FURTHER EDUCATION
TRUST FOR LEADERSHIP

MONOGRAPH

ADULT COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Supporting place and people: Characteristics of success

Dr Susan Pember OBE

ABOUT HOLEX

HOLEX is the lead professional body for adult community education and learning.

HOLEX represents a network of 130+ adult community education providers and is the sector professional membership body for local authority adult community learning (ACL) services, institutes of learning (SDI), independent third sector providers, including local authority spin offs, and national providers and individuals who share the network's ethos. HOLEX members have the largest geographical reach of all providers and they educate, train and retrain 700,000+ adult learners annually. They are judged by Ofsted as the sector best for teaching and learning and are often top of the league table for customer satisfaction.

All HOLEX members share a joint mission to provide skills and learning that give adults and often their families a chance to succeed in life and support their employment prospects and wellbeing, which in turn improves productivity and creates the circumstances for economic success.

MONOGRAPH

FETL monographs are short, forward-looking treatments of subjects key to the leadership of thinking in further education and skills. Written at the invitation of the Trust, they aim to influence leadership in and of the sector, taking its present needs and concerns as their starting point and looking deeply into the experience of colleagues in order to devise scripts for the future. As with all FETL's work, the intention is not to offer definitive solutions but to engage readers in further thought and debate about issues crucial to the development of FE and skills in the UK, often drawing on ideas from other sectors and disciplines. Each monograph concludes with a number of key ways ahead for the sector.

CONTENTS

WHY IS ADULT EDUCATION IMPORTANT?

Adult community education is important to the council because it provides all our residents with a great learning experience that helps them to make positive changes to their lives, by creating healthier, wealthier and happier communities across Nottinghamshire.

Councillor John Cottee, Chair of the Communities and Place Committee, Nottinghamshire County Council

The high-quality curriculum provision at Redbridge Institute ofAdult Education, the excellent student outcomes and, more importantly, the accessibility and use by the diverse Redbridge population are vital components and contributors in the council's ethos of delivering results for Redbridge. This helps us with delivering key priorities for residents around opportunity for all and tackling the root causes of social challenges.

Councillor Jas Athwal, Leader, Redbridge Council

I am proud of the work that Manchester Adult Education Service (MAES) does to bring learning opportunities into the heart of Manchester's communities. These make a real difference to helping our residents improve their confidence, skills and qualifications so that they can better support their families and contribute to and benefit from Manchester's success. Many of the learners I meet in MAES centres speak highly of the positive impact that learning with MAES has had on their lives.

Councillor Nigel Murphy, Deputy leader, Manchester City Council

Hertfordshire Adult Community Learning Service (HAFLS) is a vital element of adult community services offered by Hertfordshire County Council. I greatly value community learning as I have seen first-hand its impact on some of our residents. It has helped them improve their well-being, get them into employment or volunteering and is often beneficial for the family as a whole. In a context where social prescribing is a recognised viable alternative to the medical model and a society where loneliness is identified as a contributing factor to poor health, community learning is an essential part of the recovery pathways.

Owen Mapley, CEO, Hertfordshire County Council

FOREWORD

Dame Ruth Silver

This report is both timely and necessary. It comes at a moment when lifelong learning is high on the political agenda and the importance of place as an organising principle of learning provision is increasingly recognised. Adult community education contributes significantly to both these agendas, placing it at the centre of policy interest in further education and skills, which is why the Further Education Trust for Leadership is so pleased to support this work.

Adult community education is one of the most resilient and creative parts of the education system. It has survived swinging cuts to its public support, yet it continues to make its vital contribution to the social, civic and economic wellbeing of our communities, retaining its values and mission in spite of changing policy agendas and the hollowing out of local authority funding over the past decade.

At the heart of this mission is the idea of service – service to learners and to communities. The sector puts these considerations first, working in close partnership with local authorities, employers and voluntary and community-sector organizations to ensure the needs of learners are properly articulated and understood, and creating conditions in which learners – particularly the most vulnerable or hardest to reach – can engage with education.

Partnership is crucial, of course, and the sector has demonstrated its capacity to work intelligently and effectively with a range of partners. But, as the report also shows, underpinning this success is a number of other key factors, including a clear sense of vision and direction for the work, a sensible approach to monitoring and assessment, effective internal and external communications, and a commitment to the continuing professional development of staff.

This agile and collaborative infrastructure is important and is part of the policy memory associated with local authority adult education services. As we move forward in developing place-based solutions to local problems, and in renewing lifelong learning and our commitment to the creation of a learning society, it is critical that we tap into this and learn from it. This report shows, above all, how adult community education can assist the future, and contribute to the kind of holistic approach to post-18 education that we surely need, yet which seems so very elusive.

Not for the first time, adult community education points the way ahead.

Dame Ruth Silver is President of the Further Education Trust for Leadership

FOREWORD

Pat Carrington

I am proud of the sector I work within. Adult community education providers have, over the last eight years, substantially changed the way they work, now concentrating on those most vulnerable and those furthest away from the workplace and society. Each year, more than 600,000 adult students are supported, and many of those are from the most deprived localities in England. The sector can also demonstrate the quality of its education provision and its relentless focus on ensuring students meet their goals.

However, although there is much research on the benefits of adult learning there is very little written about how adult education is delivered in the community or how it fits within a local authority and with other services and partners who work with a similar client group.

This research project and resulting monograph begin to give substance to what makes adult community education successful. The research shows that inspiring leadership is vital and the ability to 'join the dots' and be 'quick of foot' is crucial when meeting the multiple needs of residents.

In this time of media interest in further education, especially around financial issues and poor performance, it is assuring to note that adult community education (ACE) bucks the trend and, although underfunded, it has not succumbed to borrowing and creating debt and therefore leaving itself financially exposed. ACE providers also fly in the face of the new unchallenged norm that to deliver further and adult education you must be a large organisation. It may be an inconvenient truth, but large is not always best. In fact, staying small allows providers to be agile and to be local. What this project has demonstrated is that adult community education providers make a reality of meeting neighbourhood learning and skills needs.

I would like to thank FETL for having the foresight to commission this work and the ACE services that contributed to the project. I am sure the sector will benefit from the findings and recommendations. The 'top tips for success' that detail the characteristics of successful community education services should help us to sustain our present quality performance and continue to give learners a first-class experience that provides the inspiration and skills they need to progress to further learning, jobs and life fulfilment.

