



Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

**CHILDREN AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
SUB-COMMITTEE
6 July 2021**

Subject Heading:

Adult Education: Outcomes Update

SLT Lead:

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Policy context:

This relates to the outcomes for the College and learners for 2019/2020

Financial summary:

Havering Adult College successfully achieved all of its financial targets for 19/20, ensuring the full external contract value was paid, and there is no reduction to the grant allocation for 20/21 or 20/22 as a result.

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

Opportunities making Havering

[X]

SUMMARY

This Report provides an update on Havering Adult College, including performance outcomes for 2019/20 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Members to note the content of the report**

REPORT DETAIL

1. Presently, the London Borough of Havering delivers adult and community learning (ACL) through the Havering Adult College, established over fifty years ago. Havering Adult College receives two direct grants to fund its operation, one from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and one from the General London Authority (GLA), that enables the service to deliver a range of courses aimed at learners aged 19+ who can be resident in the borough, or attend from outside of the borough.
2. In the academic year 2019-20, Havering Adult College delivered learning opportunities to 2041 learners. The achievement rate for learners overall was 96.97%, based on the Management Information System data returned to the ESFA for that year. Current recruitment for 2020-21 stands at 1246 with an in year achievement rate of 94.66%, although enrolments are still continuing throughout the year, numbers are down on last year as a result of Covid... The last three Ofsted inspections have found the provision to be Good, and with some excellent features.
3. For context, Havering Adult College presently offers a broad curriculum to the public, covering key areas of learning; specifically, Digital & Computer Skills, Languages (including BSL), Creative & Performing Arts, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Floristry & Horticulture, Food & Drink, Teacher Training, and Teaching Assistants. In addition, Family Learning, Employability provision and Functional Skills are also offered and are free at point of delivery to support groups and individuals with challenges and needs. The College also has a constantly developing 'Education for Independence' department, providing around the year learning for learners with learning disabilities and difficulties.
4. The above provision is funded by the Adult Education Budget, which is comprised of two streams; firstly, Adult Skills provision, whereby participants are working towards a nationally recognised qualification and are, potentially, eligible for full fee remission (if current eligibility criteria are met), and receipt of the full skills allocation is dependent on successful achievement of the qualifications. Secondly there is the Community Learning allocation, which is to support the provision of non-accredited learning opportunities. The majority of Community Learning courses have fees payable to participate, and are more to (i) encourage harder to engage groups and communities back into education, and (ii) support the development and maintenance of community cohesion, social inclusion, personal growth and esteem building. The Adult Skills courses are linked, in most instances, to qualifications that increase life

and career chances. Additional funding, to sustain adult education provision, is provided by fee income.

5. For 2019-20, the total Adult Education Budget allocated to Havering Adult College via the Education & Skills Funding Agency, and the Greater London Authority, was £1,211,100, which was comprised of:

£612,012 – Adult Skills allocation

£599,088 – Community Learning allocation

This also saw a successful implementation of the grant funding devolution to the GLA, who have maintained an effective working relationship with the service.

6. In addition, £30,000 is nominally safeguarded as Additional Learner Support funding (within the overall budget) to provide those on accredited provision with essential support (such as learning support assistants, digital equipment, etc) to allow them fair access and equality.
7. Through effective strategic management of the provision, Havering Adult College successfully achieved the target threshold for full drawdown of the entire grant..

8. A key objective of the Skills for Londoners Strategy is to increase the number and diversity of adult learners in London gaining skills to participate in society, and also progress into further/higher or additional education. City Hall has published eight areas of reform under the devolution of the AEB in London. They are:

1. Eligibility for full-funding for people in low-paid work
2. Basic English and maths skills
3. English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
4. Basic digital skills
5. Adult & Community Learning (ACL)
6. Support for disadvantaged learners
7. Support for learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
8. Addressing London's sectoral and occupational skills needs

9. As part of the reform, City Hall has acknowledged that traditional local authority funding through the block grants of the ESFA were based on historical formulae, with no direct relationship between the current allocations and the number of learners who could potentially benefit. City Hall published in the Skills for Londoners Framework (2018) that, whilst there were no plans to set local targets for levels or types of provision, as the Learning and Skills Council had done previously, the intention to incentivise better occupational

targeting of provision and the introduction of outcome-related payments as part of the devolved budget is clearly stated.

