

York Learning Strategic Plan 2017/18

Service:

Communities, Culture and Public Realm

York Learning

Directorate:

Children, Education and Communities

Director:

Jon Stonehouse

**Cabinet
Member:**

Executive Member for Culture, Leisure and Tourism

Section 1: The Service

York Learning is a CYC service that focuses on improving people's core skills, including English, maths, ICT and skills for work and contributing to their health and well being. The service also provides the largest range of leisure and health and well being learning programmes in the city. Provision is secured exclusively by external funding and contracts and the service has a zero base budget.

Turnover for 2017/18 academic year is expected to be £2.8m, (an increase of £160k on 16/17), mainly as a result of increases in funding for 16-18 work, fee income and loans funded provision. There is likely to be some reductions in funding for Apprenticeships, partly as a result in some significant changes to national funding.

The service employs 180 staff, with some 60 full and part-time contracted staff and 120 sessional tutors and support staff. The service had just over 5500 student enrolments in 2016/17, just over 4000 individual students. Currently the service operates from 40 community venues with substantial provision at York and Acomb Explore, Huntington, Fulford and York High secondary schools and Huntington Community centre, as well as in local primary schools and children's centres. The service operates a full-time 16-18 foundation learning programme from Rougier House, where there are dedicated learning rooms and a fully equipped ICT suite. The service management headquarters and main service reception are located within CYC customer centre.

The service was rated as a "Good Provider" as a result of inspection in February of 2016. Success rates in the majority of areas of provision are above the national average (judged as the % of those people successfully achieving the qualification compared with those who started the course), as reported in the service self-assessment report. Success rates for Childcare and ICT (Information and Communications Technology) remain good, and results for level 2 and 3 counselling are outstanding. There has been a significant improvement in success rates for 16-18 provision, following a very thorough and detailed improvement plan. However success rates in functional English and maths at both level 1 and 2 need further improvement in 17/18 although the improvement trend is upward. The service will be reporting a downturn in success rates for Apprenticeships in 16/17, as a result of some legacy issues with a number of individuals and some poor retention. This will mean success rates are now below minimum standards and this will mean some intervention by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. Whilst this is regrettable it is partly as a result of the sectors where the service offers provision, in both Childcare and Health and Social Care which have high levels of staff turnover. The service has robust plans in place to address this issue but some of the lack of achievement is beyond our control.

The service continues to grow the highly successful leisure learning programme at a time when other local authority providers have substantially reduced this type of provision. This growth has now been sustained for some 3 years and it is not clear as to whether this can be maintained. This has not only enabled the service to continue to offer local residents highly valued and popular courses, but enabled some cross subsidy of other programmes where fee income is impossible to collect.

Section 2: Mission and Vision

The service mission and vision are drawn from the CYC Council Plan. The service will seek to support and implement clear council policies relating to Skills and Employment focussing on supporting Adults to improve their life chances, but also on improving Adult Skills to support young people, particularly through Family Learning. Where appropriate the service will work with local employers to improve the workforce skills and support new developments as appropriate. The service mission and vision are included below:

Our Vision

All our clients have the skill and motivation to maximise their life chances

Our Mission

Support people to achieve the best they possibly can, by delivering learning, skills and employability programmes to suit their needs

Section 3: Operating Context

The service primarily provides learning and related support to adults, in partnership and with links to a number of other learning providers. It has a unique place in the city offering a non-campus based programme in local communities; a positive feature often sighted by learners. There are close partnership links with Explore York, who provide three well used community spaces for delivery, York Explore, Acomb Explore and Clifton. These high quality spaces are vital to the delivery of York Learning programmes.

There are strong partnership arrangements through York Community Learning Partnership and Higher York for the planning and promotion of learning. York WEA, (Workers' Educational Association) York College, York Explore, York Museum Trust and York University are significant and active partners who collaborate to produce joint publicity, celebration events and other promotional activity. The Family Learning team liaise with children's centres, local primary schools and education advisers to ensure programmes support local early years and primary school priorities and initiatives. There are very strong and productive relationship with Blueberry Academy, Choose2youth and United Response in delivering 16-18 and personalised learning for 19-25 year olds. This secures provision for the most vulnerable learners in the city and provides a highly cost effective programme.

An important aspect of work for the service has focussed on preparing people for work and developing their skills so that they can improve their work and life chances. Whilst this work continues, it is becoming more challenging as the current relatively low levels of unemployment mean that the focus is shifting to support some of those who are the most vulnerable who are often some way from the job market. This work involves intensive one to one support for individuals of often means tackling complex and deep seated personal, emotional and socio economic problems.

