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**Manchester City Council  
Report for Resolution**

**Report to:** Economy Scrutiny Committee – 14 January 2015

**Subject:** Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES)

**Report of:** Julie Rushton, Head of MAES

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**Summary -**

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the MAES business model and course provision and its contribution to enabling residents to have the right mix of skills to benefit from the City's employment opportunities and to improve their well being and participation as citizens. It includes information about the delivery model pilot in Wythenshawe; work the service is doing with partners to progress learners to employment and the service's performance in 2013/14 academic year.

**Recommendations**

Members are requested to note and comment on the report

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**Wards Affected:**

All

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**Background documents (available for public inspection)**

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

None

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES) is part of the Education and Skills Service which sits within the Children and Families Directorate of Manchester City Council and has direct links to the Directorate for Growth and Neighbourhoods to connect the education, work and skills agenda across the council. The Education and Skills service has strengthened partnerships across the education, skills and business sectors, in order to further improve educational outcomes, reduce dependency and better connect individuals and neighbourhoods to the employment opportunities being created.
- 1.2 In the last 2 years, MAES has revised its business model to extend the course programme from 36 to 48 weeks, delivered a 20% increase in provision and repositioned its course offer in conjunction with the other main provider The Manchester College, to better meet the City strategic priorities to reduce unemployment, address low skills and reduce dependency. MAES's particular expertise and niche is in delivering Adult Skills qualification courses up to level 2 (GCSE is level 2) for adults aged 19+ (with the largest cohort aged 25-50) in English for speakers of other languages, (ESOL) Maths, English, Care and Education and non qualification Community learning courses in Digital Skills, Employability and Family Learning as a preparation for further learning and work.
- 1.3 MAES's provision is regulated by Ofsted and was inspected in October 2013. The service was judged to be 'good' on all measures, which are outcomes for learners, leadership and management and the quality of teaching learning and assessment. Ofsted found that 'leaders and managers have transformed the service very successfully so that it now focuses on meeting the educational needs of adults from the most deprived neighbourhoods in the city and on preparing adults for work'.

## 2.0 National policy and Sub Regional Context

- 2.1 The Department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) *Skills for Sustainable Growth* strategy (November 2010) and Rigour and Responsiveness (April 2013) set out the national policy framework for the delivery of learning and skills.. The implications are for local authority adult education services are:
- Public funding for adult learning will increasingly be targeted at areas of disadvantage
  - Adult Education provision has a valuable role in supporting adults who are moving towards or seeking to progress in work
  - Community Learning provides a pathway for adults and families with complex needs to re-engage in learning and to develop the confidence and skills to become more self reliant and better contribute to their communities
  - There is the potential to better align Adult and Community Learning provision and DWP provision in the context of public service reform.

- 2.2 The Greater Manchester Devolution agreement will enable the city region to deliver the skills needs of its economy. It will re-shape and restructure the Further Education provision within Greater Manchester so that a new, forward looking FE system is in place by 2017.
- 2.3 As part of the current City Deal, the combined authority secured greater freedom and flexibility to maximise the contribution that skills funding can make to growing Greater Manchester's economy. The GM Skills and Employment partnership have agreed a set of skills priorities that aim to better meet the needs of the City's growth sectors and residents. Skills demand is expected to be driven by growth in Finance and Professional services, Health and Social Care, Education, Creative and Digital and Advanced Manufacturing and in Retail, Logistics and Hospitality and Tourism where the supply of people doesn't meet demand. This will require employers to both design training and invest in developing the skills of their workforce, an increase in level 3 provision including apprenticeships and improvements in the effectiveness of 'employability' training. The priority groups include the unemployed and especially young people, those who have been inactive benefit claimants and those in low skilled, low paid, part time and temporary jobs.
- 2.4 The Manchester Community Strategy and public service reform initiatives provide the local context for shaping and aligning the SFA funded provision for skills. An established Strategic Education Partnership is enhancing existing partnerships and better connecting the education and skills sector with the City's growth strategy

### **3.0 Manchester resident skills**

- 3.1 The 2013 GM forecasting model shows that over the next ten years there will be an increasing demand for higher lever skills, with half of all jobs requiring at least NVQ level 3 or its equivalent. The latest information available on skill levels of the Manchester working age population is the 2011 census. This shows that the city has a higher percentage of people qualified to level 4 and has reduced the proportion of people with no qualifications to just 0.45 below the average for England and Wales. This means that 34.2% or 121,000 residents had below level 2 qualifications. With an increasing demand for higher level skills by employers in Manchester's growth sectors, those residents with no or low qualifications will be significantly disadvantaged in the labour market.

### **4.0 MAES overview and business model**

- 4.1 MAES is contracted by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) on an academic year cycle to provide Skills and Community Learning programmes. Nationally the SFA budget has reduced by 7% for 14/15 and will reduce by 11% in 15/16, with 16/17 not yet known. The national Community Learning budget of £210 million has been protected for 13/14 and 14/15.

