

**AGENDA ITEM – Annual
Report of the Learning and
Skills Service**

REPORT TO CABINET

November 2017

**REPORT OF SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TEAM**

CABINET DECISION

Portfolio: Regeneration and Housing – Lead Cabinet Member – Nigel Cooke

Update on the Governing Body and the Annual Report for Learning and Skills

1. Summary

This report provides an update on the development of the Governing Body for Learning and Skills along with information on the successes and strategic decisions taken by the Learning and Skills Service during academic year 2016/17.

2. Recommendations

1. Members note the progress made in the development of the Board of Governors.
2. Members note the positive performance of the Learning and Skills Service
3. Members note the priorities of the Service in 17-18

3. Reasons for the Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

To demonstrate the success of the newly formed Governing Body for Learning and Skills and their support and strategic oversight of the Service. To continue to develop and grow the learning and skills provision across all communities of Stockton Borough and to secure the best outcomes for adult education.

4. Members' Interests

Members (including co-opted Members) should consider whether they have a personal interest in any item, as defined in **paragraphs 9 and 11** of the Council's code of conduct and, if so, declare the existence and nature of that interest in accordance with and/or taking account of **paragraphs 12 - 17** of the code.

Where a Member regards him/herself as having a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 16** of the code, in any business of the Council he/she must then, **in accordance with paragraph 18** of the code, consider whether that interest is one which a member of the public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably regard as so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Member's judgement of the public interest and the business:-

- affects the members financial position or the financial position of a person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code, or

- relates to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to the member or any person or body described in **paragraph 17** of the code.

A Member with a personal interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, may attend the meeting but must not take part in the consideration and voting upon the relevant item of business. However, a member with such an interest may make representations, answer questions or give evidence relating to that business before the business is considered or voted on, provided the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose whether under a statutory right or otherwise (**paragraph 19** of the code)

Members may participate in any discussion and vote on a matter in which they have an interest, as described in **paragraph 18** of the code, where that interest relates to functions of the Council detailed in **paragraph 20** of the code.

Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

It is a criminal offence for a member to participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which he/she has a disclosable pecuniary interest (and where an appropriate dispensation has not been granted) **paragraph 21** of the code.

Members are required to comply with any procedural rule adopted by the Council which requires a member to leave the meeting room whilst the meeting is discussing a matter in which that member has a disclosable pecuniary interest (**paragraph 22** of the code)

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Update on the Governing Body and the Annual Report for Learning and Skills

Summary

This report provides an update on the development of the Governing Body for Learning and Skills along with information on the successes and strategic decisions taken by the Learning and Skills Service during academic year 2016/17.

Recommendations

1. Members note the progress made in the development of the Board of Governors.
2. Members note the performance of the Learning and Skills Service
3. Members note the priorities of the Service in 2017-18

Reasons for the Recommendation(s)/Decision(s)

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DETAIL

Progress made in the development of the Governing Body

1. The Governing Body met for the first time on 20th October 2016 for the first stage of induction. During its infancy, the Board was supported by the National Leaders of Governance support service, funded by the Education and Training Foundation, to improve provider performance, support the chair of governors and improve board effectiveness. The induction took the board through the Terms of Reference of the Governing Body and the board reviewed the L&S Service's self-assessment plan and quality improvement plan to give background to board members about the current position and the planned improvements to move the Service closer to becoming an outstanding provider and to help steer the Service in line with Stockton Borough Council and Tees Valley Combined Authority priorities.
2. The Board was further supported by the National Leaders of Governance officer, Karen Adriaanse – a former HMI for OFSTED who delivered a workshop on 'Outstanding Leadership and Management within the FE Sector'. Governors are now clear on the

OFSTED expectations of them and how they link with the Service's own expectations from the board. Governors are using the OFSTED Common Inspection Framework to support them in their challenge and scrutiny of Learning and Skills performance reports.

