

Local Members' Interest
N/A

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 18th January 2018

Skills and Employability Self-Assessment and Adult and Community Learning – Quality Improvement

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Select Committee:

1. Scrutinise the performance and quality assurance of Community Learning.
2. Scrutinise and comment on the findings of the 2016-2017 annual Self-Assessment Report, in order to further improve overall performance, quality of provision, outcomes for learners and in remaining a good learning provider in Staffordshire

Report of Cllr Mark Sutton, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and Cllr Philip White, Cabinet Support Member for Learning & Employability

Summary

What is the Select Committee being asked to do and why?

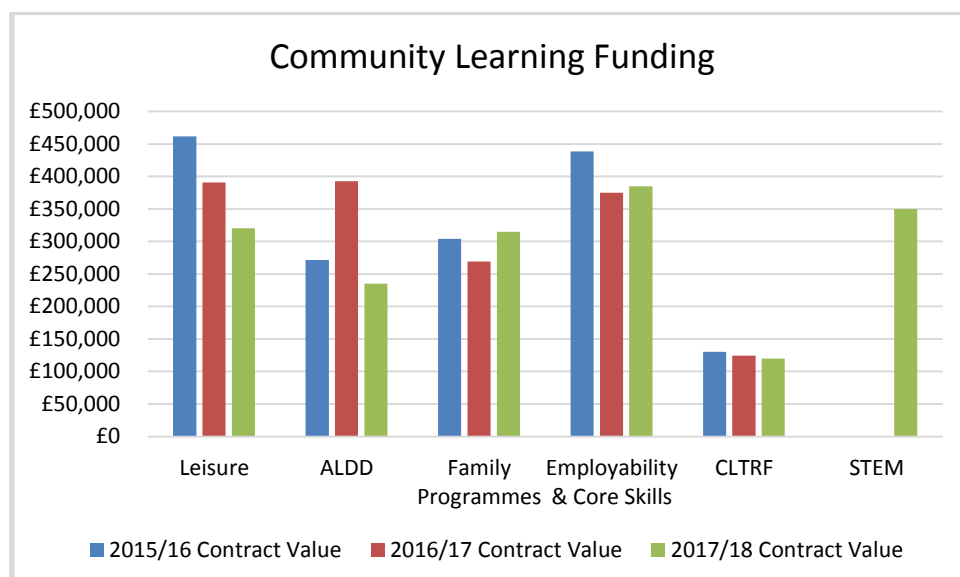
3. The Self-Assessment Report is a fundamental tool that Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) Inspectors use to judge the quality and effectiveness of an organisation in providing education opportunities to young people and adults.
4. The Select Committee are asked to scrutinise the quality assurance and performance of the portfolio of the learning provision commissioned, in order to further improve quality, outcomes for learners and in remaining a good learning provider.

Report

Background to Community Learning

5. Community Learning is an umbrella term describing a broad range of learning that brings together adults, often of different ages and backgrounds, to pursue an interest, address a need, acquire a new skill, become healthier or learn how to support their children. It is mainly non-accredited and can be undertaken for its own sake or as a step towards other learning or work. It may happen in personal time or work time and be delivered by providers in the public, private or voluntary community sectors across Staffordshire. Community Learning supports wider government policies on localism, social justice, stronger families, digital inclusion, social mobility and upskilling English and maths skills and preparing for employment.

6. Community learning is commissioned and delivered through selected sub-contractors across seven main programme areas, across all eight districts, which are as follows:
 - a. Leisure tasters and courses
 - b. Provision for adults with learning difficulties/disabilities (ALDD) and those with enduring mental ill health
 - c. Wider Family Learning (WFL)
 - d. Family English, Maths and Language (FEML)
 - e. Employability Skills
 - f. Functional Skills
 - g. Qualification based delivery in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and Information Technology programmes.
 - h. Community Learning Trust Responsiveness Fund (CLTRF)
7. Details of sub-contractors engaged with Learning and Skills can be seen in Appendix A
8. In 2015 we re-commissioned Community Learning and made the decision to reduce the funding allocation of leisure programmes in order to focus on targeted provision. Targeted provision includes family programmes, provision for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities and those with enduring mental ill health, programmes to support employability and English, maths and IT skills and more recently the STEM provision. In the academic year 2014/15 the funding allocation for leisure provision was £577,000 and 60% of the total ESFA allocation and this decreased to £360,000 and 35% in 2016/17. Targeted provision increased from £384,000 and 40% of the total ESFA allocation in 2014/15 to £670,000 and 65% in 2016/17.



