Evaluation of
Luton Borough Council’s
Co-Financing Programme for
European Social Fund
2008-2015
Luton European Social Fund Programme
Evaluation: Consultation Findings

1. Introduction

This report shows the results of a consultation carried out to evaluate the Luton Co-Financing Programme for the European Social Fund between 2008 and 2015, and of the projects delivered to participants in Luton.

2. Executive Summary

The overall opinion of the ESF programme was that it was both successful and effective. The tendering process was regarded as fair and transparent. The delivery has made a significant impact on the lives of some of Luton’s most deprived residents, helping to increase prosperity and reduce worklessness. A local delivery point to encourage trust in the community was found to be important in the recruitment and retention of participants. While providers did try to offer holistic support to people facing multiple barriers, it was felt that a more joined up approach could be useful next time – less competition and more cooperation.

3. Luton CFO Programme

Luton Borough Council (LBC) applied to be a Co-Financer (CFO) for the European Social Fund Programme in 2008. Over the following 7 years the programme supported 46 projects, with a total budget of nearly £10m (£5m ESF and £5m match). There were 8 procurement rounds, and 28 organisations in all were awarded a contract to deliver projects under this funding (some organisations delivered several projects). A total of 6,500 participants were supported.

Projects covered a range of activities, such as:

- Support for young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs), especially those from a vulnerable background.
- Employment support for people with physical or mental health issues, including learning difficulties and autism.
- Support for those with caring responsibilities, to enable them to find paid employment that best fitted with their caring duties.
- Employment support for young people involved with gangs or lawlessness
- Skills support for employees of SMEs in Luton’s key growth sectors
- Support for the homeless, those with drug or alcohol problems and ex-offenders
- Employment support for the over 50s
- English language and employment support for migrant workers.

Many of the participants supported were very far from the labour market, but all were supported to improve their skills, or sometimes their lifestyles, to move closer to finding paid employment. The outcomes as at September 2015 were:

- 589 people were supported into paid employment;
975 young people who were NEET moved into education, employment or training;
263 people obtained a level 3 qualification (e.g. CMI Award in First Line Management)

The people supported were from a range of backgrounds in Luton, with 51% of participants being female, 15% saying they had a disability and nearly 70% having a non-white British background, as shown in this chart.

![ESF & Match Participants by Ethnicity June 2015](image)

4. Evaluation Methodology

As an ESF co-finance, LBC was expected to undertake an evaluation of the impact of the programme, and to understand how effective the programme had been in supporting skills and employment in Luton.

The evaluation was carried out using several different techniques:

- An on-line survey that was distributed to all the delivery organisations for ESF projects (about 40 organisations).
- A similar on-line survey for organisations that are registered as preferred suppliers, and submitted a tender to deliver projects but were not necessarily successful (95 organisations)
An on-line and paper survey for participants in the projects. In line with data protection guidelines, we did not contact the participants directly but asked the provider organisation to contact them.

An evaluation event for providers and participants, with a “Qwizdom” anonymous questions session, followed by round table discussions.

The findings from these evaluation methods are contained in this report, and will help both in understanding the value for money from the investment in the current ESF programme and help inform the development of any projects to be delivered during the 2014-2020 ESF programme. The ESF Evaluation Sub Committee will be meeting in Sheffield on 23rd November 2015 and the progress made by CFOs in evaluating their activities will be one of the main agenda items.

The fieldwork period for surveys for both the providers and participants was over 3 weeks: 15th June to 3rd July 2015. The evaluation event was held on 24th June.

Online and paper based surveys were carried out with both provider organisations and participants on the projects.

The participants’ survey was primarily a paper based exercise. In accordance with data protection, an email and a hard copy version of the survey with a covering letter was sent to the providers. They were requested to forward this survey to participants on their database and encourage them to give their views via the survey. Some providers also supported participants to complete the form.

The providers were emailed the link to the providers’ online survey, with a request to promote / cascade the survey to other relevant bodies (e.g. sub-contractors) that had been involved in the delivery of the programme.

5. Results

5.1 Participants’ survey (Base: 19 responses)

The participants’ response to the survey was too low for the responses to be considered statistically significant. However they do provide a valuable insight into how respondents felt about the projects they took part in. Response rate was low due to the duration of the programme and lose of contact with many of the participants that took part in the rounds of projects. (Please see report attached in Annex 4 for detailed results)

Key findings:

- Respondents to the participants survey rated most aspects for all projects very good or fairly good especially staff politeness / friendliness / helpfulness (95%), staff knowledge on employment skills (95%) and staff listening and understanding participants requirements from the project (95%).

- Respondents identified many aspects of the projects of to be beneficial in their learning and development. They indicated acquiring new skills (89%), increasing
confidence and self-esteem and overall improvement in the quality of their learning provision as being most beneficial.

- Key aspects of the project that participants identified as strengths included giving the participants confidence, good skills and, in some cases, they mentioned the individual tutor by name.

- Key weaknesses identified after ‘none’ included the IT training and social media.

- Furthermore, the projects had a very big impact on 53% of respondents in terms of developing their skills to help them into employment, making them more confident, encouraged and motivated.

- Improvements suggested, other than none – extend the length of the course as many felt it was not long enough and better use of IT.

5.2 Providers survey (Base: 12 responses)

There were 23 providers who delivered projects under the ESF programme of which 12 took part and gave the views of their organisation via the evaluation survey giving a 43% response rate. (Please see report attached in Annex 3 for detailed results.)

Key findings:

- Role or purpose of the ESF fund programme was seen by providers as delivering projects to engage and support marginalised / disadvantaged and vulnerable groups to develop / up-skill themselves and enter employment. The ESF programme also identifies local need and sets priorities to support the economic wellbeing of the area.

- Most of respondents rated the PQQ process, the tendering process and elements of their working relationship with Luton Borough Council as very good or good. Furthermore, respondents to the survey felt the LBC tendering process was fair and inclusive.

- Over two thirds of respondents felt the needs of their client groups could not have been met through alternative provision if this programme had not existed and the projects funded under the ESF programme have had a positive impact on Luton by giving the client groups targeted and tailored support to meet their specific needs in applying for jobs and entering employment. It has benefited the participants in many ways including helping to find employment, to acquire new skills, supported with CV writing and help with job applications.

- Key strengths of the programme included supporting a diverse group of clients via the various projects:

  “employment outcomes delivered though support and mentoring”
“improving confidence and life chances of carers and parents to get them engaged in learning and on the path to employment”

“specialist knowledge of disability enabled us to provide targeted support through a flexible and holistic managed journey . . .”

“helped improve communications skills to participants and improved self-confidence.”

“The Work Club for over 50s, and the Work Club for migrant workers . . .”

“the main strength of our NEET contract lay in our ability to successfully engage young people . . .”

“It was a customised programme that was developed and changed to meet the needs of vulnerable groups we worked with and supported them into work and/or further education”.

And some of the weaknesses identified:

“participant’s language and cultural difficulties”

“some clients did not stay because of the commitment required”

“one year contracts are hard to deliver as confidence needs to be built with clients”

“. . . better links could be set up with employers to provide sustained job outcomes over 8 hours per week”

“many participants have complex needs and multiple barriers to work. . . . the limitations of time constraints impacted on outcomes”

“recruitment was a struggle as the targeted groups were not easy to find . . . “

- There were many suggestions made by projects respondents that they would like to see in future projects e.g. men only, pre-employment, 1-2-1 mentoring and coaching, in-work progression, working with diverse BME groups and NEET young people.

- Suggestions in terms for future programmes included greater partnership working and involvement with the local voluntary sector, local stakeholders (LEP, schools, colleges) and local employers, flexibility of programme to recognise multiple barriers and employability support specifically for migrant groups.

- Some of the lessons learnt from the projects to inform future projects / programmes:

  “more language associated mentors would be better”.

  “having a list of employers that will provide job outcomes and work placements working in partnership with them at JCP”
“having clear lines of communication across projects will be huge help . . .”

“. . . need to work more closely with local schools and other service providers . . .”

