
Apprenticeship Strategy

Committee considering report:	Personnel Committee on 9 December 2020
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Jo Stewart
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	4 November 2020
Report Author:	Abigail Witting
Forward Plan Ref:	PC3968

1 Purpose of the Report

This report seeks approval of an Apprenticeship Strategy and associated documents for the Council as well as a proposal for additional resource to support delivery of this key project/Council priority.

2 Recommendations

Personnel Committee is recommended to approve the Apprenticeship Strategy and associated documents as well as a proposal for additional resource to support delivery.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	<p>In order to ensure delivery of the strategy and to maximise opportunities a pressure bid has been submitted to budget board for inclusion in the 2021/22 HR budget as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assistant HR Officer post from 0.6 to 1.0 FTE at a cost of £16,060 based on 2021/22 salaries. <p>Financial Support has already been agreed in respect of funding to assist with the salaries for disadvantaged apprenticeships. A budget of £125k per annum for 4 years from 2020/21 was approved and is coded to CC 40104.</p> <p>The apprenticeship levy was introduced in April 2017 and each month 0.5% is paid into the levy pot. In the current year this equates to approx. £16,870 per month on average for Corporate and £19,450 per month on average for Schools. Funds not used expire after 24 months.</p>

Human Resource:	N/A- see comment above about additional resource within HR			
Legal:	The Apprenticeship Levy includes a public sector target of 2.3% of headcount (including schools). Whilst currently there are no penalties for not meeting the target, performance against the target is monitored through annual performance reporting to the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This strategy seeks to minimise the Council's risk and balances the requirements of both the levy spend and target against achieving the aims and ambitions we feel are appropriate locally.			
Risk Management:	The risks associated with this strategy relate to loss of levy funds and not meeting the apprenticeship target which could result in reputational damage. The strategy aims to minimise these risks by balancing spending the levy against number of apprenticeships and therefore demonstrating value for money for West Berkshire residents.			
Property:	N/A			
Policy:	This strategy is in response to national policy on Apprenticeships which was introduced in April 2017.			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	X			This strategy will positively impact on the workforce and community by creating learning and development opportunity for existing staff and creating new roles and opportunities for our community particularly those who are disadvantaged.

B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	X			This strategy aims to support our disadvantaged residents into employment including our young people who have been disproportionately affected by the COVID pandemic.
Environmental Impact:		X		
Health Impact:	X			This strategy will have a positive impact on the wellbeing of existing staff and residents particularly those who are disadvantaged in terms of accessing employment. It is widely accepted that work can improve/support health and wellbeing.
ICT Impact:		X		
Digital Services Impact:		X		
Council Strategy Priorities:	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes • Support everyone to reach their full potential • Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire
Core Business:	X			<p>Supports Priorities 3 & 4 of the SEND Strategy and Priorities 3 & 4 of the Autism Strategy as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to improve post 16, education, learning, employment, and training. (Strategic Priority 3 SEND Strategy) • We want to develop positive transitions for young people with SEND to enable them to prepare for adulthood. (Strategic Priority 4 SEND Strategy) • Autistic adults are able to find employment or volunteering opportunities and are supported to remain employed. (Strategic Priority 3 Autism Strategy)

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enabling and encouraging Autism Friendly environments (Strategic Priority 4 Autism Strategy).
Data Impact:		X		
Consultation and Engagement:	<p>Consultation has taken place with the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human Resources Apprenticeship Strategy Group- Dominic Boeck, Joanne Stewart, Donna Fox, Garth Simpson, Jane Seymour, Jeremy Cottam, Mark Browne, Nikki Steven. Sean Murphy, Steve Masters, Toby Green All Heads of Service & Executive Directors Sarah Clarke- Service Director Pamela Voss- Equality & Diversity Officer. Workforce Board (includes Unison)- April Peberdy, Catherine Greaves, Dave Pearson, James Gore, Janet Weekes, Karen Felgate, Laura Knowles, Laura Mayes, Linda Dobraszczyk, Lynne Doherty, Maria Shepherd, Mike Harling, Nick Carter, Rachel Johnson, Sharon Armour, Sonia Harris, Stuart Clark Gabrielle Mancini & Sam Robbins- Economic Development 			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 The apprenticeship levy was introduced in April 2017. At that time, the Council (via the Steering Group) focused on using the funds in the levy fund to upskill existing staff. Now apprenticeships are well established and we have had time to review our progress we were keen to create a more ambitious strategy that broadened the remit to include supporting our vulnerable children and adults and local businesses as well as
- 4.2 This report seeks approval of the Apprenticeship Strategy and the associated documents which seeks to capture both the current practice in relation to apprenticeships and our future ambitions in relation to supporting disadvantaged/vulnerable children and adults within West Berkshire. In addition, the supporting documents seek to provide support and advice for staff, managers, schools, and businesses.
- 4.3 In addition the report asks for consideration of additional resource to ensure effective delivery of the strategy. The success of the work so far has been largely attributable to the enthusiasm, efforts and personal investment of those involved. As this is such a key project which links to a number of other strategies and is a Council priority for members and Officers it is vital we ensure ongoing success through appropriate HR resources. In order to ensure delivery we request the following additional resources:
- Increase funding for Assistant HR Officer from 0.6 to 1.0 FTE at a cost of £13,157 based on 2020/21 salaries.

