

**REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CULTURE AND COMMUNITY****NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ADULT AND COMMUNITY  
LEARNING SERVICE: PRIORITIES FOR 2012/2013****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to:
  - a) report on the current national policy in relation to Adult and Community Learning
  - b) report on the Adult and Community Learning Service's (ACLS) priorities for funding for 2012/2013 and endorse their inclusion within the Adult and Community Learning Service Business Plan for 2012/13
  - c) seek approval for expenditure relating to the receipt of a provisional allocation of £2,137,824 from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) to the Adult and Community Learning Service as required by Financial Regulation 2.7
  - d) seek approval of the Fee Policy for 2012/13.

**Information and Advice**

2. The Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) published its strategy document 'New Challenges, New Chances. Further Education and Skills System Reform Plan: Building a World Class Skills System' in December 2011. Whilst funding for Adult Safeguarded Learning has been identified through to, and including, the 2013/14 budget year, some organisational changes are planned. In the 2012/13 year BIS will pilot different locally based 'Community Learning Trust' models to channel Adult Safeguarded Learning funding and lead the planning of local provision in cities, towns and rural settings. If the Community Learning Trust model proves to be successful then it will be rolled out from summer 2013.
3. The Strategy also outlined the objectives of Government supported community learning. These include:
  - a) focussing funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate, including in rural areas and people on low incomes with low skills
  - b) collecting fee income from people who can afford to pay

- c) widening participation and transforming people's destinies e.g. improving confidence and willingness to learn, improving/maintaining health and social well being, supporting parents to be better equipped to support their children's learning, and supporting the acquisition of skills
  - d) developing stronger communities with more self sufficient, connected and proactive citizens.
4. In 2012/13 ACLS will receive a single line budget from the SFA to deliver a balanced programme of activity across the following types of provision:
- a) Personal Community Development Learning (PCDL) - learning for personal development, cultural enrichment, intellectual or creative stimulation and enjoyment.
  - b) Wider Family Learning (WFL)
  - c) Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy (FLLN).
5. ACLS provision is delivered by an extensive network of providers. The majority of provision is delivered by two community colleges, four colleges of further education and the Workers' Educational Association. The Service also works with a wide variety of voluntary and community groups, schools, children's centres, charities and a number of private providers. Working with such a cross section of delivery partners increases the reach, flexibility and responsiveness of the Service to target audiences.
6. During 2012/13, however, the Service intends to deliver a small number of activities directly, using the skills and expertise within its team. This activity will be part of the Service's income generation programme.
7. In line with BIS requirements the Service targets its resources on those facing barriers to learning, living in areas of greatest disadvantage and who are often unconvinced of the benefits of learning. This targeted approach has a proven record of success in raising aspirations, increasing confidence and building social capital. The Service's Year End Report 2010/11 and "On Course" publications provide evidence of the wide range of benefits and positive outcomes that can arise from engagement in learning activity. Comments from learners attending celebration events and at the end of their courses provide further evidence of the value of this activity and the impact that engagement in learning can have on their outlook and lives. Comments made by learners in the current year include;

*"Confidence, confidence, confidence"*

*"I feel more confident about going into a full time course at college now that I know I am able to learn again"*

*"Really enjoyed the course, listening to stories it has given Leah and myself lots of craft ideas we can do together at home. Helped me remember how important reading and story telling is."*

*"Being on the course has made me feel more confident in being able to do things. I have enjoyed doing this and I have achieved something I didn't think I could do, thank you."*

*"Made me more confident to try new things"*

8. The following are examples of success stories that ACLS has shared with partners and Stakeholders through the 'On Course' Publication:

- 'Following a number of courses being delivered at Oaktree Lane Primary, including "Sock Monsters", there have been some fantastic developments. Initially a few of the parents bought socks then created and sold monsters at the school Christmas Fayre. 10 of the 16 parents who took part have now come together as a 'Coffee and Craft group' and spend every Thursday afternoon making a range of craft items. They have now pulled other mums in to the group that runs as a drop in. Some of the parents have undertaken other ACLS family or adult education courses previously and they are putting all that knowledge to good use by making cards, jewellery, knitting, crochet as well as other things. One has also researched her own items off the internet and was teaching the others last week to make sock babies! They have created their own Facebook page for the group and spend hours at home knitting and making things - one is taking orders for her crocheted hair braids. They are also sharing their skills with their children and family members.