“providers to work in partnership to provide learners with clear pathways of support and development”

“the project for gangs should be extended to younger participants, possibly even as young as 13 years old”

- Overall, feedback on the programme and projects delivered by providers was positive and they enjoyed delivering the projects.

5.3  ESF Celebration and Evaluation Event

A celebration event was held on 24 June 2015 to celebrate and showcase some of the projects delivered locally, and to ask for feedback on the ESF Programme. Both providers and participants were invited to come and share their experiences and tell us their thoughts on the programme.

24 delegates attended, including 12 providers and 7 participants, plus partner organisations.

The event was introduced by an overview of the ESF Programme in Luton and followed by a description of their projects from

- Develop EBP, who delivered a project for vulnerable NEETs
- Reactiv8, who delivered a project for 19-29 year olds who were at risk of gang culture and lawlessness. The project manager and one of the Reactiv8 participants gave a presentation. (photo below)

The delegates then took part in a Quizdom exercise followed by round table discussions.
5.3.1 Qwizdom

The attendees used a Qwizdom electronic voting exercise to give their views about Luton as a town, and about employment and skills levels amongst residents. (*Please see results graph report in annex 3*)

- When asked if delegates felt Luton was looking better, views were mixed fairly evenly from ‘yes, very much’ to ‘still needs work’
- Most delegates agreed that there seemed to be more job opportunities around.
- The majority of delegates felt there is still a need to improve / for a lot to change for Luton to lose its reputation as a low skills area.

5.3.2 Round table discussion groups – provider and participants

The attendees were split into four tables, and asked to discuss the following topics:

1. From your perspective, what was the main impact of the project / programme? E.g. how has it benefited the participants? What impact has it had on participants?
2. What were the main challenges for you as a participant or provider? E.g. barriers to work, lack of knowledge, access to project, recruiting participants etc.
3. Do you have any ideas of how delivery could be improved in the future?
4. How important is it that funders like the Council and ESF support similar projects for local people?
5. Do you have any suggestions for projects that could be delivered to benefit people like you, local employers and the wider community?

Responses varied according to the people around the table, but some general points raised included: (More detailed notes are attached in Annex 1)

- Referral was often through the Jobcentre, and could vary quite a lot depending on the work coach involved.
- Personal referrals and recommendation work best.
- It was felt that having local providers, know and trusted by the local community, was a very effective form of delivery.
- Participants often had multiple barriers to overcome, and so providers needed to take a holistic approach. People needed to be moved from “can’t do” to “can do”.
- The projects were very effective in supporting learning and development of client groups and supported them seeking and/or getting back into employment and/or education.
There is a need for a pre-employment programme, for people who need support to be ready for employability support (e.g. English skills, health factors).

For the skills provision, people did not always respect “free” provision to gain a qualification. It was suggested that asking a contribution from employers could improve commitment. Or charging a “no show” fee.

For the future, there was a suggestion of a larger programme with multiple providers who could address various aspects of an individual's need, e.g. one provider to address language needs, another to tackle digital skills, and another to help with caring issues.

More opportunities to use mentoring would be welcome, as this is considered one of the most effective forms of training.

Project delivery time should be longer as it can take time to build trust.

6. Case studies

Case studies have been collated where participants have chosen to share their experiences, and more are available on request.

One excellent example of the impact of ESF support is Artur Golinski who won the Outstanding Achiever Award at the Adult Learners' Awards 2015. Artur suffers from Tourette’s syndrome, a heart condition, anxiety and depression. He found securing work difficult as, despite his experience, employers failed to see past his disabilities. This rejection lead to anxiety attacks, sometimes so severe he was unable to leave home. He was supported by the “Employment Support for Adults with Mental Health Issues” project delivered by Kennedy Scott. He enrolled on several workshops to move him closer to the labour market, and gained his CSCS card. After several setbacks, he was offered a maintenance technician job at Luton's MFA Bowl. Artur soon got to grips with the maintenance duties of the bowling alley, and after a couple of months it was evident that he was feeling much happier in work. His employer was so pleased with his performance that he offered Artur the opportunity to shadow the Head Technician, who was approaching retirement. The employer offered Artur a customer facing role as a security officer. With some encouragement from Kennedy Scott, Artur agreed to attend Door Supervisor Training, which he completed in five days, after which he returned to Kennedy Scott to thank them, saying: "I will call my mum on Skype so she can see me smile."

Angela Rowney, Economic Development Team, Luton Borough Council

November 2015
Annex 1 – Notes of Round Table Discussions

Roundtable discussion (Table 1)

Q1. From your perspective, what was the main impact of the project / programme? E.g. how has it benefited the participants? What impacts has it had on participants?

- MENCAP – provide 1-to-1 support those with Learning Difficulties for 80 hour per client. Required in order to give effective support, but is very intensive.
- Becoming more confident using a computer. Its good when clients realise they can send an email unaided etc.
- DRC – supporting those with physical difficulties. Main impact moving from “can’t do” to “can do”. If clients believe in themselves its more likely that employers will believe in them.
- UoB – offers in work training up to level 3. Application of knowledge has been key. Uni has learnt much as it has undertaken 3 projects.
- Personal development, building confidence and capacity table discussion.
- Raising disability awareness – delivering training for employers and raising awareness
- Job brokers – dual role: working with employers and applicants.

University of Bedfordshire also facilitates a business growth programme that provides knowledge and practical project planning skills e.g. customer service, innovation in business etc.

Q2. What were the main challenges for you as a participant or provider? E.g. barriers to work, lack of knowledge, access to project, recruiting participants etc.

- DRC – despite lots of marketing clients predominately come through JCP. Project scope meant that the separate “strands” of need for each client had to be dealt with in isolation when it would have been better to take a more holistic approach to multiple barriers.
- MENCAP – pre-employment is key, otherwise greater risk of failure. Challenge is to build effective link with employers. Setting up social media sites is crucial. Person-to-person best for marketing.
- UoB – variable recruitment success, with unexpected amounts of effort required. Target on last project not met as not enough marketing (should have used social media more). Think one barrier is not charging a small fee for attendance e.g. admin fee. This should reduce no-shows. Do funding rules allow this?
- Recruitment. Candidates predominately come through Job Centre referrals despite marketing vacancies.
- Multiple health issues – both physical and mental health = multiple barriers to work especially if there are also childcare requirements. Need to take a holistic approach e.g. coaching, counselling etc.
- Relationship building with client to build trust to remove barriers. Develop understanding with clients is important.
• Job centre referrals: most referrals come through the job centre and so employers are competing with similar providers as well as having to rely on job centre more heavily. The challenge is to build links with potential participants.
• Face-to-face and person-to-person referrals are still most effective.
• Suitability of referral was a consideration
• Challenges from the University perspective were around recruitment – coping with the level of recruitment and the level of interest varied. It was very successful (high) recruitment for the first two programmes and low for the third round. There was more marketing on programmes 1 and 2. The University would consider doing more marketing via social and digital in future media e.g. twitter, Fb etc.
• As not charging participants, gaining their commitment to the programme is a challenge. Suggestion: charge for non-attendance.
• No show rate is much lower when a deposit is paid by participants to attend/join programme.
• Managing those participants that “just don’t want to work – no will, no want”.
• Partnership working.
• Mistrust on part of the participants and lack of motivation.

Q3. Do you have any ideas of how delivery could be improved in the future?

• Participant’s previous poor experiences have created a barrier to them accessing and participating on programmes.
• Increase amount of pre-employability training before skills development. Stepped approach for people with complex needs.
• Real value in investing time, but at high cost especially with clients with multiple, complex barriers to work.
• Confidentiality and privacy builds confidence in participants.
• Listening to the needs of participants.
• Pre-employment programme – to assess and support participants needs e.g. weight management, specific needs, disability etc.
• 1-to-1 for those with profound needs.
• Having time to build relationships with clients.
• More flexible personalised programme tailored to personal individual needs.
• Keep relaxed and informal e.g. “not to dress like the police” so that you appear approachable and more time to deliver the programme with more support workers.

Q4. How important is it that funders like the Council and ESF support similar projects for local people?

• It’s getting harder to reach the more vulnerable groups.
• Target groups based on needs shared by local employers.
• Where businesses have identified a skills shortage.
Q5. Do you have any suggestions for projects that could be delivered to benefit people like you, local employers and the wider community?

