

Session 3: Sharing Practice

Ros Parker, Aspire Sussex Ltd, gave a presentation about the sustainability of CLTS, leading on the promotion of the delivery of adult learning.

It took 8 months for the CLT to 'court' partners (it has a total of 26 partners) and to get them on board. This was time well spent as the CLT now has a wide and diverse partnership. Once the CLT has been established, it is important to divide the group in to two – strategic and operational.

Students and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) are 'company members' of the CLT which empowers them to make more decisions and encourages them to be more involved and engage more with the local community. The CLT also has a strong focus on how to get/ acquire new skills from others who volunteer their time; support from partners and stakeholders in this process is critical.

The journey cannot always be planned in advance as it is an evolving process – the model for the CLT is not necessarily the right model, it is a model that suits the CLT at this moment in time. Time will tell whether it has been a success/ whether the model works. The journey will be made easier by getting the right skills and expertise and utilising them – this is what developing partners and relationships is all about. However, passion, energy and resilience are essential!

A variable fee strategy is in place – surplus income is ploughed back into the 'hard to reach' strategy. The CLT's aim is to become a Community Interest company. The benefits of this are that, as a company/ charity, the CLT has more freedom and flexibility and, as such, is able to be much more responsive. The CLT is also looking at corporate, social responsibility and student responsibility.

Barriers to overcome include 'scavengers' – CLTs cannot do everything and there will be elements of the CLT that fall by the wayside and are picked up by others. Another issue may be those protecting their 'territory' – i.e. barriers around partner engagement etc; and show stoppers, for example Ofsted, procurement, TUPE costs, pensions, regulations etc.

It is important to mitigate risk and manage change, as well as to transform services to meet the needs of the local community.