- The current structure (adopted in April 17) is:
 - Chair and Link Governor for Equality and Diversity – Councillor Nigel Cooke, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing and Portfolio Holder for the Learning and Skills Service
 - Vice Chair – Frances Hoy – Senior HR Manager, NIFCO Engineering
 - Link Governor for Safeguarding – Councillor Jim Beall – Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health and Deputy Leader of the Council
 - Link Governor for Prevent – James Hadman, Catalyst
 - Governor – Fabienne Bailey, Learning and Skills Service Manager, SBC
 - Governor – Chris Renahan, Economic Growth Manager, SBC
 - Governor – Jacqueline Taylor, Self Employed Marketing consultant and University Lecturer
 - Governor – Katie Horbury, Learner Representative
 - Clerk to Governors – Cath Kelly, Learning and Skills Service, SBC
3. In addition to board meetings, governors are involved in the celebration of the Service success and have participated in events such as the awards evenings and photography exhibitions. Link Governor roles are helping to strengthen safeguarding, 'Prevent' and Equality and Diversity across the Service.
4. Governors will further strengthen their support for the Service by carrying out Learning Walkthroughs to gain a more in depth awareness of the learning culture. Our learner representative will help strengthen the learner voice in shaping the future of the Service.

Performance of the Learning and Skills Service

5. The Service began the academic year 2016/17 with the mandatory self-assessment process of the previous year 2015/16. The Service judged itself to remain a 'good' provider (OFSTED) with some areas of 'outstanding' provision i.e. within Community Learning and some areas that 'required improvement' i.e. 16-18 Study Programme, Traineeships and Apprenticeships. Therefore, an intensive quality improvement plan was put in place in the first half of the year to swiftly address the areas for improvement.
6. Following on from the April 2016 external Quality Review which supported the Service view that it was not best place to deliver on the 16-18 Study Programme, the Service worked with the Education Funding Agency and Stockton Riverside College's Skills Academy to close down the Service contract for this provision from February 2017.
7. A further external Quality Review was completed in April 2017 to provide additional challenge to support us in putting together a robust and responsive improvement plan around traineeships and apprenticeships. The date of this review was unannounced to staff but they were aware that it would take place in Term 3. The review confirmed some concerns identified in the self-assessment and helped to formulate a swift improvement plan to address these. This included performance management of the whole apprenticeship team and a recovery plan which was completed in just 3 months.

Traineeships and Apprenticeships have developed from 'requires improvement' to 'good' at the end of 16/17 with 'outstanding' results projected for 17-18.

8. In the last annual report, it was noted that the Service had been selected by the Skills Funding Agency to take over a contract from a failing provider i.e. Janard. The Service has successfully re-integrated 85% of the affected learners back in to Apprenticeship provision and has 100% achievement rates for 2016/17. Apprenticeship feedback from this additional contract is extremely positive and a number of the employers engaged with have now chosen the Service as its preferred apprenticeship provider for Health and Social Care education and training.
9. Apprenticeship participation has seen huge growth following our recovery plan and apprenticeship starts has almost trebled from the previous year i.e. in 2015-16 there were 112 starts and in 2016-17, there were 323 starts.
10. Whilst figures are still being finalised by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, the Service's own data shows that the Service has ended the academic year with strong performance data with growth in participation and achievement rate increases in the majority of curriculum areas. This includes:

Education and Training Learning Aim Starts	4632 (by 3101 individual learners)
Best Case Overall Achievement	93% (+2.4% from last year and +2.2% on national average) Where learners have withdrawn, the top reason recorded is for 'personal reasons'
Pass rates	97.7% (+2.9% on national average)
Functional Achievement English	73.9% (+4.7% on national average)
Functional Achievement Maths	65.9% (+5.4% on national average)
GCSE results	89% English and maths combined pass rate (first year of delivery)
ESOL	77.9% (-10.9% on national average – mainly due to learners getting the right to remain and then leaving the area – without the withdrawals, the achievement rate would be 92.2%)

Apprenticeship Starts	323 (+221 from 15/16)
Best Case Overall Achievement	69.9% (+9.9% from 15/16 and on par with the national average)
Timely Achievement	62.5% (+4.9% on national average)

11. Appendix 1 and 2 show the number of enrolments by ward area and demonstrate that the Adult Education Budget is well used to support learners from the most disadvantaged wards across the Stockton Borough.
12. The L&S Service Management team has updated its 3 year Strategic Plan and continues with the Service's vision: "To stand out in Stockton for being Outstanding". The Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment profile shows that 93.76% of sessions were "good" or "outstanding". This improvement has been supported by a vast CPD programme for tutors and assessors allowing the Service to 'grow their own' and secure high quality professionals. In line with Shaping a Brighter Future, Service staff have taken responsibility for their own professional development and, on average, have received 49 hours of CPD each within 2016/17.
13. The strategic plan also aims for continuous growth for the Service across all curriculum areas and to continue to target the bulk of the funding to those most in need.