- More flexible projects tailored around individuals, make use of diverse providers.
- Allow more flexibility in moving between programmes.
- The programme is good for overcoming barriers.
- Working in partnership.
- Funding in a different way/model.
- Not “one size fits all” approach.
- Getting local employers on board earlier.
Roundtable discussion (Table 2)

Q1. From your perspective, what was the main impact of the project / programme? E.g. how has it benefited the participants? What impacts has it had on participants?

- Participants went to employment
- Participants went to further education
- Developed skills & training e.g. IT skills communication skills, team building etc.
- Improved engagement with employers
- Engaged in activities—(without the project they wouldn’t have been able to)
- One to one IAG sessions and access to job matching service
- Increased self-esteem, confidence & motivation
- Helped them to make friends
- Improved culture awareness (people learned about other cultures – organised parties where participants were able to mix with other people and try out different food prepared by participants)
- Open diversity
- The project helped break the barriers into employment/training/engagement with others
- Helped people become more organised – time management
- Money management
- They had training based on specific interests
- Improved interview techniques and telephone manners
- More confident to look for work
- Improved team working and helped become more disciplined
- Project provided inspirational role models which has helped change participants mind set
- Improved aspirations
- Resilience
- Complex needs were met
- Participants were in support groups and they carried on supporting each other – helped them become more considerate of others.

Q2. What were the main challenges for you as a participant or provider? E.g. barriers to work, lack of knowledge, access to project, recruiting participants etc.

- Language barriers – participants could not speak, read or write English
- Participant were homeless, Vulnerable
- Not ready for work – multiple barriers
- Learning difficulties
- Don’t have the ability to find a job
- Lack of confidence
- Not motivated to work
- Low aspirations
• Partnership working was difficult
• Referral pathways
• Some participants were keen to work but don’t know the language
• Recruiting participants was hard
• There is no central location or a point of contacts in Luton where organisation can access the unemployed/unengaged people. And also learn about what is being offered already and by whom.

Q3. Do you have any ideas of how delivery could be improved in the future?

• Pathway working – knowing what others are doing and delivering
• more cohesive approach to partnership working with other organisations
• need for local intelligence – what is being delivered already – danger of duplication – local provider to know the market
• develop a programme where people can learn and move on to better prospects

Q4. How important is it that funders like the council and ESF support similar projects for local people?

• Hugely important
• Very important to invest in local people
• People wanted local delivery, local partnerships to help local people
• People in Luton know Luton/communities way better than people from outside
• People have reservations about ESF funds being managed by Central Bedfordshire Council.
• Less local impact if delivery is not local and would not add social value.

Q5. Do you have any suggestions for projects that could be delivered to benefit people like you, local employers and the wider community?

• First level support
• Soft skills – without which you’re not employable
• Real potential for mentoring type projects – people need role models, motivation and a bit extra help to achieve what they want to achieve in their life.
• Self-esteem, confidence building, motivational and IAG related projects
• A central point of contact or organisation to follow the participant though journey from unemployed to being employed.
Roundtable discussion (Table 3)

Q1. From your perspective, what was the main impact of the project / programme? E.g. how has it benefited the participants? What impacts has it had on participants?

- Self-awareness, confidence, motivation, positivity, goal setting and achievements
- Started 18 participants into work.

Q2. What were the main challenges for you as a participant or provider? E.g. barriers to work, lack of knowledge, access to project, recruiting participants etc.

- Recruitment – resistance, mistrust, lack of motivation, scepticism, fear of change.

Q3. Do you have any ideas of how delivery could be improved in the future?

- Not dress too formally (don’t look like police), more of the same / longer period time.
- Lengthen group work.
- More support workers
- Participants to train others (mentoring programme)
- Peer support.

Q4. How important is it that funders like the council and ESF support similar projects for local people?

- Very important – should be for everyone. Those lacking confidence / aspiration.

5. Do you have any suggestions for projects that could be delivered to benefit people like you, local employers and the wider community?

- Everyone should go through it.
Roundtable discussion (Table 4)

Q1. From your perspective, what was the main impact of the project / programme? E.g. how has it benefited the participants? What impacts has it had on participants?

- Supported people into work

Q2. What were the main challenges for you as a participant or provider? E.g. barriers to work, lack of knowledge, access to project, recruiting participants etc.

- Recruiting participant’s longer term.
- DWP advisors – negative impressions
- Building on relationships
- Competition – moving to collaboration

Q3. Do you have any ideas of how delivery could be improved in the future?

- Focus on participants / individuals journey – empowering.
- Moving through provision
- Work coach as key client manager.
- IAG service meeting needs – CRM
- Partnerships
- New funding model? Sharing risk/reward.

Q4. How important is it that funders like the council and ESF support similar projects for local people?

- Very simple process.
- Partnership working.

Q5. Do you have any suggestions for projects that could be delivered to benefit people like you, local employers and the wider community?

- Link through to employment – getting employers on board
- Sustainability of solutions e.g. peer to peer.
- Longer courses to embed learning.
- Longer term support – in-work support
- Longer term programmes
- Supported internships.
Annex 2 – Quizdom Results

Test your keypad

Luton Town Football Club just missed out on promotion this year, do you think they will be promoted next season?

A) Yes
B) No
C) I hope so
D) I don’t know or care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Luton is improving slowly, for example the new paved areas in the town centre. Do you think Luton is looking better?

A. Yes, very much
B. Yes, a little
C. Still needs work
D. No, there is a long way to go
E. Don’t know / not sure

The number of people on Job Seeker’s Allowance in Luton is falling steadily. Do you feel there are more job opportunities around?

A. Yes
B. No
C. Don’t know / not sure
Luton used to have a reputation as a low skills area. Do you think this has changed?

A. Yes, much better
B. Yes, improving slowly
C. Still needs improvement
D. No there’s a lot more needs to change
E. Don’t know / not sure
Annex 3 – Provider Survey Results

European Social Fund (ESF) Programme in Luton
Stakeholder evaluation: 12 responses

Q1 Please provide the following details about your organisation and yourself:
   your name 12 responses – see table below
   your job title 12
   name of your organisation 12
   your telephone number 11
   email address 12

Q2 What was your role the European Social Fund (ESF) Project delivered by our organisation?
   please specify
   9 responses:
   • Contract Manager / Project Manager / Bid Writer / Project Coordinator

About the ESF programme

Q3 What does your organisation see as the role or purpose of Luton's European Social Fund (ESF) Programme? please specify
   12 responses:
   • To support groups, and in particular marginalised and disadvantaged groups into sustainable living, primarily through employment but also through support in overcoming barriers in life and in finding work.
   • Supporting clients with learning disabilities to either gain work or move closer to the employment market with additional support by our trained team
   • To support the unemployed and marginalised in the Borough to improve their life chances. This is through various activities including up skilling, confidence building with the goal of progressing individuals to be in employment, self-employment or training. This will then improve the affluence of the community and the economy of the town.
   • To support organisations to reach out to vulnerable adults within the local community assisting them back into work, education or self-employment
   • The European Social Fund is able to identify the local needs and set priorities that ensure the economic wellbeing of the area. It aims to improve skills, job prospects, developing the workforce and improving the standards of living to resident and aiding economic growth. Priority groups include residents over 50, those with physical and learning disabilities, mental health issues and NEET young people. Programmes are awarded in order to address these needs.
   • They were the key to getting the programme up and running, and for giving us the opportunity to engage in clients with learning needs across the region.
   • In general - ESF funding is to be used to fund innovative programmes that provide significant additionally to the existing landscape of provision, meeting key ESF objectives and cross-cutting themes.
Our organisation has been involved for more than 4 years with Luton's ESF Programme as provider of IAG services, training and into employment skills, volunteering and work experience, mentoring services to unemployed, CV writing, job letters and job applications completion, job interviews.

Main role of the Luton's ESF Programme is to deliver more specific and tailored support for disadvantaged groups in local community e.g. over 45s, migrants, homeless, drug and alcohol addicted, single parents etc.

