

CAMBRIDGESHIRE ADULT LEARNING AND SKILLS SERVICE

To: **Communities and Partnerships Committee**

Meeting Date: **17 April 2018**

From: **Adrian Chapman, Service Director Communities and Safety
Pat Carrington, Assistant Director Skills and Employment**

Electoral division(s): **All**

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

Purpose: This report serves to describe the landscape within which the Cambridgeshire County Council Adult Learning and Skills Service operates, and to establish its function within an interim skills strategy for Peterborough and Cambridgeshire.

Recommendation: The Committee is asked to:

- a) Review and comment on the report.
- b) To consider and approve the adoption of the Skills Blueprint attached as Appendix 1 as an interim skills strategy for Cambridgeshire.
- c) To consider and approve further work to be carried out by officers to explore alternative delivery arrangements for the Adult Learning and Skills Service, and to receive a report on this work at the July 2018 Committee meeting

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1.	BACKGROUND
1.1	The Communities and Partnerships Committee is now responsible for the Cambridgeshire Adult Learning and Skills Service (CALSS) following recent changes agreed at Full Council. Adult learning and skills provision plays a significant part in supporting communities and individuals to thrive and succeed, and helps address some of the challenges our communities face including, for example, isolation and deprivation. This report serves to describe the landscape within which CALSS operates, and to establish its function within an interim skills strategy for Peterborough and Cambridgeshire.
1.2	The service is managed operationally within the Communities and Safety service directorate, and is led by the shared Service Director and shared Assistant Director. The equivalent service in Peterborough is operated at arms-length from the Council, and this has enabled it to attract significant new inward investment for additional delivery of services, and to diversify and, in some cases, commercialise, to achieve longer-term sustainability. This report seeks to introduce that concept for Cambridgeshire and asks for agreement from the Committee to formally explore a similar model to be discussed and agreed in detail at a subsequent Committee meeting.
1.3	Adult and Community Education covers a wide range of learning targeted as a vehicle that promotes social mobility and of benefit to individuals and society as a whole including better health and well-being, increased employability and social engagement (University and College Union, 2016, Aggett & Neild, 2014).
1.4	It has a reputation for delivering a strong return on investment, with a Department for Business Innovation and Skills research paper showing a £10 return to the economy for every £1 of Government investment for learning below level 2, and Fujiwara, 2012, states £1,160 of benefits for an adult engaged in part-time learning using the HM Treasury green book methodology.
2.	MAIN ISSUES
2.1	The work delivered by CALSS cuts across all priorities of Cambridgeshire County Council and those of the Communities and Partnerships Committee, by helping to develop individuals, improve their skills, raise potential and aspirations and by having a direct impact on their social and economic wellbeing. The service offered by CALSS is to deliver learning opportunities that support local need and help improve the social and economic wellbeing of local residents and communities, working with families, young people and adults with a particular emphasis on the disadvantaged and vulnerable. CALSS plays a key role in post 16 education and supporting vulnerable groups in the county. The service is grant funded to work with key groups and has had a recent successful Ofsted inspection of the service.
2.2	CALSS is largely self-sustaining currently with an annual turnover of c.£2.9m. It requires limited support from within the council and this is typically in the form of back office services. Line management of the service has, until relatively recently, been by the Assistant Director for Economy, Transport and Environment. The recent senior management changes have resulted in the service now being managed from the Communities and Safety service directorate. The Assistant Director for Skills and Employment also has the same role in Peterborough and is the Principal of Peterborough City Council's Adult Education College, City College Peterborough (CCP).

