



## EXECUTIVE DECISION NOTICE

<b>SERVICE AREA:</b>	<b>GROWTH</b>
<b>SUBJECT MATTER:</b>	<b>ADULT COMMUNITY EDUCATION COVID19 SERVICE CHANGES</b>
<b>DECISION:</b>	<p>That it be DETERMINED that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Adult Community Education continues to operate virtual learning in line with Government guidance on adult education.</li> <li>2. That Adult Community Education continues to develop plans and risk assessments in preparation to provide a face to face learning offer in line with Government guidance in preparation for September 2020 opening.</li> <li>3. That the entering of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Grant Funding Agreement 2020/21 be considered by a future Cabinet on receipt and be delegated to the Director of Growth.</li> </ol>
<b>DECISION TAKER(S):</b>	Councillor Leanne Feeley
<b>DESIGNATION OF DECISION TAKER (S):</b>	Executive Member for Lifelong Learning Equalities and Culture
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	8 July 2020
<b>REASON FOR DECISION:</b>	The report outlines the changes to the Adult Education Service in response to COVID19.
<b>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS REJECTED (if any):</b>	The Service cannot operate as normal at present due to the impact of COVID19 as per Government Guidance which prioritised online learning.
<b>CONSULTEES:</b>	Cllr Leanne Feeley Executive Member for Lifelong Learning Equalities and Culture
<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: (Authorised by Borough Treasurer)</b>	<p>The Tameside Adult Community Education Service is fully funded by a grant in excess of £800k per academic year.</p> <p>GMCA and ESFA have confirmed that ACE will continue to receive payments in line with the agreed schedule up to the end of the contract for academic year 2019-2020 ending on the 31st July 2020. They have also confirmed that there will be no financial penalties due to any impact of Covid-19 on learner achievement and outcomes.</p> <p>The limitations imposed on delivery by the pandemic may well result in the council being in breach of the terms of the funding agreement. However it appears that this has been acknowledged and will be addressed by a variation to the current agreement.</p> <p>It is important that this is undertaken to ensure that there is no risk of claw back of the funding in the future.</p> <p>Any costs incurred will need to be managed within the existing funding allocations to ensure there is no call on the</p>

	<p>Council core budget.</p> <p>In respect of funding for 2020-2021 the funding agreement will need to be agreed to enable the service to operate.</p>
<p><b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:</b> (Authorised by Borough Solicitor)</p>	<p>The starting point for the Executive Member in considering this decision is the original decision, which agreed to the changes to the delivery of this service in response to the covid pandemic. As set out in this report the current delivery of this service continues to be affected by the covid pandemic and the need for social distancing. Given how valuable this service is to those who access it continuing to monitor the guidance and ensuring that every possible mechanism for delivery is and continues to be explored.</p> <p>The limitations imposed on delivery by the pandemic may well result in the council being in breach of the terms of the funding agreement. However it appears that this has been acknowledged and will be addressed by a variation to the current agreement.</p> <p>It is important that this is undertaken to ensure that there is no risk of claw back of the funding in the future.</p> <p>Clarity is needed in respect of recommendation 3 as to what is being delegated to the Director when the Grant Funding Agreement is going back to Cabinet.</p>
<p><b>CONFLICT OF INTEREST:</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>DISPENSATION GRANTED BY STANDARDS COMMITTEE ATTACHED:</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>ACCESS TO INFORMATION:</b></p>	<p>The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the Report Writer, David Berry by:</p> <p> Telephone: 0161 342 2246</p> <p> E-mail: <a href="mailto:david.berry@tameside.gov.uk">david.berry@tameside.gov.uk</a></p>





Signed

Dated: 22 July 2020

Councillor Leanne Feeley, Executive Member for Lifelong Learning Equalities and Culture