- 4.2 For the academic year 14/15 MAES has a £7.6 million SFA contract and an MCC budget of £343k for the delivery of learning and skills provision to residents. Budget reductions in 14/15 and 15/16 by both the SFA and MCC will reduce the reach and range of the provision.
- 4.3 MAES offers agile and flexible provision which focuses on unemployed residents and on those with few or low skills and qualifications. This meets the City's work and skills priorities but also enables MAES to have a key role in driving forward some of the PSR initiatives such as Complex Dependency into employment, Working Well and the Wythenshawe Low Skills pilot. MAES delivers a coherent set of opportunities and pathways. This includes tasters and projects to engage people who are not in learning, through to the delivery of national qualifications and skills and routes to employment and volunteering which link directly to the Council's strategic priorities to reduce unemployment and address low skills.
- 4.4 In 2013/14 the Adult Skills and Community Learning provision delivered 24,977 enrolments to 10,053 individuals. The cohort consists of mainly 19-59 year old residents who have no or low skills and qualifications (below level 2). Of these, 64% are women and 36% are men with 80% unemployed and 46% for whom English is not their first language. MAES's learners who are in employment come to improve their Maths, English or vocational qualifications in order to secure sustainable employment and progress at work in sectors where there are current and emerging vacancies
- 4.5 MAES unique selling point is its community based model which delivers very effective local provision and outcomes in 9 Adult learning centres and over 100 community venues. This delivery model enables MAES to reach those residents who have low skills and complex dependencies to overcome if they are to improve the skills, qualifications, attitudes and behaviours needed to secure and progress in work and become less dependent on public services. MAES learners include those who have left compulsory education with no or low qualifications, have had long periods of unemployment or no work history at all, mental health problems, have been homeless, are ex offenders, drug and or alcohol dependent. The strength of delivering in a wide range of community locations is that this enables more effective co- design and delivery with other organisations and services and provision can be customised to meet local needs.
- 4.6 The service has a mixed model of direct delivery and commissioned activity with 14% of the Community Learning funding sub-contracted to other providers to deliver provision to targeted groups such as young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training), those recovering from drug and alcohol related problems and learners suffering from mental health issues

**Outcomes for residents:** (Adult Skills and Community learning)

- 614 people secured employment
- 7971 progressed to a level 1 or 2 level course within MAES
- 808 progressed to a level 2 or 3 course with another provider

- 5700 progressed to another course at the same level within MAES
- 299 people have become volunteers

## **5.0 Adult Skills provision**

- 5.1 The Adult Skills budget is to deliver qualification courses which meet the national priorities of supporting young adults, the low skilled and the unemployed to acquire the skills needed for employment and progression, identified and agreed through the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Manchester Work and Skills Plan .The Adult Skills funding mechanism means that each learning aim attracts a nationally determined cash value, with 80% for participation, 20 % for achievement and 10% if there is no achievement but there is a job outcome. Success rates (numbers retained and achieving the qualification) are a national measure used to judge performance and benchmark with other FE sector organisations. Changes to the funding methodology meant that MAES had to significantly increase the number of qualifications that an individual studied in order to maintain funding. This is a particular barrier for MAES learners as success in gaining qualifications is a significant achievement for residents who have been unemployed, not studied for many years, have low skills and confidence levels and have a range of personal and health matters to be addressed. MAES targets those furthest from the labour market (82.9% in 13/14 were unemployed with a high percentage long term) and has increasing numbers of residents mandated by Job centres to its courses. Residents who have been unemployed, including who need support to make a commitment to learning and to develop their confidence and skills and those who gain work part way through a course may be unable to achieve the qualifications in the timescale required. These factors taken together have had a detrimental impact on achievement. MAES's success rates for 13/14 are 82.9%, a 6% reduction on 12/13 and 1.5% below the 13/14 national average.
- 5.2 MAES provision is English, Maths, English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL), Family Learning, Employability, Digital skills and vocational courses linked to local employment opportunities. The curriculum is focused at entry level, level 1 and level 2 and provides a first step into sectors where there is an employer demand or progression route to other providers. MAES delivers vocational courses in Childcare, Education, Health and Social Care, Digital Skills and Community Interpreting. This means that residents are accessing training in those sectors where there is predicted job growth. MAES has also delivered a successful pre employment programme for 18-24 year olds with learning difficulties for a number of years. This includes a work placement or volunteering opportunity which is the key factor in this cohort gaining employment. Many learners need to improve their Maths and English skills before they are able to progress to a vocational course which will lead to employment.
- 5.3 In 2014/14 there were 3947 learners on Skills courses. The majority of learners achieve one or more qualifications in English, Maths and ICT, and in pre vocational and vocational qualifications. Many learners progress to further learning, volunteering and employment. The majority of job outcomes are in

the education, care, retail, administration and hospitality warehousing sectors where MAES, its partners and Jobcentre Plus have worked together to develop and identify work experience and volunteering opportunities.

