

1. **WEST NORFOLK DIGITAL SKILLS PROGRAMME** (Pages 1 - 5)
2. **EIA FULL IMPACT ASSESSMENT** (Pages 6 - 10)

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN BY OFFICERS UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

This is a record of a decision taken by officers under delegated powers and where necessary taken in consultation with members and officers.

REPORT TITLE:	West Norfolk Digital Skills Programme
OPEN/EXEMPT	Open
LEAD OFFICER	Jemma Curtis
IS DECISION SUBJECT TO CALL IN?:	YES
DATE DECISION ADVERTISED:	01 May 2026
DATE OF DECISION:	11 May 2026
DEADLINE FOR CALL IN:	18 May 2026
PRE-SCREENING EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT COMPLETED:	YES

Delegated Power

Specify the particular delegated power being exercised by reference to the Scheme of Delegation

7.17

Decision Taken

To deliver a programme during 26/27 focused on Digital Skills for young people in partnership with independent training provider, Tech Educators. The aim from the proposal is to deliver a programme of events leading into a [Hackathon](#) at the Corn Exchange, focusing on using tech for confidence building, career/pathway awareness raising and employer engagement with employers who have future tech based skills and workforce needs (the Queen Elizabeth Hospital being a key partner).

The target audience for this programme is young people who are NEETs (or at risk of NEET), that will engage year 11 high school students, College of West Anglia & Boost participants (reaching circa 100 people).

We are proposing to fund the Council's contribution to this year's activity from the Skills & Attainment reserve budget. This is a 'trailblazer' programme where we have an opportunity to pilot the initiative with a view to secure funding and sponsorship for future events in West Norfolk through corporate CPD, social value contributions and skills-based programmes.

Reasons for the Decision

The WN Skills Strategy action plan and WN Economic Development Strategy identified priority to be given to future workforce skills needs in order to support continued growth and competitiveness in our local economy. A key focus of the government's industrial strategy with digital expected to be one of the [key skills required by employers](#) during 2026-2030. This programme directly response to local employer needs and support to address/reduce the at risk of NEET or NEET young people in West Norfolk.

Details of alternative options, if any, considered and rejected.

None

Any declarations of interest and details of any dispensations granted in respect of interests (in relation to officers and any Members consulted).

Lead officer – is a Governor at CWA.

List of Background papers

West Norfolk Economic Strategy

Authorisation

Post Held Chief Operating Officer

Signature



Date 2 April 2026

Consultation with members/officers

If the decision is taken following consultation with the members/officers, please give details:

Name of Members consulted: Cllr Jo Rust

Signed by officer as consulted: [Kate Blakemore]

Date 22/04/26

Stage 1 - Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

For equalities profile information please visit [Norfolk Insight - Demographics and Statistics - Data Observatory](#)

Name of policy/service/function	Regeneration & Economic Development				
Is this a new or existing policy/service/function? (<i>tick as appropriate</i>)	New	X	Existing		
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service is rigidly constrained by statutory obligations, and identify relevant legislation.	To deliver a programme during 26/27 focused on Digital Skills for young people. The aim from the proposal is to deliver a programme of events leading into a Hackathon focusing on using tech for confidence building, career/pathway awareness raising and employer engagement with employers who have future tech based skills and workforce needs.				
Who has been consulted as part of the development of the policy/service/function? – new only (<i>identify stakeholders consulted with</i>)	Secondary Schools, NCC Skills Policy Team, College of West Anglia, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Portfolio holder.				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group. NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p> <p><i>If potential adverse impacts are identified, then a full Equality Impact Assessment (Stage 2) will be required.</i></p> <p><i>*For more information on health inequalities please visit The King's Fund</i></p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age	X			
	Disability			X	
	Sex			X	
	Gender Re-assignment			X	
	Marriage/civil partnership			X	
	Pregnancy & maternity			X	
	Race			X	
	Religion or belief			X	
	Sexual orientation			X	
	Armed forces community			X	
	Care leavers			X	
	Health inequalities*			X	
Other (eg low income, caring responsibilities)	X				
Please provide a brief explanation of the answers above:					
The target audience for this programme are young people who are NEETs (or at risk of NEET), that will engage year 11 high school students, CWA & Boost participants too (reaching circa 100 people).					

Question	Answer	Comments	
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	Yes / No		
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	Yes / No		
<p>If 'yes' to questions 2 - 3 a full impact assessment will be required unless comments are provided to explain why this is not felt necessary:</p> <p>Decision agreed by EWG member:</p>			
4. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions? If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section	Yes / No	Actions:	
		Actions agreed by EWG member:	
5. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	Yes / No	Please provide brief summary:	
Assessment completed by:	Jemma Curtis		
Name	Jemma Curtis		
Job title	Regeneration Programmes Manager		
Date completed	21/04/2026		
Reviewed by EWG member	Jo Stanton & Dave Robson	Date	30/04/26

Please tick to confirm completed EIA Pre-screening Form has been shared with Corporate Policy (corporate.policy@west-norfolk.gov.uk)

Stage 2 – Full Equality Impact Assessment Form

Title of the Equality Impact Assessment report:

Digital Skills Programme

1. What is the service area(s) and who is the lead officer?

Regeneration & Economic Development – Jemma Curtis

2. What change are you proposing?

To deliver a programme during 26/27 focused on Digital Skills for young people in partnership with independent training provider, Tech Educators as part of the Council's Raising Skills and Aspirations programme.

