Local Members Interest
N/A

Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee – Monday 15 April 2021

Staffordshire Community Learning Service Annual Self-Assessment (2019 – 2020)

Recommendation

I recommend that the Committee:

a. Scrutinise the performance and quality assurance of Community Learning commissioned and delivered through Staffordshire County Council's Community Learning Team, as set out in the Annual Self-Assessment Report.

b. Offer any ideas for future focus or areas for improvement for our Community Learning offer.

Report of Darryl Eyers, Director for Economy, Infrastructure and Skills

Summary

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

1. 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. This report is about the Community Learning provision the Service provided across Staffordshire during the 2019-2020 academic year.

2. The Select Committee are 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.

Report

Background

3. Staffordshire Community Learning Service provides learning to Staffordshire residents aged 19+ through a range of formal and informal learning programmes across the County. The programmes support people and their families to gain the skills that they need so that they can progress in the world of work and programmes that are designed to support parents to give their children the best start in life. 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.

4. 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.

5. The Community Learning Service delivers learning and skills though the Direct Delivery Unit and 95% commissioned to a range of sub-contracted partners including schools, colleges, third sector organisations and local community groups.

6. Learning is delivered via four main strands of delivery:

    a. Community Learning Framework (2019-2023)
    b. Community Learning Trust Responsiveness Fund
    c. Wider Family Learning Grants for Schools
    d. Direct Delivery (Accredited provision – Adult Skills)

7. On the 25th April 2019, the Prosperous Staffordshire Select Committee were asked to scrutinise the 2018/2019 performance and quality assurance of the Community Learning Service, through the Annual Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan and scrutinised and commented on the Community Learning & Commissioning Strategy 2019-2023.

    http://moderngov.staffordshire.gov.uk/ieIssueDetails.aspx?IId=80370&PlanId=0&Opt=3#AI78784

8. The Community Learning Service as a lead provider is funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). For the academic year 2019/2020 the Service received £1,708,269 Adult Education Budget from the ESFA.

9. The ESFA require all lead providers that subcontract more than £100,000 of their funded provision to obtain an annual report from an external auditor on the arrangements in place to manage and control subcontracted activity. The Community Learning Service demonstrated for 2019/2020 that we continue to meet the requirements set out in the ESFA Funding Rules for subcontracting.

10. The funding allocation intention for 2019/2020 was to deliver 100% targeted provision to approximately 4,000 adult learners through the delivery of 700 classroom-based programmes within local communities. To support this intention a marketing campaign was developed to effectively reach a large audience across Staffordshire.

11. On the 20th March 2020 the Government asked adult education providers to close all face-to-face provision and transfer to online learning to reduce transmission of COVID19. In response the Service transferred a proportion of learning to online platforms to maintain services. A briefing paper was presented to Prosperous

Staffordshire Select Committee on 24th July 2020 where members were asked to consider the performance, response and future options of Staffordshire Community Learning Service.

http://moderngov.staffordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=868&MId=11782&Ver=4

12. Staffordshire Community Learning Service continued to develop and maintain its services for the remainder of the 2019/2020 academic year, with 700 adult learners participating in online learning to support the development of their skills and wellbeing.

13. Due to the current COVID19 pandemic, the ESFA implemented some flexibilities and issued a statement on 30th September 2020 confirming where the provider's overall performance is between 68% and 99.9%, they would not reconcile the funding allocation. As a result, the total underspend not being recovered by the ESFA is £391,325.

14. The underspend of £391,325 will be reinvested, making good use of public money to support the sustainability of Staffordshire Community Learning and to support the economic recovery. We will do this by:

   a. Providing access to learning to Staffordshire residents relevant to their personal career and life ambitions via face-to-face, blended or online delivery.
   b. SME Business Grant Funding to support digital business developments and the sustainability of our sub-contractors (available until 31st January 2021).
   c. Digital Equipment Grant Funding to equip our sub-contractors with appropriate digital equipment to deliver blended and online learning now and in the future to groups of learners. (available throughout 2021).
   d. Appoint a Digital Officer on a fix-term contract to support the digital development of the service, our sub-contractors, developing teaching staff for the future and the Direct Delivery Unit.

Annual Self-Assessment

15. In 2019, Ofsted introduced the new Education Inspection Framework which sets out the principles that apply to inspection, and the main judgements that inspectors make when carrying out inspections of maintained schools, academies, non-association independent schools, further education and skills providers and registered early years settings in England. Community Learning was last inspected in February 2017 and judged as a good provider.

