

Communities Committee

Item No.

Report title:	Norfolk Community Learning Services: Update on Progress
Date of meeting:	15 November 2017
Responsible Chief Officer:	Tom McCabe - Executive Director, Community and Environmental Services
Strategic impact <p>This report provides Communities Committee with the latest information on Norfolk Community Learning Services progress and, in particular, the two strategic objectives previously determined for 2016/17:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">To build on the recent Grade 2 ('Good') Ofsted judgement and work towards achieving a Grade 1 (Outstanding).To continue to meet NCC priorities for the people, communities and businesses of Norfolk. <p>In addition to these two objectives NCLS has updated its strategic priorities for 2018-2021 following endorsement by the NCLS Steering Group in October 2017:</p> <p>NCLS vision and strategic goals are fully aligned with those of NCC. Positioned within the new Community, Information and Learning team in the Community and Environmental Services), we contribute to making communities stronger and more resilient, and to supporting individuals make the most of opportunities to live healthy, resilient, happy and independent lives.</p> <p>Our position within Community, Information and Learning has further enhanced the provision of information, advice and guidance that individuals need to access our services.</p>	

Executive summary

<p>The 2016/17 Self-Assessment Report was endorsed by the Steering Group in October 2017. Progress towards further improvement and meeting the strategic priorities of Norfolk County Council, the Skills Funding Agency and Ofsted is detailed in this report. Highlights include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Significant improvements in Education and Training (nationally accredited qualifications) which were up 7.5% on the previous academic year• A 10% increase in achievement of those attending Community Learning courses, compared with the previous year• 41% of Education and Training learners came from the 30% most deprived areas of Norfolk• There was a 5.6% increase in teaching quality being assessed as "Good" , combined with a 3% decrease in "Requires Improvement" – this now gives us over 97% of teaching being observed as Good or Outstanding.• 89.1% learner satisfaction rate, which compares well with the national learner satisfaction rate of 88%. In order to continue the improvement journey, NCLS is also strengthening the senior management team and proposing to implement a structure which will enable it to function well and become financially self sufficient within the next

two years. These proposals were outlined in October Communities Committee papers and are currently out to consultation with NCC staff.

Recommendations:

Communities Committee is recommended to:

Note and comment on the improvement to date; and

To agree the continued development of NCLS as Norfolk's provider of a balanced lifelong learning offer for all the community through: first steps learning; 'second chance' learning; employment skills development; community resilience; and informal leisure learning.

1. Proposal

1.1. Update on progress – for members to note the updates

2. Evidence

2.1. Significant progress has been made in a number of areas of academic performance in comparison to the previous academic year. The following section provides details on a number of key areas.

2.2. Update on 2016/17 academic performance

Number of enrolments:

Type of Programme	Number 2015/16	Number 2016/17
Apprenticeships	267	248
Education and Training (Funded)	2,831	4,254
Community Learning	9,052	6,733
*LeisureStream	913	1,521
TOTAL	13,071	12,756

*LeisureStream programmes are not subject to Ofsted or Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) requirements.

- **Community Learning progression route rationale:**

- Change in the shape of the curriculum design to focus on first steps engagement of hardest to reach residents onto short courses and progressing towards enrolment on Education and Training (qualification) courses
- Increase in LeisureStream which is fully self-financed – reducing multiple enrolments on Community Learning-funded courses following a rebalance of the curriculum offer for non-accredited courses towards self-funding for informal learning or hobby subjects.

- **Apprenticeships:**

- Slight drop due to implementation by the Government of the Levy from May 2017 and also national 'hold' on funding for non-levy apprenticeships by the Education and Skills Funding Agency for small and medium size employers (currently out to tender). Nationally this resulted in a 61% drop in take up of apprenticeships due to low take up by large employers so our drop is far less significant and since then we are seeing a steady increase in take up in the new academic year.
- **Qualification Programmes (Education and Training):**
 - Significant increase in enrolments – we are retaining more of our learners and achieving more qualifications with them. Also we are focusing more on progressing community learning learners into qualification and accredited courses to enable the pipeline to real jobs and independence.
- **LeisureStream:**
 - Significant increase in take up and income generation through this self-financed programme of learning. Very popular with learners who don't wish to go down the qualification route. Reduces social isolation and enables learners to develop their own personal goals including improved health.

