



Bristol City Council

Apprenticeships and Community Learning

Sub Contracting Commissioning Fees and Charging Policy

1st August 2025 – 31st July 2026

Rationale for Subcontracting

Bristol City Council acts as an anchor organisation providing services that benefit the environment, the economy and local citizens. The employment, skills and learning programmes we offer help us to support the further and higher education sector to meet the priorities of the One City Plan <https://www.bristolonecity.com/about-the-one-city-plan/>. Bristol City Council also delivers these services to support local initiatives in West of England with a focus on employability, skills and lifelong learning and in collaboration with key partners including, but not limited to, Department for Education (DfE), Skills England, Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), West of England Combined Authority (WECA) and NHS.

Bristol City Council sub contracts where partners have suitable local expertise or specialist skills and our joint activity provide added benefits such as long-term sustainable employment opportunities, specialist targeted provision for locally defined needs and direct interventions for individuals or communities. As a result Bristol City Council sub contracts and commissions a range of community learning and apprenticeship training services in Bristol and North Somerset. This policy outlines the basis for our sub-contracting and commissioning fees and charging.

Local Authority Sub Contracting

Bristol City Council is working together with North Somerset Councils through the Community Learning West Consortium. Working together in an equal partnership, we have identified a range of core roles and responsibilities that will be carried out in managing and delivering community learning services. This partnership originally formed at Learning and Skills Council request is subject to partner LA scrutiny and governance processes and has been endorsed for Bristol City Council in line with preparations for Adult Education Budget devolution through the West of England Combined Authority.

As part of our Consortium arrangement, to reduce overhead costs and ensure best value for learners, it has been agreed that Bristol City Council will charge a 15% fee to cover its lead role and responsibilities, including:

- Maintaining relationships with key funders, including regular contract meetings with the Education and Skills Funding Agency
- Providing a commissioning framework and service level agreement documentation to be used with all local subcontractors

- Setting up and servicing the Consortium Board, including terms of reference
 - Proactive performance and quality monitoring of all sub-contracts – including development of a quality framework, coaching, monitoring, reporting – implemented through an agreed annual work plan
 - Providing a data and management information service, including data reporting and analysis
 - Facilitating an annual Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan
 - Organising observation of teaching and learning across the sub-region
 - Facilitating and organising Ofsted inspection
 - Co-ordinating staff development and training opportunities, e.g. tutor training, development worker events, peer mentoring, shadowing, action learning sets
 - Co-ordinating regular budget monitoring and an annual Use of Funds return
 - Maintaining consortium shared server and/or web pages
 - Setting up a tutor/facilitator data-base to enable sharing of resources and reduction of record keeping
 - Collating and developing a good practice toolkit, including curriculum resources, model job documentation, policies, quality tools
- Bristol City Council has produced a detailed sub contract document for North Somerset Council, which includes DfE and City Council funding requirements and rules.

Commissioning Small Providers

The Community Learning West Consortium is committed to reaching disadvantaged learners who face complex barriers to learning by commissioning smaller intermediary providers that work closely with target communities and learners. In 2021/22, an open and transparent commissioning process was published and providers were invited to apply for small grants up to £25,000. This process was endorsed by each partner Local Authority through their own scrutiny and governance processes and is agreed annually during Consortium review and strategic planning processes..

The commissioning ‘specification and guidelines’ outline the amount of funding that providers will receive. In relation to Community Learning, this is £9 per guided learning hour, plus additional access costs to cover childcare, transport, learning support etc.

A funding specification is provided to all funded providers to outline key roles and responsibilities of both the provider and Community Learning West. Community Learning West works closely with providers and provides a range of services so that they can meet required SFA, Ofsted and City Council standards. For example, support to providers includes:

- Provision of tutor induction training and on-going continuing professional development
- Quality monitoring of provision, including observation, course visits and tutor feedback
- Support with course planning and learner recruitment
- Linking the provider with the wider community learning partnership and key services, e.g. IAG services; FE colleges etc.
- Marketing and promotion of provider activities e.g. e bulletins, websites and joint events
- Learner tracking service to help measure the impact of commissioned activities
- Provision of teaching and learning documentation
- Data reports to enable course monitoring and review


Apprenticeships

Bristol City Council delivers a range of Construction and Built Environment apprenticeships as part of the On Site Bristol programme and these are wholly or partially funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and employers' co-investment or Apprenticeship Levy. Our programmes are tailored to the needs of individual learners and their employers and we work with a range of sub-contractors who help us deliver off site education and training as well as on site assessment. On Site Bristol does not fully sub contract any of its programmes to partner organisations maintaining the primary working relationship with employers and their apprentices through regular site review. On Site Bristol procures the services of partners on a case by case service delivery basis negotiating hourly rates and/or fixed fees in respect of each programme and in line with the costs of each element of the apprenticeship framework being delivered. For contracts in excess of £25,000 On Site Bristol will procure using the services of Bristol City Council's central procurement team including open competitive tendering procedures.

Approved by: Jane Taylor

Job Title: Head of Service, Employment, Skills and Learning

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Taylor', written in a cursive style.

Date: Friday 1st August 2025