

The Wiltshire Council

Monitoring visit report

Unique reference number: 50245

Name of lead inspector: Steven Tucker HMI

Inspection date(s): 12–13 January 2017

Type of provider: Local authority

Address: County Hall
Bythesea Road
BA14 8JN



Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

This is the first re-inspection monitoring visit to Wiltshire Council following publication of the inspection report on 1 December 2016 which found the following to be inadequate: overall effectiveness; the effectiveness of leadership and management; outcomes for learners; quality of teaching, learning and assessment; adult learning programmes; and apprenticeships. Personal development, behaviour and welfare was judged to require improvement.

At the time of the monitoring visit, the council had announced its decision to withdraw from delivering apprenticeships and had recently concluded its deliberations about the future of its adult education provision. Their decision was to retain a contract with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) but to move responsibility for this provision from the directorate of people and business to the directorate of commissioning, performance and schools.

Themes

Does the council have appropriate plans for securing high-quality training for apprentices currently enrolled?

Council leaders carried out a thorough review of the options for the apprenticeship provision. They considered a range of options and, based on comprehensive information, decided to end their contract to deliver apprenticeships on 31 March 2017.

Staff have responded quickly to recommendations in the inspection report concerning apprenticeship training. They have reviewed their provision for, and recording of, off-the-job training and are monitoring apprentices' progress more closely. As a result, they have a clear understanding of what apprentices need to do in order to complete their apprenticeship and which apprentices are able to complete before the end of March 2017.

Council leaders have worked closely and productively with the SFA to examine the options for apprentices who will not complete their apprenticeship by 31 March 2017. They have written to apprentices explaining the options they have for completing their apprenticeship and are committed to assembling the information that a new provider will need when an apprentice transfers to them. They have also written to employers to ensure that they too understand the options for their apprentices.

Priorities for improvement

- Support apprentices who have the potential to complete their apprenticeship before the end of March 2017 through high-quality on- and off-the-job training and assessment.
- Ensure that apprentices continue to make progress while the council is responsible for them. Work closely with the SFA and providers who take

responsibility for the apprentices after the 31 March to ensure that these apprentices are not disadvantaged by having to change their provider.

- Maintain close communication with apprentices, and their employers, to ensure that they fully understand the progress they have made on their apprenticeship and the arrangements for moving to a new provider.

What steps have been taken to develop a strategic plan for adult learning programmes which provides:

- **provision that meets the needs of people and communities in Wiltshire**
- **clear progression routes**
- **clear objectives for the courses?**

Council leaders have considered carefully the options for adult education. They believe that, by moving the provision into the directorate for commissioning, performance and school effectiveness, they will be able to use the support for educational provision which already exists in this directorate to contribute towards improving the quality of the courses.

Council leaders are fully aware of the need to provide their staff with leadership and support from managers who have a good understanding of the standards that can be achieved in adult learning provision. They also believe that, through the council's schools improvement team, they have the knowledge and skills necessary to raise standards.

At the time of this visit, council leaders have not produced a strategic plan for the adult learning programmes. This is now urgently needed so that staff, learners and stakeholders fully understand the council's intentions. Managers reduced the curriculum offered to learners while the council made decisions about the future of adult learning courses. As a result, learners are now offered only a very small number and range of courses. However, managers have quickly improved the information they provide to learners studying English and mathematics courses about further courses they can study.

Council leaders are committed to providing governance, which includes external stakeholders, in order to hold managers to account for the performance of the service as well as support and advise them.

Priorities for improvement

- Produce a strategy for adult learning programmes which clearly demonstrates how the revised provision will help people acquire new skills or gain employment.

Have leaders identified the actions necessary to improve the quality of courses?

Managers have produced action plans to improve the management of the courses but have yet to clearly state how the impact of these actions will be evaluated or the dates by which they should be completed. As yet, council leaders and managers have not taken sufficient actions, or developed an action plan, to tackle the weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment that inspectors identified.

Priorities for improvement

- As a matter of urgency, produce a post-inspection action plan which includes dates for completion of actions, clear measures for evaluating the impact of actions taken and actions to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Ensure that the post-inspection action plan aligns to the revised strategy for adult learning courses.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that teachers know how to plan lessons and courses that develop learners' skills and knowledge and, where appropriate, prepare them for employment.

How effectively is the provider communicating with current learners and apprentices to ensure that they are kept abreast of changes to, and decisions about, the provision?

Managers have informed apprentices and employers about the future of their apprenticeship programme and are committed to working with the SFA to ensure that apprentices and employers understand the options for completing their apprenticeship once the council stops delivering them at the end of March 2017.

Staff have improved their tracking of apprentices' progress and have plans in place for how best to support those apprentices who need to complete their apprenticeship with a different provider. This includes a commitment to providing information about the work apprentices have completed and what they still need to do in order to complete their apprenticeship.

Council leaders plan to consult with stakeholders and learners now that they have made a decision about the future of adult learning courses.

Priorities for improvement

- Consult with learners to ensure that the strategic plan for the adult learning courses takes into account their aspirations. Consult with stakeholders, such as schools and children's centres, to ensure that their knowledge of their local community informs decisions about the future of adult learning courses.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Learner View

Learner View is a website where learners can tell Ofsted what they think about their college or provider. They can also see what other learners think about them too. To find out more go to www.learnerview.ofsted.gov.uk.

Employer View

Employer View is a website where employers can tell Ofsted what they think about their employees' college or provider. They can also see what other employers think about them too. To find out more go to www.employerview.ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017