In our view the Luton ESF programme was designed to add value to mainstream/national programmes, ensuring that projects were locally tailored to meet the needs of local residents and the economy.

The purpose of the programme was to engage and support 16 -19 year olds (and LLDD learners) who are particularly vulnerable and NEET and assist them to re-engage into education, training or work.

Providing resources (money, partnerships, advice & guidance)

Q4 Were you involved in the submission of the pre-qualification questionnaire? Please tick one box only
7 (58%) yes
5 (42%) no

Q5 How would you rate the following aspects of the pre-qualification questionnaire (PQQ)? Please tick one box per row

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Neither Good Nor Poor</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Very Poor</th>
<th>Don't Know/Not Sure</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ease to complete the questionnaire</td>
<td>1 (14%)</td>
<td>6 (86%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information available to register your interest</td>
<td>2 (29%)</td>
<td>5 (71%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notes for suppliers</td>
<td>2 (29%)</td>
<td>5 (71%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of time to complete and return the questionnaire</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>4 (57%)</td>
<td>2 (29%)</td>
<td>1 (14%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online help facility</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>3 (43%)</td>
<td>4 (57%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>2 (29%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If poor or very poor - please tell us why
1 response

There were some holdups to the process which were not anyone’s fault be caused some delay.

Q6 How would you describe your experience of the PQQ process? Please tick one box only
1 (14%) very good
5 (71%) fairly good
1 (14%) neither good nor poor
0 fairly poor
0 very poor

If fairly or very poor - please tell us why
0 response
Q7  **In relation to the tendering process itself, how would you rate Luton Borough Council on the following:** please tick one box per row only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Neither Good nor Poor</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Very Poor</th>
<th>Don't Know/Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prospectus - tender specification document</td>
<td>4 (33%)</td>
<td>7 (58%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear timelines/timetable for tendering exercise</td>
<td>4 (33%)</td>
<td>6 (50%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of supporting information to submit bids</td>
<td>4 (33%)</td>
<td>5 (42%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support and addressing of queries</td>
<td>3 (25%)</td>
<td>8 (67%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract management - clear roles and responsibilities specified</td>
<td>5 (42%)</td>
<td>6 (50%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracting and management information e.g. negotiation of SLA, appraisals</td>
<td>3 (25%)</td>
<td>8 (67%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment arrangements and agreements</td>
<td>4 (33%)</td>
<td>6 (50%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall tendering process</td>
<td>3 (25%)</td>
<td>8 (67%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If poor or very poor - please tell us why

1 response:

*Unfortunately I'm not able to give answers because this process pre-dated my involvement with this project I can only answer in general terms.*

Q8  **In general under the ESF programme, how have you found working with Luton Borough Council on the following:** please tick one box only

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Neither Good nor Poor</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Very Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication and contact</td>
<td>10 (83%)</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information sharing</td>
<td>5 (42%)</td>
<td>6 (50%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open, fair and transparent processes to facilitate tendering</td>
<td>8 (67%)</td>
<td>4 (33%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joining up projects to avoid duplication of activity</td>
<td>4 (33%)</td>
<td>5 (42%)</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>4 (33%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If poor or very poor - please tell us why

2 responses:

*We had issues where we were trying to contact existing programmes for help or advice, and information on clients on their caseload, and often we were not given much information. We found this to be as some organisations were 'protective' of their clients and did not want them to be engaging with anyone else.*

*The referral process between ESF partners taking the learner through a joined up pathway was not strong as a number of providers did not refer*
learners.

Q9 Which of the following projects did your organisation bid for in the 2011 call for tenders? Please tick all that apply

1 (8%) training and support for NEETs
1 (8%) support for vulnerable NEETs
2 (17%) employment support for adults with physical health issues
4 (33%) employment support for those with mental health issues or a learning disability
4 (33%) employment support for the over 50s
2 (17%) employment for those with a disability - mental and/or physical
2 (17%) employment support for carers - those caring for children and/or a dependent
3 (25%) employment support for young adults - aged 19-29
0 employment support for 19 to 29 year olds at risk of being drawn into gang culture/lawlessness
4 (33%) ESOL and employment support
2 (17%) Pre-ESOL and employment support
0 training for key sector SMEs in Luton

Q10 Did you experience any challenges in tendering for projects? Please explain

11 responses:
• Yes, the process was held up because of a dispute and a process that had to be settled.
• No
• It took a long time to get feedback on the progress of the application
• No
• This is not something I had anything to do with; however I read through the initial contract with my manager to make sure it all made sense and we felt that was agreed was obtainable/achievable.
• Again - apologies but before my time.
• Yes. As small organisation we don't have capacity to fund the project before payment from LBC
• Not really.
• n/a
• No
• none

Q11 In your opinion, was the PPQ and LBC tendering processes fair and inclusive to allow providers to make a submission? Please explain

11 responses:
• The process was fair and transparent and easy to follow.
• Yes
• Yes
• It seems fair and inclusive
• Yes, all the process is fair and inclusive. Information to promote the opportunities was well communicated through various channels and support available. As a new ESF provider will felt that the opportunities were open to
a range of organisations including local grassroots organisations and specialist providers that are able to meet the local need

- I would have to ask my manager this as it would not be fair for me to comment.
- It's fair and inclusive.
- Yes.
- We feel that the process is fair and inclusive.
- Yes
- Yes assuming you are able to navigate Bravo Solutions portal which is not that easy
Q12  Is there anything the Council could do to better support you to successfully bid for projects under the ESF programme? please explain
10 responses:
- The support that was provided by Luton Borough Council was exceptional; there was on-going dialogue and support provided whenever required. Thank you!
- No
- Have regular information about when tenders go out
- No
- n/a
- Networking opportunities between potential primes and subs are always useful.
- Yes, the Council could help small organisations to be more competitive for tendering in order to successful bid for projects under the ESF programme.
- Seetec is an organisation with an established bidding resource and as we have successfully tendered for projects we do not feel any other support is required.
- No
- no

Q13  In your experience, do you feel the ESF programme has: please tick all that apply
10 (83%) increased employment opportunities
12 (100%) helped unemployed and economically inactive people develop skills
11 (92%) helped local residents enter sustainable jobs esp. people from disadvantaged groups
6 (50%) helped young people develop skills to re-engage with education, training or work including NEET
3 (25%) raised the skills of managers and employees of key sector businesses in Luton
0 (0%) other

Other, please specify
0 response
Q14 Please indicate if you agree or disagree that the ESF programme funded the correct projects: please tick one box per row

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Don't Know/not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support for 14 to 19 year olds who are NOT in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) to enable them to re-engage with education, training or work</td>
<td>8 (67%)</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for vulnerable NEETs aged 16 to 19 years old</td>
<td>9 (75%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment support for adults (19+) who have physical disability or work limiting health issues</td>
<td>10 (83%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment support for adults (19+) who have a mental illness or learning disability which is limiting their ability to find work</td>
<td>10 (83%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment support for the over 50s to enable them to return to paid employment</td>
<td>9 (75%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment support for adults with responsibility for caring for dependent adults and/or children</td>
<td>8 (67%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment support for 19-29 year olds at risk of becoming involved in gang culture or lawless behaviour</td>
<td>7 (58%)</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English language and employment support for migrant workers</td>
<td>10 (83%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment support for migrant workers who are pre-ESOL and need advice and training on the culture of work in the UK</td>
<td>9 (75%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key sector training project</td>
<td>8 (67%)</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you disagree, please explain your reasons why you disagree. 0 response
Q15 What employment and skills support ideas do you think are not covered at the moment? Please explain.

10 responses:

- There are no specific programmes to support people’s needs who are facing multiple barriers to employment, there could be more support provided in terms of the support around individuals in overcoming barriers.

- All are covered.

- Area’s that could be improved are Leadership and Management coaching and training for participants, traineeships and apprenticeships for young people. Additional funding for skills training.

- Confidence Building for men

- Pre employability support for those with significant and multiple barriers to work and furthest from the labour market including more access to one to one support and allowing for multiple diagnosis currently separated into separate strands.

