

ANNEX 6 – Written submission from Jayne Dickinson, Chief Executive of Orbital South Colleges, dated 18 May 2022

East Surrey College

- **The benefits of participating in adult learning and skills**
- Skills acquisition – upskilling, reskilling
- Confidence building, employment skills
- Social engagement
- Leisure and well-being
- Promotes community engagement, encourages volunteering
- New start – taster courses, Pre-apprenticeship orientation opportunities
- Legislative updates to sustain employment
- **The current and anticipated economic and social needs of Surrey's residents and communities (in the context of adult learning and skills)**
- DWP/JCP Youth Hubs – supporting 18-24s not in work or in low paid work to upskill and reskill as well as develop skills relevant to accessing employment (eg English, maths, employability)
- As cost of living rises, more residents require higher level skills to access higher paid employment
- More working from home requires good IT skills, time management
- Green tech revolution – plenty of opportunities in new jobs emerging
- Many sectors have serious skills shortages – skills acquisition helps move people into jobs
- Pandemic and lockdowns have resulted in isolation, decrease in social skills but also raised interest in new hobbies, interests – appetite for more knowledge
- **The skills required of the workforce to deliver relevant environmental commitments**
- Green tech skills across the whole range – opening up new employment/career routes
- Digital and key skills – still essential
- **The groups who currently participate in adult learning and skills and the groups who stand to benefit the most from participating in adult learning and skills**
- Those with MH needs; those with disabilities
- Those who live alone and have struggled with the pandemic/isolation
- Those with low level skills who are stuck in low level employment or are unemployed
- All those with an interest in furthering education and a thirst for knowledge
- Asylum seekers/those new to the country
- **The barriers to participating in adult learning and skills**
- Cost of course and travel to course
- Lack of knowledge of funding opportunities
- Location of provider
- Online delivery may or may not suit all
- Lack of IT if delivered online
- Family or work commitments – including respite requirements in order to attend course

• Current policy and provision in Surrey, including that of Surrey Adult Learning (Surrey County Council), employers and the private and third sectors

- For context: East Surrey College (Orbital South Colleges group) is a further education provider based in Redhill but with a reach across east and mid Surrey (as well as into south London, Sussex and parts of Kent). A substantial and ever-growing number of Adult learning and skills courses are offered under: AEB, ACL, NSF funding; full cost and also funding through government initiatives: eg Bootcamps; Academies programmes. Adults attend Full time, Part time, daytime, evening and weekends across the whole year. Our courses can also be responsive in-year due to demand.
- Subjects covered include a typical FE range but with specialisms in Creative, Media, Digital, Construction, Green tech, Engineering, Motor Vehicle, ESOL, English, Maths, IT, Accounting, Counselling, Nursing, Employability skills, MFL.
- We are also a major Apprenticeship provider.

• Good practice regarding adult learning and skills. You are invited to provide information in relation to as many of those areas as are relevant to your expertise/the work of your organisation and any

- For many years, we have delivered a Pre-Access programme for those looking to enter healthcare professions but without the Study, English or Maths skills to progress to HE. This has benefited huge numbers and is popular with our many healthcare providers who work with us closely on course content and on their recruitment strategies.
- Our colleges are open all year and in the evenings plus Saturdays enabling more adults to access courses.
- We work with hundreds of employers as well as DWP/JCP supporting adults to access work via our Careers Advisers and Employer Services teams.
- We work with a range of organisations and individuals to ensure refugees/asylum seekers can access our quality ESOL provision and related skills areas – we are out in the community and have outreach provision across the areas we cover.