

APPRENTICESHIP UPDATE

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Children's Select Committee with an update on the progress on apprenticeships within the council's workforce since the last Children's Select Committee apprenticeship update in June 2018. The report also outlines future plans to ensure the use of the levy is maximised to support the development of our workforce.

Background

2. The public sector target for public sector bodies with more than 250 employees in England is to employ an average of at least 2.3% of their staff as apprentices from 2017-2021. This means that the council needs to have approximately 106 apprentices in the workforce each year until 2021, and for schools this is approximately 150 apprentices.
3. The apprenticeship levy is charged at a rate of 0.5% of an employer's total pay bill and can only be used to fund the training costs of an apprentice's qualification.
4. Work has continued with the development of our apprenticeship programme and ensuring the council is maximising the use of our apprenticeship levy. The on-going release of new apprenticeship standards has enabled the council to broaden the range and type of apprenticeships for services, which has had a positive impact on workforce planning.

Main Considerations

Current position – apprenticeship numbers

5. The current number of apprentices employed by the council is 145 (as at 14 December 2018). 129 apprentices are employed in the council with 24 as new recruits and 105 as existing staff who are accessing apprenticeship training to upskill and gain qualifications that support their personal development and career progression, as well as the council's succession plans. 16 apprentices are employed in our locally maintained schools. The table in Appendix 1 shows the current breakdown of where these apprentices are employed in each corporate director area and Appendix 2 details the numbers of apprenticeships in schools.
6. Of the 24 newly recruited apprentices, 71% were educated in Wiltshire schools in Trowbridge, Melksham, Westbury, Warminster, Chippenham and Corsham and 2 are Wiltshire care leavers.
7. The current number of council apprentices equates to 2.9% of our staff which exceeds the public sector target of 2.3%. However, maintained schools have only 0.3% of their workforce as apprentices so our combined public sector figure to report back to central government is 1.4%.

How has this been achieved?

8. Increased focus
 - a) The apprenticeship and training coordinator in the HR&OD team is responsible, as the

council's apprenticeship expert, for providing advice and guidance on apprenticeship standards and the levy, supporting apprentices and managing the council's levy account. Due to the success of the council's apprenticeship programme steps have recently been taken to appoint a temporary apprenticeship and training assistant to support the coordinator in providing advice and guidance to schools to help increase the numbers of apprenticeships.

b) In order to raise awareness of apprenticeship opportunities within the council the apprenticeship and training coordinator has attended a number of events and meetings over the last few months to provide information about apprenticeships and the opportunities that exist, as follows:

- Sustainability and transformation partnership (STP) network with NHS partners
- Science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) event within Wiltshire Council
- Apprenticeship group meetings
- South west council events
- Employability fair
- Health and social care apprenticeship network
- Education, skills and funding agency apprenticeship roadshow
- Leadership and management KnowledgeBrief launch
- Senior leadership STP event
- Five rivers careers event
- Corporate parenting panel
- Wiltshire Police meetings
- Reablement meeting
- Looked after children event
- Civil engineering event
- Swindon College meeting
- LA apprenticeship leads forum

9. New apprenticeships

a) In addition to the actions outlined in the previous report in [June 2018](#) an additional number of actions to attract and recruit new apprentices have been taken, including:

- Recruitment requests being reviewed by HR business partners and the apprenticeship and training coordinator weekly to identify any potential apprenticeship opportunities.
- Continued work with schools, further education and higher education institutions to identify opportunities for apprenticeships at the council including attending careers fayres and visiting schools to ensure Wiltshire Council's apprenticeship opportunities gain visibility.
- Limiting recruitment of roles graded C to E to apprenticeship opportunities. A level 3 apprenticeship qualification, or equivalent, is required for most posts graded C to E (Grade C is the lowest grade at which apprenticeship standards apply). Current workforce data suggests that there is the potential for up to 66 new apprenticeships per year to fill grade C to E posts based on the current headcount and turnover in posts which may be suitable for an apprentice.
- Targeting apprenticeship opportunities at care leavers, with the aim of encouraging applications from these young people for these entry level roles at the council.
- A new leisure apprenticeship academy has been developed, and a training provider has been procured to deliver a range of relevant apprenticeships covering a number of roles in our leisure centres.

