
REPORT FOR: CABINET

Date of Meeting:	17 January 2019
Subject:	Adult Learning Strategy
Key Decision:	Yes (the decision affects more than one ward)
Responsible Officer:	Paul Walker, Corporate Director, Community
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Keith Ferry, Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Planning & Employment
Exempt:	No
Decision subject to Call-in:	Yes
Wards affected:	The Strategy is the framework for a Borough- wide service which delivers in all wards
Enclosures:	Appendix 1 - Adult Learning Strategy 2019- 24

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out an Adult Learning Strategy outlining the key adult and community learning priorities for the London Borough of Harrow for the next two years to take account of national changes in policy and funding.

Recommendations:

Cabinet is requested to agree that:

1. The Draft Adult Learning Strategy is approved for public consultation.
2. The final Adult Learning Strategy is adopted following the results of consultation and subject to final edits after consultation between the Corporate Director for Community and the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration and Employment.

Reason: (for recommendations)

There are national changes in the funding, delivery and external inspection of Adult and Community Learning, including moves to a devolved Adult Education Budget for London by 2019.

The Adult and Community Learning Service (Learn Harrow) should have a place a strategy that sets out key adult learning priorities for the next five years.

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

Our vision is deliver learning that promote the wider benefits of learning, enable people to develop skills, knowledge and confidence, increase health and well-being and encourage a culture of life-long learning through progressing learners to further study or training and/or employment by securing an accessible, coherent and high-quality learning programme for adults and families in Harrow. The adoption of the Strategy will help the Council achieve its vision set out in the Harrow Ambition Plan 2020 by protecting the vulnerable and supporting families.

Options considered

- A. Revise the Adult Community Learning Strategy to ensure conformity to new regional and local priorities and to meet changing demographic and economic trends.
- B. Do nothing, and continue to allocate funding and deliver learning provision in accordance with the aims and priorities outlined in the 2016-18 Strategy.

A revised Strategy is required to set out the key adult and community learning priorities for the London Borough of Harrow for the next five years. This will take account of national, regional and local changes in policy and funding and demographic change. The attached report sets out the strategic direction for the Learn Harrow Service from 2019-24; the accompanying appendices detail performance from 2016 to date.

Failure to update the strategy will lead to reduced opportunities to secure additional funding for Harrow and commissioning provision that does not meet the current and projected needs of Harrow's community.

Background

Current situation

Harrow Council secures provision for Adult and Community Learning through the Learn Harrow Service, with funding through the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The framework for the Service's objectives, aims and actions has been the Adult Learning Strategy 2016-18, approved by Cabinet in September 2016. Since 2016 the service has improve performance across a number of indicators:

1. Increase in additional income by £446,000.00 across the 2 year Adult Learning strategy 2016-2018. An increase of 34%
2. Decrease in the delivery cost per enrolment by 5% from £157.91 to £149.60
3. Improved achievement rates for learners from 82.6% to 89.4% bringing it above the national average by 2.5%

Why a change is needed

A revised Strategy is required to set out the key adult and community learning priorities for the London Borough of Harrow for the next five years to take account of national changes in policy and funding, of regional and local priorities and of local economic and demographic changes. Over the period of this Strategy the government is intending to devolve control of a revised Adult Education Budget (AEB) to the London Mayor through a devolution agreement. It is intended that this will enable local authority services, colleges and other training organisations to reshape their local adult education provision and align with local and regional priorities.

The main drivers for this revised Strategy are:

- Devolution of funding to the London Mayor in September 2019.
- The priorities for learning and skills as set out in the Harrow Ambition Plan 2020 and Skills for Londoners Framework
- A move to the use of outcomes-based measures as part of future funding arrangements
- Growth plans for the service projecting a 25% increase in year 1 and 2

Implications of the Recommendation

Considerations

Resources, costs

The Learn Harrow Service is externally funded by the Education & Skills Funding Agency. In order to widen participation in learning, subsidised provision will be focused on maximising social and economic outcomes by focussing on excluded priority groups. However, a flexible system of fees and concessions will enable the Council to maintain a universal service. In September 2019 this funding is devolved to the London Mayor and funding levels have been protected for 2 years.

Staffing/workforce

Approximately 40% of delivery is direct delivery through a pool of sessional tutors. In 2017, the Service began reducing its reliance on large further education sub-contractors and has begun a process of capacity building for direct delivery. The Service has recruited additional staff to meet changes in the curriculum and enable a greater emphasis on Functional Skills and employability skills. The recruitment has been made within the budget.

