

Item No. 18.	Classification: Open	Date: 20 October 2020	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Southwark Skills Strategy – Delivery Plan Progress Update	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All wards	
Cabinet Member:		Councillor Stephanie Cryan, Jobs, Culture and Skills	

FOREWORD – COUNCILLOR STEPHANIE CRYAN, JOBS, CULTURE AND SKILLS

Now more than ever, in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, a hard hitting recession and Brexit looming on the horizon, the importance of ensuring Southwark residents are able to gain the skills they need to succeed and be able to access and make the most of the range of opportunities available across the Borough is paramount.

The Southwark Skills Strategy was approved by Cabinet in 2017 which led to the establishment of the Southwark Skills Partnership which brings together an array of local partners from schools, colleges, universities, businesses and employment support partners to ensure that the delivery of the Southwark Skills Strategy continues to meet the needs of residents and employers.

This report is the annual update on the progress that has been made and the priorities going forward. COVID has meant that some of our focus has had to change, in particular with our plans for hospitality skills provision where the industry has been adversely impacted by the economic consequences of the pandemic.

However the report also outlines areas where we can focus on opportunities that will be available particularly in health and social care. We also commit to looking at opportunities within our own housing delivery programme and our ongoing housing maintenance programmes and we also have an exciting opportunity for local skills development in the marine sector with the proposed upgrade of South Dock Marina.

Our commitment to Economic Renewal and a Green New Deal will also form the focus on where we can deliver skills provision and opportunities and the Southwark Skills Strategy sits front and centre in our priorities to ensure that Southwark residents continue to have access to good quality jobs, apprenticeships and internships.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendations for the cabinet:

1. That the Cabinet note the progress made in delivering the Skills Strategy since June 2019.
2. That the Cabinet note the impact of COVID-19 on the delivery of the Skills Strategy and the need to align with Southwark's Economic Renewal Plan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The Southwark Skills Strategy was formally adopted by the council following approval by Cabinet in December 2017. It was recommended that officers develop a delivery plan to set a framework for the implementation of the strategy. The delivery plan was developed in partnership with key local stakeholders and was approved by Cabinet in June 2018.
4. The vision of Southwark's Skills Strategy is that "by 2022 Southwark will have a high quality skills offer that is accessible and responsive to learner and employer needs" and that "the offer will support all learners to build resilience and develop valuable skills for a strong local economy now and in the future."
5. The Skills Strategy comprises three priority aims to deliver this vision:
 - 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.
6. Cabinet received an update in June 2019, setting out progress made since June 2018. Key developments and milestones over this time included:
 - The establishment of the Southwark Skills Partnership to oversee the delivery of the Skills Strategy
 - The opening of the Passmore Centre at London South Bank University to provide high quality apprenticeship training
 - Improved integration of skills development into council services such as Adult & Community Learning and Southwark Works
 - Increased engagement with schools careers leaders.
7. A further update was expected in June 2020 and postponed to October 2020 due to the council's urgent COVID-19 response.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

8. This report sets out progress made against the Skills Strategy delivery plan since June 2019. The overarching priorities between June 2019 and June 2020

were:

