



## **Meeting of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority - Employment and Skills Board**

**Date:** Wednesday, 15 October 2025

**Time:** 2.00 pm

**Venue:** Council Chambers, The Hub,  
Mareham Road, Horncastle,  
Lincolnshire, LN9 6PH

### **Membership:**

#### **Mayor**

Dame Andrea Jenkyns DBE

#### **Constituent Members**

Councillor Sean Matthews, Lincolnshire County Council\*

Councillor Ingrid Sheard, Lincolnshire County Council

Councillor Rob Waltham MBE, North Lincolnshire Council\*

Councillor Neil Poole, North Lincolnshire Council

Councillor Philip Jackson, North East Lincolnshire Council\*

Councillor Stan Shreeve, North East Lincolnshire Council

\*Lead Member

#### **Non Constituent Members**

Councillor Craig Leyland, East Lindsey District Council

Councillor Nick Worth, South Holland District Council

Councillor Mrs Jacqueline Brockway, West Lindsey District Council

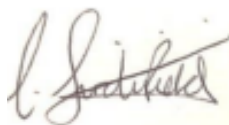
Councillor Dale Broughton, Boston Borough Council

#### **Business Member**

Vacancy

**Members of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority Employment and Skills Board are summoned to a meeting as set out above to transact the following business as set out in the agenda. Attendance of all Members is expected.**

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'L. Sirdifield', is written over a yellow rectangular background.

Lee Sirdifield  
Interim Chief Operating Officer

**GREATER LINCOLNSHIRE COMBINED COUNTY AUTHORITY - EMPLOYMENT  
AND SKILLS BOARD AGENDA  
WEDNESDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2025**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Pages</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Election of Vice Chairman</b>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Apologies and Substitutions</b>	
<b>3</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>	
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Public Question Time</b></p> <p>To receive questions from the public to the Mayor, or Board Chairs in accordance with Combined County Authority Procedure Rule 20.</p> <p>Members of the public may ask questions at this meeting if they have given notice and provided the text of the question to DemocraticServices@lincolnshire.gov.uk, no later than 8 October 2025, with each question being addressed to the name of the Member the questioner would like the question put.</p> <p>No person may submit more than one question at any one meeting and no more than two questions may be asked on behalf of any one organisation. The total time set aside for such questions and answers will be limited to 30 minutes with no extension of time, and questions not dealt with in this time will be dealt with by written responses.</p>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Chairman's Announcements</b>	
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Review of the Employment and Skills Board Terms of Reference</b></p> <p><i>(To receive a report from Clare Hughes, Interim Strategic Lead for Employment and Skills, which invites the Employment and Skills Board to consider proposed amendments to its Terms of Reference in the Constitution)</i></p>	5 - 12
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Skills England and Local Skills Improvement Plan</b></p> <p><i>(To receive a report from Clare Hughes, Interim Strategic Lead for Employment and Skills, which provides information about Skills England and Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP) and gives the Authority an opportunity to consider the scope of the future LSIP)</i></p>	13 - 18
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Get Britain Working White Paper and a Get Lincolnshire Working Plan</b></p> <p><i>(To receive a report from Clare Hughes, Interim Strategic Lead for Employment and Skills, which briefs the Authority about the Get Britain Working White Paper and seeks approval of the Get Lincolnshire Working Plan)</i></p>	19 - 98

<b>9</b>	<b>Care Leaver Covenant</b> <i>(To receive a report from Ruth Carver, Interim Deputy Director, which invites the Board to consider how the GLCCA could support the Care Leaver community, and to start the process of becoming a care leaver covenant signatory)</i>	99 - 102
<b>10</b>	<b>Devolution of the Adult Skills Fund</b> <i>(To receive a report from Clare Hughes, Interim Strategic Lead for Employment and Skills, which provides information about the Adult Skills Fund to Members, for their consideration in advance of a decision at the meeting of the Authority on 10 December 2025)</i>	103 - 204

## Information about this meeting

### Members of the Public – Rights to Attend Meeting

With the exception of any item identified above as containing exempt or confidential information under the Local Government Act 1972 Section 100A(4), members of the public are entitled to attend this meeting and/or have access to the agenda papers.

### Live streaming

Please note that this meeting may be filmed for live or subsequent broadcast via the [GLCCA's internet site](#). At the start of the meeting the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed.

Generally, the public seating areas will not be filmed; however, by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed and to the possible use of those images and sound recordings for webcasting.

### Contact

Persons wishing to obtain any further information on this meeting or for details of access to the meeting, please contact: Lincolnshire County Council Democratic Services [DemocraticServices@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:DemocraticServices@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority, c/o County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YL



<b>Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority GLCCA Employment and Skills Board</b>	
Date of meeting:	<b>15<sup>th</sup> October 2025</b>
Report title:	<b>Review of the Employment and Skills Board Terms of Reference</b>
Report of:	<b>Lee Sirdifield, Interim Chief Operating Officer</b>
Classification:	<b>This report is open</b>
Contact officer:	Clare Hughes, Interim Strategic Lead for Employment and Skills <a href="mailto:clare.hughes@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk">clare.hughes@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk</a> , 07917 635527
Purpose of the report:	<p>This report invites the Employment and Skills Board to consider proposed amendments to its Terms of Reference in the Constitution.</p> <p>Changes will be considered for approval at a meeting of the Audit Committee on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2025 and the Authority on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025.</p>
Key decision	No
Voting Arrangements:	Simple majority to include the Mayor.
Report has been considered by:	The report has not previously been considered by Members of the GLCCA

**Recommendation(s):**

**That the Employment and Skills Board:**

- 1) considers and endorses the proposed amendments to the Employment and Skills Board Terms of Reference in the Authority's Constitution detailed in Appendix A.**

## **REPORT CONTENT**

### **Information**

- 1 The Constitution is a document which sets out how the Authority works, makes decisions, and the procedures followed to ensure that its work is efficient and effective, and it is transparent and accountable to residents. Some of these procedures are set by law, while others are ones the Authority has chosen to follow. The rules of the Constitution prescribe that it should be regularly reviewed, including an annual review to ensure that it remains fit for purpose.
- 2 The Authority approved the Constitution at its inaugural meeting in March 2025 and subsequently approved some minor amendments and additions at its AGM in June 2025 and at a meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025. It was acknowledged at those meetings that the Constitution would need to be kept under continual review, especially in the early period of the Authority, in order to ensure that it reflects its emerging operational requirements and can operate in the light of experience and practical application.

### **Employment and Skills Terms of Reference Review 25/26**

- 3 This report presents changes identified as part of the review. Appendix A provides a tracked changed version of the terms of reference so that the amendments can be seen in context.
- 4 A verbal update will be given to the meeting outlining the changes that are proposed for adoption.
- 5 The amendments in Appendix A seek to clarify the role of the Authority in setting the policy framework for the devolved Adult Skills Fund (including Free Courses for Jobs funding).

### **Alternative options considered**

- 6 The Employment and Skills Board may consider approving some, all, or not to endorse the changes proposed.

### **Reasons for the recommendation**

- 7 The Employment and Skills Board is asked to endorse the suggested changes to ensure the Constitution is relevant and reflective of best practice.

## **IMPLICATIONS, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE**

### **Public sector equality duty implications**

- 8 The Equality Act duty has been considered, but no equalities impacts have been identified arising from the proposals in this report.

### **Legal implications / comments**

- 9 The Authority is required under the Localism Act 2011 to prepare and keep up to date a Constitution that complies with Schedule 1 of the GLCCA Regulations 2025. The amendments and additions detailed in Appendices A are legislatively compliant and reflective of best practice and guidance.

#### **Finance and resource implications / comments**

- 10 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

#### **Greater Lincolnshire policy / comments**

- 11 None.

#### **Consultation and Engagement**

- 12 The Terms of Reference have not yet been reviewed by the Board, as this is the first year of the Board's establishment.

#### **Overview and Scrutiny Comments**

- 13 Not applicable.

### **DOCUMENT INFORMATION**

#### **Appendices included with this report**

The following documents are included:

- Appendix A – Employment and Skills Board Terms of Reference (track changes)

#### **Background Papers used in the preparation of this report**

The following background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

<b>Background Paper</b>	<b>Where it can be viewed</b>
The Authority's Constitution	<a href="#">Constitution of the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority – Greater Lincolnshire CCA</a>

### 3.5B. Employment and Skills Board

#### 1. Terms of Reference

- 1.1 This is an Executive decision-making Committee of the Combined County Authority referred to as one of the three Boards of the Authority. The Employment and Skills Board will act in a regional capacity to enable the ambitions and outcomes of the Authority of its employment, skills and adult education functions.
- 1.2 The Employment and Skills Board is authorised to carry out any Non-Mayoral employment, skills and adult education function of the Authority<sup>1</sup> or any other Non-Mayoral function related to employment, skills and adult education in accordance with the strategic and budgetary framework agreed by the Authority, including:
- i. progressing the ambitions and outcomes of the Greater Lincolnshire Plan and policy framework of the Authority that fall within the remit of this Board, by monitoring and reviewing the outcomes and impact of any policy, investment priorities, strategy or plan;
  - ii. submitting bids for devolved and other funding;
  - iii. working with key partners and the Mayor to develop and promote a shared understanding, coherent strategies and policies, and joined up service delivery and influence the provision of employment, education and training provision;
  - iv. approval of an ASF Strategic plan each year and oversight of its implementation.
  - v. annual agreement of ASF Funding Rules and Rates.
  - vi. termination of an ASF contract for services/grant agreement.
  - vii. overseeing any project or programme in accordance with the governance and assurance arrangements for administering the adult education and skills functions of the Adult Skills Fund and the Authority's Assurance Framework<sup>2</sup>,

with the exception of

- any function which requires a Statutory Consent where that consent has yet to be given, and

---

<sup>1</sup> Functions in this context are to be construed in a broad and inclusive fashion, and as including the exercise of the ancillary powers under Section 113A of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

<sup>2</sup> Or otherwise, where the project or programme does not fall to be considered under the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority Assurance Framework

- any function which is reserved to the Combined Authority.

1.3 The Employment and Skills Board will contribute to the preparation of the Greater Lincolnshire Economic Assessment and the Greater Lincolnshire evidence base through specialist advice, including:

- i. commissioning of appropriate research and studies in relation to the Authority's employment, skills and adult education functions and needs; and
- ii. formulating, developing and monitoring procedures for public consultation of the Authority's employment, skills and adult education policies;

1.4 It will advise the Authority and the Mayor on the development of policy, strategy and budgets and make recommendations on / to:

- i. The area-wide Employment and Skills Plan;
- ii. The development of the Investment Strategy and skills investment;
- iii. Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)
- iv. Relevant governance and decision-making arrangements
- v. ASF commissioning strategy
- vi. Substantive in-year changes to ASF Funding Rules and Rates to improve provider management or to implement new policies,
- vii. the Authority in respect of any Non-Mayoral Function which is an employment, skills or adult education function or functions related to employment, skills or adult education or any other employment, skills or adult education matters requested by the Authority.
- viii. the Mayor in respect of any Mayoral General Function which is a employment, skills or adult education function or other function related to employment, skills or adult education.

1.5It will collaborate with other Boards/Committees of the Combined County Authority to achieve the ambitions and outcomes of the Authority.

1.6It will engage with and hold to account those bodies involved in the delivery and operation of employment, skills or adult education activities within the Authority area.

1.7It can nominate Authority representatives on employment, skills or adult

education bodies.

- 1.8 It will respond to any report or recommendation from the Audit Committee or the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## 1. Membership

- 2.1 The Employment and Skills Board will engage and seek advice from a range of key stakeholders including the Combined County Authority area Local Authorities FE Colleges and Independent Training Providers, key Government Agencies such as the Department for Work and Pensions as well as employers in relation to developing ASF priorities.

- 2.2 The membership of the Employment and Skills Board shall consist of:

### Voting Members

- Mayor
- Two Members/substitute members from each Constituent Authority
- Four Non constituent Members /delegate members

### Non-Voting Members

- One business member appointed by the Economic Advisory Panel
- any other co-opted members

- 2.3 In appointing members to the Employment and Skills Board there is no requirement for political balance.
- 2.4 The Board may co-opt up to 3 additional Non-Voting Membership from partner and stakeholder bodies relevant to the remit of the Board. Further co-opted members may be appointed with the approval of the Authority.
- 2.5 Substitution and Delegations operate in accordance with the Authority Procedure Rules.
- 2.6 The Board may appoint one or more sub-committees for the purpose of discharging any of the Board's functions.

## Chairing the Board

- 3.1 The Employment and Skills Board shall be chaired by a Constituent Member (or substitute) nominated and appointed by the Authority.
- 3.2 A Vice-Chair will be appointed by the Employment and Skills Board from amongst the Constituent Authority membership.
- 3.3 The Mayor is a voting member of the Board in order to allow them to act in their capacity as the Mayor, they may wish to discharge any relevant mayoral functions via the Board in order to benefit from appropriate advice.

#### 4. Quorum

- 4.1 The quorum will be 4 voting members in accordance with the Authority Procedure Rules.

#### 5. Voting

- 5.1 Any matters that are to be decided by the Board are to be decided by consensus of the Board where possible.
- 5.2 When a vote is required, it will be taken in accordance with the Authority Procedure Rules.
- 5.3 Non constituent members may vote on all matters unless specifically reserved to the Authority.
- 5.4 The Board may invite any Observers as it sees fit, relevant to any item of the agenda, to attend the meeting. These Observers will be able to participate in the meeting at the discretion of the Chair, however will not be able to vote on any matter.

#### 6. Frequency

- 6.1 There will be a minimum of five Employment and Skills Board meetings each municipal year. (approximately every other month)

#### 7. Review

- 7.1 The terms of reference are to be reviewed on an annual basis by the Employment and Skills Board, and amendments approved by the Authority.
- 7.2 The role and arrangements of the Employment and Skills Board will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Authority.

This page is intentionally left blank



<b>Greater Lincolnshire Employment and Skills Board</b>	
Date of meeting:	<b>15<sup>th</sup> October 2025</b>
Report title:	<b>Skills England and Local Skills Improvement Plan</b>
Report of:	<b>Lee Sirdifield, Interim Chief Operating Officer</b>
Classification:	<b>This report is open</b>
Contact officer:	Clare Hughes, Interim Strategic Lead for Employment and Skills <a href="mailto:clare.hughes@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk">clare.hughes@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk</a> , 07917 635527
Purpose of the report:	To provide information about Skills England and Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP) and give the Authority an opportunity to consider the scope of the future LSIP.
Key decision	No
Voting Arrangements:	Simple majority vote to include the Mayor.
Report has been considered by:	The report has not previously been considered by members of the GLCCA

**Recommendation(s):**

**That the Employment and Skills Board:**

- 1) Note the purpose of a Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)**
- 2) Support the rationale for the scope of the next LSIP (point 16); and**
- 3) Support engagement with employers when the research-phase of the LSIP starts later this year.**

## REPORT CONTENT

### Background and Existing Local Skills Improvement Plan

- 1 The Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022 set out a commitment to giving employers a stronger voice in local skills planning. As part of this approach, the Department for Education (DfE) introduced Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP) and a Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) to ensure that the technical skills system was better meeting employer need.
- 2 In Autumn 2022, following a competitive process, Employer Representative Bodies (ERBs) were designated by DfE to develop and lead Local Skills Improvement Plans in each of 38 areas of England. The Federation of Small Business (FSB) is the designated ERB for Greater Lincolnshire.
- 3 LSIPs are designed to provide a set of actionable priorities that employers, providers and other stakeholders in a local area will drive and change.
- 4 The existing LSIP covers Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland geography and, following a survey and a series of local employer forums, was first published in summer 2023. The LSIF was used to fund some of the actions.
- 5 All existing LSIPs will stay in place until new plans are published in summer 2026.

### Skills England

- 6 Skills England is a new agency, set up by DfE to address UK skills shortages enabling growth and opportunity. It officially launched in June this year and builds on the work of the former Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE), collaborating with employers, local government and training organisations, aligning qualifications with current and future workforce needs.
- 7 It has recently published an assessment of priority skills to 2030 with a detailed analysis of future employment needs. These align to the government's industrial strategy and Plan for Change.
- 8 The analysis covers employment across 10 sectors important for the government's growth mission: the 8 industrial strategy sectors, (Advanced Manufacturing, Clean Energy Industries, Creative Industries, Defence, Digital and Technologies, Financial Services, Life Sciences, and Professional and Business Services) along with Health and Adult Social Care, and Construction (Housebuilding only).
- 9 Findings of the assessment show that demand for jobs in priority occupations is expected to expand significantly by 2030. That growth will outpace non-priority employment. Although it should be noted that employment growth at national level does not always match employment growth at local level.
- 10 The analysis also shows that Digital Technologies, Adult Social Care, Construction, and Engineering will experience the largest increases in job demand across the country.

## **A new Local Skills Improvement Plan for Greater Lincolnshire**

- 11 Designated ERBs will start to develop new LSIPs later this year, (whilst continuing to implement and review the existing LSIPs), and publish in summer 2026.
- 12 A Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) to drive forward actions from the new LSIP is not expected to be received.
- 13 The geography of the new LSIP will match the geography of the Authority.
- 14 New statutory guidance is expected to be published this month (October 2025) and, following national feedback about the process and content of existing plans, is likely to give Mayoral Strategic Authorities (MSAs) a significant role in co-delivery and final approval.
- 15 This involvement is welcomed and will give the Authority an opportunity to steer and champion the report, proactively engaging of business and using the Authority's existing mechanisms and networks.
- 16 The Authority is required to set out the skills and sector focus of the plan, ensuring that they align to the Government's new industrial strategy. The proposed rationale is to use the national industrial strategy, the emerging local growth plan and everyday economies.

Advice to the ERB will therefore be that the new LSIP covers the skills needs within the following sectors:

Agri-Tech and Food Manufacturing, Advanced Manufacturing, Energy Industries, Defence, Digital and Technologies, Professional and Business Services, Health and Adult Social Care, Construction and Visitor Economy.

*This does not mean the LSIP will be limited to these sectors.*

## **Government Department Changes**

- 17 On 16<sup>th</sup> September 2025 it was announced that the responsibility for apprenticeships, adult further education, skills, training and careers, and Skills England, will move from the Department for Education to the Department for Work and Pensions. This move includes Skills England and LSIPs.

## **Alternative options considered**

- 18 The production of LSIPs is a legal requirement. Officers have considered an LSIP that focuses on one or two cross-cutting skills (for example digital) but limiting the scope of the plan could be detrimental to Greater Lincolnshire. This is because Government Departments, training and education organisations, and other stakeholders are asked to take note of what is in an LSIP when funding or developing activity.

## **Reasons for the recommendation**

- 19 The Authority does not yet have a published Local Growth Plan and therefore cannot align the LSIP to that. The Government expects local areas to align with its Industrial Strategy where it makes sense to. Therefore, using existing evidence and knowledge, the recommendation to include particular sectors means industry that is important to Greater Lincolnshire is not excluded.

## **IMPLICATIONS, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE**

### **Public sector equality duty implications**

20. ERBs are responsible in law for producing a Local Skills Improvement Plan and need to go beyond identifying employer skills needs to consider how different groups of people access and experience the training to fill those needs.

### **Legal implications / comments**

21. These are covered within the body of the report.

### **Finance and resource implications / comments**

22. Officer time will be required to support the LSIP process, including to inform the methodology so that the research provides the Authority with new information; to increase the number of employers responding to skills research so that there is statistically accurate data to work from; to participate in qualitative research sessions; and support governance. The Authority may be able to recover some of these costs.

### **Greater Lincolnshire policy / comments**

23. Once an LSIP is produced, Government Departments and local plans are asked to take the LSIP into account, therefore important that the Authority has input into it at this a stage.

### **Consultation and Engagement**

24. The report sets out that consultation and engagement will take place to develop the content of the plan.

### **Overview and Scrutiny Comments**

25. N/A

## **DOCUMENT INFORMATION**

### **Appendices included with this report**

- N/A

## Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

Background Paper	Where it can be viewed
English Devolution White Paper. Section 3.4 sets out intention to give Strategic Authorities joint role in producing LSIPs.	<a href="#">English Devolution White Paper - GOV.UK</a>
Guidance published under previous Government, including links to 2021 Skills for Jobs White paper that first set out LSIPs.	<a href="#">Local skills improvement plans (LSIPs) and local skills improvement fund (LSIF) - GOV.UK</a>
Existing local LSIP, published in 2023.	<a href="#">Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland LSIP Report by Federation of Small Businesses - Issuu</a>
Information about the LSIP process on FSB website.	<a href="#">Greater Lincolnshire &amp; Rutland LSIP   FSB Local Skills Initiative</a>
Skills England: Assessment of priority skills to 2030	<a href="#">Assessment of priority skills to 2030 - GOV.UK</a>
Announcement on 16 <sup>th</sup> September 2025 that adult skills functions of DfE will move to DWP.	<a href="#">Written statements - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament</a>

This page is intentionally left blank

<b>Greater Lincolnshire Employment and Skills Board</b>	
Date of meeting:	<b>15<sup>th</sup> October 2025</b>
Report title:	<b>Get Britain Working White Paper and a Get Lincolnshire Working Plan</b>
Report of:	<b>Lee Sirdifield, Interim Chief Operating Officer</b>
Classification:	<b>This report is open</b>
Contact officer:	Clare Hughes, Interim Strategic Lead for Employment and Skills <a href="mailto:clare.hughes@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk">clare.hughes@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk</a> , 07917 635527
Purpose of the report:	<p>To brief the Authority about the Get Britain Working White Paper and the role that the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has requested Mayoral Strategic Authorities undertake to support the Government's ambition of achieving an 80% employment rate.</p> <p>To seek approval of the Get Lincolnshire Working Plan.</p>
Key decision	No
Voting Arrangements:	Simple majority vote to include the Mayor.
Report has been considered by:	The report has not previously been considered by members of the GLCCA
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>  <b>That the Employment and Skills Board:</b>  <b>1) Note the progress to date in convening a Core Partnership and creating a Get Lincolnshire Working plan, and</b>  <b>2) Approve the Get Lincolnshire Working plan, subject to any minor amendments approved by the Chief Operating Officer.</b>	

## REPORT CONTENT

### Background

- 1 The Government has a long-term ambition to achieve an employment rate of 80%.
- 2 The employment rate in Greater Lincolnshire is just over 71% and amongst the lowest employment rate in the country. The difference in Greater Lincolnshire between 71% and 80% is approximately 56,000 people. This group comprises residents who are economically inactive (not seeking/not available for work) and unemployed (are seeking/are available for work).
- 3 The UK is the only major economy that has seen its employment rate fall over the last 5 years, reversing the previous long-run trend of declining rates of economic inactivity. This has been driven predominantly by a rise in the number of people out of work due to long-term ill health
- 4 Reform is needed because, UK Government says, DWP funded employment support provision has focused overwhelmingly on the unemployed (not economically inactive), and local support (by local councils, the NHS, voluntary sector, colleges, training providers and housing associations) is often fragmented and difficult to navigate.
- 5 Many economically inactive people contribute to the economy in ways other than work, for example, by caring or studying to build their skills. However, the UK's current high economic inactivity rate is unsustainable, leaving many people excluded from the labour market and holding back economic growth.

### Proposed Reforms

- 6 The Government wants to tackle several things:
  - too many people are excluded from the labour market – especially those with health conditions, caring responsibilities or lower skill levels
  - too many young people leave school without reading, writing, maths or digital skills or access to high-quality further learning, an apprenticeship or support to work so that they can thrive at the start of their career
  - too many people are stuck in insecure, poor quality and often low-paying work, which contributes to a weaker economy and also affects their health and wellbeing
  - too many women who care for their families still experience challenges staying in and progressing in work
  - too many employers cannot fill their vacancies due to labour and skills shortages, holding back economic growth and undermining living standards
  - there is too great a disparity in labour market outcomes between different places and for different groups of people



7 Government proposals for action are:

- 1) Scaling up and deepening the contribution of the NHS and wider health system to improve employment outcomes
- 2) Backing local areas to shape an effective work, health and skills offer for local people, with mayoral authorities leading the way in England
- 3) Delivering a Youth Guarantee so that all 18 to 21-year-olds in England have access to education, training or help to find a job or an apprenticeship
- 4) Creating a new jobs and careers service to help people get into work and get on at work
- 5) Launching an independent review into the role of UK employers in promoting healthy and inclusive workplaces

## **A Local Plan**

- 8 To support a national ambition of an 80% employment rate, all areas in England have been asked by central Government to produce a local Get Britain Working plan. These plans will identify local labour market challenges and show how areas are tackling or will tackle them. The plan is intended to develop a whole system approach to the supply and demand challenges in the local labour market.
- 9 Mayoral Authorities, where they exist, have been tasked with leading the local process. This means convening a core partnership, bringing together the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Integrated Care Boards (ICB), and Local Authorities for the purpose of producing a local 'Get Lincolnshire Working' plan, creating a set of local measures and providing a mechanism for a longer-term conversation about employment and work.
- 10 The draft Get Lincolnshire Working plan, provided at appendix 1, sets out how partners will work together to reduce the gap through existing schemes and what it can do in the future. There is an expectation from Government that it will contain immediate actions as well as longer term (10 year) ambitions aligned with Local Growth Plans.
- 11 Guidance states that plans should aim to draw on the full range of provision and resources in a local area, as well as maximising the contribution of local relationships and assets. This includes local authorities, the NHS, training providers, Jobcentre Plus, the voluntary sector, employers and trade unions (Connect to Work, Ministry of Housing, UKSPF)
- 12 The Get Lincolnshire Working plan is coterminous with the geography of the Authority. DWP have changed their Job Centre Plus (JCP) regional boundaries to align with the Authority.

## **How will local plans be used?**

- 13 DWP will take these plans into consideration nationally and locally for future employment support policy design and development, including the integration of Jobcentre Plus / Jobs and Careers Service services in local areas.

- 14 Plans will support other local strategies, and plans, including Local Growth Plans, Local Skills Improvement Plans and other health and work Strategies. They should enhance forms of local collaboration to support successful delivery.
- 15 Plans will also support local government partners, key stakeholders and wider public services, including the NHS and DWP, to manage and align current provision and to inform decisions on future commissioning, activity and support

## **A Get Lincolnshire Working Plan**

- 16 In line with DWP's guidance, a Core Partnership was established in June 2025 and has met at least ten times to date to agree the content of the plan and how organisations might work together.
- 17 To meet national guidance about membership, frequency of meetings and approval of the first phase of the plan the members of the Core Partnership are:

<b>Core Partnership</b>
Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) - Accountable Body
Department for Work and Pensions//Job Centre Plus (DWP/JCP)
Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB)
Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board (ICB)
Lincolnshire County Council (LCC)
North East Lincolnshire Council (NELC)
North Lincolnshire Council (NLC)

- 18 The draft Get Lincolnshire Working plan is provided at appendix 1.
- 19 Government expects initial plans to be built upon, to be monitored and reviewed at intervals, and for the core partnership to be a mechanism for a long-term local conversation about the challenges. Two phases are planned:

### Phase 1 (2025)

- Create the Core Partnership
- Develop evidence base for economic inactivity and unemployment
- Map current provision and support
- Agree and measure a set of Greater Lincolnshire indicators
- Create the Get Lincolnshire Working action plan
- Agree monitoring and governance

### Phase 2 (2026/27)

- Extend the Core Partnership (e.g. to include representatives of district councils, colleges, training providers, the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector VCSE, and employers)
- Extend the evidence base to include wider labour market (sustainable employment, earnings etc)
- Extend and update initial mapping\*
- Review Greater Lincolnshire indicators and performance

- Update action plan\*
- Agree ongoing monitoring and future phases (if any)

*\*To include new local and national initiatives, for example new national policy or funding, realisation of funding for towns and neighbourhoods, publication of Local Growth Plan and Local Skills Improvement Plan*

## **Alternative options considered**

- 20 None. It is a requirement for the Mayoral Strategic Authority to produce the Get Lincolnshire Working Plan.

## **Reasons for the recommendation**

- 21 The Authority has been asked by central Government (DWP) to produce a Get Lincolnshire Working Plan with partners at pace. DWP will read all plans before they are published. The plan must be published this autumn.

## **IMPLICATIONS, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE**

### **Public sector equality duty implications**

- 22 There are no implications.

### **Legal implications / comments**

23. This matter is within the remit of the Board to progress.

### **Finance and resource implications / comments**

- 24 DWP has provided a grant payment to the Authority of £100,000 to cover expenditure incurred in the production and publication of the Get Lincolnshire working plan.

### **Greater Lincolnshire policy / comments**

- 25 The Get Lincolnshire Working plan asks local (and national) funders to consider the ongoing difficulty of duplication and fragmentation of schemes for this group of residents before setting up new, programmes. The core partnership will play an important role in ensuring the better coordination of activities in the future.

## **Consultation and Engagement**

- 26 The plan has been produced in collaboration with the Core Partnership. During the development of the plan 34 local organisations involved took part in detailed interviews.

## Overview and Scrutiny Comments

27 N/A

## DOCUMENT INFORMATION

### Appendices included with this report

- Appendix 1 - Draft Get Lincolnshire Working Plan

### Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

Background Paper	Where it can be viewed
Get Britain Working White Paper	<a href="#">Get Britain Working white paper</a>
Guidance for Get Britain Working Plans	<a href="#">Guidance for Developing local Get Britain Working plans (England) - GOV.UK</a>

# **DRAFT Get Lincolnshire Working**

(add logos)

# Get Lincolnshire Working Draft Plan 2025

Contents

Page

## Add forward from core partners

### Introduction

As part of the Get Britain Working agenda, the Department for Work and Pension (DWP) has tasked local areas with creating their own Get Britain Working plans. The Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) is leading the production of a *Get Lincolnshire Working* plan with Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and Local Authorities in Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire, and North East Lincolnshire.

The UK Government has a long-term ambition to achieve an employment rate of 80%.

It aims to achieve this by creating more good jobs in every part of the country (through its modern Industrial Strategy and Local Growth Plans), by improving the quality and security of work (through the Plan to Make Work Pay), and through reforms to employment support, bringing together skills and health to get more people into work and to get on in work, as set out in the Get Britain Working white paper published November 2024.

Greater Lincolnshire's employment rate is just over 71% and amongst the lowest in the country. This report sets out the approach we propose, to increase the employment rate to 80% - definitions and key terms are set out at Appendix.

### Greater Lincolnshire

Greater Lincolnshire has a population of 1.1 million, with nearly 49,000 businesses all contributing to a £30bn economy, which has grown by 40% in the past 10 years.

It has a varied and dispersed economy, from the world-leading offshore wind energy sector, manufacturers, ports and petrochemicals in the north to the UK-significant food and agricultural heartland in the south. It has many strengths and opportunities for example in agri-tech, advanced manufacturing and defence, plus a coastal economy that attracts visitors to destinations such as Cleethorpes and Skegness.



Those strengths exist within a large geography that is predominantly rural.

More than 90% of Greater Lincolnshire's landmass is rural or coastal, population density is around 155 people per km<sup>2</sup>, much lower than the national average of 434 people per km<sup>2</sup>.

This level of sparsity means that reaching critical mass for service delivery is challenging, particularly delivering education and training.

## 1. Labour Market Analysis

Greater Lincolnshire's labour market presents both challenges and opportunities, with an employment rate of 71.2% ( $\pm 2.4\%$ pts, Oct 2023–Sep 2024), falling short of the national ambition of 80% and comparator regions such as York and North Yorkshire (79.2%) and East Midlands (76.3%). This gap highlights a challenge in reaching broader employment goals, yet it also signals potential for growth as the region works to align with national standards.

The table below sets out the high-level picture relating to patterns of employment and inactivity in Greater Lincolnshire at first tier authority level. *Percentages in brackets in the economic inactivity section show the percentage of the overall 16-64 population – the percentages outside of brackets represent the % of just the economically inactive population.* Cells highlighted in red show the areas with more challenges:

Table 1: Employment Overview

	Greater Lincolnsh ire	Greater Lincolnsh ire	Lincoln shire	Lincoln shire	NE Lincoln shire	NE Lincoln shire	North Lincoln shire	North Lincoln shire	Great Britain
	(level)	(%)	(numbe rs)	(%)	(numbe rs)	(%)	(numbe rs)	(%)	(%)
All people aged 16-64	657,100	59.9	460,100	59.8	94,800	60.3	102,300	60.2	62.9
Economically active†	511,300	75.2	360000	75.9	75,500	76.6	75,800	70.9	78.5
In employment†	494,300	72.7	350800	73.9	72,300	73.5	71,200	66.6	75.4
Employees†	435,300	64.7	304900	65	66,900	68.1	63,500	60	65.7
Self employed†	58,300	7.9	45200	8.7	5,400	5.4	7,700	6.5	9.4
Unemployed§	17,000	3.3	9200	2.6	2,800	3.7	2,900	3.9	3.9
Economically Inactive	160,300	24.8	107,800	24.1	22,500	23.4	30,000	29.1	21.5
Student	24,700	15.4 (3.8)	18,600	17.2 (4)	3,200	14.3 (3.4)	2,900	9.7 (2.8)	26.9
looking after family/home	28,800	18 (4.4)	19,100	17.7 (4.2)	3,500	15.7 (3.7)	6,200	20.6 (6.1)	18.4
temporary sick	10,100	6.3 (1.5)	#	#	#	#	#	#	2.2
long-term sick	56,000	35 (8.5)	35,000	32.5 (7.6)	9,900	43.9 (10.4)	11,200	37.4 (10.9)	28.2
retired	24,000	15 (3.7)	16,400	15.2 (3.6)	2,800	12.4 (3)	4,800	16.1 (4.7)	12.8
other	16,300	10.2 (2.5)	10,400	9.6 (2.3)	#	#	4,100	13.7 (4)	11.4
wants a job	25,200	15.7 (3.8)	14,600	13.6 (3.2)	3,900	17.2 (4.1)	6,700	22.4 (6.5)	19
does not want a job	135,100	84.3 (20.6)	93,200	86.4 (20.3)	18,600	82.8 (19.6)	23,300	77.6 (22.8)	81

Nomis 2025

Overall economic inactivity sits alongside low employment growth (3.2% from 2015–2023), low jobs density (0.79), a 2% decline in the business base (2023–2024), earnings 12% below the UK average (£33,716 vs. £37,500), and low productivity (GVA per working-age population 23% below the UK average).

Whilst it is not possible to show a direct causal link between the other factors referenced here and economic inactivity the interplay of these factors points to a low skill low wage equilibrium. This has the potential to limit incentives to work in terms of wages alongside limited opportunities for personal career advancement.

Whilst at a Greater Lincolnshire level this generalisation can be used to characterise the overall economic nature of the area there are growing pockets of stronger economic



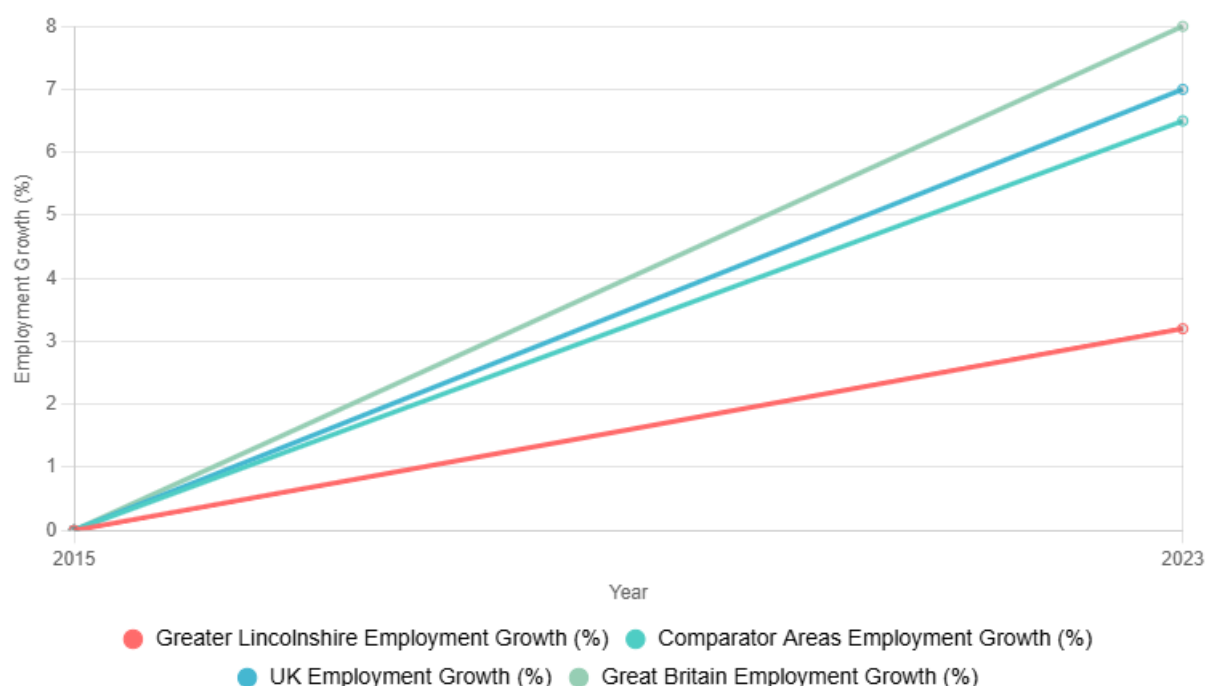
opportunity and performance in certain key locations principally in the major towns which form bright points in the overall economic landscape. These places have the potential to stimulate many new employment opportunities through programmes such as the Humber Freeport in and around Grimsby ([Humber Freeport – Britain's Global Gateway](#)) and the STEP Nuclear Fusion Programme at West Burton ([About - STEP Fusion](#)) (Gainsborough hinterland). Both are already creating jobs for Greater Lincolnshire residents at varying skill levels, construction, welding, engineering, advanced manufacturing and more.

The area faces difficulties for disadvantaged groups, including those with health conditions, young people (NEET), carers, low-skilled individuals, and those facing multiple disadvantages (e.g., migrants, ex-offenders), alongside geographical disparities in coastal and rural areas, all relevant in line with the guidance's focus on local labour market issues. These challenges offer a chance to develop targeted support, while the diversity provides a rich foundation for inclusive progress, as noted in the Greater Lincolnshire Local Skills Report (2022) and the North Lincolnshire Skills and Employability Plan (2023-2028).

## 1. Economy Overview

### 1.1 Employment Trends

From 2015 to 2023, employment in Greater Lincolnshire grew by 3.2%, below the UK's 7% (Great Britain: 8%), indicating slower growth.



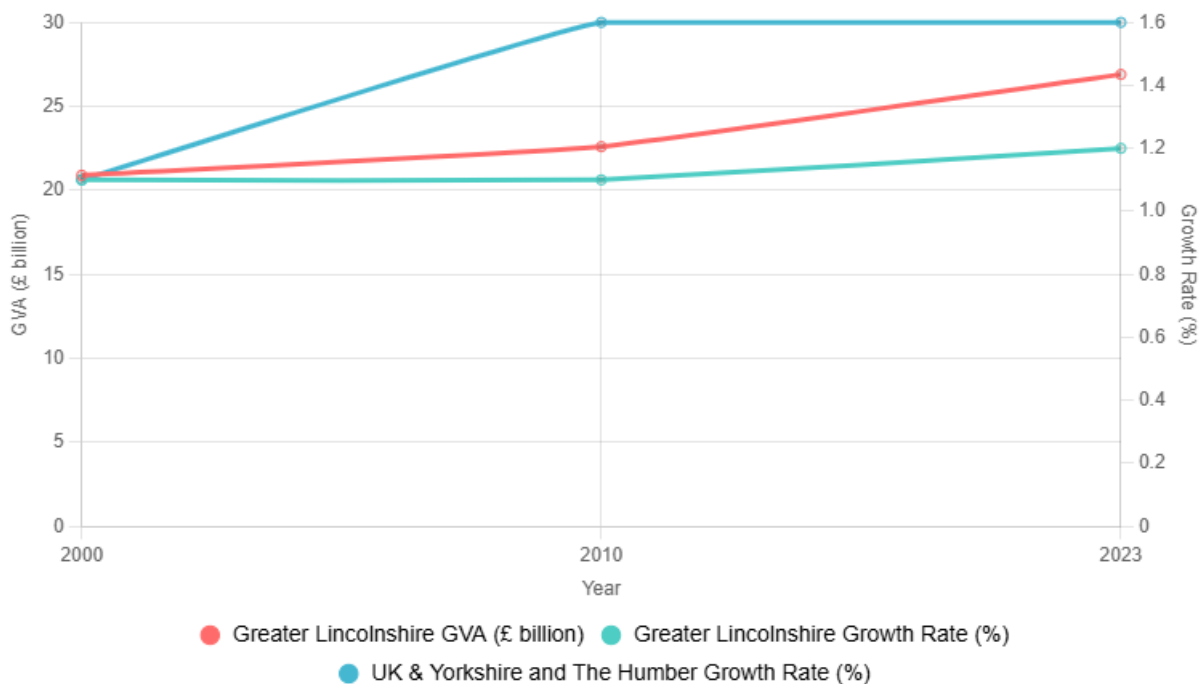
- **Lincolnshire:** Employed 318,500 in 2022, with 3.8% growth from 2015 to 2023 but a 2.0% decline from 2022 to 2023, presenting a challenge with potential for recovery.
- **North Lincolnshire:** Employed approximately 77,690 (17% of total), with 5.4% growth from 2015 to 2023 and a 2.0% increase from 2022 to 2023, offering a positive trend.
- **North East Lincolnshire:** Employed approximately 68,550 (15% of total), with a 0.7% decline from 2015 to 2023 and no change from 2022 to 2023, indicating a challenge with stability to build upon.

- **Comparison with Benchmarks:** Hull and East Yorkshire achieved 6% growth from 2015 to 2023, York and North Yorkshire 7% growth with strong post-pandemic recovery, East Midlands 6% growth despite a recent decline, Yorkshire and The Humber 6% growth, and the UK 7% growth with Great Britain at 8%, offering both a challenge and a reference point.

## 1.2 Economic Growth (GVA)

The economic performance of Greater Lincolnshire shows resilience in some areas but faces growth challenges. Valued at £26.9 billion in 2023, the economy grew by an average of 1.1% annually from 2000 to 2023, increasing from £20.9 billion. Since 2010, growth averaged 1.2%, below the 1.6% seen nationally and in Yorkshire and The Humber, indicating a challenge in keeping pace with broader trends.

However, this steady growth reflects a stable base for future development. The economy expanded to £27.7 billion in 2021, 3.7% above 2019 pre-pandemic levels, but contracted by 3% to £26.9 billion by 2023, reflecting difficulties in key sectors such as hospitality, tourism, and food production. This contraction poses a hurdle, yet it also highlights sectors with recovery potential, as noted in the West Lindsey Local Place Employment and Skills Dynamics report (2023).

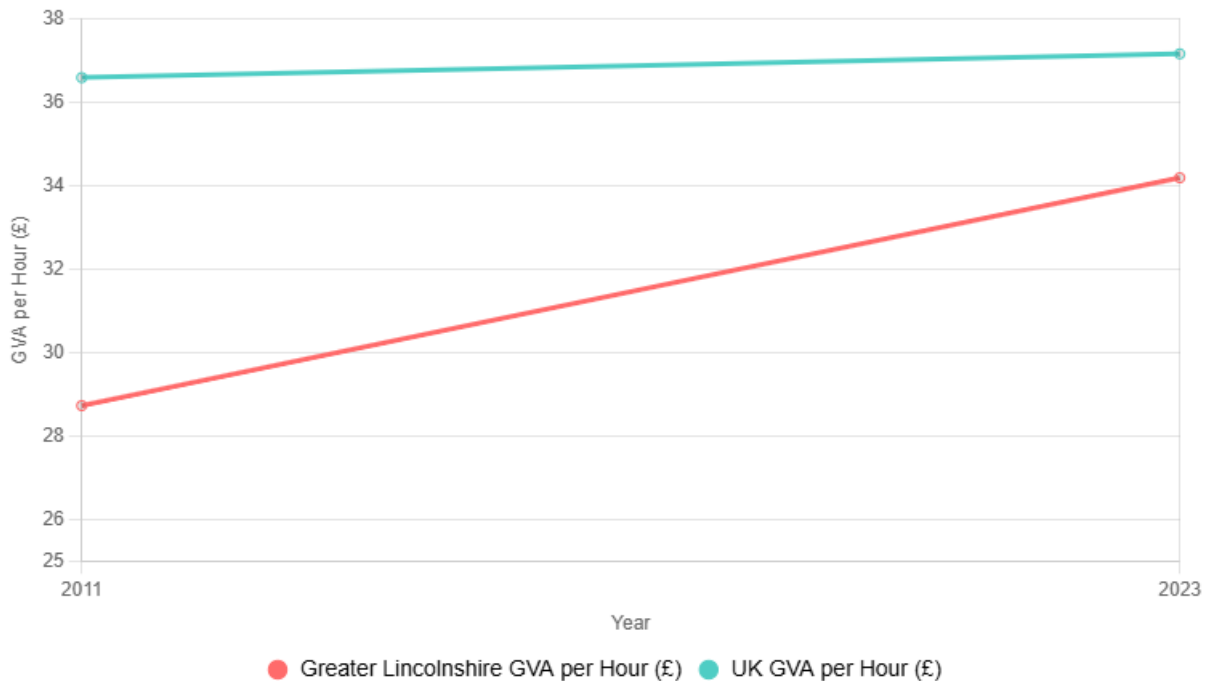


- **Lincolnshire:** Contributes the largest share (£17.7 billion in 2023), growing by 1.1% annually since 2000. It increased by 0.7% from 2022 to 2023 but remains below pre-pandemic levels, presenting a challenge to regain momentum while offering a solid economic foundation.
- **North Lincolnshire:** Grew by 1.6% annually from 2000 to 2022 (£5.4 billion in 2023), showing a positive trend that supports industrial strength.
- **North East Lincolnshire:** Reached £3.9 billion in 2023, 7.5% above 2019 levels, with 0.4% growth from 2022 to 2023, showing relative stability in urban-coastal economies, which contrasts with its growth potential.

