

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE:	<b>Education, Culture and Sport</b>
DATE:	<b>15 April 2010</b>
DIRECTOR:	<b>Annette Bruton</b>
TITLE OF REPORT:	<b>The Development and Operation of Learning Partnerships</b>
REPORT NUMBER:	<b>ECS/10/073</b>

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To report on progress with the development and operation of Learning Partnerships and Learning Communities as referred to in the report approved by Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> October - *Community Learning Hubs and Review of Community Centres and Community Learning and Development Activity*

To inform members about proposals relating to the purpose, role and remit of Learning Partnerships; their potential composition and membership and their relationship to the city's community planning and service planning processes.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

It is recommended that Committee:

1. Agree proposals for a network of Learning Partnerships across the City to support the implementation of the Aberdeen Learning Strategy, *Aberdeen City of Learning*.
2. Endorses that Learning Partnerships will support improvements in learning outcomes and support the Council's implementation of a Curriculum of Excellence and support people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to become more involved in their own learning and their community's development to help develop lifelong learning in Aberdeen.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The development and implementation of this policy will be achieved within existing resources and no requirement for new or additional resources is anticipated.

### **4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT**

The links to the Community Plan, the Single outcome Agreement and Vibrant, Dynamic and Forward looking are as follows:

**Vibrant, Dynamic and Forward Looking:** Learning Partnerships are linked to the commitment to establish a network of Community Learning Hubs across the city.

**Combined Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement.** Learning Partnerships will contribute to the development of the SOA outcomes as follows:

- People of all ages take an active part in their own learning to achieve their full potential. Learning and training is accessible and appropriate to learner's needs.
- Children and young people access positive learning environments and develop their skills, confidence and self-esteem to the fullest potential.
- Children, young people and their families and carers are involved in decisions that affect them. Their voices are heard and they play an active and responsible role in their communities.
- Educational attainment in Aberdeen is continuously sustained and improved.
- School leavers enter positive destinations of employment, training or further and higher education with a focus on and support for young people who require More Choices and More Chances.
- Children and young people actively participate in their communities and have optimum involvement in decision making.
- All children, young people and their families have access to high quality services when required and services provide timely, proportionate and appropriate responses to meeting the needs of children and young people within Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) requirements.
- Improve the quality of life in our most deprived areas.
- Citizens are increasingly more active in their communities regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, where they live, disability or faith/religion/belief and contribute to 'active citizenship'.
- Develop pathways to participation which enhance the diversity of local representation at and engagement with regional, national and international arts, heritage and sporting events.
- Our public services are consistently high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

An Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment will be undertaken.

## **5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

The development of Learning Communities needs to be consistent with the current development of Neighbourhood Community Planning and community regeneration. Officers across the relevant Directorates and services are working together to ensure this coherence and consistency.

## **6. REPORT**

### **Learning Communities and Learning partnerships.**

At its meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> October 2009 the Education, Culture and Sport Committee approved the following definitions, in the context of the development of a network of Community Learning Hubs and associated Learning Satellites in Aberdeen.

Learning in the wider community means learning in the broadest sense, from effective parenting to active lifestyle classes to more formal structured accredited learning delivered from a range of venues; not exclusively schools. This includes all age groups and communities of interest groups such as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender and religious groups or learners in an age group.

A Learning Community is a group of people who are learners based in geographical areas such as secondary school catchment areas. They may learn within one building or a range of locally based facilities or even share study on a common syllabus from different locations using information technology as a means of communication.

A Learning Partnership involves the stakeholders of learning in a given locality or community of interest working together in a structured way to deliver the best learning outcomes for a learning community.

### **Why we need Learning Partnerships**

It is proposed that a network of Learning Partnerships be set up across the City:

- To support the integrated and joined-up delivery of the Council's Learning Strategy thereby maximising impact and best value use of resources,
- To improve joint-evaluation to drive up performance and impact of learning services.
- To ensure that all learning services work together for stronger communities and more engaged citizens.
- To deliver learning outcomes at a local level that are consistent with the Single Outcome Agreement, the Council's Corporate Plan and the Education, Culture and Sport Service Plan.
- To further develop lifelong learning in Aberdeen, and
- To enable more people of all ages and backgrounds to become more involved in their own learning and their community's development.

It is intended that Learning Partnerships will be based on one in each Learning Community or a cluster of Learning Communities. These will be set up with a view to becoming operational in September 2010.

The new inspection regime of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) for mainstream secondary schools and Community Learning and Development (CLD) is now based on Learning Communities which are defined by the geography of secondary schools. This proposed Council policy is therefore consistent with current HMIE practice and direction of travel.

In Aberdeen, inspections of the Learning Communities surrounding Aberdeen Grammar School, Torry, Northfield and Hazlehead Academies have already taken place. These were carried out at the same time as the inspections of the respective secondary schools. Inspections are carried out separately though there is always one Inspector involved in both school and Learning Community inspections.

