



Programme Evaluation:
Phase – One Adult Literacies Pathfinder project
Report 2006



Evaluation Report of the Phase One Adult Literacies Pathfinder Projects

by

York Consulting Ltd

A Report to Communities Scotland

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Foreword

by Learning Connections, Communities Scotland

One of the recommendations of the Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland (ALNiS) 2001 report was the establishment of four Pathfinder Projects:

There is much to be learned...in terms of innovation and priority accorded outwith the education and training system to literacy and numeracy as an issue. Pathfinder projects will test out approaches outwith the education and training system making links with social justice issues.

ALNiS 2001

It is the role of Learning Connections' Adult Literacies team to implement the recommendations outlined in ALNiS and this is achieved by providing support for the development of Adult Literacies nationally.

This is the evaluation report of the four Phase One Pathfinder Projects. The Pathfinders were established in late 2002 by the Scottish Executive's Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Department. Management of the Pathfinders was handed over to Learning Connections in April 2003, and the Pathfinders' funding came to an end in March 2005.

The successful organisations for Pathfinder status were:

- North Lanarkshire Community Learning Strategy Partnership;
- Road Haulage and Distribution Training Council (subsequently Skills for Logistics);
- Scottish Prison Service (SPS); and
- Scottish Trades Union Congress.

The evaluation framework was implemented in the final quarter of the lifetime of the Pathfinders. The appointed consultants met with each of the Pathfinder Project Managers, together with a selection of key players and learners. The results of this evaluation are contained in this report.

Finally, we would like to thank the four organisations for participating and being the trailblazers in respect of Adult Literacies Pathfinders.

Acknowledgements

York Consulting Ltd would like to thank the four co-ordinators of the Pathfinder Projects for their help and support in accessing stakeholders and their insight into the workings of the projects.

We are also grateful for the time and contributions from the range of stakeholders who have been consulted on the individual projects. Their accounts have been an invaluable element within the evaluation.

Summary of findings

Background

The funding of four Phase One Adult Literacies Pathfinder Projects was recommended in the *Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland (ALNIS)* report published by the Scottish Executive in 2001, with the aims of raising awareness and identifying effective practice and supporting innovative approaches to adult literacies learning.

The Pathfinder Projects, which were set up by the Scottish Executive in 2002, were funded for three years to deliver specific learning outputs and outcomes in their respective areas. From April 2003, management of the Pathfinders passed to Learning Connections, Communities Scotland. The four Phase One Pathfinder Projects are:

- North Lanarkshire Community Learning Strategy Partnership;
- Skills for Logistics (formerly the Road Haulage and Distribution Training Council);
- The Scottish Prison Service (SPS); and
- The STUC.

Leading up to the end of the Pathfinders' funding period, this evaluation was commissioned to understand the key outputs and outcomes from each project, identify challenges, barriers, sustainability and transferability.

The evaluation methodology involved structured interviews with relevant stakeholders and data/information analysis for each of the projects to ascertain how the projects had delivered against their funded outputs.

Key findings:

Overall, the Phase One Adult Literacies Pathfinder Projects have demonstrated key elements of success, having made significant progress on literacies issues in their relevant sectors. Significant work has taken place as part of the projects that directly contributes to ALNIS and this includes:

- literacies learners have benefited from taking part in the Pathfinder Projects' activities;
- significant research has been carried out which widens the research and evidence base for adult literacies across a number of sectors;
- partnership working with key stakeholders involved in the provision and/or support of literacies learning;
- an increased awareness of literacies issues amongst employers, learners and those who support learners;
- an increase in liaison and partnership working with specific learning providers, like FE colleges; and
- the development of literacies training materials and screening tools that can be replicated across the sectors, and – in some cases – on a more national basis.

In addition, several 'extra' activities were delivered throughout the period, some of which were ongoing and others that developed after attracting additional funding or built on the momentum of the Pathfinder activities.

In most of the Pathfinders, all the planned outputs were not achieved. This was partly due to the nature of some of the activity that required significant foundation work before tangible results could be achieved, and the over ambitious targets that were originally proposed.

A range of good practice and lessons learnt in relation to project management and delivery, sustainability and transferability were identified. These include:

- project management and delivery
- projects that built on or integrated into existing activity could make progress quickly and strengthen existing relationships;
- literacies learning that was delivered covertly or incorporated into standard workforce training reached a greater number of learners;
- a key lesson is the need for robust management information systems to track progress and inform the performance and development of the project.

Sustainability and transferability

- funding that has been secured from other sources to continue elements of the literacies work initiated by the Pathfinders e.g. by the STUC;
- capacity building approach through building networks/partnerships, increasing awareness and developing customised learning materials;
- the development of learning materials and screening tools that can be tailored to and taken forward by other sectors/stakeholders.

There are clear indications that the literacies work will continue beyond the lifetime of the Pathfinders; each one has produced various models that, if promoted successfully, can be rolled out to others within their field. Crucial to sustained activity will be the ability to build further links with employers, providers and learners and embed the literacies learning into wider workforce development or training provision.

The projects as a whole have provided an insight into other considerations for tackling adult literacy and numeracy and possibilities for future developments in this area of work. The key aspects are detailed below:

- need to further promote and raise awareness amongst those involved with literacies learning of the distinction between literacies needs and lifelong learning;
- the need or appropriateness of a validated screening tool, when to use it and with whom;
- mapping the supply side of workplace literacies provision – location, skills and experience of those delivering the learning, types of learners; and
- the pedagogy of literacies learning – what are the most effective methods, skills and qualifications.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Learning Connections commissioned York Consulting Ltd to undertake an evaluation of the four Phase One Adult Literacies Pathfinder Projects, to assess their achievements, barriers to success and lessons learned in order to highlight future areas of activity which will assist the Scottish Adult Literacy and Numeracy strategy.

Background

- 1.2 The Scottish Executive Report *Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland* (ALNIS) published in 2001 outlined the challenges of raising the levels of adult literacies across the country. The report defines literacies as ‘the ability to read, write and use numeracy to handle information, to express ideas and opinions, to make decisions and solve problems, as family members, workers, citizens and lifelong learners’ and highlighted the fact that low or insufficient literacy and numeracy was a significant issue in Scottish society.
- 1.3 The report also stated that literacies based research in Scotland is ‘virtually non-existent’ and emphasised that people with low skills are not a uniform group, so diverse outreach strategies and learning options are required for different target groups.
- 1.4 The available research into the scale of need in Scotland estimates that 23 per cent of adults in Scotland may have low skills and another 30 per cent may find their skills inadequate to meet the demands of today’s society. Further analysis suggests that up to 800,000 adults appear to have very low skills.¹
- 1.5 Improving literacy and numeracy levels is considered critical to achieving improvements in social justice, as well as public health, economic development and lifelong learning. There is a growing body of evidence that shows links between low levels of literacy and numeracy and people working in low skilled jobs, experiencing low income and poor health and living in disadvantaged areas.
- 1.6 ALNIS set out the national strategy for adult literacies provision. It contained 21 recommendations. These included:
- the development of common approaches to produce specialised guidance and assessment and individual learning plans (ILPs);
 - the measurement of learner progress based on learner goals and distance travelled, building on the core skills framework and progress file;
 - the provision of specialist information and advice to support inclusive and effective provision for all learners;
 - the accountability for local development, funding, monitoring and targets to be given to local authorities as co-ordinators of Community Learning Strategies;
 - the doubling of learning capacity within three years.

¹ *Adult Literacy and Numeracy in Scotland* Report, Scottish Executive, 2001.

- 1.7 One of the recommendations was that 'four pathfinder projects should be established to raise the awareness and stimulate demand for literacy and numeracy.' The three-year projects would aim to identify effective practice and to support innovative approaches to literacies. The Scottish Executive selected the Pathfinders based on the sustainability of their approaches and the ease with which they could be replicated.
- 1.8 The four Phase One Pathfinders were:
- **North Lanarkshire Community Learning Strategy Partnership** - awarded £75,000 to design a new ICT based Learning Needs Analysis (LNA) tool and, in partnership with three further education colleges, to recruit ten employers and ten small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to participate in programmes which provide learning and progression plans for participants;
 - **Skills for Logistics (formerly the Road Haulage and Distribution Training Council)** - awarded £80,000 to work in partnership with employer associations, trades unions and local enterprise companies to target road haulage industry employees in Renfrewshire and Lanarkshire, and to develop sector specific literacies learning materials to build capacity among employers, managers and training providers to identify individuals in need of literacies support;
 - **Scottish Prison Service (SPS)** - awarded £156,000 to improve specialist literacy and numeracy learning opportunities for 3000 prisoners per annum, and to improve linkages to lifelong learning in communities for prisoners on release, as well as developing new guidance, learning and screening materials;
 - **Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC)** awarded £143,000 to develop a strategy to tackle adult literacy and numeracy in the workplace and to build capacity among 100 tutors and 400 trades union activists on literacies issues, through awareness raising courses and the establishment of a network of 40 fully trained adult literacies tutors.
- 1.9 These four Pathfinder Projects were established by the Scottish Executive in March 2002 and, in April 2003, management of the Pathfinders passed to Learning Connections, Communities Scotland.
- 1.10 The evaluation of the four Pathfinders focused on the following aspects: which of the outputs have been achieved and which have not;
- whether the aims, key objectives or anticipated outcomes of each project have changed since its inception; the details of any changes and the reasons for making the change;
 - details of changes of personnel during the lifetime of the project and the impact on the project;
 - whether or not the changes in practice which the project has brought about are likely to be maintained;
 - what the overall perceptions of the project are in relation to the project's key impacts and achievements in raising adult literacy and numeracy levels;
 - the lessons, positive and negative, that Learning Connections, Communities Scotland need to be aware of in disseminating the findings;

- what further areas of research, development and engagement with learners, stakeholders and interested organisations might usefully follow from these projects to assist the Scottish Adult Literacy and Numeracy strategy.
- 1.11 York Consulting's approach to addressing the evaluation requirements was to use a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques that were most appropriate for each individual Pathfinder. The evaluation process was initiated with a familiarisation visit with each project co-ordinator to gain a better understanding about how the project was operating and to consider key data and management information. There was also an initial discussion about the evaluation process and access to the main stakeholders. This process helped to inform the development of a tailored approach to each project that took account of their specific circumstances and conditions of operation.
- 1.12 The individual projects are discussed in turn in the next four sections and then the overall evaluation of the Phase One Pathfinders is explored in the final section, culminating in a series of conclusions and recommendations.

