

Cabinet

Acceptance of Funding Allocations 2022-2023 for Oldham Lifelong Learning Service

Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Mohon Ali, Cabinet Member Education and Skills

Officer Contact: Richard Lynch – Director of Education, Skills & Early Years

Report Author: Jon Bloor, Assistant Director – Economic Growth

20th March 2023

Reason for Decision

To accept the funding allocation for the academic year 2022-2022 for the Lifelong Learning Service.

Executive Summary

The report details funding offer received from the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) funding allocations of the Adult Education Budget grant for the 2022-2023 academic year and highlights how this funding will be used to meet the ESFA's, GMCA's and Council's key priorities.

Recommendations

To accept the funding for the academic year 2022-2023

Acceptance of Funding Allocations 2019-2020 for Oldham Lifelong Learning Service**1 Background**

- 1.1 Following devolution of the Adult Education Budget, the Council's Lifelong Learning Service is now funded by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (Prior to devolution this was directly awarded by the Education & Skills Funding Agency).
- 1.2 The Service delivery is designed to meet the GMCA Strategy Council's ambition and key objectives as set out in the Corporate Plan and to support the Oldham Partnership Our Future. The Service works with the 6 district partnerships with a focus upon the Council's 'Get Oldham Working' campaign and the Co-operative Agenda.
- 1.3 The Service delivers a range of employability programmes in liaison with the Employment and Skills team (GOW), Job Centre Plus, Welfare to Work Providers and the 6 districts. The Service also works closely with the Voluntary and Community sector via Action Together. Partnerships with Children's Centres, Schools, Public Health, Adult and Children Social Care and others to enable the Service to deliver targeted work which develops self-reliance, confidence, independence, health and progression to further learning, training and employment.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 For the academic year 2022 – 2023, the Adult Education Budget will continue to be split based on the initial 2019/20 geographical delivery with an allocation of GMCA Devolved Education Budget. The allocation provided for the service is a total of £2,804,560.02.
- 2.2 All funds are to be used to support Oldham Lifelong Learning Service's Strategic Plan, Self-Assessment Report (SAR), Quality Improvement Plan (QIP), the Oldham Community Learning Plan and Lifelong Learning Service's Business Plan and the Council Corporate Plan. The funding will also support the GM Strategy and GM Local Industrial Strategy and in negotiation with GMCA it will maintain the position of prioritising Adult Skills funded provision.
- 2.5 The Adult Education Budget (AEB) block grant aims to engage adults and provide skills and learning they need to equip them for work, an apprenticeship or other learning. It enables more flexible tailored programmes of learning to be made available, which may not require a qualification. This will help those furthest from learning or the workplace.

3 Options/Alternatives

- 3.1 Option 1 - To accept the funding and to enter into suitable funding agreements.
- 3.2 Option 2 - To decline the funding.

4 Preferred Option

- 4.1 To accept the funding and to enter into suitable funding agreements

5 **Consultation**

- 5.1 The Service undertakes extensive and regular consultation with learners, other users, partners and non-users.

6 **Financial Implications**

- 6.1 The initial funding allocation for Oldham Lifelong Learning Service is shown in the table below. The funding will be utilised to fund the Service's delivery programme, which is developed to meet the ESFA, GMCA and the Council's priorities and targets.
- 6.2 The GMCA funding is allocated on an academic year basis 1st August – 31st July.
- 6.3 The AEB allocation for 2022-2023 includes Adult Skills, Community Learning and Discretionary Learner Support funding. The Adult Skills element is used to fund the accredited programmes offered by the Service. Discretionary Learner Support is used specifically for childcare provision and to provide financial support towards the cost of fees, books, travel costs and equipment for learners who otherwise would be unable to attend classes.
- 6.4 Community Learning is used to fund the non-vocational programme offered by the Service which includes Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL), Wider Family Learning, Family English, Maths and Language and Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities (NLDC).
- 6.5 The budget for 2022-2023 will cover the delivery of the Service's programme for 2022-2023 although there will be a pressure due to the cost of living increases and not commensurate increase in budget (for the 10th year).
- 6.6 As in previous years, the Service may receive additional one off grant allocations from the GMCA and other funding bodies and will seek approval to accept these as and when they arise. Again this funding will be linked to specific delivery programmes and targets from varying sources. They may fall into the academic year or financial year.
- 6.7 The AEB grant is fully ring-fenced to the Lifelong Learning Service and is subject to a detailed annual grant return and detailed monthly data returns and an annual audit. The monthly data returns, namely the Individual Learner Record (ILR), record the amount of funding drawn down by individual learners and calculate the overall amount of funding earned each month. The Service is paid on a monthly profile. GMCA provide RAG rate for each audit and the service is pleased to have maintained a "green" award for each audit with no additional conditions attached.
- 6.8 Should performance issues arise then the Service delivery programme will be revised to reflect the new budget allocation at no additional cost to the authority.
(Catherine Dunkerley)

7 **Legal Services Comments**

- 7.1 The grant terms and conditions have been reviewed by Legal Services and matters of note highlighted. Provided the grant is used and managed in accordance with the grant terms and conditions, there are no known legal implications to accepting the grant and to entering into suitable grant agreements (Sarah Orrell)

8. **Co-operative Agenda**

8.1 The Lifelong Learning Service embeds the Co-operative Council's values and priorities in its delivery of learning opportunities across the Borough. The Service engages learners in decision making and regularly seeks views and input when developing the curriculum. The Service is committed to working with local communities, families and individuals with a particular focus on active citizenship and getting people into employment as part of the 'Get Oldham Working' campaign. The Service also works closely with each of the 6 districts to maximise impact across the borough.

9 **Human Resources Comments**

9.1 None. (Diane Thorpe)

10 **Risk Assessments**

10.1 None.

11 **IT Implications**

11.1 None.

12 **Property Implications**

12.1 None.

13 **Procurement Implications**

13.1 None.

14 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

14.1 No comment or evaluation needed. (Lauren Wood)

15 **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

15.1 The Lifelong Learning Service support the Council's focus on community cohesion. The Service's mission centres on widening participation and fostering community cohesion. By delivering a wide range of learning opportunities to individuals, target groups and communities the Service contributes to the Council's priorities.

16 **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

16.1 Yes.

17 **Key Decision**

17.1 Yes

18 **Key Decision Reference**

18.1 ESR-06-23

19 **Background Papers**

19.1 None.

20 **Appendices**

20.1 Appendix 1 – GMCA Grant Agreement

20.2 Appendix 2 - EIA