



Appendix B

Bristol ESL Plan Consultation Feedback

January 2024



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Residents

Easton

1. When you left school how well were you prepared for the future – particularly finding the right career?

- When I completed school I had no preparation for a future career
- In Ukraine you had a free choice in your career – but not much support
- I didn't do any more learning after I left school
- I didn't attend school as my mum died when I was young and I had to support my family
- I left school at 8 years of age, I'm now in the UK and have my level 1 English, learning to read and write.
- I'm an asylum seeker so my focus was on day to day survival.

2. Have you taken part in any learning or training since leaving school?

- Maths
- ESOL
- Computer
- Childcare
- Teaching Assistant
- Health and Social
- Sewing
- Parenting

3. Does your area have enough advice, adult learning and employment opportunities?

- Not enough job advice (no-one on our table had heard of the National Careers Service or the One Front Door)
- 2 hours a week of ESOL is not enough – we need ESOL to be provided on more days
- I want to do a level 3 course as a Teaching Assistant but I can't afford the fees
- Work experience is not available and that would help me meet employers and get a job
- I'm not sure exactly where my nearest college is?
- I can't get to the local FE college at Ashley Down – there is a problem with the transport – there is a bus (no 70) but if I miss the bus because it doesn't come I miss the lesson

4. Which organisations in Easton do you trust and that make a positive difference? Who do you ask for advice re training/work?

- Bristol Community Learning
- Wellspring Settlement
- Refugee Women of Bristol
- Felix Road Adventure Playground

- Through my children's primary school
- Just talking to local people in our community is always helpful

5. There are lots of jobs in Bristol right now – what stops you from applying for them?

- Childcare issues x 2
- Language issues
- I don't know how to apply online – applications are all online now and that is difficult
Applying online is not always easy for jobs, training, too complicated. Too Long, too many things to fill in and English and our ICT skills are lower end of knowledge. We get stuck.
- You don't hear back from applying online for jobs online. Never. They have your information / CV, who are they?
- Lack of progression opportunities into training and then into new jobs.

6. What do you want for yourself and your children over the next 5 years?

- Maths and English qualifications.
- Level 1 and 2 are good however level 3 is really hard to get onto. All level 3 courses are so much higher and harder. You have to also pay, lots. These could help me move on into other areas of my interest.
- 100% of participants told us, Yes, they would like to be in work please and exploring all progression for their future
- To find a good job
- To find a job in care work
- To work as a teacher or teaching assistant
- To find part time work, as I have a family to support at home
- I'd like to talk with others about my options, my opportunities in this City. It would give me fresh hope
- Better schools more staff support SEN kids
- Get settlement visa- been waiting 9 years, cant access college without it
- Free or cheap sports clubs for children
- Cheaper Arabic school
- Safer communities, less drugs
- Free toddler groups

7. What courses would you like to see?

- Fitness for women e.g. yoga and swimming especially in winter
- Healthy cooking and eating
- Higher level courses- level 2 in more than maths and English
- Driving lessons
- Work experience in a salon
- English and Maths Level 1 and Level 2
- ESOL for driving
- Level 3 Teaching Assistant

- Health and social care training
- Accounting – but I need to do GCSE Maths
- Hairdressing so I can set up a business
- I want to improve my English – reading, writing and speaking
- I want to improve my English while my children are at school and I have to be at home
- Online training in photo editing and professional English
- Job search skills/ CV writing

8. What skills do you think employers looking for?

- English skills – employers prefer people who speak English well
- Digital skills
- Communication
- Interpersonal skills
- That you learn quickly, you are lively and energetic

9. If you had a magic wand what would help more people in Easton get advice, skills, jobs?

- Support to convert a foreign degree and driving licence
- When you come on a spouse visa you don't get any IAG or information unlike asylum seekers
- More chance for studying full time
- Opportunities for work trials - a big ask please
- Work experience - longer than a work trail, this can be added to my CV and then I can gain a professional reference for future progression / applications
- Help with finding somewhere to volunteer
- Self employment preparation
- Interview preparation
- Free childcare
- Free after school/ breakfast clubs
- Housing advice – I've been in temporary accommodation for years
- There are terrible problems finding an NHS dentist

Hartcliffe

1. When you left school how well were you prepared for the future – particularly finding the right career?

- I experienced old fashioned schooling with low aspirations
- I didn't get any help with subject options in school
- My school found out I was dyslexic way too late
- Schools try to push option choices on you
- The curriculum did not include life skills

- There is a postcode lottery on jobs - this area is very deprived which puts us all at a disadvantage
- Low expectations and limited college opportunities
- Not at all – I left school during Covid 19
- Grades affect your opportunities
- Sexism still plays a big part in the advice and options you are given
- I was never taught how to apply for jobs or how to apply experience to application forms
- I got kicked out of St Brendans College
- Merchants pushed on HE – even when that was not in the interests of the student – I got good GCSE grades so I was encouraged to go into the sixth form, even though I wanted to do carpentry – I didn't finish my A'Levels and ended up unemployed
- There was a lack of support for practical skills courses
- There is the issue of family culture and pressures. Some choices aren't valued. Some parents didn't turn up when young people graduated from the youth and community work programme.
- There were a lack of clear pathways, there was no preparation for the job application process after leaving school, and no specialised support
- At school in South Bristol I was pushed into the university study route
- Schools are only focused on those with high grades
- The school system is designed to get young people into standard jobs, not the jobs they want
- It was a fight to get any support
- The local academy has just pulled all the A level courses
- I wanted to go into engineering in year 10 and year 11 – my mental health got in the way. I had a bad experience on a work placement. In year 11 I got kicked out and had to go back to take my exams. I applied to college at the last minute and ended up on a course I didn't really want to do

2. Have you taken part in any learning or training since leaving school?

- Having kids stopped me from taking part in courses
- I did first aid training which I now use at our community group
- Food hygiene training
- Safeguarding training that I use at work
- Fire training – I'm now the fire warden
- First aid training – paediatric and normal
- Yes – college, A-levels, Uni where I did a PGCE – care certificate, first aid, whole family practitioner training, advocacy training
- I'm undertaking an internship and doing a Level 2 course in youth work – its got a different structure to normal school or college - I'm becoming a role model – I used to laugh at the idea of role models – and now that's me!
- I'm undertaking Level 3 animal management at Weston College
- Through Kickstart I got an apprenticeship with the Council

- I wanted to train in youth work but there were no local courses – the Gap Project has given me a chance to take a youth work internship and I’m encouraged to develop community projects

3. Does your area have enough advice, adult learning & work opportunities? Who would you ask for advice about training and work?

- Yes and No
- Yes – places like HWCP / @Symes / Symes Library (adult ed groups upstairs? Staff in library /on desk helpful for advice
- Yes – Gatehouse Centre – good access to IAG (can make appointments face to face rather than tel/online booking), help/ adult ed courses for doing CV’s / employability / IT skills / maths & English. Creche/nursery on site. Courses fit around school times so parents can join. Also, A2A for 16-18’s (will take yps without GCSE’s / usually flexible start, but currently full)
- Yes – Hartcliffe Children’s Centre – maths / English and childcare courses for parents. (2 mums on the table go there for lessons and really appreciated the time away from their kids to learn). Has creche/ childcare. “Learning has to be at the right time for childcare / creche – and local”.
- Possible – Hartcliffe City Farm. Bit of an unknown – thought to be running courses / expanding provision now under new management. Best known for children/family events. (word slowly spreading)
- No – local adult courses seem to stop at Level 2. There are some adult Level 3 vocational courses at SBSA (e.g. Hair) but most ‘academic’ / A level courses are in city centre or further. No A levels at SBSA.
- There’s a lack of youth worker presence in the area – including a lack of peer mentoring
- Issues – TRAVEL! Difficulty getting around BS13 using public transport/buses. Main route (75? 76?) unreliable and may not turn up (lack of bus drivers was noted) – goes into city centre. Difficult to get to Imperial Shopping Park on public transport. Can’t get bus from Hartcliffe to The Park Centre, Knowle – or to Brislington /Bath Road where more shops and warehouses. The 36 used to go from Withywood/Gatehouse Centre right through Hartcliffe – past The Park Centre, through Brislington/ St Annes to Barton Hill and City Centre. Concerns with walking to areas like The Bottleyard which goes past flats (in the old Council Building) as seen as unsafe. Also unsafe to get to/from Imperial shops especially when dark. Most bus routes seem to go straight to city centre – not around the outside so people having to catch 2 buses when they used to catch one.
- Jobs – mostly low paid jobs in the area. Families worried about cost of childcare and bus fares for jobs further away when they are struggling to pay bills/food.
- The support may be there but it can be stigmatised
- I would ask around and use google (didn’t know about the One Front Door service)
- The best jobs are in the city centre - all the jobs in this area are in retail (Imperial Park, Morrisons, Lidl etc)

- There are good trade jobs in construction – self employed builders are doing alright
- There is an issue with youth and community pathways – there's a lack of statutory funding for youth work, there's a need for more youth enterprise in schools, and there's been a lack of pathways in the third sector with a lack of willingness for local organisations to work together – the Bristol VCS is chaotic. The Youth Council lacks a strong connection to local communities – there's a lot of self entitlement – who designs the application process?

