

# The Adult Learning Strategic Forum for Scotland

## *Meeting information*

### **Date & Time**

Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022, 10:00-12:00

### **Location**

Virtually, held via Microsoft Teams

### **Attendees**

Please see Annex A for full list of meeting attendees.

### **Agenda**

1. Welcome from the Chair
2. Minutes of Previous Meeting
3. Strategy in Action - Strategy Evaluation Framework.  
**[Redacted]** *HMIE.*
4. Strategy in Action - CLD Shared Measurement Framework.  
**[Redacted]**, *Advanced Learning and Science Analysis, The Scottish Government.*
5. Strategy in Action- Adult Learning National Outcomes and Standards. **[Redacted]**, *The CLD Standards Council.*
6. Strategy in Action - Community Learning and Development Device Fund. **[Redacted]**, *Economic Input and Digital Inclusion, The Scottish Government.*
7. Strategy in Action- Resources for local areas and practitioners.  
**[Redacted]**, *Education Scotland.*
8. Strategy in Action – Open University in Scotland and Newbattle Abbey College Pathways. *Roddy Henry, Newbattle Abbey College and [Redacted], Open University in Scotland.*
9. Strategy in Action - Launch Evaluation, **[Redacted]**, *CLD Unit, The Scottish Government.*
10. Cost Crisis. **[Redacted]**, *The Scottish Government.*
11. Governance of The Adult Learning Strategy. **[Redacted]**, *CLD Unit, The Scottish Government.*
12. Next Steps and Close

# Minutes

1. Welcome from the Chair
  - a. Mhairi Harrington OBE welcomed guest speakers and attendees.
2. Minutes of Previous Meeting
  - a. All accepted the minutes of the last Adult Learning Strategic Forum meeting, held on 04/05/2022, as true and accurate.
  - b. All actions were reported as complete.
3. Strategy in Action - Strategy Evaluation Framework  
**[Redacted], HMIE**
  - a. **[Redacted]** updated on HMIE's work around creating a Strategy Evaluation Framework. This is currently in the initial stages of development and work so far is focussing on the potential of conducting a baseline thematic review to explore where adult learning in Scotland is right now in order to provide a basis for review in five years. Plans being discussed, but not confirmed, would involve desk based work commencing in Winter and early Spring with visits taking place after that including visits to four national organisations; Newbattle Abbey College, LEAD Scotland, WEA Scotland and Learning Link Scotland.
  - b. It was confirmed that visit locations would be carefully considered to avoid duplication and burden to specific organisations. It was also confirmed that inspection activity would not be carried out as the work would focus on the impact of the Adult Learning Strategy. HMIE would provide informal feedback to organisations but no official reports. The final report would take a national view and provide a thematic picture but may draw on examples of best practice.
4. Strategy in Action - CLD Shared Measurement Framework  
**[Redacted], Advanced Learning and Science Analysis, The Scottish Government**
  - a. **[Redacted]** updated on work around creating a Shared Measurement Framework (SMF) for CLD. The intention would be for the SMF to be aligned with both the Adult Learning and Youth Work strategies. The creation of the SMF would bring a wide range of stakeholders together to develop a shared understanding of roles, responsibilities and challenges across the sector as a whole.
  - b. The team are currently considering the membership of a project group to work on developing a theory of change in relation to outputs. A set of indicators to enable measurement of progress towards outcomes will be developed. It is hoped that a final version will be published in April 2023.
  - c. Advanced Learning and Science analysts have also been working on an evidence review on the impact of CLD and will be looking into how to share this.

5. Strategy in Action- Adult Learning National Occupational Standards (NOS), **[Redacted]**  
**The CLD Standards Council**
  - a. CLDSC have been granted a contract from Skills Development Scotland create new NOS for Adult Learning and to carry out reviews of the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for Community Development and Family Learning across the four nations. CLDSC will carry out a series of UK focus groups for this work. It is hoped that a suite of standards covering all areas of CLD will be available by April 2023.
  
6. Strategy in Action - Community Learning and Development Device Fund  
**[Redacted], Economic Input and Digital Inclusion, The Scottish Government**
  - a. The CLD Device Fund allows organisations to apply for up to £15,000 to buy digital devices. The £500k fund is administered by SCVO. Applications closed on 16/09/22 and it is hoped that funds will be disbursed in October 2022. Final reports will be gathered by end of July 2023.
  - b. It was confirmed that there will be no additional funding available within this tranche. Support for unsuccessful organisations and possibilities around recycling devices were discussed.  
  
