

MINUTES

Meeting: Outcomes for Londoners Advisory Group

Date: Thursday, 18 March 2021

Time: 10.00 am

Place: Remote meeting

Copies of the minutes may be found at: <http://www.london.gov.uk/Skills-for-Londoners>

Present:

Members:

Angus Knowles-Cutler, Skills for Londoners (SfL) Board Member (Chair)
Arinola Edeh, SfL Board Member
Dipa Ganguli, Sutton College
David Pack, West London Alliance

Officers in attendance:

Lubomira Chirmiciu, Skills Funding Policy Manager, Skills & Employment
Rachel Greenwood, Board Secretary, Skills & Employment (Clerk)
Christopher Minter, Senior Policy Officer, Skills & Employment
Ododo Edigbonya, Principal Policy Officer, Skills & Employment
Karissa Singh, Senior Policy Officer, Skills & Employment

1. Welcome and apologies (Item 1)

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the last meeting of the Group ahead of the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections in May 2021.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were received from Nigel Ball, Pat Carvalho, Helen Hammond, Gerry McDonald, Kirsty McHugh and Dianna Neal.

2. Declarations of Interest (Item 2)

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interests.

3. Minutes from the previous meeting (Item 3)

3.1 RESOLVED:

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2020 were agreed as a correct record.

4. Actions arising from previous meetings (Item 4)

- 4.1 The Group received an update on actions arising from the previous meeting.

4.2 RESOLVED:

The actions arising from the previous meeting were noted.

5. Skills for Londoners governance update (oral update) (Item 5)

- 5.1 An update was provided on Skills for Londoners (SfL) governance arrangements during the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections in May 2021.
- 5.2 Members heard that, as is usual practice, the subordinate bodies that support the work of the SfL Board and SfL Business Partnership would be disbanded at the start of the pre-election period, including the Outcomes for Londoners Advisory Group.
- 5.3 A review of the subordinate bodies would take place during the pre-election period to ensure they continued to meet the needs of the SfL Board and Business Partnership and were responsive to any new policy development and manifesto commitments, particularly in light of the COVID-19 recovery work. Officers would be in touch to confirm next steps after the elections.

5.4 RESOLVED:

The update on Skills for Londoners governance was noted.

6. Outcomes for Londoners programme update (Item 6)

- 6.1 The Group received an update on progress since the last meeting including:
- the delay to the pilot of the London Learner Survey, noting that the baseline survey had been delayed until the Easter term, while the endline survey had begun this week;
 - an outline of the Skills for Jobs White Paper and members were invited to feedback on areas that the GLA could include in its consultation response; and
 - an update on the London Adult Education Roadmap, including work to date and next steps.
- 6.2 These points were discussed in more detail during the next agenda item.

6.3 RESOLVED:

The Outcomes for Londoners Advisory Group noted the update on progress since the last meeting.

7. London's Adult Education Roadmap (workshop) (Item 7)

- 7.1 The Senior Policy Officer introduced the workshop, noting that the overarching aim of the Roadmap was to make adult education in London more accessible, impactful and locally relevant. Officers were keen to hear where outcomes would fit in the Roadmap and how this work would connect with different parts of the skills system. Members were invited to answer four key questions:
- *What does this mean to you? What does success look like?*
 - *What policy priorities around outcomes should be included in the Roadmap?*
 - *What are the key points of our/London's approach to outcomes to highlight to government?*
 - *What examples of best practice are you aware of for measuring outcomes?*
- 7.2 Before answering the questions, the discussion began with a conversation on the Skills for Jobs White Paper and a summary of the key points is below:
- 7.2.1 Members welcomed the focus on employability outcomes, however agreed that wider outcomes (such as social and progression outcomes) were missing and this should be fed back as a part of the consultation response.
- 7.2.2 Local Skills Improvement Plans were discussed. Officers noted that, while not confirmed, it was understood that employers would lead these - potentially local Chambers of Commerce and other business representative groups - working in partnership with colleges. Members commented that there should also be a role for local authorities and their involvement in the development of Local Skills Improvement Plans would be important,

particularly in terms of geography and coverage.

- 7.2.3 The Group discussed how partnerships between providers, local authorities and businesses had improved as a result of the pandemic, and particularly welcomed the benefits of increased business engagement. It was suggested that this good practice was harnessed, and a holistic approach taken to developing the Local Skills Improvement Plans with a wide range of views fed in.
- 7.2.4 The Chair provided an update on the role of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) in the work around skills and recovery, and particularly the role of LEAP (London's LEP) and its business members in this area. To add to the point above, he noted that at a national, regional and local level, business, educators and policy makers had worked together effectively during the last year and it was important to maintain the momentum.
- 7.2.5 In terms of data, it was suggested that there was sometimes a mismatch between the data on skills levels provided at a local level and what providers were seeing 'on the ground', and this should be fed into the response. Officers noted this point, observing that while there was currently a focus on higher level skills, there was a question around what could be done first to bring learners up to that level, such as providing English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses which in turn would help improve employability skills.