- Promoting apprenticeships
 - Meeting sector specific skills needs
 - Shaping essential skills provision
 - Improving all age careers advice and guidance.
9. These priorities were shaped and defined by the Southwark Skills Partnership, which was set up in August 2018 and comprises a range of local partners including education and training organisations, developer partners, employers and Business Improvement Districts. Chaired by the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Culture and Skills, the Skills Partnership oversees and reviews progress of delivery.
 10. The reprioritisation of resources needed for the council's urgent response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact on partner organisations, necessitated a pause in Skills Strategy delivery between March and July 2020.
 11. The pandemic has already had an unprecedented impact on the local, regional and national economy and the longer-term impacts will be far reaching. The pandemic has affected certain sectors disproportionately and we are likely to see sustained job losses, particularly as the national Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme comes to a close at the end of October. The economic impact of the pandemic on central London and London as a whole has significant implications for the borough and its residents, who have also strongly felt the impact locally.
 12. While the overarching aims of the Southwark Skills Strategy remain appropriate, delivery will need to be recalibrated to respond effectively to new economic challenges, in order to support residents to achieve the skills they need to access current and future opportunities.
 13. This work forms part of the council's wider approach to economic renewal as set out in Southwark's Economic Renewal Plan (ERP). The ERP sets out immediate, short, medium and long-term priorities for the local economy and will continue to evolve to respond to new developments. The Cabinet Member for Jobs, Culture and Skills will maintain oversight of the ERP.
 14. The ERP also recognises the need to take account of the risks to the local economy posed by Brexit. The ERP will therefore evolve in tandem with the council's wider Brexit planning. It is considered likely that the potential reduction in EU citizens working in the UK will have an adverse impact on existing skills shortages particularly in key local sectors such as construction and health and social care. These economic impacts will be monitored and future delivery of the Skills Strategy will seek to respond to these challenges.
 15. Following the onset of the pandemic and the nationwide lockdown, the Skills Partnership met in July 2020 to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on Skills Strategy delivery and to feed into the ERP, providing an initial review of existing skills projects. The Partnership agreed refreshed priorities for the Partnership's work going forward, as detailed in the body of this report, and this review will be

ongoing as the ERP evolves.

16. The review of Skills Strategy delivery will also be aligned with Southwark Stands Together, the borough wide initiative in response to the killing of George Floyd, the injustice and racism experienced by Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, and the inequalities exposed by COVID-19. A range of listening exercises with communities, key stakeholders, partners and staff took place over the summer to hear about experiences of racism, discrimination and inequality, and to identify solutions. Cabinet received a summary of this activity in September 2020 and agreed a set of emerging recommendations grouped by specific work streams including employment and business, education, culture, communities, health and policing. The ongoing delivery of the Skills Strategy will be aligned to the recommendations specifically under the employment and education works streams. In particular, it will support the Southwark Stands Together recommendation to support residents from diverse backgrounds to access quality employment opportunities including apprenticeships, internships and careers information, advice and guidance.
17. The paragraphs below therefore summarise:
 - Progress made against the delivery plan priorities between June 2019 and March 2020, when work needed to be paused due to the impact of COVID-19
 - The likely impact of COVID-19 on these skills projects
 - Planned next steps for each priority area.

Promoting apprenticeships

18. The Skills Strategy delivery plan sought to support the council's aims of promoting apprenticeships as a pathway into sustainable employment and career progression by:
 - Encouraging apprenticeship creation
 - Continuing to build local provision of high quality apprenticeships
 - Driving quality and strengthening support for employers
 - Supporting learners to access apprenticeships.
19. Further to meeting the Council Plan commitment to create 2,000 apprenticeships between 2014 and 2018, the council has worked with partners and employers to create an additional 1,300 apprenticeships between 2018 and 2020.
20. Established in partnership with the council in November 2018, London South Bank University's Institute of Professional and Technical Education, known as the Passmore Centre, offers higher and degree level apprenticeships across a range of sectors. The council is continuing to work closely with London South Bank University as it continues to develop its offering and to support Southwark residents to access these courses.
21. In 2019, the council carried out a review of the long-standing and respected

Southwark Apprenticeship Standard to ensure that it continues to promote the creation of quality apprenticeships while also providing the necessary support to employers. The council consulted with employers signed up to the Standard to better understand current challenges, support needs and ways to continue to drive up the quality of apprenticeships. Based on this engagement work, the council refreshed the Standard in early 2020 by expanding the criteria for a good quality apprenticeship and committing to create additional networking opportunities for employers and apprentices. Work is planned to consider how the Standard can remain relevant and of benefit to employers in light of the impact of the pandemic.