10. It is understood that the following are key occupational areas that the incentivising will focus upon, although this was anticipated to be introduced following the pilot year of 2019-20, it will now likely be introduced in 21/22:

- Health and social care
- Construction
- Tourism, hospitality and retail
- Creative and digital
- Finance and professional services

11. As part of the Local London (Eastern London) Region, Havering Adult College is aligned to the priority outcomes identified through the Local London Steering Board. These include:

- Supporting in-work low paid residents to up-skill, secure new qualifications and progress into higher paid work
- Supporting unemployed and economically inactive residents (particularly those with disabilities and long term health conditions)
- Supporting lone parents who are struggling to secure and maintain part-time/full-time work at a reasonable wage
- Supporting residents whose first language is not English, for whom it is a barrier to employment and accessing educational opportunities
- Supporting residents both younger and older with SEND needs
- Supporting skills development for: construction, digital, health and social care, cultural and creative industries

12. Havering Adult College has, through strategic engagement with partners, aligned with targeted curriculum planning, positioned itself well to deliver a range of high quality courses (both accredited and non-accredited) within the mayoral priorities, many targeted at up-skilling unemployed residents. This includes a range of digital skills programmes, TV and Film production, digital music manufacture, employability skills (including individually tailored packages which include 1:1 mentoring, all of which have been heavily praised by Ofsted), a growing ESOL provision (including work taking place on-site at schools and children's centres to optimise participation and reach).

13. The Education for Independence (E4I) department works specifically with residents who have learning disabilities and difficulties, with much focus on the acquisition and development of skills and nationally recognised qualifications to boost esteem and acknowledge achievement. At their last inspection, Ofsted noted that, as a particularly impressive service for residents, it was surprisingly under-utilised as a point of referral internally, which is captured in their last inspection report.

14. E4I has taken on several new learners who use their direct payment facility to fund their place at the provision, which allows them vertical and lateral progression in their support towards independence, the benefits of which are anecdotally celebrated by the learners and their parents and carers, in favour of 'day care' approaches.
15. Due to the strategic growth of the E4I area of work, and the need to relocate much of the Adult Education daytime provision because of the expansion of Bower Park Academy, resulting in the reclamation of the previously leased venue, E4I moved into the Europa Centre as of September 2020. The Europa Centre presently has a full-scale learning village located within it, previously used to support modern foreign language learning for children, but a diminished market for this has led to the strategic decision to repurpose that adult college site to support independent living provision. This has also proven successful since the last report, and it is hoped fuller use of the facilities and the opportunities they provide to extend the experience of learners with learning difficulties and disabilities within the borough is made by other local authority services.
16. In addition to the grant and fee funded work, Havering Adult College will continue to develop and offer bespoke training for other local authorities (such as inspection preparation, observation training, recruitment and selection training etc) to increase its own commerciality, whilst also offering high quality staff development training to the council as best value. The college's Mental Health First Aid provision has been delivered to many LBH teams and continues to garner extremely positive feedback.
17. Through closer working at a strategic level with the primary and secondary schools sector, Havering Adult College are now also working to deliver parent-focused support courses that are targeted at increasing parental capacity to support their children with ADHD, challenging behaviours, trauma, anxiety, as well as emotional wellbeing, raising confident children and others. These courses are free at point of delivery to the parents as part of the community learning funding, which has the added value of ensuring the provision of this support is cost-neutral to the borough whilst building in additional support mechanisms.
18. Through closer working at a strategic level with the primary and secondary schools sector, Havering Adult College are now also working to deliver staff-focused support courses that cover the understanding and awareness of British Values, and how they can be promoted in the educational workplace. This is also a certificated course, and successful participants will receive a recognised qualification.

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19. Of the 2041 learners recruited overall during 2019-20, retention was excellent at 95%, with overall achievement also excellent at 96.97%.
20. For skills-based (accredited) courses, retention was excellent at 92%, and achievement was particularly excellent at 95.98%.
21. For community learning (non-accredited) courses, retention was very good at 97%, with achievement remaining excellent at 97%. Retention on community learning courses can often be more challenging, especially as in some cases, learners are able to access the provision for free, thus mitigating any financial commitment to the course in a minority of cases. That fact notwithstanding, the achievement rate details the successful achievement of their learning aims prior to leaving the course, which could also account for a drop off in their commitment to attending.
22. All withdrawn learners are followed up as part of the college's robust quality assurance and improvement infrastructure, and reasons are recorded for the early departure.
23. It must be acknowledged that the overall impact of COVID-19 did see an in-year transition to blended learning (incorporating on-site and remote learning). Learners benefitted from the swift actions of the leadership team to support their successes, although a reduction in later in-year enrolments was felt.
24. It remains anticipated that the academic year 20-21 will continue to see the impact of the pandemic, with fewer adult learners feeling inclined to enrol on adult learning programmes, or – where they wish to – to be satisfied with online learning, given the wider social benefits of in-class learning. A more accurate final picture can be drawn at the close of the academic year.
25. A breakdown of achievement and retention by curriculum area for 19-20 appears below:

