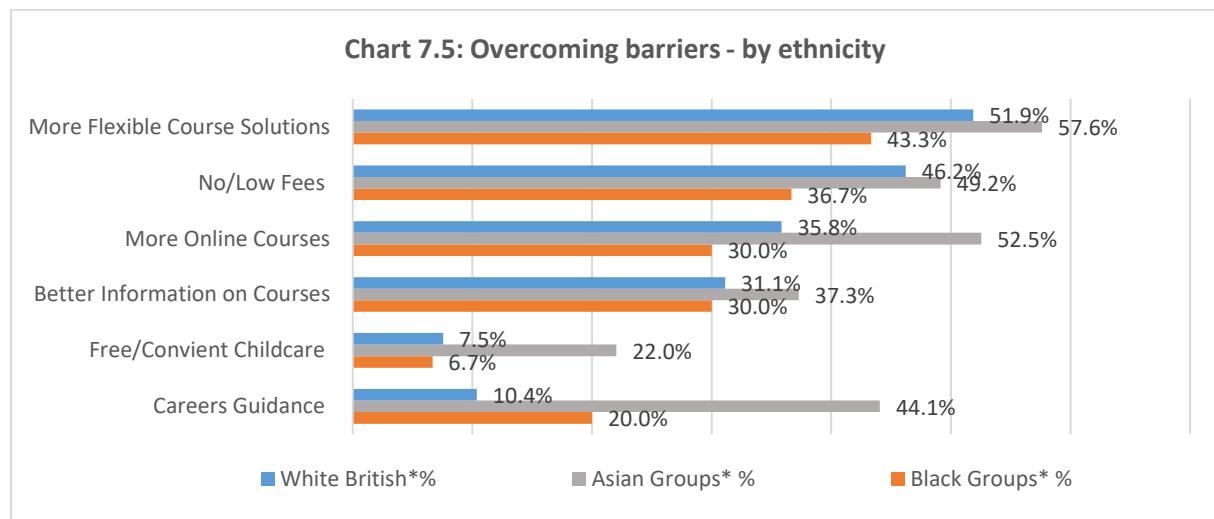
Chart 7.3: Overcoming barriers - by gender



7.4 Overcoming barriers – by age: Course flexibility was a bigger issue for both the 16-24 and 50+ age groups. Conversely ‘no/low fees’ was a bigger issue for the 24-49 year old group. Interestingly wanting more courses online was not as big an issue for 16-24 year olds as for 25-49 year olds. This perhaps goes against assumptions and shows offering more online solutions could actually attract more 25-49 year olds than 16-24 year olds. ‘Free/convenient’ childcare was understandably a bigger issue for the 25-49 year old group, reflective of increased likelihood of childcare responsibilities.



7.5 Overcoming barriers – by ethnicity: Respondents from Asian Backgrounds* were considerably more responsive with much higher percentages for ‘more flexible course solutions’, ‘more online courses’, ‘better information on courses’ and ‘careers guidance’. ‘Careers guidance’ also features more prominently for respondents from Black Backgrounds* as well.

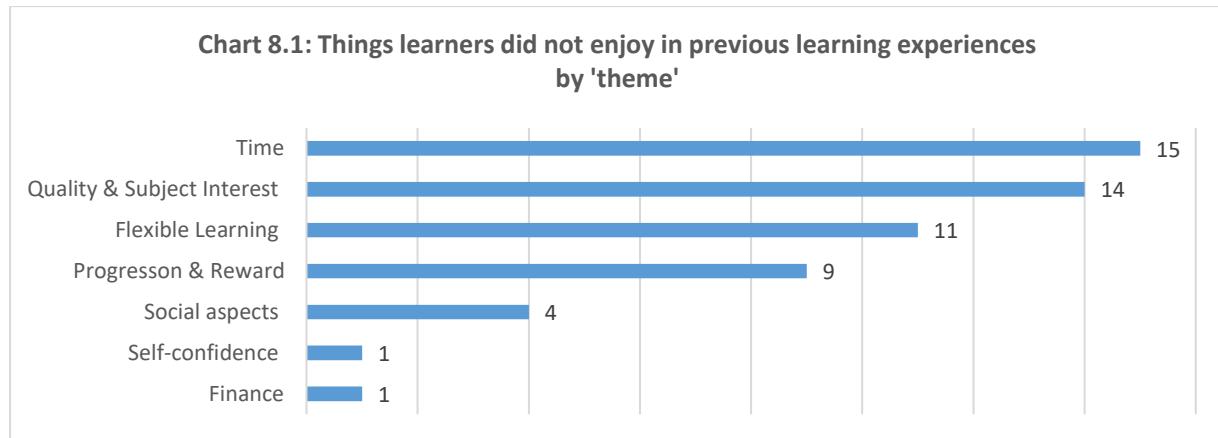


Q8 What, if anything, did you not enjoy about your previous learning experiences (open text responses)

This question was answered by 55 of the survey respondents. Responses have been grouped into themes to show patterns:

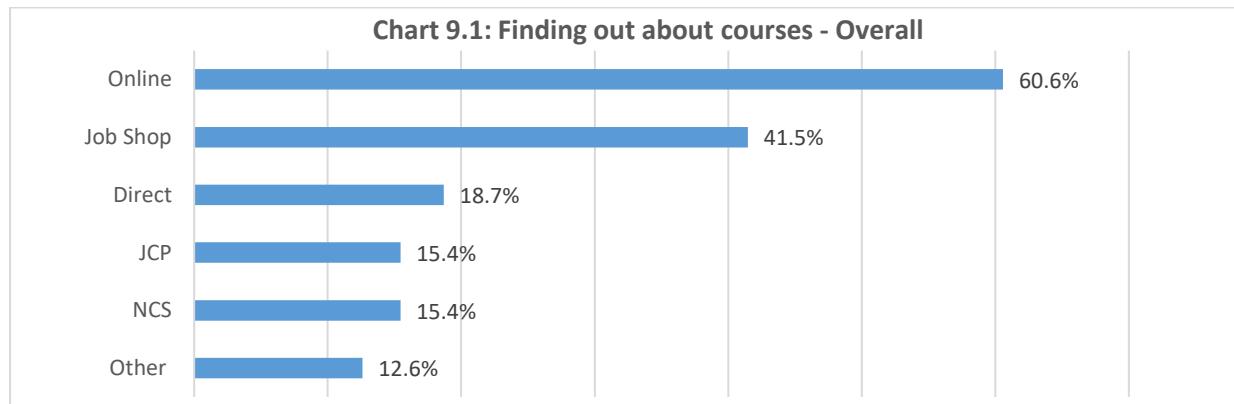
- **Time (15 responses):** For example - ‘Not having enough time in work to do it’ or ‘having to fit studies around my part time job’.

- **Quality and Subject Interest (14 responses):** For example - 'staff were not well prepared' or 'some of the topics in the course felt irrelevant'.
- **Flexible Learning (11 responses):** For example – 'Too much time traveling to the location' or 'fixed hours of delivery even though it was an online course'.
- **Progression and Reward (9 responses):** For example – 'it didn't help me to get a new job' or 'sometimes courses were very vague with no qualification'.
- **Social Aspects (4 responses):** For example – 'bullies in the class', or 'loudest people get the most attention'
- **Other:** 'Self confidence' and 'finance' with one response each.



Q9: Where would you go to find out information on available courses? (Tick all that apply)

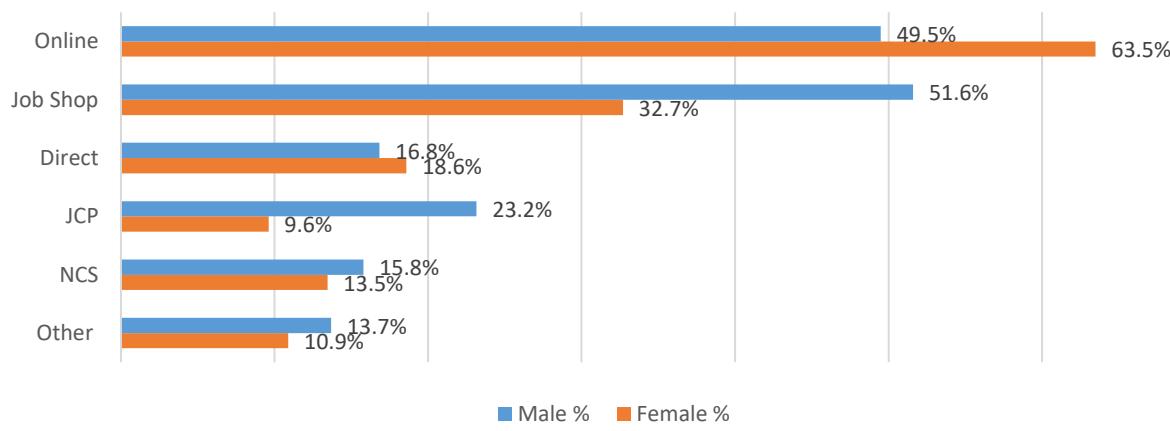
9.1 Finding out about courses – overall: It is clear that Adult Skills Providers need to have a strong online presence with 60.6% of survey respondents saying they would find out about courses this way. However, it is still important for Skills Providers to work closely with referral partners especially the Coventry Job Shop with 41.5% stating they would use the Job Shop to find out about courses.



9.2 Finding out about courses- respondents with a declared disability: Responses from this group were roughly in line with overall responses.

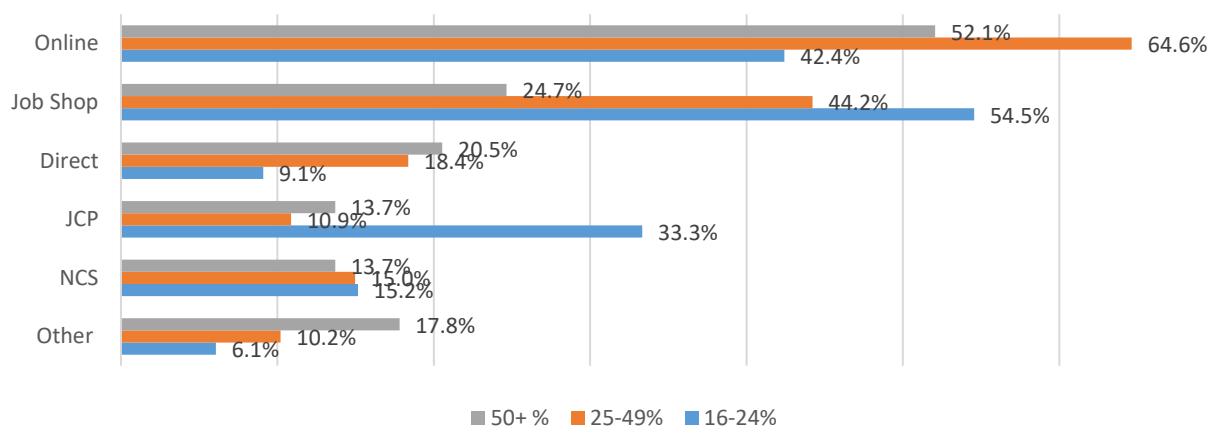
9.3 Finding out about courses – by gender: Higher proportions of female respondents favoured finding out about courses online, whereas a significantly higher proportion of male respondents favoured face to face information – especially from the Job Shop (51.6 compared to 32.7 of female respondents) and JCP (23.2 compared to 9.6% of female respondents).