2.3. Significant improvements were made across all areas of learner achievement

Type of Provision	2014/15 %	2015/16 %	2016/17 %	% Change	Comparison 2016/17 outturn with 2015/16 National Rate % difference*
Education & Training	78.9	73.8	81.3	+7.5	-1.2
Community Learning	94.2	86.7	96.7	+10	+11.8
Apprenticeships	61.9	61.9	72.2	+10.3	-1.8

**2016/17 national rates will not be available until spring 2018, so we can only make comparisons with the previous academic year's national rates.*

Education & Training (nationally accredited qualifications):

Achievement increased by 7.5% in comparison with the previous academic year and is now just 1.2% below the previous year's national rate. However, Ofsted do not make direct comparison with overall national rates as the characteristics of our learners will be significantly different to other providers.

44% of our learners on qualification programmes declared a difficulty, disability or health problem and were well supported to achieve 1% above the achievement rate of other learners. 41% of Education and Training learners came from the 30% most deprived areas of Norfolk, which demonstrates we are reaching our target audiences.

Community Learning (non-accredited bespoke courses):

There was a 10% increase in achievement between 2015/16 and 2016/17. This is

attributed to improved recording of learner progress and outcomes, as well as a focus on shorter provision and progressing learners onto further learning in a more robust manner.

Apprenticeships:

2016/17 framework achievement increased by 10% in comparison with the 2015/16 academic year. It would have been above the 2015/16 national rate however we have removed the data of 'old' apprentices from previous years, who will not complete/achieve, so that we have a clear baseline for performance in future years.

2.4. Quality of teaching and learning remains "Good" and is improving

In the academic year 2016/17, approximately 200 tutors taught for NCLS. The majority of tutors were formally observed and their sessions graded, resulting in an observation grade profile for 2016/17 of:

- Outstanding: 12.84% (-2.02% from 2015/16)
- Good: 84.46% (+5.60% from 2015/16)
- Requires Improvement: 2.70% (-3.01% from 2015/16)
- Inadequate: 0% (-0.57% from 2015/16)

Overall, compared to 2015/16, the grade profile has improved slightly, consolidating around the 'Good' grade and we have observed teaching, learning and assessment that is a more consistent and robust 'Good' than in the previous academic year.

We believe that the slight decrease in 'Outstanding' grade observations was due to the prioritisation of new tutors and tutors with higher support requirements (such as tutors with a previous "Requires Improvement" or "Inadequate" judgement in 2016/17.

2.5. High rates of learner satisfaction

Our learners' satisfaction with the service we provide was confirmed through the Skills Funding Agency FE Choices Learner Satisfaction Survey 2016/17, in which we scored an 89.1% learner satisfaction rate, which compares well with the national learner satisfaction rate of 88%.

Our learner satisfaction scores were well above those of the principal FE Colleges in Norfolk (College of West Anglia 69.3%; Great Yarmouth College 84.1%; Easton & Otley College 78.8%; and City College Norwich 79.9%).

3. Update on developments

3.1. Flexible learning through online courses

We started to deliver online (no classroom teaching) Maths and English functional skills in May 2017. This programme provides learning opportunities for learners who are unable to access classroom provision due to rural access issues and shift working patterns. This initiative took off rapidly with 73 learners completing an online functional skills test by July 2017. The rate of growth is continuing in the new academic year, where in the first half term September to October 2017 we already have 60 online Maths and English learners on programmes. There is considerable demand for this programme with further expressions of interest already amounting to

more than an additional 200 learners.

We continue to increase access to blended (combination of online and classroom learning) programmes in other types of programmes such as accountancy, health and social, classroom preparation and apprenticeships.

