

HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE			
<b>Report Title</b>	Adult Learning Lewisham – annual report		
<b>Ward</b>	All	Item No	5
<b>Contributors</b>	Executive Director for Community Services		
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 13 January 2016	

## 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update the Healthier Communities Select Committee on the adult learning services offered by Adult Learning Lewisham (ALL) in 2015-16.

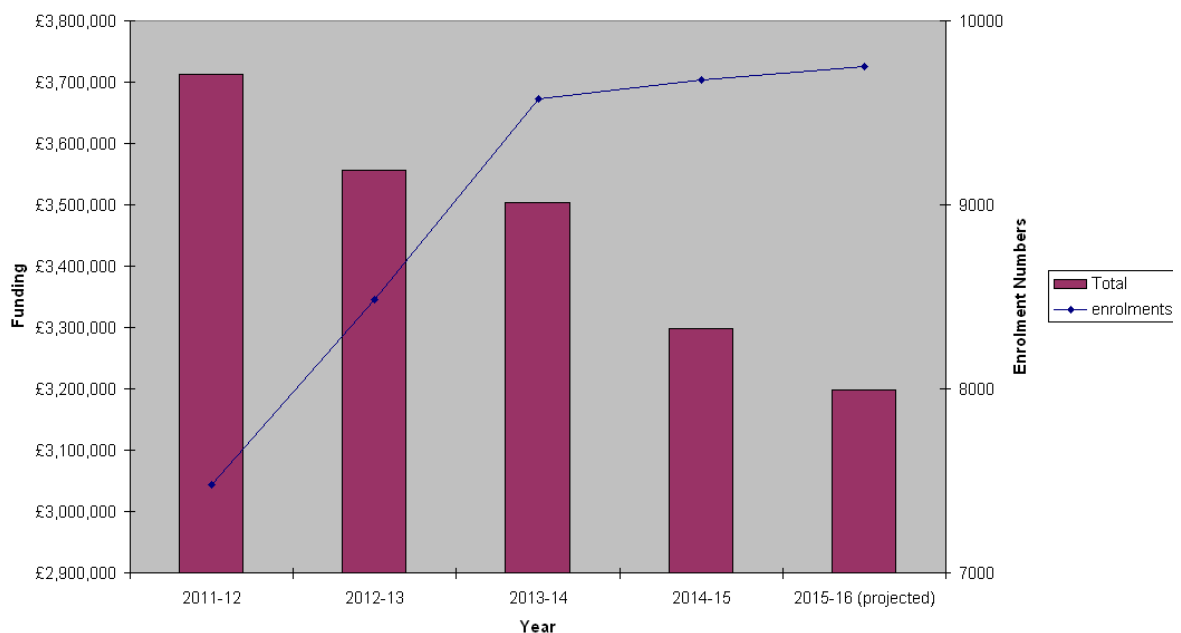
## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 Members of the Healthier Communities Select Committee are asked to note the contents of this report.