Disadvantaged learner participation has increased year on year and demonstrates provision is being delivered to learners and communities who need it the most.

Funding

14. Each academic year, the L&S Service receives an allocation of funding from the Skills Funding Agency and the Education Funding Agency to deliver learning outcomes based on their current priority areas e.g. Apprenticeships, English and maths, ICT, community impact and employability. Both agencies allocate funding based on the final outturn (enrolments and achievements) of the previous academic year. Any funding that is not used is returned to the Agencies. This model means that the L&S Service is fully funded by SFA/EFA and is a net contributor to Stockton Borough Council.
15. Funding arrangements from the agencies continued to be a challenge for the Service including changes in the funding methodology for community learning provision and the reductions made to this area and also the large scale apprenticeship reforms, moving funding responsibilities away from the agencies and more to employers. Despite these challenges, the Service secured the following in 2016/17:

Adult Skills funding (English, maths, ICT, employability and NVQs)	£751,502
Community Learning funding	£847,178
Community Mental Health Project funding	£80,000
Traineeships (Adult and 16-18)	£36,757
Janard Apprenticeship contract	£332,604
Mainstream Apprenticeships	£294,417
Total apprenticeship contract value (+ £200,000 than in 15/16.)	£627,021

All funding targets were met or exceeded putting the service in a strong position for 17/18.

16. To support continuous growth, the Service has attracted additional funding from the following sources:
- Tees Valley Youth Employment Initiative which in total is worth **£297,000** to the Service. The project continues until July 2018 but the Service has already over achieved its participation target i.e. 142 enrolments (aged 19-29) against a target of 102 and so the team will focus on securing the required outcomes in to positive destinations.
 - European Social Fund to deliver ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) Employability courses. The Service is a sub-contractor to Middlesbrough College on this project and will receive **£75,000** if all outcomes are achieved. The project aims to support black, Asian and minority ethnic learners to move into work, apprenticeships, volunteering and further learning.
 - Home Office's Controlling Migration Fund - The Service has been allocated **£160,000** of additional income to support 2 years' worth of activity that will open up access to more ESOL provision and train people to become Community Interpreters so that they can support lower level English residents within their communities.
17. A self-assigned income target of **£100,000** from full cost courses which was achieved from leisure/hobby based courses such as, Spanish, woodwork, yoga and cookery which

support the council's objective of providing high quality, affordable, cultural and leisure experiences for people to experience and be inspired by.

Curriculum Offer

18. As per the Service's strategic plan, the curriculum offer is fully aligned to Stockton Borough Council's strategic objectives and the Tees Valley Combined Authority priorities for economic growth. Data in the tables in Appendix 3 shows that, in 2016/17, the curriculum has been purposefully aligned to priority areas where there are real job opportunities and that the bulk of funding has been targeted to support economic regeneration through up-skilling of local residents. 58.5% of Stockton learners were from the most disadvantaged wards of the Borough. This is an increase of 7.5% from 2015/16.
19. Following the remodelling of the pre-employment provision, the Service has been successful in delivering a wide ranging suite of sector based work academies to support local employers with recruitment needs. Examples are in the following sector areas:
20. Warehousing (Bookers and Clipper), Croupier (Grosvenor Casinos), Contact Centre Operations (Virgin Media and RED Driving School), Horticulture (APS Growers), Health and Social Care and Security (Phoenix Security).
21. These academies range from 2-6 weeks and are bespoke programmes designed with employers to give people the training and qualifications they need to be successful in gaining employment in a particular sector. Employers guarantee all participants an interview at the end of the programme and many include work experience with the employer.