*"I joined the class because I had tried to pass maths assessments for jobs and failed. When I joined the class I realised that I did have maths skills but no confidence in using them. With a supportive tutor I found that I could do the maths and really enjoyed attending. I made new friends and really liked the laughter and jokes that we had in class. The tutor has pushed us to learn and I also learnt that I was not the only person worried about maths and this made me feel better about myself. I have found a new job back in customer services. I would recommend this course to anyone that asked me. "*

*"When I arrived at MAES 18 months ago I was absolutely petrified but straight away, the staff made me feel welcome and did not judge me because my reading and writing were not very good. I have a degenerative muscular condition which means I can't do physical work anymore. The job centre referred me because I needed to improve my maths and English to improve my chances of getting a job. Since joining MAES I have improved my maths and English, gained qualifications and improved my confidence immensely. The support I have received has been more than I could ever wish for with dyslexia, career advice and I was encouraged to do voluntary work. I have joined the 'Talk English Project' as a volunteer and looking for jobs in support roles."*

- 5.4 Progression pathways to The Manchester College and other local providers are identified and promoted to MAES's learners. The extent to which individuals successfully progress to another provider is affected not just by the range of provision available, but where it is delivered, whether there is more than one entry point during the year, or whether they are mandated by Jobcentre Plus or the Work Programme. Apprenticeship opportunities for unemployed adults, which are increasing locally, are targeted mainly at 19-24 year olds, although there has been some success with progressing over 25's through MAES and its VCS partner's work with Business in the Community.

## **6.0 The Wythenshawe Skills Pilot**

- 6.1 In 2011, 31% of residents in Wythenshawe had no qualifications (eight percentage points higher than the city average) and there is a lower than expected engagement of local resident accessing the growing number of employment opportunities within the area.  
The Wythenshawe area was chosen for a pilot project to work with a small cohort of unemployed residents who have no or very low level qualifications and additional barriers that impact on their achievement and progression. The purpose of the pilot was to test out whether an assertive support approach and enhanced delivery model would improve retention in learning and progression to higher level learning and sustained employment.
- 6.2 The Troubled Families Programme in Manchester is already showing how delivery models based on core principles of integration of public services in the form of bespoke packages of support, the deployment of evidence-based

interventions and a focus on the whole family rather than just the individual, can achieve positive outcomes for families and individuals.

It is important that we are able to test delivery models that will contribute to this and help build a strong evidence base of how the ways of working evident in the Troubled Families programme can also work for different groups of people. The Wythenshawe Skills Pilot (WYSP) has contributed to developing an evidence base of what the skills offer should be for people for whom, low skills is a significant barrier to sustainable work.

6.3 MAES and The Manchester College worked with a number of partners including National Careers Service, Jobcentre Plus and registered providers to develop the project. It incorporates an assessment of a learner's wider personal circumstances in order to apply a broader support model. Similar to the Troubled families approach of assigning a key worker to a family, the WYSP provides appropriate assessment with integration, co-ordination and sequencing of interventions, overseen by a 'key worker' from The Manchester College (TMC) or Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES).

6.4 The main barriers that residents presented, other than their low level functional skills, were low confidence, motivation and lack of hope that they could improve their circumstances. Many of the pilot learners identified mental health issues as a barrier to progression and work. Feedback from them indicates that their experience of the support and the learning experience itself led to improvements in their mental health and outlook resulting in them continuing to attend and progress.

*"I was really ill when I started here as I had agoraphobia for 18 months so when I first came it was very hard for me. There was too many what ifs, I didn't turn up on time and stuff..... It was almost like growing up again."*

6.5 Regular reviews took place to measure progress and distance travelled against a range of employability measures. Use of the Work Star tool was an integral part of the support process as it enables the participants to recognise and record their progress. Aspiration and motivation, stability and challenges were the aspects where learners reported most significant progress.

*"I'm feeling more positive. It's given me structure in my life, I want to try new things and I don't give up as easily as I used to."*

6.6 Residents have been supported to gain the skills and qualifications needed to secure sustainable employment in a job that will enable them and their families to be independent.

The achievement rate for learners in the cohort was 79% whereas the comparison group had an achievement rate of 48%.

*"I'm dyslexic and I need 1:1 help with my English and my maths and I've just passed 100% and I'm looking at an IT course now and I've never done it in my life! That's how much confidence she (learning mentor) has given me. I've got a certificate and two more to come."*

- 6.7 Feedback from the cohort about the approach has been very positive and early indications are that the assertive support approach has retained learners who would otherwise have left learning but are now progressing to higher levels. 79% of the pilot cohort progressed compared to 50% of the comparison group.
- 6.8 The support has changed learners' aspirations and increased their motivation to take control of their future. The outcomes for residents and support received are being further evaluated to determine the effectiveness of the approach and make recommendations for future development/funding.

