

# York Learning Strategic Plan 2015/16

**Service:** Communities, Culture and Public Realm  
York Learning

**Directorate:** Communities and Neighbourhoods

**Director:** Sally Burns

**Cabinet Member:** Cllr Nigel Ayre

## Section 1: The Service

York Learning is a CYC business unit that focuses on improving peoples skills for work, contributing to their health and well being and providing a range of leisure based learning opportunities. Provision is secured exclusively by external funding and contracts and the service is working toward being a zero based budget service.

Turnover for 2015/16 is expected to be £2.3m, with all of the funding secured from external contracts and fee income. 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 6000 student enrolments in 2014/15 which was just over 4000 students. Currently the service operates from 40 community venues with substantial provision at York and Acomb Explore, Huntington, Fulford and York High secondary schools. The service operates its 16-18 full-time programme from Rougier House on Rougier Street where there are dedicated learning rooms and a fully equipped ICT suite. The service management headquarters are in West Offices, where the main service reception is located within CYC customer centre.

Success rates in the majority of areas of provision are above the national average, as reported in the service self assessment report. Success rates for Childcare and ICT (Information and Communications Technology) are outstanding. Success rates for functional English, maths and ICT are good with significant improvement for 16-18 provision.

The service offers a range of programmes including but not restricted to the following:

- English and maths functional skills and GCSE programmes
- ICT programmes to support Digital inclusion
- Full-time 16-18 programmes including personalised learning programmes
- A range of health and well being programmes
- Family Learning Programmes as part of a first steps back into learning
- Employability and work preparation programmes
- 16-18 and 19+ Apprenticeships
- Essential workplace qualifications to improve skills
- A range of leisure programmes to support health and well being and support personal development

## 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 but not exclusively 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 provides learning primarily to adults in partnership and with links to a number of other learning providers. It has a unique place in the city providing community based learning, in a variety of community venues throughout York. Whilst some of the programme offer is similar to York College, it is unique in being non-campus based, a feature often sighted by learners as significant to them. There are close partnership links with Explore York, who provide three significant 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 arrangement through York Community Learning Partnership 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. Joint planning of programmes is developing although there is still significant work to do in this area.

In common with most public sector organisations, funding for provision is reducing year on year and the service is seeking ways 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.

Core work for the service over the past couple of years has focussed to a large extent on getting people ready for work and improving their skills so that they can improve their work and life chances. Whilst this work will continue, the current relatively low levels of unemployment mean that the focus will shift to support some of those who are most vulnerable and perhaps somewhat away from the job market.

The service will be seeking to secure external funding for this work through 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.

#### Section 4: Priority Focus

Key priorities for the service are a focus on developing skills for employment and to support health and well being. There continues to be a focus in all provision on improving core skills of English, maths and ICT alongside a general focus on supporting people skills to gain employment. In brief priority areas include

- Full time 16-18 programmes, including personalised learning programmes for some of the city's most vulnerable young people
- 16-18 and 19+ Apprenticeships, supporting national priorities
- Developing and improving skills in English, maths and ICT
- Programmes designed to support and improve people's mental health and well being
- Programmes to support people's personal development and leisure learning

#### Section 5: Challenges

Funding for programmes remains the single key challenge for the service. This is both in securing new funding to develop the offer and respond to local needs. Equally there is a challenge to ensure that current funding is sufficient to ensure that provision is both adequate and of a good quality. The latter is increasingly becoming a difficulty as funding rates are reduced for the same provision year on year. This puts an increasing strain on staffing levels and the resources required to secure quality provision.

There are also some risks associated with contract compliance and reaching maximum contract values. Whilst the service is aware of those risks and takes the appropriate action 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, where initial investment is needed to secure the 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 relates to the 16-18 full time learning programme. Due to the very specialist nature of the programme and the small numbers involved, core EFA (Education Funding Agency) funding is not adequate to cover the costs of delivery. There is a very real risk that if further resources are not secured or expenditure more closely matches income, that the programme is at risk. The closure of the programme would have a significant affect on the city's NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) outcomes and figures.

The service is also aware of the need to maintain the quality of the provision offered and to ensure it complies with and reaches the necessary OFSTED standards and requirements. This is a challenging area, as the requirements are increased but resources decrease. There is some risk in this area. The service has not undergone a full OFSTED inspection since June 2011 and the expectation is that sometime over the next 12 months the service can expect a full OFSTED visit under the new Common Inspection Framework. Preparation to respond to any potential inspection is underway.

