

ADULT LEARNING AND SKILLS SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT

To: Economy and Environment Committee

Meeting Date: 3rd February 2015

From: Executive Director, Economy, Transport and Environment

Electoral division(s): All

Key Decision: No **Reference Number:** Not applicable

Purpose: As a provider of Skills Funding Agency (SFA) funded activity we are required to produce a self-assessment report for the SFA and Ofsted who can use the content for their own evaluation.

Ofsted Governance requires the report to be endorsed by the appropriate committee. The report also provides an opportunity to update members on the work of the Adult Learning and Skills service.

Recommendation: Committee is asked to endorse the report.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Adult Learning and Skills self-assessment report summarises achievement of the Service against the Ofsted Common Inspection Framework.
- 1.2 The report bases the evaluation on both quantitative and qualitative data gathered on the student engagement and achievement, and on learner, partner and stakeholder feedback.
- 1.3 The style of the report is designed to answer key questions that will be asked of us by Ofsted inspectors.
- 1.4 A Quality Improvement Plan is written to follow up any concerns, issues or areas for development over the next year.
- 1.5 It is important to note that the Adult Learning and Skills Service which is made up of Community Learning, Learning Services and the Adult Careers Service only acts as a prime contractor for Community Learning. Learning Services and the Adult Careers service funding are mostly sub-contracted from National Prime providers. For that reason the main focus of the self-assessment is Community Learning and the Adult Careers Services and Learning services only feature as supporting evidence in this report. Separate self-assessment reports are written by the prime contractors for those services.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 The self-assessment report evaluates the work of the service and its impact on learners, employers and communities. The evaluation involves and is contributed to by staff in the service, partners and learners. The executive summary of the report can be found at appendix 1. and all the Committee members have received a full copy of the report and data appendices for information.
- 2.2 The report demonstrates that the work of the service continues to meet the Ofsted standards for a good quality provision.
- 2.3 Achievement is consistently good at 95%. Success rates for learners taking qualifications through the Skills Budget are good at 82% (Community Learning) and very good at 90.7% in the learning service (Learning Services).
- 2.4 Overall learner numbers have been retained over 3 years against a national backdrop of decline. 95% of learners are very satisfied with their experience. Teaching and learning have improved substantially with 78% of tutors graded as good or outstanding up over 3 years from 62% in 11/12.
- 2.5 In line with Adult Learning providers nationally, tracking progress and destination information continues to present challenges
- 2.6 The partnership structure at district level has developed enough for members to be able to actively participate in the commissioning of learning and skills activity, planning the curriculum offer and undertaking needs analysis.

- 2.7 The highly successful Quality Mark has raised aspiration throughout the Service, with those centres having achieved the award demonstrating much higher standards of professional practice, improved learning programmes, and stronger quality standards particularly in teaching and learning. We are working with other providers to work towards this award.

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

Providing increased skills and training to individuals will increase their ability to find work and reduce dependency on Council and other public services which in turn will benefit the local and national economy.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

Personal health and independence generally improves through greater job prospects and greater self esteem, which can be developed through increasing skill levels and opportunities available.

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

Increasing skill levels improves life chances. The Adult Learning and Skill service focuses its efforts on those most in need of additional skills and thus those most at risk of exclusion and not being able to benefit from the opportunities available in the local area.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.3 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.4 Engagement and Consultation Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.5 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.6 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

SOURCE DOCUMENTS GUIDANCE

Source Documents	Location
Adult Learning and Skills Self-Assessment Report 2013-2014.	Room 309, Shire Hall, Cambridge. .

Adult Learning and Skills Self Assessment Report 2013/2014

Executive summary

The Focus for the Adult Learning and Skills Services (AL&S) is to help individuals, communities and businesses achieve their goals, by helping them access learning and skills development. The service aims to offer a consistent, high quality experience for people wherever they engage with us and to work with partners to ensure we reach those furthest from learning. The teams within the service offer effective careers advice and guidance, assessment, initial and advanced skills learning and a range of support for skills development and routes into employment. The service takes a strategic role in the development of skills throughout the county.