4.4 The Strategy contains the following ambitions:

1. Identify apprenticeship opportunities and embed these across the council.
2. Actively promote apprenticeships within the Council both as a recruitment tool, as part of retention strategies, and encouraging a learning and development culture.
3. Utilise higher level apprenticeships to support succession planning, personnel development, recruitment & retention and developing future leaders.
4. Maximise the use of levy spend and increase the number of apprenticeships starts, with a view to meeting our public-sector target.
5. In the capacity of Corporate Parent, we will look to enable apprenticeships for our Looked After Children, SEND pupils and NEETS.
6. Encourage work experience placements and/or traineeships as a pathway to an apprenticeship.
7. Promote apprenticeships to local businesses within West Berkshire.

4.5 Approval of the above points is recommended as it will enable the Council to achieve its commitment to provide equality and diversity as set out in its Equality in Employment Policy as well as its strategic priorities in the Council Strategy, Autism Strategy and the SEND Strategy. Having an ambitious Apprenticeship Strategy makes it clear that the Council is an advocate for apprenticeships, values learning and development and is willing to “put its money where its mouth is” and support our residents and in particular our vulnerable children and adults.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

5.1 This report seeks approval of the Apprenticeship Strategy and associated documents to raise awareness of apprenticeships across the council and the wider community, provide support for staff, managers, and schools in accessing apprenticeships and in supporting apprentices.

Background

5.2 In April 2017, the Government relaunched apprenticeships alongside the plans for the Apprenticeship Levy in a bid to recruit three million new apprentices by 2020. All organisations with a pay bill of over £3 million are required to pay a levy of 0.5% of their pay bill each month into the levy which equates to approximately £0.5 million per year being allocated to the levy fund. Organisations with more than 250 people were set an apprenticeship target for new starts each year of 2.3% of the headcount.

5.3 This document sets out the Apprenticeship Strategy for West Berkshire Council both as an employer and as key stakeholder in the future of our communities including the promotion of apprenticeships to other local businesses both within West Berkshire and as part of a pan-Berkshire initiative.

Proposals

5.4 The Council has committed to promote equality and diversity in its equality in employment policy. Implementing an apprenticeship strategy will support the Council

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in achieving this by developing a learning culture and supporting disadvantaged/vulnerable children and adults into work and thereby being an inclusive workplace.

- 5.5 By having an Apprenticeship Strategy and associated documents the Council can encourage staff, managers, and schools to study for/take on apprentices by making the process easy to understand and for them to support apprentices.
- 5.6 By working with local businesses to promote the use of apprenticeships the Council can support SMEs to take on apprentices (using levy transfer from the Council and other businesses) and thereby improve employment opportunities for our residents.
- 5.7 Points 5.5 and 5.6 above help the Council to achieve their public sector target and maximise the use of the levy fund and thereby provide value for money and mitigate the risks of reputational damage.

6 Other options considered

The option of not having an Apprenticeship Strategy was considered as the Council has not had such a document in the past nor since the introduction of the levy in April 2017. However by having a strategy we underpin our long standing commitment to apprenticeships and seek to become an advocate for apprenticeships to improve opportunities for our existing staff and the wider community.

