

Local Members' Interest
N/A

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – 25th April 2019

Community Learning Annual Self-Assessment & 2019-2023 Strategy and Priorities

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Select Committee:

- a. Scrutinise the performance and quality assurance of the Skills & Employability's Community Learning Service, through the Annual Self-Assessment Report and areas for improvement.
- b. Scrutinise and comment on the Community Learning Strategy 2019/2023

Report of Cllr Philip White, Cabinet Member for Learning and Employability

Summary

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

The Skills and Employability Service focuses on a range of education and training opportunities to meet the needs of learners, the economy and the wider community and supports delivery of the LEP priorities. However, this report is about the Community Learning provision that the service provides in Staffordshire.

The portfolio of work covered in this report includes Community Learning and adult classroom-based learning. The Select Committee are therefore asked to scrutinise the annual performance of the Community Learning provision, in order to further improve quality, outcomes for learners and in remaining a good learning provider.

The Select committee are asked to agree improvement priorities and the Community Learning Strategy for 2019-2023.

Report

Background

1. The Skills and Employability Service's purpose is to improve people's lives through lifelong learning and training, leading to employment and or increased personal fulfilment, supporting the growth of Staffordshire's economy. The Skills and Employability Service aligns with, and respond to, the priorities of local and national Government in all of its services and provision. As part of this approach the Skills and Employability Service continues to support economic growth through its commissioning strands and direct delivery provision, leading on learning and skills programmes to support priorities.
2. The Skills & Employability Service provides Community Learning programmes through a range of formal and informal learning programmes for all adults across the County and

provides programmes that supports people and their families to gain the skills that they need so that they can progress in the world of work and give courses that are designed to support parents to give their children the best start in life. In particular it supports and develops individuals and groups for whom formal learning may have been a barrier in the past and works with them to build confidence and realise their true potential in a competitive world.

3. For the most disadvantaged learners Community Learning offers engaging “first steps” learning opportunities as a way of increasing participation for people who are least likely to engage in adult learning and to prepare learners for a more formal programme of learning. We are also inclusive and offer programmes to our community that prevent social isolation through poor health.
4. Above all else we place the learner at the centre of our work and ensure that a high-quality learning experience is achieved through innovative teaching practices that ensure that learners achieve their goals and progress to fuller and richer lives.
5. The service priorities are based on the needs of its customers – primarily Staffordshire residents. The overall impact of this service is positive and contributes to the Councils Strategic Plan and is aligned to Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) priorities. It targets and prioritises those most vulnerable adults who face barriers to learning and improving employability. It is a community-based service that reaches out to those most in need of improving skills. The outcomes from this service contribute to the Councils Strategy by more residents gaining confidence through learning, improving skills, particularly in English, maths and ICT and will improve employability enabling progression to further learning and work.
6. The Community Learning Service is funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and works with schools, colleges, third sector organisations and local community groups to deliver a range of learning opportunities for adults, families and communities across Staffordshire. Service delivery is a combination of provision delivered by the Direct Delivery Unit (DDU), and provision which is commissioned to a range of sub-contracted partner organisations. The purpose of our commissioning is to enable Providers to deliver programmes of learning that:
 - a. Develop the skills, confidence, motivation and resilience of adults of different ages and backgrounds
 - b. Support individuals to progress towards formal learning or employment
 - c. Support individuals to improve their health and well-being, including mental health
 - d. Develop stronger communities
7. Community learning is commissioned and delivered through selected sub-contractors across nine 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. Science, technology, Engineering and mathematics (STEM)

- h. Qualification based delivery in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) and Information Technology programmes.
- i. Community Learning Trust Responsiveness Fund (CLTRF)

Programme Area Enrolments	Number of enrolments 2017/18
Family English, maths and Language (FEML)	83
Leisure	2940
Wider Family Learning (WFL)	1148
Wider Family Learning Grants (WFLG)	163
Adults with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (ALDD)	1314
Employability Skills	460
Functional Skills	225
Direct Delivery Unit ESOL	237
Direct Delivery Unit IT	430
Community Learning Trust (CLT)	665
STEM	172

