

# Officer Non-Key Decision Report

Decision Date – 26 June 2024



## NON-KEY DECISION TAKEN BY THE: SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMY, EMPLOYMENT AND PLANNING

**Author:** Melanie Roberts

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### Details of the decision:

That the Service Director for Economy, Employment and Planning:

- Approves Somerset Council's Accountability Statement for Adult Skills and Learning for the year 2024/25 (attached as Appendix A)

### Reasons for the decision:

It is a requirement of the DfE that Somerset Council submits an Accountability Statement by the end of June 2024 to enable the allocated funding of £2,524,199 for Adult Skills and Learning (Tailored Learning) for the academic year 2024/25.

The approved Accountability Statement must be published on Somerset Council's website.

### Background to the decision:

#### Overview

Accountability Agreements form part of the wider set of reforms set out in the Skills for Jobs White Paper ([Skills for jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/skills-for-jobs-white-paper)) to transform the skills system, so it better supports young people and adults to develop the skills they need to get a good job and ensuring a clearer focus on the delivery of outcomes.

Accountability Agreements were introduced for the first time in the 2023/24 academic year and consist of a 2-part document. The agreement sets out both the overall expectations, and what colleges, designated institutions and local authorities in scope will deliver, in return for the Department's funding.

Somerset Council is a Local Authority and is in receipt of funding to deliver:

- Skill Bootcamps
- Tailored Learning (Community Learning)
- Apprenticeships

Part 1 of the agreement - the 'Accountability Framework' - sets out National Skills Priorities as well as the terms and conditions of funding to ensure the effective management and assurance of public funds, the protection of learners as well as requiring sound governance.

Part 2, the 'Annual Accountability Statement' - the document we are seeking approval of - sets how the Council are contributing to priorities outlined in Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) and to the National Skills Priorities. It also sets out how our Tailored (Community) Learning provision meets local skills needs.

The document sets out the overall expectations of the Authority's delivery for the year ahead and how we intend to support local needs to improve people's lives through inclusive and inspirational adult learning that will empower people to make intelligent choices and succeed in their personal, social, and economic aspirational goals.

The planned provision in Somerset should meet the strategic requirements as set out on the Council Plan.

The Authority's Accountability Statement is to be reviewed annually and should set out the outcome targets for areas of the curriculum that are being planned for the coming year. These targets will reflect how the Authority is contributing to the priorities as set out in the Council Plan to support the provision of the employment and skills required in Somerset.

The Accountability Statement will set out the Authority's learning vision, learning purpose, and learning intentions. These are detailed in the complete document as provided in background papers below.

The funded programmes for which the statement applies are delivered within the Economy, Employment and Planning Service with the exception of Apprenticeships which are delivered by the Somerset Centre of Integrated Learning (SCIL) within the Children and Young People Directorate. The SCIL team have been consulted with in the drafting of the Accountability Statement.

The Accountability Statement for 2024/25 is attached as Appendix A.

**Background papers:**

None

**Compliance section:**

Members consulted; members informed:	Yes
Officer consultations completed:	Yes
Senior (including statutory) officer sign off completed	Yes
Public / other consultations undertaken	Yes
Do you have sufficient budget or additional funding available and approval to commit this budget or funding and has this been confirmed with the appropriate Finance Service or Service Manager?	N/A
Are there any legal considerations to be made?	No

Has Legal Services been consulted (specific requirement for changes in service delivery, procurement, contracts, or property matters?)	N/A
Are there any TUPE implications arising?	No
Has HR/Workforce been consulted?	N/A
Is the decision likely to lead to a procurement exercise or contract award / change?	No
Has the Commercial and Procurement Team been consulted?	N/A
Service Finance Lead Officer / Manager consulted for commissioning?	N/A
Are there any risks arising? (liaise with Pam Pursley / Angela Farmer regarding these)	No
Have mitigating actions already been taken?	not considered necessary
Have all Due Regard (equalities) implications been considered? (liaise with Tom Rutland regarding these).	N/A
<b>If ticked 'No' or 'not considered necessary' for any of the above, please provide your justification below:</b>	
<p>All relevant consultations and discussions have taken place to ensure this is a fully compliant process.</p> <p>There are no risks identified in respect of taking this decision. However, if the Accountability Statement is not approved and submitted to the DfE then they will not release the funding to us which will mean we cannot deliver the Adult Community (Tailored) Learning Programme.</p>	

<b>Member consultation completed:</b>	<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Date</b>
Relevant Local Unitary Councillors consulted where decision directly affects their division.	N/A	
Relevant Executive Member(s) consulted (if applicable)	Ros Wyke	
Opposition Spokesperson informed (if applicable)	Cllr Mandy Chilcott	
Chairman of relevant Scrutiny informed (if applicable)	Cllr Martin Dimery	

**Decision Maker**

**I am aware of the details of this decision, have considered the reasons, options, representations, and consultation responses (where applicable) and give my approval / agreement to its implementation.**

**Signed by relevant Service Director:**

Paul Hickson

**Name: Paul Hickson**

**Post: Service Director – Economy, Employment and Planning**

**Date: 26 June 2024**

Note – a copy of this signed decision should be sent to David Clark / Scott Wooldridge,  
Monitoring Officer, Democratic Services