**Action: [Redacted] will contact Jackie Howie to discuss support for unsuccessful organisations.**  
  
**Action: Roddy Henry and Ray McGowan will ask about recycling of devices at the next meeting of College Chairs and Principals group.**
  
7. Strategy in Action- Resources for local areas and practitioners  
**[Redacted] Education Scotland**
  - a. Education Scotland have produced resources using development from outputs from the strategy launch workshops held on 29/06/22. These can be used by organisations to deliver sessions on the strategy's themes. These are currently undergoing peer reviews and will be shared with the wider group shortly.
  
8. Strategy in Action - Pathways  
**Open University in Scotland and Newbattle Abbey College**
  - a. Newbattle Abbey College and The Open University in Scotland gave an overview of their work which aligns with Theme One (Expanding and Extending Adult Learning) of the Adult Learning Strategy. A new formal partnership agreement has been put in place which involves mapping progression pathways, supporting students to commence Open University or college courses and designing credit transfer arrangements.
  
9. Strategy in Action – Adult Learning Strategy Launch Evaluation  
**[Redacted], CLD Unit**
  - a. Attendees at the launch were sent an evaluation form to consider the effectiveness of the event. Thanks were provided to Education Scotland for assisting in issuing

the evaluation. Respondents highlighted that future events should be more learner focussed and there should be more opportunities for networking. A future in-person event will be considered once new governance arrangements have been confirmed and will focus on how to incorporate feedback from the launch.

#### 10. Cost Crisis

##### **[Redacted]**

- a. **[Redacted]** provided a brief summary of the statements made by the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister in Parliament in early September. Ministers have stated that there will be further savings required due to the cost of living crisis. **[Redacted]** confirmed that at this moment the £2m CLD funding was still in place but this could be subject to change as reprioritisation exercises are being conducted across The Scottish Government.
- b. The diffuse nature of CLD and how this can limit the sector's ability to make their voice heard was discussed. Successive cuts to funding and the limited nature of alternative funding sources was also highlighted by attendees. **[Redacted]** stressed that Ministers are fully sighted on challenges faced by the CLD sector.

#### 11. Governance of The Adult Learning Strategy

##### **[Redacted], CLD Unit**

- a. **[Redacted]** provided an update on planned governance arrangements for the delivery of the strategy . A Joint Programme Board will be established and will chaired by Mr Hepburn. This will provide strategic oversight of both the Adult Learning and Youth Work strategies, ensuring greater connections across CLD.
- b. Membership of the Joint Programme Board is currently being established and will include learner representatives. The Adult Learning Strategic Forum for Scotland will be refocussed in to four implementation groups aligned with the themes of the Adult Learning Strategy which will be overseen by the Joint Programme Board;
  1. Expanding and Extending Adult Learning led by **[Redacted]**, The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework.
  2. Connecting the Adult Learning Journey led by **[Redacted]**, The College Development Network.
  3. Access Diversity and Inclusion led by **[Redacted]** and **[Redacted]**, Education Scotland.
  4. Workforce Development led by Marion Allison, The CLD Standards Council.
- c. Implementation Groups for the Youth Work Strategy will be developed when it is published.

**Action: Members who have not already done so should inform **[Redacted]** of which implementation groups they would like to join.**

#### 12. Next Steps and Close

##### **Mhairi Harrington**

- a. Mhairi Harrington advised there would be another Forum meeting before Christmas and closed the meeting.

## **Actions**

- 1. [Redacted] and Jackie Howie to discuss support for organisations which were unsuccessful in obtaining CLD Device Fund monies.**
- 2. Roddy Henry and Ray McGowan to ask about recycling of digital devices at next meeting of the College Chairs and Principal's group.**
- 3. Members who have not already done so should inform [Redacted] of which working groups they would like to join.**

**ATTENDEE LIST**

- Mhairi Harrington OBE (Chair)
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted] (minutes)
- Emma Whitelock
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- Jackie Howie
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- Ray McCowan
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted]
- [Redacted] guest speaker
- [Redacted] guest speaker
- [Redacted] guest speaker

# The Adult Learning Strategic Forum for Scotland

## *Meeting information*

1. Date & Time

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022, 11:00-12:30

2. Location

Virtually, held via Microsoft Teams

3. Attendees

Please see Annex A for full list of meeting attendees.

