

**REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURE****ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING SERVICE: OUTCOME OF OFSTED  
LEARNING AND SKILLS INSPECTION, NOVEMBER 2012****Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Members on the outcome of the Ofsted Learning and Skills Inspection of Nottinghamshire's Adult and Community Learning Service provision on 12–16 November 2012.
2. A short presentation on the work of the Adult and Community Learning Service will be provided to the Committee before this report is considered.

**Information and Advice**

3. The Adult and Community Learning Service (ACLS) is part of the Libraries, Archives and Information group of services, and is led by the Team Manager, Library and Community Learning.
4. ACLS commissions community learning for adults across Nottinghamshire, funded by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), an agency of the Department for Business and Skills, working with over 40 local learning providers.
5. The priorities of the Service are directed by both the SFA and those of the County Council. An annual report outlining priorities and targets is made to Culture Committee.
6. ACLS and the Skills for Employment (SfE) service (located within the Young People's Service) are subject to a combined inspection. A report outlining the outcomes of the inspection of the SfE will be made to the Children and Young People's Committee.
7. ACLS was previously inspected in May 2009 under the previous inspection framework and was judged as a 'Good' service.
8. The five day inspection was undertaken from 12 November 2012 under the new Ofsted inspection framework, providing less than 2 days advance notice.
9. The inspection outcome judged the service to be Good.

10. The report summarises the key findings for learners as:
- the large majority of learners achieve their learning objectives in their chosen subject areas. Many, who have previously had poor learning experiences or limited opportunities to learn, join courses, enjoy learning and progress well
  - most learners gain confidence, improve their self-esteem and raise aspirations for their lives. They gain new knowledge and skills that they use to help themselves, their families and communities
  - much teaching, learning and assessment is good or better
  - leadership and management are good. Managers provide good levels of staff training and resources for learning and manage tutors' performance well
  - the Service, in partnership with other providers, delivers a very broad range of learning opportunities successfully. Learners from socially and economically disadvantaged communities attend classes well in many local venues, where they feel safe.
11. Areas for improvement for the ACLS were identified as:
- a small minority of learners do not complete their learning objectives successfully and the service is not fully effective at monitoring these learners' progress
  - many tutors do not sufficiently promote equality and diversity in their lessons
  - a few tutors do not use all opportunities to develop learners' literacy and numeracy skills.
12. The 'Good' outcome was a consistent evaluation of ACLS provision covering the following areas:

### **Outcomes for learners**

'Since the previous inspection, the service has maintained and improved good outcomes and progression for learners on programmes of independent living and leisure skills,.'

'The service is very successful at providing programmes for some of the most excluded groups..... The take up of the provision and success rates on courses by learners from minority ethnic groups are higher than the proportion in the county council area.'

'Outcomes are high for learners with learning disabilities and difficulties throughout the service. Male and female learners achieve equally well.'

### **The quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

'Tutors develop excellent rapport with learners and create a supportive learning environment to raise aspirations and build learners' confidence. They have high expectations of learners and most make good use of their skills to support individuals.'

‘Learners build their confidence and develop the skills of independent learning and self-assessment of their own progress using a variety of strategies.’

‘Initial assessment is appropriate and is conducted sensitively to meets the needs of those whose earlier experiences of education may have been negative.’

‘Feedback on learners’ performance in classes is good overall and encourages and motivates learners.’

‘Most tutors including the community learning officers are well experienced and skilful in their specialist areas and hold appropriate teaching qualifications.’

‘Learning resources are of good quality in a wide variety of venues.’

### **Community Development Learning programmes for 19 +**

‘The quality of teaching in Community Development is good, with examples of outstanding teaching that reflect the high outcomes for learners.’

‘Staff skilfully question learners to check understanding, give frequent and clear feedback on how well they have done and what they need to do to improve and support the development of learners’ self-esteem and confidence.’