3.2. Launch of new Independent Living Skills programme for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Following a redesign of our Independent Living Skills programme, we currently have 62 learners (124 enrolments) on the new Independent Living Skills programme in 2017/18. We are delivering the new programme in Norwich, Great Yarmouth, Dereham, Cromer and (from January 2018) in King's Lynn. Our learners have requested digital skills as part of their programme so that they can access online services, such as benefits claims and support services. We have incorporated this into the programme. We are currently working with NCC and external partners such as Independence Matters and Involve as part of widening our partner base.

In addition the 'Match' employment programme, in partnership with Adult Social Care, continues to support people with learning difficulties, through brokering with employers, to find real and sustainable jobs. This strongly supports the Promoting Independence agenda within ASC.

3.3. Growth of Apprenticeships and 'Pre-Apprenticeships'

We are continuing to develop a close relationship with the NHS and other healthcare partnerships in Norfolk, for example, we are currently delivering to 80 Level 5 NHS Management and Leadership apprentices. The take up of our apprenticeships from levy-paying employers is steadily growing and we also aim to secure non-levy apprenticeship funding.

3.4. Traineeships

Traineeships are work-based programmes aimed at young adults not yet ready for apprenticeships. Barriers for young adults to getting on the career ladder are often a combination of relatively low qualifications coupled with limited 'work-ready' behaviours and attitudes valued by employers; thus traineeships can be an excellent pathway to overcoming these barriers and supporting 19- 24 year olds into a career, usually an apprenticeship. Working in collaboration with the NCC Apprenticeship Manager, NCLS, in partnership with a large hospitality employer, is developing a programme to deliver traineeships from January 2018 and 'progression' apprenticeships from May 2018.

3.5. The Joy of Food programme

Delivered in partnership with the Public Health team this reaches some of the most disadvantaged groups and gave 125 learners practical cooking skills to improve their cooking confidence and promote healthy eating. This programme enables NCLS to reach new groups of learners and support them to progress on to other learning and skills and potentially employment.

3.6. Programmes to support the unemployed into work

Continue to increase the take up of 'wrap around' employability courses by learners

who are unemployed and actively seeking work. NCLS is projected to deliver vocational skills qualifications and employment support programmes to 750 job seekers in the 2017/18 academic year.

3.7. Empowering Families through 'Family Learning'

Working in partnerships with schools, children's centres and community hubs to focus on the most vulnerable families NCLS delivered family learning to 1,935 learners in 2016/17. Benefits include developing of English, maths, IT and budgeting skills as well as enabling parents to support their child's preparation for school.

Our Family Learning team also made a significant contribution to Norfolk County Council's 'Count On Project' in summer 2017. This project focused on parental support for children with their maths and aimed to increase engagement at home and pupil attainment, particularly at Key Stage 2. We delivered family learning maths courses to 71 parents in the summer term 2017.

3.8. This term (2017/18 academic year) we are excited with a new development in East Norfolk, where we have already engaged with 6 primary schools who have taken up a new family learning programme that will be delivered throughout the academic year.

3.9. Parish Council Initiative

We are keen to further develop our offer in rural areas by working closely with Parish Councils to identify need and develop new, local programmes. For example, we have been working with Marshland St James Parish Council and, as a result, a survey (electronic and paper-based) has been distributed in the local community to identify what types of course local people would be interested in. After the first week of the survey, we already have 36 responses. We plan to establish a learning programme to start in February 2018.

3.10. ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages)

We are supporting the Council's 'People From Abroad' team, delivering intensive ESOL and Cultural Awareness programmes currently to 30 adult refugees in Norwich (funded in partnership with the Home Office).

3.11. Digital Skills Inclusion

The Department for Education (DfE) has made a policy commitment to make basic digital skills training free for any adult digitally excluded due a lack of core competencies. This policy has the potential to totally transform what NCLS can do for the council in equipping learners with the everyday skills they need for a self-reliant and happy life.

