

# The Further Education Sector in London

**Report to: Education Panel**

**Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat**

**Date: 4 February 2016**

**This report will be considered in public**

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 The Education Panel will examine the current state and future development of the Further Education (FE) sector in London. FE colleges in London provide technical and professional education and training for young people, adults and employers and include general further education colleges, sixth form colleges, specialist designated colleges and art, design and performing art colleges.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 **That the Panel notes the report, puts questions to the invited experts and notes the discussion.**

## 3. Background

- 3.1 London has the highest density of FE college estates in the country, with over half a million people involved in the sector. 15 per cent of all FE estates are based in London. The FE sector is viewed by the Mayor and Government as a vital means of developing workers and ensuring they have the skills to meet the demands of a rapidly changing economy.
- 3.2 The Government is proposing major reform of the FE sector to address the significant financial pressures these institutions are facing and as a way of driving up standards. In July 2015, it launched a national programme of area reviews of post-16 education and training institutions. The reviews will be led by steering groups consisting of chairs of governors, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and local authorities, FE and Sixth Form College Commissioners and Regional Schools Commissioners.
- 3.3 There will be four sub-regional steering groups, overseen by a pan-London steering group, chaired by the Mayor, and deputy chairs who will be a borough Leader and London Enterprise Panel (LEP) business representative. The London-wide group will ensure consistency of approach across the London reviews, as well as ensuring that recommendations produced in each sub-region take account of the London-wide skills strategy. Whilst each sub-region will produce individual reports (covering the analysis and options) the Government will not publish any London area review report until all the sub-regional reviews have been completed. This will not affect the authority of local

colleges, or other participating institutions, to make decisions on or begin to implement recommendations put forward.

## **4. Issues for Consideration**

4.1 The Panel will examine, with expert guests, the following issues:

- What is the current state of the FE sector in London, and how has it dealt with the reduction in Government funding over the last five years?
- To what degree is the FE sector meeting the needs of learners and the business community?
- How will the London Area Review be conducted and what issues will it address?
- How can devolving control of the adult skills budget to the GLA in 2019 improve the quality, efficiency and responsiveness of the FE sector?

4.2 The guests for this meeting include:

- Andrew Travers, Chief Executive, London Borough of Barnet, and London Councils lead on skills devolution;
- Sir Frank McLoughlin, Principal, City and Islington College;
- Mary Vine Morris, Regional Director, Association of Colleges;
- Dr Sue Pember OBE, Director of Policy and External Relations, Hoxex;
- Jack Morris OBE, Co-Chair of the Skills and Employment Working Group. London Enterprise Panel; and
- Michelle Cuomo Boorer, Senior Manager – Skills, SMEs and Employment, Greater London Authority.

## **5. Legal Implications**

5.1 Under Section 31 of the GLA Act, the Mayor is not permitted to incur expenditure in providing, among other things, ‘any education services’ for which provision might be made by any other public body. However, the Mayor has the power, under Section 30 of the Greater London Authority (GLA) Act 1999, to promote, among other things, social development in London and Section 186 of the Localism Act 2011 permits the Mayor to sponsor academies or facilitate their sponsorship.

## **6. Financial Implications**

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

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**List of appendices to this report:** None

<b>Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985</b>
List of Background Papers: None
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