



Education and Skills Board  
September 2016

**The Community Learning and Skills Service 2015-16 performance**

**Purpose of the report:**

Provide an opportunity for scrutiny of the Community Learning and Skills performance for the 2015-16 academic year. The report will also set out the direction of travel for the Service, the national policy considerations, and the opportunities and threats facing the Service.

**1.0 Introduction:**

- 1.1 The Community Learning and Skills Service (CLS) is funded by a Skills Funding Agency (SFA) contract. The SFA provides a framework on how funding can be used, and the Service interprets this policy guidance in the context of County Council priorities. The Service is also required to meet the requirements of Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework.

**2.0 Background:**

- 2.1 CLS has maintained the delivery of a balanced programme of targeted courses and a broad universal Community Learning offer via the seven dedicated adult learning centres and 115 community Venues in North and South West Surrey. These non-accredited courses enable learners to develop a wide range of skills in areas such as Arts and Crafts, Modern Foreign Languages, English as a Foreign Language, Healthy Living, IT and Humanities.
- 2.2 There are three teams focused on delivering targeted Community Learning - one to meet the learning needs of adults with disabilities and learning difficulties; a second that delivers a Family Learning programme; and the third works in the areas of relative disadvantage providing Outreach learning opportunities to adults least likely to participate, including learners on low incomes or low skills.
- 2.3 East Surrey College holds a direct contract with the SFA for Community Learning in the eastern third of the county. An exception is for Family Learning

where CLS is contracted to deliver to priority families across the whole of the county.

- 2.4 CLS also delivers an increasingly important programme of classroom-based adult skills courses, predominantly English and maths, independent living skills for adults with learning difficulties, and a smaller programme of ESOL.

### **3.0 Profile of the Service:**

- 3.1 There are a set of important indicators that highlight the strength of the Service performance in the 2015-16 academic year: an Ofsted inspection, a Matrix assessment, growth in learner numbers, and key data comparisons with sector norms.

#### **Ofsted**

The Service was inspected by Ofsted in May 2016. The report states that “Surrey County Council Adult Learning continues to provide a good service for the county and offers a wide variety of good-quality educational experiences. Provision for learners with specific learning needs is particularly good.” The report captures the continuous improvement that has been achieved since the last inspection in December 2010. You will find a copy of the report attached.

The report concludes with the inspection teams proposed next steps for the Service. It reads:

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- adequate wi-fi cover is available at all venues and they further develop the virtual learning environment
- they explore provision for apprenticeships and for those learners with mental health issues
- tutors check learners’ understanding in classes.

#### **Matrix Standards**

An assessment by **matrix** to test the effectiveness of the information, advice and guidance (IAG) provided by the Service to those who make enquiries about learning, as well as learners both at initial assessment at the start of their course and again at the end of their course, was conducted in February 2016. The assessment report (attached) states that “this Initial Assessment showcased an organisation that is passionate about making a difference to each and every learner. IAG practices are entrenched in principles of impartiality, empowerment and enabling social inclusion and motivation. Importantly IAG is well understood by all staff and valued as a golden thread embedded within the SAL learner journey. Managers and delivery staff inspire, raise aspirations and are firmly focused upon playing their part in contributing to wider Council priorities of wellbeing, sustaining economic prosperity and providing a responsive value for money resident experience.”

#### **Learner numbers**

The number of adults supported on the programme continues to remain strong. The Service’s community learner numbers grew by 7.4% in 2015-16 and 11.5% in the previous year. During the last 8 years period the CL funding has been maintained in cash terms. The number of learners on the programme that receives no government subsidy continues to rise, while those on the Adult Skills Budget have been maintained on a falling budget allocation. In total there were 11,424 adults generating 21,705 enrolments.

## Income

3.2 In line with SFA policy guidance it has also grown its fee income. Both the Universal Community Learning and Full Cost programmes have contributed to sustaining the Service through income growth. The Service generated a 7.2% growth in fee income to £1,799,000.

## Finances

3.3 Table B. summarises the planned funding, income, and expenditure for the 2015-16 financial year. The Service makes a substantive, £856,000, contribution to SCC overheads after the payment of direct costs.