Pat Carrington is Chair of HOLEX and Executive Principal/Assistant Director, Skills and Employment, City College Peterborough/ Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This monograph, commissioned by the Further Education Trust for Leadership (FETL), highlights the impactful practice of successful adult community education (ACE) services in raising standards and sustaining high performance in their local neighbourhoods. The review built on the concepts of 'place-making and supporting residents'. The purpose of the review was to consider how, in these worrying times for further education, ACE services have continued to provide a good local offer while simultaneously improving quality. With 88 per cent of services rated good or outstanding, the review considered the characteristics that make ACE services the quality leader in the FE sector. To do this, the review examined the role of local leadership in delivering community education and what characteristics these services demonstrate that has ensured their longevity and sustainability.

The five main aims of the project were: to consider the role of local leadership in supporting community education and meeting the complex productivity and societal education needs of residents; to consider how adult education services work with other services related to their client group and vice versa; to identify successful characteristics and how these can be replicated throughout the ACE sector; to determine if they complement the work being done by others, looking at place and the role of civic responsibility; and to determine a development plan to ensure the findings are cascaded to the rest of the ACE sector.

The review found that there were four areas that set local authority services apart from other providers. These were: having a consistent government policy approach for community learning that has allowed services to develop and embed good practice; the enhanced scrutiny role of local authorities and related governance boards; the actions and behaviour of leaders and managers, and the example they set; and the small size of many of the services, which allows them to be agile, which,

in turn, supports the local structure and ensures individual student needs are met.

The standout feature was the determination and drive of senior leadership teams in making sure their visions and values became the culture and ethos of their staff, ensuring they built in outstanding and good features in their work and the work of their delivery partners. Although not well articulated in their own publicity literature, the importance of 'place' and what residents needed was paramount in their thinking and actions.

This document sets out the findings of the review around four themes that influence service vision and delivery, offers a set of recommendations to build on the good practice found, suggests components for a leaders' continuous professional development programme and provides a list of 'Top tips' for ensuring a successful ACE service.

The full data report can be found at: **https://holex.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/HOLEX-LA-Leadership-Survey-FETL-Results-Annex-4.pdf.**

BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

Many communities are disconnected from the main political infrastructure. As shown by the Brexit vote, residents do not feel that the government understands their needs. The 2018 published report on loneliness demonstrates what modern society is doing to individual wellbeing. That, coupled with changes in the workplace, with automation and remote working, is leading to a society that is not engaging with its community.

The traditional support infrastructure no longer exists. For example, there are very few youth clubs for the young, or community centres for those with a disability, or libraries for those who want a friendly place to go and meet others. Local authorities are no longer funded for these services and the result is fewer physical centres for people to socialise or engage with others to create a sense of community. So, even if people want to self-organise, their choice is limited.

Local authority adult education services were created between the two world wars, but many services can track their history back to the late 1800s. They have traditionally thrived in periods of history following a crisis – for example, after the Second World War or following a depression such as the crash in the 1980s. They provide a space of safety and empowerment for individuals who are having to address real-life issues. They offer a second chance to retrain and get new skills and provide the structure to support other government goals though learning, such as integration and social inclusion. The government strategy covering ACE is the 2011 *New Challenges, New Chances* skills strategy *(Annex 3)*.

Local authorities still have a remit for adult education, but the remit has changed. Some council officers assume this activity must be just skills based, but many have managed to maintain a community service. These are the services which have programmes built on the needs of

individuals who live in their local community. Although these services always feel under threat (because of the austerity measures funding is 40 per cent less than it was 10 years ago) they are surviving and, in some areas, flourishing.

Using the standard post-18 performance indicators, adult community education providers regularly outperform the rest of the FE sector. Their Ofsted inspection reports demonstrate that 88 per cent of ACE providers are good or outstanding and they regularly top student satisfaction surveys. Ofsted often comment on partnership work and the role of providers in the community. However, there is not much written about the reasons why these types of service are flourishing and what difference these services can make to an area when there is an active community education service.

This project reviewed the unique factors of adult education in the community and tried to address the questions of what defines local leadership, what difference it makes to individuals living in an area and what are the skills needed to support services working together for the benefit of those who live there. The review also considered what is deemed to be good practice in other parts of a local authority's work and looked at what is required to establish local structures to support integration and wellbeing.

Project aims

The project sought to determine and recognise excellent practice in local authority adult education services. The work concentrated on five main aims:

- To consider the role of local leadership in supporting community education and meeting the complex needs of residents.
- To reflect how adult education services work with other services related to their client group and vice versa.
- To identify excellent practice and how it can be replicated throughout the ACE sector.
- To determine if this complements the work being done by others, looking at place and the role of civic responsibility.

- To determine a development plan to ensure the findings are cascaded to the rest of the ACE sector.

The project focus was on local authority adult education services, but several not for profit and Institute of Learning organisations asked to take part and, where relevant, have been included.

Project review topics

The project themes covered in this final report are:

- Local authority adult education governance regulatory framework
- Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) guidance on ACE
- Definition of place
- Existing joint structures
- Role of head of services
- Civic responsibility and how it could be related to ACE
- Service structures that foster joint working
- Leadership qualities
- Development structures that foster joint ownership
- Evidence that place matters
- What CPD is required

The research work and summary of findings centred around the themes and structures that shape an education provider:

- Statutory government and regional policy
- Structures and business processes, including the role of partnerships
- Accountability, scrutiny and challenge
- Leadership values

Methodology used

The review team used a mixed methodology comprising interviews, desktop research, survey and corroboration of findings by experts.

- The first stage included a review of the literature, existing support materials and research into best practice.
- The second stage involved a survey of ACE providers, from which a sample was selected for interview. These interviews were also used to determine the good practice case studies.
- The third stage involved convening a roundtable of local leaders and others to present and consider the emerging findings, acting as a sense-check that the findings accurately reflect sector-wide practice and serve to promote good practice.

The work of this project was steered by a group of sector leaders, overseen by the Chair of HOLEX, and kept to the originally agreed methodology. The project has been well received within the adult education sector, with a high level of interest.

Case study:
Local authority services working together
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Partnership between the adult education service (Inspire Learning) and Nottinghamshire County Council's Troubled Families Team

Inspire is supporting the council's Troubled Families Team to deliver an innovative programme of parenting support across Nottinghamshire. Parents are gaining the skills to become trainers, so that they can support other parents by teaching them new skills to cope better with their children. The 'Working with Parents Group Leader Training Course' trains participants to deliver the 'Being a Parent' programmes. The partnership between Inspire and the council means that the group leaders (who are themselves parents who have previously been supported by the Troubled Families Team) will gain accreditation (the Award in Education and Training Level 3), which will help them to gain employment as sessional tutors. The collaboration between Inspire and the council has also made the 'Being a Parent' courses more sustainable by accessing new sources of co-funding. This partnership is helping some of the most vulnerable people in Nottinghamshire learn new skills that will improve their lives. This is a good example of the transformative role that adult and community learning can play, helping councils to positively impact residents' lives by providing access to new funding sources and expertise.

