

**Manchester City Council
Report for Information**

Report to: Economy Scrutiny Committee – 5 December 2019

Subject: Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES)

Report of: Head of Adult Education Service

Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide information on MAES 2018/19 performance and 2019/20 improvement actions to include an update on the Manchester ESOL strategy

Recommendations

Members are recommended to consider and comment on the information in the report

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

MAES has a sustainability plan to raise awareness and promote behaviour change with staff and learners. It includes actions across the course programme and in MAES venues to reduce energy use and increase recycling in our centres and the community.
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Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	MAES provision assists residents who are disadvantaged in obtaining work because of low skills & language barriers. MAES supports residents into sustained and healthy work with opportunities for in work progression. The service course offer and enrichment activities also play a fundamental part in improving

	integration and developing greater community cohesion. MAES provision enables residents to contribute to and benefit from a good quality of life as active citizens and ensures that Manchester's businesses have the skills and talents they need to prosper.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

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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.

Manchester Adult ESOL strategy

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the MAES 2018/19 performance and the service improvement actions.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 MAES is part of the Work and Skills team in the Directorate for Growth and Development. Its provision makes an important contribution to the Greater Manchester priorities and the Manchester Local Industrial Strategy with its focus on People, Place and Prosperity. MAES has a key role in improving the skills and qualifications of Manchester residents so that they can access employment and benefit from and contribute to economic growth.
- 2.2 MAES has recently collaborated with the other main providers of adult education in the city to develop the Manchester Adult Education and Skills plan. (MAEDP) Our vision is to be the best city in the country for adult education by 2025. The plan was officially launched on 27 November 2019.
- 2.3 MAES provides agile and flexible provision which contributes to the achievement of the Manchester Work and Skills plan priorities, Working Well and Early Years and Early Help strategies. Our unique selling point is a community based model of informal/first step learning and qualification courses delivered in 7 Adult learning centres and over 50 community venues. We work with partners and stakeholders to co-design and deliver services to meet individual, employer and community needs and to support the city's strategic priorities.
- 2.4 MAES particular expertise and niche is in delivering an Adult Education programme which includes qualification courses (Adult Skills) and non-qualification courses (Community Learning) with the largest cohort aged 25-50. We also deliver a small programme for 19-24 year olds with learning difficulties and disabilities. The Adult Skills programme includes Maths and English up to GCSE, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and Care and Education. The Community Learning programme includes Everyday English, Getting into Work, Digital Skills, Family Learning and a range of directly delivered and commissioned projects and engagement activities as a preparation for further learning, work and to improve health and wellbeing.
- 2.5 The 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. Our employed learners come to improve their skills and qualifications in order to secure sustainable employment and progress at work. The majority of the job outcomes are in the education, care, retail, hospitality and facilities sectors.
- 2.6 MAES is regulated by Ofsted and was judged to be a good provider in 2017.

3.0 2018/19 provision

- 3.1 Funding for Adult Education provision in 18/19 from the ESFA, has from August 2019 funding been devolved to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA).
- 3.2 MAES contracts bring in external income of approximately £9.7 million a year of which £7.647million is AEB funding. The contracts include a national MHCLG contract to deliver our award winning Talk English Programme. In April 2019 additional resource was also secured to develop a Manchester ESOL Advice Service to develop a centralised initial assessment and referral service to better coordinate provision across Manchester
- 3.3 In 18/19 all ESFA contract targets were exceeded, with overachievement of the formula funded Adult Education Budget contract by 7.72%.
- 3.4 In the academic year 2018/19 9397 people engaged in learning with MAES on Adult Skills, Community Learning and Talk English courses and activities. In addition, 220 volunteers gave over 16,000 hours of time to support our delivery. From confidence building courses and activities to achieving professional qualifications, every learner has been on their own unique learning journey with us. Significant number of learners progress from a community learning programme to a qualification programme during the same academic year.
- 3.5 We subcontract 14% of our Community Learning funding to voluntary and community organisations who deliver practical activities, engagement and short courses to attract and engage unemployed people back into learning and employment. The voluntary and community sector providers work with target groups such as those recovering from drug and alcohol related problems; homelessness and health issues.

4.0 Manchester ESOL strategy update

- 4.1 In 2016 MAES led the development of an Adult ESOL strategy for Manchester in partnership with providers and stakeholders in the city. The strategy gave an overview of the current and future need for ESOL, an overview of current provision, what we know about the different situations and motivations of the residents who want to improve their English and identified some key actions
- 4.2 The strategy and updates on progress have been shared widely across the Council and partners, including being tabled at the Manchester Work and Skills Board, the Economy Scrutiny Committee and Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee. Our vision is that by 2020 there will be sufficient, well-coordinated ESOL learning provision so that Manchester residents with their vast array of first languages and cultures will be enabled to secure employment, progress in employment and feel fully integrated into life in Manchester and the UK, contributing to greater community cohesion in our city.

