

London Borough of Bromley

Report to: Portfolio Holder for Education

Date: 03 May 2016

Title: Proposed Adult Education Curriculum for 2016/2017

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Reason for report:	<p>At the meeting of the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee on 19 January 2016 Members requested that a further report setting out the structure of the final curriculum be considered by the Portfolio Holder.</p> <p>This report provides the Portfolio Holder with</p>
Recommendations:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Approve the proposed amendment to the fee policy with regard to non accredited provision.2. Consider & comment on curriculum currently planned for mainstream adult education offer.3. Consider and comment on curriculum proposals for the community outreach provision, including the distribution of the community learning funding across the different areas of community outreach

1 Background

- 1.1 The proposed restructure of the adult education service, including the closure of the Widmore Centre for the purpose of adult learning, was approved by the Executive Committee on 10 February 2016.
- 1.2 Managers within the adult education service reviewed the accommodation at the Kentwood and Poverest sites to identify which curriculum could be reasonably relocated to either site without undue expenditure and/or significant structural alterations.
- 1.3 On 24 March 2016 the adult education service received confirmation of its indicative funding allocation for the 2016/2017 academic year from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA). The statement showed that the service can expect to receive funding at similar levels to those it has received for the current academic year.
- 1.4 As part of the reorganisation of the adult education service it was agreed that a higher proportion of the grant for non-qualification courses should be directed towards disadvantaged adults and communities. As a consequence of this decision

there will be fewer courses on offer as part of the mainstream adult education programme (sometimes referred to as leisure courses) available for public enrolment. However, there will be an increase in the number of targeted community outreach courses including family learning.

- 1.5 As the funding for the qualification courses has remained at a similar level to that of 2015/16, much of the previous offer remains. Where qualification courses have been withdrawn, this is as a result of declining demand for the subject, difficulties in relocating specialist resources or the qualification being removed from the list of those approved for public funding.

2 Changes to the fee policy for 2016/17, non accredited provision only

- 2.1 Although students pay course fees, mainstream non qualification courses are usually subsidised by the Community Learning portion of the grant from the Skills Funding Agency. Historically in Bromley this has been based on the assumption that learners pay 50% of the true costs and the remainder is covered by the grant.

- 2.2 In practice this has meant that where courses have been fully subscribed (usually over 16 in a class) they have required a lower level of subsidy whilst those courses with lower enrolments have required a higher level of subsidy to cover the costs.

- 2.3 In previous years the fee policy for the non-qualification courses has been split into 4 main bands:

Table 1

Standard short course	Standard rate applied to those courses that take place in a standard classroom setting, e.g. languages, art appreciation.
Standard long course	
Specialist short course	Specialist rate applied to those courses that require specialist facilities e.g. cookery, ICT.
Specialist long course	

- 2.4 Long courses were defined as those that spread across 2 terms or more, usually for a period of 28 weeks.

- 2.5 Each time a student enrolls on a course there are various costs that are associated with that enrolment. When a student enrolls on a long course that spans across academic year there is only one occurrence of those associated costs. However if a student enrolls on three short courses spread across the academic year then there are three occurrences of those costs even if the total number of learning hours amount to the same as that of a long course. For this reason the two course length related bands were established many years ago.

- 2.6 Curriculum managers are now required to implement greater levels of scrutiny and monitoring of the use of the Community Learning fund and it is essential that they seek to maximise the impact that the limited funding can have on local communities and residents.

- 2.7 Recent evidence shows that long courses use a higher proportion of the SFA allocation than short courses. For example, a general drawing and painting 28 week course with full occupancy will require subsidising to 36% of the total costs, compared to a general drawing and painting short course with full occupancy, where only a 29% subsidy is required to cover all costs. A yoga 28 week course with minimum occupancy would need to be subsidised at 57% of costs, compared to a

yoga short course with minimum occupancy where the subsidy level would be at 36%.

- 2.8 Therefore in order to maximise the funding available to support mainstream adult education courses, officers propose to charge the same fee per hour for short and long courses. This would be set at £4.90 per hour for a standard course and £5.20 per hour for a specialist course. These rates will continue to compare favourably with Croydon and Bexley adult education services at £5.25 and £5.50 per hour regardless of the length of course.
- 2.9 By simplifying the fee structure and introducing parity between long and short courses, officers can improve how they manage the provision of fee-paying courses within the reduced 2016/17 budget and provide a higher number of courses than would have been possible under the previous fee structure. Reducing the number of fee rates allows for a more transparent fee pricing structure that is simpler for service users to understand.
- 2.10 To prevent low income from being a barrier to participation, the impact on the public could be abated by allowing learners to pay their course fees in instalments. The average instalment would be similar to the fee for a short course. Curriculum managers have planned to run a higher percentage of short courses than in previous years, splitting the year into two halves and therefore alleviating the larger upfront fee burden for many learners.
- 2.11 A very small number of specialist courses would attract a higher fee due to small numbers and/or tutor higher rates of pay. For example, in an advanced level language course where class numbers are lower than average and the tutors are paid at a higher rate, the proposed fee is £5.43 per hour. In the current academic year these courses with full occupancy require a 29% level of subsidy. Learners on these specialist courses who responded to the consultation indicated that they are willing to pay more towards the cost of their course.