- **Comparison with Benchmarks:** East Midlands achieved 1.4% annual growth, Yorkshire and The Humber matched the UK's 1.6% growth rate, Hull and East Yorkshire saw modest growth (1.3% annually) with a stronger post-pandemic recovery, York and North Yorkshire demonstrated growth with the economy 27% larger in 2023 than in 2010, and the UK grew by 1.6% annually, providing both a challenge and a benchmark for aspiration

### 1.3 Productivity

Productivity is important for economic competitiveness and workforce sustainability. GVA per working-age population, a measure of output relative to the labour force, remained 23% below the UK average (£53,024) at £40,741 in 2023, indicating a significant productivity challenge.



- **Lincolnshire:** GVA per hour (£31.65) is 14.5% below the UK average, a challenge that highlights potential for skills enhancement.
- **North Lincolnshire:** GVA per working-age population (£53,472) matches or exceeds the UK average, driven by industrial strengths, offering a positive example.
- **North East Lincolnshire:** GVA per working-age population (£40,767) is close to the regional average, supported by urban-coastal activities, with room to build on this stability.
- **Comparison with Benchmarks:** Hull and East Yorkshire's GVA per hour (£34.46) is slightly above Greater Lincolnshire, York and North Yorkshire's GVA per hour (£34.50) is comparable but GVA per working-age population (£51,931) is higher, East Midlands' GVA per hour (£31.09) is below Greater Lincolnshire but GVA per working-age population (£41,423) is slightly higher, Yorkshire and The Humber's GVA per hour (£32.77) is below Greater Lincolnshire, and the UK sets the benchmark at £37.00 per hour and £53,024 per working-age population, presenting both a challenge and a target.

### 1.4 Business Dynamics

Greater Lincolnshire's business base grew by 17% from 32,645 in 2011 to 39,310 in 2022 but declined by 2% to 38,505 in 2024, indicating a recent setback. Business concentration (businesses per 10,000 population) increased from 324 in 2010 to 350 in 2019 but fell to 347 in 2024, 50 below the UK average (397) and 130 below York and North Yorkshire (477), highlighting a challenge in business density. **Lincolnshire:** Represents three-quarters of the business base, with a 2% decline from 2023 to 2024 and a concentration of 361, showing a challenge with potential for revitalisation.

- **North Lincolnshire:** Accounts for 15% of businesses, with 17% growth from 2010 to 2022 but a 1.2% decline from 2023 to 2024, concentration of 333, indicating resilience with room for growth.
- **North East Lincolnshire:** Comprises 12% of businesses, with a 3.3% decline from 2023 to 2024, lowest concentration (290), posing a challenge but also an opportunity for targeted support.
- **Business Composition:** Micro businesses dominate (89.1%), with small (8.7%), medium (1.9%), and large (0.3%) aligning with benchmarks. North East Lincolnshire has more small and medium businesses, while North Lincolnshire has more medium businesses, offering a balanced business structure.
- **Comparison with Benchmarks:** East Midlands' concentration is 365, surpassing Greater Lincolnshire, Yorkshire and The Humber is 352, slightly above, Hull and East Yorkshire is 340, closing the gap, York and North Yorkshire is 477, the highest, and the UK is 397, providing a benchmark for growth.

## 1.5 Jobs Density

Jobs density, the number of jobs per working-age resident (16-64), was 0.79 in Greater Lincolnshire in 2022, up from 0.74 in 2011 but below the UK average (0.86), highlighting a challenge in job availability. This gap also suggests potential for increased employment opportunities, as noted in the North Lincolnshire Skills and Employability Plan.

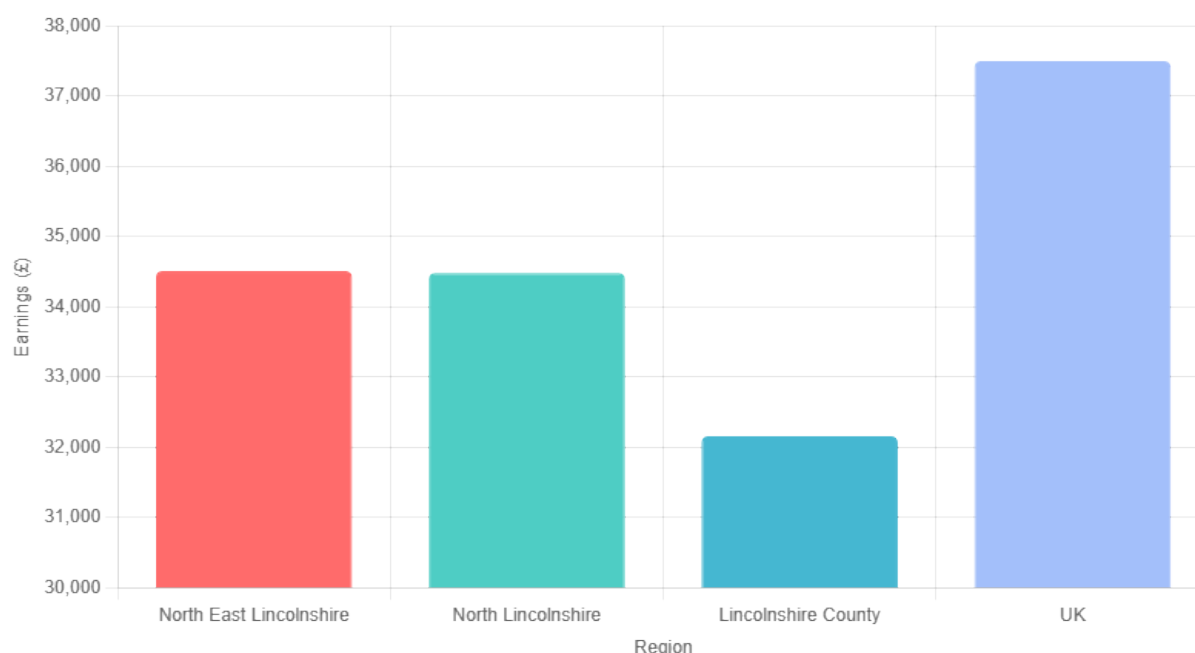
- **Lincolnshire:** Stable at 0.77, indicating limited job growth, with a foundation for improvement.
- **North Lincolnshire:** Highest at 0.85 (peaked at 0.88 in 2021), close to the UK average, providing a positive example.
- **North East Lincolnshire:** Rose from 0.73 in 2011 to 0.83 in 2021 but fell to 0.79 in 2022, showing a challenge with recent stability.
- **Comparison with Benchmarks:** Hull and East Yorkshire is 0.80, York and North Yorkshire is 0.92, East Midlands is 0.81, Yorkshire and The Humber is 0.82, and the UK is 0.86, offering a mix of challenges and benchmarks.

## 1.6 Workplace Earnings

Earnings grew by 4.5% annually from 2019 to 2024, narrowing the gap with the UK from 13% in 2019 to 12% in 2024, a positive trend. Estimated earnings in 2024 were:

- **North East Lincolnshire:** £34,509 (6.4% annual growth), showing steady progress with room to align with national levels.
- **North Lincolnshire:** £34,480 (3.6% annual growth), indicating a moderate increase with potential for further gains.
- **Lincolnshire:** £32,158, the lowest, presenting a challenge but also an opportunity for wage improvement.
- **Comparison with Benchmarks:** Hull and East Yorkshire had slower growth (4.0%), slightly above Greater Lincolnshire, York and North Yorkshire had higher earnings

with similar growth, East Midlands had comparable growth, and the UK was approximately £37,500 with 4.3% growth, providing a balanced perspective.



### 1.6.3 NEET Analysis for Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire

NEETs are a key focus for the Get Britain Working Programme. Data is limited at a meaningful level of granularity due to their small numbers and the risk of disclosure, posing a challenge in detailed analysis. Nevertheless, young individuals in this position face significant challenges in the labour market, and available data at upper tier authority level provides a foundation for understanding. The NEET analysis highlights youth disengagement across the area.

**Table 2: NEET Overview by Local Authority**

Local Authority	Total Cohort (16-17)	Total NEETs	Total NEET + NK	NEET + NK Proportion
Lincolnshire	17,688	371	1,256	7.1
North East Lincolnshire	4017	277	289	7.2
North Lincolnshire	4276	77	491	11.5

Another useful dataset for assessing challenges facing the youth cohort in relation to economic inactivity is the Youth Opportunity Index, which provides a relative measure of education and employment opportunities for young people across England's local and combined authorities.

The score for each area reflects its performance compared with the best-performing area; the higher the score, the better the performance. The Youth Opportunity Index brings together data on educational achievement at age 16 (Key Stage 4), attainment of Level 3 by age 19, access to higher education, take-up of apprenticeships, employment rates, a measure of the quality of work (net underemployment), and the number of 16–17-year-olds not in education, employment or training (NEET).

The map and table below show the position of the Combined Authority local authority geographies:

- Lincolnshire – 47
- North East Lincolnshire – 33
- North Lincolnshire – 48

This ranking indicates a challenge in youth opportunities.

## Overall Score

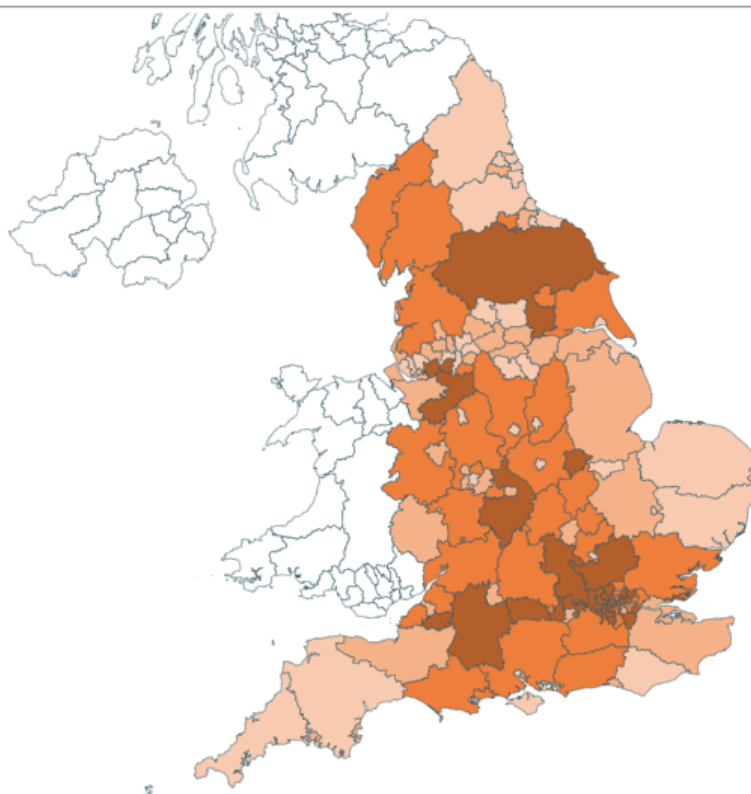
Quartile Values

23 to 47

47 to 54

54 to 61

61 to 76



### 1.7 Previous Reports/Analysis

This synthesis summarises employability documents—from skills reports to youth evaluations—through the GLW lens. These documents, spanning 2018-2023, reveal persistent barriers like skills shortages, rural isolation, and NEET vulnerabilities, offering evidence-based foundations for the plan's forward-looking actions. A detailed breakdown of the reports is set out at Appendix

The GLW plan's labour market analysis section echoes themes from the Sector Skills Report (March 2019), which engaged nearly 500 organisations to **highlight shortages in technical expertise, digital literacy, and soft skills across manufacturing, agri-food, and health sectors. Greater Lincolnshire's dispersed, rural-coastal economy—90% landmass rural, with coastal towns facing seasonal unemployment and flood risks—amplifies these issues.** The plan's definitions of 'rural' (sparsely populated, limiting access) and 'coastal' (high unemployment, low GVA) align with the report's findings on an ageing workforce and recruitment challenges due to geography. **Similarly, the Greater Lincolnshire LEP Skills Priority Statement (April 2021) identifies strengths in**

**decarbonisation and defence but needs in higher-level qualifications and apprenticeships.** Post-COVID, it notes 39% hard-to-fill vacancies, exacerbated by labour gaps—insights that **bolster GLW's emphasis on job density (fewer opportunities per working-age resident) and location quotients showing over-reliance on a few key sectors such as tourism and agriculture.**

Economic inactivity, defined in GLW as individuals not seeking work due to illness, family care, or other factors, draws heavily from evaluations like the MOVE Final Evaluation Report (2023). MOVE supported 1,219 economically inactive beneficiaries with holistic interventions, achieving 29% employment outcomes and £3.48 social return per £1 invested, despite COVID disruptions shifting demographics towards unemployed males. **Barriers such as long-term health issues (49%), jobless households (56%), and basic skills deficits (35%) mirror GLW's intergenerational 'access' challenges, where information deficits in deprived areas hinder potential. The Adult Literacy in Greater Lincolnshire report (2021) further illuminates this, revealing 48.6% of working-age adults at NVQ level 2 or below, with barriers like isolation impacting wellbeing and productivity. Through GLW's lens, these underscore the need for integrated health-skills support,** as per the national white paper's £240 million investment, to address inactivity rates higher than national averages.

Youth-focused documents provide critical insights for GLW's NEET and SEND priorities. The What Works reports (September 2018) on encouraging aspiration among 18-24 NEETs detail the Career Net project's successes: **group-based programmes building confidence, employability skills, and employer encounters** via Gatsby Benchmarks. With 43% lacking paid work experience, recommendations like 'starting from the dream' in IAG and 'top-up' progression align with GLW's aim to reduce NEET rates through tailored support. The Talent Match Evaluation (July 2020) reinforces this, evaluating support for over 25,000 NEETs with **personalised mentoring yielding £2-£3 ROI per £1, reduced NEET rates, and improved mental health.** In Greater Lincolnshire's context, adaptations for agri-food opportunities highlight partnerships with LEPs, essential for GLW's systemic changes. SEND definitions in GLW, covering 0-25s with needs like autism, link to these, urging EHC plan integration to prevent long-term inactivity.

These documents chart a long-term path of interventions and policy development which underpin the background context for the Get Lincolnshire Work Plan. Annex A lists all providers which are straightforwardly visible. The LSIP overview (2025) promotes transparency via online annexes on employer surveys, mirroring the Sector Skills Report's CRM-driven feedback. **Systemic changes in GLW—joining up skills, health, and employment—can draw from MOVE's pilots in digital skills and financial inclusion, addressing post-pandemic gaps.**

Priority actions in this plan, such as maximising national initiatives and workforce development, benefit from actionable lessons arising from this history of employability activity. The Skills Priority Statement's timelines (e.g., apprenticeship strategy by May 2021) inform GLW's 12–24-month focus, per guidance. Recommendations include embedding literacy support (from 2021 report) into numeracy programmes and scaling NEET interventions like Career Net for SEND groups.

In conclusion, these employability documents provide a robust evidence base for GLW, transforming past challenges into strategic opportunities. By synthesising skills shortages, NEET successes, and literacy barriers with national reforms, the plan positions Greater Lincolnshire—its £30bn economy and 1.1 million population—for inclusive growth.

## 1.8 Key Outcome Areas

*The key outcome areas for the Get Britain Working Programme are set out in the table in Annex F along with the more granular local indicators we propose to monitor. A detailed interactive dashboard has been prepared for these indicators, operating at local authority and neighbourhood (msoa level) a screen shot of the dashboard is set out below:*



*Whilst taking a place-based approach to interpreting the distribution of worklessness challenges clarifies the relative intensity of its distribution, it is important to recognise that we need to deliver a universal support strategy for individuals based on their needs rather than their simply their location.*

A drawing together of insights from the data analysis and stakeholder interviews suggests the following priorities for key groups within the focus of the plan.

**Disabled People and People with Health Conditions:** These groups are central to the plan, given high Work Capability Assessment (WCA) rates and health-related inactivity, including musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions and mental health issues. Stakeholder interviews highlight long waiting times for people with mental health support needs as a barrier.

**Disadvantaged Young People and Older People:** Disadvantaged youth, including NEETs, face skills mismatches, low qualifications and inter-generational experience of low aspirations. Older people, often in rural/coastal areas with low jobs density, encounter age-related health barriers and seasonal job insecurity.

**People with Caring Responsibilities (Including Parents and Lone Parents):** Carers, particularly parents and lone parents, are deterred by low earnings (£33,716 median, 12% below UK) and inflexible jobs, exacerbating child poverty in areas with high female employment gaps.



**People Facing Multiple Disadvantages:** This group, including homeless individuals, ex-offenders, refugees, and care-experienced people, often overlaps with other barriers in deprived areas.

## **2. Drivers and Causes of Supply and Demand Side Labour Market Issues**

The drivers and causes of labour market issues in Greater Lincolnshire are complex and interlinked, perpetuating cycles of economic inactivity and low participation, as evidenced by the inferred 28.8% inactivity rate and 71.2% employment rate.

This section provides an in-depth analysis of supply-side drivers health conditions, skills gaps, caring responsibilities, transport barriers, intergenerational worklessness, and benefit claiming challenges and demand-side drivers seasonal employment, economic contraction, skills mismatches, and low pay and job quality. It examines how these drivers manifest across local authorities and Middle-layer Super Output Areas (MSOAs).

### **2.1 Supply-Side Drivers**

Supply-side drivers encompass barriers that limit individuals' ability or willingness to participate in the labour market, rooted in personal, social, and infrastructural constraints. These are particularly (although not exclusively) significant in Greater Lincolnshire's rural and coastal areas, where limited access to services can amplify disengagement, yet this diversity also creates opportunities for tailored support. The following sub-sections explore each driver in detail, supported by data and stakeholder insights. Comparisons with benchmarks highlight both challenges and potential for improvement.

#### **2.1.1 Health Conditions**

Health conditions are a primary driver of economic inactivity in Greater Lincolnshire, significantly contributing to the high economic inactivity rate. This poses a challenge to workforce participation, while also reflecting a need for health-focused support. The Metro-Dynamics Evidence Refresh 2025 notes a 23% gap in GVA per working-age population (£40,741 vs. £53,024 UK average), partly due to health-related issues, offering a chance to boost economic output with better health integration.

Rural areas face compounded isolation due to low jobs density (0.65), limiting opportunities for employment and this isolation highlights a need for accessible services. Stakeholder insights point to long waiting times for mental health services as a challenge for people seeking to return to employment.

Compared to East Midlands (1.4% GVA growth), Greater Lincolnshire's health barriers contribute to a high employment gap for disabled people, presenting a challenge, but also an opportunity to align with national health-employment initiatives. The prevalence of health conditions affects productivity by reducing workforce participation, particularly in rural areas with high WCA rates.

#### **2.1.2 Skills Gaps (Low Qualifications)**

Lack of qualifications are a critical barrier, limiting employability. There are high no-qualifications rates across Greater Lincolnshire. This poses a challenge to workforce readiness, while also indicating a need for enhanced training opportunities.

The Metro-Dynamics report indicates a 2% business decline from 2023 to 2024, partly due to skills mismatches in sectors like engineering, care, and logistics, where low digital literacy and soft skills deficits hinder entry, yet this decline highlights sectors ripe for skill development. Coastal areas have the highest no-qualifications rates, many of these areas rely on seasonal jobs. Stakeholder insights highlight transferable skills deficits in urban areas where intergenerational experiences compound low qualifications, offering a challenge that

could be addressed through community engagement. In places like Boston, workers face language barriers, limiting training access, which is a difficulty but also an opportunity for language support programmes.

Stakeholder interviews identify rural areas lack digital literacy training, further entrenching disengagement among older workers and youth, a barrier that contrasts with the potential to expand training access. The limited approach to tailored training for migrants exacerbates mismatches, as language barriers prevent entry into high-demand sectors like agrifood presenting a challenge but also an opening for integration efforts.

### **2.1.3 Caring Responsibilities**

Caring responsibilities significantly reduce labour market participation, especially in a region with low earnings. This poses a challenge to workforce availability, while also highlighting a need for support structures. The data identified 69% female employment in areas like Boston, indicating a hurdle but also a potential focus for family-friendly policies. Stakeholder insights advocate childcare subsidies, particularly where carers face health issues, offering a positive avenue to address this barrier.

### **2.1.4 Transport Barriers**

Transport barriers, which involve a lack of access to adequate public transport, significantly impede participation, particularly in rural Lincolnshire County, where jobs density is low (0.77). This poses a challenge to mobility, while also suggesting a need for improved infrastructure. The NEET Analysis notes high NEET+NK rates due to tracking challenges, exacerbated by poor infrastructure in some areas. Low jobs density and high mental health prevalence compound isolation, limiting opportunities for young and disabled individuals. Rural transport challenges also affect access to training providers, limiting uptake of programmes by people living in areas without regular public transport, which is a challenge but also an opportunity to expand educational reach.

### **2.1.5 Intergenerational Experience of Worklessness**

Intergenerational experiences drive disengagement, particularly for SEND and care-leavers. This poses a challenge to youth engagement, while also indicating a need for long-term support. Stakeholder insights note intergenerational issues in SEND youth, intersecting with housing instability in places like Lincoln, which is a hurdle but also a focus for stability initiatives. Low TUNDRA scores (reflecting limited HE participation) in coastal show limited labour market mobility. Intergenerational issues also contribute to low trust in institutions, as seen in areas like Gainsborough, hindering engagement with support services.

### **2.1.6 Benefit Claiming Challenges**

Stakeholder analysis Benefit issues deter participation, particularly among disabled and low-income groups has indicated there is a potential with high WCA rates reflecting the 28.8% inactivity rate. This is a challenge to participation in workforce incentives, while whilst also suggesting a need for policy reassurance. Additionally, it has highlighted Stakeholder analysis highlights benefit reform issues, as fears linked to losing money in neighbourhoods reduce incentives, indicating a hurdle that could reduce participation but also an opportunity for clearer communication. As part of this Get Lincolnshire Working Plan, we aim to develop a support offer aligned with *the Pathways to Work: Reforming Benefits and Support to Get Britain Working* Green Paper, ensuring residents who can realise the benefits of work are supported to do so.

This driver intersects with poor health and low earnings, creating barriers in rural areas with poor transport. Compared to York and North Yorkshire, where the potential for higher earnings incentivise participation, Greater Lincolnshire's relatively low wage economy presents a challenge in terms of incentives to work, yet it also offers a foundation for reform to encourage engagement. It is worth noting however that relative living costs in the two areas may mean that the gap between earnings is not as pronounced as may be assumed.

## **2.2 Demand-Side Drivers**

Demand-side drivers relate to the availability and quality of jobs, shaped by Greater Lincolnshire's economic structure and market conditions. The Greater Lincolnshire Economic and Labour Market Report 2025 notes a 3% GVA contraction from 2021 to 2023 and a 2% business decline from 2023 to 2024, highlighting structural weaknesses in terms of a higher proportion of lower paid jobs and lower GVA generating sectors such as tourism, retail and agriculture, while low pay and skills mismatches deter participation.

The following sub-sections explore each driver, supported by local area data and stakeholder insights.

### **2.2.1 Seasonal Employment**

Seasonal employment, prevalent in coastal areas, undermines job security, contributing to economic inactivity. This poses a challenge to stable employment, while also indicating a reliance on tourism that can be built upon. The Metro-Dynamics report notes a 3.3% business decline in North East Lincolnshire, where tourism dominates, highlighting a difficulty but also a sector with growth potential. Low jobs density exacerbates reliance on hospitality, where low TUNDRA shows a lack of labour market mobility. Stakeholder insights highlight job insecurity in coastal areas, reducing incentives for carers and low-skilled workers. Compared to Hull and East Yorkshire (0.80 jobs density), Greater Lincolnshire's more seasonal economy limits participation, a difficulty that offers a foundation for economic diversification. This driver intersects with skills gaps, as low qualifications in coastal areas hinder transitions to stable sectors, presenting both a barrier and a potential focus area.

### **2.2.2 Economic Contraction**

Economic contraction, marked by a 3% GVA decline from 2021 to 2023 and a 2% business decline from 2023 to 2024, limits job creation. This poses a challenge to economic expansion, while also reflecting a base from which to recover. Compared to York and North Yorkshire's 27% economic growth since 2010, Greater Lincolnshire's contraction challenges opportunities, particularly in rural areas with low jobs density (0.77 in Lincolnshire County). Economic contraction amplifies supply-side barriers like health and skills gaps, as job losses reduce opportunities for disabled and low-skilled workers, which is a difficulty that contrasts with potential for sector resilience.

### **2.2.3 Skills Mismatches**

Skills mismatches in high-demand sectors like engineering, care, and logistics persist, with vacancies unfilled due to low qualifications. This poses a challenge to workforce alignment, while also indicating a need for skill development in key areas. Greater Lincolnshire's mismatches contribute to the 23% GVA gap, a challenge that reflects potential for training to fill high-productivity roles. The mismatch issue intersects with supply-side skills gaps, creating cycles where vacancies remain unfilled, presenting a difficulty but also a focus for youth and low-skilled worker engagement.

### **2.2.4 Low Earnings and Job Quality**

Low earnings significantly reduce participation incentives, particularly in Lincolnshire County. This poses a challenge to workforce motivation, while also suggesting a need for wage improvement. Many neighbourhoods face low pay, intersecting with health barriers. Stakeholder insights highlight job insecurity in hospitality-heavy areas, where low-quality jobs deter carers and health-affected individuals, which is a difficulty that contrasts with potential for sector enhancement. Compared to UK earnings (£37,500), Greater Lincolnshire's low pay contributes to the 28.8% inactivity rate, a challenge that offers a foundation for addressing wage disparities. This driver amplifies supply-side barriers like caring responsibilities, as low wages fail to justify childcare costs, presenting both a barrier and a chance for policy support.

### **2.3 Interconnected Impacts and Broader Context**

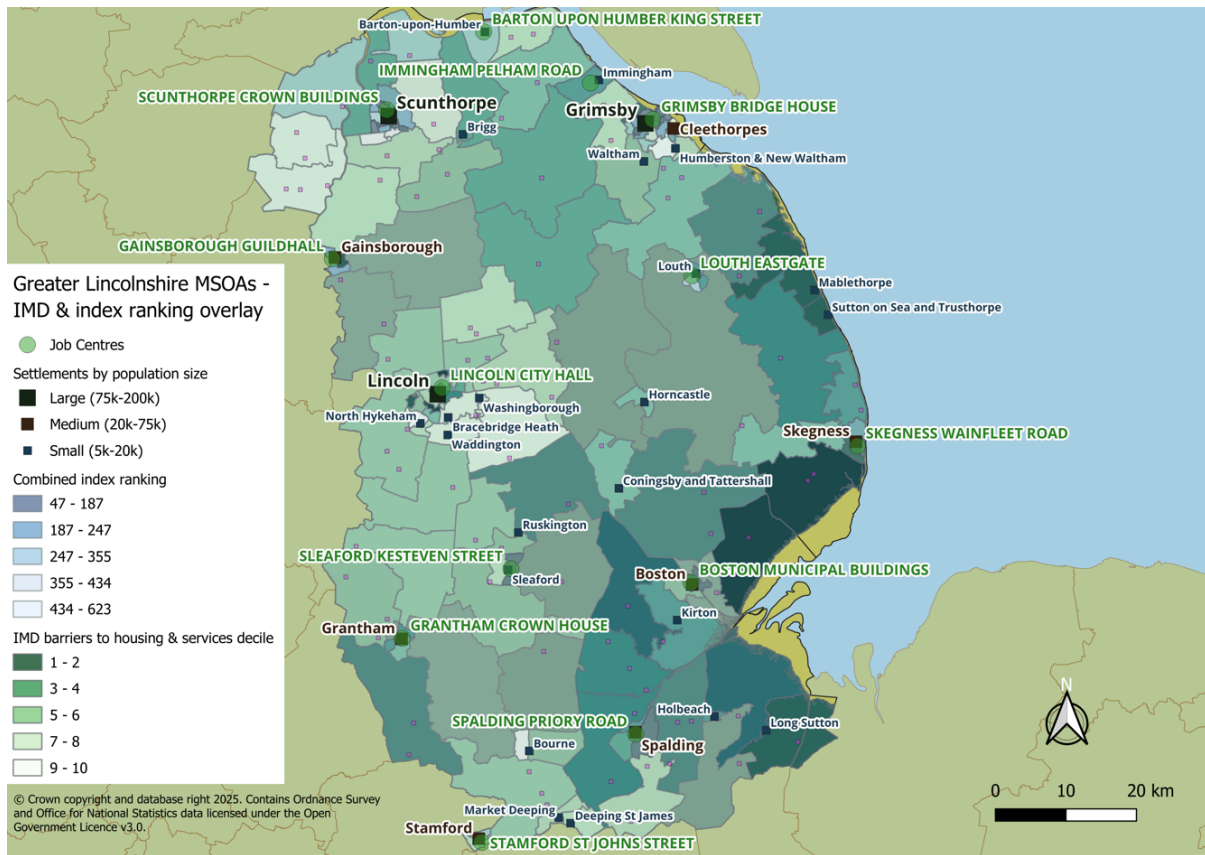
The interplay between supply-side and demand-side drivers creates a challenging environment of labour market issues, as noted by stakeholders, particularly in coastal and rural areas. This poses a difficulty in achieving balanced growth, while also reflecting a complex system with potential for integrated solutions.

### **2.4 Wider Overview Informed by Stakeholder Interviews**

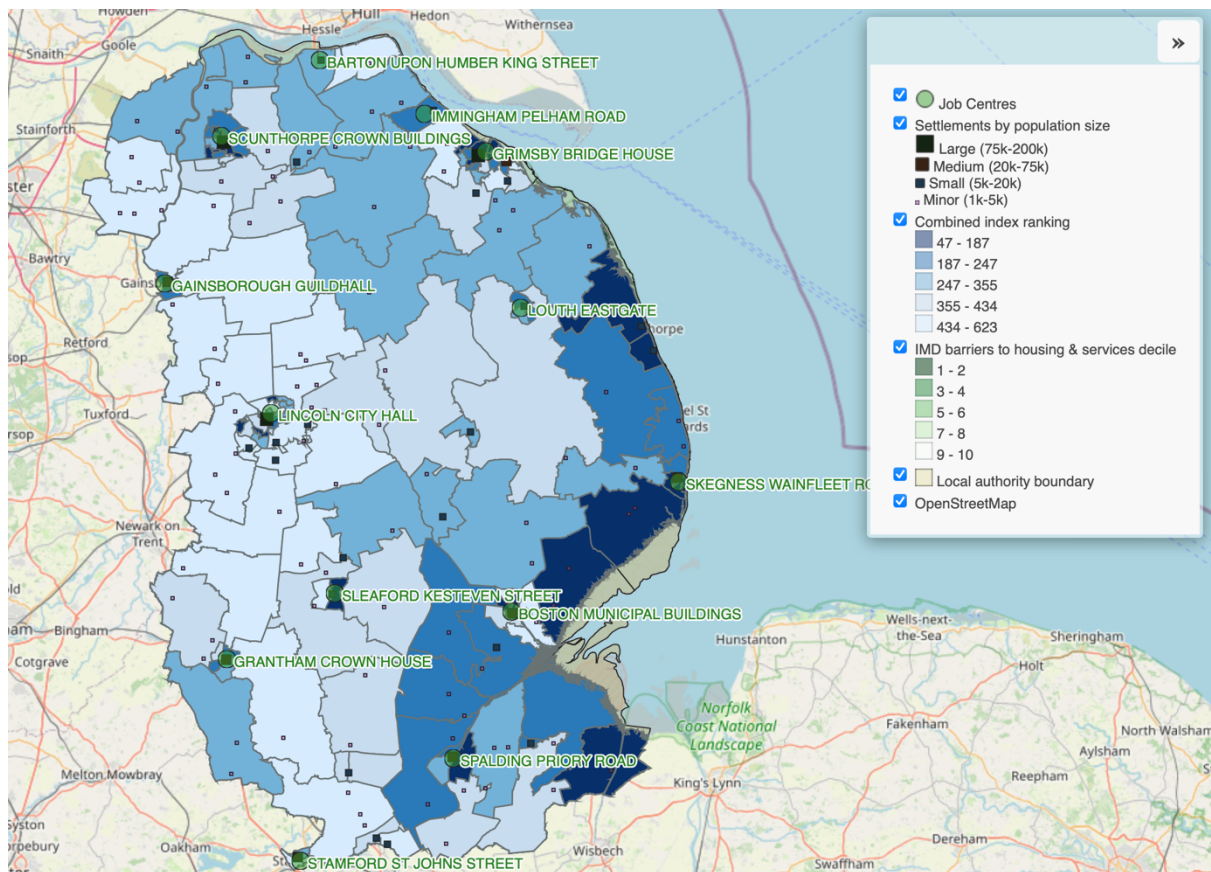
Stakeholders from a wide range of organisations with a direct interest in the development of the Get Lincolnshire Working Plan and their insights are summarised below and in more detail in Annex E.

### **2.5 Mapping of Key Themes**

The map below overlays the location of job centres against the backdrop of the relative levels of worklessness according to our specific index. It shows that northern coastal strip and elements of inland East Lindsey (around Horncastle for example) have significant challenges and are distant from a key job centre support hub. There is a distributed model of outreach which accompanies the direct Job Centre support which needs to be taken account of when considering this map.



The following map shows the format of an interactive map which provides more information on each MSOA and can be accessed [here](#). Individual labelled maps which further expand on the information displayed are included as an Appendix.



### 3. Current System and Offer

***The Get Britain Working White Paper acknowledges that support across the country (for example by councils, the NHS, the voluntary sector, colleges, training providers and housing associations) is often fragmented and difficult to navigate.***

Despite the presence of over 120 organisations involved in some way with residents (Annex A), the high economic inactivity rate and 71.2% employment rate highlight significant ongoing challenges.

This section leverages DWP-provided data sources, cluster analysis, and insights from stakeholder interviews to map existing mechanisms, identify duplication and gaps, and outline citizen journeys. It examines Jobcentre Plus (JCP) / Jobs and Careers Service programmes, education and training initiatives, charity and voluntary sector support, and health services, addressing challenges like high NEET rates, low qualifications and health barriers (9.3% WCA in East Lindsey).

Strengths include diverse provider offerings, while gaps encompass rural provision, mental health support, migrant integration, and employer engagement.

#### 3.1 Existing Support Mechanisms

Greater Lincolnshire's labour market support system includes DWP-funded programmes, vocational training, community-based services, and health interventions, as detailed in Annex A. However, fragmentation leads to duplication, such as multiple employability programmes in urban areas like Lincoln and Grimsby, and gaps in rural and coastal areas.

##### 3.1.1 Jobcentre Plus / Jobs and Careers Service Programmes

JCP, transitioning to the Jobs and Careers Service as outlined in the Get Britain Working White Paper, delivers critical DWP-funded programmes, including the Restart Programme, Work and Health Programme (WHP), Workwell, and Connect to Work, targeting long-term unemployed individuals, those with health conditions, carers, youth, and disadvantaged groups like ex-offenders and migrants. Additional JCP services include:

- **Additional Work Coach Support:** One-to-one support for individuals with health conditions or disabilities and for those customers aged 50+. but underutilised in rural MSOAs.
- **Disability Employment Advisor:** Specialist advisors for employment support. primarily urban-focused.
- **Youth Employability Coach:** Targets young claimants with complex needs, e.g., SEND youth.
- **Vulnerable Customer Load:** Assists vulnerable individuals but limited in low-trust areas.
- **Prison Work Coaches:** Supports ex-offenders though data gaps hinder targeting.
- **Flexible Support Fund:** Tailors local support. but underused in coastal areas like. Stakeholder feedback from Think Employment notes duplication in urban employability programmes, diluting resources, and calls for better integration with the Jobs and Careers Service to address these gaps.

##### 3.1.2 Education and Training Initiatives

Education providers, including Lincoln College, Grantham College, Grimsby Institute, Stamford College, John Leggett College, North Lindsey College, Franklin College and



Boston College (Annex A), offer vocational qualifications, apprenticeships targeting high-demand sectors like care, engineering, agri-food, and logistics. Lincoln College's Care College and Lincolnshire Institute of Technology (LloT) address care and engineering shortages, but low FE participation in coastal reflects transport barriers and low TUNDRA scores (quintile 1).

Compared to York and North Yorkshire (7% employment growth), Greater Lincolnshire's high no-qualifications rate in (31.6% for example in East Lindsey) hampers progress toward the 80% employment target.

### 3.1.3 Charity and Voluntary Sector Support

Charities fill critical gaps for disadvantaged groups. The VCS offers mental health and disability placements across multiple districts, but stakeholder insights note uneven rural outreach. VCS bodies provide employability and wellbeing programmes, but fragile funding structures and complex subcontracting chains, as noted by stakeholders, dilute resources, particularly for ICB and DWP contracts

### 3.1.4 Health Services

Integrated Care Boards (ICBs), through contracted provision, deliver MSK and mental health support, critical for addressing the high disability employment gap across the area. However, long waiting hinder progress. Stakeholders call for health-employment hubs to integrate support, aligning with the guidance's emphasis on health leadership to tackle inactivity due to ill-health. The Greater Lincolnshire Evidence Refresh notes that health barriers exacerbate the 23% GVA gap, particularly in coastal areas.

## 3.2 Gaps and Citizen Journey

The citizen journey in Greater Lincolnshire features fragmented services leading to disengagement among inactive cohorts (e.g., those with health conditions, carers, SEND youth, migrants, ex-offenders), as identified through stakeholder interviews with core strategic partners. Complex benefit navigation and low awareness in low-trust areas deter participation. DWP's cluster analysis categorises Greater Lincolnshire as a rural-coastal labour market, where transport, health, and skills barriers exacerbate disengagement. Key gaps include:

- **Mental Health Support:** Long waiting times limiting participation.
- **Rural Outreach:** Limited provider access due to transport barriers and low jobs density.
- **Migrant Integration:** Language barriers in Boston and other migrant worker hubs excluding migrant-heavy populations.
- **Flexible Jobs:** Shortages, deterring carers, particularly women with childcare responsibilities.
- **Ex-Offender Support:** Data gaps hinder targeting, limiting programme effectiveness.
- **Duplication:** Overlapping employability programmes dilute resources and confuse job seekers.

## 3.3 System Strengths and Opportunities

Despite gaps, the system has strengths, including the diversity of over 120 providers offering vocational training, disability-focused programmes and health support. DWP-funded initiatives like Restart and Workwell reach urban areas, while charities support refugees. The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) offers potential for investment in transport and skills.

### **3.4 Addressing Gaps Through Integration**

Addressing gaps requires a coordinated approach and ongoing engagement with JCP, ICBs, employers, and community organisations.

### **3.5 Core Partner Strategies and Interventions**

Local authorities, including Lincolnshire County Council, North East Lincolnshire Council (NELC), and North Lincolnshire Council, alongside the NHS Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board (ICB) and DWP, already have several actions in train to address the challenges set out in the preceding sections of this plan. These are detailed below.

#### **3.5.1 Skills Development and Employability**

The Adult Skills and Family Learning (ASFL) Service Plan 2024/25 is a key feature of Lincolnshire County Council's efforts to tackle worklessness. The plan leverages the Adult Skills Fund (ASF), which replaced the Adult Education Budget in 2023, to deliver structured learning opportunities. The ASF aims to equip adults with skills for meaningful employment or further learning, while tailored provisions support wider outcomes such as improved health, parental engagement in children's education, and community development. The service commissions delivery partners through the ASFL Open Framework, optimising resources to address market failures where further education (FE) provision is limited. This approach ensures accessibility, particularly in sparsely populated areas with poor transport links, by offering face-to-face courses in health and well-being to combat social isolation.

The Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) and associated action plans prioritise aligning education with employer needs, using case studies to demonstrate successful partnerships with colleges and community organisations. These initiatives create clear progression routes, from foundational skills to vocational training, addressing the region's economic structure and labour market demands.

#### **3.5.2 Targeted Interventions in North East and North Lincolnshire**

Each of the first-tier local authorities has a Skills Plan and relevant details are set out below

North East Lincolnshire Council's (NELC) projects, include employability support programmes like the National Careers Service and Care Experienced employment initiatives. These target young people, including those not in education, employment, or training (NEETs), and individuals with health barriers, offering tailored training and job placement support.

North Lincolnshire Council's initiatives include the Youth Hub, now in its fifth year, which supports 16-24-year-olds on Universal Credit with one-on-one guidance for job applications and skills assessments. The Jobs Team provides a one-stop shop for CV writing, interview preparation, and access to apprenticeships, holding weekly jobs clubs in community venues to reach the most disadvantaged. The North Lincolnshire Skills and Employability Plan 2023-2028 sets priorities to build great careers, enable business growth through skills investment, and promote a culture of lifelong learning, addressing health-related barriers and raising aspirations.

#### **3.5.3 Community and Partnership Engagement**

All local authorities emphasise partnership working to maximise impact. The ASFL Service collaborates with voluntary groups, FE providers, and the Mayoral Combined Authority to deliver accessible courses with clear outcomes, such as employment or volunteering.

The NELC VCSE Alliance and North Lincolnshire's Community VISION facilitate connections with voluntary and community sector (VCS) players, offering support for health, inclusion, and employment. Projects like the Equality Practice's tailored programmes for women and NEETs, and WithYou's supported employment for substance misuse recovery, exemplify how these partnerships address specific disadvantaged groups.

#### **3.5.4 Integrated Care Board's Role in Addressing Health-Related Worklessness**

The NHS Lincolnshire Joint Forward Plan 2023-2028 integrates health and employment by prioritising five key areas: better partnerships with residents, living well and staying well, improving access, delivering integrated community care, and supporting a happy and valued workforce. Health-related worklessness is a critical issue, with NELC data indicating 45% of economic inactivity stems from long-term conditions, and North Lincolnshire noting similar trends in its Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2026. The ICB's focus on community care and workforce well-being aligns with local authority efforts to enable residents to overcome health barriers to employment.

The NHS Lincolnshire Joint Forward Plan 2023-2028 includes a health needs assessment and insights from Lincolnshire Healthwatch, identifying gaps in access and support for vulnerable populations. By fostering integrated services, the ICB supports initiatives like the ASFL's health and well-being courses, which are delivered face-to-face to enhance social connections and confidence. This holistic approach ensures that health interventions complement skills development, addressing the lower life expectancy in deprived wards and supporting long-term employability.

#### **3.5.6 DWP's Contribution through Jobcentre Plus.**

The DWP's Jobcentre Plus support, enhances local and ICB efforts by providing practical employment assistance. Services include help to prepare for work through training, work placements, and job trialling schemes; job search support with CV building and interview advice; and guidance for starting a business or progressing in a career. Dedicated work coaches offer regular meetings to discuss career goals and tailor support, which is particularly valuable for disadvantaged groups such as the long-term unemployed, those with health conditions, and carers.

Jobcentre Plus also signpost to colleges and training providers, aligning with local skills initiatives to upskill the workforce. This support complements the ASFL's focus on foundational learning and the Youth Hub's career guidance, creating a seamless pathway from training to employment. Social media updates and job hours events further connect residents with local opportunities, reinforcing the collaborative framework established by local authorities and the ICB.

A pilot programme, the New Jobs and Careers Service Pathfinder in West Yorkshire, is currently testing more personalised, skills-focused support, and we will be looking to learn from its findings to inform future developments as part of the Get Lincolnshire Working Plan.

#### **3.5.7 Interconnected Approaches and Synergies**

The synthesis of these efforts reveals efforts to address worklessness in Greater Lincolnshire all pointing in the same direction. Local authorities target skills gaps and employment barriers through tailored education and community engagement, leveraging data from the Greater Lincolnshire Local Skills Report and local employment dynamics to prioritise interventions. The ICB addresses health impediments, a key driver of economic

inactivity, by integrating care with employment support, while Jobcentre Plus provides direct assistance to bridge the gap between training and work.

