**North Yorkshire Community Learning Partnership, NYCLP**

**A Strategic Framework for the Development of Community Learning in North Yorkshire**

**Revised June 2015**

1. **Introduction**

Craven College, Harrogate College, North Yorkshire County Council, Selby College, the Workers’ Educational Association, Yorkshire Coast College and Your Consortium came together in 2012 to form the North Yorkshire Community Learning Partnership. They committed to an integrated partnership approach to the provision of community learning which was consistent with SFA / BIS priorities and requirements, (particularly those described in “New challenges, New Chances. Further Education and Skills Reform Plan: Building a World Class Skills System (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 1 December 2010), and agreed to support one another as this approach was pursued.

In a formal Memorandum of Understanding, (first established for 2012/13 but reviewed and revised annually), the partners have agreed:

* To share information about their current and planned provision freely and without prejudice so that the totality of provision across North Yorkshire can be reviewed on a regular basis.
* To work together to assess community needs and identify and prioritise responses to unmet need;
* To share approaches and work together to involve individuals and communities;
* To plan provision collaboratively in order to maximise opportunities and facilitate progression for participants;
* To work together to ensure a consistent approach across North Yorkshire;
* To share approaches to quality standards and work together to ensure consistency and support new providers;
* To work closely with Children’s Centres, Libraries and other community centres;
* To link to other “projects” – eg NYCC;’s work on “troubled families”
* To respect institutional autonomy and the financial circumstances of members but hold true to the principles of good integrated partnership working;
* To share information and approaches so that any changes to funding regimes and / or SFA / BIS priorities and requirements may be anticipated to ensure appropriate levels of stability but maximum benefit to (potential) participants in North Yorkshire;
* To adopt a statement of priorities and working practices to clarify the approach to targeted and universal provision;
* To pay a membership fee pro-rata to their level of SFA funding for community learning so that a Partnership Coordinator may be employed on a part-time, flexible basis, to help individual institutions pursue the approaches and objectives described above. The Coordinator is employed by Your Consortium but acts according to the direction of the Partnership Steering Group.
* To encourage other providers to commit to the Partnership.
* To review the Memorandum of Understanding on an Annual Basis.

Askham Bryan College and Scarborough Sixth Form College joined the Community Learning Partnership in early 2013/14 making all the providers in North Yorkshire receiving community learning funds from the SFA members.

1. **Progress to date**

2.1 Initially the priority was to establish and consolidate the CLP at county and area levels:

A County Steering Group comprising representatives of the fee paying members of the NYCLP was established to provide direction for the work of six area groups for:

* Craven
* Hambleton / Richmondshire
* Harrogate
* Ryedale
* Scarborough
* Selby

The core members of the area groups were the fee paying members of the CLP which offered learning opportunities in the given area but associate membership was extended (at no charge) to include other providers of community learning and representatives from other agencies with an interest and / or who could provide information about needs in the area.

2.2 Early work of the CLP then included:

* + Work to map and analyse existing provision to identify gaps and duplication
  + Surveying voluntary organisations across the county in order to try to develop further capacity in the sector
  + Developing links with Children’s Centres and Libraries
  + Undertaking surveys in the areas of the county where participation was low in order to identify learning and progression opportunities and learners’ needs.

The NYCLP then built on the firm foundations it had established and began to use a more detailed check-list of priorities to ensure that the planning of provision at an area level (and therefore aggregated across the county) was not only collaborative but also inclusive, coherent and consistent with SFA priorities. This also helped to begin to describe the North Yorkshire Community Learning Partnership Offer and, in due course, the contributions that individual organisations and institutions were making.

2.3 In 2013/14 the CLP adopted a statement (adapted from documents prepared by the Cheshire West and Chester Employment, Skills and Learning Service) to confirm its commitment to collaborative planning and a universal offer of community learning opportunities but also committed to increase the percentage of provision specifically targeted towards learners under-represented in learning. It defined those groups. Details are available at Annex 1 and a Planning Provision Template based on these Priority Groups was prepared and was used to develop elements of new provision during 2013/14 and to plan all provision for 2014/15.

2.4 This change in the balance of provision has been the key task for the NYCLP since its inception but the County Steering Group has also provided a template for development s at an area level which has included:

* Continuing to consolidate and develop the area partnership groups including regular consideration of involving representatives from other providers in the area.
* Continuing to develop third sector infrastructure and work with voluntary groups
* Demonstrating how Pound Plus work is contributing to the universal offer and leading to better targeting of provision.
* Developing some joint marketing of provision.
* Increasing the involvement of the community and individual learners (including potential learners).
* Assisting organisations that do not receive SFA funds to promote their community learning offer.