- I think from receiving feedback from our clients, they really benefited from the soft skills that were on offer. Many of the clients arrived a long way from being ready for work so needed quite a lot of groundwork put in before even thinking of applying for roles. The nature of our programme gave the client an opportunity to improve their IT or Communication Skills. As we had time to work with the clients we could address these issues so as to make them better ready for approaching the workplace. More programmes that have the time like we did to work with clients on a 1 to 1 basis would be great.

- Mentoring services

- Employment support for 45+. We have worked very closely with JCP for the last 3 years supporting unemployed over 50s into work. However there is increasing group of unemployed people 45+ who are willing to reconsider their career path and once they do it before age of 50 it is more likely they will sustain their new job while 50+ are more stigmatised by the age and harder to move to new kind of employment. There is no specific provision for 45+ as they are too old to join NEET and 19-29 provision and they are too young to be supported by 50+ programmes.

- n/a

- None
Q16  Are there any other projects you would like to have seen funded by the ESF programme?  
please specify  
10 responses:
- Perhaps some small social enterprises that not only become self-sustainable through their work but also support individuals in raising their self-worth and self-esteem.
- Not at the present
- Men only projects as we delivered on women only men felt left out
- As before - Pre employability support and one to one case management
- n/a
- Support for in-work progression
- Mentoring and coaching for unemployed
- Having experience of working with different ethnic groups of migrants it will be good to have employment support for the specific ethnic groups e.g. Asian ladies or EU migrants. Their employment needs and employability skills are quite different and sometimes due to culture difference it is impossible to work in mixed groups to accommodate their individual needs. Also there is lack of provision for Qualification Conversion for migrant workers. The Learning Partnership provided this as additional outcome in ESOL and ES programme. Among migrant workers there are groups of semi-skilled and highly skilled professionals however due to a lack of QC provision they take jobs for unskilled workers.
- We feel that potentially a separate programme for 14-15 at risk NEETs (or additional volumes within an overall 14-19 NEET programme) would ensure that this group receive appropriate focus as there is very limited support for this group outside of ESF currently and we experienced significant demand from schools.
- No

Q17  If this programme did not exist, could the needs of the client group be have been met through an alternative provision?  please tick one box only

0 yes
8 (67%) no
3 (25%) don't know/not sure

If yes, please tell us about these alternatives

1 response:
- Whilst some client groups could have been supported through mainstream provision e.g. Work Programme, in delivering our ESF NEET programme we found that schools in particular were very keen to work with us as there were few alternative (funded) programmes or support available to support their at risk of NEET students.
Q18  **Do you as an organisation believe the projects funded under the ESF programme have had a positive impact on Luton residents?**  please explain

11 responses:
- Absolutely, a massive affect for the better.
- Yes
- Yes as it has allowed target client groups in the community to receive support which may not have occurred on more general and mainstream provision.
- Yes as it has provided skills training and increased motivation to get back into work education or business.
- Yes. LBC has been able to identify and address the specific needs of the area using organisations that are able to engage with the priority groups and delivered tailored provision to meet their needs. However some areas still need further support in order to impact such as ESA claimants, adults and young people with mental health issues and those with chaotic lifestyles.
- I do, but I feel we only begun to scratch the surface of those that could really benefit from it.
- Yes, as the ESF programme gave learning and employment opportunities to minority ethnic groups in Luton.
- Definitely yes, a lot of clients entered employment, the others improved confidence in applying for jobs, improved IT and employability skills.
- We feel that the projects delivered have had a positive impact on local residents. For example our 14-19 NEET programme supported young people to progress to further learning or employment, and for at risk young people to remain in school. We met all targets and received a range of positive feedback from local schools to highlight the positive impact on their student’s behaviour and achievement at school.
- Yes
- yes

Q19  **How important or unimportant is commissioning of local programmes (not regional or national) of this kind?**  please tick one box only

12 (100%)  very important  
0  fairly important  
0  neither important nor unimportant  
0  fairly unimportant  
0  not at all important  
0  don’t know/not sure  

If unimportant or not at all important, please explain

1 response:
- We deliver both local and national programmes in Luton and across the UK and have therefore seen the positive impact of both types of provision. We feel that the infrastructure of national mainstream programmes to support large volumes of participants is important but that the overall effectiveness of support is strengthened when taken in conjunction with locally commissioned programmes targeting specific local groups and community needs.
Q20  Do you have any suggestions on how future programmes can be improved to address these priorities to be of benefit to the participants, employers, economy and wider community? please explain
  10 responses:
  • Perhaps more involvement of employers as partners.
  • No
  • More links provided with local employers and networks to help with job outcomes, so we have a joined up service meeting the needs of local employers.
  • More information about progression routes
  • More flexibility of programmes recognising the multiple barriers to employment faced by NEET young people and adults with more partnership working to address this barriers and one to one case management for those furthest from the labour market. Pre employability programme could include condition management, change management, confident building and motivation and counselling with access to high quality impartial advice and guidance.
  • I think clearer lines of communication between existing programmes and new programmes will be helpful. This avoids stepping on others people's toes when a new programme arrives, but can result in the sharing of information.
  • Making programmes too niche or granular can be a mistake. Instead of cutting it into small slices, it is better to contract to one trusted provider which can co-ordinate provision across diverse priorities. This drives economies of scales, and ensures quality is upheld across provision. Anything too small and it can become an 'add-on' which is often ineffective and ends up with poor resourcing and consequent poor delivery quality.
  • More partnership between voluntary sector and employers in Luton, giving to unemployed people opportunities for work experiences or volunteering
  • 1. Include 45+ in employability support 2. Employability support for specific migrant groups e.g. Asian Ladies, Eastern European migrants 3. Availability of Qualification Conversion provision.
  • We feel that closer links between local stakeholders including the LEP, schools and colleges will be beneficial in the future to support better join up of programmes and skills needs across the area. Expansion of current NEET provision particularly for 14-15 year olds would greatly benefit this group and ensure a preventative approach is taken to minimise NEET rates post 16 and align with the ongoing RPA agenda.

ESF funded projects delivered by your organisation

Q21  Please indicate which of the following specific groups/clients your project primarily aimed to target? please tick all that apply
  8 (67%) unemployed
  5 (42%) economically inactive - those not on Job Seekers Allowance and hoping to return to the labour market
  2 (17%) age 14 -19 year old NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training
2 (17%) young adults - aged 19-29
6 (50%) those with a disability, mental or physical
3 (25%) those caring for a child or dependant adult
4 (33%) age 50 years and over
7 (58%) ethnic minorities
5 (42%) females
0 other

Q22 Was your project(s) successful in recruiting this/these target groups/clients? please tick one box only
12 (100%) yes
0 no

Please explain - what worked well and what not so well
3 responses:
- Yes, however most were via jobcentre plus despite a range of marketing strategies, collateral, events and outreach. We were 4 short from recruitment targets and with longer projects would develop further partnerships and relationship management with community groups.
- We were very successful in getting the right number and type of clients for the programme, but I think it took us longer to figure out the nature of the market and this affected us in terms of achieving actual job targets.
- Our ESF NEET project was very successful in engaging the specified target groups and we met our start targets. We achieved this by mapping and contacting all schools and colleges in the area in addition to youth/community centres, youth offending team, training providers, local authority and community organisations. We held community engagement events including evening outreach activities at local youth spaces, community centres, and careers fairs and in the town centre.

Q23 How was the project(s) you delivered tailored to meet the specific needs of your participants/clients? please explain
11 responses:
- By providing work placements along with English classes we supported people in developing their English skills quickly and to learn work relevant English.
- Mencap Employ Me programme was used and accepted by all clients.
- Course times and venues accessible for the client group, female tutors who could empathise well with the client group.
- We held open days and spoke to JCP staff for them to get a better understanding of the programme so referral can be made confidently. Our ability to work with other organisations to benefit the clients.
- Work is possible for a significant number of workless adults with physical health issues and will provide independence, control and economic well-being. An individualised holistic package of tailored support was delivered in a managed journey. Workshops were delivered on both employment and life issues including employment and enterprise support. Taking into the
consideration the specific needs of participants it incorporated change management and psychological interventions. It provided up to 190 hours training and one to one coaching to residents with physical disabilities or work limiting health issues, across the breadth of Luton and included work trails and in work support, information, advice and guidance. A twinned approach to employers and participants was taken with the development of an employer academy.