16. Sub-contractors and the Direct Delivery Unit contribute to the overall Service Self-Assessment and Quality Improvement process. Self-Assessment summary judgements (2019 - 2020) are below:

Education Inspection Framework Area	Overall Judgement
Overall Effectiveness	Good
Quality of Education	Good

Behaviour and Attitudes	Good
Personal Development	Good
Leadership and Management	Good
Safeguarding	Safeguarding is effective

Quality of Education

17. Ofsted Inspectors make graded judgements on '*Intent, Implementation and Impact'*. The Service place the learner and the learning experience at the heart of everything we do to ensure we continue evolve to meet the needs of Staffordshire residents. Therefore, for the purposes of this report we focus on quality of education and safeguarding.

18. Further detail on overall effectiveness, behaviour and attitudes, personal development and leadership & management can be viewed in the Self-Assessment Report (Appendix 1)

Curriculum Intent

19. Staffordshire County Council's Community Learning 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 and society. The Service enables sub-contractors and the Direct Delivery Unit to deliver programmes of learning that:

   a. Develops 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

20. Community Learning programmes are prioritised with funding directed towards the following groups:

   a. Adults residing in the eight districts of Staffordshire
   b. Adults residing in the Staffordshire districts with the greatest concentrations of deprivation, worklessness and economic inactivity
   c. Adult males
   d. Parents/carers of underachieving children or who wish to develop their parenting skills
   e. Adults with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities, including mental health issues
   f. Carers of adults with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities, including mental health issues
   g. Refugees, asylum seekers and adults from Minority Ethnic Groups
   h. Care leavers
   i. Adults yet to achieve a level 2, or those with low skills in English and maths
   j. Digitally excluded adults
   k. Adults on low income and/or in receipt of state benefits

l. Those who are unemployed and want to improve their chances of finding work by developing or acquiring vocational skills

m. "New" adult learners (defined as those who have not participated in Community Learning programmes in the previous three years)

21. Staffordshire Community Learning Service contributes to the strategic objectives identified in the Staffordshire County Council's Strategic Plan (2018-2022) where the vision is to create a connected Staffordshire, where everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy.

22. The service demonstrates the ambition and intent through a four-year Community Learning & Commissioning strategy and the Community Learning Framework (2019–23), which both reflect the local needs of Staffordshire and national priorities. The Community Learning Framework (2019-23) provides a broad range of programmes areas to appropriately meet the needs of Staffordshire residents:

Leisure, Health & Wellbeing

23. The programme area offers learning opportunities to adult learners who want to develop a new area of interest or hobby and take part in learning to support their health and wellbeing. There are a broad range of subject areas including arts media and publishing, languages and literature, hospitality and catering, horticulture, agriculture and animal care. Learners are supported to keep physically and mentally healthy, to develop their personal, social and employability skills and to become active in their communities with progression routes into higher level learning of the same subject, volunteering and accessing other services in their local community.

Supported Learning

24. The programme area is for adults who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and adults who have had long-term mental ill health who require more bespoke and supported teaching and learning. The programmes provide opportunities for learners to develop their sense of well-being and self-esteem, develop skills for independent living and improving their functional skills in English, Math and IT. Programmes of delivery make good use of subjects such as art, music, humanities or cultural subjects etc. as a vehicle for developing and practising strategies for improving mental health or for embedding functional and independent living skills. The programmes help learners to lead healthier, happier, safer and more independent lives and give progression opportunities into further learning, volunteering and employment.

Family Learning

25. The programme area encourages family members to learn together to improve basic skills and skills for development in order to equip families to thrive. The programmes support well-being, healthy lifestyles, mental health, fitness, family finances, accessing community activities and services, managing children's behaviour and development, transition from primary to secondary, understanding school curriculums and staying safe online. There are opportunities for inter-

generational learning and, where possible, lead both adults and children to pursue further learning in English, math, IT and volunteering and employment.

Employability

26. The programme area is focused on up-skilling and re-skilling adults in a vocational context, including sector specific skills, wider skills and the development of English and math skills to support learner's employment opportunities for those who are unemployed or on a low income who want to improve their employment opportunities. Programmes prepare and give learners skills for work in various jobs and trades, for example, construction, business, health services, art and design and agriculture. The programmes can include classroom theory and practice and hands-on job specific technical training for work and progression onto accredited provision, volunteering and employment.