4. There are lots of jobs in Bristol – what would stop you applying for them?

- Need for childcare / hours to fit (and school holidays / flexible if child ill)
- Transport (buses) to get to/from place of work (not easy busing back from town for hospitality staff working late)/ Location needs to be near home or safe to walk there/back. Imperial Park – people felt it wasn't safe to walk to/from, especially when its dark.
- Low paid jobs in Hartcliffe vs being on benefits (starter wages low, so people not inspired/motivated to work to end with with very little more money at the end of the month or even worse off – especially if need to pay for bus / childcare).
- Lack of the right qualifications (being able to drive / having license would make finding work easier .. also could then get jobs that involving driving)
- Language barrier for people new to UK.
- Lack of transport to big employers at Avonmouth e.g. Walberton's Bakery (possible opportunity for car lift share schemes / employers minibuses ... like the university has buses?)
- A1 bus to airport ... worries about the cost (but thought airport staff did get discount fare) – also times of shifts for new staff (put on earlies/ lates which were harder/safety concerns to get to on public transport)
- This area has been hit by the clean air zone and the charge you have to pay going into the centre if you don't have a newer vehicle
- Apprenticeships – many on minimum pay for f/t work (doing the same as other staff/ little proper training) ... e.g. in hospitality – low pay and late evening work.
- Few p/t or weekend work for teens or as way to get back into work. Not everyone can or wants to work f/t. For some going from being NEET to F/T work or apprenticeship is too much
- Cost of driving lessons and test

5. Looking at the map – what organisations & employers do you trust and that make a positive difference?

- HWV / Gatehouse *** – good that people can walk in and make an appointment in person for IAG etc
- HWCP ***
- @Symes/ Symes Library
- Hartcliffe Children's Centre
- Hartcliffe City Farm ***

- Hartcliffe Millenium Green – gardening group and wellbeing group
- Hideout Adventure Playground (LPWO – community play groups and forest school)
- Withywood Centre
- Skate Park
- Rivers of Life Church & Mowcraft Church – food clubs / community cooking
- Fixx Bike Workshop – provide workshops with kids
- Morrisons used to be good when Karen used to be their community link worker (she doesn't work there now / they don't seem as involved locally) – but major employer. They employ lots of local people but a lot of people don't like working there.
- Lidl and Home Bargains – ok places for work.
- Bottleyard and factories going into Whitchurch Lane/ Hengrove – safety concerns walking past Imperial Apartments (old Council Building)
- Cater Road industrial estate – bit of an unknown. Don't see jobs advertised, people don't know what businesses are there. (no buses through there?)
- Lots of small businesses / self employed builders – seem to recruit through word or moth rather than advertise.
- Bridge Learning Campus – employs a few local people
- New Fosseyway – a school for Disabled children
- City of Bristol College
- Merchants Academy
- City of Bristol Gymnastic Centre have a café and provide gym classes
- Job Centre – good if you are claiming, but you can't get in if you aren't. People remember being able to walk in and see vacancy boards – now you can't get through the door because of security.
- Not good - Citizen's Advice – people used to like to be able to go to a drop in advice session locally. Now you have to ring to make an appointment.
- There is currently work going on behind the screens to better link Gatehouse / Hartcliffe Children's Centre /HWCP. New 'Family Hub' for adult learning will be at the Children's Centre*

6. What do you want for yourself and your children over the next 5 years?

- less self-isolation and more support
- happiness
- better schooling for my children
- easier access to health professionals
- clearer processes for health referrals and better waiting times
- better and more support from local and national government
- opportunities
- stability – food, job, housing, finances
- local facilities and better local infrastructure
- I've redone my English, Maths and also taken Animal Care – I want to set up a dog walking enterprise while my kids are in school (I need a driving licence) and then I'd like to set up a charity for animals

7. What courses would you like to see?

- Local history
- Further IT skills
- First aid
- Practical parenting advice and support – or just a drop in
- English and maths – basic and advanced
- Life skills
- Food hygiene
- Preparation for returning or starting work
- Communication skills

8. What skills do you think employers are looking for?

- Making yourself stand out from others
- Experience
- Grades and predicted grades
- Others skills not related to the job – e.g. first aid
- Communication skills
- Older qualifications are no longer relevant because IT is taught in schools now and is part of every day life
- Tech savvy

9. If you had a magic wand what would help more local people get advice, skills and jobs?

- Better TRANSPORT (BUSES) – Not just going into city centre ... being able to travel around the neighbourhood and going 'sideways' into neighbouring areas.
- Better links with employers – they put on transport or pay for driving lessons/test for potential employees
- Jobs Boards – in places like Morrisons (easy for small employers to put note on as well as big ones)
- Higher level learning without going to city centre
- Higher paying jobs
- Better secondary education – need to raise aspirations. For schools to better prepare young people for the working world. (less history /geography subjects as not seen relevant – more about managing money/ budgeting)
- More warehouses – and warehouse type jobs. Training for fork lift license / CSCS etc
- More organisations like A2A / Princes Trust
- Local stand alone Maths and English groups for under 19's who don't want to join a f/t course but where they lack L4 GCSE grades is a barrier to learning vocational courses / getting apprenticeships.
- Companies / DWP to fund getting driving license
- Self belief
- Help with writing your CV and interview skills

- People or organisations to trust where you can get help and support
- Less competition for jobs
- Better understanding of how your first paycheck looks
- More opportunities in general for people
- Better help when leaving education – so many lessons are pointless - rather than the focus on geography/history – more focus on preparing for the world of work, how to manage money, how to apply for jobs
- Every young person before they leave school should have 121 advice about next steps and this advice service should continue after they leave school
- A base where you can drop in and get advice about jobs and support
- Young people just need the right environment to flourish

Southmead

1. When you left school how well were you prepared for the future – particularly finding the right career?

- There was no careers advice when I was at school and my mum didn't really push me
- I didn't go to school because of the bullying – I just used to walk home. At first I wanted to be stripper as not sure of other options for me but went into childcare after taking a course
- I didn't know I was dyslexic- 'school failed me' labelled as naughty and disruptive
- I started stealing in Iceland and I was asked if I'd like a job there. I just needed that one person to see something in me, to give me a break. I ended up working there for 15 years
- I skipped school as was naughty and didn't enjoy learning, I am easily distracted and still hate learning (is on Multiply course)
- Some schools don't teach children who learn in a different way - my 10 year old grandson has dropped out and I can't get a place for him
- I went to school in London – I really struggled with Maths and to avoid those lessons I stayed in the toilets - teachers didn't pick up on it (is on a Multiply class now)

2. Have you taken part in any learning or training since leaving school?

- I did a childcare course and was able to get training through a work placement – I ended up in a childcare job for 14 years
- I've attended lots of Community Learning courses – like Health and Social Care – I want to be a good example for my boys
- Worked as a support worker, then went to college but then went off the rails before sorting my head out and now do a lot of community learning courses- autism awareness, cooking on a budget, brush up your maths, first aid
- I did a BTEC in Health and Soc at COB, foundation then intermediate for 2 years, worked in care sector and now Multiply
- The job centre sent me to Restart and that's how I found out about Multiply

- Left school in Caribbean age 15 years, been here 20 years, worked in catering, in a school kitchen, when I moved to Bristol. I've done a computer course and Multiply.

