

Establishing a Community Learning Trust for York

Summary

1. Following the reforms of FE funding in 2012, a key policy change was the proposal to create a series of "Community Learning Trusts" (CLTs), in local areas to coordinate and grow the local informal learning offer.
2. There is no prescribed model of governance for CLTs and certainly no requirement to set up a formal "trust". It is therefore proposed to create a partnership model for York, based on the well developed "informal learning" planning arrangements that currently exist.

Background

3. *New Challenges, New Chances: Building a world class skills system*, set out the expectation that Community Learning Trusts should be established across the country. Subsequent briefing guidance established that they should be local in their nature and should therefore reflect the requirements of particular areas. There is no nationally prescribed model.
4. Whilst the expectation is that CLTs should reflect their own local area priorities, they are also expected to share some common characteristics. CLTs would do the following as a minimum:
 - Maximise access to community learning for adults, bringing new opportunities and improving lives, whatever people's circumstances.
 - Promote social renewal by bringing local communities together to experience the joy of learning and the pride that comes with achievement.
 - Maximise the impact of community learning on the social and economic well-being of individuals, families and communities.
5. The expectations is that local neighbourhoods, wards and parishes are empowered to work collaboratively with learning providers and other partners to agree their own community learning priorities, strategies and partnership models - in order to develop a shared identity, build a culture of lifelong learning and foster social purpose at neighbourhood level.

6. The ambitions and expectations set out in New Challenges, New Chances, are very far reaching, particularly as there are no new resources to stimulate a new approach. In light of this it is proposed to use the first year of the new partnership arrangements to agree the ambitions and direction of the new arrangements, setting in place a three to five year strategy for development and growth of informal community learning.

Proposals

7. The following are the initial proposals for the formation of the new partnership. Others will be developed as the partnership matures.
 - The Community Learning Trust will be called “York Community Learning Partnership” (YCLP)
 - The founder members will be those represented on the current partnership group YILP, York’s Informal Learning Partnership. (A full list of partners is listed in Annex 3)
 - There will be a formal partnership arrangement with a memorandum of understanding and a formal partnership agreement (The latter to be developed in the first year)
 - YCLP will have its own distinctive and separate brand. This will be public facing.
 - Core purpose / mission, will be developed based on the principles set out in the main proposal document .
 - The scope of the partnership to include the City of York Unitary Authority Boundary and the immediate hinterland around York (To be agreed with the North Yorkshire Community Learning Trust)
 - Establish a clear working relationship with North Yorkshire Community Learning Trust and other CLTs that border the unitary authority area.

Consultation

8. Over the past 12 months there has been an extended period of consultation with prospective partners about the type and nature of the partnership. A number of options were considered including the following:
 - Create a social enterprise to run the community learning partnership that would be independent of partners
 - Join together with North Yorkshire Community Learning Partnership, creating York as a sub group
 - Asking the emerging new social enterprise “York Explore” to run the partnership
9. There were also a number of other ideas that were a combination of the above. Whilst all of the ideas had some merit, partners did not feel at this early stage, that they wanted to commit to any of the more formal partnership arrangements but would prefer instead to use the first year to work out the best arrangements for the future.

Council Priorities

10. These proposals relate to the Creating Jobs and Growing the Economy and Build Stronger Communities sections of the Council Plan: ensuring that we maintain a strong informal learning offer, including first steps into learning programmes and opportunities for progression to further qualifications and preparation for work. In addition to ensure that there is a wide variety of programmes to support resident's health and well being and personal learning goals.

Implications

Financial

11. Any running cost or additional expenditure will be met from existing Skills Funding Agency allocations.

Human Resources:

12. There are no HR implications associated with the proposal to establish the partnership.

Equalities:

13. One of the key principles of the establishment of CLTs is to ensure equality of access to learning programmes, using the principle that those that can afford to contribute to the costs of the programmes do so, at a rate commensurate with their income levels. Whilst this principle is difficult to implement with any degree of sophistication and to properly take account of income levels for individuals or families, there are some well established proxy measures that will continue to be used. The principle of reduced fees for those individuals and families who claim certain means-tested benefits will be retained. Other measures to ensure that fees are reduced appropriately for those on the lowest incomes will also be considered.

Legal:

14. There are no additional legal, crime and disorder, information technology, property, or other implications.

Risk Management

15. There are no identified risks.

Recommendations

16. The Cabinet Member is recommended to agree to the establishment of York Community Learning Partnership in accordance with the principles set out in Annex 1.

Contacts

Author:	Chief Officer Responsible for the report:		
Alistair Gourlay Head of York Learning Tel; 4294	Charlie Croft Assistant Director - Communities, Culture and Public Realm		
	Report Approved	✓	Date 25.4.13.
Specialist Implications Officer(s)			
Wards Affected: <i>List wards or tick box to indicate all</i>		All	✓
For further information please contact the author of the report			

Background Papers:

- Annex 1 CLT Proposal Document
- Annex 2 Memorandum of Understanding
- Annex 3 List of proposed founder members