### **3.5.8 Data-Driven Decision Making**

Data plays a central role in linking these initiatives. The ASFL Service uses market intelligence and research to commission provision, while NELC and North Lincolnshire Councils rely on disaggregated data from Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and labour market briefings and commissioned research to identify trends like health-related inactivity and low qualification rates. This evidence base informs the LSIP, Skills and Employability Plans, and health strategies, ensuring resources are directed where they are most needed.

### **3.5.9 Addressing Disadvantaged Groups**

The focus on disadvantaged groups—NEETs, carers, those with health conditions, and residents in deprived areas—unites these efforts. The ASFL's family learning breaks inter-generational cycles, NELC's Care Experienced programmes target vulnerable youth, and the ICB's community care supports health recovery. Jobcentre Plus's work coaches provide personalised support, with all parties seeking to ensure that no group is left behind.

### **3.5.10 Challenges and Opportunities**

Despite these synergies, challenges persist. Rural sparsity complicates service delivery, with low population density and poor transport links requiring innovative solutions like mobile learning units or online platforms—though health courses remain face-to-face to maintain social benefits. Data accuracy can be skewed by small sample sizes, necessitating robust local intelligence. Long-term funding settlements, rather than short-term projects, are advocated to sustain progress, particularly in responding to economic shocks and the Industrial Strategy.

Opportunities lie in scaling successful interventions, such as the Youth Hub and Jobs Team, and enhancing collaboration across government departments. The upcoming NELC skills survey, will provide fresh insights to refine strategies. Flexible learning options for young people and community-based job support, as highlighted in both councils' submissions, could further address mainstream provision gaps.

## Section 4 Roles and Functions

### 4.1 Levers Applied by Different Stakeholders

Stakeholders deploy financial, operational, regulatory, and relational levers to tackle labour market challenges, tailored to regional disparities like urban deprivation in North East Lincolnshire and rural isolation in parts of Lincolnshire County. DWP's cluster analysis categorises Greater Lincolnshire as a rural-coastal labour market, guiding targeted interventions.

Levers are split out between organisations which principally focus on **commissioning** (although not exclusively in terms of the local authorities) and **delivery**:

#### Commissioning Focus

##### 4.1.1. Local Authorities (Lincolnshire County Council, North Lincolnshire Council, North East Lincolnshire Council)

GLCCA and local authorities have significant levers in planning, funding, and infrastructure. Operationally, they can lead data integration, using MSOA indicators (e.g., WCA, UC claims, social trust) to target hotspots. For instance, transport support can address rural barriers), enabling access for carers and disabled individuals.

##### 4.1.2. DWP / Jobcentre Plus (Jobs and Careers Service)

As the primary employment support provider, DWP/JCP leverages programmes like Restart, Work and Health Programme (WHP), Workwell, and Connect to Work, targeting long-term unemployed individuals, those with health conditions, and disadvantaged groups (e.g., ex-offenders, migrants). The transition to Jobs and Careers Service, as outlined in the Get Britain Working White Paper, enhances integration with education and health services. For health-affected individuals, JCP can expand Individual Placement and Support (IPS) models with ICBs, reducing WCA reliance in local areas. Operationally, mobile units can enhance outreach in rural areas, increasing engagement among older people and carers. Financial levers include the Flexible Support Fund to tailor support for SEND youth and migrant workers. By more strongly aligning with LSIPs, JCP can bridge skills gaps and improve job quality, addressing low pay (£33,716 median) and supporting the 80% employment target. Stakeholder insights from stakeholders highlight the need to streamline urban programme duplication.

##### 4.1.3. Health Services

ICBs apply clinical levers to address MSK and mental health barriers. Financially, partnering with DWP for Workwell or reallocating NHS funds supports health-employment hubs, reducing waiting times.

##### 4.1.4. Education and Training Providers

To address youth disengagement, providers can scale specialist curricula. Operationally, partnerships with employers create flexible pathways for carers, incorporating online modules to overcome transport barriers in coastal areas.

##### 4.1.5. Charities and Voluntary Sector

Charities excel in building trust in low-social-trust areas like Gainsborough. For homeless and care-leavers individuals, Hospitality training and refugee support address multiple disadvantages. Financially, UKSPF or DWP grants can expand programmes for priority groups. Operationally, co-delivery with JCP in urban areas enhances engagement. Stakeholder insights suggest peer-led models to overcome intergenerational experiences of worklessness in some areas, aligning with the guidance's focus on disadvantaged groups.

#### 4.1.6. Employers and Business Networks

Employers control many demand-side levers, offering wage incentives to address low pay and flexible roles for carers. Technical employment legislation support and incentives for employers to operate on a flexible basis provides scope to maximise their engagement and enhance employment opportunities for those furthest from the labour market.

### 4.2 How Stakeholders Can Collaborate to Increase Engagement, Align Provision, and Improve Outcomes

To increase engagement, stakeholders can co-design outreach campaigns using DWP webinars, leveraging charity relational levers in low-trust areas. Mobile hubs combining JCP, ICBs, and education providers can reach isolated carers and older people, with digital tools tracking participation rates via shared dashboards.

Local authorities can facilitate multi-agency forums, harmonising resources. For multiple disadvantages, integrated case management ensures holistic support, addressing health, skills, and housing. Improving outcomes requires shared KPIs. Regular joint reviews, using DWP data (UC claims) and ICB metrics (fit notes), refine interventions. Employer involvement ensures inclusive job placements. Pilot programmes in hotspots test models, scaling successes via evidence-sharing, aligning with the guidance's Trailblazers model.

### 4.3 Mechanisms for Collective Working

Robust mechanisms can support collective working,

1. **Data-Sharing Protocols:** A shared dashboard, using relevant data (e.g., UC claims, NEET rates) and MSOA indicators can be used to measure progress.
2. **Funding Frameworks:** ASF and UKSPF (and any successor - details awaited), will support health-employment hubs, programme for speakers of other languages, and transport subsidies. Funding will align with the new Local Skills Improvement Plan when it is published and Local Growth Plans, ensuring coherence and avoiding duplication. There is a need for longer term planning and alignment of funding streams to build resilience into the planning and delivery of interventions.
3. **Evaluation and Accountability Systems:** A formative evaluation framework can track outcomes (e.g., reduced NEETs), with quarterly reviews to refine interventions.

**Table 3: Stakeholder Levers and Responsibilities**

Stakeholder	Levers	Responsibilities
Local Authorities	Financial (ASF, UKSPF), regulatory (zoning), operational (data integration)	Lead forums, fund transport subsidies
DWP/JCP	Financial (Flexible Support Fund), operational (mobile units)	Expand IPS, streamline programmes

Education Providers	Educational (e.g. Skills Bootcamps), relational (employer partnerships)	Scale specialist curricula, flexible pathways
Charities	Relational (trust-building), operational (co-delivery)	Support SEND, ex-offenders, migrants
ICBs	Clinical (health hubs), financial (NHS funds)	Reduce waiting times, integrate with JCP
Employers	Demand-side (wages, flexible roles), financial (grants)	Create apprenticeships, inclusive hiring

## 5 Priority Actions and Longer-Term Goals

This section outlines the priority actions and longer-term goals for the Get Lincolnshire Working (GLW) plan, building on the labour market analysis, drivers of inactivity, and current system assessment detailed earlier. It acknowledges that skills development is only one aspect of the broader picture required for thriving local economies in Greater Lincolnshire. Economic growth depends on a holistic approach that integrates health improvements, business innovation, infrastructure enhancements, and community resilience, particularly in rural and coastal areas where geographical isolation exacerbates challenges.

Skills alone cannot address systemic issues like low productivity (GVA per working-age population at £40,741, 23% below the UK average) or economic contraction (3% GVA decline from 2021 to 2023). Instead, this plan positions skills as a foundational enabler within a wider ecosystem that includes demand-side interventions, such as business support and job creation, to drive sustainable employment growth toward the national 80% target from the current 71.2%. Tackling health inequalities as part of the whole system approach is also key - there is a need to tackle poor health and poor work.

The priorities are ambitious yet achievable, focusing on collective action among partners over the next 12-24 months, with longer-term goals extending to 2030. They align closely with key local frameworks, including the 2022 Greater Lincolnshire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), which emphasizes skills alignment in priority sectors like agri-food, advanced manufacturing, health and care, clean energy, digital technologies, engineering, and the visitor economy.

Monitoring and reporting will occur through the Core Partnership using outcome indicators aligned with Get Britain Working metrics. These include: employment rate (target: increase from 71.2% to 75% in 12-24 months); health-related economic inactivity rate (reduce by 5%); disability employment rate gap (narrow from 49% to 45%); proportion of 18-25 year olds NEET (reduce from average 3.36% to 2.5%); employment amongst parents 18-66 years (increase by 3%); employment rate gap between lone parents and parents in a couple (reduce by 4%); percentage of coupled families where at least one parent is out of work (reduce by 3%); and female employment rate (increase from 69% in areas like Boston 004 to 72%). Local variations will be tracked using DWP, ICB, and local authority data. Progress will be reviewed via an online dashboard, with annual reviews adjusting actions based on stakeholder feedback.

### 5.1 Key Design Principles

The GLW plan is grounded in national Get Britain Working policy priorities—reducing economic inactivity through integrated support for health, skills, youth, parents, and disadvantaged groups—refined for Greater Lincolnshire's distinctive context. This context, drawn from the GLW report, includes a rural-coastal divide, high NEET rates among SEND youth, seasonal employment vulnerabilities and health barriers. Principles emphasise inclusivity, partnership, and evidence-based action:

1. **Place-Based Customisation:** Interventions must address geographical disparities, prioritising rural and coastal challenges. For instance, transport support will target isolated MSOAs, where rural isolation intersects with low jobs density. This aligns with the Industrial Strategy's focus on rural productivity and the LSIP's call for accessible training in agri-food and tourism sectors. In North Lincolnshire some of the areas with the highest levels of economic inactivity and unemployment are in Scunthorpe and the market towns. The priority should not only be on rural and coastal areas but where the data shows there is a high level of need for intervention.



2. **Employer-Led Innovation:** Business involvement is central, drawing on the LSIP's employer-led model to co-design actions. This includes enhancing engagement with local businesses to address skills mismatches in engineering and logistics, as seen in Immingham. The principle commits to celebrating provider diversity while fostering coherence.
3. **Integrated Health and Employment:** Health is a core theme, integrating ICB strategies to tackle MSK and mental health barriers. Actions will build on DWP Trailblazers like WorkWell, adapting lessons for local contexts, such as health-employment hubs in high-WCA areas). We will prioritise early intervention and health inequalities and prevention programmes. Working also with employers around to keep people in good health and in employment.
4. **Inclusive and Equitable Access - Addressing Health Inequalities and recognising the role poverty plays:** Prioritising disadvantaged groups, with a focus on customer voice through journey mapping. This ensures actions support intergenerational trauma and benefits fears, as highlighted in stakeholder interviews (e.g., from Virtual School and Linkage).
5. **Data-Driven Decision-Making:** Emphasising data sharing to inform actions, aligning with national metrics while developing local indicators for workforce planning.
6. **Sustainability and Scalability:** Actions start small (pilots in 12 months) and scale (rollout in 24 months),

These principles ensure actions are holistic, recognising skills as part of broader economic thriving, including business diversification to reverse the 2% business decline.

## **5.2 Priority Actions for the Next 12-24 Months**

Over the next 12-24 months we will collaborate on the following priority actions:

1. Move quickly into phase 2 of the plan (see 7.1 p52)
2. Launch the Connect to Work programme to integrate health and job support, taking account of DWP Trailblazer learning and workwell vanguards. This will involve consolidation of the health and employment partnerships that underpin the operational dynamics of the current Get Lincolnshire Working group.
3. Roll out of the Widening Access Demonstrators in Grimsby and in Skegness, Mablethorpe and Boston, linking working opportunities in the NHS to support those furthest from the labour market in accessing new job opportunities
4. Explore funding for interventions for 15–25-year-olds, targeting combined proportions of SEND, care leavers and high-NEET levels. Filter this approach through the lens of learning from the Youth Guarantee and consider in the context of the work of the Greater Lincolnshire Careers Hub.
5. Work with Government to support the roll-out of new foundation apprenticeships
6. Work with Business Lincolnshire and other business support bodies to enhance engagement with businesses focusing on local skills needs.
7. Explore opportunities for innovative trials based on current good practice such as the North Lincolnshire's Skills Pledge (employer commitments to skills development) and the North Lincolnshire Youth Hub model across Greater Lincolnshire.
8. Improving Access – consider piloting innovative actions around transport and isolation in rural/coastal MSOAs and more urban environments where participation amongst economically inactive is particularly low.
9. Work with JCP to look at dynamic integration of their community outreach work with the other core elements of the employability offer in Greater Lincolnshire. Use the learning from this experience to develop ideas to feed into national pilots and provide

a distinctive rural and coastal “landing place” for national employability pilots, trailblazers and other initiatives.

10. Develop a comprehensive overview of current training support and provision for the client group and develop and implement a focused programme of ongoing alignment to reduce duplication and boost innovation.
11. Establish a series of task and finish groups 1) to fine tune the key data and monitoring definitions associated with the plan, particularly in relation to health indicators in the North and North East Lincolnshire area (see section 6.4) and 2) to progress other aspects of its implementation set out from 1-9 above.

### **5.3 Longer-Term Goals (to 2030)**

Building on short-term actions, longer-term goals aim for systemic transformation:

1. Achieve 80% Employment Rate: By 2030, increase to 80% through scaled interventions, reducing inactivity to 20% via diversified economies (e.g., renewables growth per Industrial Strategy).
2. Close Productivity and Earnings Gaps: Narrow GVA gap to 10% below UK and earnings to 5% below, via LSIP-aligned upskilling in high-productivity sectors.
3. Zero NEET for SEND Youth: Eliminate SEND NEET disparities through sustained specialist support.
4. Integrated System-Wide Offer: Evolve to a single navigation platform, ensuring coherent journeys.
5. Resilient Rural-Coastal Economies: Boost jobs density to 0.85, addressing seasonal vulnerabilities.

Monitoring will use annual benchmarks against Get Britain Working indicators.

### **5.4 Data Development, Analysis, and Sharing**

A dedicated Data Sub-Group, comprising DWP, ICBs, local authorities, and analysts, will form within 3 months to enhance data capabilities. Key themes:

- DWP Data Flexibility: Explore granular data at MSOA level (e.g., WCA, UC claims) for real-time tracking, beyond current aggregates.
- ICB Indicators: Develop work-related health metrics (e.g., MSK/mental health fit notes as % of workforce), available at neighbourhood level, addressing current Lincolnshire-only availability.
- Workforce Development: Capture planning data via employer surveys, integrating with LSIP.

### **5.5 Provider Mapping and Coherent Offer**

Map the 120 plus providers (Annex A) within 6 months, celebrating diversity while addressing fragility (e.g., funding dependencies) and supply chain issues including consideration of subcontracting risks.

### **5.6 Alignment with Wider Initiatives and Governance Evolution**

Actions align with UKSPF (transport investments), devolution deals (skills funding), and ICB strategies (health integration). The Core Partnership will evolve within 3 months, with task and finish groups where needed, for example NEET, health or data themes. The Core Partnership will oversee implementation.



## 6. Governance Arrangements for Oversight

### 6.1 Governance Structures

The Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA), as the accountable body, will oversee the Get Lincolnshire Working plan, leveraging its strategic role to coordinate across the three local authorities (Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire) and align with devolution priorities, such as skills funding and economic growth.

A Core Partnership was established in June 2025 and by the time this plan is published will have met at least nine times to collaborate and agree the content.

Table 4: Governance

<b>Core Partnership</b>
Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) - Accountable Body
Department for Work and Pensions//Job Centre Plus (DWP/JCP)
Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB)
Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board (ICB)
Lincolnshire County Council (LCC)
North East Lincolnshire Council (NELC)
North Lincolnshire Council (NLC)

There are two phases to the Get Lincolnshire Working Partnership and Plan. The publication of this report completes Phase 1.

#### Phase 1 (2025)

- Create the Core Partnership
- Develop evidence base for economic inactivity and unemployment
- Map current provision and support
- Agree and measure a set of Greater Lincolnshire indicators
- Create the Get Lincolnshire Working action plan
- Agree monitoring and governance

#### Phase 2 (2026/27)

- Extend the Core Partnership (e.g. to include representatives of district councils, colleges, training providers, the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector VCSE, and employers)
- Extend the evidence base to include wider labour market (sustainable employment, earnings etc)
- Extend and update initial mapping, seeking a longer-term solution to fragmentation
- Review Greater Lincolnshire indicators and performance
- Update action plan
- Agree ongoing monitoring and future phases (if any)

### 6.2 Pre-Development Engagement

**Stakeholder Interviews:** semi-structured interviews were held (Annex 2) with local and district authorities, education providers, charities, employers, health services and community groups. These have helped to build the context for the development of the plan.

### 6.3 Post-Development Engagement

The Core Partnership will consider facilitating ongoing involvement through:

- **Task and Finish Groups:** Each group (Health, Skills, Business, Community) meets to refine actions.
- **Annual Stakeholder Forums:** Forums will engage providers (Annex A), and employers. Forums will gather feedback on actions like health-employment hubs and training programmes.
- **Community Outreach Campaigns:** peer-led and peer to peer campaigns in low-trust and other thematic areas, targeting SEND youth and ex-offenders for example. Digital platforms, including social media and community events, will boost awareness.
- **Employer Engagement:** Regular roundtables with employers led by the core partnership will co-design job quality initiatives and wider employer focused priorities (e.g., apprenticeships in energy).

## 6.4 Monitoring Progression

The Get Britain Working initiative, and the local plans seek to monitor agreed set of outcome indicators. The Core Partnership will oversee a **Formative Evaluation Framework**, supported by a shared dashboard updated regularly. It will use the indicators set out at section 1.8 to understand in detail progress in relation to the following targets, which we believe chart an appropriate incremental progress towards the aim of the plan:

- **Employment Rate:** Increase from 71.2% to 75% in 12–24 months, tracked via ONS data.
- **Health-Related Inactivity:** Reduce by 5%, monitoring WCA rates (e.g., 9.3% in East Lindsey).
- **Disability Employment Gap:** Narrow from 49% to 45%, using ICB metrics.
- **NEET Rates:** Reduce from 3.36% average to 2.5%, focusing on SEND youth (11.04% NEET in Lincolnshire).
- **Parental Employment:** Increase by 3%, with lone parent vs. couple gap reduced by 4%, and coupled families with one parent out of work reduced by 3%.

## 6.5 Update Periods and Events for Plans

The guidance requires regular plan updates tied to specific periods or events. The GLW plan will be updated:

- **Six Monthly,** reviewing short-term actions (e.g., health-employment hubs) against metrics like WCA reductions.
- **Annually:** coinciding with ONS data releases (e.g., employment rates) and stakeholder forums, ensuring updates reflect the latest labour market trends (e.g., 3% GVA contraction, 2021–2023).
- **Event-Driven:** In response to DWP Trailblazer evaluations (e.g. economic inactivity and youth trailblazers and WorkWell vanguard outcomes), Local Growth Plan, new devolution deals (e.g., skills funding expansions), or economic shocks (e.g., further business decline).

## 6.6 Alignment with Future Initiatives and Strategies

The Core Partnership is well placed to align the plan against the following events/new plans, and will agree timings for updates when publications times are confirmed:

- **Greater Lincolnshire Local Growth Plan:** GLCCA is expected to publish the Government approved Local Growth Plan in spring 2026.
- **Greater Lincolnshire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP):** a brand new LSIP is expected to be published in summer 2026. GLCCA will have a role in the strategic direction and production of the plan that will detail employer demand for skills and training.
- **ICB Strategies:** Integrating health-employment hubs to address MSK (39.5%) and mental health (34.4%) barriers, ensuring co-terminus boundaries.
- **Further Devolution:** Incorporating new skills or economic funding to enhance actions

## 6.7 Addressing Gaps and Ensuring Compliance

This governance framework addresses identified gaps:

- **JCP Integration:** The Jobs and Careers Service is embedded in board and sub-group activities, streamlining programmes like Restart.
- **Cohort Coverage:** Actions target all inactive cohorts (health-affected, carers, SEND youth, migrants, ex-offenders), with stakeholder input ensuring inclusivity.
- **Duplication:** Quarterly reviews address programme overlaps
- **Metrics:** Aligns with Get Britain Working indicators (employment, earnings, job quality, parental gaps).
- **Engagement:** Ongoing forums and outreach ensure ICB and employer involvement, with resident feedback shaping iterations.

## 6.8 Conclusion

The governance arrangements, stakeholder engagement, and iteration processes will ensure robust oversight of the GLW plan, aligning with LSIP, Local Growth Plans, and ICB strategies.

## Annex A – Support Organisations and Accredited Education and Training Providers

<b>Provider/Programme</b>	<b>Programmes Offered</b>	<b>Location Details</b>	<b>District Council Area</b>
Lincolnshire County Council	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Adult and Family Learning, Multiply Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing Courses	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
3CATs	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Introduction to payroll, Statutory payroll compliance, Sage Payroll M1/M2, Introduction to bookkeeping software, Sage 50 accounts M1/M2	1A The Old Malthouse / Distance Learning, NG31 7BG; Grantham	South Kesteven
Abbey Access Training	Wellbeing Programmes (Non Accredited), Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications, Adult Skills English and Maths, Employability and Skills (Non Accredited)	Lincoln	Lincoln City
Active Lincolnshire	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Jobs and Careers Hub, Skills Programmes	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Agandi	Wellbeing Programmes (Non Accredited), Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications, Adult Skills English and Maths, Level 3 Free Courses For Jobs, Employability and Skills (Non Accredited)	Boston, Lincoln, Sleaford, South Holland	Boston Borough, Lincoln City, North Kesteven, South Holland

Alford Hub	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Alford	East Lindsey
Avant Skills Academy	Apprenticeships in various occupational sectors including hair professional, business administration	Grimsby	North East Lincolnshire
Bearded Fishermen	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Beyond Money	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Bishop Grosseteste University	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services, Greater Lincolnshire Social Economy Academy (GLSEA) Training	Lincoln	Lincoln City
Boston College	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Wellbeing Programmes (Non Accredited), Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications, Agrifood Skills Training. Lincolnshire Institute of Technology (LIoT)	Boston, South Holland, Stamford	Boston Borough, South Holland, South Kesteven
Boxes of Hope	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
British Society of Pharmacy Sleep Services	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
CAP Job Club (Alive Church/Acts Trust)	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited)	Lincoln	Lincoln City
Care Plus Group	Employability Services (DWP-funded): Supporting healthcare sector,	Grimsby & Cleethorpes	North East Lincolnshire



	including refugees and care-experienced individuals		
Carers First	Employability Support, Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
CATCH	Apprenticeships and skills training in process, energy, engineering, renewables	Stallingborough, near Immingham	North East Lincolnshire
Children's Links	Wellbeing Programmes (Non Accredited), Improved Outcomes for Families (Non Accredited), Education Services	Mablethorpe, Skegness, The Wolds	East Lindsey
Christians Against Poverty	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Debt help, job clubs, money courses	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Citizens Advice Lincoln & Lindsey	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Lincoln, Lindsey	Lincoln City, East Lindsey
Citizens Advice Mid Lincs	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited)	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Citizens Advice North Lincolnshire	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Social Prescribing	Scunthorpe	North Lincolnshire
CLIP (ACIS)	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications, Wellbeing Programmes	Gainsborough, Market Rasen, Mablethorpe	West Lindsey, East Lindsey
Community Lab Initiative CIC	Employability Support (for Ukrainian refugees), Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Community VISION	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited)	North Lincolnshire	North Lincolnshire

Creating Positive Opportunity	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Functional Skills English and Maths, educational courses for young and older adults	Grimsby & Cleethorpes	North East Lincolnshire
Creative Rebel	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
CrosbyONE	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Community Training	Scunthorpe	North Lincolnshire
Curo Lincs	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Darkside Rising CIC	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Development Plus	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Step in the Right Direction, Bridging the Gap, Better Together, Project Compass	Lincoln	Lincoln City
DNCG (DN Colleges Group) / North Lindsey College	Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications, Adult Skills English and Maths, Level 3 Free Courses For Jobs. Lincolnshire Institute of Technology (LIoT)	Scunthorpe	North Lincolnshire
East Lincolnshire Down's Syndrome Family Support Group	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
East Midlands Cyber Resilience Centre	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
EcoCoach PE Solutions	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Engineering UTC Northern Lincolnshire	Vocational Education: Engineering, Renewables, Health Sciences, Social Care (13–19 year olds)	Scunthorpe	North Lincolnshire

ESH Consultancy	Improved Outcomes for Families (Non Accredited)	Boston, Bourne and Deepings, Gainsborough, Grantham, Lincoln, Mablethorpe, Market Rasen, Skegness, Sleaford, South Holland, Stamford	Multiple districts (Boston Borough, South Kesteven, West Lindsey, Lincoln City, East Lindsey, North Kesteven, South Holland)
Every-One (Cares)	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Family Action	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Fareshare Midlands	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Father Craft	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Feathers Teens	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Fenside Community Centre	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
First College (East Lindsey ITEC)	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications, Adult Skills English and Maths, Level 3 Free Courses For Jobs, Apprenticeships (Business Administration, Customer Service, Management, Hospitality, Early Years),	Louth, Skegness, The Wolds, Virtual Classroom	East Lindsey, Virtual Classroom
Franklin College	A-Levels, Vocational Courses, Adult Education,	Chelmsford Avenue, Grimsby, DN34 5BY	North East Lincolnshire

	Functional Skills Maths and English		
Gainsborough Adventure Play Area	Education Services	Gainsborough	West Lindsey
GamCare	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
GoGro CIC	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Good Things Foundation	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Grantham College	Building Better Futures (BBF) Programme, Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications, Lincolnshire Institute of Technology (LIoT) Courses, Agrifood Skills Training	Grantham	South Kesteven
Green Synergy	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Grimsby Institute (TEC Partnership)	Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications, Higher Education, Apprenticeships	Grimsby, Skegness (Skegness TEC)	North East Lincolnshire, East Lindsey
HETA Humberside Engineering Training Association	Apprenticeships, Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications, Electrical, Mechanical, Welding	Based in Hull, with sites in Grimsby and Scunthorpe	North and North East Lincolnshire
Hillholt Wood	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
HW Lincs	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited)	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
I Miss	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Immersive Tales	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified

Inspired Equine Assisted Learning	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited)	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Involving Lincs	VCS Infrastructure Support: Training and capacity building for VCS organizations	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
JAQS Trust - Relief In Need	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Job Centre Plus	Employability Support, Family Support, Schools Support, Flexible Support Fund	Greater Lincolnshire	All GL authorities
John Leggott College	A-Levels, Vocational Courses, Adult Education, Leggott Academy (14–16 year olds)	Scunthorpe	North Lincolnshire
Learning4Life	Adult education and learning, careers service	Grimsby & Cleethorpes	North East Lincolnshire
Lincoln City Foundation	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Lincoln	Lincoln City
Lincoln College	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Wellbeing Programmes (Non Accredited), Education Services, Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications, Apprenticeships, Lincolnshire Institute of Technology (LIoT) Courses, Care College, Policing College, Air and Space Institute, Lincoln School of Food and Hospitality, Agrifood Skills Training	Lincoln, Sleaford, Gainsborough, Newark	Lincoln City, North Kesteven, West Lindsey

Lincolnshire Action Trust	Employability Support (DWP-funded): LAT CFO3 (for sentenced prisoners, post-custodial individuals, community order individuals)	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Lincolnshire Community & Voluntary Service (LCVS)	VCS Infrastructure Support: Training and capacity building for VCS organizations, Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Lincolnshire Community Foundation	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust	Adult Skills English and Maths	Lincoln, Scunthorpe, Grimsby & Cleethorpes	Lincoln City, North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire
Lincolnshire County Council (LCC)	DWP-funded: Connect to Work, Local Supported Employment (LSE) for learning disabilities/autism	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Lincolnshire Coop	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Lincolnshire Training Hub	Excellence Pathway (Health, Care, Dentistry)	Skegness, Mablethorpe, Greater Lincolnshire	East Lindsey, Not specified
Lincolnshire Traveller Initiative	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Lincs Digital	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Digital support sessions on tablets, smartphones, laptops	Horncastle, serves East Lindsey, Boston, South Holland	East Lindsey
Linkage Community Trust	Specialist FE: Vocational and Non-Accredited Courses for learners with	Lincoln, Grimsby, Skegness, Spilsby	Lincoln City, North East Lincolnshire, East Lindsey

	disabilities (16–25), Employability Support (potential DWP subcontractor)		
LIVES	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
LocalMotion	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
LVET	VCS Infrastructure Support: Training and capacity building for voluntary organizations in health, care and wellbeing	Lincoln	Lincoln City
Magna Vitae	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Metheringham Swimming Pool	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Mind North Lincolnshire	Wellbeing Programmes (Non Accredited), Mental Health Support	Scunthorpe	North Lincolnshire
Mint Lane CIC	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited)	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Modal Training Ltd	ASF, Transport Management Level 3	Immingham	North East Lincolnshire
Momentum Recruitment Limited	Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications, Level 3 Free Courses For Jobs	Lincoln	Lincoln City
Nacro	Study Programmes (16–24 year olds with learning disabilities)	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
National Careers Service (NELC)	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Careershift (UKSPF- funded, supporting training and employment)	Grimsby & Cleethorpes	North East Lincolnshire

National Citizenship Project	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Industry taster sessions (engineering, offshore wind, seafood)	Grimsby & Cleethorpes	North East Lincolnshire
National Energy Action	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Natural England	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Navigo	Employability Support (DWP-funded): IPS Supported Employment for mental health conditions	Grimsby & Cleethorpes	North East Lincolnshire
North Lincolnshire Adult Education & Community Learning	Adult Skills English and Maths, Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications, Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Functional Skills, Health & Wellbeing Crafts, Preparing to Work in Schools, Autism Awareness	North Lincolnshire	North Lincolnshire
NWCH	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Oasis	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Hospitality training via social enterprise coffee shop (potential DWP subcontractor)	Scunthorpe, Oasis Community Space	North Lincolnshire
Old Wood Organic CIC	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
On Yer Bike	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
One You Lincolnshire	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Ongo	Employability and Skills (Non	North Lincolnshire	North Lincolnshire



	Accredited): Skills and personal development training		
Orangebox	Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications	Grantham, Lincoln, Scunthorpe, Grimsby & Cleethorpes	South Kesteven, Lincoln City, North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire
Outwood CIC	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Pelican Trust	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Wellbeing Programmes (Non Accredited): Training and work placements for mental health/learning difficulties/disabilities (potential DWP subcontractor)	Boston, Gainsborough, Lincoln, Market Rasen, Sleaford, South Holland, Stamford	Boston Borough, West Lindsey, Lincoln City, North Kesteven, South Holland, South Kesteven
Place 2 Be	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
Reed in Partnership	DWP-funded: Restart Programme	North and North East Lincolnshire	North East Lincolnshire,
Riseholme College	Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications: Agrifood, Land-Based, Green Skills	Riseholme, Lincoln	West Lindsey
Riverside Access Group (ACIS)	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Wellbeing Programmes (Non Accredited), Improved Outcomes for Families (Non Accredited), Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications	Gainsborough, Lincoln, Stamford	West Lindsey, Lincoln City, South Kesteven
Salvation Army	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Wellbeing	Lincoln	Lincoln City

	Programmes, Community projects		
Seagull Recycling	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Wellbeing Programmes (Non Accredited), Improved Outcomes for Families (Non Accredited)	Skegness	East Lindsey
Sector Support North East Lincolnshire	VCS Infrastructure Support: Training and capacity building for VCS organizations	Grimsby & Cleethorpes	North East Lincolnshire
Shine Lincolnshire	Improved Outcomes for Families (Non Accredited), Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Wellbeing Programmes (Non Accredited)	Gainsborough, Skegness, South Holland	West Lindsey, East Lindsey, South Holland
Skills Centre PLUS	Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications, Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Vocational training, bespoke programmes for young people and adults	Berkeley Business Centre, Doncaster Road, Scunthorpe, DN15 7DQ	North Lincolnshire
Soteria Solutions	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Wellbeing Programmes (Non Accredited)	Boston, Bourne and Deepings, Grantham, Lincoln, Skegness, South Holland, Stamford	Boston Borough, South Kesteven, Lincoln City, East Lindsey, South Holland
Stamford College (IEG)	Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications: Adult curriculum for 50+ age group, A-Levels,	Stamford	South Kesteven

	Apprenticeships, Higher Education		
Standguide	DWP-funded: Workwell and Restart contracts	Grimsby & Cleethorpes	North East Lincolnshire
Steadfast Training	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Restart Programme (DWP- funded), Wellbeing Programmes (Non Accredited), Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications Apprenticeship provider	South Holland	South Holland
Study United	Study Programmes: Education through football, BTEC for 16-19 year olds	Scunthorpe	North Lincolnshire
TaylorITEX	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited), Adult Skills English and Maths	Boston, Stamford	Boston Borough, South Kesteven
Teach Vocation	Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications, Level 3 Free Courses For Jobs	Lincoln, Scunthorpe, Virtual Classroom	Lincoln City, North Lincolnshire, Virtual Classroom
The Arc Westcliff	Wellbeing Programmes (Non Accredited): Wellbeing hub	Scunthorpe	North Lincolnshire
The Community Growers CIC	Education Services	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
The Equality Practice	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Tailored support for women, NEETs, and men's confidence-building	Grimsby & Cleethorpes	North East Lincolnshire
The Forge Project	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Support for homeless and roofless	Scunthorpe	North Lincolnshire
The Network	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): One-to-	Lincoln	Lincoln City

	One Support for 16–29 year olds		
Think Employment	Adult Skills English and Maths, Level 3 Free Courses For Jobs: Certificate in Cyber Security Practices, Certificate in Understanding Autism	North East Lincolnshire	North East Lincolnshire
Tonic Health	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Health and Wellbeing Training	Spilsby, Skegness	East Lindsey
University of Lincoln	Employability Support, Education Services, Lincolnshire Institute of Technology (LIoT) Courses, Agrifood Skills Training	Lincoln	Lincoln City
Voluntary Centre Services	VCS Infrastructure Support: Training and capacity building for VCS organizations, Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Moving On (UKSPF-funded, North Kesteven)	North Kesteven	North Kesteven
Walking with the Wounded (WWTW)	Employability Support (DWP-funded): IPS Employment Support for veterans	Greater Lincolnshire	Not specified
WEA	Adult Skills Vocational Qualifications, Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Adult learning courses in arts, crafts, history, ESOL	Scunthorpe	Not specified
Westcliff Community Drop-In Centre	Employability and Skills (Non Accredited): Ways to	Scunthorpe	North Lincolnshire

	Wellness, community learning		
We Are With You	Employability Support (DWP- funded): IPS Supported Employment for substance misuse recovery	Grimsby & Cleethorpes, Scunthorpe	North East Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire

## **Annex B**

**In addition to the information provided by the Core Partnership members (GLCCA, LCC, NEL, NL, ICBs x 2) and taken from local skills strategies and plans, the following organisations have provided their views about existing support and the barriers to work facing Greater Lincolnshire residents.**

### **Interview List**

1. Tec Partnership
2. Lincoln College
3. West Lindsey District Council
4. South East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership
5. Hull Chamber of Commerce
6. Acis
7. Abbey Access Training
8. Tonic health
9. Centre 4
10. YMCA
11. The Equality Practice Ltd
12. Think Employment Ltd
13. Lincolnshire Co-op
14. East Marsh
15. We are with you
16. LHS
17. Learning for life
18. Public Health NLC
19. Boston College
20. Ongo Communities Ltd
21. First College
22. Stamford College
23. University of Lincoln
24. North Lincolnshire Council's Jobs Team
25. Lincolnshire County Council's Virtual School
26. Grantham College
27. LAT
28. Community Vision
29. Oasis Community Partnership
30. Linkage
31. Steadfast Ltd
32. Lincolnshire County Council's Adult Skills Team
33. DN College Group
34. BGU

## **Annex C Key Policy Insights Linked to Previous Skills and Employability Reports**

## **The LSIP report for Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland**

This document serves as an index or overview of the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) for Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland, compiled by the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB). It lists a series of related reports and annexes focused on skills development, employer needs, and progress tracking in the region. The main components include the full LSIP report, progress updates from June 2025 and June 2026, and supporting annexes such as Annex B (LSIP metrics for 2025), Annex C (accountability statement 2025), Annex D (employer survey 2025), and Annex E (resident's survey 2025).

All documents are accessible online via the FSB website.

The LSIP framework aims to align skills provision with local economic demands, particularly in sectors like agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism, which are vital to Greater Lincolnshire's rural and coastal economy. It highlights the need for collaboration between employers, education providers, and local government to address skills gaps, boost productivity, and support post-pandemic recovery. Key themes include employer engagement through surveys to identify training needs, resident feedback on skills accessibility, and metrics to measure progress against targets such as apprenticeship uptake and qualification levels.

Progress reports track advancements in skills initiatives, potentially covering areas like digital skills, green jobs, and inclusivity for underrepresented groups. The annexes provide data-driven insights: metrics outline quantitative goals (e.g., qualification rates, employment outcomes), accountability statements ensure governance, and surveys capture stakeholder views on barriers like rural isolation or funding shortages.

Overall, this compilation underscores a strategic approach to skills enhancement, fostering economic resilience. It reflects ongoing efforts to adapt to challenges like Brexit's impact on labour supply and the shift towards sustainable industries. By making documents readable online, it promotes stakeholder involvement, aiming for a skilled workforce that meets regional priorities.

## **Sector Skills Report ESF Advisor Programme July 2019**

Published in March 2019, this report summarises findings from the ESF-funded 'Specialist Skills Advisor' project, commissioned by the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and delivered by Bishop Grosseteste University. It draws on engagement with nearly 500 organisations across all sectors to identify skills shortages, gaps, and opportunities, while assessing the local recruitment, employment, and skills infrastructure's responsiveness.

The project involved Specialist Skills Advisors providing tailored support to businesses. Data was collected via a CRM system, analysing employer feedback on workforce needs. Key players include the Greater Lincolnshire LEP (representing business interests), the Employment and Skills Board (shaping support for employers and communities), Bishop Grosseteste University (contract holders), and SkillsReach (a consultancy handling sector-based analysis).

Findings highlight persistent skills shortages in areas like technical expertise, digital literacy, and soft skills such as communication and problem-solving. Sectors like manufacturing, agri-food, and health face recruitment challenges due to an ageing workforce and rural geography. The report notes implications for infrastructure, including better alignment between training providers and business needs, and calls for improved apprenticeships and upskilling programmes.

Opportunities include leveraging growth sectors like renewables and tourism, with recommendations for collaborative initiatives to bridge gaps. It emphasises the value of advisor interventions in fostering business growth and addressing Brexit-related labour issues. Acknowledgements thank employers, providers, and stakeholders for their input.

This summative report consolidates six sector-specific analyses, providing a cross-sectoral view. It advocates for a responsive skills ecosystem to enhance economic competitiveness, with data revealing that many firms struggle with talent retention and development. Overall, it serves as a blueprint for targeted interventions, promoting sustainable employment and productivity in Greater Lincolnshire.

### **Talent Match Final Assessment (National)**

This July 2020 report, from Sheffield Hallam University's Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research, provides a final evaluation of the Talent Match programme. Funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, Talent Match targeted young people aged 18-24 who were not in education, employment, or training (NEET) in deprived areas across England, including Greater Lincolnshire.

The assessment examines the programme's effectiveness in supporting over 25,000 participants through personalised mentoring, skills training, work experience, and employer engagement. It highlights successes in building confidence, employability skills, and pathways to sustainable jobs. Key outcomes include reduced NEET rates, improved mental health, and economic benefits like increased earnings and reduced welfare dependency. The report uses mixed methods: surveys, interviews, and economic modelling to quantify impacts, estimating a social return on investment of £2-£3 per £1 spent.

Challenges noted include barriers like rural isolation, mental health issues, and post-Brexit labour market shifts. In Greater Lincolnshire, the programme adapted to local needs, such as agri-food sector opportunities, through partnerships with LEPs and community organisations. It emphasises youth involvement in design and delivery, fostering ownership and innovation.

Recommendations include scaling up similar initiatives, integrating mental health support, and enhancing employer links for apprenticeships. The evaluation underscores the programme's role in addressing youth unemployment amid economic uncertainty. It concludes that Talent Match demonstrated a holistic, person-centred approach, yielding long-term societal benefits.

### **What Works – Employment Career Progression Amongst Young Adults in Greater Lincolnshire Summary 2109.**



This September 2018 summary report, part of a series commissioned by the Greater Lincolnshire LEP and funded by the European Social Fund and Education and Skills Funding Agency, focuses on encouraging aspiration, employment, and career progression among 18-24 NEET young adults. It distils key recommendations from the 'Career Net' programme, which provided group-based support, employability training, and personalised guidance.

Five core recommendations include: developing an integrated careers curriculum using Gatsby Benchmarks; ensuring multiple employer encounters; recognising the mutual enhancement of experience and confidence through new activities; starting from participants' 'dream' aspirations in IAG; and sustaining programmes like Career Net as a 'second chance'.

Additional suggestions emphasise high-quality employability skills (e.g., CVs, interviews), ongoing adult careers guidance via the National Careers Service, group projects for leadership and teamwork, inspirational employer events, short qualifications for motivation, local labour market awareness (especially in priority sectors like engineering), paid/unpaid work experience, and a 'top-up' programme for sustained progression. It addresses gender and attainment differences in aspiration definitions.

The report highlights the programme's benefits: group dynamics build social skills, while intensive support aids personal growth. It notes 43% of surveyed youth lacked paid work experience and 26% voluntary work, underscoring the need for access. Overall, it positions Career Net as a trigger for change, advocating for inclusive, aspirational support to combat NEET status in Greater Lincolnshire's diverse economy.

This September 2018 What Works full report, commissioned by the Greater Lincolnshire LEP and funded by ESF/ESFA, expands on encouraging aspiration, employment, and career progression for 18-24 NEET young adults. It details the Career Net project, research findings, and lessons.

Contents include acknowledgements, executive summary, project overview, recommendations on 'What Works' and barriers, policy context, research plan (surveys, interviews, Work Star tool), qualitative data, case studies, and appendices. Career Net offered group sessions, employability skills, and support, acting as a 'trigger for change'. Key 'What Works' elements: integrated careers education, employer encounters, experience-building activities, aspiration-led IAG, and programme sustainability. Barriers include poor prior careers advice, lack of work experience (43% none), confidence issues, and unclear aspirations influenced by gender/attainment.

Survey of 18-24s revealed preferences for engineering/manufacturing, with calls for better local intelligence. Interviews and Work Star data show progress in motivation and skills. Case studies (e.g., Cassandra in Gainsborough, Elliott, four plumbers in Lincoln, Robert in Boston, Owen in Louth) illustrate transformations from NEET to employment/apprenticeships.

The report advocates group-based programmes with personalised support, short qualifications, and 'top-up' progression. It emphasises Gatsby Benchmarks and National Careers Service integration. Overall, it provides evidence-based strategies to reduce NEET rates, enhance skills, and align with Greater Lincolnshire's economic needs.

### **Adult Literacy in Greater Lincolnshire 2021**

This 2021 exploratory report by LORIC at Bishop Grosseteste University, funded by Research England's Strategic Priorities Fund, investigates adult literacy in Greater Lincolnshire. It addresses the absence of recent national surveys (last in 2003 for general literacy, 2011 for workplace skills) and aligns with a 2021 HMG white paper emphasising literacy's economic role.

Key questions explore barriers to wellbeing rooted in literacy, their manifestations, impacts, measurement, and regional variations. Data sources include open repositories, prior research, and qualitative interviews with support workers. Findings reveal significant challenges: 48.6% of working-age adults hold NVQ level 2 or below, 14% level 1, and 7.1% none. Barriers include limited education access, inefficient technology use, systemic issues (gender, ethnicity, learning difficulties), EAL challenges, stigma, and low trust. Impacts affect individuals (health, employment, confidence), employers (productivity, recruitment), and society (inequalities, service access).

COVID-19 exacerbated issues, entrenching long-standing problems.

The report identifies manifestations like poor job progression and service navigation difficulties, with rural/spatial differences amplifying isolation. Measurement suggestions include qualification metrics and wellbeing indicators.

Recommendations advocate improved support, targeted programmes for vulnerable groups, and better integration of literacy into skills strategies. It calls for addressing EAL needs and reducing stigma through community initiatives. Overall, it highlights literacy's foundational role in economic inclusion, urging policy action for Greater Lincolnshire's diverse population.

