Lifelong Learning Policy

"Learning is the key to prosperity - for each of us as individuals, as well as for the nation as a whole. Investment in human capital will be the foundation of success in the knowledge-based global economy of the twenty-first century." *David Blunkett – The Learning Age.*

Policy aims and objectives

Both national and local Government objectives include creating a learning society where everyone is able to learn and improve their skills via lifelong learning. Learning is at the heart of the local community and fundamental to academ   social, economic and cultural development.

We will provide high quality opportunities, diversity and choice for learners in North East Lincolnshire to enable them to increase their skills,   owledge and life choices for their own and the community's benefit.

Access

This policy reflects the promotion of race equality and the prevention of unlawful discrimination (Race Relations Act 2000 – General Duty, and Human Rights Act 1998).

We will adhere to the principles of the Council's Diversity Policy Statement:

'The Council is fully committed to the broad principle   ial justice and is opposed to any form of discrimination or oppression.

It therefore willingly accepts not only its legal responsibilities but also wishes to embrace best practice in all areas of its work in order to sec   equality of both treatment and outcome for all.

The Council is therefore committed to ensuring that no-one is treated in any way less favourably on the grounds of personal differences such as race; colour; national, ethnic or social origin; gender (including reassigned gender); sexual orientation; religious belief; age; disability; marital status; caring responsibilities or political or other personal beliefs.

The Council will implement all necessary action and training to ensure its commitments with regard to equality of treatment and outcome are fulfilled and will regularly monitor and review progress in this respect.'

As some sections of the community have had negative learning experiences in the past, it is essential that we ensure that the environment we provide encourages people of all ages to learn, whether formally or informally. We need to take into consideration

learning styles and the different methods of learning delivery. People accessing distance learning courses for example, may well require both study space and ICT facilities within the same setting.

When considering aspects of our service such as opening hours, access to service points and fines/charges we will take into account the special needs of learners. Effective signposting is an essential tool in encouraging lifelong learning and in supporting basic skills development. We will ensure that our buildings comply with the Disability Discrimination Act; and that our guiding and signage is easily seen and read by people with visual impairments as well as those with low basic skills.

Staff will be made aware of local and national initiatives in order to provide advice and guidance about learning opportunities. Information created by the library service will be presented in a clear comprehensive manner, designed to help people getting started with learning.

We will provide access to other learning materials via national and regional inter-library loan schemes.

Collections

We will provide a wide range of flexible and manageable learning materials in a variety of formats, including online, to complement the independent learning needs of the community.

Sufficient funds will be allocated to ensure that materials are purchased in appropriate formats following established stock selection guidelines.

We will provide public search facilities with access to primary and secondary information through automated and integrated indexes and catalogues. Recommended website help sheets and other resources needed to mediate between the user and the Internet will be created on a variety of educational topics.

As an increasing number of online reference resources   now available these will be assessed in terms of provision quality and relevance to local learning requirements. If purchased adequate staff training and promotion will support them.

As ICT learning is central to library learning we will ensure that the computer related stock at each branch remains up-to-date and helpful to the independent learner. Support packages placed upon the People's Network PCs   ill also reflect the need for ICT learning.

For many, early learning experiences can be negative and uninspiring. In an effort to encourage adults to return to learning, at whatever level, we will create Learning Collections. These will include information on course   ces, study skills and practical assistance such as funding opportunities.

Library Learning Centre

The Library Learning Centre will continue to provide support and online facilities for those wishing to undertake independent learning and for Council staff undertaking professional development. We will ensure that any materials purchased are evaluated in terms of quality and appropriateness for particular needs. Where possible we ll seek the views of partners, i.e. Community Learning, Human s and investigate independent reviews. As online, Internet based learning resources in the areas of ICT and Human Resources/Business skills are increasing we will jointly investigate their provision against CD based learning materials. Cost and availability across the network will have to be considered.

Monitoring and evaluation will ensure that new titles added and out-of-date or damaged materials removed.

To ease access to information careers and course related materials will be included in the Library Learning Centre.

Partnerships

North East Lincolnshire Library Service will work in partnership with other local and national learning providers to ensure that we improve access to all resources and encourage joint Lifelong learning activities.

Following national recommendations such as those in the 'Empowering the Learning Community' report we have established co-operative arrangements with the local colleges and other information centres to improve the of local learning resources and to ease the transition between learning institutions. Already these partnerships have created updated access maps, joint holdings lists and the promotion of library services in external publications.

Libraries will identify opportunities to deliver new forms of branded learning and will support national initiatives from other agencies including Learn Direct and UK Online.

Exploiting the cultural heritage of the area for learning purposes will allow the library service to develop joint projects with other Council departments (Museums, Archaeology and Education), and regional groups. Digitisation will be used to increase community access to historical resources and to remove physical barriers to learning about our local heritage. Where possible, external funding will be sought to support this.

ICT

Familiar ways of undertaking learning and new skills are changing. Through the use of IT the Library Service will bridge the digital divide and provide learners with opportunities to exploit new technologies. In order to support online lifelong learning we will maintain an ICT infrastructure via the People's N ork.

This network will be exploited, via computer skills classes run by partners such as Community Learning. As well as developing basic ICT skills these will help develop the confidence of groups who have traditionally been reluctant to embrace the new technology. The network also provides an opportunity to encourage participation in basic and key skills learning.

Constant monitoring and evaluation will ensure the cla   s fulfil local learning needs within an 'informal' environment. Where possible individual courses will be developed to provide more specialist knowledge. People undertaking   courses will also be encouraged to develop their skills further via opportunities at Community Learning Centres.

Branch Library stock will be developed to support ICT   ls and user guides created for various software and hardware packages, including the   Assistive technology will ensure that the whole community has access to onl   ing opportunities.

Through the NOF ICT training staff will develop the sk ls to assist users and to develop help guides and subject based content on the Library website.

Promotion

Libraries will be actively promoted as both learning centres and as access points to other educational opportunities.

We will highlight the importance and cost-effectiveness of public libraries being used to help and inspire communities to learn and stress the positive value of governmental and educational investment in them.

If you would like to receive this information in another language or in another format such as large print, Braille or on audio tape, please contact:

Grimsby Central Library
Town Hall Square
Grimsby
DN31 1HG
Tel: 01472 323642
e-mail: librariesandmuseums@nelincs.gov.uk

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Filename: Life long Learning policy
Directory: P:\My Documents\Childrens librarian
    Work\Website\New Website\Library Information
Template: P:\Office\Templates\Normal.dot
Title: "Learning is the key to prosperity - for each of us as
    individuals, as well as for the nation as a whole
Subject:
Author: Fiona Service
Keywords:
Comments:
Creation Date: 19/12/2009 11:57:00
Change Number: 3
Last Saved On: 19/12/2009 11:58:00
Last Saved By: Garland, Robin
Total Editing Time: 1 Minute
Last Printed On: 19/12/2009 11:58:00
As of Last Complete Printing
    Number of Pages: 4
    Number of Words: 1,373 (approx.)
    Number of Characters: 7,828 (approx.)