9. The Community Learning offer aims to target its provision at Staffordshire districts with the greatest concentrations of deprivation, worklessness and economic inactivity. We publish in the community learning specification, a list of wards

within each district that experience high levels of deprivation. We also monitor delivery and learner outcomes within these wards, which show minimum disparity between achievement rates year on year.

Achievement	Number of learners% 2016/17	Number of enrolments % 2016/17	Attendance rate % 2016/17	Retention rate 2016/17 %	Pass rate % 2016/17	Achievement rate % 2016/17	Achievement rate % 2015/16
Learners from deprivation wards	38.1 (2063)	39.0 (3474)	88.6	93.0	98.9	92.0	92.4
Learners from no deprivation area	59.2 (3206)	56.5 (5030)	91.8	94.7	99.1	92.9	92.4

Apprenticeships

10. Apprenticeships are commissioned from Entrust and are delivered in the following vocational areas:

- Business Administration: Intermediate and Advanced Apprenticeships
- Information Communication Technology: Intermediate and Advanced Apprenticeships
- Early Years (Children and Young People's Workforce): Intermediate and Advanced
- Supporting Teaching and Learning Apprenticeship: Intermediate and Advanced
- Functional Skills (Level 1 and 2) in Maths, English and ICT – delivered as part of the apprenticeship framework.

11. Achievement rates for apprentices have improved year on year, with overall achievement at 79.1% and 12 percentage points above the national achievement rate. Timely achievement has increased at a steadier pace to 76.8% and 1 percentage point above the 2015/16 end-year position. With achievement rates continuing to improve in some areas; although at a steadier rate, apprentices are making good progress.

Apprenticeship Achievement (all frameworks)	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	Timely Achievement 2016/2017	National Achievement Rate 2016/2017
Achievement rate	72.1%	78.3%	79.1%	76.8%	67.0%

Annual Self-Assessment

12. Inspectors' use self-assessment reports to help to plan for inspections and will grade our capacity to make further improvements. The effectiveness of the quality assurance systems and the accuracy of our self-assessment report will be an important factor in the judgements that lead to grades awarded. Learning and Skills was last inspected in February 2017 and judged as a **good provider**.
13. Annual Self-Assessment provides a review of what has been carried out by Skills & Employability every year. By carrying out self-assessment you can judge how well you are doing and how to improve. The report provides an evaluation of performance against Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills) criteria.
14. Robust and honest self-review and reflection is a vital ingredient of any provider's improvement journey. Self-assessment is a systematic way of:
 - a. Reviewing how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve
 - b. Comparing your performance against that of previous years and/or national benchmarks
 - c. Finding out about the needs of your learners and other groups
 - d. Bringing together all the information you have about your performance
 - e. Preparing for inspections.
15. The ability to self-assess effectively, to identify strengths and weaknesses and to implement identified improvements is critical to the development of a continuously improving sector.
16. Good progress has been made on completing the areas identified in the 2015/16 self-assessment and updates on the key improvement priorities can be found in appendix B.

