

Item 10.

**ADULT & COMMUNITY LEARNING
IN SURREY HEATH**

Surrey County Council's Local Committee in Surrey Heath

18th March 2004

KEY ISSUE:

To present to the Local Committee in Surrey Heath an annual report on Adult and Community Learning in the area for 2002/03 and to offer the Committee an opportunity to influence the Three Year Development Plan for Adult Learning (2004/5 to 2006/7) and the review of the "mission" for Adult and Community Learning.

SUMMARY:

This report sets out the current context for adult and community learning together with a summary of current provision in the Surrey Heath area. It seeks the input of the local committee on the future direction of the service.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Surrey Heath Local Committee

- (i) Consider and comment on the annual report for 2002/3.
- (ii) offer comment on the overall objectives for the service, and on priorities for adult and community learning in Surrey Heath for the next three years, and how they could be addressed.

BACKGROUND TO THE SERVICE IN SURREY HEATH

1. Adult and Community Learning (ACL) attracts 33,000 learners and 68,000 enrolments annually to a programme of recreational learning which is delivered through a network of 16 centres and over 200 community locations across 9 of the 11 Boroughs/Districts in Surrey. A programme is provided in Tandridge and Reigate & Banstead by East Surrey College under a contract with Surrey County Council.
2. In April 2001, the Learning & Skills Council (LSC) assumed responsibility for all post-16 further education. This includes all sixth form provision, Further Education Colleges and work-based learning as well as adult and community learning. Local education authorities (LEAs) lost the duty to provide adult learning to the LSC but retain the power to secure provision.

3. The transfer of the legal duty for ACL from LEAs included the financial resources that were allocated by the County Council for Adult and Community Learning. From April 2001, the service has been funded by a grant based on the annual Adult Learning Plan submitted to the LSC.

Funding

4. For 2003/4, ACL expenditure countywide will be £7million. This is funded by £3.5m from learner fees and other income, and £3.5m in LSC grant. Surrey County Council provides no direct funding for ACL. As the grant is based on activity in 1998/9, providing improved quality and new programmes within the available budget is challenging.
5. The Secretary of State guaranteed the level of funding until August 2003. The LSC wished to move to a funding methodology based on learner numbers, but research and consultation revealed such significant disparity in costs, income and level of provision between LEAs that grant funding was extended for 2003/4, and the LSC has recently notified the County Council that these difficulties have not been overcome for 2004/5. We therefore expect to receive a grant for 2004/5 based on the current grant uprated by 2.8% for inflation. In addition, nearly £600,000 has been offered to improve the condition of, and access to, ACL buildings.
6. ACL has benefited since April 2001 from additional resources made available by the LSC to achieve specific objectives. In 2003/4, specific grants have been received for a new Management Information System, additional family learning (£240,000) and learning for people from minority ethnic backgrounds (£50,000).

Scope of provision

7. Surrey's ACL provides recreational learning, which learners choose to undertake courses for a wide range of reasons, including a step towards more formal study, a desire to develop a new skill, to meet new friends or to maintain mental or physical fitness. In the last year, family and community learning activities have been expanded, engaging more people in learning and contributing to both the self-reliance and school improvement agendas.
8. 47% of ACL students are aged 50 years and over; 28% of our students are 60 years and over compared to 20.9% in the Surrey population generally. 17% of learners, though, are in the 30 – 39 age group. There are a disproportionate number of women (75% of enrolments). In the last year, learner numbers have increased by 3.22% and enrolments by 5.78%, and the number of men participating has increased by 9.21%. 45% of learners are in employment, and 34.7% are retired.
9. There is an extensive programme of learning for adults with learning disabilities and difficulties, and more support is being provided for learners with disabilities to enable them to access our programmes (150 learners in 2002/3).
10. Learners express high levels of satisfaction with the provision. 96% of learners gave an excellent or good rating for the content of their course, a 95% rating for the overall effectiveness of their learning and 96% for quality of teaching. 99% of

learners said they had gained at the two highest levels (of five) from their course. Learners express lower levels of satisfaction for the accommodation used at 66%, reflecting the age and condition of the ACL property portfolio.

11. ACL works closely in partnership with the Colleges of Further Education, which provide basic skills courses and accredited and vocational learning for adults in our Adult Learning Centres. Students regularly progress from ACL to college courses as they seek to improve their vocational opportunities. Similar partnership arrangements are maintained with the University of Surrey.
12. A rigorous quality regime has been introduced that has required the development of a Quality Assurance Framework and annual self-assessment. An inspection by the Adult Learning Inspection is expected within the next two years.

