

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER - THE MAYOR**

A meeting of the Executive Member - The Mayor was held on Friday 16 May 2025.

**PRESENT:** Mayor C Cooke - Elected Mayor

**OFFICERS:** C Benjamin, B Carr and S Lightwing

**ALSO IN  
ATTENDANCE:** Councillor P Storey – Deputy Mayor

**APOLOGIES FOR  
ABSENCE:** None.

24/8 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at this point in the meeting.

24/9 **CONSENT TO ADULT EDUCATION FUNCTIONS ORDER 2025**

The Mayor considered a report of the Director of Legal and Governance Services the purpose of which was to seek consent to enable government to lay an amendment to the Adult Education Functions Order 2025, before Parliament. The Order would be made, subject to Parliament's approval, under provisions within the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016, including section 105A, and would confer an additional funding power for adult education functions on all existing combined authorities with adult education functions. It would enable combined authorities to administer their Adult Skills Fund (ASF) to fund new technical qualifications from academic year 2025/26.

The Department for Education (DfE) currently transferred statutory adult education functions to combined authorities via statutory instrument (once devolution deals were agreed) so they could decide, at a local level, which qualifications they wished to fund to support skills development in their areas.

This Order would amend the existing education-related statutory instrument for each Combined Authority to add the further funding power, specifically it would concurrently transfer Section 100(1B) of the Apprenticeships, Skills and Children Act 2009 (ASCLA), to enable combined authorities to fund new, high-quality technical qualifications alongside others already available to them. This would ensure that adult learners in the area would have access to the same high-quality technical qualifications as those in other devolved, and non-devolved, areas. The aim (subject to Parliamentary approval and timetabling) was for the statutory instrument to come into effect by the start of August 2025, in time for the new academic year.

This funding power would not be applicable for adults aged under 25 who were in receipt of an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, as they would continue to be funded from the 16 to 19 budget, nor would it apply to adults in detention, as they were funded by the Ministry of Justice.

The Mayor thanked the Council's Deputy Monitoring Officer for arranging the meeting and commented that the notice period provided by the TVCA to enable a decision to be taken lawfully and in line with the Council's decision-making process, was in his view, unacceptable.

Further the Mayor stated that a flowchart in respect of the Council's decision-making process should be forwarded to the Chief Executive of the TVCA for clarity and this action to be included in the report.

**OPTIONS**

**The Council could have chosen not to give the approval sought, which would have resulted in powers not being devolved to the TVCA. Department for Education (DfE)**

believed that if they did not transfer this funding power this may have led to a greater administrative burden.

**ORDERED** that the Mayor:

1. **APPROVES** that the report be amended to include an action to forward to the Chief Executive of the TVCA a flowchart in respect of the Council's Decision-Making Process.
2. **APPROVES** consent being given to the amendment to the Adult Education Functions Order 2025 and the transferring of funding powers from the Department for Education to the Tees Valley Combined Authority for the technical qualifications.

#### **REASONS**

The recommended decision would appear to have no negative implications and did not bind TVCA to fund any particular qualifications. It simply broadened the scope of qualifications it may support. By not granting consent, the offer to students may have been restricted with the TVCA area.

24/10

**ANY OTHER URGENT ITEMS WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR, MAY BE CONSIDERED.**

None.

**The decision will come into force immediately as it was considered under urgency provisions.**