

North Yorkshire Council
Children & Young Peoples Services
Executive Members

18 July 2023

Adult Learning and Skills Service Draft Accountability Agreement 2023-24

Report of the Corporate Director Children & Young People's Service

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to gain approval to submit the final version of the accountability statement, relating to Adult learning grant spend, to the Department for Education by the 31 July 2023 deadline.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Skills for Jobs White Paper set out the government's plan to put employers more firmly at the heart of the skills system to help ensure businesses and people have the skills they need to thrive and progress. Central to this process were Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP) which are documents written by approved Employers Representative Bodies (ERBs) that set out clearly employer's skills needs and the priority changes needed in the areas post-16 technical and skills provision..
- 2.2 All providers in receipt of £1m or more of funding for post-16 provision have a statutory responsibility to produce and publish an annual accountability statement that reflects the LSIP. The first draft agreement was returned in draft form on 31 May 2023 and this final approved 'basic' version by 31 July 2023. This report accompanies the final version of the agreement and seeks approval for its submission by 31 July 2023. Following successful submission of the plan a final version is to published on our website, this will only vary in format without changes to narrative.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 [Skills for jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth](#) published in January 2021 laid out key reforms to post-16 technical education and training that aims to support people to develop the skills needed to get good jobs and improve national productivity. This paper and its subsequent legislation stipulated a clear plan to place employers at the heart of the skills system through the production of an LSIP.
- 3.2 The draft LSIP was submitted on May 31st by the North and West Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce as the approved Employer Representative Body (ERB)
- 3.3 The LSIP report presented a strategic document identifying clear priorities for skills in the local area. The document suggested necessary key changes needed to make post-16 technical education and training more responsive to the skills needs of employers in our area.
- 3.4 The draft LSIP was written and submitted to the Secretary of State for Education in draft form on 31 May 2023, but no formal feedback has been received and the document is not yet published. Publication is expected in late July 2023

- 3.5 The whitepaper detailed how providers would need to publish an annual accountability statement, that would form part of their annual funding agreement, that will indicate how funding received is to be used in line with local and national skills priorities as detailed by the LSIP
- 3.6 The Department for Education (DfE) describing the annual accountability statement as the provider setting out a small number of outcome targets for areas of your curriculum that you are planning to change for the coming year. These targets reflecting how the provider is contributing to priorities outlined in the LSIP, and to National Skills Priorities listed below. There was an expectation that ERBs would share draft priorities by the end of March 2023. Completion and receipt of the annual accountability statement is a requirement of funding for organisations in receipt of post-16 funding in excess of £1m
- 3.7 These top-line priorities were shared locally on March 31st and were used to fully shape the accountability statement in line with service curriculum planning
- 3.8 The DfE stipulate that we must return our annual accountability statement by 31 May 2023, so they are received and available to link to Part 1 of the funding agreement which will be issued for signing in June/July 2023 for the 2023 to 2024 academic and funding year.
- 3.9 In recognition of the need for local authority providers to gain executive approval the DfE state that for this first year the DfE extended the deadline for submission of the accountability statement up to 31 July 2023. In this scenario we submitted a draft accountability statement to DfE by 31 May 2023, and now need to submit a final endorsed accountability statement by 31 July 2023

4.0 CORE ISSUE

- 4.1 Enclosed is the final word version of the accountability statement, this is to be reviewed in line with the above so that alterations can be made ahead of final submission to the DfE. We must then produce a version that can be posted onto our website.

5.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

- 5.1 The enclosed agreement has been drafted in line with the 'Adult Learning and Skills Engagement strategy 2022-2025', previously approved and subject to public consultation

6.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 6.1 Adult Learning can provide support for all aspects of the council's key themes, to do so requires effective and efficient use of the resources available. The service strategy details how we aim do this, and the priority responses listed within the accountability statement are in line with those ambitions

7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 7.1 We have considered the LSIP and national priorities and consider those actions named as the keyways that the service can respond to those priorities. To take a more specific approach would require significant investment in technical facilities.

8.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS

- 8.1 The service aims to work closely with a number of key internal services, e.g. Training and Learning, Stronger Communities and inclusion. This essential work will be supported by the priorities within the LSIP for the benefit of learners within all communities.

9.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Failure to produce a draft by the 31 July 2023 has implications for timely receipt of funding.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The production of a final accountability statement is a statutory responsibility.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The equality impact assessment does not indicate any equalities impacts – see Appendix B.

12.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The climate impact assessment does not determine any climate impacts, beyond improvement in awareness of sustainability with all learners – see Appendix C.

13.0 PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

13.1 This final version confirms key targets for the service.

14.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

14.1 Although a contractual requirement to produce an agreement is in line with national policy there are no implications for council policy.

15.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1 For the service to continue to meet its funding obligations to ESFA the final version must be sent to the DfE by 31 July 2023 and published on the Council website by early September.

15.2 In line with wider council charges policy we must uplift charges in-line with inflation

16.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

16.1 The Executive are asked to approve:

- i) The submission of the final accountability agreement to the DfE
- ii) Publication of the final agreement

Stuart Carlton
Corporate Director – *Children and Young Peoples Service*
County Hall
Northallerton

6 July 2023

Report Author & Presenter – Paul Cliff – Shared Head of Adult Learning and Skills (York and North Yorkshire)

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Draft Adult Learning and Skills Service Accountability Agreement 2023-24
Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment
Appendix C – Climate Change Impact Assessment

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

[Skills for jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth](#)
[DfE Accountability Agreements for 2023 to 2024 guidance](#)
[Local Skills Improvement Plans Statutory Guidance](#)

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.