7 Conclusion

Personnel Committee is recommended to approve the Apprenticeship Strategy and its associated documents in order to support existing staff and the wider community in accessing apprenticeship opportunities.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment
- 8.2 Appendix B – Data Protection Impact Assessment
- 8.3 Appendix C – Apprenticeship Strategy
- 8.4 Appendix D – Apprenticeship Action Plan
- 8.5 Appendix E- Levy Transfer Policy
- 8.6 Appendix F- Levy Transfer Process
- 8.7 Appendix G – Apprenticeship Procurement Strategy
- 8.8 Appendix H – Apprenticeship Procurement Process
- 8.9 Appendix I – 9 Steps to Recruiting an Apprentice
- 8.10 Appendix J- Schools Apprenticeship Information Pack

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8.11 Appendix K- Apprenticeship Expenses Policy

8.12 Appendix L- Job Mentor Training

8.13 Appendix M- One-page Profile

8.14 Appendix N- Apprenticeship Steering Group Terms of Reference

8.15 Appendix O- Quotes from apprentices

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☒ No: ☐

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval ☐

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council ☐

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position ☐

Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or associated Task Groups within preceding six months ☐

Item is Urgent Key Decision ☐

Report is to note only ☐

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Document Control

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Author:	Abigail Witting		
Owning Service	Human Resources		

Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1	29.10.2020	Apprenticeship Strategy created	
2			

Appendix A

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) - Stage One

What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Executive to make?	To approve the Apprenticeship Strategy
Summary of relevant legislation:	The Equality Act 2010
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's priorities for improvement?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Name of Budget Holder:	Abigail Witting
Name of Service/Directorate:	Strategy & Governance
Name of assessor:	Abigail Witting
Date of assessment:	29 th October 2020
Version and release date (if applicable):	V1 November 2020

Is this a		Is this policy, strategy, function, or service	
Policy	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	New or proposed	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Strategy	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Function	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Is changing	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Service	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

(1) What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To support disadvantaged residents to access better outcomes via employment and to provide learning and development opportunities for existing staff.
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure our vulnerable children and adults achieve better outcomes • Support everyone to reach their full potential • Support businesses to start, develop and thrive in West Berkshire
Outcomes:	The Council increases its support of apprenticeships through upskilling existing staff, supporting disadvantaged residents in particular young people and

	those with SEND, levy transfers and acts as an ambassador for apprenticeships in the local area.
Benefits:	We continue to develop a highly skilled workforce for out our future needs, and we improve outcomes for vulnerable children and adults as well as supporting local businesses.

(2) Which groups might be affected and how? Is it positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this?		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	Improved outcomes for young people who have been disproportionately affected by COVID	
Disability	Improved outcomes for those who are disadvantaged due to a disability.	
Gender Reassignment	N/A	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	N/A	
Pregnancy and Maternity	N/A	
Race	N/A	
Religion or Belief	N/A	
Sex	N/A	
Sexual Orientation	N/A	
Further Comments:		
The strategy will have a positive impact on existing staff supporting learning and development opportunities		

(3) Result	
Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
This strategy seeks to improve outcomes from disadvantage groups who are currently experiencing inequality.	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
This strategy seeks to improve outcomes from disadvantage groups who are currently experiencing inequality. In addition to seeks to have a positive impact on staff by promoting learning and development opportunities.	
(4) Identify next steps as appropriate:	
EqlA Stage 2 required	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Owner of EqlA Stage Two:	
Timescale for EqlA Stage Two:	

Name: Abigail Witting

Date: 29th October 2020

Please now forward this completed form to Pamela Voss, Equality and Diversity Officer (pamela.voss@westberks.gov.uk), for publication on the WBC website.

Appendix B

Data Protection Impact Assessment – Stage One

The General Data Protection Regulations require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for certain projects that have a significant impact on the rights of data subjects.

Should you require additional guidance in completing this assessment, please refer to the Information Management Officer via dp@westberks.gov.uk

Directorate:	Resources
Service:	Strategy & Governance
Team:	Human Resources
Lead Officer:	Abigail Witting
Title of Project/System:	Apprenticeship Strategy
Date of Assessment:	29 th October 2020

Do you need to do a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)?

	Yes	No
Will you be processing SENSITIVE or “special category” personal data? <i>The data being processed relates to employees and is covered by an existing privacy notice. No data will be processed in relation to the introduction of the apprenticeship strategy itself</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will you be processing data on a large scale?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will your project or system have a “social media” dimension?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will any decisions be automated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will your project/system involve CCTV or monitoring of an area accessible to the public?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will you be using the data you collect to match or cross-reference against another existing set of data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will you be using any novel, or technologically advanced systems or processes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

If you answer “Yes” to any of the above, you will probably need to complete [Data Protection Impact Assessment - Stage Two](#). If you are unsure, please consult with the Information Management Officer before proceeding.