

## WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

### Staffing Policy Committee

1 November 2017

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### Apprenticeship policy and progress on the recruitment of apprentices

#### Purpose

1. The purpose of this item is to present to staffing policy committee the updated apprenticeship policy, along with a progress report on the recruitment of apprentices and the use of our apprenticeship levy.

#### Background

2. An apprenticeship is a work-based training programme which leads to a nationally recognised qualification or set of competencies. The apprenticeship programme allows apprentices to gain the technical knowledge, practical experience and wider skills they need for their immediate job and future career.
3. The new regulations for apprenticeships were launched in April 2017 so that now apprenticeships are available to anyone over the age of 16, whether they are a school leaver or have previous work experience, and are also available for current staff who want to improve skills in their chosen career or start a new career.
4. An apprentice role:
  - Should ideally be for a minimum of 30 hours per week but the length of an apprenticeship can be extended to accommodate fewer working hours:
  - may be a new role within the team
  - may be an existing role which could be converted into an apprentice role
  - may be upskilling of a current employee for future succession planning, and
  - must involve at least 20% off the job training, normally supplied by an external provider.
5. An apprenticeship must run for at least one year, but depending upon the type and level of the programme can last up to five years. Extensions to an apprenticeship agreement may be considered depending upon circumstances.
6. There is a government target for the council to employ 2.3% of its workforce as apprentices which currently equates to approximately 266 apprentices per year.
7. In order to support the apprenticeship programme the council has in place an apprenticeship policy for managers and employees and this is supported by a

managers' guidance document and a set of frequently asked questions. The policy has been recently updated and improved now that the new regulations are in place.

## **Main considerations**

### Apprenticeship levy

8. With effect from 6 April 2017 the council has had to pay 0.5% (£366,919) of its 2017/18 pay bill into the apprenticeship levy.
9. This levy can be used to fund the cost of apprentice training as follows:
  - On-the-job and off-the-job training through an externally contracted training provider.
  - Planned on-programme assessment and the formal end-point assessment, including any costs associated with external quality assurance and the certification of the apprenticeship.
  - Distance, online or blended learning related to the off the job training element of an apprenticeship
10. It is not possible to use the apprenticeship levy to fund the apprentice's salary costs and therefore the salary costs must be borne by the service area employing the apprentice.
11. Earlier this year an apprenticeship training coordinator was employed within HR&OD in order to manage the apprenticeship programme to include the procurement of external apprenticeship providers and the allocation of levy funds from the digital apprenticeship account.

### External apprenticeships

12. It is the council's objective to recruit and develop apprentices who will continue their employment, following completion of the apprenticeship programme, and develop their career within the council. The policy is therefore clear that services should ensure (as much as possible) that there will be a job available at the end of the apprenticeship.
13. The apprenticeship training coordinator is working with HR strategic business partners to help managers identify apprenticeship opportunities and these are being advertised and marketed on our careers website, supported by films of current apprentices who are undertaking their training.

### Internal apprenticeships

14. The council are also committed to providing apprenticeship opportunities for existing employees to gain new skills where undertaking an apprenticeship will

enable the employee to gain a qualification and work experience which is relevant to the service area / team they are employed in.

15. The apprenticeship training co-ordinator works alongside the HR strategic business partners to identify apprenticeships which will provide apprenticeship opportunities for current staff to enable us to be more effective at succession and workforce planning.

#### Apprenticeship standards

16. As part of the new regulations launched in April apprenticeship standards have replaced the old apprentice frameworks. We are currently limited to offering the standards that have been developed as not all are available yet. However, there is commitment nationally to developing more standards and additional standards are becoming available every month.
17. The apprenticeship standards are available at different levels so that they can be matched to an individual's skills and previous experience. They range from a level 2 apprentice (business administration, customer services) up to a level 6 or 7 apprentice which is equivalent to a degree qualification in a professional service area.

#### Current apprentices

18. We currently have procured a small range of apprenticeships which include business administration, accountancy and management and have plans to increase this range significantly as more standards become available in 2018. The table below shows our current apprentices:

Current apprentices (as of 16/10/2017)

<b>Number of Apprentices</b>	<b>Apprenticeship</b>	<b>Job Title</b>
2	Business admin Level 3	Payroll Assistant
2	Accountancy level 3	Finance Assistant
1	Business Admin level 3	Business Support for children's placement services
1	Business Admin level 3	Technician Support in Fleet
1	Business Admin Level 3	Registrations Assistant
1	Business Admin Level 3	Business support for Economic Regeneration
1	Business Admin Level 4	Business support for Joint Commissioning
1	Management level 3	Fleet Transport Officer
1	Management Level 3	Systems Administrator
1	Management Level 3	Area Co-ordinator Highways and Transport
1	Building Control Level 3	Assistant Building Control officer

## Apprenticeships in leadership

19. The HR&OD team have been developing a new leadership and management offer which will be launched in January 2018. The programme will include the opportunity to complete the following qualifications:

- **Chartered manager institute level 3 diploma in principles of leadership and management -**

This qualification is ideal for aspiring managers that do not have prior formal management qualifications and/or previous management experience.

- **Chartered manager institute level 5 diploma in principles of leadership and management**

Managers with 3 years' managerial experience can also achieve chartered manager status upon completing this apprenticeship. Chartered manager (CMgr) is the highest status that can be achieved in the management profession.

This qualification is suitable for managers or aspiring managers that do not have prior formal management qualifications

20. The apprenticeship standard for the level 6 chartered manager degree apprenticeship will also be available in February 2018 and the new master's degree apprenticeship for senior leaders will be offered once it becomes available.

21. We hope that these apprenticeship opportunities will be widely taken up as part of our learning and development offer for aspiring, developing and experienced managers.

## Apprenticeships policy

22. We have recently taken steps to update and improve our apprenticeships policy following the introduction of the new regulations and the levy. There have been a number of changes this year to how we recruit apprentices and complexities about pay rates and current employees becoming apprentices, and it has taken some time to determine the best course of action and develop robust procedures to ensure that our recruitment of apprentices and internal apprenticeship offer is clear.

23. We have recruited an OD delivery manager and an apprenticeship training coordinator within the HR&OD team and there is now a real focus on delivering apprenticeships within our clear guidelines and procedures. We have worked hard to ensure our managers are engaging with us to create apprenticeship opportunities and there is now much more interest in following this route to ensure successful workforce and succession planning.

24. A report about the progress on the recruitment of apprentices against our target and the impact of the apprentice levy will be brought to staffing policy committee at the end of the financial year 2017/18.

### **Environmental Impact of the proposal**

25. None

### **Equalities impact of the proposal**

26. None

### **Risk Assessment**

27. None

### **Financial Implications of the proposal**

28. The council will draw down from the levy training costs of the apprenticeship and the salary cost for the apprentice will be offset against the vacant post of the substantive role the apprentice will move to upon successful completion of the apprenticeship.

### **Recommendations**

29. It is recommended that staffing policy committee:

- note the apprenticeship policy, managers' guidance document and frequently asked questions which are designed to support managers when recruiting an apprentice.
- receive a further report on the impact of the apprenticeship levy at the end of the 2017/18 financial year and an overview on the number, type and level of apprenticeships in place across the council.

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