Performance Issues

The Adult Learning Strategy sets out the framework for delivery of anticipated annual enrolments of around 4200. The proposed actions include working with the Xcite team to provide employability skills, functional skills and language skills for residents seeking employment and developing links with the Working with Families programme to increase the number of identified families accessing pathways to training and employment.

The Learn Harrow Service currently returns learner data to the Education & Skills Funding Agency. The ESFA's role will be devolved to the London Mayor in September 2019. The learner returns includes Key Performance Indicators for the number of learners enrolling, their success and retention rates. Annual success rates are reported on the Enterprise, Regeneration and Planning Scorecard. Performance against priority groups for 2016-2018 can be found in annex B of the draft strategy

The Service is also subject to external inspection by Ofsted, which expects priorities for delivery to be identified in a Strategy linked to local and regional priorities.

Environmental Implications

There is no specific environmental impact associated with this report

Risk Management Implications

Associated risks are not included on the Directorate risk register, but a separate risk register is in place.

There is no financial risk to Harrow Council as the service is externally funded.
Health & Safety risks are managed according to Harrow Council policy but are deemed low risk

Procurement Implications

There are no immediate or direct procurement implications from the recommendations of the Adult Learning Strategy 2018 – 2023. Procurement arising out of the strategy will be undertaken in compliance with the Public Contract Regulation 2015 and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

Legal Implications

A function of Local Authorities under the Education Act 1996 is to provide opportunities for the education of adults. The arrangements for securing and/or delivering the education provision are the decision of the local authority. The proposals set out in the Adult Learning Strategy will allow for improved delivery of the Local Authority's functions in relation to adult learning reflecting local need.

The Local Authority is subject to the Public Sector Equality duty set out in s149 of the Equality Act 2010, and must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out its public functions

Financial Implications

Adult Community Learning is an externally funded service. Funding is currently provided by the Education & Skills Funding Agency and is largely based on historical allocations with no correlation to population size, levels of deprivation or learner numbers. For 2018/19 academic year, the grant allocation is £664,000. The Service also seeks to maximise its provision by bidding for other funding as set out in the Draft Strategy document.

The national changes in both policy and funding are anticipated in 2019. In September 2019, the Adult Education Budget will be devolved to the Mayor of London. The funding level for 2019 and 2020 is to remain at the same level i.e. £664,000 per annum, whilst the funding formula will be reviewed by the GLA with an aim to move towards the use of outcomes based measures for future funding arrangements. The delivery of the Strategy for 2021-2024 will be subject to the level of funding allocation and the costs of activities will be met from within the funding envelope.

The Draft Strategy outlines the key adult and community learning priorities over 5 years from 2019. All activities associated with the delivery of these priorities are to be met from the external funding allocation including any funding awards from bids submitted to other funding bodies to support adult community learning.

Equalities implications / Public Sector Equality Duty

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out.

Council Priorities

The Council's vision:

Working Together to Make a Difference for Harrow

Please identify how the report incorporates the administration's priorities.

- Making a difference for the vulnerable
- Making a difference for communities
- Making a difference for local businesses
- Making a difference for families

The aims and actions of the Adult Learning Strategy incorporate the following priorities:

Protecting the Most Vulnerable and Supporting Families

- Building on the wellbeing project to deliver and evaluate community learning programmes for adults with mild to moderate mental health problems
- Securing a range of adult learning programmes delivered by organisations working with the most vulnerable, including mental health service users and adults with learning difficulties and disabilities
- Delivering Functional Skills English and Maths programmes and English language programmes in schools to parents with the aim of improving pupil achievement as well as parents' skills
- Delivering learning programmes through providers such as Relate and HOPE to support targeted families and develop employability skills

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Jessie Mann.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date: 26/11/2018.....		
Name: Sharon Clarke.....	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Monitoring Officer
Date: ...13/11/2018.....		

Section 3 - Procurement Officer Clearance

Name: Nimesh Mehta...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Head of Procurement
Date: ...12/12/2018.....		

Ward Councillors notified:	NO as it impacts on all Wards
EqIA carried out:	YES
EqIA cleared by:	Dave Corby

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Karen Bhamra, Service Manager,
Tel. 0208 416 8906 email: karen.bhamra@harrow.gov.uk

Background Papers: Adult Learning Strategy 2019-24

Call-In Waived by the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee	NO – CALL IN APPLIES
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