‘Tutors make good use of the diverse cultures within the classes to raise awareness of diversity in society and the world at large.’

### **Family Learning Learning programmes for 19+**

‘Teaching, learning and assessment are good with a significant proportion of outstanding lessons, which is reflected in the very good skills that the learners develop particularly in managing their children’s behaviour.’

‘Learners receive very encouraging, positive verbal feedback in classes and weekly written comments in their individual learning plans. Learners’ homework and other written work has detailed comments and an overall encouraging contribution from teachers, while digital recording by video, photograph and textspeak is increasingly used with learners who prefer graphic and spoken feedback.’

‘All teaching and learning aims to develop learners’ spoken communications significantly, with particular emphasis on the effective discussion and negotiation essential in living with children, while some teachers use opportunities to develop learners’ understanding of numeracy in everyday life.’

‘Staff are skilled at helping learners to develop their very individual pathways through family learning, non-accredited or accredited, and onwards to other providers or into voluntary or paid work. Where learners are ready and interested, teachers actively promote the idea of taking English and mathematics qualifications and, less often, qualifications in IT in order to increase learners’ range of future choices.’

‘All learners feel safe and respected.’

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management**

‘....teams contribute extensively to support the county council’s wider objectives to improve skill levels, reduce poverty and enhance health and wellbeing. The recent management restructure was managed well.’

‘Governance arrangements at the strategic level are good and provide effective challenge to service managers to maintain effectiveness, within the context of declining resources.’

‘Performance management within the ACLS is particularly rigorous.’

‘The service supports subcontractors well, provides them with a wide range of staff development opportunities, and effectively facilitates the sharing of best practice to maintain high professional standards.’

‘Managers regularly assess the quality of teaching sessions through direct observation and use improvement planning to raise standards.’

‘Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the provision’s quality and rightly prioritise improvement actions that have the greatest impact on learning. The self-assessment process in both teams is well established, highly inclusive and evaluative. The self-assessment reports for both teams are accurate and are focussed on improvement informed by an honest, self-critical and participative culture.’

‘The associated development plans for the self-assessment reports are well structured. The improvements within the ACLS service have been rapid and standards maintained or improved; ..’

‘ACLS managers make excellent use of partnerships to deliver a flexible and responsive curriculum that learners enjoy.’

‘The strategic and operational objectives of both services are informed clearly by an appropriate range of policies and procedures that protect learners and promote their understanding of equality and diversity.’

13. An improvement plan will be developed following the inspection with the aim of moving the service towards that of an outstanding service
14. A copy of the full report is available as a background paper from the Ofsted web site.

## **Other Options Considered**

15. None.

## **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

16. The report provides an update for information.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

17. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Implications for Service Users**

18. Service users can be confident that they are accessing a service quality assured by an independent inspection framework and process. Recommendations for improvement outlined in paragraph 10 will be implemented with users as appropriate.

### **Financial Implications**

19. ACLS is a full cost recovery based service. There are no specific financial implications following the inspection.

### **Equalities Implications**

20. The inspection highlighted good practice in promoting equality and diversity and states 'All learners feel safe and respected'.
21. The report also highlights the challenging targets set by the County Council to engage hard to reach and marginalised learners from almost all of the economically deprived areas and isolated rural communities.
22. As identified in paragraph 10, further work with tutors to promote equality and diversity in their lessons will be included in the development plan.

### **Implications for Sustainability and the Environment**

23. The use of local community venues limits the need for learners to travel.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

- 1) That the outcome of the Ofsted Learning and Skills Inspection of Nottinghamshire's Adult and Community Learning Service provision on 12–16 November 2012 be noted.

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### **Constitutional Comments**

24. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional comments are required.

### **Financial Comments (NDR 08/01/13)**

25. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

### **Background Papers**

Learning and Skills Inspection Report – Inspection Number 399152 – URN: 53674 – Ofsted, December 2012: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/files/2152463/urn/53674.pdf>

### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

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