3. Does your area have enough advice, adult learning and employment opportunities?

- Newsletters no longer come through door telling people what's happening
- Not enough job vacancies or not with hours to suit parents or carers
- Demands for qualifications and experience too high, hard to get a foot in door
- Employers should change the format of interviews so that they can find people who have experience, which is sometimes much more useful than qualifications
- People need opportunities to 'show not tell'
- Need more training for school leavers and channel them into something positive/creative especially boys (other learner disputed that higher need for support for boys)

4. Who ask for advice re training/work?

- Google
- Kids' school – they advertise courses and send out texts
- Facebook
- A lot of training is not accessible for people in work who need to update their knowledge and training – when you're working, a lot of things change and your skills need updating
- If you leave a job your Universal Credit is penalised
- Children getting let down re medical or educational needs, difficulties accessing SEND support, getting an EHCP which will affect their futures. Access to SEND services and schools is a fight – one parent had been going through the assessment/appeal process for 5 years. This has involved a lot of stress and pressure.
- Schools don't motivate children who need a different type of learning

5. There are lots of jobs in Bristol right now – what stops you from applying for them?

- Certain barriers can stop you from progressing – such as not having Level 2 Maths. I worked for my local school as a supervisory assistant in breakfast clubs and at lunchtimes. I'd been there 8 years and wanted to apply to be a Learning Support Assistant, but I was told I had to have a level 2 in Maths
- There need to be more ways of showing how you are skilled for the work - i.e. the actual skills rather than do a tell interview
- Employers not offering enough training or giving people a chance in recruitment
- Childcare, working hours- not enough flexibility for parents and carers
- Having a Disabled child – when you work your pay impacts on your carers allowance and other benefits – you're better off on benefits as a carer
- Need understanding employers who have flexible hours
- bank staff carer jobs don't provide workable shifts (weekends, evenings, school holidays)

- travel – buses are hopeless, they are expensive and unreliable
- only one person had a driving licence – a need for driving lessons for independence
- Schools don't help - my child is autistic, and since they were age 3 I've been struggling to get them an EHCP, and now they are 8

6. Which organisations in Southmead do you trust and that make a positive difference?

- Baddocks School
- Horfield Leisure Centre are very supportive
- The Ranch is really cliquey – they don't welcome incomers and they are not accessible
- Not enough out there for kids – the local park is dirty and disgusting, if you report this to the council they do nothing
- Library closed down – or there are reduced hours (has in fact moved but she didn't know that)
- The Greenway Centre – it's not always clear what's going on – you don't get information unless you come in, you don't get anything through the letterbox any more and you don't find out about things if you don't have wifi
- The local health centre only provides information about health

7. There are some big employers close to Southmead – like Airbus do you feel connected to them?

- No
- Airbus too far away, public transport doesn't go to royal mail, Rolls Royce etc
- 'they aren't going to want one of the little people – like me – there's a class and education divide – why don't these employers make their jobs more accessible and appealing for local people?
- Health centres only have info about health not other services or events
- Southmead hospital always been helpful for my family – but not as an employer

8. What do you want for yourself and your children over the next 5 years?

- More support for single parents and those with kids with additional needs like welcome groups and support groups
- More clubs for young people/ teens aged 8-15
- Toddler groups - only one playgroup at Baddock's children's centre and it's always full
- I want to build on my confidence, doing courses helps build myself
- I want to inspire my children that they can see that although I was dyslexic and I failed at school I have now improved so if they fail at school they will look at me as a role model
- Go back to work in childcare
- I'm a self employed cleaner so I want to grow that
- I'm in a limbo waiting for a transplant. Maths course takes my mind off that

9. What courses would you like to see?

- Mental health courses and access to CBT - I suffer from major anxiety and depression. How to help yourself- did not receive help when tried to commit suicide and I've had to pay £65 a session for counselling
- Cost of living help/ budgeting
- Cookery
- Etiquette class
- SEND support
- Relaxation
- Art and crafts
- Setting up your own business – access to a business mentor
- Higher level childcare training
- First Aid

10. What skills do you think employers looking for?

- Maths
- English
- IT for the digital world

11. If you had a magic wand what would help more people Southmead get advice, skills, jobs?

- People to be brave enough to ask for help
- More places/ events like this with opportunities to meet and talk with different professionals in the room to ask for help
- Non judgemental places, asking people for feedback and what they need

Young People

1. Have you learnt about different careers at school? How has this been useful?

- We have been learning about this for a while, we have most recently explored what options there are after school in personal development sessions, 30 minutes every week. This only started this year.
- We have had some career sessions since year 7. This has been useful as it teaches you about the real world, finances, shows things that you can do when you leave school. It allows you to explore post 16 and post 18.

2. What activities have you done that relate to jobs and careers? What have you enjoyed and not enjoyed? Why?

- We had a Dream Big project (in Year 7) where we had to present what we hope to do in the future.

- We haven't recently had a go at anything ourselves. Its largely about being taught what's out there, through watching presentations, rather than putting this into practice.
- I enjoyed people coming into school and taking an activity when we had to design an app (x2)
- We took part in a 'green earth' project where we had to design a recycling task.

3. By taking part in career workshops, how have your ideas about the world of work changed?

- The students all reported that their ideas had changed since being in year 7.
- They all remembered the Dream Big project and felt that this had kickstarted them into thinking about what they would like to do in the future. It seems to have made a big impact with them.
- We then explored why this was and they said that it was doing lots of activities and meeting adults who were interested in them and what they had to say.

4. What do you know about post-16 options in Bristol?

- You can take A-levels, apprenticeship, T-levels, you can go to college – all the group had a knowledge of these options.
- They would all go to their careers lead for more information – when pushed their only other source of information was the internet.
- They did later say they might go to Head of Year or Learning Mentor as well.

5. What do you think will be the most challenging part of getting a job? E.g writing an application interview, meeting new people etc.

- One student said he was feeling pressure about interviews and then there was nodding in agreement. The whole group felt interviews will be their greatest barrier. They were aware that they will have mock interviews at the end of the year. There seemed to be a great pressure to perform at interviews and the group said they were nervous and anxious about this.
- So far, none of the group had done WEX though they did know it was coming at the end of the year.

6. What skills do you think you need to be successful at work? Have you practised these skills in lessons or workshops you've attended at school?

- Teamwork, flexible, leadership, friendly, being able to compromise e.g. you need to cover for someone else and take on responsibilities that aren't your own. They felt they do practise some of these in school by doing projects, but they would rather do real work tasks. They wanted to meet more people doing different jobs.

7. If you have a question about careers, jobs, training, college, or university where would you go?

- They would go to their tutor or go to the careers lead, learning mentor, safari (no one mentioned parents or carers)

8. What do you feel are the issues facing young people in Bristol?

- Not trying hard enough in lessons, some people have potential but don't use it. People may settle in lower level jobs as they have low aspirations.
- Some schools in Bristol, like this one, have quite poor catchment areas. There is conflict with Clifton schools as students from these schools think they are better.
- One student said there is this kind of attitude from older people and therefore all the group seem worried that they may already be disadvantaged in the local workplace.

9. What support you'd like to see for young people in Bristol?

- Our Personal Development sessions are a bit boring. They need to be more engaging and doing tasks, rather than just asking questions.
- Having practical activities may be more inspiring and useful. We would like to meet more people doing jobs and have a go at jobs rather than just learning about them

Young People with SEND

1. Transport funding stops at 16 and this can be a barrier when we move to post 16 education or training
2. When young people are planning to move to Post 16 provision, their timetable is going to reduce from 5 days to 3 days a week - this can place pressure on families to make alternative arrangements for the remainder of the week
3. For young people with an EHCP, access to post 16 provision can be difficult - most learners go to The Park or to the City of Bristol College
4. One young person commented they would prefer to stay at their school, New Fosseway, until they were 19 rather than moving somewhere new
5. The majority of the group fear transition to Post 16, even though their school provides a transitions programme

Parent/Carers of SEND Young People

1. What are the main issues and challenges that prevent young people with SEND from achieving their full potential after age 16?