RESEARCH DATA AND INFORMATION

Data and information were collected on the four themes of:

- Government and regional policy and guidance
- Structures and business processes including the role of partnership
- Accountability, scrutiny and challenge
- Leadership values

Data and information were sourced from Ofsted reports, survey, interviews, an expert panel and observations from the past.

Review of Ofsted reports

Ofsted is the statutory inspector of state-funded adult community education. It defines ACE providers as those that deliver community learning, education and training and apprenticeships designed to help people of all ages and backgrounds. ACE providers specialise in engaging with learners who are economically and/or socially disadvantaged. They help learners to improve their personal, social and employability skills. Learning often takes place in community settings, such as schools, libraries and children's centres.

Ofsted has observed that most ACE providers offer courses at Level 2 or below, including courses that do not lead to a formal qualification (non-accredited). In recent years, there has been a shift towards focusing more on courses in English, mathematics and information, communication and technology (ICT). However, health and wellbeing and arts and culture courses that help individuals to gain confidence, progress to further learning and create opportunities for social interaction remain an integral part of the curriculum offer in this part of the sector.

Ofsted uses the FE data library local authority tables to determine the number of providers to inspect. In 2017, there were 222 community learning and skills providers, made up of 139 local authorities, 72 not-for-profit organisations with charitable status and 11 specialist designated institutions. Between them they were delivering training to around 650,000 learners.

Ofsted commented in its annual report that the number of adults participating in government-funded education and training programmes continues its year-on-year decline, but the decline in ACE is less than that for the main FE colleges.

- Overall participation declined by 3 per cent over the first two quarters of 2017/18 compared with 2016/17. This follows a 4 per cent decline between 2015/16 and 2016/17.
- There were declines in the number of adults participating on Level 2 courses, English and mathematics qualifications and in the number of learners on community learning funded programmes.
- However, the number of adults participating on Level 4 courses has increased over time and there was a small, recent, increase in the number of learners taking English for speakers of other languages (ESOL).

In 2017/18, inspectors observed a wide range of activity to support adult learners in their communities, including:

- high-quality training in mentoring and counselling for learners recovering from drug and alcohol misuse;
- ESOL courses to help refugees and nurses recruited from overseas to improve their spoken English;
- family learning courses for parents so that they can help support their children in learning to read, write and count;
- programmes that focus on developing independence, social and employment skills for learners who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities;
- work with the police service to help learners remove themselves from gang culture and law-breaking.

By August 2018, Ofsted had inspected 220 of the 222 community learning providers. In 2017/18, Ofsted inspected 75 community learning and skills providers. This year, 17 out of 24 providers that previously 'required improvement' or were 'inadequate' improved to good. This increased the proportion of providers judged 'good' or 'outstanding' at their most recent inspection by 5 percentage points, from 83 per cent on 31 August 2017 to 88 per cent on 31 August 2018. This placed community learning as sector best, with FE colleges at 76 per cent and independent providers 77 per cent.

Of the 17 providers that improved to good this year, inspectors found that the most common areas of improvement were that:

- leaders and managers had successfully improved the number of learners achieving their qualifications or personal learning goals on non-accredited courses;
- leaders and managers had made improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment through improved performance management;
- governance arrangements had been strengthened;
- subcontractors were being managed more effectively;
- leaders and managers had raised expectations and aspirations for their learners.

Reviewing the comments in good and/or outstanding inspection reports, the following good practice has been identified. In good and outstanding services:

- Vision for services underpins LA plans for productivity and well-being.
- Local authority (LA) and governance structures have clear accountabilities.
- LA members have excellent knowledge of the service offer and how it underpins local need.
- Advisory board members have extensive experience of adult education and skills and very strong finance and business acumen.
- Service leaders understand both how to manage the curriculum offer and how to work in a democratic setting.

- Scrutiny committees have the relevant breadth of skills to support and challenge leaders effectively in all aspects of the service's work.
- Senior leaders focused on student experience provide a high level of scrutiny on a number of key performance indicators, including the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Frequent and detailed scrutiny of data and KPIs used to monitor learner recruitment, employer engagement, outcomes, progression and finance.
- Strong governance is instrumental in ensuring that outcomes for learners remain at a very high rate and there is effective promotion of the 'Prevent' duty and safeguarding.

Survey data and interpretation

To determine and provide background to the review, a survey was conducted to collect base information from the ACE, sector and this was circulated to HOLEX members via the main e-group on which there are 138 providers and 500+ members. The survey was live for 10 days and reminders were sent during this period.

There were 57 responses to the survey, representing answers from 53 providers. This represents a response rate of 38 per cent of the HOLEX membership and around 35 per cent of all local authority providers and gives a statistically sound cohort for the analysis.

Note the focus of the survey was local authority providers, but responses were welcomed from any provider who felt that they could contribute.

The questions were devised to elicit a mix of factual and qualitative answers. A link can be found to the full data report in *Annex 4*.

Business structure:
- 85 per cent of respondents were in local authorities
- The most used role titles were: head of service manager and Principal
- Size of service had no bearing on role title.
- Organisational structures are different in every service; there is no common structure.

- 25 per cent reported to a director for education, 20 per cent to a director of employment, 8 per cent to a director of economy and enterprise, 16 per cent to a director of community, people and place.
- 53 per cent of services were governed and held accountable through an LA scrutiny committee, while 38 per cent had an advisory board.

Partnership:
- Complex regional structures.
- All work with skills boards, enterprise boards, care boards and new mayoral combined authority (MCA) structures.
- 69 per cent had some form of interaction with these partners or something similar.

Service objectives:
- Plans in line with LA objectives while at the same time bearing in mind other policies and strategies.

Planning information:
- Widespread use of various information sources for planning, including: labour market intelligence, student feedback, own surveys and employer feedback.

Place-making:
- 84 per cent of respondents mention place as important, but only 20 per cent had a policy.

Partnerships:
- 50 per cent of services had formal partnerships and subcontracted activity to them.

Leadership characteristics:
- Leadership,
- Coordination,
- Planning and building on service expertise seen as the most important.

In summary, there was a mixed approach to governance structure, but the single standout feature was the importance of the democratic accountability processes of local authorities that added another dimension to the scrutiny role. Quality is good whatever the structure, but some structures make it easier to operate; for example, when the structure facilitates joint working with other LA services that are focusing on the same client group, such as housing and or vulnerable families.