Learner Voice and Celebration

22. Each year, the Service is required to carry out the ESFA's FE Choices – Learner Views Surveys. Based on the volume of learners the Service has, a sample size is set by the ESFA and 2016/17 was the first year in 5 years that the Service met the required sample. The results showed that overall – 90% of our learners would recommend us to a friend or family member and within Community Learning programmes, 100% of learners would recommend us to a friend or family member. This information is very important to the Service as OFSTED will make judgements around learner satisfaction.
23. In March, the Service participated in National Apprenticeship Week and along with information sessions for learners and employers around the reforms and the Levy, the Service hosted the annual apprenticeship awards evening, recognising exceptional apprentices in different sector areas. Governors from the Service's board and the Council Leader, Bob Cook, supported with the presentation of the awards to learners. The overall apprentice of the year was from the Teaching Assistant apprenticeship programme.
24. In July, the Service participated in the National Festival of Learning and along with 'have a go' sessions for new learners, the Service hosted the annual Adult Learner Awards evening, recognising outstanding learners from the different courses offered by the Service. Again, the evening was supported by Governors and the Council Leader, Bob Cook. The overall learner of the year was awarded for his perseverance in achieving English, maths, employability and volunteering skills.

Support for Partners

25. Across the year, the Service has supported 10 Stockton Riverside College students with work experience placements in the administrative office in Billingham Community Centre.

All students reported excellent feedback on their experience and each student was provided with a reference from us about their performance in the office.

26. Across the year, the Service supports the MALAP group in sourcing opportunities for young people leaving care from the council. One particular success was developed through the new relationship with APS Growers and has seen a young man complete a traineeship with them in Engineering and has now progressed on to a full time Engineering apprenticeship there too.
27. In the spring term, the Service supported an intern from the University of Teesside by providing her with a 3 month internship in the business administrative team. The young lady had a positive experience with us and has now moved in to full time employment.
28. Over the Summer period, the Service supported Safe in Tees Valley's National Citizenship Service programme by hosting 150 16-18 year olds in Billingham for an information session on traineeships and apprenticeships, followed up by a 'Masterchef' style challenge where the teams competed against each other in our catering kitchen to design, prepare and serve food to our team of judges. The young people loved the challenge and were awarded with a prize from us at their celebration evening.

Priorities for 2017/18

- To provide a curriculum where learners can access provision from entry level to higher level (including apprenticeships) through a dynamic and flexible offer
- To provide a curriculum that supports positive impacts against our local council and local economic priorities, meeting the needs of individuals, communities and employers
- To collaborate internally and with partners in professional exchanges to raise standards in teaching, learning and assessment so that we become outstanding in all areas
- Recruit and retain outstanding professionals who take responsibility for their own development and provide outstanding outcomes for learners
- Strengthen further the governance arrangements of the Service to provide additional scrutiny, challenge and support to drive the Service forward
- To adopt the 'Smarter Working in Stockton' (SWIS) approach to drive greater effectiveness and efficiency, optimising tools and working environments for employees

COMMUNITY IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

29. The L&S Service is actively targeting communities of greatest need and disadvantage. The L&S performance data shows that there are no significant achievement gaps between any group of learners, with or without protected characteristics. The strategic plans of the L&S Service are expected to have a positive impact for all communities.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

30. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

31. There are no legal implications arising from this report.

RISK ASSESSMENT

32. This Learning and Skills Annual Report is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

COUNCIL PLAN POLICY PRINCIPLES AND PRIORITIES

33. As detailed in **Appendix 3**, the Learning and Skills provision contributes to all of the council priorities and principles.

CORPORATE PARENTING IMPLICATIONS

34. There are no corporate parenting implications arising from this report.

CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS

35. Consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health and the Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration and Housing has been carried out in line with the Concordat for Communication and Consultation with Members

