



APPRENTICESHIP STRATEGY 2019 -2021

Policy and Performance Committee 12th December 2018

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APPRENTICESHIP STRATEGY

1. Introduction and purpose

Broxtowe Borough Council ('the Council') is committed to investing in its staff, ensuring that skills gaps are filled in order to continue to deliver an excellent, value for money service to the public. The Council's 2016-20 Corporate Plan states 'Broxtowe...a great place where people enjoy living, working and spending leisure time' and identifies Business Growth as one of its priorities.

Apprenticeships within the Council are seen and valued as high quality pathways to successful careers, providing opportunities for new and existing employees to develop, and which assist the Council in meeting its current and future skills needs.

The implementation of the Apprenticeship Strategy and utilisation of the Apprenticeship Levy funds available will assist the Council in its commitment to developing opportunities for people. Apprenticeship opportunities will also ensure that the Council continues to up-skill its workforce and reduce the percentage of staff with no formal qualifications.

2. Background

In April 2017, the Government introduced the Apprenticeship Levy (the Levy) which is applicable to all UK employers with an annual wage bill of £3 million or more. This is to ensure that by 2020, there is a commitment to an additional 3 million apprenticeships in order to boost productivity by investing in human capital and developing vocational skills. The Levy is charged at 0.5% of the annual pay bill based on Class 1 National Insurance Contributions via PAYE (Pay As You Earn) alongside tax and National Insurance. The Levy is intended to ensure that relevant funding is available to provide further opportunities.

In addition, the Government will apply a 10% top-up to the funds for spending on apprenticeship training. Therefore for every £1 that enters an employer's Digital Apprenticeship Account, employers get another £0.10 from Government. The monthly top-up will be applied at the same time the funds enter the digital account.

Each monthly contribution and Government top up will expire after 24 months if not used to purchase apprenticeship training and assessment. However, the Council can award up to 10% of unspent levy to a partner organisation.

The Government also requires public sector organisations with over 250 employees to have an average of 2.3% of their workforce to be apprentices over

the period 1 April 2017–31 March 2021. Based on Broxtowe Borough Council's current headcount, this equates to 11 apprentices in training over the period.

3. Corporate Vision and Aims

The aim of this strategy accords with the Council's stated Vision and Values which are:

Vision

Broxtowe... a great place where people enjoy living, working and spending leisure time

Values

Going the extra mile - a strong, caring focus on the needs of all communities

Ready for change - innovation and readiness for change

Employees - valuing employees and enabling the active involvement of everyone

Always improving - continuous improvement and delivering value for money

Transparent - integrity and professional competence

4. Overall aim

The aim of the Apprenticeship Strategy is that Broxtowe Borough Council will optimise use of its apprenticeship levy contributions whilst meeting the government public sector apprenticeship targets by way of a high quality 'Broxtowe Apprenticeship Scheme'.

5. Objectives

- Achieve the target of 11 apprentices in training with Broxtowe Borough Council over the period 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2021.
- Maximise use of the training courses available via the Levy for existing members of staff where development needs are identified, and where possible, provide apprenticeship opportunities.
- Minimise the costs of training and assessment, where possible, by working with other local authorities when purchasing apprenticeship provision from training providers.
- Actively promote apprenticeships within the Council as valuable recruitment, retention and progression opportunities and develop a pro-apprenticeship culture amongst managers and staff.
- Increase the range of vocational areas that apprenticeships are offered in.
- Offer apprenticeships at a wider range of levels with a particular focus on growth at level 3 and higher apprenticeship levels and where a skills shortage has been identified.

- Identify skill-gaps and scarce skill subject areas and consider whether they can be met with an appropriate apprenticeship qualification to ensure succession planning for the future.

6. How the objectives will be achieved

- Work with training providers and other local authorities and partner organisations in order to provide opportunities through the Levy.
- Engage senior managers to ensure that aims in relation to apprenticeships are positively communicated.
- Challenge managers to consider offering up vacant posts as possible apprenticeships via General Management Team.
- Promote externally available apprenticeships via social media in order to communicate to a wider audience and demographic.
- Continue to provide work experience opportunities for young people to provide an insight into careers in Local Government and show that there is a clear path from work experience and apprenticeships to further, higher, managerial roles within the Council.

7. How success will be measured

- Meeting the Government's proposed target of 2.3% of our workforce to be apprentices over the period 1 April 2017–31 March 2021
- Number of apprenticeships created
- Number of apprenticeships successfully completed
- Number of apprentices who gain further employment with the Council upon course/qualification completion
- Number of apprentices who gain further employment with an organisation other than the Council upon course/qualification completion
- % of Levy funds are 'drawn down' and utilised fully to develop opportunities and develop the workforce.
- Number of work experience opportunities offered

8. Delivery of the Apprenticeship Strategy

Responsibility for delivery of the strategy will rest with the Human Resources Section. That section will create an Action Plan to reflect the overall aim and objectives of this strategy.

9. Reporting

Progress against specific actions will be reported to General Management Team and to elected members by way of performance information reported to committees.