10. Upskilling apprenticeships

- a) A significant proportion of our current apprentices are existing staff who are accessing apprenticeship training to upskill, and this has been achieved by:
- Identifying opportunities for apprenticeship conversions within service areas as part of the work to support service re-design and re-structure, as well as part of regular strategic workforce discussions. Examples of apprenticeships being used to upskill staff are:
 - L3 Building control
 - L3 Business administration
 - L5 HR consultant/partner
 - L4 Data analyst
 - L4 Civil engineering
 - L5 Children and young people and families' manager
 - L3 Children and young people's workforce
 - L3 Accounting technician
 - Accessing apprenticeship levy to fund our accredited leadership and management programme. Levy funding to support accredited leadership and management development is proving successful with 79 employees upskilling via this apprenticeship route.
 - There are currently 33 employees undertaking the CMI L3 Diploma in Principles of Leadership & Management and 46 employees enrolled on the CMI L5 Diploma in Leadership & Management.
 - These programmes ensure we have clear career pathways and will strengthen leadership and management capabilities within the organisation as part of the overall learning and development offer. As well as providing development for existing managers, this has also provided opportunities for employees who aspire to be a manager. It enables them to acquire the skills and competencies needed to secure their first management position as part of a structured programme that leads to a recognised management qualification.
 - These programmes aim to both support staff with their transition to a management role, and improve management and leadership skills for those already in a managerial role.

11. Care leavers

- a) The council is the corporate parent for care leavers in Wiltshire, and has a responsibility to improve the lives of these young people. The apprenticeship levy provides the council with an opportunity to invest in training for these young people.
- b) In January 2018 a new initiative was launched which offered guaranteed interviews to all care leavers who applied for an apprenticeship. There have been 6 applications from care leavers since this was introduced and all were contacted by our apprenticeship and training coordinator and offered mock interviews. Two accepted this offer with one attending mock interviews, and was subsequently successful at interview, and is now employed as an apprentice at Wiltshire Council. We continue to work with the Building Bridges team (Employment & Skills) who work with personal advisors to the care leavers to ensure this initiative is promoted to care leavers who could benefit from it.
- c) Another Wiltshire care leaver applied independently for an apprenticeship role that care

leavers were signposted to, and this means that we now have 2 care leavers working as apprentices at the council with a guaranteed permanent job on successful completion of their apprenticeship training.

- d) The apprenticeship and training coordinator attended the virtual schools careers fair in June 2018 on behalf of the council to raise awareness of apprenticeships and the careers available at the council.
- e) The apprenticeship and training coordinator and the recruitment team attended the care leaver post-16 options event in December 2018 to highlight the council as an employer with a wide variety of opportunities and to promote our programmes of mock interviews and work experience.
- f) Despite the actions taking place to support care leavers we are aware that a number are not yet in a position to apply for apprenticeships due to the requirements for levels of numeracy and literacy. The family and community learning team are able to provide numeracy and literacy support from entry level to level 2 for care leavers aged 19+ (funding for family learning is only available at age 19+) so that these care leavers are more “apprenticeship ready”.
- g) Following the publication of new statutory guidance (in line with the enactment of the Children and Social Work Act 2017) the duties of the council have been expanded to promote the education of children who previously had looked after status but no longer do so. In relation to previously looked after children, the role of the virtual school was limited in comparison to their duty in relation to looked-after children given that they are no longer the child’s “corporate parent”. However, virtual schools must now ensure that they provide suitable advice and information in order to promote educational achievement and they can also undertake any activity they consider appropriate where that activity will promote the educational achievement of such children in their area. As a result of this guidance:
 - In Wiltshire a governing body was set up in 2018 to provide support and challenge to the virtual school. It is made up of 11 members representing a range of services and interested groups, including carers; care leavers; health; post 16 education and career opportunities.
 - The PEP (personal education plan) process now includes post 16 PEPs. This has been in place since October 2018 and paper copies are in place for immediate use. Young people are actively encouraged to be central to the PEP process at all ages but this is emphasised even more post 16. Alongside this a post 16 virtual schools officer is working with colleges, personal advisors and other professionals to support unaccompanied asylum seeker children (UASC) educational opportunities.

Next Steps

12. Increasing apprenticeships in the council

- a) Plans that are being developed to further increase apprenticeships and sustain the progress include:
 - Targeting services with a structured programme in service areas where there are currently no apprentices. This will include exploring with managers the options they have to create apprenticeship opportunities in their services, including opportunities for care leavers.
 - Further cohorts of leadership and management apprentices at Level 3 and 5 are planned. We currently offer 2 cohorts per year with April and October start dates.
 - Offering higher-level and degree-level apprenticeships both in leadership and

management, and also in some service areas.