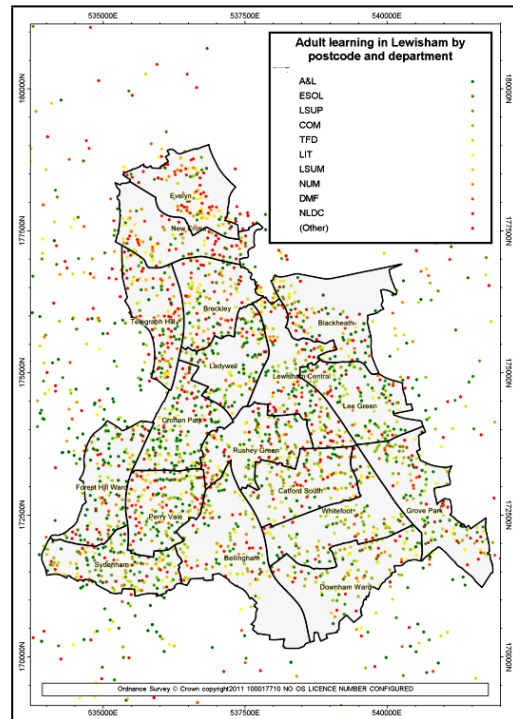
## 3. The Year in Numbers

- 3.1 Adult Learning Lewisham (ALL) receives a Skills Funding Agency grant of £3.2 million and currently employs approximately 230 staff, 160 of whom are part-time tutors. The service also generates income of approximately £400,000 and in 2015 completed delivery of a European ESF project to the match funded value of £250,000. The ratio of non-SFA funding to overall funding is 23.4% and as part of its Pound Plus measures the service is reducing the reliance on SFA funding. Despite a year-on-year reduction in funding, enrolment numbers continued to increase in the past year, which is an indication of the efficiency of the service (see chart below).

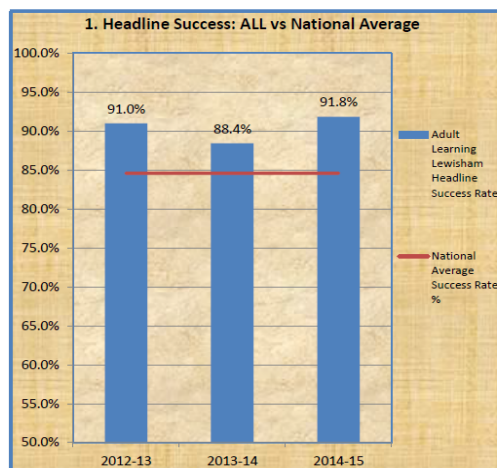
SFA Funding mapped against Enrolments 2011-16



3.2 ALL offers over 1,000 courses covering 9 sector subject areas of learning and located in three bespoke education centres, as well as community venues, across the borough. There are 5000 learners enrolled on courses, and nearly 10,000 enrolments (each learner enrolling on 2 courses on average). Learners who enrol on courses at Adult Learning Lewisham are spread throughout the borough.



3.3 In 2015 success rates at ALL were the highest they have ever been. At a service wide level success rates stand at 91.8%, which is a 3.4% increase from 2013-14 (when success rates were 88.4%). This represents an outstanding (Grade 1) performance by the curriculum and its support staff. 2015 was the first year that ALL offered GCSE English and Maths, with very good results, which combined with other qualifications meant that the headline success rates stood at 83% for English (compared with 71% in 2010-11) and 82% for Maths (compared with 67% in 2010-11). For the third year running, ALL success rates far exceed the national benchmark for the adult skills sector (chart below).