22. In order to support more residents to access apprenticeships, the council started development of a dedicated pre-apprenticeship support offer in autumn 2019. Engagement with training and employment support providers revealed that an intensive support programme, comprising access to qualifications, employability skills, and work placements, would support residents to overcome the most common barriers to accessing apprenticeship opportunities. A specification was developed and the tender process was due to launch in mid-March 2020. This process was placed on hold following the onset of COVID-19 as suppliers prioritised resources to switch to remote delivery. A pre-apprenticeship support offer will be reviewed and procured as part of the delivery of the ERP.
23. The impact of the pandemic is likely to create challenges across the apprenticeship landscape in Southwark and in London as many businesses, particularly smaller employers, may be more reluctant to keep on or hire apprentices during an economic downturn. A rise in unemployment is also likely to increase competition for opportunities with those furthest away from the labour market being most at risk.
24. Through the ERP, the council will continue to promote apprenticeships and work with key partners to shape the role that apprenticeships can play in economic recovery. The council will also carefully monitor the impact on creation and take-up of apprenticeships and collaborate with partners to inform a coordinated approach to future support. Apprenticeship delivery will also be in line with the objectives of Southwark Stands Together to ensure that opportunities are accessible to residents from diverse backgrounds.
25. The council will also support apprenticeship delivery directly by continuing to create new apprenticeship opportunities within our internal apprenticeship programme, which will include new opportunities within our housing investment and maintenance programmes.
26. The Skills Partnership will continue to contribute to this work and is due to meet in late 2020 to further define where partners can best support promotion and delivery of apprenticeships.
27. In response to the challenges in delivering apprenticeships nationally, the government has announced a 'Youth Opportunity Guarantee', pledging a work placement or apprenticeship for 16 – 24 year olds, and a bonus scheme for

employers hiring new young apprentices between August 2020 and January 2021. The council will work closely with employers, training providers and support organisations to ensure that the new national policies and programmes are incorporated into local apprenticeship delivery programmes.

Meeting sector specific skills needs

28. The Skills Strategy recognises the need to improve local provision of sector specific skills training to meet the needs of local employers and to improve access to career opportunities for Southwark residents. This builds on the council's successful skills offer for employers in the construction sector delivered through the Southwark Construction Skills Centre. A key objective within the delivery plan was to test the feasibility of a hospitality skills offer.

Hospitality

29. The Southwark Skills Partnership agreed to focus its sector specific work initially on hospitality as this key growth sector presented an immediate opportunity to strengthen local skills provision and help meet the significant shortages experienced by local employers. It was agreed that a skills study would allow the Partnership to better understand the employment and skills needs of this sector and identify the most effective ways to address key challenges with provision. A working group including employers and training providers was convened to design a specification for the study.
30. As an identified area of joint need, the study was commissioned with the neighbouring boroughs of Lambeth, Lewisham and Wandsworth to pool resources. The Skills Centre and London South Bank University won a tender to jointly conduct the research and develop a set of recommendations.
31. Completed in January 2020, the study showed continued strong employment growth in the local hospitality sector with a large recruitment gap that was not being met locally. Research carried out with employers and providers showed that there was a notable gap between employers' skills needs and the current offer from learning providers. The study also identified further work required on the part of hospitality employers to improve pay and conditions to improve the attractiveness of the sector to prospective employees, as well as existing employees seeking to progress.
32. The study identified an opportunity to help local employers meet a greater proportion of their skills and labour needs from local residents, ensure training is better aligned to employers' needs and to support the sector to offer high quality, sustainable careers. The following recommendations were made:
 1. Set an ambitious vision to develop world class hospitality skills in South London
 2. Develop and implement a localised hospitality skills framework to support the sector to create a clear plan for meeting skills needs

3. Establish a governance structure that ensures stakeholder voices are represented in skills delivery
 4. Create a delivery vehicle to improve local provision and deliver high quality careers through one or both of:
 - a) a new employer-led hospitality training centre, using a progression-focused skills model
 - b) a 'hub and spoke' model where a small delivery organisation provides the final stage of skills development and job brokerage for students leaving existing provision.
33. The Skills Partnership agreed the recommendations in late January 2020 and agreed to move forward with developing options to establish a skills training centre. Work was subsequently started to identify a potential site for a centre.
34. This work was placed on hold at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic with hospitality being one of the most adversely affected sectors. Despite some re-opening of the sector in more recent months, there is likely to be a significant impact on skills demand in the sector at least into the medium term. The Skills Partnership has agreed to return to this work in early 2021 to consider how to proceed once the lasting impact on the sector and employment opportunities is likely to be clearer.

