

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

16 April 2015

BRIEFING NOTE – FOR INFORMATION

Title: Support For Apprentices

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Recommendations:

Members to note the current position of work in progress which introduces additional support to apprentices in order to improve their experience within Bristol City Council.

In addition, the intention is to submit a related report to the July 2015 HR Committee to consider the training allowances currently paid to apprentices. It will ask Members to consider an additional Care Leavers' allowance in order to increase the participation of Care Leavers within the apprenticeship scheme. The allowance will set out to reduce the negative financial impact experienced by Care Leavers undertaking an apprenticeship.

Support for Apprentices in Year 1 and Year 2

It was suggested that action be considered to increase the retention rates of apprentices, which is currently 84%, and to focus on support for apprentices to improve their experience in the workplace.

We also know both anecdotally and in managing the Apprentices' case work e.g. disciplinaries etc that many issues relate to young apprentices not being 'work ready'. In addition, we are also aware that some Managers may require a different approach to managing apprentices; one based on a supportive and coaching based style of management. Also, we understand that further clarity at interview stage in terms of the roles offered to apprentices would better equip young people for their new roles.

In view of these issues the following support has been put in place:

1. The one day induction course now includes: acceptable and unacceptable behaviours in the workplace – covering use of mobile phones, Instant Messenger, time keeping and highlights the Code of Conduct.
2. Introduction of a recruitment course for Managers recruiting Apprentices. This covers how Managers can support their new apprentices from recruitment stage to managing them once in post. This will be rolled out by August 2015 in time for the next recruitment drive. It is hoped that the role clarity offered at interview stage will be invaluable to the apprentice.
3. Implemented monthly mentoring meetings for apprentices with the HR Change and Performance Team who support apprentices. This is in order to be proactive and to respond to any potential issues.
4. Care leavers gain a guaranteed interview when applying for apprenticeship roles.
5. All Apprentices will be offered a Customer Service or Citizen Service course to build confidence in dealing with people. It is envisaged that this will help in how apprentices respond to people around them too.

The reasons for apprentices exiting the apprenticeship programme have been analysed for the period Aprils 2014 – March 2015.

<u>Reasons for Leaving</u>	<u>Number of apprentices</u>
Pregnancy	1
Obtained positions with partner organisations	3
To train to be a teacher	1
Further or higher education	1
Not able to obtain a position within the Council at end of apprenticeship	2
Ill Health reasons	1
Unknown	1
Total	10

In terms of the reasons apprentices are exiting the Council, we can see from the above information, that 5 apprentices or 50% of those apprentices leaving the Council did so because they did not obtain a role within the Council.

There are future plans to consider various initiatives to ensure that opportunities exist for apprentices to develop into permanent roles, within the Council. These include the possibility of offering career paths and aligning apprenticeships to skills shortage areas.

The following pilot schemes are being designed to cover skills shortages:

- ICT
- Housing
- Highways

The above roles will ensure that apprentices are still treated as trainees and are not covering vacancies for these professional roles but instead are offered the appropriate training and development, to eventually obtain a permanent position within an established career path.

The apprenticeship scheme has an evaluation process and these support mechanisms will be monitored. It is hoped that we can evaluate what has been put in place and determine whether further support is required.

Helen Sinclair-Ross

HR Change and Performance Manager.