# **ACL Strategic Advisory Board (SAB)**

# **Terms of Reference**

# **Document date: January 2021**

As a commissioned service, ACL is a part of Essex County Council, and as such its activities and decisions are part of informal and formal decision-making processes.  This is to ensure clear accountability and transparency as part of democratic organisation working for the people of Essex.  This includes both support and scrutiny from senior leaders and politicians.

Part of this governance includes strategic leadership from the ACL Strategic Advisory Board.  Membership is made up of individuals with relevant skills and experience to govern the intent, implementation, and impact of the ACL Service.  Contributing to ACL’s continued improvement, ensuring that it is delivering for learners, communities, and businesses in Essex in a relevant, meaningful, and safe way.

At service level, day to day decision-making and responsibility rests with the ACL Principal and the Senior Leadership Team.  However, depending upon the nature of a decision relating to a council service, it may be taken by an officer of the council (Head of Service (Principal) Director, an Executive Director with responsibility for the service, or the Cabinet Member under whose Portfolio the service falls.  It may also be appropriate for a decision to be made at a meeting of the ECC Cabinet, or in exceptional circumstances and for significant decisions, at Full Council.  The governance and running of council services is also reviewed and scrutinised by the relevant council Policy and Scrutiny Committee.

**The purpose of the ACL Strategic Advisory Board:**

* Ensure that the education and training offered by ACL has a positive impact on all its learners
* Provide confident, strategic leadership and create strong accountability for, and oversight and assurance of, educational performance to ensure continuous and sustainable improvement, including financial sustainability.”
* Know the ACL service and understand its strengths and weaknesses
* Support and strengthen ACL’s leadership and contribute to shaping its strategic direction
* Ensure ACL meets its statutory responsibilities
* Provide challenge and hold senior leaders and managers to account for improving the quality of learning and the effectiveness of performance management systems.
* Ensure that ACL Essex fulfils requirements relating to equality, diversity and inclusion, disability, safeguarding, Prevent and health and safety
* Support and challenge of the financial performance of the ACL service

**The membership of the ACL Strategic Advisory Board**

Members understand their respective roles and carry these out to enhance the effectiveness of the provider.

The roles and responsibilities are defined in the Board Member role profile.

Membership of the ACL Essex Steering Group is comprised of

* Essex County Council Cabinet members with an interest in the ACL provision,
* ACL Principal
* An ACL Vice Principal
* Members with adult and/or FE education expertise (curriculum, quality and safeguarding)
* A local employer
* ECC Director with responsibility for ACL
* Members with business operations expertise, including finance and property.

Representative(s) from the ECC finance / property teams will be invited to present reports on finance and property assets.

This membership will be reviewed by the Chair and the ACL Principal to ensure that it is meets the needs of the Service.

Board members are expected to attend each meeting, where appropriate supplying a substitute if not available. Board members will link with an ACL manager to know and understand a particular area of the service.

The Chair of the Strategic Advisory Board is the Cabinet member with ACL portfolio responsibility. The Chair and Principal will appoint a Deputy Chair to support the Chair as needed.

**Additional Stakeholder Representation**

Additional contacts may receive papers, attend upon invitation by the Chair and be kept updated on progress of ACL Essex as appropriate

**Application process**

There is an application process to become a member of the Strategic Advisory Board including a knowledge and skills survey.

**Induction**

All members will be inducted into the Strategic Advisory Board by the Chair supported by the Principal. This will include:

* Mandatory training
* ACL Centre visits
* Meeting with the ACL Senior Leadership Team.

**Frequency of meetings and agenda items**

The Strategic Advisory Board will meet a minimum of four times during the academic year with additional activity as defined by the Group Chair.

Each Strategic Advisory Board meeting will include a review and scrutiny of the following items:

* Finance
* Safeguarding
* Educational performance
* Provider performance against contractual target
* Quality (self-assessment and quality improvement)
* Review of Strategic and operational plans
* Risks and opportunities for the Service

Other items will be added in accordance with the needs of the Service.

Papers will be sent out one week in advance.