- 8. In the 2017/18 academic year, Community Learning engaged with 41 providers, delivered 879 courses to 4658 learners, of which equated to 7837 enrolments.
- 9. Details of sub-contractors engaged with Community Learning can be seen in Appendix A
- 10. Staffordshire's Community Learning secures approximately £1.9 million per academic year in funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency, to provide training and education across the county, with the allocation in 2017/18 focusing on 70% of 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.
- 11. The Council is subject to accountability and scrutiny of the ESFA and Ofsted Inspection of further Education & Skills. All sub-contracted provision must comply with the ESFA, the Council and related statutory requirements. The Conditions of Funding Grant Agreement with the funding agency places conditions on the Council for the delivery of Community Learning programmes.
- 12. The Council is responsible for the delivery of the provision as the prime contract holder, including maintaining its approved training provider status via the due diligence assurance gateway. The quality and performance of the service is also scrutinised through comprehensive reports presented to Senior Officers and Members. This allows for further understanding of the performance and challenges against the Service's delivery plan and hold Officers to account for improving any underperformance of the service.

Annual Self-Assessment

- 13. Ofsted Inspectors' use self-assessment reports to help to plan for inspections and will grade our capacity to make further improvements. Community Learning was last inspected in February 2017 and judged as a good provider.

14. Self-Assessment summary judgements (2017 - 2018):

Graded using the Ofsted 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	1
Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare	2
Outcomes for Learners	2
Adult Learning Programmes	2

Overall effectiveness of the Community Learning Service

Why Community Learning is a 'GOOD' Service

15. There is a committed focus on providing education opportunities to meet the needs of Staffordshire residents and the wider economy.
16. Strong and effective leadership, management and governance, together with improved quality assurance and improvement arrangements, are transferred to learning, teaching and assessment practices. This has continued to enhance aspects of the Services' performance and strongly support learning, resulting in learners successfully completing their learning programmes and achieving their goals.
17. Leaders maintain highly effective and dedicated partnerships with a wide range of local and national partners. As a result, the County Council is successfully raising aspirations, enhancing curriculum opportunities and addressing the developmental needs and priorities both within its community and the local economy.
18. Learners receive 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.
19. The Service makes a very significant difference to learners' lives, for the majority of learners coming from challenging backgrounds. As a result, the vast majority of learners develop strong personal and work-related skills which develop self-confidence and work-readiness.
20. Good and effective wider outcomes achieved for 'hard to reach learners', such as reducing isolation, social inclusion, mental health and the impact on family life and health.
21. Outcomes for learners overall on Community Learning programmes are good with achievement in 2017/2018 sustained across the majority of Community Learning Programmes.
22. Rigorous quality and performance management has seen the significant improvement of the FEML (Family English, maths and Language) provision. As a result, Learners on these programmes have achieved well above the end-year achievement target. Current

performance represents a 13.7 percentage point increase in achievement rates compared to the 2016/17 end-year position.

23. Specific targeting of district participation has led to an increase in learner enrolments across East Staffordshire, Tamworth and Cannock districts, as a result more Staffordshire adults are engaging in learning opportunities.
24. The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across Community Learning is outstanding with 97% of sessions judged as good or better, with an improved rate of tutors receiving grade one, outstanding observations.
25. Highly effective safeguarding arrangements and strong initiatives to promote staff and learners' awareness of the risks of extremism and radicalisation; as a result, learners feel safe and are safe.
26. Learners develop effective employability skills which prepares them well for the job market. They gain a good awareness of employment through courses focused on skills for particular sectors and specific employability classes.
27. Learners develop personal, social and employability skills including maths, English and ICT and appreciate the importance of these skills to increase their future employability.

Key outcomes for learners on Community Learning Programmes

28. Outcomes for learners overall on Community Learning programmes are good with achievement rates at 93.1%. Provision for Learners on English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programmes is good at 93%, 3 percentage points above the GFE national achievement rate.
29. The 2017/18 pass rate is good and at 98% with rates being sustained from the 2016/17 position. The majority of programme areas have shown good in-year improvements; however, some specific areas continue to require further improvement, particularly across IT and Community Learning Trust programmes which have under-performed in relation to retention performance targets.
30. Within Community Learning, achievement gaps between genders have closed and are equal at 93%. Learners with learning difficulties and or disabilities achieve slightly higher than those without, with a 2-percentage point difference in rate at headline level.
31. There is variance of achievement for different ethnic groups, with BME learners performing at a slightly higher rate compared to other groups and have performed 4 percentage points higher than the 2016/17 position. The number of male learners enrolling on community learning courses, which was an area of improvement from 2016/17, has increased to 31.6%, however will remain as an area for improvement to continue the upward trend.
32. Teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding, with the profile of good or better observations at 97%, 2 percentage points above the 2017/18 target. Observations judged as outstanding are above target at 47%, 7 percentage points above target.
33. The Service maintained its matrix accreditation in 2018 and learner feedback results show that 99% of learners felt that their tutor helped them to understand what they can do next.