Health & social care

35. Work was started in 2019 to define the key skills challenges in the local health care sectors, map current referral pathways and routes into the sector for local residents, and identify any required interventions. The council has continued to engage with key partners and Skills Partnership members in this sector including Guys & St Thomas NHS Trust, London South Bank University and Southwark College. The Skills Partnership was due to meet in April 2020 to discuss next steps in this area.
36. Due to the impact of COVID-19 on the health care system locally, regionally and nationally, this sector has seen increased skills demand as well as a consistently high vacancy rate which presents a clear opportunity for skills and jobs delivery. The Skills Partnership has agreed to focus on this sector as an immediate priority.

Digital

37. Southwark is a member of the Stride partnership with Lambeth, Lewisham and Wandsworth which is delivering a number of programmes to address the underrepresentation of black and minority ethnic people, women, people with disabilities and people from lower income backgrounds in the creative and digital industries. Stride has commissioned talent development activities to tackle the lack of diversity in these sectors, focusing on innovative programmes that trial new approaches to increasing diversity.

38. The Skills Partnership has also explored wider challenges and opportunities for skills development within the local digital sector and further work was initially planned for 2020. Many businesses within this sector are experiencing increased skills demand and this presents an opportunity for skills and jobs delivery. This area will be revisited in 2021.

The Green Economy

39. The ERP identifies the opportunity to root the council's existing climate change commitments in the local economy and business growth, by supporting a green new deal that creates jobs, cuts emissions and generates a new wave of profitable environmental innovation. The delivery of the Skills Strategy will support this work to identify and support emerging skills needs in this sector.
40. The proposed upgrade of the South Dock Marina boatyard also presents an opportunity for local skills development within the marine sector.
41. All sector specific skills initiatives will be developed in line with Southwark Stands Together to ensure that opportunities are accessible to residents from diverse backgrounds.

Shaping essential skills provision

42. The Skills Partnership has continued to support the council's aims of ensuring that residents have a basic qualification in English and maths and are able to access the essential digital skills required for everyday life and for work.

English & maths

43. The council commissioned an external organisation to conduct a review of learning provision provided by the Southwark Adult Learning Service at the Thomas Calton Centre. This included reviewing the service's role in providing essential skills provision to residents. Recommendations included setting up a governing body for the service and working more closely with local partners to deliver programmes of learning.
44. The governing body is now established, chaired by the Cabinet Member for Jobs, Culture and Skills. The body will support and challenge Southwark Adult Learning Service to meet residents' current and future skills well as helping to facilitate joint working with a range of local partners.
45. The council's Education department has defined a basic qualification in English and maths as a Level 2 qualification and new targets have been set for the number of learners starting, sustaining and completing Level 2 English and maths qualifications through the Southwark Adult Learning Service.

Essential digital skills

46. Over the course of 2019, the council developed a two year Essential Digital Skills Action Plan in partnership with education providers, broadband

companies, the DWP, the NHS, the voluntary sector and a wide cross-section of council teams and services. The plan seeks to establish a common approach provision across the borough to ensure all residents can develop the essential digital skills they need for their daily lives and work.

