

# Buckinghamshire Adult Learning

## - 'Pound Plus' Policy

### Overview

The Education and Skills Funding Agency require, as part of their funding rules, Adult Community Learning providers to have in place a Pound Plus strategy. Within Pound Plus - the 'Pound' represents the public pound, the 'Plus' is everything else that providers can generate in addition to the non-formula community learning funding allocation – this may be in the form of either income or savings. The process of Pound Plus has been in place since the Skills Funding Agency's publication of *New Challenges, New Chances* in 2011, and it ensures that the community learning grant is seen as a *contribution* to the overall funds necessary to sustain community learning. Providers must have in place a 'Pound Plus' policy, which is available on their website or at their site, and must invest Pound Plus fee income or savings for the people who most need, and can least afford, community learning provision.

### Income

Additional, pound plus, income may include: fee income, funding from other sources, resources in kind and other sources of revenue / sponsorship / volunteering

- *Fee Generation*: BAL have in place a fee income structure which is competitively priced, ranging from workshops and courses to other community learning courses with concessionary fees available. The income raised from fees is used to fund courses and the hardship fund for those most in need.
- *Joint Funding & Grants*: BAL will seek funding from other sources, in partnership with local authority services or from partner ACL providers and will use the additional funds on offer through the Education and Skills Funding Agency's AEB in order to provide progression for learners studying accredited courses.
- *Business Charges*: BAL will seek to deliver courses which are delivered for other businesses or organisations, who can afford to pay a higher rate that covers the management costs of running the course, plus other on-costs.

### Cost Savings

- *Venue Savings*: BAL has ten centres, but does work in partnership with other providers to deliver learning across the county. In these cases the lowest rates of venue hire will be negotiated with the partner organisation, on the grounds of the benefit of the community benefit of learning to the local area.
- *Reducing Costs to other services*: BAL has developed partnerships across Buckinghamshire Council aimed at helping other services reduce their costs, for example through 'upstreaming' interventions that keep people healthy and fit, through reducing visits to GPs, through reducing social isolation (which is a major cost to services), and through reducing falls (through exercise). The ongoing partnerships with Job Centre Plus aim to reduce costs to local government through a structure that helps unemployed people get back into work.
- *Reducing costs through reducing repetition*: The Strategic partnership will map learning opportunities and activities from public, private and third sector providers across the county. As outlined above one effect of this will be to reduce overlap and unnecessary repetition of courses (so that funds can be diverted to other areas of need, rather than supporting under-utilised provision).