

# Communities Committee

Item No.

<b>Report title:</b>	<b>Norfolk Community Learning Services: Update on Progress</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>29 June 2016</b>
<b>Responsible Chief Officer:</b>	<b>Tom McCabe, Executive Director of Community and Environmental Services</b>
<b>Strategic impact</b> This report provides Communities Committee with the latest information on service improvements and in particular two strategic objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To build on the recent Grade 2 ('Good') Ofsted judgement and achieve a Grade 1 (Outstanding) service by July 2018</li><li>• To implement a new vision and operating model for the service from September 2016 onwards which will:-<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Increase the range of NCLS services on offer to all Norfolk residents</li><li>▪ Increase the accessibility of NCLS services for all Norfolk residents</li><li>▪ Continue to improve the quality of NCLS services</li></ul></li></ul>	

## Executive summary

Following the recent Ofsted inspection where the services offered by NCLS were rated as 'Good', NCLS managers have set out their plans to improve further and to reach a Grade 1 (Outstanding) rating by July 2018. To achieve this will require the current restructure to be fully implemented by August 1<sup>st</sup> this year and also the Quality Improvement Plan will need to include all the recommendations from Ofsted as well as the further on-going improvements identified by service senior managers. Progress towards these outcomes is detailed in this report.

### Recommendation

Communities Committee is recommended to approve the further improvement and development of NCLS as Norfolk's 'second chance' learning provider through:

- **Completing all post Ofsted actions as set out in the service's current Quality Improvement Plan**
- **Fully implementing the new structure and operating model for the service**
- **On-going monitoring of achievement of targets including increasing numbers of learners from disadvantaged communities, achieving income targets for full cost ('Leisurestream') provision and increasing the number and quality of apprenticeships across Norfolk.**

## 1. Proposal

1.1. The aim of the Strategy for NCLS is to:

- I. Align Norfolk Community Learning Services more effectively with the priorities of Norfolk County Council:
  - a. Excellence in Education
  - b. Real Jobs

- c. Good infrastructure
  - d. Supporting Vulnerable People
- II. Position the service in the best possible place to respond to the direction of travel for central government grant funding, in particular as a provider that specialises in the delivery of apprenticeships and second chance learning. This will also enable the service to attract further discretionary funding, for example, from European Social Funds.
- III. Build resilience in the service that will enable it to survive in an era of austerity.
- IV. Recognising the significant investment made by the Council so far, provide a return on this investment (ROI) for the Council with the service providing important parts of the following corporate outcomes for example:
- a. Children's Services Early Help offer
  - b. Adult Social Care preventative strategy
  - c. Local Enterprise Partnership economic priorities
  - d. Devolution bid

## 1.2. **Post Ofsted Action Plan**

- 1.2.1 The service's Quality Improvement Plan now includes all the actions recommended by Ofsted. These are highlighted in the document presented at Appendix 1. It is fair to say that all these points had already been raised by service managers as areas to be addressed by the service and it was possible during the inspection week to evidence to inspectors, with confidence and conviction, that this was the case. This helped the service achieve its Grade 2.
- 1.2.2 The areas for the service to now turn its attention to, whilst ensuring that all other areas remain strong are:
- Deal quickly with the few weaknesses remaining from the previous inspection, such as the poor quality of written feedback to some learners
  - Ensure that teachers have the skills, confidence and resources to help learners further their understanding of equality, diversity and British values
  - Ensure that all teachers:
    - ✓ provide detailed written feedback to learners on how they can improve
    - ✓ use the results of assessments of learners' starting points well to plan learning
    - ✓ increase the rigour and effectiveness with which they set targets for learners, particularly to challenge them to achieve their full potential.

## 1.3. **Summary of vision**

- 1.3.1 The new vision and operating model for the service has previously been endorsed by Communities Committee and comprises a series of learning opportunities for individuals in Norfolk with the option to join at a point appropriate to individual prior experience and achievement. Students are able to progress and advance through levels of learning starting at community engagement level and, depending on individual ambition and aspirations, be

assisted through to higher level vocational qualifications and onto programmes delivered by partners including colleges and universities. At every point in their learning 'journey', learners are offered support to make the best of the 'second chance' opportunities that the service offers.

- 1.3.2 The service is currently doing moderately well in terms of addressing the learning needs of residents who require a 'second chance' to learn a new skill or advance their personal or career development. The following table shows the levels of socio-economic need of our learners from the year 2014/15 (last full year available). The aim of the service will be to increase both the numbers and proportions of learners from disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Targets for this will be set for 2016/17 by the new Head of Service once he takes up his post.

<b>IMD 2015 (Norfolk)</b>	<b>Learners</b>	<b>% Total Learners</b>
0-10% Most Deprived	868	14%
10-20% Most Deprived	646	10%
20-30% Most Deprived	561	9%
30-70% Most Deprived	2182	34%
30% Least Deprived	2156	34%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6413</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 1.3.3 There is a commitment to expand and broaden the NCLS 'offer' across the whole of Norfolk. Currently Wensum Lodge provides a base for a wide range of courses across the city of Norwich and surrounding areas. In the future there will be an expectation that provision will be further developed in other parts of Norfolk with an emphasis on partnering with community groups, the voluntary sector and other parts of the Council and its partner organisations. New locality-based Programme Managers will be allocated areas of Norfolk with a remit to develop the provision according to need and in consultation with the local communities and agencies working in these areas such as Libraries, Childrens Centres, Children's Early Help Teams and Adult Social Care teams.
- 1.3.4 At Appendix 2 is a summary of the recent developments in each of the localities. Throughout the next academic year (August 2016 to July 2017) the Programme Managers allocated to particular localities will build on these developments and construct an offer that meets local needs as articulated by members of the community themselves. The plan is to keep elected Members fully informed of these developments and to celebrate local successes as they occur.