Chart 9.3: Finding out about courses - by gender

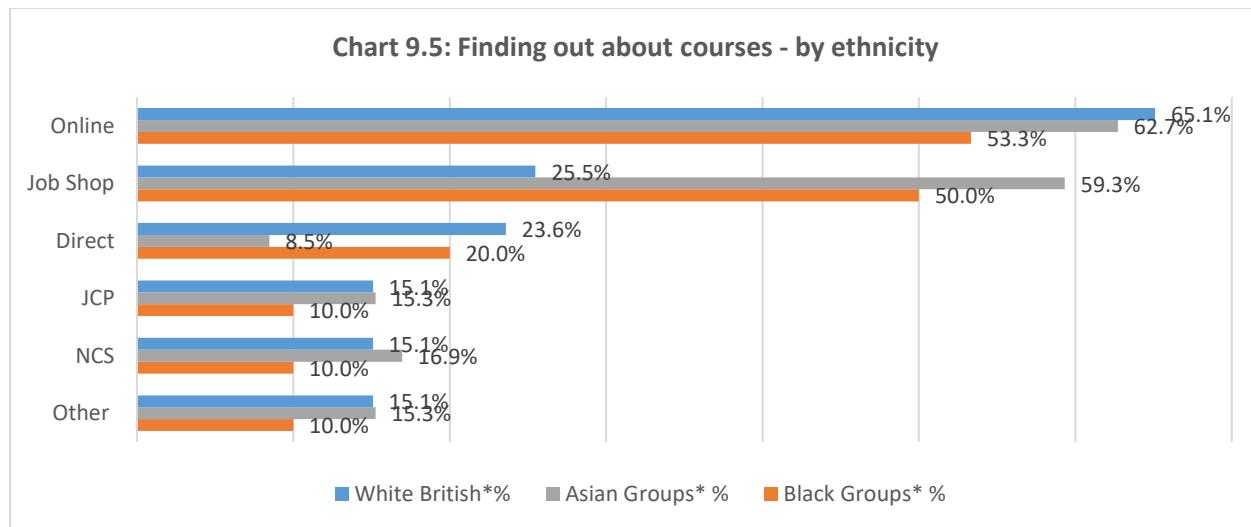


9.4 Finding out about courses – by age: The 16-24 age group showed the lowest preference for finding out about online courses, which is consistent with responses to question 7 with lower proportions of 16-24 year olds wanting online course delivery compared with the other age groupings. The 16-24 year old group were much more likely to want face to face information than the other two age groupings, especially from JCP and the Job Shop.

Chart 9.4: Finding out about courses- by age



9.5 Finding out about courses – by ethnicity: Online information was selected by more White British* and Asian Backgrounds* respondents than Black Backgrounds* respondents. Both Black and Asian Backgrounds* respondents showed a significantly stronger preference for the Job Shop than White British* respondents. This was not the case for other face to face sources of information though with Black Backgrounds* respondents selecting NCS and JCP less than the other two ethnicity groupings.



Q10 What makes learning fun for you? (open text responses)

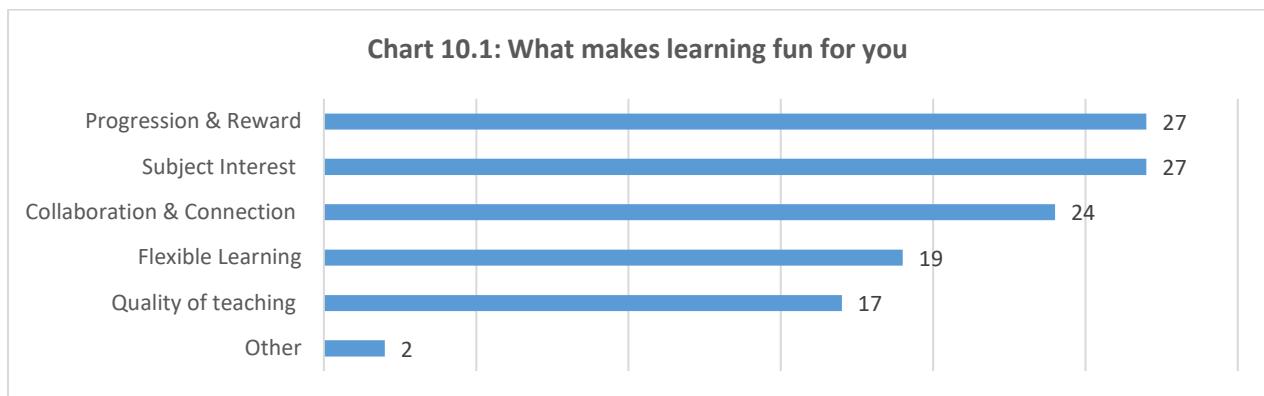


This question was answered by 116 of the survey respondents. The above word cloud shows the importance of other ‘people’ with several survey respondents expressing that they wanted to work in groups collaboratively and with ‘like-minded’ people. There was a lot of emphasise also on the quality of tutors especially their teaching style and passion for the subject they teach. Interest in the subject and the learning environment also feature quite strongly in the word cloud.

To consider whole responses rather than individual words, responses have been grouped into themes to show patterns. This shows a stronger emphasis on ‘subject interest’ and the ‘progression and reward’ then reflected in the word cloud:

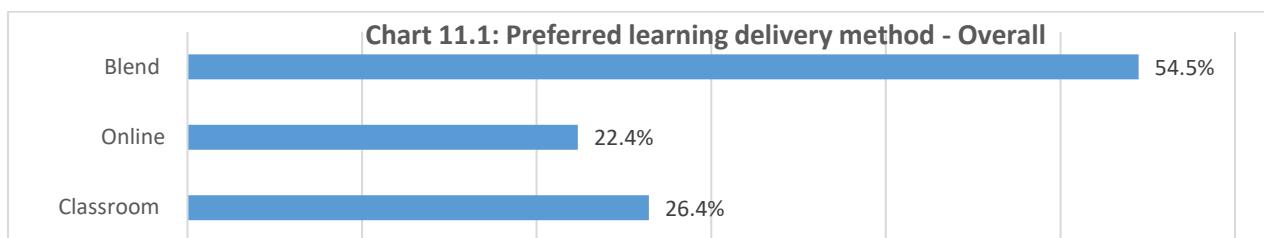
- **Subject Interest (27 responses):** For example – ‘learning something new’ or ‘passion for a particular subject/area’
 - **Progression & Reward (27 responses):** For example - ‘learning something useful that will further progress my career’ or ‘transferrable skills and improved understanding’.
 - **Collaboration & Connection (24 responses):** For example – ‘Having like-minded people with you’ or ‘interaction with peers and networking’.
 - **Flexible Learning (19 responses):** For example – ‘Easy bite-sized lessons’ or ‘flexible time scheduling’
 - **Quality of teaching (17 responses):** For example - ‘Passionate teachers that enjoy the content being taught’ and ‘good tutor support with helpful feedback’.

- Other (2 responses)

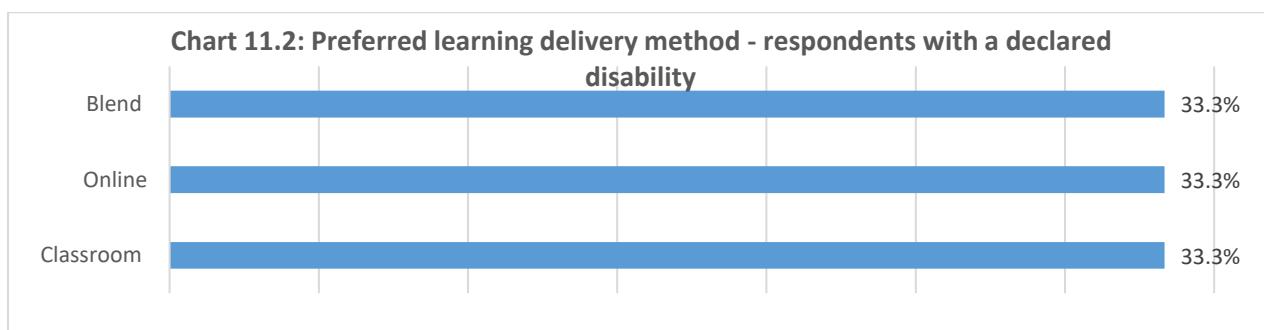


Q11 How do you prefer to learn (tick one)

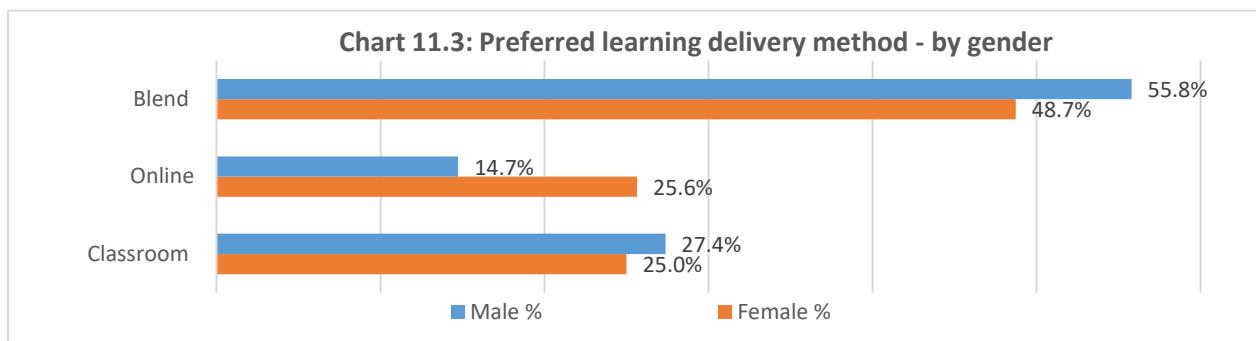
11.1 Preferred learning delivery method – overall: Overall there was clear preference for blended learning. Slightly higher numbers of respondents preferred solely classroom over solely online.



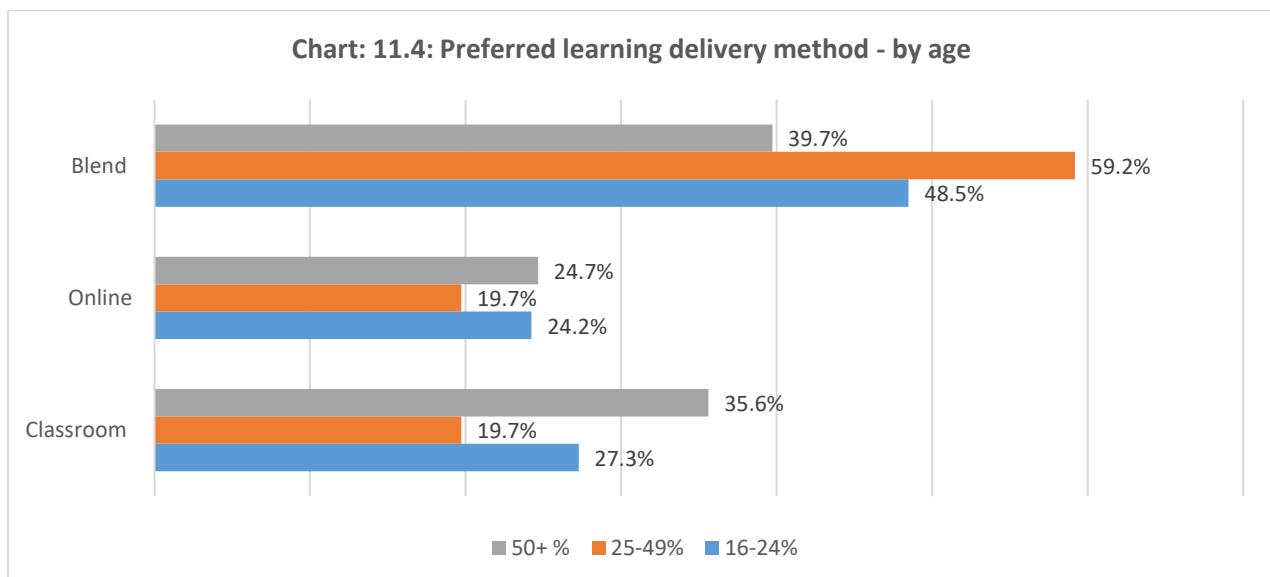
11.2 Preferred learning delivery method – respondents with a declared disability: There was a lower preference for blended learning from respondents with a declared disability, with responses being evenly split between the 3 options.