47. The plan sets out the following objectives:
 1. A shared understanding of need and demand for essential digital skills in Southwark
 2. Collectively deliver sufficient, accessible provision that responds to learner needs
 3. A collaborative approach to innovation.
48. The impact of the pandemic has meant that essential digital skills have become more needed than ever for everyday life and work. The action plan objectives remain appropriate and the Southwark Essential Digital Skills Group has reviewed the draft plan to capture issues and priorities brought to the fore during the pandemic.
49. A planned launch event in March 2020 will be rescheduled. The Essential Digital Skills Group will monitor progress and undertake an annual refresh of the action plan, to ensure it reflects changes in the local policy and delivery landscape, and incorporates learning from the previous year's delivery.

Improving all-age careers advice and guidance

50. The delivery plan included priorities of developing an all-age careers advice and guidance framework to improve the effectiveness and coordination of local careers provision for people of all ages. The framework will also explore a more collaborative approach to delivery in the borough.
51. A draft all-age careers advice and guidance framework for the borough began development in early 2020. The framework will set out ambitions for high quality, coordinated delivery across the borough and identifies key gaps for future development. The draft framework requires further development in light of the impact of COVID-19 and emerging Southwark Stands Together recommendations to support residents from diverse backgrounds to access high quality careers advice and guidance. The framework will be reviewed and approved by the Skills Partnership in 2021.
52. The Skills Partnership has also worked with Better Placed, a partnership with Lambeth and Lewisham, to map the careers advice and guidance services available to residents of these boroughs. This exercise found that while there are a large number of disparate sources of information, advice and guidance across the three boroughs, provision is inconsistent and concentrated in the north of Lambeth and Southwark. This presents challenges to residents in being able to easily identify where best to access support. This work has also been incorporated into the draft careers advice and guidance framework.
53. To help address the issues identified by the mapping exercise, Better Placed

has started development of 'Skillbot', an AI careers adviser, in partnership with London South Bank University. This will be a digital platform to signpost residents to the most suitable sources of careers, advice and guidance, and locally will be embedded into the Southwark Works website. This will provide a mechanism for managing high volumes of low intensity careers support and will help to tackle the challenges of a patchy careers advice landscape. Pilot testing is currently due to take place in the spring of 2021 with a launch expected in the autumn of 2021.

54. The council is also continuing to support entry into employment and career progression through the long standing Southwark Works employment support programme and through partnering with Beam, a social enterprise supporting people experiencing homelessness to access skills, training and employment opportunities.

Governance

55. The Southwark Skills Partnership will remain in place going forward to oversee the delivery of the Skills Strategy in the borough and linking it to ongoing economic renewal activity. This is particularly important in the current context to ensure that skills projects respond effectively to current economic challenges as experienced locally. The Partnership will also work to link local skills delivery into wider economic renewal activity across London.
56. Progress will be tracked through the ERP, ensuring alignment to wider economic renewal and recovery work.

Policy implications

57. The Southwark Skills Strategy delivery plan is in line with the 2018-2022 Council Plan, in particular the aim of achieving a full employment borough.
58. The planned next steps for Skills Strategy delivery, as outlined above, are in line with the council's Economic Renewal Plan which sets out immediate, short, medium and long-term priorities for the local economy. Skills projects will be developed as part of the ERP to ensure alignment.

Southwark Stands Together

59. The council has launched Southwark Stands Together, a borough wide initiative in response to the killing of George Floyd, the injustice and racism experienced by Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities and to the inequalities exposed by COVID-19. Listening exercises with communities, key stakeholders, partners and staff took place over the summer to hear about experiences of racism, discrimination and inequality, and to identify solutions. Cabinet received a summary of this activity in September 2020 and agreed a set of emerging recommendations grouped by specific work streams including employment and business, education, culture, communities, health and policing. A road map and action plan with measures and metrics to deliver the programme will be presented to Cabinet in October 2020.

60. The Skills Strategy is aligned to the overall objectives of objectives of Southwark Stands Together and Skills Strategy projects will also support the delivery of specific emerging Southwark Stands Together recommendations. The table below sets out how Skills Strategy delivery will support these recommendations.