- The key aspect of our programme was that each client was in total given 80 hours’ worth of tailored support. The support was different across each client to ensure they were receiving the correct type of support for them. Each member of staff was fully trained on how to work with clients of a learning disability nature and the knowledge was also shared with advisors at the job centre to help make them aware of clients to refer to us.
- We have carried out survey to identify the needs of our participants before we were involved in the projects.

1. Employment Support for the Over 50s  The Over 50s project offered a comprehensive package of employability support to workless adults aged over 50 living in Luton. Personal Adviser helped participants identify the option for future employment via 1 to 1 or group sessions using diagnostics and Luton specific Labour Market Information. The weekly Work Club for 50+ was offered to all practice and to gain confidence. This environment provided excellent opportunity for clients to network and helped with developing their self-confidence. Also Work Club website - an invaluable resource for Over 50s participants. The website was developed by us and updated weekly with current vacancies on local market, encouraging less digitally advanced participants for job seeking and upgrading their employability skills. 2. ESOL and Employment Support for migrants The programme offered work related beginner level English language programme, into employment support through Work Club for the migrants and Qualification Comparison. The course helped participants to gain understanding of workplace processes, communication and Health and Safety whilst gaining language skills. Also Work Club website reflected the modules of the Work Club programme. We provided Google Translate on the website to support participants whose first language is not English. All our venues have a diverse range of languages to support participants individual needs e.g. if culture needs identified we accommodate it with female advisor for female Asian group or multilingual (Polish/Russian) adviser for Eastern European group.

- For the NEET contract we employed members of staff who were able to engage/relate to young people’s needs and the service was delivered in schools and youth centres. We assessed needs with interactive/engaging initial assessments including BKSB assessments for functional skills and delivered employability and careers focused sessions to identify options for young people including Traineeships/Apprenticeships. We provided additional support for participants with additional needs e.g. LLDD, including travel plans and advocacy support. We set milestones for achievement to ensure all learners were able to progress.
- We designed a programme that focussed on the needs of particularly
vulnerable people. This included the development of confidence building, motivational activities (delivered by local inspirational role models) employability skills and challenging activities to assist them in changing negative behaviour patterns. The programme also looked at developing the young person’s emotional resilience to equip them with sustainable skills to succeed long after they have left the provision.

- We had a very good understanding of the needs of clients and developed a specifically tailored programme for the distinctly different needs of African and eastern European clients

Q24 How would you as the provider rate the success of the project(s)? please tick one box only

- 7 (58%) very successful
- 5 (42%) fairly successful
- 0 (0%) neither successful nor unsuccessful
- 0 (0%) fairly unsuccessful
- 0 (0%) very unsuccessful
- 0 (0%) don’t know/not sure

Q25 Which of the following skills and employability priorities did this project(s) address and/or deliver? please tick all that apply

- 1 (8%) language skills - speaking, presenting
- 2 (17%) language (ESOL)
- 1 (8%) literacy - written skills
- 0 (0%) customer services
- 1 (8%) team work
- 0 (0%) leadership
- 1 (8%) problem solving
- 0 (0%) planning and organising tasks
- 0 (0%) management
- 1 (8%) numeracy
- 0 (0%) technical, practical or job specific skills
- 0 (0%) basic computer/ICT skills
- 2 (17%) applying for work
- 0 (0%) writing a CV and covering letters
- 0 (0%) interview skills
- 2 (17%) other

other, please specify

5 responses:

- language skills - speaking, presenting team work numeracy basic computer/ICT skills applying for work
- IT, CV, online job search, change management, confidence, applications, letters, healthy lifestyle
- All above applies. (Does not allow to tick more than one)
- Enabling young people to progress/reengage with learning *please note only possible to tick 1 answer
- You can only tick one of the above boxes however it covered leadership,
Q26  **How has the project(s) benefited the participants/clients:** *please tick all that apply*

- 10 (83%) helped find employment
- 3 (25%) helped gain qualifications
- 9 (75%) helped acquire new skills
- 8 (67%) increased confidence and self-esteem
- 9 (75%) supported with writing CVs and covering letters
- 9 (75%) helped with job applications
- 8 (67%) helped with interview skills
- 8 (67%) access volunteering opportunities
- 7 (58%) access accredited learning, helped to further studies
- 8 (67%) further informal learning
- 8 (67%) provided skills and knowledge to help and others
- 7 (58%) provided additional targeted support to meet specific needs of participants/clients
- 6 (50%) provided a broader range of support to participants/clients
- 2 (17%) helped other local residents (non participants/non clients) find employment
- 7 (58%) overall improved the quality of learning provision for participants/clients
- 0 (0%) none of the above
- 0 (0%) other

Other - please specify
0 response

Q27  **Overall, what were the main strengths of the project?** *please explain*

10 responses:

- Employment outcomes delivered through support and mentoring
- Increasing employment and employment opportunities in Luton
- Improving the confidence and life chances of carers and parents to get them engaged in learning and on the path to employment, with volunteering opportunities provided.
- The increased confidence and motivation of the ladies to apply for jobs, education and self-employment
- Specialist knowledge of disability enabled us to provide targeted support through a flexible, holistic managed journey. It addresses the whole person, the family system with a combination of employability, ICT and personal and social development training. Support included group, one to one and peers support. They had access to and dedicated employ-ability suite and work coach and time allocated for job search. There was a dedicated job broker engaging with local employers and the formation of an employer academy.
- The length of time spent with each client meant you could see their confidence increase and could actually see real progress in their development over time.
- Helped to improve communications skills (speaking) to participants and improved self-confidence.
- 1. The Work Club for 50+/Work Club for Migrants 2. Work Club website 3. Basic IT training course and individual IT session 4. Flexibility and client-
centred approach to meet the individual needs of the participants. In house training: Basic IT, CV, Interview techniques, Traditional and Digital Job Search, Application Form, LMI. Both programmes were nominated and awarded in different categories in Adult Learners' Week.

- The main strengths of our NEET contract lay in our ability to successfully engage young people and stakeholders. Many schools had highlighted funded pre-NEET support as a gap in current provision for their students and commented on the success of the programme in re-engaging these young people, building confidence and motivation and helping them to understand future career options, as well as informal support with literacy and numeracy. Our programme was flexible to ensure support was tailored to individual needs with a combination of engaging group and 1-1 activities. At the same time our delivery was progression focussed to ensure tangible career/life goals for young people with back up options and stepping stones to achieving these goals. We supported a range of harder to help learners to ensure parity of outcomes for the most disadvantaged who would benefit the most from support including care leavers and young offenders.

- It was a customised programme that was developed and changed to meet the needs to the vulnerable groups we worked with and supported them into work and/or further education.

Q28 . . . and key weaknesses? please explain

10 responses:

- Language and cultural difficulties, some participants did not stay because of the commitment required.
- One year contracts are hard to deliver as confidence needs to be built with clients.
- Though we had good links with employers who provided volunteering opportunities and work placements, better links could have been set up with employers to provide sustained job outcomes over 8 hours per week.
- More ladies should have been referred from JCP
- Many participants have complex needs and multiple barriers to work. The course made significant impact on moving them closer to the labour market and significant distance has been travelled. Some learners have moved into sustained employment but overall targets were not met. The limitation of the time constraints impacted on outcomes. Embedding and delivery on long programmes took place in the early stages, with impact being shown in the last six months which indicated accelerated outcomes over time within an established provision.
- Only being a yearlong. It takes time to get to know the layout of a town, find out who already runs programmes in that area and the type of work available. Now having that years learning behind us, I feel we would be in a far better position to actually achieve the targets set out in the contract.
- Very short period of leaning and not enough money to continue supporting learners.
- 1. Employment Support for the Over 50s. As unemployment in Luton has
fallen we found it difficult at the end of the programme to recruit new Over 50s. Knowing that there is a quite big group of 45+ who can benefit from the programme we could not offer our support to them due to eligibility criteria.