2 North Lanarkshire Community Learning Strategy Partnership Pathfinder Project

Background and context

- 2.1 The ALNIS report highlights the challenges and barriers for addressing the needs and provision requirements of adults with low literacies skills.
- 2.2 Traditional approaches to adult literacies learning had had limited success and the need to develop and implement assessment and screening tools for adults that assess skills as well as learning styles and preferences was recognised.
- 2.3 There are also specific areas to consider when addressing the support needs of those in employment; in particular, identifying appropriate ways for learners to improve their literacy and numeracy skills, whilst recognising the environment in which they work and where their development could be supported.
- 2.4 In partnership² with the three local FE colleges, North Lanarkshire Council and local employers, the Pathfinder Project aimed to identify literacies needs of individual employees and to develop a framework to support workers in a workplace context.³

Project aims and objectives⁴

- 2.5 The following key outputs were funded as part of the Pathfinder Project:
 - the design and development of a comprehensive LNA process that incorporates a screening practice;
 - identification and recruitment of employer and employee participants drawn from ten employers and ten SMEs;
 - analysis and design of contextualised programmes of development supported by mentors in the workplace, on the basis of the LNA;
 - 200 learners to receive support throughout the lifespan of the project;
 - full evaluation of the project comprising a benchmark study, interim evaluation, process studies and final evaluation.

Project changes

- 2.6 There have been a number of changes in personnel and approaches during the project. A member of the management committee, responsible for co-ordinating the management information, retired in 2004. Thereafter, a new member of staff was employed to carry out this role and the project's marketing activity. However, this individual took up another post soon after arrival and was not replaced.
- 2.7 The approach to working with employers evolved as the development workers (DW) identified more effective ways to engage with them. The original screening tool was also amended to allow for 'dipping in and out' of the assessment rather than working through all the elements.

² Named partners are detailed in Appendix 1.

³ This partnership is referred to as the 'Pathfinder Partnership' in this section.

⁴ Original Pathfinder Bid - North Lanarkshire Community Learning Strategy Partnership.

Evaluation methodology

- 2.8 The Pathfinder Project was evaluated through a range of consultation approaches in the form of a focus group, telephone and face-to-face interviews, along with a familiarisation meeting with the project co-ordinator. Those who participated in the consultation included:
- four development workers;
 - four members of the Pathfinder Partnership;
 - eight workplace learners; and
 - members of the management team from two employers.
- 2.9 Further research was carried out by analysing data and management committee reports and these are referenced wherever they have been used.

Outputs and outcomes achieved

- 2.10 The following section gives details of the various outputs achieved and the progress and outcomes of each.

The learning needs analysis (LNA)

- 2.11 This tool was designed and developed to include an ILP to ensure that learners had a structured pathway for their learning. The tool was devised with significant Pathfinder Partnership support and was tested, adapted and revised until a flexible model was produced which could be easily administered, with learning needs readily identified.
- 2.12 Despite some concerns about the diagnostic nature of the tool and the fact that it had not been formally validated and approved for use, those administering the tool (i.e. the DWs) felt that the tool was easy to work with, non-threatening and highly flexible. The ICT version which was also created was very much welcomed and it has since been disseminated to all relevant community learning and development staff within North Lanarkshire Council
- 2.13 It is not clear whether the ILPs were widely applied and valued by learners. This suggests that the structure of the ILP was not entirely useful or that it was not given sufficient emphasis following the LNA.

Identifying and recruiting employers and employees

- 2.14 Despite significant efforts to engage a wide range of organisations, it was not possible to sustain relationships with 20 large employers or SMEs. Translating initial employer interest into engagement was a significant challenge, with the need for intensive support and communication, and the relationship building with employers was a very fluid process. Achievement of the original target was not possible even with the support of four DWs, who worked on the Pathfinder for 50 per cent of their time. A total of six employers were engaged, and their employees were recruited to the programme.

Learner engagement

- 2.15 A total of 55 learners, against a target of 200, were engaged over the lifetime of the project. Thirty-three completed the full LNA, of which 30 had an ILP. This indicates that the remaining three individuals who completed the full LNA did not go on to develop a learning plan. Out of the 55 learners, 42 have embarked on further training and 12 have completed their ILP, participating in learning relating to letter writing, completion of application forms and exercises in the clarity of written work.
- 2.16 The learning support detailed in the paragraph above was delivered primarily through the DWs. With the conclusion of the project, there are some commitments to continue working with some employers through community learning and development services within North Lanarkshire Council.
- 2.17 It was recognised that the early 'scatter-gun' approach to targeting employers was not wholly effective in securing the engagement of learners.

Project evaluation

- 2.18 The Pathfinder was very clearly focused on learning from experience and did commission some evaluation work to provide an overview of progress and recommendations for revising the approach. However, in the absence of more systematic collection of 'softer' management information, it is not clear that the Pathfinder had sufficient insight into how to convert early employer interest into longer term engagement. The absence of this information also prevented systematic collection of information relating to individual learner progress.

Strengths and success factors

Development workers (DWs)

- 2.19 The work of the Pathfinder Partnership and its commitment to reflect, learn and further develop approaches and mechanisms was a key strength and factor in delivering outputs. This commitment was mirrored by the DWs who showed a willingness to learn and develop new skills (e.g. business development) in the face of significant challenges in engaging employers.
- 2.20 The learner-centred style and sensitive and discrete approach of the DWs further assisted in engaging learners and sustaining their involvement with the project and participation in the literacies learning. This was evidenced through the consultation with learners, who were very complimentary of the support provided by the DWs.

Marketing

- 2.21 Despite the relatively poor take-up, the approach to developing and delivering the marketing campaign to attract employers and promote the literacies agenda was another positive element of this Pathfinder. This was due to the systematic approach which was applied in generating a

targeted database of potential employers. Joint working with business development staff in colleges and local authority staff was critical to this achievement.

Benefits to employers and staff

- 2.22 The learning and development of employees was applauded by a number of organisations involved. Feedback from the Pathfinder partners, in contact with employers, as well as marketing materials and discussions with employers as part of the consultation programme all identified that the literacies learning had been of benefit to their organisations. Examples cited were:
- benefits to recruitment and retention, due to organisational 'reputation' in promoting staff development;
 - level of support to shop-floor staff;
 - improvements in reporting and supervisory functions;
 - improved staff-management relationships.
- 2.23 Employees also highlighted the positive effects of the learning. Examples provided included:
- one canteen worker, with literacies needs, saw an improvement in their ability to undertake the role more effectively. This led to an increase in confidence, communication and interpersonal skills;
 - another employee has started to learn Spanish in their personal time as a result of the introduction to learning and the Internet in the workplace;
 - one employer - a management member of staff from one of the involved organisations - has since become a volunteer literacies tutor in North Lanarkshire.

Weaknesses and barriers

The 'learning styles' component of the LNA

- 2.24 The 'learning styles' component of the LNA was not found to be wholly useful, either for DWs in organising and planning learning programmes, or in demonstrating how learners could use this information to consider their own learning needs.

Integrating learning within the workplace setting

- 2.25 There were insufficient linkages between Pathfinder programmes of work and wider organisational learning, whereby linkages could be drawn between the literacies learning and wider workforce development plans. This probably occurred because there were no formal mechanisms to link the literacies work to wider workforce development plans.
- 2.26 Views differed as to whether such linkages were appropriate. However, it is unclear how sustainable programmes of literacies learning can be devised where these are not fully integrated into workforce development objectives. Where literacies learning is viewed as an 'add-on' or discrete element of business planning, it is unlikely to receive the required efforts

and resources to make it a sustainable and supported part of organisational planning.

- 2.27 In addition, there was limited evidence of programmes of learning which were truly contextualised – either to the individual, their non-workplace needs or to organisational needs. Contextualised learning – which was intended to make learning more relevant to learners' lives – does not appear to have been a key feature of how literacies learning was promoted to learners. In the absence of this, there is a danger that learners are insufficiently motivated to engage with literacies learning, or to sustain such an engagement.

Lack of monitoring and evaluation

- 2.28 A lack of consistent, systematic and continuous management information makes the effectiveness of this Pathfinder difficult to assess. This is particularly the case when considering the 'softer' data relating to progress at the level of the individual learner or how the Pathfinder contributes to the achievement of organisational objectives. In the absence of such information, it is difficult to ensure that the work of the Pathfinder can adapt and evolve in accordance with needs.
- 2.29 Lack of monitoring and evaluation means that no tracking mechanisms exist to link the work of the Pathfinder to improvements in literacy or numeracy, beyond ad hoc anecdotes which were offered by all stakeholders consulted but were not recorded in a systematic way. This also contributed to a lack of clear evidence of the benefits of literacies learning in the workplace, and an insufficient base of 'testimonials' for sustaining support and engaging new employers.

Employer and employee engagement

- 2.30 The lack of an employer engagement strategy at an early enough stage meant that directed efforts and a systematic mechanism for optimising employer engagement did not occur until much later in the Pathfinder's life. There was also insufficient focus on engaging the private sector, where incentives to take part are very different from organisations in the non-profit sectors.
- 2.31 The Pathfinder faced some difficulties in engaging SMEs. This is not surprising given the existing evidence base which demonstrates that SMEs face significant challenges in identifying and addressing employee development needs. An employer engagement strategy at an early enough stage might have identified ways to address this.
- 2.32 In addition, the 'tension' between balancing employer and employee needs was often evident, whereby incentives and objectives to engage in learning, and the benefits which ensue, are often different (whether literacies or more mainstream learning). This relates to both costs and the lack of certainty of returns to learning i.e. both employers and employees are faced with a level of risk relating to whether the learning will be successful. In the absence of advice and evidence to both parties of how they are likely to benefit from taking part in literacies learning, this could result in a lack of commitment from one or both parties.

- 2.33 A key issue of learning from the Pathfinder was how the literacies programme of support could potentially be used negatively by employers to identify staff with literacies needs (who might have 'hidden' these previously) with a view to getting rid of them or forcing this type of learning upon them. The Pathfinder Partnership was aware of the potential for this to happen and ensured that early employer interactions could identify when this might occur.
- 2.34 Other related barriers to engaging with literacies learning were found to exist. For example,
- employees fear that there will be repercussions if they 'admit' to their literacies learning needs within the workplace;
 - employees are unwilling to take part for fear of failure;
 - engrained anti-learning attitudes, or unrealistic employee expectations of the support on offer, can make learner engagement a lengthy and complex process.

Much of this depends on clear and open lines of communication at the outset. There is also a need to set very clear expectations and to encourage necessary levels of employee 'ownership' and responsibility for their own learning.

The Pathfinder Partnership

- 2.35 The Pathfinder Partnership generally felt that it has suffered from not having a 'link' between the Pathfinder Partnership and the DWs in the shape of an operational co-ordinator/project manager. While the Pathfinder Partnership benefited from a more strategically orientated project co-ordinator role, this position was not intended to deliver the type of operational co-ordination required.
- 2.36 The 'strategic' project co-ordinator role was primarily concerned with retaining an overview of the Pathfinder's progress as part of North Lanarkshire's wider approach to adult literacies. The Pathfinder did attempt to address this 'gap' through further recruitment, but, as noted earlier in this section, it was unable to secure this resource.