2.3	Adult Education is operating in a very complex world and government funding in this area has decreased in real terms by over 40% in recent years. In order to ensure that we are able to continue to support local adult residents to improve their skills and therefore improve their work, career and pay prospects, alongside their health and wellbeing, there is a need to be more innovative and agile in our approach.
2.4	<p>For Adult and Community Learning provision nationally, the Adult Education Budget (AEB) includes Community Learning, the purpose of which is to develop the skills, confidence, motivation and resilience of adults of different ages and backgrounds in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve their health and well-being, including mental health and/or • progress towards formal learning or employment, and/or • develop stronger communities <p>The AEB funds the statutory entitlement for all adults with low-level maths and English to have access to free maths and English classes (and from 2020 this will include Digital) and those up to the age of 24, free first full level 2. There are no plans for big changes in the 2018-19 adult education budget process and rules because reforms are scheduled for 2019 with the devolution of money and power to the Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs).</p>
2.5	The Learning and Skills provision across Cambridgeshire is no less complex. A majority of the activity is found in the further education colleges and via our own CALSS provision, although there are also a changeable number of private training providers.
2.6	The current offer in the colleges
2.6.1	The colleges in Cambridgeshire offer a broad range of provision. The two sixth-form colleges, which are based in Cambridge City, offer A-levels across the Cambridge City and wider Cambridgeshire areas, along with the College of West Anglia which delivers small numbers of A-levels. Hills Road Sixth Form College offers only A-levels and delivers the largest number of these of all the colleges in the area.
2.6.2	The general further education colleges and Long Road Sixth Form College offer a range of technical provision for young people and adults including a focus on level 3 and above in science, manufacturing and engineering, agri-tech and information technology and computer science. The general further education colleges offer some provision at level 4+, with the largest offer being delivered by Cambridgeshire Regional College.
2.6.3	All general further education colleges offer apprenticeships in the majority of sectors areas, with the largest being business, administration and law, retail and commercial enterprises, engineering and manufacturing technologies, and health, public services and care.
2.7	Cambridgeshire County Council's Adult Learning and Skills Service
2.7.1	The Cambridgeshire County Council Service is offered across the whole of Cambridgeshire and now with some joint working with Peterborough City College (particularly relating to health and care via the Health and Care Sector Work Academy referred to later in this report). The objects of the service are: to advance

	education; to advance health; to relieve unemployment; to relieve poverty; to promote social inclusion; and to support social mobility.
2.7.2	<p>The work undertaken by CALSS is largely funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). This funding is received either as a grant for adult education activity (c.£2.3m) or in our capacity as a subcontractor (e.g. as in the National Careers Service contract of c.£0.3m). A number of projects are also funded from European Social Funds as described later in the paper. Work undertaken falls in to the following categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Learning – provision offering a range of non-accredited learning mainly sub-contracted to a range of statutory and non-statutory providers. This includes the ‘traditional’ adult education offer – e.g. languages, dance, craft etc. – and is targeted at those who would most benefit from adult learning. We also have a range of courses at full cost that are part of the universal offer and provide income to the sub-contractors. • Adult skills – accredited learning directly delivered in Learning Centres and partner locations. The curriculum includes functional skills, English, maths and IT, English language (ESOL), ICT from entry level to level 2, and work skills (team working, job hunting, CV writing, interview skills etc.) We also offer Traineeships and have a plan for future apprenticeships. • Careers Advice & Guidance – CALSS is a National Careers Service contract holder offering information, advice and guidance services across the County. • Family Learning – learning aimed at helping parents develop their own skills so that they can better support their children. • Adults with Learning Difficulties & Disabilities – aimed at engaging and supporting adults into learning and helping them to progress to independence and employment. • Cambridgeshire Adult Learning Fund – funding for first-step learning that engages those farthest from learning and with the greatest need. This is mostly commissioned from voluntary sector providers
2.8	<p>Where is the service provided from?</p> <p>It is vital that the service operates locally and is accessible to as many people as possible. At present the service operates from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five Learning Centres in libraries – Cambridge Central, Ely, Huntingdon, March and Wisbech • Partner locations – Children’s Centres, Community Access points, outreach locations • Academies, Community Colleges and FE Colleges • DWP Flexible Support Fund – Work Clubs aimed at unemployed people offering job hunting skills, CV writing and work experience placements currently in Whittlesey, March, Manea, Wisbech, Wimblington, Oxmoor Huntingdon, Ramsey, Littleport and Ely)
2.9	Value for money
2.9.1	<p>The Service’s income provides learning opportunities to approximately 10,000 Cambridgeshire residents per annum, many of whom come from disadvantaged backgrounds, and is providing excellent overall success rates. The impact of the Cambridgeshire Adult learning and Skills Service on the five priorities of Cambridgeshire County Council is extensive.</p>