## **7.0 ESOL and Employment**

- 7.1 The 2013 Comprehensive Spending Review announced a rigorous, systematic approach to ensuring that Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants (and equivalent Universal Credit group) with poor spoken English; improve their language skills in order to continue receiving benefit. The measure underlines the importance of a good standard of English in getting a job and integrating into society.
- 7.2 This new policy introduced a requirement for claimants with a low level of spoken English to be identified at the beginning of their claim and referred to the most appropriate English language training. Those who fail to start, participate in, or complete their training will potentially face a benefit sanction.
- 7.3 MAES and Jobcentre Plus managers meet regularly to review and improve the programme, to ensure resources are fully utilised and that the right clients who can really benefit from the provision are referred onto the courses. MAES regularly offers mandation opportunities to Jobcentre Plus to support Skills Conditionality. Since April 2014 MAES has offered 514 initial provider assessments and subsequently enrolled 300 residents onto ESOL courses.
- 7.4 MAES ESOL for Jobseekers courses offer learners four sessions a week to work on their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. The courses are tailored to develop these skills in the context of work and job search. Learners gain nationally recognised qualifications in ESOL as well as Maths and employability qualifications. The courses are roll on, roll off, meaning that learners can join at various points in the year and they can transfer to an evening 'Everyday English' course to continue to develop their skills when they gain employment.
- 7.5 MAES also delivers ESOL Work Clubs specifically designed to support speakers of other languages in seeking and applying for jobs

*"The job centre sent me because I am looking for work. I didn't know what to do. The teachers helped me with a CV and looking for work. My English is stronger because I talk to people."*

## **8.0 Community Learning**



- 8.1 Community Learning is defined as a broad range of learning that brings adults together to pursue an interest, address a need, acquire a new skill, become healthier or learn how to support their children. It is a key part of the learning continuum, may be undertaken for its own sake, may or may not lead to a qualification or result in direct progression to other learning / training, but will usually have wider progression outcomes.
- 8.2 Community Learning is made up of four strands: Family English, Maths and Language (FEML) Wider Family Learning (WFL) Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC) and Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL). The budget is not formula funded and is based on meeting participation targets against the four strands. Each provider has the flexibility to determine how to allocate this resource across the strands.
- 8.3 The stated objectives for Community Learning ('New Challenges New Chances' Sept 2013) are to:
- Focus public funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate
  - Widen participation and transform people's destinies by supporting progression relevant to personal circumstances
  - Develop stronger communities, with more self-sufficient, connected and pro-active citizens
  - Commission, deliver and support learning in ways that contribute directly to these objectives
- 8.4 MAES Community Learning Plan was developed in consultation with residents and key stakeholders. Resources are now focused on developing skills which progress residents towards employment and which reduce dependence on public services. There is also now a requirement to generate additional resources known as 'pound plus', to fulfil the local plan. These may include innovative approaches to volunteering, match funding, pooling resources, business sponsorship and using fee income from people who can afford to pay in order to reach those who cannot. As MAES targets people who are unemployed or on low incomes, it generates little fee income but it does lever in other 'in kind' resources through its partnerships with a wide range of organisations. These include volunteering opportunities in community organisations, joint delivery of training, partner venues provided either free or at low cost.
- 8.5 In 2013/14, there were 8018 learners on MAES Community Learning provision, who participated in a wide range of tasters, projects and courses. The provision must also have clear outcomes and local measures capable of evaluation by our local communities and stakeholders. MAES and the North West local authority adult learning provider's network have tested out an outcome framework which includes a range of distance travelled measures for employability skills and health and well being. In 2013/14, 98.7% of learners achieved their personal goals and gained skills and qualifications. Adults and children improved their individual and family resilience and English and Maths skills on Family Learning courses; adults acquired and improved their digital

skills and gained skills and qualifications in preparation for employment or vocational training;

## **9.0. Family Learning (Family English, Maths and Language and Wider Family Learning)**

- 9.1 The Family Learning pedagogical approach promotes the family as a learning environment, builds on home culture and experience, encourages participatory learning and promotes progression to further learning and/or work. Family Learning develops a culture of aspiration in both adults and children, improves parents' confidence to tackle family situations through increasing their understanding of children's development and improving their capacity to communicate with their children and each other.

*"I have learned that it's normal to feel the way I do sometimes. I have learned to step back - I am more confident in myself and able to cope more. My next step will be to actively look for a job."*

- 9.2 MAES delivers a range of courses in community settings including Family English, Maths and Language (FEML) that address gaps in parent's skills and teach parents about how their children learn at school. Wider Family Learning (WFL) offer personal development and parenting courses to develop confidence and resilience in parents, and as a result, their children. Through other courses such as Learning through Play and Ready for School, parents learn how their children develop and help them prepare for the transition from home to school. Family Learning programmes are designed to embed broader employability skills such as communication, team work, creative thinking and digital skills.

- 9.3 Family Learning programmes are delivered predominantly in primary schools and Children's Centres. The team have very well-established and effective partnerships with MCC Early Years team and schools leading to joint planning of provision which contributes to local and city priorities and meets the diverse needs of residents in neighbourhoods across the city.

- 9.4 MAES uses Family Learning activities to enhance and optimise the outcomes of the local authority's interventions with families with complex needs. The Family Learning team are trained in techniques such as cognitive behaviour therapy, and their courses are built around evidence-based programmes such as the Webster-Stratton parenting programmes, to ensure that their approaches are aligned with the other interventions that families receive. In conjunction with other MCC and stakeholder services, MAES is contributing to the integrated approach, working with families with complex needs to reduce their dependence on public services, increase their participation in skills training and improve their employment prospects.

