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# West Berkshire Council

## Community Learning and Skills: Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy

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### Community Learning and Skills: Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy 2023-24

#### Sub-contracting arrangements

##### **Rationale for subcontracting**

West Berkshire Council subcontracts provision of Community Learning and Skills to provide wider access to learning opportunities for adults in the community, outside of the Council's own direct offer. Subcontracting enables the Council to better respond to local need by working in partnership with specialist local providers to identify learning and skills gaps and develop an offer to fill them.

This model adds value, generating pound plus through the support of local charitable, voluntary and community organisations and their resources.

##### **Allocation of subcontracted funding**

Funding for the 2023-24 academic year has been decided using a variety of rationales, as detailed in the [2022 - 25 Community Learning Strategy](#)

The Community Education Fund (CEF) is opened to all local providers in May of each year. This is alongside negotiated proposals with providers out of scope of the CEF (referred to *established*) under spot purchase arrangement. All proposals consider:

1. Overview and priority groups
2. Project aims
3. Identification of local need
4. Working with other organisations
5. Delivery plan
6. Delivering personalised learning

7. Embedding of English, maths and digital skills
8. Impact – success and progression
9. Value for money
10. Compliance

A moderation meeting is then facilitated by the Community Learning Team, resulting in a combined, moderated score for each proposal.

Funding is allocated by considering each proposal in order of their scoring.

Each service provider's proposed courses were also considered in terms of the criteria in the specification and on how they contributed to the needs of a wide range of client groups across the district:

- Client groups who will either benefit more from the learning offer or who are currently under-represented in our programme.
- The activity meets specified local and/or national agendas where adult learning has been identified as being able to make a strong contribution.

These agendas include:

- Developing employment skills and opportunities
- Improving maths, English and digital skills
- Supporting families to help children to learn and develop
- Improving health and wellbeing
- Developing stronger communities

Funding requests typically outstripped available funding and additional consideration was therefore given to designing a balanced programme that offers a broad curriculum offer at a variety of levels aiming to support those most disadvantaged across the whole district. In many cases this resulted in the choice to offer funding for some, rather than all, requested instances of a particular subject (i.e. to offer funding for 2 instances of a course rather than the 4 requested) in order to be able to offer some funding to a different course or one aimed at a different client group or in a different geographical area. In some cases an overall funding allocation was agreed and, where all the courses proposed were judged to be of equal merit, the Community Learning Team work with the service provider to agree a balanced delivery programme.

Some courses were not allocated funding because they were judged to either not meet the necessary learning element of the funding (e.g. appeared to be clubs where clients meet to share similar interests but are not necessarily actually learning anything new), or because they failed to meet one of the other requirements of the funding (e.g. courses that either the learner or employer should pay for or there is the potential of other available funding).

### **Level of funding retained**

West Berkshire Council retains a level of funding from the Adult Education Budget (AEB) to support the improvement of community learning and skills locally.

The Community Learning Service leads on, administers, manages and quality assures subcontracted provision, benchmarking against other local authorities.

A level of 12% is retained for commissioned accredited learning (referred to as other learning programme funding or adult skills funding by the ESFA) as a contract management fee. The fee retained amounts to no more than the area cost uplift applied to the unweighted base rate of ESFA approved qualifications as listed on the [Hub](#)

When agreeing subcontracted levels, the Community Learning Service will convert the 12% retained amount to a day rate of the Community Learning Team plus indirect costs as below:

The Community Learning Team has four staff members: Manager, Principal Officer, Officer and Data/Finance/Systems Officer. Costs have taken team time needed to planning, developing strategic direction, mandatory training, staff management, prepare reports, briefing Members, collect, cleanse and submit data, procurement, contracting, administration, observations of teaching and learning, financial management etc. The current day cost of the team is **£717.23**.

40% indirect costs are added to this to cover premises, recruitment, HR, accountancy, audit, cleaning, telephones, utilities (as per ESF rules).

With indirect costs added, the day rate is £1,004.12. As an example, £1,200 retained funding on a £10,000 contract would equate to 1.195 days, or 9 hours of team contract management support. However, we do **not** limit the support to providers in this way and this is simply a guide.