Until recently the service has been able to maintain a vibrant team offering one to one support and Information, Advice and Guidance to individuals. This was primarily through ESF (European Social Fund) contracted provision. These contracts have now finished and it poses a significant challenge to the service to maintain this provision. Indeed over the last 12 months a significant number of staff have left the service and were not replaced. This is likely to continue in the service reorganisation and thus the service previously offered will also be lost. Information, Advice and Guidance are key aspects of all programmes and the service will have to find new and innovative ways to continue to offer these services.

## Section 6: Actions 2015/16 Academic Year

Ref	Council Plan/Local Priority	Activity	Lead officer	Milestones	Indicators by which Performance will be Measured & Frequency
1	Local/Service plan priority	Develop new governance arrangements that support and challenge service development and sustainability	AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This strategic plan is signed off by the executive member- 09/15</li> <li>• Self Assessment Report is received and approved by the executive member prior to publication - 01/15</li> <li>• Regular performance management information is reported to executive member and to directorate management team – 11/15</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Governance arrangements will be developed and signed off by the executive member</li> </ul>
2	Residents have the opportunity to get good quality and well paid jobs	Consider a range of new delivery models including working with other organisations in geographical areas outside of the city.	AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a specification for the service to be used to measure and evaluate options – 02/16</li> <li>• Options for the delivery of the service are presented to Assistant Director for discussion –</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A report will be prepared to outline the options for the future delivery of the service</li> </ul>

				03/16	
3	Residents have the opportunity to get good quality and well paid jobs	Secure an ESIF (European Structural and Investment Fund) contract for working with some of the most vulnerable adults in the city to help them secure skills for employment and to support their mental well-being	CC/AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop specifications with a number of partners as part of the bidding process – 10/15</li> <li>• Ensure adequate staffing is in place to respond to contract demands -02/16</li> <li>• Ensure staffing model allows for the contract to be developed and delivered in a timely and cots effective manner – 04/16</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New ESIF contract/contracts are secured and ready for delivery</li> </ul>
4	Local/Service Plan priority	Carry out a full service review and reorganisation to ensure that service costs align more closely with income generation.	AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Options for new structure are developed and consulted upon – 11/15</li> <li>• New structure arrangements and funding model are approved by Directorate Management Team – 12/15</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New structure is implemented from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016</li> </ul>

5	Every child has the opportunity to get the best possible start in life	Continue to secure provision for High needs support students as part of a “Personalised Learning” programme for 16-19 year olds and for 19-24 with learning difficulties	CC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put in place Service Level Agreement and contract with Blueberry Academy -08/15</li> <li>• Ensure sufficient funds are secured to enable Routes to Success programme to operate or other arrangements developed to secure provision -12/15</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16-19 routes to success programme has a strategy for the next three years with funding model in place</li> </ul>
6	Residents have the opportunity to get good quality and well paid jobs	Consider ways in which the service can respond to the highly significant increase in the demand for GCSE English and maths in the context of fixed funding	FH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through Learning city consider how the service responds to increases in demand. 01/11</li> <li>• Explore how a full cost GCSE offer could be developed in the event of funding running out. 01/10</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear and coherent city plan for dealing with the demand for GCSE English and maths is developed and shared.</li> <li>• Clear strategies for coping with demand set out, and all providers understand their role.</li> </ul>
7	Local/Service Priority	Develop a testing centre to support the national drive to increase the number of people taking online tests	AP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure ICT suite at Rougier House is fit for purpose as a new testing centre -10/15</li> <li>• Secure contracts for new testing- 01/16</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First tests take place. Further contract for testing is secured</li> </ul>



