

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURE**ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING SERVICE STRATEGIC AIMS AND OBJECTIVES AND FEES POLICY 2016/17****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to:
 - 1) report on the Skills for Employment and the Adult and Community Learning Service's (ACLS) delivery and outcomes 2014/15
 - 2) seek approval of the Nottinghamshire Community Learning and Skills Service's Strategic Aims and Objectives for 2016/17
 - 3) seek approval for expenditure relating to the receipt of an anticipated allocation of £2,145,430 from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) to the Nottinghamshire Community Learning and Skills Service and £1.3 million from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) for 16 to 18 Study Programme provision
 - 4) seek approval for the Fees Policy for 2016/17.

Information and Advice**Introduction**

2. The Nottinghamshire Community Learning and Skills Service (CLASS) Strategic Aims and Objectives and Fees Policy sets out the plans for 16 to 18 study programme and 19+ community and family learning in Nottinghamshire for the period 2016/17. The Nottinghamshire Community Learning and Skills Service (CLASS) is funded by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and in 2015/16 an EFA grant of £1.1 million and an SFA grant of £2.2 million was available to deliver learning. It is anticipated that the EFA allocation for 2016/17 will grow by £200,000 to £1.3 million (as learner numbers grow from 245 in 2015/16 to 300 in 2016/17). It is anticipated that the SFA allocation for Community and Family learning will be the same as the 2015/16 allocation of £2.2 million. In addition, however, there will be scope to deliver additional Adult Education Budget SFA provision in 2016/17.
3. The EFA and the SFA requires the allocation to be used to;
 - maximise access to learning for the County's young learners (16 to 18) who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) by providing provision that is not available

from existing FE providers (e.g. General Further Education Colleges and Independent Training Providers)

- maximise access to community learning for adults, bringing new opportunities and improving lives, whatever people's circumstances
 - promote social renewal by bringing local communities together to experience the joy of learning and the pride that comes with achievement
 - maximise the impact of community learning on the social and economic well-being of individuals, families and communities.
4. The overall purpose and objectives for EFA funded provision are set by the Department of Education, while the objectives for SFA funded community learning provision are set by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills in the White Paper 'New Challenges, New Chances'. In addition, however, the SFA has established a new Adult Education Budget (AEB) that will operate from the beginning of the 2016/17 academic year and will give all FE providers including Nottinghamshire CLASS new flexibilities to deliver accredited programmes to 19+ adults.
5. The aim of the Nottinghamshire CLASS Strategic Aims and Objectives is to deploy the EFA and SFA funding to ensure that local people have access to a range of appropriate and flexible learning opportunities that will contribute to their personal, social, educational and economic development and hence contribute to the strategy of Nottinghamshire County Council.
6. This Nottinghamshire CLASS Strategic Aims and Objectives and Fees Policy:
- outlines the Council's strategic aims and objectives for EFA funded 16 to 18 Study Programmes and 19+ adult and community learning and introduces the wider learning offer
 - reports on achievement of targets and outcomes against the adult and community learning objectives for the academic year 2015/16 and provides an overview of priorities and targets for 2016/17.

Strategic Aims and Objectives

7. The strategic aims and objectives of the Nottinghamshire Community Learning and Skills Service for the 2016/17 academic year are as follows:

Aim

To ensure that local people have access to an appropriate range of flexible learning opportunities that contribute to personal, social, educational and economic development.

Objectives

- Deliver a programme of high quality learning which clearly contributes to the priorities of the County Council (to support safe and thriving communities; support economic growth and employment; provide care and promote health; and invest in our future)

- Focus EFA and SFA public funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate in learning, including NEET young people, people on low incomes, those with low skills and those furthest away from the labour market
- Continue to deliver a universal Community Learning and Skills Service with access for all and set a fees policy to ensure fees are paid where learners are able to do so (i.e. Pound Plus)
- Widen participation in learning through locally delivered formal and informal learning programmes serving the needs of diverse communities in the County
- Provide learning opportunities in a wide variety of community venues, focused on deprived areas where learning can make a difference to the life-chances of young people and adults and their families
- Provide Study Programmes from six (expanding to seven with the move to deliver from Hawtonville Young People's Centre in Newark from April 2016) centres across the County to 300 16 to 18 NEET learners
- Provide community learning to approximately 7,000 adults aged over 19 from a variety of appropriate venues
- Directly deliver to a minimum of 1,000 adult learners a range of programmes including community, family and AEB funded provision
- Provide Family Learning in partnership with schools and Children's Centres in deprived areas where attainment levels are low
- Grow the capacity of the voluntary and community sector organisations to deliver effective adult learning that meets the quality requirements of Ofsted through funding and supporting niche provision
- Directly deliver new 19+ AEB funded accredited provision to adults where appropriate
- Deliver new Apprenticeships and 19 to 24 Traineeships building upon the successful pilots in 2015/16
- Deliver new 19 + Advanced Learning Loan provision building upon the pilot loan allocation secured in February 2016 including an Access to HE programme and new Level 3/4/5/6 programmes
- Develop new full-cost commercial learning programmes where appropriate, building upon the lessons learned from the 2015/16 pilots.