The group requested some further support to help them with costs and pricing and as a result are now attending an enterprise course at the school.'

- 'William known as "Danny" helps out most lunch times greeting, seating the customers and taking the food to the tables at Trinity Church Café. It is a legal requirement for anyone working with food to have commensurate training with work activities. Danny attended the Food Safety Level 2 Course at Trinity Community Centre, Kirkby-in-Ashfield to gain up to date knowledge on food safety and recalled that during his childhood he used to push an ice cream "barrow" with his father around the streets.

Danny says he really enjoyed having something to do and finds volunteering very rewarding. He walks to the venue, which he says helps his exercise. Meeting people daily stops Danny feeling isolated and ensures he still feels integrated and part of the community.

By gaining this qualification it ensured Danny carried on doing what he enjoys – putting a smile on people's faces.'

- 'Celia left school at 16 with no qualifications. A busy mum to five children left her with no time to do any later on. She joined our SHARE group (Jefferies School) four years ago when her youngest child was in our foundation unit. In her words she wanted to join us to help her support her daughter with learning, she didn't want her to leave school with nothing just like she did.

Celia has continued to join us at SHARE every year; her daughter is now in Key stage 2, year 4. As tutors we have watched Celia's confidence grow. Last year Celia decided to join two other mums who were doing the accreditation. She never believed she could do it but with lots of support she did achieve entry level/level 1. We were all so pleased, especially Celia who said 'I've never had a certificate before'. Celia now comes into school one morning a week and supports children with reading. Again this is something Celia would not have done before her experiences with SHARE. A great achievement!'

9. The Service seeks to locate a number of programmes in schools and children's centres to benefit parents and carers. During 2010/11, 170 national tests in literacy and/or numeracy were achieved through family learning programmes, 77 of these at Level 2. Activities are also provided in day care centres and in some cases learners are taken off site to engage in their course. Links with libraries also continue to be developed, for example using libraries as a learning venue for ACLS activity where possible.
10. Access to ACLS funds is via a commissioning process for those providers with a successful history of working with ACLS and who offer a programme of learning throughout the year. Those providers wishing to offer more ad hoc or bespoke provision have access to funding via a grant application process. Grant applications are considered by a panel which meets on a monthly basis.
11. Where appropriate the Service intends to utilise a proportion of its tuition fee income to finance activities that help individuals move closer to the labour market. Such activity will not be eligible for PCDL or FE funding but it will enhance learners' opportunities to access employment and/or volunteering opportunities. This activity has proven successful in previous years and for this reason the Service is looking to continue this approach with an identified financial allocation from its resources during 2012/13.
12. In accordance with the business case put forward for the Service in relation to the Council's budget reduction programme, the Service will explore opportunities to attract additional income during the course of the year.
13. In line with the BIS Strategy, ACLS will focus the majority of the funds on those most in need. The funds will also be used creatively to support the achievement of County Council priorities. With this in mind, ACLS will require its provider network to deliver learning activities that address one or more of the following themes:
  - developing stronger communities and promotes social wellbeing
  - supporting parental and community engagement in schools and children's centres and equipping parents and carers to assist and encourage their children's learning
  - fostering aspiration, independence, personal development and responsibility, improving health, well being and quality of life
  - developing skills that prepare people for training, employment or self employment
14. ACLS will require its provider network to primarily target the following priority learners for PCDL resources in 2012/13:
  - those with low qualification and/or skill level (below Level 2)
  - individuals or groups who are socially excluded
  - Black and minority ethnic individuals with low qualification and/or skill levels (below Level 2)
  - those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those experiencing mental health difficulties.

