

York Learning Strategic Plan 2019/20

Service:

Communities and Culture

York Learning

Directorate:

Children, Education and Communities

Director:

Amanda Hatton

**Cabinet
Member:**

Cllr Darryl Smalley

Section 1: The Service

York Learning is the City of York Council adult education and community learning 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 wellness learning programmes in the city. Provision is secured exclusively by external funding and contracts and the service has a zero base budget.

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 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 (HNS), 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

Turnover for 2018/19 academic year was £3.3m, (an increase of £400k on 17/18, mainly as a result of increases in funding for 16-18 High Needs Support, fee income and loans funded provision).

Turnover for 2019/20 is expected to be £3.5 m, mainly as a result of continuing demand for High Needs Personalised learning programmes, fee income and loans funded provision, with all of the funding secured from external contracts and fee income. The service is expecting a reduction in funding for Apprenticeships overall, partly as a result of changing qualification aims and no longer offering Health & Social Care qualifications and some Level 2 qualifications due to low recruitment and poor success in this area. Some of this reduction will be offset with increased Learner loans sales.

Increased funding has recently been confirmed related to our Family Learning team leading on a community strand of the Social Mobility Project; this will involve a grant of £50,613 over a three year period from Shine, an education charity based in Leeds. This will promote engagement with families, recruiting them onto bespoke Family Learning provision and other appropriate learning paths.

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 6994 student enrolments in 2018/19 which is close to 3500 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, our counselling provision is at the Centre@Burnholme Reading Café, as well as local primary schools and children's centres. The service operates its 16-18 full-time programme (targeted to some of the most vulnerable young people in the City) currently from Rougier House on Rougier Street, where there are dedicated learning rooms and a fully equipped ICT suite. This provision will move during the Autumn term to new premises in Fishergate. The service management headquarters are in West

Offices, with the main service reception located within CYC customer centre.

The service had its last Ofsted Inspection in February 2016 which resulted in the service being judged as Good, thus maintaining its status from the previous inspection. Achievement 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 essential skills in English, maths and ICT continue to be 'Good' with maths particularly has had 'Excellent' performance. Unfortunately our Apprenticeships programmes have some areas in minimum standards for the second year running (minimum standards is achievement rates of below 67%). This has triggered sanctions from the ESFA (Education Skills Funding Agency) to stop further recruitment to specific qualifications. Part of those actions is leading us to find an alternative provider to take on those qualifications and respective learners. Whilst this will reduce our Apprenticeship funding we are increasing our Advanced Learner Loan take up which should help reduce the financial shortfall.

The service has maintained a highly successful leisure learning programme at a time when other local authority providers have substantially reduced this type of provision. 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.

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 and skills for work
- Full-time 16-18 programmes including personalised learning programmes
- A range of arts, craft, cultural, health and well being programmes
- Family Learning Programmes as part of a first steps back into learning and work
- Employability and work preparation programmes
- 16-18 and 19+ Apprenticeships
- Essential workplace qualifications to improve skills
- Targeted provision to support health, well being and personal development
- A range of loan-funded programmes at level 3,4 and 5, to support improvement of skills for work

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 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. The service offers a non-campus based programme in local communities; 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 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. Joint planning of programmes is developing although there is still significant work to do in this area. 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. In the area of 16-18 programmes and personalised learning for 19-25 there is a very strong and productive relationship with Blueberry Academy, Choose 2 Youth, Ad Astra, Toolbox and United response. This secures provision for the most vulnerable learners in the city and provides a highly cost effective programme.

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 continue to support some of the most vulnerable adults and young people in the city. The service is responsive to additional funding opportunities as they arise and is well placed to take forward opportunities to help support individuals who are unemployed, have poor digital or essential skills or those returning to the workplace.

Core work for the service continues to focus 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 also working to support those who are most vulnerable and perhaps some way from the job market. Those who are further away from the job market require intensive one to one support to individuals. To support this we continue to receive funding on two projects Positive Progressions and Action Towards Inclusion which involves both Leeds City Region LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) and York and North Yorkshire LEP. This can 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 remain around developing skills for employment, to support health and well being and creating learning opportunities in our communities. 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 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 and local priorities
- Developing and improving skills in English, maths and ICT
- Programmes designed to support parents and individuals to support children's learning
- Programmes designed to support and improve peoples' mental health and well being

- Programmes to support people’s personal and cultural development and leisure learning
- Programmes designed to support people back into work or to improve in work skills to enable them to progress

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.

