

HR Committee

26th April 2018



Report of: Service Director, Education, Learning and Skills

Title: Apprenticeships and the Levy

Ward: N/A

Officer(s) Presenting Report: Jane Taylor (Head of Service, Employment Skills and Learning)
Darren Perkins (Apprenticeship Manager)

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Recommendation

That the Committee notes the report.

Summary

This report provides the Committee with an update regarding the establishment of the Bristol Apprenticeship Service following Cabinet approval on 27th June 2017.

The significant issues in the report are:

- A cross Council Apprenticeship Steering Group is helping shape a new Apprenticeship Strategy
- The Apprenticeship Service now has a dedicated Team Leader to focus on BCC apprenticeship development and recruitment
- Commissioning and procurement processes have been developed and an initial round of applications and tenders are being processed
- The Council's initial plan to supplement Levy funds with ESFA Non-levy funding has been impacted due to unsuccessful tender – this is being addressed through interim measures, including Section 106
- The Council is leading one of the '5 Cities' Apprenticeship Diversity Hubs with the National Apprenticeship Service and the Combined Authority
- By October 2018 we are aiming to start approximately 100 new apprenticeships from Level 2 to Level 6

Levy and Apprenticeship Reforms

1. Since the last full report August 2017 significant changes have been made to BCC systems to manage the Levy funded Apprenticeships offer and enable the Council to fulfil its Public Sector Duty by 2021.
2. A Bristol Apprenticeship Steering Group has been formed, Chaired by Sue Rogers, Service Director Education, Learning and Skills with cross-council department and Trade Union representation. This group is currently developing a 3-year strategy and implementation plan, which is linking to the Council's Workforce Development Plan.
3. Bristol Apprenticeship Service has been formed and a Team Leader appointed (March 2018) to manage operations – including performance management of delivery partners and support/awareness raising within BCC teams.
4. Following an Education and Skills Funding Agency procurement exercise the Council was unsuccessful in gaining a contract to deliver apprenticeships for non-Levy paying employers in the period April 2018 to March 2019. This has created a significant delay of 7-months in the Council's ability to fully implement our own apprenticeship delivery as an Employer Provider. A remedial action plan is in place to sustain provision for 12 months – including Section 106 investment. In discussion with Education and Skills Funding Agency the Council will offer 'Programme- Led' apprenticeships to ensure services to small construction employers will continue. This arrangement will lead to small local employers accessing the Digital Apprenticeship Service April 2019.
5. BCC has been invited to and has agreed to lead one of 5 National Apprenticeship Service Core Cities Apprentice Diversity Hubs with an over-arching objective of increasing Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic apprentice starts by 200 by 2020. This is a partnership programme which will coordinate under the 'Works' banner to ensure employer involvement is maximised and activities are aligned to Learning City partnership priorities also.
6. An extensive procurement process, using a 'Dynamic Purchasing System' has been instigated and so far 15 training providers approved to bid for apprentice delivery contracts as BCC develops its offer March 2018 using the DPS we issued 3 'Lots' covering:
 - a. Leadership and Management (Level 3 to 6 apprenticeships) – aimed at existing staff for roles including Team Leadership/Supervision; School Business Management, Project Management, Operations Management and Chartered Management = 70 start opportunities with Levy spend of £533k.
 - b. Health and Social Care (Level 2, 3 and 5 apprenticeships) – a mix of existing staff and new recruits (e.g. through Proud to Care Reablement campaign) for roles in Adult Care = 70 start opportunities with Levy spend of £300k.

c. Business and Administration (Level 2 and 3 apprenticeships) – a mix of new recruits and existing staff = 90 start opportunities with Levy spend of £200k.

Responses to the tender information are in process of being assessed and evaluations of bids are being completed with support of relevant departments where possible. Providers have been encouraged to offer co-design opportunities so we can ensure the programmes suitably match our needs. Within Leadership and Management we are also requesting delivery support to provide a Level 5 Management Certificate for participants on the 'Stepping Up' programme.

Further significant 'Call Offs' to follow in relation to: Teaching and Support in Local Managed Schools and Children's Centres; Accounting and Finance and Children's Care.

Currently in discussion with Open University regarding our first Degree Apprenticeship and there are a host of other opportunities being considered/developed e.g. Graphic Design; Social Work; Law; Civil Engineering, Chartered Building Surveying and Community Development.

7. Initial rounds of apprentice recruitment are underway with 9 starts to new scheme joining the Council 19th March 2018 on Business Administration programmes and a further 11 similar opportunities on offer (interviews 16th to 20th April 2018). Early indications are that the Council will continue its good record of recruiting apprentices from diverse backgrounds but that we have increased the % of 16 to 18 year olds seeking opportunities through our apprenticeship scheme. Whilst these numbers maintain apprentice numbers at April 2017 levels the new offer will start to impact numbers from Autumn 2019.
8. From April 2018, Bristol City Council can elect to share 10% of its apprenticeship levy with external employers. This provides an opportunity to build the capacity of small and medium enterprises and partner employers, including local businesses that supply critical services to Bristol citizens and communities. However, this reform will not reach its full potential for some time as Education and Skills Funding Agency are restricting its use during a pilot stage of indeterminate length.

Consultation

9. Internal
Not required because this report is for information only.

10. External
Not required because this report is for information only.

Proposal

11. That the Committee notes the report.

Other Options Considered

12. None.

Risk Assessment

13. Not required because this report is for information only.

Public Sector Equality Duties

14a) Before making a decision, section 149 Equality Act 2010 requires that each decision-maker considers the need to promote equality for persons with the following “protected characteristics”: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. Each decision-maker must, therefore, have due regard to the need to:

- i) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Equality Act 2010.
- ii) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to --
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic;
 - take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it (in relation to disabled people, this includes, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities);
 - encourage persons who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
- iii) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it. This involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to – tackle prejudice; and promote understanding.

14b) Not required because this report is for information only.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

Not required because this report is for information only.

Financial

Not required because this report is for information only.

Land

Not applicable.

Personnel

Not required because this report is for information only.

Appendices:

A. Apprenticeship Providers Training Briefs

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985