- The lack of part-time 16-19 provision so that young people who need to resit English and Maths can combine this with part-time work/apprenticeship programmes
- The lack of public transport so young people can get to post 16 education, training and employment with ease

- The quality of career advice in schools is inconsistent - in my experience the advice been given is inaccurate and poor quality
- 2. What more could we do to improve young people's career progression from education into good jobs?**
 - Link up after school club activities with volunteering to support work readiness
 - Support parents/carers to understand non-traditional pathways that don't fit the standard A' level route
 - 3. If you had a magic wand, what improvements would you make to local post 16 services so more young people could improve their future prospects?**
 - Get employers to ditch their traditional approaches to recruitment and to introduce more inclusive methods (e.g. Watershed - just ring us to discuss the role further)
 - Employers would create inclusive roles - not excluding people because they are unable to carry out one element

Voluntary and Community Sector

- 1. How do you support your residents/service users to access employment, skills and lifelong learning services?**
 - Support job application writing, provide community references, work with community learning to provide courses, casework, providing information and support. Linking with other organisations to provide support
 - Bristol NW Food Bank has visits from Employment Plus - takes them along the journey of finding and applying for work. Service seems to work well. Mostly come to Avonmouth Hub - central location between foodbanks. Someone on-hand in-person.
 - Digital Inclusion work, access to wifi and computers for job searches, volunteering opportunities, cooking and gardening skills for work, hosting training and employment skills for many Bristol VCSEs
 - Remove barriers around low income to allow time to engage in ESL
 - NHS Talking Therapies now offers an Employment Support service for anybody who is receiving therapies from us or waiting for therapies. This is goal-focussed to help someone find, stay in or move employment. There are no targets for job placements etc which we hear feedback about being important. Person-centred.
 - Advertise volunteer and job opportunities at VCSE organisations around the city.
- 2. What do you perceive to be the main challenges for residents/service users in relation to employment, skills and lifelong learning?**
 - Childcare
 - Provision of ESOL. Challenge of location and travelling to formal location. Needs of childcare
 - Language and cultural barriers
 - Language barriers in Easton and Lawrence Hill

- Language barriers, culturally introvert, confidence. Educating people about new industries and how they can get prepared for them. Lack of information about support services
- Transport where activities are not happening in their area
- Lack of English language skills
- BOPF - can see an ageist impact on access to work. Many older people 55+ are still in employment. Try to support them whilst still in employment. Looking to prevent age discrimination in Job descriptions, Person Specs etc. For younger people this is also true eg. requirements for experience. Recognise importance of unions.
- Not being able to get back to work easily after career break to have children, lack of support for parents, lack of flexible worthy jobs
- Issues with affordable childcare to enable people to work
- one of the key challenge is the conversion courses for people who trained as doctors and nurses overseas but not able to work here due to lack of such courses
- Conversion courses for people who are already qualified, i.e. nurses, doctors etc...
- Language barriers - can't access mainstream services
- Often when young people graduate they have to leave the city to find work relevant to their degree
- Parents/carers with children with additional need - they find it difficult to get the support they need
- Access in terms of life-long learning. Particularly around ageing population
- Many older people don't have access to digital kit, data or skills to get online
- Pakistani community - Low IT access problem - not trained in digital skills
- Assumptions of certain communities i.e. Van Dwellers (600 in Bristol)
- lack of flexible roles, childcare, support for parents to return to work
- low pay is no motivation to come off benefits
- lack of transport for people where there is little activity in some parts of the city
- Address people's mental health needs. This comes from looking all the areas that affect your wellbeing like insecure housing, food poverty, education etc
- Mental health struggles - especially under pressures of Cost of Living
- An Us and Them attitude to people

3. What more could you do to help us improve referrals and take up of local ESL services and what support do you need?

- Long term secure funding
- Funding to create collaborations and dedicate time an focus
- Accessible information is key. We can help reach communities with that information if we are able to feedback on how it is provided.
- Different people work in different ways - trying to find out what works with each person and remind/prompt them to take actions. Can use meetings as needed. Connects well to having in-person link in community hubs. Some will still prefer to communicate by email etc.
- Funding for job coaches who could be based in communities

- Remove impacts of eg. appearance on recruitment and employment processes. Stigma against tattoos, piercings etc. Reframe perspective around ageism - younger and older people. Focus on recruitment process to encourage diversity. Realistic questioning.
- People need resources to help them prepare for work.
- More support in improving language skills. We need the employment training departments to work with community groups
- Remove stigma of living in certain areas of the city
- Ensure good from services form an early age to prevent disengagement and demotivation.
- we used to have an excellent National Careers Advice coach who would support local people with weekly surgeries
- Remove barriers to good service delivery for services (simplify reporting requirements, admin resources etc as mentioned by Tom and Abdullahi re WECA funding)
- Replicate successful examples - there are plenty, for example a few years ago Khaas ran a childcare course for women they work with - all ended up in related employment following it.

4. If you had a magic wand, what improvements would you make to local ESL services so more residents could improve their prospects?

- Community ESOL provision better than College ESOL
- The pre-employment support doesn't always particularly relevant to residents lives and the local job market. Practical supported work experience would really improve
- is there an innovative idea to base career coaches in welcoming spaces where unemployed people are attending
- See more older people involved in the older people's industry and decision-making. Paid opportunities.
- Intensive English Language tuition and childcare for those who need it
- run community friendly training and employment accessible to various communities
- Fund support around financial wellbeing/low income to free up capacity to engage in ESI
- employment coaching for those who had career breaks for family or health reasons
- In planning conditions for new developments to have legal obligation to employ from local post code - influence policy, localism act
- More provision for face-to-face/intensive support for people to achieve their goals. Person centred really important. Focussed on unblocking meaningful employment goals.
- Better advertising of training opportunities - not just from one org but all of them (like Age UK have produced a booklet with activities for over 50s)
- Funding for paid internships in professional roles.

- Fund education properly and value skills other than maths/english/science. Support children in their skills and don't see going to university as the only measure of a successful education
- Unions, better working conditions in certain sectors (e.g. care). Fair pay, career development/upskilling opportunities etc.

5. Any other issues or questions we should be considering?

- WECA funding has proven difficult to access due to heavy bureaucracy

Employers

1. What's the biggest recruitment and workforce challenges you are facing?

- Shortage of apprentice opportunities - this is because employers don't get an output for the first few years. This has been a challenging period and businesses are operating on low profit margins. Whilst it is important to invest in young people, a company in effect has to 'carry' them, and they don't get value from them until they are trained.
- Retention of trained apprentices is an issue - this is because there is a highly competitive market for skilled people in construction. We try and lock them in once they have trained.
- We need to find ways to make the construction industry more attractive - many young people think of engineering they will be outside, feeling cold and dirty, and they'll have to get up early. There are some excellent qualifications now for apprentices and once trained they will have a great career and will never be out of work. The industry can be glamorous and people can earn a lot of money.
- There are skills shortages across all trades - we were impacted by Brexit and many firms stopped trading and stopped taking on apprenticeships because of the recession
- We need young people to know what they are applying for when they join us as an apprentice. Perhaps more could be done in school so they get more understanding of construction careers and the different trades. We don't want young people to apply just because they want a qualification, we want them to want a career with us.
- Our company is new to the Bristol area - and it's a challenge to get access to talent and retaining talent, especially when we don't know what developments are coming next
- Sometimes travel is a challenge - especially where jobs are out of town and young apprentices don't have their own transport - we don't expect them to get to the site, but to meet with an engineer.
- It is a real struggle to get applications from applicants with lived experience or who reflect the EDI of our clients.
- As we are a temperature-controlled food warehouse, often the issue is the cold, people struggle to handle to work in this environment. Upcoming national minimum wage rise will have an impact, it'll be even more difficult to attract new colleagues
- Trying to forge local connections with colleges to showcase working for PepsiCo