Curriculum Area	Retention %	Achievement %
Health, Counselling & First Aid	95.29	91.36
Horticulture	77.78	100
Computing	90.74	83.67
Food & Drink	97.93	97.88
Health, fitness & Safety	99.19	99.84
Creative Arts	91.06	97.99
History	100	100
Modern Foreign Languages (inc. BSL)	88.91	95.06
Education & Training	96.97	100
Teaching Assistants	96.70	100
English, Maths & ESOL	90.31	94.30
Preparation for Life & Work (E4I)	45.16	100
GCSE	95.31	98.36
Employability Skills	100	99.64

Family Learning	94.12	66.67
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26. Within the 2019-20 academic year, 557 learners had progressed into new courses with the College from 2018-19.
27. At the point of writing, 266 learners who have enrolled on courses in 2020-21, have progressed from 2019-20. This number is likely to rise as courses continue to enrol throughout the year.

Funding Model & Challenges

28. As of 2019-20, and the advent of devolution, funding has been split across two contracts. The primary contract, as a result of devolution, is held by the GLA, and is only for those learners with a London postcode. This contract will be split thus:

£498,385 – Adult Skills allocation
£541,427 – Community Learning allocation

29. The secondary contract is held by the ESFA, and is to be used for those learners who live outside of London, and is split thus:

£52,447 – Adult Skills allocation
£56,852 – Community Learning allocation

30. This split is to ensure the college can continue to attract a clientele beyond the boundaries of London, so as to not be disadvantaged as a result of the devolution outcome. This does pose a new challenge to the service, however, of needing to attract sufficient out-of-London learners as a new target in order to secure the drawdown for adult skills provision and not see the overall grant value reduced.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

As of 2019-20 the funding level agreed has been: GLA c£1.040m and ESFA c£0.109m, totalling c£1.149m. The funding level for 2021-22 is yet to be confirmed from the GLA although the expectation is to be at least the figure stated above. There is opportunity to increase funding in longer term by facilitating a growth bid.

In 2021-22 the budget overspend by c£0.274m, mostly due to impact of pandemic which resulted in lower enrolment numbers. The expectation is that the budget should breakeven every year and for 2021-22 other alternative funding streams are being explored such as Kickstart and joint working with some large employers such as the NHS to bring in more income and as well probably facilitate a growth bid.

Overall, there are no new financial implications to the transition from the ESFA to the GLA's devolved budget, other than the extended opportunities to access, through the Local London partnerships, additional income to support the delivery of learning that is targeted at Skills for Londoners strategic priority groups, such as ESOL learners and the unemployed (both areas the College has significant, high-quality experience in).

The financial risks to Havering Adult College are no different to the annual risks attached to being externally grant funded, with aspects of the funding linked to service outcomes. In the event Havering Adult College under-performs, there is a risk of a reduction in the core budget. This is an on-going issue and not one that will be enhanced further by devolution.

Additionally, through face-to-face discussions with GLA representatives at our termly meetings, it is clear that the team overseeing devolution will be more open to flexible use of the AEB to delivery the priorities, meaning that risks presently associated with the inflexibility of the ESFA's approach to the split strands of the AEB (Adult Skills and Community Learning) could be reduced. Until implementation takes place, it is impossible to confirm this.

Legal implications and risks:

This report is for information. There are no recommendations to consider at this point and therefore there are no implications arising.

Human Resources implications and risks:

As there are no changes to the operation and delivery of the service, the staffing requirements, or any contractual agreements as the transition period is confirmed to replicate the current arrangements for at least the first academic year of

implementation (1st August 2020 – 31st July 2021), there are no Human Resource implications or risks.

Equalities implications and risks:

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council is committed to all of the above in the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and the employment of its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing for all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

As there are no changes to the operation and delivery of the service, the staffing requirements, or any contractual agreements (as the transition period is confirmed to replicate the current arrangements for at least the first academic year of implementation (1st August 2020 – 31st July 2021), there are no perceived equalities implications or risks, as there is no change to the status quo, and as such a further Equalities Impact assessment is not necessary.