- Negotiating with training providers via the procurement process the inclusion of relevant qualifications in the apprenticeship, especially where the top of the funding band for the apprenticeship is being charged. For example, the apprenticeship and training coordinator has negotiated the inclusion of:
 - Level 4 construction & built areas qualification into the level 3 civil engineering technician apprenticeship
 - Chartered institute of personnel development (CIPD) qualification in the L3 HR support and L5 HR business partner apprenticeship
 - AAT L2 and L3 qualifications into the L3 accounting assistant apprenticeship
- Reviewing service structures in the highways and transport team to create entry level opportunities has been completed and we now have 3 employees enrolled to undertake a civil engineering degree apprenticeship commencing in September 2019.
- Creating opportunities for a level 6 chartered manager degree and/or a level 7 senior leaders masters as an apprenticeship. We are also in trailblazer groups to help shape the CIPS (Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply) level 6, and a higher level teaching assistant Level 4 apprenticeships, working collaboratively with Somerset, Hampshire, Rochdale, Derbyshire, Manchester, East Sussex, Walsall, East Riding and Bexley councils.

b) Social care apprenticeships

- Exploring options to use the levy funding for social care and social work apprentices within the council, and with our provider services in health and social care. Whilst some of the standards required are not yet available e.g. health and social care level 4, the new social worker apprenticeship standard (which covers both children's and adults) has now been released and we are expecting this to be available for delivery from September 2019.
- Limiting recruitment of roles graded C to E to be apprenticeship opportunities.

c) Care leavers

- Continuing to raise the profile of the council with care leavers as an employer of choice, as well as providing them with valuable employability skills and experience and pathways to apprenticeships, with the aim of encouraging these young people to apply for and secure apprenticeships with the council, and with other employers across Wiltshire. Whilst we are continuing with the initiatives included in the previous report, we are also:
 - Sending out questionnaires to all personal advisors asking them for information about what types of careers care leavers would like. Using this information, the apprenticeship and training coordinator has created a list of matching apprenticeships that would be suitable.
 - Continuing to work in partnership with the employment and skills team to support care leavers and NEETs to ensure the development of an education, employment and training (EET) pathway.
 - In 2019 we will be looking at the opportunity to transfer some of our apprenticeship levy funding to enable care leavers to access apprenticeships in areas they are interested in such as hairdressing, retail or other career paths as anecdotally we understand that these are paths that are more appealing to some of the young people that our Building Bridges team are working with.

d) Apprenticeships in schools

- Continuing to encourage the take up of apprentices in schools which has been slow due to lack of apprenticeship standards being available. However, there are now the following suitable apprenticeship standards available:
 - School Business Manager
 - Supporting Teaching & Learning
 - Commis Chef
 - Business Administration
 - Facilities Maintenance
 - Assistant Accountant
- The apprenticeship & training coordinator has attended right choice events in the county to raise awareness of apprenticeships in schools (maintained and voluntary controlled schools) and apprenticeship advice and support is now available to schools via this website.

e) Commissioning training provision and managing the councils levy account

- Continuing to conduct procurement exercises to ensure the council has a framework of preferred training providers, as one single training provider cannot meet all of our apprenticeship requirements. We have been procuring using the Nottingham directory of approved apprenticeship providers (DAAP) and collectively with our STP network through Salisbury NHS Trust. In addition to procurement regulations, the council is also required to demonstrate that it is securing value for money, and has to meet the apprenticeship levy rules relating to procurement of training providers published by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

f) Levy opportunities to support Wiltshire's economy

- Providing opportunities for transferring up to 10% of the council's apprenticeship levy to smaller firms in 2018/19. From April 2019, the government has increased this figure to enable employers to transfer up to 25% of their apprenticeship levy to smaller firms. Steps to identify organisations who would benefit from this are being taken and the focus is on providers of social care who the council already work with, and organisations that could provide apprenticeship opportunities for our care leavers (see paragraph 12c).

Financial considerations

13. The apprenticeship levy is charged at a rate of 0.5% of an employer's pay bill and is collected monthly by the HMRC through PAYE deductions. Based on current calculations this means that the council's contribution to the levy per annum will be approx. £0.47m, with schools (maintained and VC) contributing £0.53m to the same levy account. These figures are approximate as our staff numbers fluctuate and, therefore, so does our employer's pay bill.
14. Funding for apprenticeship training stays in our digital account for 24 months and then any unused funding will disappear.
15. The total value of the 145 apprenticeships already in place in terms of the draw on our apprenticeship levy account is £1,044,761.00. This is the total amount that we will have used from our levy account once the apprenticeship training for these staff is completed. The value of each apprentice varies, with a greater draw on our account for those apprentices completing professional qualifications. Our balance in the council's apprenticeship levy fund is just under £1.5m with approximately £72k being deposited monthly.

Equalities considerations

16. The apprenticeship programme continues to support the council in fulfilling its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty/PSED (2010) through increasing equality of opportunity and improving life chances, particularly for those groups named within the Equality Act (e.g. disabled people) and vulnerable groups such as care leavers.

Risks

17. A lack of engagement from services in recruiting new apprentices and/or converting existing staff to apprentices is a risk to the achievement of the public sector target for apprentices.
18. There is a continued risk that the capacity in HR&OD required to support the apprenticeship programme may not continue to be available. The cost of the new apprenticeship and training coordinator role and apprenticeship and training assistant has been absorbed within the HR&OD revenue budget, against which there are further savings targets for 2019/20. In addition the service is meeting increased demand as a result of significant transformation programmes that are taking place, for example digital, ASC (adult social care) transformation and FACT (families & children transformation). The position will be monitored and steps will be taken in consultation with the corporate leadership team to address this when required.

