

Report

Report to: **Clyde Valley Learning and Development Joint Committee**
 Date of Meeting: **2 March 2009**
 Report by: **Chair of Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project Implementation Group**

Subject: **Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project - Shared Services Update Phase One**

1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ update the Joint Committee on progress achieved in the various work areas identified in phase one of the project

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Joint Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that it be noted that phase one of the project has reached completion with a significant number of satisfactory outcomes achieved.
- (2) that it be noted that the business changes identified and introduced during phase one will continue to be evaluated as part of the Clyde Valley councils' day to day activities.

3. Background

3.1 The first phase of the Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project identified the following subject areas in phase one

- ◆ First Aid training
- ◆ Equality and Diversity training
- ◆ Delivery of Scottish vocational qualifications (SVQs)

4. Progress and outcomes

4.1 First Aid

4.1.1 At the preliminary feasibility stage of the project, a number of business models were evaluated in order to identify the optimal delivery method to meet the Clyde Valley's demand for First Aid training. The solution chosen was that First Aid training should be delivered by Glasgow City Council Direct and Care Services (DACS) on behalf of the Clyde Valley Group in a variety of venues throughout the Clyde Valley.

4.1.2 Since the establishment of this approach, employees from East Dunbartonshire, East Renfrewshire, Glasgow City, North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire and South Lanarkshire Councils have accessed these courses. To date 145 courses have been run with a total of 1,496 Clyde Valley employees trained.

4.1.3 The success rate of the programme is 100% with participating employees successfully achieving certification or re-accreditation to the appropriate level.

4.1.4 The First Aid model has been cited as an example of good practice in other aspects of the Clyde Valley Project's work, particularly in the field of Social Care training. Overcoming the logistical difficulties inherent in this delivery model has become a significant driver in addressing similar aspects of training delivery relevant to Social Care. In addition, the approach has been successfully replicated by the three Ayrshire councils (North, East and South Ayrshire).

4.1.5 The savings that have been generated by this approach to date have yielded an average of 8% across the Clyde Valley. In cash terms the current figure is some £6,600.00 to date.

4.2 Equality and Diversity

4.2.1 An initial audit of current provision of training in this subject area was completed as part of the feasibility phase of the project. It was recognised that an efficient solution was required to both provide basic level training across all authorities but also to provide evidence that the training had been provided and had been effective. For this reason an e-learning solution was recommended by the Implementation Steering Group, and a suitable package commissioned for development.

4.2.2 The e-learning package is now available in versions for front line staff and for managers for each of the Clyde Valley partner councils. The economies of scale derived from shared development and procurement amount to a saving of some 60% when compared with prices quoted for single council purchase.

4.2.3 Usage on the package has not yet reached the anticipated numbers as each authority has taken a different approach to allowing access to this training. This issue will continue to be addressed, however it has been universally accepted that the content provides an appropriate solution for the Clyde Valley councils in the short-term.

4.3 Delivery of Vocational Qualifications (SVQs)

4.3.1 The approach taken on this aspect of the project was to identify opportunities for improvement by benchmarking existing costs, processes and sharing good practice. This approach has yielded benefits both planned and unplanned from the collaborative approach.

4.3.2 During the initial period of the SVQ project, (up to June 2008), the quantified savings achieved across the Clyde Valley councils was some £45,197.00. This in part was due to a change in the nature and structure of the SVQ in Administration. However, in addition, these savings were also attributed to the reduction in assessor time required due to the use of online portfolios. This use has now been increased from three councils to five, with the potential for further expansion in the future.

4.3.3 The resulting business case recommended that the Clyde Valley Project expanded the use of the online portfolio development tool, Learning Assistant, together with 1,059 user licences. Purchasing through the Clyde Valley will yield initial savings of £2,500.00 per council in start-up and installation costs, and a further saving of some £10,708.00 in initial licence charges.

4.3.4 The purchase price negotiated by the Clyde Valley has encouraged North Ayrshire Council (an associate member of the Clyde Valley Group), to purchase Learning Assistant, and to develop the use of online portfolios in a further four subject areas.

- 4.3.5 The shared approach has also yielded a further partnership between North and South Lanarkshire Councils, whereby two tranches of 16 candidates from North Lanarkshire Council (NLC) have had the SVQ delivered by South Lanarkshire Council (SLC). In doing so the income of some £18,000.00 has been retained within the Clyde Valley with no additional resources required to deliver the programmes. This has been accommodated from savings in time achieved through the online portfolio approach.
- 4.3.6 The group continues to investigate further opportunities for savings and sharing good practice, such as reviewing the number of accredited VQ centres throughout the Clyde Valley. An evaluation of these and other opportunities to generate further savings is planned to be developed in phase two of the project.
- 5. Employee Implications**
- 5.1. Evidence suggests that the increasing use of online portfolios will generate savings of as much as one third of assessor time. This time when realised can be represented by additional capacity to deliver VQs (e.g. the partnership between North and South Lanarkshire), or for overall allocation of additional duties.
- 6. Financial Implications**
- 6.1. Financial outcomes achieved by phase one of the project are documented in the main body of this report.
- 7. Other Implications**
- 7.1. None
- 8. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**
- 8.1. An initial Impact Assessment was completed on 3 November 2008 using the South Lanarkshire Council online assessment tool. The assessment was completed with contributions from members of the Implementation Steering Group.

Gill Bhatti

Chair of Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project Implementation Group
17 February 2009

Previous References

Clyde Valley Joint Committee Progress Report – Dec 2008

List of Background Papers

Clyde Valley EGF Training Bid

NBSS Clyde Valley Consortium Submission Nov 06

NBSS Clyde Valley Consortium – Secondary Paper December 06

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

Gill Bhatti, Chair, Clyde Valley Learning and Development Project Implementation Group

Ext: 5604 (Tel: 01698 455604)

E-mail: gill.bhatti@southlanarkshire.gov.uk