Work stream	Emerging Southwark Stands Together recommendation	Alignment to Skills Strategy delivery
Employment & Business	<i>a. Support residents from diverse backgrounds to access quality employment opportunities including apprenticeships, internships and careers information, advice and guidance.</i>	Ensuring accessibility for residents from diverse backgrounds is central to all Skills Strategy projects. In particular, apprenticeship delivery, sector specific skills offers and careers advice and guidance projects, will help to support residents from diverse backgrounds into sustainable careers.
	<i>b. Implement a structured work experience programme for young residents</i>	The development of this programme will be aligned to the Skills Strategy careers advice and guidance work stream.
	<i>c. Work with employers to support them to adopt more inclusive recruitment and employment practices, aligning to the Good Work Standard; and to support delivery of this recommendation, work through key partnerships including employers that are linked with Southwark Works, Jobcentre Plus and others.</i>	The development of sector specific skills offers will include working closely with employers to ensure inclusive recruitment and employment practices as part of any new skills and employment initiatives.
Education	<i>e. Improve the experience of young people with respect to meaningful work experience; develop networks within and beyond school that provide advice and guidance and exposure to opportunities that helps them develop their aspirations and confidence and understanding linked to the world of work.</i>	The Skills Strategy's careers advice and guidance work stream will help to deliver this recommendation by improving the effectiveness and coordination of local careers provision.

Sub-regional policy implications

61. The Southwark Skills Strategy is in line with the Central London Forward Skills Strategy which was approved by the Central London Employment and Skills Board in February 2019. This strategy aims to rebuild the skills system for central London to be more responsive to employer needs, focusing on shaping skills delivery to more closely match key sectoral needs and deliver more and higher quality apprenticeships. It aims to influence the GLA commissioning of the Adult Education Budget to support residents and employees to develop the skills that will increase productivity and progression, particularly among the most disadvantaged and hard-to-reach learners.
62. The aims of the strategy are that:
 - Residents and workers access the skills, jobs and support to thrive in Central London's dynamic economy. There is a specific focus on developing skills for vulnerable groups and those that are currently furthest from the labour market.
 - Employers secure growth through access to a more diverse and better-skilled workforce, who are trained in the types of skills that employers need, in fields with skills gaps.
 - Providers access information around the labour market and local needs, to improve the quality and relevance of courses that are offered.
 - Boroughs take a leadership role in reforming the sub-regional skills system, through collaborating with partners and each other, to ensure that skills commissioning and provision is of a high and consistent quality across the sub-region.
63. The Southwark Skills Strategy echoes sub-regional ambitions by aiming to address skills shortages in specific sectors and encourage apprenticeship creation locally.
64. The council is participating in Central London Forward's review of skills and employment strategy in response to the economic impact of COVID-19 and will ensure that future delivery of the Southwark Skills Strategy is aligned.

Regional policy implications

65. The Mayor's Skills Strategy for London was published in June 2018. The key priorities are as follows:
 - Empower all Londoners to access the education and skills to participate in society and progress in education and work
 - Meet the needs of London's economy and employers now and in the future
 - Deliver a strategic city-wide technical skills and adult education offer
66. In December 2017 the council contributed to the consultation process

endorsing the London wide strategy given its alignment to our local strategy. In particular the council endorsed the following:

- The focus on vulnerable learners and those with low to mid skills.
- The pan-London review of SEND
- Focus on the quality of work through the Good Work Standard, payment of the London Living Wage and in-work progression initiative
- Improving basic skills delivery through the devolved AEB.
- 16+ pathways research
- Proposed improvements to an all-age careers advice service
- Proposals for the devolution of the Apprenticeship Levy and the creation of a skills levy
- A Skills Sector focus providing better integration of employer needs in the skills system and the potential to develop a Skills Index for London
- Focus on improving the technical skills and adult education offer in London
- To ensure quality learning, employability skills and progression underpin the delivery of the devolved AEB.

67. The Southwark Skills Strategy is aligned to regional ambitions, supporting the Mayor's aims to boost the technical and adult education offer and emphasising the need for good work and the ability to progress in the labour market.