Community education services work in very complex local structures which often include multiple levels of planning and commissioning and others who want to influence service plans, for example, MCA committees, skills and enterprise groups, care boards, schools/pupil progression groups. There is no standardisation in service leaders' title or role, but all seem to do the same job and have the same key characteristics of strategic thinking, coordination and partnership. It could be seen from Ofsted reports and the responses to the survey that there were four key business areas that influenced the shape and success of the service. These were:

- Government and regional policy and guidance
- Structures and business processes including the role of partnership
- Accountability, scrutiny and challenge
- Leadership values

Interview observations

To investigate further, a set of six interviews was undertaken with heads of service and principals using a semi-structured format. The interviews concentrated on key areas: government and regional policy and guidance; structures and business processes, including the role of partnership; accountability; scrutiny and challenge; civic responsibility; place and leadership.

Statutory base

All the services interviewed were clear that they worked to the local authority adult education governance regulatory framework set by government in *New Challenges, New Chances* in 2011 and how that is

expressed in ESFA funding guidance. The main influence on how their programmes are arranged is ESFA rules, which still insist on ACE services working to the framework (written in 2011). Although some funding rules have changed, in the main this was seen to be merely clarification. The fact that the policy has remained the same since 2011 has allowed providers to apply it properly in their locality. Interviewees saw this to be a positive, especially when compared to other government initiatives that had come and gone in the same period.

Other influences were Ofsted and the Common Inspection Framework, which, again, was well understood and seen as a positive and, although cautious about the recent changes, most saw the new emphasis as being also positive. There was less certainty about the role of the FE Commissioner and most felt there was an inbuilt unfairness in the system. The main issue concerned the fact that if LA services received an Ofsted 'inadequate' grade they came under the commissioner's remit for intervention but, if these providers needed support, they could not call on the national leaders scheme in the way FE colleges can.

Definition of place

There was no common definition of place, although many services were managed via the 'place directorate'. Place was seen to be important as a method for targeting certain geographical areas such as wards or streets where residents were underrepresented in education, or had multiple agencies working to bring services together to support residents with issues. There was evidence that 'place matters' and adult education plans were being built using local data. The views of elected members, councillors, employers and learners are used to influence policy. There was a focused approach to working with other services in certain areas, for example, funding concentrated on deprived wards.

Existing joint structures

All service leaders spoke of a complicated array of systems, meetings and groups. There is no standardised system, but there is enthusiasm to ensure adult education is locked into the needs of the area. In order to do that, they need to contribute to all the groups, initiatives and projects which could benefit their students. The most effective results

were found where an LA has formalised structures. And all service leaders feel it is their job to support the voice of their learners; they use different tactics to achieve this.

Funding

Adult education services and centres can have an annual turnover of anything from small at £200,000 to large at £35 million. However, the average is around £3 million. Using this funding, they cover a range of provision normally targeted at their authority's priority areas – for example, long-term unemployed, those at risk of isolation from society and priority wards in the LA. They also support other services such as housing, care and employment services, and children through family learning. Although they generally concentrate on subjects below Level 2, several services and centres have good-quality, high-level provision and make use of the government's FE loans scheme.

Providers follow the same rules as FE colleges with the same funding levels for courses and, although they would agree that they are underfunded, they are not allowed to run a deficit budget or borrow. The following table shows a typical income stream. It shows an average provider may have 10 funding streams. Although several of these streams come from the ESFA, they have attached to them different funding rules and outcomes. Also, from 2019/20, eight areas of the country will also respond to the requirements of mayoral combined authorities, which will have devolved responsibility for two of those funding streams.

Although funding is complex, ACE providers manage to provide a quality experience within the funding available. As they are not allowed to borrow, they are not in debt, unlike some FE colleges.

Example of a provider's funding sources, 2018/19

	Name of funding source	Amount £	Notes
1	16 to 19 study programmes (ESFA) including 16 to 18 traineeships	1.25m	310 learners in 2018/19, mainly NEET–direct delivery
2	19 + AEB non-formula funding ESFA community and family learning	2.28m	5,000 learners – £1m direct delivery, £1m subcontracted
3	19 + AEB formula funding ESFA Accredited learning – Including 19 to 24 traineeships (ESFA)	625k	1,000 learners – direct delivery
4	19 + Advanced Learner Loans (ESFA/SLC)	75k	30 learners (Access to HE provision – health and social care) directly delivered
5	16 + Apprenticeships Levy	250k	Levy paying only, in-house and neighbouring LAs
6	Towards Work Strand of the Building Better Communities Fund (ESF/Communities Lottery Fund)	300k	200 beneficiaries, long-term unemployed (project due to finish 31/01/2020 but may be extended to 2022)
7	Flexible Learning Fund (DfE)	250k	Project due to finish on 31/07/2019. Partnership with ACE services.
8	Minor 2 Major Fund (Heritage Lottery Fund)	850k	Project over four years (starts 2019/20 finishes 31/07/2023), approx. £212k p.a.
9	Way2Work (ESF / DWP)	725k	Project to support long-term unemployed. Announcement in May 2019 (£242k p.a. between 2019/20 and 2021/22)
10	Learner fees funding and full cost	530k	
	TOTAL (Actual 2018/19)	**5.635m**	

Civic responsibility - How it could be related to ACE

There was little knowledge or concept of formal civic responsibility, policy or theory and it is not included in formal job descriptions. However, there was much evidence of it working in practice and service leaders had a heightened awareness of doing what's right for local residents. A real sense of personal responsibility for the residents of their local authority was demonstrated when discussing deprived wards and how these were being targeted.

Role of head of service

The interviews confirmed the findings of the survey in that there was no standardised job description for a head of service/principal or service leader. However, whatever the job title, they did have a similar role and prioritised the same activities. There was a consistent approach to the role which included:

- Interpreting local need through a vast array of information – 'joining the dots'.
- Setting strategy and getting it approved – ensuring adult education goals meet the LA vision.
- Motivating staff, including partners and volunteers.
- Meeting the needs of regulators.
- Promoting learner achievements.
- Making the most of available funding and being opportunistic about finding other funding sources.
- Understanding local, regional and national politics and how they could impact on learners.

Leadership qualities

The main leadership qualities that stood out from the discussions with leaders and from reviewing what Ofsted, their staff and students said of them were:

- Passionate about raising learner aspiration and success.
- Determined to use national policy to support local need.
- Ability to work in partnerships and, where they don't exist, create them.
- Fleet of foot – turning challenges into opportunities.