- 4.3 The ESOL strategy identified that there were approximately 4,000 adult ESOL places available, with over 1,000 people on different providers' waiting lists. At the time because there was no centralised waiting list there was no way to check how many residents appeared on more than one waiting list.
- 4.4 In September 2019, MAES enrolled 1,480 residents to ESOL courses, and the other providers enrolled to their new courses. However once classes were full, all providers have referred all enquiries to the ESOL Advice Service so any duplicate requests can be identified and we can get a truer picture of demand
- 4.5 The ESOL Advice Service was launched in September which means that we can be confident about the overall level of unmet demand. 1,208 residents (figures correct up to 10th November) have been assessed and placed on the centralised waiting list. 476 (39%) of these have subsequently been placed into spaces in classes across the city (in MAES courses, courses at the Manchester College, in Talk English provision and with nine different community providers). The remaining 732 residents remain on the waiting list.
- 4.6 The Manchester ESOL Strategy identified five priorities for the city. They are shown in this table along with updates on progress.

Priority	Update
Increase the overall amount of ESOL provision in Manchester by working with a range of partners, including employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk English was in consultation with the Louise Casey team to influence national ESOL policy and inform the Casey Review, which fed into the 'Integrated Communities' green paper and action plan. • MAES has contributed towards the national ESOL Strategy for England which is due to be launched in Spring 2020 • MAES leads a consortium of selected local authorities and colleges (including the Manchester College) across GM, the North West, Yorkshire & Humber, the Midlands and London, which has been successful in attracting additional ongoing funding for the Talk English project, utilising volunteers to increase its reach and cost effectiveness • MAES has introduced a blended learning programme for Level 1 learners • Packages have been put together for employers both at their request and proactively but none have committed funding yet • MHCLG funding for Talk English has been extended until March 2020 - this will fund 875 additional places in Manchester April 19 - March 20 • Successful GM bid to Controlling Migration Fund funded 375 additional places in 17/18 and 375 additional places in 18/19 in Manchester • The Manchester College have increased the overall number of ESOL places available in their provision

<p>Develop clearer signposting to ESOL provision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful application made to ESOL Coordination Fund Oct 18 for the ESOL Advice Service, following detailed discussions amongst the main providers • ESOL Advice Service – website launched in September 2019 www.manchesteresol.org • 10 x weekly ESOL Advice Service sessions across the city offered from September 2019, a centralised waiting list system has been agreed by MAES, the Manchester College and VCS organisations to have a single point of entry to all ESOL courses in Manchester, cutting duplication and increasing coordination
<p>Improve progression pathways for ESOL learners into vocational areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESOL Advice Service providers group and overall management steering group have been convened and six well attended meetings held to date - detailed discussions about improving progression pathways between providers • The ESOL Advice Service is improving access to vocational areas by directing learners to the most appropriate route for them • MAES has introduced new short courses to help learners improve their vocabulary and knowledge for specific sectors • The Manchester College has introduced a wider programme of ESOL and vocational programmes
<p>Improve the data collected on ESOL demand</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new ESOL Advice Service was launched in September 2019. It has established a centralised waiting list system and is already starting to produce detailed data on demand and supply for ESOL courses across Manchester. To date 1208 residents have been assessed and of those 476 have been placed.
<p>Develop targeted provision for under represented groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis has identified a gap in provision for recent arrivals with higher level professional qualifications and people already in work who want to progress – a pilot project started in Jan 19 with PwC, leading to a paid placement scheme for ESOL learners with qualifications and experience from overseas

5.0 MAES offer -Who we reach and who benefits

- 5.1 MAES engages residents from every Manchester ward. The 2018/19 the cohort was: 70% female and 30% male, 27% employed, 47% unemployed & looking for work, 25 % not looking for work, 42% for whom English is not their first language.
- 5.2 MAES learners include those who have left compulsory education with no or low qualifications, highly skilled immigrants who have poor English language skills, residents who have had long periods of unemployment or no work history, many with mental health issues. 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. Our employed learners come to improve their Maths, English or vocational qualifications in order to secure sustainable employment and progress at work where there are current and emerging vacancies.
- 5.3 MAES learners have different starting points. Some learners start on entry courses level courses and work their way up the qualification ladder before they feel confident enough to seek employment. Others have worked in low level jobs, then return to learning after having children and now aspire to having a career. Some of our learner journeys and their achievements are highlighted in the appendix