Digital Skills

27. The programme area supports learners use of digital technology more effectively, including the use of computers, tablets, phones, online services and staying safe online. Programmes aim to give learners the confidence to use the digital tools that are important to them. This could be to access local or national services, to communicate, to research, to store and present information, to use technology safely and to keep their family safe, to make the most of applications and use their potential to improve their lives in a variety of ways eg employment, shopping, creativity, leisure. Learners are supported to continue with further learning including accredited provision in IT, English and math and gain access to more employment opportunities.

STEM

28. The programme area supports learners to up-skill and re-skill to gain and improve employment opportunities. STEM education creates critical thinkers, increases science literacy, and enables the next generation of innovators. Innovation leads to new products and processes that sustain our economy. STEM programmes are those that are deeply rooted in science, mathematics, engineering and/or are of technical or technology application. Learners acquire skills in a specific vocational area and are able to apply for jobs and/or progress onto relevant accredited provision.

Progression Pathways

29. The programme area provides internal accreditation progression routes for our learners in Employability, STEM, Digital Skills and Supported Learning. Learners acquire skills to progress onto further learning, volunteering or employment. For 2019 – 20 the Direct Delivery Unit was the sole provider of accredited provision (see below).

30. In addition to the framework, the service delivers learning through:

Community Learning Responsiveness Fund

31. The Fund is for adult learning programmes delivered by third-sector organisations who have access to individuals in local communities. The Fund supports a responsive approach to local emerging needs for a number of targeted learners; carers, care leavers, asylum seekers, people with no or low qualifications, learning difficulties and disabilities, adults from ethnic minority groups and male learners. The programmes are broad and varied and provide 'first step' learning experiences, skill development, including English, math and IT, access to other local activities, volunteering and employment.

Wider Family Learning Grants

32. The Grant is made available for schools across Staffordshire who have identified a need to support families to learn together. Targeted at parents who are digitally excluded, English is not their first language, families at risk, male carers, parents/carers of children with learning/physical disabilities, families with children who are underachieving, Black and Minority Ethnic Groups. There are a number of overarching outcomes to be achieved through the provision, for example, supporting families to have healthy and independent lifestyles, adults able to support their child's school learning and further activities outside of school, new adult aspirations for their own learning and progression, developing understanding of school curriculums and developing functional skills (language, math, digital).

Direct Delivery

33. The Service's Direct Delivery Unit delivers non-accredited programmes in ICT through the community learning programme and accredited provision in ICT and English Speakers of another Language through the Adult Education Budget. Programmes offer Entry Level ICT and Entry to Level 1 English Speakers of another Language qualifications. The curriculum content for ICT gives learners with no or limited experience of ICT the skills they require for everyday use and basic skills required for work. The ESOL curriculum is targeted at those learners who wish to develop their use of the English language in speaking and listening, reading and writing to support them to be active in their community and make positive steps to employment.

Delivery Intent

34. At strategic level there is a strong focus on allocation of provision across Staffordshire which is strongly influenced by the local and regional priorities identified by the Local Enterprise Partnership and Skills Advisory Panel and the overarching outcomes of the Staffordshire County Council Strategic Plan. The Community Learning Service, through the Community Learning and Commissioning Strategy target delivery of provision and funds across the eight districts within identified wards of deprivation. Provision is delivered by the best local providers most equipped to reach out to our learners to provide a high-quality learning experience.

35. Through procurement, the Community Learning Service and sub-contractors identify well the intent of the provision, identifying need and linking that to strategic objectives. Leaders, managers and teaching staff work effectively with stakeholders to shape how the curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of learners and communities.

36. Leaders, managers and sub-contractors have developed and maintained strong and effective partnerships with a broad and varied range of statutory and community-based organisations to gain access to targeted learners and use these partnerships exceptionally well to develop programme content to meet the needs of learners. In addition, teaching staff fully utilise these partnerships to support the additional needs of learners and their progression routes, in terms of wellbeing, further learning, volunteering and employment.

37. A comprehensive Community Learning specification lays out the intent of each programme area, and a range of policies and statements are made available to sub-contractors and their teaching staff to ensure there is consistency of expectation in key areas, such as Information and Advice, Embedded Functional Skills, Learner Voice and Digital.