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 of a new contract, where initial investment is needed to secure the model, but where the funding is insufficient in the early stages to cover this. Close monitoring of projects therefore is hoped to inform on those risk early on.

One very specific contract risk that was identified in the previous strategic plan relates to the 16-18 full time learning programme. The funding received against this program does not fully cover the costs in delivering the programme and relies heavily on other areas of our provision financially supporting it. It is hoped that changing to a new, more appropriate venue will enable increases to learner numbers, and increase support to those additional needs, which will generate more funding, whilst at the same time reducing our building overheads. The service will remain vigilant as this area supports some of the most vulnerable young people in the City.

The Apprenticeship offer still requires improvement and is continuing to perform below minimum standards. Whilst their overall performance is in an upwards direction it will take another year for them to be out of minimum standards. A further year at minimum standards may trigger further sanctions from the ESFA but our action plan has included additional responses/actions from ourselves which were above the ESFA’s requirements. This we hope will mitigate any further sanctions. Processes observed within the apprenticeship offer have shown that investment is required for an e-portfolio system and this is currently being investigated.

Investment is required to improve our current data processes if we are to meet our Ofsted and audit requirements and future growth is affected by our administratively heavy processes due to those current data systems. A continuing challenge is monitoring retention (attendance) and tracking (monitoring on course progress) progress in our wider community learning and apprenticeship offer, due to our data systems not providing timely information. Not achieving good outcomes can lead to some punitive measures taken by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. The service is actively pursuing a new MiS (Management Information System) system and liaising with the relevant finance and ICT departments.

The provision continues to see an increase in learners with complex emotional, mental health and socio-economic needs. This places a significant strain on staff, both in terms of time and emotional strain to support learners. To help us respond to this we are developing our IAG and Wellbeing offer to support individuals into community activities and learning opportunities to develop their resilience. Our staff continue to be supported by the wellbeing systems in place by CYC.

Future joint management of the service with North Yorkshire will be challenging due to different Council processes, pay scales and funding priorities. However there are good teams in place to help support this process and monitor potential problems.

Our governance processes require strengthening to achieve the level of scrutiny Ofsted expects. The service is investigating a Pre Governance Board to improve the effectiveness of governance of the service. The board would consist of a group of board members who are independent of the local authority. To improve our level of scrutiny a member of the Council's scrutiny board would be recruited to be able to report to scrutiny any issues and concerns raised by the wider body of the board that reflects the communities we represent. The scrutiny board member would be required to have the right balance of knowledge relating to community, adult teaching & learning, business and economy, whilst supporting us towards an offer that supports improved economic growth and effectiveness in our communities.

York Learning Strategic Service Plan : Actions 2019/20 Academic Year -

Ref	Activity	Target date	Performance 18/19	Target for 19/20	Progress to date	Commentary
1	Consolidate partnership working with North Yorkshire County Council and agree a strategy for future collaborative working	Ongoing	Shared resource 2 areas	Permanent Joint Head Post to be recruited before end of year		<i>CYC and NYCC currently share a Chief Executive of Service until the end of August. Talks have been taking place to recruit a permanent Joint Head of Service to cover both York and North Yorkshire. The job description is currently being agreed and approved to go to advertisement during July. It is hoped to have a person in place for January. The current arrangement of an Acting Head is to stay in place at CYC.</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	79	85		<i>The significant increase in learner numbers for the academic year 2018/19 has continued. The service is still looking to secure funding to support this growth is agreed and in place from CYC.</i>
3	Deliver 4 jobs fair as part of a strategy to support York residents into work		5 Job Fairs to date	4 Job Fairs 70 employers 800 attendees		<i>Exceeded expectations in 18/19 but further funding for future job fairs is required to book the required venues now for September 2020.</i>
4	Develop further English for Speakers of Other Languages programmes in response to demand		Increased by 15 Learners	1 Additional Class to be created		<i>We have upwards of 90 ESOL learners on board, with 2 new Syrian families arriving - an increase of over 20 over last year, just under half of the learners are from the Refugee Resettlement project, most others are living and working in the city. Suitable city centre</i>

