

## **Development of a Skills Strategy for York**

### **Summary**

1. This report provides interim information on the development of an adult skills strategy for York within the context of the Community Strategy (the Without Walls Learning Vision). It then reviews the recommendations relating to the development of skills in the Future York Group Report, and explains that work is on-going to identify potential gaps between the strategies. The report has a number of appendices that provide the detailed analysis undertaken. Members of the Board are invited to make comments and suggestions in relation to this work to date, in order to provide a steer towards the completion of a definitive York Adult Learning and Skills Strategy 2007-2010.

### **Background**

2. York City Vision and Community Strategy (2004-2024), entitled 'Without Walls', has a learning vision for the City of York:

'To ensure all those who live and work in York have the education and skill that will enable them to play an active part in society and contribute to the life of the city. To ensure that the city is seen as an internationally recognised centre for education with a commitment to lifelong learning and creativity which is second to none.'

3. Since the launch of the York Community Strategy, Learning City York (York's Lifelong Learning Partnership) has been leading on the Learning City theme, on behalf of the Local Strategic Partnership.
4. In May 2006, Learning City York established a multi-agency Adult Learning and Skills Steering Group, whose main task was to develop and implement a three year Adult Learning and Skills Strategy for York, 2007 - 2010, that aims to:
  - respond to the needs of individuals, families, communities and employers
  - take account of national, regional and local strategies and respond to future economic needs and forecasts
  - maximize the contribution of learning to social cohesion, local regeneration and economic growth

5. Supported by funding from both the Learning and Skills Council North Yorkshire and City of York Council (Adult and Community Learning), the group was able to appoint an Adult Learning and Skills Co-ordinator to assist with the developments and it was agreed that the strategy would:
  - provide a city-wide collaborative framework that underpins the learning and skills strategies developed by individual partners in York
  - build capacity of individual partners to address key emerging issues and achieve shared targets for different groups of learners
  - develop and implement an annual action plan with mechanisms to monitor, review and evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the strategy based upon agreed measures and shared targets.

### **York's Adult Learning and Skills Strategy, 2007-2010**

6. The initial work of the Adult Learning and Skills Steering Group (ALSS Group) focused on compiling two linked but discrete pieces of work:
  - i) A skills fact sheet, which provides background information on key economic, social and employment issues and adult learning and skills and education in the City of York. (Appendix 1)
  - ii) A supply of adult learning and skills fact sheet that details the offer and take-up of provision. (Appendix 2)
7. From this initial research a draft skills strategy was developed through the ALSS Group that was used as a consultation document with stakeholder organisations. After extensive consultation an amended version of the report was approved by the Learning Partnership Board on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2007. The approved report and the supporting document are attached as Appendices 3 and 4. Whilst these documents are extremely detailed, Members of the EDPB may wish to focus on the supporting document (appendix 4) which is a work in progress looking at skills issues by providing key facts, targets, suggested interventions and outcomes.
8. The approved strategy is an extensive piece of work and a number of actions and initiatives have commenced as a result of it. These are currently being reviewed for achievement against the framework for action. The results will be reported to the Lifelong Learning Partnership Strategy and Resource Group on 20<sup>th</sup> September and then to the Board on 28<sup>th</sup> September.
9. The Learning City York Manager is currently working with the Learning and Skills Council to respond to the Future York recommendations in relation to skills. This is to ensure that the Skills Strategy and the Future York Report are aligned and satisfy local partner organisations.

### **The Future York Group Report**

10. The Future York Group was set up by the City of York Council to look at the city's economic development strategy in the light of growing economic

competition and a number of recent job losses. Its debate on skills issues was based largely on background papers distilled from the research for the development of the York Adult Learning and Skills Strategy detailed above. The Future York Group recognised this with its first skills recommendation:

We recommend that City of York Council work with business and other key partners, and support the work of Learning City York, in analysing the city's skills needs and the spatial mismatches between labour demand and supply. This will enable more specific targeted policy responses to be developed.

11. A number of specific skills recommendations are made in the Future York Group report in relation to the Council working with partners to:

- Increasing Further and Higher Education opportunities relevant to increasing economic activity.
- Increasing the proportion of the workforce with technical skills and the development of graduate placements (particular focus on the role of Science City York).
- Proactively develop an entrepreneurial workforce.
- Engage fully with local business.

12. Other recommendations within the Skills and Inclusion chapter of the Future York Group are relevant to this report in terms of supporting people from worklessness into employment and social inclusion. It is important to grow and retain the workforce and provide access to meaningful and well paid jobs. These recommendations will be covered in an additional report to the EDPB on the work done for the WOW Board, by the Inclusive York Forum, on antipoverty issues.

13. As mentioned in para 9 above work continues to ensure that the Skills Strategy and the Future York Report are aligned and satisfy local partner organisations.

### **Consultation**

14. No consultation was required for this report.

### **Options**

15. This report is for information only and therefore does not present options for decisions by Board members. However, Board members are invited to comment on the information provided and these will be used in the process of aligning the Skills Strategy with the Future York Report.

### **Analysis**

16. As stated above, options have not been presented therefore there is no need for analysis.

## **Corporate Priorities**

17. The Skills Strategy Report relates to the following corporate priority for the Council :
  - Increase people's skills and knowledge to improve future employment prospects.
18. It also supports the LSP "Without Walls" initiatives within the "Thriving City" theme of the WOW Community Plan strategic objective :
  - To support the progress and success of York's existing businesses and to encourage new enterprises in order to maintain a prosperous and flourishing economy that will sustain high employment rates.
19. The Economic Development Service Plan identifies a number of corporate priorities :
  - Increase people's skills and knowledge to improve future employment prospects.
  - Improve the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in the city.
  - Improve the way the Council and its partners work together to deliver better services for the people who live in York.

## **Implications**

20. **Financial:** The report is provided for information and feedback only and there are no recommendations with financial consequences.
21. **Human resources:** None
22. **Equalities:** None
23. **Legal:** None
24. **Crime and Disorder:** None
25. **Information Technology:** None
26. **Property:** None

## **Risk Management**

27. In compliance with the council's risk management strategy, there are no risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

## Recommendations

28. The Board's input and views on the emerging Skills Strategy are requested.

Reason: To help shape the effectiveness of future action.

## Contact Details

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**Report Approved** ✓ **Date** 11/9/07

**Specialist Implications Officers:** None

**Wards Affected:** *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

**All** ✓

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:** The background papers are added as annexes to this report.

### Annexes:

Annex 1 - York Learning & Skills Fact Sheet: February 2007

Annex 2 - Supply of Adult Learning & Skills in York February 2007

Annex 3 - York's Adult Learning & Skills Strategy, 2007 – 2010

Annex 4 - Supporting Document 1: Issues, Key Facts, Targets, Interventions & Outcomes