

EDUCATION & CHILDREN SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24th January 2019

Progress report Adult Community Learning 2018-19

To consider and comment on the following issues:

- To consider receiving the report and offering comments on the contents

Reasons:

- Requested by Scrutiny Committee
- In order for the Scrutiny to exercise its scrutiny function

To be referred to the Executive Board for decision: NO

Executive Board Member Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Glynog Davies (Education & Children)

Directorate: Education & Children	Designations:	Tel Nos. / E-Mail Addresses:
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Budget Situation

In recent years, the ACL Service has worked to become self-funding via external grants from Welsh Government and franchise arrangement with Coleg Sir Gar.

- The Coleg Sir Gâr franchise income for academic year 17-18 was £246,730 and, for 18-19, £217,759 is the current contract amount.
- The WG direct grant to the ACL has remained at £180 000 for the past 2 financial years – this grant is subject to change from September 2019 (WG to confirm timescale), following an extensive consultation by Welsh Government. It has now been confirmed by the minister that the grant will continue to be awarded to LEA/FE colleges in each local authority, however the allocations will be recalculated to ensure a more equitable distribution across Wales. The allocation amount has yet to be confirmed. However it is likely that the funding methodology will replicate the FE funding model rather than the current 'lump sum' allocation, and funding will be directly drawn down based on delivery, which may have implications for the overall service budget.
- Some additional income for ESOL tutor costs as part of the Vulnerable Persons Repatriation Project has been available to the service since June 2017.

There is no significant overspend since restructuring in 16-17. Overspend has related to the on-going costs associated with closure/ asset transfer of buildings.

Service Delivery:

From financial year 16-17, the service has focussed on the delivery of Essential Skills and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) provision. Consequently there were redundancies in terms of ACL staff – 1 x Community Learning Officer, and tutors who had previously delivered leisure courses. Plus a reduction in admin and support staff, either through redundancy or staff resignations. The loss of the service co-ordinator, data officer, and admin staff (who have not been replaced) has placed additional pressure on remaining staff. The exam officer has taken on much of this responsibility. A request for admin support for exams and data has been approved and recruitment will take place shortly.

The service continues to deliver Essential Skills and ESOL in line with the priorities of 'Adult learning in Wales' (2017) and the ESOL policy for Wales (2018) at levels pre-entry to GCSE. 70 + Classes are delivered across the county weekly including Digital Literacy, Family Learning, GCSE maths and English, with 689 learners in 2017-18 and 388 so far in 2018-19. Success rates: for the Carmarthenshire ACL partnership are good: 90% successful completion in 15-16 and 16-17, with a (provisional data) increase to 93% in 17-18, which is 3% above the National comparator for ACL.

The service is also working with colleagues in CCC and Coleg Sir Gâr to provide ESOL classes for 53 adults in Syrian refugee families as part of the Vulnerable Persons Repatriation Project. Syrian learners are achieving qualifications in City & Guilds ESOL at Entry level 1, with some learners progressing to Coleg Sir Gar for vocational programmes. They are integrating well into their communities, eg one coaches football for his local juniors team.

Learner feedback is good, learners on higher level courses report that they have improved their work prospects, eg as HLTAs, and improved confidence in using maths in particular. Some learners with learning disabilities are gaining new skills in digital literacy.

Further examples and details can be found in the ACL SER (attached)

Groups and clubs attending the Carmarthen centre attend a centre users group twice a year. Feedback from groups about the centre has been positive, with many people accessing who were previously CCC learners.

Challenges for the service in the coming year will be:

- Recruiting learners from hard to reach backgrounds – for example the service works with learners receiving treatment for drug and alcohol dependency in Ammanford, and would seek to expand this type of provision in other areas.
- Recruiting suitable qualified tutors to meet the demand for provision and/or providing further training for staff
- Expanding the Digital Literacy Curriculum, including staff training as Digital Practitioners.
- Developing more work focussed programmes

These will be essential to expand the curriculum offer and meet the anticipated requirements of the future funding framework.

