

Briefing note

To: Cllr Jon Hartley

From: Danny Edwards, Strategy & Partnerships Manager
Liz Britton, Head of SAFEE

Title: Local Economy & Life Long Learning Scrutiny Commission

Date: 29 November 2018

Introduction

As part of the Scrutiny work programme, the Local Economy and Life Long Learning Scrutiny Commission is looking into post 16 and adult education provision and its link with the local economy. The critical context to this in Southwark is the development of the borough-wide Southwark Skills Strategy and associated delivery plan.

The provider landscape in Southwark and London is diverse and dynamic. Schools, University Training Colleges (UTCs), Further Education Colleges, Sixth Forms, Adult Education, apprenticeship providers, universities as well as employment support providers are all part of the skills infrastructure, and have been the subject of much policy and funding changes over several years.

The government's 2016 Area Based Review of Skills highlighted the need to stabilise the Further Education sector in light of a reduction in the adult skills budget. This review failed to effectively focus on wider issues in the further education sector; specifically that skills provision is poorly tailored to needs of the labour market and has been ineffective at increasing productivity levels.

Southwark's provider landscape varies in terms of quality. Southwark schools are among the best in the country and have above average Key Stage 4 results across central London. Yet there remains an overall quality gap in skills provision locally with too few learners completing training courses and apprenticeships and progressing to high skills attainments. Following their school years, many learners make the choice to leave the borough to study elsewhere; the LCCIS Report May 2018 Data on travel to study patterns in London shows that Southwark is in the top ten boroughs for exports to education with 67% of pupils aged 16-18 leaving the borough to study

This quality gap is not unique to Southwark, with just 71% of London colleges rated Good or Outstanding by Ofsted compared to 94% of London schools. More concerning, almost a third of London's 39 colleges are rated as 'requiring improvement' or 'inadequate'.

The council is committed to ensuring that the places where people live create new life opportunities, promote wellbeing and reduce inequalities. This leads to people having better lives, in stronger communities, and achieve their potential. It is also about harnessing change to reduce inequalities and make a borough where people are healthy and resilient, feel connected, and there are opportunities for all. It is vital that all residents are able to equip themselves for the future and have the life and work place skills and qualifications they need to access jobs and live fulfilling, independent lives.

As a central London borough, Southwark is job rich and offers a wide range of opportunities to learn and earn. Jobs are available across a range of sectors and skills levels. It is essential that Southwark has an education and skills offer that allows all of our residents to access these opportunities.

Southwark's Skills Partnership has been established to deliver the Skills Strategy Delivery Plan. This includes partners who have been involved from the outset of the strategy development such as Southbank and Team London Bridge Business Improvement Districts, LSBU, Southwark and Lewisham College, Lendlease and British Land. Three Task and Finish Groups have been set up to manage specific actions in the Delivery Plan. Details of Partnership and Task and Finish Group membership can be found in appendix 1.

The Southwark Skills Strategy

In March 2017 Cabinet noted the recommendations of the Government's 2016 Area Based Review of Skills and endorsed the recommendation to develop a local skills strategy. The resulting Southwark Skills Strategy was developed over the summer of 2017 in partnership with learner representatives, further and higher education providers, businesses (including the council's Business Forum) and schools, with a view to supporting the delivery of a high quality further education (FE) and skills offer in the borough.

The Southwark Skills Strategy was formally adopted by the council at December 2017 cabinet meeting. It was recommended that officers develop a delivery plan to set a framework for the implementation of the strategy. The plan has therefore been developed in partnership that has included working group meetings, presentations to key stakeholder groups and conversations with individual partners.

The vision of the Strategy aligns with the proposed Council Plan for 2018-22, which sets out a vision for a full employment borough, where everyone has the skills to play a full part in the economy.

It also aligns to the council's Economic Wellbeing Strategy, that *"by 2022 Southwark will have a high quality skills offer that is accessible and responsive to learner and employer needs. The offer will support all learners to build resilience and develop valuable skills for a strong local economy now and in the future."*

To achieve the vision, the Strategy has three priority aims:

- Residents have the opportunity to gain the type and level of skills they need to access local opportunities and progress in the labour market
- Employers invest in their workforce and have access to training provision that responds to their needs and allows them to recruit locally
- Employers and providers work collaboratively to develop a local skills offer that is responsive to the needs of the local economy

Delivery of the Strategy

The development of the delivery plan has been undertaken in close collaboration with key partners from across the borough. This is so there is a consistency in vision and ambitions across Southwark and the wider sub-region, and to help ensure that available resources are maximized.