ADULT & COMMUNITY LEARNING IN SURREY HEATH

13. Surrey Heath has 1 ACL centre (Camberley Centre) from which the course programme is planned for the surrounding area and courses are delivered in dedicated teaching rooms. Enrolments are also taken at Kings International and Tomlinscote schools.
14. Courses are also provided at other locations to allow local community access at: Camberley Library; Camberley Infants and Hillside Resource Centre; Connaught School (Bagshot); in Chobham at Chobham Village Hall, Chobham Church Hall, St Lawrence school, and Valley End Hall; in Frimley at Tomlinscote School, St Augustine's school, and Tomlinscote Sports Centre; Heatherside Community Centre; in the Old Dean area at Collingwood College and St Martins Church Hall; and at Kings International School and Watchetts Junior school.
15. Learner enrolments for the academic year 2001/2 compared to 2002/3 were:

Centre	Learners	Learners	%	Enrolments	Enrolments	%
	2001/2	2002/3	change	2001/2	2002/3	change
Surrey Heath	3269	3868	15.5%	6876	8141	15.5%
Surrey*	26669	27490	3.0%	54295	57408	5.4%

NB – excludes East Surrey College courses

16. Particular subjects that are attracting interest are Bricklaying, Plumbing and Building, Pilates, Bellydancing and Flying Model Aircraft. Computing for the Retired is proving very popular with many learners progressing to different levels of IT learning after each course.

17. ACL always looks to deliver new subjects in addition to those that have proved popular in the past. New for 2003/4 were Bellringing (in co-operation with St. Michael's Church, Seasonal Flower Arranging (Chobham Village Hall) and You & Your Garden.

18. Students often travel some distance to join a course. The figures above do not represent the number of Surrey Heath residents undertaking ACL courses. An

analysis of postcodes shows the number of Surrey Heath residents and their enrolments, who undertook courses at an ACL centre in Surrey. In many cases, the postcode covers more than the Surrey Heath area.

Postcode	Residents	Residents	%	Enrolments	Enrolments	%
	2001/2	2002/3	change	2001/2	2002/3	change
GU15	998	1092	9.41%	2168	2494	15.0%
GU16	581	597	2.75%	1161	1210	4.2%
GU18	179	198	10.6%	357	413	15.6%
GU19	118	118	0%	251	283	12.7%
GU20	91	97	6.5%	171	254	48.5%
GU24	437	472	8.0%	921	1026	11.4%
GU25	123	115	6.6%	261	280	7.2%
Total	2527	2689	6.4%	5290	5960	12.66%

13.13% of Surrey Heath's 20,482 adult residents (19+) undertook an ACL course in 2002/3.

ADULT & COMMUNITY LEARNING ISSUES IN SURREY HEATH

Self-reliance

19. Learning is a significant factor in promoting self-reliance in individuals and communities. Projects are targeted at the areas of highest deprivation and the needs of specific communities. Learning to support self-reliance responds directly to the needs of communities and individuals within those communities by offering free or reduced cost learning outside main ACL centres and also by offering types of learning that the community has specifically requested. Three Widening Participation Co-ordinators have been appointed in ACL covering Mid, North West and South West, specifically to establish community learning projects targeting the areas of Surrey most in need. As these are new appointments the level of activity to date has been low as the Widening Participation Co-ordinators have been identifying the most appropriate way to meet needs before putting together activities.
20. In St Michael's during 2004 there have been a DIY and a Healthy Eating course and Relaxation/Yoga is planned for March/April 2004. In total 36 learners will be targeted.
21. Practical Skills Day and Cooking on a Budget will be delivered after April 2004 at Camberley Centre (it has the specialist facilities) with learners targeted from Surrey Heath areas of greatest need.

Family Learning

22. Using the additional funding provided by the Learning and Skills Council, significant development is taking place to enhance the delivery of family learning opportunities which contribute to the raising of achievement by children and widening participation by adults in learning, particularly literacy and numeracy. The programme of activity includes:
 - Publishing a strategy for family learning, linked to other key strategies including the Education Development Plan, Early Years, Parenting strategy

- Innovative family learning delivery programmes based in the community and using resources such as museums, Youth Development Outdoor Centres, and the Surrey History Service
- Expanding the number of schools offering family learning opportunities.
- Developing a new curriculum, resources, evaluation and accreditation

23. In Surrey Heath, Collingwood College has family learning activities planned for the 2003/04 academic year.

Access to learning

24. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 now applies to education establishments and services; by September 2005, we need to ensure that buildings offer no barriers to participation in our programme. Many of ACL's dedicated buildings have significant access deficiencies, which, despite additional funding from the Learning and Skills Council and the County Council, may not be overcome by September 2005.