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Education related? Yes

Background Papers

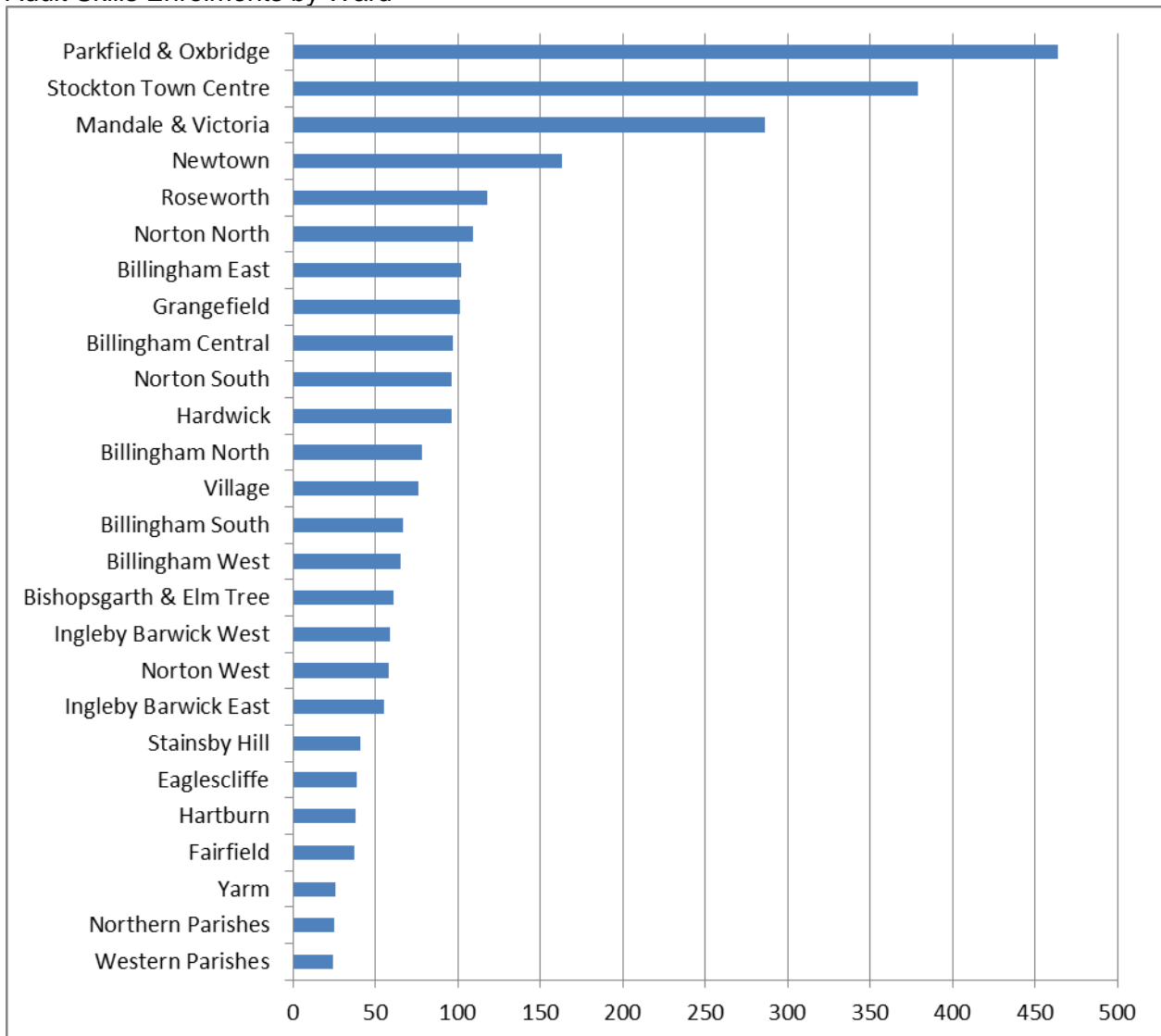
Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Property

No implications identified in relation to the Council's property.