8	Everyone has access to opportunities regardless of their background	Continue to develop provision for digital inclusion targeting skills development on the final 25%	AP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the Community Learning Partnership to indentify the role of the service within the wider digital inclusion provision – 11/16</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear digital inclusion strategy is developed in partnership with Community Learning Trust and action plan developed and shared with partners.</li> </ul>
9	Residents have the opportunity to get good quality and well paid jobs	Maximise funding for 24+ loans by expanding and developing new programmes for those seeking to improve their skills.	CC/AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level 4 counselling course developed and secured – 9/15</li> <li>• New provision for schools classroom assistants secured – 09/15</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £100k or funding for loans secured with clear pipeline for continued provision</li> </ul>
10	Local/Service Priority	Respond to the new OFSTED inspection framework by ensuring the service is OFSTED inspection ready	AP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managers are briefed on new inspection framework – 07/15</li> <li>• Quality systems and SAR process area adjusted to fit with new requirements -10/15</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Processes and procedures are in place and regularly checked by the quality managers and head of service</li> <li>• Following an OFSTED short inspection visit the good status of the service is maintained.</li> </ul>

11	Local/Service Priority	Expand and develop new service performance development framework to include community learning programmes	CC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal for PDF (Performance Development Framework) is signed off at management team – 12/15</li> <li>• New arrangements are introduced for community learning – 01/15</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrangements are in place and signed off by management team</li> <li>• Annual schedule is set up as part of the quality improvement process</li> </ul>
12	Everyone is supported to achieve their full potential	Develop the services approach and rationale for targeted and first step community learning programmes	FW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear first steps programmes are implemented and recorded in the service SAR – 03/15</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear strategy for community learning targeted and first step programmes is in place</li> </ul>
13	Residents have the opportunity to get good quality and well paid jobs	Secure a new 'Headstart' programme to follow on from the current programme due to finish in March 2016	AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to work closely with Learning City manager and LCR (Leeds City Region) to ensure the service is well placed to secure a new contract 03/16</li> <li>• Ensure bid is submitted where appropriate 02/16</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New contract is secured to support young people into work</li> </ul>

14	<p>Work with all public sector bodies in the city and the region to make sure we get the most from collective public expenditure in York</p> <p>Residents are encouraged and supported to live healthily</p>	<p>Continue to support the new “Community Learning Trust” arrangements by working with a range of providers to secure provision beyond that which is funded.</p>	AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to develop a joint approach to promotion of programmes – 01/16</li> <li>• Work with partners to consider new delivery models – 04/16</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning for Everyone brochure is expanded to include more providers</li> <li>• New models of delivery are in place with funding secured for 2016/17</li> </ul>
15	<p>Everyone is supported to achieve their full potential</p>	<p>Implement recommendations from Matrix review on provision of Information, Advice and Guidance</p>	AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train adequate numbers of frontline staff to IAG (Information Advice and Guidance) level 3 standard 03/16</li> <li>• Ensure an adequate number of staff are qualified at Level 4 12/15</li> <li>• Review all teaching staff and ensure an adequate number are qualified at level 4 IAG 03/16</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following the review visit of the Matrix assessor all development actions are signed off as completed.</li> <li>• All frontline staff complete the level 3 IAG qualification</li> </ul>

16	Local/Service Priority	Ensure the service is able to meet minimum standards for IAG as set out in the SFA contract	AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During service reorganisation ensure that adequate IAG capacity is retained to fulfil contract requirements – See above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some capacity to deliver IAG is retained within the new service structure.</li> </ul>
17	Everyone has access to opportunities regardless of their background	Continue to development links with other organisations to development collaborative arrangements and the delivery of joint provision	AG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When developing new programmes consider first how these can be delivered collaboratively – Review 07/16</li> <li>• Where the service is no longer able to deliver provision consider how this can be developed with other providers – Review 07/16</li> <li>• Consider carefully the future delivery of mental health programmes in light of service reorganisation – 02/16</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New provision is in place with other partners and co-delivery arrangements are clearly identified</li> <li>• Mental health provision is clearly identified within the new service model as appropriate.</li> </ul>

**Abbreviations**

NEET - Not in Education, Employment or Training

EFA - Education Funding Agency

LEP - Local Enterprise Partnership



CYC – City of York Council  
ICT – Information and communications technology  
SFA - Skills Funding Agency  
GCSE – General Certificate of Secondary Education  
WEA - Workers Educational Association  
OFSTED - The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills  
ESF - European Social Fund  
ESIF - European Structural and Investment Fund  
PDF - Performance Development Framework  
SAR – Subject Access Request  
NYCC – North Yorkshire County Council  
LCR - Leeds City Region  
IAG - Information Advice and Guidance