

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Economy Scrutiny Committee – 4 January 2017

Subject: Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES)

Report of: Head of MAES

Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide information on MAES 2015/16 performance, self assessment and 2016/17 improvement plan.

Recommendations

Members are requested to consider and comment on the information in the report.

Wards Affected: All

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Background documents (available for public inspection)

None

1.0 Background

- 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 MAES unique selling point is its community based model of informal/first step learning and qualification courses delivered in 8 Adult learning centres and over 100 community venues. We deliver our mission by working with partners and stakeholders to co-design and deliver services to meet individual and community and employer needs and to support the city's strategic priorities to reduce unemployment, address low skills and reduce dependency. MAES provides agile and flexible provision which contributes to the achievement of the Manchester Work and Skills plan priorities, Working Well and the Early Years and Early Help strategies.
- 1.3 MAES particular expertise and niche is in delivering first step Adult Skills and Community Learning courses for adults aged 19+ (with the largest cohort aged 25-50). The Adult Skills programme includes Maths and English up to GCSE, English for speakers of other languages, (ESOL), Care and Education. Community Learning includes Employability, Digital Skills and Family Learning as a preparation for further learning, work and to improve health and well being.
- 1.4 MAES provision is regulated by Ofsted and was inspected in October 2013. The service was judged to be 'good' on all measures, i.e., Leadership and Management, Quality of Teaching Learning and Assessment and Outcomes for learners. Ofsted found the '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'.
- 1.5 The expected devolution of the Adult Education Budget to the GMCA and associated outcomes frameworks developed within GM to commission provision in the future, will be a key context in which the service will work to further develop and secure appropriate provision for the City.
- 1.6 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. Our provision enables residents with low skills and complex dependencies the opportunity to improve the skills, qualifications, attitudes and behaviours they need to secure and progress in work and become less dependent on public services MAES 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.

2.0 2015/16 provision

2.1 The service has a mixed model of direct delivery and commissioned activity and recruited over 10,000 individual learners in 2015/16 there were 2895 on Adult Skills courses, 8322 on Community Learning provision and 933 on the Talk English programme. Significant number of learners progress from a community learning programme to a qualification programme during the same academic year. We subcontract 13% of our Community Learning funding to voluntary and community sector providers who work with targeted groups such as those recovering from drug and alcohol related problems; health issues; young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

In 2015/16 MAES had a number of contracts to deliver adults skills and community learning provision which totalled £8,790,760k. These were:

- Skills funding Agency (SFA) contract for both Adult Skills and Community Learning
- SFA contract for Community Learning and Mental Health pilot
- Education Funding Agency (EFA) contract for 16-18 year olds
- SFA/ESF contract for a Skills for Employment pilot
- Department for Communities and local Government (DCLG) contract for Talk English
- DCLG contract for Talk English randomised control trial pilot

2.2 The majority of the contract targets were or achieved or exceeded

3.0 Who we reach:

3.1 In 2015/16 the MAES cohort was:

- 68% female
- 32% male
- 76% unemployed
- 82% from 'disadvantaged' postcodes
- 42% for who English is not their first language.

3.2 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. Our provision enables residents with low skills and complex dependencies the opportunity to improve the skills, qualifications, attitudes and behaviours they need to secure and progress in work and become less dependent on public services MAES 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.

4.0 2015/16 targets/performance and outcomes

4.1 Ofsted judges outcomes for learners by a number of indicators which include the achievement of qualifications, individual learning goals on non accredited courses and the development of personal, social and employability skills. They also make a judgement about the tracking of learner destinations to assess the impact of learning on future outcomes. The EFA and SFA Adult Skills performance measures are retention, pass rates and achievement rates. For Community learning the measure is achievement of individual learning goals.

4.2 **Outcomes**

- Adult skills achievement rate 82.2 % a decrease of 3.6% on 2014/15 (not validated until Jan 2017) NB. This is still 8.2% above the 2014/15 national average for the learning aims MAES delivers.
- Significant reductions in achievement in Functional skills - Maths Level 1 and 2 and English level 2
- Achievement of community learning goals 90.7%
- Destinations 43% in employment, 12% in further learning, 13% in voluntary work, 20% unemployed and actively seeking work, 34% unemployed and not seeking work
- Learners rate the service highly- FE choices score of 9.1
- MAES learners survey shows that that 80% were more confident, over 50% of had improved their Maths and English, and 38% had improved their Employability skills

4.3 The reduction in achievement rates for Functional Skills were the main contributing factor to the decrease in the overall service achievement rate. Feedback from other providers suggests that the national results will be down. We have strengthened our assessment and tutorial systems and identified learners who need additional support such as those who do not have English as their first language in order to improve retention and achievement.

