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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 priorities<sup>1</sup> 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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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. ~~(from 50% to 59.3%).~~

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’<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>2</sup> ‘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%.<sup>3</sup>



**A diverse City:** 33% of Coventry's population are from ethnic minority backgrounds, compared to 20% for England as a whole.<sup>4</sup> 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<sup>5</sup> 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%.<sup>6</sup> 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.<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> One Coventry (draft)

<sup>4</sup> [Coventry City Council Website - Facts About Coventry](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Coventry City Council IMD Summary Report](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Nomis \(ONS\)](#)

<sup>7</sup> [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.<sup>8</sup> 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

<sup>8</sup> [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 4<sup>th</sup> 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 Strategy<sup>9</sup>)
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 Benchmarks<sup>10</sup> 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:**

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<sup>9</sup> [Coventry University Group 2030 Strategy](#)

<sup>10</sup> [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.

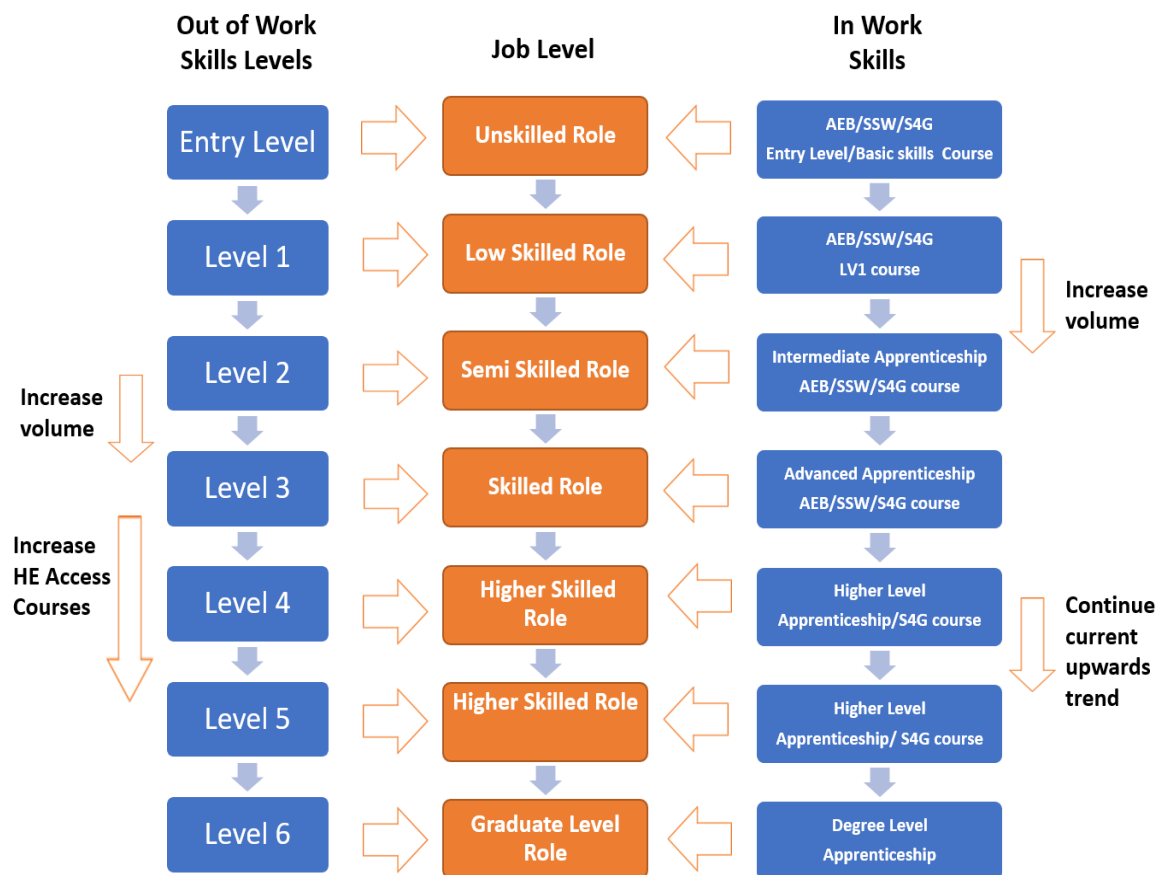
**3. Progression Pathways: Providing a clear line of sight for people to progress through Coventry’s skills system**

**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.<sup>11</sup> 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

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<sup>11</sup> 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.<sup>12</sup> 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.

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<sup>12</sup> [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.