

Regulations for the delivery of Community Learning and Development

Report by Mary Smith, Director Education Communities and Economy

1 Purpose of Report

The Scottish Government has amended the Education (Scotland) Act to require Council's to ensure adequate and efficient delivery of Community Learning and Development activities in partnership with Community Planning Partners in each area. This report seeks approval of the required strategy and action plan which must be published by every Council and its partners by September 2015.

2 Background

2.1 The Midlothian Community Learning and Development Strategy for the period 2015-18 sets out the priorities for the field of practice referred to in legislation as Community Learning and Development (CLD), including Adult Learning, Youth Work, and Community Development whether undertaken by Midlothian Council or by other partners including, Universities; Further Education Colleges; Community Groups and Third Sector bodies.

2.2 The Scottish Government published the CLD Strategic Guidance for Community Planning Partnerships in June 2012 and the CLD Regulations (Scotland) 2013. The CLD Regulations (Scotland) aim to:-

- Ensure communities across Scotland, particularly those who are disadvantaged, have access to the CLD support they need;
- Strengthen coordination between the full range of CLD providers, ensuring Community Planning Partnerships, local authorities, and other providers of public services respond appropriately to the expectations set out by the CLD Strategic Guidance;
- Reinforce the role of communities and learners in the assessment, planning, and evaluation processes to enable them to shape CLD provision; and
- Make the role and contribution of CLD more visible.

More detailed information on the CLD Regulations/Strategic Guidance can be found on the Education Scotland website at: -

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment/about/ssi/index.asp>

The CLD Strategic Guidance also states that CLD partners should aim to work together to deliver 'adequate and efficient' outcomes through:

- Community development (building the capacity of communities to meet their own needs and engaging with and influencing decision makers);
- Local community planning (Neighbourhood Planning in Midlothian);
- Youth work, family learning and other early intervention work with children, young people, and families;
- Community based adult learning, including libraries and English for speakers of other languages;

- Volunteer development, accreditation and progression;
- Learning for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in the community;
- Learning support and guidance

2.3 In response to the CLD Regulations/Guidance, the Midlothian Community Planning Partnership has produced a CLD Strategy for the period 2015-18 based on:-

- The identification of target individuals and groups;
- Consultation with target groups and stakeholders in local areas;
- Consideration of the needs of those target individuals and groups;
 - An assessment of the degree to which these needs are already being met;
- Identification of the barriers to the adequate and efficient delivery of CLD.

An executive summary of the CLD strategy is attached as appendix A to this report. A full copy of the CLD Strategy is available in the members' library.

3 Report Implications

3.1 Resource

Midlothian Council currently funds community learning and development activities through a number of services including direct delivery by Council staff, partner organisations and through grants to voluntary and 3rd sectors. The Council has re-designed delivery to better meet the needs of service users. Staff employed within the former CLD/Regeneration area will now have a remit for Lifelong Learning and Employability or Community Development in two new services. In addition we have previously reviewed grants to the voluntary sector and whilst there has been a reduction in funding across this area the Council spends £2.85 million within Midlothian on the delivery of community learning and development.

3.2 Risk

The CLD plan for Midlothian is ambitious and will take CLD activity forward bearing in mind the constraints of funding and staffing. Risk levels will be monitored and reviewed on a regular systematic basis.

The term 'adequate and efficient' is not defined in full by law and is subject to the judgement of Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education (HMIE). Judgements will be based on the existing national standards for delivery of community learning and development activities set out in the Education Scotland inspection Guidance "How Good is our Community Learning and Development 2".

Failure by the Council, (on whom the statutory duty falls), to ensure 'adequate and efficient' delivery of community learning and development services directly and through its partnership working with community planning partners will be a breach of the law .

3.3 Policy

The working definition used in Midlothian is derived from “How good is our Community Learning and Development 2”. It is:

“We are providing appropriate, responsive, well-promoted, accessible services for young people, adults and community groups; setting and achieving targets for participation, retention, outcomes, quality improvement and Best Value; and self-evaluating and improving the quality of the services we provide for young people, adults and the community”.

Strategy

The CLD strategy aligns with the Single Midlothian Plan, specifically contributing to actions in the Improving Opportunities, Getting it Right for every Midlothian Child, Safer Communities and Adult Health and Care themes

In addition CLD activity supports the three agreed “approaches” being prioritised by the Council under its “Future Model of Service Delivery”, and by the CPP partners as part of the wider National Community Planning Delivery group’s expectations. These are:

Preventive intervention; accessible services; capacity building and co-production.

Area Targeting

From 2013 the CPP added a further dimension to its priorities. For many years there has been a significant statistical gap between the outcomes for residents living in parts of the county and the average outcomes for Midlothian and Scotland as a whole. The expectation is that Council and partner CLD activities will demonstrate how they are targeting their resources to reduce these outcome gaps.

Consultation/ Engagement

The set of processes used in producing the strategy included the bi-annual Citizens’ Panel; stakeholder joint planning groups; use of the Council website; the local radio stations and the previously published free newspaper published by the Council to invite public contributions, as well as engagement through the structures of Community Planning, currently involving around 70 third sector agencies, including the 16 Community Councils.

Equalities

The Council and CPP are fully committed to ensuring the legislative requirements placed on all public service delivery agencies in the Equality Act are met. The partners have in place processes for Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) to monitor the potential impact of any changes in service planned individually or jointly. In addition the partners have established a forum of specialist agencies operating in the equalities field to act as a critical friend, challenging partners to consider these issues broadly.

Sustainability

CLD practice supports sustainable communities as defined in Local Agenda 21 the Rio Earth summit statement on local community empowerment.

3.4 IT Issues

A wide range of IT issues have been identified in the course of the services to communities review in Council, which relate to management information systems , data sharing , enabling on line transactions and equipping frontline CLD delivery points with the resources required for on line learning and promotion of offers and services via social media . Further work is required to address these in- Council issues. Partners in the voluntary sector have also identified challenges in modernising IT equipment, data management, data sharing and use of social media. Individual pieces of work have advanced some of these issues, but much more remains to be done.

4 Summary

This report and the strategy document describe how Midlothian Council and its CPP partners are ambitious in meeting the statutory duty to ensure adequate and efficient delivery of CLD activities as required by law.

5 Recommendations

Council is recommended to approve the strategy and note the risks and further development requirements set out in this report. These will be reported on further through standard monitoring arrangements.

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Report Contact: Alasdair Mathers, Communities and Performance Manager

Tel No 0131 271 3438 **E-mail** alsadair.mathers @midlothian.gov.uk

Background Papers: CLD Strategy document in members' library