- In reference to our NEET contract delivery, a key challenge was evidencing requirements (5hrs per week learning); where we set tasks to be completed at home it was more difficult to evidence.
- Recruitment was a struggle as the targeted groups were not easy to find and had to be recruited based on existing experience, contacts and word of mouth.

Q29 As an organisation, are there any lessons learnt from this projects that will inform future projects/programmes? please tick one box only

- More language associated mentors would be better; this worked well but could be better.
- Have a list of employers that will provide job outcomes and work placements working in partnership with them at JCP to provide guaranteed interviews through Sector Based Work Academies.
- More direct contact with clients and have more open days
- As a new provided additional time had been required to establish links and relationship with employer, stakeholders and referral agencies. The formation of an employer academy provided a framework to support both employers and learners.
- Again I think having clear lines of communication across all programmes will be of huge help with each programme offering the best support for the service users.
- Yes, we learned that if there is a minimum willing to support people who are in need there can be a change in the life of people.
- That was second edition of the Over 50s programme. We applied all the new things which could support our clients more e.g. individual IT sessions, Work Club website.
- As we have referenced above, we see the need to work ever more closely with local schools and other service providers to ensure: a) Duplication is avoided b) Each organisation understands the others objectives and challenges c) Services can be improved over time by sharing ideas, methodologies and data (where appropriate)
- Partners to work in partnership to provide learners with clear pathways of support and development

Q30 Which of the following skills and employability priorities has your organisation identified as being the future skills needed by Luton employers? please tick all that apply

- 1 (8%) language skills - speaking, presenting
- 2 (17%) language (ESOL)
1 (8%) literacy - written skills
2 (17%) customer services
3 (25%) team work
  0 leadership
  0 problem solving
  0 planning and organising tasks
  0 management
  0 numeracy
  0 technical, practical or job specific skills
  0 basic computer/ICT skills
  0 applying for work
  0 writing a CV and covering letters
  0 interview skills
3 (25%) other
other, please specify
5 responses:
- Confidence Building and motivation - self belief
- Dedicated support and recruitment advice to employers
- All above. (Does not allow to tick more than one)
- General employability skills. *only possible to tick 1 box.
- Can't tick more than 1 box

Q31 Any other comments?
4 responses:
- No
- We have enjoyed delivering this contract and look forward to making improvements for increasing job outcomes to this client group.
- Thank you for the opportunity and support and hope to continue to work with you moving forward particular in terms of employment support for disabled people.
- Small organisations are more effective to work with people in the community but they do not have enough money to provide effective services.

About your service users and services

Q32 Apart from/in addition to the ESF project described above - who are your organisation's key service users? Please tick up to 5 boxes only

1 (8%) Unspecified
2 (17%) Alcohol/substance misusers
0 (0%) Armed services personnel
0 (0%) Bereaved
8 (67%) Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities
2 (17%) Carers
0 (0%) Children 0-4
7 (58%) Lone parents
1 (8%) Men only
4 (33%) Migrant workers
6 (50%) People with disabilities and/or health issues
0 (0%) People at risk e.g. forced marriage, sale of sexual services etc
2 (17%) Prisoners/ex offenders
1 (8%) Refugees and asylum seekers
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children 5-7</td>
<td>10 (83%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children 8-13</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elderly community (65 years and over)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith communities</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families</td>
<td>3 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gypsy/roamer/traveller community</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless people</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local residents</td>
<td>8 (67%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other - please specify</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed/low income</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban communities</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of crime</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>3 (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people 14-19</td>
<td>2 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people 20-25</td>
<td>4 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women only</td>
<td>1 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Annex 4 – Participant Survey Results**

**European Social Fund (ESF) Programme in Luton participants evaluation form: 19 responses**

**Q1** Which project delivered under the European Social Fund (ESF) programme did you take part in? please provide the name of the project

19 responses:
- Employment Support for Adults with Learning Disabilities - LUT-36
- Employment Support for the Over 50s
- Skills for Key sector SMEs: Meeting Customer's Needs
- Employability Support for Parents and Carers
- Reach for the stars LUT-39
- Reactiv8 reach for the stars LUT-39

**Q2** Who was the project delivered by? please provide name of the organisation that delivered the project

19 responses from participants with the following providers:
- Royal Mencap / Berries Employment / The Disability Resource Centre / Diversity of Bedfordshire / Kennedy Scott / TCHC / Reactiv8 / University of Bedfordshire

**Q3** How would you rate the following aspects of the project: please tick one box per row

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of the Project</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Fairly Good</th>
<th>Neither Good nor Poor</th>
<th>Fairly Poor</th>
<th>Very Poor</th>
<th>Don't Know/Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>staff - polite, friendly, helpful etc.</td>
<td>18 (95%)</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staff knowledge on employment skills</td>
<td>18 (95%)</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>content of the project - topics covering, activities etc.</td>
<td>17 (89%)</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information and paperwork provided</td>
<td>17 (89%)</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>project relevant to your needs</td>
<td>16 (84%)</td>
<td>3 (16%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location and venue</td>
<td>15 (79%)</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>advice and support</td>
<td>16 (84%)</td>
<td>2 (11%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>staff listening and understanding your requirements from the project</td>
<td>18 (95%)</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>overall, delivery of project</td>
<td>16 (84%)</td>
<td>3 (16%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If good or poor - please tell us why
13 responses:

- Because other programs I went on didn’t offer the same amount of time or the same level of support outside of 1-2-1 sessions.
- Staff I found very helpful a very warm and friendly atmosphere
- Very good help with C.V. covering letter
- Excellent support and help
- The staff where very helpful in their delivery of the project very good indeed
- really enjoyable course with knowledgeable tutor
- I found the course and staff very helpful and motivating.
- Was very good, easy to get on with the programme, the staff were all very helpful.
- Excellent course, working with reactiv8 was fin and motivating
- Help me to get/find work. To motivate me. Understanding my needs.
- Team work, CV, looking for work, skills
- Fabulous course, really informative and very good.
- Excellent support and assistance

ANALYSIS: respondents rated almost all aspects listed as very good or fairly good – particularly staff politeness/friendliness/helpfulness, staff knowledge on employment skills and staff listening and understanding participant’s requirements from the course.
Q4 Which of the following employability skills did the project cover? please tick all that apply

- 9 (47%) language skills - speaking, presenting
- 0 language (ESOL)
- 5 (26%) literacy - written skills
- 12 (63%) customer services
- 18 (95%) team work
- 12 (63%) leadership
- 16 (84%) problem solving
- 12 (63%) planning and organising tasks

Other, please specify
1 response:
• Confidence building

Q5 Please indicate how this project has benefited you: please tick all that apply

- 10 (53%) helped find employment
- 7 (37%) helped find work experience
- 9 (47%) gained qualification(s)
- 17 (89%) acquired new skills
- 17 (89%) increased your confidence and self esteem
- 15 (79%) supported you with your CVs, job applications and interviews
- 3 (16%) access volunteering opportunities
- 3 (16%) access accredited learning and further studies
- 9 (47%) further informal learning
- 11 (58%) provided skills and knowledge to help others
- 8 (42%) provided additional targeted support to meet any specific needs you may have
- 15 (79%) generally provided a broad range of support
- 17 (89%) overall improved the quality of my learning provision
  0 none of the above
  0 other

other, please specify
0 response

Q6 At the time of the project, which of the following best described you? please tick all that apply

- 10 (53%) unemployed - claiming Job Seekers Allowance
- 5 (26%) looking for work but not claiming Job Seekers Allowance
- 1 (5%) aged 14-19 years old and Not in Education, Employment or Training
- 9 (47%) aged 50 years or over
Q7 Overall, how would you rate the project in supporting your learning and skills development? please tick one box only
17 (89%) very good
2 (11%) fairly good
0 neither good nor poor
0 fairly poor
0 very poor
0 don't know/not sure
If good or poor - please tell us why
7 responses:
• I wasn't getting any support before joining the programme.
• good at helping my confidence
• Helped me gain new skills in IT plus helped me gain more confidence in my self
• I gained a lot of skills and support throughout the project.
• I was supported in every way possible
• Because it helped me to get to where I wanted to get to in life!
• Subject was well delivered, with an understanding of how businesses run.