- Out of 26 action plans for the South Bristol Talent Pathway Project, 11 employers reported their main recruitment challenge as finding skilled staff, and 6 reported the high staff turnover.
- We are quite a niche organisation so understanding of what the business does and the opportunities (although we are doing a lot of work with education establishments to change this). The other challenge is candidates (especially apprentices) having employability skills for interview - not confidence or nerves but lateness, dress etc.
- Candidate engagement - increased occurrences of candidates 'ghosting' in spite of regular updates and quick response times. As it's a candidate-led market we're seeing more instances of interview no-shows without prior warning etc.
- Travel/location is a huge issue for us in the Avonmouth area. We have lots of vacancies but struggle to get people here from Bristol area due to poor local travel options.
- Getting students to see beyond our companies name and consider the wider business and the opportunities we have to offer.
- As a fairly small local charity the costs of recruitment are generally too much so we can't publicise as widely as we'd like or compete with bigger businesses in terms of pay and conditions. Lack of applications with the right skills or experience. Lack of training opportunities for youth work, although City of Bristol has just started a Level 3 youth work course so fingers crossed this changes.
- Shortage of quality candidates to fill our role and retention is a huge issue
- Entry level roles in the industry, we have roles that we struggle to fill, apprentices are not remaining committed and costing local companies in lost fees
- Diversity, people not understanding the roles available, think it's just roles in investment and finance, whereas our biggest areas by colleague numbers are digital and client support.
- The Film/TV Industry works in a different way to many other industries. Most crew will be freelance and find out about new opportunities through word of mouth or social media. Apprenticeships don't really work as a production will exist for a few months and then disappear. In addition to this, new entrants are often expected to work for free to get experience which means people from lower socio-economic backgrounds often face barriers to entry.
- We represent most sectors as a business improvement district and each sector has its different challenges from availability of candidates , skills and cost of living impacting on wage demands

2. Do you get support from local agencies with your recruitment and training needs? If yes, which ones do you rate the most and why?

- We work together with Bristol WORKS (x7) – providing volunteers for school careers events; reviewing opportunities to join up our workplaces and schools; taking part in mock interviews
- We have taken part in the Building Bristol launch
- I belong to an organisation outside of work called the 'Bristol Junior Chamber', and we encourage our members to volunteer their time to help support many of the Bristol

Works initiatives in helping pupils from schools across Bristol with developing the skills that they need for their futures.

- We are being supported by the University of Bristol and the Temple Quarter development - we are the lead contractor of the new campus. We will be passing on social value targets to our local sub contractors
- Working with On Site Bristol is invaluable and they help us recruit apprenticeships in Bristol. They help filter candidates for us. But they can't offer enough places for us so we have to use other providers
- Our social value team liaises with schools, colleges and apprenticeship providers
- Recruitment agencies
- A WECA funded organisation that is supporting office apprenticeships (can't remember the name)
- We work with Bristol WORKS, Building Bristol, local schools, SGS College and others. Our social value team work hard to ensure we cover all bases.
- All of the local job centres support us with recruitment and are very supportive.
- All of our recruitment and training is undertaken by employees at our company. This way the people we speak with can relate to people who work there.
- Out of 70 SMEs in South Bristol supported by the SBTaPP team, the support agencies they rated the most included:

Bristol Works	48
Dementia Action Alliance	40
Local Apprenticeship and Job Fairs (One Front Door)	32
WTPN	30
UWE	29
Business West	21
Weston College	21
Bath College	20
FSB	19
High Street Team	19
DWP	17
BCC Community Learning Team	16
Leonard Cheshire	16
WECA	15
On Site	14

3. What could we do to revolutionise and improve recruitment – plugging skills gaps and building a diverse workforce?

- There are new engineering T Levels in Bristol which are being sponsored by a local school that provide a direct route into HE.
- As someone who progressed through the traditional HE route, I can see the benefits of progressing in the field of construction through the apprenticeship route. Not least, this avoids £80K student debt and means earning whilst learning.
- Quotas could be the way to go. It is not fair where white straight males dominate senior roles. This means there are no diverse role models and recruitment of diverse

candidates is impacted. Increasing diversity could make a real difference to the business and also provide grassroots opportunities.

- As a woman working in the construction industry, I hate the idea of quotas - I want to feel that I've been given a job on merit, based on my abilities and skills. However, I can see that some people need additional support to break in to the industry
- More needs to be done to challenge the pub culture and banter on building sites and in the building trade. This is difficult - and it must be those in charge who take a stand
- Diversity in construction office jobs is getting there - whereas on site there is still a lot of banter.
- Surely we've gone past the question of diversity - we just want to focus on people who want to come and work for us, they need to right attitude and we will provide them with skills - no one owes them a living, they have to work hard and they will have great future career opportunities
- The construction industry has to be more diverse - and trades can't be stuck in the dark ages. But we have to be sure that we put the right support in place for anyone from a minority group - they won't just be exposed to our own workforce, they will be exposed to all other businesses and trades too. How can we support them with that?
- In our company 20% of the workforce are women - mainly in office-based roles. We would like to see more women as site supervisors and contract managers, not necessarily in the trades.
- We got involved in a national 'women into construction' scheme. This was aimed at older women who were already working on site - perhaps as cleaners or labourers - the focus was on career changers. This involved providing placements so they could find out more about higher paid roles like surveyors or site managers.
- The Hill Academy has developed an NVQ qualification which provides another access route into jobs with us - not just through the higher degree route which tends to work for people with higher skills.
- We just want to employ the best people. We know that having a diverse team is good for business - for example if you have a woman on your team that is reassuring for some customers. Surely we need to be 'people-ist' in our approach? We would welcome more people from diverse groups but we just need them to come forward and to stick at it.
- Organizing warehouse tours for unemployed colleagues could give them better understanding of what we do, transparency could attract them to the warehouse industry.
- Have an annual showcase for employers to come and talk to young people in the area.
- For us it would be pushing the unusual parts of construction - the bits young people don't know about. Ensuring we don't just sell construction as 'muddy boots' - what about marketing, HR, finance etc. We are an industry just like accountancy or law, you don't have to be a site manager or bricklayer. We also don't want to employ based on gender, race, disability etc - a job is for the right person so we must be careful how we go about this.
- Companies need to stop prioritising cultural fit in their recruitment practices as this leads to recruiting with affinity bias. The focus needs to be cultural add, what can a

different perspective add to a business and how can these additions better reflect the customer base to increase both employee and customer engagement.

- Getting females to apply for roles in the Mobility industry is a key objective for us. We can do this by being more visible to females on campus.
- good role models in all sectors and positive and inclusive work cultures. More disability awareness and flexible working conditions which allow people to work where, when and how they can work best, not just try to fit square pegs in round holes. Build on the skills and competencies people have which may not align exactly with how companies 'have done it in the past'
- SBTaPP SME employers highlighted the need for on-going support with local recruitment and staff training, linking them up with a wide range of partners and the business community.
- We would like to receive at least 6 weeks notice of events for which you are asking volunteers to get maximum response from our club members
- Perhaps we can engage with them earlier to plan delivery/opportunities for the duration of our contracts.
- Correspondence and communication of opportunities where we can support is useful. To be able to support local employment and skills in the area.
- I guess it might be good to have monthly catch ups maybe? I know we will be assigned a member of the ESL to support our skills plan so perhaps that'll be the time.
- sharing of content and marketing which we can share through our business networks.

4. Are there any other issues or questions we should be considering?

- Our company has to be very agile - for example we got heavily involved in the production of cleanrooms because of Covid. We're now doing decarbonisation.
- The housing market impacts on our company hugely. We have been active in the heat pump market for years - about 50% of heating systems we install now are air source. From 2025, we won't be allowed to install gas boilers.
- Looking to implement a better public transport network that aligns with the shift times of the Avonmouth Distribution centres. We are all 24/7 operations and general shift times are 6am - 2pm, 2pm to 10pm and 10pm to 6am - the busses/trains do not align with this, and there is 0 chance for travel on weekends for these times.
- Better public transport across Bristol, but also into South Glos. As an organisation looking for staff to work early evenings (youth clubs mostly), it is impossible for staff if they can't easily get public transport home at 10/10.30pm.