- Positive, optimistic, encouraging, energetic and affirmative.
- Showed an understanding of how to teach – empathy with teachers.
- Common sense approach to providing the offer within available funding.
- Champion of their staff and students – especially ensuring learners had a voice.

The expert panel suggested that the FE Women's Leadership Network should be approached to see whether they could work with HOLEX to do further work on the possible correlation between the mainly female leadership staff cohort and the success of ACE services.

Case study:
Working in partnership:

Redbridge Institute of Adult Education

Redbridge Institute set up the Redbridge Community Learning Partnership Trust (CLPT) to undertake joint curriculum planning with strategic partners from the public sector, voluntary organisations and other stakeholders to ensure the community learning grant funding and offer meets local priorities. The service continues to convene the meetings which are chaired by the principal.

The Institute, through the CLPT, has actively supported and contributed to other projects and initiatives in the borough to tackle child poverty, homelessness, health and wellbeing, including mental health, unemployment, integration and debt. These are all key priorities for residents around opportunity for all and tackling the root cause of the social challenges set out in the Redbridge Council Borough Plan. This collaborative approach has maximised the funding that flows into Redbridge to support education, skills and employment priorities and actions within the plan.

For example, a research project, *Family Fortunes,* was funded by Campaign for Learning and the Money Advice Service, enabling

the service to deliver a financial skills course in three participating schools. Ninety-eight per cent of the parents who took part experienced positive changes against financial capacity indicators.

Recycles Ilford is a social enterprise bike-recycling project in collaboration with the Salvation Army, Shanks Waste Management plc and the Metropolitan Police. The project helps previously homeless or unemployed clients to acquire bike mechanic skills and gain a Cycle Mechanics Level 2 qualification through Redbridge Institute. Recycled bikes are sold to the public to fund the project and learners gain vocational skills which supports their recovery and progression into employment.

Working in Mind is an employability initiative targeting priority Jobcentre Plus customers – unemployed adults with mental ill health and, more recently, older people with poor literacy skills. Working with other partners such as Redbridge Concern for Mental Health and local mental health charities, the initiative has been able to combine traditional employability support, dyslexia screening, wellbeing coaches and access to social prescription provision such as mindfulness training, which has resulted in 50 per cent of participants progressing to work and others to further learning.

The Family learning STEM programme is a priority for the CLPT. By exposing families to STEM and giving them opportunities to explore STEM-related concepts, the children may develop a passion for it and, supported by their parents, be interested in pursuing employment in a STEM field.

During British Science Week 2019, working with five primary schools, 65 parents, 250 children and 15 school teachers participated in family learning workshops on this year's theme, 'Journey'. Feedback from parents and head teachers highlighted not just the practical skills and knowledge gained but also the kindling of a real enthusiasm for science and experimentation.

A new initiative with eight parents and 13 children is underway with a self-organised group of parents who are home-schooling

their young children. A STEM course held in the library is bringing these isolated parents together and offering their children a broader curriculum as they enjoy coding in Raspberry Pi.

The service has organised joint showcase and celebration events enabling those benefitting (organisations, volunteers and learners) to come together and talk about the impact the projects had had on them as individuals and the impact on their communities/users. The attendance of key stakeholders and policymakers at these events ensures wider dissemination of innovative strategies which are successfully tackling local priorities engaging the most disadvantaged and excluded learners and ensuring continued support for the service from local councillors and funders.

Redbridge Institute recently achieved an 'outstanding' Ofsted report (May 2018). Inspectors commended the work of managers who maintain a strong network of partnerships across the local community, ensure that the curriculum addresses local priorities and that courses take place in a wide range of high-quality and accessible venues within the community provided by their partners.

Learning from the past

Reflections from the past and present by William Tyler, retired Principal, City Lit

Core values don't change, but delivery may

Local authority adult education grew in part from the many nineteenth and early twentieth century local community initiatives, ranging from literary and philosophical societies to mechanics' institutes.

Adult educators working for local authorities began in the 1960s and 1970s to look at what they called 'community education'. This took many forms, from community schools to community outreach workers. The purpose was to engage more closely with communities or individuals who were missing out on the more formal education offered in adult education institutes and colleges.

In the 1970s, a national initiative to establish local development councils for adult education sought to provide a base for some form of unified planning between all the bodies involved in adult education provision in a given area. These councils were local authority led; but the model was flawed.

One matter which has plagued adult education has been that of the language used to describe what it is. Permanent education, lifelong learning, continuing education, recurrent education, non-vocational education, and others. Thus, today there is a case that all adult education could/should be described as community education, as long as the fact that the word 'community' incorporates individual learning alongside group learning is acknowledged. But, more important than all that, is that we are ourselves clear what it is that adult/community learning is seeking to deliver.

The 1945 enquiry conducted by the British Institute of Adult Education said clearly, inter alia, 'Education should be made available to the whole adult population and should be varied in range and standard to suit the variety of their requirements'.

What lessons can be learned from past mistakes?

1. Adult education functions best when it manages itself and is not incorporated into another type of education establishment, whether secondary school or further education college.

2. Adult education responds best to community needs, as well as demands, when local people are democratically and genuinely involved in the governance of the adult education institution.

3. Adult education in order to make a comprehensive provision needs to alter its views as to what is appropriate to be taught, the way it is taught, and who takes the initiative – e.g. another public body, a voluntary body, a commercial body, a private group or one of the host of other types of provider.

4. To be a lead organisation, such as a local authority adult education service, does not equate with being in charge of decision-making; as Ronald Reagan once remarked, 'The most terrifying words in the English language are: I'm from the

government and I'm here to help.' It equates instead to leading a community to identify needs and demands, and then filling those gaps still left by others.

5. Politicians, both national and local, must be brought to an understanding that adult education cannot be quantified and measured as though its aims and methods were the same as those of secondary or further education.

What skills are needed by community educators?

The ability to stimulate, incorporate, support and stand back from provision. This has always been the case although, too often, local authority adult education professional staff were appointed to be managers or subject specialists.

Specific training courses for a new breed of adult education 'animateurs' needs to be established. These courses should be available to paid and volunteer staff throughout the community education sector, and the expertise to run them should be internally generated. One of the mistakes of the past was to allow adult education training to become absorbed by further education training, leading to an emphasis on management or classroom performance alone.