38. Traditional classroom-based learning is predominantly delivered in risk assessed, safe and fully accessible community venues across the eight districts of Staffordshire. Learning environments are fit-for-purpose and well-resourced. Those sub-contractors with their own premises incorporate a broad range of facilities into their curriculum and programmes of delivery to enhance the learning experience for all learners. Further learning opportunities are well-planned through guest speakers and field trips in order to extend learning.

39. The delivery intent was altered and developed in-year with the introduction of remote online learning in the third term in response to the COVID19 pandemic. A high proportion of teachers fully utilised their expertise and embraced the opportunity to innovate, exploring a range of digital tools to deliver learning, adapting their curriculum and resources and exploring new teaching practices and creative pedagogy delivery.

40. Teachers use their occupational expertise and undertake comprehensive course planning to build a curriculum that provides learners with opportunities to develop knowledge, skills, positive behaviours and personal development for current and future learning, volunteering and employment.

41. An inspiring culture of inclusivity and meeting learners' needs underpins the work of all those involved in Staffordshire Community Learning. Diversity is embedded in the curriculum and best practice shared via the Teaching and Learning Blog.

42. Teachers focus well on next steps in learning and plan opportunities to encourage learners to access local and/or online services within their programme of delivery. Relevant information and advice sessions are planned well into all programmes. A high percentage of learners report they know what they will do next.

Safeguarding Intent:

43. The Community Learning Service is committed to and promotes the safeguarding and welfare of all children, young people and adults in accordance with the Children's Act 1989, the Children's Act 2004 and section 175 of the Education Act 2002. As a service protecting children, young people and adults is one of the most important aspects of our work. All teaching and support staff hold up-to-date Safeguarding and Prevent certificates. All programmes of delivery include a thorough induction process with a strong focus on safer learning in classrooms and online. There is a strong intent to ensure all our learners and their families feel safe and are safe.

Curriculum Implementation

44. Teaching, learning and assessment is good for classroom-based learning, with the profile of good or better observations at 89%. Equally, the grade profile for online observations is 100% good or better. All observations are moderated by the Quality & Performance Team.

45. Classroom-based learning programmes were timetabled well for terms 1 and 2 with a good geographical spread across the eight districts of Staffordshire enabling learners to access programmes in their locality. Delivery timing is versatile, with programmes delivered weekly over two/three-hour sessions or whole days and in the daytime or evenings. Programmes are delivered within well-resourced community venues in rural and urban areas, for example, colleges, libraries, Children's Centres, Family Hubs, sub-contractor premises, small holdings and local community centres. Some sub-contractors support accessibility by providing transport for learners or plan their delivery on public transport routes.

46. In the third term, COVID19 restrictions were adhered to and the service remained open by predominantly delivering remote and online learning to adults. With effective leadership and management, a good proportion of teaching staff responded positively to clear direction and support and quickly adapted their curriculum to maintain services and provided relevant and purposeful learning. Online learning was timetabled for daytime and evening delivery using synchronous and asynchronous learning approaches to provide interaction with others and exchanges of knowledge, real-time feedback and opportunities to learn flexibly and independently.

47. At the start of the COVID19 pandemic the service quickly identified learners who would become disadvantaged due to lack of connectivity and access to digital equipment and/or low digital skills. For these learners, sub-contractors provided paper-based course materials and appropriate resources by following safe social distancing practices and/or delivery via post.

48. Teachers know their learners well and demonstrate high expectations. They have a strong awareness of diverse needs of target learners and produce informative group profiles which inform the development, planning and delivery of learning programmes. Learners contribute to the development of courses and during lockdown engaged more with 1-2-1 tutorials to improve wellbeing.

49. Community Learning promotes a culture of equality and inclusion and advocates this approach with learners at induction and throughout the programme of delivery. Teachers plan for and deliver opportunities to raise awareness of diversity and British Values within their sessions.

50. Learners work collaboratively with their teacher to record their learning journey, focusing strongly on personal goals, progress and achievement and next steps in learning. Teachers use this information well to personalise learning.

51. Teachers plan and develop programmes of learning exceptionally well and are reflective in their practice. They produce comprehensive schemes of work and deliver teaching and learning with a sound structure that builds effectively on subject- specific knowledge, allowing learners to master the basics and make connections. Teachers have excellent working relationships with Learner Support Assistants and involve them in the planning of sessions and give clear direction in order to keep learners on task, engaged and to reinforce learning.

