

<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Education Board	18/03/2021
<b>Subject:</b> Skills Strategy Update	Public
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	3, 8, 9 & 10
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	N
<b>If so, how much?</b>	N/A
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	N/A
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	N/A
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
<b>Report author(s):</b> Daniel McGrady, Lead Policy Officer (Education, Culture and Skills) Fatema Chowdhury, Skills Project Officer Barbara Hamilton, Head of Adult Education and Apprenticeships	

### Summary

The Education Board has oversight over the Skills Strategy 2018-2023. The strategy ensures that there is high-quality exposure to the world of work at all stages of education, there is interconnectivity and collaboration between education and industry, and there is high quality delivery of adult learning and apprenticeships. Members are asked to note the update on delivery of the Skills Strategy over the 2020/21 Academic Year.

### Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note the report.

### Main Report

#### Background

- At its meeting on 23 July 2020, the Education Board approved the 2020/21 Action Plan which included the following high-level actions to deliver the goals of the Skills Strategy:
  - Ensure a comprehensive strategy for skills development and careers support is delivered in the Family of Schools
  - Link learning at all stages of education with the world of work
  - Establish an education to business 'hub'
  - Provide high quality exposure to creative and cultural industries

- Develop the critical skills, knowledge and competencies to provide adult learners with the skills to meet the world of work
  - Develop innovative approaches to teaching industry-relevant courses and apprenticeships
  - Deliver academic excellence in teaching, learning and knowledge exchange as well as the resources and services to promote wellbeing
  - Provide opportunities for learners to be co-creators in their learning and improve the learning experiences and outcomes of learners impacted by disadvantage
2. At its meetings on 24 September 2020 and 28 January 2021, the Education Board received detailed updates on the outcomes and impact of activities delivered over the 2019/20 Academic Year. This report updates Members on the progress of activities being delivered to date in the 2020/21 Academic Year.

## **Current Position**

### Skills Forum – Supporting careers and skills programmes across the Family of Schools

3. The termly Skills Forum is comprised of one member of staff and one governor from each school in the Family of Schools. These Forums are currently being delivered online and have been well-attended since the start of the academic year.
4. The forum explores and gives feedback on skills and career-related learning for pupils with SEND and discusses upcoming skills and careers related opportunities for pupils including apprenticeship opportunities within the City of London Corporation, London Careers Festival, online mentoring opportunity with Culture Mile Learning, and higher education exploration events organised directly by City of London School for Girls.
5. Each Skills Forum also facilitates one-to-two partner organisations to host and/or speak to members about opportunities relating to both pupils and teachers that support their skills and careers programme. Previous host organisations include Structural Learning (who enable educators to get the best out of their pupils by developing tools and frameworks that gets everyone thinking for themselves), and PwC who presented their Digital Fitness App accessible to both teachers and pupils.

### London Careers Festival – Working with business and organisations across London to connect learning to the world of work

6. The London Careers Festival (LCF) is an annual event which seeks to connect pupils (primary, secondary and post-16) with the world of work. In 2020, LCF ran virtually from Monday 29 June – Friday 3 July 2020 and offered schools and pupils the opportunity to engage with employers via live webinars and online based resources. Over 2,800 bookings were made by schools for live webinars delivered by over 30 partner organisations. Following a detailed evaluation of the festival, a commitment was made to make several improvements for LCF 2021.
7. LCF 2021 is focusing on the quality of experiences it offers to schools and pupils. The objective is to ensure that all LCF offers engage young people in skills and career exploration in a meaningful way. Some examples of webinars to be delivered for LCF 2021 include:

- ELSA Education, Artificial Intelligence (for pupils with SEND). This engaging, interactive and fun workshop will ask pupils to design a robot pet
  - Education and Employers, Becoming an Influencer (Marketing & Social Media). In this webinar, pupils will be exploring the essential skills that go into effective marketing and social media
8. This year, LCF 2021 will also feature targeted opportunities for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) noting that pupils with SEND can face multiple barriers to careers and can require additional support to access careers provision during school. This will include at least two 'live sessions' for primary and secondary pupils which will be specifically targeted at SEND schools, PRU's and other relevant educational institutions and delivered in partnership with a specialist organisation to ensure that sufficient support is in place to meet specific support needs.
9. Members wanting to attend LCF sessions should contact:  
[fatema.chowdhury@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:fatema.chowdhury@cityoflondon.gov.uk).