25. Improving access is a significant issue for ACL, and emphasises the importance of the discussions with secondary schools and other possible partners about alternative locations, although it is challenging in most communities to secure space for daytime classes, and specialist facilities needed for subjects like art.

26. The Camberley Centre has ground floor accessibility to teaching rooms and all learners can be catered for within either the main Centre or satellite venues.

THREE YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND MISSION REVIEW

27. The requirement for an annual Adult Learning Plan has been replaced by a three year development plan, for the academic years 2004/5 to 2006/7. The Plan is due for submission to the Surrey LSC by April 2004. This changed requirement is a key strategy within 'Success for All', the Department for Education & Skills' plan to improve the quality and responsiveness of the post-16 Learning sector.

28. Three-year plans are required from other providers of Learning, and are linked to three year funding and agreed targets; Adult & Community Learning is encouraged to develop a three-year plan but will not have access to three-year funding arrangements until 2005/6. ACL three year plans support the Strategic Area Reviews being carried out by local Learning and Skills Councils, which are intended to analyse provision in their areas and develop plans which match the need of learners, employers and local communities. The role ACL can play in widening participation in learning, advancing social inclusion and supporting community regeneration is valued by the LSC, and needs to be evidenced in the ACL plan.

29. We are required to develop the plan through discussions with stakeholders and partners, including Local Committees.

30. The Adult Learning Plan is required to address the Learning and Skills Council's priorities for 2003/4:

- improving basic skills, and enabling more adults to gain qualifications at level 2

- widening participation in learning to those who do not traditionally participate in education and training
- increasing family learning provision, especially family literacy and numeracy
- contributing to neighbourhood renewal through learning

Key objectives

31. The proposed key objectives for Adult and Community Learning for the next three years will be to:

- Attract new learners, especially learners aged 20 – 50, and particularly men; learners from minority ethnic backgrounds; and learners who are from “hard to reach” groups
- Develop the curriculum to ensure that it meets learners’ needs, identified through market research; achieves income targets; and contributes to local priorities
- Expand programmes of family learning and family literacy and numeracy, working in partnership with schools and Colleges, building capacity and enhancing quality
- Develop new learning and enhance current provision to contribute to self-reliance, targeting learners with lower level skills, and providing progression routes with our partners
- Develop capacity and innovative provision which contributes to targets for Basic Skills and level 2 qualifications
- Examine other models for governance and delivering provision to ensure viability and stability of the service

32. In addition, the Plan sets improvement targets for:

- Quality management
- Health and safety
- Staff development
- Management information
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Service mission

33. The current mission statement for Adult and Community Learning is to: Deliver quality recreational learning for the residents of Surrey at convenient locations and times, at reasonable cost to the learner and in subjects that reflect demand.

34. This statement no longer fully reflects the role of the service. As part of the Strategic Area Review, Surrey Learning and Skills Council has asked all providers of learning to reconsider their missions, consulting with stakeholders and partners. While the core “business” of Adult and Community Learning remains the programme of recreational learning, the service’s key activities now include:

- First-step learning
- Family learning
- Learning for people with disabilities
- Engaging reluctant and unconfident learners

35. ACL also makes a significant contribution to the planning of learning for adults across Surrey, and to self-reliance and other key County Council targets and policies.

CONSULTATION

36. Adult and Community Learning was discussed with the Standing Citizens Panel for Surrey Heath in December 2003.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

37. None

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

38. As noted in paragraphs 19 - 21.

CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

39. None

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

40. As noted in Access to learning paragraphs 9 and 24.

CONCLUSION

41. The views of Members of the Local Committee on both the strategic objectives for Adult and Community Learning and its overall purpose and mission are sought.

LEAD/CONTACT OFFICER: Judith Dey, Area Manager, Adult & Community Learning, NW Surrey

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 01932 794181

BACKGROUND PAPERS: Adult & Community Learning Plan 2002 Local Education Authority Learning Plan 2003/4 (published by the Learning & Skills Council)