## 4. Strategic Context

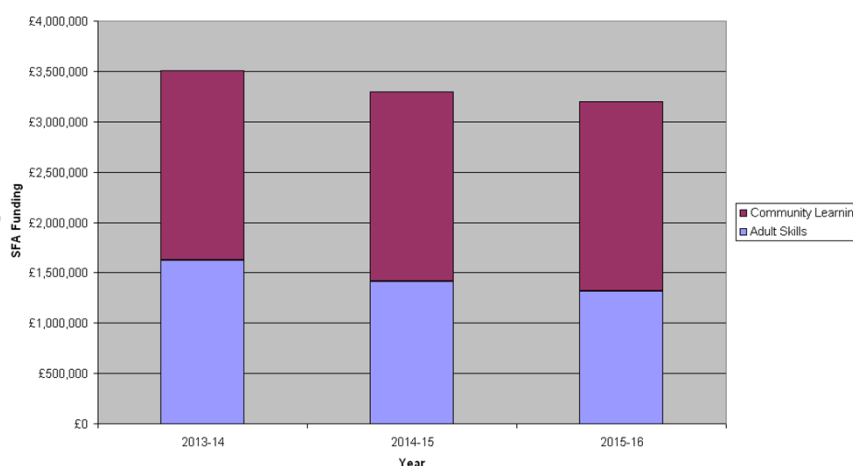
- 4.1 *Shaping our Future*, Lewisham's Sustainable Community Strategy, establishes the Council's and Lewisham Strategic Partnership's vision for Lewisham and its citizens, "Together, we will make Lewisham the best place in London to live, work and learn." Underpinning this vision are six priority outcomes that describe sustainable communities in Lewisham and provide a clear picture of what citizens and services can deliver together.
- 4.2 The work of ALL contributes to the delivery of these priority outcomes, primarily towards 'Ambitious and Achieving', in which residents are inspired and supported to fulfil their potential and which carries our commitment to encourage and facilitate access to education, training and employment opportunities for all citizens. In addition, the benefits of adult learning mean that ALL plays an important supporting role for other priority outcomes including 'Empowered and Responsible' – through which people can be actively involved in their local area and contribute to supportive communities; and 'Dynamic and Prosperous' – through which people are part of the vibrant localities and town centres in Lewisham and well-connected to London and beyond.
- 4.3 ALL also supports the Council's corporate priority to deliver services that support 'Active, healthy citizens' and 'Strengthens the local economy'. ALL's strategic objectives are derived from both the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council's corporate priorities and can be summarised as follows:
- To provide adult learning opportunities, which promote access to skills and knowledge for continuing education and employment.
  - To provide entry and first step qualifications into key economic growth areas raising educational attainment and skill levels.
  - To improve residents' quality of lives through personal, social and recreational education.
  - To widen access to education services through the development and monitoring of equality and diversity impact measures.
- 4.4 ALL monitors itself against six performance indicators:
- (1) Providing teaching and learning that is outstanding or good in 90% of the provision, including the effective use of e-learning in delivery.
  - (2) Ensuring there are no significant areas of unaddressed underachievement across the service, leading to headline retention rates of 93%, achievement rates of 92%, and success rates of 85% within ALL.
  - (3) Ensuring ALL meets its safeguarding responsibilities, for the safety and wellbeing of all.
  - (4) Using the views of wider community and users to shape future developments and ensure that ALL responds to meet these needs
  - (5) Ensuring ALL buildings, services and resources enable learning to take place in a safe, secure and inspiring environment
  - (6) Embedding skills development for ALL staff as a key quality function

## 5. Funding for ALL

5.1 Funding for ALL in 2015 continued to be through two designated SFA streams: the Adult Skills Budget (for accredited courses) and the Community Learning Budget (broadly speaking for non-accredited courses). The table and chart below show the degree of funding cuts over the past few years to the Adult Skills budget, and the financial position of the current academic year.

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Adult Skills	£1,623,346	£1,416,810	£1,317,649
Community Learning	£1,880,426	£1,881,080	£1,881,080
Total	£3,503,772	£3,297,890	£3,198,729

CEL/ALL Funding 2013-16



5.2 In the Comprehensive Spending Review, George Osborne announced that the 'core participation budget' for adult skills would not be cut in this parliament. This was very good news for the sector, who had feared cuts of up to 25%. However, the department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) have still not clarified what the 'core participation budget' refers to, and which parts of our funding that fall outside of the 'core' will be cut.

5.3 Further announcements made as part of the CSR may spell more significant changes to adult learning, although no details have yet been released to clarify these changes. From 2016-17 onwards the SFA will no longer divide funding into two streams (the 'adult skills' budget, and the 'community learning' budget). Instead ALL, in line with the rest of the sector, will receive a single Adult Education Budget, which makes no distinction between accredited and non-accredited courses. This means that even if ALL does not receive any further cuts from 2016 onwards, our provision may still be affected. For example, providers may have to make a case to funders in order to support the continuation of non-accredited provision.