34. The majority of learners consistently demonstrate exceptional attitudes to learning which, in turn, has a positive impact on their progress. Learners 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 are exemplary.
35. Learners have high expectations, are very proud of their achievements and have clear awareness of when they have worked hard and achieved. Learner feedback results show that the course has benefited learners in a variety of ways, with the most rated being an increase in personal self-confidence (81%). Over three-quarters (77%) felt their course has enabled them to experience improved social contact and 79% intend to continue with further learning or enter employment within the next six months.
36. Opportunities are created for learners to recognise the relevance and importance of these skills and to best utilise them within their everyday lives. The majority of learners develop personal, social and employability skills and appreciate the importance of these skills. Learner feedback and learners taking part in focus groups frequently mention confidence, communication, social skills and teamwork also as important skills that they have developed during the course.

Learner feedback can be found in Appendix C

37. 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, where learners can 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.

Improvement Priorities can be found in Appendix B and Learner Outcome data can be found in Appendix D

Community Learning Strategy 2019 – 2023

38. Community Learning needs to respond to fast changing circumstances. This is not just financial challenges but also changing priorities in how people want to learn, the types of skills that employers wish to develop, and the priorities of other sectors such as public health and adult social care.
39. The way in which people want to learn is changing. More flexible learning options are required to enable people to acquire new skills or strengthen existing knowledge throughout their lives. We must exploit opportunities that new technology provides to help people engage in more independent learning outside of the classroom.
40. For the most disadvantaged learners we will ensure that we continue to offer engaging "first steps" learning opportunities as a way of increasing participation for people who are hard to reach and to prepare learners for a more formal programme of learning. We also want to be inclusive and offer programmes to our community that prevent social isolation through poor health. There is a need to better connect learning to the needs of employers and engage untapped talent in the region, particularly with disadvantaged groups

41. We have now focussed the service on meeting priority needs in Staffordshire (particularly related to employment and health) with now 100% of provision focussed on those priorities and makes a contribution to the Councils Strategic Plan priorities for economic growth and health and well-being.
42. The overall impact of this service is positive and contributes to the Councils Strategic Plan and is aligned to LEP priorities. It targets and prioritises those most vulnerable adults who face barriers to learning and improving employability.
43. The Community Learning Service will continue to commission adult education programmes and sub-contract the majority proportion (90%) of funding received, by engaging a group of suppliers to deliver a wide range of Community Learning programmes throughout the eight districts of Staffordshire. The balance of provision will be delivered directly by the Service's Direct Delivery Unit (10%) to meet the priorities and outcomes of the strategy
44. This procurement is essential to deliver our Community Learning Strategy. This will be through a four-year Framework Agreement (2019-2023) between the appointed sub-contractors and the Council, to supply Services on an annual call-off basis. There will be an initial one-year award period from 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020, with an approximate funding allocation value of £1,200,000. There will be an option to extend for three further years through an annual call-off basis.
45. The 2019/2023 Community learning offer will be commissioned and delivered through appointed sub-contractors across seven main programme areas, across all eight districts, which are as follows:
- Leisure, Health & Wellbeing
 - Supported Learning
 - Family Learning Programmes
 - Employability Skills
 - Science, technology, Engineering and mathematics (STEM)
 - Digital Skills
 - Progression Pathways (qualification-based delivery)

Level of programme investment – year one call-off 2019/2020

Programme Area	Funding allocation year 1	Anticipated enrolments year 1
Leisure, Health & Well-being	£200,000	2500
Supported Learning	£250,000	694
Family Learning	£200,000	1333
Employability	£100,000	633
Digital Skills	£100,000	667
STEM	£200,000	333
Progression Pathways (qualification delivery)	£150,000	155
Direct Delivery ESOL and IT	£160,000	650
Total	£1,360,000	6965

The Community Learning Strategy 2019/2023 can be found in Appendix E

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity –

<http://moderngov.staffordshire.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?id=1505>

Community Impact

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 Funding gives 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.

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List of Appendices:

Appendix A: List of Sub-contractors engaged in Community Learning

Appendix B: Improvement Priorities

Appendix C: Learner Feedback

Appendix D: Learner outcomes 2017/18

Appendix E: Community Learning Strategy 2019-2023