



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

ADULT SERVICES AND HEALTH COMMISSION 12 March 2007

Report of the Director of Corporate and Adult Social Services

Adult Learning Service Strategic Options Review

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 To consider and comment on the Adult Learning Service Strategic Options Review.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Adult Learning Service (ALS) is part of the Children and Young People's Department and provides accredited and non - accredited courses from approximately 30 locations across the city. It is funded mainly by output related grants from the Learning and Skills Council and remainder of its income generated through course fees. During the current financial year 2006/07, the LSC provides a grant of £2.863m of which £485k covers support services. The ALS currently employs 45 fulltime equivalent management and administration staff and 204 part-time tutors. Information contained in the Detailed Revenue Budget Consultation Document considered by this Commission at the last meeting showed that there were 9753 enrolments in 2005/06 of which 5224 were for literacy, numeracy and ESOL courses, which between made up more than 50% of its provision.
- 2.2 The ALS will be experiencing new pressures arising from the change in the priorities and focus of vocational skills and training by the Learning and Skills Council and not least the funding criteria for English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). From September 2007, the LSC will no longer provide fee remission for ESOL therefore people not in receipt of means tested benefits will have to pay the same rates as adults on accredited courses which are currently £2.30 per hour. It is likely that introducing charges will affect the number of learners enrolling on to courses.
- 2.3 The biggest financial risk is therefore posed by the changes in the grants and fee structure. There was reduction of approximately 10% in income from LSC between 2005/06 and 2006/07 financial years. It is likely that next year's budget will be reduced necessitating an increase

in existing course fees and introducing fees on other courses, which could affect the numbers of learners taking up courses.

- 2.4 The ALS recognised the risks and employed an external consultant to carry out a strategic review. The attached strategic options report was considered by the Adult Services Cabinet Member as part of his delegated responsibilities on 7 February and accepted the recommendations put forward in the paper.
- 2.5 Since the scrutiny of the adult learning provision falls within the remit of this Commission, it was felt by the Chair that this Commission should be given the opportunity to comment on this report before the strategy is adopted and to consider the questions listed below:
- What types of learning provision should be available in the city- who takes the lead in determining this?
 - What should be the function of the ALS- should it be just another training provider in the city?
 - Should the ALS continue to provide a range of training courses focusing on maximising income from the LSC or should it look at other revenue sources?
 - Has the Council identified its future skill needs and used the ALS expertise to address these
- 2.6 Members are asked to consider and comment on the Adult Learning Service Strategic Options.

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Background papers:	None.
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 - Implications Appendix 2 – Review of Adult Learning Service

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. None arising from this report.

Legal

2. None arising from this report.

Personnel

3. None arising from this report.

Equalities impact

4. Effective scrutiny will benefit all Derby people.

Corporate Priorities

5. This report links with Council's priorities for 2007-10 to:
 - support everyone in learning and achieving
 - give excellent services and value for money
 - help us all to be healthy and active