

Wednesday 20th July 2022

Approval of Staffordshire County Council's Community Learning Procurement Arrangements 2023 to 2027



Cllr Philip White - Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills said,

Community learning is targeted to help those who may need help with core English, Maths and digital skills in an environment that works for them and give others the opportunity to improve their vocational skills to increase their employability.

With capable workers in demand, this programme helps hundreds of people take steps towards either finding a job or improving upon the one they have.

Incorporating lessons from the pandemic, these proposed arrangements for 2023 to 2027 will also help our community learning programme evolve to deliver learning in different ways that reach new audiences.

Report Summary:

Staffordshire County Council's Community Learning Service receives funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency to deliver community learning provision across Staffordshire. The service engages with approximately 3,000 learners each year and 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. This paper seeks Cabinet approval to procure and develop a four-year Community Learning Framework to continue to meet the priorities and outcomes of the Community Learning & Commissioning strategy and approval of the funding allocation and distribution for the first contract year 2023-2024.

Recommendation(s)

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Give approval to conduct an Open tender process in line with Staffordshire County Council's Procurement Regulations and the Public Contract Regulations to put in place a Community Learning Framework,

ensuring the Council achieves value for money and delivers its Community Learning & Commissioning Strategy.

- b. Agree that the award of the Community Learning Framework and that subsequent call-off contracts relating to the annual allocation and distribution of funding, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills is to be delegated to the Director for Economy, Infrastructure & Skills.



Local Members Interest
If report is relevant to ALL Members, type 'N/A' into table, otherwise insert Members Name and Electoral Division

Cabinet – Wednesday 20 July 2022

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Recommendation(s) of the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills

I recommend that Cabinet:

- a. Give approval to conduct an Open tender process in line with Staffordshire County Council's Procurement Regulations and the Public Contract Regulation to put in place a Community Learning Framework, ensuring the Council achieves value for money and delivers its Community Learning & Commissioning Strategy.
- b. Agree that the award of the Community Learning Framework and that subsequent call-off contracts relating to the annual allocation and distribution of funding, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Economy and Skills is to be delegated to the Director for Economy, Infrastructure & Skills.

Report of the Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills

Reasons for Recommendations:

1. Staffordshire County Council's Community Learning Service has implemented a four-year Community Learning Framework Agreement (2019 – 2023) with commissioned suppliers including schools, colleges, independent training providers, third-sector organisations, and local community groups to deliver a range of learning opportunities for adults aged 19+, families and communities across Staffordshire. The Community Learning Framework Agreement is due to expire on 31 July 2023.
2. This procurement is essential to deliver our Community Learning & Commissioning Strategy. The proposal is to secure a four-year Framework Agreement (2023-2027) 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

2023 to 31 July 2024, with an approximate funding allocation value of £1,600,000. All future funding allocations will seek approval through the delegated decision process on an annual basis.

3. The Council makes no guarantee as to the volume of business on offer and any funding values given are indicative only and intended as a general guide and these will be subject to annual allocations made to the Council by the Education and Skills Funding Agency.

Background

4. The Community Learning Service delivers non-accredited community learning and accredited Adult Skills provision. The provision contributes to the Council's strategic priorities for economic growth and health and wellbeing.
5. Provision is focused on meeting priority needs in Staffordshire and engages with approximately 3,000 learners each year. The Service 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.
6. The curriculum offer establishes learning pathways to help residents develop wellbeing and confidence, and core skills such as English, maths and digital, together with opportunities to upskill and retrain in vocational areas to support their career ambitions and family aspirations.
7. Traditionally, Community Learning is delivered in local communities. Since the start of the pandemic in 2020, we have introduced new ways of delivering learning, allowing residents to continue to access opportunities through a range of online, blended, and face-to-face delivery. This embedding of digital innovation in our delivery has had clear benefits, enabling some people to access learning for the first time in a more flexible way. We will build on this innovation to ensure that we continue to engage residents in learning, in ways that suit their needs.

Legal Implications

8. There are no legal implications to note in relation to this report.

Resource and Value for Money Implications

9. The Community Learning provision is externally funded by the Education and Skills Funding agency with a requirement to demonstrate

compliance with the Education and Skills Funding Agency's Adult Education Budget Funding Rules and Subcontracting Standards. Contracts are performance based and pay on earned to date.

Climate Change Implications

10. The Community Learning provision has been developed to include online, blended, and face-to-face delivery reducing travelling and carbon emissions. Elements of sustainability are delivered as standalone courses or embedded within provision.

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Contact Details

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