Case study:
Working with the most vulnerable
—

Hertfordshire Adult Education Service (HAFLS)

To further enhance its ability to reach people in the most disadvantaged communities, HAFLS has taken the lead to set up new learning hubs in some of the most deprived areas in Hertfordshire, with a specific focus on wards where there is currently little or no support services. Each is set up in partnership with a local organisation from the voluntary sector. The aim of the hub is to be a welcoming environment for people from disadvantaged groups, a non-judgemental and non-intimidating space where people can come and 'have a chat and a cup of tea', hear about local services they might benefit from or take part in courses that will help them get closer to their personal aims. Community learning courses are available in each hub, varying from health and wellbeing, arts and crafts or English and maths courses. The partner organisation and HAFLS also agree which other services should be represented at the hub, depending on the needs within the local area. This includes, for example, a Job Centre Plus advisor, an information point for the local college, a representative from the local Citizen Advice Bureau, Money Advice Service, impartial careers advice, a mental health charity organisation and other charity organisations (e.g. drug support services or job search support).

This model has proved successful as the residents become gradually more confident to engage with local services and with local education suitable to meet their needs. Residents take their first steps towards adult education at the hub, but coaching/mentoring is also made available to them if required (currently funded by the Building Better Opportunities (BBO) projects) to help them continue their journey towards employment, volunteering or improved health and wellbeing. As well as being more confident about their future, learners are reporting feeling supported through the hub and feeling less isolated.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The summary of key findings is grouped under four themes. These themes were chosen as they are the ones that emerged from the survey and interview findings as the key component parts of any education service's success and provide a base from which to review the service's business model. Evidence from the survey and interviews confirmed the importance of these areas when shaping practice.

Government and regional policy and guidance

The main influence is *New Challenges, New Chances*. Although written in 2011, it has been embedded into the funding guidelines and therefore forms part of funding agreements with the ESFA. This provides a clear line of sight between government and regional policy to local adult education service plans. This government policy has led to changes of practice and has allowed the changes to be properly embedded, which, in turn, has allowed services to build capacity to deliver it. This has led to good quality delivery as demonstrated by 88 per cent of providers being classed as good or outstanding. This is a key difference when compared to the rest of the FE sector, which has seen several changes in the same time span. The ACE sector has had stability for eight years, which means the delivery of the policy intent has had time to mature and space to find out what works. There are now risks of this success being undermined by devolution of the skills budget and/or the government's response to the post-18 review of funding, but services are optimistic about the future as they can see that more needs to be done if the challenges of the government's Industrial Strategy and the Communities Integration Plan are to be met.

Structures and business processes including funding and the role of partnership

Although all adult community education providers are influenced by government policy and funding guidance, there is no common model for delivery or organisation structure.

The actual organisational structure in which the provider sits does not make much difference to the quality of the service. There are good providers in all the different organisational structures. However, it does seem easier for leaders when based in a directorate of the LA where the executives are focused on place and/or education or enterprise.

Delivery partnerships are important and are best used when they are for specialist provision. Each service has a different mix of direct delivery and/or subcontracted partnership contracts. These subcontract arrangements are robustly managed and the students know they are students of that ACE service.

This delivery format has served providers well. However, there is a new trend to more direct delivery as it is seen to be more effective when managing quality and when there is need to change direction.

The infrastructures in ACE providers are slimline, with very little middle management or large support services. The support services that are there are built around supporting the student, such as career counselling. Salary levels have been kept low and the average head of service salary is much lower than the norm in FE colleges. By concentrating on student experience, controlling salary costs and not spending on unnecessary infrastructure, ACE services have managed not to go into debt and still maintain enhanced quality. It should not be underestimated how hard this has been and ACE services, like FE colleges, believe that the funding rates are now too low. Also, ACE services believe they should have access to capital in the same way colleges do.

Accountability, scrutiny and challenge

As well as the normal government and agency performance systems, adult education services and providers undertake several other levels of scrutiny, including:

- their own governance/advisory boards;
- their LA executive accountability systems;
- the democratic scrutiny process whereby local councillors/ elected members are held to account by their peers.

This has led to a position where funding is well spent, learner outcomes have improved and there is less fraud and system gaming than in the rest of the FE sector. This is one of the major differences between local authority ACE services and the FE sector as a whole. The enhanced level of scrutiny has created conditions whereby ACE service plans are very much in line with local needs and goals for residents and ensures funding is well spent. Although it duplicates some of the reporting processes, it has enhanced their business and financial planning.

Leadership values and qualities

From the in-depth discussions it was clear that successful services had a clear focus on the learner while, at the same time, being opportunistic in ensuring that, as leaders, they sourced all the available funding streams to support their learners. These leaders demonstrated enhanced skills in determining, through local trends, data and intelligence, what their adult education programme should be like. Most services work in a complex environment with several lead players, including the new combined authorities as well as the national government departments for Education, Work and Pensions and Local Government. These services saw the leader's role was to make sense of the various initiatives and align them to local need – as put concisely by one head of service: 'My role is to join the dots'.

Another shared feature seen in good ACE services was the use of management information, particularly relating to learners' performance and progression. The information was clear, accurate, available and timely. However, student welfare was seen to be a more important

driver than the data. These services were very much learner aligned and not data driven. The data were there to help identify where change was needed and performance could be improved, and to effectively challenge, motivate and make these changes while spending as much time as possible ensuring learners are safe and progressing in their learning.

Especially in the outstanding providers included in this project, a solid database gave the services confidence, self-belief and knowledge about themselves and their learners. They have established a culture of self-assessment and supplemented their systems with independent structures that challenged their work and relevance, including complementing their local authority internal scrutiny boards with independent governing bodies.

Where services have independent advisory boards, they are not simply assuring quality of learning, but confirming the service is doing what is needed in their locality - the mantra is 'place and people matter'. The services ensure they evaluate and report on all aspects of their provision, including the work of subcontracted partners. The result is a climate where they feel confident within their limited resources, meeting local society issues, including providing first steps into employment and improving wellbeing. They understand they don't have to do everything themselves – for example, if there was already a structure in place to support the learning aims of the retired, they didn't feel they should duplicate it.

The good and outstanding providers interviewed for this study all prided themselves on their inclusivity. They all had a common narrative that was about a strong sense of belonging and respect among staff, learners, stakeholders and the community, including employers. Although all keen to meet the commonly expected FE outcomes of participation and retention and learning goals, be it a job, promotion, change of vocation or further learning, they were also keen to acknowledge the other outcomes of confidence building, better mental health and improved relationships with society at large.

Summary of findings

- Adult community education leaders have the learner at the forefront of their minds.

- They have a strong moral and public sector compass that ensures they are working to best support the residents of their local authority area and the learners in their centres.

