

<b>Committee:</b> Overview & Scrutiny	<b>Date:</b> 12 <sup>th</sup> May 2015	<b>Classification:</b> <b>Unrestricted</b>	<b>Agenda Item:</b> <b>7.2</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Service Head Corporate Strategy & Equality, Louise Russell  <b>Originating officer(s)</b> Gulam Hussain, Strategy, Policy & Performance Officer, Corporate Strategy & Equality		<b>Title:</b> Literacy across Early Years, Primary, Secondary and Adult Learning  <b>Wards Affected:</b> ALL	

## 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides recommendations following a scrutiny review to support literacy skills across Early Years, Primary, Secondary and Adult Learning.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:-

- 2.1 Agree the draft report and the recommendations contained in it; and
- 2.2 Authorise the Service Head for Strategy & Equality to amend the draft report before submission to Cabinet for consideration after consultation with the scrutiny review group.

## 3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The scrutiny review took place throughout February and March 2015, led by Cllr Denise Jones, Scrutiny Lead for Children, Schools and Families.
- 3.2 Literacy is noted to have a significant impact in improving life outcomes ranging from better employment prospects, health and wellbeing outcomes and economic benefits to the taxpayer.
- 3.3 Tower Hamlets as a deprived borough has high levels of functional illiteracy amongst its adult population. In addition, based on the results from 2014, 13% of students did not achieve a Level 4 in reading and writing at Key Stage 2 whilst approximately 40% of learners left secondary school without 5 A\*-C grades which included English and Maths. At the Early Years stage, results are below the London average.

- 3.4 The review was underpinned by 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?
- 3.5 The report with recommendations is attached at Appendix One. Twelve recommendations have been made:

**Recommendation 1:**

Continue to fund the operation of Local Authority nurseries.

**Recommendation 2:**

Improve the quality of online information available on the council's website including making available information and videos on the impact of early years learning.

**Recommendation 3:**

Support the development of early years hubs to promote good practice through clusters of providers.

**Recommendation 4:**

Support the identification of grant streams and corporate sponsors to ensure the continued availability of the Reading Recovery programme in Tower Hamlets.

**Recommendation 5:**

Explore opportunities in conjunction with the Idea Store Learning Service to support the development of higher literacy skills amongst Support Staff in Early Years, Primary and Secondary settings in the borough.

**Recommendation 6:**

Develop and implement a pilot Academic English programme at Key Stage 3 and assess the impact on learning outcomes.

**Recommendation 7:**

Make available to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee findings of the commissioned research and relevant action plans to address underachievement amongst White British students.

**Recommendation 8:**

Undertake a review of the successes of the Triage tool at the end of Year 1 and report findings to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Recommendation 9:**

Undertake a review of health literature developed to support those with poor literacy and assess the impact on the patient experience and the success in affecting the management of health conditions. The findings of this review are to be reported to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Recommendation 10:**

That Healthwatch Tower Hamlets undertake a research project to scope existing work on health literacy in the borough and its impact on the health of local residents and identify areas for improvements. The findings of this research are to be reported to the Council's Health Scrutiny Panel and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Recommendation 11:**

Include improving Health Literacy as a strategic issue in the development of the new of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy in 2016/17.

**Recommendation 12:**

Explore the use of the triage tool developed by the Idea Store service within health settings across the borough.

**4. BODY OF REPORT**

- 4.1 The report of the challenge session is attached at Appendix 1.

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

- 5.1 This draft report contains twelve recommendations which if agreed will be submitted to Cabinet for consideration. Any recommendations which are agreed by Cabinet would need to be met within existing Council resources where possible.

## **6. LEGAL COMMENTS**

- 6.1. 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 with the Constitution and the statutory framework for the Committee to be asked to agree the report and recommendations and to authorise a senior officer to amend the draft report before submission to Cabinet for consideration after consultation with the scrutiny review group.
- 6.2. In respect of the recommendations contained in the report, the Council has a duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness by virtue of section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999. This is known as its Best Value Duty.
- 6.3. 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.
- 6.4. The Childcare Act 2006 ("the 2006 Act") 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.

- 6.5. By 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 includes “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.
- 6.6. Under related regulations, 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.
- 6.7. Section 193 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 inserts a new s116A into the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, 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 Joint Strategic Needs Assessments and Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategies published on 26 March 2013, and can only depart from this with good reason.
- 6.8. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 also amended section 221 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 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.
- 6.9. 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.

## **7. ONE TOWER HAMLETS**

- 7.1 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.

- 7.2 Implementing the recommendations in this report will support the Local Authority 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 Local Authority 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.

## 8. **BEST VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 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 health literacy work and that the Executive seeks to identify grant streams and corporate sponsors to ensure the continued availability of the Reading Recovery programme in Tower Hamlets.

---

### **Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended) List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Presentation from <b><i>LBTH Idea Store Service</i></b> . Adult Literacy services in Tower Hamlets. | Gulam Hussain ext 4710<br><a href="mailto:gulam.hussain@towerhamlets.gov.uk">gulam.hussain@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a> |
| 2. Presentation from <b><i>LBTH Public Health</i></b> . Health and Literacy in Tower Hamlets.          | Gulam Hussain ext 4710<br><a href="mailto:gulam.hussain@towerhamlets.gov.uk">gulam.hussain@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a> |
| 3. Presentation from <b><i>Osmani Primary School</i></b> . Reading Recovery in Tower Hamlets           | Gulam Hussain ext 4710<br><a href="mailto:gulam.hussain@towerhamlets.gov.uk">gulam.hussain@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a> |
| 4. Presentation from <b><i>Swanlea School</i></b> . Embedding Literacy in the curriculum.              | Gulam Hussain ext 4710<br><a href="mailto:gulam.hussain@towerhamlets.gov.uk">gulam.hussain@towerhamlets.gov.uk</a> |

## 9. **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Review Report: Literacy across Early Years, Primary, Secondary and Adult Learning