

Adult Community Learning - update

Reference Number: PAF/23/20

Report title: Adult Community Learning - update	
Report to: People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee	
Report author: Graham Hughes, Senior Democratic Services Officer	
Date: 12 November 2020	For: Discussion and identifying any follow-up scrutiny actions
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County Divisions affected: Not applicable	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In February 2020 the Committee were briefed on the current objectives, priorities and strategy for Adult Community Learning in Essex. This is a further update to reflect the new additional challenges presented by the pandemic.

2. Action required

To consider the update and identify any follow-up scrutiny actions

3. Background

- 3.1 In February 2020, at the request of the Chairman and Vice Chairmen, the Committee were given a broad introduction to Adult Community Learning - how it is organised, its client groups, how funded, its aims and objectives, and measuring outcomes including links with the Skills Board and supporting economic growth; the update also included consideration of the social impact of ACL activities, and other 'less quantitative' outcomes.
- 3.2 A link to the February 2020 meeting papers is here [PAF meeting papers 13 Feb 2020](#) and an extract of the minutes of that meeting is reproduced overleaf in Appendix A.
- 3.3 The pandemic has presented further challenges and the Chairman and Vice Chairmen have asked for a further update on how it has impacted on the provision of Adult Community Learning services. This update is attached as Appendices B and C.
- 3.4 Councillor Ray Gooding Cabinet Member – Education and Skills, and Katherine Burns, Adult Community Learning Principal will be in attendance for this item.

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4. Update and Next Steps

See Appendices B and C for the update. A short power point presentation (Appendix C) will also be made on the day.

5. List of Appendices

- A. Extract minute from the February 2020 meeting of the Committee when Adult Community Learning was last discussed.
- B. Update from Councillor Ray Gooding, Cabinet Member – Education, and Katherine Burns, Adult Community Learning Principal.
- C. Power Point presentation to be delivered at the meeting.

6. Further reading

Learning and Work Institute – Healthy, Wealthy and Wise: The impact of adult learning across the UK (October 2017)

[LWI - Healthy, Wealthy and Wise](#)

Minutes of the meeting of the People and Families Policy and Scrutiny Committee, held at 11am in Committee Room 1 County Hall, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH on Thursday, 13 February 2020

Minute 5 - Adult Community Learning – update

The Committee considered report PAF/05/20 providing an update on the Adult Community Learning service. Councillor Ray Gooding, Cabinet Member – Education and Katherine Burns, Adult Community Learning Principal, joined the meeting to introduce the item. During discussion the following were highlighted, acknowledged and/or noted:

- (I) ACL activity had a social investment value with savings to the wider health and social care system which was difficult to quantify;
- (II) A new national framework to measure outcomes was being developed to facilitate future benchmarking with six identified high-level outcomes – health and wellbeing, employment and skills, attitudes, aptitudes and confidence, integration and inclusion, creativity and culture and skills for life transitions;
- (III) There were nine ACL centres across the county. The last OFSTED inspection had asked the service to assess whether learners felt safe in their journeys to and from ACL centres. There could be greater use of libraries to host future activities;
- (IV) Approximately 130 outreach centres (such as schools) were also used for some family learning activities;
- (V) The ACL service were looking at how to further motivate those with low literacy skills to undertake courses;
- (VI) Members encouraged further communications exercises to highlight and promote ACL courses;
- (VII) Discounts were available for some courses for those on low incomes. However, it was acknowledged that course prices could adversely impact the broader outcomes being sought for ACL;
- (VIII) Family learning courses were open to any carer of children;
- (IX) At the moment the only quality assurance undertaken was via self-assessment against the OFSTED new education framework which was submitted once a year and subsequently used by OFSTED for their future inspections;
- (X) Future OFSTED inspections would assess against three components – the intent of the curriculum offering and the learner, secondly the implementation (where doing it and how much offering) and thirdly measuring the impact of the intent.

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Conclusion

The following actions were agreed:

1. Recommendation – Community Learning Team to further promote that grandparents could attend family learning courses.
2. A copy of the latest ACL self-assessment to be provided.
3. To consider a future visit to an ACL centre.
4. A further update to focus on the new OFSTED inspection framework and also the measurement of the impact against the national outcomes framework once it was established.