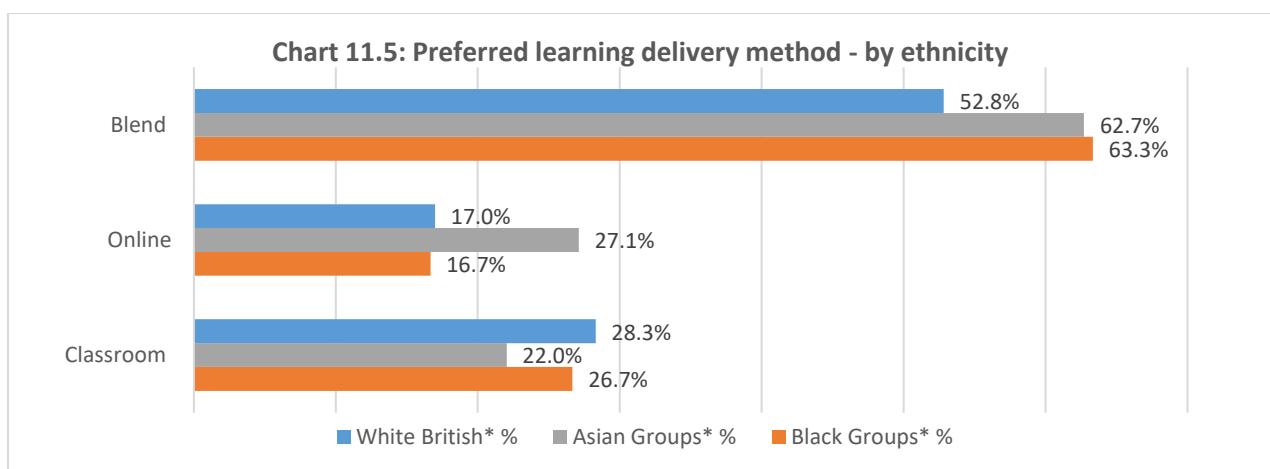
11.3 Preferred learning delivery method – by gender: Slightly higher percentages of male respondents opted for blended and classroom-based learning, but much lower percentages of male respondents opted for online learning compared to female respondents.



11.4 Preferred learning delivery method – by age: Blended learning was the most common response for the 25-49 age group. The 50+ group were the most likely to choose classroom learning with nearly as many choosing this option as blended.



11.5 Preferred learning delivery method – by ethnicity: A significantly higher percentage of respondents from Asian Backgrounds* opted for online learning than the other two ethnicity groupings.



Q12 & 13: These questions didn't add anything of note for the purposes of this report.

Q14: Do you have any suggestions for how we can improve skills provision in Coventry (open text responses)

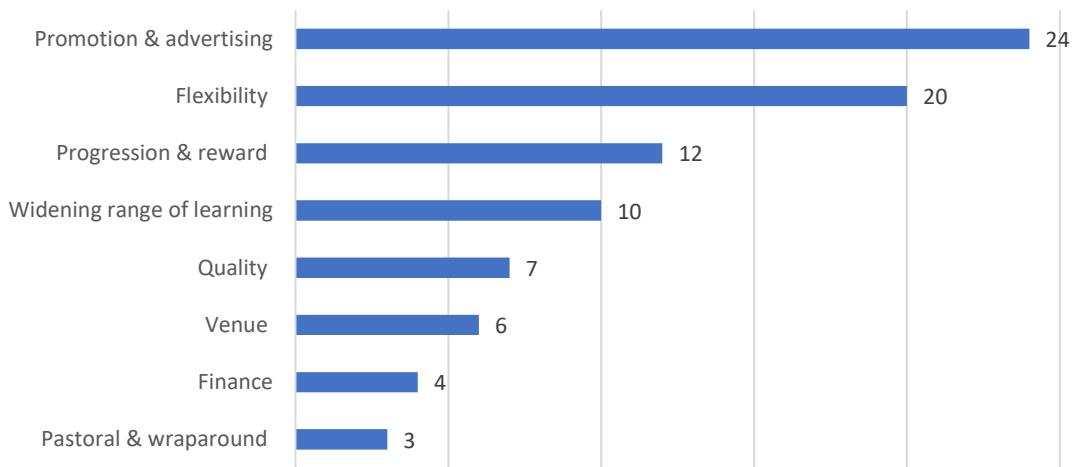


This question was answered by 86 survey respondents. The above word cloud shows that many felt courses could be better advertised and promoted. Respondents showed a preference for 'in person'/'face to face' courses. However, some did state that they wanted courses to be streamed. Flexibility of course delivery also featured with some wanting evening or weekend courses. Also featured were responses around good 'prior information' on course content.

To consider whole responses rather than individual words, responses have been grouped into themes to show patterns. This reflects the word cloud in showing the most common responses were around promotion and advertising of courses. 'Flexibility' features more strongly than in the word cloud as does 'progression and reward':

- **Promotion and advertising (24 responses):** For example – ‘Increasing advertising of courses’, or ‘better promotional materials.’
- **Flexibility (20 responses):** For example – ‘More out of hours courses’ and ‘more weekend courses.’
- **Progression and reward (12 responses):** For example – ‘Progressing to a higher level, after learning the basics’ and ‘have an end destination such as an interview with an employer’.
- **Widening the range of learning (10 responses):** For example – ‘More 'refresher' courses for people who have been away from a job for a few years’ or a ‘design courses that meet real work world needs’.
- **Quality (7 responses):** For example – ‘Trainers need to better apply information.’ Or ‘having extra teachers in the class to provide more 1 to 1 support’
- **Venue (6 responses):** For example – ‘a more central training venue’ and ‘a venue with better parking’.

Chart 14.1: Suggestions for improving skills provision in Coventry



Category	Organisation/Service Area
CCC	Adult Social Care
	Children and Young Peoples Partnership
	Customer Service
	Early Help Partnership/Children and Young People Partnership
	Economic Development Service
	Educational Improvement
	Extended Service Leadership Team
	Housing and Homeless
	HR
	Migration Team
	Organisational Development
	Public Health
	Sustainability and Low Carbon
	Violence Prevention/West Midlands Police Project
Community Organisations	Caribbean Centre
	Grapevine
	Highlife Centre
	Indian Community Centre
	Moat House Community Trust
	Watch
	Weetec
FE Colleges	Coventry College
	Hereward College
	NWSLC
	Warwickshire College Group
Independent Training Provider	CW Chamber Training
	Foleshill Womens Training
	Go Train
	New Start 4 U
	Pet Xi
	Princes Trust
Universities	Coventry University
	Warwick University
Regional/Sub Regional Bodies	CWLEP
	WMCA
Other	Citizen Housing
	JCP
	Mental Health Matters
	Prospects (NCS)
	Positive Youth Foundation
Business Representative Bodies	FSB
	BiTC



CW Chamber Training: Sally Lucas, Executive Director

Questions:

- 1. What's your view on these 10 priorities? Describe the areas that you agree with and disagree with. Is the language of these priorities suitable?**

Overall, I think the priorities cover the range of audiences. Don't disagree with any as such.

How will the priorities be measured to know what success looks like ? I'm not sure what the starting point is or what the end goal is.

I think 10 are quite a lot of priorities and there is probably overlap in some areas eg. 8 and 9.

- 2. Is there anything you would add? Any gaps?**

I would probably group the priorities and have some as a sub-set of the high level aim eg. Overall skills levels with 2 and 3 as a sub set ?

- 3. What actions do you think Coventry should take to help achieve these priorities?**

Please suggest:

- Actions that would support individual priorities
- Actions that would support multiple priorities

Would need to know the baseline starting point under each priority and what success looks like.

Provide the structure to join skills provision up/access existing structures to influence and inform.

- 4. How could you and your organisation contribute to these priorities.**

Offering practical options eg. ESF NEET provision opportunities, traineeships and apprenticeship vacancies. Provide a bridge into employment and employers. Work with schools/FE to seamlessly progress.



5. Can you make suggestions for how these priorities should be measured?

Identify the starting point eg. current skill levels of Coventry residents and current skills priorities of local businesses. Benchmark with nearest statistical neighbours.



Lee Osborne, Development Manager Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire

Introduction

The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) is the UK's largest business support organisation, promoting and protecting the interests of the self-employed and small business owners. Established over 45 years ago to help our members succeed in business, we are a non-profit making and non-party political organisation that's led by our members, for our members.

The FSB in Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull welcomes the opportunity to respond and input to Coventry Skills strategy which aims to give Coventry based businesses the skills they need both currently and in the future.

FSB research has consistently shown that small businesses are facing real skills challenges.

According to our latest small business confidence the share of small businesses who say lack of access to the right staff is holding them back is at its highest level in six years at 38%. Close to a quarter of employers in the West Midlands state that it is difficult to find individuals with the right skills in their area and a similar proportion say hiring is a struggle because they require individuals with niche skill sets.

The FSB is therefore keen to support Coventry City Council and other partners to help deliver an effective and locally relevant skills strategy. This will not only aim to enable the development of skills within the local population but also help ensure businesses can employ people with the right skills sets and achieve their growth ambitions, having a positive impact on the local economy.

We would therefore welcome the opportunity for further involvement as the document progresses and evolves to help address shared priorities and outcomes. We have provided some initial thoughts on some of the questions within the consultation below:

Consultation questions

What is your view on the priorities?

The FSB can agree with the summary of priorities, outlined in the consultation document.

While we have a particular focus on priorities 8 – 10, we would agree that all the priorities within the document are relevant and should be supported.

While the language of the priorities is suitable, there could be further reference in here as to how they fit in with Government priorities and initiatives at a national level around apprenticeships, skills bootcamps and lifelong learning aims. It would also be useful to provide some context around the priorities and provide an understanding as to how the skills strategy will link in with other skills initiatives and strategies that are being developed across the region such as Local Skills Improvement Plans and regional skills strategy developed by WMCA.

We would also welcome reference to the self-employed and sole traders under priority 8 and a focus on entrepreneurship.

Is there anything you would add?

While Priority 3 aims to outline and provide clear progression pathways, consideration should be given to including points around effective careers and employability advice. When recruiting young people, small businesses are seeking individuals who are able to successfully transition from education to the workplace and possess the skills their firm needs to grow. Careers advice, information and guidance that covers a range of education, training and employment pathways and facilitates opportunities to gain experience of the working world, can help to achieve this and should be included either in the existing priorities or as a separate priority.

Small businesses can play a key role in helping improve young peoples awareness of apprenticeships, facilitate access to opportunities to experience the workplace first hand and inform young peoples understanding of enterprise and self-employment. We believe that this priority area should see schools, colleges, Coventry careers hubs and other key stakeholders working with small firms to identify and pursue opportunities for successful engagement and to provide careers advice guidance to young people, raise aspirations and meet local labour market need.

In relation to priority 8 and 9 which will be critical in terms of future employment, we would also like to see reference to the importance of leadership and management skills training and support small firms to invest in this area emphasising the link between skills training and improved business productivity and competitiveness.

What action do you think should be taken to help achieve these priorities?

FSB research has consistently shown that small businesses are facing skills and employment challenges. The share of firms citing lack of access to appropriately skilled staff as a barrier to growth has risen in the FSB quarterly small business confidence surveys and in the Q2 2021¹ survey had soared to its highest level in a

¹ <https://firstvoice.fsb.org.uk/first-voice/regional-voice/fsb-west-midlands-sbi-2021-q2-report.html>

number of years (37%) for West Midlands firms, with the proportion of respondents citing it as a barrier up 18 percentage points compared to Q2 2019, before the pandemic hit.

The FSB is therefore keen to support Coventry City Council and other partners to focus on education and skills development, employability skills, technical skills and local skills development. This will help to inform the key skills requirements and provision now and for the future to ensure businesses can grow and have a positive impact on the local economy.

We would welcome continued engagement with Coventry City Council and other stakeholders locally in liaising with small businesses to tackle skills challenges and future skills needs. Key actions here could include:

- Hold joint events or webinars to help inform a wider network of small businesses about the role that local stakeholders including the local authority, colleges, careers hubs and Universities all play in this space and how it can benefit small businesses across Coventry
- There is still a lack of general awareness from small businesses about the services and initiatives that are available to help them with skills and recruitment challenges.

Therefore, consideration should be given to holding an event specifically targeted at small businesses to include businesses sharing skills and recruitment challenges, awareness raising of local support services and benefits of supported internships, apprenticeships, traineeships and funded skills programmes for businesses. To help inform about the benefits of these initiatives it would also be useful in sourcing a number of business case studies to share at these events.