The aim from the proposal is to deliver a programme of events leading into a [Hackathon](#) at the Corn Exchange, focusing on using tech for confidence building, career/pathway awareness raising and employer engagement with employers who have future tech based skills and workforce needs (the Queen Elizabeth Hospital being a key partner).

3. How will this change help the Council achieve its Corporate Strategy priorities (and therefore your Directorate/service objectives)?

Aligns with the corporate priority to 'Promote growth and prosperity to benefit West Norfolk'

The WN Skills Strategy action plan and WN Economic Development Strategy identified priority to be given to future workforce skills needs in order to support continued growth and competitiveness in our local economy. A key focus of the government's industrial strategy with digital expected to be one of the [key skills required by employers](#) during 2026-2030. This programme directly response to local employer needs and support to address/reduce the at risk of NEET or NEET young people in West Norfolk.

4. What is your evidence of need for change?

The [West Norfolk Economic Strategy \(WNES\)](#) and [Marmot Place](#) baseline data identifies the above average levels of NEET and the below average skills and educational attainment levels of residents. The WNES identifies this as a key barrier to economic growth, supported by qualitative data from employers in key sectors that are struggling to recruit to roles which have higher/bespoke skills required. Specifically, the Hospital 2.0 Programme has identified the future workforce needs for the health sector locally will be dramatically different to that of the current workforce. By focusing on the opportunities digital related careers, this programme will inspire local young people on the opportunities available to them and build their confidence and aspirations to work towards training and employment opportunities locally.

5. Does this change deliver improved value for money and/or release efficiency savings?

This project is funded through the Raising Skills and Aspiration reserve budget to support wider social and economic objectives.

6. What geographical area does this proposal cover?

The target audience for this programme is young people who are NEETs (or at risk of NEET), that will engage year 11 high school students from across West Norfolk, College of West Anglia & Boost participants (reaching circa 100 people).

7. What is the impact of your proposal?

This is a 'trailblazer' programme where we have an opportunity to pilot the initiative with a view to secure funding and sponsorship for future events in West Norfolk through corporate CPD, social value contributions and skills-based programmes.

We anticipate that the social value achieved by this project will include;

- Retention of young people in education
- Pathways to careers relating to digital skills
- Employer and future employee engagement to support recruitment in key roles in priority sectors
- Aspirations raised and opportunities identified for future career opportunities locally.
- CPD for employer staff involved in the Hackathon delivery

Immediate outputs and KPIs include;

- number of young people engaged in careers activity
- number of businesses supporting local career activity
- number of young people retained/completing education and training qualifications.

However, it is recognised there will be many softer outcomes that are not measurable immediately including confidence building to pursue onward training and employment in digital skills.

8. What data have you used to support your assessment of the impact of your proposal?

As above, supported by stakeholder support from NCC, College of West Anglia, Queen Elizabeth Hospital and secondary high schools.

9. What consultation has been undertaken/will need to be undertaken with stakeholders/groups directly or indirectly impacted by the proposals and how do you intend to use this information to inform the decision?

Stakeholder consultation in developing the programme has been undertaken with the Chief Executive, NCC, Careers Hub, College of West Anglia, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, secondary high schools and portfolio holder (Cllr Rust). This has directly shaped the target age, timeframe and delivery approach to the programme

10. Are there any implications for other service areas?

HR – we plan to offer CPD opportunities to council staff through being involved in the Hackathon event, particularly to support future recruitment in ICT /digital skills related roles.

11. What impact (either positive or negative will this change have on different groups of the population?

Implications on groups with protected characteristics;

- Age – this programme is specifically targeted at age 16-18 years to building confidence and raise aspirations to mitigate potential of becoming NEET
- Other (eg low income, caring responsibilities)

Note that these are positive impacts – all other Protected Characteristics are neutral.

The longer term positive impacts will support minimising the number of NEET young people, number of young people going into higher level of training and employment to support the future growth in the west Norfolk economy utilising skills that will be required by the next generation workforce.

This will be measured through the monitoring framework established in the West Norfolk Economic Strategy Action Plan.

12. Other staff involved in Assessment (including Corporate Equality Group Representatives), and comments from Equality Working Group reps

Jo Stanton

Dave Robson

We feel this is a positive initiative, with no negative impacts identified. We agree with the findings of the assessment and the EIA clearly identifies how this will impact on the local area. There is the opportunity to identify lessons learned and expand the initiative going forward.