#### Industry and Livery Partnerships – Establishing a partnership 'hub' of organisations which support careers, skills and work-related learning initiatives

10. LCFs 2019 and 2020 were delivered successfully through the development of strong partnerships with numerous organisations who hosted webinars/workshops, virtual talks and curated online resources. For LCF 2021, those partnerships will continue to play a key role in ensuring that all offers engage young people in skills and career exploration and enable them to make informed career choices. Organisations who will continue to be key partners for LCF 2021 include Education and Employers, Role Models, PwC, NatWest, Culture Mile Learning, Apprentice Futures, CISI and many others.
11. A partnership with CISI (Chartered Institute for Securities & Investment) has now been extended until 2024 (subject to annual performance review) which will enable up to 40 Year 12 pupils from the Family of Schools to gain a Level 2 Award in Fundamentals of Financial Services. Successful applicants/pupils will attend 25 online teaching sessions, culminating in students taking the CISI Level 2 exam.
12. The Livery Skills Network is currently exploring the need to build momentum and bring about lasting and sustainable systemic change to bridge the gap between school and the world of work from a skills perspective. Liveries are in a unique place to enable cross sector collaboration and all Liveries can contribute regardless of size or resource. The Livery Skills Network is looking to provide a joined-up approach to helping people get the skills and advice they need.

#### Fusion Skills Programme – Maximising the collaboration of education, culture and business sectors to develop skills which link to the world of work

13. Following the success of the Fusion 1 on 7 June 2019, the second meeting in the three-year cycle, Fusion 2, took place on 9 October 2021. Fusion 2 was attended by 235 attendees from 16 UK, EU and Global Cities. Fusion events are part of a three-year commitment made by the City of London Corporation to form an influential network of people, organisations and 'places' where there is a clear link between education, business and the cultural and creative sector to develop and enhance Fusion Skills within an ethical context of social mobility and sustainability. The meetings aim to draw people together to form systemic change to better skills education for all.

14. The focus of Fusion 2 was to gather the key thinkers, influencers, and actors in the fields of education, business, technology, the arts and culture, philanthropy, NGOs, and policy makers to energise action around addressing the fusion gap.
15. The third meeting, Fusion 3, will take place as a virtual event on 7 June 2021.
16. As reported at the meeting of the Education Board on 28 January 2021, the Education Unit have commissioned the development of a new website called 'Find Fusion' which will be connect schools, businesses, cultural organisations and training providers for the mutual benefit of sharing their learning opportunities in a one-stop-shop of 'Fusion' learning opportunities. Find Fusion will enable schools and learners to find resources, events, training and projects which are relevant to them and for partner organisations to list, promote, amplify and share their offers. Find Fusion will also connect, and curate offers around themes such as learner type, age group, curriculum area and Fusion Skills. Find Fusion is an important next step in the partnership working around the promotion and development of Fusion Skills, enabling sharing between education, cultural and business sectors.

Adult Learning and Apprenticeships - Develop the critical skills, knowledge and competencies to provide adult learners with the skills to meet the world of work

17. Due to COVID-19, the provision of adult education and apprenticeship training has been delivered online since the start of the Academic Year 2020/21. In the case of Adult Community Learning (ACL), there is a reduction in enrolments which is in line with the London-wide reduction due to COVID-19. A review of the curriculum took place in March 2020 to identify the courses which could not be practically delivered online, such as: physical activities e.g. Jewellery Making and Ballroom Dancing; and teaching which requires greater clarity and body language such as early level ESOL and some family learning programmes. The course review also identified the requirement to pay close attention to the skills gaps, training and re-training due to the labour market and employment 'fall-out' from COVID-19. The revised course file works towards preparing unemployed learners to secure jobs in areas such as the Care Sector, Customer Service, Administration and Bookkeeping. There continues to be an increase in demand for courses such as ESOL, Functional Skills Maths and English. These courses are reflected in the course file for Summer and Spring 2021 and will take place online. ACL have also responded to the rapid requirement for upskilling of digital skills by providing online IT support and by increasing the number of Online Digital Skills Training courses such as the National Digital Functional Skills Qualifications at Levels 1 and 2. A small laptop loan project is also being developed. to support adult learners who have access to the Internet but do not have a laptop to access online learning.
18. The delivery of the Apprenticeship programme has experienced a slight reduction in its recruitment numbers. External businesses who would normally recruit apprentices have been reluctant to do so since the start of March 2020. There was a 20% reduction in apprenticeship recruitment between March and November 2020. This meant that although 100% of the enrolled training delivery continued, the numbers joining new programmes during that period reduced. For some apprentices there has been changes to assessment arrangements. Qualification awarding bodies gave permission for some exams to be sat remotely, including for Functional Skills, Maths and English. For some qualifications, such as Finance and Accounting, assessments were postponed . Arrangements for assessment are

regularly monitored and reviewed by the service in response to developing national guidance. Recognising the challenging circumstances of completing an apprenticeship during a pandemic, ASES are making efforts to ensure that all apprentices are contacted by a member of ASES Service at least once per week and that additional support is available where required, including for mental and emotional health and wellbeing.