Over 10 million adults in England lack the basic digital skills. In Norfolk (See Table A, Appendix 1) there is a strong correlation between levels of digital exclusion and levels of poverty, poor health and lower qualifications. This linkage calls for an integrated approach to not only enabling residents to acquire digital skills but also having continued access to online facilities so that those skills are not lost through a lack of 'real-life' application. NCLS is well positioned to meet the all-round learning needs of the resident (e.g. the importance of reading is critical here) and already provides the following programmes in partnership with the voluntary sector and DWP as well as standard published courses:

- Bespoke programmes for digitally excluded
- Leisure Stream activities
- Creative and digital media
- Family Learning
- Online Safety
- Get Online
- Discrete digital skills for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- Health self-management and signposting
- Basic and intermediate IT Skills
- Digital skills for finding work or a better job
- Employer responsiveness - Digital skills for increasing productivity in the workplace such as 'Bite Size' workshops covering spreadsheets or social media marketing

During the 2016/17 academic year 731 learners completed first steps digital programmes with NCLS:

- Bespoke Community Learning programmes (Get Digital):320
- ICT Functional Skills Qualifications Skills:138
- ICT Functional Skills Qualifications for work in partnership with DWP (Pathways to Employment):273

The DfE is committed to providing a digital entitlement which means that people over the age of 19 who lack basic digital skills will be entitled to free ICT qualifications that support them to operate effectively in day-to-day life.

The funding will be provided via the Adult Education Budget although thus far DfE have not committed to providing additional funding to providers. A welcome development is that the DfE is reviewing how the provision of planned free basic digital courses for those who need it will be implemented. As the joint national lead for ICT policy for adult learning and skills providers the Head of NCLS will be meeting DfE officials in London on 7 November to support the review and development of the digital skills offer. In addition DfE have agreed, in principle, to visit NCLS to better understand the digital needs of learners and the community.

Community, Information and Learning has been commissioned by the Digital Innovation and Efficiency Committee to create a digital inclusion strategy and the work of NCLS will be a key part of this, alongside the Library offer.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. NCLS continues to ensure the efficient delivery of its core funded programme, whilst also looking to maximise any opportunities for revenue generating courses such as apprenticeships and LeisureStream courses.

5. Issues, risks and innovation

- 5.1. None

6. Background

- 6.1 Norfolk Community Learning Services (NCLS) is part of Norfolk County Council and provides apprenticeships and adult learning programmes. Most of the provision is adult learning programmes, which include family learning, community learning and work-based learning, including a growing apprenticeship programme at all levels for 16-18 and 19+ learners. The programmes are delivered at NCLS' main base in Norwich and in a wide range of large and small venues across the county.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper or want to see copies of any assessments, eg equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

Officer name : Ilgun Yusuf

Tel No. : 01603 306540

Email address : ilgun.yusuf@norfolk.gov.uk



If you need this report in large print, audio, braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.

Table A: Digital Exclusion Heatmap for Norfolk - 2017 (Source: Go ON UK)*

	King's Lynn & West Norfolk	North Norfolk	South Norfolk	Great Yarmouth	Norwich
Likelihood of overall exclusion	High	High	High	High	Medium
OFFLINE – Percentage of adults not been online within the last 3 months	10.2 %	10.2 %	10.2 %	11.4%	11.4%
BASIC DIGITAL SKILLS – Have all five Basic Digital Skills	75 %	75 %	75%	76%	79%
BASIC DIGITAL SKILLS USED – Adults have used all five Basic Digital Skills in the last three months	44 %	44 %	44%	42%	42%
Social Indicator (metrics)					
AGE – Adults over 65	25.3 %	32.1 %	25.3 %	23.6%	14.7%
EDUCATION - Adults with no qualifications and/or no Level 1 qualifications	43.80 %	41.60 %	43.8 %	48.50%	35.40%
INCOME – Average income per taxpayer	£20, 200	£18, 800	£20, 200	£18,700	£20,300
HEALTH - Adults who have long-term illness or disability	21.3%	23.3%	21.3 %	22.5%	18.4%