<b>Table B</b>			
<b>Income</b>	<b>£,000</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>£,000</b>
SFA Contract	2,624	Staffing	3,124
Fee Income	1,799	Other Operating Costs	532
Other Income	89	Contribution to SCC Overheads	856
Total	4,512		4,512

## 4.0 Quality Improvement:

A commitment to continuous improvement is embedded within the Service. The Ofsted report notes:

Leaders and managers have taken action to improve the quality of the provision and have moved the provision forward. The impact is clear:

- The proportion of good or better teaching has increased significantly.
- The identification and dissemination of good practice is now good with improved communication between teams and frequent meetings.
- Work is in progress to develop an effective and accessible virtual learning environment.
- Managers monitor learners' progress more effectively and there is good recording of learners' destinations.
- Tutors promote learners' understanding of equality and diversity much better.
- The use of data to manage the provision is much improved.

Achievement, retention, pass, and attendance rates at Service level continue to be good, and compare favourably to national benchmarks. More detailed analysis of this performance data will be undertaken at subject level and course level if required, as part of the management teams' considerations in completing their Self Assessment reports. Of particular note are the GCSE results which are again very positive, with all of those who sat the examination gaining a pass grade. Many of those who have achieved these good results have previously had poor educational experiences at school and college. Full year end reported performance details can found in the KPI dashboard attached.

#### 4.4 Safeguarding

4.4.1 The Service has a strong commitment to ensuring Safeguarding measures are robust. Managers ensure that learners and staff benefit from a safe and supportive environment. There is high level of engagement of staff with both Safeguarding and Prevent training. The latter was flagged as a potential challenge in the Service's previous report to the Education and Skills Board. Current details of engagement with the training are detailed in the table below:

<b>Completed an agreed form of Prevent training</b>	<b>%</b>
Permanent Staff	98.92
Tutors	99.58
SLAs, models, technicians, invigilators	91.56
Volunteers	85.0

4.4.2 The Service's Safeguarding Officer reports to the Safeguarding group once per term. There is a review of concerns raised and action taken. The Report is shared with relevant Cabinet members and Senior SCC management.

A summary of the Safeguarding activity for the year is attached.

#### **5.0 Opportunities and Threats:**

- 5.1 We have entered a period of uncertainty about future funding, being in the early period of a new government. The responsibility for Adult Learning has been transferred from DBIS to the DfE, and there are new ministers in place. The early signs are that the commitment to apprenticeships is the overriding priority for the available resources. There is some likelihood that there will be some adjustment to the wider policy, although nothing has been flagged to date.
- 5.2 There is a real opportunity for the Service to broaden its impact and the contribution it can make to the local economy and the skills of its workforce. The changes that are in train regarding apprenticeships and how they will be funded from April 2017 will result in a capacity issue in Surrey, as it will elsewhere. All organisations with payrolls greater than £3,000,000 per annum will be required to contribute 0.05% of the value of their payroll into the Apprenticeship Levy. The employers will then be able to access the levy funding to pay for the training of apprentices within their organisation. The employer will choose their provider from a new register of Apprenticeship providers.
- 5.3 Another important factor in apprenticeship policy development is the introduction of targets for the percentage of staff on public sector organisations payrolls. This will be 2.3% by 2020. This will require a substantial increase in the number of apprentices on the SCC payroll. CLS is in dialogue with HR to be part of the solution to this pressure.
- 5.4 CLS has set itself an objective to provide a coherent offer of targeted courses for learners with mild to moderate mental health needs. A 'Passport to Wellbeing' model is being developed in conjunction with partner organisations, including the Recovery College being set up by Surrey and Borders NHS Trust. CLS is also working with specialist partners to ensure our staff have underlying training to work effectively with adults with mental health issues.
- 5.5 There is also the prospect of local commissioning of Adult Learning (excluding apprenticeships) on the horizon. Local commissioning of adult learning services

is starting to emerge from a number of local authority devolution settlements. However, it is somewhat uncertain how this will play out now that responsibility for adult learning now sits with the DfE.

## 6.0 Conclusions:

- 6.1 The Service has had a very successful year in 2015-16. This places it in a strong position to continue to meet the Adult Learning needs of the community.
- 6.2 The good performance in terms of learner numbers and income generation provide the Service with a sound basis for its sustainability.
- 6.3 The diversification into apprenticeships will represent a real challenge to the Service, one that it is confident it can meet.

## 7.0 Recommendations:

- 7.1 The Service engages with the next Steps set out in the Ofsted report regarding apprenticeships, working with adults with mental health needs, and further improving teaching practice.
- 7.2 Given the level of uncertainty on the horizon. The Education and Skills Board should be updated as these matters become clear.

## 8.0 Next steps:

Identify future actions and dates.

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### **Sources/background papers:**

*Ofsted Report May 2016; Matrix report February 2016; Performance Dashboard against KPIs; Report on the summary of Safeguarding activity for the academic year.*

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