Self-Assessment summary judgements (2016 - 2017)

Graded using the 4 point scale: 1: Outstanding 2: Good 3: Requires Improvement 4: Inadequate	Overall
Overall Effectiveness	2
Effectiveness of Leadership and Management	2
Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment	2
Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare	2
Outcomes for Learners	2
Apprenticeships	2
Adult Learning Programmes	2

Overall effectiveness of the Skills and Employability Service's Learning and Skills Portfolio

17. The Service is judged to be good and is continuing to make progress towards being an outstanding provider of skills across Staffordshire, which it is achieving by following the Council's vision is to create a Connected Staffordshire, whilst working in conjunction with Local Enterprise Partnership's and other providers. The Service has a strong focus on providing education opportunities to meet the needs of Staffordshire residents and the wider economy.
18. The effectiveness of leadership, management and governance is good. The management team continuously undertake strong strategic and operational planning, focused clearly on maintaining and improving high standards of quality and performance; as a result all staff have a clear understanding of the County Council and Skills and Employability's vision and priorities.
19. Good curriculum planning reflects the commitment of providing high-quality learning opportunities that are well-designed and improve the employment prospects and life chances of residents across the eight districts of Staffordshire. The Service has maintained highly productive relationships with targeted commissioned sub-contractors to reach the most disadvantaged residents across the county.
20. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across learning and skills is good. Throughout 2016-2017 Community Learning has focused on the delivery of learning, teaching and assessment, which is continually improving the quality of experience for learners. In the good and better lessons, tutors have high expectations and have established effective strategies to engage learners. The majority of teachers and assessors are well-qualified and use their occupational, industrial and subject expertise very effectively in lessons. They are excellent role models, providing inspiration, motivation and subject-specific insight for learners.
21. Community Learning has continued to focus its approach on ensuring learners develop very good personal, social and employability skills, through the continued development and provision of a wide variety of activities aimed at enriching their learning experience. This is supported by the ongoing partnerships with local community organisations and employers, resulting in learners gaining useful additional subject knowledge, qualifications and positive workplace experience which effectively prepares them for the world of work.
22. Good and sustained achievement across Community Learning and apprenticeship programmes with improved classroom based learning provision.
23. There is a positive and high-profile approach across Community Learning in raising awareness of, and promoting, equality and diversity and safeguarding. As a result, the vast majority of learner's state that they feel safe and are safe. Learner knowledge and understanding of 'staying safe' and 'healthy' are good. All learners are actively encouraged to undertake and engage in a range of wider activities, aimed at raising awareness of physical and emotional wellbeing, rights and responsibilities as learners and safeguarding and Prevent related themes.

The result of this is that learners can make confident, informed choices about their personal welfare.

Key outcomes for learners on Community Learning, Apprenticeship programmes and Classroom Based Learning 2016/2017

24. Outcomes for learners overall on Community Learning programmes are good with achievement in 2016/2017 sustained across the majority of Community Learning Programmes. However Family Learning programmes and Community Learning Trust provision requires further improvement and is a priority improvement area in 2017/2018.
25. Learners on accredited programmes have achieved above the in-year achievement target. Current performance represents a 6.9% increase in achievement rates compared to the 2015/16 end-year position. Provision for Learners on English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programmes has shown significant in-year improvement and is outstanding at 98%, 4 percentage points above the end-year target and 10 percentage points above the GFE national achievement rate. Achievement on IT programmes has seen a 6% increase at 94.6% from 2015/16 and is 1.6 percentage points above the GFE national achievement rate.

16/17 Headline Achievement Performance by Programme Area	End -Year Achievement % R14 2016/17	Target Achievement %	Target Achievement Variance %	National Achievement Rate %	NAR Variance %
Family English, maths and Language (FEML)	81.5	94	-12.5		
Leisure	94.0	94	0.0		
Wider Family Learning (WFL)	91.1	94	-2.9		
Wider Family Learning Grants (WFLG)	93.4	94	-0.6		
Adults with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (ALDD)	94.0	94	0.0		
Employability Skills	94.6	94	+0.6		
Functional Skills	94.2	94	+0.2		
Direct Delivery Unit ESOL	97.8	94	+3.8	88.3	+9.5
Direct Delivery Unit IT	94.6	94	+0.6	93.0	+1.6
Direct Delivery Unit Leisure	95.3	94	+1.3		
Community Learning Trust (CLT)	89.1	94	-4.9		