Lessons learned

- 2.37 The following table details the lessons learned by the Pathfinder Project:

Lessons learned from the North Lanarkshire Community Learning Strategy Partnership Pathfinder Project

- Significant barriers to engaging employers in workforce development related to literacies learning and the Pathfinder is likely to be more successful when rolled out in tandem with wider national efforts as opposed to an isolated approach.
- The need to build in more lead-in time, to engage employers and the importance of existing relationships (e.g. with colleges) in 'signposting' employers who are likely to be interested in literacies learning.
- Need for a more effective infrastructure across the partners (e.g. 'networking' DWs into the work of business services/business

development from colleges), promoting the DW role to partner organisations and engaging a wider range of partners (e.g. Scottish Enterprise Lanarkshire, Careers Scotland and Chamber of Commerce) to support business development objectives.

- DW role – need for clarity and focus of business engagement aspect of the role, with sufficient time dedicated to engaging employers and sharing practice of what works in different employer settings.
- Employer engagement – need to develop a systematic approach to working with employers, which involves a clear and formalised plan, with realistic timescales and objectives. There was a recognition that more informal communications and planning with employers did not usually produce concrete results.
- DW role – earlier and more systematic connection of this role to the wider role of community learning and development, such that sufficient learning takes place around engaging workers in more mainstream literacies provision.
- Partnership structure – the need for a co-ordination role with DWs, to provide an overview of progress and to offer clearer direction and support for employer engagement.
- Location of learning – mixed views from learners regarding where this should be done; the convenience of workplace learning needs to be weighed against the apparent stigma which is sometimes evident, where employees not taking part in the literacies learning perceive the learning to be of a ‘remedial’ nature. Clearly, this requires a more nationally-oriented drive to reduce such stigma.
- There is no ‘one size fits all’ answer regarding how to engage employers or employees, or in using the LNA. It requires to be tailored to each workplace setting and a ‘plan’ devised which seeks to meet both employer and employee needs.

Sustainability and transferability

- 2.38 The Pathfinder has been effective in linking into other initiatives – for example, using existing Big Plus for Business materials to support employers and ‘piggy-backing’ on the work of community centres/local learning centres. This has an added advantage of ‘spreading’ the local support mechanisms to offer learners within the workplace the flexibility of different learning locations.
- 2.39 The LNA tool, together with recently produced detailed guidance, and the ILP were disseminated to tutors across North Lanarkshire as another ‘tool’ for undertaking literacies diagnostic work.
- 2.40 The Pathfinder Partnership has developed its thinking in how to provide a sustainable infrastructure for learning across North Lanarkshire and has built upon the critical mass generated through the partnership (e.g. putting together funding bids and the new web-site – www.myetl.org.uk) to ensure the work and tools are embedded into future learning developments and initiatives, aimed at addressing the literacies agenda.
- 2.41 The marketing materials produced for raising awareness and securing commitment were varied, of high quality and targeted at a range of

audiences. These included newspaper articles (including the Times Educational Supplement); employer materials; notices in pay slips of North Lanarkshire Council employees; local awards and events to celebrate learner success. This approach was an effective model that, with appropriate resources, could be easily replicated across a number of initiatives.

- 2.42 The LNA could be extended across Scotland with tutors in community and adult learning settings. With the correct validation and clear links to the 'next levels' of learning the LNA could be promoted as part of a more extensive lifelong learning 'package'.

3 Skills for Logistics (formerly the Road Haulage and Distribution Training Council) Pathfinder project

Background and context⁵

- 3.1 Over 90 per cent of freight in Scotland is moved by road and so the road haulage and distribution sector underpins much of Scotland's economic activity. The sector covers a wide range of activities involving both business to business, and business to consumer services. This includes:
- companies whose main business is not road haulage or distribution but who have their own transport and distribution operations;
 - haulage of goods by general freight and logistics companies for payment;
 - courier businesses e.g. pedal and motor cycle couriers, parcels/same-day delivery companies;
 - removals and storage companies; and
 - storage and warehousing.
- 3.2 Recent research⁶ of the profile of the Scottish sector shows that there are 35,000 logistics companies, mainly SMEs, with a total of 75,000 employees. The workforce is pre-dominantly male (80 per cent) and aging (37 per cent aged over 45 and only ten per cent under 25 years of age).
- 3.3 In 2000, when the Road Haulage and Distribution Training Council (RHDTTC) surveyed 1000 employers in the sector, it found that 57.9 per cent of all Scottish employers believed that significant numbers of their employees had literacies needs. More than half of employers also said that promoting and developing literacies within the sector was a key workforce priority.
- 3.4 In 2001, further research by the RHDTTC across the UK revealed that:
- poor literacies skills were widespread in the sector;
 - not many employers recognised the problem in their own company; and
 - no company in the survey had any mechanism for assessing and developing literacies skills among its workforce.
- 3.5 The RHDTTC welcomed the 2001 publication of the ALNIS report as it provided momentum for developing a Pathfinder to undertake further research in the sector and implementing activity to assist road haulage employees.
- 3.6 In 2003, the RHDTTC became a Sector Skills Council – Skills for Logistics – with a remit covering all freight logistics throughout the UK and the management of the Pathfinder Project was passed over to the new body.

⁵ Information taken from the Pathfinder's Final Report, Skills for Logistics, March 2005.

⁶ Skills for Logistics Data, 2004.

- 3.7 The proposal for the Pathfinder Project was geographically focused on Renfrewshire and Lanarkshire. Although it was not part of the original bid, the Pathfinder took the decision to extend this focus to cover the central belt area.
- 3.8 In partnership⁷ with employer associations, trades unions and local enterprise companies (LECs), it aimed to build capacity among employers, managers and training providers to identify individuals with literacies needs. The Pathfinder was also funded to develop sector specific learning materials on customer care and communication, which would be distributed to other employers in the sector. The specific outputs and outcomes are detailed below.

Aims and objectives⁸

- 3.9 The Pathfinder Project undertook activities in three components with the following outputs, which are taken from the original bid document:

Component One

- research with 20 companies to define key indicators for driver competencies;
- research with 50 companies about preferred training packages and modes of delivery; and
- interim report and project progress for Component One.

Component Two

- 30 owner/managers trained in 'spotting and referring';⁹
- 6 LECs and 6 training provider staff trained in 'spotting and referring';
- evaluation of three 'spotting and referring' approaches; and
- interim report on Component Two.

Component Three

- development and production of new literacies learning materials or contextualisation of existing materials for use by road haulage employees;
- employees' skills in various workplaces will be enhanced via training pilots, therefore improving driver competencies. In addition, the Pathfinder Project partners will examine the elements that can be applied to other companies so that the learning can be transferred across the sector;
- the project steering group will formulate a dissemination strategy and distribute the new materials (CD ROMs). This would provide the resources for addressing literacies needs. Employers will be more aware of the literacies needs of their employees and the materials available to them for addressing this; and
- final project report.

Changes in approach

- 3.10 During the Component One research, it was highlighted that managers

⁷ Named partners are detailed in Appendix 1.

⁸ Original Pathfinder bid - Skills for Logistics.

⁹ In this context, 'spotting and referring' means the ability to identify learners with literacies needs and signpost them to sources of support.

in most companies did not recognise or accept that literacies was an issue with their workforce and so it was decided that activities planned for 'spotting and referring' in Component Two would not be productive. This component was, therefore, abandoned in favour of the following activities:

- conduct research with a further random sample of 100 SMEs who were not members of trade associations. It was recognised that the research results could be skewed as all those interviewed were members of the three associations (Road Haulage Association (RHA), British Association of Removals (BAR) and the Freight Transport Association (FTA));
 - carry out direct research with employers and drivers to identify key competencies; and
 - develop learning materials to focus on literacy, as research with employers identified that numeracy was less of a priority.
- 3.11 Component Three would then concentrate on developing the new learning materials, implementing different approaches for engaging employers and incorporate the awareness raising and dissemination activity. The proposed changes and subsequent budget changes were submitted to, and approved by, Learning Connections, Communities Scotland in November 2003.
- 3.12 Although there were no changes in personnel as such, it is worth noting that the two representatives from the trade unions (United Road Transport Union (URTU) and Transport General Workers Union (TGWU)) on the steering group were absent due to long term sickness. As a result, planned activities to spot and refer using union learning representatives (ULR) could not occur. In particular, the TGWU had planned to offer the 'spotter and referrer' training to all ULRs within six companies which had expressed an interest.
- 3.13 If this had taken place there may have been an opportunity to link into the work of the STUC Pathfinder Project, discussed later in this report, to ensure that similar activities were not being delivered by different Pathfinder Projects.

Evaluation methodology

- 3.14 The evaluation consisted of a face-to-face familiarisation meeting with the project co-ordinator in order to gain the background to the project, how the project had progressed, changes in approach and barriers faced.
- 3.15 A key issue which was highlighted, and which had an impact on the project, was the insensitive media coverage following the literacy training pilot. As a result, some employers became disengaged with the Pathfinder activities and Skills for Logistics. Although this tension has subsequently been diffused and relations improved, it meant that employers and learners involved in the pilot could not be approached for the evaluation. However, as Skills for Logistics did undertake their own internal evaluation and obtain learner views via an evaluation sheet, it has been possible to obtain perceptions of the pilot from the learners involved. In addition, eight telephone interviews were carried out with

people from the following organisations, many of whom sat on the Pathfinder steering group:

- a representative from Scottish Enterprise (SE) Renfrewshire;
- a representative from the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) Scotland;
- two members from trade associations – RHA and BAR;
- a representative from BTS UK – private training organisation;
- a tutor from Stirling's Adult Literacy and Numeracy (ALN) Partnership – recipient and user of the interactive CD ROM; and
- two representatives from Reid Kerr College – the training manager and a tutor.

3.16 Furthermore, information has also been obtained from progress and research reports kept by Skills for Logistics as well as their final Pathfinder Project report. Where these sources have been used, these have been referenced as footnotes.

Outputs and outcomes achieved

3.17 The following section details the various outputs achieved and the progress and outcome of each.

Research

3.18 Four sets of research were undertaken:

- research with 70 companies to define key indicators for driver competencies;
- research with 50 companies about preferred training packages and modes of delivery; and
- research using a telephone survey with 100 randomly selected employers who were not members of the trade associations.

3.19 The methodology used for the research worked well for the Pathfinder Project. The personal visits enabled an in-depth perspective to be gained while the remaining telephone interviews enabled a larger number of companies to be consulted.

Training material development

3.20 A review of available training materials was undertaken in order to contextualise relevant materials for the road haulage sector. As no suitable material existed, it was decided to design new ones which comprised:

- an interactive CD ROM on skills for LGV drivers '*Get Up to Speed*'; and
- a Driver Customer Care CD – this is not a literacies learning resource and was not funded by the Pathfinder Project.

3.21 The development of the materials and the piloting of the Driver Customer Care CD was supported by the Pathfinder Project funding from Learning

Connections, Communities Scotland. However, the costs of the reproduction and distribution of the CDs was met by Skills for Logistics.

- 3.22 The decision was taken to develop materials which dealt overtly with skills needed by drivers (customer care was highlighted by employers to be the most popular topic), while helping covertly with literacies skills. This helped to remove stigmatisation and sell the business case to employers.