1. When you talk to people outside the ESL Team, what are you most proud of?

- Impact of the team's work x8
- Partnership working with employers and other organisations x8
- Passionate and positive attitude of the team x5
- The reputation of the team x4
- Reaching the "hard to reach" x4

- Getting people into work and careers x4
- The commitment of staff in the team x3
- Outcomes x3
- Range of work the team does e.g. IAG, ESOL, jobs fairs, specialist employment support
- The level of support for students and service users
- Providing an alternative route to education

2. In your experience, what stops people accessing ESL services?

- Knowing about the services x22
- Reluctance to trust the service x6
- Lack of confidence or anxiety x5
- Language barriers x4
- Transport x4
- Digital poverty x4
- Childcare x4
- Accessibility of locations and geography x2
- Funding x2
- Isolation
- Generational unemployment
- Work commitments
- Mental health problems
- Crisis or chaotic lives
- Discrimination
- No in-person access point for communication
- Not enough staff

3. What would improve the ESL offer – including our cross ESL working and our joint work with partners?

- More joined up team working x13
- Better promotion x9
- Sharing information in the team x4
- More team resource and capacity x2
- Coordinated funding
- Childcare provision
- Work experience opportunities
- Capacity building for partners
- Access to specialist provision
- Better technology

4. Looking ahead 5 years, what are the biggest challenges and changes that the ESL team should be preparing for?

National

- Cost of living x8
- Energy crisis x2
- Leadership changes x3
- Skills shortages
- Impact of Covid x2
- Poor mental health x2
- Digital poverty
- Inequality
- Social care, health and housing
- AI
- Climate crisis
- Benefit changes
- National Living Wage impacting on apprenticeship recruitment
- Schools' resources and outcomes

Bristol

- Ensuring we meet the needs of the community in Bristol
- More ESOL or translator provision x5
- Reduction in job recruitment and employment prospects x3
- Childcare provision
- Poor transport links
- Housing crisis
- Changes in the economy

In our team

- Capacity of the team
- Staff recruitment and retention x6
- Strategic stakeholder priorities x7
- Funding x2
 - Leading to gaps in provision and progression opportunities
 - Continuing good services
 - Short term/fluctuations
 - BCC budget challenges x4
- Increasing demand
 - due to other teams having less funding
 - for apprenticeships due to 16-18 population growth
- Adapting to remote working
- Competition from other providers x2
- Decreasing provision from other organisations x2

5. How can we raise our profile and celebrate what we do more?

- Internal BCC communication
 - Bulletins across ESL
 - Working as a whole ESL team
 - More acknowledgment of achievements in team meetings
- External marketing
 - Social media (Linked In) x4
 - Positive case studies x3
 - Word of mouth
 - Videos
 - Radio
 - Apply for awards
 - Press releases
 - Primary schools
- Community events
 - ESL roadshow x4
 - ESL open day x2
 - Attending non-employment focused events
 - Community events
- Engage and network with partners
 - Employers
 - Training and support organisations
- Guidance and training around storytelling
- Uniforms
- Logos and signage

6. Any other questions or issues we should be considering?

- Internal surveys
- How can we improve outcomes in persistently NEET/jobless areas?
- Are we as inclusive as we could be?
- Retaining staff through progression routes and permanent roles
- Horizon scanning for employment and skills trends
- Feedback from service users
- ESL induction for new staff
- Learner-led profile raising
- Improved use of BCC support systems

Employment and Skills Providers

- 1. What would help strengthen our partnership work with you? What more could we do to support your team or organisation?**

- Currently a lot of VCSE leaders are under immense pressure due to lack of funding and thus capacity. This results in lack of time to engage, build and maintain partnerships, strategic level thinking and planning etc. Bristol's VCSE sector is great but is far off delivering at it's full potential due to it's leaders being tied up in trying to keep their services running. Funding in general is missing but in more specifically for strategic work/partnership work/headspace for leaders would be beneficial.
- We're an employer and we've been struggling to recruit - we'd welcome more promotion of our vacancies locally.
- a campaign to support employers to utilise inclusive recruitment practices - as part of the WECA 'Good employment charter'.

2. In your experience, what stops local young people and adults from accessing employment, skills and lifelong learning services?

- Some bus routes have been closed that make it difficult for some people to get to courses and jobs.
- Some people are reluctant to move out of their immediate area for courses or work.
- Poverty is a massive barrier to people getting access to training and employment - including costs of transport, childcare, food poverty, digital poverty.
- Poverty, childcare costs, public transport issues, adverse experience/lack of confidence.
- Low confidence and unwillingness to be with others in a group.
- We have 193 disability confident employers within the region the vast majority based in Bristol. Having engaged with all of these as part of the WWfE provision, it is clear that this scheme needs updating. Currently to become a Disability Confident Employer a simple application needs to be made and Tier 1 status can be gained. It is clear that sadly the vast majority of employers register as a simple tick box exercise and to achieve some kind of positive PR status. This scheme needs to be subject to stringent quality and compliance checks and audits similar to Ofsted. What is also clear is that the scheme itself is out of date and needs updating to better reflect current mainstream disabilities such as neurodiversity, mental health needs and other hidden disabilities which impact on far greater numbers of individuals not moving forwards into work.
- For those on a methadone drug reduction support programme, courses are better run in the afternoon.
- Ex offenders can't access some courses when they are held in venues where they cannot go due to restrictions.
- Inaccessible recruitment processes.

3. What ideas do you have to improve referrals and take-up of local employment, skills and lifelong learning services?

- A campaign to encourage people to consider skills and employment outside their immediate area 'the whole city is your city'.

- Provision of accredited digital skills courses entry/Level 1 - with progression support to Level 2.
- DWP work coaches have 15mins with their clients every fortnight. They have a huge caseload. We need to work out what additional information should be handed to all clients about wider services - perhaps through the OFD.
- For the most vulnerable young people, 1-to-1 tutoring would make a difference.

School Career Leads

1. What help do you receive externally to support your learners with careers and to transition into post 16 pathways? What is working well?

- WORKS has helped us to provide experience of work which have been beneficial for students – we're an SEN school and our students don't always like to leave site - bringing in employers and providing interactive activities has really worked.
- We have no help or support which is why we are joining these Bristol CEIAG Network meetings. We are also a very small cohort as a SEN school.
- We get a lot of support from the Careers Enterprise Company - networks and information/information sharing.
- Career pilot.
- Local employers - predominantly bigger ones - established relationships.
- other education providers - post 16 FE and HE - all very useful for support.
- Biggest support from Post 16 Currently and there is a better partnership in place and empowered to do the preventative work.
- We work with Sixteen Co-operative who support us with job coaches - similar to supported internships.

2. What are the main barriers in supporting learners who are transitioning into post-16?

- Lack of finance is a big barrier – particularly in relation to transport – it costs us at least £1000 to pay for a bus to visit a post 16 provider or an employer.
- time and pressure with whole school curriculum - taking students out of lessons is very problematic – the case to focus on careers is justifiable - but there are other cases just as strong and it depends who gets in first!
- SEN specifically and providers who are familiar with engaging with young people with SEN; accessing wider facilities, as we have students from a huge area and so need to have a wider knowledge of providers all round Bristol ie attending open events do we choose Bath, Weston, Bristol, Gloucester can't do all due to timetable commitments.
- Risk of NEET young people over the summer is a risk. Better transitions from colleges and links and having a named contact.
- Pre-16 don't have funding or resources for young people in SEN/with additional needs with an EHCP.

- Those young people who don't secure formal qualifications face real barriers to progressing, This includes students who have been bounced around several mainstream schools. They don't want to go into formal education due to their negative experiences. They just want jobs, they want to bring in money for their families and there's layers of stuff going on for these students. Some of them want to sign up for apprenticeships, others jobs without training, but they don't have the skills, experience of qualifications. Many don't know what areas of work to chose. It's very hard - they are pushed into college, they drop out and these are the NEET young people.