*"I am now thinking more positively rather than always thinking about the obstacles. I have learnt to deal with the scars from the past that stop me from moving forward. I have felt a lot more comfortable talking in a group. My next step is to enrol at college."*

- 9.5 Parents and carers often with little positive experience of education, develop confidence to listen to, talk to and teach their children. Schools and Early Years settings can evidence the positive impact this has on the children's behaviour and attainment. There is good progression from the Family Learning courses to Adult Skills courses and to volunteer roles in schools as governors or teaching assistants and to support wider community activities.

*"I have learned to be calmer and not shout and to say what's on my mind rather than bottling it up. I am now accepting myself as I am. I have also been able to understand how my kids feel and to learn new strategies as a parent. My next step will be to go to college to get qualifications and to get a job."*

**Outcomes include:**

- Parents reported that the increased confidence and social skills they gained through the course enabled them to implement their learning, working co-operatively with schools and other services.
- Parents who are speakers of other languages are able to interact more positively with schools, other services and their communities which results in improved outcomes for them and their children.
- Teachers reported improvement in the attainment of the children.
- Improved mental health also led to improved relationships with their children, decreased isolation and increased resilience and ability to cope and take control of their lives.
- Parents report that they feel more confident and motivated to make changes in their lives such as getting work, progressing to further learning and becoming more independent.

*"shortly after completing this course a teaching assistant job came up at my children's school. Part of the interview was delivering a guided read to a group of 5-6yr old. I automatically used my phonics knowledge that I'd gained from this course. I couldn't believe it when I was called back for another interview and then went on to get the job!!! I now support and deliver phonics classes on a daily basis at work."*

**10.0 Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC)**

- 10.1 NLDC provision is intended to capacity build organisations that work with clients who are least likely to be engaged in learning and consequently are further from the labour market. This includes young people with a lack of family support and people with mental health problems. The provision is targeted at particular clients that the VCS organisation has a track record of working with.
- 10.2 In 2013/14 MAES commissioned 13 voluntary and community providers to deliver its NLDC programme. The majority of the provision used practical activities to attract and engage unemployed people back into learning and employment, such as digital skills, cookery, gardening and DIY, drama, sports leadership and radio production. Several providers organise voluntary work

experience as an integral part of their NLDC funded training. For example Emerge 3Rs offer voluntary work in driving and warehousing, Mustard Tree offer voluntary work in office admin, customer service, catering and warehousing and Chapter One (The Limes) delivers tenancy training to people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. Many providers also run Work Clubs to support residents to find work. Improved personal resilience and confidence to work with others are measured using 'distance travelled' tools.

*M was unemployed and homeless when he moved into The Limes, a temporary supported housing project. He attended a number of courses including sport, tenancy training, employability, cookery and learnt independent living skills. He achieved his own tenancy and started voluntary work with a major retailer where he has now secured a full time job.*

- 10.3 Each provider has a MAES Link Manager to support them and build progression pathways to MAES's courses and to other providers. A quality assurance and improvement programme is delivered monthly and enables the NLDC providers to receive essential training and share good practice.

**Outcomes for residents:**

Of 1513 learners tracked:

- 175 secured employment
- 48 had done a work placement
- 237 were volunteering
- 878 had progressed to further learning

**11.0 Personal and Community Development learning (PCDL)**

- 11.1 The PCDL programme ( 4008 learners in 2013/14) delivers a wide range tasters and projects to engage residents with the courses particularly focused on Employability, Digital skills , Volunteering, ESOL for Everyday Life and Sustainability.
- 11.2 MAES delivers learning programmes that concentrate on the development of employability skills, improving mental health and wellbeing and progression to further learning or work. These support residents to set goals, recognise their transferrable skills and the gaps they need to address particularly around Maths, English and ICT. Through the use of self-assessment processes and tools, learners record changes in their levels of confidence and motivation as well as improvements in their communication skills, teamwork and positive approach.
- 11.3 The provision is co designed with stakeholders including Jobcentre Plus (JCP), housing providers and continues to be developed to contribute to MCC initiatives such as Working Well. MAES works in partnership with a number of organisations which support residents with barriers to employment such as Big Life, Addiction Dependency Solutions and Back on Track. MAES has combined the management of the ICT/digital team and the Employability team in order to deliver more responsive and relevant programmes for unemployed

residents whose lack of digital skills is a barrier to them finding and sustaining work.

- 11.4 MAES is working with partners on the GO ON digital skills campaign and has delivered a programme of training for Digital Champions for residents who want to offer peer support to help others develop digital skills. Mentors support residents to access support and advice, navigate online benefit and job applications, electoral registration and money saving websites. This support is available in learning centres, libraries and community venues across the city.
- 11.5 New activities have been designed for job-seekers who have no ICT/digital skills and for those who are speakers of other languages. These are delivered in learning centres and community venues across the city for residents who are digitally excluded to those who need to improve their skill levels and qualifications to find work.
- 11.6 In MAES Work Clubs, there is a focus on digital skills and signposting to skills programmes where gaps are identified. MAES makes a significant contribution to the running of VCS Work Clubs through training and matching volunteers and supporting the Work Club network to raise the quality of the service offered in VCS work clubs.