7.3 Members then considered the workshop questions and a summary of the discussion is below:

- 7.3.1 It was essential that employment, progression and social outcomes were woven into the Roadmap throughout. It was also suggested that the notion of commissioning for outcomes was included, however it was recognised that this was a complicated area.
- 7.3.2 It would be important to demonstrate in the Roadmap why delegation of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) was beneficial, and better than the funding being managed centrally.
- 7.3.3 Members queried how the AEB Delivery Plans being introduced from the 2021/22 Academic Year would be used and cautioned against duplication. They also suggested that existing systems such as GLA OPS could be used in the future to administer them. Officers noted that the Delivery Plans were not intended for performance or funding reasons; instead they were intended as a basis to support planning conversations, as well as to demonstrate the breadth of activity taking place across London.
- 7.3.4 The Chair noted that in terms of understanding business requirements, it would be useful to gather data on the number of foreign-born Londoners that had left the city in the last year, including the types of jobs they were doing and the sectors they were in, as this could have a significant impact on London's economic recovery. There was concern that there could be significant skills shortages and vacancies in some sectors (such as retail

and hospitality) that would become evident once restrictions were lifted and would need to be filled quickly. The Chair suggested convening business representative bodies to ensure London could respond quickly if these concerns did come to fruition.

- 7.3.5 Provider representative members noted that they had already seen skills shortages both at entry level and higher skilled roles in some sectors, such as hospitality and construction. Another challenge was that some employers were choosing not to recruit in London with roles that could be done remotely. This could result in an imbalance in the roles available for local people to fill.
- 7.3.6 Close working with business would be key, however one of the main challenges for providers was gathering a clear understanding from businesses on the basic level of skills they required from learners. In order to be more agile and responsive to need, providers had designed shorter programmes while encouraging commitment from businesses to continue to invest and develop their workforce long-term. The Chair suggested officers reviewed the Oxford University research that had looked at job categories in London and identified the basic skills needed and ‘building blocks’ required by employers.
- 7.3.7 While it was noted that the Roadmap would set the long-term vision for Adult Education in London, there was a discussion about the Roadmap and the AEB needing to be agile and respond quickly to changing circumstances; as had been done with the COVID-19 Response Fund. Short-term actions would also be important to start having an impact sooner, while the long-term aims were embedded. For example, it was highlighted that while recruiting someone could be a relatively quick short-term aim, improving that person’s skills level and career prospects was a longer-term need.
- 7.3.8 Officers noted that the GLA had been approached by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) to input into its review of outcomes recorded on the Individualised Learner Record (ILR). Members were invited to share their thoughts outside the meeting on the types of measures they would like to see recorded. Members welcomed this piece of work and commented that the London Learner Survey questions were a good starting point.

7.4 Members then provided some examples of good practice tools used to measure outcomes. Suggestions included:

- 7.4.1 Using frameworks such as the Outcomes Star, the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, and RARPA (recognising and recording progress and achievement). Provider self-assessment reports and local authority Key Performance Indicators may also be a useful source of information.
- 7.4.2 The London Learner Survey would be important as a consistent measure of outcomes across all learners which would help to understand the broader impact of adult education in London. Its ability to measure social outcomes would be particularly important and help to justify why some elements, such

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as community learning, were so important.

7.4.3 Officers were also interested in any examples of how community and voluntary organisations had measured the impact/outcomes of their informal provision. It was suggested that case studies had been a good way of demonstrating impact, particularly for Adult and Community Learning (ACL) providers, as they helped to demonstrate the qualitative outcomes that may not be seen through formal quantitative data.

7.5 Finally, the Group discussed the launch of the pilot of the baseline London Learner Survey in the Easter Term, noting that continued support from providers to administer the survey would be important for the Survey's success. Members asked if providers could support the pilot of the follow-up survey in any way, such as communicating the details with learners. Officers welcomed the offer and would consider this outside of the meeting. Officers also thanked the Group for their engagement and constructive feedback throughout the development of the survey.

7.6 The Chair thanked members for their input during the workshop, and invited them to share any further thoughts or ideas with officers after the meeting.

7.7 RESOLVED:

The Outcomes for Londoners Advisory Group:

(a) Noted the workshop discussion; and

(b) Agreed to share any further feedback or examples of good practice with officers outside of the meeting.

8. Date of next meeting (Item 8)

8.1 If the Outcomes for Londoners Advisory Group is reinstated following the Mayor of London and London Assembly elections on 6 May 2021, officers will be in contact to discuss next steps. Any new membership, terms of reference or meeting dates would need to be approved, or reconfirmed, as appropriate.

9. Any other business the Chair considers urgent (Item 9)

9.1 The Chair thanked members for their time and contributions to the Group over the last two and a half years, and particularly for their invaluable input into the London Learner Survey design and implementation. The Chair also thanked officers for their support during this time.

10. Close of meeting

10.1 The meeting ended at 11.22am.

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