6.0 MAES Self-assessment and Improvement Plan

- 6.1 MAES uses a range of external measures to self-assess against and inform the Service and team improvement plans. These include:
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework
 - Matrix standards for Information, Advice and Guidance
 - National benchmarks for achievement rates and destinations
- 6.2 A new inspection framework - the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) was introduced in September 2019. The new framework is structured around three key aspects which are the basis for judging the quality of education. These are **intent, implementation and impact**. The new framework also places greater emphasis on the development of personal and social skills and on a clear line of sight to employment or further learning.
- 6.3 The intention of the new framework is to shift the emphasis of inspections towards curriculum delivery, with less of a focus on for example achievement rates. The framework has taken account of consultation feedback about the previous emphasis on hard measures which has diverted providers from the substance of education and led to a narrowing of the curriculum and 'teaching to the test'.
- 6.4 MAES has responded to the new framework by using it to review the service offer and the format of its improvement plan. The 2019/20 improvement plan

objectives and actions will be based on the learner journey from engagement, to the course offer, to development of skills and behaviours to achievement, outcomes and destinations.

- 6.5 The service Quality Improvement and Self-assessment process follows an annual cycle. Learners are consulted through course reviews, 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.
- 6.6 The service was re-accredited with the MATRIX standard for the quality of its information advice and guidance last year and this aspect remains good.
- 6.7 Executive member briefings, MAES Governing Body meetings and team performance management meetings 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.

7.0 MAES self-assessment 2018/19.

- 7.1 Our self-assessment is that we remain good in all aspects of the previous Inspection framework. These were:

7.2 Overall effectiveness

MAES has a well-defined offer which aligns to key priorities for the city and contributes towards the delivery of strategies at Manchester and Greater Manchester levels. The delivery of first step courses significantly improves the prospects of learners with low qualifications, those who have little knowledge of English language and those learners with significant personal barriers to employment.

7.3 Effectiveness of Leadership and Management

MAES has high expectations of learners and has a clear vision for helping learners secure or progress in work. Provision is well-designed in order to achieve this and staff understand how to differentiate to ensure the most disadvantaged and the most able, can make good progress and achieve on both accredited and non-accredited courses. For example, the ESOL for Work programme had positive outcomes in terms of employment, volunteering or education for 44% of learners, including 36% getting jobs. The course programme was successfully reviewed in 18/19 to enable learners to access more substantial provision (increasing average guided learning hours per learner), in order to improve progression and outcomes.

- 7.4 There are good partnerships with employers which benefit them and our learners. They are helping us to shape our course offer so that it better meets their needs, delivering information about job/careers in their sectors and providing work experience opportunities. We have reshaped our course offer, and have developed online learning materials to make our learning provision more flexible. For example:
- Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC) have worked with us to develop a customised programme so that higher level ESOL learners who have professional backgrounds/experience from other countries, can secure work experience and employment in accountancy/professional service roles.
 - Pure Innovations work in conjunction with us to deliver bespoke programmes for 18-24 year olds with learning disabilities and difficulties who need additional support to prepare for and sustain paid employment or volunteering. The programmes includes Maths, English and Digital skills qualifications, work placements, travel training and community activities. They have secured a range of work experience opportunities with employers including Tesco and Manchester University.
 - The MCC supported accommodation team have helped us to design a course to equip local people to try out roles, learn new skills and secure MCC care vacancies. We have also delivered a bespoke course for this team's existing staff focussing on the English skills they need in their role including report writing and record keeping. This model has significant scope to be rolled out with other teams across the council.
- 7.5 Effective and well targeted partnerships with community learning fund providers enabled MAES to recruit 1637 'harder to engage' learners and provide them with a first step into learning, increased confidence and increased motivation and ability to access further learning opportunities.
- 7.6 MAES also leads the award-winning Talk English project, working with partners in 18/19 to expand the project to a total of 26 areas, including areas in London, the Midlands, the North West and Yorkshire & Humber. This has enabled an additional 6,932 beginner ESOL learners access to provision nationally and delivered a further 1017 additional ESOL places in Manchester.
- 7.7 MAES also expanded its work with Manchester Libraries in 18/19 supporting and encouraging all MAES learners to take part in the Read Manchester campaign. In addition, 9 bespoke workshops were delivered for over 70 parents and carers and 154 children, to support the development of their own reading skills and help their children, effectively contributing to a key priority for the city. The Family Learning team also worked with Manchester Libraries to provide 10 free Read and Feed workshops to tackle Holiday Hunger. Family Learning tutors delivered a reading workshop while the libraries provided a free lunch for the children. 64 parents and approximately 250 children were engaged contributing to Manchester Family Poverty strategy.