## **1.4 The 'full cost', 'Leisurestream' offer**

- 1.4.1 The aim of Leisurestream provision is to ensure that there continues to be 'leisure and pleasure' courses on offer which meet the need for extended social learning in a range of disciplines, mainly arts and crafts and language courses. There is a clear need and demand for these courses with learners continuing to meet and learn together for many years (in some cases up to 15 years and still continuing). Through the engagement with learners that has taken place in the development of the new Vision, learners on these courses have made it very clear that they wish the service to continue to offer this provision and it is also clear to service managers that there is a market for the specialist teaching and skills development that falls within this area of the service's offer.
- 1.4.2 These courses do not however fit with central government and local priorities to up-skill the Norfolk workforce and improve the local economy including bringing reluctant and unconfident learners back into active learning and out of welfare benefit. This is the unique role of Norfolk Community Learning Services. There are currently 450 learners accessing the Leisurestream provision and the total fee income projected for the academic year (January 2016 to July 2016) is £112,000. Targets will be set for 2016/17 by the new Head of Service once he takes up his post.
- 1.4.3 The Wensum Lodge site is currently a hub of activity for the service and the central administrative base. There is potential for the site to become a vibrant artisan centre focused on craft skills and providing incubator units for small business set-ups and support. Recently, Norfolk Arts Forum received a presentation from NCLS managers outlining how this may be achieved and the benefits that might be realised.

## **1.5 Apprenticeships**

- 1.5.1 In the recent inspection, Ofsted praised NCLS both for its rapid expansion of apprenticeship numbers and the continued high quality of delivery. They commented that *'Apprentices make a valued contribution to their employers' business and have a positive attitude to work.'*
- 1.5.2 The service is working with corporate colleagues to plan for the introduction of the Apprenticeship levy from April 2017 when all large organisations including Local Councils will be required to pay the levy and encouraged to use this levy for the expansion of apprenticeships within their geographic area.
- 1.5.3 This will be an opportunity for Norfolk County Council to demonstrate its local leadership and commitment to the Government's apprenticeship programme and significantly expand the number of young people and adults accessing apprenticeships across a broad range of vocational areas and achievement levels that are now available. Decisions on how NCC will respond to this opportunity are currently pending. Here is the link to government information about the apprenticeship levy.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work>

## **1.6 Publicity and marketing**

- 1.6.1 To promote the new vision and operating model, a full re-branding of the service has taken place followed by an intensive publicity and marketing campaign. This has included:

- Articles in the local press (EDP)
- Articles in NCC staff and management newsletters
- Ten minute interview on Mustard TV by the Communities Committee Chairman and Interim Head of Service
- New-look service prospectus for 2016/17 (copies available at the Committee)
- New-look locality-based course listings (copies available at the Committee)
- Two week Taster courses at Wensum Lodge (460 new learners)
- Two week Taster courses at County Hall
- NCLS Learning bus touring around the county for two weeks. (Schedule of bus visits included at Appendix 3)

## 2. Evidence

Appendix 1 is the current service Quality Improvement Plan.

Appendix 2 is a summary of the most recent developments in different localities across Norfolk.

Appendix 3 is the schedule for the learning bus.

Link to guidance on the Apprenticeship levy.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work>

## 3. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

### 3.1 The Skills funding agency allocations for 2016/17 are as follows:

	<b>2016/17</b>
Adult Skills	893,928
24+ Advance learning	371,332
16-18 Apprenticeships	27,196
Community learning	552,885
Discretionary learner support	15,874
24+ advance learner bursary	9,973
Adult education Block Grant	2,279,357
Adult Apprenticeships	105,249
16 to 18 Apprenticeships	50,677
Advance learner	130,751
Advance learner bursary	29,919
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	4,467,141

### 3.2 In order to continue to offer 'leisure stream courses for continuing social learning groups and at the same time increase the funds generated by the service, the new operating model describes this offer as 'full cost'. The aim of this offer is to ensure that charges for these courses:

- Will fully cover the cost of delivery so that they do not require any grant funding and will be based on the assumption that:
- The operating model is sustainable;

- The pricing structure we enable a subsidy to those learners on means-tested benefits who wish to take part in these types of courses (In 2014/15, 43% of learners who joined 19+ classroom-based qualification programmes were resident in the 30% most deprived LSOAs)
- That there will be sufficient funding, that can be used by the service to offer additional opportunities to 'hard to reach' learners
- Generate funds that can be used by those who require additional learning support whilst on their learning programmes with NCLS. In 2014/15, 18% of learners with NCLS had stated additional learning needs e.g. dyslexia, mental health difficulties etc.

## **4. Issues, risks and innovation**

### **4.1 Risks**

Recent changes in national funding arrangements means that the service may face competition from other providers for first step learners. To mitigate this risk the positive Ofsted grade and continued strong partnership working will position the service as the second chance provider of choice in the county.

## **5. Background**

### **5.1 Ofsted Inspection and Monitoring Reports –**

<http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/53545>

Previous Committee Report and Vision document –

<http://norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com/norfolkcc/Meetings/tabid/70/ctl/ViewMeetingPublic/mid/397/Meeting/372/Committee/12/Default.aspx>

## **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:

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