- They have a background in curriculum planning and are astute financial managers. They are also opportunistic and entrepreneurial when sourcing alternative funding.

- They understand true partnership and are willing to share with others to develop and improve provision.

- They understand the importance of raising the profile of their service within the council.

- Two outcomes from the project were a better understanding of the development needs of senior leaders (see the continuous professional development plan below) and, what are the characteristics of good and outstanding leadership and services. The top tips list below describes the characteristics found.

ACE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The heads of service interviewed as part of this study were keen to ensure that the ACE sector had in place a continuous professional development plan for future leaders. They were acutely aware that sector leaders were largely of a similar age and background. And, although the ACE sector does well in the normal categories of representation, in leadership there was underrepresentation of men and further work needs to be done with those from diverse backgrounds.

There was consensus on the need for a development plan that covered the following topics:

- Setting mission and strategy and developing service policies which meet national and local policies.
- Fostering exceptional teaching and learning.
- Managing the democratic process.
- Promoting adult education and advocacy.
- System and change leadership.
- Being accountable, including transparent public reporting.
- Being responsive to workforce trends.
- Ensuring financial sustainability and solvency in a LA setting.
- Providing effective control and due diligence, especially in partnerships.
- Exceeding statutory equality and diversity responsibilities.
- Making best use of the staff resource available.
- Undertaking self-assessment and using the results to facilitate change.

The expert workshop suggested that the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) and Women's Leadership Network should be approached to see whether they could work in partnership in developing the programme.

TOP TIPS

Ten characteristics for sustaining success

Successful and outstanding services shared the following characteristics:

1. Scrutiny, governance and accountability were strong. Clear line of sight from the elected members to service outcomes. Elected members and governors were skilled in asking perceptive questions and calling for the right information to measure performance and, in return, they were impressive advocates of the service.

2. Senior management teams had a clear vision and direction for the service, and a genuinely collaborative approach. They knew the needs of their local area well and had already taken positive action to develop further links with other statutory services, voluntary groups, employers and Jobcentre Plus.

3. Senior managers and especially the head of service were alert to the need to promote their service internally and externally and had clear plans on how to do this, including the use of social media and more traditional methods.

4. Leaders and managers 'always stuck to the knitting', understood their financial structure well and cut their cloth to the funding available. There was no question of setting a deficit budget or leaving a financial problem to the following year. A strong sense of public values and probity.

5. Self-assessment based on accurate data was integral to the work of a successful service and included all key processes and areas of work – for example, work subcontracted to partners. Decisive, prompt and effective in acting to remedy areas of concern.

6. The views of learners, partners, voluntary sector and employers were used effectively to improve plans and teaching and learning – not merely to improve support or general facilities.

7.   There was a strong focus on getting the curriculum and safeguarding right and ensuring that support for teaching and learning improved outcomes for learners at all levels and leveraging other resources to support learners.

8.   Classroom teachers, both part-time and full-time, as well as the support staff, understood the value of assessing their own performance objectively.

9.   Good communication and professional development underpinned this. Genuine engagement with staff led to changes that were sustainable rather than being short-term 'quick fix' solutions.

10. Good continuing professional development (CPD) had been linked to effective performance management and an 'open classroom' culture. Sharing good practice across departments and areas was expected.

Case study:
We Love Manchester
—

MAES adult education centres are located in the heart of Manchester's communities and are a resource for local people. We know that Mancunians have far more in common than what divides them. Each year, the centres host Charitea, a celebration of the food and culture of residents, learners and staff, whether they were born in the city, work there, or now call it home. This year, the centres raised over £3.5k for the 'We Love Manchester', the Lord Mayor's Charity and the Ruth Hayman Trust.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Although the project goals were very much about identifying and then sharing good practice, other issues surfaced which, if changed, could help services be even more effective. The following sets out our recommendations and next steps for government, the Local Government Association, mayoral combined authorities, the Education and Training Foundation and HOLEX:

1. HOLEX board will disseminate widely via the HOLEX network the findings of this project.

2. HOLEX will use the top 10 characteristics checklist to support senior leaders in improving their services.

3. HOLEX will work with the Department for Education (DfE) and MCAs to update their guidance on community learning. Although *New Challenges, New Chances* (2011) is relevant, it is dated and needs to be revisited in the light of new government and regional policies.

4. The concept of 'place-making' is an important feature of successful local delivery – HOLEX will work with the LGA to promote the concept more widely.

5. Structures, though not crucial, can facilitate successful partnerships. Through the dissemination of this project, HOLEX will promote the different structures that support 'place making' as a central theme.

6. Councillor participation in scrutiny committees is vital to demonstrating quality and performance – HOLEX to produce guidance on their role.

7. HOLEX to consider running an annual elected members network seminar so that good practice can be shared, and delegates learn what others are doing.

8. Branding and visibility – titles and names of adult education services are confusing. HOLEX to work with services to consider standardising these across all services.

9. Skills and attributes of service leaders are a vital element of ACE success – HOLEX to discuss with the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) how best to take forward the development programme for service leaders.

10. HOLEX to work with the Women's Leadership Network to determine how women in ACE lead the sector and whether gender characteristics create the right atmosphere for ensuring learner-led quality provision.

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- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/727776/Foresight-future-of-skills-lifelong-learning_V8.pdf

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ANNEX 1

ORGANISATIONS TAKING PART IN THE SURVEY AND IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

HOLEX – FETL Local Authority Leadership Survey – List of respondents

Spring 2019

1. Barnsley Council

2. Bolton Council

3. Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole – Skills and Learning

4. Bracknell Forest Council

5. Brighton and Hove City Council

6. Bristol City Council

7. CALAT (Croydon Adult Learning and Training)

8. Cheshire West and Chester Council

9. City College Peterborough/Cambridgeshire Skills

10. Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council – Adult, Family and Community Learning