3 Proposed Curriculum – Mainstream Provision

- 3.1 Mainstream provision open to public enrolment and promoted by the BAEC website, also encompasses those courses which generate a fee income for the adult education service.
- 3.2 Tables 2 – 6 provide an overview of the curriculum that is proposed for this mainstream provision from September 2016 onwards. Additional short courses will be added later in the year, but these are dictated by both demand and the progress made towards the funding target. However, it is anticipated that any further mainstream courses planned for 2016/17 will fall within the categories listed on tables 2-5 below.
- 3.3 Table 2 lists the types of daytime provision planned for the Kentwood Centre, table 3 lists that proposed for evening delivery.

Table 2 Kentwood Centre – day time courses

Course title	Number planned	Short = one term or less Long = over one term	Status
Art Appreciation	1	Long	Non-Accredited
Bookkeeping	1	Short	Accredited
Bridge	1	Long	Non-Accredited
Clothes making	4	Long	Non-Accredited
Clothes making	2	Short	Non-Accredited
Computing/Digital Skills	1	Long	Accredited
Computing/Digital Skills	3	Short	Accredited
Cookery	2	Long	Non-Accredited
Cookery	12	Short	Non-Accredited
Drawing and Painting	4	Short	Non-Accredited
Drawing and Painting	9	Long	Non-Accredited
English	2	Long	Accredited
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)	10	Long	Accredited
Etching and printing	4	Long	Non-Accredited
Floristry	6	Short	Non-Accredited
GCSE English	2	Long	Accredited
GCSE Maths	2	Long	Accredited
Languages (French/Italian/Spanish)	8	Long	Non-Accredited
Learning for adults with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LLDD)	2	Long	Accredited
Level 1 Award in Caring for Children	1	Short	Accredited
Level 2 Award in Counselling	2	Long	Accredited
Level 2 Certificate in Counselling	1	Long	Accredited
Level 2 Interior Design	1	Long	Accredited
Level 2 Photography	1	Long	Accredited
Level 3 Interior Design	1	Long	Accredited
Maths	3	Long	Accredited
Meditation	3	Short	Non-Accredited
Patchwork	3	Long	Non-Accredited
Pilates/Yoga	8	Short	Non-Accredited
Sign Language	1	Long	Accredited
Stained Glass	2	Long	Non-Accredited
Stained glass	2	Short	Non-Accredited
Upholstery	2	Long	Non-Accredited
Total	107		

Table 3 Kentwood Centre – evening courses

Course title	Number planned	Short = one term or less Long = over one term	Status
Bookkeeping	1	Short	Accredited
Computing/Digital Skills	2	Long	Accredited
Cookery	9	Short	Non-Accredited
Drawing and Painting	2	Short	Non-Accredited
Drawing and Painting	3	Long	Non-Accredited
English	3	Long	Accredited
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)	2	Long	Accredited
ESOL Support for Dyslexic Parents	3	Short	Non-accredited
Etching and printing	1	Long	Non-Accredited
GCSE English	1	Long	Accredited
GCSE Maths	1	Long	Accredited
Guitar	6	Short	Non-Accredited
Languages (French/Italian/Spanish)	9	Long	Non-Accredited
Level 2 Award in Counselling	2	Long	Accredited
Level 2 Certificate in Counselling	1	Long	Accredited
Maths	3	Long	Accredited
Photography	2	Short	Non-accredited
Pilates/Yoga	2	Long	Non-Accredited
Pilates/Yoga	4	Short	Non-Accredited
Sign Language	1	Long	Accredited
Stained Glass	1	Short	Non-Accredited
Stained Glass	1	Long	Non-Accredited
Total	60		

3.4 Table 4 lists the types of daytime provision planned for the Poverest Centre, table 5 lists that proposed for the evening delivery.

Table 4 - Poverest Centre daytime courses

Course title	Number planned	Short = one term or less Long = over one term	Status
Art Appreciation	1	Long	Non-Accredited
Bookkeeping	1	Short	Accredited
Computing	3	Short	Non-Accredited
Computing/Digital Skills	2	Short	Accredited
Childminding	2	Short	Accredited
Drawing and Painting	3	Short	Non-Accredited
Drawing and Painting	6	Long	Non-Accredited
English	3	Long	Accredited
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)	7	Long	Accredited

ESOL support for Dyslexic parents	3	Short	Non-accredited
Languages (French/Italian/Spanish)	3	Long	Non-Accredited
Level 3 Counselling	1	Long	Accredited
Learning for adults with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LLDD)	31	Long	Accredited
Maths	2	Long	Accredited
Pilates/Yoga	4	Short	Non-Accredited
Upholstery	2	Long	Non-Accredited
Total	74		

Table 5 - Poverest Centre evening courses

Course title	Number planned	Short = one term or less Long = over one term	Status
Computing	3	Short	Non-Accredited
Childminding	2	Short	Accredited
Dance	3	Short	Non-Accredited
Drawing and Painting	1	Short	Non-Accredited
Drawing and Painting	2	Long	Non-Accredited
English	2	Long	Accredited
English for speakers of other languages (ESOL)	2	Long	Accredited
Languages (French/Italian/Spanish)	3	Long	Non-Accredited
Maths	2	Long	Accredited
Pilates/Yoga	8	Short	Non-Accredited
Total	28		

3.5 In addition to the courses that take place within the main centres a small number of offsite daytime courses are proposed. These courses encourage residents to be more active and to learn about the London environment.