- FSB would be willing to organise and coordinate a roundtable with a group of small employers to discuss skills and employability challenges locally to ensure there is direct feedback to the Coventry City Employability and Skills team and other partners locally of the types of challenges and issues being faced.
- We welcome increased engagement with SME's through specialist advisers at the local authority to work with them to identify and support their skills and employment needs. This would again help highlight initiatives and resources such as use of the Apprenticeship levy to provide fully funded training and the promotion by member representative organisations of case studies to help showcase the



benefits of this service and engagement would also be beneficial to any service provided.

How should these priorities be measured?

We would like to see some important outputs and outcomes included in the description of each of the priorities. These should have timescales and targets attached to help make it easier to evaluate progress and specify more clearly what success looks like.

The FSB see the outcomes around reducing the number of businesses reporting skills shortages and the focus on apprenticeships is being amongst the most important from a business perspective. We would also like to see more emphasis placed on increased engagement from small businesses in supporting local programmes which encourage apprenticeships and work with schools and colleges to help raise awareness of careers and self-employment opportunities. Specific measures could also include an increased business representation on local skills boards to make it accessible for local employers to input.



**Violence Reduction Unit CCC/West Midlands Police: Caroline Ryder,
Programme Manager**

Thanks for sharing the draft strategy. Just a few points from me. I don't really need you to come back to me with answers but I just wanted to point them out for your consideration!

Priority 1: Could be measured by taking the baseline of current skills and then again at a later point - however, things like GCSE attainment may take 5 years to show an improvement..... I would think that the closure of Henley college will hamper this ambition somewhat. Perhaps mention in the strategy how this can be addressed?

Priority 2: I think this will be very difficult to measure. I'm not sure what the Gatsby benchmark is. My personal experience of careers advice for my own kids has been that it's flaky at best. It's very much an optional thing and most kids wouldn't take it up because at 15, if you don't have to do it, then likelihood is you won't. What "added value" can the careers advisor bring? It's no longer enough to just give people the information - young people need coaching/guidance. It may be that we have to prioritise certain areas of the City or schools. In Marmot we often talk about proportionate universalism - this would be a perfect example. For some kids, telling them about an apprenticeship is enough- they can do the rest. For others, they may need additional support to be able to access opportunities because of barriers they face.

Priority 3: Have "we" been in consultation with local business/industries about what their expectations are not only of school leavers but also older adults. Business want staff with certain skills and with some investment from them they could pay for short courses in for example, basic IT. I know we had an annual skills summit so not sure if any data was ever captured about the skills gap but I know it's something employers talk about a lot.

Priority 4: I suppose a good example of this would be the classroom facility at Moathouse - not sure if they are well used but with Henley College closing, it would be good to make more of that facility. Are we making the most of on-line learning opportunities? There is so much stuff out there now that's accessible on-line, the quality varies enormously but there must be some valuable learning to be done online.



Priority 5: No comments

Priority 6: I think it would be useful to link in with people like the probation service here. I have contacts if you need. Also - positive choices, the young peoples drug, alcohol and sexual health service. Again I have contacts. I'm just thinking of community organisations that could signpost people into provision.

Priority 7: No comments

Priority 8: I haven't seen the new social value strategy - if you can lay your hands on a copy I'd be interested to look it over. Thanks.

your feedback form said 10 priorities, but I count only 8? Also, are you completing an Equality Impact Assessment on this strategy? If not, give Jaspal Mann a shout and she can assist you. It's something that often gets overlooked but needs to be completed to ensure we aren't overlooking any protected groups.

Sorry for the lengthy email!



Coventry University: Joanne Dobson, Associate Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Group Policy)

Apologies. I thought I had followed up on your email but can't see a reply in my sent mail. I hope this is still useful.

I think that the main piece of feedback would be to raise the importance of education and not just skills.

I'm pleased to see a priority of "aspiration" so high up the list. As one of the city's universities, our Mission of "Creating Better Futures" fits well with that.

We also agree with the need for clear progression pathways. I'm not sure if you're aware, but the government recently (last week) announced the new Office for Students Director of Fair Access and Participation and that universities would need to revise their Access and Participation Plans. This may mean increasing activity in schools, which could well support clear progression – and indeed aspiration. This may also impact on diversity and supporting areas of highest need. Finally, there may also be some measurements in our APP that could be useful for you in terms of measuring the priorities. Please let me know if you'd like me to reach out to the relevant team here as this new plan develops.

Re: Priority 6. Should this be worded more to reflect inclusivity of those with the highest need? Does it currently read as though the skills system focusses primarily on those with the most need? Interestingly, we welcomed the Labour Councillors onto campus recently and there was a discussion about support for veterans. Is that an area of high need in the city?

We welcome the acknowledgement of support the skills needs of companies in the city. I would be happy to reach out to colleagues on the Technology Park on that point if that would be helpful.



Finally, there are almost certainly other areas on this that our 2030 Strategy could support. This can be found here:

<https://www.coventry.ac.uk/globalassets/media/global/09-about-us/corporate-strategy/group-strategy-2030-compressed.pdf>

Happy to have a conversation on any of these points if that would be helpful.

CCC Public Health: Sue Frossell

Priorities 1-3:

To achieve this, proportionately more resources will need to be applied across the gradient of skills need. Below references reflect a need to measure 'overall skills measure' (hides unequal uptake), moving out of poverty, helping most in need (both focus on most need). Can we apply our resources across a gradient of skills need and measure this uptake? Rather than most, can we use the term more? Uptake by postcode is a crude measure but might be helpful alongside other measures?



Coventry City Council Skills Strategy

Contact: Glen Smailes, Employment and Skills Service (T: 07967 820436)

Priorities Consultation:

A comprehensive, citywide skills offer that raises aspirations and allows each and every learner throughout their lives to reach their full potential

We want aspirations to be high at each level of Coventry's skills system, from Primary education through to Adult Education including 'lifelong learning'. We want Coventry's young people and adults to be ambitious and realise their potential. To enable this, we need clear pathways which empower both young people and adults to make the right choices. We need to be responsive to emerging need, shaped by changes to the labour market such as growing and emerging sectors.

Ambition Priorities:

1. Overall Skills Levels: Improve the overall skills levels of Coventry residents

Our ambition: Bring skills levels for number of residents with no qualifications and numbers with NVQ1, 2 and 3 and above in line with National Averages.

We will achieve this by: Enable our primary schools, secondary schools, and further education (FE) colleges to continue to improve educational attainment through taking a multi-agency 'One Coventry' approach. Increase participation in Adult Education whilst maintaining quality.

2. Aspiration: An aspirational skills system that inspires residents to achieve through from primary school to lifelong learning

Our ambition: For high aspirations to be built into Coventry's Skills System from a young age (primary school) and to remain all the way through to lifelong learning.

We will achieve this by: Schools and FE providers supported to be aspirational, seeing the potential in their learners. Supporting schools to achieve the Gatsby Benchmarks, working in close partnership with careers advisors including the



Careers and Enterprise Company. Look after the wellbeing of young people and working in partnership to address barriers which can affect aspirations and attainment for young people.

Continue to push adult residents to be aspirational, with good quality careers advice and flexible course options which make use of the new 'Lifetime Skills Guarantee', and entitlements to flexible lifetime student finance from 2025 onwards.

3. Progression Pathways: Clearly built in throughout Coventry's skills system

Our ambition: Clearly defined routes through all educational levels which lead into good quality employment. For residents to easily re-engage in the skills system once in employment; continuing 'lifelong learning' and increasing their earning potential and facilitating career development.

We will achieve this by: Support Coventry's Education and Skills Providers to map clear pathways developed in partnership with local and regional employers and higher education providers. Ensure these are clearly defined and communicated to learners with co-design of courses between residents, education providers and employers where relevant. Ensure that learners see the value of their course and know the destination(s).

A skills ecosystem that ensures that all, including those most in need, are able to participate in, progress and achieve success

Coventry's Skills System needs to include all residents with no disparities in access, educational attainment, or progression. Skills Providers need sufficiently flexible provision, tailored delivery and content - including bespoke courses to support residents with different needs. We also need to work together to promote skills provision widely across the City and ensuring no residents view provision as 'not for them'.

4. Community: A skills system which meets the needs of all residents and is widely accessed by all Coventry communities

Our Ambition: Ensure all areas of the City are widely accessing skills support, at all levels and with good evidence of progression.

We will achieve this by: Support Skills Providers to have offers which are relevant, effectively communicated – including through close partnership work with community organisations, widely accessible (i.e blended learning and delivery within communities) and of high quality.

5. Inclusion: A skills system which is fully inclusive and representative of our diverse City

Our Ambition: Ensure all ethnic groups are well served by the skills system, ensuring engagement practices reflect our communities' needs and appropriate provision and support is available to enable full participation and progression at all educational levels.

We will achieve this by: Support Skills Providers to have offers which are widely accessible and effectively communicated (including in other languages). Ensure high participation in ESOL classes to remove language barriers from learning. Ensure progression from ESOL into higher level skills provision and work.

6. Highest Needs: A skills system which supports those most in need, supports people out of poverty and helps create a more equal City.

Ambition: Ensure Coventry's skills system is widely accessed by areas of higher deprivation and demonstrates progression into work - especially higher paying work. High participation of those who may be considered higher needs due to disability, health/mental health conditions, drug/alcohol misuse, lone parents, teenage parents, ex-offenders, and young people at risk of gang violence. Able to demonstrate a positive impact on people's general wellbeing.

We will achieve this by: Support Skills Providers to have offers which can be flexible and responsive in delivery and able to overcome barriers to attainment and progression. Strong community provision and good communication of offers. Strong progression pathways which support residents into good quality paid work. Clearly evidenced wellbeing benefits.



A flexible and responsive system that works together with our growing, investing and local businesses to deliver the right skills mix for our dynamic labour market

Coventry's skills system needs to support our businesses and encourage new businesses to invest in the City. It also needs to support these businesses to deliver on social value and provide the skills needed for the 'green' jobs of the future.

7. Skills for business: A skills system which provides the skills required by Coventry's businesses, both current and future and contributes to economic growth and the prosperity of the City

Our Ambition: Ensure Coventry businesses can find the skills to grow, including upskilling/reskilling existing workforces through in-work skills provision. Ensure Coventry has the skills base to attract inward investment. Maximise opportunities for residents to benefit from large developments such as the planned electric vehicle 'Battery Gigafactory'.

We will achieve this by: Effectively provide Skills Providers with labour market intelligence to ensure courses are designed to meet current and future skills needs. Strong links between employers and Skills Providers to provide suitable in work skills provision. Work in close partnership with Coventry City Councils Economic Development Service and their partners, aligning skills provision to Coventry City Councils Economic Development Strategy.

8. Social Value and Sustainability: A skills system which is well positioned to maximise increased commitment to social value and Coventry's commitment to tackling climate change

Ambition: Aligned skills provision to support residents to capitalise on social value opportunities generated through Coventry City Councils new Social Value Strategy. Ensure skills provision is geared towards jobs growth created by sustainability actions including those linked to the Net Zero 2050 Plan.

We will achieve this by: Working in close partnership with Coventry City Councils Procurement Team and strategic partners, especially large businesses through the Councils Anchor Alliance. Close partnership working with employers and industry bodies, supported by intelligence from regional and sub-regional bodies such as CWLEP, WMCA and FSB.





Questions:

Migration Team feedback

The Migration Team are particularly interested in the following areas that will contribute to the Skills Strategies high-level priorities and other parts that have a more operational focus.

1. What's your view on these 10 priorities? Describe the areas that you agree with and disagree with. Is the language of these priorities suitable?

Yes, we agree with all 10 priorities. There are clear areas of strength and synergy with our service, particularly against Points 2, 4, 5, and 7 and there are also some identified gaps below.

A skills section will form part of our Integration Strategy where we will add key priorities from the Skills Strategy, it will also include more details on sector-based academies and surveillance.

Point 4 'Community' and 5 'Inclusion' expand the wording to include "newly arrived communities", this sends a positive message to contributors and the community that the skills strategy helps to achieve for this group.