The self-assessment report evaluates this work and its impact on learners, employers and communities. The evaluation involves and is contributed to by staff in the service partners and learners .

Although Adult Learning and Skills has a universal offer in some circumstances learners are targeted where they are farthest from learning in the most deprived communities and in the hardest to reach circumstances, but also where they or their employer have not been able to fulfill their potential. The community learning offer includes in its target outcomes the opportunity for individuals to combat social isolation and improve health and wellbeing. An outcomes framework is being piloted with this work.

The Service is very well represented at national and regional level and it has worked with colleagues across the county council to develop a skills strategy that embraces the transition of young people into the adult learning and skills stage of the journey to employment. The Strategy has been agreed by the county council members and is supported by a range of stakeholders and business and statutory and voluntary sector partners.

The AL&S budget is approximately £3.4 million broadly divided into £1.7m (50%) community learning trust (CLT) fund and £0.5m (15%) accredited provision funded by the Skills Budget. £278k learning service (LS) and £380k adult careers service (ACS). Successful tendering has secured European, and NIACE funding of around £291k. In addition Cambridgeshire County Council supply the learning Service with £172k to support their work in Fenland.

AL&S's overall effectiveness, rated as good in the full Ofsted inspection in March 2011, continues to improve with increased resources targeted at disadvantaged/vulnerable adults in line with government priorities. It has a very clear strategic direction and vision, with a 3-yr trend that indicates improvements in key areas that impact on learners.

Achievement is consistently good at 95%. Success rates for learners taking qualifications through the Skills Budget are good at 82% (CLT) and very good at 90.7% in the learning service (LS). Overall learner numbers have been retained over 3 years against a national backdrop of decline. 95% of learners are very satisfied

with their experience. Teaching and learning have improved substantially with 78% of tutors graded as good or outstanding up over 3 years from 62% in 11/12.*

In line with Adult Learning providers nationally, tracking progress and destination information continues to present challenges with the SFA (Skills Funding Agency) outcome incentive funding being used by the service to set up an appropriate tracking model. A NIACE (National Institute for Adult Continuing Education) sponsored project is successfully working with large numbers of learners through partner organisations to measure health & well-being related wider outcomes from learning.

Another key focus has been to engage learners and non learners through the learner involvement strategy and this has developed a wider range of engagement that is having an impact on programme planning. A variety of methods to enable learners to choose the right learning programme have been implemented with knowledgeable front line staff, good quality information and advice and a good county-wide web site, Cambridgeshire.net – being increasingly used by adults to find courses to suit them.(50,000 hits a month)

The well established CLAS (Community Learning and Skills) district partnerships are increasingly effective in enabling local planning to meet local needs. This partnership structure has developed enough for members to be able to actively participate in the commissioning of learning and skills activity, planning the curriculum offer and undertaking needs analysis.

The highly successful Quality Mark has raised aspiration throughout the Service, with those centres having achieved the award demonstrating much higher standards of professional practice, improved learning programmes, and stronger quality standards particularly in teaching and learning. The strong provider body within the Service is benefitting from more robust and more extensive data reports for programme planning although progression data is a priority for further development.

Staff development is good, with increasing numbers of tutors and managers taking (preparing to teach in the lifelong learning sector) PTLLS qualifications. Excellent tutor events attract large numbers and provide effective knowledge and skills that are targeted on improving teaching, learning and assessment. A good web site provides a full range of resources for tutors. Twenty experienced tutors have trained as peer observers, and with local and county managers provide an effective team of observers that have raised the numbers of tutors with outstanding and good observations.

The Service has taken a lead role in developing the Cambridgeshire Skills Strategy and the Skills element of the City Deal and has a clear role in bringing partners together to contribute to the growth of the skilled workforce in the County.

Safeguarding and health and safety arrangements are good and equality and diversity is close to outstanding with a range of provision that makes a very strong impact on a growing number of vulnerable adults with diverse needs.

The County Council's strategic objectives are embedded in all AL&S policies and plans and the service plays a significant role in helping the council achieve its objectives.

*Draft data pre-QSR publication