Delivering the Objectives

8. In order to achieve the above objectives, the Council will:

- Commission a curriculum which will give priority to:

- Engaging new learners and ensuring they are aware of further learning opportunities
 - Improving confidence and skills to allow people to participate fully in society
 - Moving young people from study programmes to Traineeships and Apprenticeships where appropriate (including new 19 to 24 Traineeships)
 - Moving adults from community to accredited (AEB funded) provision, and Apprenticeships as appropriate to enhance their employability
 - Securing additional funding from the European Social Investment Fund (ESIF), Building Better Opportunities, the Talent Match project etc to support the needs of all Nottinghamshire's unemployed learners and helping them to access sustainable employment
 - Developing a learning offer to specifically appeal to adult learners who wish to fund their own leisure learning and using their fees to contribute towards the Service's wider delivery to less advantaged learners
 - Meeting the needs of vulnerable young people and adults, particularly those with learning difficulties/disabilities and those with physical and mental health issues.
- Commission learning activities under the themes of:

Employability (to build the confidence and basic skills of people not supported by Department of Work and Pensions Programmes) including young people and adults via AEB funded, Traineeship, Apprenticeships and 19 + Advanced Learning Loan funded provision

Health and Social Wellbeing (to improve physical, emotional and mental health through enjoyable group learning)

Family Learning (to strengthen families and improve the skills of parents to support their children particularly in mathematics and English)

Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (discrete courses to improve the lives through learning of people with learning difficulties and disabilities)

Community and Individual Capacity Building (to build confidence and skills to enable young people and adults to shape their own futures and/or their communities)

Equality, Inclusion and Citizenship (to engage communities of interest and minority groups and to allow young people and adults to play a part in wider society)
 - Work with partners to develop a curriculum plan, as part of a wider CLASS Service Review, outlining how the identified target groups will be attracted to learning by the courses, times, locations and modes of delivery on offer to meet the priorities outlined above
 - Develop the capacity to directly deliver community learning courses and 19+ AEB funded provision, and 19+ Apprenticeships and 19 to 24 year old Traineeships and 19+ Advanced Learning Loan provision and commercial learning provision. Building upon the direct delivery experience of the Skills for Employment team within CLASS to identify

and harness their direct delivery capacity and expertise for the benefit of young people and adult learners too

- Ensure the Council is on target to build upon the successful Ofsted inspection from May 2015 by moving to achieving a Grade 1 Outstanding grade for Overall Effectiveness at the next inspection
- Support the successful transition to the new Community Benefit Society trading under the name of Inspire by ensuring that the EFA and SFA funded provision is delivered effectively and that all governance and leadership and management systems of performance management and safeguarding are sufficiently robust
- Work with partners from Notts Loves Learning (the Community Learning Trust) and the new D2N2 Adult and Community Learning Alliance to ensure that the Council's service and sector can present itself effectively during the Fifth Phase of the Area Based Reviews of FE planned for D2N2 in November 2016
- Work with colleagues from Adult and Community Learning Services across D2N2 to develop a coordinated offer to potential Skills Funding Commissioners from the new Combined Authority from May 2017 prior to the 2017/18 academic year's allocation (which is likely to be devolved from the EFA and SFA to the new Combined Authority).

Fees Policy 2016/17

9. A consistent Fees Policy is required to ensure that young people and adults within Nottinghamshire are treated equitably by each delivery partner within the Nottinghamshire Community Learning and Skills Provider Network. Given the focus of the EFA and SFA public funding on those young people and adults with low skills/confidence, along with the current economic climate, it is proposed that the hourly tuition fee for SFA funded programmes for adults not qualified for fee remission should be increased from £2.80 to £2.90, a 3.5% increase. The proposed Fees Policy for 2016/17 is attached as **Appendix 1**.
10. Fee remission will only be available to those learners who qualify under the national EFA and SFA guidelines.
11. In addition to the above fees to be applied to all young people and adult learners who do not qualify for fee remission under existing EFA and SFA guidelines, it is planned to deliver provision in 2016/17 that is specifically designed to be full-cost recovery. This separate provision will be fully funded by the learners' fees and will deliver provision that is differentiated from the EFA and SFA funded provision.