5.0 **Quality improvement:**

MAES self assessment and improvement plan

5.1 MAES uses a range of external measures to self assess against and inform the Service and team improvement plans.

These include:

- Ofsted Common Inspection Framework
- Matrix standards for Information, Advice and Guidance
- National benchmarks for achievement rates on qualification courses

5.2 As of September 2015, Ofsted undertakes short inspections for providers that were judged good at their previous inspection. Short inspections take place approximately every three years, which means that MAES is due to be inspected. The purpose of the short inspection is to confirm the previous grade for overall effectiveness is accurate and the provider remains good and that safeguarding is effective.

- 5.3 MAES judgements of its current strengths and areas for improvement reflect the categories used in the Ofsted common inspection framework (CIF) The current SAR and SIP have been through a support and challenge and moderation process with a member of MAES governing body and the quality manager of Oldham Lifelong Learning (who were judged by Ofsted in Nov 2015 to be Outstanding) They have confirmed the judgements made by service managers ,which is that MAES continues to be a good provider.
- 5.4 MAES provision is targeted well to meet the needs of Manchester residents who face the highest levels of disadvantage. Strong and effective partnership working is the key to achieving this. The service's mission strongly supports the council's strategic objectives for improving economic prosperity and health and well being in Manchester. Leaders and managers have a strong commitment to ensuring a high quality of service, to the promotion of equality and diversity through the provision and to the strength of partnership and collaborative working. The standard of teaching and learning continues to improve and achievement rates are mainly good. MAES has a good capacity to improve the provision and safeguarding is effective
- 5.5 The service Quality Improvement and Self-assessment process follows an annual cycle of events and activities. 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. Partners and stakeholders are involved through surveys.
- 5.6 All curriculum and cross-service teams complete self-assessment reports and service improvement plans, which are used to inform the summary self-assessment report and service improve. The evidence on which the individual area self assessment report (SAR) data and judgements are based is taken from course reviews ,observations of lessons, management reports, learner forums and surveys, review of learners' marked work and progress against their starting points.
- 5.7 For Adult Skills courses, retention, pass and achievement rates are judged against internal and national benchmarks. 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, all 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.
- 5.8 The service was reaccredited with the MATRIX standard for the quality of its information advice and guidance last year and this aspect remains good.
- 5.9 Executive member briefings and support and challenge sessions by the Director for Education and Skills and the Head of Service are used to monitor

progress and inform actions needed. 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.

5.10 MAES strengths are:

- The service's work with disadvantaged communities is very good. Leaders and managers have high expectations that learners reach their full potential and improve the communities where they live. They deliver programmes which successfully engage those who are least likely to participate in learning.
- Learners benefit from good or better teaching, learning and assessment which motivates and challenges learners. In each of the last three years, 97% of TLA has been graded as good or above, with 40% graded as outstanding in 2015-16.
- The majority of learners successfully complete their courses and achieve their qualifications and personal learning goals
- Effective collaboration with community partners and stakeholders has resulted in well planned and priority focused provision.
- Learners successfully develop personal, social and employability skills that improve their lives and help them to gain employment

5.11 To maintain strengths and improve MAES needs to :

- Enable the Governing body to provide informed support & challenge to improve outcomes
- Further improve in year data reporting/monitoring of in year performance
- Further develop the Safeguarding and Prevent plan to ensure learners know how to keep safe and act according to the principles of good citizenship
- Improve achievement rates in Maths and English Functional skills
- Reduce the achievement gap for African learners by providing additional support.
- Further improve teaching ,learning and assessment
- Increase volunteering and work placement opportunities so learners can build their employability skills
- Strengthen the monitoring and analysis of learner's destinations

5.12 In order to deliver and sustain the improvements needed to not only maintain 'Good' but move towards outstanding, MAES needs to continue to invest in its teaching and learning capacity, ICT including the use of learning technology and in performance management.

6.0 Conclusion

MAES provision makes an important contribution to the Manchester priorities to reduce dependency and improve skills and qualifications so that residents access employment and progress in work. MAES will continue to work collaboratively with stakeholders and partners to ensure that the MAES offer supports the city's approach to improving resilience and outcomes for families

and enables residents to contribute to the economic growth and health and well being of Manchester.