3. What further support do you need to enable your learners to transition to post 16 options successfully?

- change the criteria so there is more importance placed on students final destinations rather than just GCSE results; also change the priority of what we're teaching students so there can be more focus on skills rather than subjects
- funding issue – settings need more funding for careers
- Local universities have limited resources to engage with our students – they give priority to those students at the end of their statutory education – and only 50 students. We'd like them to have resource to engage with other year groups and to offer opportunities to more students.
- Providers who have experience and desire to work with young people with SEN; information to share with parents as well as young people.
- More money and support. Currently it's how proactive the careers team are at getting people in.

4. What are your priorities when engaging with employers and how well do they engage?

- We need to expose young people to career opportunities - opening their eyes to see jobs and the skills sets they will need – to see beyond the small number of core jobs they all know about.
- having sustainability – it works well to have a programme you can replicate year on year – so you don't have to keep reinventing the wheel.
- big employers have got programmes and have time and offer help and support - the SMEs it tends to be more ad hoc and bespoke – there are not enough engaged and some can only do 1 day in 6 months time – it's difficult.
- We need employers to help us with providing work experience programmes. We have to organise 200 year 12 and 150 year 11 placements. As schools we're expected to deliver this, whereas there is no expectation on employers. Perhaps we need a levy like we do with apprenticeships. Some employers bend over backwards and some don't engage. We need engagement from SMEs. We could do with a city pledge or expectation for employers to support this.
- We have only ever asked people who are connected to our school who understand our students - so priorities are to broadened our young peoples experience.

- Local businesses in to work with students, and building links and getting them back in to do more with schools.
 - SME businesses are key and getting them in front of the students so they have reorientation from those areas.
- 5. Any other questions or issues we should be considering?**
- Is there a SEN Specific careers programme you have experience of?

Elected Members

1. What are the biggest employment, skills and lifelong issues you are seeing?

- Low expectations!
- Skilled industrial jobs moved out of the city centre - people no longer have easy access to these jobs.
- Not seeing big push on jobs of the future - particularly green industries such as decarbonisation and retrofit. This could be a big employment gap if we don't skill up a future workforce.
- People trust community based organisations - so we should find ways to work through trusted organisations rather than relying on websites.
- There doesn't seem to be a lot of careers advice available - supporting young people and people of working age to do what they love.

2. What will help us improve employment, skills and lifelong learning services and outcomes?

- Bristol University needs to do more to promote Access to Bristol - a widening participation programme that is aiming to attract non-traditional entrants to HE
- Role models from the area who have succeeded! If they can do it from a difficult background, then I should think about it.....
- It's important to support people in work to progress in learning and achieve higher qualifications to support career progression.

3. How can we raise the profile of these key services and celebrate success together?

- hold local events with people who have overcome some of the challenges.
- We need to do more to nurture and promote lifelong learning - for many people FE is perceived as a waste of time - we need to help people with the cost, commitment and culture of learning - including career changers.
- could we use libraries more to do adult learning and support local people to think about jobs.

4. Are there other issues or questions you think we should be considering?

- Transport is a big problem - if you need to travel to a job and there is no public transport, it is difficult to hold down a job.

- Utilising the WECA Scrutiny process to challenge things that aren't working and advocate for what Bristol residents need.

Bristol Disability Equality Commission

- There are huge problems with the DWP Access to Work scheme that need to be tackled: it can take up to 12 weeks for applications to be processed; there are not enough skilled and trained people to carry out the assessments; there is a gap in paying for support to enable people to start work; there is a need for more training for employers so they understand Access to Work; for young Disabled people starting off, they are expected to be responsible for Access to Work applications with no work experience – this means handling claims, invoices, agreeing coaching aspects, using complex technology and in work support – ideally young people would be supported with an experienced mentor
- Parents/carers need to be recognised as critical partners to support young people as they transition from education to independence and employment
- Deaf people are struggling to access the right employment support – the barriers are huge such as communication and knowing where to get support
- Travel to work is costly and not always accessible for Disabled people - a Disabled Person Travelcard cannot be used until 9am which is after the time when most people need to be at work.

Bristol City Council Managers

1. **What are the biggest employment, skills and learning challenges you are seeing?**
 - People most excluded – for example people who use substances and those with mental ill health
 - Digital skills gap
 - Career transition support
 - Adaptability to change
 - Impact of long Covid
 - Continuing support for people... retention.
 - Providing support to asylum seekers with permission to remain in the UK - including those who are highly qualified who need validation to work in the UK, and those who need to improve their English. More support with career pathways - can some people in this group be supported to apply for hard to fill vacancies in Bristol City Council?
 - Supporting care leavers into employment and into higher education.
 - affordable childcare and sufficiency of funded places - most of our sufficiency is in the private sector - there is a local social enterprise opportunity if we want to address equity issues.
2. **What more could we do to support your team priorities and progress these together?**

- joining up ESL with Family Nurse Partnerships and our Home Visiting offer to support very young parents when their children are in the first two years.
- Developing a Community Health and Wellbeing Apprenticeship - we don't have a local provider and this could provide a great entry route into employment
- Linking ESL to development of ICS localities.
- There is more to be done to work together across all Council services and how we embed employment and skills - for example, how we use employment support to improve diverse recruitment in Council jobs, how we train people up so they can benefit from City Leap jobs. How can employment and skills be built into manager's objectives? The ESL team needs greater visibility. This could form part of the new governance framework with metrics developed with CLB.
- There is more to be done to work together across all Council services and how we embed employment and skills - for example, how we use employment support to improve diverse recruitment in Council jobs, how we train people up so they can benefit from City Leap jobs. How can employment and skills be built into manager's objectives? The ESL team needs greater visibility. This could form part of the new governance framework with metrics developed with CLB.
- When we provide feedback on EQIA mitigations we could direct managers to ESL to support teams to improve diverse recruitment, engagement, outcomes. We just need some headlines of where to direct people to.

3. What will help us improve employment, skills and lifelong learning services and outcomes?

- Ensuring people's experience of employment enhance their confidence.
- Inclusive workplaces.
- Reducing stigma of people with disabilities, people who have used substances etc
- Linking ESL into Family Hub work - to provide support to parents/carers and young people.
- Ensuring that employers have the right policies in place so they can recruit and retain Disabled people and those with health conditions - e.g. making reasonable adjustments and providing flexible working opportunities.

4. Any other issues/questions we should be considering?

- Within the NHS there is an outcome which is we will improve equality and diversity workforce measure in all healthier together partner organisations.
- Bristol was one of the initial Marmot cities - it would be useful to draw on the Marmot evidence in the ESL plan.
- We need to avoid the usual definition of unskilled and/or low skilled - people have a range of skills that are not recognised through the formal education system or in employment. This results in blaming individuals rather than organisations recognising the support and adaptations they need to make so people can make their best contribution.

- Involving people in designing services shouldn't just end there - this can be used to legitimise plans without further involvement in running and monitoring services. How does ESL become truly 'community led'?
- There is an opportunity to share the ESL plan at a future meeting of the Bristol Equality Network.
- The ESL Team can nominate a rep to attend future Equalities Team meetings - for single items of interest or on a regular basis.

Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)

1. What's going well?

- There has been some progress in bringing down unemployment – in Hengrove, Brislington, Bedminster.
- There have been some impactful interventions – ESL ran a South Bristol Talent Pathway Project which was brilliant – reaching out to SMEs and identifying vacancies, finding out what local employers were looking for, a bespoke programme that linked employers with local job centres/job seekers.
- Warm spaces have been a really good development in Bristol.
- Skills Based Work Academy Programmes (SWAPS) – these are employer led, for example Dunelm had 50 jobs and there were 5 SWAPs set up to fill the jobs with good outcomes.
- Some Bootcamps have been positive – for example HGV and Digital Bootcamps – they have achieved really good into work outcomes
- Job Fairs – ESL does a great job co-ordinating and communicating about jobs fairs
- Changing Futures – an expensive model but effective at supporting people with very complex needs through 'my team around me' hubs
- The Launchpad has provided a positive collaborative space for the central Youth Hub

2. What are the gaps?

- The DWP could do more with Multiply to support claimants with improving their maths skills
- Black and minoritised communities – in our 'business as usual' approach, we don't see the trauma of racism and how this impacts on Black and minoritised clients enough.
- Travel and where things area – for example if specific training is provided at Parkway in North Bristol, South Bristol residents can't get there – this is a major issue for job seekers.
- Supporting SMES with recruitment in critical sectors with better local co-ordination of recruitment and training – for example, a number of care homes in South Bristol could be brought together and their recruitment could be supported through a targeted SWAP.
- People on Universal Credit can now go on training for longer – this has increased from 16 weeks to 4 months.