Learning Community inspection reports from the new regime have been very positive and provide pointers as to how closer joint working could be achieved in Aberdeen. They have advocated closer working between schools, CLD and other learning providers such as libraries and voluntary sector organisations.

They also recommend greater emphasis on planning and evaluation with partner agencies to make best use of existing resources for the learner and the local community; to attract new resources and to provide the best possible learning experience for all. Inspections of learning communities focus on the three national priorities for CLD. These are:

**1. Achievement through Building Community Capacity**

*Building community capacity and influence by enabling people to develop the confidence/understanding and skills required to influence decision making and service us*

**2. Achievement through Learning for Adults**

*Raising standards of achievement in learning for adults through community based lifelong learning opportunities, incorporating the core skills of literacy, numeracy, communication, working with others, problem solving and ICT.*

**3. Achievement through Learning for Young People**

*Engaging with young people to facilitate their personal, social and educational development and enable them to gain a voice, influence and place in society.*

All schools in the Learning Community area are viewed as partners with other learning providers in delivering community learning and development services and impact. Similarly all community learning and development providers operating within a Learning Community are expected to work in partnership with schools to extend opportunities for pupils.

Learning Partnerships will therefore contribute towards supporting and enabling the effective delivery of a Curriculum for Excellence within Aberdeen as well as driving forward progress in corporate priorities including raising educational attainment and achievement and 'Closing the Gap'.

The ability to focus on local or community based issues will allow schools as part of a Learning Partnership to link better with Council services and other agencies such as Libraries, health, police, Aberdeen College and voluntary and community organisations. Learning Partnerships will give partners the opportunity to build up a detailed knowledge of families, young people and communities in order that they can be better supported. They will act as an information, planning and action hub which other partnerships can feed into, for example, the emerging 16+ Learning Choices partnerships which will be a feature of every secondary school in the city. They will also complement existing meetings of Associated School Groups (ASGs).

Learning Partnerships will also have the potential to draw in a range of groups which are often not presently involved in existing structures, for example, uniformed and church groups.

### **How Learning Partnerships will operate**

It is proposed that Learning Partnerships are set up to reflect the particular circumstances of each Learning Community and that a dedicated member of CLD staff be given responsibility for supporting and developing the Partnership. It is also proposed that Steering Groups are set up in each area from May 2010 to consider initially the needs of the Learning Community and to make evidenced based decisions about the membership of the potential Learning Partnership. Steering Groups will comprise Principal Community Learning and Development Worker, Secondary School Head Teacher, Primary School representative,

Parent representative, Senior Pupil representative and Community representative.

There will be a review of resulting structures within eighteen months, undertaken both by local Learning Partnerships and by the Lifelong Learning Forum who will provide a city wide overview of implementation.

Though there will be no formal constitution for the Learning Partnerships, the following will require to be observed:

#### Purpose of Learning Partnerships

*To ensure that all learning services work together for improved outcomes, stronger communities and more engaged citizens.*

#### Role and Remit of Learning Partnerships

- To audit, take account of and through collaborative action to improve the impact of all forms of learning activity within a Learning Community, both formal and informal, and report on progress accordingly.
- To identify gaps in provision through local analysis of learning need.
- To re-focus resources to meet learning needs and attract new resources.
- To develop a Learning Partnership Plan which would be the learning contribution to local Neighbourhood Community Plans and Service Plans and which would show clearly the impact of joint working in terms of meeting local outcomes.
- To ensure that the learning plan is coherent with and accountable to the Single Outcome Agreement, the Council's Corporate Plan and the relevant Council Service Plans.
- To regularly monitor, review and evaluate progress and report, through action notes, to the Lifelong Learning Forum. To prepare an annual report for the Lifelong Learning Forum and the Aberdeen City Alliance.
- To re-design existing Associated School Groups (ASGs) and Community Learning and Development Centre Management Committees as key forums where learning and community matters are currently debated.

#### Memberships of Learning Partnerships are likely to include:

- Principal Community Learning Worker (Partnership Development)
- Head Teacher or Senior Manager of Secondary School
- Senior Manager representatives from Primary Schools in Learning Community
- Representatives of partner agencies and services operating in the Learning Community
- Representation from the community and service users such as Community Networks, Council's or Forums.
- Private Sector/Employers' representation (as appropriate).
- Chair of Partnership to be identified locally.

#### Frequency of meetings

As determined by local areas but a maximum of 6 meetings per year initially are envisaged.

## **7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Report Number ECS/09/032 - Community Learning Hubs and Review of Community Centres and Community Learning

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education – The inspection regime for the Community Learning and development is now based on Learning Communities which are defined by secondary school catchment areas.

Vibrant, Dynamic and Forward Looking – The Liberal Democrat and SNP programme for Aberdeen City Council.

Single Outcome Agreement – Defines the priorities of the Council and Partners.

Aberdeen City Council draft Learning Strategy- outlines learning priorities for the Council

Council Notice of Motion 12 Nov 2008 – Called for a review of community centres and community learning activity across the city, leading to the report approved by Education Culture and Sport Committee on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2009