### **Greater Lincolnshire LEP Skills Priority Statement April 2021**

This April 2021 report outlines the Greater Lincolnshire LEP's interim Skills Priority Statement, ahead of a full strategy refresh in autumn 2021. It addresses post-COVID-19 uncertainties, remote working impacts, and challenges like rurality, inequalities, and Brexit.

Introduction highlights the region's size (comparable to Birmingham but 20 times larger), ageing workforce, and ESAP's role in leadership. Labour market analysis tables strengths (growth in decarbonisation, health) and needs (skills shortages, higher-level qualifications, apprenticeships).

Opportunities include 'game changers' like freeports (£2bn ambition, 7,000 jobs), clean growth, and defence (2,500 jobs by 2030), requiring level 4+ skills. Challenges: rural sparsity, lower skills (39% hard-to-fill vacancies), Brexit labour gaps, and lack of employer awareness.

Priorities for the place: maximising national initiatives, literacy/numeracy support, careers information, upskilling for future jobs, digital skills, workforce development, and sector opportunities. Action plan details ESAP-led tasks, timelines (e.g., skills report submission April 2021, strategy refresh June-October 2021), targets (e.g., apprenticeships, careers hubs), and partners.

It emphasises aligning supply/demand across geography, boosting productivity through skills, and inclusive growth. Overall, it positions skills as central to recovery and ambition, urging collaborative action.

## **Greater Lincolnshire MOVE Evaluation Final Report**

This evaluation report assesses the Greater Lincolnshire MOVE (Moving on, Volunteering & Employability) project, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and European Social Fund under the Building Better Opportunities programme. Running from June 2016 to June 2023 with extensions, MOVE provided holistic, flexible support to economically inactive and unemployed individuals furthest from the labour market, aiming to facilitate their journey towards employment.

The evaluation combines formative and summative approaches, covering process (implementation), impact (outcomes for beneficiaries and partnership), and economic (value for money) strands. Annual insights reports informed this final document, spanning three phases: original delivery (2016-2019), first extension (2019-2022), and second extension (2022-2023).

Contextually, MOVE addressed high economic inactivity in Greater Lincolnshire, exacerbated by rural sparsity and an ageing workforce. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted Phases 2 and 3, causing employment dips to 71% in 2020 and shifting demographics towards more unemployed males. Beneficiaries averaged 37 years old, with 4 years out of work; 40% economically inactive, 60% unemployed. Ethnic diversity increased over time, with rising representation from non-British White, Black, and Gypsy-Roma groups. Challenges like jobless households (56%), long-term health issues (49%), and basic skills deficits (35%) were prevalent.

Impacts were significant: 1,219 beneficiaries supported, with 29% entering employment (exceeding 22% target by 85 jobs) and 14% into education/training. Phase 3 saw 33% employment outcomes amid labour market recovery. Journeys emphasised person-centred, tailored support, building confidence and skills. Social Return on Investment analysis yielded £3.48 per £1 invested, valuing intangible gains like improved wellbeing and relationships.

Costs totalled £4,769,350 across phases, aligning with forecasts. Underspends funded pilots: financial inclusion (utilities/cost-of-living courses), digital skills (laptops/training for 40 beneficiaries), and basic/functional skills (Sleaford Learning Hub). These addressed gaps, leveraging external match funding for sustainability.

Systems included APTM CRM for monitoring and Pathway Star for progress tracking. VCS provided admin support, quarterly meetings, and closure checklists,

ensuring compliance. Partnership fostered collaboration, capacity building, and legacy, with VCS treating all 19 partners equally.

Future employability agendas should embed MOVE's learning: partnership models, beneficiary co-design, real-time monitoring, and formative evaluation. Gaps include intensive support for vulnerable groups and in-work progression. Overall, MOVE demonstrated VCS-led consortia's effectiveness in holistic employability, generating £3.48 social value per £1 and transforming lives amid economic challenges.

### **Synthesis of Employability Documents through the Lens of the Get Lincolnshire Working Draft Plan 2025**

The Get Lincolnshire Working (GLW) Plan 2025 sets an 80% employment rate target. Aligned with the Guidance for Developing Local Get Britain Working Plans (April 2025), the GLW plan addresses Greater Lincolnshire's low 71% employment rate by focusing on local labour market challenges, partnerships, and systemic changes. This synthesis examines summaries of historical employability documents—from skills reports to youth evaluations—through the GLW lens, demonstrating how past insights inform the plan's seven core elements. These documents, spanning 2018-2023, reveal persistent barriers like skills shortages, rural isolation, and NEET vulnerabilities, offering evidence-based foundations for the plan's forward-looking actions.

The GLW plan's labour market analysis section echoes themes from the Sector Skills Report (March 2019), which engaged nearly 500 organisations to **highlight shortages in technical expertise, digital literacy, and soft skills across manufacturing, agri-food, and health sectors. Greater Lincolnshire's dispersed, rural-coastal economy—90% landmass rural, with coastal towns like Skegness facing seasonal unemployment and flood risks—amplifies these issues.** The plan's definitions of 'rural' (sparsely populated, limiting access) and 'coastal' (high unemployment, low GVA) align with the report's findings on an ageing workforce and recruitment challenges due to geography.

**Similarly, the Greater Lincolnshire LEP Skills Priority Statement (April 2021) identifies strengths in decarbonisation and defence but needs in higher-level qualifications and apprenticeships.** Post-COVID, it notes 39% hard-to-fill vacancies, exacerbated by labour gaps—insights that **bolster GLW's emphasis on job density (fewer opportunities per working-age resident) and location quotients showing over-reliance on a few key sectors such as tourism and agriculture.** This emphasises upskilling in 'game changer' environments like freeports (aiming for 7,000 jobs by 2030), using metrics from LSIP reports (2025-2026) for progress tracking.

Economic inactivity, defined in GLW as individuals not seeking work due to illness, family care, or other factors, draws heavily from evaluations like the MOVE Final Evaluation Report (2023). MOVE supported 1,219 economically inactive beneficiaries with holistic interventions, achieving 29% employment outcomes and £3.48 social return per £1 invested, despite COVID disruptions shifting demographics towards unemployed males.

**Barriers such as long-term health issues (49%), jobless households (56%), and basic skills deficits (35%) mirror GLW's intergenerational 'access' challenges, where information deficits in deprived areas hinder potential. The Adult Literacy in Greater Lincolnshire report (2021) further illuminates this, revealing 48.6% of working-age adults at NVQ level 2 or below, with barriers like isolation impacting wellbeing and productivity. Through GLW's lens, these underscore the need for integrated health-skills support,** as per the national white paper's £240 million investment, to address inactivity rates higher than national averages.

Youth-focused documents provide critical insights for GLW's NEET and SEND priorities. The What Works reports (September 2018) on encouraging aspiration among 18-24 NEETs detail the Career Net project's successes: **group-based programmes building confidence, employability skills, and employer encounters** via Gatsby Benchmarks. With 43% lacking paid work experience, recommendations like 'starting from the dream' in IAG and 'top-up' progression align with GLW's aim to reduce NEET rates through tailored support. The Talent Match Evaluation (July 2020) reinforces this, evaluating support for over 25,000 NEETs with **personalised mentoring yielding £2-£3 ROI per £1, reduced NEET rates, and improved mental health.**

In Greater Lincolnshire's context, adaptations for agri-food opportunities highlight partnerships with LEPs, essential for GLW's systemic changes. SEND definitions in GLW, covering 0-25s with needs like autism, link to these, urging EHC plan integration to prevent long-term inactivity.

These documents chart a long-term path of interventions and policy development which underpin the background context for the Get Lincolnshire Work Plan. Annex A lists providers like Boston College (apprenticeships) and YMCA (youth hubs), echoing MOVE's VCS-led consortium model with 19 partners fostering capacity building. The LSIP overview (2025) promotes transparency via online annexes on employer surveys, mirroring the Sector Skills Report's CRM-driven feedback. Interview lists in GLW (e.g., TEC Partnership, University of Lincoln) suggest building on past evaluations for co-design, as in Talent Match's youth involvement.

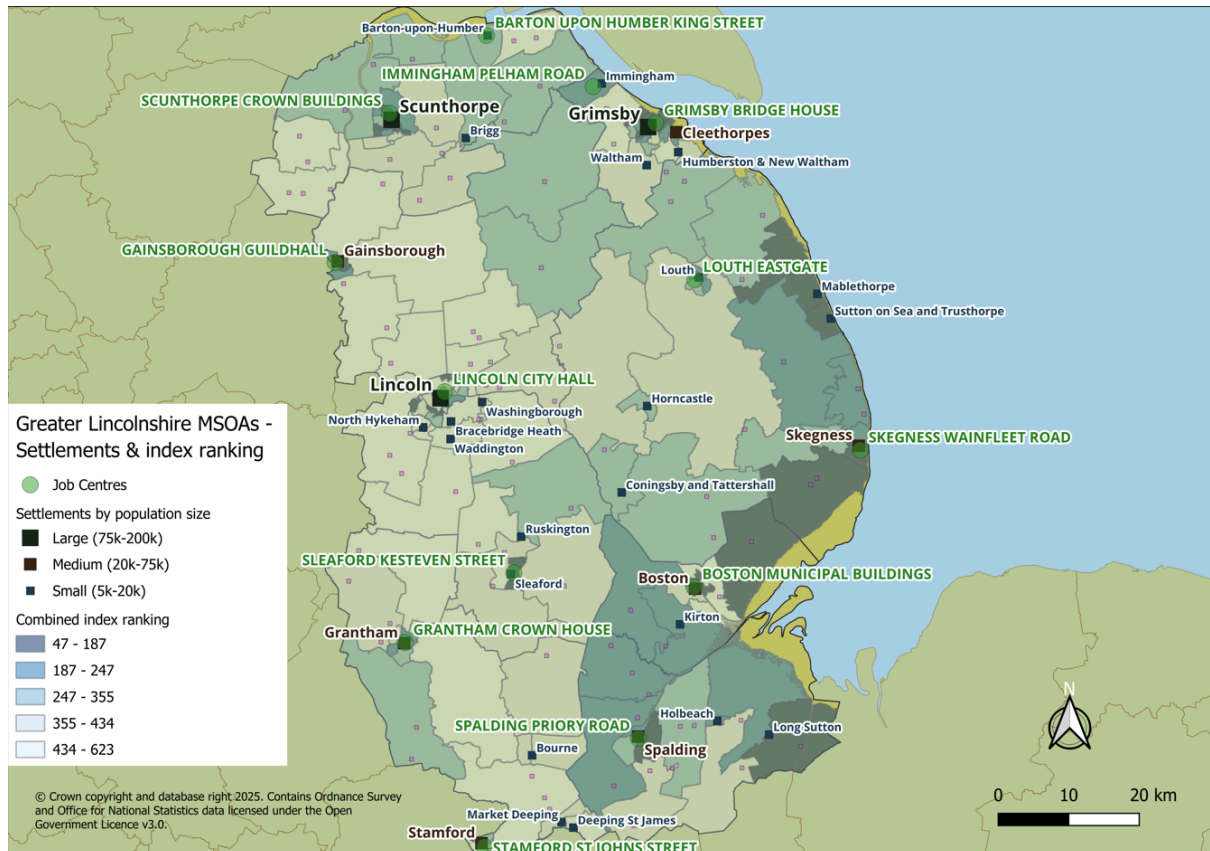
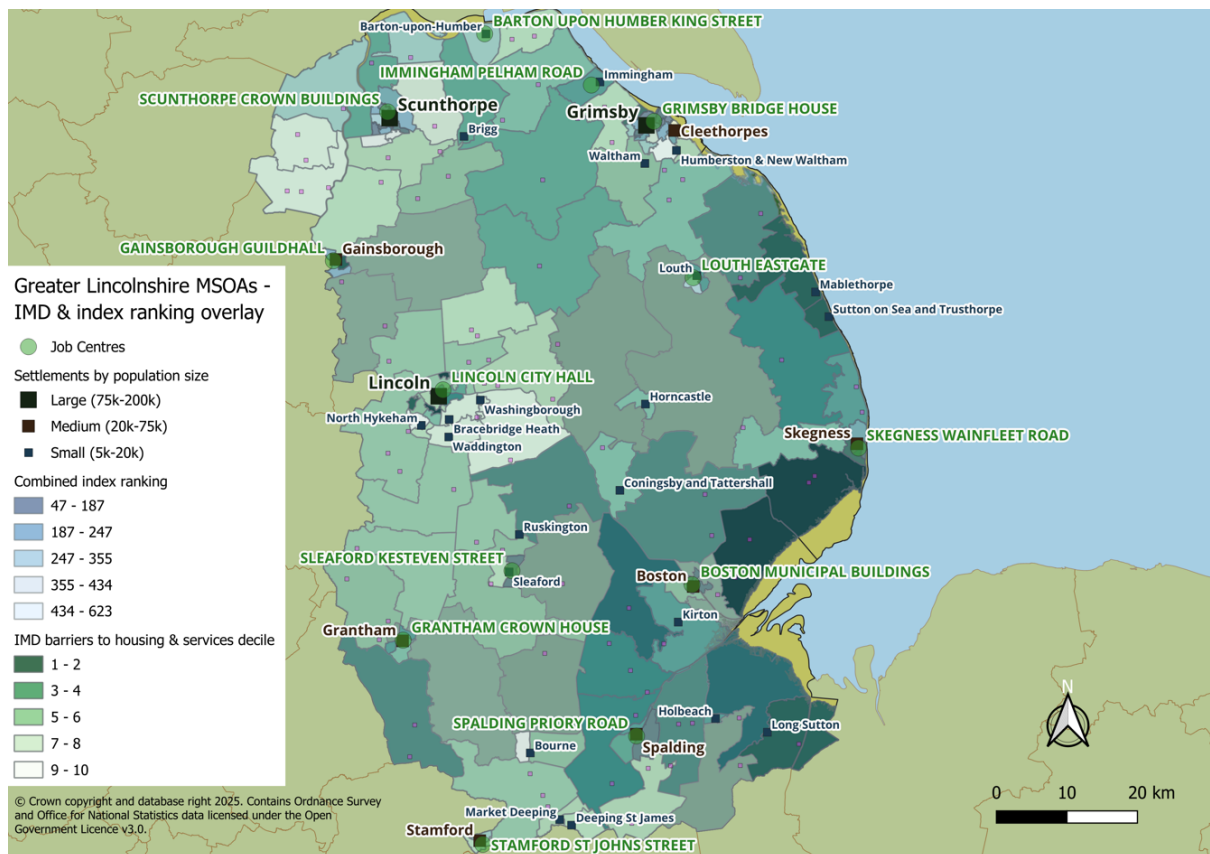
**Systemic changes in GLW—joining up skills, health, and employment—can draw from MOVE's pilots in digital skills and financial inclusion, addressing post-pandemic gaps.**

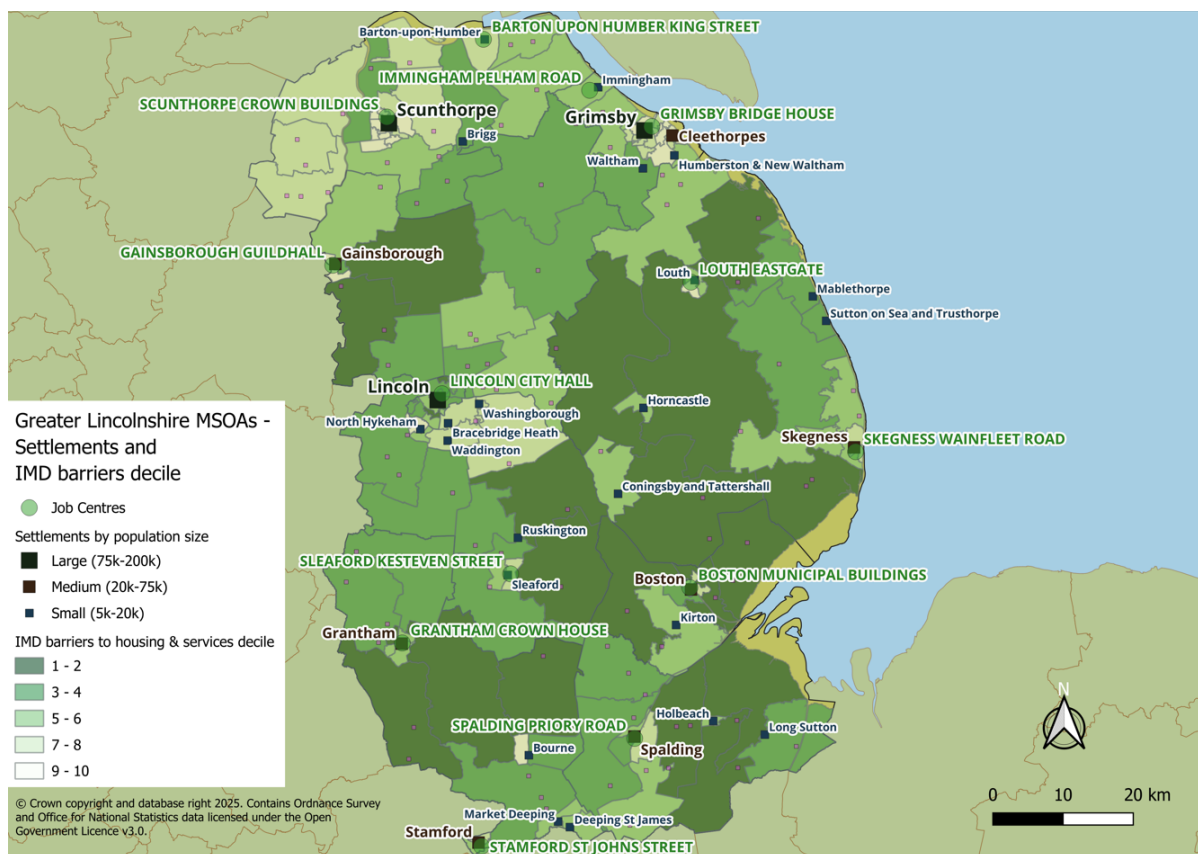
Priority actions in GLW, such as maximising national initiatives and workforce development, benefit from actionable lessons arising from this history of employability activity. The Skills Priority Statement's timelines (e.g., apprenticeship strategy by May 2021) inform GLW's 12–24-month focus. Recommendations include embedding literacy support (from 2021 report) into numeracy programmes and scaling NEET interventions like Career Net for SEND groups.

In conclusion, these employability documents provide a robust evidence base for GLW, transforming past challenges into strategic opportunities. By synthesising skills shortages, NEET successes, and literacy barriers with national reforms, the plan

positions Greater Lincolnshire—its £30bn economy and 1.1 million population—for inclusive growth. Implementing these insights could elevate employment towards 80%, fostering resilience in rural-coastal communities and securing energy-food futures.

## Annex D Maps







## **Annex E Stakeholder Interviews**

Stakeholders from a wide range of organisations with a direct interest in the development of the Get Lincolnshire Working Plan and their insights along with the labour market analysis and the msoa indicators are set out below:

### **Health Barriers and Their Impact on Participation**

Health-related challenges dominated stakeholder narratives, with repeated emphasis on how physical and mental health issues act as formidable obstacles to labour market engagement. In coastal deprivation contexts, stakeholders described high musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions as intertwined with low TUNDRA participation and the physical toll of seasonal tourism jobs, which often involve repetitive strain and limited job security, leading to disengagement. They noted that such conditions not only reduce individual capacity for work but also contribute to broader community health declines, where access to preventive care is exacerbated by geographical remoteness.

Areas with high deprivation were highlighted for high MSK rates which stakeholders viewed as stemming from a combination of health barriers and skills gaps, where inadequate training for less physically demanding roles leaves individuals trapped in inactivity. In urban deprivation settings, poor mental health was associated with low trust and NEET youth, with stakeholders pointing out how eroded social networks amplify feelings of isolation, deterring job-seeking efforts.

Rural isolation narratives included high mental health impacts, exacerbated by low digital literacy, which stakeholders saw as limiting access to online mental health resources or remote work opportunities, thus deepening disengagement in sparsely populated areas. Coastal areas were flagged for mental health prevalence, tied to outflow of young people and low TUNDRA (quintile 1), where an ageing population's health needs strain local services, indirectly affecting younger residents' participation through increased caring responsibilities.

Urban health challenges featured prominently, with high mental health challenges and low trust creating environments where stakeholders believed community cohesion suffers, leading to reduced motivation for workforce re-entry. In some agricultural settings, migrant health barriers were connected to MSK, with stakeholders noting that language and cultural differences hinder access to health support, resulting in prolonged absences from work.

Deprived estates were discussed in terms of low median earnings interacting with mental health issues, where stakeholders argued that financial disincentives, coupled with psychological barriers, discourage participation. High not fit for work (NFW) rates were a cross-cutting concern, linked to skills mismatches that prevent adaptation to healthier roles.

In ageing coastal areas, low productivity was tied to caring responsibilities, with stakeholders highlighting how health demands on family members reduce available workforce hours. Rural market towns featured ageing workforces, where stakeholders observed that demographic shifts lead to skill shortages as experienced workers exit due to health reasons.

Stakeholders advocated for integrated wellbeing programmes, including non-accredited training in health awareness and employer accommodations, to mitigate these impacts. They stressed the importance of addressing MSK and mental health through community-based support, recognising that without such measures, the region's inactivity rates would persist, hindering progress towards national employment goals. Proposed interventions included

partnerships with health providers to deliver targeted support, such as mental health workshops and physical rehabilitation programmes, tailored to the specific needs of coastal, rural, and urban communities. They also highlighted the potential for employer-led initiatives to adapt workplaces, reducing the physical and psychological toll on workers and enabling sustained participation.

The emphasis on health barriers extended to the need for systemic integration, with stakeholders calling for better coordination between healthcare and employment services to address the root causes of disengagement. For instance, in areas with high MSK prevalence, they suggested vocational training for roles requiring less physical exertion, alongside health interventions to improve long-term employability. Community-based peer support networks were proposed to rebuild trust and encourage re-engagement, particularly among young people and those with caring responsibilities.

## **Youth Disengagement and Educational Challenges**

Stakeholder narratives placed significant weight on youth disengagement, viewing it as a foundational issue that perpetuates long-term inactivity. In coastal areas, high NEET rates were attributed to skills shortages, with stakeholders describing how young people struggle to find stable entry-level roles in fluctuating industries, leading to early dropout from education or training. This was seen as particularly acute where decline contributes to high NEET levels, intertwined with disability gaps that stakeholders believed stem from inadequate support for health-related barriers during transitional years.

Urban areas were highlighted for SEND NEETs, where high mental health rates at 46.8% compound vulnerabilities, with stakeholders noting that specialised needs are often unmet, resulting in higher disengagement rates. Urban deprivation contexts featured NEET youth linked to low trust and high MSK, where stakeholders observed that family and community pressures discourage educational persistence, fostering a sense of futility around job prospects.

Coastal poverty narratives included youth disengagement tied to seasonal jobs and high MSK, with low TUNDRA (quintile 1) indicating limited pathways to higher education, as stakeholders pointed out that without role models or accessible opportunities, young people opt out early.

In coastal areas, outflow of young people was connected to poor mental health with stakeholders expressing concern over the “brain drain” that leaves communities without fresh talent, exacerbating ageing demographics.

Stakeholders advocated for an expanded apprenticeships offer including more access to new foundation apprenticeships and NEET interventions, particularly for SEND groups, proposing partnerships with educational providers like virtual schools to bridge gaps in access and motivation. They suggested programmes that combine practical skills with personal development, such as mentoring schemes to boost confidence and aspirations among disengaged youth. These interventions were seen as critical to breaking cycles of inactivity, aligning with broader calls for increasing the proportion of 16–21-year-olds in education or jobs with training to reduce 18-25 NEET rates.

Educational challenges were woven throughout, with low TUNDRA (quintile 1) scores repeatedly cited as a marker of underrepresentation in higher education, limiting aspirations in coastal and rural settings. Stakeholders viewed this as linked to skills mismatches, where no formal qualifications hinder progression. They proposed non-accredited programmes like functional skills, autism awareness, and health and wellbeing support to build foundational competencies, particularly for vulnerable young people.

Gender dynamics in youth contexts were also noted, with higher male NEET rates in some areas prompting calls for gender-sensitive interventions, such as male-focused confidence-building groups to address specific barriers. Stakeholders also highlighted the role of community-based initiatives, like youth hubs, to provide safe spaces for engagement and skill-building, particularly in areas with low trust and high deprivation. They believed that fostering a sense of belonging could counteract the social isolation that drives disengagement, paving the way for long-term workforce participation.

### **Skills Mismatches and Qualification Gaps**

Skills mismatches were a recurring focus in stakeholder narratives, illustrating how they undermine workforce participation across various contexts

High no-qualifications rates predominate in coastal areas were tied to job insecurity, with stakeholders noting that basic education shortfalls limit adaptability to new economic realities, such as automation in traditional industries.

Low digital literacy in areas of rural isolation with poor mental health was viewed as a key challenge, in terms of access to modern job markets that increasingly require technological proficiency.

Some stakeholders perceived (notwithstanding the existence of such provision) a need for more scope for people to participate in vocational qualifications and to engage in non-accredited employability programmes like functional skills, to meet employer needs. They suggested sector-specific training in areas like agrifood and green skills to meet regional demands, alongside flexible learning formats to accommodate diverse needs. These interventions were seen as essential to enhancing productivity and enabling transitions into high-quality jobs.

### **Language Barriers**

The scope to improve language skills was specifically raised, with stakeholder views centring on areas with significant migrant populations, where skills mismatches create entry barriers to work. They described how language barriers prevent people from accessing training or understanding workplace requirements, leading to exploitation in low-skill roles.

### **Sector-Specific Vulnerabilities and Economic Pressures**

Sector vulnerabilities were extensively discussed, with manufacturing decline in some areas linked to high mental health challenges arising from job insecurity.

Seasonal tourism in coastal areas, coastal poverty, rural-coastal and tourist seasonality were seen as creating precarious work, with stakeholders describing how seasonal peaks and troughs disrupt income stability.

Stakeholders proposed diversification into renewables and advanced manufacturing, supported by business incubators, to stabilise sectors and create sustainable jobs.

### **Governance and Collaborative Approaches**

Stakeholders stressed the importance of collaborative governance, with multi-agency partnerships seen as essential for systemic changes. They advocated for integrating health, skills, and employability support, with monitoring using neighbourhood-level indicators to

ensure accountability and measure progress. Regular data reviews and stakeholder forums were proposed to adapt strategies dynamically.

## **Conclusion**

Stakeholder perspectives reveal a comprehensive picture of labour market barriers in Greater Lincolnshire, from health and youth disengagement to geographical and sector vulnerabilities. By addressing these through targeted interventions, leveraging existing provision, and fostering collaborative governance, the region can achieve sustainable growth.

## Annex F

### Indicators and Measures

**Table 2: High Level Indicators (indicators we will track annually)**

Main Measures	
employment rate	NE Lincs 73.5% N Lincs 66.6% Lincolnshire 73.9% (Nomis 2024-25)
real earnings amongst non-retired households (all ages)	Median NE Lincs £671,2 40%ptl £606.9 N Lincs £700.5 40% ptl £623.8 Lincolnshire £664.7 40% ptl £604.7 (ASHE 2024)
Intermediate Measures	
local variation in employment rates	7.3%
health related economic inactivity rate	NE Lincs 43.9% N Lincs 37.4% Lincolnshire 32.5% (Nomis 2024-25)
disability employment rate gap (2023/4)- regional benchmark compared to local authority figure for all in employment	NE Lincs 28,5% N Lincs 21.6% Lincolnshire 23.9% (DWP)
proportion of 18–25-year-olds NEET supported by an increase in the proportion of 16–21-year-olds in education or job with training	16-18 Neets /NK NE Lincs 7.2% N Lincs 11.5% Lincolnshire 7.1% (NCCIS 2025)
employment amongst parents 18-66 years	APS (2023) Workless Households with children as a % of Working households with children NE Lincs 9.4% N Lincs 8.5% Lincolnshire 11.3%
employment rate gap between lone parents and parents in a couple	APS Households with children under 16 Lone parent household working and mixed as a % of all vs couple households NE Lincs (66%-94%), N Lincs (68%-99%), Lincolnshire (69%-91%)
percentage of coupled families where at least one parent is out of work	APS mixed and workless households as a % of all households NE Lincs 30% N Lincs 36% Lincolnshire 46%
female employment rate	APS NE Lincs 70% N Lincs 64% Lincolnshire 69%

#### 1.8.1 Granular Data

To take account of the large geographical scale and economic diversity of our place, and to make sure we develop the right solutions for our residents, it's important to use more granular data.

We have identified the following measures which are both available at neighbourhood level and sufficiently regularly updated as to provide scope for effective monitoring.

Additional data has also been sourced from the Lincolnshire Public Health/ICB source, available for the administrative county of Lincolnshire. It represents the number of GP recorded issuing of fit notes or visits associated with musculoskeletal or mental health challenges over 12 months shown as a percentage of the working population.

As some individuals may have been the source of several fit notes and musculoskeletal and mental health records the figures do not straightforwardly represent the percentage of the workforce with these conditions.

As North and North East Lincolnshire neighbourhoods do not have index scores for these measures the impact of these factors is not mapped for them. However, consideration is given in the actions within the strategy of the relative value of developing similar indicators for these two areas in view of the high proportion of economic inactively people with health challenges in Greater Lincolnshire. We feel it is very important to use and track these indicators for Lincolnshire whilst seeking similar measures for North and North East Lincolnshire.

**Table 3: Detailed Indicators (indicators we can track more frequently and at a more granular level)**

Indicator	Source	Rationale
<b>Universal Credit Work Capability Assessments (WCA)</b>	Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Sheet: WC Assessments	The WCA indicator measures the proportion of the working-age population (16-64) assessed as having limited capability for work due to health conditions or disabilities. It is critical for identifying individuals who face significant barriers to employment due to health-related issues, providing insight into the health-driven component of worklessness.
<b>Claimant Count</b>	Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Nomis, Sheet: Claimant Count	This indicator represents the number and proportion of individuals claiming unemployment-related benefits, including Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) and Universal Credit (UC) claimants required to seek work. It is a direct measure of unemployment and worklessness, capturing those actively seeking work but unable to find

Indicator	Source	Rationale
		employment, reflecting local labour market conditions.
<b>Social Trust (Net Trust)</b>	Onward Consultant using the Annual Population Survey	Social trust measures the difference between those who "always or usually trust" others versus those who are "usually or almost always careful." Low social trust can indicate weaker community cohesion, which may correlate with economic disengagement and worklessness, as trust influences cooperation and access to job networks.
<b>Jobs per Capita</b>	Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), Sheet: BRES	This indicator calculates the ratio of jobs to the working-age population, reflecting the availability of employment opportunities in an area. A lower jobs-to-population ratio suggests limited job opportunities, contributing to higher worklessness rates.
<b>No Qualifications</b>	Census 2021, Sheet: Census Quals	The proportion of the population aged 16+ with no formal qualifications highlights educational attainment levels. Lack of qualifications is a significant barrier to employment, as it limits access to skilled jobs, making this a key indicator of worklessness risk.
<b>Not Fit for Work (NFW)</b>	Lincolnshire Public Health Team/Lincolnshire ICB	This indicator measures the incidence of people deemed not fit for work due to health conditions across different age bands. It complements WCA by providing a broader view of health-related barriers to employment, crucial for understanding chronic worklessness.
<b>Musculoskeletal (MSK) Conditions</b>	Lincolnshire Public Health Team/Lincolnshire ICB	The prevalence of musculoskeletal conditions among the working-age population indicates a specific health barrier to employment. MSK issues can limit physical work capacity, making this a key factor in assessing health-related worklessness.
<b>Mental Health (MH) Conditions</b>	Lincolnshire Public Health Team/Lincolnshire ICB	This indicator tracks the incidence of mental health conditions that impact work capability. Mental health issues are a growing cause of worklessness, affecting productivity and employability, making this a vital measure.

Indicator	Source	Rationale
<b>TUNDRA Participation Rate</b>	TUNDRA Dataset, Sheet: TUNDRA	TUNDRA measures the proportion of 16-year-olds participating in higher education by age 18 or 19, categorized into quintiles. Low participation rates indicate limited educational progression, which correlates with higher worklessness due to reduced skills and opportunities. <i>Whilst used in key sections of the report it does not feature in the summary table below as it is a complicated and nuanced data set.</i>

It is proposed that these local and national data sets are used formally by the Core Partnership to monitor progress.

### 1.9 Indicators by Local Authority

We have mapped the distribution of local measures across local authority areas as set out below.

**Table 4: Local Authority**

Local Authority	Population (16-64)	WCA (%)	UC (%)	No Quals (%)	MSK (%)*	Mental Health (%)*	Jobs per Capita (2023)%	Net Trust
Boston	42,828	7.8	4.7	31.4	39	28.8	0.70	-15.1
East Lindsey	79,280	9.3	3.6	36.1	47	36.1	0.56	-6.4
Lincoln	70,799	7.3	3.9	25.0	38	31.9	0.6	-12.6
North Kesteven	71,273	3.4	2.2	17.9	48	33.8	0.57	-1.7
South Holland	54,485	5.5	3.2	28.8	46	34.1	0.58	-7.1
South Kesteven	84,139	2.9	2.9	18.3	47	36.8	0.65	-1.2
West Lindsey	56,204	5.5	3	25.9	50	37.5	0.48	-0.6
North Lincolnshire	108,093	5.4	3.7	25.7			0.73	-7.2
North East Lincolnshire	95,101	8.9	6.4	32.5			0.69	-7
Lincolnshire	462,229	6.6	3.3	28	45	34.2	0.62	-6.5

Descriptions linked to the above table:

- WCA % -Work Capability Assessments expressed in comparison (as a percentage) to the overall number of people in the working population
- UC% - Percentage of the population claiming Universal Credit
- No Quals% - Percentage of the population with no qualifications
- MSK% - GPs caseload of people with MSK conditions as % of the 16-64 population
- Mental Health - GPs caseload of people with Mental Health conditions as % of the 16-64 population
- Jobs per Capita – the number of jobs as a proportion of the 16-64 population



- Social Trust – A measure derived from the Annual Population Survey which indicates the level of trust local people have in their peers and local institutions

*\* This compares the number of MSK and Mental Health diagnoses within a year across the local authority health system with the population. It is a relative measure of the incidence of each position as many individuals within each authority may have made multiple visits to the GP within a year*

## **Appendix**

### **A Note on Key Terms**

#### **Rural**

This term is defined in relation to space which is sparsely populated, where distance from key services limits choice and often aspirations, reducing opportunities and increasing living costs due to enhanced travel requirements. Rural places in Greater Lincolnshire often have low wages and a narrow sectoral base along with skewed geographies.

#### **Coastal**

Coastal areas have a 180-degree economic hinterland. They are frequently distant from major employment sectors and are characterised by relatively high unemployment, low GVA sectors and patterns of seasonal working. They can be quite urban in terms of the built environment with dense patterns of housing in settlements like Grimsby and Cleethorpes. Flood risk is a major issue which affects the viability of settlements on the Lincolnshire coast like Mablethorpe and Boston.

Rural areas and coastal areas constitute more than 90% of Greater Lincolnshire's landmass.

#### **Access**

Access reflects not just access to physical services and jobs but also the information deficits which mean that certain groups and communities lack access to the connections and experience to maximise their potential through work. This is an intergenerational issue in some communities that don't feel connected with other parts of Greater Lincolnshire and the opportunities available, and have some of the most significant deprivation in the country

#### **Economic Inactivity**

In the UK, economic inactivity refers to individuals who are neither in employment nor actively seeking work, and thus are not classified as unemployed. According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), this group includes people aged 16 and over who are not in paid work and have not looked for a job or been available to start work in the last four weeks. Common reasons for economic inactivity include long-term illness or disability, looking after family or home, retirement, being a full-time student, or other personal circumstances. Economically inactive individuals are distinct from the unemployed, as the latter are actively seeking and available for work. This definition is used to monitor labour market participation and inform policy aimed at reducing worklessness.

#### **GVA**

In the UK, Gross Value Added (GVA) is a measure of the value of goods and services produced in an economy, industry, or region, minus the cost of inputs and raw materials used in production. It represents the contribution to the economy from each individual producer, industry, or sector, and is a key indicator of economic activity. GVA is calculated as the sum of an area's output (at basic prices) less the cost of intermediate consumption (the goods and services used up in the production process). It is closely related to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with the main difference being that GVA excludes taxes on products (like VAT) and includes subsidies.

#### **Job Density**

In the UK, job density is a measure that indicates the number of jobs available in a specific area relative to its working-age population. It is calculated as the ratio of total jobs (including employees, self-employed individuals, and government-supported trainees) to the resident population aged 16-64, expressed as a percentage or a figure per 100 people. This metric, provided by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), helps assess the balance between job opportunities and the potential workforce in a region. A higher job density suggests more employment opportunities relative to the population, while a lower density may indicate areas with fewer jobs, such as rural regions like Greater Lincolnshire, where sparsity and connectivity challenges can affect this ratio.

### **Location Quotient**

the location quotient (LQ) is a statistical measure used to compare the concentration of a specific industry, occupation, or economic activity in a particular area (such as a region or local authority) relative to a reference area, typically the national economy. It is calculated by dividing the proportion of local employment in a given sector by the proportion of national employment in that same sector. An LQ greater than 1 indicates a higher concentration of that activity in the local area compared to the national average, suggesting specialisation, while an LQ less than 1 suggests under-representation. For example, if Greater Lincolnshire has a higher proportion of jobs in agriculture than the UK average, its LQ for that sector would exceed 1.

### **NEET**

NEET stands for "Not in Education, Employment, or Training." It refers to young people aged 16-24 who are currently not engaged in any form of education, employment, or vocational training. This classification, tracked by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and used by government bodies, highlights a group at risk of long-term economic and social disadvantage. NEET status can result from various factors, including lack of qualifications, health issues, family responsibilities, or limited access to opportunities, particularly in areas with skills shortages or rural isolation, such as parts of Greater Lincolnshire.

### **SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)**

SEND refers to a framework that supports children and young people (aged 0-25) who have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn or access education compared to their peers. This includes a wide range of needs, such as autism, dyslexia, physical disabilities, or mental health conditions. The SEND Code of Practice (2015), updated by the Department for Education, outlines how local authorities, schools, and health services should identify, assess, and provide support through Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plans. In the context of Greater Lincolnshire, addressing SEND is crucial for reducing economic inactivity and NEET rates, as these individuals may face barriers to employment without tailored support.

### **SEN HC (Special Educational Needs and Health Care)**

SEN HC typically refers to the integrated support provided under an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan, which is a legally binding document in England for children and young people with SEND who require more comprehensive assistance. It combines educational needs with health and social care provisions to ensure a holistic approach. The "HC" emphasises the health care component, which may include therapy, medical support, or mental health services, coordinated by local authorities and NHS bodies like the Lincolnshire Integrated Care Board (ICB). This is particularly relevant in Greater Lincolnshire, where

health-related economic inactivity (e.g., 45% in North East Lincolnshire) is a significant issue, and SEN HC plans can facilitate transitions into employment or training.

## **TUNDRA**

The term "TUNDRA" in the context of datasets primarily refers to the Tracking Underrepresentation by Area dataset, developed by the Office for Students (OfS) in the UK. This dataset is an area-based measure designed to classify local areas in England according to the participation rates of young people in higher education.



This page is intentionally left blank

<b>Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority GLCCA Employment and Skills Board</b>	
Date of meeting:	<b>15<sup>th</sup> October 2025</b>
Report title:	<b>Care Leaver Covenant</b>
Report of:	<b>Lee Sirdifield, Interim Chief Operating Officer</b>
Classification:	<b>This report is open</b>
Contact officer:	Ruth Carver, Interim Deputy Director, GLCCA. <a href="mailto:ruth.carver@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk">ruth.carver@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk</a>
Purpose of the report:	This report invites the Employment and Skills Board to consider how the GLCCA could support the Care Leaver community, and to start the process of becoming a care leaver covenant signatory.
Key decision	No
Voting Arrangements:	Simple majority vote to include the Mayor.
Report has been considered by:	The report has not previously been considered by Members

**Recommendation(s):**

**That the Employment and Skills Board:**

- 1) agree that the Authority commences the process to become a care leaver covenant signatory, and
- 2) Supports the development of an action plan for care leavers through the Authority's employment and skills programmes.

# REPORT CONTENT

## 1 Information

- 1.1 Constituent members of GLCCA have made strong commitments to transforming the offer for the Care Leavers community across Greater Lincolnshire, and many Local Authority members already have a whole council approach to Care Leavers. One of the themes with the Devolution deal was further support care leavers in the area, and a working group was established to explore options.
- 1.2 This report seeks approval for the GLCCA to sign the care leavers covenant and to develop an action plan to support the Care Leaver Community in relation to employment and skills.

## 2 Care Leavers Covenant

- 2.1 The Care Leavers Covenant (CLC) is a promise made by the private, public and voluntary sectors to provide support for care leavers aged 16-25 to help them to live independently. The aim of the Care Leaver Covenant is to provide additional support for those leaving care, making available a different type of support and expertise from that statutorily provided by local authorities.
- 2.2 The CLC is a national programme which works with over 600 organisations across the country to connect care leavers with exclusive opportunities in education, work, wellbeing, money and their home.
- 2.3 The Care Leaver Covenant outcomes are stated as:
  - Care leavers are better prepared and supported to live independently.
  - Care leavers have improved access to employment, education and training.
  - Care leavers experience stability in their lives and feel safe and secure.
  - Care leavers have improved access to health and emotional support.
  - Care leavers achieve financial stability.
- 2.4 The recommendation is that the GLCCA indicates intent to sign up to the CLC and ultimately becomes a care leaver covenant signatory. This would mean that the GLCCA could commit:
  - To guarantee to offer interviews and promote employment to care leavers.
  - To provide care leavers with opportunities to enter the world of work, such as offering work experience placements, work shadowing placements, internships, traineeships and apprenticeships
  - To open up future employment opportunities through our commissioned employment and skills programmes
  - Encourage other organisations in Greater Lincolnshire to become a care leaver covenant signatory.



### **3 Care Leavers Employment and Skills Action Plan**

- 3.1 As a new authority, signing the covenant is the first step in supporting care leavers, and therefore the GLCCA's Employment and Skills Board is asked to support the development of action plan to meet the agreed outcomes of giving access to training and employment opportunities to Care Leavers through its programmes.

### **4 Alternative options considered.**

- 4.1 The CLC is a well-known and utilised covenant and platform for promoting opportunities for care leavers. An alternative considered was the development of a bespoke Greater Lincolnshire version, however this was discounted at the stage due the traction the CLC has achieved nationally and the recognition of its impact.

### **5 Reasons for the recommendation**

- 5.1 The Authority is asked to discuss and approve the recommendation in line with the aspiration of the devolution discussions, and for the GLCCA to sign the CLC and develop an action plan to further support Care Leavers.

## **IMPLICATIONS, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE**

### **Public sector equality duty implications**

- 6 The Equality Act duty has been considered, but no equalities impacts have been identified arising from the initial proposals in this report due to the small numbers involved. It is likely that impacts will arise from the action plan that considers the GLCCA employment and skills programmes, and these will be assessed during the development.

### **Legal implications / comments**

- 7 There are no current legal implications arising from this report.

### **Finance and resource implications / comments.**

- 8 There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report. However, there are likely to be future costs once the action plan is developed to meet the requirements of the Covenant. It is anticipated that these costs will be met from within existing budgets.

### **Greater Lincolnshire policy / comments**

- 9 None.

