

**COMMENTS FROM THE SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORKING GROUP ON THE ADULT LEARNING
AND SKILLS STRATEGY FRAMEWORK**

To: **Cabinet**

Date: **22nd May 2012**

From: **Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Working Group**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **N/a** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **To summarise the comments arising from a review of the draft Adult Learning and Skills Strategy Framework.**

Recommendation: **Cabinet is asked to consider the working group's comments when determining the Adult Learning and Skills Strategy Framework.**

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee was invited to comment on the draft Adult Learning and Skills Strategy Framework in order to inform the Cabinet's deliberations about this important strategy.
- 1.2 Councillors L Nethsingha, J Reynolds and R West volunteered to undertake this task and met Lynsi Hayward-Smith, Head of Service for Adult Learning and Skills, on 4th May 2012 and agreed to submit the following comments to Cabinet. The Head of Service indicated that she was supportive of these comments.

2. COMMENTS

- 2.1 The Committee members recognise the important role that the Council has in facilitating skills development across Cambridgeshire and are supportive of the four key priorities identified in the strategy.
- 2.2 The review group note the repeated emphasis within the strategy on the relationship between skills development, employability and economic development and agree that these are key issues to be addressed by the strategy. However, the group believe that the skills strategy should also recognise that learning new skills can have a multitude of other benefits. For example, there are numerous societal benefits from increasing parenting skills, caring skills, and skills that help vulnerable people in communities to increase their independence. The importance of the value of learning for learning's sake should also not be underestimated, as this is an important contributor to many people's quality of life.
- 2.3 Members therefore agreed that it would be advantageous to add an additional priority to the strategy to recognise that the value of skills development goes far beyond economic productivity, and that the Council seeks to promote adult learning in a much broader sense.
- 2.4 The group reviewed the performance measures for the strategy, which they supported. However, they felt that it would also be important to measure the satisfaction of learners, in order to gauge the benefits that they experienced, as this would be a true indicator of the efficacy of the strategy.
- 2.5 The group agreed that they would propose to the full Overview and Scrutiny Committee that a report should be brought to the Committee in a year's time in order to review the implementation of the strategy.

<u>Source documents</u>	<u>Location</u>
Draft Adult Learning and Skills Strategy Framework	Shire Hall, Room 116 Contact Robert Jakeman 01223 699143