2.9.2	Adult Learning & Skills supports four district based Community Learning and Skills (CLAS) Partnerships. There is a partnership in each district council area, with Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire coming together to form a group as many of the local partners work across the two districts. The CLAS Partnerships are made up of local organisations working within each district who have a stake in adult learning and skills, either as a provider or on the demand side. The partnerships' vision is to enhance life opportunities in the district by offering learning experiences that develop new interests and skills that can lead to increased health and wellbeing, skills development and employment.
2.9.3	<p>The local partnership meetings look at the aims listed below and how partners of the CLAS Partnerships operate in a way that will ensure local activity is managed to address these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To focus public funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate, including in rural areas and people on low incomes with low skills • To collect fee income from people who can afford to pay and use where possible to extend provision to those who cannot • To promote social renewal by bringing local communities together to experience the joy of learning and the pride that comes with achievement • To widen participation and transform peoples' destinies by supporting progression relevant to personal circumstances • To maximise the impact of community learning on the social and economic well-being of individuals, families and communities
2.10	CALSS Self-Assessment
2.10.1	<p>CALSS is regulated by Ofsted, and as part of this regime, the service is required to prepare and submit an annual self-assessment. The self-assessment reviews the previous academic year's performance against Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes for learners • Quality of teaching, learning and assessment • Effectiveness of leadership and management <p>The self-assessment review is moderated by colleagues, peers and partners before being submitted.</p>
2.10.2	<p>The most recent CALSS review demonstrated the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 96% overall retention rate • 94% overall success rate • 26% increase in learners taking qualifications • Improvements in Family Learning English, maths and languages retention and success rates – retention increasing from 89% to 97%, and success increasing from 86% to 96% <p>A summary of the key findings under each criteria is shown below.</p>
2.10.3	<p>Outcomes for Learners:</p> <p>Strengths –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outstanding retention rates overall • Good GCSE achievement rates • Good progression routes <p>Areas for Improvement –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the number of male learners • Investigating success rates in particular areas

2.10.4	Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment: Strengths – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 96% of learners said that teaching was ‘good’ • Careers advice and information is well integrated • 90% of learners who completed feedback stated they would recommend our service Areas for Improvement – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking learner progression and destinations
2.10.5	Effectiveness of Leadership and Management: Strengths – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships are very effective • Good subcontracting arrangements • Strategic planning aligns closely with the council's priorities and also key partners such as DWP Areas for Improvement – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen relationships with a wider range of employers • Continue to ensure greater alignment with other CCC teams
2.11	Health and Care Sector Work Academy
2.11.1	The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Health and Care Sector Work Academy is a pilot supported by the Combined Authority, which will seek to address the skills shortage in the Health and Care sector by stimulating progression and improving career prospects for those in receipt of in- and out-of-work benefits. This programme will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support individuals to have career and social mobility • Deliver a skilled workforce and help to meet the recruitment needs of the health and care sector • Be delivered through a single intervention that is in two parts - training people from outside and within the health and care sector simultaneously: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Outside the sector it will train those that are trapped in low paid jobs with no career or pay prospects ○ Inside the sector it will give training for progression • Offer a robust and clear career pathways for all
2.11.2	The Innovation Pilot will attract £5.2m funding from the Department of Work and Pensions, but it will also benefit from drawing down an additional c.£2m from other funding (e.g. the Apprenticeship Levy). The programme will run for 3 years and will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seek to remove barriers by providing wrap around career guidance / post-employment support and have a bursary for childcare and travel costs • seek to influence employer practice around recruitment and staff development to help improve retention of staff • deliver an individualised tailored programme that will be co-designed with employers for sector specific training • deliver on the basic skills agenda and give work experience visits
2.12	Skills Blueprint
2.12.1	The Combined Authority will secure adult skills funding and decision-making powers from 2019 as previously mentioned. As part of its new role, the Combined Authority is committed to developing a new skills strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