11. Essex ACE

12. Friends Centre

13. Gloucestershire County Council

14. Herts Adult and Family Learning Service – Herts County Council

15. Isle of Wight Council

16. Kent County Council

17. Kirklees LA

18. London Borough of Bromley – Bromley Adult Education College

19. London Borough of Hackney

20. London Borough of Harrow Council

21. London Borough of Hillingdon ACE

22. London Borough of Hounslow

23. London Borough of Islington – Adult and Community Learning

24. London Borough of Lewisham Council

25. London Borough of Waltham Forest Adult Learning Service

26. London Borough of Westminster Adult Education Service

27. Manchester City Council Adult Education Service

28. Mary Ward Centre

29. Medway Adult Education

30. Middlesbrough Council

31. Milton Keynes Council

32. Northamptonshire County Council

33. Nottinghamshire County Council – Inspire Learning

34. Portsmouth City Council

35. Reading Borough Council

36. Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

37. Royal Borough of Kingston – Kingston Adult Education

38. Rutland Adult Learning and Skills Service

39. Sandwell Adult Family Learning

40. Sefton Community Learning Service

41. Somerset Skills and Learning

42. Southampton City Council

43. Southend Adult Community College

44. Stockport Continuing Education Service

45. Surrey Adult Learning

46. Sutton College

47. Wakefield Adult Education

48. Warwickshire County Council

49. Workers' Educational Association

50. West Berkshire Council

51. West Sussex County Council

52. Wokingham Borough Council

53. Worcestershire County Council

In-depth interviews

1. Worcestershire County Council ACE

2. Hertfordshire County Council

3. Inspire – Nottinghamshire County Council

4. Manchester City Council

5. Essex ACE

ANNEX 2
KEY FACTS

Local authority adult community education 2019

Size: Educate and train more than 600,000 learners annually

Income: £350+ million annually

Legal status:

- Public body: Local authorities are the accountable body (they are not limited companies or charities).

Background:

- 1944 Education Act: Every local authority to have an adult education service.
- The 1992 Act set up incorporated colleges and removed colleges from LA control but left behind a set of residual bodies (large external institutions) to be managed and owned by LAs but funded nationally. Only a few have kept the word 'institution' in their name, most are known as an adult education service or college.
- Because of the way they were originally created, the staff are eligible for the Teachers' Pension Scheme.

Government strategy:

- The main document explaining why they are there and what is expected of them is the 2011 *New Challenges, New Chances* skills strategy. This document sets out their purpose and objectives (see Annex 3). These objectives are still the basis for the ESFA funding agreements and are legally binding. New strategies, such as Integrated Communities and Loneliness and, in the NHS, Mental Health, also set out duties for them.

Funding status

- Department for Education funding: Grant funded in the same way as schools and FE colleges.
- Funding from other departments: Specific projects with a mix of grants and contracts.

Funding sources

- AEB
    - Quality of teaching and learning
    - Progression
    - Prevent/safeguarding
- FE loans
- Apprenticeship levy and non-levy
- ESF
- ERASMUS
- National Careers Service – subcontractors
- Student fees
- Other government departments – for example, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Home Office

Accountability

- Ofsted: Common Inspection Framework (FE) – in 2018, 88 per cent good or outstanding
- FE Commissioner Intervention Policy: Trigger Ofsted grade is Grade 4, for which there will be an FE Commissioner intervention

Services size

- Financial annual budget £200,000 to £30+ million average size £3 million
- Student numbers 400 – 40,000, average 5,000

ANNEX 3
GOVERNMENT POLICY AND REGULATIONS

2011 New Challenges, New Chances

Community learning

BIS (Department for Business, Innovation and Skills) funding will continue to support a universal community learning offer, with a wide range of learning opportunities available to all adults in England.

Purpose of government-supported community learning:

- 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.
- Maximise the impact of community learning on the social and economic wellbeing of individuals, families and communities.

Objectives

- Focus public funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate, including in rural areas and people on low incomes with low skills.
- Collect fee income from people who can afford to pay and use where possible to extend provision to those who cannot.
- Widen participation and transform people's destinies by supporting progression relevant to personal circumstances, e.g.
    - improved confidence and willingness to engage in learning;
    - acquisition of skills preparing people for training, employment or self-employment;
    - improved digital, financial literacy and/or communication skills;

- parents/carers better equipped to support and encourage their children's learning;
- improved/maintained health and/or social well-being.

- Develop stronger communities, with more self-sufficient, connected and pro-active citizens, leading to:
    - improved increased volunteering, civic engagement and social integration;
    - reduced costs on welfare, health and anti-social behaviour;
    - increased online learning and self-organised learning;
    - the lives of our most troubled families being turned around.

- Commission, deliver and support learning in ways that contribute directly to these objectives, including:
    - bringing together people from backgrounds, cultures and income groups;
    - including people who can/cannot afford to pay;
    - using effective local partnerships to bring together key providers and relevant local agencies and services;
    - devolving planning and accountability to neighbourhood/parish level, with local people involved in decisions about the learning offer;
    - involving volunteers and voluntary and community sector groups, shifting long term, 'blocked' classes into learning clubs, growing self-organised learning groups;
    - encouraging employers to support informal learning in the workplace;
    - supporting the wide use of online information and learning resources;
    - minimising overheads, bureaucracy and administration.

ESFA Funding Guidance 2018/2019

The funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency is still based on the purpose and objectives above.

This section only applies to providers with a non-formula community learning allocation included in Appendix 1 of their contract:
The purpose of community learning is to develop the skills, confidence, motivation and resilience of adults of different ages and backgrounds in order to:

- progress towards formal learning or employment; and/or
- improve their health and well-being, including mental health; and/or
- develop stronger communities.

Community learning courses are delivered and reported on the Individual Learner Records under the following four delivery strands:

- Personal and Community Development Learning: Learning for personal and community development, cultural enrichment, intellectual or creative stimulation and for enjoyment (in most cases not leading to a formal qualification).
- Family English, Maths and Language: Learning to improve the English, language and maths skills of parents, carers or guardians and their ability to help their children.
- Wider Family Learning: Learning to help different generations of family members to learn together and how to support their children's learning.
- Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities: Supports local voluntary and other third sector organisations to develop their capacity to deliver learning opportunities for the residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Please note, non-formula community learning funding follows funding model 10.

Non-formula funding

Where applicable, your AEB allocation will include an amount of non-formula community learning funding. We state this value in your Appendix 1 of your contract. You must deliver non-formula funded community learning provision in line with the existing community learning objectives set out in Annex B, up to this maximum amount.

Non-formula community learning funding is paid on a monthly profile, see Annex D. You must 'attribute costs' for eligible learners, up to the value of your non-formula community learning allocation. This should include the cost of delivering learning and any support costs, in line with learner and learning support, paragraphs 235 to 253. You must record these costs in the learner's learning plan.

If we fund you through a grant or financial memorandum, you have the flexibility to use all, or some, of your non-formula community learning funding in line with the AEB formula-funded methodology (fund model 35), to meet local demand.

You can use this amount of non-formula community learning funding (stated in your Appendix 1) to deliver non-regulated provision that may be similar to community learning. If you do, you must: Follow the AEB formula-funded methodology and submit ILR data under fund model 35.

MONOGRAPH

HOLE**X**

MONOGRAPH 4
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