4. Agenda

1. Welcome from the Chair
2. Minutes of Previous Meeting
3. Introduction to **[Redacted]**
4. Improving Gender Balances and Equalities in CLD  
**[Redacted], Education Scotland**
5. Qualification Development  
**Jackie Howie, Learning Link Scotland and [Redacted], West  
Dunbartonshire Council**
6. Impact of the cost of living crisis on Adult Learners  
**Jackie Howie, Learning Link Scotland**
7. Next Steps and Close

## Minutes

### 1. Welcome from the Chair

- a. Mhairi Harrington OBE welcomed attendees to the last meeting of the Adult Learning Strategic Forum and introduced **[Redacted]** as the current **[Redacted]**.

### 2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

- a. All accepted the minutes of the last Adult Learning Strategic Forum meeting, held on 21/09/2022, as true and accurate.
- b. Action points from 21/09/22 were noted as follows;
  - i. **[Redacted]** and Jackie Howie to discuss support for organisations which were unsuccessful in obtaining CLD Device Fund monies.  
**Complete**
  - ii. Roddy Henry and Ray McGowan to ask about recycling of digital devices at next meeting of the College Chairs and Principal's group.  
**Roddy Henry advised he would follow up with [Redacted] regarding this.**
  - iii. Members who have not already done so should inform **[Redacted]** of which working groups they would like to join.  
**Forum members will be contacted as new governance arrangements are put in place.**

### 3. Introduction to **[Redacted]**

- a. **[Redacted]** introduced **[Redacted]** and provided an update on recent developments within the Unit;
  - i. Staffing changes have led to a small additional amount of staff resource.
  - ii. The aim is to publish the new Youth Work Strategy in early 2023.
  - iii. The CLD Unit will form part of a newly established Directorate of Lifelong Learning and Skills.
  - iv. Work on establishing the Joint Programme Board for CLD Strategies has been taking place but further details will not be confirmed until the timing of publication of the Youth Work Strategy is confirmed. If required, the Joint Programme Board will be established in advance of publication of the YWS and would focus initially on the implementation of the Adult Learning Strategy.
- b. An overview of the current extreme budget challenges faced by the Scottish Government and the implications of these on the delivery of the



strategy was provided. The remaining CLD budget for 2022-23 has been taken as a saving to assist in balancing the central budget. The Deputy First Minister will announce the 2023-24 budget in Parliament on 15/12/22 and it is expected that budgetary constraints will intensify over the coming years. Prioritisation work around the delivery of the strategy will be conducted following budget announcements. This work will entail looking at how strategic actions can be carried out by leveraging resources and in cost neutral ways.

4. Improving Gender Balances and Equalities in CLD, **[Redacted], Education Scotland**

- a. **[Redacted]** provided an overview on work she is leading on which is connected to the Adult Learning Strategy's theme of Access, Diversity and Inclusion and improving diversity and removing barriers in the workforce. Education Scotland have produced resources to help practitioners gather and analyse a range of data to support planning approaches to address gender imbalances. It is hoped the resources will be used by organisations for self-evaluation, reflection and to promote discussion. A consultation process is currently ongoing and it is hoped that the resources will be published in April/ May 2023.

5. Qualification Development  
**Jackie Howie, Learning Link Scotland and [Redacted], West Dunbartonshire Council**

- a. The Adult Learning Strategy contains an action to support the development of new entry level qualifications. **[Redacted]** and Jackie Howie presented their work with partners to develop a Personal Development Award at SCQF Level 6 called *Adult Learning: An Introduction to Working in Adult Learning in Scotland*. Possible funding sources for the next stage of the process were discussed such as approaching the SQA. It was highlighted that further work will be considered as part of prioritisation exercises for the delivery of the Adult Learning Strategy in the new year. Slides of the presentation are attached to these minutes.

6. Impact of the cost of living crisis on Adult Learners, **Jackie Howie, Learning Link Scotland**

- a. Learning Link Scotland have undertaken a survey of their members to identify the impact of the cost of living crisis on adult learners. The findings highlighted debt and borrowing, access to benefits and digital skills and access as particular issues for adult learners. Slides of the presentation are attached to these minutes.

- b. It was agreed that maintaining engagement with those in hard to reach groups was an important step as well as ensuring learning on offer reflects the demands of the local jobs market.

## 7. Next Steps and Close

### **Mhairi Harrington**

- a. The Scottish Government thanked Mhairi Harrington for her invaluable contribution as Chair of the Forum.
- b. Mhairi thanked all Members for their time and dedication in producing the Adult Learning Strategy.
- c. The CLD Unit will contact Members to find out who would like to attend a meeting in the new year while the transition to new governance arrangements takes place.