5.4 In July 2015, having received a funding settlement from the SFA at the start of the financial year, ALL received an in-year funding cut, along with every other provider in the country. In-year funding cuts are particularly difficult to manage, as budgets have been set, and the cuts particularly affected the ESOL provision in Lewisham

run in partnership with Job Centre Plus (known as 'ESOL Mandation'). Curriculum leaders worked hard to find the cuts with minimum disruption to learners. In the autumn of 2015 a project (SpEC – Speaking English with Confidence) was launched in partnership with JCP to plug the gap in the ESOL provision.

## 6. ALL Vision, Values and Curriculum

- 6.1 Adult Learning Lewisham remains an Ofsted-graded 'Good' provider, with outstanding features and one of the few Grade 2 providers of adult skills in the area. However, ALL is an ambitious service, wanting to meet and exceed the sector benchmark, which is laid out in Ofsted's descriptors for 'outstanding'.
- 6.2 ALL aims to be an outstanding provider of adult skills and community learning to inspire and motivate our learners to enable them to fulfil their potential and flourish. It is flourishing in a deep, Aristotelian, sense that fuels the vision of ALL: namely that learners should be able to live well, fare well and do well as a direct result of attending courses. Moreover, flourishing is not something that comes to an end, so learners who we help to learn a new skill, and then help to get a job, will still wish to continue their journey towards flourishing by attending courses after work, and with their children. Flourishing is a lifelong goal, and Adult Learning Lewisham delivers lifelong learning so that learners and communities can pursue this goal.
- 6.3 In Spring 2015, staff across the service were consulted to ask them what they thought made their work in Lewisham's adult learning service (CEL, as it was then called) so valuable. Staff were invited to sum up this value in one word, through the 'CEL in One Word' Pinterest site, established online for this purpose. This led to a beautiful webpage capturing a plethora of values. These values shared the family resemblance of 'flourishing', but could not be summed up in a single mission statement, or reduced to a series of bullet points. Instead the values of Adult Learning Lewisham were felt to be best represented through a Tree of Values.



- 6.4 The roots of the tree represent our ethos, what ALL stands for. The trunk of the tree represents those core learning skills that are common to all curriculum areas, and which learners need to develop in order to be successful learners and to live better lives through better engagement in employment, volunteering, family life, civic society and personal projects. These core skills and characteristics that ALL learners should aim to develop include: commitment, perseverance, confidence, emotional intelligence, independence, critical thinking, English, Maths and digital

skills. The outer branches represent the impact that we can have on learners' lives, which in turn enables them to flourish.

6.5 This impact falls into nine distinct areas, which learners are now invited to consider from the very start of their journey with ALL. The nine types of impact are:

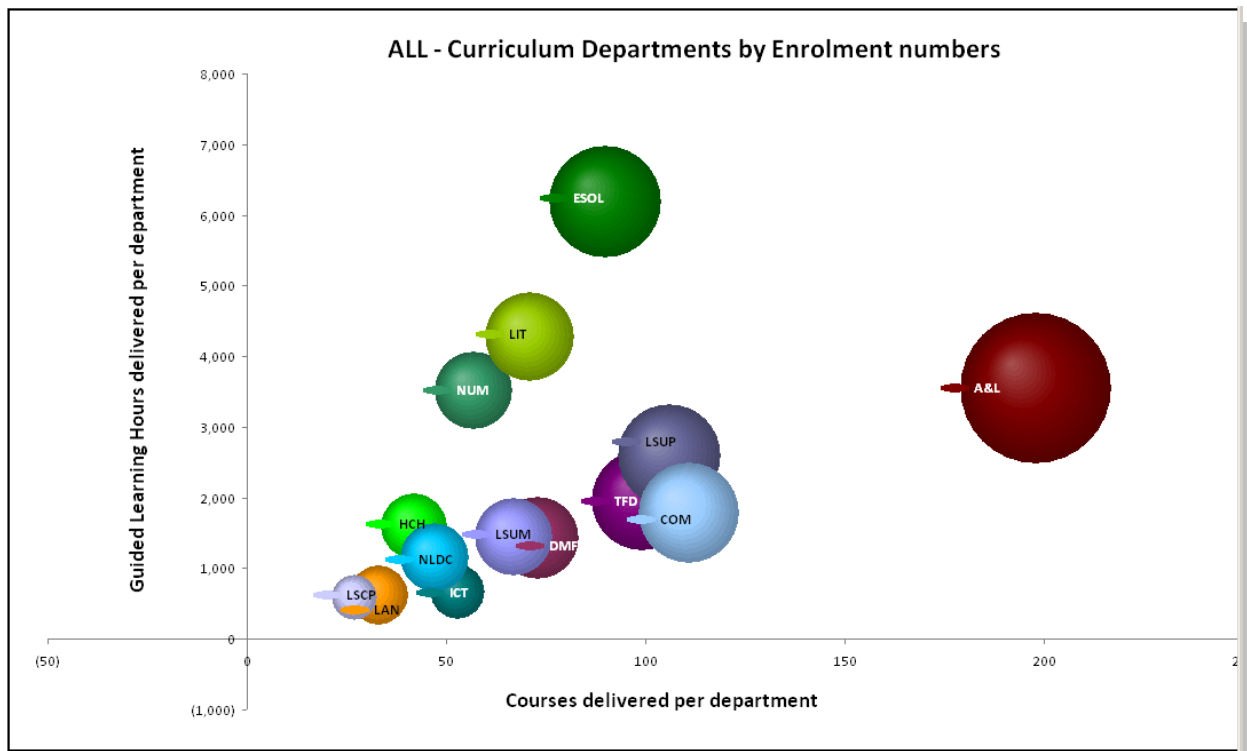
1. Development of curriculum and subject specialist skills
2. Development of a core learning skill
3. Progress to further training or qualifications
4. Progress in, or into, work
5. Support for children and family
6. Increase in health
7. Increase in social inclusion (and decrease in social isolation)
8. Creation of a product or project
9. Progress towards a personal ambition

6.6 By explicitly asking learners about the impact, beyond the learning of the subject, ALL will be able to demonstrate its overall civic impact, and this in turn should help the service to bid for, and secure, funding in future.

6.7 ALL offers a wide range of adult learning opportunities across the borough, with over 1000 courses for residents to choose from, including both accredited and non-accredited learning opportunities to help LBL residents flourish and fulfil their potential. These sector subject areas fall into thirteen curriculum areas within ALL, which are as follows:

Arts & Leisure	A&L
Community Family Learning	COM
Design, Media & Food	DMF
ESOL	ESO
Health & Childcare	HCH
ICT	ICT
Languages	LAN
English	LIT
Computer Project	LSC
Supported Learning & Mindlift	LSU
Neighbourhood Learning in deprived communities	NLDC
Mathematics	NUM
Textiles & Floral Design	TFD

6.8 The size of each of these curriculum areas can be measured through three different variables: the number of enrolments, the number of guided learning hours (GLH) and the number of courses on offer. The relative size of each department at ALL is represented in the spheres in the chart below, with the size of the sphere proportionate to the number of enrolments, and the position on the graph determined by the number of hours and courses offered (see figure overleaf). ESOL, Maths and English are the largest curriculum areas in terms of the number of hours they offer, whilst Arts and Leisure is the largest as measured by enrolment numbers. The Supported Learning department (LSUP) and Family Learning (Com) are also significant in terms of the number of different types of courses they offer.