2.5 North Yorkshire County Council took a lead in planning Community Learning in a different, more collaborative, way for 2014/15 and this has resulted in:

* + A greater proportion of provision that is targeted towards the targeted groups of the CLP;
  + Some very clear examples of how Pound Plus is being implemented;
  + Clear identification of opportunities for learners to progress;
  + Opportunities for other providers (whether funded by SFA or not) to identify and fill any gaps in provision (particularly in relation to priority groups).

This approach will be refined still further for 2015/16.

1. 2015/16 and beyond

3.1 The commitment to collaborative planning and a universal offer of community learning opportunities but also increasing the percentage of provision specifically targeted towards learners under-represented in learning will remain the over-riding priorities of the CLP. But, in addition (and building on the views expressed by members in an “Evidence of Impact” survey), work will continue to:

* + Increase the membership of the area groups in order to further consolidate and develop their work;
  + Further develop third sector infrastructure and work with voluntary groups;
  + Further develop joint marketing of provision and promote community learning offer through the CLP’s website at: [www.nyclp.org/learningopportunities.html](http://www.nyclp.org/learningopportunities.html)
  + Increase the involvement of the community and individual learners (including potential learners).
  + Allow some discretion at an area level to respond to particular needs or circumstances

3.2 The Steering Group of the CLP responded to the elements of the recent BIS Consultation Document “A Dual Mandate for Adult Vocational Education” that related to Community Learning and anticipates that the future of the SFA’s funding stream for Community Learning will become clearer during 2015/16. On that basis, it will undertake a major review of the CLP towards the end of 2015/16.

**4.0 Conclusions**

4.1 The nine core members of the NYCLP believe that through the collaborative work of the NYCLP and their own individual institutions and organisations that they are responding positively and effectively in North Yorkshire to the expectations and requirements of BIS and the SFA for the use of Community Learning Allocations as set out in SFA Funding Guidance, specifically:

* To consider the SFA’s Community Learning funding as *“a contribution in locally-owned community networks with clear strategic plans, priorities, objectives and learner outcomes …”*
* To rise to the challenge *“to deliver learning that meets local needs and shares the objectives set out in ‘New Challenges, New Chances’ December 2011”* and in particular to:
* *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, and,*
* *maximise the effect community learning has on the social and economic well-being of individuals, families and communities.*

4.2 Much progress has been made but it should be noted that there is no quick fix. Bringing about the change requires clear vision, strategy and plans – we are confident these are now in place (as described above) and will be developed and refined as required.

**Chris McGee**

**Coordinator for the North Yorkshire Community Learning Partnership**

On behalf of Askham Bryan College, Craven College, Harrogate College, North Yorkshire County Council, Scarborough Sixth Form College, Selby College, the Workers’ Educational Association, Yorkshire Coast College and Your Consortium.

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*Annex 1 – NYCLP’s Statements of Commitments and Priorities*

1. *The North Yorkshire Community Learning Partnership seeks to ensure that the provision made by its member organisations and partners is planned collaboratively to be inclusive and meet the needs and reasonable aspirations of, as far as possible, all residents of North Yorkshire. In order to achieve that, a “universal” offer will be complemented by provision specifically targeted towards learner groups that are currently under-represented in learning. These will include:*

* *Neighbourhoods with participation rates significantly below the local average and with high levels of basic and other skills needs including Family Learning designed to have learning outcomes for both parents/carers and their children*
* *The most rural parts of the county*
* *Provision for people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities including adults with mental health issues*
* *Provision that will impact positively on people’s quality of life, health and well-being*
* *Older adults*
* *Males*
* *Adults from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds*

1. *The members of the CLP also expect Community Learning provision to contribute (alongside provision funded through other routes) to tackling the barriers people face when trying to secure employment including:*

* *Work related Skills eg IT, Literacy, Numeracy and work-related personal skills with a focus on progression into further learning and/or work.*
* *Work Clubs looking at CV development, interview techniques, job search, personal impact etc.*
* *Provision designed to help participants to run their own businesses.*
* *English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)*
* *Community capacity building provision eg volunteer development provision, increasing civic participation and mentoring.*
* *Capacity building for community & voluntary organisations to be able to deliver learning.*
* *Vocational sector specific provision that provides a gateway (first step) to local employment opportunities.*
* *1 to 1 Mentoring to support effective transition between levels of learning and work.*

*The degree to which such provision is funded through community learning will vary across the county as provision funded by other means varies.*

1. *The NYCLP through its Steering Group and Area Groups (and with the agreement of its members) will, over a period of time, increase the proportion of targeted work being funded through community learning budgets but, at the same time, seek to generate additional income to ensure that the “universal” offer is not significantly diminished. The NYCLP will monitor the progress being made and effectiveness of this approach in terms of the outcomes achieved by individual participants.*