ANALYSIS: 89% of respondents rated the projects they participated in as very good at supporting their learning and skills development.

Q8 Did you have any of the following specific needs when considering to take part? please tick all that apply
0 (0%) cultural - e.g. can access women’s only programmes
0 (0%) faith based
2 (11%) disability
1 (5%) childcare
14 (74%) none/not applicable
0 (0%) other
Other, please specify your need(s) 0 response

Q9 How did the project team ensure you could access the support project? please explain
7 response:
• By allowing me to attend and use the computer for a few hours
• By helping me pay my bus fares which if left to my own devices I could never afford too
• open door policy
• They were always there for you to talk to no matter what they are a great group of people.
• They offered any help if needed.
• It was run local to my address
Q10 What impact has this project had on the development of your skills and learning?
please tick one box only
0 (0%) no impact at all
0 (0%) very little impact
4 (21%) fairly big impact
10 (53%) a very big impact
0 (0%) don't know/not sure
Please explain
9 responses:
• This project has greatly improved my development in my skills of IT and learning
• Got employment!
• The course has made me see what I need to do to get to where I want to.
• It has made me become a more confident person and to have confidence and faith in myself.
• I have been motivated and encouraged I can do things. Also taught skills to help me in employment
• Because I'm working now, seeing daughter more, I'm losing weight.
• n/a
• Given me so many more tools to ensure that I can improve my team and role in my job.
• learnt new skills and techniques

ANALYSIS: The projects have had an impact on all respondents of which 53% have indicated ‘a very big impact’.

Q10. Impacts of the projects on the respondents
Base: 9 responses

employment
development
ensure
skills
made
course
confident
encouraged
daughter
Q11 Overall, what were the main strengths of the project? please explain
14 responses:

- Help and advice in making applications for jobs
- Learning more about the computer
- Excellent delivery of the course by Dr Linda Lee-Davies
- something to look forward to
- They got me back to a place that is good; I was in a really bad place when I started now I am doing well.
- gives confidence, good tutor and organisation
- The skills and team work.
- Improve myself to become better, confident in myself.
- The motivation it gave me.
- getting into employment
- confidence, skills, teamwork
- Linda was the main strength, she was great.
- Opened my eyes and gave me a much better understanding of customer services.
- Gaining knowledge from other peoples experiences.

Overall, what were the main strengths of the project? Base: 14 responses

ANALYSIS: key aspects of the project that participants stated as being strengths include giving the participants confidence, good skills and the tutor (Linda).
Q12  
... and what were the weaknesses? please explain

13 responses:

- None I can think of
- None that I can think of
- Can't think of any!
- staff are busy
- none
- I didn't feel anything could have been better as I benefitted a lot.
- I don't think that there was
- n/a
- Had no confidence or motivation.
- project could be longer
- Computer training - teacher was confusing.
- IT the use of computers was delivered to quickly leaving us confused and not sure how best it can work for my company.
- The social media part of the course was confusing and the tutor went too fast for me to follow.

... and what were the weaknesses? Base: 13 responses

ANALYSIS: key weaknesses identified after ‘none’ included training around delivery of the IT training and social media.
Q13  **Was there anything else you feel should have been included?** please specify and explain
13 responses:
- Nothing I can think
- None that I can think of
- Maybe more on soft skills products (e.g. translations) and customer needs.
- no
- first aid
- no
- n/a
- n/a
- n/a
- no
- no
- no
- none

Q14  **How can this project be improved?** please explain
12 responses:
- None I can think of
- To extend the courses and extend the days of learning
- Could be longer, really enjoyed it.
- longer time
- More job opportunities.
- Do more of this type of thing.
- Ran more regularly.
- It’s already good/great to be involved with Reactiv8. No changes!
- length of time increased
- More simply explained computer training.
- More time with the use of the internet.
- None

**ANALYSIS:** improvements suggested, other than none – extend the length of the course as many felt it was not long enough and use of IT.

Q15  **If the ESF programme did not fund projects like this, could your learning needs and skills development have been met in a different way?** please tick one box only
1 (5%) yes 6 (32%) no 8 (42%) don’t know/not sure

**please explain**
6 responses:
- Was the job centre that advised me to attend
- I could not have learnt half as much if not for this course
- was unaware of this type of course beforehand
- I would not have been changed the way I have if it wasn’t for Reactiv8
I couldn't have paid and also I wouldn't have been able to take the time off work if my Director hadn't agreed to it.

I don't think my employer would pay for the courses. So I wouldn't have been able to attend.

Q16 How important is that programmes like the ESF support the funding of projects similar to this for local residents? please tick one box only

14 (74%) very important
1 (5%) fairly important
0 (0%) neither important nor unimportant
0 (0%) fairly unimportant
0 (0%) not at all important
0 (0%) don't know not sure

please explain

8 responses:

- I found it very helpful and important
- I find it very important that projects like this exist for local residents
- It helps locally and then lets the trainees use the knowledge nationally.
- It gives more people an opportunity.
- because it helps people as not everyone learns things differently
- Everyone could do with having their mind unlocked by this course.
- Cause we all need help, just finding it is hard!
- It gives a variety of people opportunities to learn, which they wouldn't normally have.

ANALYSIS: majority of participants indicate it is ‘very important’ that programmes like the ESF support the funding of projects similar to this for local residents for gaining knowledge, opportunities and support around employment.

Q17 Do you have any suggestions on how projects like this could be delivered to benefit people like you, local employers, the economy and wider community? please explain

12 responses:

- I would say more of them
- To have more than one Disability Resource Centre in the area
- Maybe personalised in-situ trainings?
- This was good because I could go there when I was in town centre signing on.
- more publicity
- more awareness
- needs wider advertising / publicity
- no
- not sure
- Anyone not in employment should have to attend this course
- They help you gain motivation to get into employment.
- I think it would be good if more courses could be run from Luton Uni.
ANALYSIS: overall, more awareness and signposting to such projects

Q18  Any other comments?  
6 responses:  
- None  
- Not only have I learnt new skills in IT but have improved my skills in typing and job search  
- Thank you for this excellent course.  
- please continue  
- Was a really good course that I really enjoyed?  
- no thanks

About You  
The following questions are voluntary, however to ensure that we are reaching all residents we would appreciate it if you could answer the following questions about yourself.

Q19 Are you . . . ? please tick one box only  
12 (63%) male  
7 (37%) female  
0 (0%) transgender

Q20 Which age group do you belong to? please tick one box only  
0 (0%) under 18  
0 (0%) 35 - 44  
5 (26%) 18 - 24  
4 (21%) 45 - 54  
3 (16%) 25 - 34  
7 (37%) 55 - 64

Q21 At present, are you? please tick all that apply  
8 (42%) in full-time employment  
4 (21%) in part-time employment  
1 (5%) self-employed  
5 (26%) unemployed  
0 (0%) full-time student  
1 (5%) other  
Other, please specify
1 response  
- volunteer

Q22 Which of the following groups best describes you? please tick one box only  
10 (53%) White - British  
1 (5%) White - Irish  
1 (5%) Other White  
3 (16%) Mixed - White and Black  
0 (0%) Mixed - White and Black African  
0 (0%) Mixed - White and Asian  
0 (0%) Other Mixed  
0 (0%) Asian/Asian British - Indian  
0 (0%) Asian/Asian British - Kashmiri  
0 (0%) Other  
0 (0%) Asian/Asian British - Pakistani  
1 (5%) Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi  
0 (0%) Other Asian  
1 (5%) Black/Black British - Caribbean  
1 (5%) Black/Black British - African  
0 (0%) Black Other  
0 (0%) Chinese  
1 (5%) East European  
1 (5%) Other
Other, please specify
2 responses:

- Persian
- Australian White

Q23  **Do you consider yourself to have a disability?** *please tick one box only*

- 4 (21%) yes
- 15 (79%) no

Q24  **Please state which of the following best describes your disability.** *please tick all that apply*

- 0 (0%) hearing impaired/deaf
- 0 (0%) visually impaired/blind
- 2 (11%) physical
- 1 (5%) learning
- 1 (5%) other

Other, please specify
1 response

- **Short term-memory and dyslexia**