68. The London Recovery Board has been established to co-ordinate planning for London's future following the impact of COVID-19. The Board is co-chaired by the Mayor of London and the Chair of London Councils and is supported by a Recovery Taskforce, which will coordinate actions to meet these challenges, working in partnership with local authorities, health and care bodies, business groups, trade unions, the voluntary sector, academia, national Government and other bodies. Southwark Council is represented in sub-groups feeding into this work. Future delivery of the Skills Strategy will be aligned to London-wide renewal and recovery activity.

Adult Education Budget

69. In 2016 it was announced that London's Adult Education Budget (AEB) would be delegated to the Mayor of London from 1 August 2019 under a devolution arrangement. Through this arrangement the Mayor will be responsible for the commissioning, delivering and management of London's AEB. The principal purpose of the AEB is to provide the skills and learning that adults need to equip themselves for work, an apprenticeship or further learning. Devolution is also intended to enable more tailored programmes of learning to be made available, which do not need to include a qualification, to help those furthest from learning or employment.

70. The GLA consults annually on the delivery of the AEB. The council's responses published in April 2019 and April 2020 are available as background papers.

National policy implications

71. The Southwark Skills Strategy is in line with a range of national policies related to skills delivery as detailed below.

National Careers Strategy

72. In December 2017 the government published the National Careers Strategy, an all-age strategy, which includes new Ofsted requirements for schools and recommendations for schools to follow Gatsby benchmarks in the delivery of careers advice and guidance. The aim of improving local delivery of careers advice and guidance within the Southwark Skills Strategy is aligned with the National Careers Strategy.
73. In April 2019 the government announced new national standards for adult basic digital skills, including new essential digital skills qualifications and a new national entitlement to fully fund adults with no or low digital skills to undertake the new qualifications. The Southwark Essential Digital Skills Action Plan is aligned with the national standards and supports local delivery of qualifications.

COVID-19 response

74. In response to the economic impact of COVID-19, the government has announced a number of skills and employment interventions including:
- A 'Youth Opportunity Guarantee', pledging a work placement or apprenticeship for anyone aged 16 – 24
 - The 'Kickstart' job creation scheme for under 25s, funding 6 month work placements
 - A bonus scheme for businesses to employ apprentices
 - Tripling funding for traineeships and offering employer incentives
 - Additional funding for the National Careers Service, with the aim of supporting an additional 270,000 people with bespoke careers advice
 - Tripling funding for sector-based work academy placements in 2020-21.
75. The council is working to ensure that national initiatives are integrated into local skills delivery and that the impact of these are maximised locally.

Community impact statement

76. The June 2018 Skills Strategy Delivery plan approved by cabinet provides an overview of the assessment of impacts on the community and includes the equality analysis carried out in 2017, and reviewed in April 2018. Specific measures and actions to address inequalities and assessment of the impact on protected characteristics in line with the Equality Duty will be developed as part of the delivery of individual projects relevant. The analysis will therefore be ongoing. It is the role of the Skills Partnership to consider ongoing equalities implications at a strategic level.
77. The Skills Strategy has an impact on the whole community in all wards, including the borough's business community. A core aim of the strategy is to

identify what actions the council and partners can take to create a local skills offer that responds to the needs of local people and the local economy.

78. The delivery of the Skills Strategy will be adapted to ensure that it responds effectively to economic impact of COVID-19 and supports residents to develop the skills they need to access opportunities during a time of financial hardship.
79. The strategy encourages employers to offer good quality work and it also supports the adoption of the London Living Wage, as set by the Living Wage Foundation.
80. Project monitoring arrangements for skills projects continue to follow the council's equalities monitoring guidance to ensure it captures information about impact on intended target groups and protected characteristics.

Resource Implications

81. The council's contribution to the delivery of the Skills Strategy will be met from within existing resources. This includes a range of sources where funding is specifically tied to objectives to promote vocational training and education related to job and career opportunities. Agreement of any redirection of existing funding will be undertaken in line with the council's normal resource setting processes.
82. Proposals outlined in this report may require future commitment of resources. Section 106 funds have been identified which could contribute towards funding future skills initiatives.