26. Within Community Learning, achievement gaps for different groups of learners have rapidly closed and are equal, in achievement between gender and learners with and without learning difficulties and or disabilities at headline level. There is variance of achievement for different ethnic groups, with BME learners performing at a slower rate compared to other groups, and requires in-year monitoring to ensure all achievement gaps close. Although a 1% in-year increase, the enrolment of males still remain low on Community Learning and remains a continued focus. See Appendix C for learner achievement breakdown

27. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the Skills and Employability Service is good with 90% of sessions judged as good or better, with an improved rate of tutors receiving grade one observations.
28. Learners develop personal, social and employability skills including Maths, English and ICT and appreciate the importance of these skills to increase their future employability.
29. Good and effective wider outcomes achieved for 'hard to reach learners'. There is consistent reporting of significant wider outcomes such as reducing isolation, social inclusion, mental health and the impact on family life and health. A number of providers run courses in residential and care home settings. The learners often experience reduced amount of social opportunities, reduced mobility and increased health problems. The courses offer them access to learning and help to tackle isolation
30. Health and well-being is the predominant factor for learners engaging on Community learning provision, with 69% stating this was the case and 27% of learners joined a course to help update their skills.
31. The majority of learners consistently demonstrate exceptional attitudes to learning which, in turn, has a positive impact on their progress. Learners and apprentices appreciate how their learning equips them with the behaviours, attitudes and skills required for integration within the community and success in the workplace. As a result, learners enjoy their learning, demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and their behaviours in learning and the workplace is exemplary.
32. Learners receive very good information, advice and guidance to ensure that they are enrolled on programmes that meet their needs, interests and aptitudes and make good progress towards their choice of destination with 27% of learners progressing to employment and 14% continuing or progressing to further study and 15% engaging in wider community activities. Learner destinations and learner feedback can be found in Appendix D:

Improvement priorities for 2017/18

Improvement priority
1. Ensure in Community Learning, the retention of learners in 2017/2018 is improved and achieving their programme of study, particularly for adult learners enrolled on Family Learning and Community Learning Trust programmes achieving at a rate of 94%
2. Improve timely achievement on the Children and Young People's Workforce frameworks and Business and Administration across all levels for 16-18 and 19-24 years
3. Increase the achievement overall on functional skills mathematic programmes, particularly at level 2 which requires further improvement
4. The quality of learning, teaching and assessment opportunities experienced by learners, although good, requires further development to ensure more consistently 'outstanding' learning is received with overall with 95% of sessions judged as good or better, of which 40% to be judged as outstanding
5. All learners receive clear and relevant individualised targets, which are regularly monitored, so they have a better understanding of their progress and achievement

6. Continue to set clear action plans for sub-contractors in relation to under-performance of provision and follow up in a timely manner to ensure sub-contractors make improvements timelier
7. Implement strategies to engage more adult males on Community Learning programmes
8. Closely monitor achievement across BME learners to ensure performance is consistent across all groups
9. Undertake a full review of the FEML curriculum to ensure the rapid improvement in quality of provision and availability of programmes increases with additional commissioning of new sub-contractors to deliver FEML programmes in 2017/18

Resource and value for money

33. Learning and Skills delivery is funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). Community Learning funding from the ESFA is considered to be a contribution in locally-owned community networks with clear strategic plans, priorities, objectives and learner outcomes which can only be achieved if there is extra funding over and above that available from the Government.

34. The County Council uses 15% of the funding from the SFA (£236,147) to cover the costs of supporting Community Learning commissioning, performance monitoring, quality assurance and learning provider development. The current 15% is in line with sector averages but in real terms is shrinking as the overall SFA community learning budget has remained constant since 2007-08 whilst expenditure, staff costs and delivery costs for targeted programmes, have risen substantially.