Piloting of different forms of employer engagement

- 3.23 Four different pilot approaches to employer engagement were designed by different partners. Two pilots were undertaken. However, two other pilots were unable to proceed due to a combination of employee disputes and employer reticence.
- 3.24 Although the Customer Care Package was aimed at more competent literacies learners (Intermediate 2 and above), it has been included in this report to highlight an effective method of employer engagement.
- 3.25 The pilot with Reid Kerr College and Bullet Express was successfully completed and 11 learners were involved in the learning that was delivered by the College. The second completed pilot was delivered by the private training organisation BTS UK with Maxi Haulage, M&S Toiletries and Ian Ellis Transport. This originally worked with ten learners, although only two successfully completed the pilot course. This, again, was a result of the inappropriate media coverage of the new learning materials which led to employer dissatisfaction and the withdrawal of some learners from the course.
- 3.26 There were two pilots that were not delivered within the lifetime of the Pathfinder Project. The first pilot with WEA Scotland and City of Edinburgh Council Waste Services was postponed because of industrial disputes but was re-initiated and will continue outwith the Pathfinder Project. The second was with the North Lanarkshire Community Learning Strategy Partnership Pathfinder Project, in conjunction with Skills for Logistics and three employers. This was eventually abandoned when the awareness-raising amongst employees was delayed and a venue to accommodate the training could not be found.
- 3.27 In addition to the 13 learners involved in the two successful Customer Care pilots, the '*Get Up to Speed*' CD Rom has been disseminated to all ALN Partnerships in Scotland with the intention that additional learners could also be reached. While the Pathfinder Project has not engaged a large number of learners, there were no actual learner targets set because the focus of this Pathfinder Project was on development of materials and raising awareness.
- 3.28 A further pilot was developed in conjunction with SE Renfrewshire and James Watt College. Unfortunately, this pilot lost momentum when the College pulled out because they felt they did not have the appropriate experience to meet the needs of learners in the road haulage sector. However, this will now be taken forward by Inverclyde's ALN Partnership, funded by SE Renfrewshire.

Awareness raising and dissemination

- 3.29 An awareness raising and dissemination campaign to increase industry knowledge about literacies and the Pathfinder Project's activities was designed and implemented which incorporated:
- press releases;
 - articles and employer information sheets in trade association newsletters;
 - articles in trade press;
 - presentations at trade associations and ATO network meetings;
 - the CD ROMs were distributed to all Adult Literacy and Numeracy Partnerships, large logistics employers and training organisations approved by the road haulage sector in Scotland; and
 - the project research reports are available on both the Skills for Logistics and Futureskills Scotland websites.
- 3.30 The dissemination of the CD ROMs took place during autumn 2004 and, despite the awareness raising campaign, did not necessarily engage those most in need of literacies support in the workplace. The 32 ALN Partnerships were contacted by the Pathfinder Project to ascertain their use of the CD ROMs. From the 20 responses received, 18 had not used the CD ROMs. In most cases, the ALN Partnerships stated that this lack of use was because they were not working with anybody from the road haulage sector.
- 3.31 Evidence shows that the dissemination could have had more impact if the CD ROMs had been issued with comprehensive information about their purpose and use. Dissemination was targeted at partners who were likely to be assisting learners from the sector e.g. trades unions.
- 3.32 The foundations have certainly been laid for greater logistics employers' awareness of literacies needs. The trade associations have been able to raise the profile of literacies learning via their newsletters, and the pilots helped to forge links with some employers. However, the Pathfinder Project faced significant barriers in engaging employers and there is a long way to go in terms of persuading them that literacies learning will have a business benefit, although the Big Plus for Business should help.
- 3.33 Within the road haulage industry there is the perception that industrial problems and government legislation are of greater priority than literacies learning. This acted as a barrier to the Pathfinder Project making a significant breakthrough in further supporting literacies learning. Trade associations represent the collective interests of businesses within the same sector and can provide a range of dedicated services like campaigning, advice, information, relations with employees and sales development. Although instrumental in providing employer contact details to the Pathfinder Project, it is possible that the trade associations could have played a bigger role in promoting literacies learning to employers.

Strengths and success factors

- 3.34 The research undertaken by the RHDTC in 2000 provided a baseline of information which was helpful in developing the early stages of the

Pathfinder Project. There is a growing recognition of the importance of literacies learning and this has impacted positively on employer awareness of this type of learning and their willingness to engage in discussions with the Pathfinder. This was further supported by the trade associations who were pro-active in providing employer contact details and assisting with the set up of meetings with employers.

Tailored learning

- 3.35 However, as the time approached for the literacies learning to take place, it became more difficult as employers focused on industrial issues and newly introduced legislation like the Working Time Directive for LGV drivers. Nevertheless, the approaches developed were tailored to individual organisations and were relevant to the needs of the employees e.g. the '*Bin Your Paperwork*' for the City of Edinburgh Council Waste Services. Whilst these materials were developed and produced, the learning was not delivered within the lifetime of the Pathfinder Project.
- 3.36 The sector-specific literacies learning materials have been well received as they are seen to add value to the widely available 'bank' of more generic resources. Targeted literacies materials are needed as most learners appear to have an 'end' in sight and respond to relevant materials which can help them achieve their goals. This is evidenced by the fact that both tutors and learners were enthusiastic about the Customer Care Course and deemed it to be an important step. This was echoed by employers on the pilot who were positive about the training, before the insensitive media coverage.

New materials

- 3.37 The interactive CD ROM was well produced and is easily adaptable for learners in other sectors and individual learners. It is also broad enough to reach out to different levels of literacies learning. The use of CD ROMs means learners in rural areas can still gain access to training relevant to their industry without having to travel.
- 3.38 Tutors worked hard on the induction process, encouraging use of available support (e.g. virtual seminars) and trying to develop an understanding of the needs of employees in the sector. The awards ceremony to celebrate achievements of the learners was a good motivational tool.

Flexible approach

- 3.39 Despite several set backs and external factors impacting on the planned work of the Pathfinder Project, the steering group was flexible and developed new approaches to maintain momentum. There was good support for the Pathfinder from the outset and the common goal of assessing the scale of need and improving literacies skills for employees in the sector was recognised. The steering group ensured that project outputs were linked to wider strategies and pursued, where appropriate, and this flexibility is also evidenced by the amendments to the CD ROMs in light of feedback received.

Weaknesses and barriers

Literacies awareness and acceptance

3.40 In general, employers in the sector were increasingly more aware of the literacies needs of staff. However, there was a very real stigma attached to this and it was difficult for employers to translate their initial enthusiasm into action. Businesses need to perceive a benefit in order to become involved in literacies learning and the Pathfinder Project struggled to sell this aspect to employers. This has represented a significant issue in terms of raising literacies skills in a practical sense. There is an opportunity to link literacies development with general workforce development. For example, legislation on compulsory training is a priority for employers in the sector. There is clearly scope for more formalised connections of this nature to be made, in order to provide the impetus for, and relevance of, literacies learning across the sector.

Partnership working – selection

3.41 For the pilot, employers who were approached were those with whom the steering group members already had links. Although this makes sense in some respects, there was a view that other companies could have been approached as a means of accessing 'new' partners for the trade organisations.

Partnership working

3.42 Amongst stakeholders, there was some divergence of opinion regarding the benefits of an interactive CD ROM in delivering literacies training. It was suggested that not enough road haulage employees had access to a computer and would prefer face-to-face training. In addition, it is recognised that the majority of workers in the sector are aged over 45, yet tutors reported that the use of ICT was still an effective tool, particularly amongst the younger workforce.

Promotion

3.43 The dissemination of the Pathfinder Project's activities was undertaken primarily by Skills for Logistics and other partners on the steering group did not seem to have direct involvement in shaping its course. One trade association representative commented on the challenges in taking forward the Pathfinder outputs and outcomes, as too many employers were concerned with impending legislation, in particular the introduction of the Working Time Directive for LGV drivers in April 2005. This suggests that the steering group had not been adequately involved in the awareness raising component - the trade associations could have provided valuable input into this element, as they had with the development of the other components.

3.44 The Pathfinder Project offered additional assistance to learners in their literacies learning in the form of email/telephone support and the use of laptops. This was not availed of and it is unclear if the lack of uptake of learning support was due to the lack of awareness, the lack of need for such support or lack of knowledge on how to use computers. In this case, there may have been a need to promote more effectively the benefits of extra support to companies and employees which might have increased uptake.

- 3.45 The Pathfinder Project's programme of activities predominantly focused on small firms who sometimes struggled to maintain this work. The engagement of larger companies from the sector, with greater employee numbers and well-developed infrastructures, could have more easily sustained the Pathfinder Project activities and the momentum in the face of other business demands.

Lessons learned

The table below details the lessons learned by the Pathfinder Project:

Lessons Learned from the Skills for Logistics Pathfinder Project

- Sensitive handling of the promotion of literacies needs and learning in the sector needs particular attention – evidenced by the rift between employers in the Customer Care pilot and Skills for Logistics which was caused by some poor management of the media coverage.
- Using the SQA core skills framework for helping to define the scope and level of literacies skills needed in the workplace was very useful and would be recommended for other Pathfinder Projects assessing literacies competencies in a particular sector.
- Working in partnership has demonstrated its value in ensuring that the activities are more successful and cost-effective. Furthermore, there are several wider developments outside of the Pathfinder Project which have occurred as a result of working in a joined up way e.g. SE Renfrewshire working in partnership with BTS and the Inverclyde ALN Partnership.
- Some partners noted that they would be more proactive next time in canvassing employers e.g. writing to heads of departments.
- Engaging the expertise of a training organisation with experience of road haulage (i.e. the relevant sector) is more credible when working directly with such employers and employees.
- Linkage to workplace development could have been given more consideration in order to create a more sustainable base of literacies learning.
- The absence of a suitable training venue for the drivers was sometimes a significant barrier to progressing activities and engaging employers.
- Timescales, resources and activities to deliver outputs should have been more realistic, to take into account significant set-up and lead-in times.
- In the spirit of lifelong learning, Skills for Logistics could have started to consider future learner progression and where drivers could be signposted to after they had completed the Customer Care training.

Sustainability and transferability

- 3.47 As a result of increased awareness of the industry through involvement in the Pathfinder Project, Reid Kerr College is now viewing the needs of the road haulage sector in its own right.
- 3.48 Good links have been developed between the College and private training providers which bodes well for future sustainability. Pathfinder

Project activities have also enabled the WEA to forge more contact with representatives at Skills for Logistics which will benefit and impact on the future joint work for more general employee development.