The delivery plan is structured over four main themes. This is because of the multifaceted structure of the skills system and of those operating within it and, most importantly, those affected. The four themes are:

- **Learners** – Southwark learners who learn in a number of different settings; schools, colleges, universities, at work, and at home. They learn to build knowledge, to develop specific skills, gain a sense of achievement and self worth.
- **Employers** – The micro, small and medium and large employers in the borough provide opportunities for people to develop work place skills and gain employment opportunities. Their engagement in the skills system helps to ensure training is relevant to their skills needs now and in the future.
- **Providers** – There are many skills providers in the local area. Schools, University Training Colleges (UTCs), Further Education Colleges, Sixth Forms, Adult Education, apprenticeship providers, universities as well as employment support providers are all part of the skills infrastructure, and have been the subject of much policy and funding changes over the years.
- **Funding** – The plan seeks to strengthen local influence over the government funding available to support the skills system such as the Adult Education Budget as well as the Apprenticeship Levy.

A Partnership Board consisting of a range of key local stakeholders has been established to:

- Ensure ongoing cross partnership support for the Strategy
- Endorse and support the delivery of activity as set out in the delivery plan
- Oversee the progress of the delivery plan and review outcomes
- Advise on future skills activity and support effective prioritisation
- Influence and inform sub-regional, regional and national decision makers, ensuring that Southwark’s voice is heard

Following the inaugural Skills Partnership meeting in September 2018, task and finish groups have been established to scope out delivery across four agreed areas of focus:

- Sector specific skills offer – looking at health, hospitality and digital sectors, and building on learning from the Southwark Construction Skills Centre (SCSC).
- Labour market insight – understanding employer skills needs and the local skills gap.
- All-age careers information, advice and guidance – addressing the lack of comprehensive careers information, advice and guidance offer, particularly for older people.

The task and finish groups will report back to the Skills Partnership in January 2019. Work is also underway on linking skills and regeneration, focusing on the OKR and Canada Water, and developing a digital skills framework.

The delivery plan is integral to the broader sub-regional work that is underway to improve the quality of the FE and skills offer in London and ensure local leadership influences how the Adult Education Budget (AEB) is prioritised. It is also aligned to emerging Mayoral priorities and the delivery of the London Skills Strategy, the AEB commissioning framework and the developing Central London Forward (CLF) Skills Strategy.

Adult Education

Southwark Council Adult Learning Service (SALS) provides a wide range of adult learning courses funded/subsidised by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). These include courses which focus public funding on people who are disadvantaged and prepare them for training, employment or self-employment. Courses include Basic Skills in literacy, numeracy and English for Speakers of Other Languages and vocationally-related courses, such as those in Childcare. Most of these courses lead to nationally recognised qualifications. Courses such as those in arts, ceramics, woodwork,

health and fitness are in-house and interest-based. These are sometimes described as non-accredited courses.

SALS is subject to Ofsted inspection. The last inspection report (2016) noted:

“SALS plays an important role in meeting the local authority’s vision of a fairer future for all Southwark residents....Managers continue to ensure that a high proportion of learners successfully complete their courses and those taking qualifications achieve them....During a time of reducing funding, managers have successfully increased the number of learners taking courses and the number of courses available to them...Managers ensure that those learners from the most disadvantaged communities attend, with a very high proportion of learners coming from areas with high levels of deprivation.”

SALS is working with the Local Economy Team on the development of the action plan to implement the recently approved Southwark Skills Strategy.

Priorities include to:

- sustain the quality and standards of provision
- maintain the healthy recruitment, retention and completion rates of learners
- nurture the earned confidence of Ofsted and the ESFA
- influence regional and local AEB devolution in line with Southwark Skills Strategy and emerging local priorities

Southwark Adult Learning Service delivers to approximately 3,000 learner enrolments per annum. Within this, approximately 500 families benefit from family learning courses. More than three quarters of learner enrolments derive from Southwark’s deprived, or most deprived, Index of Multiple Deprivation bands. Completion rates, at 95% or better, are good.