Points 2 and 7 there are missed opportunities for newly arrived school aged children and adults. Point 7 Newly arrived communities can help to fill some of the gaps of skills shortages for businesses and be part of the workforce for the future. There are challenges with former qualifications being recognised.

Newly arrived communities contribute to economic growth and employment and it is important they can access well-coordinated skills services, which recognise and meet their needs.

There is a lot we have learnt about barriers and the need for skills to be available and acquired flexibly.

Improving the position of those already in employment through well-developed personal plans to achieve their career aspirations. Within employment, progression should continue, with sustained skills journeys leading to better social and financial outcomes.

Links between formal classroom and community provision, to be flexible between the two to access support.

Provide opportunities to use spaces like the library to access support for newly arrived communities.

Include skills support for UAC (unaccompanied) young people – approximately 100 in the City.

2. Is there anything you would add? Any gaps?

Suggested wording to include in the Skills Strategy:

“To support integration the skills strategy commits to better access to skills for newly arrived communities. It recognises the skills refugees and the wider migrant population bring and aims to help people to pursue their ambitions.”

The city receives approximately on average 1,500 newly arrived individuals per year (this number increased last year due to the Afghan resettlement); it can take between 1-5 years to rebuild their lives from the day they arrive to become fully assimilated. Access to work is a key marker of integration

Engagement – How can we use lived experiences to help understand user journeys and respond on the ground? Engage the migrant population in processes to design and develop skills programmes.

Aspirational - Research and identify unused skills in the migrant population and local skills gaps and provide pathways to fill the skills gap. The West Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership is developing a regional resource to be applied to unused skills and better connections to the jobs market.

Practical Pathways to fill skills gaps - EDS (Business Advisors) working with businesses to provide pathways to fill skills gaps. Mi-Friendly Cities worked with the Chamber to complete a survey of SME's vacancy gaps, build on this work to offer practical pathways to jobless refugees and migrants into work.

Untapped potential of migrant and refugee women in employment and skills, re-engaging with women to build digital skills.

Working with individuals to develop entrepreneurial skills and talent and access business development services.

Point 8 – Social Value Policy - the inclusion of Refugees and Unaccompanied migrant children is not included as a group in the policy, this needs to be revisited.

3. What actions do you think Coventry should take to help achieve these priorities?

Please suggest:

-Actions that would support individual priorities

- Working with the Migration Team and partners to help newly arrived communities and refugees address the challenges and create bridges to access the skills support on offer.
- Actively engaging with clients to understand and provide the support they need.
- Actively engaging with the wider sector that works with these groups including organisations with specialist experience.
- Dialogue with employers to sign up to support newly arrived young people with developing basic skills and traineeships to become economically active.
- To broaden network of organisations that provide support and access to employment with additional support i.e., mentoring.
- Migration Team and Employment and Skills Team working together to deliver support and work on joint programmes i.e., UKSPF

-Actions that would support multiple priorities

Labour Market Integration for Newly arrived communities - lack of understanding of the labour market, pathways to employment and their options, including vocational training and apprenticeships, can limit their opportunities to gain meaningful employment, which makes best use of their skills.

- Provide clear communication on what skills support is available for newly arrived communities. Requires more comprehensive communication on the skills support offer to enable Liaison officers and others to provide information to clients.

- Specific communication on the different routes and journeys into skills and training i.e., eligibility and requirements to access apprenticeships, training, schools, courses.
- Work with networks across the city to engage in delivering skills support i.e., Refugee Employment Network
- The West Midlands Strategic Partnership would help to support and provide a general understanding of the processes and systems in place in this country.
- Employers' perceptions of refugees/newly arrived communities can limit opportunities and success in gaining employment. There is a lack of opportunities to gain experience, particularly through volunteering, work placements and work shadowing, which could lead to paid employment or provide references for job applications.
- Raising awareness of what our new communities can bring to the table, working with local businesses and partners to understand the needs and experience of newly arrived communities and what they can offer. Establish a campaign (sensitive use of media) to promote skills and experience and case studies.
- Build on the Mi-friendly Cities work on supporting employers to understand the checks that are required to employ refugees and HR team skills/training required to support this element.
- Shared apprenticeships schemes for sector-based working with a number of different employers, to gain the skills they require.

4. How could you and your organisation contribute to these priorities.

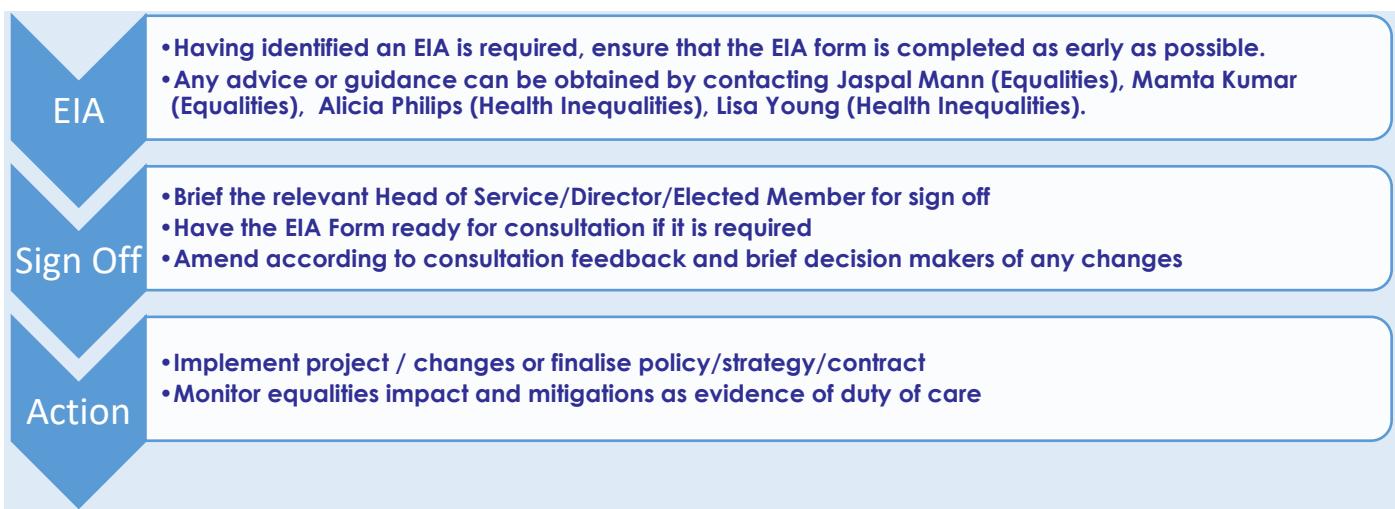
- Migration Team representation on the Skills Strategy strategic groups
- We can provide intelligence on newly arrived communities skills needs and challenges and work with employment hub to provide support.
- Engage with migrant groups and people when they arrive.
- Integration Strategy will contribute to delivering the Skills Strategies priorities linked to our service area.
- Can you make suggestions for how these priorities should be measured?
- People progressing towards goals to get a sense of individuals learning journey at the outset and how to accelerate the journey and measure the ongoing impact.

- Hard outcomes, those that are already employed and have got into higher skilled/paid employment.
- Social Value supporting newly arrived communities' skills development.
- Ask clients how they feel about the process? Have they really achieved what was promised when they started the programme?
- We can suggest targeted indicators once we have a clear idea of which priorities you will focus on for newly arrived communities.



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Title of EIA		Skills Strategy 2022-2030
EIA Author	Name	Glen Smailes
	Position	Business Development Manager
	Date of completion	12/9/2022
Head of Service	Name	Kim Mawby
	Position	Head of Employment and Skills
Cabinet Member	Name	Cllr K Sandhu & Cllr J O Boyle
	Portfolio	Education and Skills & Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change



PLEASE REFER TO [EIA GUIDANCE](#) FOR ADVICE ON COMPLETING THIS FORM

SECTION 1 – Context & Background

1.1 Please tick one of the following options:

This EIA is being carried out on:

- New policy / strategy**
- New service
- Review of policy / strategy
- Review of service
- Commissioning

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Other project (*please give details*)

1.2 In summary, what is the background to this EIA?

This is an Equality Impact Assessment of the new Coventry Skills Strategy 2022-2030. This is primarily to ensure that the strategy, and more detailed interventions that are developed after rolling it out, eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advances equality of opportunity between different groups; and fosters good relations between different groups.

1.3 Who are the main stakeholders involved? Who will be affected?

The strategy and its roll out will affect and involve a wide range of stakeholders and partners. Although its implementation will be co-ordinated by CCC's Employment and Skills Service, it will involve and affect multiple Service Areas across the Council. The other key stakeholders that the strategy and its roll out will impact on include Coventry's skills providers (schools, colleges, universities, independent training providers), voluntary and community sector groups and businesses, as well as Business Representative Bodies and business support organisations. In light of this, the aforementioned stakeholders have all been consulted to agree the Strategy's priorities and key areas of focus.

Coventry residents will also be affected by the strategy, in that it will provide a 'framework for action' for improving skills outcomes across Coventry. This includes the raising of overall skills levels, building aspiration, improving progression pathways, ensuring our skills system; meets the needs of our communities, is inclusive and supports those with the highest needs, ensuring we get the right skills for businesses and providing the green skills to support action on climate change.

1.4 Who will be responsible for implementing the findings of this EIA?

Although Coventry City Council's Employment and Skills Service will be responsible for co-ordination and monitoring of the roll-out and implementation of this Strategy, the delivery of all interventions will entail partnership work with local, regional and national partners. As such, all of these organisations will need to take responsibility for implementing the findings of this EIA.

SECTION 2 – Consideration of Impact

Refer to guidance note for more detailed advice on completing this section.

In order to ensure that we do not discriminate in the way our activities are designed, developed and delivered, we must look at our duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conflict that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010

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- Advance equality of opportunity between two persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

2.1 Baseline data and information

Please include a summary of data analysis below, using both your own service level management information and also drawing comparisons with local data where necessary (go to <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/factsaboutcoventry>)

Economy – challenges and opportunities

In the 10 years after the 2008/09 recession, Coventry & Warwickshire was the fastest-growing local economy in England, with economic output (measured in real GVA) growing by 33.4% between 2008/09 and 2016/17.

However, the performance of the local economy has slowed, reducing the capacity to create new employment and training opportunities. For example, in 2018/2019, Coventry & Warwickshire recorded the lowest growth rate of all local economies (1.24%) and in 2020, the West Midlands experienced the biggest economic contraction of all regions due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This led to a significant increase in the Claimant Count (numbers claiming unemployment related benefits) from 7,825 (3.2%) in February to 16,490 (6.6%) in December 2020 (the peak pandemic level). This exacerbated longstanding inequalities in the city, with the highest increases in the Claimant Count seen in Coventry's most deprived wards.

An important objective of the Coventry Skills Strategy is to therefore ensure that Coventry's labour force is able to secure the necessary skills to enable them to access new opportunities that will emerge from structural economic change, and thereby enhance their standard of living. As an enabler of change, the Council will help our businesses to better reflect the communities they serve, encouraging employers to look at alternative methods of recruitment and to appoint more diverse workforces.

Demographics

Coventry's has a dynamic and adaptable labour force that could play an active role in supporting the economic recovery:

A young population: Coventry has a median age of 32 years compared to the UK average of 40. The pandemic in 2020 had a disproportionate impact on younger workers, due to the sectors most impacted by lockdowns, but through upskilling of the labour force (one of the central priorities within this strategy), this demographic could have an important role to play in accelerating the growth of emerging and expanding sectors of the economy.

Expected growth in 65+ age group: The 65+ age group is expected to become the fastest-growing demographic over the next 15 years, and the transferrable skills and experience of this demographic could again have an important role to play in facilitating economic restructuring. Those 75+ represent 6% of the

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city's population compared to a UK average of 9%. However, by 2043 there is expected growth in 75+ residents of 8%.

A diverse City: 33% of Coventry's population are from ethnic minority backgrounds, compared to 20% for England as a whole. Coventry's population is expected to become more diverse: among schoolchildren, 48.7% of pupils are from ethnic backgrounds other than White British, and it will be essential that we ensure that any barriers these groups face in accessing employment and training opportunities are tackled within Coventry's skills system.