- 3.49 The opportunity exists to link in with the mandatory training in this sector e.g. on the Working Time Directive, which companies are now prioritising, and which one or two firms have started to investigate. However, the links with literacies learning and legislation must be emphasised to employers, otherwise literacies learning will be sidelined.
- 3.50 SE Renfrewshire is in talks with BTS and Inverclyde ALN Partnership about funding a project on using the materials with learners from road haulage companies. The WEA, funded by CLAN (City Literacy and Numeracy) Edinburgh, is delivering work with the City of Edinburgh Council Waste Services and is in contact with the TGWU in order to continue the proposed literacies learning for employees.
- 3.51 The Dundee ALN Partnership is looking into a road haulage project and is waiting to see how the CLAN Edinburgh funded project progresses in order to see if there is an opportunity to integrate some of the training materials as part of their In-Step Initiative.¹⁰
- 3.52 The Scottish Executive funded *Scottish Driver Training Scheme* involves an assessment of the general skill level and learning needs of all new drivers. Through discussions with the Pathfinder Project about this scheme and the literacies learning materials, the interactive *Get Up to Speed* CD ROM will be used with those drivers who are identified as having literacies needs.
- 3.53 The Pathfinder Project had a good starting point in that it developed and explored earlier research from both the then RHDTTC and BTS training. In this respect, the Pathfinder Project had existing processes on which to build. All those consulted agreed that most of the key organisations had been involved from the start. The experience of the members on the steering group ensured that the Pathfinder Project linked in well with the sector's infrastructure. This was more apparent as the Pathfinder Project developed. It became obvious that sound knowledge of the industry, via the trade associations, would be crucial to accessing companies for the pilots, raising awareness and engaging employers and their employees in literacies learning.
- 3.54 If the training with the City of Edinburgh Council Waste Services Department goes ahead as planned, then this could be replicated in other departments, thereby increasing further the employer support for literacies learning within the Council.

¹⁰ Instep Initiatives, supported by Scottish Enterprise Tayside, Abertay Housing Association and Dundee and Tayside Chamber of Commerce, offers a series of pre-employment courses for local people e.g. funding from the New Opportunities Fund contributes to the delivery of the course which is aimed at local people who have no experience, or very limited experience of ICT.

4 Scottish Prison Service Pathfinder Project

Background and context

- 4.1 The Scottish Prison Service (SPS) has responsibility for fifteen prisons and young offenders' institutions across Scotland, housing approximately 6,600¹¹ prisoners.
- 4.2 The SPS demonstrated a determination to tackle the issue of rehabilitation and prisoner up-skilling and address some key issues facing prisons which include:
- high instances of very low literacies levels, particularly in reading, with 25 per cent of prisoners lacking functional literacy and 12 per cent have almost no reading skills;
 - inconsistencies in levels of assessment and provision across prisons;
 - underdeveloped exit guidance and a lack of community integration planning; and
 - patchy learning management processes.
- 4.3 In 2004, the SPS drafted a new social inclusion policy which detailed the commitment to supporting prisoners during their time in custody and upon release.
- 4.4 The policy states five key principles to which the prison service is required to work in order to secure effective and co-ordinated support for prisoners. These include:
- evidence based assessment of need;
 - logical and sequenced priority planning;
 - meaningful and appropriate interventions and activities;
 - seamless transitions from custody to community by fostering effective partnerships; and
 - information-sharing with partners to maximise the impact of community integration.
- 4.5 There is a real emphasis on joined-up services in order to address needs of prisoners in a more holistic manner through multi-agency partners.
- 4.6 The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 provides a framework against which local authorities provide services to the public which include widening participation in lifelong learning and a reduction in crime. FE colleges are also tasked with increasing access to and participation in further education, particularly for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.¹² Therefore, there is a clear link between the aims and objectives of the SPS to deliver effective services to prisoners to aid resettlement, and the requirements of local stakeholders like colleges and local authorities to assist in achieving these aims.
- 4.7 The proposal for Pathfinder Project funding from the SPS took into account these aspects when developing their approach to tackling literacies development within the prison population.

¹¹ Taken from SPS website www.sps.gov.uk

¹² Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, Community Planning National Framework: National Priorities as at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library5/localgov/cpan-02.asp#2>, March 2005.

Project aims and objectives

- 4.8 The planned outputs for the Pathfinder Project for the SPS were:
- new learning materials, increased intervention rates and levels of provision both inside and outside prison for at least 3,000 prisoners per annum;
 - better information about the causes of poor literacies in different prison groups, including the probable incidence of learning difficulties;
 - piloting use of a new screening tool to enable targeting of resources at the most educationally disadvantaged prisoners amongst a range of different prisoner groups (young prisoners, women, long term prisoners, short term prisoners, remands); and
 - exit guidance and routes to lifelong learning opportunities upon release in relevant local authority areas developed and monitored.

Evaluation methodology

- 4.9 The approach to evaluating this Pathfinder involved visits to three prisons; HMP Perth, HMP Cornton Vale and HMYOI Polmont, where a series of interviews were held with:
- the Prison Literacies Development Manager (PLDM);
 - Scottish Prison Officers including Wing Officers and Induction Officers;
 - Learning Centre Managers;
 - LINK Centre Manager; and
 - prisoners, including peer mentors and learners.
- 4.10 Visits were also made to providers in the community and with tutors delivering co-ordinated local authority support and training on the Introductory Training in Adult Literacies Learning (ITALL).
- 4.11 Further interviews were conducted with local authority co-ordinators responsible for ensuring continuity of learning begun in prison and the Shannon Trust who deliver the TOEBYTOE mentoring programme.¹³
- 4.12 In addition to this activity, information has been drawn from the progress reports submitted to the Scottish Executive and other pieces of information forwarded from partners post consultation. Extensive activity has been ongoing over the last few years and the progress reports give clear summaries on progress to date. The visits to prisons and interviews with co-ordinators and tutors offer a snapshot in terms of identifying progress against objectives and what is working well.

Outputs and outcomes achieved

New learning materials

- 4.13 New materials are constantly being identified to improve training resources across the SPS. ICT materials in the form of CD ROMs are being piloted at HMYOI Polmont and in North Lanarkshire Adult Literacy Partnership with HMP Shotts. The focus of the materials is on literacy learning and on using ICT as a hook into further learning.

¹³ A literacy scheme originally developed by Keda Cowling to work with children with reading difficulties and adopted by the Shannon Trust in taking forward literacies within the prison population.

- 4.14 Prisoners using the ICT resources have been consulted to seek their views on the appropriateness of the materials. This has proved to be an effective way of empowering prisoners, developing their communication skills and gathering relevant feedback on the learning tools.

Increased intervention hours

- 4.15 Since the start of the Pathfinder Project, the Scottish Prison Service has encouraged local authorities to use funding available through the Adult Literacies Partnerships to provide a greater level of tutor support in prisons. Previous contract arrangements with providers have limited the contact hours with prisoners and the ratio of learners to tutors was approximately 6:1. There are now increasing examples like HMP Perth where the education centre has boosted its teaching capacity through the employment of a full time tutor and can now offer one-to-one support for those learners with specific needs e.g. dyslexia, and assist them so they can learn more effectively in the group sessions.
- 4.16 The main contracted providers are Motherwell and Lauder Colleges but additional support has been delivered through non-contracted local ALN providers which have resulted in some tensions. As such, the nature of support has developed only on an ad hoc basis. This places limitations on ensuring arrangements are appropriate and adding value to the service for prisoners. There are further complications with the geographical spread of the prisons and matching with appropriate local authorities.¹⁴ Nevertheless, there is a high level of commitment to support the needs of the prisoners and to develop long term solutions to their learning needs.
- 4.17 There has been a range of initiatives developed over the duration of the Pathfinder Project which contribute to increased intervention hours and support for prisoners with literacies needs. These are important to recognise as the Pathfinder was often key in encouraging the establishment of the initiatives and co-ordinating individual prison involvement. These initiatives, TOEBYTOE, ITALL and Storybooks for Dads and Mums, are outlined in more detail below.

TOEBYTOE

- 4.18 A new scheme, called TOEBYTOE, is being implemented by the Shannon Trust which encourages prisoners to help each other with their reading and writing skills. This is particularly valuable due to the limited capacity of Learning Centres to respond to the literacy and numeracy needs among inmates. It is also an effective way of introducing learning into the prison wings where prisoners spend much of their time.
- 4.19 Pilot schemes have been established across six of the prisons¹⁵ using a variety of models of implementation and prison officers are being used to spot those who would make good mentors and those who need a mentee.

Introductory Training in Adult Literacies Learning (ITALL)

- 4.20 The TOEBYTOE initiative is complemented by the peer mentoring which is being developed through the accredited ITALL course. A visit to HMP Cornton Vale showed the value of this activity to the inmates.

¹⁴ The number of local authorities with which each prison is required to work in order to deliver effective referrals and post release support is detailed in the report by Glasgow Caledonian University, *Social Exclusion and Imprisonment in Scotland, 2005*.

¹⁵ HMP Cornton Vale, HMP Edinburgh, HMYOI Polmont, HMP Inverness, HMP Kilmarnock, HMP Perth.

4.21 Four peer mentors who had completed the ten week course were interviewed and they reported that during the training they had developed skills in many areas including:

- literacies;
- working together as a group;
- supporting each other in their learning;
- communication;
- completion of a task;
- time management;
- ICT;
- listening to others; and
- presenting their own work.

Storybook for Dads (and Mums)

4.22 This project is in the development phase and the Prison Literacies Development Manager is working on a number of potential opportunities with HMP Glenochil, HMP Cornton Vale and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). It is hoped that the BBC will support the project by training prisoners in the use of sound recording equipment. This initiative was supported by the mentors who view it as an opportunity to gain a broader range of skills, including reading and delivering presentations, as well as getting the chance to develop recording skills.

4.23 Overall, through the range of projects taking place across the prison service, the number of learning intervention hours has increased significantly. Some of this takes place in an informal setting and is unreported. Crucially the monitoring systems are not in place to provide an indication of the actual increase in learning intervention hours.

Research report into the affect of learning difficulties on learning

4.24 The PLDM has reviewed current research into the effect of learning disabilities on learners with regards to dyslexia and has linked up with the Dyslexia Institute who have conducted research across eight prisons. Results showed that, from a sample of 357 prisoners, 52 per cent were found to have limited literacy skills and a further 20 per cent had a hidden difficulty including dyslexia and dyspraxia. This could suggest that just over half of the total prison population have literacies difficulties which would limit learning if left unsupported.¹⁶ This has significant implications for the type and level of literacies intervention support offered in the prison setting.

Develop and pilot a new literacy and numeracy screening tool

4.25 Over the life of the project the PLDM has been working in partnership with Learning Connections, Communities Scotland to pilot a new formal screening tool based on the current Job Centre Plus model. The PLDM has been keen to use existing professionally developed materials which may be adapted to suit the needs of prisoners in Scotland. Initially, the Basic Skills Agency Screening (BSA) tool was used to conduct group

¹⁶ *The Incidence of hidden disabilities in the prison population: Yorkshire and Humber Research*, The Dyslexia institute, 2005. The full report can be found at www.dyslexia-inst.org.uk

assessments to identify priority access for those with poor literacies levels.

