

Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
All Wards

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:

**Cabinet
Council**

**5 June 2002
11 July 2002**

Adult Learning Plan 2002/2003

Report of the Director of Education

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report puts the Local Authority's Adult Learning Plan before Cabinet for approval.

2. Summary

2.1 The LEA is required to submit an Annual Adult Learning Plan to secure funding for non-accredited Adult Learning from the Learning and Skills Council. The 2002/2003 Plan outlines the priorities for this element of Adult Learning and proposes a total target (accredited and non-accredited) of 21,000 learners. This is the final year of the Secretary of State's guarantee to protect Local Authority Adult Learning. From 2003 all Adult Learning will be funded through a common funding formula. The Plan was submitted to the LLSC (Local Learning and Skills Council) on 8th March 2002, but should Members wish to make any amendments, these can be included following negotiation with the LLSC.

3. Recommendations

3.1 The Cabinet is recommended to:

- (a) Confirm the contents of the Plan and to recommend to Council that it be approved.

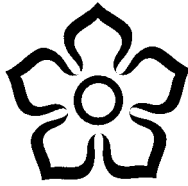
4. Headline Financial and legal Implications

4.1 See supporting information for Financial Implications.

4.2 There are no direct Legal Implications arising from this report (Guy Goodman, Assistant Head of Legal Services x 7054).

5. Report Author/Officer to contact:

**Tim Ward
Principal Adult Officer
Tel: 252 7821**



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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. Report

1. Learning and Skills Council

1.1 Following the 2000 Learning and Skills Act, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) was established in April 2001 to co-ordinate and fund all Post-16 education and training other than Higher Education. The LSC is a national body with 47 local arms including the Leicestershire LSC which covers both Leicester City and Leicestershire. Adult Learning is now funded almost entirely through the LSC (the only exceptions being European and regeneration funding) and this is paid to the Local Authority through two streams:

- (i) 'Adult and Community Learning' – non-accredited Adult Learning not leading to any qualifications.
- (ii) 'Further Education' – accredited Adult Learning leading to some form of recognized qualification, plus Basic Skills and English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL).

Different formulae currently apply to these two strands of Adult Learning but the intention of the LSC is to adopt a common funding formula for August 2003.

2. Statutory Requirement

2.1 In order to secure funding of the Adult and Community Learning element, the Authority is obliged to submit an Adult Learning Plan to the LSC, detailing our plans for the forthcoming funding year commencing 1 August 2002. The Plan has to be presented to a prescribed format covering 26 sections and is attached to this report.

3. **Overall Aim**

- 3.1 The 2002/2003 Plan sets out the future shape of Adult Learning within the new Lifelong Learning and Community Development Division. The Division is committed to providing a quality Adult Learning Service for all the citizens of Leicester and believes the structure of the new Division will assist us to achieve this goal.

4. **Key Themes**

The Plan outlines three key themes to underpin our Adult Learning Service:

4.1 Widening Participation

To promote social inclusion and ensure the city has a skilled workforce able to compete in a global knowledge – based economy, we need to build on levels of Adult Learning participation already among the highest in the Midlands. In particular, we need to engage with hard-to-reach learners, especially these categories currently under represented in our learner profile:

- (a) people without qualifications
- (b) unemployed people
- (c) people (especially men) aged over 45

4.2 Family Learning

Using additional funding promised by the LSC, we wish to expand our provision of intergenerational learning. We recognize the potential of this medium to contribute the raising levels of achievement within schools and to help to address significant Basic Skills needs within the City.

4.3 Valuing all Learning

The Division seeks to offer a broad and attractive curriculum of Adult Learning opportunities open to all, for vocational gain and also for social, cultural, recreational and health benefits.

5. **Targets**

- 5.1 The 2002/2003 Adult Learning Plan sets out our targets for participation levels next year. The Division aims to enroll a total of 21,000 Adult Learners across both accredited and non-accredited strands of learning. Of this 21,000, we aim to recruit the following percentage of specified learner categories:

8.5% Learners with Disabilities/Learning Difficulties
35% Male Learners
30% Learners from Ethnic Minorities
24.5% Learners aged 60+
25% Learners who are 'New' (undertaken no formal learning in last 3 years or more).

6. **Issues for consideration**

- 6.1 Increasing pressure is being placed on the Local Authority to justify the City's relatively high levels of expenditure on Adult Learning. This pressure takes the form of external quality criteria developed by the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) and the LSC, and the challenging learner targets which are rigorously monitored, with the prospect of 'clawback' if we fail to meet them.
- 6.2 The targets proposed in the 2002/2003 Adult Learning Plan will set a real challenge to the Division both in reaching the overall total and certain of the sub-targets, particularly those pertaining to male and 'new' learners.
- 6.3 2002/2003 is the last year of the 'guarantee' made by the Secretary of State for Education in 2001 that LEA Adult Learning provision would not suffer as a result of LSC funding methodology. This is a critical year for the Division to prove that it can deliver on both quality and volume in order to achieve comparable funding from August 2003.
- 6.4 The Plan clearly indicates the Division's drive to match the Leicestershire LSC's priorities as outlined in their strategic plan, in particular through the focus on widening participation, Basic Skills and Family Learning. Our LEA provision, with its strong community network, should be ideally placed to respond to LSC priorities and target groups. While preserving as much as possible of the broad curriculum offer, the Division must concentrate on attracting new learners to predominantly Entry Level and Level 1 courses.
7. **Timing of Consultation**
- 7.1 Ideally, this should have started before submission of the Plan to the LSC. However, the Plan could not be finalized until the last week of March because we were required at short notice to add further detail.

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

1. Financial Implications

- 1.1 Approval of the plan by the LSC will release to the LEA an equivalent amount to this year's grant of £2.3m
- 1.2 Grant is released to the Local Authority subject to meeting the volume and quality targets set out in the plan. The LSC can vary the grant dependent upon the outcomes of quarterly monitoring performance.
- 1.3 The Division clearly needs to achieve its targets for increases in learner numbers. Recognising that core funding from the LSC may be reduced from 2003, we need to explore opportunities to meet some or all of the potential income shortfall through attracting additional funding for specific initiatives from the LSC and other sources. We have already succeeded in attracting more than £270,000 this year to appoint Learning Development Workers (5 posts), a Family Learning Co-ordinator and a Learning Outreach Worker to link with the Voluntary Sector.

1.4 The Division is developing a strategy for reducing unit costs. In particular, we will review management and premises costs and devise a structure capable of developing more for less. These are issues to be addressed in Stage 2 of the Community Review and within Partnership Agreements being negotiated with schools.

2. Legal Implications

2.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

3. Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph Within Supporting information	References
Equal Opportunities	YES	4.1, 4.3	
Policy	NO		
Sustainable and Environmental	NO		
Crime and Disorder	NO		
Human Rights Act	NO		
Elderly/People on Low Income	YES	4.1	
School Improvement	YES	4.2	

4. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

None.

5. Consultations

Strategic Community Learning Forum
FEJOTC
Inter Departmental Lifelong Learning Working Group
Leicestershire and Leicester City Learning Partnership
Leicester College

6. Report Author

Tim Ward
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Tel: 252 7821