### **Consultation and Engagement**

10 None

### **Overview and Scrutiny Comments**

11 Not applicable.

## **DOCUMENT INFORMATION**

### **Appendices included with this report.**

The following documents are included:

None

### **Background Papers used in the preparation of this report.**

The following background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

<b>Background Paper</b>	<b>Where it can be viewed</b>
None	

<b>Greater Lincolnshire Employment and Skills Board</b>	
Date of meeting:	<b>15<sup>th</sup> October 2025</b>
Report title:	<b>Devolution of the Adult Skills Fund</b>
Report of:	<b>Lee Sirdifield, Interim Chief Operating Officer</b>
Classification:	<b>This report is open</b>
Contact officer:	Clare Hughes, Interim Strategic Lead for Employment and Skills <a href="mailto:clare.hughes@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk">clare.hughes@greaterlincolnshire-cca.gov.uk</a> , 07917 635527
Purpose of the report:	To provide information about the Adult Skills Fund to Members, for their consideration in advance of a decision at the meeting of the Authority on 10 <sup>th</sup> December 2025.
Key decision	No
Voting Arrangements:	Simple majority vote to include the Mayor.
Report has been considered by:	The report has not previously been considered by members of the GLCCA

### **Recommendation(s):**

**That the Employment and Skills Board:**

- 1) Endorse the ambition and strategic priorities for the Adult Skills Fund set out in this report (Section 9)**
- 2) Endorse the draft ASF Strategic Skills Plan (Appendix 2)**
- 3) Endorse the commissioning plan set out in the draft ASF Strategic Skills Plan (Appendix 2 Pages 23-24), and**
- 4) Note and discuss the draft changes to the funding rules and performance framework (Appendix 1)**

## REPORT CONTENT

### Introduction

- 1 The Adult Skills Fund (ASF) is used to equip adults, aged 19 and above, with the skills needed to progress into employment, progress within employment, or progress into further learning.
- 2 ASF is the largest national budget spent on adult skills. It supported approximately 14,657 Greater Lincolnshire learners during the academic year 23/24.
- 3 Locally, there is a history of good delivery of the Adult Skills Fund achieving good outcomes for those involved. Together, grant funded organisations, independent training providers and the third sector ensure effective use of the Adult Skills Fund across Greater Lincolnshire and reach local communities that national programmes tend not to.
- 4 Devolution of this budget means that the Authority will commission this funding instead of the Department for Education (DfE) and will result in a programme that better meets the needs of Greater Lincolnshire.
- 5 The Authority agreed at its inaugural meeting earlier this year a principle that constituent authorities will deliver its programmes. In line with that, the ASF programme will be commissioned and managed by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) through a Service Level Agreement according to the policies set out by the Authority, with a gradual transition to delivery by the GLCCA.
- 6 A ministerial decision is expected to be made this month about Greater Lincolnshire's readiness to receive the legal responsibilities that go with this fund. An important element of that is assurance to the Secretary of State for Education that changes made in the first years of managing the fund are done slowly, avoiding shocks to the system that would put existing recipients of grant funding (Colleges and Local Authorities) at financial risk.
- 7 The Authority is required to submit (and publish) its final funding rules and an 'ASF Strategic Skills Plan' (SSP) to Government by December 2025.
- 8 The SSP sets out the Authority's ambitions and priorities for ASF, its commissioning plan, and how it will manage the budget. It will be updated as required, and in advance of each academic year if needed.

### Ambitions and Strategic Priorities

- 9 *Our ambition:*  
To provide Greater Lincolnshire residents with learning opportunities that improve their personal, and local economic prosperity.

#### *Our ASF priorities:*

- a. Create a programme of high-quality provision for Greater Lincolnshire adults that is accessible, aligned to local business need, well-promoted,

and achieves good value for money by removing unnecessary duplication.

- b. Provide adults with the confidence and support to participate in learning and progress to higher levels.
- c. Fund qualifications that are business-led and contribute to the long-term prosperity of Greater Lincolnshire, creating a locally skilled workforce.
- d. Increase the capacity of the local provider base, so that Greater Lincolnshire's training infrastructure can be flexible and responsive to future local needs.

#### *Evolution of the Programme:*

Once funding is devolved the Authority will have access to better data and evidence that will help to shape its future programme. It expects to make a series of changes over time that will meet the priorities listed above.

For example, increasing provision in vocational and technical training to help residents into work; increasing the number of people with no qualifications into training to help their work prospects, providing a clear ladder of progression from Level 1 to 3 and beyond so that residents are able to fill the gaps that employers tell us they have in the workplace at a higher level; whole-place programme planning so that training is delivered in hard to reach areas; and mandating residents who have not successfully found work to attend training programmes.

The Authority will work with stakeholders including colleges, Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and business to shape the programme for the future.

#### **10 Anticipated devolution timeline:**

- **October 2025:** ministerial decision on readiness, Authority will receive letter outlining specific conditions of readiness.
- **November /December 2025:** The Authority will make legislative proposal to DfE and consent to lay the Statutory Instrument.
- **November/December 2025:** The Authority submits the final plans and documents to DfE.
- **Jan/February 2026:** Authority informed of funding allocation for year 1
- **May 2026:** legislation passed into law
- **June 2026:** first funding allocation paid to Authority (once legislation is passed)
- **31<sup>st</sup> July 2026:** last day of skills delivery administered by DfE

- **1<sup>st</sup> August 2026:** first day of delivery with new funding rules set out by the Authority

### **Changes to Funding Rules and Eligibility**

- 11 Providers across the country use a set of national funding rules for ASF. Once devolved, an Authority can amend most (but not all) of those rules and will be required to publish its own each year.
- 12 Changes in funding rules often have unintended consequences (or need more budget to fund them than will be available) therefore the Authority must take technical advice where necessary to avoid errors that put it at risk.
- 13 The Authority will not be able to make any significant changes to the funding rules for Year 1 after 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025 but will continue to be able to make changes every year and proposals for changes in Year 2 will be brought to the Board for consideration in the first half of 2026.
- 14 The Authority intends to adopt national funding rules, with several exceptions. These policy intentions are set out in the table below and are subject to further dialogue to ensure no financial or legal issues arise.
- 15 The Authority will engage stakeholders including employers, colleges, training organisations and DWP on its policy intentions set out below, before a decision is taken in December 2025. The Policy will also be considered by the Authority's Scrutiny Board in November.
- 16 The draft GLCCA Funding Rules and Performance Framework is provided for members' consideration.

## Draft Policy Changes in Year 1 (subject to further consideration)

	Current Situation (before devolution)	Proposed New Greater Lincolnshire Process/Rule (after devolution)	Reason for Change	Expected Impact
1	<b>Procurement of non-grant funded providers.</b> Historically DfE have set various maximum and minimum caps on contract amounts and changes to those have prevented smaller providers from holding a direct contract.	Minimum contract: £150k Maximum contract: £1m  Multi-year contracts: The Authority will not be able to award multi-year contracts at this stage because it will not know what budget it has available for future years. Extensions to contracts that are performing well can be considered by officers in future years.	To provide a route for small providers to grow their business, bidding for direct contract once they can deliver them independently.  A maximum cap will help to manage the risk to the Authority.	Growth of smaller providers but balanced against the need to keep stability for grant-funded providers with sub-contracts
2	<b>Support for Learners</b> Hardship funds are already made available to learners, but they are not uniform across Greater Lincolnshire	A new support fund to ensure more care leavers can access learning is proposed.  Care leavers, up to age 25, would be able to access to up to £1,500 from their provider when they enrol on an accredited course (of a particular length) to support with learning costs.	Local figures show high levels of NEET amongst 19-25 care leavers. Providers incur additional costs recruiting and retaining learners with more complex backgrounds, and care leavers tend to have less access to resources as they do not have family support.	An increase in the number of care leavers into training. <i>Cost:</i> <i>Approx. 500 Greater Lincs care leavers are NEET due to reasons that include disability, pregnancy and parenting. If all enrol the maximum cost = £750,000.</i>
3	<b>Qualification Eligibility</b> Currently the Level 3 Award in Education and Training is not eligible to be funded through ASF	To change the eligibility of the Level 3 Award in Education and Training so that it can be fully funded regardless of the salary of the learner, using ASF on a 2-year trial allowing results to be evaluated.	In addition to upskilling college/provider staff, this award provides opportunity for industry specialists to train for the classroom, helping meet the crisis of	Greater Lincolnshire will increase the number of skilled trainers.  <u><i>An estimated cost is being calculated but not yet available.</i></u>

			recruitment of qualified staff.	
4	ASF is for UK residents.	The Authority will fund Greater Lincolnshire residents. Employees who work but do not live in Greater Lincolnshire will be funded by their own authority/national fund in the same way that a GL resident working elsewhere will need to be funded by GLCCA.	The Authority is not expected to fund residents who live in other areas.	n/a
5	<b>License to Practice</b> Currently only HGV Licence costs are eligible for funding through the ASF	The Authority will fund providers to support unemployed residents to obtain their first Green CSCS card (CSCS = Construction Skills Certification Scheme), giving them the ability to work in the sector.  Learners will be required to gain a job as a result of this funding.	To meet the demand for construction workers.	Increase the number of unemployed adults into construction <i>Costs: CSCS card + required H&amp;S learning = £58 per learner.</i> <i>The total number construction learners (23/24) was 747, &amp; whilst not directly relating to number that might need a first CSCS card, it provides a useful indication and estimation of cost £43.5K</i>
6	<b>Residency Rules</b> Current national rules have recently changed and say that learners must be resident on day 1 of learning to be eligible for funded courses.	Change resident eligibility back to the national rules that were in place in 24/25 rules, i.e. learners must be ordinarily resident for 3 years.		Current national rules have been in place for 2 months and there is no data available to know how many additional residents of Greater Lincolnshire have participated in ASF training in comparison to the previous year.
7	<b>English for speakers of other languages</b>	Create a more inclusive learning environment by meeting the needs of non-English speaking residents through other provision, and not specific ESOL courses.	A more inclusive culture	From 23/24 data: 1427 Greater Lincolnshire residents on an ESOL course. Additional information being collected.



8	<b>Subcontracting rules</b>	Introduction of a 25% cap on the amount a grant funded provider can automatically subcontract without seeking permission from/providing a case to the Authority first. Organisations that win awards for delivery will not be permitted to subcontract.	To ensure value for money	n/a
9	<b>Over-delivery.</b> DfE make automatic payment to grant-funded providers if value of delivery is exceeded by up to 110% for ASF and 103% for FCFJ.	No automatic over-delivery  Instead, increases in funding to providers will be managed through a grant or contract variation process based on identified opportunities for increased delivery, mid-year performance review and availability of funding	Unlike DfE, GLCCA at this stage will not have access to multi-year budgets or other departmental budgets that could be transferred where over-delivery occurs.	GLCCA's budget is not overspent.
10	<b>Online Learning</b> Self-directed online/remote/distance learning is funded by DfE	Collect evidence in Year 1 to understand impact and cost of self-directed learning (i.e. online training that has no live person/ tutor/assessor involvement) particularly for residents with prior learning below Level 2.	Evidence suggests that people with low qualifications lack the skills needed to manage self-directed environments and their own learning. Assurance is required that these programmes are impactful and good value.	Data to inform future years.

**NB** Grant funded providers are local FE Colleges (Lincoln College, Boston College, Grantham College, Stamford College, Riseholme College, DN College Group, TEC Partnership, John Leggott College, Franklin College, Local Authorities LCC & NLC and University of Lincoln)

**Officers expect to make these additional operational changes**

	<b>Current Situation (before devolution)</b>	<b>Proposed Process/Rule (after devolution)</b>	<b>Reason for Change</b>	<b>Expected Impact</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Curriculum planning</b> Grant Funded providers are not currently required to submit a delivery (curriculum) plan to DfE	Grant funded providers will be required to submit a delivery plan once funding is devolved to GLCCA.  Providers with contract for services will submit this as part of the procurement process.	This is to ensure that the GLCCA knows what is being delivered across the area	A reduction in unnecessary duplication and fewer gaps in provision
<b>2</b>	<b>Destination Data Collection</b> The destination of the learner after following a qualification is not collected by DfE. Outcomes for learners on a tailored learning course is collected.	All providers delivering qualification programmes will be required to collect and provide GLCCA with information about the progression of the learner.	To enable GLCCA to build a better understanding of the current system and the impact of its funding and any changes it makes	Better informed decision making

### **Alternative options considered**

- 17 The Secretary of State for Education requires the Authority to provide its Local Funding Rules and ASF Strategic Skills Plan to help them decide whether to transfer funding powers to the Authority. Not producing them would result in funding not being devolved.
- 18 The Authority could make no change to rules in Year 1 and wait until Year 2, but due to the lag in data, an evaluation of impact of changes made in Year 2 would not be known until Year 3. The Authority prefers to make small changes over time so that the adult funding system locally remains financially stable.

### **Reasons for the recommendation**

- 19 The Authority is setting out how it would like the programme to evolve over time, and by setting out this policy intent it provides a basis for further dialogue and legal and technical advice.

### **IMPLICATIONS, ADVICE AND GUIDANCE**

- 20 The national Adult Skills Funding rules have been in place for several years and are published by DfE. Changes happen from time to time, at least once a year, and they are usually small, or they reduce the complexity or administrative burden of the rules. Changing eligibility of learners and qualifications will have implications on residents, employers and providers, and the decision that the Secretary of State makes in transferring funding powers to the Authority.

### **Public sector equality duty implications**

- 20 Proposed changes set out within this report have the potential to impact protected groups. To mitigate this, work will be undertaken with the training sector to explore further.

### **Legal implications / comments**

- 21 There are no legal implications at this stage as a decision is not required.

### **Finance and resource implications / comments**

- 22 The ASF budget will be allocated once a year, usually in May, and the Authority will find out the value of the Year 1 allocation at the end of January 2026.

### **Greater Lincolnshire policy / comments**

23 None

## Consultation and Engagement

24 The following have been consulted in the preparation of this report:

- Informal briefings to the Employment and Skills Board on 11<sup>th</sup> July, 11<sup>th</sup> September and 30<sup>th</sup> September 25
- Corporate Leadership Team on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025

## Overview and Scrutiny Comments

25 N/A

## DOCUMENT INFORMATION

### Appendices included with this report

- 1 Draft Funding Rules and Performance Framework
- 2 Draft ASF Strategic Skills Plan

### Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

Background Paper	Where it can be viewed
Current national ASF funding rules	<a href="#">Adult skills fund: funding and performance management rules 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK</a>

# Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority Adult Skills Fund - Funding and Performance Management Rules 2026/2027 \* - draft

\* based on available information at time of issue

## *Version 2*

This document sets out the funding rules for the funding year 2026 – 27 (1 August 2026 – 31 July 2027). These rules apply to all Learning Organisations who receive Adult Skills Funding including Free Courses for Jobs funding for residents in the Greater Lincolnshire Combined Authority area. It is implicit that if a Learning Organisation subcontracts provision funded through GLCCA ASF, these funding rules also apply.

**To be read in conjunction with your Grant Funding Agreement or Contract for Services.**

# CONTENTS

Introduction to the Adult Skills Fund .....	3
Headline DFE ASF changes.....	3
for 2026-27 (2025-6).....	3
Headline GLCCA ASF changes .....	4
for 2026-27 .....	4
Purpose of the document .....	5
Terminology.....	5
General Funding Requirements .....	6
1. Who we fund.....	7
2. Residency eligibility .....	8
3. What we will not fund .....	10
4. Evidence.....	12
5. GLCCA Funded ASF.....	13
GLCCA contribution charts to be updated.....	18
6. Unemployed .....	21
7. Earnings threshold for full funding.....	21
8. Licences .....	22
9. HGV and LGV Training.....	22
10. King's Trust Team Programme.....	23
11. English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) .....	23
12. Care Leaver Support Fund .....	23
13. Award in Education and Training.....	24
14. Tailored Learning.....	24
15. Funding for developing innovative provision .....	26
16. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.....	27
17. Support funding .....	27
18. Job outcome payments .....	32
19. Funding Arrangements .....	33
20. Performance Management.....	35
21. Contract/Grant Performance Management Review (PMR) .....	36
22. Subcontracting – applicable to Grant funded Organisations only.....	41
Annex A: Devolution of adult education functions .....	46
Annex B: GLCCA contribution charts text version.....	46
Annex C: Qualifications .....	47
Annex D: Evidence .....	48
Annex E: 19-25 Care Leavers Support Fund .....	51
Glossary .....	54

# Introduction to the Adult Skills Fund

---

In the response to the DfE consultation Skills for Jobs: Implementing a new Further Education Funding and Accountability System published in July 2023, the DfE funded Adult Skills Fund (ASF) has replaced the DfE Funded Adult Education Budget (AEB).

The purpose of the ASF is to support adult learners to gain skills which will lead them to meaningful, sustained, and relevant employment, or enable them to progress to further learning which will deliver that outcome.

Within the ASF, further provision for learning is available that supports wider outcomes such as to improve health and wellbeing, equip parents/carers to support their child's learning, and develop stronger communities (Tailored Learning/Community Learning/Non-Regulated Learning).

This document replaces the ASF Funding and Performance Management Rules 2025 to 2026. We strongly recommend that Learning Organisations review the whole document.

ASF funding rates and formula guidance is due to be published shortly.

*Please note that the GLCCA reserves the right to amend these Funding Rules should the need arise.*

## Headline DfE ASF changes for 2026-27 (2025-6)

---

**In line with DfE changes to national ASF, the following applies:**

### **Legal Entitlement for English and Mathematics**

In line with National legislation, the amendment has been made to the guidance regarding the legal entitlement for English and Mathematics. The guidance now reads that adult learners are eligible for fully funded English and Maths provision if they have not previously attained a GCSE in English or maths at grade 4 or above (or a qualification which is at a comparable or higher level) **or** have been assessed as having an existing skill level lower than grade 4 (even if they have previously achieved a GCSE or equivalent qualification in English and maths). The section in bold has been added.

# Headline GLCCA ASF changes

## for 2026-27

---

- The earnings threshold for policy entitlements for GLCCA residents is £25,750 (to be aligned with DfE 26/27 once released)
- The intention is for there to be a requirement eligibility of 3 years residency. Further details to be confirmed after consultation.
- Care Leavers' Support Fund – A special Learner Support Fund specifically for Care Leavers. Please see section 12 and Annex E. This is in order to support some of our most vulnerable residents.
- Award in Education and Training – section 13. This is in order to build capacity in the education and skills sector to meet demand.
- Licences to Practice – The Construction and Skills Card can be funded only for unemployed learners, subject to prior approval by GLCCA. HGV and LGV Licences are already funded through existing rules. This is to support employment in a key sector and is subject to change in future years to reflect new opportunities.
- Slight change in eligibility for Prisoners who are on Release on Temporary Licence to clarify that the learning can be provided within Prison establishments or at a Learning Organisation's venue.
- All provision must have a live tutor (or lecturer, teacher, assessor etc) present in person, through hybrid teaching or in a virtual classroom. This is to ensure that the GLCCA only funds provision of appropriately high quality and impact. The definitions of the terms: hybrid teaching and virtual classroom are shown below.

Term	Definition
Hybrid Teaching	A model that combines online virtual classroom activities and traditional face-to-face teaching methodologies, ie some sessions of the course are delivered on line and the remainder taught in a physical classroom.
Virtual classroom	An online learning environment supporting live interaction between the tutor (or lecturer, teacher, assessor etc) and the learners as they are participating in learning activities – ie a shared online space where the learners and the tutor work together simultaneously.



# Purpose of the document

---

This document applies to all Learning Organisations, and your subcontractors, who receive GLCCA funded ASF for the 2026 to 2027 funding year (1 August 2026 to 31 July 2027).

These rules do not apply to:

- Apprenticeships
- Advanced learner loans
- Skills bootcamps
- Provision delivered outside of the Combined Authority area

This document forms part of the terms and conditions of funding and you must read them in conjunction with your funding agreement. You must operate within the terms and conditions of the funding agreement, these rules, rates and formula and the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) specification. If you do not, you are in breach of your funding agreement with us.

Definitions and the [glossary](#) are included to assist in understanding the terminology and explain technical terms. We may make changes to these rules at any time.

## Terminology

---

The term 'we' refers to the Combined Authority.

The term 'you' or 'Learning Organisations', includes colleges, higher education institutions, training organisations, local authorities, specialist designated institutions and employers and any other organisations who receive funding from the Combined Authority to deliver education and training through the devolved ASF. We will use the generic term 'you' or 'Learning Organisation' unless the requirements only apply to a specific Learning Organisation type.

'Resident/learner' covers those whose provision is funded by the Combined Authority.

'Provision' refers to all learning that we fund, whether it is a regulated qualification or other learning that is not a regulated qualification as detailed in the DFE 'Find a Learning Aim Service' available at <https://findlearningaimbeta.fasst.org.uk> or as agreed with the Combined Authority.

Qualifications will either be from the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) or an Access to Higher Education Diploma recognised and regulated by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA).

'Learning aims' mean a single episode of learning which could be a regulated qualification, a component of a regulated qualification or Non-Regulated Learning.

'Programmes' mean a coherent package of learning which may include regulated qualifications, components of regulated qualifications or nonregulated learning with clearly stated aims supporting agreed outcomes. We may refer to this document as Funding Rules or the rules.

# General Funding Requirements

---

These rules apply in relation to all learners starting new ASF learning aims on or after 1 August 2026 and continuing learners as referenced in the [who we fund](#) section.

We align our approach for funding residents in the 2026/27 funding year to the current national system operated by the DFE. **Unless specifically stated by the Combined County Authority, all the current approaches taken by the DFE in relation to ASF funding will be adopted.**

Funding must be earned in the way set out in the specific funding agreement, and funding rules related to that funding. You will not be paid for over-delivery from the under-delivery on your other allocations. You must not transfer funding between different funding agreements and the following budgets:

- ASF
- Level 3 free courses for jobs (FCFJ)
- Skills Bootcamp (where applicable)

We will review and monitor whether the ASF provision you provide represents good value for money. If we consider that funding is significantly more than the cost of providing education and training, we may reduce your funding after consulting with you.

All Learning Organisations will be treated equally and fairly. To aid transparency the value of grant allocations, contracts for services and sub-contracted provision will be published annually and updated in-year.

You must complete the resident's Unique Learner Number (ULN) field accurately to access Combined Authority funding.

You must ensure as part of your initial assessment, that you check the postcode where the resident will be living for the duration of their training. It must be within the GLCCA postcode area. You must also check that, on the first day of learning, the learner is aged 19 or older on the 31st August within the 2026 to 2027 academic year.

You must hold evidence to underpin any claims you make to assure us that you are using the funding appropriately. The Combined Authority retains the right to ask for sight of your evidence, spend or to require additional performance management information/evidence at any point over the lifetime of the funding agreement and up to a period of 6 years thereafter.

Failure to comply with Funding Rules could lead to action or intervention. The triggers for action and the type of action we may take are set out in our Performance Management documents and is in accordance with provisions in our Grant Agreements and Contracts for Services.

The Combined Authority's relationship with its Learning Organisation base will primarily be strategic rather than transactional. It will expect high quality provision, delivering measurable impact on the progression and outcomes for Combined Authority residents.

# 1. Who we fund

---

## 1.1 Residency

You must check the eligibility of a learner, including where in England they are resident, at the start of each learning aim and only claim funding for ASF for eligible learners. We will only fund **GLCCA residents** undertaking ASF provision subject to the requirements set out below.

## 1.2 Age

On the first day of learning, a learner must be aged 19 or older on 31 August within the 2026 to 2027 funding year to be GLCCA funded.

## 1.3 Duration

Learners will be eligible for ASF for the whole of the Learning Aim or programme if they are eligible for funding at the start, even if the duration is for over one year. You must reassess the learner for any further learning they start.

## 1.4 Potential issues

If an individual starts a learning aim or programme and is not eligible for funding, we will not fund their learning while they remain ineligible.

**You must not fund a learner who is unable to complete a learning aim or programme of study in the time they have available.**

## 2. Residency eligibility

---

Individuals will be eligible for the GLCCA funded ASF provision if the learning is taking place in England, and they are a GLCCA resident. The GLCCA resident postcodes can be found here: [Adult education budget \(ASF\) postcode files - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

**Individuals must also have been ordinarily resident in England for the last 3 years.** Further details to be confirmed after consultation. Unless otherwise stated, individuals must be ordinarily resident in the GLCCA area on the first day of learning to meet the residency requirements.

### 2.1 No recourse to public funds conditions

2.1.1 The learner's immigration permission in the UK may have a 'no recourse to public funds' condition. Public funds **does not** include education or education funding. Therefore, this does not affect a learner's eligibility, which must be decided under the normal eligibility conditions.

### 2.2 Individuals who are not eligible for funding

2.2.1 You must not claim funding for individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria set out in the [residency eligibility](#) section. Examples of individuals who do not meet the eligibility criteria include the following. Please note this list is not exhaustive:

- Are not residents of the GLCCA
- Those who are here without authority or lawful status
- Those who are resident in the UK on a student visa unless they are eligible through meeting any other of the categories described above
- Those who are in the UK on holiday, with or without a visa
- Any family member of a person granted a student visa, who has been given immigration permission to stay in the UK and has not been ordinarily resident in the UK for the previous 3 years on the first day of learning
- Those whose biometric residence permit or residence permit imposes a study prohibition or restriction on the individual

### 2.3 Learners in the armed forces

2.3.1 British armed forces personnel, Ministry of Defence personnel or civil and crown servants resident in the GLCCA, who meet the criteria in the [who we fund](#) section, are eligible for the GLCCA funded ASF where learning takes place in England.

2.3.2 Members of other nations' armed forces stationed in England, and residing in the GLCCA and their family members, aged 19 and over, are eligible for the GLCCA funded ASF, as set out in the [who we fund](#) section, if the armed forces individual has been ordinarily resident in England for the previous 3 years on the first day of learning. We will not fund family members that remain outside of England.

## 2.4 Fees and charging

2.4.1 You must not make compulsory charges relating to the direct costs of delivering a learning aim to learners we fully fund, including those with a legal entitlement to full funding for their learning. Direct costs include any essential activities or materials without which the learner could not complete and achieve their learning.

2.4.2 If a fully funded learner needs a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to participate in learning, you cannot charge them for this. If the learning is associated with the learner's employment, their employer is responsible for carrying out and paying for this check.

## 2.5 Qualifying days for funding

2.5.1 A learner must be in learning for a minimum number of days between their learning start date and learning planned end date before you can earn funding, including learning support. [You can access this information in the GLCCA Funding Rates and Formula Guidance.](#)

This does not apply where the learner achieves the learning aim.

## 2.6 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

2.6.1 A learner could have prior learning or attainment that has been previously accredited by an awarding organisation or could be formally recognised and count towards achievement of a qualification. If this is the case, you must:

- Reduce the funding amount claimed for the qualification aim by the percentage of learning the learner does not need
- Follow the policies and procedures set by the awarding organisation regarding recognition of prior learning, including any restrictions concerning where RPL or prior attainment may not be applied
- Ensure you have a robust internal RPL policy and appropriate resources to deliver RPL

2.6.2 We would not expect RPL or prior attainment to be used against the whole qualification, this is exemption rather than RPL.

2.6.3 You must not use prior learning to reduce funding for:

- English and maths qualifications up to and including Level 2 or
- Essential digital skills qualifications up to and including Level 1

2.6.4 If a learner enrolls on an Advanced Subsidiary (AS) level qualification followed by an A Level, you must reduce the funding claimed for the A Level to take account of the prior study of the AS Level and record this in the funding adjustment for prior learning field in the ILR. [More information is available in our ILR guidance.](#)

## 2.7 Breaks in learning

2.7.1 You and the learner can agree to suspend learning while the learner takes a break from learning. This allows the learner to continue later with the same eligibility that applied when they first started their learning.

2.7.2 We will not fund a learner during a break in learning.

2.7.3 You must record the date a learner starts a break in learning and the date they restart their learning in the ILR. Further guidance on recording breaks can be found in the [ILR provider support manual](#).

2.7.4 You must have evidence that the learner agrees to return and continue with the same learning aim; otherwise, you must report the learner as withdrawn. When the learner returns to learning, you must re-plan and extend the remaining delivery as required.

2.7.5 You must not use a break in learning for short-term absences, such as holidays or short-term illness.

## 3. What we will not fund

---

3.1 We will not fund:

- Qualifications, units or learning aims that are not listed on [find a learning aim](#) or on the [DfE list of qualifications approved for funding](#)
- Provision to learners in custody the [Ministry of Justice](#) funds prison education in England. Please note you can use your GLCCA funded ASF to fund individuals released on temporary licence. This can be either within prison establishments or at a Learning Organisation's venue.
- End-point assessment outside of apprenticeship standards, which is subject to Ofqual external quality assurance and regulated as a qualification
- Any part of any learner's learning aim or programme that duplicates provision they have received from any other source
- Training through the GLCCA funded ASF, where a learner is undertaking an apprenticeship and where that training will:
  - Replicate vocational and other learning aims covered by the apprenticeship standard or framework, including English and maths
  - Offer career-related training that conflicts with the apprenticeship aims

- o Be taking place during the apprentice's working hours. Where an apprentice has more than one job, working hours refers to the hours of the job the apprenticeship is linked to.
- o Repeat the same regulated qualification where the learner has previously achieved it, unless it is for any GCSE where the learner has not achieved grade 4 (C) or higher
- o A learner to sit or resit a learning aim assessment or examination where no extra learning takes place

DRAFT

## 4. Evidence

---

You must hold evidence to assure us that you are using the GLCCA funded ASF appropriately. Most evidence will occur from your normal business processes. You must make sure enrolments for the GLCCA funded ASF support your decision to claim funding and support the individual's case for consideration as ordinarily resident in the GLCCA, or any exceptions set out in the Residency [eligibility](#) section.

In line with [General Data Protection Regulations](#) (GDPR), you must record in the evidence pack what appropriate documentation you have seen, rather than take photocopies to prove eligibility.

[Annex D](#) contains the details on the evidence required.

DRAFT



## 5. GLCCA Funded ASF

---

GLCCA funded ASF includes support for 4 legal entitlements to full funding for eligible adult learners.

The legal entitlements for Level 2 and Level 3 follow the definition of fullness in the [full level 2](#) and [full level 3](#) sections respectively. A learner can only be fully funded for one vocational qualification from the entitlement qualifications list when exercising their legal entitlement. Appropriate information, advice and guidance should be given to a learner and the learner should be made aware of their entitlement rights and progression routes on completing an entitlement qualification.

These entitlements are set out in the [Apprenticeships, Skills and Children Learning Act 2009](#), and enable eligible learners to be fully funded for the following qualifications:

- English and maths up to and including level 2 for individuals aged 19 and over who have not previously achieved a GCSE grade A\* - C or grade 4 or higher or have been assessed as having an existing skill level lower than grade 4 (even if they have previously achieved a GCSE or equivalent qualification in English and maths) and/or
- First full qualification at level 2 for individuals aged 19 to 23, and/or
- First full qualification at level 3 for individuals aged 19 to 23
- Essential Digital Skills qualifications (EDSQs) OR Digital Functional Skills qualifications (FSQs), up to and including Level 1, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have digital skills assessed at below Level 1

Learners who meet the residency eligibility criteria in Section 1 and are below the earnings threshold criteria will also be fully funded for qualifications within policy entitlements that include:

- Free Courses for Jobs
- Level 2 local flexibility
- Tailored Learning (Community Learning)
- HGV and LGV licences
- Award in Education and Training
- Licenses to Practice – CSCS Card
- Care Leavers
- The King's Trust
- ESOL

### 5.1 Learning for Level 2 and below (including the full Level 2 entitlement)

5.1.1 We will fully fund learners who meet the residency eligibility, are aged 19 and over, and who meet the definition of being below the earnings threshold, to undertake learning:

- Up to and including Level 2 qualifications from the local flexibility offer and/or
- Qualifications from the full Level 2 legal entitlement qualification list

5.1.2 Learners aged 19 to 23 who have not previously achieved a full level 2 qualification must be fully funded, regardless of the earnings threshold, if they choose a qualification from the level 2 legal entitlement list. You must not charge them any course fees.

5.1.3 Learners who have exhausted their first full level 2 entitlement and do not meet the definition of being below the earnings threshold will be co-funded.

5.1.4 For the funding year 2026 to 2027, Learning Organisations can find the qualifications we have approved in the [DfE list of qualifications approved for funding](#).

## 5.2 Learning at Level 3 legal entitlement and the Level 3 Free Courses For Jobs

5.2.1 Learners aged 19 to 23 who have not previously achieved a full Level 3 qualification must be fully funded, regardless of the earnings threshold, if they choose a qualification from the Level 3 legal entitlement list. You must not charge them any course fees.

5.2.2 For the funding year 2026 to 2027, Learning Organisations can find the qualifications approved in the [DfE list of qualifications approved for funding](#).

5.2.3 Learners who meet the residency eligibility, have exhausted their first level 3 legal entitlement and do not meet the definition of being below the earnings threshold have the option of funding through an Advanced Learner Loan (ALL).

## 5.3 Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ) offer

5.3.1 For Learning Organisations with a 26/27 FCFJ allocation, Free Courses for Jobs is a targeted Level 3 offer to support adults who meet the definition of being below the earnings threshold.

The offer includes:

- Level 3 qualifications which will support the development of new skills for adult learners and improve the prospects of eligible adults in the labour market. In particular, eligible adults can now access fully-funded level 3 provision from the list of level 3 FCFJ qualifications available via the DfE list of qualifications approved for funding
- An uplift is payable at 2 different rates and follows the earnings methodology set out in the funding rates and formula document. This uplift should be used to support delivery of the Level 3 FCFJ offer

5.3.2 Only Level 3 qualifications included in this offer will attract an uplift. There may be additions to the list to ensure it meets the needs of the economy; we encourage Learning Organisations to check availability regularly.

5.3.3 We will fully fund learners who meet the residency eligibility as part of this offer where they:

- Are aged 19 or above on 31 August within the 2026 to 2027 funding year; and
- Enrol on the Level 3 FCFJ qualifications approved for funding and

- Meet the eligibility of being below the earnings threshold

5.3.4 You must not claim for GLCCA funded ASF funding where learners are already being funded through an Advanced Learner Loan (ALL), or a [skills bootcamp](#) (where applicable), for qualifications that are in the FCFJ offer. The criteria for ALL can be found in the [ALL Funding Rules](#).

5.3.5 To determine qualifications that are eligible for FCFJ funding you must use learning aims that are marked with:

- Category code 45: National Skills Fund Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs rate 1
- Category code 46: National Skills Fund Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs rate 2
- Category code 48: National Skills Fund Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs only
- Category code 56: Free Courses for Jobs MCA and GLA only flexible delivery qualifications.  
For short courses, you must also use:
- Category code 49: National Skills Fund Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs short qualification

The Category Code Effective to date must be after the delivery start date.

Note: 19-23 year olds are funded from the FCFJ ASF allocation

## 5.4 English, maths and digital for those aged 19 or older

### English and maths

5.4.1 We will fully fund eligible learners for the following qualifications:

- GCSE English and/or maths
- Functional Skills English and/or maths from Entry to level 2
- Stepping stone qualifications (including components, where applicable) in English and/or maths approved by DfE

5.4.2 To be eligible for the legal entitlement the individual must meet the residency eligibility in section 1, and:

- Be aged 19 or over, and
- Not have a GCSE in English or maths at grade 4 or above (or a qualification which is at a comparable or higher level) or have been assessed as having an existing skill level lower than grade 4 (even if they have previously achieved a GCSE or equivalent qualification in English and maths)

5.4.3 If a learner wants to retake GCSE English and maths qualification because they did not achieve a grade 4 (C), or higher, we will not fund the learner to only resit the exam.

5.4.4 You must not fund an apprentice for English and/or maths from the GLCCA funded ASF.

5.4.5 You must not enrol individuals on qualifications which are not necessary for progressing towards a GCSE or Functional Skill Level 2.

## Digital Skills

5.4.6 We will fully fund eligible learners, including those who are employed, for the following qualifications:

- Essential Digital Skills Qualification (EDSQ) up to and including Level 1
- Digital Functional Skills Qualifications (DFSQ) up to and including Level 1

5.4.7 To be eligible for the legal entitlement the individual must meet the residency eligibility in Section 1, and be:

- Aged 19 or over, and
- Assessed as having digital skills levels below Level 1

## General funding principles for English, maths and digital entitlement

5.4.8 We will fully fund non-regulated English, maths and digital for learners, including those learners assessed at pre-entry level with significant learning difficulties and/or disabilities as part of a personalised learning programme, where assessment has identified the learner cannot undertake the entitlements above.

You must:

- Carry out a thorough initial assessment to determine an individual's current level using current assessment tools based on:
- The national literacy and numeracy standards and core curriculums or DfE published English and Maths Functional Skills subject content

or;

- The national standards for essential digital skills or DfE published digital Functional Skills subject content
- Carry out an appropriate diagnostic assessment to inform and structure a learner's evidence pack to use as a basis for a programme of study

- Enrol the learner on a level above that at which they are assessed and/or of which they have prior attainment, and be able to provide evidence of this
- Deliver ongoing assessment to support learning
- Record the evidence of all assessment outcomes in the evidence pack

The assessments must place a learner's current skills levels within the level descriptors used for the RQF.

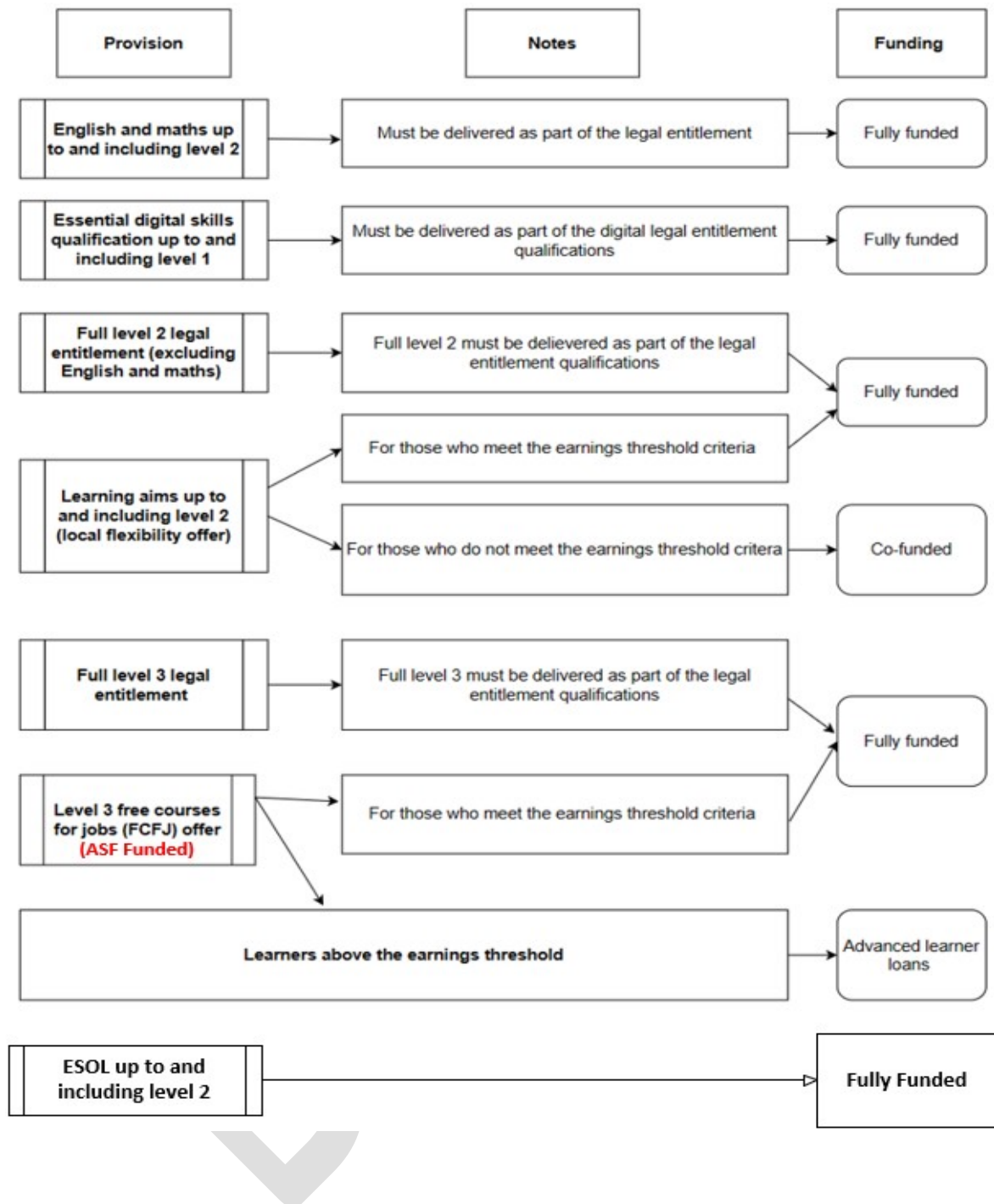
DRAFT

# GLCCA contribution charts **to be updated**

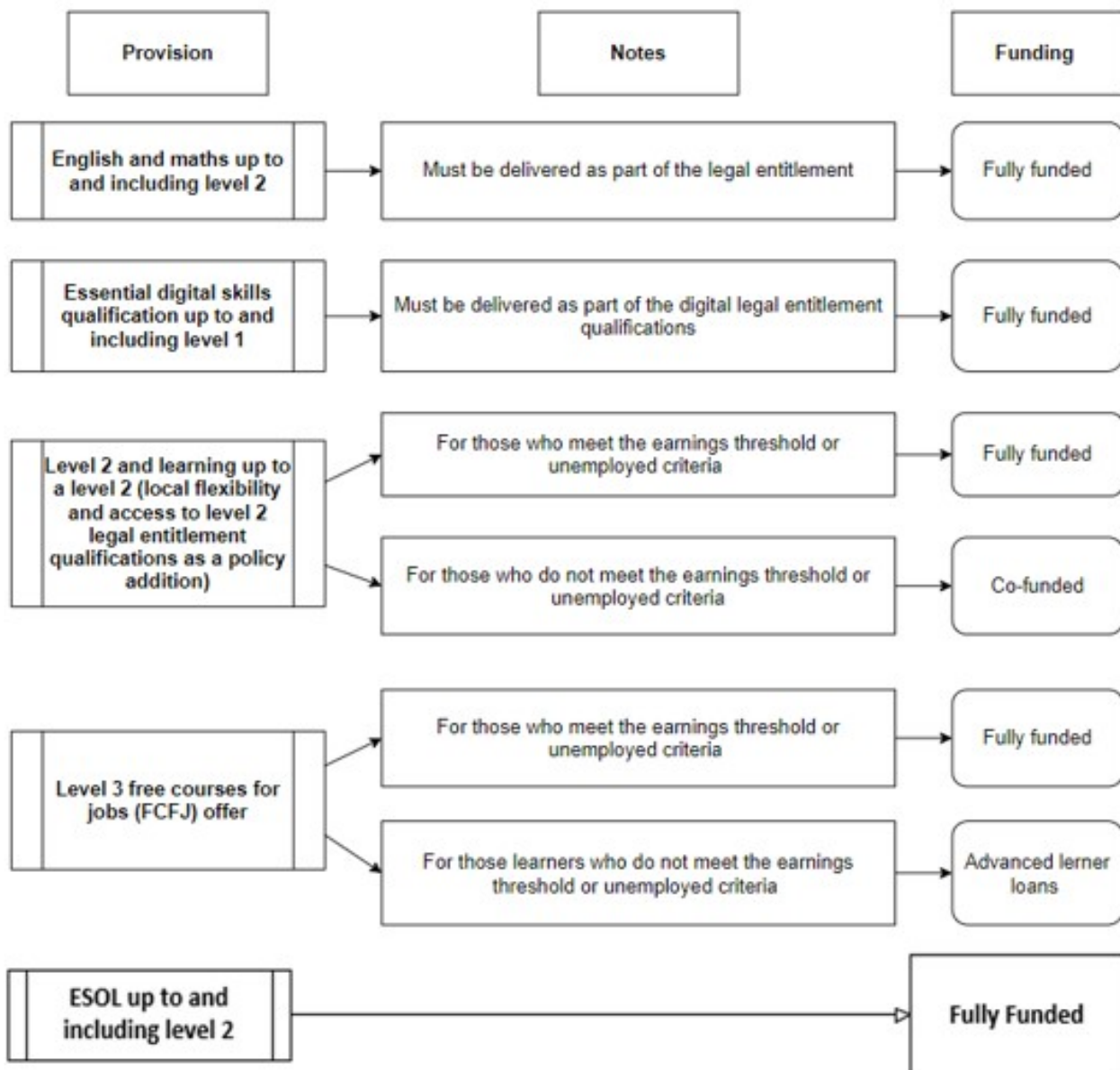
Charts 1 and 2 show the level of contribution for GLCCA funded ASF. You can find the text version of these charts in [annex D](#). The text in bold relates to either contents of this document or external links as shown below.

## Chart 1: 19 to 23-year-olds

DRAFT



## Chart 2: 24+





## 6. Unemployed

We will update the Universal Credit thresholds to align to any revisions made by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

**6.1 For funding purposes, we define a learner as unemployed if one or more of the following apply, they:**

- Receive Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), including those receiving National Insurance credits only
- Receive Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Receive Universal Credit (UC), and their take-home pay as recorded on their UC statement (disregarding UC payments and other benefits) is less than £952 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £1534 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner)
- Are released on temporary licence, studying outside a prison environment, and not funded by the Ministry of Justice

**6.2 Learning Organisations may also use their discretion to fully fund other learners if either of the following apply. The learner:**

- Receives other state benefits (not included in the list above) and their take-home pay (disregarding UC payments and other benefits) is less than £952 a month (learner is sole adult in their benefit claim) or £1534 a month (learner has a joint benefit claim with their partner),
- Is not receiving any benefits, wants to be employed, and you are satisfied identified learning is directly relevant to their employment prospects and the local labour market needs

## 7. Earnings threshold for full funding

7.1 We have introduced the earnings threshold as part of a new eligibility criteria that enables learners to be fully funded if they earn below £25,750. The policy entitlement includes learners who are unemployed, employed or self-employed. This threshold is specific to the GLCCA.