Earlier this year, the Adult Learning Service conducted a community engagement exercise, to capture service users’ views about the future of Adult and Community Learning. Respondents value the locations of Southwark Council’s adult learning provision, the supportive, high-quality, value-for-money learning environments and opportunities for them to progress their learning. The positive impact of adult community provision on health and well-being was repeatedly articulated, echoing the nationally recognised, demonstrable benefits of community learning in this phase.

Respondents in Southwark’s consultative exercise described their vision for future Adult Learning provision to include a wider course offer and greater scheduling flexibility. The many and varied influences on adults’ decisions to study are captured in the DfE’s 2018 report: Decisions of adult learners.

It is important to note that Southwark’s own provision, and that of its directly commissioned partners, constitutes a part of the mixed adult-learning provision market. Adult learning is offered by a range of other essential providers. The list includes:

- private education & training companies
- charitable organisations
- digital learning providers
- distance-course offers

Each of these providers plays an important part in the lifelong learning landscape, to develop adult skills that are responsive to learner and employer needs.

The attached appendices show locations of provision commissioned by Southwark Adult Learning Service and learners' residential wards (as at **insert date**).

Useful Links

GLA London Datastore

<https://data.london.gov.uk/>

Office of National Statistics (NOMIS)

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

Southwark Adult Learning Service, Ofsted Report, May 2016

<https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/42/53145>

London Adult Community Learning Review, March 2017

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_adult_community_learning_review_report.pdf

Central London Area Review, February 2017

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/594088/Central_London_Report_DfEreport_2016_AR_Template_17_February_2017.pdf

Decisions of adult learners, September 2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/742108/DfE_Decisions_of_adult_learners.pdf

WEA Impact Report 2018 (providing an illustration of the impact of adult learning via a national provider)

<https://www.wea.org.uk/news-events/news/wea-launches-2018-impact-report>

Appendix 1

The Skills Partnership members

- Nadia Broccardo, Executive Director, Team London Bridge
- Jayne Couchman, Southwark Works Programme Manager, JCCS- Southwark Works
- Nina Dohel, Director of Education, Children's and Adults' Services, Southwark Council
- Nic Durston, Chief Executive, South Bank BID
- Stephen Gaskell, Head of Chief Executive's Office, Southwark Council
- Andrew Gower, Principal & Chief Executive, Morley College London
- Will Harwood, Borough Partnership Manager Southwark, Department for Work and Pensions
- Jon Howlin, Manager, Southwark Construction Skills Centre
- Elise John-Lewis, Social and Economic Development Manager, Elephant Park, Lendlease
- Matt Jones, Head teacher, Globe Academy
- Dave Keogh, Operations Manager, Department for Work and Pensions
- Tony Lewin, Executive Lead for Lewisham and Southwark College, Lewisham Southwark College
- Julie Screaton, Chief People Officer, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust
- Michael Simmons, Director of Corporate Affairs, London South Bank University
- Eleanor Wright, Head of Community – Canada Water, British Land
- **Chair:** Councillor Kieron Williams, Cabinet Member for Jobs, Innovation and Skills

Task and Finish Group membership

Sector specific offer		
Name	Title	Organisation
Matt Jones	Head teacher	Globe Academy
Mike Simmons	Director of Corporate Affairs	LSBU
John White	Director	Southwark Construction Skills Centre
Elise John-Lewis	Social and Economic Development Manager	Lendlease
Julie Screaton	Chief People Officer	Guy's & St. Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust
Adam Fahey	Director of Learning	Southwark College
Local skills analysis		
Name	Title	Organisation
Will Harwood	Borough Partnership Manager Southwark	DWP
Dave Keogh	Operations Manager	DWP
Nick Rampley	Vice Principal	Morley College
Jon Howlin	MD, Sigma	Southwark Construction Skills Centre
Adam Fahey	Director of Learning	Southwark College
Mike Simmons	Director of Corporate Affairs	LSBU

All age careers		
Name	Title	Organisation
Catherine Verrinder	Team Leader, Southwark Choices	Southwark Council
Mike Simmons	Director of Corporate Affairs	LSBU
Luke Howson	Student Services Manager	Morley College
Jayne Couchman	Manager	Southwark Works
Jon Howlin	MD, Sigma	Southwark Construction Skills Centre
Sharon Muncie	Director of Student Experience	Southwark College
Toyin Busari-Odubonojo	Employment Support Manager	Pecan