*“It’s given me confidence - attending the Work Club I have enrolled onto a beginners ICT class. When I first started I was very nervous and my hands used to shake when using the keyboard. I am now more confident in using the laptop/computer and applying for jobs online”*

- 11.7 MAES has also established work clubs at several of its Learning Centres and at a number of partner venues in order to fill gaps in other such provision across the city. These provide residents with high quality support to develop job-search skills and apply for work.

*“I was very nervous at first but my confidence has improved since attending (the Work Club). The tutor helped me to secure two jobs – one in a call centre and the other in a local store as a Sales Assistant. I have recently secured another position in sales.”*

- 11.8 In response to identified needs, MAES has developed short ICT for Jobseekers programmes to support learners to develop independent job seeking skills (residents can be mandated to attend through Skills Conditionality). MAES also offers a short programme, ‘Making a Change’ to improve the confidence and communication skills of residents who have been unemployed for a long time or who experience mental health issues or other barriers.
- 11.9 Volunteers recruited from MAES programmes and partners are trained to offer peer support in the work clubs and gain valuable skills and confidence to enhance their own employability.

*"The course gave me the expertise to help those who need it. Volunteering has given me new friends; new interests, more confidence and I have also gained employment."*

11.10 MAES delivers volunteering programmes for ESOL, Work Clubs and Digital Champions. They are designed to increase capacity in third sector organisations and focus on the development of a pool of volunteer trainers as a cost effective and sustainable investment of limited public funding.

*"I joined a MAES Work Club for help in applying for jobs. After a few sessions, my tutor suggested that I join MAES' volunteering programme. I joined because I was interested in using my skills, learning new ones and meeting other volunteers. I found the course very interesting – the whole experience has improved my confidence and I have also learnt new skills. Volunteering has given me new friends, new interests, a more positive outlook and confidence. I have also now gained employment."*

*I got into volunteering in the Work Club as I was receiving support to get back into employment myself. After completing the Mentoring Skills course, I was fortunate enough to secure paid work as an Employment Broker with the charity I was volunteering at.*

*I have recently started working as a learning mentor in a local high school. The PTLLS (Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning sector) qualification and experience I gained as a volunteer ESOL teacher were instrumental in securing this work.*

11.11 Volunteers who have enrolled and completed these courses have achieved a worthwhile qualification that will improve their employment prospects, gained new skills, improved communication skills and confidence in their own abilities to support others.

11.12 MAES and its NLDC commissioned partners also deliver non-accredited programmes to prepare unemployed residents for work experience and volunteering as part of their pathway to work.

#### **Outcomes for residents:**

- Over 130 residents gained L2/L3 Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning sector and Mentoring qualifications.
- 86 volunteers have been trained as volunteer ESOL teachers and have delivered pre-entry ESOL classes in community venues to 600 learners
- Volunteers became Work Club and Digital Mentors and provided support in over 20 different work clubs, libraries, community organisations and venues across the City

#### **12.0 Talk English Project**

12.1 MAES led a successful regional consortium bid to the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) English Language Competition

in 2013. The Talk English project, in collaboration with partners from across the North West, was launched in early 2014. It aims to enable people with little or no English to access services and get more involved in their communities, to encourage community cohesion and also to give the wider community a better understanding of the challenges faced by migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the UK.

The Talk English project has five key strands to support people with little or no English to integrate into the wider community:

- 12.2 **Talk English Courses:** Recruiting, training and supporting volunteer ESOL teachers to teach informal Talk English courses for speakers of other languages in community settings. To date 49 Talk English courses are being delivered by 93 trained volunteers, reaching 605 residents so far.

*"..this volunteering work has given me the sense of purpose a reason to get up in the morning. It has given me a stronger sense of belonging as a citizen. It has strengthened my belief in equality, respect for others and social justice. I have learnt that I can do things I never dreamed I would do, what it feels like not to give up and what commitment is really about, which is about being committed to life and giving something of yourself to it. I am a lot happier - I laugh a lot these days! My mental health has improved so much that I am not the same person I was in November. It's been a hard slog at times but I have thoroughly enjoyed this experience, I love everything about it and I have more confidence, more belief in myself, I feel like I have succeeded at something for the first time in my life. This project has changed my life and who I am!"*  
J, Volunteer ESOL teacher, summer 2014

- 12.3 **Talk English Friends:** Recruiting, training and supporting volunteer Talk English Friends who offer 1:1 support to people with low levels of English in order to help them improve their language skills, access services and get more involved in their community. We have trained 65 Talk English Friends so far in Manchester who have now been introduced to 44 residents with low levels of English.