8.0 Quality of Teaching, Learning & Assessment

8.1 Leaders and managers have successfully improved the quality of assessment on Community Learning and non-regulated provision in 2018/19 through a focus on more robust processes for Recognising and Recording Performance and Achievement (RARPA). The new approach is ambitious for learners, requiring 100% of course objectives to be achieved in order to 'pass' a course whilst also increasing the focus on individualised learning and setting personalised learning objectives. The approach ensures that achievement decisions are robust and meaningful.

8.2 Tutors are well-qualified and experienced in meeting the needs of learners, many of whom have multiple barriers to learning. Tutors have an excellent understanding of their learners and adapt teaching materials and resources accordingly. The majority of teaching staff have a degree or higher level of qualification, 20% have a master's level qualification, and 30% hold PGCE Level 7. MAES scored 97.5% in the FE Choices Learner Satisfaction Survey. At the end of each course we ask learners to rate the course and the teaching. This is collated across the service and the 2018/19 learner feedback was:

- 99% learners rated the teaching as excellent (80%) or good (19%).
- 95.7% of teaching was rated good or better when observed.
- 98% learners rated their tutors as 'Excellent (78%) or Good (21%) for 'giving clear instructions and explanations'.

8.3 Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare/Learner Voice

MAES is effective at capturing and responding to learner voice - for example learner forums were held at all main centres (attended by 195 learners in total and representing the views of around 1,950 learners). MAES responded to all suggestions and ideas put forward by learners, such as improving publicity which led to increased recruitment at two centres.

8.4 Teaching and learning includes a wide variety of activities that promote equality of opportunity and celebrate diversity. Schemes of work take account of important religious, cultural and other events to integrate cultural understanding into the majority of courses. Teaching and learning activities include an extensive range of group work activities that ensure different groups of learners have the opportunity to work together to promote understanding, respect and tolerance of the views of others. For example, ESOL learners across the service worked together on a group project called 'Charitea', planning, organising and selling refreshments in centres and raising over £2,000 for charity. Tutors consistently make excellent use of learners' different cultural backgrounds and experiences in their teaching. This successfully promotes tolerance and understanding of different lifestyles and backgrounds.

8.5 Outcomes for Learners

MAES is very effective at addressing the Manchester priority of adults with low

skills and no qualifications. For example, in 2018/19, the majority of learners made good progress and achieved qualifications and/or personal learning goals and 2119 individuals achieved one or more national qualifications, an increase of 6% in 2017/18 (2014).

- Good Adult Skills retention (95.8%), pass rates (93.8%) and achievement rates 89.8%, an increase of 2.3 percentage points from 2017/18.
- Good achievement of GCSE grades 4-9 in Maths 81.8%, English 83.3%. English GCSE pass rate up by 5.6 percentage points to 97.9%. Maths GCSE pass rate up 5 percentage points to 97.1%
- Good achievement of Community learning goals at 89%.
- The number of learners gaining Level 1 and Level 2 Functional Maths qualifications significantly increased by 39% while maintaining good achievement rates for all. Functional skills qualifications achievement rates were 82.9% in 17/18 and increased to 83.4% in 18/19.
- 3351 national qualifications achieved.

8.6 Destinations

Since October 2018, the Department for Education has produced annual statistics on the employment and learning outcomes of Further Education (FE) learners. The Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) study is based on a data matching exercise across government departments, giving rich data and much higher accuracy as 98% of records are matched, as opposed to a typical response rate of 50-55% from a telephone survey.

- MAES Adult Skills learners have had a sustained employment rate of 40- 41% over the four years, comparative to other similar adult education services.
- The sustained learning rate for skills learners has increased from 39% for 13/14 learners to 54% for 16/17 learners - this compares very favourably to the national rate which is 24% and to other similar services.
- Sustained positive destinations has also increased from 66% in 13/14 to 74% in 16/17, performing relatively well against national average (76%) and other similar services.
- However, for learners on benefits at the start of the programme, the sustained employment rate has decreased from 35% to 27%. At the same time, the number and proportion of 'benefit learners' has significantly decreased from 1170 to 800.

