

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, YOUTH, FAMILIES AND CULTURAL SERVICES**ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING SERVICE MANAGEMENT FEES AND CHARGES POLICY 2014/15****Purpose of the Report**

1. This report seeks approval to publish the Adult and Community Learning Service Management Fees and Charges Policy for the academic year 2014/15.

Information and Advice**Background**

2. The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) requires that all organisations holding a contract with SFA and delivering adult learning through sub-contract arrangements publish their policy on retained funding for the management of the contract and what this covers.
3. Nottinghamshire County Council's Adult and Community Learning Service (ACLS) currently works with colleges, the Workers' Educational Association, children's centres, schools, third sector organisations and local community groups to deliver a range of learning opportunities for adults (aged 19+ years) and families across Nottinghamshire, excluding Nottingham city. ACLS does not currently deliver any learning directly but may choose to do so during the 2014/15 year. The learning opportunities are secured through an annual open and competitive commissioning process for commissioned providers where the value is greater than £10,000 and through a rolling application process for grants for learning delivery where the total annual value is under £10,000.
4. ACLS is funded primarily by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and also uses some non-SFA generated funds to commission work that falls outside the SFA funding rules.
5. This policy outlines the management charges for those providers who are sub-contracted by the Council to deliver Community Learning (Personal and Community Development Learning, Family English, Mathematics and Language, and Wider Family Learning). There are no additional fees.
6. ACLS works with providers who share a common philosophy to put the experience of the learner at the heart of the delivery. It supports providers to continuously improve the quality of their teaching, learning and assessment by providing an infrastructure that supports providers but also drives improvement.

Management and charges

7. The Adult and Community Learning Service sub-contracts its provision to ensure that it can engage with eligible adult learners throughout Nottinghamshire particularly in the top 250 Super Output Areas.
8. By using skilled and knowledgeable providers ACLS aims to:
 - reach hard to engage learners
 - actively respond to a wide range of individual learner, family and community needs across the County
 - maintain a programme that meets the needs and interests of local learners
 - tailor provision to meet the needs of learners with learning difficulties and disabilities and engage specialist providers
 - grow the number of providers of quality adult learning by working with smaller grant providers
 - respond flexibly to local, regional and national initiatives
 - maximise the use of funding through 'Pound Plus' and provide excellent value for money
 - identify and share best practice from a diverse provider base in order to continually improve the quality of provision
 - meet the County Council's aims and priorities.
9. A strong emphasis is placed on improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment through: the development and application of a quality framework with providers; class visits; observations of learning, teaching and assessment; sharing best practice; quality improvement group meetings; and provider meetings.
10. 25% of the total Community Learning allocation is retained by the ACLS to cover management costs prior to allocating funding to providers. Management costs include: staffing; overheads; Management Information System; data reporting for providers; administration and inputting of course information; meetings and the support of the Team Manager and Development Managers.
11. In return for the charge, providers receive the following support, guidance and challenge:
 - an ACLS Team who will respond promptly to any queries and provide support on any area of the contract, quality assurance or delivery
 - input of course and learner information onto the ACLS Management Information System
 - reports from class visits, joint lesson observations and observations of teaching, learning, and assessment
 - at least twice yearly contract monitoring meetings, where provider performance against contract and the quality of delivery against the ACLS Quality Framework are discussed and action plans for improvement agreed

- weekly Red/Amber/Green rated data reports sent to commissioned providers
 - termly network meetings where best practice is shared and providers can raise issues for discussion/clarification
 - support with the Provider Self-Assessment Report
 - annual provider meeting (commissioned providers) to ensure providers are kept informed of developments
 - professional support for quality improvement from the ACLS Quality and Curriculum Manager and the ACLS Curriculum Leader
 - processing of data returns to the Skills Funding Agency: ILR returns, data validation and reporting
 - an annual Tutor Conference
 - a programme of training and development opportunities for tutors and other staff
 - access to 'Honeycomb', Nottinghamshire County Council's Adult and Community Learning website. This is regularly updated and stores all guidance documents, provider, tutor and learner documentation needed for high quality delivery and course details by district
 - business support team processing of paperwork, invoices and regular finance payments
 - access to the Nottinghamshire County Council's Marketing and Communication team who will support and advise providers on how to correctly display the County Council's logo and other related issues
 - joint administration of the Notts Loves Learning Community Learning Trust and support for the community learning group meetings
 - advice and support from Community Learning Officers for the development of work in their communities.
12. The payment schedule, terms and timescale for paying invoices and claims for funding received are detailed in the provider contracts.
13. This policy will be published on the ACLS Honeycomb website to be viewed by current and potential subcontractors and will be reviewed annually.

Other Options Considered

14. None.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

15. The recommendations are made to ensure compliance with the Skills Funding Agency contract.

Statutory and Policy Implications

16. 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 only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, 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.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the publication of the Adult and Community Learning Service Management Fees and Charges Policy 2014/15 be approved.

Derek Higton
Service Director, Youth, Families and Cultural Services

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Judith Dey
Team Manager, Library and Community Learning
T: 0115 977 2875
E: judith.dey@nottsgov.uk

Constitutional Comments (LM 03/11/14)

17. The Culture Committee has delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendations in the report.

Financial Comments (KLA 03/11/14)

18. There are no financial implications for the County Council arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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