- 12.4 **Talk English Here:** Working with local businesses and public services to increase ESOL awareness in staff and train them to be 'sympathetic listeners', enabling more people with low levels of English to 'Talk English Here' and access services. To date, Talk English Here training has been delivered to 63 staff in partner organisations in Manchester.

*"Through the Talk English Here training I learnt how difficult it is for people who speak little or no English to understand single questions and how patience can make a big difference in that person's experience." "I've learnt how to communicate better with people with low level English."*

- 12.5 **Talk English Activities:** Working with local services and community organisations, Talk English Activities take place to provide further opportunities for people to practise their English informally and include activities in parks, libraries, galleries, community centres and other public

spaces. To date 68 Talk English activities have taken place, engaging 471 residents. The activities have ranged from 'Talk English cafes' 'Create and Talk English' sessions at Manchester Art Gallery, 'Discover and Talk English' sessions at Manchester Museum, 'Story time with Children and Talk English' and 'Sing and Talk English'.

- 12.6 **Talk English Website:** The website provides general information about all aspects of the project and provides training and learning resources for Talk English volunteers and learners. Volunteer teachers are able to access resources, lesson plans and teaching ideas to use with their classes and there are video-based e learning resources for learners. The website address is [www.talk-english.co.uk](http://www.talk-english.co.uk)
- 12.7 All the Talk English activities are aimed at those residents with the lowest level of English (pre-entry). They cover topics that help them get on with their everyday lives: shopping, giving personal information, talking to the doctor, transport, friends and family, homes, emergency services etc. Guided and supported by the volunteer teachers in the courses they develop speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Through participation in the non-classroom based activities learners gain confidence to try out their English outside of the classroom and continue to access the services in the community and introduce their family and friends to the places they have visited with their class.
- 12.8 The Talk English project uses links with community organisations to recruit learners from the target groups and with schools and children's centres in the target areas to refer parents to the project. The project has enabled VCS organisations to develop ESOL teaching capacity in their organisation free of charge, and in turn offer local residents free pre-entry ESOL courses. Volunteers have benefited from being involved in the project as they gain an initial teaching qualification and experience, as well as increased confidence and satisfaction. The funding for this project will finish at the end of June 2015 and MAES is currently looking at ways to sustain the activities in Manchester beyond this point.
- 13.0 Quality improvement and value for money**
- 13.1 MAES uses a range of external measures to self assess against and inform improvement planning.  
These include:
- Ofsted Common Inspection Framework
  - Matrix standards for Information, Advice and Guidance
  - National benchmarks for Success rates on qualification courses
- 13.2 The service Quality Improvement and Self-assessment process follows an annual cycle of events and activities and is a cohesive and inclusive process. Learners are consulted through course review, observation of teaching and learning feedback, forums, evaluations and surveys. Teaching and non teaching staff are involved in the process through appraisals, management and team meetings, course and service evaluations, feedback gathering and



surveys. All teams have team and improvement action plans. Partners and stakeholders are involved through surveys.

- 13.3 All curriculum and cross-service areas complete self-assessment reports and team service improvement plans, which are used to form the summary self-assessment report. The evidence on which the individual area self assessment report (SAR) data and judgements are based is taken from: course reviews carried out during the year, observations of lessons carried out during the year, quality reports, learner forums and learner surveys, review of learners' work - particularly marked work and displayed. For Skills courses, retention, achievement and success rates are judged against internal and national benchmarks. All non- accredited programmes are judged using the national Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA) process. Learners identify targets based on programme content and the initial assessment of their skills, and then their progress against their targets is measured and recorded. In addition, learners are asked to rate themselves against a range of employability skills at the start and end of their programme to ensure they recognise the additional work-related skills they have gained on their programme.
- 13.4 Learner, partner, stakeholder and staff feedback is used to improve the service performance. MAES is also a member of the North West Local Authority learning provider's network, which shares good practice and initiates and delivers a range of quality improvement projects. MAES's assessment of its strengths includes:
- Learners successfully develop personal, social and employability skills that improve their lives and help them to gain employment
  - Teaching, learning and assessment are good and motivate and challenge learners. There has been an increase in grade one outstanding teaching ,learning and assessment (39% in 13/14 compared to 26%in 12/13) with 1/3 of grade 2 good teaching at grade 2\* ie good with outstanding features.
  - Leaders and managers demonstrate high ambition and expectations have successfully changed the provision to better meet the needs of residents who have complex life circumstances
  - Successful sub-contracting and partnership working recruits learners from the most disadvantaged communities and groups in the city
- 13.5 Our current improvement plan includes actions to:
- Improve the amount of outstanding teaching, learning and assessment
  - Make better use of learning technology to enhance teaching and learning
  - Improve the collection and analysis of learners' destinations in order to assess the impact of learning on further learning, volunteering and employment
- 13.6 In January 2014, MAES secured external funding (£58,900) to run a six-month Joint Practice Development (JPD) project called Developing Outstanding Teaching (DOT). This directly involved 19 tutors from MAES and 4 from

NLDC providers in action research that focussed on meeting the needs of learners in areas of high deprivation. Activity included peer observation of classes and reviews of targeted resources, piloting of new approaches, such as flexible and fast track routes to qualifications, and accelerated learning, strategies to help dyslexic learners improve performance in Maths. New resources have been utilised in the 14-15 programme and the MAES staff training programme has incorporated the successful JPD approach which has encouraged staff to take ownership of their professional development.

