

Meeting:	Executive Member Decision Session
Meeting date:	17/1/2024
Report of:	Director of Customers and Communities
Portfolio of:	Cllr Jo Coles – Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care

Decision Report:

York Learning Self-Assessment Report 2022-2023

Subject of Report

1. This report presents York Learning’s Self-Assessment Report (SAR) for the academic year 2022/23. The full report is attached at Annex A with performance data contained within.
2. The report shows how York Learning performs in relation to the ‘Education Inspection Framework’ and this final report will be sent to Ofsted on 31 January.

Benefits and Challenges

3. This helps to form the robust monitoring in place for the service and supports the sound governance arrangement for York Learning Services.

Policy Basis for Decision

4. The performance of the service is aligned to the following strategies:
 - 10 Year York Skills Plan (<https://www.york.gov.uk/YorkSkillsPlan>).
 - York’s Economic Strategy 2022-2032
<https://www.york.gov.uk/performance-policies/york-economic-strategy>
 - York and North Yorkshire - Local Skills Improvement Plan 2023 (Annex c)
https://www.wnychamber.co.uk/app/uploads/2023/08/LSIP_York_and_North_Yorkshire_2023.pdf

5. The new Council Plan, which was adopted in September 2023, contains four core commitments to enable it to deliver the vision for the next four years.
6. York Learning's funding enables the service to provide a wide offer that helps us work towards those four commitments whilst tackling inequalities by providing a wide range of learner support to those most in need whether that is financially to support their access onto courses or with additional support within classes as needed to enable successful achievement of goals.
7. This report reflects on York Learning's performance, in the previous academic year, towards the expectations set out in the 'Education Inspection Framework'.

Financial Strategy Implications

8. The service is fully funded via external contracts and grants. The budget remains challenging, and the service will continue to seek additional income streams to allow us to meet the needs of those who are furthest away from accessing skills and employment.

Recommendation and Reasons

9. The Executive Member is asked to consider the attached 2022/23 Self-Assessment Report and approve it subject to any suggested changes.
Reason: To help monitor the service and provide sound governance arrangements.

Background

10. 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 and wellbeing. The service is funded exclusively from external contract funding and fee income.
11. This report, which is for the academic year 2022/23, is an important element in enabling the service to demonstrate to Ofsted that it has secure and robust governance arrangements in place.

Consultation Analysis

12. The Self-Assessment report is an amalgamation of themes showing from each curriculum area within York Learning which have separate individual reports. It has been robustly challenged and consulted on with various members of York Learning, a peer challenge from regional providers and the York Learning Improvement Board. This is now presented for final consultation and approval.

Options Analysis and Evidential Basis

13. York Learning continues to perform well, and overall top-level achievement is good at 87.4% (learners who stayed and achieved their qualification). Learners enjoy learning with York Learning, they feel very well supported, achieve their goals, become committed learners and progress well. There is a wide curriculum offer with highly skilled tutors, which ensures York residents receive a good choice of learning opportunities and York Learning work hard to support learners to identify their skills and opportunities towards employment.
14. Partnership working across the city is strong with a wide variety of other local colleges, local charities, services, and employers. Working together with partners we have created new co-designed courses which meet the local skills needs.
15. York Learning works hard to make learning available to all:
 - a. 16.74% of learners identify as non-white British which is above the York demographic of 13.9%.
 - b. 18% of learners recruited identified that they have LLD or health problems which is also above the demographic proportions of residents who identify as disabled or limited (10.9%) or with poor health (4.3%).
 - c. 4.24% of our learners are from the most deprived areas of the city (York population in LSOAs most deprived 4.6%), whilst this is below the proportion of the city, in comparison, we believe it is still good as this group are the hardest to reach and engage with to come back into learning.
16. Achievement for Education and Training 19+ is below benchmarks at 74.1%. Whilst this is not as good as we would like it to be, considerable quality checks have happened over the year, and we are confident that this is not due to poor teaching or resources. A proportion of learners from the following areas of maths, digital, ESOL and counselling level 2

