


<p style="text-align: center;">Non-Executive Report of the:  <b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>  26<sup>th</sup> October 2016</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><b>TOWER HAMLETS</b></p>
<p><b>Report of:</b>  Christine McInnes, Service Head, Education &amp; Partnerships   Sharon Godman, Service Head, Corporate Strategy &amp; Equality</p>	<p><b>Classification:</b>  Unrestricted</p>
<p><b>Update Report – Literacy across Early Years, Primary, Secondary and Adult Learning</b></p>	

<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Gulam Hussain, Senior Strategy, Policy and Performance Officer
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

**Summary**

This report provides an update on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the scrutiny review on literacy across early years, primary, secondary and adult learning. The report and recommendations was agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in May 2015.

**Recommendations:**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the progress on the implementation of recommendations from the scrutiny review on literacy across early years, primary, secondary and adult learning.

## **1. DETAILS OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the implementation of recommendations from the scrutiny review on literacy provision across early years, primary, secondary and adult learning. The report and recommendations were considered and agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in May 2015. An action plan was developed to address the recommendations.
- 1.2 The review was undertaken between February and March 2015 involving local school leaders, experts from the Institute of Education and Research and Practice in Adult Learning (RaPAL) and representatives from the London Borough of Newham. It sought to explore the concerns of the panel that despite the strong progress made over the last decade to improve attainment levels and exceed national averages, little was known of how those who left the education system with less than average or functional levels of literacy were being supported and whether the support and interventions on offer were effective.
- 1.3 The review focused on three core questions;
  - a) What are the key causes of underachievement and how can attainment be sustained?
  - b) What are the interventions available to all teachers to identify and tackle poor literacy in children?
  - c) How effective are the adult learning provisions in identifying and reaching out to learners with poor literacy?
- 1.4 The report (Appendix 1) made thirteen recommendations. Progress against each recommendation is recorded in the accompanying action plan (Appendix 2).
- 1.5 The action plan responding to the thirteen recommendations contained twenty one actions. Six of these are ongoing actions which continue to be progressed. Of the remaining fifteen time-limited actions seven have been delivered. The delays to the remaining actions are detailed in Appendix 2.

## **2. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

- 2.1 Actions progressed to date have been funded from existing budgets. External funding needed to deliver any remaining actions can only be delivered when such funding is identified or alternative delivery options will have to be considered within existing resources to meet the recommendations.

### **3. LEGAL COMMENTS**

- 3.1 The Council is required by Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 to have an Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to have executive arrangements which ensure the committee has specified powers. Consistent with that obligation Article 6 of the Council's Constitution provides that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants and may make reports and recommendations to the Full Council or the Executive, as appropriate, in connection with the discharge of any functions. It is consistent these powers that the Committee receives this update report on progress on the implementation of recommendations from scrutiny reviews.
- 3.2 This report provides details of an Overview and Scrutiny challenge session and subsequent report titled "Literacy across Early Years, Primary, Secondary and Adult Learning" which made 13 recommendations. This Report is at Appendix 1.
- 3.3 In response to the recommendations, an action plan was been prepared and which is at Appendix 2. There were 23 actions; all appear to be capable of being carried out within the Council's powers. In relation to those actions, 8 are still ongoing whilst the remained have been completed.
- 3.4 The Council's functions in relation to children include a duty under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to make arrangements to ensure that its functions are discharged having regard to the need to promote the welfare of children. Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 introduced a general duty for local authorities to promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need, including children with disabilities. The Council's general duty to promote high standards of education in respect of primary and secondary school students is set out under section 13A of the Education Act 1996.
- 3.5 The Childcare Act 2006 ("**the 2006 Act**") also imposes a number of duties on local authorities. The general duty contained in section 1 of the 2006 Act is to:
- (a) improve the well-being of young children in their area; and
  - (b) reduce inequalities between young children in their area in respect of various matters, including physical and mental health and emotional well-being, protection from harm and neglect, education, training and recreation, the contribution made by them to society and social and economic well-being.
- 3.6 Pursuant to section 3 of the 2006 Act, a local authority must make arrangements to secure that early childhood services in its area are

provided in an integrated manner, which is calculated to facilitate access to those services, and to maximize the benefit of those services to parents, prospective parents and young children. “Early childhood services” are defined by section 2 of the 2006 Act, and include “early years provision” for young children – i.e. the provision of childcare for a young child. In deciding what “arrangements” to make under this section, a local authority must have regard to:

- (a) the quantity and quality of early childhood services that are provided, or expected to be provided, in the area; and
- (b) where in that area those services are provided or are expected to be provided.

- 3.7 Pursuant to the Local Authority (Duty to Secure Early Years Provision Free of Charge) Regulations 2012, the Council must secure free early years provision for 15 hours per week, 38 weeks per year, for all 3-4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds.
- 3.8 Section 193 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 inserts a new section 116A into the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (**‘the 2007 Act’**), which places a duty on the Health and Wellbeing Board to prepare a joint strategic health and wellbeing strategy in respect of the needs identified in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. The duty to prepare this plan falls on local authorities and the Clinical Commissioning Group, but must be discharged by the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Board must have regard to the Statutory Guidance on the published Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies, and can only depart from this with good reason.
- 3.9 The Health and Social Care Act 2012 also amended section 221 of the 2007 Act to introduce a Local Healthwatch. The functions of the Local Healthwatch include making reports and recommendations about how local care services could or ought to be improved. Section 226 of the 2007 Act sets out that the Local Healthwatch have an additional reporting power enabling them to refer matters relating to social care services to the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which must then have regard this information.
- 3.10 In the exercise of its functions, the Council must with the public sector equality duty to eliminate unlawful conduct under the Equality Act 2010, the need to have regards to equality of opportunity and the need to foster good relations between persons who share a protected characteristic, including ethnicity, and those who do not.

#### **4. ONE TOWER HAMLETS CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 The recommendations contained within this report aim to advance equality of opportunity for residents of the borough to secure access to high quality learning facilities.
- 4.2 Implementing the recommendations in this report will support the Council to deliver on its Community Plan priorities which include a vision of delivering a 'Prosperous Community' and a 'Healthy and Supportive Community'. The recommendations also seek to aid the Council in widening access to early years learning for some of the most disadvantaged 2 year olds, as determined by the eligibility criteria, within the borough.

#### **5. BEST VALUE (BV) IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Scrutiny Review supports the Best Value duty by setting out a number of recommendations which aim to support improvement, informed by consideration of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The report recommends that work be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of existing arrangements to support effective contract management and review periodically review the council's approach to securing community benefits to ensure the continued availability of high quality front line services delivering value for money.

#### **6. SUSTAINABLE ACTION FOR A GREENER ENVIRONMENT**

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the report or recommendations.

#### **7. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising from the report or recommendations.

#### **8. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no direct implications of crime and disorder as a result of the recommendations of this review.

#### **9. SAFEGUARDING IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no direct implications of safeguarding as a result of the recommendations in this review.

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### **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

#### **Linked Report**

- None

**Appendices**

**Appendix 1** – Action Plan

**Appendix 2** – Literacy Review Update

**Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012**

- None

**Officer contact details for documents:**

N/A