19. The recently released Government White Paper “Skills for Jobs”<sup>1</sup> focusses on post-16 education reform including adult education and apprenticeships. It includes a £1.5 billion capital funding commitment to improve the condition of further education colleges, a further £291 million to support 16-19-year-olds and £375 million to deliver a Lifetime Skills Guarantee as a four-year Loan Entitlement to post-18 education similar to Student Loans. ASES have developed initial responses to the five main areas of the White Paper and will continue to monitor the impact of national policy changes for the provision of adult learning and apprenticeships. The initial response is included in **Appendix 1**.

### **Proposals**

20. Following the completion of the 2020/21 Academic Year, a detailed update on the outcomes and impact of activities to deliver the Skills Strategy will be included in the 2020/21 Annual Report.

### **Options**

N/A

### **Key Data**

N/A

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

21. The Skills Strategy 2019-23 is closely connected to other cross-Corporation strategies including the Corporation Plan, the Education Strategy 2018-2023, the Cultural and Creative Learning Strategy 2018-2023, the Digital Skills Strategy and the Social Mobility Strategy.

### **Conclusion**

Members are asked to note an update on activities and work streams being delivered over the 2020/21 Academic Year in the delivery of the Skills Strategy 2018-23. The work areas include: the development of careers and skills offers in the Family of Schools; partnerships with Liveries and employer organisations to provide work-related learning opportunities for learners across London; the continual promotion and championing of Fusion Skills; and the delivery of exceptional adult education and skills provision which is industry-relevant and linked to the labour market. A further update on the progress against the strategy will be provided in the 2020/21 Annual Report due to be submitted to the Education Board in November 2021.

### **Background papers**

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<sup>1</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/957856/Skills\\_for\\_jobs\\_lifelong\\_learning\\_for\\_opportunity\\_and\\_growth\\_web\\_version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/957856/Skills_for_jobs_lifelong_learning_for_opportunity_and_growth_web_version.pdf)

- Education Board – 24 September 2020 – Adult Education, Skills and Apprenticeships Update
- Education Board – 24 September 2020 – London Careers Festival 2020 Evaluation Report
- Education Board – 28 January 2021 – Education, Cultural and Creative Learning and Skills Annual Report 2019/20.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Government White Paper “Skills for Jobs”: ASES Initial Response.

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### **Appendix 1 - Government White Paper “Skills for Jobs”: ASES Initial Response**

<b>Key area of White Paper</b>	<b>ASES actions underway or in planning</b>
Putting employers at the heart of the system so that education and training leads to jobs that can improve productivity and fill skills gaps.	The service has initiated effective working links with employers in the Health and social Care sectors and the NHS service. The partnership delivers a range of training to address the identified skills gaps in the sectors. Opportunities are also made available to provide upskilling and advanced level training for those individuals who are already employed.
Investing in higher-level technical qualifications that provide a valuable alternative to a university degree.	Working with external FE colleges, specialist training institutions and universities to ensure that higher level technical and professional level qualifications are real options for ASES learners/employees. For example: delivering the joint Apprenticeship and CIPs qualifications for Procurement Levels 3 and 4 working in partnerships with private sector organisations and departments in the National Health Trust.
Making sure people can access training and learning flexibly throughout their lives and are well-informed about what is on offer through great careers support.	Developing an effective range of Digital Skills training options for local residents and employees. ASES has secured the accreditation to deliver the Essential Digital Skills award Levels 1 and 2. Digital skills training is available as a first step support for learners with low skills levels and available for individuals as they progress into higher level courses and can be delivered without the accreditation. The training offer is available in areas such as Bookkeeping, Food and Hygiene, Customer Services. More specialist courses are available for more advance learners in areas such as Excel, Word and non-apprenticeship/Diploma in Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT qualifications).
This Government will help everyone to get the skills they need at every stage in their lives.	Continue to integrate Family Learning into the school curriculum to be the start of the Lifelong Learning journey for both adults and children. Working with parents and their children to better understand the process of learning, for example delivering working and learning together through art classes and language learning. Delivery courses such as ‘working with families to make better use of online learning’. Deliver weekend storytelling courses in languages such as Bengali, Portuguese, French and Spanish. Families are encouraged to ‘dip in and out’ of learning options and develop a personal lifetime learning log. The ‘Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities’ course promotes a whole family approach to access new skills, training, learning and employment.

<p>Ensure everyone has access to education and training that will help them to get good work.</p>	<p>Working with City academies and schools to promote the Apprenticeship programme and a pre-apprenticeship programme. Employability programmes are in place to provide CV writing and interview preparation activities to learners who have completed particular courses or those who need independent employment support and advice. Developing a series of Summer 2021 courses as short courses to respond to immediate skill needs, for example: refresher Digital skills, Money Management/Bookkeeping or AAT. Security Skills plus short courses in line with further needs of the Health and Social Care sector. Discussions are currently taking place to agree the summer curriculum for 2021.</p>
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