52. Lessons include a broad range of teaching and learning activities that are interesting, stimulating, engaging and challenging to give learners opportunities to explore topics and new learning fully in a safe and supportive environment. There is a good balance of theory and practice, with opportunities to apply learning in everyday situations and the workplace. Teaching and learning activities for online learning are adapted appropriately for delivery; they provide opportunities to learn independently and to work and learn with others. As a result, learners develop wider skills and most importantly essential digital skills.

53. Teachers are well-qualified and use their occupational experience to contextualise learning. They present examples using high-quality resources and scenarios and effectively incorporate key concepts through relevant discussion. Learners respond exceptionally well, are highly motivated, often seek clarification, work well with others and have confidence to explore learning in-depth. The majority make excellent progress in their learning and have confidence to use subject-specific technical vocabulary well and are often inspired to undertake further learning in their own time.

54. Those sub-contractors who have their own premises make excellent use of additional facilities available which allows learners to work as part of a team or to work independently. Some learners have access to on-campus library and resource centres and other learners gain access to facilities that provide current and up-to-date equipment and industry standard resources to support and enhance learning through opportunities to practice learning in realistic working environments. Examples include IT suites, kitchens, pottery workspace, woodworking sheds, landscaped gardens and vegetable plots, poly tunnels, working farm, riding school, art rooms, portable music suite and electronic workshops.

55. Assessment for learning and independent learning is encouraged by most teachers and they use this very well to assess learners' understanding and their ability to apply their learning at home and in vocational settings. Learners find confidence to report back and engage in discussion with peers often leading to extended learning.

Teaching staff have further adapted assessment activities for online programmes appropriately.

56. The Service maintained its matrix accreditation in 2019. Learners receive good information and advice prior to and during their programme of learning. Teachers are supportive and provide appropriate information and advice that gives learners confidence and motivation to support their own progression. In classroom-based learning guest speakers promote local services. Online learning has brought about other links to national initiatives and promotions for learners to engage with. A high proportion of learners report they felt their tutor helped them to understand what they can do next.

57. Across the programme areas most teachers include good strategies to develop English, maths and employability skills. Teachers embed these opportunities discreetly alongside subject content and provide appropriate support to their learners.

58. In classroom-based learning there is good use of technology in delivery including iPad loans, social media closed groups, Wi-Fi in venues, use of mobile phones, Pinterest, YouTube and padlet to support leaners' understanding and creativity and to give opportunities to develop IT skills. Likewise, online learning programmes support the development of essential digital skills using familiar, accessible learning platforms. As learners progress in this area of learning, they often report on new digital skill development that previously they would never have thought possible.

59. Continual Professional Development (CPD) to support teaching and learning is comprehensive and has included extensive digital upskilling for teachers to maximise the use of technology across the learner experience for classroom-based and remote online learning and to develop the digital skills of teaching staff for the future. The investment in CPD fully supported the introduction of remote online learning and gave teaching staff confidence and new skills to deliver.

Safeguarding Implementation

60. At induction there is a strong focus on safeguarding and learners' rights and responsibilities in terms of safer learning in classrooms and online. Sub-contractors and their teaching staff make excellent use of their strong partnerships across the County, for example, Safeguarding teams, Early Help teams, Tier 2 Family Support, health visitors, housing associations, community health teams and mental health hubs to name a few. They are responsive and actively promote and/or signpost learners to opportunities to support their welfare and wellbeing.

61. Teachers have been focused on the wellbeing and safeguarding of learners and report concerns following clear guidelines and procedures in a timely manner. Teachers ensure that learners have a good understanding of what to do if they or others feel unsafe and that they are aware of the dangers of radicalisation and the support they can receive should they come into contact with extreme views, within learning, online, home and the community.

Impact 2019/2020

62. The COVID19 pandemic has contributed to a significant reduction in learner enrolments and performance and has presented many challenges in terms of learner recruitment and engagement, mainly attributed to restricted access to learners following Public Health guidelines, limited access to connectivity and equipment, low digital skills and public anxiety to engage in wider services.

63. A direct impact was the adjustment in the marketing campaign utilising online strategies to broaden the reach and to widen participation for Staffordshire residents during lockdown 1. The Staffordshire Course Directory received 66,207 unique visits compared to 16,163 in the previous year.