Becoming less economically deprived and more equal: The 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) report showed significant improvements compared to 2015. Coventry moved from 34th most deprived Local Authority area to 64th. The number of neighbourhoods ranked within the most deprived 10% in the UK also decreased from 36 to 28. This improvement was driven in part by improving schools, a significant decrease in unemployment, supported by Coventry City Council's Job Shop, and rising resident wages. This Skills Strategy will contribute towards further reducing the number of neighbourhoods ranked within the most deprived 10% by providing residents in these areas with more access to good quality jobs and training opportunities.

Inequalities for women: Average weekly wages for women in Coventry are £173 less than those of male residents. This compares unfavourably to the national average gender pay gap of £97. Coventry also has statistically high numbers of economically inactive women with a gap of 9.6% between economically inactive women and men in Coventry which is larger than the National Average of 5.7%. A key focus of this Skills Strategy is ensuring that women in Coventry can access the best skills provision to help them into work or to progress to better paid roles, with courses delivered with the right flexibility.

Improving outcomes for disability and health conditions: Coventry has just over 10,000 residents claiming Employment Support Allowance, the main out of work benefit for people with disabilities and health conditions. This number has decreased in the last 5 years. Coventry has proportionally less people economically inactive due to long term sickness than the national averages. Coventry has been particularly successful in supporting residents with learning disabilities to progress straight from education into employment through our innovative Supported Internship programmes with University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire (UHCW) and Warwick University, which have seen over 70% progress into paid work. This Skills Strategy seeks to increase innovative provision such as Supported Internships and ensure mainstream provision is sufficiently flexible to support the needs of people with disabilities and health conditions leading to good outcomes for these groups.

Still challenges in health outcomes: The Covid pandemic has exacerbated longstanding inequalities, especially in health outcomes with life expectancy varying by 10.7 years for men and 8.3 years for women between the City's most affluent and most deprived neighbourhoods. In delivering this strategy, we will work with businesses to tackle longstanding health inequalities, through increasing investment in skills and apprenticeships, implementation of fairer working practices and paying more staff the real living wage, engaging Trade Bodies, Unions and other relevant stakeholders in the process

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Labour Market:

The characteristics of Coventry's labour force will influence the focus of where our skills support activities need to be over the next five years:

High employment in professional occupations: 26.4%, compared to a National Average of 23.3%. There is a high concentration of public sector employment: Coventry City Council, one of the largest Job Centres in the country, a large regional hospital and offices for several national civil service bodies such as The Department for Education and the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. Also, two large Universities which combined employ over 11,000 people, many in Professional Occupations, including engineering specialisms in support of Coventry's advanced engineering research and development. There will continue to be a need for labour with the requisite generic, leadership and management, and technical skills to fill new roles, so it is vital that we enable the local education and training system to produce a local labour force with these vital skills.

Strong employment in manufacturing sector: 6.1% of Coventry's workforce compared to a national average of 5.6%. Although the Covid pandemic caused a contraction of 2,300 jobs in this sector, advanced manufacturing & engineering is a sector where we aspire to create further growth (notably through growing electric vehicle and battery supply chains). It is therefore crucial that our skills system continues to produce a supply of local labour with the required high-level technical skills.

Low proportion of residents employed as Managers, Directors and Senior Officials: 5% compared to a national average of 10.9%, although this is in partly due to many of those working in these roles in Coventry businesses commuting from outside the city. A key objective within the Skills Strategy is to raise aspirations of Coventry residents across all neighbourhoods, and expand provision and maximise take-up of Leadership & Management training to enable more Coventry residents to progress into these types of roles.

Higher than average vacancy numbers: As with much of the UK over the last year Coventry has had higher than average numbers of vacancies. Employers particularly struggled to fill roles in hospitality and logistics, Health & Social Care (notably nursing roles in the NHS), and programme and software development roles across a range of sectors. This is a further challenge slowing the economic recovery, especially as many of these sectors employed high volumes of "EU nationals", who have since left the UK labour market. We will therefore work with employers, trade bodies unions, and training providers to ensure that training courses are designed in a way that delivers the skills the sectors need, and to identify Coventry residents that could potentially benefit from upskilling and fill the vacancies.

Many vacancies are low skilled/low paid and insecure: Skills solutions can support sectors experiencing labour shortages, however for many of the roles available the issue is more 'labour' as opposed to 'skills' shortage. Many roles in logistics, hospitality and care for example require elementary skills, have limited entry requirements, are lower paid and more insecure and struggle to attract candidates as a result. We will therefore work with employers, trade bodies and unions to drive improvements in the terms of employment within these sectors and develop and promote clearer career development paths. We will

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also provide support to these businesses in tackling recruitment challenges, and through the Job Shop, match local residents that could potentially fill new vacancies.

The above data, a citywide skills survey and widespread consultation with various stakeholders informed the developing of 3 Strategic Ambitions which contain 8 Priorities. These serve as a ‘framework for action’ and the Action Groups delivering these priorities will ensure positive impacts for all ‘protected groups’. The Strategic Ambitions and Priorities are set out below:

Strategic Ambition 1: A comprehensive, citywide skills offer that raises aspirations and allows each and every resident throughout their lives to reach their full potential.

- 1. Skills Levels:** To improve the overall skills levels of Coventry residents.
- 2. Aspiration:** Further develop a skills system that inspires residents to achieve from primary school through to lifelong learning.
- 3. Progression Pathways:** Providing a clear line of sight for people to progress through Coventry’s skills system.

Strategic Ambition 2: A skills ecosystem which ensures that all, including those most in need, are able to participate in, progress and achieve success.

- 4. Community:** A skills system which meets the needs of all residents and is widely accessed by all Coventry communities, including newly arrived communities.
 - 5. Inclusion:** A skills system which is fully inclusive and representative of our diverse City.
 - 6. Highest Needs:** A skills system which supports those most in need, with a ‘proportionate universalism’¹ approach, helping people out of poverty and creating a more equal City.
- Strategic Ambition 3: A flexible and responsive system that works together with our growing, investing and local businesses to deliver the right skills mix for our dynamic labour market.**
- 7. Skills for business:** A skills system which provides the skills required by Coventry’s businesses, both current and future and contributes to economic growth and the prosperity of the City and Region.
 - 8. Social Value and Sustainability:** A skills system which is well positioned to maximise increased commitment to social justice, respect, community, and responsibility including Coventry’s commitment to tackling climate change.

There are also 3 shared priorities with the Economic Development Strategy:

¹ ‘Proportionate Universalism’ is an approach developed by Sir Michael Marmot and applied throughout health and other services in the UK. The resourcing and delivering of universal services is at scale and intensity proportionate to the degree of need.

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Shared goals with the Economic Development Strategy

The Skills Strategy is fully integrated with Coventry City Council's new Economic Development Strategy 2022-2025.* Through the two strategies we will achieve three common goals:

1. **Getting the skills and opportunities right for investment:** Develop a 'team around' approach for investments and large developments with expertise brought together from across the Council to ensure early, comprehensive planning better meets business need and ensures maximum benefit for Coventry.
2. **Co-designing skills solutions with businesses:** Designing together with industry and skills partners to ensure the skills system is responsive, innovative and produces the right skills mix for now and the future. This includes supporting employers to maximise social value commitments.
3. **In-work upskilling with local employers:** Collaborations which encourage access to skills and workplace development at all levels.

2.2 On the basis of evidence, complete the table below to show what the potential impact is for each of the protected groups.

- Positive impact (P),
- Negative impact (N)
- Both positive and negative impacts (PN)
- No impact (NI)
- Insufficient data (ID)

*Any impact on the Council workforce should be included under question 2.6 – **not below**

Protected Characteristic	Impact type P, N, PN, NI	Nature of impact and any mitigations required
Age 0-18	P	<p>The Coventry Skills Strategy will positively impact this group by:</p> <p>Raising grades at all stages</p> <p>Building aspiration – inspiring young people to believe in their future and be inspired to achieve to reach their goals</p> <p>Progression pathways will be developed to provide clear line of sight for young people as they progress through Coventry's skills system.</p>

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		<p>Ensuring the skills system for 0-18 year olds is fully inclusive and supports those with the highest needs. This includes securing equality of outcomes.</p> <p>Ensuring young people are given the skills employers need to support their future careers and inspiring young people to consider 'green' future careers.</p>
Age 19-64	P	<p>The Coventry Skills Strategy will positively impact this group by:</p> <p>Raising grades at all stages and raising overall City skills levels through increased uptake of adult learning both within and outside of the workplace.</p> <p>Building aspiration – inspiring people to believe in their future and to understand that it is never too late to learn.</p> <p>Progression pathways will be developed to provide clear line of sight for all age learners ensuring they see the value in the courses they take.</p> <p>Ensuring the adult skills system is fully inclusive and supports those with the highest needs. This includes securing equality of outcomes.</p> <p>Ensuring adults are given the skills employers need to support their future careers and providing 'green skills' to support residents into current and future 'green' jobs.</p>
Age 65+	P	<p>The Coventry Skills Strategy will positively impact this group by:</p> <p>Raising grades at all stages and raising overall City skills levels through increased uptake of adult learning both within and outside of the workplace.</p> <p>Building aspiration – inspiring people to believe in their future and to understand that it is never too late to learn.</p> <p>Progression pathways will be developed to provide clear line of sight for all age learners ensuring they see the value in the courses they take.</p> <p>Ensuring the adult skills system is fully inclusive and supports those who are 65+ with the highest needs. This includes securing equality of outcomes. Ensuring skills provides make necessary reasonable adjustments to provide positive learning environments for people who are 65+.</p> <p>Ensuring adults are given the skills employers need to support their careers and providing 'green skills' to support residents into current and future 'green' jobs.</p>
Disability	P	<p>The Coventry Skills Strategy will positively impact this group by:</p> <p>Raising grades at all stages and raising overall City skills levels through increased uptake of adult learning both within and outside of the workplace.</p>

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		<p>Building aspiration – inspiring people with disabilities to believe in their future and to understand that it is never too late to learn. Progression pathways will be developed to provide clear line of sight for all age learners, including those with disabilities, ensuring they see the value in the courses they take.</p> <p>Ensuring the adult skills system is fully inclusive and supports those with the highest needs including those with disabilities. This includes securing equality of outcomes. Ensuring skills provides make necessary reasonable adjustments to provide positive learning environments for people with disabilities.</p> <p>Ensuring adults with disabilities are given the skills employers need to support their careers. Encouraging employers to create opportunities for residents with disabilities i.e job carving. Providing ‘green skills’ to support residents with disabilities into current and future ‘green’ jobs.</p>
Gender reassignment	p	<p>The Coventry Skills Strategy will positively impact this group by:</p> <p>Raising grades at all stages for all groups, including those who have gone through or are in the process of gender reassignment and raising overall City skills levels through increased uptake of adult learning both within and outside of the workplace.</p> <p>Building aspiration – inspiring people who have gone through or are in the process of gender reassignment to believe in their future and to understand that it is never too late to learn.</p> <p>Progression pathways will be developed to provide clear line of sight for all age learners, including those who have gone through or are in the process of gender reassignment, ensuring they see the value in the courses they take.</p> <p>Ensuring the adult skills system is fully inclusive and supports those with the highest needs including those who have gone through or are in the process of gender reassignment. This includes securing equality of outcomes. Ensuring skills provides make necessary reasonable adjustments to provide positive learning environments for people who have gone through or are in the process of gender reassignment.</p> <p>Ensuring those who have gone through or are in the process of gender reassignment are given the skills employers need to support their careers. Encouraging employers to be positive about employing people who have gone through or are in the process of going through gender reassignment. Providing ‘green skills’ to support these residents into current and future ‘green’ jobs.</p>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	p	<p>The Coventry Skills Strategy will positively impact this group by:</p>