7.2 You must have seen evidence of the learner's gross annual wages in these circumstances. This could be a wage slip or a UC statement within 3 months of the learner's learning start date, or a current employment contract which states gross monthly/annual wages. Please note this is not an exhaustive list, but you must evidence your decision to award full funding to an individual who would normally be eligible for co-funding.

7.3 If the learner is unemployed and is claiming benefits you must complete the [Benefit Status Indicator \(BSI\)](#) to identify the learner is in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance (BSI 1) Universal Credit (BSI 4), or Employment and Support Allowance (all categories) (BSI 5).

## 8. Licences

**8.1** In addition to on-programme funding, the GLCCA will also pay the cost of the Construction Skills and Certification Scheme (CSCS) card where it is an occupational requirement, at a cost of up to £58 per learner. This will support unemployed learners to acquire all the necessary licences to practice in advance of accepting employment. Where this is funded evidence of actual progression into work will be required\*. In exceptional cases, the GLCCA may agree additional payment where the cost is above this amount. Please also see HGV and LGV Training below.

*In advance of delivery*, the cost breakdown associated with any licence must be discussed and agreed with the GLCCA. [See the Funding Rates and Formula and the ILR coding documents for full details.](#)

*\* See Provider Handbook for eligibility and evidence required*

## 9. HGV and LGV Training

### 9.1 HGV driver training flexibilities were developed to support an increase in HGV and LGV driver training.

This offer:

- Includes level 2 qualifications which will prepare learners for HGV and LGV licence acquisition for all vehicles up to category C and E (articulated)
- Includes additional qualifications that are approved for training in this sector throughout the 2026 to 2027 academic year
- Allows all eligible learners, fully funded and co-funded, to claim for the cost of HGV and LGV licences and medical Eligibility

The offer will be eligible to all learners aged 19+ who reside in a Greater Lincolnshire Combined Authority postcode and are enrolled on one of the targeted approved for funding level 2 qualifications listed in find a learning aim.

For learners, we will fund the first attempt only for:

- The HGV licence as part of a programme of training and
- The medical, at a cost of £61 per learner and/or
- A licence to upgrade from category C to category C+E

### 9.2 Claiming Funding of Additional elements

9.2.1 Unless specified as part of a bespoke offer, Learning Organisations must:

- Use learning aims that are marked with category code 50: HGV, to identify an approved qualification.

- Category code 51: HGV Medical for the additional learning aim to represent the HGV medical and
- Category code 52: HGV Licence, for the additional learning aim(s) to represent parts of the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) tests required to attain the licence, when learners undertake these elements
- Record an outcome of “Achieved” in the ILR where you have a recorded learning aims for the HGV licence and medical aim, to generate reimbursement funding for these activities
- Have criteria for how you will administer and distribute your funds
- Retain and provide evidence in the learner file confirming that you have verified the medical test and licence documentation and evidence from your accounts of the payment made to the learner and learner’s receipt of the funds as agreed with the Combined Authority

## 10. King’s Trust Team Programme

10.1 The King’s Trust Team Programme is a 12-week course designed to improve confidence, motivation and skills for eligible 16 to 25-year-olds. Each team recruits a mix of 16 to 25-year-olds of different abilities and backgrounds, including employees sponsored by their employer. We fund the team programme. Providers in partnership with the King’s Trust run and manage it on a local basis. To deliver the team programme, you must get approval from The [King’s Trust](#) before commencing delivery.

10.2 GLCCA will fund eligible learners aged 19 to 25 using the national DfE funded [funding methodology](#). Please also refer to The King’s Trust section in the [funding rates and formula guidance](#).

## 11. English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)

11.1 GLCCA is committed to providing learning for all to community cohesion and considers the best way to achieve this is through integrated learning.

11.2 ESOL qualifications are not fundable as part of the ASF learning at level 2 and below offer.

## 12. Care Leaver Support Fund

12.1 GLCCA will provide an enhanced package of support for Learning Organisations that deliver ASF funded training to Care Leavers aged 19-25 (*aged 19-25 as of 31/08/2026*) of up to £1,500 per Care Leaver and must be used for reasonable expenses that would support the learner to progress to higher levels of learning or employment.

The Support Fund can be claimed when a learner is studying a programme of learning at 60GLH or above. This should be claimed through the [EAS](#). The provider must keep evidence of expenditure in the same way they

would for general learning or learner support. The Authority advises providers to build this into their own Learning/Learner support policies.

Please see [Annex E](#) for full details.

## 13. Award in Education and Training

- 13.1 For 2026/27 GLCCA will fund level 3 Award in Education and Training (AET) to non-teaching staff.
- 13.2 Funding flexibility is intended to test different approaches to attracting new entrants into FE teaching who may otherwise not have the opportunity to train to teach.
- 13.3 Unemployed learners and employed learners who fall under the Low Wage Scheme threshold will be fully funded.
- 13.4 All other learners will be co-funded. During 2026/27, Learning Organisations will be able to use their professional judgement regarding eligibility of other categories of learners and propose full funding.
- 13.5 To claim full funding under this offer use Learning Aim Z000XXXX, Devolved Area Monitoring Codes XXX and the relevant FFI code for full funding or co-funding the enrolment.

## 14. Tailored Learning

- 14.1 Nationally as part of the new ASF, the term Tailored Learning brings together what was ASF Community Learning, formula-funded ASF Non-Regulated Learning (previously delivered through adult skills) and any new employer-facing innovative provision that is not qualification based. The primary purpose of Tailored Learning is to support learners into employment and to progress to further learning, in line with the overall purpose of ASF. It will, however, also support wider outcomes including using it to improve health and wellbeing, equip parents/carers to support their child's learning and develop stronger communities.
- 14.2 You have the flexibility to use your Tailored Learning funding in line with the ASF formula funded methodology (funding model 38), to meet local demand. This flexibility works one way, you cannot use your ASF formula funded allocation to fund additional Tailored Learning and we will not fund above the value stated in your contract.
- 14.3 You can use the amount of Tailored Learning funding (stated in your appendix 1) to deliver regulated provision to meet local demand. If you do deliver regulated learning, you must enrol learners following GLCCA funded ASF eligibility requirements set out in the GLCCA contribution [chart 1](#) and [chart 2](#).
- 14.4 You must not use Tailored Learning funding for learning that is:
- Eligible for funding through an advanced learner loan
  - Primarily or solely for leisure purposes. We define learning for leisure purposes as learning where the primary or sole intent of the learning is for leisure

14.5 Tailored Learning funding will be reconciled against the Tailored Learning allocation line at the end of the funding year. You must repay funding that has not been used for Tailored Learning or where its use cannot be evidenced.

14.6 You must include the use of your Tailored Learning funding to cover learning and learner support costs up to the value of your Tailored Learning allocation. If you do, you must:

- Claim for learning and learner costs through the final funding claim and follow the policy in line with the support funding section
- Record these costs in the learner's evidence pack and maintain evidence that support the costs for audit purposes

14.8.1 We will monitor Tailored Learning provision through the ILR and claim submissions and may require you to provide information on your delivery where it does not represent value for money.

14.9 You can support learners aged under 19 if they meet both of the following, they are:

- A parent, carer or guardian attending provision delivered through family learning
- Funded through Tailored Learning using funding model 11 in the funding model field (refer to ILR guidance for more information)

14.10 Tailored Learning courses are delivered and reported on the ILR under the following purpose types, please refer to the 2026 to 2027 ILR specification for further details:

- Engaging and/or building confidence
- Preparation for further learning
- Preparation for employment
- Improving essential skills (English, maths, digital)
- Equipping parents/carers to support children's learning
- Health and well-being
- Developing stronger communities

14.11 Learner outcomes of Tailored Learning courses are reported on the ILR.

14.12 The eligibility principles we apply to Tailored Learning provision are as follows:

- It must not be provision linked to UK visa requirements
- It must not be provision linked to occupational regulation unless there is an agreed concession in place
- It must not be learning, for example, induction to college, that should be part of a learner's experience
- It must not be used primarily or solely for leisure purposes
- It must not be a non-regulated version of a regulated qualification. That includes regulated qualifications that are not currently approved for funding
- It must not be above notional level 3

14.13 Where you are delivering Tailored Learning, you must ensure you have appropriate and robust quality assurance processes in place. For instance, you could follow the recognising and recording progress and

achievement (RARPA) cycle. Further [information on RARPA](#) is available from the Learning and Work Institute.

14.14 Learning Organisations must have a fair and transparent fees policy in place. Learning Organisations are asked to collect fee income from people who can afford to pay and use where possible to extend provision to those who cannot. Your fees policy must be available on your website and, where appropriate, in the venues where you deliver Tailored Learning.

## 15. Funding for developing innovative provision

15.1 Funding for developing innovative provision enables eligible Learning Organisations to earn up to **5%** of their ASF allocation on the development of innovative provision. The purpose of this flexibility is to encourage local innovation and to support eligible Learning Organisations to be able to develop new provision, in partnership with local employers and others.

15.2 We expect that provision developed using this flexibility reflects the priorities outlined in the local skills improvement plans.

15.3 You have the flexibility to use all, or some, of the additional 5% and you must use this flexibility to fund the development costs of establishing new provision. This includes:

- research and developments costs to support work with large employers and/or local SME/micro businesses to scope and develop non-accredited provision bespoke to that employer
- project management costs to support the costs of overseeing the project development and setting up of new non-accredited provision. It could also cover the staff costs of developing and preparing new qualifications for submission to DfE/awarding bodies approval processes
- training for the trainer developing training for teaching staff to be able to deliver provision in new and emerging fields such as green skills and artificial intelligence

15.4 You must be able to demonstrate that the above activity has been delivered and ensure you clearly document and retain records as evidence of the complete breakdown of costs that have been incurred and paid.

15.5 This evidence may well form part of the documentation comprised of your normal financial systems and processes which demonstrate clearly the different costs specifically spent from this funding such as direct costs (such as invoices, expenses), personnel costs (such as payroll, time records) and any indirect costs (how these have been calculated).

15.6 You must complete the funding claim. The relevant guidance won t be published until later in the year.

15.7 You must not use this flexibility to claim:

- Funding for learners, including those where new provision is being piloted
- For any capital costs, building/estates refurbishments, maintenance and restoration

## 16. Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

ASF does not fund learning for learners aged 19-24 who have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP). This provision must be funded using the DFE 16-19 funding methodology which is not available through the GLCCA.

## 17. Support funding

17.1 The GLCCA funded ASF's overarching aim is to support as many eligible adult learners as possible to access learning. Some learners will need additional support to start or stay in learning. Where you identify that a learner has a learning difficulty and/or disability, or a financial barrier, your GLCCA funded ASF allocation enables you to claim learning support and/or learner support funding to meet the additional needs of learners.

17.2 Support for learners undertaking Tailored Learning is funded from within the Tailored Learning allocation.

### 17.3 Learning support

17.3.1 Learning support is available to meet the cost of putting in place a reasonable adjustment, as set out in the [Equality Act 2010](#), for learners who have an identified learning difficulty and/or disability, to achieve their learning goal.

17.3.2 Learning support must not be used to deal with everyday difficulties that are not directly associated with a learner's learning on their programme.

17.3.3 You must:

- Carry out and document a thorough assessment to identify the learner's learning difficulty and/or disability
- Agree and record the assessment and outcome of your assessment in the evidence pack
- Record details of the reasonable adjustments required and how support will be planned and delivered
- Record and retain the appropriate evidence to demonstrate that the planned support has been delivered



- Confirm the continuing necessity and appropriateness of these reasonable adjustments on a monthly basis
- Report in the ILR that a learner has a learning support need associated with an identified learning aim, by entering code LSF1 in the Learning Delivery Funding and Monitoring field and entering the corresponding dates in the Date applies from and Date applies to fields. This does not apply to any non-formula Tailored Learning
- Learning support funding can only be claimed for each month in which reasonable adjustments are provided to the learner and where evidence of costs can be provided. For months in which no reasonable adjustments are necessary, or no costs have been incurred, a claim for learning support funding must not be made

17.3.4 All learning support claims must be reported in the ILR. To claim any costs that exceed the fixed monthly rate, up to 19,000 you must also use the [earnings adjustment statement \(EAS\)](#). For any costs over 19,000 please see the next section for exceptional learning support.

17.3.5 You must keep evidence of these additional costs in the evidence pack. You must only record the excess amount on the EAS, not the whole learning support cost, unless a learning aim is delivered in less than one calendar month. In this case you may claim the entire cost through EAS.

## 17.4 Exceptional Learning Support claims above £19,000

17.4.1 If a learner needs significant levels of support to start or continue learning and has support costs of more than 19,000 in a funding year, you can claim exceptional learning support (ELS) but only for the amount above 19,000. The amount up to 19,000 should be claimed through the monthly rate and any excess funding through the EAS. Learners aged 19 to 24 who require significant levels of support should have an EHC plan provided by their local authority and, therefore, would access funding from their local authority.

17.4.2 You must submit ELS claims at the beginning of the learner's programme, or when you identify the learner requires support costs more than 19,000 in a funding year, by completing and sending the [ELS claims document](#).

17.4.3 To claim exceptional learning support for a learner aged 19 to 24 you must confirm why the individual does not have an EHC plan. This should be a letter or email from the learner's local authority stating the reason(s) why the individual does not need an EHC plan.

17.4.4 When you claim exceptional learning support you must explain why you have claimed the amount you have, which would be linked to the learner's assessment and planned learning support claim. You must only claim amounts for your costs of providing the support to the learner and not include any indirect costs or overheads.



## 17.5 Learner support

17.5.1 Learner support is available to provide financial support for learners with a specific financial hardship preventing them from taking part/continuing in learning. Before you award support to a learner, you must identify their needs within the following categories.

- Hardship funding general financial support for financially disadvantaged learners to support participation learning
- 20+ childcare funding for learners aged 20 or older on the first day of learning who are at risk of not starting or continuing learning because of childcare costs
- Care to Learn top up for 19-year-olds
- Residential Access funding – to support DfE funded ASF learners (set out in the Who we Fund section) where they need to live away from home in order to access provision
- ICT devices and connectivity to support disadvantaged learners who cannot undertake online delivery
- Care leaver support fund

17.5.2 You must not claim more than 5% of your total learner support as administration expenditure.

17.5.3 You must document your process for managing your administration costs over the current funding year and record, report and retain evidence on spending for each of the categories. You must follow these rules and claim learner support using the appropriate method as set out below.

17.5.4 You must:

- Have criteria for how you will administer and distribute your funds; these must reflect the principles of equality and diversity and be available to learners and to us on request
- Assess and record the learner's needs, demonstrating the need for support. You must record this information and retain in the evidence pack
- Report the appropriate Learner Support Reason codes in the Learner Funding and Monitoring fields in the ILR. This does not apply to non-formula Tailored Learning
- Complete 3 funding claims throughout the year in line with funding claims guidance if you have a grant contract, otherwise record delivery through the earning adjustment statement each month if on a contract for services
- Consider the availability of other support for learners, for example from Jobcentre Plus
- Make it clear to learners it is their responsibility to tell the Department for Work and Pensions about any learner support they are receiving from you, as learner support payments may affect their eligibility to state benefits
- Use ASF support fund (or loans bursary where appropriate) to support specific provision funded by either ASF or ALL where a learner is on 2 courses at the same time.

17.5.5 You must not use learner support funds for any of the following:

- Essential equipment or facilities if the learner is eligible for full funding with the exception of the items covered in the first clause of the [hardship](#) section and the flexibilities in [ICT devices and connectivity](#) section

- A learner in custody or released on temporary licence
- A learner carrying out a higher education course or learning aims fully funded from other sources
- To pay attendance allowances or achievement and attendance bonuses

## 17.6 Hardship

17.6.1 You can use hardship funds for the following:

- Course-related costs, including course trips, books and equipment (where costs are not included in the funding rate)
- Support with domestic emergencies and emergency accommodation provided by others, or by providing items or services or cash direct to the learner, this can be in the form of a grant or repayable loan provided by you
- Transport costs (but not make a block contribution to post-16 transport partnerships or routinely fund transport costs covered in the local authority's legal duty for learners of sixth-form age)
- Examination fees
- Accreditation fees, professional membership fees and any fees or charges due to external bodies
- Your registration fees
- To support continuing traineeship learners, including the work placement element

17.6.2 In exceptional circumstances, you can use hardship funds to assist with course fees for learners who need financial support to start or stay in learning. If an asylum seeker is eligible for provision, you may provide learner support in the form of course-related books, equipment, cash payments or a travel pass.

## 17.7 20/+ Childcare

17.7.1 You can only use childcare funding to pay for childcare with a childminder, provider or childminder agency, registered with Ofsted.

17.7.2 You must not use childcare funding to:

- Fund informal childcare, such as that provided by a relative
- Set up childcare places or to make a financial contribution to the costs of a creche

17.7.3 You must not use childcare for those aged 20 years or older to top up childcare payments for those receiving Care to Learn payments.

## 17.8 19-year old learners - Care to Learn

17.8.1 Learner support may also be used to provide further help with childcare costs for 19-year-old learners in receipt of Care to Learn whose costs exceed the weekly maximum rates for that scheme. The top up may only be applied to childcare provision [eligible under the Care to Learn scheme](#) rules.

The institution must hold evidence that the maximum amount is being paid under Care to Learn to confirm that a top up is required. Any top up paid must be made in line with Care to Learn guidance and paid directly to the childcare provider.

## 17.9 Residential Access funding

17.9.1 You can use residential access funding to support DfE funded ASF learners who meet eligibility criteria in the Who We Fund section, where they need to live away from home, for example to access specialist provision which involves a residential element, or to support learners who cannot access provision locally.

17.9.2 You must:

- set out the criteria and procedures for considering and agreeing applications for support from your residential access funds
- only pay for travel costs for learners who are awarded residential access funding in exceptional circumstances
- only claim residential access funding for the period the learner is resident, this could be in accommodation you own or manage or other accommodation which you have agreed to fund in line with your criteria
- ensure you evidence the costs that make up your claim represent value for money for the local area
- publish your rates where you have your own residential facilities

## 17.10 ICT devices and connectivity

17.10.1 You can support disadvantaged learners who are undertaking classroom or blended learning to continue to participate via online learning where the learner does not have:

- Internet access at home, and/or
- A suitable device, for example a laptop or tablet, to complete the necessary online course work

17.10.2 You must secure value for money when purchasing IT devices and/or internet access including:

- Deploying any unused devices before you purchase new ones
- Exploring options to access low cost second hand or recycled devices
- Avoiding entering long term contract arrangements
- Holding a record of actual costs for any IT devices and/or internet access bought for this purpose and make this available to us, if asked

17.10.3 IT devices you purchase must only be loaned out to learners and returned at the end of their learning aim to allow them to be re-used by other learners. Learners must sign a declaration, confirming:

- They will return the device when their online learning aim(s) is complete, or if they leave before completing their learning
- They will return the device in the same condition in which they received it

17.10.4 You must maintain an up-to-date record of the loan and return of devices to learners.

17.10.5 You must record the following evidence in the learners evidence pack:

- The outcome of the assessment undertaken to identify the learner's individual needs
- The learner declaration referred to above

## 18. Job outcome payments

18.1 The earnings method principles changed for grant funded providers starting aims on or after 1 August 2024. In previous years 20% of funding was held back and only earned on achievement of the learning aim; this will continue for procured contracts. This 20% element will continue to be earned on completion for grant-funded providers for new starts from 1 August 2024. We therefore refer to 'achievement /completion' and 'achieves/completes' to reflect the difference. For more information please refer to the [funding rates and formula guidance](#).

18.2 For fully funded learners who are unemployed we will pay 50% of the completion/achievement payment if they start a job before completing/achieving the learning aim. If the learner then completes/achieves the learning aim, we will pay the remaining achievement payment. The following conditions apply:

- the learner must provide you with evidence through a declaration, that they have a job for at least 16 hours or more a week for 4 consecutive weeks
- where the learner was claiming benefits relating to unemployment, they must also declare that they have stopped claiming these

# 19. Funding Arrangements

## 19.1 Grant Funded Providers Funding Arrangements

For Grant funded Learning Organisations with an ASF block grant, your grant agreement will state the maximum amount of ASF provision you can deliver between 1 August 2026 and 31 July 2027.

As a Grant funded Learning Organisation, you will have submitted and we will have approved a Learning Plan for the 2026/27 Academic Year. The plan includes estimates of volumes, mix of provision, and spend across the full range of provision you expect to deliver and reconciles to the total value of your Grant allocation. The Learning Plan will underpin your performance management dialogue.

In Year 1 (Academic Year 2026/27), the Grant can be used only to fund new starts for Level 3 Free Courses for Jobs, Adult Skills, non-formula funded Tailored Learning (where applicable to you) and learner support.

Learning Organisations operating under grant arrangements will be paid on profile. The payment profile for the funding year 1 August 2026 to 31 July 2027 is set out below and includes Tailored learning:

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6 *	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12
Monthly Profile	8.333 %	8.333 %	8.333 %	8.333 %	8.333 %	8.333 %	8.333 %	8.333 %	8.333 %	8.333 %	8.333 %	8.333 %
Cumulative Profile	8.33%	16.67 %	25.00 %	33.33 %	41.67 %	50.00 %	58.33 %	66.67 %	75.00 %	83.33 %	91.67 %	100%
Minimum Delivery Performance expectations			25%			60%			70%			100% (at R14)

\* Mid year review point. Please refer to the Performance Management Section for further details on this.

Any required reconciliation will take place after R14.

## 19.2 Contract for Services Funding Arrangements

Learning Organisations who have secured a contract with the Combined Authority will be subject to its risk-based performance management arrangements.

You will be paid on actual delivery, one month in arrears, for the 2026/27 Academic Year. Your payments will be based on your actual delivery and reconciled against your approved Learning Plan, on a monthly basis. At no stage will the cumulative payments made to an Contracted Learning Organisation breach the maximum value of the contract. Any over delivery will not be funded without a variation to the contract. These contract variations must be discussed with your Project Officer prior to a business case being submitted for approval for a formal variation to the contract value.

## 19.3 Payment Arrangements for all Learning Organisations

In advance of the start of the Academic Year, you will be provided with an expected payment profile based on your agreed Learning Plan underpinned by your Grant/Contract. Learning Organisations will be paid monthly via invoice (to be agreed with finance).

For Grant Funded Organisations, this will be in line with your flat profile. For those Organisations with Contracts for Services this will be in line with actual delivery as shown on the ILR, and we will run payment reports monthly on receipt of the Occupancy Report. You will then be asked to invoice us for the amount due.

All manual claims through the Earnings Adjustment Statement will be paid monthly. You will need to ensure that you have cash flow available to accommodate these payment terms. You will be advised in writing in advance of any in-year changes being made to the value of your Grant or Contract. We reserve the right to withhold payments in cases of underspend or cease payments should you be in breach of your Contract/Grant.

Invoices are to be submitted to [invoices@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:invoices@lincolnshire.gov.uk), in pdf format, referencing the appropriate Purchase Order No, in accordance with the individual Contract terms and conditions. Learning Organisations are required to follow up any invoice queries directly with LCC Suppliers. They can be contacted via [suppliers@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:suppliers@lincolnshire.gov.uk)

Payments terms and conditions are included in the Grant Funding Agreement or the Contract for Services.

Non-compliance of the terms and conditions of the Contract with regards to items including appropriate completion and submission of paperwork, providing learner case studies, etc. will result in the suspension of monthly payments until outstanding actions have been completed.

## 19.4 Earnings Adjustment Statement

The Earnings Adjustment Statement (EAS) is the mechanism for Learning Organisations to claim funding for eligible activity that cannot be recorded through the Individualised Learner Record (ILR). This includes specific categories of learner support, exceptional delivery costs and authorised claims.

The EAS is not a mandatory return unless you are making a claim for one or more of the following categories:

- Excess Learning Support
- Authorised Claims
- The King's Trust Programme
- Learner Support: 19+ Hardship
- Learner Support: Care Leavers' Support Fund
- Learner Support: 20+ Childcare
- Learner Support: Residential Access Fund
- Learner Support: IT Devices and Connectivity Costs
- Learner Support: Administration Expenditure

Where you make an EAS claim, you must submit an EAS file to the Authority monthly, alongside your ILR return. You must not wait until the final funding claim point to supply this data.

Once an EAS claim has been submitted, you must continue to submit EAS data in all subsequent returns for the remainder of the academic year. The EAS is a cumulative return, and each file must include the totality of claims made to date. **We will pay each claim monthly.**

If an EAS return is submitted with previously claimed data removed, the Authority may recover any payments associated with that data. Subsequently, if EAS data is not included in your final R14 ILR return, it will not be paid.

There is no standard EAS template provided by the Authority. You must use the standard format as defined by the DfE and ensure all claims are accurate, clearly evidenced and aligned with Authority rules.

You must retain full supporting evidence for each EAS claim, including:

- Learner eligibility
- Description of support provided, or cost incurred
- Dates of activity and related documentation
- Authorisation or agreement (where required)

All EAS claims are subject to performance management, monitoring and audit by the Combined Authority. Claims without sufficient evidence or which fall outside of published rules may be rejected and may lead to funding recovery.

The Authority may, in line with its strategic priorities, authorise additional or exceptional EAS use to support local flexibilities, pilot programmes or targeted interventions. These must be preapproved in writing and appropriately referenced within submitted EAS files.

## 20. Performance Management

---

We will apply our principles of performance management consistently to all Learning Organisations but with reference to the risk profile of our agreement with you.

We will use the Combined County Authority funding and performance management approach for your ASF funding to make sure learning provision is high quality and that you are progressing against your Learning Plan profile.

We will assess your ability to deliver education and training to the required standard. This assessment will include but not be limited to, Ofsted grades, minimum quality standards, financial health, financial management and control, outcomes, destinations, employer and learner feedback, and your delivery against your contract and Learning Plan profile. We expect all Learning Organisations with a direct award or contract from GLCCA to hold the Matrix Standard for information, advice and guidance (IAG) services.

If at the performance management points, we have evidence that you will not deliver your contract value in full, we may reduce it to a level that is in line with your actual in-year delivery. We will make these reductions in line with these rules at the mid-year point.



## 21. Contract/Grant Performance Management Review (PMR)

---

The purpose of the PMR is to review your performance for individual grants or contracts with you. All relevant aspects of performance will be assessed against grant or contractual requirements and delivery plans. The usual frequency of the Reviews will be quarterly; however, this can be varied when appropriate. It may mean the Combined County Authority holds more frequent reviews in the initial stages of the grant or contract.

The PMR meeting will focus on the ongoing achievement of performance levels and the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning, and is likely to cover the following areas:

- Funding allocation performance
- Action points outstanding from previous meeting
- Performance including outputs such as expenditure and outcomes such as participation of targeted demographic groups, community cohesion, sustainable employment, qualification progression, wider outcomes, further learning, links to priority sectors and pay progression
- Expected future performance based on information available
- Review of any Action Plans – including performance expectations agreed at the last meeting
- Subcontractor and supply chain performance
- Good news stories/case studies
- Collaborative working
- Challenges and issues causing concern
- GLCCA / DfE policy changes

If data shows that you may not achieve the performance levels set out in your grant/contract, we will discuss with you whether an Action Plan is required. The Action Plan will be used to capture all agreed actions for performance improvement including incremental performance and pipeline data that may lead to improving performance levels in line with the agreement/contract.

If the remedial actions captured on the Action Plan are unable to lift your performance to meet the delivery profile performance levels, you will be invited to a meeting to discuss performance and receive a management letter to request specific performance improvement. At this stage you will be informed that formal action could be taken if performance does not improve.

In addition, as part of our financial assurance work, we will continue to place significant assurance on the national systems and processes operated by DfE. We will however expect you to be fully compliant with our funding rules.

The funding in your funding agreement or contract value can be used to fund both learning and support for new starts but not for carry in residents in year 1 (Academic Year 26/27). You must ensure you have funding available to ensure all residents you enrol can complete their programmes.

Allocations and performance management decisions are subject to affordability within the available budget at the time. The Combined County Authority has no responsibility to pay any amount over and above your



allocated funding amount for the Academic Year. If you deliver more than your contract value, you do so at your own risk, unless agreed in advance and in writing with the Combined Authority.

Any future allocation will be subject to government policy, budget availability, your delivery and performance against your ASF contract or grant value and the delivery agreed with you as part of the contract or grant award. Performance management of all ASF provision will be undertaken whether Grant or a Contract.

If we increase your contract value through a performance-management process, you must use that extra funding to deliver the exact type of learning provision for which you requested and are awarded funding.

You cannot move funds between ASF and any other funding stream.

The Combined County Authority reserves the right to increase or decrease the number of performance management points we operate, in line with delivery against the funding available for ASF and reserves the right to adjust your contract value if there is a risk that demand for ASF may exceed the budget available.

The mid year review point will be based on data submitted as part of R06. Performance at this point may lead to an adjustment to the maximum contract value. We will work closely with both grant organisations and procured provision to reallocate funding from underperforming Learning Organisations and seek to reallocate to those who can provide a clear rationale for meeting regional skills priorities.

We reserve the right to re-profile, reconcile or hold payments at any point during the funding agreement period. As part of the Performance and Management process, we are setting a cut-off date of May (R09), for in-year ASF contract reductions, where these may affect end-of-year outturn.

## **21.1 Grant funded in-year performance management**

The expectation is that there will be a collaborative review meeting quarterly. If the risk profile of the grant funded Learning Organisation changes in year, then we reserve the right to change the performance management arrangements we have with you. Any decision to increase/decrease Grant allocations will be discussed in advance of any changes being made, following the mid-year review.

## **21.2 Grant Funded end of year performance reconciliation**

The GLCCA cannot pay for any under or over delivery against agreed contract values for any funding stream.

For Grant-funded Learning Organisations, at the end of the 2026 to 2027 funding year, the GLCCA will apply a 3% reconciliation tolerance. Where your overall delivery of your GLCCA-devolved ASF is at least 97% of your Grant allocation, the GLCCA will not make any year-end adjustment and you will not have to pay back any unspent funds.

Where a Grant-funded provider fails to achieve 97% or above, the GLCCA will reconcile 100% of the shortfall.

The GLCCA calculation of whether a provider has delivered 97% will include delivery confirmed through a review of their ILR, EAS information and their in-year overall performance.

## 21.3 Contract for services funded Learning Organisations – in year management

We will calculate the value of your actual delivery using the latest validated ILR and EAS data you provide. We will pay you the Learner Support component on the standard national profile set out in [Appendix 1](#) of your contract. We will reconcile this funding at the end of the year based on the funding claims you provide. We will recover under-delivery. **For Learner Support you must provide monthly funding claims setting out your actual delivery to date and, where appropriate, provide a forecast for the remainder of the funding year.**

To support funding and performance, Contract for Services Learning Organisations will be expected to submit a funding forecast as part of their PMR. Learning Organisations will be expected to provide a realistic forecast.

We reserve the right to re-profile, reconcile or cease payments at any point during the funding agreement period. Any over payments will be corrected in the month following discovery of the issue. If any funds are recovered, we may make this available to fund growth requests.

Any provider with identified funding under-performance at performance management points, must submit a plan setting out how they intend to address under-delivery.

Please note; to minimise overpayments and reconciliation, R13 payments will be withheld while the provider data cleanses end-of-year claims. Any remaining monies owed to a provider will be paid at R14, additionally, overpayments will be reconciled as part of the R14 reconciliation.

Learning Organisations must ensure that data is updated regularly to ensure overpayments are minimised. We will use the following tolerances at key performance points during the year.

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6 *	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	Final Return
Tolerance to Learning Plan Profile				15%				10%				5%	0%

## 21.4 Changes to your ASF Programme Learning Plan/funding allocation

Learning Organisations are issued with a Learning Plan/s that form part of the Combined Authority's overall ASF programme. These agreed plans contain a range of data and targets relating to the proposed course offer, including e.g., course location, numbers of enrolments expected, sector subject area, guided learning hours and targeted learner breakdowns.

GLCCA aims to give Learning Organisations as much flexibility within their agreed Learning Plans so that they can respond to local employer skills needs.

Learning Organisations can adjust the volumes within the agreed priority sector subject areas, and within the overall maximum funding value that has been agreed for their Learning Plan(s) and are expected to keep their Project Officer informed of these.

For any other amendments, eg an increase, reduction or adjustment of provision types, changes between sector subject areas, and for any change relating to sub-contracting, approval must be obtained in advance from the Project Officer.

In the academic year 2026/27, the deadline for any changes to the financial value of learning plans will be 30<sup>th</sup> April 2027. At the performance management review at the end of Quarter 2 (Period 6), we will be looking at the annual allocation for all Learning Organisations: which could mean a reduction or increase in the allocation according to the performance of the previous 6 months and expectations for the next 6 months. If we decide to reallocate funding, we will have a transparent process to invite and assess growth requests. We will expect all requests for growth to be supported by evidence of expected demand and alignment to our Employment and Skills Strategy.

The GLCCA will consider in-year growth and flexibility requests subject to affordability and subject to such requests addressing the priorities. The GLCCA will consider the request in line with the following principles: The Local Skills Improvement Skills Plan (LSIP) and Employment and Skills Strategy will frame priorities for funding.

The integrity of the specification and contract award criteria set out in the skills portfolio commissioning and procurement framework.

We will consult with other stakeholders as appropriate to validate requested changes in the provision or identify gaps in localities.

We will evaluate financial risk and exposure.

Additional allocations and growth will only be considered where Learning Organisations are meeting the current delivery plan and outcomes.

This applies to all Lots and contracts being delivered and therefore underperformance on one Lot or contract could result in the GLCCA deciding not to approve additional allocations or growth to minimise risk.

Funding repurposed from underperformance may be offered to Learning Organisations who meet the following criteria:

- You have evidence of demand for learning that meets local priorities and delivers tangible outcomes in regard to sustainable employment and progression routes for employed residents.
- You have a good track record of accurate forecasting and delivery. Please note you will be judged on the accuracy of your forecasts for any change requests.
- You are not under notice for failure of inspection, Cause for concern or serious breach of contract under remedy notice.
- And one of the following applies:
  - You have a Grant Funding Agreement and are progressing well against your Learning Plan and the priorities set out in the Strategic Skills Plan or
  - You have a Contract for Services, are progressing well against your Learning Plan and you are on profile against the financial profile at the performance management points.

In the instances where growth is awarded, the Learning Organisation's Learning Plan will be updated to reflect the growth.

The full details of the process and an application form can be found on our website. These should be discussed with and submitted to your Project Officer.

## 21.5 Free Courses for Jobs

The GLCCA expects Learning Organisations to be proactive and responsive to market requirements but it is important that Learning Organisations continue to ensure they work within the performance parameters for FCFJ funding.

All Learning Organisations which have a FCFJ allocation in their Learning Plan are required to submit a request for any changes to FCFJ qualifications that have been previously approved as part of the Learning Plan. This will be subject to approval and should be requested via the Project Officer in the first instance.

In year, Learning Organisations may wish to request that qualifications are added to the FCFJ funding list. If a provider wishes to do this, please contact your allocated Project Officer.

## 21.6 Contract Compliance

If a Learning Organisation is in breach of a contract, the Council will issue a Notice of Concern as a formal first step. The Notice of Concern, to document the dispute, will include an action plan that must be implemented before it is withdrawn. Where an action plan is not met, next steps include escalation to senior management and may include suspension of funding or termination of the contract.

## 22. Subcontracting – applicable to Grant funded Organisations only

---

All sub-contracting arrangements must be agreed, in writing, before any delivery of Combined County Authority funded ASF activity is undertaken.

The Combined County Authority will undertake checks on sub-contracting to ensure that appropriate controls have been designed and implemented by a lead learning organisation to demonstrate that:

There is effective oversight and management of public funds and

ASF funds are used to best effect, to maximise the value to benefit the learner

We define a delivery subcontractor as a separate legal entity that has an agreement with you to deliver any element of the education and training the GLCCA fund. A separate legal entity includes companies in your group, other associated companies, and sole traders. It also includes residents who are self-employed or supplied by an employment agency, unless those residents are working under your direction and control, in the same way as your own employees.

You must take your own legal advice about the impact of the Procurement Act 2023 on your recruitment of delivery subcontractors and have this advice available for inspection by us on request.

Your governing body or board of directors and your accounting officer (senior responsible person) must agree your policy for delivery subcontracting. You must publish your policy for delivery subcontracting on your website.

You are responsible for all the actions of your delivery subcontractors connected to, or arising out of, the delivery of the services which you subcontract.

You must only use delivery subcontractors:

- If you have the knowledge, skills and experience within your organisation to successfully procure, contract with and manage those subcontractors and can evidence this with the CVs of relevant staff;
- That your governing body/board of directors and your accounting officer (senior responsible person) determine as being of high quality and low risk, and provide written evidence confirming this; and
- If you have robust procedures to ensure subcontracting does not lead to the inadvertent funding of extremist organisations.

### 22.1 Selection and procurement of Sub-Contractors

You will be required to outline any subcontracting plans you anticipate carrying out prior to commencement of your grant. Any subcontracting plans must be agreed with us before any subcontracts are signed.

You cannot subcontract more than **25%** of your contract value, except for Local Authorities.

You must have the Combined County Authority's agreement (in writing) before proceeding with subcontracting. All sub-contractors must be disclosed on the Sub-contractor Declaration Form. For transparency, a list of sub-contractors and their funding values will be published on the Combined County Authority website.

Changes to your subcontracting plans after you have entered into a grant agreement with us must be agreed with us in advance.

When appointing delivery subcontractors, you must avoid conflicts of interest and you must write to us through your Combined County Authority Project Officer about any circumstances (for example, where you and your proposed subcontractor have common directors or ownership) which might lead to an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

You must carry out your own due diligence checks when appointing delivery subcontractors and have both the process and the results available for inspection by us. You must not use a delivery subcontractor's presence on a public register or database, as an indicator that they are suitable to deliver to your specific requirements.

You must not enter new subcontracting arrangements or increase the value of your existing arrangements if any of the following circumstances apply. These conditions will continue until we are satisfied that the concerns have been addressed and the circumstances below no longer apply:

- If Ofsted has rated your leadership and management as inadequate
- If the outcome of your annual financial health assessment is inadequate unless we have provided written permission in advance.

You must not increase the value of delivery subcontracts agreed to over **25%** of your contract value without written permission from the Combined Authority.

## 22.2 Appointing a Subcontractor

You must not enter into any agreement for Brokerage.

You must only award contracts for delivering provision funded by the Combined Authority's ASF to legal entities. If the legal entity is a registered company, it must be recorded as active on the [Companies House](#) database.

You must not award a subcontract to any organisation if:

- it has passed a resolution (or the court has made an order) to wind up or liquidate the company, or administrators have been appointed; or
- its statutory accounts are overdue

You must make sure that learners supported through subcontracting arrangements know about you and your delivery subcontractor's roles and responsibilities in providing the learning.

You must have a legally binding contract with each delivery subcontractor that includes all the terms set later within this document. You must ensure that there is a continuity of Services for existing learners and you must have a contingency plan in place for learners if:

- you need to withdraw from a subcontract arrangement;
- a delivery subcontractor withdraws from the arrangement, or
- a delivery subcontractor goes into liquidation or administration

You must make sure that the terms of your subcontracts allow you to:

- monitor the delivery subcontractor's activity;
- have control over your delivery subcontractors; and
- monitor the quality of education and training provided by delivery subcontractors.

## 22.3 Terms that you must include in your contracts with delivery subcontractors

You must make sure your delivery subcontractors:

- Meet the requirements set out in our Funding Rules
- Provide you with ILR data so your data returns to us accurately reflect your subcontractors' delivery information;
- Give us, and any other person nominated by us, access to their premises and all documents relating to the Combined Authority's ASF and other provision co-funded by the ASF;
- Give you enough evidence to allow you to:
- Assess their performance against [Ofsted Further Education and Skills Inspection Handbook](#).
- Incorporate the evidence they provide into your self- assessment report, and guide the judgements and grades within your self- assessment report
- Always have suitably qualified staff available to provide the education and training we fund through the ASF;
- Ensure safeguarding and the PREVENT duty are implemented
- Co-operate with you to make sure there is continuity of learning if the subcontract ends for any reason;
- Tell you if evidence of any irregular financial or delivery activity arises; irregular activity could include, but is not limited to:
  - Non-delivery of training when funds have been paid
  - Sanctions imposed on the delivery subcontractor by an awarding organisation
  - Inadequate Ofsted grade
  - Complaints or allegations by residents, people working for the delivery subcontractor or other relevant parties, and allegations of fraud

## 22.4 Monitoring

You must manage and monitor all your delivery subcontractors to ensure that high-quality delivery is taking place that meets our Funding Rules.

You must carry out a regular and substantial programme of quality assurance checks on the education and training provided by delivery subcontractors, including visits at short notice and face-to-face interviews with staff and learners. The programme must:

- Include whether the learners exist and are eligible;
- Involve direct observation of initial guidance, assessment and delivery of learning programmes;

The findings of your assurance checks must be consistent with your expectations and the delivery subcontractor's records.



## 22.5 Evidence

You must hold and retain evidence to assure us that you are using the funding appropriately. Most evidence will occur naturally from your normal business process.

You must make sure enrolments for GLCCA funded ASF support decisions to claim funding and support the individual's case for consideration as resident in GLCCA region

In line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), you must record in the evidence pack what appropriate documentation you have seen, rather than take photocopies to prove eligibility.

## 22.6 Second-level subcontracting

You must not agree the use of any delivery subcontractor where this would require you to subcontract education and training to a second level. All of your delivery subcontractors must be contracted directly by you.

## 22.7 Requesting subcontracting arrangements

Prior to the commencement of your grant, you must submit your subcontracting plan for the delivery year to us. You may not subcontract without our prior written approval

You must also update and reconcile your subcontracting plan if your subcontracting arrangements change during the year. You may not make changes to your subcontracting plan without our prior written approval.

## 22.8 Distributing income between you and your delivery subcontractors

Your governing body or board of directors must review your delivery subcontracting funding retention and charges policy. Your accounting officer must sign the policy.

You must publish your delivery subcontracting funding retention and charges policy on your website before entering into any subcontracting agreements for each funding year.

As a minimum, you must include the following in your delivery subcontracting funding retention policy:

- Your contribution to improving your and your delivery subcontractor's quality of teaching and learning
- The typical percentage range of funding you retain to manage delivery subcontractors, and how you calculate this range. We will consider a retention of **up to 15%** of funding to manage delivery subcontractors as a maximum cap and would not expect Learning Organisations to retain more than this.
- Any support delivery subcontractors will receive in return for the fee you charge
- Any oversight and management of delivery which you will carry out with the funding you retain
- If appropriate, the reason for any differences in retention amounts or support provided to and management and oversight of different delivery subcontractors
- Payment terms between you and your delivery subcontractors; the timing of payments in relation to delivery and timescale for paying invoices and claims for funding received



- How and when you communicate and discuss your policy with current and potential delivery subcontractors
- Timing for policy review (which should be done annually) and
- Where you publish your policy.

You must also tell us the actual level of funding paid and retained for each of your delivery subcontractors. You must include the following in your published delivery subcontracting funding retention and charges information:

- Name of each delivery subcontractor
- the [UK Learning Organisation Reference Number \(UKPRN\)](#) of each delivery Subcontractor
- Contract start and end date for each delivery subcontractor;
- Funding we have paid to you for ASF delivery by each delivery Subcontractor in that funding year
- GLCCA funding you have paid to each delivery subcontractor for ASF Delivery in that funding year
- GLCCA funding you have retained in relation to each delivery Subcontractor's ASF delivery for that funding year and

If appropriate, GLCCA funding each delivery subcontractor has paid to you for services or support you have provided in connection with the Subcontracted delivery.

# Annex A: Devolution of adult education functions

As a devolved authority GLCCA has the responsibility for funding ASF to its residents. Details of all powers and funding that have been devolved to individual areas can be found through the [local government association website](#).

## Annex B: GLCCA contribution charts text version

Lists 1 and 2 are the text version of charts 1 and 2 and show the level of GLCCA funded ASF.