	against which services and provision will be developed in line with the overall social and economic growth strategies for the area.
2.12.2	However, this new Skills Strategy will take some time to develop, and it is essential that the adult skills sector have a strategic framework to operate within in the interim. Over the past few months, the council and other strategic partners have worked closely with the Combined Authority to produce a draft Skills Blueprint that is attached at appendix 1 .
2.12.3	The Blueprint acts as a precursor to a more robust and comprehensive strategy, and sets out a vision for employment and skills which is to improve and grow our local skills base to support a successful, globally competitive economy grounded in high-skilled and better-paid jobs, increased productivity, and growing strong, sustainable communities. These principles align well to the proposed delivery plan priorities for the Committee.
2.12.4	The Blueprint goes on to describe the ways in which this vision will be realised, and that to do so will require a more ambitious and targeted skills approach.
2.12.5	The Committee is asked to consider the draft Blueprint and to approve its adoption as an interim skills strategy, pending the development of the more comprehensive strategy with the Combined Authority. Other key partners will also need to agree and approve the Blueprint, and this will be progressed in coming weeks.
2.13	Future Service Design
2.13.1	As previously described, the equivalent adult skills service in Peterborough operates at arms-length from Peterborough City Council. This has enabled the service to diversify and expand its offer, resulting in less reliance on short-term grant funding and enabling the service to develop long-term financial sustainability. This approach has increased the turnover of the service four-fold. This model has been operating formally in Peterborough since December 2014, with a 3-year review cycle.
2.13.2	It is proposed that the potential to replicate this model within CALSS is now explored in order that communities and residents can benefit from more significant investment, a broader range of provision, and a richer and more diverse offer.
2.13.3	This work would involve exploring different structural models that will support a new way of working. This is a complex area of work and will need to be carefully and rigorously undertaken in order to identify and deal with financial, legal, HR and other implications, and to mitigate any known or potential risks. It is helpful however that Peterborough's equivalent service already operates differently from Cambridgeshire's, as there is significant learning in place that can be shared. It is proposed that this work is overseen via the Shared and Integrated Services Programme, which Members will be aware of.
2.13.4	The direct benefits to the council of any proposed new structure need to be identified, and are likely to include some back-office financial savings, greater assurance of the continued delivery of the adult skills service to local residents, and access to new funding.

3.	ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES
3.1	Developing the local economy for the benefit of all
	The provision of professional, relevant and accessible adult skills training is vital to the economic growth and sustainability of our population.
3.2	Helping people live healthy and independent lives
	Adult skills and learning can improve the career and social prospects of our residents, reducing reliance on welfare benefits, improving social and career mobility, and enabling people to self-help more effectively.
3.3	Supporting and protecting vulnerable people
	Adult skills and learning can improve the ability for people to live more independently and to increase their economic and social position, addressing for example issues associated with poverty, deprivation and poor health.
4.	SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS
4.1	Resource Implications
	There are no significant implications within this category.
4.2	Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications
	There are no significant implications within this category.
4.3	Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications
	There are no significant implications within this category.
4.4	Equality and Diversity Implications
	The work carried out by the service is often with the county's most vulnerable residents and as such makes a positive contribution to issues of equality and accessibility.
4.5	Engagement and Communications Implications
	CALSS already operates a partnership model with communities and community groups and this will continue to evolve and develop.
4.6	Localism and Local Member Involvement
	The heart of CALSS is in its local engagement and place-based delivery.
4.7	Public Health Implications
	Public health are a partner of the Adult Learning and Skills Service.

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Financial Officer: Tom Kelly
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes Name of Procurement Officer : Gus de Silva
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by LGSS Law?	Yes Name of Legal Officer: Satinder Sahota
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Adrian Chapman
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Name of Officer: Christine Birchall
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Name of Officer: Adrian Chapman
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Name of Officer: Val Thomas

Source Documents	Location
None	N/A