Conclusion

19. There is still some work to do to develop the understanding of the opportunities the levy can provide with some services, and plans to target services to employ apprentices or convert existing staff to apprentices to support their own succession plans and to support personal development and career progression for their staff will assist with this.
20. Further steps to support care leavers in accessing apprenticeship opportunities with the council will continue.
21. New apprenticeship standards will continue to be developed and as they become available HR&OD will continue to work with services to identify how they can make use of these new standards to aid recruitment and retention issues, for example in social work.

Recommendations

22. It is recommended that the Children's Select Committee note the contents of this report and the progress that has been made with the recruitment of apprentices, and the use of the levy for upskilling current staff.

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Director, HR&OD
13 December 2018

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**The [Building Bridges programme](#) supports people across Swindon and Wiltshire who are facing significant challenges in being able to develop their skills, access education or move towards the world of work. Support is available for all those aged 15 and over. Taking part in the programme is entirely voluntary and all advice and support is offered free of charge.*

The programme is a partnership of local organisations, including Wiltshire Council Employment and Skills and Family Learning teams, who are experts at supporting people and giving them the skills and confidence they need to move forward. The programme works with people on a one-to-one basis to help them address the challenges and barriers they are facing and develop a personalised plan to help them achieve their goals at a pace they are comfortable with.

Each participant will have someone who works with them as a mentor, helping them to access support from across the

partnership. These mentors can also work with family members, carers, key workers or other people supporting them if the participant give permission.

The programme is jointly funded by the Big Lottery Fund and the European Social Fund.

Number of Apprenticeships per Corporate Director Area (as at 14 December 2018)

Corporate Directors					
Carlton Brand Adult Care, Public Health & Protection		Terence Herbert Children, Education & Communities		Alistair Cunningham Growth, Investment & Place	
Apprenticeship	No. enrolled	Apprenticeship	No. enrolled	Apprenticeship	No. enrolled
L3 HR Support		L3 HR Support	1	L3 HR Support	
L5 HR Consultant/Business Partner		L5 HR Consultant/Business Partner	5	L5 HR Consultant/Business Partner	
L4 Data Analyst		L4 Data Analyst	2	L4 Data Analyst	1
L3 Business Administration	1	L3 Business Administration	12	L3 Business Administration	5
L4 Business Administration		L4 Business Administration	1	L4 Business Administration	1
CMI L3 Diploma in Principles of Leadership & Management	6	CMI L3 Diploma in Principles of Leadership & Management	8	CMI L3 Diploma in Principles of Leadership & Management	16
CMI L5 Diploma in Leadership & Management	9	CMI L5 Diploma in Leadership & Management	15	CMI L5 Diploma in Leadership & Management	21
L3 Assistant Accountant		L3 Assistant Accountant		L3 Assistant Accountant	4
L3 Building Control		L3 Building Control		L3 Building Control	1
L3 Customer Service	1	L3 Customer Service		L3 Customer Service	
Level 4 Civil Engineering		Level 4 Civil Engineering		Level 4 Civil Engineering	6
L3 Payroll Assistant		L3 Payroll Assistant	1	L3 Payroll Assistant	
L3 Children & Young people's Workforce		L3 Children & Young people's Workforce	3	L3 Children & Young people's Workforce	
L5 Children, young people and families		L5 Children, young people and families	1	L5 Children, young people and families	
Junior Energy Manager		Junior Energy Manager		Junior Energy Manager	5
L2 Light vehicle maintenance		L2 Light vehicle maintenance		L2 Light vehicle maintenance	1
BCS L3 Digital marketer		BCS L3 Digital marketer	2	BCS L3 Digital marketer	
Total	17	Total	51	Total	61

Number of, & type of, apprenticeships per School (as at 14 December 2018)

Schools			
School Name	Town	Apprenticeship	No. enrolled
St Nicholas Primary CofE	Bromham	Supporting teaching and learning	1
Westbury Leigh CofE Primary	Westbury	Supporting teaching and learning	1
Staverton Primary	Staverton	Supporting teaching and learning	1
Bellefield School	Bellefield	Supporting teaching and learning	4
Hullavington CE Primary	Hullavington	Business Admin	1
Startford Sub Castle Primary	Startford	School Business Manager	1
Ramsbury School	Ramsbury	Supporting teaching and learning	1
St Nicolas Primary	Chippenham	Supporting teaching and learning	1
Grove Primary	Trowbridge	Commis Chef	1
Kiwi School	Bulford Camp	Business Admin	1
Kiwi School	Bulford Camp	Supporting teaching and learning	3
		Total	16