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		<p>Raising grades at all stages including for adults in marriages and civil partnerships and raising overall City skills levels through increased uptake of adult learning both within and outside of the workplace. Building aspiration – inspiring people from all groups including those in marriages and civil partnerships to believe in their future and to understand that it is never too late to learn.</p> <p>Progression pathways will be developed to provide clear line of sight for all age learners, including adults in marriages and civil partnerships, ensuring they see the value in the courses they take. Ensuring the adult skills system is fully inclusive and supports those from all communities including adult in marriages and civil partnerships.</p> <p>Ensuring adults in marriages and civil partnerships are given the skills employers need to support their careers. Encouraging employers to be positive about employing people from all backgrounds including residents in marriages and civil partnerships. Providing ‘green skills’ to support these residents into current and future ‘green’ jobs.</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	P	<p>The Coventry Skills Strategy will positively impact this group by:</p> <p>Building aspiration – inspiring residents who are pregnant or on maternity leave to believe in their future and to understand that it is never too late to learn.</p> <p>Progression pathways will be developed to provide clear line of sight for all age learners, including young people and adults who are pregnant or on maternity leave, ensuring they see the value in the courses they take.</p> <p>Ensuring the adult skills system is fully inclusive and supports those who are pregnant or mothers to learn and achieve good outcomes. Ensuring skills provides make necessary reasonable adjustments to provide positive learning environments for pregnant women and mothers.</p> <p>Ensuring adults in marriages and civil partnerships are given the skills employers need to support their careers. Encouraging employers to be positive about employing people from all backgrounds including pregnant women and those returning from maternity. Providing ‘green skills’ to support these residents into current and future ‘green’ jobs.</p>

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Race (Including: colour, nationality, citizenship ethnic or national origins)	P	<p>The Coventry Skills Strategy will positively impact this group by: Raising grades for ethnic minorities at all educational stages and raising overall City skills levels for adults from ethnic minorities through increased uptake of adult learning both within and outside of the workplace.</p> <p>Building aspiration – inspiring young people from ethnic minorities to believe in their future. Inspiring adults from ethnic minorities to have high career aspirations and understand that it is never too late to learn.</p> <p>Progression pathways will be developed to provide clear line of sight for all age learners from ethnic minorities ensuring they see the value in the courses they take.</p> <p>Ensuring the adult skills system is fully inclusive and supports those from ethnic minorities, including those with the highest needs. This includes securing equality of outcomes. Ensuring skills provides make necessary reasonable adjustments to provide positive learning environments for ethnic minorities.</p> <p>Ensuring young people and adults from ethnic minorities are given the skills employers need to support their careers. Working with employers to prevent discrimination against people from ethnic minorities. Providing ‘green skills’ to support resident from ethnic minorities into current and future ‘green’ jobs.</p>
Religion and belief	P	<p>The Coventry Skills Strategy will positively impact this group by: Raising grades for young people from all religions and beliefs at all educational stages and raising overall City skills levels for adults from different religions and beliefs through increased uptake of adult learning both within and outside of the workplace.</p> <p>Building aspiration – inspiring young people from all religions and beliefs to believe in their future. Inspiring adults from all religions and beliefs to have high career aspirations and understand that it is never too late to learn.</p> <p>Progression pathways will be developed to provide clear line of sight for all age learners from different religions and beliefs ensuring they see the value in the courses they take.</p> <p>Ensuring the adult skills system is fully inclusive and supports those from different religions and beliefs, including those with the highest needs. This includes securing equality of outcomes. Ensuring skills provides make necessary reasonable adjustments to provide positive learning environments for people from all religions and beliefs.</p> <p>Ensuring young people and adults from ethnic minorities are given the skills employers need to support their careers and providing</p>

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

		<p>'green skills' to support residents from all religions and beliefs into current and future 'green' jobs.</p>
Sex	P	<p>The Coventry Skills Strategy will positively impact this group by: Raising grades for all genders at all educational stages and raising overall City skills levels for adults from all genders through increased uptake of adult learning both within and outside of the workplace. Building aspiration – inspiring young people from all genders to believe in their future. Inspiring adults from all genders to have high career aspirations and understand that it is never too late to learn. Progression pathways will be developed to provide clear line of sight for all age learners from different religions and beliefs ensuring they see the value in the courses they take. Ensuring the adult skills system is fully inclusive and supports those from all genders, including those with the highest needs. This includes securing equality of outcomes. Ensuring skills provides make necessary reasonable adjustments to provide positive learning environments for people from all genders. Ensuring young people and adults from all genders are given the skills employers need to support their careers and providing 'green skills' to support residents from all genders into current and future 'green' jobs.</p>
Sexual orientation	P	<p>The Coventry Skills Strategy will positively impact this group by: Raising grades for people of all sexual orientations at all educational stages and raising overall City skills levels for adults from all sexual orientations through increased uptake of adult learning both within and outside of the workplace. Building aspiration – inspiring young people of all sexual orientations to believe in their future. Inspiring adults of all sexual orientations to have high career aspirations and understand that it is never too late to learn. Progression pathways will be developed to provide clear line of sight for all age learners of all sexual orientations ensuring they see the value in the courses they take. Ensuring the adult skills system is fully inclusive and supports those of all sexual orientations including those with the highest needs. This includes securing equality of outcomes. Ensuring skills provides make necessary reasonable adjustments to provide positive learning environments for people of all sexual orientations. Ensuring young people and adults of all sexual orientations are given the skills employers need to support their careers and providing 'green skills' to support residents of all sexual orientations into current and future 'green' jobs.</p>

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)



HEALTH INEQUALITIES

2.3	<p>Health inequalities (HI) are unjust differences in health and wellbeing between different groups of people which arise because of the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work and age. These conditions influence our opportunities for good health, and result in stark differences in how long we live and how many years we live in good health.</p> <p>Many issues can have an impact: income, unemployment, work conditions, education and skills, our living situation, individual characteristics and experiences, such as age, gender, disability and ethnicity</p> <p>A wide range of services can make a difference to reducing health inequalities. Whether you work with children and young people, design roads or infrastructure, support people into employment or deal with welfare benefits – policy decisions and strategies can help to reduce health inequalities</p> <p>Please answer the questions below to help identify if the area of work will have any impact on health inequalities, positive or negative.</p> <p>If you need assistance in completing this section please contact: Alicia Philips or Lisa Young in Public Health for more information. More details and worked examples can be found at https://coventrycc.sharepoint.com/Info/Pages/What-is-an-Equality-Impact-Assessment-(EIA).aspx</p>
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Question	Issues to consider
2.3a What HIs exist in relation to your work / plan / strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Explore existing data sources on the distribution of health across different population groups (<i>examples of where to find data to be included in support materials</i>)Consider protected characteristics and different dimensions of HI such as socio-economic status or geographical deprivation
	<p>Response:</p> <p>The Health Inequalities most pertinent to this area of work are similar to those baseline challenges identified when Coventry secured Marmot City status. Namely that where someone is born, where they live, whether they work or not and what they do all affect how long someone will live, how healthy they will be and what quality of life they will experience. Men in the most affluent areas of the city will live, on average, 10.7 years longer than men in the most deprived areas, while for women the difference is 8.4 years.</p> <p>The Economic Development Service, working with key local and regional partners, and other Service Areas within the Council, has played an active part in forming the Council's</p>

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response to the Call to Action, and will continue to do so through the implementation of this new Economic Development Strategy and the interventions that will be delivered as part of this.

<p>2.3b How might your work affect HI (positively or negatively).</p> <p>How might your work address the needs of different groups that share protected characteristics</p>	<p>Consider and answer below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Think about whether outcomes vary across groups and who benefits the most and least, for example, the outcome for a woman on a low income may be different to the outcome for a woman a high income• Consider what the unintended consequences of your work might be
	<p>Response:</p> <p>a. Potential outcomes including impact based on socio-economic status or geographical deprivation</p> <p>The Coventry Skills strategy aims to raise skills levels for all residents and encourage resident aspiration. Whilst there is a focus on all residents the strategy recognises that more attention needs to be directed to more deprived areas of the City, using a 'proportionate universalism approach'. One of the priorities of the Coventry Skills Strategy is that the skills system 'meets the needs of all residents and is widely accessed by all Coventry communities, including newly arrived communities.' There will be an Action Group focusing on this priority, ensuring that the strategies other priorities such as raising skills levels, building aspiration and providing the skills that employers need are equally benefiting all communities, especially deprived communities.</p> <p>Through the focus on communities, the Coventry Skills Strategy will have a positive impact on the socio-economic status of many city residents. There will be a focus on ensuring that residents from more deprived communities are given the skills they need to secure employment and to progress within employment to higher paying roles.</p> <p>The Coventry Skills Strategy is fully integrated with the Economic Development Strategy and shared goals around getting the skills right for investment, co-designing skills solutions with businesses and in work upskilling with local employers. These shared goals will provide businesses with the skills they need to grow and invest in the City which will lead to more jobs for local people, including growth in higher paid roles. Crucially both strategies recognise the need to work closely with businesses around social value to ensure that jobs growth benefits local residents, particularly residents from more deprived communities.</p>

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- b. Potential outcomes impact on specific socially excluded or vulnerable groups eg. people experiencing homelessness, prison leavers, young people leaving care, members of the armed forces community.

The Coventry Skills strategy aims to raise skills levels for all residents and encourage resident aspiration. Whilst there is a focus on all residents the strategy recognises that more attention needs to be directed to socially excluded or vulnerable groups using a 'proportionate universalism approach'. One of the priorities of the Coventry Skills Strategy is that the skills system effectively supports those who may be considered to have the highest needs such as people experiencing homelessness, prison leavers, young people leaving care, members of the armed forces community, people with disabilities, victims of domestic violence and those with substance misuse issues. There will be an Action Group focusing on this priority, ensuring that the strategies other priorities such as raising skills levels, building aspiration and providing the skills that employers need are equally benefiting those with higher need. We will ensure that skills providers

2.4 Next steps - What specific actions will you take to address the potential equality impacts and health inequalities identified above?

The Action Groups responsible for actioning the priorities of the Coventry Skills Strategy be actively involved in supporting Public Health and other Service areas and partners to reduce health inequalities. The Action Groups will work with skills providers at all levels to raise skills levels for all Coventry communities with more attention directed to more deprived areas of the City, using a 'proportionate universalism approach'. There will also be actions focused on building aspiration for all communities and ensuring that all communities are gaining the skills that they need to secure good quality work, and to progress within the workplace. This includes actions to ensure that the skills system is fully inclusive and supporting those with 'higher needs'.

The Coventry Skills Strategy (alongside Economic Development Strategy) pledges to work with businesses to tackle longstanding health inequalities, through increasing investment in skills and apprenticeships, implementation of fairer working practices and paying more staff the real living wage, engaging Unions and Trade Bodies in the process. We will also continue to support businesses in addressing recruitment challenges, which will entail co-designing training programmes alongside training providers, and (where possible) matching local jobseekers with new vacancies to reduce risks of worklessness widening health inequalities.

DIGITAL INCLUSION

- 2.5** The Covid-19 pandemic accelerated the uptake of digital services nationally, whereby people who are digitally enabled have better financial opportunities, can access new information and are better connected to others (Lloyds Consumer Digital Index, 2021). However, for those who are digitally excluded, the digital divide has grown during the last two years, and without intervention people will be left behind with poorer outcomes across employment, health and wellbeing, education and service access. Some people are more likely to be excluded including: older people, people from lower income households, unemployed people,

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people living in social housing, disabled people, school leavers before 16 with fewer educational qualifications, those living in rural areas, homeless people, or people whose first language is not English ([NHS Digital](#).)

Some of the barriers to digital inclusion can include lack of:

- **Access** to a device and/or data
- **Digital skills**
- **Motivation** to get online
- **Trust** of online safety

Digital exclusion is not a fixed entity and may look different to different people at different times.

Example 1. Person A, has access to a smartphone and monthly data and can access social media apps, however lacks the digital skills and confidence, and appropriate device to create a CV, apply for jobs and attend remote interviews, and/or access educational and skills resources.

Example 2. Person B, is digitally confident and has their own laptop, however due to a lower household income and other financial priorities, they cannot afford their monthly broadband subscription and can no longer get online to access the services they need to.

Example 3. Person C has very little digital experience and has heard negative stories on the news regarding online scams. Despite having the financial resource, they see no benefit of being online and look for alternatives whenever possible. A new council service requires mandatory online registration, therefore they do not access it.