35. The table below shows the breakdown of funding over the last three years

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
ESFA Community Learning	£1,574,309	£1,574,310	£1,574,310
ESFA Adult Education Budget (classroom based learning)	£591,839	£397,728	£397,728
ESFA Adult Apprenticeships	£160,003	£160,003	£148,054
ESFA 16-18 Apprenticeships	£154,090	£154,500	£177,078
Total	£2,480,241	£2,286,541	£2,297,170

36. The Service is part of a benchmarking group which involves 35 members including local authorities. The table below shows the overall ranked position in terms of value for money for Community Learning against other members and the benchmark club average, highlighted by Quartiles

COMMUNITY LEARNING - BENCHMARKING DATA 2016/17 Quartiles			white = quartile 1 (bottom 25%)			orange = quartile 2	green = quartile 3		blue = quartile 4 (top 25%)		
ESFA Allocation	Amount of total ESFA grant allocated to provision under Funding model 10	% of ESFA Retained to Cover Management Costs	Area Population (19+ Years)	Number of Learners	Number of Enrolments	% Re-enrolment Rate	Number of enrolments delivered by sub-contracted learning providers	% of enrolments delivered by sub- contracted learning providers	No of Enrolments per 1000 Adult Pop	Cost Per Learner	Cost Per Enrolment
£1,972,038	£1,574,310	15%	688,207	5,051	8,141	38.0%	8,141	100.0%	11.83	£311.68	£193.38

37. We are ranked in quartile 2 in terms of the amount of total ESFA grant allocated to provision under Funding model 10 (non-accredited), due to the actual funding allocated in comparison to the 34 group members and quartile benchmark. We are £342,860 below quartile 4 in the top 25%.

38. Out of the providers that largely commission provision, our management fee of 15% is the third lowest, therefore allowing us to allocate more funding to sub-contractors to invest in our learners.

39. We have a high re enrolment rate (quartile 2) in comparison to other providers and this is due to being focused on learner progression. This also demonstrates learner satisfaction and wanting to progress through levels of programmes to further develop their skills.

Pound Plus

40. The term 'Pound Plus' is used by the Education & Skills Funding Agency to describe the added value required to supplement the existing community learning income streams to widen the offer to people who are disadvantaged and can not afford to pay fees.

Pound plus Investment Types

Pound Plus Category	Examples
Direct Income	Fee income from learners Sponsorship Grants and tenders Sales from products or services
Cost Savings	Savings in accommodation Use of volunteers to support learning Savings in staffing through partnerships Shared services - back office functions

Value for Money	Efficiency of curriculum – avoiding duplicated provision Effectiveness of curriculum – new subjects, better progression opportunities leading to increased learner participation Setting up self-organised groups
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41. The Pound Plus strategy requests providers to collate data and submit returns to the council to detail the value of Pound Plus it has generated against the three categories above. Due to the nature of Pound Plus it is traditionally difficult to categorise and evidence therefore the provider returns largely detail the items that are easier to determine e.g. fee income from learners and costs savings in kind through the use of volunteers and savings in accommodation costs.
42. In 2016/17 the provider returns detailed the value of the Pound Plus investment to be a total of £572,000. The table below shows the breakdown of returns:

Pound Plus Category	All Community Learning (CL) programmes	Community Learning Trust Responsiveness Fund (CLTRF)	Community Learning Groups	Total
Direct Income	£186,000	£10,000	£52,000	£248,000
Cost savings	£231,000	£14,000	£68,000	£313,000
Value for money	£10,000	£1,000	Nil	£11,000
Total	£427,000	£25,000	£120,000	£572,000

Community Impact

43. Community Learning supports wider government policies on localism, social justice, stronger families, digital inclusion and social mobility and it includes a range of community-based and outreach learning opportunities and is designed to help people of different ages and backgrounds and families to develop new skills and interests, support progression to formal courses and improve health and wellbeing and therefore positively support our community in Staffordshire. The use of the Adult Education Budget and Apprenticeship Funding gives young people and adults the skills they need to progress within or into work and gives employers the skills they need for their workforce development therefore contributing to economic growth.
44. The video below shows learners' views on the impact of Community Learning

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTEem1MKySd4>

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Appendices/Background papers

Appendix A – Details of Sub-Contractors Engaged with Learning and Skills

Appendix B – 2016/17 improvement priorities and progress

Appendix C – Community Learning achievement data

Appendix D – Learner progression and learner feedback data