- 4.26 It was found to be of limited use in terms of identifying those prisoners who had learning needs but who were above Level 1 of the assessment test, which is the equivalent of Intermediate 1 of the SQA core skills framework. On this basis, the rollout of the tool was halted and consultations identified the need to develop a bespoke 'Alerting Tool' for prisons based upon the Job Centre Plus model.
- 4.27 The Alerting Tool operates as an initial screening device to identify those who need further support and those prisoners who do not need to undergo a formal assessment. In addition to formal questions, the tool provides an opportunity for prisoners to write a short paragraph about their hobbies, likes or dislikes, and gives the tutors the chance to assess their writing skills as well as their comprehension.
- 4.28 The Alerting Tool is being rolled out through presentations via the PLDM to LINK Centre staff, where the tool will be delivered as part of induction programmes across all prisons. The PLDM is keen to raise awareness among prison staff regarding the barriers to learning and the consequences of poor literacy and numeracy skills for prisoners. However, specific awareness raising sessions have been difficult due to the issues of resources and officers being released from duty. Therefore, this session has been integrated with the training for the Alerting Tool.
- 4.29 Initial responses to the new tool have been positive as the process is much easier to administer than the earlier BSA screening tool, shorter in length so more likely to be completed by prisoners when they arrive in prison, and more appropriate for those with low level literacies skills.

Development of community referral mechanisms

- 4.30 The Scottish Prison Service has placed emphasis of continuity of learning on the ALN Partnerships to which the prisoners are returning after release. The PLDM has been developing individual links with them. The relationship between prisons and local authorities is complex.¹⁷ The number of local authorities that each prison establishment has to work with in order to provide a level of continuity in throughcare of prisoners on release ranges from two to 17. For example, HMP Peterhead, HMP Cornton Vale, HMYOI Polmont, HMP Castle Huntly and HMP Noranside each have 15 or more local authorities to work with which requires a significant level of networking and service level agreements.
- 4.31 Some progress has been made with ALN Partnerships to date; the Pathfinder Project has been able to secure support from most of the ALN Partnerships, only a few remain unengaged, mainly due to their geographically remote position. Some ALN teams have shown a strong commitment to initiating new links and working with prisoners. For example, a tutor from the Cowane Centre in Stirling is now delivering ITALL training to women prisoners in HMP Cornton Vale.
- 4.32 The funding for an additional tutor from the Stirling ALN Partnership to deliver ITALL training to women prisoners in HMP Cornton Vale has been provided through the literacies Pathfinder Project. The Centre is also working with the PLDM to develop a map of possible progression

¹⁷ As detailed in the report by Glasgow Caledonian University, *Social Exclusion and Imprisonment in Scotland*, 2005

routes to ensure that mentors continue to learn and build on their increased level of confidence.

- 4.33 In Tayside, Dundee, Angus and Fife, local authorities are working closely with HMP Perth to develop links with prisoners returning to their geographic areas. The respective ALN co-ordinators are working with Lauder College within the prison to ensure that all prisoners returning to their home authorities are identified and picked up by the appropriate co-ordinator.
- 4.34 There has been a general focus on short term prisoners (less than two years custodial sentence) as many of them move from prison to prison and are not able to access the prison education system. Prisoners serving three months or less will be referred directly to the local ALN co-ordinator who will try and build a rapport with the prisoners. This referral process is being integrated into the daily service of the LINK Centres which provide throughcare support up to and during the release period. This can be seen at HMP Greenock, a holding prison which is working with Inverclyde ALN Partnership to ensure that appropriate networks and links are made with other learning providers. The initiative is a positive step forward in terms of meeting the needs of short term prisoners.
- 4.35 As initial contacts are made and plans are developed for each ALN Partnership, the potential for working with more learners has increased. However, there will be a range of issues which will need to be addressed to ensure that this activity continues to bear fruit. These include:
- further engagement with ALN Partnerships not currently supporting referrals;
 - funding arrangements for ongoing support;
 - materials development including ICT to ensure widening participation; and
 - awareness-raising amongst prison staff.

Strengths and successes

- 4.36 The key strength of the prison Pathfinder Project in improving the learning among prisoners is that it has covered a range of initiatives and generated support from a diverse number of partners. Therefore, the resource has allowed capacity to be built across the service for literacies learning.
- 4.37 A great deal of activity and materials have been developed to support the needs of this cohort. A particular strength of the project is the ITALL course which has the added benefit of developing both mentors and learners. Furthermore, the activity covered by the Shannon Trust is complementing the mentoring role by extending literacies resources e.g. TOEBYTOE manuals among prisons.
- 4.38 Particular success factors of this project are:
- the engagement of partners which had no previous experience in supporting prisoners and working with prisons e.g. Cowane Centre in Stirling;
 - development of prisoner's skills and confidence;

- increased levels of support for prisoners with literacies needs;
 - an easy to use alerting tool which has been rolled out across the prison service;
 - increased awareness among prison staff of the issues relating to poor levels of literacies; and
 - greater levels of throughcare in terms of getting learning referrals included in LINK Centre support.
- 4.39 The development of ALN Partnerships' support is an excellent way of engaging local stakeholders in the needs of prisoners as they move back into the community. Although this activity is still in its early stages, where clear strategies have been put in place, there is evidence that prisoners who have participated in literacies learning are being encouraged to participate in general learning post-release.

Weaknesses and barriers

- 4.40 The main weakness is that the co-ordination of all the activity has come from the Prison Literacies Development Manager and progress has relied heavily on this one person in driving the agenda forward within SPS.
- 4.41 The absence of centrally held monitoring information that records the learning activity across all 15 prison establishments - in particular prisoners' literacies achievements - is a significant weakness in measuring progress of this Pathfinder Project and in assessing the development of the literacies learning agenda across SPS.
- 4.42 The current conditions, under which prisoners participate in learning, merit consideration in terms of factors that act as an incentive or disincentive to prisoners taking part in the ITALL or other peer mentoring courses.

Lessons learned

- 4.43 The following lessons have been identified from this Pathfinder Project:

Lessons Learned from the SPS Pathfinder Project

- Raising awareness in prison staff of consequences of poor literacies skills amongst prisoners.
- Integration of literacies learning into other areas of activity such as physical education and work should be given greater consideration.
- Stimulation for identifying ITALL training should be driven from the core providers e.g. ALN Partnerships and FE Colleges, delivering learning in the prisons rather than through the Prison Literacies Development Manager.
- The need for robust monitoring and evaluation in order to attribute resource to sustain elements of learning and identify area for improvements.

Sustainability and transferability

- 4.44 There is a great deal of evidence to demonstrate that the developments so far will have long term implications on the increased learning opportunities and developments for prisoners. This is because a number of elements have been built into standard prison practice, like the use of the Alerting Tool to spot learning needs at a prisoner's induction.
- 4.45 The Pathfinder Project has been very successful in attracting high profile literacies activity e.g. the BBC's Storybooks for Dads and Mums, the Scottish Book Trust's Live Literature Scheme, and significant publicity (newspaper articles, radio programmes) about prisoner literacies which should have heightened awareness amongst the SPS, local stakeholders and the general public.
- 4.46 However, a number of these initiatives are short term and, having placed literacies clearly on the SPS agenda, some of the key challenges to progressing the Pathfinder Project's activities have been identified as relating to the organisation's infrastructure. Without addressing some of these barriers e.g. incentives for learning, responsibilities for post-release referrals to local authorities, time for awareness-raising amongst staff, then the ability to sustain the work achieved to date will be restrained.

5 STUC pathfinder project

Background and context

- 5.1 ALNIS suggested that approximately 800,000 adults in Scotland have low literacy and numeracy skills. Approximately 500,000 of that figure are currently employed and the need to raise awareness and address literacies learning in the workplace is recognised in the report. There are around 630,000 members in affiliated trades unions in Scotland. There is a growing recognition across the UK that unions are uniquely placed to identify learners and assist them in accessing the support they require.
- 5.2 The development of the Scottish Executive's Lifelong Learning Strategy and the introduction of the Scottish Union Learning Fund (SULF) have led to an increase in union interest and activity in learning. In 2001, the Employment Relations Act provided statutory recognition of union learning representatives (ULRs) and this union role, which assists local members to take up learning opportunities, has focused attention even further, with some unions involved in learning for the first time.
- 5.3 Therefore, learning has become an integral part of the trades unions mainstream activity. The opportunity to access training and learning is now an important negotiating issue for unions and adult literacies, which the STUC term 'everyday skills', is considered a part of the wider lifelong learning agenda, and viewed as key to the personal success of workers.
- 5.4 Equipping ULRs with the knowledge, skills and ability to assist union members with literacies needs was an essential part of the capacity building that needed to take place within the union movement. The development of a course to raise awareness of these issues was considered an important element in moving the agenda forward.
- 5.5 The proposal for the Pathfinder Project¹⁸ aimed to co-ordinate the development and implementation of a strategy that would build the capacity within unions around literacies issues and provide support for union-initiated assistance in the workplace. A key element to the delivery of this approach was the appointment of an STUC Adult Literacy Co-ordinator. In addition, a number of outputs were identified that would involve trades unions and lead to an effective range of support for literacies needs in the workplace. These are detailed in the next section.

Project aims and objectives¹⁹

- 5.6 The Pathfinder Project was funded to undertake the following key outputs:
- recruitment of an STUC Adult Literacy Co-ordinator;
 - development of a strategy for adult literacies in the workplace;
 - co-ordination of the design and development of a workplace literacies awareness pack and training;
 - development of guidance notes for trades unions representatives which would inform them about the issue (including identifying and meeting needs) and its dissemination to all 45 affiliated trades unions;

¹⁸ The partners involved in this Pathfinder are detailed in Appendix 1.

¹⁹ Taken from the original Pathfinder bid – STUC.

- use of the workplace literacies awareness pack and training as a general introduction to this issue for 100 union tutors and activists;
- delivery of the workplace literacies awareness pack and training to more than 400 Scottish ULRs by March 2005;
- co-ordination of the design and development of literacy and numeracy training for unions and colleges delivering learning in the workplace;
- establishment of a network of 40 fully trained and accredited trades union literacies tutors; and
- development of a series of five evaluated pilot workplace literacies learning programmes.

Project changes

- 5.7 Across the lifetime of the project there have been a couple of significant changes. The original Adult Literacy Co-ordinator (ALC) left the post in May 2003 and was replaced by the current post-holder two months later. There was no activity on the project during the transition period.
- 5.8 One element that has been significantly revised is the network of 40 accredited literacies tutors. The project reported that they were unable to reach an agreement with the National Training Project (NTP), now Learning Connections, and the project advisory group on the most appropriate qualification framework for tutors. This led to a change in approach. The original plan was revised and the development of a national network of literacies support for workplace literacies tutors has been planned which builds on the experience of Adult Literacy and Numeracy Partnerships and the WEA.

Evaluation methodology

- 5.9 The evaluation approach was adjusted after the initial familiarisation meeting with the project co-ordinator where information about progress, challenges and achievements were discussed, along with management information, the evaluation approach and access to the main stakeholders.
- 5.10 At that stage, it was clear that there was an absence of comprehensive details e.g. name, union, contact number of ULRs and participants who have benefited from the Pathfinder Project, thus necessitating an approach that focused solely on the members of the Pathfinder Project steering group.
- 5.11 In addition to a further meeting with the ALC, 11 telephone and face-to-face interviews were carried out with a range of stakeholders which included:
- a representative from Glasgow Chamber of Commerce;
 - a tutor from Fife College;
 - managers of SULF funded projects; and
 - union representatives from PCS, AMICUS, USDAW, NUJ, UCATT, ASLEF²⁰.