## EXECUTIVE DECISION REPORT

<b>SERVICE AREA:</b>	<b>GROWTH</b>
<b>SUBJECT MATTER:</b>	<b>Adult Community Education COVID19 Service Changes</b>
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	22 July 2020
<b>DECISION TAKER(S):</b>	Councillor Leanne Feeley
<b>DESIGNATION OF DECISION TAKER (S):</b>	Executive Member for Lifelong Learning Equalities and Culture
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Jayne Traverse Director of Growth
<b>REPORT SUMMARY:</b>	This report sets out changes to the Adult Community Education service due to COVID19 and Indicative Funding Letter for 2020/21.
<b>RECOMMENDATION:</b>	<p>That it be DETERMINED that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) That Adult Community Education continues to operate virtual learning in line with Government guidance on adult education.</li> <li>2) That Adult Community Education continues to develop plans and risk assessments in preparation to provide a face to face learning offer in line with Government guidance in preparation for September 2020 opening.</li> <li>3) That the entering of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority Grant Funding Agreement 2020/21 be considered by a future Cabinet on receipt and be delegated to the Director of Growth.</li> </ol>
<b>JUSTIFICATION FOR THE DECISION:</b>	The report outlines the changes to the Adult Education Service in response to COVID19.
<b>ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS REJECTED (if any):</b>	The Service cannot operate as normal at present due to the impact of COVID19 as per Government Guidance which prioritised online learning.
<b>CONSULTEES:</b>	Cllr Leanne Feeley Executive Member for Lifelong Learning Equalities and Culture
<b>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: (Authorised by Section 151 Officer)</b>	<p>The Tameside Adult Community Education Service is fully funded by a grant in excess of £800k per academic year.</p> <p>GMCA and ESFA have confirmed that ACE will continue to receive payments in line with the agreed schedule up to the end of the contract for academic year 2019-2020 ending on the 31st July 2020. They have also confirmed that there will be no financial penalties due to any impact of to Covid-19 on learner achievement and outcomes.</p> <p>The limitations imposed on delivery by the pandemic may well result in the council being in breach of the terms of the funding agreement. However it appears that this has been acknowledged and will be addressed by a variation to the</p>

	<p>current agreement.</p> <p>It is important that this is undertaken to ensure that there is no risk of claw back of the funding in the future.</p> <p>Any costs incurred will need to be managed within the existing funding allocations to ensure there is no call on the Council core budget.</p> <p>In respect of funding for 2020-2021 the funding agreement will need to be agreed to enable the service to operate.</p>
<p><b>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:</b> <b>(Authorised by Borough Solicitor)</b></p>	<p>The starting point for the Executive Member in considering this decision is the original decision which agreed to the changes to the delivery of this service in response to the covid pandemic.</p> <p>As set out in this report the current delivery of this service continues to be affected by the covid pandemic and the need for social distancing. Given how valuable this service is to those who access it continuing to monitor the guidance and ensuring that every possible mechanism for delivery is and continues to be explored.</p> <p>The limitations imposed on delivery by the pandemic may well result in the council being in breach of the terms of the funding agreement. However it appears that this has been acknowledged and will be addressed by a variation to the current agreement.</p> <p>It is important that this is undertaken to ensure that there is no risk of claw back of the funding in the future.</p> <p>Clarity is needed in respect of recommendation 3 as to what is being delegated to the Director when the Grant Funding Agreement is going back to Cabinet.</p>
<p><b>CONFLICT OF INTEREST:</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>DISPENSATION GRANTED BY STANDARDS COMMITTEE ATTACHED:</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>ACCESS TO INFORMATION:</b></p>	<p>The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the David Berry by:</p> <p> Telephone: 0161 342 2246</p> <p> E-mail: david.berry@tameside.gov.uk</p>

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Tameside Adult Community Education (ACE) delivers education and learning opportunities to residents of Tameside aged 19+. All provision is funded via a grant from Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB) £818,418 with a nominal amount from the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) (£4,570). Our training Centre based at Stamford Chambers in the centre of Ashton-Under-Lyne has remained closed since 18 March 2020 due to the COVID19 Pandemic. The closure was considered by Executive Board on the 1 April 2020 as part of the Response to COVID Pandemic Report. The Government issued guidance on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020 to enable adult community education providers should plan to open to all learners from September with priority learners aged 19+ able to return to onsite delivery from 13 July where this can be safely accommodated.
- 1.2 ACE supports around 600 individual learners per annum and is the second highest provider of adult education in the borough after Tameside College. 47.8% of learners have a learning difficulty or disability and 34% of learners are from BAME backgrounds. ACE is focused on providing community learner and basic skills to the most vulnerable residents to support the foundational economy and progression onto Level 3+ learning.