- 13.7 Another successful outcome of the DOT project was the increased use of technology to support communication and collaboration between staff who utilised the discussion forums and blogging features of the learning platform (Moodle). Tutors are now integrating this experience into wider course delivery with a view to developing a blended learning programme.

**Improvements include:**

- Changes to the observation grading system were introduced to provide a clearer pathway for tutors to move from good to outstanding practice
- Increase in grade one outstanding teaching ,learning and assessment ( 39% in 13/14 compared to 26%in 12/13) with 1/3 of grade 2 good teaching at grade 2\* ie good with outstanding features.
- Online end of course evaluations, which include learner satisfaction surveys have been extended to include a wider range of learners, including those on Family Learning programmes. Results include 98% rated MAES excellent or good, 97% said learning had had a positive impact on their life, 80% acquired new skills, 80% more confident , 77% more independent.
- MAES participated in a national pilot of learner tracking and carried out its own telephone pilot in March 2014. As a result, new systems for follow-up and tracking learners are being introduced from September 2014.

**14.0 Conclusion**

MAES's provision makes an important contribution to the Greater Manchester strategies to reduce dependency and improve skills and qualifications so that Manchester residents access employment and benefit from and contribute to economic growth. The service Family Learning and Employability programmes are also a key component of the approach being developed to deliver better outcomes for families and children. By working closely with The Manchester College and other partners there is a great opportunity to make sure that the skills offer links directly to the City's priorities and growth sectors and help more residents access and sustain work.

## Appendix 1

# Where to find us

- 1. The Avenue Library and Learning Centre**  
Victoria Avenue East, Blackley, M9 6HW. Tel: 0161 219 2393
- 2. Abraham Moss Adult Learning Centre**  
Crescent Road, Crumpsall, M8 5UF. Tel: 0161 219 6735
- 3. Newton House Adult Learning Centre**  
203 Droylsden Road, Newton Heath, M40 1NY. Tel: 0161 254 7706
- 4. Manchester Communications Academy**  
Silchester Drive, Harpurhey, M40 8NT. Tel: 0161 234 5640
- 5. Greenheys Adult Learning Centre**  
Upper Lloyd Street, Moss Side, M14 4HZ. Tel: 0161 254 7314
- 6. Longsight Library and Learning Centre**  
519 Stockport Road, Longsight, M12 4NE. Tel: 0161 227 3706
- 7. Withington Adult Learning Centre**  
24a Burton Road, Withington, M20 3ED. Tel: 0161 234 5687
- 8. Chorlton Park Adult Learning Centre**  
Mauldeth Road West, Chorlton, M21 7HH. Tel: 0161 254 7421
- 9. Forum Learning**  
Forum Square, Wythenshawe, M22 5RX. Tel: 0161 935 4080

We also run courses at many community venues across Manchester. Please contact your nearest centre for further details.



**Manchester  
Adult  
Education**

 MANCHESTER  
city council

**Skills  
Funding  
Agency**

## Appendix 2

### MAES Participation in Learning by SRF/Ward for Academic year 2013/2014

SRF Area	Ward	Learners	Enrolments
North	Charlestown	208	487
North	Cheetham	490	1429
North	Crumpsall	337	943
North	Harpurhey	355	843
North	Higher Blackley	229	638
North	Moston	152	370
<b>North Total</b>		<b>1771</b>	<b>4710</b>
East	Ancoats and Clayton	271	622
East	Bradford	268	700
East	Gorton North	354	881
East	Gorton South	385	867
East	Miles Platting and Newton Heath	322	787
<b>East Total</b>		<b>1600</b>	<b>3857</b>
City Centre	City Centre	20	41
<b>City Centre Total</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>41</b>
Central	Ardwick	608	1474
Central	Hulme	264	657
Central	Longsight	554	1396
Central	Moss Side	707	1852
Central	Rusholme	312	829
<b>Central Total</b>		<b>2445</b>	<b>6208</b>
South	Burnage	210	491
South	Chorlton	93	222
South	Chorlton Park	196	514
South	Didsbury East	79	183
South	Didsbury West	96	198
South	Fallowfield	233	689
South	Levenshulme	201	446
South	Old Moat	253	629
South	Whalley Range	250	554
South	Withington	157	402
<b>South Total</b>		<b>1768</b>	<b>4328</b>
Wythenshawe	Baguley	277	631
Wythenshawe	Brooklands	154	338
Wythenshawe	Northenden	201	461
Wythenshawe	Sharston	312	748
Wythenshawe	Woodhouse Park	294	649
<b>Wythenshawe Total</b>		<b>1238</b>	<b>2827</b>
<b>Outside Manchester</b>	X - OUTSIDE MANCHESTER	1211	3006
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>10053</b>	<b>24977</b>

