

Employment, Learning and Skills - Pound Plus Policy

What is Pound Plus?

Pound Plus is a term used to describe how learning providers can show how they are maximising the value of the public funding they receive. Generating additional income and revenue is key to increasing participation within a very constrained public funding environment. The objective is to widen participation in learning by ensuring as much funding as possible is targeted at enhancing opportunities for those experiencing social and/or economic disadvantage.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) requires providers to detail how they provide added value to their Community Learning Provision.

Aims

The aim of Community Learning is to maximise the funding grant allocated by the ESFA and increase the value to enable the delivery of a high-quality community learning service that meets the needs of the individual learners across Stoke on Trent.

Stoke on Trent City Council and its partners recognises their responsibility to add value to the grant received and that it should take appropriate action to attract additional income (actual or in kind), and reduce costs to widen the offer available to disadvantaged learners who otherwise may not be able to afford course fees.

Generating Pound Plus

Pound Plus has been systematically embedded into the employment learning and skills strategy.

Its main elements include: -

- Fee Income from courses
- Sponsorship
- Grants,
- Funding from other government departments and/or commercial sales
- Contributions in kind
- Volunteer activities
- Sharing services and/or pooling of resources
- Other income streams and non-income

Income Generation

Fees and charges policy

Through the fees and charges policy the city council generates income from those learners who can afford to pay for their community learning course. Fee remission is in place for individuals who, due to personal circumstances are unable to pay for some or all of their course.

Sales from products

Stationery products are available for sale to learners and staff at a reduced price, profit generated is reinvested into the service.

Cost Savings

Accommodation

Courses are held where possible in venues that are accessible to learners and which are free of charge across the city.

Shared Services enable a cost saving for support staff across the service.

Partnership Working

Through partnership working subcontractors, additional provision and services are provided that aim to engage hard to reach learners that the city council may find difficult to achieve.

Value for Money

By ensuring that the curriculum available is efficient and avoids duplication of provision.

Effectiveness of the curriculum – We provide courses that encourage participation which leads to increased and improved progression opportunities.

In Kind Resources

It is difficult to quantify the value of all in kind resources, the added value of the knowledge of partners and subcontractors over and above that of the council enhances the learner experience.

Other examples of in-kind resources include staff in other departments who support learners that have disabilities to access and complete a course, or organisations across the city that advertise and promote courses for free.

Volunteers are both a cost saving and in kind resource. Volunteers provide additional support on open days, career fairs and also help promote learning across the city.

Review

Next Review August 2021