Reduction in the number of buildings managed by the service

Since 2015 there has been a further reduction in the number of buildings managed by the service, as part of the work towards becoming self-funded.

The current buildings position is:

- **Llandeilo Community Education Centre** - Welsh for Adults funding continues to be used to run this facility.
- **Glanamman Community Education Centre** – Handed over to Cwmaman Town Council under an asset transfer arrangement. ACL supports this financially with that agreement coming to an end in 2019-20
- **Carmarthen Community Education Centre** – Continues to be managed by ACL and provides venue for ES and ESOL courses in Carmarthen area, plus many community groups and private classes (some of which were formally ACL provision). The centre is well used providing an income of £12,660 in 17-18 with an income target of £12950 in 18-19
- **Felinfoel Community Education Centre** - Has been empty since June 2015. The ACL service continues to pay for on-going costs (NDR, electricity, grounds maintenance etc.) at a cost of approx. £8-10k pa. Agreement to sell has been sought and Llanelli Youth Theatre have expressed an interest in renting.
- **The Cennen Centre, Ammanford** – Has been handed over to Children’s Services and the ES/ESOL service now located in Streets Youth Centre, Miners theatre.

Members should note that the updates in this report do not apply directly to Welsh for Adults provision. Learn Welsh courses are planned and provided by CCC ‘Welsh in education’ service and funded by National Centre for learning Welsh as the lead body.

DETAILED REPORT ATTACHED	YES (Self-evaluation report)
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IMPLICATIONS

I confirm that other than those implications which have been agreed with the appropriate Directors / Heads of Service and are referred to in detail below, there are no other implications associated with this report.

Signed: J. Aeron Rees Head of Curriculum and Wellbeing

Policy, Crime & Disorder and Equalities	Legal	Finance	ICT	Risk Management Issues	Staffing Implications	Physical Assets
NONE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

LEGAL

The Learning & Skills Act 2000 specifies “LEAs are [also] responsible for certain categories of further education... LEAs may, in respect of part-time provision for those over compulsory school age and full time education for those over 18, secure provision for their area of appropriate facilities.” (Section 22.)

Thus the direct provision of adult and community learning is not one of the statutory obligations placed on Local Authorities through the Learning & Skills Act 2000. This means that Carmarthenshire County Council has no statutory duty to provide adult community learning courses **directly**, since this provision could be offered via third party providers already who already offer some of these courses in the local area.

FINANCE

See report main text

ICT

Provision of ICT classes and facilities has traditionally been a component of ACL service provision. With changes and developments in the curriculum, the service now focusses on Digital Literacy as part of the Essential Skills curriculum. Consequently investment in up to date resources has been made including ipads; laptops and c-touch boards in each centre.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Should changes in the Welsh Government ACL direct grant be linked directly to course provision only, this could limit the potential income and create a funding gap. CCC would need to make a decision as to how this would be addressed.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

The ACL service has been restructured twice in 2008 and 2012. With further staff redundancies in 2015, following the decision to no longer provide Leisure courses.. The service currently employs the following staff:

- Community Learning Manager x1 (1 x FTE);
- Centre officers x3 (2.25 x FTE);
- Exams Officer x1 (1 x FTE);
- Admin staff x 1 (1x FTE);
- Caretaker x 1 (0.8 x FTE);
- Tutors x 20 (5.89 x FTE)

Total number of individuals = 27

Total FTEs 12 (approx)

PHYSICAL ASSETS

See above for details of buildings used

CONSULTATIONS

I confirm that the appropriate consultations have taken in place and the outcomes are as detailed below:

Signed: J. Aeron Rees Head of Curriculum and Wellbeing

1. Local Member(s) – N/A
2. Community / Town Council – N/A
3. Relevant Partners – N/A
4. Staff Side Representatives and other Organisations – N/A

**Section 100D Local Government Act, 1972 – Access to Information
List of Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

THESE ARE NO DOCUMENTS