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## 1. Introduction

This strategy is the basis for funding the delivery of adult community learning in Rotherham over the next academic year 2013/14 and sets out our priorities and future plans for supporting the funding of adult community learning through a variety of funding schemes.

The main priority for the Rotherham's adult community learning provision is to extend the range, appeal and access to learning and employment opportunities, including those that enable, motivate and build self-confidence in new learners.

The national priorities for the delivery are guided by the vision for adult community learning presented by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), in "*New Challenges, New Chances Further Education and Skills System Reform Plan: Building a World Class Skills System*". This document specifically identifies the purpose of Government supported community learning as being to:

- Focus public funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate, including in rural areas and people on low incomes and 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

Government supports adult community learning through the allocation of the Adult Safeguarded Learning Grant which is routed through the Skills Funding Agency (SFA).

The level of funding provided by the Government to support adult community learning has been maintained and RMBC will receive allocations as in previous years. However, this allocation is now to be regarded as a contribution towards the cost of delivery. It is expected that RMBC, in partnership with other providers, will develop a strategic plan for community learning with priorities, delivery objectives and measurable learner outcomes – the ambition of which will be achieved only by securing additional revenue over and above the public subsidy available. The SFA expects each recipient of the grant to ensure they reach at least as many learners in 2012/13 and where possible exceed this number.

This strategy aims to articulate the commitment of RMBC through the Community Learning Service and throughout its partner organisations. It is operational and attempts to offer clear, concise guidelines. It is also written to inform the policies and practice of provider organisations, their staff partners, other stakeholders and most importantly the service users.

## **2. Statement of Intent**

RMBC intends to deliver a value for money service by focusing public funding on people who would not otherwise have access to learning and to maximise income from learners who can afford to pay.

RMBC intends to increase the funding available to support the delivery of adult community learning by identifying sources of additional income, that can be used to help offset the costs of delivering a programme of learning. Any income generated can then be treated as a means to reduce the level of subsidy necessary, complement use of the grant and increase the number of learning opportunities offered in Rotherham. RMBC will seek to enhance the grant available through a range of activities including:

### **Sponsorship**

Working with local companies and encouraging businesses to see that sponsorship can show that a company cares about its community and is prepared to invest in the future and the welfare of the people it serves. RMBC will seek support from local organisations to sponsor local learning activities and will actively canvass and develop sponsorship opportunities.

### **Grants**

Achieving better outcomes and increasing the number of learning opportunities by obtaining grants and support from local or national organisations and working with other public bodies on cross-funding initiatives.

### **Fee Collection**

Collecting fee income from people and organisations who can afford to pay and use where possible to extend provision to those who cannot.

### **Expenditure savings**

Maximise the use of available resources, reducing costs, sharing facilities and working with organisations that bring in additional funding into the Borough from other sources. Encourage collaboration amongst organisations, developing new partnerships, supporting better co-ordination and joined up delivery of community learning and promoting the sharing of best practice.

## **3. Scope**

This Strategy applies predominantly to Rotherham Council's SFA-funded adult safeguarded learning provision. All staff will be made aware of the Strategy which will be updated on an annual basis. The responsibility for monitoring the Policy lies with Rotherham Community Learning Partnership Manager.

The range of provision supported by the Community Learning Service is very diverse, and includes part-time learners studying at a range of venues by both direct and sub contracted delivery.

This strategy covers all aspects of Community Learning functions including:

- Provisions of services
- Partnership with other organisations
- Commissioning and purchasing of goods and services
- Funds to external organisations
- Communication and publicity

It applies to the following stakeholders:

- The voluntary and community sectors
- Learners
- Private and public sector organisations
- Contractors and sub-contractors

#### **4. Policy Statement**

**Rotherham's Community Learning Service is committed to developing a funding strategy that will enhance the quality and range of teaching and learning and increase participation.**

The Service intends to pursue this commitment by:

1. Focusing public funding on people who are disadvantaged and least likely to participate and people on low incomes and with low skills. Collect fee income from people who can afford to pay and use where possible to extend provision to those who cannot.
2. Seek sponsorship from local organisations and businesses for the delivery of local learning activities.
3. Secure funding to support the Safeguarded Learning Grant by accessing additional grant income from local and national organisations.
4. Maximising the use of available resources by reducing costs, sharing facilities and working with organisations that bring in additional funding into the delivery of adult community learning.

#### **5. Guidelines for Practice**

The guidelines, as set out below show how the Service will achieve each of the policy statements.

**Policy Statement 1**  
disadvantaged

Focusing public funding on people who are

The Adult Community Learning Service will develop and implement a Fees Policy which reflects the funding priorities identified by the Skills Funding Agency.

The policy will clearly identify learners entitled to fully funded or co-funded learning activities.

The Fees Policy will be publicised and the cost of any learning opportunity will be identified for all courses delivered with the support of the Adult Safeguarded Learning Grant.

RMBC will work to secure £20,000 through the collection of fees to support the delivery of local learning activities.

**Policy Statement 2**    Seek sponsorship from local organisations

RMBC will identify a variety of ways in which organisations can support the delivery of community learning.

RMBC will approach local organisations and businesses with the intention of developing a range of fully or partially sponsored learning activities.

RMBC will work to secure £10,000 of sponsorship for the delivery of local learning activities.

RMBC will publicise information relating to learning activities which have been delivered with the support of sponsorship.

**Policy Statement 3**    Secure additional funding to support the Safeguarded Learning Grant by accessing additional grant income.

Establish a working group to identify potential sources of income available in grant form.

Seek support from the External Funding section of RMBC Finance Section

Identify opportunities to work in partnership with other organisations to access funding from grants sources

RMBC will work to secure £40,000 of grant aid to support the delivery of local learning activities.

**Policy Statement 4**      Maximising the use of available resources

RMBC will seek to secure contributions in kind to support the delivery of adult community learning

RMBC will seek to increase the use of volunteers to support the development of the infrastructure and the delivery of learning.

RMBC will support the continuation and development of self organised learning groups.

RMBC will work to secure £300,000 expenditure savings (Pound Plus) to support the delivery of local learning activities.

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## 6. Links to Other Policies, Strategies and Legislation

Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) - *“New Challenges, New Chances Further Education and Skills System Reform Plan: Building a World Class Skills System”*.

Skills Funding Agency – *Funding Rules 2013/14*

### **Websites for further information:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-investment-statement-for-2011-to-2014-new-challenges-new-chances>

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