

Committee	Dated:
Education Board – For Information Community and Children’s Services Committee – For Information	23/05/2019 12/07/2019
Subject: Adult Skills and Education Service Update	Public
Report of: Andrew Carter, Director of Community and Children’s Services	For Information
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Summary

This report provides Members with an update on the Adult Skills and Education Service, including: some key findings from a recent independent review of the service; its progress towards delivering the outcomes in the Skills Strategy; and preparations for upcoming national policy developments.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note:

- updates on the provision of Adult Skills, Education and Apprenticeships, including a table of performance data in **Appendix 1**
- progress on delivering the outcomes of the Skills Strategy and preparation for the new Ofsted Inspection Framework and Adult Digital Skills requirements
- recommendations from an independent review of the service in **Appendix 2**.

Main Report

Background

1. The Adult Skills and Education Service (ASES) is the City Corporation’s provider of adult education and skills services as well as the co-ordinator and lead training provider for apprentices at the City Corporation and partner employers across London. The service is under the remit of the Community and Children’s Services Committee and has a strategic link to the Education Board as a major implementer of the Skills Strategy 2019–23.
2. During March 2019, an independent review of the service was conducted by a former senior Ofsted Inspector of adult learning and skills to gather evidence on the quality of provision. The review concluded with a written report that identifies strengths, gaps, areas for improvement and recommendations. These are included in **Appendix 2**.

Adult Community Learning (ACL)

3. ASES is the direct provider of adult skills and education courses for City and City-fringe residents and employees in community and training venues across the City and its neighbouring boroughs. A table of key performance indicators for the service can be found in **Appendix 1**.
4. The service has a strong strategic identity to support social mobility, meet skills gaps in the labour market and address the identified needs of both business and resident communities. This focus has stimulated an increase in the provision of Level 2 and 3 accredited training

courses to improve employability, as well as courses targeted at groups of residents who face barriers to the labour market.

5. Example in practice: Accredited training in food hygiene for Bangladeshi and Colombian women to gain skills and knowledge required for employment in the food industry.
- A group of 15 Portsoken community residents approached the service manager requesting access to professional training and qualifications. It was agreed that this level of training would allow access to employment and further training opportunities. The service worked in partnership with local residents to design a Food Hygiene course that would meet the aims and objectives of all participants. The successful completion of this qualification enabled some learners, for the first time, to apply for paid employment or to explore self-employment options. A second course is being planned to commence in the summer term 2019.

Apprenticeships

6. There are currently 119 active apprenticeships for the 2018/19 academic year.
7. The achievement and progress of apprentices managed by ASES is good. A table with data for 2017/18 and 2018/19 can be found in **Appendix 1**.
8. The apprenticeships provision has a strong focus on social mobility and inclusion, which includes working closely with department managers and external employers to identify apprentices who might be at risk of falling behind to address work-related or personal issues that might be a barrier. Specialist support is also provided for apprentices who need it.
9. Example in practice: Additional learning is available for those apprentices most in need of support to complete their apprenticeship qualification.
- The levels of support will vary from different groups of apprentices. For example, a selection of apprentices in certain employment areas and departments are offered small group support with key elements of their learning. For other apprentices, a one-to-one approach to teaching and learning is more suited to their learning needs – for example, apprentices with disabilities such as hearing impairment, Dyspraxia, Dyslexia or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Strategic and Policy Considerations

10. Delivery of the Skills Strategy: The Skills Strategy has an emphasis on ensuring that adult skills delivery is informed by labour market intelligence, that provision is high quality with good progress for learners, and that adult learning supports diversity and social mobility. ASES's partnership work with local employers, other London-based local authorities and community organisations has strategically positioned the service to be on track to deliver these outcomes. The key areas for improvement are in:
- the marketing and promotion of courses and apprenticeships to ensure breadth of take-up
 - using Service Improvement Plans to continuously improve the quality of teaching and learning
 - ensuring that effective information, advice and guidance is available for learners to support their progression.
11. New Ofsted Framework: The next inspection of the service is likely to fall under the new Ofsted Framework for Further Education and Skills Providers to be implemented from September 2019. Implementing the recommendations from the independent review will be an important vehicle for preparing for an inspection under the new framework.

12. Adult Digital Skills: In April 2019, the Department for Education published its response to the consultation on 'Improving adult basic digital skills' which commits to fully-funded digital skills training for adults to be delivered through the devolved Adult Education budget. ASES will be required to incorporate this training in its existing provision and ensure that the provision is closely linked to the City Corporation's Digital Skills and Skills strategies.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Service Performance Data
- Appendix 2 – Service Independent Review March 2019 – Recommendations

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