### Chart 1: 19- to 23-year-olds

- English and maths for those aged 19 to 23 up to and including level 2; Must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement; Fully funded
- Essential digital skills qualifications up to and including level 1; Must be delivered as part of the digital legal entitlement qualifications; Fully funded
- First full level 2 entitlement (excluding English & maths); First full level 2 must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement qualifications; Fully funded
- Learning aims up to and including level 2 (Local flexibility offer); For those who meet the earnings threshold criteria and have exhausted their first full level 2 legal entitlement; Fully funded. For those who do not meet the earnings threshold criteria; Co-funded
- First full level 3 legal entitlement; First full level 3 must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement qualifications; Fully funded
- Level 3 free courses for jobs (FCFJ but funded via ASF) offer; For those who meet the earnings threshold criteria and have exhausted their legal entitlement; Fully funded. Learners above the earnings threshold; advanced learner loans

### Chart 2: 24+

- English and maths up to and including level 2; Must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement; Fully funded
- Essential digital skills up to and including level 1; Must be delivered as part of the legal entitlement qualifications; Fully funded

- Level 2 and learning up to level 2 (local flexibility and access to L2 legal entitlement qualification as a policy addition); For those who meet the earnings threshold criteria; Fully funded. For those who do not meet the earnings threshold; Co-funded
- Level 3 free courses for jobs (FCFJ) offer; For those who meet the earnings threshold criteria; Fully funded. For those who do not meet the earnings threshold criteria; [advanced learner loans](#)

## Annex C: Qualifications

### Full Level 2 Qualification

Full level 2 is the level of attainment which, is demonstrated by:

- a GCSE in 5 subjects, each at grade 4 (C) or above, or
- a Technical Certificate at level 2 which meets the requirements for the 16 to 19 performance tables

Please refer to the [qualification downloads - list of qualifications approved for funding](#) on GOV.UK or email [qualifications.approval@education.gov.uk](mailto:qualifications.approval@education.gov.uk) if you need advice on a previous qualification's designation.

### Full level 3 Qualification

Full level 3 is the level of attainment which is demonstrated by a:

- General Certificate of Education at the advanced level in 2 subjects
- General Certificate of Education at the AS level in 4 subjects
- QAA Access to Higher Education (HE) Diploma at level 3
- Technical, or applied general qualification at level 3, which meets the requirements for the 16 to 19 performance tables
- Core maths at level 3

Please email [qualifications.approval@education.gov.uk](mailto:qualifications.approval@education.gov.uk) if you need advice on a previous qualification's designation.

For new linear AS and A levels, where a learner enrolls on an AS qualification and continues with further study to take the A level qualification in the same subject, you must record both the AS and A level in the ILR. The AS learning aim will be funded separately to the A level learning aim.

### Approved qualifications

Where you deliver regulated qualifications and/or their components, you must ensure they are [approved for DFE funded ASF](#) and available on [find a learning aim](#).

[Qualifications and public funding](#) provides information on qualifications that are no longer approved for funding.

Where you deliver approved qualifications and/or their components you must ensure that learners are registered for the qualifications and/or component in line with the awarding policies and procedures. You must not pre-register learners a significant period in advance of the learner starting the qualification.

We will fund qualifications that are linked to occupational regulation/licence to practise. You can find more information about these qualifications at the [qualifications website](#).

Before delivering a component, you must check with the awarding organisation they provide a learner registration facility, and the learner can achieve it alone or as part of accumulating achievement towards a qualification.

If the [UK ENIC](#) has confirmed the authenticity of a qualification gained overseas and confirmed it is comparable/compatible with a regulated qualification in England, currently part of the level 2 and level 3 [legal entitlement](#), the individual will be deemed to have achieved their first full level 2 and/or level 3 qualification.

You must provide accurate unique learner number (ULN) information to awarding organisations and ensure all information you use to register learners for qualifications is correct. You can find more information in the [Learner Records Service](#) guidance.

## Annex D: Evidence

### Evidence Pack

The evidence pack must contain evidence to support the funding claimed and must be available to us if we need it.

Evidence in the evidence pack must assure us that the learner exists.

The learner must confirm information they provide is correct when it is collected.

If the time spent in learning is short, the level of evidence in the evidence pack would reflect this.

Where you hold information centrally, you only need to refer to the source.

If applicable, the evidence pack must confirm the following:

- all information reported to us in the ILR, EAS, funding claims if applicable, and all supporting evidence to substantiate the data that you report
- your assessment and verified evidence of eligibility for funding and a counter signed record of the evidence the learner has provided to support their eligibility for funding

- copies of all assessments and diagnostics undertaken to determine a learner's requirements
- evidence and information on prior learning that affects the learning or the funding of any of the learning aims or programme
- for personalised learning programmes, for example, Non-Regulated Learning aims, full details of all the aspects of the learning to be carried out, including supporting evidence of the number of planned hours reported in the ILR
- a description of how you will deliver the learning and skills and how the learner will achieve
- the supporting evidence about why you have claimed funding and the level of funding for a learner
- details and evidence of any learner or employer contribution
- support needs to be identified, including how you will meet these needs and the evidence of that
- that learning is taking or has taken place (including a work placement for continuing traineeship learners) and records are available
- if applicable, a learner's self-declaration as to what state benefit they claim
- a learner's self-declaration on their status relating to gaining a job; and
- all records and evidence of achievement of qualifications, learning aims or continuing traineeship learners. This must be available within 3 months of you reporting it in the ILR

Where the learner is unemployed, this must include a record of what you have agreed with them, including the relevance of the learning to their employment prospects and the labour market needs.

If a subcontractor delivers any provision to the learner, the provider must clearly identify the subcontractor. This must match the information reported to us in the ILR.

## Confirmation and signatures

The learner must confirm the information is correct when it is collected. You must have evidence of this, which can include electronic formats.

We accept electronic evidence, including electronic/digital signatures. Where evidence is electronic, you must have wider systems and processes in place to assure you that learners exist and are eligible for funding.

Both electronic and digital signatures are acceptable. We do not specify which should be used, only that a secure process to obtain and store signatures is followed.

An electronic signature is defined as any electronic symbol or process that is associated with any record or document, where there is an intention to sign the document by any party involved. An electronic signature can be anything from a check box to a signature and/or a digital signature is where a document with an electronic signature is secured by a process making it non-refutable. It is a digital fingerprint which captures the act of signing by applying security to a document. Usually documents which have a digital signature embedded are extremely secure and cannot be accessed or amended easily.

Where an electronic or digital signature is being held, from any party for any reason, you must ensure it is non-refutable. This includes the definitions of both wet and dry signatures. Systems and processes must be in place to assure to us the original signature has not been altered. Where any document needs to be renewed, and a new signature taken, it must be clear from when the new document takes effect, and both must be held.

You must keep effective and reliable evidence. You are responsible for making the evidence you hold easily available to us when we need it.

## Starting, participating and achieving

You can only claim GLCCA funded ASF when directly related learning starts. **This would not include enrolment, induction, prior assessment, diagnostic testing, or similar activities.**

For your direct delivery, and any subcontracted delivery, you and where relevant, your subcontractor(s) must have direct centre approval and where appropriate, direct qualification approval from the respective awarding organisation for the regulated qualifications you are offering.

Delivery of the qualification (including learner registration with the awarding organisation) for direct delivery and any subcontracted delivery must be in line with the qualification specification and guidance set out by the relevant awarding organisation.

You must have evidence that the learning took place, and the learner was not certificated for prior knowledge. Where the learning is certificated, you must follow the relevant awarding organisation's procedure for claiming the relevant certificate(s) and ensure the learner receives them. You must evidence this has happened in the evidence pack.

## Leaving learning

You must report the learning actual end date in the ILR for a learner who leaves learning as the last day that you can evidence they took part in a learning activity.

## Individualised learner record (ILR)

You must accurately complete all ILR fields as required in the [2025 to 2026 ILR specification](#) even if they are not required for funding purposes.

**In addition, you must apply specific GLCCA ILR coding as detailed in the GLCCA ILR Guidance 2026/27 – to be provided in due course.**

Failure to correctly code activity in the ILR may result in a loss of GLCCA funding.

The ILR must accurately reflect the learning and support (where applicable) you have identified, planned and delivered to eligible learners. You must not report inaccurate information that would result in an overstatement of the funding claimed.

Where your data does not support the funding claimed, we will take action to correct this, and we could recover funds you overstated.

## Self-declarations by learners

All self-declarations must confirm the learner's details and describe what the learner is confirming for requirements set out in this document.

If a learner self-declares prior attainment, you must check this in the [personal learning record \(PLR\)](#) and query any contradictory information with the learner. The PLR will not necessarily override the learner's self-declaration.

# Annex E: 19-25 Care Leavers Support Fund

As part of our commitment to support Care Leavers, the Combined Authority will fund a Care Leavers' Support Fund for young people aged 19-25 under the care of our constituent councils. Its purpose is to enable Care Leavers to overcome any financial barriers to learning. For the 2026/27 academic year, Combined Authority funded ASF Learning Organisations will be able to utilise funding from their ASF Learner Support Fund allocation to provide financial support to Care Leavers enrolled on a qualification programme of 60GLH or longer, of up to £1,500. Learning Organisations must ensure they have a clear and accessible policy or statement setting out how they will use the Support Fund, the eligibility criteria they use and any terms and conditions they set. Learning Organisations may utilise the Care Leavers' Support Fund to incentivise participation, attendance, attainment, and progression to higher levels of learning or employment.

### Eligibility for the Care Leavers' Support Fund will be:

An official letter from a named social worker at Lincolnshire County Council or North Lincolnshire Council or North East Lincolnshire Council confirming the learner is a Care Leaver. If the learner is not resident within the Combined Authority but in the care of our constituent councils, they will only receive financial support from the support fund if they are enrolled onto a Youth Offer programme at a Combined Authority contracted ASF Learning Organisation.

Access to the Support Fund is for learners studying a programme of learning at 60GLH or above. **This should be claimed through the EAS.**

### Age

A learner must be aged 19 or over but under 25 at 31 August 2026 to be eligible for support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund in the 2026 to 2027 academic year.

These learners aged 19+ can receive support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund only while they attend education or training through Combined Authority contracted ASF Learning provision, if their eligibility continues, and their institution considers they need the support to continue their participation.

### Purpose of the Support Fund

The purpose of the Care Leavers' Support Fund is to raise awareness of adult education as well as remove barriers to participation for this important group of learners.

Learning Organisations can access additional funding to support those learners who meet the criteria, and who have a financial need. The defined groups reflect that these learners are unlikely to be receiving financial assistance from parents or carers, so may need a greater level of support to enable them to continue to participate. Learners should be awarded the amount of support they need to participate based on an assessment of the types of costs they have and not be automatically awarded £1,500. Institutions must ensure learners are eligible for the financial support for defined vulnerable groups in each year they require support.

Learners who are not funded or eligible for ASF are not eligible for support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund.

### **Postcode**

To be eligible for support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund 19-25, learners must either be in the care of our constituent councils or a resident within a Combined Authority postcode. For example, Care Leavers under the care of non-constituent councils are eligible for the financial support, if they are a GLCCA resident. In this case, a letter from the social worker confirming the learner's status as a Care Leaver and address within the GLCCA will be necessary to confirm eligibility.

Care Leavers' Support Funds must not be awarded to learners enrolled at another institution, where that institution also receives public funding for the learner.

Learners aged 19 – 25 enrolled on higher education qualifications are not eligible for support under this scheme.

### **Eligible education provision**

To qualify for support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund, eligible learners must be participating in provision of over 60GLH, that is subject to inspection by a public body that assures quality (for example Ofsted). The provision must be funded by ASF. Therefore, Apprentices and employer-funded schemes are ineligible for funding from the support fund.

Care Leavers who meet the criteria, and who have a financial need, can apply, via their Learning Organisation, for financial support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund. Institutions must ensure learners are eligible for the support fund in each year they require support. Care Leavers are unlikely to be receiving financial assistance from parents or carers, so may need a greater level of support to enable them to continue to participate and progress.

We encourage institutions to provide support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund by making payments in kind where possible, for example breakfasts, lunches, equipment etc. While Learning Organisations do have flexibility to provide vouchers or small petty cash payments, based on the Care Leaver's individual circumstances, Learning Organisations must not make Support Fund payments as regular payments for living costs. This is out of scope of the Support Fund and any such payments would be subject to the Social Security Amendment (Students and Income-related Benefits) Regulations 2000.



## **Evidence of eligibility**

Learning Organisations must obtain proof that learners meet the criteria for support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund and that they fully meet the definition of a Care Leaver. Institutions should ask for evidence from each learner and retain copies for audit purposes.

## **Claiming funding**

All Combined Authority funded Learning Organisations may use their Learner Support Fund allocation to award payments to Care Leavers as well as fund Care Leaver related activity (ie planning, recruitment, etc). Funding will be claimed via the Earnings Adjustment Statements and the manual funding claims at the end of the following ILR return points: R04, R06, R09, R12 and R14.

Learning Organisations may vire funds into the Care Leaver Support Fund from their main ASF allocation, as necessary. In future years, a notional allocation will be made to support planning, based on past take-up.

As a matter of principle, no eligible Care Leaver should be denied financial support from the Care Leavers' Support Fund in the 2026/27 academic year, due to insufficient allocation of Learner Support Funds. In the event a Combined Authority contracted Learning Organisation has insufficient allocation to pay Care Leaver Support Funds, a request for additional funding may be made in-year.

## **ASF Evaluation**

The impact of this policy will be evaluated, and all participating Learning Organisations must contribute to the evaluation. This will also enable Learning Organisations to propose improvements to maximise impact.

## **Case Studies**

Subject to learner consent, we will request case studies to demonstrate the impact of the Care Leavers' Support Fund.

# Glossary

Term	Description
20+ childcare	A category of learner support to assist learners aged over the age of 20 who are at risk of not starting learning or leaving learning due to issues in obtaining childcare.
Advanced learner loan	<a href="#">Advanced learner loans</a> are available for individuals aged 19 or above to undertake approved qualifications at levels 3 to level 6, at an approved provider in England. Advanced learner loans give individuals access to financial support for tuition costs similar to that available in higher education and is administered by Student Loans Company.
Annual gross salary	Gross salary is the total income before any deductions are removed from that amount. This total income is usually described as an annual salary, and it is the total amount an employee will receive for work completed before tax of national contributions are deducted.
ASF funding methodology	The funding methodology for individuals aged 19 and over, participating in ASF learning.
Benefit Status Indicator (BSI)	Complete the <a href="#">Benefit Status Indicator (BSI)</a> to identify the claimant is in receipt of Jobseeker s Allowance (BSI 1) Universal Credit (BSI 4), or Employment and Support Allowance (all categories) (BSI 5).
Break in learning	When a learner is not continuing with their learning but has told you beforehand that they intend to resume their learning in the future.

Term	Description
Care to Learn	A Department for Education scheme to assist young parents under the age of 20 with the childcare costs that may form a barrier to them continuing in education.
Components of regulated qualification	A subset of a qualification, which could be a unit.
Continuing learners	Learners who commenced learning in a previous funding year and remain in learning as of 1 August 2026.
Devolution of adult education functions	The devolution of adult education functions refers to the transfer of certain Secretary of State functions in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 to specified Mayoral Combined Authorities by way of orders made under section 105A of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, and the delegation of those functions to the Mayor of London under section 39A of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, in relation to their areas.
Digital Entitlement	The study of EDS qualifications for learners who have digital skills assessed at below level 1. Qualifications that are designated up to and including level 1 are Essential Digital Skills qualifications and digital Functional Skills qualifications.
Earnings adjustment statement (EAS)	The form Learning Organisations need to fill in to claim funding that cannot be claimed through the Individualised Learner Record (ILR).
Earnings Threshold	The earnings threshold is a new eligibility criteria, that enables learners to be fully funded if they earn below than 30,491.

Term	Description
Economically inactive	People who are not involved in the labour market including early retirees, carers and the long-term sick
Education health and care (EHC) plan	An EHC plan replaces statements of special educational needs and learning difficulty assessments for children and young people with special educational needs. The local authority has the legal duty to secure the educational provision specified in the EHC plan, that is, to ensure that the provision is delivered.
European Economic Area (EEA)	The European Economic Area, abbreviated as EEA, consists of the Member States of the European Union (EU) and 3 countries of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway; excluding Switzerland). The Agreement on the EEA entered into force on 1 January 1994. Please refer to appendix A for more information.
European Union	A list of member states is available on the <a href="#">EU website</a> .
Employment status (formerly employed)	The main types of employment status are: worker employee self-employed and contractor director office holder More information on <a href="#">employment status</a> is available.
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)	The study of English by speakers of other languages.

Term	Description
GLCCA funded ASF	Funding you can claim from GLCCA for delivery of ASF eligible provision to individuals set out in the <a href="#">who we fund</a> section.
Evidence pack	A collection of documents and information brought together to form a single point of reference relating to learning that is taking place. This must provide evidence to prove the learner exists, is eligible for funding, the planned learning to be provided, and that learning has been delivered.
Exceptional learning support	Learning support funding to meet the costs of putting in place a reasonable adjustment for a learner who requires more than 19,000 in a funding year.
Find a learning aim	<a href="#">Find a learning aim</a> provides online services to find the latest information on available qualifications, Non-Regulated Learning, apprenticeship standards, T Levels and units. Standards will show you information on funding, dates and common components. Qualifications and units show you funding streams for courses and the last date learners can start.
Full level 2	<p>The following qualifications are designated full at level 2:</p> <p>General Certificate of Secondary Education in 5 subjects, each at grade C or above, or grade 4 or above</p> <p>a Technical Certificate at level 2 which meets or has previously met the requirements for 16 to 19 performance tables</p>

Term	Description
Full level 3	<p>The following qualifications are designated full at level 3:</p> <p>General Certificate of Education at the advanced level in 2 subjects</p> <p>General Certificate of Education at the AS level in 4 subjects</p> <p>QAA Access to Higher Education (HE) Diploma at level 3</p> <p>Technical or applied general qualification at level 3 which meets or has previously met the requirements for 16 to 19 performance tables</p> <p>Core maths qualification at level 3</p>
Full or co-funding Indicator (FFI)	Indicates whether a learning aim is fully funded or co-funded in Adult Skills or Other Adult Funding.
Functional skills	Applied practical skills in English, maths and digital that provide the learner with the essential knowledge, skills and understanding to enable them to operate effectively and independently in life and work.
Funding agreement	The agreement between the GLCCA and Learning Organisations who receive funding for education and skills training.
Funding model (11 and 38)	Identifies the funding methodology we apply to submission of finalised ILR data. For ASF funding, Funding Model 11 (Tailored Learning) and 38 (Adult Skills) are used, noting model 11 is non-formula funded (i.e ILR data does not generate a funding rate and is paid on monthly profile) and model 38 is formula funded. More information is available in the <a href="#">2025 to 2026 ILR specification</a>
Funding year	The GLCCA s adult funding system operates on a funding year basis, which starts on 1 August and finishes on 31 July.

Term	Description
General Data Protection Regulation	The GDPR is retained in domestic law as the UK GDPR, but the UK has the independence to keep the framework under review. The UK GDPR sits alongside an amended version of the DPA 2018.
Hardship	Within learner support, a category of support to assist vulnerable and disadvantaged learners to remove barriers to education and training.
Individualised learner record (ILR)	The primary data collection requested from Learning Organisations for further education and work-based learning in England. The government uses this data to monitor policy implementation and the performance of the sector. It is also used by organisations that allocate funding for further education.
ILR specification	The <a href="#">ILR Specification</a> is the technical documents, guidance and requirements to help Learning Organisations collect, return and check ILR and other learner data.
Job outcome payments	Payments made for learners who are unemployed at the start of learning who cease learning to take up a job.
Learner residency	<p>We use the term resident or residence in this document for different purposes.</p> <p>Residence in the UK, EU and EEA has specific definitions in education law, and this is set out in the residency eligibility section.</p> <p>Following the devolution of adult education functions, there is a new emphasis on residence in England, in determining and evidencing eligibility for GLCCA funded ASF - see who we fund and evidence sections.</p>
	<p>This means the permanent residency of an individual in the GLCCA region (i.e. not a temporary address for duration of learning taking place), immediately prior to enrolment determines eligibility for GLCCA funded ASF.</p>

Term	Description
Learner support	Funding to enable Learning Organisations to support learners with a specific financial hardship that might prevent them from being able to start or complete their learning.
Learning aim	Statements that describe the overarching intentions of a course.
Learning aim reference number	The unique eight-character code used to identify a specific learning aim.
Learning delivery monitoring (LDM)	A code used as part of the ILR to indicate participation in programmes or initiatives.
Learning planned end date	The date entered onto the individualised learner record (ILR) when the learner is expected to complete their learning.
Learning support	Funding to enable Learning Organisations to put in place a reasonable adjustment, set out in the <a href="#">Equality Act 2010</a> , for learners with an identified learning difficulty and/or disability to achieve their learning goal.
Legal Entitlements	<p>GLCCA funded ASF includes support for 4 legal entitlements to full funding for resident eligible adult learners. These entitlements are set out in the <a href="#">Apprenticeships, Skills and Children Learning Act 2009</a> and include:</p> <p>English and maths, up to and including level 2, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have not previously attained a GCSE grade A* - C or grade 4, or higher</p> <p>first full qualification at level 2 for individuals aged 19 to 23, and/or</p>



Term	Description
	first full qualification at level 3 for individuals aged 19 to 23 essential digital skills qualifications, up to and including level 1, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have digital skills assessed at below level 1
Leisure Learning	Defined as learning where the <b>primary or sole</b> intent of the learning is for leisure. This applies to curriculum intent and to the learner's purpose for undertaking the learning. For example, a learner may participate on a course within the learning aim Creative Arts to improve their confidence, and another to improve their well-being. Similarly, a learner may participate on a course within the learning aim volunteering, active citizenship to develop employability skills, another to contribute to community life.
Local flexibility	Regulated qualifications, and/or their components, that we fund, which is not part of the English and maths, or level 2 or level 3 legal entitlement offer. All regulated that is available for funding through the flexible local offer is listed on <a href="#">find a learning aim</a> .
Non-Regulated Learning	Learning which is not subject to awarding organisation external accreditation in the form of a regulated qualification. It may be designed, delivered and certificated by a provider or another organisation. This could include: independent living skills engagement and confidence building employability skills labour market re-entry essential skills (English, maths, digital)
Ofqual	The <a href="#">Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation</a> , which regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in England.

Term	Description
Ordinarily resident	For funding purposes, a person who normally lives in the United Kingdom, are allowed to live there by law, and return there after temporary trips outside the country.
Personal learning record (PLR)	A database that allows individual learners access to their past and current achievement records. These can be shared with schools, colleges, further education training Learning Organisations, universities or employers.
Policies	Alongside to the legal entitlements the GLCCA have policy entitlements allowing full funding for residency eligibility learners, over 19 years old, and meet the earnings threshold criteria, these include: level 2 and below, local flexibility, free courses for jobs, work placements, HGV, King's Trust, Tailored Learning
Recognising and recording progress and achievement (RARPA)	The Learning and Work Institute have published <a href="#">updated RARPA Guidance</a> . This comprises a clear framework designed to support learners through the learning process, identifying key outcomes. It provides a robust approach to quality assurance and improvement of non-regulated provision with a focus on self-assessment that supports standards acceptable to the Office of Standards in Education (Ofsted). You can access further information from <a href="#">The Learning and Work Institute</a> .
Recognition of prior learning (RPL)	An assessment method that considers whether a learner demonstrates that they can: meet the outcomes for a qualification or a component of a qualification through knowledge, understanding, or skills they already have and so do not need to undertake a course of learning for that component or qualification
Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)	The RQF provides a way of understanding and describing the relative level and size of qualifications. The RQF, operated by Ofqual, is a single regulatory framework containing a range of general, technical and professional qualifications.

Term	Description
Residential Support	Support provided under learner support to learners receiving specialist provision, which involves a residential element, or to support learners who cannot receive provision locally.
Sector-based work academy programme (SWAP)	Sector-based work academy programme is a DWP scheme that offers pre-employment training, work experience placements and a guaranteed job interview for recipients of Jobseeker s Allowance (JSA), Universal Credit (all work-related requirements group) or Employment and Support Allowance.
Self-declaration	A process where the learner can confirm something through his or her own signature.
Skills Bootcamp	A skills bootcamp is a bespoke employer-led level 3 to 5 programme, designed to meet skills needs within the economy. Following a procurement process, the skills bootcamp programme began in August 2022.
Start of learning	The date on which learning begins. We do not consider enrolment, induction, diagnostic assessment, or prior assessment to be part of learning.
State benefits	State benefits are contributions, both financial and non-financial, made by central and local government to individuals in certain circumstances to meet their day-to-day living needs.
Study programme	Study programmes are for learners aged 16 to 19 and cover all levels up to level 3. Funding is for each learner, rather than for each qualification and can only have one core aim at a time.

Term	Description
Tailored Learning	For 24/25 Tailored Learning is to be used for Community Learning activity only and FM11 is to be used. All other non-regulated aims will remain formula funded and FM38 is to be used.
Unique learner number	A 10-digit number used to match a learner s achievement to their personal learning record (PLR).
Work placement	A placement with an employer in a workplace setting as part of a continuing learner s offer.
Young people s funding methodology	The funding methodology for individuals aged 16 to 19 (and those aged 19 to 24 with an EHC plan). You can access <a href="#">16 to 19 funding methodology</a> on GOV.UK.

This is a live document.

It is presented to the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority's Employment and Skills Board on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2025 as a live draft, and further amendments will be made before it is approved at the meeting of the Authority on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025.

# Adult Skills Fund Strategic Skills Plan

*The information in this report and accompanying evidence will be assessed by the Department for Education to give assurance that the budget will be effectively administered after it is devolved. The preparation of processes to meet the 'readiness conditions' has been led by Lincolnshire County Council, an established and experienced deliverer and commissioner of the Adult Skills Fund, working in partnership with North Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire Council.*

## Contents

Intentionally blank for now

DRAFT

# Introduction

## What is the Strategic Skills Plan?

This Strategic Skills Plan (SSP) explains how the Adult Skills Fund (ASF) and Free Courses for Jobs Fund (FCFJ) will operate once devolved to the Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA).

The ASF incorporates the tailored learning fund, previously known as the community learning fund. (Unless stated otherwise in the report, where it says ASF, please assume this intended to include FCFJ and tailored learning).

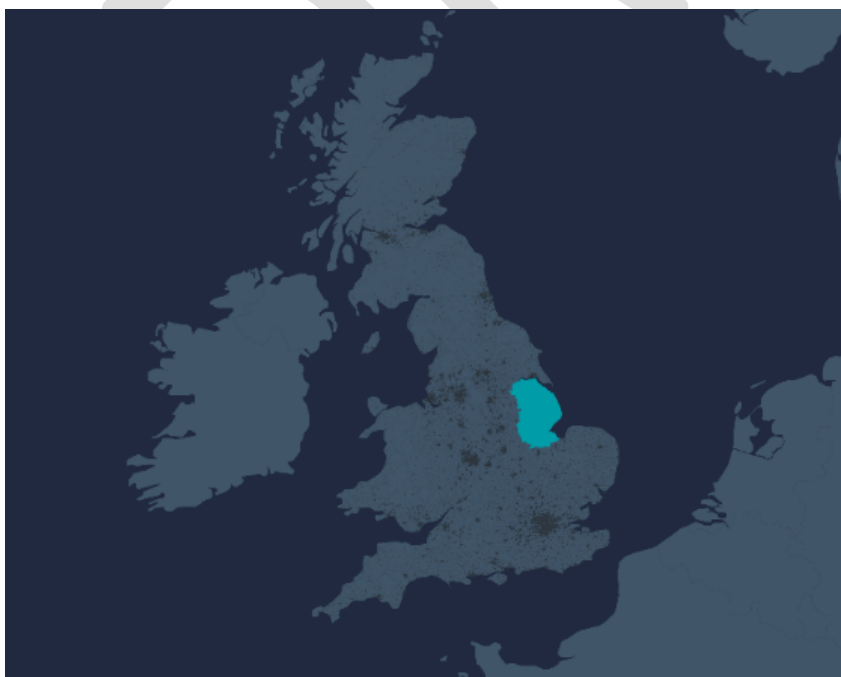
The Department for Education (DfE) will confirm the amount to be devolved in February 2026 and GLCCA will take control of the budget from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2026. The budget is expected to be in the region of £17m - £19m a year.

This plan sets out the intended purpose of the fund and how it will be used to support our residents and our growth ambitions in Greater Lincolnshire.

## The Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority

The Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) is governed by a main board responsible for overseeing strategic decision-making and ensuring that devolution powers are used effectively to benefit the region.

Alongside the main board, three specialist boards will focus on areas critical to Greater Lincolnshire's growth and prosperity: Transport, Employment and Skills, and Business and Infrastructure. These boards will bring together local leaders, industry experts, and stakeholders to develop targeted policies, drive investment, and deliver tangible improvements



The Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority (GLCCA) was established on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and held its inaugural meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025. A mayor was elected on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025. It covers the administrative boundaries of Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire.

Website: [Home – Greater Lincolnshire CCA](#)

## Adult Skills Fund Responsibilities after Devolution

- Determining funding priorities in line with local strategic plans
- Setting and publishing funding rates and rules within DfE parameters
- Allocating funding via grants or procurement in line with legal requirements
- Determining contracts and conditions of funding
- Managing contracted providers and payment mechanisms

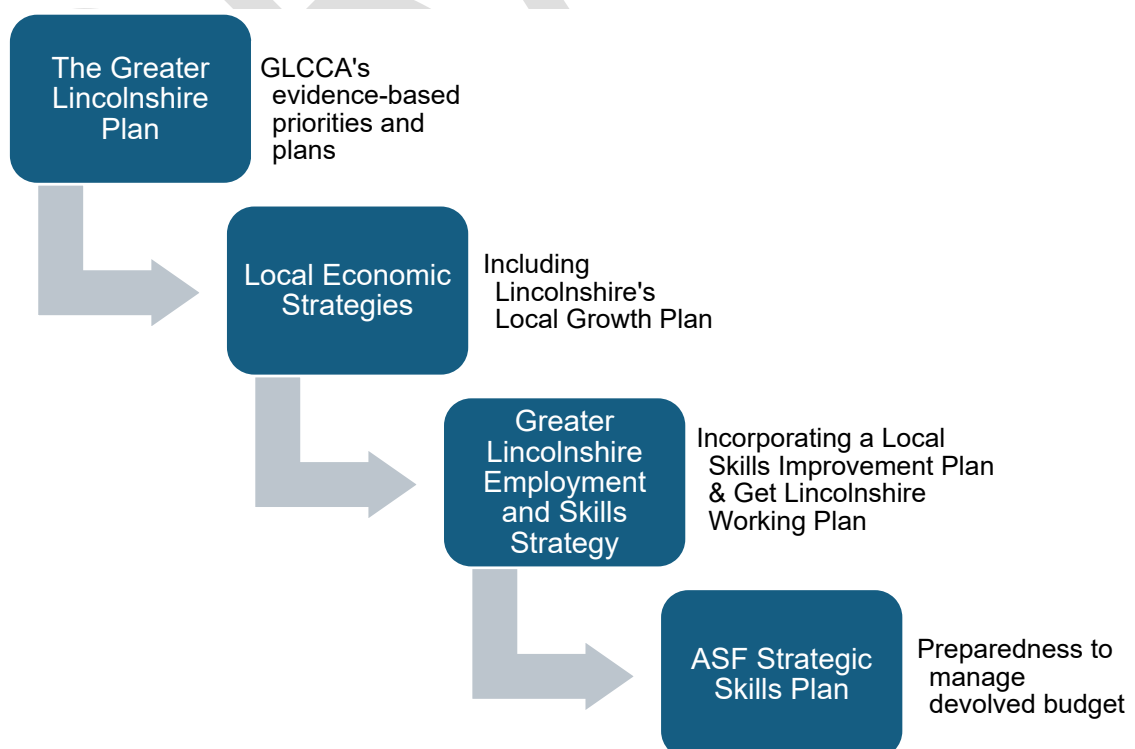
## Strategic Context

Greater Lincolnshire's employment and skills challenges have been well documented over the last decade and the team at GLCCA has substantial experience of the evidence base having written several DfE-approved sources: the Area Review evidence base 2017; the SAP Analysis 2020 and the Local Skills Reports of 2021 and 2022.

Drawing on these, as well as the Local Skills Improvement Plan of 2023 and 2024; strategies produced by local authorities specific to their areas; and the Get Lincolnshire Working plan, the GLCCA will publish a ten-year employment and skills strategy for Greater Lincolnshire within its first year of operation.

The devolved Adult Skills Fund (ASF) will help to deliver brighter futures for local people and this Strategic Skills Plan (SSP) sets out our preparedness to successfully commission, manage and administer the devolved ASF.

### Relationship between strategies and plans





## What is the Adult Skills Fund?

The Adult Skills Fund, previously known as the Adult Education Budget (AEB), is the largest of central government's budgets for educating and training adults aged 19 and above and has already been devolved to 9 areas of England.

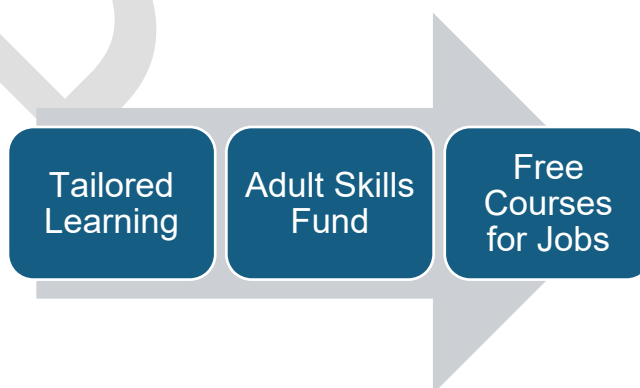
In the region of £15m–£18m per year is expected to be devolved to Greater Lincolnshire for the academic year starting August 2026 and the Department for Education will confirm the amount in February 2026.

The devolved budget covers three areas of learning:

- Tailored Learning (replacing a fund that used to be called Community Learning) is available within the ASF budget to deliver non-qualification and non-regulated learning. It is used to support wider outcomes such as to improve health and wellbeing, equip parents/carers to support their child's learning and develop stronger communities.
- The Adult Skills Fund supports adult learners to gain skills and qualifications up to Level 2 which will lead them to employment or enable them to progress to further learning which will deliver that outcome.
- The Free Courses for Jobs Fund helps adults gain valuable skills and qualifications to improve their job prospects and earning potential by fully funding a Level 3 qualification in particular subjects.

GLCCA will use the relevant budget to ensure that residents can take their first steps into learning, can progress in learning, can progress in their job, or gain employment.

Information later in the plan provides further detail of the purpose of the fund and the legal entitlement that will be transferred from the secretary of state for education to GLCCA on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2026.



## Adult Learning in Action

Martin had a very difficult time in the last year, due to health issues that caused him to lose his job 6 months ago. He had to learn to walk and talk again during this period and he was adamant that the disability he had was not going to beat him.

He enrolled on the HGV Driver Training Programme. Due to his disability, the medical checks required for the provisional licence took longer than normal, but Martin was successful and went on to complete and pass the theory and practical driver training within 10 days. He gained his full HGV licence and is now employed full-time.

Natalie initially joined Lincoln College after a cancer diagnosis and was keen to support her young son. She initially applied for a Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Autism but over the following 12 months took a series of short courses including Understanding Children and Young People's Mental Health; Self harm and Suicide Prevention; Mental Health First Aid, Special Education Needs Awareness; and a Level 3 Mental Health course. She achieved more than she could ever have anticipated, and she has secured a role as a teaching assistant in a Special Education Needs school.

Thomas was referred to training from the Restart programme to help him in his search for work. He was keen to become a chef in the RAF. To support his goal, he completed a food hygiene certificate, and attended a Get into Hospitality and Catering course, also learning about kitchen safety, risk assessments, legislation, and customer service. He also completed an Employability Skills course and a Find your Mojo course to improve his confidence and motivation.

He secured an interview with the RAF but was unsuccessful, however is now working in a restaurant in Gainsborough and working towards becoming a chef. He earned more in five shifts than he would have on Universal Credit, affording a gym membership and maintaining a positive mindset.

## How is the national education budget spent?

For context, the total national annual budget for all age education and training is approximately £86 billion.

- Around 75% of this is allocated for early years, primary and secondary education.
- Approximately 9% for higher education.

Funding for further education and work-based learning is split into:

- 16-19 education
- Apprenticeships (all age), and
- Adult Education (age 19+).

Adult Education is funded through different national DfE-led funds, each with their own criteria, rules or purpose.

- Adult Skills Fund (ASF) (£1.4 billion\*\*)
- Free Courses for Jobs (FCFJ) (£0.5 billion\*\*)
- Skills Bootcamps (£34 million\*\*)
- Advanced Learner Loans (£200 million\*\*)
- Other: e.g. UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Multiply

*\*\* numbers are approximate national 2024-2025 budgets*

Schemes that are delivered through the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) aimed at reducing barriers to work (e.g. Restart, Connect to Work and the Sector Based Work Academy Programme) do not generally fund the training and education part of the scheme, learners are instead linked to the relevant training course funding through DfE.

*(Note: persons subject to adult detention are not funded through the Adult Skills Fund (ASF) and adult learners with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who are aged under 25 are also outside the ASF as they fall within 16-19 funding. Accordingly, devolved skills funding for the ASF excludes those two groups).*

## Greater Lincolnshire Landscape – Employment and Skills

Greater Lincolnshire is a dispersed economy which is distinctive in its variety, from the world-leading offshore wind energy sector and manufacturers, ports and petrochemicals in the north to the centre of the UK's food and agricultural heartland in the south.

Rural areas and coastal areas constitute more than 90% of Greater Lincolnshire's landmass, attracting visitors to destinations such as Cleethorpes and Skegness.

To the west of Greater Lincolnshire towns such as Grantham, Stamford and Gainsborough act as gateways into the Midlands, Yorkshire and the North West.

Industrial centres like Grimsby, Immingham and Scunthorpe, clusters of chemical and energy production companies on the South Humber Bank, the heritage city of Lincoln, and market towns

such as Boston and Sleaford all contribute to the economy as drivers of growth and innovation, housing residents, and providing vital services to their rural hinterland.

It has a population of 1.1 million, with nearly 49,000 businesses all contributing to a £30bn economy, which has grown by 40% in the past 10 years.

It has a rich heritage in agriculture, engineering and industry and a major role to play in the future of the UK's energy and food security as well as the way we trade with the rest of the world.

Over the past decade, the population of Greater Lincolnshire has increased by 5.4%, below the national average of 6.6%.

There has been 1% growth in the working age population (16–64-year-olds) over the past decade across Greater Lincolnshire as a whole, whilst the 65+ population has grown by 21%. This is more pronounced in rural and coastal areas and variation exists.

There are significant variations. In Boston there has been a 14% increase in 0–15-year-olds, whereas in North Lincolnshire, North East Lincolnshire and East Lindsey the number of 0–15-year-olds has decreased; in Lincoln there has been a 10% increase in 16–64-year-olds, whilst in West Lindsey and South Kesteven there has been a 29% increase in over 65s.

## **Employment**

**Greater Lincolnshire has amongst the highest proportion of employment in small and medium sized businesses of any place in the country.**

Greater Lincolnshire supports 528,000 jobs (including 66,800 self-employed) and has the third highest proportion of employment in micro and SME-sized businesses (at 64% of employment) in the country.

Wholesale & retail, health and manufacturing continue to make up a significant proportion of overall employment. These sectors, combined, account for nearly half of total employment in Greater Lincolnshire.

Manufacturing makes up almost double the proportion of employment compared to nationally.

Transport & storage and agriculture also have a significantly higher proportion of people employed in Greater Lincolnshire than nationally.

Accommodation and food services has seen strong growth of 3% annually in employment, this is above rise seen nationally.

Analysis shows that agriculture, public admin & defence, manufacturing, and transport are sector specialisms in Greater Lincolnshire, especially agriculture which is over twice as specialised as nationally.

Construction is also somewhat specialised as the sector makes up over 15% of total businesses with strong growth and 5% of total employment.

## **Sectors Specialisms**

Greater Lincolnshire has key sector strength in agri-food tech and seafood, low carbon energy and water, ports & logistics, defence and security, the digital economy, visitor economy, health &

care, and manufacturing.

### Challenges

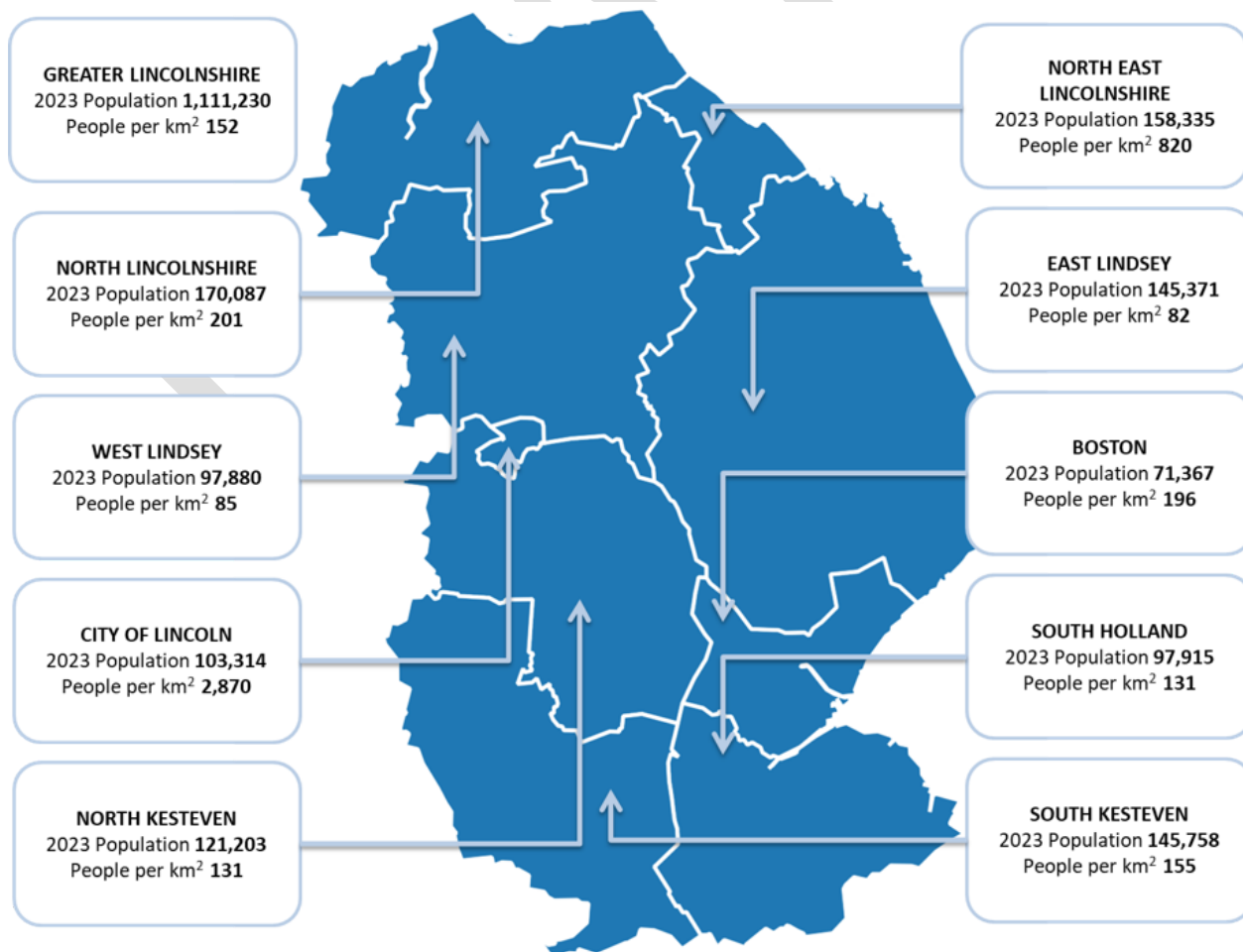
It is 7,997 sq. km in size, which is more than six times the size of the Greater Manchester City Region! It is one of the most rural and sparsely populated areas in the country with a population density of just 142 people per sq.km compared to 434 nationally. That is lower than Cornwall's population density of 161 people per sq.km.

There are 6 enterprises per sq.km compared to 13 in the UK on average.