Staffing issues

83. Officer time to effect the proposals and work streams outlined in this report will be contained within existing resources and any Section 106 funds that are allocated.

Consultation

84. A range of external and internal stakeholders have been consulted during the process of developing the Skills Strategy and its associated delivery plan. Consultation has taken place at three key stages following the formal adoption of the Skills Strategy in December 2017. Firstly an initial scoping session in January 2018 developed shared solutions to the areas the strategy needed to focus on. This then informed a second session in March 2018 to further consider the solutions, to discuss resources and assets as well as identifying and managing risks. Finally, the third session in May 2018 sought feedback on a draft delivery plan.
85. External consultation with partners included: Department of Work and Pensions, Southwark Business Forum, Better Bankside Business Improvement District (BID), Blue Bermondsey BID, Southbank BID, Team London Bridge BID, We Are Waterloo BID, Southwark Chamber of Commerce & Industry,

Federation of Small Businesses, Guys and St Thomas' Hospital, London South Bank University, schools, Southwark Youth Forum, adult education providers and further education Colleges, Southwark Association of the School Governors, Central London Forward and delivery partners on the Southwark Works Framework.

86. The Southwark Skills Partnership was established in August 2018 to bring together a range of local partners including education and training organisations, developer partners, employers and Business Improvement Districts. The Skills Partnership reviewed and agreed the first delivery plan in June 2018 and the updated version in June 2019.
87. The Skills Partnership is collaborative by nature, allowing ongoing consultation and discussion with a range of partners to understand future skills priorities and adapt delivery as required in order to deliver solutions to best meet these needs and challenges.
88. The Partnership structure allows members to bring forward the views of their clients and stakeholders, allowing a broad range of perspectives to be incorporated into delivery.

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Strategic Director of Finance and Governance

89. This report is requesting cabinet to note the progress made in delivering the Skills Strategy since June 2019 and to also note the impact of COVID-19 on the delivery of the skills strategy and the need to align with Southwark's Economic Renewal Plan.
90. The strategic director of finance and governance notes that there are no immediate financial implications arising from this report.
91. The strategic director of finance and governance expects that financial appraisals will be carried out as any new plans are developed and will be subject to future reports, including identifying the suitable financial resources for any new commitments.
92. Staffing and any other costs connected with this report are to be contained within existing business unit revenue budgets.

Director of Law and Democracy

93. This report sets out the progress made in delivering the Skills Strategy since the last cabinet update report in June 2019. This report also details the impact of COVID-19 on the delivery of Skills Strategy, and the need to align with Southwark's Economic Renewal Plan. In addition, paragraph 16 and paragraphs 59-60 confirm that Skills Strategy delivery will also be aligned with Southwark Stands Together, the borough wide initiative in response to the killing of George Floyd, the injustice and racism experienced by Black, Asian and minority ethnic

communities, and the inequalities exposed by COVID-19.

94. As this report is for noting, there are no legal implications.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Web links below: (please copy and paste into your browser):		
Southwark Skills Strategy and Skills Strategy Equalities Analysis	http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=6366	Susan du Toit 020 7525 2970
Southwark Skills Strategy Delivery plan	http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=6525	
Southwark Skills Strategy Update	http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?AllId=53347	
Draft Skills for Londoners Strategy Consultation Response	http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=50017874&Opt=0	
Skills for Londoners Framework AEB Consultation Year 2 (2020/21) Response	http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=6820	
Skills for Londoners Framework AEB Consultation Year 3 (2021/22) Response	http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=7035	

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Hospitality skills study summary report

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor Stephanie Cryan, Jobs, Culture and Skills	
Lead Officer	Eleanor Kelly, Chief Executive	
Report Author	Susan Du Toit, Senior Strategy Officer	
Version	Final	
Dated	8 October 2020	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Democracy	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	8 October 2020	