<b>Funding table 2023-24 (forecast)</b>	
AEB allocation – community learning	£401,150.00
AEB allocation – adult skills	£79,717.00
<b>Total AEB budget</b>	<b>£480,867.00</b>
Funding subcontracted (internal/external delivery)	£286,895.95
*Funding retained (overall service costs)	£210,975.31
<b>Total funding allocated for all delivery and service costs</b>	<b>£497,871.26</b>
Funding retained from ESFA adult skills allocation towards management of adult skills subcontracting programme**	£9,566.04

Commissioned Community Learning (non-accredited) is funded under a grant arrangement and is **not** subject to the same 12% contract management fee.

#### **\*Funding retained (overall service costs)**

These costs cover the running of the Community Learning Team and all associated costs. These include, but are not limited to:

- Staff salary costs
- Staff National Insurance contributions
- Staff Pension contributions
- Service Apprenticeship Levy contributions
- Staff work from home and other allowances (eg. First Aider)
- Staff expenses

- Staff telephony, IT and all consumables
- Contributions to central services (HR, Legal etc.)

The above costs are used to provide general management of *all* subcontracted external and internal delivery, as set out below.

**\*\*All funding retained specifically against adult skills accredited provision is used to fund any growth in delivery in-year.**

**Contract management of *all* subcontracted external and internal delivery will include:**

- An annual planning meeting
- An annual contract review meeting and additional support meetings as requested or required
- Three Provider Meetings across the academic year where the provider network (Community Learning Partnership) will come together to share good practice, raise issues or concerns and hear important service updates and information. These will be managed and chaired by the Service.
- Confirmation of allocation and payment process
- Policies and Procedures guidance including Prevent and Safeguarding Support
- Advice on Government policy
- Full suite of course paperwork and support and training as required for tutors and managers in ensuring accurate completion
- Full tutor pack containing templates of all required paperwork and training, if required, on their completion.

**Financial Support** – each subcontractor will receive a financial support and payment service:

- Funding will be confirmed before the start of each academic year and an individual Purchase Order Number issued to each partner
- Returns of paperwork will be made in line of the course start and end dates in order to claim funding three times over the course duration or academic year
- After all paperwork has been processed, subcontractors will be informed of the invoice amount
- Invoices must be sent to Customer Services - Exchequer, West Berkshire Council, Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury, RG14 5LD Berkshire.
- Payment will be issued by BACS 30 days after receipt of invoice
- Specific financial advice will be provided in relation to West Berkshire Council processes, AEB funding rules and other ESFA finance policy
- Additional financial support for learner support is available on a case by case basis as determined by the needs of the learner.

**Data input, monitoring and analysis support** – each subcontractor will receive support for both data entry and data analysis:

- Provision of online enrolment forms to enable learners to be enrolled onto courses
- All learner enrolment and course data will be input by the service, unless directly input by the subcontractor
- Any errors or missing data will be notified to the subcontractor for follow up
- Additions and corrections will be completed by the service on the subcontractor's behalf on receipt of correct data
- The ILR file will be created and submitted to the ESFA as required
- All in-year data returns will be completed and submitted on the subcontractor's behalf
- Learner and tutor feedback will be collected and input for each subcontractor as applicable
- Individual and overall service targets will be shared with subcontractors including regular analysis of delivery against target as part of the contract review process.

**Publicity and Marketing Support** – each subcontractor will receive marketing and communications support:

- Courses promoted on social media, and other platforms
- Appropriate courses advertised via Berkshire Opportunities
- All subcontractors will be invited to take part in annual Adult Learner Achievement Awards event to promote and celebrate adult learning in the district.

**Additional Support** - each subcontractor will receive additional support:

- All data input and data quality control to ensure ILR and data uploads meets ESFA requirements
- Support from the Service to manage the contract and associated support to ensure all ESFA requirements are met
- One to one support for teaching, management and administrative staff as requested or identified; this is particularly relevant for new subcontractors
- Support to identify strategic and funding opportunities within and outside West Berkshire
- Delivery support is available equally to all providers. Greater support is available for new and inexperienced subcontractors, or where existing subcontractors have staff changes, as required.

### **Communication of policy with current and potential subcontractors**

This policy is communicated to current and potential subcontractors by being made available on the Council's website on the *Working with Community Learning* page: [Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy](#)

Current and potential subcontractors can discuss this policy at any time with the Community Learning Team by contacting them by email [aclteam@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:aclteam@westberks.gov.uk) or by calling 01635 519060.

## **Timing of policy review**

This policy will be reviewed annually. If significant or substantial changes are made to ESFA funding or guidance or there are other central or local government changes that may affect it, the policy will be amended in year as necessary.

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Pearson', is written above a horizontal line.

**Ian Pearson**  
**Head of Education Services**