64. Those learners who have engaged and completed their courses report high learner satisfaction and a good to outstanding learning experience. Learner Impact statements can be viewed in the Annual-Self Assessment Report (Appendix 1).

65. The service sub-contracted with 28 sub-contractors, delivered 427 courses to 2,540 learners, of which equates to 3,711 enrolments. This is a decrease of 3,281 (47%) learner enrolments against the 2018/19 end-year position.

66. All eight districts of Staffordshire have experienced an overall decrease in enrolments with Cannock, South Staffordshire, Staffordshire Moorlands and Newcastle demonstrating a significant decline. However, 49% of enrolments were from identified priority wards listed in the Community Learning Specification. Priority wards information can be viewed in Appendix 2.

67. The service successfully reached out to new learners through the introduction of online learning achieving 700 enrolments in term 3. The Family Learning programme area demonstrated much success enrolling 40% of total learners in Term 3.

68. Headline learner performance has been greatly affected by the COVID19 pandemic and will require further monitoring during 2020/21 and beyond to bring performance in line with previous years. Attendance fluctuated across the terms because of illness, bereavement and as caring responsibilities increased. Additionally, a proportion of learners lacked digital skills and/or access to equipment or suffered ill health and were unable to continue and/or complete their learning. Low retention levels inevitably impacted on the final achievement for specific groups of learners.

Indicator	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Trend
Pass rates	98.0%	98.6%	98.0%	ó
Achievement	93.1%	94.4%	88.2%	⇩
Retention	95.0%	95.7%	90.0%	⇩
Attendance	90.3%	n/a	79.7%	⇩

69. Learner satisfaction is high and has remained positive and consistent with 2018-19, with a large proportion (99%) of learners stating they enjoyed their learning experience, had the help they needed to make good progress and achieve, received the help they required to understand what they could do next. More than half (63%)

of learners intend to engage and participate in further community learning programmes.

70. Learners consistently report significant development of wider outcomes such as reducing isolation, social inclusion, mental health and the impact on family life and health:

    a. 71% stated they made new friendships
    b. 61% reported an improvement in their wellbeing as a result of attending their programme.
    c. 35%felt more confident to keep themselves and their family safe
    d. 29% felt confident they could give their children the best start in life.
    e. 35% felt more confident to take an active role in their community
    f. 19% stated they felt more confident to access health services

71. A good proportion of learners report an improvement in skills for employment alongside their programme of study:

    a. 37% developed further confidence and skills to progress in their job/career
    b. 28% reporting they had been able to upskill and reskill to improve their employment opportunities.
    c. 31% developed English skills
    d. 26% digital skills

72. A large proportion (87%) of learners within the Employability programme area reported an increase in their English Skills. Similarly, 45% of learners within the Community Learning Responsiveness Fund area reported they had developed English skills which was not the main subject of delivery.

73. Safeguarding is effective with learner feedback remaining positive and consistent to 2018-19 with 99% of learners reporting they felt safe during their learning experience, of which 97% confirmed they understood what to do if they or others did not feel safe. There were 4 individuals who reported that they did not feel safe within the Supported Learning programme area. A high percentage (94%) of learners understood how to protect themselves from risks associated with radicalisation and extremism.

Impact 2020/2021 (Term 1)

74. The marketing campaign has gone from strength to strength with the Community Learning Service experiencing high volume visits to the webpage on the Staffordshire County Council website.

75. July to December 2020 the Course Directory recorded 26,439 unique visits and exceeds the targets set in the Comms Plan. We have optimised search engine results and are now position number 2 on page 1 Google for a generic search.

76. The Community Learning Facebook page has experienced growth. Originally set up in 2016 and achieving 94 followers by the autumn 2019. The page has been rebranded and new regular owned/organic content included, for example Advent

calendar and success stories. As a result, the page has grown to 1,590 followers, has a reach averaging around 22,000 per week, with more than 600 uses of the hashtag #StaffsCommunityLearning.

77. Learner enrolments for Community Learning have experienced a 33% drop against the 2019/20 term 1 out-turn. However, only 15 sub-contractors delivered in the first term and Staffordshire experienced further lockdown restrictions, therefore the decline was inevitable. The Service continues to work with all sub-contractors and their teaching staff to develop digital approaches to delivery to increase learner enrolments.