Over the past 12 months the service has managed to secure a number of small externally funded contracts, (ESF and Big Lottery funding) through working with both Leeds City Region LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) and York and North Yorkshire LEP. This may involve work beyond the city boundaries, either in direct delivery or in partnership work as part of a larger contract. It should be

noted that these contracts bring with them an enormous burden of bureaucracy that at times interferes with service delivery to clients and customers and means that securing small contracts can lead to significant increases in admin work to support them.

In common with most public sector organisations, core funding for provision is reducing year on year and the service is continually seeking new funding streams to diversify its offer, in order to be able to continue to support some of the most vulnerable adults and young people in the city. This includes developing more “full-cost” provision (with a view to investing more in targeting learning) and competing in the market place for new business. The service is well placed to take forward opportunities for ESIF (European Structural Infrastructure Funding), although this is now clearly going to be limited, mainly in supporting individuals who are unemployed or those returning to the workplace.

Recently the service has begun some strategic discussions with North Yorkshire Adult Learning Service and more latterly with East Riding with a view to developing some collaborative and jointly managed working practices. This work is likely to increase in importance over the next 12 months.

Section 4: Priority Focus

Key priorities for the service remain on developing skills for employment and to support health and well being. The service continues to focus on core skills of English, maths and ICT as these are the building blocks for the development of other skills and are key to the development of further learning. In brief priority areas include:

- Developing and improving skills in English, maths and ICT
- Learning to support people back into work or to improve in work skills to enable them to progress
- Full time 16-18 programmes, including personalised learning programmes for some of the city’s most vulnerable young people
- 19+ High Needs Support, personalised learning programmes through sub-contracted arrangements
- 16-18 and 19+ Apprenticeships, supporting national and local priorities
- Developing the skills of parents and carers to support children’s learning
- Learning to support and improve peoples’ mental health and well being
- Personal development and leisure learning

Section 5: Challenges

Funding for programmes remains the single key challenge for the service. The service has to balance the need to secure additional contracts to respond to the needs of local people and keep staff meaningfully employed, with the bureaucratic burden that new contracts bring. Over the past 12 months the service has only been able to secure a number of small contracts to work with those people seeking to get back into the job market. Managing the contract requirements and the necessary bureaucracy has proved very challenging and frustrating for staff whose primary motivation is to support individuals.

There are also some risks associated with contract compliance and reaching maximum contract values. Whilst action is taken to monitor and mitigate those risks, there remain some challenges in ensuring that the resources dedicated to fulfilling the contracts do not exceed the value of the contracts themselves. This is particularly a risk in the early “capacity building” phase of a new contract, where initial investment is needed to secure the delivery model, but where the funding is insufficient in the early

stages to cover this. Ensuring a model is developed to cope with this is important.

One very specific contract risk that was identified in the previous strategic plan related to the 16-18 full time learning programme. Whilst the risks identified previously still remain, increases in funding into this area, due to the increase in student numbers and effective management to maximise funding are now mitigating this risk.

Apprenticeship reform at a national level continues at a pace. Whilst this is a complex area, in essence the risks to the service come from the switch in control of funding to employers and the fact that for the first time many employers will have to make “cash” contributions for apprenticeship programmes. This opening up of the market place clearly poses some risks to this aspect of the service’s provision. There is still a fair amount of turbulence in the sector and the arrangements to fund and secure apprenticeship provision, particularly for SME’s remains challenging.

Finally, the role of the Local Enterprise Partnerships (both Leeds and York and North Yorkshire) and the potential affects of “Devolution” are sure to have an impact on funding for the service. Whilst the switching of control of funding from a national to a regional level is a positive development, competing for funding with other areas where levels of deprivation and unemployment might be greater, does pose some risks. Whilst direct impacts are unlikely to be felt in 2017/18, or indeed 18/19, impacts are likely to be significant in subsequent years.