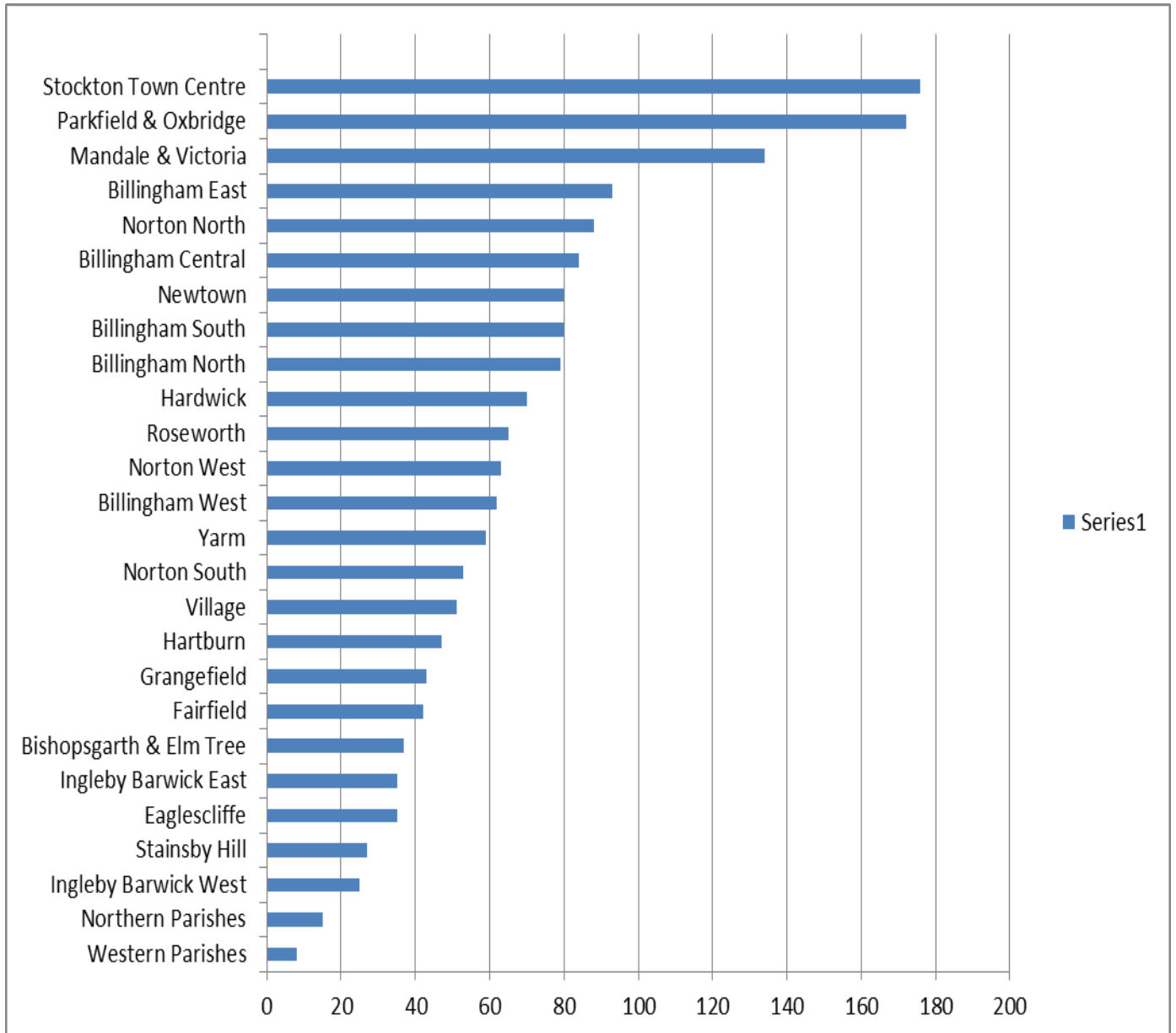
Appendix 1

Adult Skills Enrolments by Ward



Appendix 2

Community Learning Enrolments by Ward



Appendix 3

Council Priority	No. of Courses	No. of enrolments
Stockton on Tees at the heart of a vibrant and economically successful Tees Valley, providing real opportunities for residents	237	2188
Stronger more cohesive communities	168	1064
Enhanced quality of life for people with care and support needs	64	1183
A safe Stockton on Tees	53	769
Every child has the best start in life	28	276
High quality, affordable cultural and leisure experiences for people to experience and be inspired by	26	334
Ill health is prevented wherever possible	16	118
Life chances are improved for children and young people, particularly those whose circumstances make them vulnerable to poor outcomes	14	137
TVCA Priority	Number of Courses	Number of enrolments
Skills for Employment (English, Maths, ICT, Employability	340	2816
Health and Social Care	118	1659
Digital and Creative	51	460
Business and Professional Services	35	374
Logistics	6	30
Low Carbon	3	11
Higher Education		
Other	54	697