15. Priorities for Wider Family Learning and Family Literacy Language and Numeracy programmes will be parents/carers below Level 2 literacy and/or numeracy.
16. The majority of the above mentioned priority learners will be from the areas of greatest economic and social disadvantage as measured by the Multiple Index of Deprivation. The recommended economic and social disadvantage target for 2012/13 is 73% of learners to be from the 250 most disadvantaged super output areas (SOAs). There are 500 SOAs in the County.
17. Performance Indicators for the Service for 2012/13 will be based on our 2011/12 performance. The table below shows a breakdown of learner numbers to date for the current year i.e. 2011/12:

<b>PCDL</b>	<b>Actual to Date</b>	<b>Year End Target</b>
Learners	4,223	6,300
No of males	27%	34%
No of students with learning difficulties/disabilities	35%	-
No of students from Ethnic Minority groups (BME)	2.2%	2.7%
No of students age 60+	23%	-
Learners feeling more confident to learn	91%	-
Learners who feel their course met their expectations (greatly)	94%	-
Learners who intend to become more involved in their community	59%	-
<b>Wider Family Learning</b>	<b>Actual to Date</b>	<b>Year End Target</b>
Learners	337	750
Children	326	-
<b>Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy</b>		
Learners	538	900
Children	215	-

*Figures as at 6/2/12*

18. With regard to the Fees Policy, given the number of delivery partners within the ACLS Provider Network and the number of delivery locations used, it is important that the Policy is relatively easy to administer and apply to ensure consistency of approach. An increase of 50p in the hourly rate was agreed for 2011/12. Whilst there has been little negative feedback on the increased rate it is too early to tell what the impact of the increase has had on 2011/12 income levels; as such it is proposed that the fee rate remains at £2.50 per hour. It is also proposed that the Administration Fee remains at £5 for all PCDL learners undertaking an accredited course. Family Learning activity remains free of charge in line with National Policy. The proposed Fee Policy for 2012/13 is attached as **Appendix 1**.

19. It is proposed that the fee remission categories remain unchanged from the agreed policy for 2011/12.

### **Other Options Considered**

20. ACLS has a proven record of delivering an effective and efficient Service. A self assessment is undertaken on an annual basis to identify areas for improvement and strengths.

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

21. The Adult and Community Learning Service wishes to utilise the SFA funding to engage the most disadvantaged members of our communities in learning activity.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

22. 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**

23. The proposed Service targets will focus the majority of the SFA funding on areas of greatest economic and social disadvantage. This will leave a small balance to support activity in less disadvantaged areas of the County.

### **Financial Implications**

24. The provisional SFA Grant figure for the period 01/08/12 to 31/07/13 is £2,137,824.

### **Equalities Implications**

25. The Service prioritises certain geographical communities and communities of interest in line with national policy guidance.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That:

- 1) national policy changes in relation to Adult and Community learning be noted
- 2) ACLS Service Priorities and activity for 2012/2013 be approved
- 3) expenditure relating to the receipt of a provisional allocation of £2,137,824 from the Skills Funding Agency be approved
- 4) approval is given to maintaining the current Fee Policy for 2012/13.

**Councillor John Cottee**  
**Cabinet Member for Culture and Community**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Sue Green  
Team Manager, Library and Community Learning  
Tel: 0115 9772875

**Constitutional Comments (LM 08/03/12)**

26. Cabinet has delegated authority to approve the recommendations in the report.

**Financial Comments (NDR 14/03/12)**

27. The amount of provisional grant is referred to in paragraph 24 of the report.

**Background Papers**

'New Challenges, New Chances. Further Education and Skills System Reform Plan: Building a World Class Skills System' 1 December 2011

ACLS Fees Policy for Personal and Community Development Learning 2011/2012

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

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

All.

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