



EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 28 FEBRUARY 2019

APPRENTICESHIPS

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Employment Committee on the progress made with the County Council's apprenticeship scheme following the introduction of the Government's Apprenticeship Levy in 2017.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. In May 2017, the Government introduced a national Apprenticeship Levy. This required a revised approach to increase the number of apprentices across the Council, thereby ensuring the Levy fund was utilised effectively.
3. At its meeting in June 2017, the Employment Committee endorsed the Apprenticeship Strategy and received a further update on progress made with the apprenticeship scheme and the implementation of the new Apprenticeship Strategy in October 2017. This report gives a further update on progress.

Background

4. Since the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy, numerous apprenticeship standards have been developed and become available nationally. The new national apprenticeship standards offer qualifications at a number of levels, covering a wide range of job roles and at various levels of academic achievement, for example, up to Levels 4 and 5 (equivalent to a Foundation Degree) and Levels 6 and 7 (equivalent to a Bachelor of Arts or Master's Degree). There are a large number of different standards currently being undertaken across the County Council (**See Appendix 1**).
5. In September 2018 all public sector bodies were required to submit an update on progress to Government. This outlined the number of apprentices being employed and the progress made in achieving the Public Sector Apprenticeship target i.e. that 2.3% were apprentices.

6. Following the Government's publication of the public sector data, work was undertaken to benchmark the Council's performance against that of other County Councils.
7. As of 31st March 2018 the percentage of the Council's workforce employed as apprentices was 2.2%. This means that Leicestershire is the second highest performing County Council in the country after Cumbria. **(See Appendix 2)**
8. There are currently 197 apprentices employed by the Council across all departments and Maintained Schools:

Corporate Resources	88
Maintained Schools	51
Environment and Transport	26
Children and Families Services	11
Public Health	10
Adults & Communities	9
Chief Executive's	2

9. In addition to the above, a selection process has been taking place in conjunction with Warwick University in both the Adults and Communities Department and Children and Family Services Department to recruit candidates for the Social Work Apprenticeship programme, starting in April 2019. The interest from staff in both departments has been very high. Following the selection process there will be 10 Social Work Apprentices in Adults and Communities and 6 in Children and Family Services, It is expected that this will evolve into a rolling programme with a new intake every 12 months and with cohorts running concurrently within both departments. This will result in a regular supply of newly qualified degree level Social Workers, helping to achieve a number of long-term recruitment and retention objectives.
10. To support the Leadership work stream within the Council's People Strategy, Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) qualifications at levels 3 and 5 are currently being offered through the Apprenticeship Levy. Consideration is also being given to other management qualifications that can support managers in increasing their capability and effectiveness.
11. As more national apprenticeship standards become available, work will continue to increase the uptake across the Council, enabling opportunities for both existing staff and new starters to the organisation.
12. As a part of the Council's Corporate Parenting responsibility, six apprenticeship vacancies have been ring fenced for Leicestershire Care Leavers. The aspiration is to have one care leaver apprentice in each of the six departments.

13. Care Leavers who may not be 'work ready' and are unable to currently undertake an apprenticeship, are enrolling on the Traineeship scheme run by the Adult Learning Service. This supports young people with functional skills, Maths and English, C.V. writing and completion of job applications.

Recommendations

14. It is recommended that the Committee notes the progress that has been achieved to date and the approach that is being taken to further develop apprenticeships within the Council.

Background Papers

Report to Employment Committee October 2017

<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=212&MId=4971&Ver=4>

Apprenticeship Standards:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding-bands>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

15. None.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 – Apprenticeships currently being undertaken by the Council

Appendix 2 – National comparisons with County Councils

Equality and Human Rights Implications/Other Impact Assessments

16. The current approach seeks to ensure that changes that impact employees as apprentices promote greater equality, increase access to training and are implemented in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.

Officer to Contact

Paul Lewis

Learning and Development Manager

Tel: (0116) 3054070

paul.lewis@leics.gov.uk

This page is intentionally left blank