

		AGENDA ITEM 6
		PAF/01/16
Committee:	People and Families Scrutiny Committee	
Date:	14 <sup>th</sup> January 2016	
<u>Outstanding Items</u>		
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### **Purpose of the Paper:**

To present the progress made on Adult Community Learning (ACL) redesign

### **Background information:**

ACL Essex is the leading provider of adult education across Essex and is the second largest Local Authority provider in the country with more than 12,000 adults taking part in opportunities to learn new skills, enter into employment, become more independent, learn for social benefit and to improve their mental and physical health and well-being.

The delivery of ACL is predominately funded through the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) annual contract and tuition fee income generated from those that can afford to pay for their learning. Funding is targeted at those that have benefited least from the education system previously, vulnerable adults, disadvantaged groups and those adults that are not in employment.

SFA funding has decreased significantly over the past five years with up to 25% cuts per year, in addition to in-year cuts and changes in the funding regime resulting in some funding streams being withdrawn altogether – for example mandated English for Speakers of Other Languages.

In November 2014 ACL Essex was inspected by Ofsted and this resulted in a judgement of requires improvement.

A full review of the structure was undertaken to achieve the following:

- Streamlined structure and processes in line with Ofsted recommendations and to reduce duplication of activity
- Improved financial performance
- Improved customer experience
- Improved quality to enable students to achieve their aspirations

## **Process undertaken**

The redesign included all staff at all levels and engaged them in consultative activities as follows:

- Consultation groups – 16 sessions were held with staff across the county to present the structure and invite questions and answer sessions
- Employee forum - this included 40 members of staff
- Workshops – these themed workshops enabled staff to fully contribute to the re-design and put their views forward for new ways of working and organisational structure
- Surgeries – 1-2-1s across the county were set up to enable people to express their views, issues and concerns and to give an opportunity make a positive contribution to the change process
- Email group – An inbox was set up to enable people to send their enquiries, thoughts and counter proposal
- Newsletter – a fortnightly newsletter was set up and circulated to keep people up to date
- Tutor workshops – across the county over 140 tutors attended these sessions and contributed their ideas, thoughts and concerns

Staff feedback was taken on board and changes made as a result of their input.

## **Progress to date**

The redesigned service structure was implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015. The savings required have been achieved and additional in year funding shortfalls addressed. Whole service days have been implemented which have included training and development sessions, information sessions, quality improvement, PREVENT training and celebration of success.

Enrolments are up compared with the same time last year, success rates are up overall which is a critical factor in terms of Ofsted. Following a MATRIX inspection in October the following was reported:

‘Leadership and management of ACL Essex is visionary, motivational and centred upon efficiency and effectiveness whilst striving to deliver the best possible service for clients. Implementation of change management practices, combined with a whole organisation restructuring, were realised through a positive, enthusiastic outlook, where management supported staff to embrace change and innovation. Communication channels are working particularly effectively, with the senior leadership team ensuring that all teams understand service standards and key performance indicators. The full range of staff (employees and sessional tutors) understand the ACL Essex business priorities and direction of travel. The workforce feels consulted, supported and values of autonomy and trust prevail. ‘

The leadership and management team have undergone a series of training sessions to develop their skills in financial management, marketing and sales and cultural change. Further training is being rolled out in 2016 for all staff on financial management and funding, planning and curriculum design, marketing and managing change.

The service is now conducting a 6 month review of structure with staff in workshops to understand the elements that are working well and those aspects that may need further change and development.

## **The future and next steps**

To secure ACL provision in local communities it will be essential that providers work together to share resources and maximise the use of limited funds. Therefore ACL Essex is leading the way with the implementation of a strategic alliance. This will bring together colleges and other adult education providers to focus on specific workstreams where there is a need, initially those workstreams will be as follows:

- Quality improvement – improving English and Maths results using each providers best resources to develop a strategy for improvement, implementation of new models and monitoring of progress
- Organisational intelligence – a review of current management information systems will be undertaken by national steering group member who will advise on the implementation of streamlined reporting that enables managers to make informed decisions.
- Curriculum design – leaders in the field will review the current curriculum to ensure it meet local and business need and is responsive to the changing market demands

A memorandum of understanding has been signed by partners and work has started to make improvements. This initiative will bring additional creative leadership to build management capacity across the organisation. This work will provide timely expertise, shared resource and provide the innovation that is required to enable ACL Essex to thrive in challenging times.