## **2.0 CONTINUED SERVICE PROVISION**

- 2.1 During the COVID19 Pandemic teaching and learning has been undertaken remotely where possible, with all face to face learning ceased (as per Government Guidance at that time). This is allowing learners particularly those on courses leading to a qualification to remain engaged in learning and receive regular support from their tutor including on-line teaching and feedback. A range of methods are being used to maintain communications with learners including Facebook, WhatsApp, google classroom, skype, e-mail, blogs, website updates and printed workbooks. 264 learners were in learning as of 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 over 170 learners have remained engaged with learning during this period and are in regular contact with their tutors. Those learners without access to Information technology have been assisted using telephone and regular posting of workbooks using I-mail to enable the following of safety procedures. All community based learning programmes were ended as access to community venues was removed as a result of the CV pandemic. This type of provision is difficult to operate remotely, similar provision has ceased across GMCA.
- 2.2 Community and family learning has been severely impacted by the pandemic with many of the venues used to host these classes closing to external users, resulting in most classes being withdrawn before their planned end date. Currently the ACE website has a family learning page with useful links to support parents whilst they are at home and encouraging them to remain engaged with ACE.
- 2.3 As with other national examinations and qualifications functional skills maths and English learners and those undertaking vocational programmes are not permitted to sit any examinations. Vocational qualifications and Functional Skills results in ICT, childcare retail, English and maths have been calculated by tutors in-house using a range of evidence following strict awarding body guidelines. This has enabled those learners who have achieved the appropriate standard to be submitted for certification. Final results will be available in late July following external moderation by the relevant awarding bodies. (The date has not been published).
- 2.4 GMCA and ESFA have confirmed that ACE will continue to receive payments in line with the agreed schedule up to the end of the contract for academic year 2019-2020 ending on the 31st July 2020. The withdrawal of performance monitoring procedures during this period ensures that there will be no financial penalties due to any impact of to Covid-19 on learner achievement and outcomes. This variation to contract is to be reviewed quarterly

enabling ACE to consider future curriculum planning and recruitment for academic year 2020-2021. Research continues to establish an on-line learning platform which will enable ACE to offer a range of learning opportunities on-line. It should be noted that our historical focus has been a welcoming community environment with small class sizes and a strong learner focus to enable learners to progress with us from taster courses into qualifications. Digital learner will present challenges to many of our traditional learner cohort due to low level English skills and learning difficulties and disabilities.

- 2.5 As ACE traditionally works with those furthest from the workplace with additional barriers to employment such as mental health issues, low confidence, additional needs and poor literacy and numeracy skills. ACE does not presently have a commercial product which can be routinely translated into an offer for those who are closer to the jobs market or vocational tutors who can offer support to those looking to re-train in key sectors (such as health and social care) in the short term during the COVID19 emergency.
- 2.6 GMCA has introduced additional flexibilities to the original AEB funding rules to support residents during this period. Including Unemployed and economically inactive residents seeking to gain skills in key sector areas and furloughed workers who are now in receipt of a lower wage due to a reduction in their salary which meets the low-wage criteria, additionally GMCA will allow learning programmes to take place on an employer's premises. ACE continues to monitor how these flexibilities can be utilised locally. ACE are not currently taking new enrolments as our centre remains closed and staff are working from home. All new learners would have to complete their training programmes before the 31 July 2020 and our current curriculum does not allow for this. Therefore ACE has not been able to utilise these new flexibilities to the funding rules.

### 3. **ACADEMIC YEAR 2020/2021**

- 3.1 ACE is currently reviewing risk assessments and planning for the Academic Year 2020/21 following Government guidance on the future reopening of education facilities and working to Tameside Council recovery plans. At 15 July 2020 the Government Guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-further-education-provision/what-fe-colleges-and-providers-will-need-to-do-from-the-start-of-the-2020-autumn-term>) relevant to ACE states:
- **Attendance from July until September**  
Providers can now make arrangements for priority learners aged 19+ to return to onsite delivery from 13 July, where this can be safely accommodated, in addition to those 16 to 19 learners currently attending.
  - **Opening to all learners in September**  
You should plan on the basis that, from September 2020, all learners will return to a full high-quality education programme. This is possible because we are continuing to make significant progress in tackling the virus. The prevalence of the virus has reduced and the NHS Test and Trace system is up and running. Given the improved position, the balance of risk is now overwhelmingly in favour of young people and adults being able to take part in a full education, including attending on site, with appropriate controls in place to manage the transmission risk. This guidance will be kept under review and will be updated as necessary.
- 3.2 ACE has received an Indicative GM Devolved AEB Funding Allocation letter for 2020/21 (£818,418) attached as Appendix 1 which was approved at the GMCA meeting on the 29 May 2020. Tameside Council will receive a Grant Agreement in July/August 2020 to be signed and sealed. It is proposed that on receipt that agreement be presented to Executive Cabinet.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 ACE will continue to operate in 2020/21 based on continually review and adaption to Government Guidance and Tameside Council recovery plans with reports brought forward as appropriate to support re-opening