Delivery and Outcomes 2014/15

12. Nottinghamshire CLASS operates within academic year, so the 2014/15 year is the most recent full set of data.
13. In 2014/15, ACLS achieved 11,442 individual learners against a target of 10,000 and had 15,534 enrolments on short courses (mostly under 20 hours). In addition, Skills for Employment delivered 28 programmes to 239 learners with 410 enrolments.

14. Overall success rates for EFA funded provision in 2014/15 was 73%. Overall success rates for SFA funded provision in 2014/15 was 87%.
15. In 2014/15 the EFA funded provision was delivered by a directly employed team of 23 professional tutors. In the same year, the SFA funded provision was delivered 100% by commissioned providers (i.e. with contracts in excess of £10,000 p.a.) and grant funded providers (i.e. subcontractors with contracts below £10,000 p.a.).
16. In 2014/15 there was a target that 73% of the SFA funded learners would come from the 250 most deprived super output areas. In 2014/15 the percentage achieved was 68%. Additional focus upon this figure is a key priority for 2015/16 and will continue to be a focus of delivery in 2016/17. In May 2015, Ofsted inspected the provision and judged the service to be good with outstanding features (Overall Effectiveness Grade 2 'Good').
17. There was a wide subject offer available to EFA and SFA funded provision covering all 16 Sector Subject Areas (SSAs). A summary table for 2014/15 of learners and enrolments by Sector Subject Area (SSA) is attached as **Appendix 2**.

The Wider Learning Offer

18. From 5 May 2015, the ACLS and the Skills for Employment (SFE) service have been formally merged under the Team Manager – Learning and Skills.
19. During the 2015/16 academic year, the 23 SFE direct delivery tutors have supported the delivery of new adult learning (predominately Apprenticeships and 19 to 24 Traineeships). In addition, new casual tutors and work based assessors will need to be recruited as required to deliver planned direct delivery to 19+ learners.
20. During the 2015/16 financial year, the pilot of the full-cost recovery library based Astronomy provision has been extended with new courses delivered from Southwell, West Bridgford and Arnold libraries. These pilots will be used as a foundation to plan income-generating courses from April 2016 onwards as part of the offer from the new Community Benefit Society trading under the name of Inspire.
21. During the 2015/16 academic year, Nottinghamshire CLASS has developed a range of accredited provision for 19+ adults funded from a variety of sources (e.g. Apprenticeships funding, Traineeships funding, 24 + Advanced Learning Loans funding) and this approach will be extended in 2016/17 with the introduction of the Adult Education Budget that will enable the delivery of accredited courses to 19+ learners using the core SFA funding mechanism.
22. Commissioning and grant allocation processes are being streamlined as part of the February/March 2016 Service Review being carried out. The commissioning for 2016/17 will not be for the full percentage of available SFA funding. It is proposed to retain at least £200,000 of SFA community learning funding in 2016/17 for 19+ direct delivery in addition to the growth of Apprenticeships, 19 to 24 year old Traineeships, 19+ Advanced Learning Loans and Adult Education Budget funded provision.

23. Learning is a core part of the service offer provided by the range of services to be delivered via the new Inspire community benefit society to achieve an improve offer and higher levels of take up in addition to the EFA and SFA targets.

Other Options Considered

24. None.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

25. The recommendations are made to ensure effective spend of the EFA and the SFA grant against relevant government and Nottinghamshire County Council priorities and to set a fair Fees Policy.

Statutory and Policy Implications

26. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

27. The anticipated 2016/17 SFA grant of £2.2m and EFA grant of £1.3m will be fully utilised delivering the services as set out in the report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

That:

- 1) the Skills for Employment and Adult and Community Learning Services' delivery and outcomes for 2014/15 be noted
- 2) the Nottinghamshire Community Learning and Skills Service's Strategic Aims and Objectives for 2016/17 be approved
- 3) the expenditure of the anticipated grant allocation from the Education Funding Agency and the Skills Funding Agency against the priorities identified be approved
- 4) the Fees Policy for 2016/17 be approved.

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Constitutional Comments (LM 16/02/16)

28. The recommendations in the report fall within the Terms of Reference of the Culture Committee.

Financial Comments (SS 19/02/16)

29. The financial implications of the report are contained within paragraphs 9 and 27 above.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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