78. The learning experience remains good, with high learner satisfaction rates. Outcomes for learners have greatly improved, with attendance, achievement, pass and retention performance KPIs in line with previous years. Subcontractors and the Direct Delivery Unit have implemented a curriculum to meet local needs and effective strategies to support individuals to start and complete their learning.

79. The top performing programme areas are Supported Learning, Family Learning and STEM. There is an identified development need to increase learner enrolments in the Employability and Digital Skills programme areas.

Community Learning							
Number of Courses	Number of Learners	Number of Enrolments	Number New Learners	Attendance Rate %	Achievement Rate %	Pass Rate%	Retention%
100	698	922	428	90.5	97	98.8	98.2

80. Learner enrolments for Adult Skills (accredited) have experienced a 28% drop against the 2019/20 term 1 out-turn. It should be noted, a strength of this area is ESOL recording 89 enrolments engaging learners with diverse needs and low communication skills in online learning. ICT enrolments are extremely low in comparison to previous years.   In response the ICT curriculum is under development to include short non-accredited programmes and progression routes onto Essential Digital Skills qualifications roll-out in term 3.

81. The learning experience remains good, with high learner satisfaction rates. Outcomes for learners require further improvement. The current performance is greatly influenced by COVID19 breaks in learning and continuers. This will improve when learners can undertake their final assessments.

Adult Skills (Accredited Provision)							
Number of Courses	Number of Learners	Number of Enrolments	Number New Learners	Attendance Rate %	Achievement Rate %	Pass Rate%	Retention%
22	76	103	18	76.8	66	-	66

82. Overall, in term 1 learners intended progression consists of:

    a. 433 intend to continue with Community Learning
    b. 259 intended progression route not known (to be explored)
    c. 105 intend to progress onto another outcome (to be explored)
    d. 80 intend to move into employment
    e. 34 intend to progress into volunteering
    f. 5 intend to move into self-employment
    g. 3 intend to progress onto an apprenticeship
    h. 2 intend to progress onto a traineeship
       *Actual progression will be reported on term 3.

83. The Community Learning team have started to utilise the £391,325 retained funds from 2019/20 to support our subcontractors and learners throughout the pandemic.

    a. Three subcontractors applied for the SME Business Grant Funding to support digital business development to support them to deliver learning to Staffordshire residents. A total of £11,640.18 of the allocation was awarded.

    b. To date two subcontractors have applied for the Digital Equipment Grant Funding. The equipment has consisted of ipads, assistive technology for learners with physical and learning disabilities, laptops and learning platforms. The equipment purchased will be loaned out to groups of learners to ensure learning remains accessible for all. A total of £10,549 of the allocation has been awarded.

84. There have been further cross-directorate partnerships established to support the development of the digital offer, including work with Health and Social Care and the Library Service to reach out to the most vulnerable learners. The partnerships have contributed to the development of a new Digital offer predominantly delivered by the Direct Delivery. A strong marketing campaign will commence 19th February 2021 with courses starting 1st March 2021.

85. The Community Learning team demonstrate much commitment to developing the service and are working collaboratively with the Holex Digital ACE programme. This has led to extensive sharing of best practice and numerous CPD opportunities delivered directly to our subcontractors and their teaching staff. Consequently, we are fully supporting the development of digital skills of teaching staff for the future.

What the Service needs to do better

86. The Service and its sub-contractors demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement and all staff contribute to the Quality Improvement Plan 2020-2021 (Appendix 3). The following areas for development have been identified:

87. Improve attendance, retention and achievement of all learners and monitor in-year with a strong focus on developing the Digital, Employability and Adults Skills provision and equality groups.

88. Further develop and monitor targeted provision through the marketing strategy.

89. Measure impact and progression more effectively (intended and actual destination)

90. Highlight the breadth of investment drawing on Pound Plus.

91. Further address digital exclusion across all programme areas through the introduction of a 'Learner Digital Entitlement'.

92. Develop the Digital Skills and Employability programme areas to include learner access routes to employment.

93. Ensure RARPA (Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement) remains compliant and individual goals are challenging in online and blended learning.

94. Maintain effective safeguarding practices.

95. Continue to raise learners' awareness of the risks of radicalisation and extremism.

Community Impact

96. 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.

List of Appendices/Background Documents:

Appendix 1: *Community Learning Service Annual Self-Assessment Report 2019-20*
Appendix 2: *Priority Wards Information 2019-20*
Appendix 3: *Community Learning Service Quality Improvement Plan 2020-21*

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