

<b>Meeting:</b>	Decision Session - Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care
<b>Meeting date:</b>	15/11/2023
<b>Report of:</b>	Pauline Stuchfield Director of Customers and Communities
<b>Portfolio of:</b>	Cllr Jo Coles – Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care

## **Decision Report: York Learning Annual Strategic Plan 2023-2024**

### **Subject of Report**

1. This detailed report at Annex A presents York Learning’s strategic aims for the academic year 2023/24, offers clear areas for development to meet the Accountability Agreement (Annex B) agreed at CMT in May 2023. This report will be used to show progress towards these aims to Children, Culture & Communities Scrutiny Committee at the end of the academic year in 2024.
2. The Accountability Agreement (Annex B) is based on the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) which has been developed by the Chamber of Commerce (as our designated Employer Representative Body) and approved by the DFE. As part of devolution, Combined Authorities are required to prepare an Accountability Statement which is based in part on the LSIP. (See [Local skills improvement plans - statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

### **Benefits and Challenges**

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

## Policy Basis for Decision

4. The strategic direction of the service is informed from, and decisions based on, 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](https://www.wnychamber.co.uk/app/uploads/2023/08/LSIP_York_and_North_Yorkshire_2023.pdf)
5. York Learning's funding enables the service to provide a wide offer that helps us to tackle 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.
6. The strategic aims will have a strong focus in areas to widen the demographic we reach, as well as promote transferable skills. This will help learners identify their current skill sets and how these can be articulated to promote employment opportunities whilst promoting progression to higher level skills to support future skills needs.

## Financial Strategy Implications

7. 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

8. The Executive Member is asked to consider the attached Strategic / Service Plan and approve it subject to any suggested changes.  
Reason: To help monitor the service and provide sound governance arrangement for York Learning Services.

## **Background**

9. 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.
10. This report, which is for the academic year 2023/2024, is an important element in enabling the service to demonstrate to Ofsted that it has secure and robust governance arrangements in place.

## **Consultation Analysis**

11. The plan has been consulted with the management team (September 2023) within York learning, is based on the Accountability Statement (set within the guidelines of the LSIP) which has previously been agreed by CMT and to be shared with the Improvement Board once it has met approval with our Executive Member.
12. The plan is presented for consultation and approval.

## **Options Analysis and Evidential Basis**

13. For the local skills strategies to succeed, members of the local community will need to see themselves as learners. As cited in the approved service strategy this is not currently the case. There is a clear disconnect between the needs of local employers, local economy, local skills offer and most of the local adult population. Shaping a service offer to engage individuals to encourage them to progress, move workplaces or set up on their own, is as important as the work targeted to get people into work who are economically inactive. Setting out an intent to recruit wider, recognising our starting points and strengths will enable the service to have a marked impact on the local economic needs and support a greater range of individuals to meet their potential.
14. Data on a local and national scale clearly demonstrates that those with the lowest skills are those least likely to engage with further education and training. Often this is a result of poor experiences at school or college and the perceived fear of further 'failure'. This perception creates a significant barrier to engagement with provision and whilst some will engage in creative or leisure provision, this is likely to be either later in life or to overcome other barriers.

15. To enable us to meet the strategic aims and national local priorities we have designed our Annual Strategic Plan to align how we will work towards meeting those aims. The plan amongst other things requires us to consider a wider curriculum offer, curriculum managers to expand knowledge into new areas of skills, work wider with other FE/HE providers and create a published skills map of our offer.

## Organisational Impact and Implications

16. There will be impacts on curriculum manager time and focus to gain an understanding in the needs of emerging skills areas, but the impact will lead to an offer that better reflects entry point pathways to the new skills emerging.

17.

- **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.
- **Human Resources (HR)** The report has no Human Resources, implications.
- **Legal** The report has no legal implications.
- **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** The report will have a positive impact on health and reducing health inequalities by widening access to opportunities for education
- **Environment and Climate action** Creating the conditions for York to be net zero by 2030 will require considerable increase in green skills and employment. Focus is required both at specialist skills training in the low-carbon sector (e.g. retrofit, EV, renewables) and general skills training in sustainability and climate change for all individuals.
- **Affordability** The plan will deliver an affordable learning gateway in communities or on-line designed to reach those furthest from adult learning offers. This will help to improve confidence and skills, and potential employment opportunities improving outcomes for residents with low or no incomes.
- **Equalities and Human Rights** The strategic plan aims to improve a flatter demographic spread of residents across the city to give greater equal access to skills development and improve employability.
- **Data Protection and Privacy** 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 CGT20715.

- **Communications** The report makes clear that for the local skills strategies to succeed, members of the local community will need to see themselves as learners, and - in addition to ambitions for a focal point for adult learning where adults can see themselves learning - this is likely to require a communications and marketing campaign to achieve the required behaviour change. Adult Education will have conversations with the Communications Service about how to resource and deliver the required campaign/s.
- **Economy** The LSIP process is designed to better match adult education and training to the needs of local employers and the economy. York Learning's new Strategic Plan thus provides valuable skills and training resources which will help improve employment and earning prospects for York residents.

## Risks and Mitigations

18. 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

19. All Wards

## Contact details

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

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<b>Date:</b>	23/10/2023

## Background papers

None

## Annexes

- Annex A York Learning Strategic Plan 2022\_23
- Annex B Accountability Agreement

## 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](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/>