

TITLE OF REPORT: Lifelong Learning

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an overview to the Housing, Economy and Health Communities OSC of Gateshead Council's post-16 education offer and the impact on residents.

Background

2. Gateshead Council's post-16 education offer has evolved over the last 20 years from a small community learning offer to being one of the largest local authority providers in England.
3. The majority of our funding comes from the Education Skills Funding Agency, The Department for Education, and the North East Combined Authority. Smaller one-off or short-term projects are funded through (previously) the European Social Fund, Community Renewal Fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
4. Education for residents includes the following provision:
 - a. Community and Family Learning, delivery in over 40 community venues, schools, and learning centres across Gateshead, including specialist provision for adults with learning disabilities
 - b. Apprenticeships and work-place learning, working with over 350 employers each year. We are the largest local authority provider of Apprenticeships in England
 - c. Employability and Careers provision which includes the Council's statutory Information Advice and Guidance team, and employability programmes for learners aged 16+
 - d. Essential Skills programmes including English, maths, digital skills and English for speakers of other languages
5. Funding is for both qualification-based learning and for learning that leads to improved outcomes, such as better community cohesion and improved well-being.
6. The focus of our provision is to help those most disadvantaged, in low-waged employment, have low or no qualifications, or least likely to participate in education. 49% of our learners live in a deprived postcode area, 44% have a learning difficulty, disability or long-term health concern and 2 out of 5 adults are unemployed.
7. Post-16 provision makes a huge impact on individuals, their families, the community and wider region. There are numerous studies demonstrating education, irrespective of age when undertaken:
 - a. Increases earnings by up to 22%, especially for those undertaking a level 3 qualification

- b. Investment in education for women yields higher rates of return than investment in men's, although this can vary by age and type of programme
- c. Having a level 2 qualification offers better protection against weak labour markets, whereas adults with qualifications at level 1 or below suffer the greatest

Recommendations

- 8. The Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities OSC is asked to
 - a. Notes the clear benefits to individuals, communities and employers of adult education
 - b. Recognises the unique and high-quality service offered by Gateshead Council

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