²⁰ See glossary for full names of these trades unions.

- 5.12 Information has also been obtained from progress reports produced by the STUC and a draft final evaluation report produced by Glasgow Caledonian University. Where these sources have been used, they have been referenced as footnotes.

Outputs and outcomes achieved

- 5.13 The following section gives details of the various outputs achieved and the progress and outcomes of each.

STUC adult literacy and numeracy strategy

- 5.14 The strategy is based on the original submission for the Pathfinder Project and, as such, does not provide any additional detail about the strategic approach to building capacity within trade unions to support workers with literacies needs. The one-page document focuses on the commitment to delivering the Pathfinder Project outputs up to March 2005 and does not go beyond those assigned to the Pathfinder Project.
- 5.15 Since the end of the Pathfinder Project, the STUC have secured additional funding from the Scottish Executive and the strategy will be developed. This will focus on the generation of activity in the workplace and the mainstreaming of everyday skills into the work of the STUC Lifelong Learning Unit and individual trades unions.

Development of a workplace literacies awareness pack and guidance notes for trade unions

- 5.16 Two funded outputs - the development of a workplace literacies awareness pack and guidance notes - are incorporated into the *Everyday Skills* awareness training materials that were devised in conjunction with TUC Education and accredited through the Open College Network.
- 5.17 The course can be delivered over two or three days and covers a range of issues including raising awareness of literacies in trade unions, the role of a ULR in supporting *Everyday Skills*, the union approach to *Everyday Skills*, and the literacies policies and strategies e.g. the ALNIS report, of key players like ALN Partnerships and Learning Connections, Communities Scotland.

Workplace literacies awareness training for 100 union tutors and activists

- 5.18 The monitoring of the performance against this output has not been maintained and is not reported in any of the project's quarterly returns where the focus has been the number of ULRs trained. It is unclear as to whether this target of 100 is part of, or additional to, the 400 target of the output detailed below.

Workplace literacies awareness training to 400 ULRs

- 5.19 The work towards meeting the target of 400 ULRs receiving awareness raising training, delivered in the *Everyday Skills* course, has been more successful. At the end of March 2005, the project reported that 339 ULRs had been trained, with a further 123 ULRs on a waiting list to access the course over the spring and summer period.

- 5.20 It has not been possible to substantiate the participation of 339 ULRs on the course or to consult with ULRs in any significant number to ascertain their awareness of literacies issues or their ability to 'spot and refer' confidently. This is due to the absence of management information or contact data for participants on the *Everyday Skills* course.²¹ Nevertheless, four of the ULRs were interviewed and they acknowledged the benefits of the course in raising their awareness of workplace literacies issues and identifying members with literacies needs.
- 5.21 The ability to meet the original target has been restricted by the availability of tutors to deliver the course, rather than a lack of demand from union members wanting to participate. This is being addressed and the *Everyday Skills* course now features in the TUC Education Programme April – June 2005.

Design and development of literacies training

- 5.22 This output is being addressed by the Pilot Workplace Literacies Practitioner Course which is funded by the Glasgow ALN Partnership's Workplace Literacies Project. This is outwith the scope of the Pathfinder Project, but the ALC is a member of the course development team. The Pathfinder Project has fed into the development of this pilot course and the project co-ordinator sits on the advisory group.

Establishment of a network of 40 accredited adult literacies tutors

- 5.23 As previously mentioned, the approach to this output was revised to overcome the difficulties in reaching agreement with the NTP and the project advisory group on the most appropriate qualification framework for workplace literacies tutors.
- 5.24 The new approach has been to work with the WEA and ALN Partnerships to develop a network of literacies support by establishing criteria for membership and identifying potential workplace literacies tutors. The Pathfinder Project has recently reported that 26 tutors have now been identified.
- 5.25 In addition to the development of the network, six ULRs have undertaken the SQA Professional Development Award: Introduction to Adult Literacies Learning (PDA: ITALL) course. On completion of their assessments and practise sessions they will obtain the Professional Development Award as tutor assistants.

Five pilot workplace literacies programmes

- 5.26 The delay in identifying workplace literacies tutors and the revision of the tutor network had a knock-on effect on the work-based pilots. In addition, the discussions with employers to secure commitment to the pilot programmes, and then planning the appropriate provision tailored to employer and employee needs, took more time than originally anticipated.
- 5.27 There is activity at an individual union level to engage employers in specific workplace literacies learning programmes, most of which are funded through the Scottish Union Learning Fund (SULF). The project reports that two workplace literacies pilots are underway; one is with

²¹ The project has reported that contact details are held on a database owned by TUC Education (Scotland) and that it was agreed that the STUC would have access to this database, but the details required updating.

Scotrail, the rail unions and NUJ and the other is with Royal Mail, the CWU and WEA. Other pilots have been identified with three employers; Remploy, BT and Parcellforce.

- 5.28 It is clear that the Pathfinder Project has raised awareness of adult literacies amongst the unions and has provided an impetus to engaging employers with this agenda. However, for example, the Scotrail *Earn as You Learn* project is SULF funded. An NUJ literacy programme was piloted, in partnership with the rail unions and the employer and, whilst the STUC provided advice and explored development opportunities with the unions, delivery of this pilot programme is a result of the activity of individual unions and not the Pathfinder Project.
- 5.29 Therefore, the inclusion of SULF projects - which deliver work-based literacies learning – as part of the outputs is confusing. As noted above, it is recognised that the Pathfinder Project could have provided an impetus but it is highly likely that the SULF projects would have existed and been sustained in the absence of the Pathfinder Project. Indeed, the aims do not make any linkages between SULF projects and the intended Pathfinder Project work.
- 5.30 In the absence of robust monitoring and tracking information it is difficult to ascertain the level of support, resources and training that the Pathfinder Project has added to existing activity of SULF funded projects.

Strengths and success factors

Awareness raising

- 5.31 A significant achievement of the work of the Pathfinder Project is the increased awareness and profile of literacies issues amongst individual unions and the STUC. Before the Pathfinder Project was established, literacies was a non-issue and did not feature on the union agenda in Scotland. It now has a regular slot at STUC conference and congress, and individual unions are taking forward literacies initiatives outwith the project.
- 5.32 The ALC is based within the STUC Lifelong Learning Unit and is well positioned to use learning as a hook to get unions involved in literacies. A number of consultees commented on the importance of having a dedicated central resource that provides support and advice on literacies.
- 5.33 Specifically, the *Everyday Skills* course has generated awareness amongst ULRs and union activists across the trades union movement in Scotland. The feedback on the course and the training materials has been very positive with both participants and course tutors commenting on its value in raising awareness and providing them with the skills to identify colleagues with literacies needs. The use of the *Everyday Skills* materials has been further extended by its development as an online course which will make it available to union members in more remote areas.
- 5.34 There are indications that literacies issues within the workforce are being acknowledged by individual unions. This is evidenced by the increasing

number of applications for the Scottish Union Learning Fund which contain elements of literacies. All the successful SULF 5 funded projects contained elements of *Everyday Skills*.

Partnership work

- 5.35 The work with individual ALN Partnerships has established key contacts and working relationships which are being further developed to take forward the literacies and lifelong learning agenda in many areas across Scotland.

Weaknesses and barriers

Low awareness of literacies

- 5.36 The initial low levels of awareness of literacies issues amongst trades unions presented an early challenge in ensuring literacies issues were even acknowledged. This was then followed by a similar resistance from employers which again presented barriers to engagement.

Challenges to delivery

- 5.37 In developing the approach to raise awareness and build capacity within the trades union movement, there were significant barriers to the progression of the agenda because of the reported shortage of workplace literacies provision and specific literacies tutors. However, it appears that some of the courses were cancelled due to insufficient participant numbers, so one of the challenges has been the co-ordination and marketing of the courses across the trades union movement.
- 5.38 Funding arrangements for adult literacies (via the 32 Community Learning Strategy (CLS) Partnerships to local ALN Partnerships) presents challenges for the nationally-based Pathfinder Project in that a range of different partners have to engage in each geographic area, which is time consuming and resource intensive.
- 5.39 There were challenges to delivering the *Everyday Skills* course because of the demands of other trade union education. Of the six TU departments in Scottish colleges, only two deliver the *Everyday Skills* course - priority is given to delivering the core TU educational programme over the *Everyday Skills* course.

Partnership working - selection

- 5.40 Trades unions involved in the Pathfinder Project steering group were already engaged in the learning agenda and literacies issues and, whilst this seemed appropriate in the early stages, over the three-year period the 43 affiliated trades unions were regularly targeted by letter and email, there would have been benefits in bringing on board unions where there was no previous literacies activity or involvement.

Course provision

- 5.41 A number of unions commented on the difficulties in securing places for their members on the *Everyday Skills* course. They felt that they would benefit from more marketing and literature from the project on *Everyday*

Skills and literacies issues in general, like the Adult Literacies Newsletter that was produced and disseminated in the first year of the Pathfinder.²² However, it does appear that some courses have been cancelled due to the lack of demand, so an increase in the co-ordination of the supply and demand of the course is needed, so that situations where there are ULRs on a waiting list in one area and yet courses being cancelled in another can be avoided.

Management information

- 5.42 Absence of accurate management information that records data on the ULRs who have attended the awareness raising training prevents access to a significant number of ULRs. It also means that there is no evidence, even by union breakdown, to substantiate the 339 reported ULRs who have benefited from the *Everyday Skills* course.

Lessons learned from the STUC Pathfinder Project

- 5.43 The following details the lessons learned from the Pathfinder Project:
- The need to allocate more resources and time to developing union/employer partnerships.
 - The need for management information systems that record the details and number of ULRs, their union and timescale for involvement in *Everyday Skills* training and PDA:ITALL courses.
 - Timescales, engagement and resources in delivering particular elements needs to be more realistic.
 - *Everyday Skills* could benefit from an additional element of how to engage with the ULR once the representative has identified literacies needs, accompanied by more practical guidance on broaching the subject with work colleagues.
 - Increased co-ordination and matching of the demand for the *Everyday Skills* course and the availability of tutors and courses on offer.

Sustainability and transferability

- 5.44 The *Everyday Skills* course is now part of the TUC Education Programme and will continue to be offered to trade union members and activists as part of the core learning programme.
- 5.45 The STUC has recently secured additional funding from the Scottish Executive to take forward literacies work over the next 12 months. This will allow the awareness raising on literacies to continue within the trades union movement.
- 5.46 The identification of workplace literacies tutors and the establishment of the network will result in a Scotland-wide resource which can be accessed by all stakeholders involved in the workplace literacies agenda.
- 5.47 Literacies awareness amongst individual unions seems to have increased, as evidenced by the SULF applications for project funding, the majority of which have elements of literacies within their proposals.