York Learning Strategic Service Plan : Actions 2017/18 Academic Year

Ref	Activity	Target date	Performance 16/17	Target for 17/18	Commentary
1	Continue to develop partnership and collaborative working with neighbouring local authorities	Ongoing	New measure		<i>Over the past 6 months the service has been working closely with North Yorkshire County Council and East Riding County Council to discuss closer working arrangements and collaboration. This has already led to some joint working and the setting up of a number of working groups. It is too early to judge the impact of the groups. It is expected that this will gather pace in 17/18.</i>
2	Continue to secure and extend provision for High needs support students as part of a "Personalised Learning" for 16-19 year olds and for 19-24 with learning difficulties and disabilities	Ongoing	69	85	<i>There is a significant increase in learner numbers for the academic year 2017/18 as fewer students seek places outside of the city. However the funding methodology of "lagged funding" common to all post-16 institutions, poses some particular challenges for York Learning in working with sub-contractors. The service is working closely with colleagues in the 16-19 team to mitigate this risk.</i>
3	Revise Digital inclusion offer as a result of recent policy changes and funding for ICT	Sept 2017	New measure	N/A	<i>This is likely to mean working more closely with organisations who identify individuals who are digitally excluded for examples carers.</i>
4	Deliver 6 jobs fair as part of a strategy to support York residents into work	Sept 2017	New measure	70 employers 800 attendees	<i>These events are highly valued by employers as a means of seeing a large range of individuals in a relatively short period of time. The last jobs fair April 2017 had a waiting list for employers. The jobs fair organised for the end of September is currently full with a waiting list.</i>
5	Develop further English for Speakers of Other Languages programmes in response to demand	Sept 2017	New measure	No target numbers set	<i>Demand for these programmes has increased over the past 12 months as a result of some demographic changes in York. One of the challenges that remains is securing suitable city centre premises to deliver the programme.</i>

6	Apply for and secure an increase in Advanced Learner Loans Funded allocation to support the development of new programmes	Oct 2017	£200k	£250k	<i>Programmes funded by Advanced Learner Loans have been expanded to the extent that demand is now out stripping supply. An application for further funding will be submitted shortly.</i>
7	Increase full cost programme to ensure a diverse and varied offer and develop a robust fee income stream	31/03/18	£415k	£425k	<i>We are setting a revised target to increase fee income of 2.5% a year, a reduction from 5% in 16/17.</i>
8	Work with York Explore to secure provision for the new Burnholme Hub with particular emphasis on the city wide counselling programme	Dec 2017	New measure	New measure	Whilst the provision is planned to begin in September 2018 there is some significant work to complete in advance of that date. Initial discussions with Explore York have been encouraging.

Performance Targets 2017/18

The following are some general performance information that the service uses as part of its performance management measures. These are further split into smaller “subject targets” for individual managers and monitored on a quarterly basis.

	Target area	Date	16/17 Actual	17/18 Target	Commentary
9	Fee income	31/03/18	380k	410k	Unlike most of the targets in this plan, this is a financial year target . We are above profile on this measure and are likely to exceed original target. Figure in brackets does not include receipt in advance.
10	Student enrolments to non-qualification bearing courses	31/07/18	4800	5400	We continue to see a steady increase in learner numbers directly in relation to fee income.
11	Total number of 16-18 Apprenticeships (Starts) (Carried over)	31/07/18	30	30	This is likely to be fewer than in previous years as there is a fair amount of turbulence in the sector
12	Total number of 19+ Apprenticeships (Starts) Carried over	31/07/18	75	75	<i>See above</i>
13	GCSE English	31/07/18	30	36	This is a static figure as this is determined by fixed funding
14	GCSE Maths	31/07/18	58	60	<i>See above</i>
15	Functional English	31/07/18	212	212	Targets are static as they are determined by funding which has not increased. These numbers represent individual qualification aims and not learners. English includes accredited ESOL programmes

16	Functional Maths	31/07/18	142	142	See above
17	Full time 16-18 Foundation Learning Programme	31/07/18	36	36	This programme has undergone a change in curriculum with revised eligibility criteria and induction process. This has significantly increased the retention rate and achievement rates
18	Full time 18-25 High Needs Support students personalised learning programmes	31/07/18	33	53	We are anticipating a significant increase in numbers of High Needs Students coming through our provision in academic year 17/18. The majority of this provision is sub-contracted with Blueberry Academy, Choose2youth and United Response
19	Functional Skills English 16-18	31/07/18	18	18	These represent a very small cohort of learners
20	Functional Skills Maths 16-18	31/07/18	15	15	See above
21	Overall success rate for service		78.3%	80%	We are reporting on this for the first time this year within this report. However more detailed information about performance across a range of measures can be found with the services Self Assessment Report. (SAR) Please note that performance for 2016/17 is subject to final confirmation as the service is still awaiting some further results.