

NO: **Ro79**

COUNCIL DATE: **May 9, 2011**

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE **May 4, 2011**

FROM: **Chief Librarian**

FILE: **Learning for Life
Strategy**

SUBJECT: **Learning for Life Strategy - 2009/10 Annual Report**

RECOMMENDATION

Surrey Libraries recommends that Council:

1. receive the Annual Report for 2009/2010 on the Learning for Life Strategy as information; and
2. direct that future annual reports related to the Learning for Life Strategy be delivered as an element of the Annual Report on the Action Plan for the Social Well-Being of Surrey Residents.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to forward to Council as information the 2009/2010 annual report on the implementation of the Learning for Life Strategy that was adopted by Council in 2008.

BACKGROUND

The Mayor's Task Force on Literacy and Early Childhood Development was established in December 2006 to identify key concerns with respect to literacy and early childhood development in the context of the City of Surrey and advise Council on how the City could assist in addressing these important issues in Surrey. As a result of the work of the Task Force, in October 2008, Council approved the Learning for Life Strategy that focuses on literacy (learning for life) in the following areas:

- Early Learning
- Learning – Middle Years and Teens
- Adult and Workplace Learning
- Social Engagement: Community and Interpersonal Learning
- Personal Development and Lifelong Learning

City and Surrey Libraries staff members have been working on the 43 recommendations contained in the Strategy over the past two years. Work on some recommendations is complete while others entail an ongoing commitment. Some are being undertaken in partnership with community partners and others are being monitored in consultation with community partners to determine the most effective time to involve the City in advocacy with senior levels of

government to further the recommendation. The Strategy includes a recommendation that an annual report be prepared on the implementation of the recommendations within the Strategy.

DISCUSSION

The 2009/2010 Annual Report on the implementation of the Learning for Life Strategy is attached as Appendix “1” to this report. As is evident in the report, significant progress has been made in implementing or acting on many of recommendations in the Strategy. Staff is confident that the Strategy has been effective in encouraging improved literacy in Surrey that is resulting in an improved quality of life for many of Surrey’s residents, particularly the City’s more needy residents.

Future Annual Reports:

In consideration of the close relationship between many of the recommendations in the Learning for Life Strategy and the recommendations in the Plan for the Social Well-being of Surrey Residents, staff is recommending that in the future the annual report for the Learning for Life Strategy be delivered as a component of the annual report for the Social Well-Being Plan.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The Learning for Life Strategy supports the objectives of the City’s Sustainability Charter; more particularly, Action Item *SC15: Literacy, Education and Training* in the Surrey Sustainability Charter. The implementation of the Learning for Life Strategy has improved literacy and skills for Surrey citizens of all ages by:

1. Increasing the number of programs related to early literacy, to ensure that Surrey’s children are ready to learn when they enter school;
2. Enhancing initiatives that assist residents whose first language is not English to learn and practice their English skills, so that they can participate in education and training programs to improve their economic independence and ability to participate fully in society;
3. Implementing programs that address adult literacy needs in partnership with local educational institutions, to help residents improve the skills they need to succeed in and contribute to Surrey’s economy; and
4. Increasing access to programs that enhance computer literacy skills for residents of all ages and abilities, so that they have the skills to find and assess computer-based sources of information.

CONCLUSION

The Learning for Life Strategy is achieving its intended objectives by encouraging improved literacy levels across the City, particularly in those sectors of the population where enhanced literacy skills is viewed as being most critical. Surrey Libraries staff along with staff from other City Departments will continue to focus on implementing the recommendations of the Strategy within available resources and to partner with others to deliver on those recommendations where partnerships are expedient.



Chief Librarian

Attachment: Appendix "1" – Learning for Life Strategy, 2009/10 Annual Report