Table 6 – meet out courses, daytime

Course title	Number planned	Short = one term or less Long = over one term	Status
London walks	6	Short	Non-Accredited

4 Proposed Curriculum – Community Outreach Provision

4.1 The community outreach provision encompasses those courses that are aimed at disadvantaged and low-waged adults within local communities. This provision is usually set up in partnership with other organisations, local schools or Council departments that have direct access to the targeted communities.

4.2 Table 7 below compares the distribution of the community learning funding in previous years (column A) to that being proposed for the 2016/17 year (column C). Column B shows the illustrative example provided at the time of planning the

initial proposal in July 2015 and subsequently used to inform the consultation phase. Officers now propose a few minor adjustments to the distribution and these are explained in 4.3 and 4.4 below.

Table 7 – Distribution of funding across provision type.

Type of provision	Examples of partners	A	B	C
		Funding distribution prior to restructure	Distribution example at consultation	Actual proposed funding for 2016/17
Family English, maths and language	Primary schools, Children and Family Centres	£150,000	£200,000	£200,000
Wider Family Learning	Bromley Children Project, CFC's, primary schools, community groups	£100,000	£100,00	£ 80,000
Adults with Disabilities and Learning Difficulties	Community organisations such as Mencap, Deaf Access.	Not included	Not included	£20,000
Older learners	Adult social care, Age UK, residential care homes	£20,000	£75,000	£75,000
Learning organisation partnerships	Mottingham and Cotmandene Centres	£20,000	£50,000	£50,000 including 2 x work clubs
Other partnerships	Local agencies, housing associations and community groups	£10,000	£75,000	£100,000
Sub-Contracting	Local agencies and specialist providers	£60,000	£120,000	£95,000
Funding used to subsidise mainstream provision		£446,555	£176,555	£176,555
TOTAL		£796,555	£796,555	£796,555

4.3 In 2014/2015 overall learner numbers participating in wider family learning fell by 9% and it is understood that funding for the Bromley Children Project and CFCs is under review. For these reasons it is now proposed that, whilst the service will continue to offer parenting classes through the wider family learning projects, the amount should be adjusted downwards from £100k to £80k to reflect the smaller participant numbers. Through freeing up £20k of funding the service will develop targeted non-accredited learning for learners with disabilities and learning difficulties. Some of this provision could be delivered within BAEC centres to give learners access to the facilities on offer; in particular widening access to the cookery facilities at the Kentwood centre.

4.4 Since the original proposal was developed in July 2015 the Skills Funding Agency have introduced changes to the funding rules around subcontracting. Under current

rules, if the total amount of funding allocation subcontracted out by any provider exceeds £100k, an external auditing process is required. As this would reduce the amount of funding available to deliver provision adult education managers recommend that the subcontracted amount is reduced to £95k. This would free up £25k to be used to support small community associations, who do not meet the necessary criteria for sub-contracting, and allow them to deliver learning opportunities to specific marginalised groups of adults.

- 4.5 The proposed increase (as indicated in columns B and C) in the level of funding for the learning partnership work will help to support the local work clubs that operate out of the Mottingham and Cotmandene centres. Currently these services are provided by volunteers. The proposal is for BAEC tutors to provide training based on individual needs which will enable participants to make best use of the software and learning opportunities. The work club offer will complement the BAEC programme of IT courses that is also delivered at both centres.
- 4.6 Courses within the community outreach work are demand lead and negotiated with partners as part of the planning process to ensure the identified needs of targeted groups are met. As reflected by the levels of funding there will be a growth in the volume of courses available to such groups and table 8 below lists the types of courses that adult education managers plan to discuss with partners when negotiating the learning activities.

Table 8 – Examples of Community Outreach provision

Subject Area
Family English, maths and language
English for Speakers of other languages, including
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employability for ESOL • Enrichment learning with ESOL
Employability Skills, including:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CV writing • Digital literacy • Interview skills • Work club
Family Learning, to include
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parenting skills • Understanding Anger • Enrichment & intergenerational learning
Healthy Lifestyles to include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cookery • Exercise • Gardening • Meditation
Learners with mental ill health, to include
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts and crafts • Exercise • Healthy lifestyle courses • Meditation
Older Learners, to include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts and Crafts • Digital literacy

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gentle Exercise
ICT in the Community, to include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using Microsoft Office
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excel File Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using laptops and tablets
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Get Online