- 6.9 ALL offers a large and thriving provision of supported learning through its Mindlift (LSUM), Computer Project (LSCP) and Supported Learning (LSUP) programmes. These are classes for learners with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory impairments or mental health difficulties. Learners on the Mindlift programme can access a range of non-accredited learning opportunities including art, dance, keep fit, fashion, floristry and health. Progression for these students includes increased confidence, development of new skills and an increased independence to help in further education or towards employment.
- 6.10 ALL also delivers family and community learning (COM and NLDC) with a range of other providers across the borough, including primary schools, libraries and children's centres. The family learning offer has increased the number of learners engaged in family learning from 843 enrolments (in 2013-14) to 886 enrolments (in 2014-15). The focus remains on improving the quality of provision and working with key partners who are successful in engaging the hardest to reach.
- 6.11 Within the vocational learning department (HCH) learners studying to be child carers or teaching assistants use a variety of school and childcare placements across the borough, in partnership with LBL's schools team.
- 6.12 ALL supplements the courses outlined above through offering a wide range of Arts and Leisure courses for those residents able to pay fees (A&L, DMF, TFD, LAN). These courses help to generate fee income for additional courses that ALL can in turn use to widen participation. Thus ALL delivers a range of informal learning opportunities through its Studio courses launched last year. These courses offer learners an opportunity to continue to update and develop their skills in these subject areas outside SFA funding. These areas include Botanical illustration, Tailoring and Clothes making, Glasswork, Pottery, Printing and Upholstery. The Studio courses enable learners to continue their learning in areas where they have previously completed a range of SFA funded courses.

## 7. ALL Developments and Achievements

- 7.1 There are two key questions to ask when measuring the success of the adult learning service: 'are people enrolling?' and 'are they learning?' The first question is addressed in 7.3 below, and the second question can be broadly answered by looking at success rates, namely do learners stay to the end of their course *and* do they achieve. In 2015 success rates across the service were the highest they have ever been, standing at 91.8% which is a 3.4% increase from 2013-14 of 88.4%. Success rates on accredited courses were outstanding for learners at Entry Level (91.5%) and were very good at Level 2 at 84.6%. These represent an excellent achievement for the service, but there is still room for improvement.
- 7.2 Significant progress continues to be made in narrowing success gaps in key areas of gender, disability and widening participation. Rigorous Pre-course Assessments continue to improve the process of diagnosing and providing support for learners with a range of needs. This has in part led to the overall increase in success rates across the curriculum areas. But there are still gaps that need to be reduced and this is an on-going priority for the service. The difference in success rates is narrow for some groups of learners, for example success rates for male and female learners is 90.5% and 91.1% respectively; and there is no significance difference between learners declaring a learning difficulty (91.5%) and those declaring no learning difficulty (90.7%). However, the success rate for white British learners as compared with non-white British learners is 94.7% against 90.2%. Whilst these are both outstanding, and this does represent a reduction in the gap to 4.4% (a success gap which last year stood at 7%), it is still too large and continuing to reduce this gap remains a priority.
- 7.3 So, are people enrolling? As noted in 3.1 above enrolment rates are still going up despite funding cuts, and are projected to reach 9750 enrolments for the current academic year. 2015 saw the development of a new approach to marketing, a new name (ALL, previously CEL) and a new understanding of its learner demographics. The curriculum has been divided into five curriculum clusters, each of which is aimed at reaching a particular demographic, based on a detailed analysis of ALL learners. Two of these clusters, the Lewisham School of Arts and Design, and Language, Leisure and Lifestyle have marketing materials and channels designed to attract learners who can afford to pay fees, which can be used within ALL's business model to provide additional courses for those less able to pay. The generic marketing materials (including the course guide, below) are now more reflective of the quality, professionalism, and expertise and specialist accommodation available through ALL.





7.4 ALL is increasing its efforts to reach learners who are least likely to engage with adult learning, or who need the most support in being successful in their learning. An essential part of the success of the service in achieving this goal is to work in closer partnerships with Lewisham Council's other services who are also striving to reach these groups. By harnessing the regular and sustained interaction that ALL has with its learners (70 hours per learner per year on average) the service may become an even more effective instrument of local government. This type of enhanced partnership (co-production, co-location, or co-design) should have the added benefit of reducing costs to those other services. Enhanced partnerships that have been strengthened or started in 2015 include the following:

- CYP - The development of a strategic approach to the family learning curriculum, working with Head Teachers to develop engagement activities and a curriculum that will help parents of children who are most at risk of underperformance. The goal is to use adult learning to improve pupil achievement at school
- Public Health - Improved health outcomes are one of the key impacts on learners' lives who attend adult learning. Working with strategic managers in Lewisham Public Health, ALL can share data, engage in 'brief interventions', and potentially co-locate some of the health-related courses. The goal is to use adult learning to improve priority health outcomes.
- Economic Development and Strategic Partnerships - The ESF project was a partnership between ALL, JCP and Lewisham's Strategy team, and was noted as best practice in a DWP national report. Building on this partnership should see even more learners (with low or no skills) supported into employment. The goal is to use adult learning to improve employment outcomes.
- Adult Social Care - ALL has a specialism through its Supported Learning department, particularly in working with Adults with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities. A nascent partnership may lead to the use of the new Community Hubs to support meaningful activity and learning for these residents. The goal is to use adult learning to improve outcomes for ALDD residents.
- Libraries - Digital inclusion remains a priority for this government, and for Lewisham. ALL and Lewisham's library service has natural affinities, and the Go On project represents an opportunity for partnership working. The goal is to use adult learning to reduce digital exclusion.

## **8. ALL Learner Demographics**

8.1 Adult Learning Lewisham is funded to reach all Lewisham residents, but should prioritise the engagement in learning of those residents with the greatest needs (see paragraphs 12.1 and 12.2 below). In 2014-15 ALL enrolled on its courses 7000 learners who were unemployed or low-waged; 1600 learners in its specialist Supported Learning department who were managing mental ill health, or a physical or learning disability; 3000 older learners managing deteriorating health; 760 people studying ESOL to progress into work or training; 930 people enrolling on English or Maths courses up to and including GCSE; and 500 people enrolling on courses to train as Early Years or Childcare professionals, or gain a qualification to help them progress in work.

8.2 ALL has around 5000 individual learners on its 1200 courses, making up enrolment numbers of nearly 10,000 (meaning that on average each learner enrolls on two courses). Around two thirds of ALL learners (64%) are from non-white British ethnic

groups, which is a higher percentage than for Lewisham residents as a whole (59%). 77% of ALL learners are female, which reflects the gender imbalance in adult learning engagement across the country (on average 25% of adult learners are male). Learners who are managing mental ill health, or a learning or physical disability, make up 33% of enrolments which reflects the success of two of our specialist curriculum areas (Supported Learning and Mindlift, and the Computer Project).

## **9. Financial implications**

- 9.1 Grant funding for ALL was reduced in-year for 2015 and is expected to reduce further in the coming year as the Adult Skills and Community Learning budgets merge into a combined Adult Education budget. Despite this ALL has managed to contain its expenditure within the reduced budgets.
- 9.2 The service will continue to adjust spend in the light of changes in funding, whilst minimising the impact on the number of learners it reaches.

## **10. Legal Implications**

- 10.1 It is one of the roles of the Select Committee to review policy within its terms of reference. It can make enquiries and investigate options for future direction in policy development. Additionally the Committee can require the Executive Members or Executive Directors to attend before it to explain amongst other things the extent to which actions taken implement Council policy and provide evidence of the same.
- 10.2 The power for local authorities to provide an adult education service for adults is a discretionary one. This discretion should be exercised reasonably in the sense that only relevant matters should be taken into account and irrelevant considerations ignored.

## **11. Crime and Disorder Implications**

- 11.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

## **12. Equalities Implications**

- 12.1 The London Borough of Lewisham, like all inner London boroughs, is a place of heterogeneity, with areas of high income, high qualification rates and low unemployment sitting alongside areas of high multiple deprivation. Lewisham still has one of the highest percentages of people claiming JSA in London (at 2.6%). Rates of mental ill health are higher than in London or nationally, and this has been identified as a council priority – 3,400 people in Lewisham are on the severe mental health register. Of all skills, a lack of English has been identified as the largest barrier to employment by the Office of National Statistics (2014). The percentage of Lewisham households (9%) with no adults who can speak English is amongst the highest in the country, with 10,000 residents in those households.
- 12.2 Lewisham residents have a high level of qualification, with 54% of Lewisham residents educated to NVQ Level 4 and above (compared to a GB average of 36%). Widening this to Level 3 reveals that 70% have NVQ Level 3 and above which is equivalent to at least 2 A Levels. The proportion of residents with no qualifications