- There could be scope for a customised entry level Bootcamp to support people into entry jobs – this could focus on clients facing specific barriers e.g. rough sleepers; people with lived experience of the criminal justice system etc.
- DWP Work coaches sometimes struggle with awareness and promotion of the local employment support and training offer – whilst it is useful to have an online directory with all the provision listed, one of the most successful ways of connecting work coaches to local provision is when external staff take up residences in job centres (e.g. setting up an information desk once a week).
- There is scope to expand the Launchpad concept and to support Youth Hubs in other areas with the highest levels of unemployment – particularly South Bristol and in Southmead/Brentry.
- There is need for additional specialist support for Disabled people and those with health conditions – there are new government policy announcements in this area – Universal Support; WorkWell Partnership.
- Inclusive recruitment with larger anchor employers is a priority – for example supporting people apply for NHS vacancies is ‘a tough nut to crack’ – we would benefit from closer joint working with employers on this.
- We don’t do enough to celebrate what we do.

City of Bristol College

Feedback

- It is very positive for the college and the council to have a collaborative voice – with employers, with HR networks and with the DWP.
- The demand for ESOL in the city – we both see this and there is a critical need for additional resources to meet learner demands. WECA are telling us that the need is Level 2, but that’s not what we’re seeing – that’s not our lived experience. We’ve invited WECA colleagues to come into a classroom to see for themselves. Learners need ESOL combined with more vocational pathways with pathways into employment.
- There is a big job to do to support in work progression – seeing management as a skill.
- There is a huge shift underway in workforce requirements - the impact of AI for example is already having an impact on the workforce in engineering and warehousing – just two examples.
- There is clearly a need to support the city prepare for green energy and sustainability – however the qualification process means that even new qualifications are already out of date and can’t meet employer needs – this can be tackled by working directly with employers and to deliver with them through a suite of training which draws on their expertise and prepares students for future jobs. With Vattenfall, it would be good to have a SLA/MOU so that they take some of our college students on work

placement, co-creating content with our trainers, resulting in great skills exchange and complementary provision.

- The college is keen to provide skills so learners can become good community members and we are supporting this through community action projects.
- We need to work in a different way when it comes to the availability of A level provision, particularly in South Bristol. For some residents, a 20 minute bus journey is too far. T Levels seem set to continue. Some young people balk at level 2 and can't get a level 3. There is uncertainty in the system regarding Post 16 funding and programmes that are in the process of being defunded.
- We have an ageing workforce and we are finding older workers are not interested in attaining more qualification.
- Community Learning provision helps learners to build resilience and embrace change – there is scope to refocus on progression support for these learners into college, and also to consider options for community based FE progression programmes for those that are unable to attend a main college site.
- The Office for Students is introducing new Lifelong Learning entitlements from September 2025 with a need for more accessible Higher Education – this is an opportunity to build more flexible, online, evening and blended provision.
- We are anticipating a change in the way the apprenticeship levy operates with a shift to an apprenticeships and skills levy.
- The college has established sector boards which are just getting going – these provide a great platform to work with employers to build career pathways across organisations and it would be good for ESL to be represented on these.
- In relation to the Care Sector and care roles, we could look at developing a Council standard like Plymouth – introducing a Bristol Care Certificate. Bank staff could be supported to obtain a core set of competences and skills – again, we could have an MOU/SLA to co-deliver these skills, bringing employers with us.

The University of Bristol and the University of the West of England

- In Avonmouth there are employers like Amazon and the Docks – there are lots of jobs but not great pay or working conditions. Work has to be a viable option for people 'good' work that pays enough to cover the bills.
- The latest autumn statement is introducing a tougher benefits regime and sanctions for Disabled people. When the jobs on offer are not viable, penalising Disabled people is morally reprehensible.
- As employers, Universities are not ready to employ some of the people who have struggled in education who are participating with ESL on courses or initiatives – even though they may have great technical skills. We sometimes need to change our approach – with recruitment, onboarding, and getting people through their probation. As civic universities, we need to get in a room with our HR services to address the structural barriers we are creating to diverse recruitment – including jobs that are being created through the new Temple Quarter campus.

- Young apprentices are disadvantaged when their low wage can impact on family universal credit calculations – this can be a huge disincentive.
- People who don't succeed first time around in education need to be able to access courses that enable them to obtain qualifications.
- Lack of transport and affordability of transport are barriers.
- When young people are excluded, Alternative Learning Provision is often not based in their local community, and this can make attendance problematic.
- The University of Bristol has a number of activities that promote widening participation and employment – our career service provides under-graduates with support and advice in relation to starting your own business, we have an internship scheme through which interns are paid to take on a business challenge, and some students teach A'level students over the summer break.
- Join Us is a new UoB programme which is providing people from priority communities with support with job applications, interviews and selection processes. Hiring managers are now approaching us to get involved.
- The Council used to facilitate a Learning City Partnership Group – there is now a gap as there is no forum where education organisations can come together to talk and skills and address city challenges together.
- We would benefit from a map of Post 16 and Post 18 opportunities – particularly for those people not following a conventional academic route. This could help us promote alternative routes into higher education.
- Our challenge is to create diverse employment opportunities together- is there scope to employ a cohort of trainees who can move around to get experience of different sectors/teams as a group? Could we link this with research into the future of work? What skills is the world of work going to prioritise in the future?
- The Office for Students has a funding competition 'Women Like Me' to promote and expand the number of women in STEM – we could build on this with a locally focused campaign.
- There is so much to do in the outreach space to engage the public about alternative routes into HE.
- There is scope to build a local alumni of role models and mentors – who has made it through – can we piggyback on their success to inspire others in similar communities?
- Building social value into all our contracts is another lever to promote inclusive employment and skills – opportunity to share practice in this space.
- Bristol has a strategic leaders group working together to promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. This includes an HR sub group made up of HR and EDI practitioners. It could be useful for ESL to link up with these groups – pooling resources for impact.
- As part of the new lifelong learning entitlement, is there scope for Universities to offer adults from priority communities 20 credits for free?
- In relation to recruitment, what does success look like for an employer – is it the number of candidates with A* or First degree grades – or should it be measured by inclusive recruitment?

- We need longitudinal thinking and resilience building – there is a strong entrepreneurial spirit in the city – can we develop programmes that recognise and channel this into new local businesses that can grow inclusive careers?
- Disabled people are being told that they can work from home – what happens when people start to submit applications saying they can only work 100% from home, endorsed by the DWP? This will mean that employers can provide support entirely remotely – how as employers are we going to work with that? Is this even possible when most jobs required people to be in the workplace – and for a lot of people the value of work is the social contact with others.
- We are about to hear whether the new Social Mobility Partnership bid has been successful, and this will hopefully provide funding to identify what's working to support Disabled people into employment and to inform policy.

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BCC Education and Skills Team
BCC Equalities Team
BCC Management of Place Team
Bottle Yard Studios
Bristol Cathedral Choir School
Bristol Citizen Advice Bureau
Bristol Law Centre
Bristol North Food Network
Bristol Older People Forum
Bristol Somali Resource Centre
Bristol Windows Limited
Bristol Women's Voice
BS3 Community Development
Chinese Community Wellbeing Society
City of Bristol College
CleanSlate
Crossfit Fort Ashton
CMB – Mechanical and Engineering Company
The Co-op
Davies Roofing
DWP
Eastside Community Trust
Eden Hairdressers
E-Tel Express
Everyone Active
FACE - Youth and Community Charity
Future Kings
Gas World Ltd
Good Faith Partnership
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Monkey Business Design
Mass Group
Maintenance and Contracting Services (MCS) Ltd
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University of Bristol
University of the West of England
Value Optimised Retrofit
Visit West (Redcliffe and Temple Business Improvement District)
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