						premises remain a challenge – currently spread between West Offices, York RI, Aspire Igen and York Explore.
5	Revise and develop new Family Learning Programmes to reinvigorate the programme and develop further support for learners	Ongoing	New measure	4 additional classes		Existing Keep Up programmes enhanced Widespread survey conducted (over 350 participants) to find out what parents want. New Wider Family Learning workshops and courses, new Early Start model being written for parents of 1-2 year olds. Significant problems being experienced due to change of use of some of our traditional venues (school and children’s centre rooms). Participating in Social Mobility project in the west of the city.
6	Develop and lead on new IAG and Networking model to engage both partner organisations and new learners	Ongoing	New measure	2 pilots		We are setting up Information, Advice and Guidance training for those working in our communities, including volunteers and potential learning champions to network, engage, signpost and advise effectively. Some of this work forms a strand of the Social Mobility project.
7	Secure a new MIS system for the service to improve and develop data compliance and competence	Ongoing	March 19	Part procurement by Dec 19 / full procurement by Dec 20		Further work with the ICT department is pointing towards a delay to September 2020. Reviewed risk and have concluded that certain modules have to be purchased earlier. Currently ongoing discussions with IT, Finance and Procurement.
8	As a result of the above action, secure a new a new online enrolment system that is fully integrated into a new management information system	Ongoing	Procurement process to be in place by March 19	Procurement by Dec 19	Ongoing – Suggested completion Sep 20	See above.

9	Continue to improve success rates in those programmes that are at risk of falling below minimum standards particularly apprenticeships	Ongoing	Improve Apprenticeships Success Rates to above Minimum standards	Jan 2021		Successfully have all areas above Minimum levels of performance except Apprenticeships. ESFA have now imposed sanctions on the Apprenticeships offer. An agreed action plan is in place to help improve this area. Unfortunately as many learners are on programme for 2 years there is no way to improve these figures until later next year when many of the learners who have left and end dates have passed.
10	Creation of a Pre Governance Board to improve overall scrutiny and effectiveness of the service	New action	New Measure	Pre Governance Board to meet by Jan 2020		The first stage towards this action is to recruit a member from Scrutiny who is willing to also sit on the pre-governance board.

Performance Targets 2019/20

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	18/19 Actual	Target 19/20	Progress 1 st Quarter	Full year 31/07/20	Commentary
1	Fee income	31/03/20	480k	480k			Unlike most of the targets in this plan, this is a financial year target . We exceeded our 18/19 target however administrative processes are under pressure and further growth in this area is limited until new systems are in place.
2	Student enrolments to non-qualification bearing courses	31/07/20	5278	5300			Numbers have continued to increase however further growth is becoming limited due to non efficient systems which are putting increasing pressure on our administrative teams.

3	Total number of 16-18 Apprenticeships (Starts) (Carried over)	31/07/20	36	25			Due to ESFA sanctions there will be a reduction in the offer for this area.
4	Total number of 19+ Apprenticeships (Starts) Carried over	31/07/20	70	50			Due to ESFA sanctions there will be a reduction in the offer for this area.
5	GCSE English	31/07/20	25	30			Targets are determined by funding which is shared across accredited programmes and has not increased. These numbers represent individual qualification aims and not learners. Enquiries on GCSEs fell in 18/19 – partly due to lower unemployment/access to courses/less advertising as course numbers had grown significantly since 2015-16. Advertising is being stepped up this year.
6	GCSE Maths	31/07/20	50	55			See above
7	Functional English	31/07/20	75	90			Targets determined as above. Numbers in community venues have decreased this year mainly as a result of cuts in outreach activity. This is countered from funding point of view by increase in ESOL numbers. One of the aims of the IAG programmes above is to bring in more referrals across English and maths provision. We are also looking at overall marketing strategy and planning increase in apprenticeship support in terms of more appropriate referrals to skills pre-adult apprenticeships.
8	Functional Maths	31/07/20	67	80			See above
9	Full time 16-18	31/07/20	21	30			This programme has undergone a change in curriculum

	Foundation Learning Programme						with revised eligibility criteria and induction process. There have been significant challenges within this offer, due to an increased level of mental health issues in young people which has impacted retention and their ability to stay on programme.
10	Full time 18-25 High Needs Support students personalised learning programmes	31/07/20	94	100			We are anticipating a continued increase in numbers of High Needs Students coming through our provision in academic year 18/19. The majority of this provision is sub-contracted with Blueberry Academy, Choose2youth and United Response. There is a high likelihood that demand will exceed funding available.
11	Functional Skills English 16-18	31/07/20	19	19			These represent a very small cohort of learners within our foundation learning and personalised learning programmes
12	Functional Skills Maths 16-18	31/07/20	25	25			See above
13							