*This level of sparsity means that reaching the critical mass required for service delivery can be difficult and expensive, and that some areas are poorly connected by road, public transport and digital infrastructure. Access to skills and jobs is difficult, particularly for those in more peripheral and dispersed areas; addressing this is critical to achieving greater prosperity within our economy.*

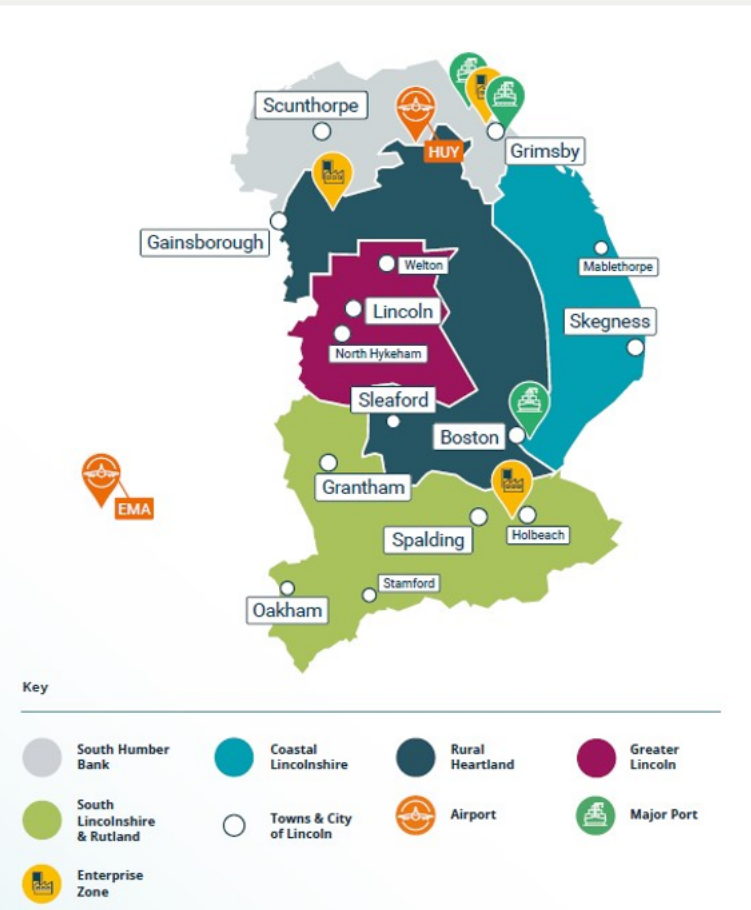
GLCCA will use devolved funding to make it easier for our residents to access the training they need to get better jobs and careers.

The map below shows how population density is different in areas around Greater Lincolnshire.



# Meeting local challenges

Area	Challenges	Opportunities
South Humber Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pockets of high and worsening deprivation</li> <li>Life expectancy is low; healthy life expectancy is below retirement age in some areas</li> <li>Low skills levels impede local residents' ability to work in high-tech growth sectors</li> <li>In the top 20% of areas with the highest proportion of insecure employment</li> <li>Wage growth is one third slower than UK averages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pockets of strong employment growth</li> <li>Estimated £15bn of private investment activity to develop the energy estuary</li> <li>Well established cluster of offshore wind operations</li> <li>High concentration of manufacturing businesses and significant decarbonisation opportunity</li> <li>Humber Freeport</li> </ul>
Coastal Lincolnshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Areas of high and worsening deprivation, and social exclusion</li> <li>Reliance on the visitor economy for employment</li> <li>30% of workers paid below real living wage</li> <li>Life expectancy is lowest along the coast. Healthy life expectancy is lower than retirement age in many areas</li> <li>Flood risk hampers development</li> <li>Poor broadband connectivity in places</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some pockets of employment growth</li> <li>Strong sense of place, identity, and culture with key heritage assets</li> <li>Town Deal investments in Skegness, Mablethorpe and Boston</li> <li>Nationally significant natural capital, with SSSIs, nature reserves and Wolds AONB</li> </ul>
Rural Heartland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area is slow to change, with low social mobility</li> <li>Housing is becoming less affordable</li> <li>Growth hindered by insufficient transport and digital connections</li> <li>Low wages – 30% of jobs paid below real living wage</li> <li>Challenges in provision and choice of HE</li> <li>Rapid population ageing in some parts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Areas of employment growth, particularly in Boston</li> <li>High quality of life</li> <li>Food production, manufacturing and defence strong parts of the economy</li> <li>Levelling Up Funding in Gainsborough</li> <li>Natural assets such as the olds AONB and 14 SSSIs</li> <li>Strong network of market towns</li> </ul>
Greater Lincoln	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>House prices have risen faster than earnings</li> <li>Pockets of significant deprivation</li> <li>Some barriers to accessing further and higher education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young and relatively high-skilled population</li> <li>Relatively balanced economy</li> <li>Deprivation has fallen significantly in parts of the area in recent years</li> <li>Strong and growing universities with innovation assets</li> <li>Lincoln Town Fund</li> </ul>
South Lincolnshire & Rutland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of diversity in the economy poses a risk</li> <li>Housing affordability is a challenge in parts of the area; with housing viability a challenge in other parts.</li> <li>Lack of electricity capacity constraining growth</li> <li>Wages have struggled to recover since 2008 economic crisis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategically located port in Boston with associated rail links</li> <li>Nationally important food sector</li> <li>Higher than average life expectancy and healthy life expectancy</li> </ul>



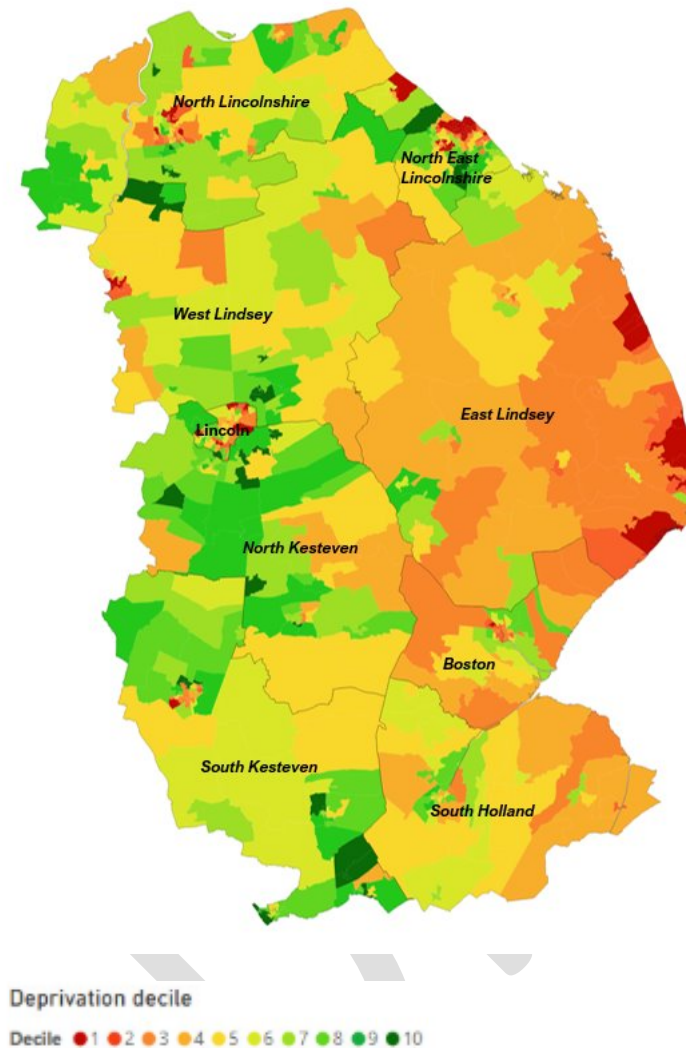
To update or remove.



## Deprivation in Greater Lincolnshire

Across Greater Lincolnshire there are challenges ensuring residents have access to the opportunities they need, and over 20% of neighbourhoods are amongst the most 10% deprived nationally with acute challenges in some of the region's coastal communities.

### Overall Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019)



Deprivation is particularly high in East Lindsey, which ranks amongst the top 10% most deprived local authorities nationally (30 out of 317 local authorities) - high levels of deprivation around Skegness and Mablethorpe.

North East Lincolnshire ranks around the top 20% most deprived local authorities (66 out of 317 local authorities), with high deprivation in Grimsby, Cleethorpes, and area around Immingham Dock.

Lincoln (68th) and Boston (85th) also rank in and around the top 25% most deprived local authorities nationally.

North Lincolnshire ranks 120th most deprived out of 317 local authorities, with high deprivation in Scunthorpe.

South Holland (144th) and West Lindsey (146th) rank towards the median.

South Kesteven and North Kesteven amongst the 30% least deprived local authorities nationally. North Kesteven 49th least deprived and South Kesteven 84th least deprived out of 317 local authorities in England.

Across Greater Lincolnshire, it is estimated that men from most deprived areas will live 10.5 years fewer and for women 8.8 years fewer than those from least deprived areas. This is in line with inequality found across Yorkshire but above other comparator areas, and more pronounced in North and North East Lincolnshire.

Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government English indices of deprivation (2019)

Compare with Get Lincolnshire Working indicators

## Employment and Skills

Historically, employment in Greater Lincolnshire has been strong in sectors which tend to be labour intensive, have relatively higher numbers of lower skilled roles and therefore lower paid, and produce lower levels of value. Sectors, jobs and skills needs are changing.

Over the fifteen-year period 2020-2035 the Greater Lincolnshire economy is expected to have filled 268,000 jobs. The vast majority (93%, or 250,000) of positions will become available due to people leaving the Greater Lincolnshire workforce, mainly because of retirement, *with significant increases in demand for Level 3 roles* reflecting future opportunities within our economy.

*GLCCA will use its devolved funding to support residents into these roles.*

It is estimated that between now and 2035, nearly 135,000 jobs in the Greater Lincolnshire economy will be impacted in some way through developments relating to Industrial Revolution 4.0 and therefore *ensuring that people have digital skills is vital.*

Due to the changes in population previously described it is vital to recognise that the future success of the Greater Lincolnshire economy relies on the reskilling of the existing workforce, as well as providing the right pathways into work for young people.

Unemployment has historically been low in Greater Lincolnshire, but levels of economic inactivity are high overall. Economic inactivity is particularly significant in areas with older populations with early retirement and long terms sickness particular drivers for economic inactivity.

Across Greater Lincolnshire it is estimated that a quarter of employees are paid below the current National Living Wage of £10.42 per hour, well above the national average. This is an area of concern given that the real living wage acts as a proxy for in-work poverty, which remains a major issue for achieving inclusive growth, although living costs may also be lower in Greater Lincolnshire too.

Qualification attainment remains relatively low in Greater Lincolnshire, where fewer people are qualified to degree level and more people have no formal qualifications than compared to regionally and nationally.

The difference in the proportion qualified to degree level is particularly stark. Despite progress since 2019, in 2023 32% were qualified to RQF4+, 15 percentage points lower than the UK average, and between 8-9 percentage points below regional averages.

Positively, the proportion of 16- and 17-year-olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) is in line with nationally and below the Yorkshire average, although there has been an increase in North East Lincolnshire from an already high base.

FE education and skills participation and achievements have grown since 2019/20 despite being impacted by the Pandemic, and in 2023/24 rank among the highest of comparator areas. Achievements are relatively high across Greater Lincolnshire but have fallen since 2019/20 in North East Lincolnshire.



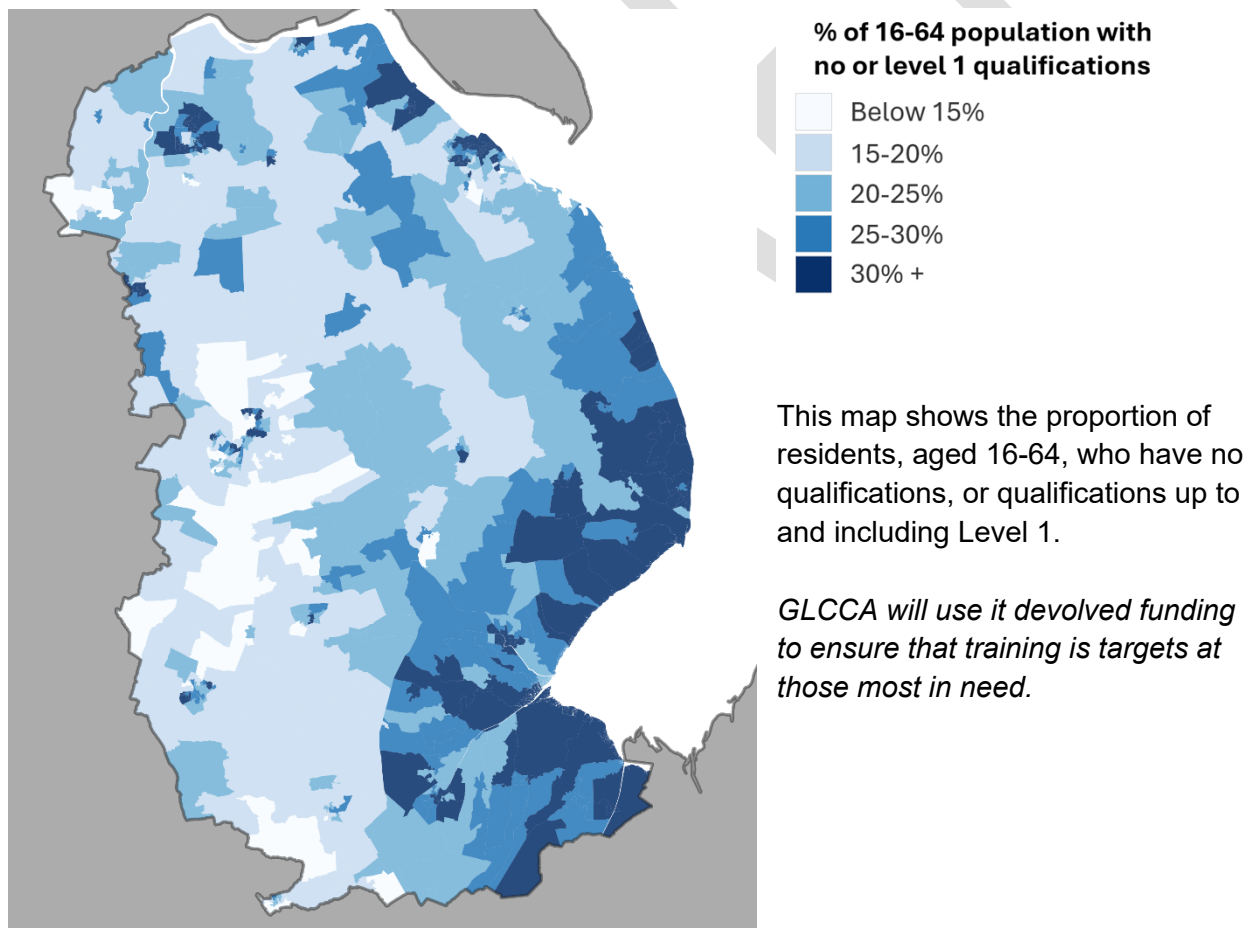
Just over 32% of the working age population are qualified to degree level or above (RQF4+), a rise from four years prior, however this remains low compared to comparator areas, where regionally, the proportion is at least 40% and nationally, it is 47%.

In Greater Lincolnshire, more people are qualified to level 2 (GSCE grades 9-4/A\*-C) or level 1 (GCSE 3-1/D-G) or hold no formal qualifications.

1 in 10 people in Lincolnshire have no qualifications, 3pp above the UK average. The proportion with no qualifications is also high in North East Lincolnshire.

Qualifications attainment in North Lincolnshire is highest amongst areas in Greater Lincolnshire, with the proportion with no qualifications in line with nationally, but fewer people are qualified to degree level.

The proportion qualified to degree level or above is relatively low across Greater Lincolnshire, particularly in North East Lincolnshire at just over a quarter of the working age population.



Add Get Lincolnshire Working map regarding areas of need

## Adult Learning in Action

Five learners celebrated success after balancing their studies with busy work and family lives. Allison, Laura, Anna, Vicky and Amy all achieved GCSE Maths after studying part time.

For Allison, the challenge was a personal one, taken on to prove to herself that she could succeed. Laura is now preparing to progress onto an Access course with the long-term goal of becoming a midwife, while Anna will continue her studies in September with GCSE Combined Science.

Vicky, a teaching assistant at a local school, needed the qualification to support her role, and Amy, also a teaching assistant, marked the achievement with her two children, who had proudly promised her sweets if she passed.

Selina joined the English for Speakers of other Languages Higher course, designed for learners needing support with advanced grammar, colloquial vocabulary, and pronunciation. She enrolled to improve her English in support of her goal to establish a beauty business.

Despite raising her children alone and adjusting to life in a new country, she consistently completed tasks to a high standard and began exploring business opportunities, eventually launching the Bubble Kiss company in Lincoln's Cornhill Market.

Selina's improved language skills have enabled her to deliver excellent customer service and manage the administrative demands of running a business. She continues to offer beauty treatments and is a vibrant example of how adult learning can empower entrepreneurial success.

Vickie enrolled in a 12-week Level 2 Business and Administration course, having never taken any courses since leaving school.

Initially nervous and uncertain, Vickie quickly gained confidence and excelled in the course. She transitioned from part-time supermarket work to a full-time apprenticeship with East Lindsey District Council.

Vickie's achievements include attending an event at the House of Commons and progressing rapidly in her apprenticeship, scoring 90% on a recent exam. Vicki says it still feels like a dream that this time last year she was stacking shelves. She is now a role model for adult learners and has been recognised by the apprenticeship team.

# Strategic Priorities

## Intended Purpose of Adult Skills Funding

It is set out in the English Devolution White Paper that Mayoral Strategic Authorities will receive combined and un-ringfenced funding for the Adult Skills Fund, Free Courses for Jobs, and Skills Bootcamps from 2026/27 onwards. The GLCCA will need to decide how to allocate its devolved funding to each. [English Devolution White Paper - GOV.UK](#)

Receiving the devolved adult skills funding allows the GLCCA to take commissioning decisions at a local level that better meet the need of residents, alongside the provision of statutory entitlement set by legislation set out below.

The devolved ASF budget covers different areas of learning, and the budget has historically been split nationally as follows:

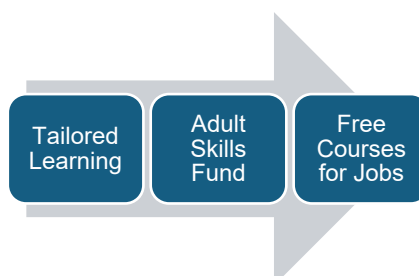
The Adult Skills Fund: (approx. 70%) aims to support adult learners to gain skills and qualifications up to Level 2 which will lead them to meaningful, sustained and relevant employment, or enable them to progress to further learning which will deliver that outcome.

Tailored Learning: (approx. 20%), (replacing a fund that used to be called Community Learning) is available within the ASF budget to deliver non-qualification and non-regulated learning. It is used to support wider outcomes such as to improve health and wellbeing, equip parents/carers to support their child's learning and develop stronger communities.

The Free Courses for Jobs Fund (approx. 7%) aims to help adults gain valuable skills and qualifications to improve their job prospects and earning potential. It provides adult learners who are unemployed, or who do not already have a Level 3 qualification, an opportunity to access free qualifications in particular subjects. A list of eligible courses is available via this link [Free courses for jobs - GOV.UK](#) Mayoral Combined Authorities can add to the list of qualifications within certain parameters set out by DfE.

Innovation Funding (approx. 3%): this funding encourages local innovation and supports providers to be able to develop new provision, in partnership with local employers and others. It is only available to Grant Funded Providers (Colleges and Local Authorities).

Skills Bootcamps provide flexible training courses for adults that must lead to a job outcome. Generally, at Level 3 or higher, any adult can benefit whether unemployed, in work or self-employed. Courses must be created in partnership with employers.



## Statutory Entitlements

The Department for Education (DfE) retains the power to specify which qualifications are statutory entitlements in devolved as well as non-devolved authorities.

The Adult Skills Fund fully funds 4 statutory entitlements for eligible adult learners. These are shown below:

1	English and maths up to and including level 2 for learners who have not previously attained a GCSE grade A* to C or a grade 4 or higher	19+
2	a first full qualification at level 2 for learners	19-23
3	a first full qualification at level 3 for learners	19-23
4	essential digital skills qualifications up to and including level 1 for learners who have digital skills assessed as being below level 1	19+

The GLCCA will be able to change funding rules over time but will not be able to change the statutory entitlement in the table above.

The Adult Skills Fund can also fund:

- learning for adults of all ages to:
  - develop their skills
  - build their confidence, motivation and resilience
  - enable them to take up further learning or employment
  - improve their health and wellbeing
  - help them contribute to their community
- learning or learner support to overcome barriers that prevent individuals from taking part in education or work, and courses in English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)

## GLCCA's Strategic Priorities for the Adult Skills Fund (DRAFT)

- 1 **Ambition:**  
provide Greater Lincolnshire residents with learning opportunities that improve their personal, and local economic prosperity.  
  
**ASF priorities:**
  - a. Create a programme of high-quality provision for Greater Lincolnshire adults that is accessible, aligned to local business need, well-promoted, and achieves good value for money by removing unnecessary duplication.
  - b. Provide adults with the confidence and support to participate in learning and progress to higher levels.
  - c. Fund qualifications that are business-led and contribute to the long-term prosperity of Greater Lincolnshire, creating a locally skilled workforce.

- d. Increase the capacity of the local provider base, so that Greater Lincolnshire's training infrastructure can be flexible and responsive to future local needs.

#### *Evolution of the Programme:*

Once funding is devolved the Authority will have access to better data and evidence that will help to shape its future programme. It expects to make a series of changes over time that will meet the priorities listed above.

For example, increasing provision in vocational and technical training to help residents into work; increasing the number of people with no qualifications into training to help their work prospects, providing a clear ladder of progression from Level 1 to 3 and beyond so that residents are able to fill the gaps that employers tell us they have in the workplace at a higher level; whole-place programme planning so that training is delivered in hard to reach areas; and mandating residents who have not successfully found work to attend training programmes.

The Authority will work with stakeholders including colleges, DWP and business to shape the programme for the future.

## Eligibility

We will fund eligible individuals, in line with DfE funding eligibility [Adult skills fund: funding rules for 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK](#), resident in Greater Lincolnshire, who were aged 19 or older on 31 August of the funding year, with the following changes:

To be added once approved on 10<sup>th</sup> December

# Data and Findings

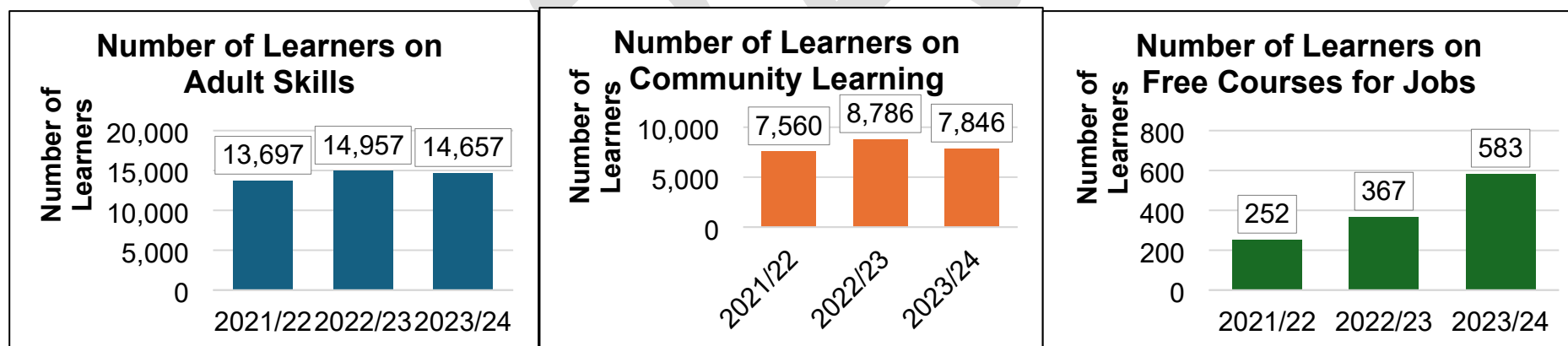
## Analysis of Adult Skills Funding Data

The most recent ASF data that is available to us is for the academic year August 2023 to July 2024. The data provides a detailed picture of how the funding that will be devolved to Greater Lincolnshire has been spent in previous years. Using this data GLCCA can made decisions on future funding priorities.

### Total Number of Learners

The Adult Skills Fund supported approximately 14,657 learners during the academic 23/24, and 7,846 learners benefitted from tailored learning. Growth in the number of learners accessing the higher level (3) Free Courses for Jobs training was anticipated given that this fund is a relatively recent introduction.

*(Learners may access more than one fund at the same time so the total number of learners supported each year is less than the total of all three funds below)*



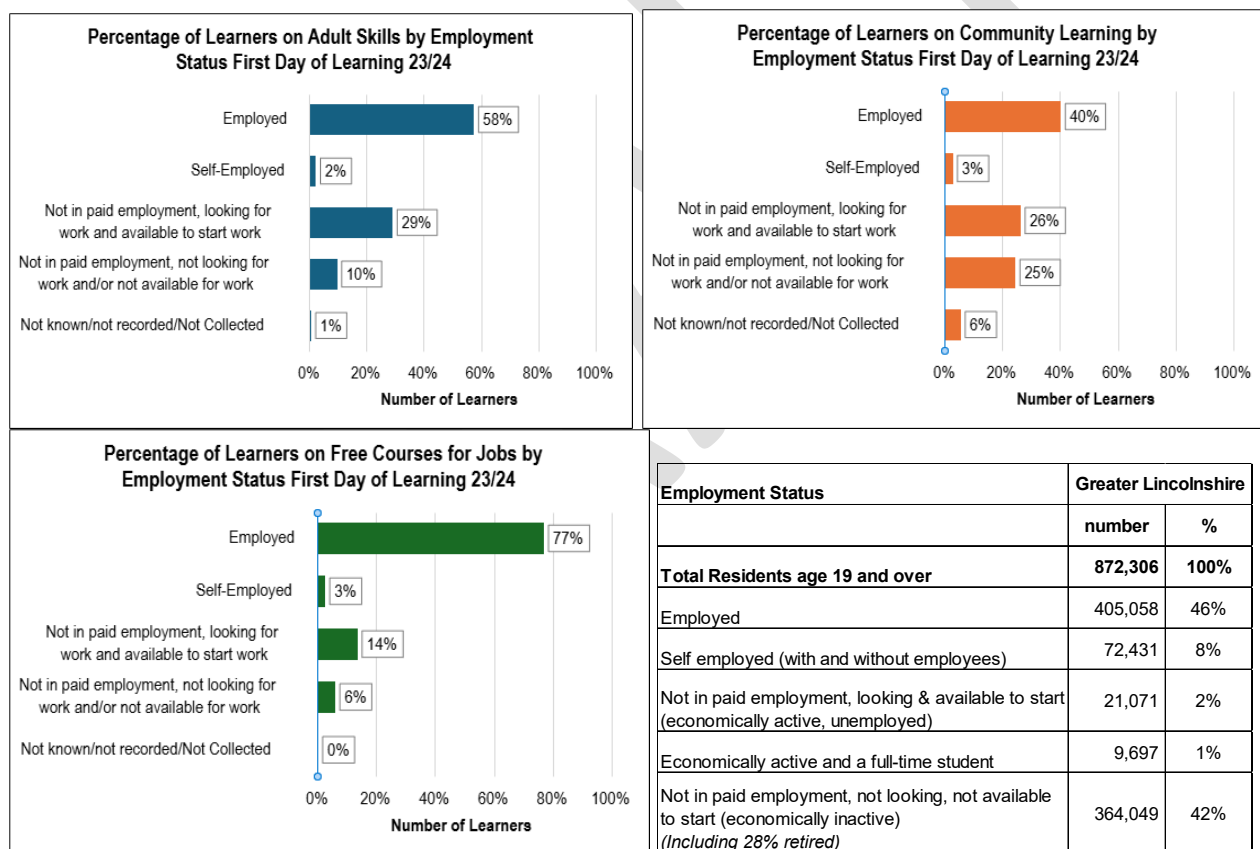


## Learning by Age

Age Band	Adult Skills Budget Learners		Community Learning/ Tailored Learning Learners		Free Courses for Job Learners		Total GL Population (Census 2021)	Proportion of Total GL Population (Census 2021) %
	2023/24	Distribution of learners %	2023/24	Distribution of learners %	2023/24	Distribution of learners %		
19-24	2,400	16%	758	10%	14	2%	71,157	6.5%
25-30	2,111	14%	940	12%	107	18%	317,343	29%
31-49	7,180	49%	3,257	42%	361	62%	233,532	21.30%
50-64	2,763	19%	2,053	26%	100	17%	250,270	22.90%
65+	203	1%	838	11%	<5	0%		

GLCCA will drive growth in the number of residents obtaining Level 3 qualifications via the Free Courses for Jobs Fund.

## Employment Status of Learners – Learners versus Population



GLCCA will measure the impact that learning is having on employed as well as unemployed residents to ensure it is supporting progression in work and improving the lives of people

Further analysis is being undertaken to understand why last year ASF is supporting learners who already have Level 6 qualifications, with qualifications at Level 2 and below.

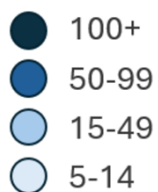
## Provider Analysis

In total, across all three funds, and three years of data, 254 different colleges, independent training providers, universities and local authorities have received a grant allocation of funding from DfE, or have bid successfully to DfE for a contract, for provision to Greater Lincolnshire learners. Throughout this report this group are generally referred to as providers or training providers. In 21/22, 192 providers; 22/23 190 providers, and 23/24 183 providers.

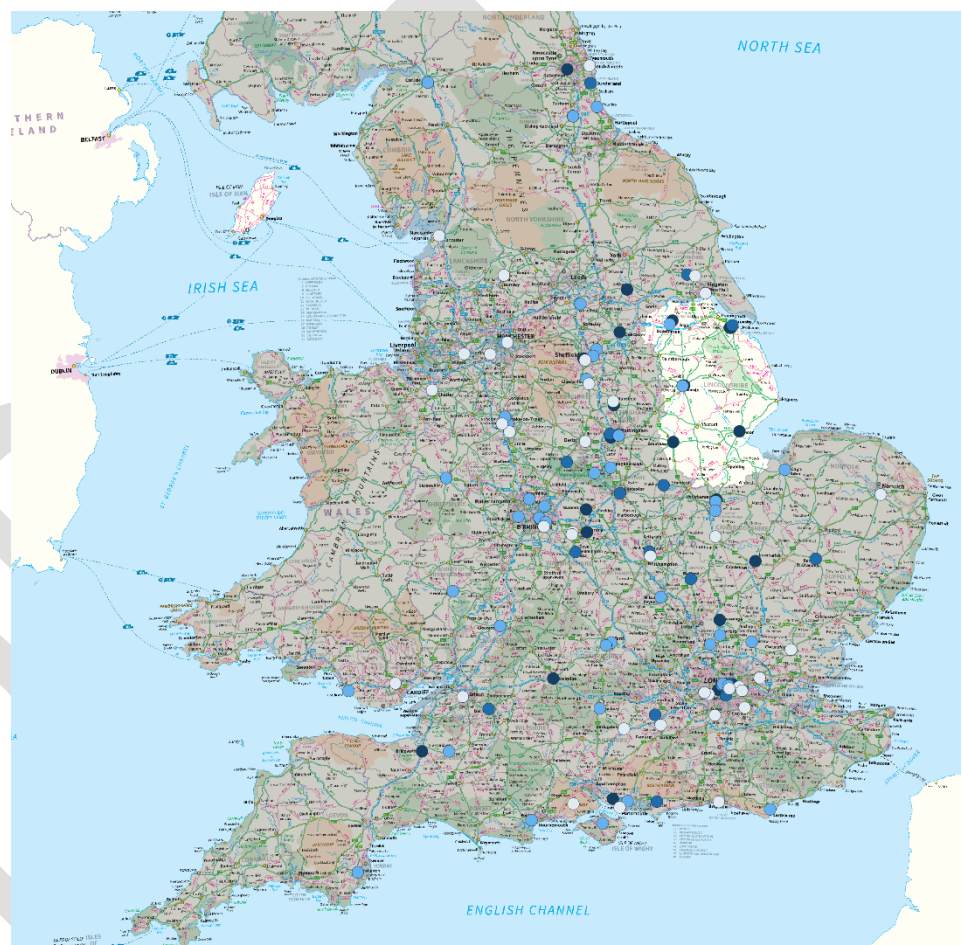
Some of this funding is then subcontracted to others to deliver the provision.

Main location of providers in direct receipt of ASF delivering provision to Greater Lincolnshire residents in 23/24. (This excludes providers who received subcontracts from one of these main organisations)

Providers funding training for 4 or fewer learners have been removed from the map to make it simpler. None of these were in Greater Lincolnshire.



Most of these providers do not have delivery bases in Greater Lincolnshire.





### **Adult Skills Fund**

The total number of Greater Lincolnshire learners receiving ASF support in 23/24 was 14,657, and they were funded by 174 different providers, some directly and some through subcontracting arrangements. 615 of these learners accessed provision through funding from 102 providers, i.e. these providers funded between 1 learner and 20 learners each) 39 providers funded more than 50 learners each, and only 22 providers funded more than 100. Of these 22 providers some were based in areas bordering Greater Lincolnshire, and others were based in other parts of the country.

### **Tailored Learning**

The total number of Greater Lincolnshire learners receiving Tailored Learning support in 23/24 was 7,846, and they were funded by 32 different providers, some directly and some through subcontracting arrangements. 14 providers funded more than 10 learners each and of these 14, 8 providers funded provision for 7,572 Greater Lincolnshire learners.

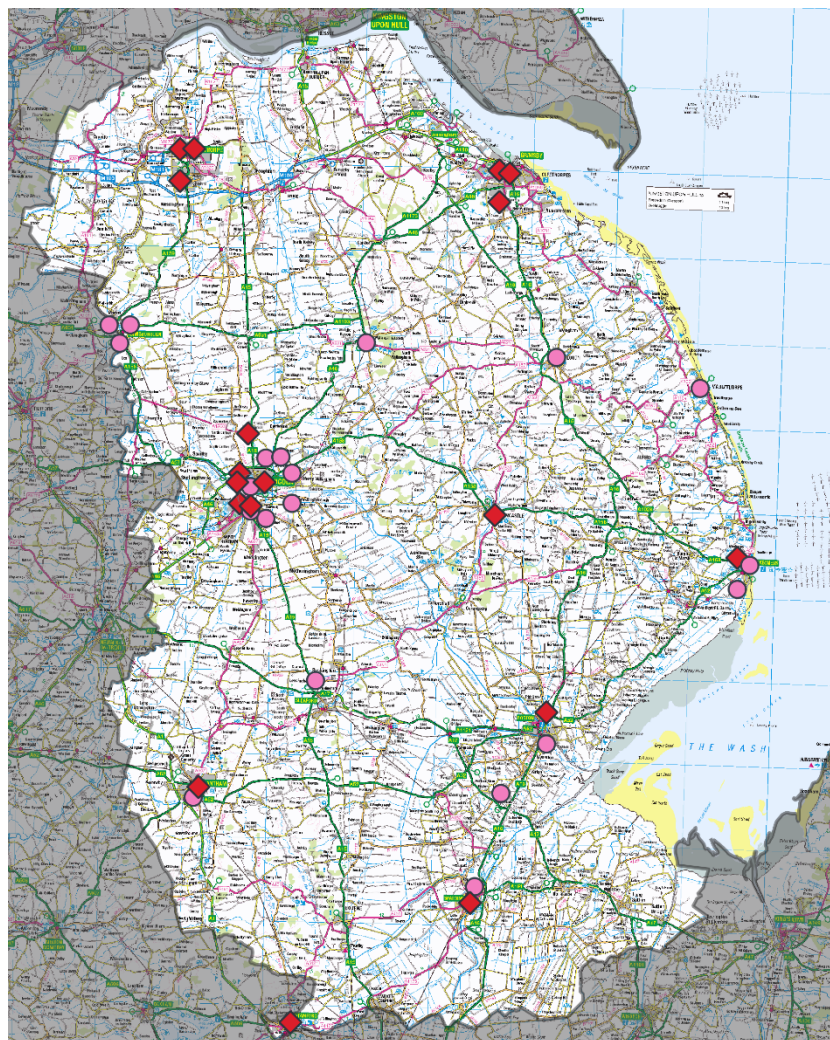
### **Free Courses for Jobs**

The total number of Greater Lincolnshire learners receiving Free Courses for Jobs support in 23/24 was 583 and they were funded by 61 different providers, some directly and some through subcontracting arrangements. 15 providers funded 10 or more Greater Lincolnshire learners each. Of these 15, 9 providers funded provision for 20 or more learners totalling 368 learners. Funding for provision of Free Courses for Jobs for Greater Lincolnshire learners is spread differently to ASF and tailored learning, and several locally based Colleges and training providers are not within this 'top' 9 by volume.

## Subcontracting

A subcontracting analysis has shown Lincolnshire County Council's impact is greatest on reaching small providers that would not otherwise receive a direct contract from DfE.

**Map of providers with a base in Greater Lincolnshire delivering ASF provision to GL residents in 23/24.**

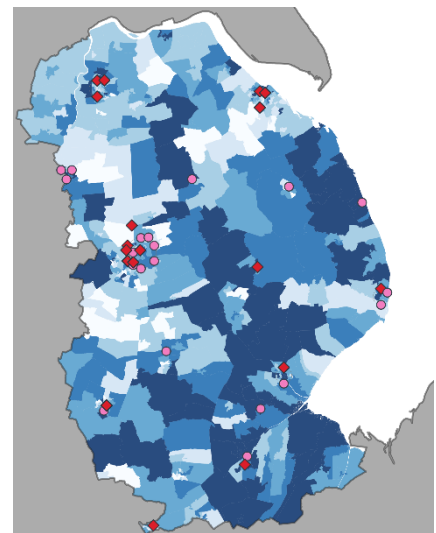


### Contract Type

- ◆ Main Contractor
- Subcontractor

### % of 16+ population with no or level 1 qualifications

- Below 25%
- 25-30%
- 30-35%
- 35-40%
- Over 40%
- ◆ Main Contractor
- Subcontractor



## Stakeholder Engagement

As Greater Lincolnshire prepares for devolution it is working with the Greater Lincolnshire Federation of Colleges and with local training providers, to communicate plans and to engage on what currently works well and what could work better in the future for the area.

An event that took place on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024 captured rich intelligence from providers that GLCCA can take into consideration. For example, the negative impact of short-term funding decisions on staff, and staffing levels within providers; the inflexible nature of funding impacting the ability to change direction of provision as required to meet local labour market needs; duplication that could be reduced with better provider-to-provider collaboration; the opportunity to have a positive impact with more effective local employer engagement. This is just a snapshot of what was collected.

Discussions continue to take place to ensure that all providers understand the changes that will directly affect them. Conversations are also being held with MCA's on Greater Lincolnshire borders to understand how the devolved adult skills fund will support learners crossing areas for training.

## Commissioning Plan

1. To ensure stability within the training system we will allocate grants to providers, via a Grant Funding Agreement, who hold an existing grant agreement with DfE and meeting the following criteria:

- Have a head office in Greater Lincolnshire
- Demonstrate they have an established place-based approach and support GLCCA's strategic priorities

Allocation via grant agreement (instead of a competitive process) is historically how ASF has been awarded to FE Colleges and Local Authorities.

2. All grant funded providers will have the opportunity to subcontract an agreed percentage of their grant, subject to prior approval by GLCCA.

3. Remaining funds will be distributed through a competitive tendering process, via a purpose-built framework, so that training organisations who are not colleges or local authorities but are an important part of delivery in Greater Lincolnshire can apply.

4. A portion of funding to allocate to specific initiatives may be retained if budget is available and activity is clearly evidence-led.

This approach:

- Ensures stability of the local system while GLCCA takes over the budget
- Prioritises local knowledge of people, geography and employment opportunity so that we have the best offer we can for residents
- Addresses rurality by maintaining a spread of provision across Greater Lincolnshire, particularly through subcontracting arrangements developed by Lincolnshire County Council
- Provides flexibility so that innovative projects can be created at speed if there is an identified need

## Allocation and Procurement

GLCCA, via Lincolnshire County Council, has produced a procurement strategy and framework.

The strategy will establish the foundation to manage ASF effectively, ensuring transparency, financial accountability, and adherence to national policy requirements. It defines the approach to sourcing provider services, ensuring providers meet the necessary standards and that the devolution of ASF results in enhanced educational and employment opportunities in the region.

The strategy ensures legal compliance, financial due diligence, quality assurance, and social value alignment while supporting Greater Lincolnshire's devolution readiness for the ASF.

The procurement approach aims to:

- Ensure compliance with:
  - The Department for Education's rules on Adult Skills Funding, combined with adjustments made by GLCCA to meet Greater Lincolnshire's strategic objectives
  - The Procurement Act 2023 (PA23), Equality Act 2010, and GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.
- Achieve value for money (VfM) while maintaining high-quality provision.
- Promote social value by fostering employment opportunities and supporting local communities.
- Facilitate a transparent and competitive provider selection process.
- Develop robust contract governance and performance monitoring mechanisms.
- Align with ASF devolution, ensuring operational readiness for the academic year 2026/27.

The procurement will be conducted as an Open Framework Arrangement under the Light Touch Regime (LTR) through the Open Procedure.

This approach ensures:

- Compliance with PA23 and LTR procurement flexibilities.
- Maximum provider engagement.
- Transparency and accountability.
- Flexibility in provider onboarding.
- Compliance with funding regulations.

As part of the bidding process for access to the provider catalogue, bidders must also submit proposals detailing their delivery plans for the initial year's programmes. While successful entry onto the framework does not guarantee funding, providers will be assessed for their capability to deliver these initial programmes as part of the selection process. This ensures that only high-quality, capable providers are considered for funding allocations.

## Impact

Devolution will provide GLCCA with data that has not previously been available at local level in the way it is needed to match people with opportunities for learning and track progression and employment.

### **Assessment of impact will include:**

- ☒ Analysis of outcomes and impact data collected from delivery
- ☒ Feedback from Employers who have benefitted from ASF funded programmes
- ☒ Feedback from Providers delivering on Greater Lincolnshire's programme
- ☒ Feedback from residents who have benefitted from skills investment
- ☒ Evaluation of new partnerships and collaborative work undertaken

### **Analysis of outcomes and impact data**

We will collect impact data as well as analyse mandatory monthly Individual Learner Record (ILR) data collections to assess the impact of our provision and drive improvements. This will include:

- Actual Progression Data for learners on qualification programmes (to be provided by those Providers funded to deliver Adult Skills formula funded qualification programmes)
- Intended Destination Data for all learners (to be provided by Providers delivering on Greater Lincolnshire's programme)
- Outcomes data for learners on tailored learning programmes (provided as part of the mandatory monthly ILR return)
- Outcomes data with regards to retention, attendance, success and achievement (provided as part of the mandatory monthly ILR return)
- Delivery Location data to identify where provision is being delivered and highlight any cold spots (provided as part of the mandatory monthly ILR return)
- Targeted learner data to ensure funding is reaching those learners who best benefit from skills investment (provided as part of the mandatory monthly ILR return)
- Sector subject area data to ensure we are meeting the objectives.

### **Feedback from Employers who have benefitted from ASF funded programmes**

Providers funded through Greater Lincolnshire's ASF will be required to collect feedback from those Employers who have benefitted from ASF investment in their workforce, focusing on filling skills gaps and developing skills for progression.

### **Feedback from Providers delivering on Greater Lincolnshire's programme**

An annual evaluation of Providers delivering on Greater Lincolnshire's programme will be undertaken to understand the impact of new arrangements introduced on their organisations. Have they led to improved outcomes for learners?

### **Feedback from residents who have benefitted from ASF funded provision**

We want to hear from learners engaged in ASF funded activity to assess the impact of the funding. This will include:

- Feedback from regular Learner Satisfaction Survey
- Feedback from ad hoc learner focus groups

### **Evaluation of new partnerships and collaborative work undertaken**

An annual evaluation of new partnerships developed, and collaborative work undertaken as a result of these will be carried out to feed into the annual Impact Report.

## **Governance**

The GLCCA will be governed by a main board responsible for overseeing strategic decision-making and ensuring that devolution powers are used effectively to benefit the region.

Alongside the main board, three specialist boards will focus on areas critical to Greater Lincolnshire's growth and prosperity: Transport, Employment and Skills, and Business and Infrastructure. These boards will bring together local leaders, industry experts, and stakeholders to develop targeted policies, drive investment, and deliver tangible improvements in each sector.

Add updated GLCCA's constitution

## **Sources**

[Annual report on education spending in England: 2024–25 | Institute for Fiscal Studies](#)

[DfE Main Estimate Memorandum 2024 to 2025](#)

[School funding statistics, Financial year 2024-25 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)

[School capital funding - GOV.UK](#)

[16 to 19 further education revenue funding allocation guide: 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

[16 to 19 funding: how it works - GOV.UK](#)

[Latest trends in further education and sixth form spending in England | Institute for Fiscal Studies](#)

[Further education funding in England - House of Commons Library](#)

[Higher education finances and funding in England - House of Commons Library](#)

[Adult skills fund: funding and performance management rules 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

[Adult skills fund: funding rules for 2024 to 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

[Free courses for jobs - GOV.UK](#)

[Qualification funding approval: 2024 to 2025 - Level 3 free courses for jobs offer: approval criteria - Guidance - GOV.UK](#)

[Skills Bootcamps: £34 million boost for free career training for adults – The Education Hub](#)

[Advanced Learner Loan: Overview - GOV.UK](#)

This page is intentionally left blank