²² Unfortunately, the marketing budget for the lifetime of the project was spent in the first year and no further newsletters could be funded.

- 5.48 The significant links and partnership work with the ALN Partnerships, the WEA and unions have flourished over the last three years and provided an impetus for new posts in this area, as evidenced by the creation of a trades union literacies tutor in Glasgow, funded by the Glasgow CLP Challenge Fund but employed through Stow College to provide workplace literacies support to trades union members.
- 5.49 The *Everyday Skills* course appears to have acted as a catalyst for further individual union activity in addressing literacies in the workplace. For example, the Fire Brigades Union (FBU) worked in partnership with Scottish Enterprise Fife to develop a core skills course for their members. As well as addressing literacies issues, the course covers the core skills of information and communication technology (ICT), problem solving and working together.

6 Overall findings and recommendations

- 6.1 The four Pathfinder Projects have collectively delivered a range of significant adult literacies outputs over their lifetime.
- 6.2 The remainder of this section considers general observations about the management and delivery of the projects as a whole, the common lessons that can be learned, the projects' contributions to the overall adult literacies strategy, and presents some ideas for future research.

Project management and delivery - good practice

Partnership work

- 6.3 All the projects have developed effective working partnerships with key agencies and local stakeholders, linking in with local structures and often with the Community Learning Strategy Partnerships and ALN Partnerships. This use of local expertise and existing networks has resulted in significant achievements and more sustainable future developments.

Capacity building

- 6.4 Again, all the Pathfinder Projects have worked with, and developed, members of staff within organisations to raise awareness of adult literacies and build on their expertise and understanding of their local or work environment. This form of capacity building within organisations increases the opportunities for learning to be disseminated throughout the existing structures.

Training delivery

- 6.5 In some of the projects the literacies learning was delivered within more general and 'acceptable' training or added on to standard training packages. This helped to engage a wider range and number of learners as well as avoiding the stigma of the literacies issue. This approach also offered incentives to learners through, for example, engaging with ICT.

Pathfinder Projects' flexibility

- 6.6 When faced with barriers, three projects changed their approach to address a particular output and all of them showed flexibility and creativity in identifying alternative solutions. This provides a clear indication of the Pathfinder Projects' commitments to their projects and ability to learn from experience. This is of particular note since the 'learning curve' for most of Scotland's literacies learning is significant and has clearly required a great deal of effort and innovation on the part of the Pathfinder Projects to develop approaches which are 'fit for purpose'.

Project management and delivery - barriers

Management information

- 6.7 A key element in two of the Pathfinder Projects was the absence of central management information and basic recording mechanisms that

evidenced the numbers of learners benefiting from the project. This not only impacted on evaluation but had wider implications for each project, as details of learner progression are critical when following up learning, disseminating additional information or contacting the individuals to track their personal development following the learning experience.

Delivering literacies across local authority areas

- 6.8 For those projects that worked with individual ALN Partnerships, a recurring aspect was the challenge of engaging with more than one partnership when delivery was over a wide geographical area, or where learners lived in one area but worked in another. Clearly, the crossing of local authority boundaries is an important issue in offering continuity and progression for literacies learning.

Literacies awareness and acceptance

- 6.9 One consistent challenge to delivery across the Pathfinder Projects was the stigma attached to literacies issues and the reluctance of both employers and employees to acknowledge literacies difficulties.
- 6.10 Linked to the stigma associated with literacies and the reluctance to acknowledge the issue, some of the projects suffered from the lack of awareness and acceptance of literacies issues when taking forward the Pathfinder Project activities. Until there is widespread acknowledgement of the issues that face a substantial percentage of the population, the impact of local programmes will be limited. The need for large-scale national workplace learning programmes will go some way to addressing the above issues. However, a national culture change to perceive literacies learning in a more positive light is likely to reap the best results over an extended period of time.

Employer engagement

- 6.11 The Pathfinder Projects working with employers all struggled to meet their employer-specific targets. Generally, the time, awareness raising and relationship building required to effectively engage employers in the area of workplace literacies and sustain their commitment was underestimated. It is recommended that future projects consider such 'lead-in' times when developing targets.
- 6.12 There were also concerns raised about the incentives for employers to engage in this agenda and the recognition that, in fact, some companies could be content with maintaining low skilled workers in particular roles. This would, therefore, not encourage or support employee activity in the area of workplace literacies. This suggests the need for both 'selling' the literacies learning message to employers and targeting those who are more likely to recognise the benefits of upskilling the workforce.

Delivering literacies work - skills and abilities

- 6.13 At some stage in the lifetime of the North Lanarkshire Community Learning Strategy Partnership, Skills for Logistics and STUC projects all experienced a shortage of appropriately qualified people to deliver or develop literacies training to their specific audiences. This came in the form of a lack of experienced tutors and development workers with the

necessary skills, and education providers with the relevant industry knowledge. Clearly the development of workplace literacies learning provision and materials that are context-specific are still in short supply. This suggests the need for a more comprehensive national mapping exercise to identify the relevant skills sets and the supply of these.

Common lessons

Monitoring progress

- 6.14 There is clearly a need for robust management information with common elements, for example, the numbers of learners across projects, in order to determine progress, reflect on activity and track broad elements and developments across diverse delivery mechanisms. This would allow projects to evaluate their own performance and progress on an on-going basis and also provide a clearer evidence base of the benefits of literacies learning which could be used for marketing and promotional efforts.
- 6.15 Related to the above is the need to track and monitor progress at the level of the individual learner. All Pathfinder Projects struggled to achieve this, not least because of the complexities and time involved. However, such 'testimonials' could prove to be very powerful in engaging future learners.

Resources for partnership working

- 6.16 All the projects benefited from working with local stakeholders, but in order to build relationships with partners there needs to be:
- sufficient thought about which partners should be involved;
 - appropriate time to effectively engage with these partners; and
 - consideration of the relevant stage of their involvement in the work.
 - This type of stakeholder analysis is common good practice to all partnership working, and is especially crucial in programmes of work which requires innovation and sustained partnership involvement.

Engaging employers

- 6.17 The promotion/publicity of literacies learning to employers needs to take into account sensitivities and the lack of understanding of the issue. It also requires people with the correct skill mix, abilities and knowledge of the best approach to secure and maintain employer and manager commitment. There also needs to be a more realistic view of achieving targets for employer and learner engagement, especially in light of long lead-in times and the relative 'newness' of literacies learning.

Links to literacies work

- 6.18 The need for more creative links or integration of literacies learning materials into broader workforce training programmes would allow literacies to be consistently addressed whilst delivering a job-related course. It would also avoid the stigma associated with literacies learning and the denial of the need for support from individual learners.

- 6.20 There is a need to consider the importance of networking literacies work into local infrastructures (e.g. LECs, business development services in FE Colleges) and accessing a broader pool of resources if the roll out of project activities is to reach the widest possible audience.

Development of targeted training

- 6.21 When working with learners, the importance of producing appropriate learning materials is paramount. Such materials that relate to home or work context have proved to be a significant element in engaging them in literacies learning. This is very much in line with the Scottish approach to adult literacies and the social practice learning model²³ that is adopted.
- 6.22 Examples of consulting with learners regarding course development and content has resulted in relevant materials that have proved popular and effective in addressing literacies needs.

Contribution to the wider literacies agenda

- 6.23 A number of literacies learning materials have been developed across the projects that could be adapted and rolled out across ALN Partnerships, Community Learning and Development Partnerships and other sectors. These include:
- awareness raising *Everyday Skills* course – STUC;
 - LNA tool – North Lanarkshire Community Learning Strategy Partnership;
 - screening/alerting tool – SPS (piloted as part of *An Adult Literacy and Numeracy Framework for Scotland*);
 - mentor training to support learners – SPS;
 - skills for LGV drivers '*Get Up to Speed.*' – Skills for Logistics; and
 - the development worker model – North Lanarkshire Community Learning Strategy Partnership.
- 6.24 The research carried out during this period, along with the internal evaluations within some projects, has increased the research base for adult literacies in specific sectors and provided a greater insight into the barriers, and in some cases how to tackle them, facing adult literacies provision.
- 6.25 In addition, the last three years have raised the profile of the literacies learning agenda across particular sectors e.g. trades unions, road haulage and the prison service as well as increasing the responsiveness of key stakeholders such as local authorities and the voluntary sector.

Ideas for further work

- 6.26 The work of the Pathfinder Projects has raised issues about support, delivery and the provision of adult literacies learning which merit further investigation. These include:
- the need to further promote and raise awareness amongst those involved with literacies learning of the distinction between literacies needs and lifelong learning;

²³ This approach recognises that literacy and numeracy are complex capabilities rather than a simple set of basic skills and that learners are more likely to develop and retain knowledge, skills and understanding if they see them as relevant to their own problems and challenges.

- the need or appropriateness of a validated screening tool, when to use it and with whom;
- mapping the supply side of workplace literacies provision – location, skills and experience of those delivering the learning types of learners; and
- the pedagogy of literacies learning – what are the most effective methods; skills and qualifications.

7 Glossary

ABBREVIATION	IN FULL
ALP	Adult Literacies Partnership
ASLEF	Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen
ATO	Approved Training Organisation
BAR	British Association of Removals
CLAN	City Literacy and Numeracy
CLSP	Community Learning Strategy Partnership
CWU	Communication Workers Union
DW	Development worker
FBU	Fire Brigades Union
FTA	Freight Transport Association
HMP	Her Majesty's Prison
HMYOI	Her Majesty's Young Offenders Institution
ILP	Individual learning plan
ITALL	Introductory Training in Adult Literacies Learning
LEC	Local enterprise company
LNA	Learning needs analysis
NUJ	National Union of Journalists
PCS	Public and Commercial Services
RHA	Road Haulage Association
RHDTC	Road Haulage and Distribution Training Council
SME	Small to Medium Enterprise
SPS	Scottish Prison Service
SQA	Scottish Qualifications Authority
STUC	Scottish Trades Union Congress
SULF	Scottish Union Learning Fund
TGWU	Transport and General Workers Union
TUC	Trades Union Congress
UCATT	Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians
ULR	Union Learning Representative
URTU	United Road Transport Union
USDAW	Union of Shop Distributive and Allied Workers
WEA	Workers' Educational Association

APPENDIX 1

Partner organisations

North Lanarkshire Community Strategy Partnership

Cumbernauld College
Coatbridge College
Motherwell College
North Lanarkshire Council

Skills for Logistics (Formerly the Road Haulage and Distribution Training Council)

Skills for Logistics,
Scottish Enterprise Lanarkshire
Scottish Enterprise Renfrewshire
Road Haulage Association (RHA)
British Association of Removals (BAR)
Freight Transport Association (FTA)
Transport General Workers Union (TGWU)
United Road Transport Union (URTU)

Scottish Prison Service

All 15 penal establishments

Scottish TUC

TUC
USDAW
PCS
Fife College
NUJ
UCATT
FBU
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AMICUS

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