- have withdrawn from courses. On cold calling those learners there were a variety of reasons but there are three common themes that came back:
- a. health issues particularly mental health issues that were stopping many learners from continuing at that point;
 - b. financial issues, due to cost-of-living crisis and rising bills, many were taking on additional jobs, hours and shifts to make ends meet which did not allow time for study or classes;
 - c. ESOL learners moving out of York for accommodation or being relocated outside of York.
17. Achievement for Apprenticeships is also down to 59.6% which is below the national benchmark of 61.8%. Investigations have shown this to be related to Early Years Educator qualifications. Learners that were telephoned have reported that they have left the industry due to poor pay and long hours and have moved into retail or hospitality positions instead. This is a national picture and whilst in the main this is outside of our control; we are still putting actions in place with employers to retain learners in this much needed area of learning.
18. The attached SAR clearly identifies our strengths and areas for development. Balancing the strengths and areas for development we believe the service is 'Good' in all areas and would like to report that to Ofsted. The areas for development are all well in hand and already showing improvements in helping learners to identify if they are ready to learn which will, we hope, improve our achievement figures for 2023/24.

Organisational Impact and Implications

19. The areas identified for improvement have become the key focus for curriculum managers to improve performance and changes to initial assessment and induction processes particularly.
20. A new health and wellbeing group has been created to focus on how we ensure learners are fully supported so that they are best placed to achieve and finish their learning with us.
21. Implications:
- **Financial:** The service is primarily funded from external contracts, grants and course fees. This leads to financial challenges and the service continues to seek additional income streams to minimise council contributions to the service. There are no financial implications to this report.

- **Human Resources (HR):** The report has no Human Resources implications.
- **Legal:** Where the service identifies additional income streams that consist of external contracts or grant funding, Legal Services will need to be engaged to review any associated contract documentation or grant funding agreements.
- **Procurement:** This will have no procurement implications. Where contracts are needed to support this plan, procurement will support in the usual way.
- **Health and Wellbeing:** There are no major health implications of this report. It is pleasing to see that York learning are engaging learners from non-white British backgrounds and of poorer health, at a rate higher than the York average. There are strong associations between education and life expectancy, morbidity and health behaviours, so any work York Learning does to reduce health inequalities is welcomed.
- **Environment and Climate action:** The report shows that York Learning is working hard to provide a wide range of learning opportunities which will support learning that will help learners progress into a wide range of careers including sustainability.
- **Affordability:** The service is focussed on those adults who are at the furthest from opportunity and education, often starting with practical courses in community settings moving on to more academic and/or skills-based courses ultimately resulting in qualifications, further study, apprenticeship or employment.
- **Equalities and Human Rights:** An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required as this is a retrospective report. However, the report does evidence the ways in which York Learning has sought to engage those who are furthest away from education and the job market. It also recognises the challenges faced by those groups when entering, and trying to maintain regular attendance in, formal education.
- **Data Protection and Privacy:** *Please see Annex B*
- **Communications:** There is no need immediate need for communications support arising from this report.
- **Economy:** As set out in the report, the work of York Learning contributes to positive economic outcomes and the delivery of the York Economic Strategy.

Risks and Mitigations

22. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy the main risks identified associated with the areas of work covered in this report

are operational: affecting delivery of the Council’s business objectives and its image and reputation. Measured in terms of impact and likelihood, the risk score has been assessed at 10 which equates to “Low”. This is acceptable but means that regular monitoring will be required of the Quality Improvement Plans.

Wards Impacted

23. All Wards

Contact details

For further information please contact the authors of this Decision Report.

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Report approved:	Yes
Date:	09/01/2024

Background papers

All relevant background papers must be listed.

A ‘background paper’ is any document which, in the Chief Officer’s opinion, discloses any facts on which the report is based, and which has been relied upon to a material extent in preparing the report. See page 5:3:2 of The Constitution.

Annexes

Annex A – York Learning Self-Assessment Report 2022/23

Annex B – York Learning Self-Assessment Report 2022/23 DPIA Screening

As there is no personal data, special categories of personal data or criminal offence data being processed, there is no requirement to complete a DPIA.

This is evidenced by completion of DPIA screening questions AD-02553

Further information and links to supporting papers

- *Supporting paper: York and North Yorkshire Local Skills Improvement Plan*
https://www.wnychamber.co.uk/app/uploads/2023/08/LSIP_York_and_North_Yorkshire_2023.pdf
- *Supporting Paper - York 10 Year Skills Plan -*
(<https://www.york.gov.uk/YorkSkillsPlan>)
- *Supporting Paper – York’s Economic Strategy 2022-2032*
<https://www.york.gov.uk/performance-policies/york-economic-strategy>
- *Supporting Paper – York and North Yorkshire Strategic Plan 2022*
<https://yorklearning.org.uk/policies/engagementstrategy/>