8.7 MAES also commissions a private company to conduct a telephone tracking survey for all leavers in July a year after they have completed their course. The formal destination data of **2018/19 leavers** will therefore be available in October 2020. This will be supplemented by data gathered by our new Careers and progression team in year. J2 Research also provides national averages to benchmark our performance against. J2 research tracking survey of 2017/18 leavers:

- 39.2% of MAES leavers were in paid employment in comparison to 38.3% of all council adult learning services former learners. However, a greater proportion of MAES leavers were in part time rather than full time employment.
- 5.8% of MAES leavers were in learning compared to 7.1% for all councils - however a higher proportion were in Higher Education.
- 75.6% of MAES leavers contacted said the course had made them feel more positive about the future and 79.2% said the course had made them more confident at home, work and in everyday life.
- 40.7% of MAES leavers said the course made them more able to set clear goals and ambitions and 53.5% said it helped them develop new skills to make changes.

9.0 MAES Improvement Plan 2019/20

9.1 We have used our self-assessment processes, reviewed the learner journey and taken account of the Our Manchester objectives and behaviours to identify the key areas for improvement for the coming year. These are:

9.2 Make learning more accessible

We have analysed our learner data to identify specific gaps in who we currently engage. For example, we have identified a reduction in residents enrolling on entry level Maths and English courses. Actions include:

- Focus groups with current learners (listening and understanding)
- Co design of job related Maths and English provision with Work Club providers (working together)

A greater proportion of MAES learners are now employed in part time jobs so we need to make our provision more flexible so that it is easier for them to learn and earn, Actions include:

- Increase the amount of blended and online learning available to support learning outside the classroom.
- Develop learner's digital and study skills.
- Revise our course delivery to better enable residents who work variable hours or shift work to be supported and achieve.

9.3 Tackle digital inclusion and the high level digital skills gaps in the city (connected economy)

We want to motivate residents to recognise the benefits to them and their families of developing and using digital skills.
Actions include;

- Work with libraries to better coordinate and promote our digital inclusion offer (working together).
- Deliver digital skills in the workplace and in targeted community locations.

- Develop pathways to meet the high level digital skills gaps.

9.4 Engage employers in shaping the course offer

We have identified a need to improve our course offer so that it better prepares our learners for work and better meets employers' current and future needs. Actions include:

- Co design courses to improve learners job readiness for different sectors (listening & understanding residents and business).
- Further develop work experience opportunities (listening & understanding residents and business).
- Co design Boost Your Skills with job centre staff and employers.

9.5 Further Improve Teaching, Learning and assessment

We need to improve the use of learning technology to support learning outside the classroom and enable learners to develop online and independent learning skills. We need to need to continue to stretch and challenge the most able learners. Actions include:

- Develop and implement the use of Google classroom.
- Deploy Teaching & Learning coaches to develop specific themes and coach tutors.
- Develop service wide approach to improve all learners' Maths and English skills.

9.6 Increase positive destinations

We need to increase the number of learners who secure and sustain work and progress in work and increase volunteering as a pathway to work and to improve citizenship.

- Develop our 'Make it Happen' approach to improve careers education and progression.
- Work with stakeholders including Libraries and Housing providers to promote and develop our volunteering opportunities.

9.7 Profile

We recognise that many residents and employers are not aware of how adult education can contribute to improving people's job prospects, health & wellbeing and benefit the economy, families and communities. Actions include;

- Develop our governors as ambassadors who will promote the benefits of adult education.
- Develop video and case studies and marketing content to promote adult education to learners, stakeholders and employers.
- Improving our learning centres/environments.

- Invite former learners to celebration events to share their experience and act as role models.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1 MAES provision makes an important contribution to the Manchester priorities to raise aspirations and improve skills and qualifications so that residents access employment and progress in work. We have £7.647million AEB budget for 2019/20 and hope to have continued MCHLG funding from April 2020 to support our Talk English provision. We will be reviewing our service strategy to ensure it is aligned with the Manchester Local Industrial Strategy, the Manchester Adult Education and Skills Plan and the GM Adult Education Budget priorities. We will be working in collaboration with other Manchester providers to develop a strategic city wide education and skills offer and raise its profile. Key next steps are to engage with the wider provider base to map the collective offer and identify gaps and duplication. We also need to share the lessons learned from leading on the city wide ESOL strategy and action plan. The GM local authority providers group will in particular be considering how we can develop and strengthen our evidence base about the impact of Community and Family Learning.
- 10.2 By working closely with stakeholders and partners there is a great opportunity to make sure that the MAES offer links directly to the City's priorities and growth sectors and help more residents access and progress in work and contribute to their communities.