has decreased from 17.7% in 2011 to 7.5% in 2015. There has also been a notable rise in those with Level 4 or higher (degree or equivalent). However, the distribution of residents with high levels of qualifications is not evenly spread over the borough, and geographical location is correlated with low qualifications.

- 12.3 ALL remains the only Grade 2 'Good' provider of adult skills in Lewisham. It offers accessible entry routes for new or returning learners as well as progression routes that are used by learners to further their skills and education. In addition, ALL provides a range of informal learning activities aimed at communities in areas of high and multiple deprivation across the borough. Paragraphs 8.1 and 8.2 above outline the effectiveness of ALL's response to continuing inequality and disadvantage amongst some Lewisham communities. The service will continue to work in partnership with other services, and the voluntary sector, to reach those residents least likely to engage, but most likely to benefit, from adult learning.

### **13. Environmental Implications**

- 13.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

### **14. Conclusion and the future**

- 14.1 There are significant challenges to the adult learning sector in the months and year ahead. Although the comprehensive spending review did not sound the death knell for adult learning, and preserved a certain level of spending, there are changes afoot (noted in 5.2 and 5.3 above) which will transform the sector. There are three primary risks, or opportunities, that ALL faces over the coming year.
- 14.2 First, a change to the BIS and SFA funding mechanism, in which the grant for both non-accredited and accredited provision is rolled together. The gathering of the impact data (outlined in 6.5 above) should be useful evidence to support the case for the continued funding of non-accredited courses in Lewisham and we are confident that this funding will remain secure.
- 14.3 Secondly a change to the funding bodies, in which devolution remains a government priority, and a London funding agency for adult learning will be developed. This may mean that ALL is bidding to a new devolved body for its grant. But ALL is in a strong position, partly because of its size, partly because of its Ofsted grade, and partly because of the support ALL receives from the Council and its partners across the borough.
- 14.4 Thirdly a change to the Further Education sector as a whole, meaning that colleges are being told to become more efficient, larger and more specialist institutions. The mechanism for this change are the Area Reviews, which take place from Autumn 2015 to summer 2016 and are expected to result in significant changes to colleges: leading to fewer, larger and more specialist colleges. Adult Learning providers have been invited to take part in these reviews, and the London reviews are expected to start in February 2016. ALL is a key member of two important networks, Halex and LEAFA, and its voice at the Area Reviews will be strengthened through these networks.

**For further information please contact Gerald Jones, ALL Service Manager, ext. 46189**

## Glossary

ALL – Adult Learning Lewisham

BIS – Department of Business, Innovation and Skills

CEL – Community Education Lewisham

CSR – Comprehensive Spending Review

DWP – Department for Work and Pensions

ESF – European Social Fund

ESOL – English for Speakers of Other Languages

ICT – Information and Communications Technology

JCP – Job Centre Plus

LBL – London Borough of Lewisham

LDD – adults with a learning difficulty or disability

Mindlift – ALL's supported learning programme for adults with a learning difficulty or disability

NVQ – National Vocation Qualification

SFA – Skills Funding Agency

SpEC – Speaking English with Confidence project

### *A note about Success, Retention and Achievement rates*

- *Achievement Rate* – the rate of learners who achieve their qualification or learning goals measured as a percentage of the number of learners who are still on the course at the end.
- *Retention Rate* – the rate of learners who are still attending the course when it finishes measured as a percentage of the number of learners who started the course.
- *Success Rate* – the rate of learners achieve their qualification of learning goals measured as a percentage of the total number of learners who started the course. This is a tougher test of organisational performance than the achievement rate.