



Visit to community learning and development in Glasgow City Council

26 July 2022

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1. Background

This report is based on a visit by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education to Glasgow City Council, to look at community learning and development (CLD) provision. This follows a previous inspection where it was identified that there was a need for further engagement. During the visit we met with local authority officers, CLD partners, staff, volunteers, learners and community representatives. Our engagement enabled HM Inspectors to learn more about how learners and communities have been supported through the COVID-19 pandemic. We also heard about approaches that have been working well to support health and wellbeing, and learning. We also discussed progress in taking forward the recommendations from the original inspection.

This report sets out what we found during our visit.

2. CLD in the current context

Glasgow Life and its partners responded well to the challenges posed by the pandemic. Partnerships have been strengthened, and partners now have an increased awareness of their respective roles. Partnership working continues to ensure resources reach those most in need. The CLD one year action plan sets out the CLD priorities during a period of recovery. This plan is about to be reviewed to help establish baselines and assist in evidencing impact of service provision. In common with other local authorities, Glasgow Life faced significant challenges regarding access to buildings for community use during the pandemic. This affected their ability to deliver face-to-face learning.

3. Progress with recommendations from previous report

Glasgow Life and its partners are beginning to improve approaches to setting targets and baselines. The CLD one year action plan helpfully sets out priorities for Glasgow City. Although this is at an early stage, the CLD strategic partnership has established sub groups to take forward both priorities and reporting against targets. New reporting arrangements for CLD that reflect the key outcomes for the city are in the process of being established. This has the potential to demonstrate impact against CLD priorities and help to identify where there may be gaps. However, it is too early to assess its impact.

Glasgow Life staff continue to report on progress against priorities using their management information system. As yet, there are no measurable targets or baselines for CLD partners to report against due to these being removed during the early stages of the pandemic. It is important that these are re-established to ensure progress can be measured. Wider partners continue to use their own systems to support reporting to funding bodies and the community planning partnership where relevant. At a local level in Govan, youth planning, response and recovery partners individually and collectively gather evidence of impact from informal feedback through the use of a wide range of tools. All partners recognise the added value of sharing evidence to demonstrate the positive impact on learners and communities.

Coordination of the learning offer across Govan is improving. Partners share resources and intelligence more effectively. Thriving Places continues to be a key driver for planning at a local level. There is an increasing awareness of the vision and work of Thriving Places amongst partners. An increasing number of partners are involved and seven thematic groups are now operating including Food for Good and Arts and Heritage. Action plans are in place, although a few have not yet been updated to reflect the current context. This should be addressed as soon as possible to ensure that local need is driving service delivery. English for Speakers of Other Languages provision remains strong and most learners are progressing to other opportunities. Family Learning programmes are leading to positive outcomes for children and their families. Govan Help supports around 600 families from Govan and surrounding areas through a range of early intervention services including family support, play therapy and counselling. This is helping to build resilience, confidence and a sense of self-worth. The Hub, based in Govan High School and staffed through the Rangers Charity Foundation, is supporting young people to achieve their potential. 'Make Do and Grow' is focused on supporting families with children aged 3-12 through a range of programmes including a toy library. Strong referral networks ensure those that would benefit most do not miss out. Their 'grow your own' approach is encouraging local people to get involved and progress to learning and volunteering.

The South Adult Learning Partnership (SALP) continued to meet throughout the pandemic and successfully coordinated the distribution of digital devices to local adults. This helped tackle social isolation and enabled engagement in online learning. Local organisations involved with SALP work together well to support learners, for example, by responding quickly to emerging adult learning needs. Since the last inspection visit, SALP have produced an action plan. However, clearer outcomes with appropriate timescales would strengthen this further and allow partners to report on progress more effectively.

4. What happens next

Understandably, Glasgow Life has been responding to the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. These have had a significant impact on the work of CLD partners and they are continuing to work together to address the recommendations from the original inspection. However, there remain areas for improvement that now require focused attention. As a result, we will seek a progress report from Glasgow Life and its partners within six months of the publication of this report. This report should reflect the areas for improvement agreed between HM Inspectors and representatives of the partnership.

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26 July 2022

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