

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Education, Skills and Wellbeing Cabinet Board

Report of the Head of Education Development – Chris Millis

Matter for Information

Wards Affected:

All wards

Adult Learning in the Community Update (Diweddariad Dysgu Oedolion yn y Gymuned)

Purpose of the Report

To inform Member of the progress of Adult Learning in the Community Service in Neath Port Talbot.

Executive Summary

This report contains an update of the work completed in communities by the Adult Learning in the Community (ALC).

The number of learners enrolled on courses started off slow and have gradually increased. Enrolments are up 6% on last figures at this time. ALC is on target to maintain and hopefully improve slightly on the number of enrolments for 2022-2023.

During the COVID outbreak we adapted our delivery to online and we have continued a hybrid approach for 2022-2023. This approach offers learners the choice to attend sessions online or face to face. This has kept

attendance figures high as learners are able to learn alongside their normal life routine.

ALC has supported learners to be able to 'get online' with more learners now engaging in the use technology to allow them to continue their learning journey. Also AL developed 'Using IT to Support Your Learning' courses where learners have the opportunities to study digital skills alongside their learning.

Adult Learning in the Community was again successful in securing Welsh Government funding from the Adult Learning Support Fund 2021-2022 - 3K for each LA, which is ongoing. This funding was used for staff to support their mental health and well-being and professional development.

Funding from the Engagement Grant was secured in 2021-2022 - 106K. This funding allowed ALC to deliver well-being/engagement courses in the community. The funding was used to develop a website which is under construction. This will allow learners access to direct links to the courses and support ALC can offer. The new website will link into our database which will make data collection and analysing more efficient, this will support the data used to secure our Community Learning Grant funding.

Background

Adult Learning in the Community (ALC) continues to deliver a range of learning activities for post 16 year olds in Neath Port Talbot. It is non-statutory and approximately 60% of Adult Learning in the Community courses provided in Neath Port Talbot County are delivered by Adult Learning in the Community (ALC).

Adult Learning in the Community is externally funded through a grant from the Welsh Government and a franchise agreement with NPTC Group. Both contracts amount to approximately £450K. The ALC direct funding grant from the Welsh Government remained the same for 21/22. Funding from the college covers the academic year August - July and the service is on target to deliver the appropriate amount of learning to ensure the funding allocation for 21/22.

ALC is one of the lead partners of the NPT Learning and Skills Network partnership. The partnership was set up in 2000 under the New Learning

Network and involves a range of public and voluntary-sector organisations in Neath Port Talbot County Borough including NPTC Group, Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Service, Adult Learning in the Community Wales, Swansea University Department of Adult Continuing Education and Tai Tarian.

The Network is committed to the continuous development of quality, curriculum and learner support across the county. Welsh Government continues to look at ways it funds Adult Learning in the Community with options being put forward to the minister for approval. The ALC Manager has attended regular meetings to ensure that the service is kept up to date with current information on funding.

ALC continues to deliver courses in line with Welsh Government priorities as set in the Adult Learning in the Community in Wales policy, developing soft skills (including their confidence to learn) improving literacy/numeracy/digital literacy skills, employability skills, engagement activities and ensures progression into more formal learning and/or employment. For example the service continues to have a large number of learners on childcare courses and aims to give people the knowledge and understanding to achieve a professional qualification which may lead to employment in the sector. The service is also delivering the new Children's Care, Learning, Play and Development qualification with progression opportunities from the Introduction to Childcare which helps to improve their skills in preparation for more formal training onto the QCF level 2 and 3 qualifications. Other courses relevant to childcare learners are autism awareness, phonics, dyslexia awareness and classroom Welsh.

Other courses delivered by ALC are literacy, numeracy, study skills, confidence building, IT and employability skills. Our GCSE and A-Level programme remains highly attended with enrolment figures for 22/23 are 35% higher than 21/22.

New courses introduced for 22/23 include Anger and Conflict Management, Principles of Team Building, Managing Anxiety, Knowing Myself, Managing a Diary, Time Management, Communication in a Business Environment, Stress Management and Active Citizenship.

ALC will be starting a new programme in January 2023, Be SMART with your money, and it will be designed to try and support people through the

cost of living crisis. The programme will include courses such as weekly shopping, purchasing goods, home finances, money management, understanding home energy efficiency, handling payments, cooking on a budget, budgeting for Universal Credit, budgeting and planning finances. Our learning engagement officer is contacting community venues throughout the borough to discuss what needs the communities have. ALC will plan delivery around the community need.

Adult Learning in the Community ensures that costs are kept to a minimum with numerous classes being free e.g. literacy, numeracy, study skills, employability, retail and hospitality to enable all residents in NPT to be able to access learning to their improve skills.

ALC continues to have good links with the Department of Work and Pensions, Communities for Work+, DOVE, Glynneath Training Centre, Skills and Training and Mental Health Co-ordinators.

ALC delivers a variety of courses in schools throughout NPT. The Family Learning delivery has given parents opportunities to increase their Literacy and Numeracy skills and support their children's learning. The majority of learners ask for progression courses after attending the Family Learning course and then go onto courses such as Introduction to Childcare, British Sign Language and Child Psychology that are being offered in schools. During the pandemic Family Learning stopped however, ALC has been working with schools during summer 2022 and delivery has now resumed.

The number of learners enrolled onto courses started a little slow and have gradually increased. Enrolments have increased by 6% in comparison to last year. ALC is on target to maintain and may improve slightly, on the number of enrolments for 2022-2023.

One of the reasons for maintaining good enrolments figures is the partnership working that the service has with organisations. ALC attends regular events arranged by different organisations e.g. DWP, Crisis and Communities for Work+. These raise the ALC profile and generate many referrals for work skills courses such as Hospitality, Retail, Admin and other provision. It also allows ALC to anticipate changes such as the introduction of universal credit and monthly employment themes.

Our aim is to continue and expand delivery throughout NPT in a variety of outreach community venues. ALC are currently working with local libraries such as Cymer and Pontardawe to develop a learning programme to suit the needs of the community.

Data -due to COVID no external data published for 2020/21 (Internal data only).

Direct Delivery

Completion – 97% Attainment – 92% Success – 94%

Franchise Delivery

Completion - 99% Attainment - 97% Success - 95%

Adult Learning in the Community will continue to look at ways to improve the service. This is evidenced by the learner survey and the steps taken to implement feedback. ALC will also be sending out a survey to organisations who refer learners onto courses to gain information regarding the service.

Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts in relation to this report.

Equality Impact Assessment

There are no equality impacts associated with this report.

Workforce Impacts

There are no direct workforce or staffing issues in relation to this report.

Legal Impacts

There is no legal impact in relation to this report.

Risk Management

There is no identified risk to this report.

Consultation

Not applicable.

Recommendations

The report is for information purposes only.

Appendices

None

List of Background Papers

NA

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