

## **York Learning – Strategic Plan Progress Report 2017/18**

### **Summary**

1. This report presents the mid-year performance data for York Learning and updates on any significant service issues. This is part of a regular reporting cycle.
2. This report forms part of the service’s governance reporting arrangements which are crucially important for the service in demonstrating to Ofsted that it has secure and robust governance arrangements in place. This requirement has been given more weight in a number of recent Adult and Community Learning Inspections and there is a need for City of York to consider whether the current arrangements are suitable for the future. This will be the subject of a further report to this committee.

### **Background**

3. York Learning is a council service which delivers a range of learning programmes to support people into employment, to improve their skills and to support their personal development. The service is funded almost exclusively from external contract funding and fee income. Originally the service was reporting income for the academic year 2017/18 in the region of £2.7m, but this is likely to increase to just short of £2.9m. The majority of increase in funding is due to a sharp rise in the number of 19-25 year olds high needs personalised learning programmes. The majority of this funded is ‘passport’ to partner organisations, primarily Blueberry Academy, Choose2Youth and United Response, although there are now 6 independent organisations offering very bespoke support to SEND learners.
4. Annex 2 is a detailed breakdown of income streams for the service. This shows increases in 16-19 and 19+ SEND funding along with increases in

fee income and loans funding. There are also 2 new funding streams for the service as detailed below.

### **Significant highlights in performance.**

5. The services are performing well against most of the measures set out in the strategic plan for 2017/18. This is reported in Annex 1. The services performance in supporting SEND students and in the continued development of its general programme is ensuring a robust and financially sound model on which to base delivery. This has resulted in a 4<sup>th</sup> year of growth for the service with increases in income over the period of £500k. This is despite a number of contracts coming to an end in this period worth a total value of over £250k.
6. The service has also been successful in procuring 2 new ESF contracts to support some of the most vulnerable people across the city. Respectively called “Action Towards Inclusion” and “Positive Progressions”, these two programmes offer high levels of support to individuals over a significant period of time, allowing individuals to gain confidence, raise their self-esteem and gain qualifications to prepare them for work. Whilst the audit requirements in the programmes have caused some difficulties for the service and at one point there were some questions about the ability of the local authority to provide the audit evidence required, there is no question that this type of intervention can have a profound effect on individual people. There are numerous examples of work with very vulnerable individuals having significant affect on their life chances and on their general health and well being.
7. The service is pleased to report that it was successful in retaining its Matrix Accreditation, which is a national quality framework which measures how well the service provides information, advice and guidance to learners and how well the service promotes these services. This accreditation has to be renewed every three years.
8. The service continues to provide significant levels of support for those learners who need to improve their English, maths and employability skills and this remains a key focus for the service. There has also been a significant increase in demand for ESOL ( English for Speakers of Other Languages) courses which has resulted in the service offering more courses. However the suitability and availability of suitable city centre rooms to run courses remains a significant challenge.

## Options

9. This report is for discussion and comment. There are no options to consider.

## Corporate Objectives

10. Any plans and strategies developed are set within the context of the council plan but also respond to a number of sub-regional, regional and national policy objectives.

## Implications & Risk Management

11. **Finance:** The service is fully funded via external contracts and grants. Whilst the service has robust procedures in place to ensure the services maximises income this is not without some risks.
12. The report has no Human Resources, Equalities, Legal, Crime and Disorder, Information Technology, Property or other implications.
13. There are no risks to consider that arise from this report.

## Recommendations

14. Members are asked to comment upon the performance of York Learning and seek clarification on any areas of concern

Reason: To help monitor the service and guide managers and ensure robust and accountable governance arrangements.

## Contact Details

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### Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Charlie Croft  
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Report Approved



Date

19 March 2018

### Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

**Background Papers:** None

### Annexes:

Annex 1 – Strategic/Service Plan update 2017/18

Annex 2 – Service Income projection for financial year 2018/19