It is important that we all consider how we can reduce digital inequalities across our services, and this may look very different depending on the nature of our work.

Please answer the questions below to help identify if the area of work will have any impact on digital inequalities, positive or negative.

If you need assistance in completing this section please contact: Laura Waller (*Digital Services & Inclusion Lead, CCC*). More details and worked examples can be found at [https://coventrycc.sharepoint.com/Info/Pages/What-is-an-Equality-Impact-Assessment-\(EIA\).aspx](https://coventrycc.sharepoint.com/Info/Pages/What-is-an-Equality-Impact-Assessment-(EIA).aspx)

Question	Issues to consider
2.5 What digital inequalities exist in relation to your work / plan / strategy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does your work assume service users have digital access and skills?• Do outcomes vary across groups, for example digitally excluded people benefit the least compared to those who have digital skills and access?• Consider what the unintended consequences of your work might be.
	Response:

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The Coventry Skills Strategy is city-wide in scope and therefore does not consider all to have equal digital access and skills. The Strategy's priorities around community, inclusion and supporting those who may be considered to be 'higher needs' recognises this. Action Groups working on these priorities will work with skills providers to ensure that digital barriers do not prevent some from accessing courses and progressing. For example, if a course is planned to be delivered online or with a blended approach the skills provider needs to ensure that they have a plan for learners who do not have digital access at home i.e they can use classroom facilities or be given a device and data/broadband access. Ensuring that there is good access for all to gain digital skills will also be a key action in promoting inclusion and ensuring the Coventry skills system is supporting all communities.

A Citywide Skills Survey undertaken between Nov 2021 – Jan 2022 showed that 54% of respondents wanted 'blended' online and classroom courses with 22% wanting online only. However, 26% of respondents wanted classroom only, which showed that there is still a significant proportion of residents who either cannot access online provision or prefer not to learn in this way. It is crucial therefore that skills providers do not exclude these groups.

2.5b How will you mitigate against digital inequalities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If any digital inequalities are identified how can you reduce these? For e.g. if a new service requires online registration you may work with partner organisations to improve digital skills and ensure equitable processes are available if someone is unable to access online.
	<p>Response: As detailed above the Skills Strategy Action Groups will work with all skills providers as well as community partners to improve digital skills across the city and ensure that device access barriers are addressed.</p>

2.6 How will you monitor and evaluate the effect of this work?

We will continue to hold an Annual Skills Survey which will look at whether digital barriers are preventing residents from accessing skills courses. As with our previous survey there will be readily available offline versions of the survey to ensure good representation from residents with digital barriers.

We will continue to engage with businesses in partnership with our Economic Development Service to understand if businesses are struggling to recruit Coventry residents with the right levels of digital skills. We will also be informed by local and regional data on digital skills levels.

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2.7 Will there be any potential impacts on Council staff from protected groups?

There will be no additional impacts on Council staff from protected groups.

You should only include the following data if this area of work will potentially have an impact on Council staff. This can be obtained from: Nicole.Powell@coventry.gov.uk

Headcount:

Sex:

Female	
Male	

Age:

16-24	
25-34	
35-44	
45-54	
55-64	
65+	

Disability:

Disabled	
Not Disabled	
Prefer not to state	
Unknown	

Ethnicity:

White	
Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic	
Prefer not to state	
Unknown	

Religion:

Any other	
Buddhist	
Christian	
Hindu	
Jewish	
Muslim	
No religion	
Sikh	
Prefer not to state	
Unknown	

Sexual Orientation:

Heterosexual	
LGBT+	
Prefer not to state	
Unknown	

3.0 Completion Statement

As the appropriate Head of Service for this area, I confirm that the potential equality impact is as follows:

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)



No impact has been identified for one or more protected groups

Positive impact has been identified for one or more protected groups

Negative impact has been identified for one or more protected groups

Both positive and negative impact has been identified for one or more protected groups

4.0 Approval

Signed: Head of Service: Kim Mawby, Head of Employment and Skills	Date: 9th September 2022
Name of Director: Kirston Nelson, Chief Partnerships Officer/ Director of Education and	Date sent to Director
Name of Lead Elected Members: Cllr K Sandhu, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills Cllr J O'Boyle, Cabinet Member for Jobs, Regeneration and Climate Change	Date sent to Councillors:

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**To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee
Education and Children's Service Scrutiny Board (2)**

**Date: 28th September 2022
Date: 20th October 2022**

Subject: Co-option of Other Faiths Representative to the Board

1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 To provide Members of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee and the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) the opportunity to co-opt an "Other Faiths" representative to the Board

2 Recommendations

- 1) Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee is recommended to approve the co-option of Mr Ghulam Vohra as a non-voting co-optee to the Committee under Part 2D, Section 6.1 (e) of the constitution to the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee for Education matters.
- 2) The Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) is recommended to approve the co-option of Mr Ghulam Vohra as a non-voting co-optee to the Board under Part 2D, Section 6.1 (e) of the constitution

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 At the meeting on 19th May 2022, Council agreed to:

"Delegate the approval of the outstanding co-opted Members for Education matters appointments for the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee and the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2) to that Committee and Scrutiny Board."

- 3.2 Part 2D, Section 6 of the Council Constitution, Education Representatives states:

"6.1 The Scrutiny Board responsible for Education matters will include the following:

(a) One person nominated by the Church of England.

(b) One person nominated by the Roman Catholic Church.

(c) A maximum of two parent governors elected by the parent governors in the City in respect of either the Primary or Secondary phase of education.

(e) One representative from other faith groups in the City

6.2 Such appointees, with the exception for the time being of the representative appointed under 6.1(e) above, may speak and vote on education issues only, but may speak on other issues.

6.3 They will also be invited to attend the meetings of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee (if it is considering a call-in on an educational matter) and of other Scrutiny Boards (if education matters are to be considered at those meetings) and may speak, but not vote upon those matters.

6.4 Such appointees shall serve a minimum term of two years and a maximum term of four years."

Gennie Holmes
Scrutiny Co-ordinator
gennie.holmes@coventry.gov.uk

Agenda Item 6

SCRU CO Work Programme 2022-23

Last updated 8th September 2022

Please see page 2 onwards for background to items

22nd June 2022

Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board
Scrutiny Annual Report 2021-22

20th July 2022

One Coventry Annual Performance Report (Cabinet Report)
One Coventry Plan Engagement

28th September 2022

Jobs and Skills:
a) Economic Development Strategy
b) Coventry Skills Strategy
Appointment of Co-opted Member of the Education and Children's Scrutiny Board (2)

19th October 2022

Coventry Municipal Holdings (CMH) Annual Report

9th November 2022

PSPO's
Community Safety Strategic Assessment
One Coventry Plan (Cabinet Report)

14th December 2022

18th January 2023

Rough Sleeper Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant
Exempt Accommodation

1st March 2023

Coventry City of Culture Legacy
Coventry and Warwickshire Health Inequalities Strategic Plan

19th April 2023

FGM

Suggested items for 2022-23 – dates to be agreed

Inequalities T&F group
One Coventry Plan Refresh
The cost of living crisis – including food banks and the energy crisis
CCC Transformation Programme
Economic Impact of Brexit
Climate Change Action Plan
Domestic Abuse Update
Health Inequalities and Marmot
Spon End Regeneration Project

SCRUCO Work Programme 2022-23

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
22nd June 2022	Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board	A report on progress on the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership progress including benchmarking data and duties under the Domestic Abuse Act	Cllr AS Khan/ Cllr P Akhtar Public Health reps
	Scrutiny Annual Report 2021-22	To consider the 2021-22 Annual Report	Cllr N Akhtar
20th July 2022	One Coventry Annual Performance Report (Cabinet Report)	To scrutinise the One Coventry Annual Performance report and for Scrutiny Board Chairs to identify areas of work for their Boards to scrutinise in detail.	Cllr Duggins Allison Duggal Kirston Nelson
	One Coventry Plan Engagement	This item will outline the engagement work being delivered around the One Coventry Plan Refresh. SCRUCO comments will be fed into the engagement work.	Cllr Duggins Kirston Nelson
28th September 2022	Jobs and Skills: a) Economic Development Strategy b) Coventry Skills Strategy	To consider the draft Skills Strategy and draft Economic Development Strategy before they are considered by Cabinet	Cllr O'Boyle Cllr Sandhu Kim Mawby/ Steve Weir
	Appointment of Co-opted Member of the Education and Children's Scrutiny Board (2)	To appoint a representative of "other faiths" as laid out in section 2D paragraph 6.1(e)	Gennie Holmes Cllr Innes
19th October 2022	Coventry Municipal Holdings (CMH) Annual Report	To receive the CMH Annual Report at an appropriate time as agreed at the meeting on 26 th August 2021.	Cllr Duggins Barry Hastie
9th November 2022	PSPO's	To consider all of the PSPO's across the city to look at the data to evaluate their effectiveness, to include Police reps.	Liam Nagle Cllr AS Khan
	Community Safety Strategic Assessment	To scrutinise the data within the Community Safety Strategic Assessment.	Cllr AS Khan/ Craig Hickin
	One Coventry Plan (Cabinet Report)	To consider the final One Coventry Plan before the report is taken to Cabinet in December.	Cllr Duggins Kirston Nelson

SCRUCO Work Programme 2022-23

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
14th December 2022			
18th January 2023	Rough Sleeper Drug and Alcohol Treatment Grant	The Council have received a grant to deliver enhanced drug and alcohol treatment services to Rough Sleepers and those at risk of Rough sleeping. The grant was issued in December 2021 and runs until March 2023. SCRUCO have asked to know how effective the measures within the grant have been.	Cllr Caan Jim Crawshaw/ Rachel Chapman
	Exempt Accommodation	To look at the levels of exempt accommodation, the quality of the support offered to vulnerable tenants, as well as steps the Council can take to address concerns.	Jim Crawshaw Cllr Welsh
1st March 2023	Coventry City of Culture Legacy	To consider the lasting legacy from City of Culture 2022 including impact on the Council.	Cllr Duggins David Nuttall
	Coventry and Warwickshire Health Inequalities Strategic Plan	To look at the monitoring framework to monitor progress against targets and KPI's. Representation from NHS partners to be invited.	Cllr Caan Allison Duggal
19th April 2023	FGM	To scrutinise services and awareness raising of Female Genital Mutilation.	Cllr Caan Allison Duggal
Suggested items for 2022-23 – dates to be agreed	Inequalities T&F group		
	One Coventry Plan Refresh	To consider a draft of the refreshed One Coventry Plan presented to Cabinet. The committee will be able to make recommendations to Council. To also consider the community engagement and public consultation plans. Also, to consider how the Anchor Alliance will support delivery of the Plan	Cllr Duggins Kirston Nelson Vanessa Millar

SCRUCO Work Programme 2022-23

Date	Title	Detail	Cabinet Member/ Lead Officer
	The cost of living crisis – including food banks and the energy crisis	Identified at SCRUCO 16.02.22. To scrutinise the impact of the energy crisis and what support is available to support local residents. Council Tax rebate. Revs and Bens. Include case studies. Use of credit unions and loan sharks.	Cllr O'Boyle/ Cllr Caan /Bret Willers
	CCC Transformation Programme		
	Economic Impact of Brexit	An update report on the impact of Brexit on the local economy, including information on sector-by-sector feedback, be submitted to a future meeting of the Board in twelve months and the Board's work programme be updated accordingly. Follow up to meeting in Nov 2021	Cllr O'Boyle Steve Weir
	Climate Change Action Plan	Identified at SCRUCO 16.02.22. What consultation has been undertaken for this item? Invite in key stakeholders.	Cllr O'Boyle Bret Willers
	Domestic Abuse Update	An update following meeting on 22 June 22 to include progress on early intervention	Alison Duggal Cllr P Akhtar
	Health Inequalities and Marmot	To look at what the Council is doing to address health inequalities and to monitor progress	Allison Duggal Cllr Caan
	Spon End Regeneration Project	How is it funded? How have people have been relocated? What are the plans? How are plans communicated with the community?	