

Delivering Apprenticeships in Havering – a Framework for Action

Introduction

Apprenticeships are a key way to develop the skills required by the council now and into the future. By embedding apprenticeships through Our People Strategy, talent management and career pathways, we can ensure they provide a modern employment offer and clear route into and through the Council for both new and existing staff.

In Havering our Apprenticeship Programme will help to maximise our workforce capability by developing our existing workforce and bringing in a diverse pipeline of talent to meet existing and future skills gaps. This programme will enable the Council to develop a breadth of experience and depth of expertise through a variety of apprenticeships, from entry-level skills to higher and degree level apprenticeships, open to both new recruits and existing staff as an opportunity to retrain or learn new skills.

Apprenticeships also give us an opportunity to improve the diversity and inclusivity of our workforce by providing opportunities for people from all backgrounds to take a step on professional career ladders, enhancing employability and improving life chances. Apprenticeships can open up jobs to a wider range of applicants, removing traditional barriers like educational attainment and retraining and enhancing the skills of our existing workforce. Degree level apprenticeships offer the potential for improved social mobility on a scale not seen before.

There is a strong business case for apprenticeships. In a recent survey by the National Apprenticeships Service 81% of apprenticeship employers said that apprentices have increased the productivity of their business and 85% of apprentices stated that their ability to do the job had improved. This translates into a return on investment from the training within a few years of completion and for our apprentices these benefits can result in significant monetary returns over their working lives. Significantly, our apprenticeships will help us to build a workforce for the future, embed diversity across our workforce and develop a sustainable set of career pathways through which to attract and retain talented people.

The Council makes a significant investment in the Apprenticeship Levy and this money can only be used for training and assessing apprentices. This is a long-term investment which will improve the quality of training opportunities and the skills of all of our people.

Our Strategic Aims

- To build a skilled and committed workforce now and for the future and maximise workforce capability
- To improve diversity and inclusion, employability and career opportunities

- To increase the number of apprentices and apprenticeships both within our own workforce and across our Borough

The key objectives of Our Apprenticeships Framework

- **To embed apprenticeships across our workforce.** We will create apprenticeships that provide a modern employment offer and viable route into and through the Council. This includes considering apprenticeships as part of Our People Strategy, workforce planning, succession management, talent development, and career pathways.
- **To offer existing staff opportunities for career development, to refresh or gain new skills or retrain.** We will increase opportunities for personal and professional development through high quality transferrable training so that our existing employees embrace apprenticeships as part of their learning and development. We have more progress to make in changing the traditional view of apprenticeships, to ensure that equality of opportunity is achieved. Apprenticeships are not limited in terms of age or length of service and although it is a requirement that they are linked to national standards and recognised qualifications they do have to be labelled “apprenticeship” to attract levy funding.
- **To develop skills and enhance the capability of the workforce.** We will use apprenticeships to develop strong professional capabilities so that we develop a highly capable, skilled and engaged workforce with effective leaders. This includes developing profession-oriented apprenticeships, at a variety of levels (including higher and degree level) and in areas where there are identified skill gaps (e.g. commercial, digital, planning etc).
- **To enhance diversity and inclusion and social mobility.** We will ensure that apprenticeships are a key component of an inclusive Council so that our workforce better reflects the community we serve. This includes promoting apprenticeships within the local area, to those from underrepresented groups and low socio-economic backgrounds and improving recruitment processes accordingly, to emphasise the importance of potential rather than the finished product.
- **To ensure quality experiences.** We will make sure apprentices receive high quality training so that they feel valued and engaged with the Council and our community. This includes working with reputable training providers, complying with apprenticeship standards and securing senior and line management engagement to ensure accountability for the quality of the apprenticeship schemes.
- **To deliver a return on investment on the apprenticeships levy.** We will work collaboratively across the Council and wider local government so that apprenticeships fit clearly within workforce planning to maximise our potential for delivering apprenticeships within the resources available.

Routes to Apprenticeships

There are 5 main ways to develop and embed apprenticeships across the council:

1. Converting planned external recruitment – challenging recruiting managers to see if roles can be offered as apprenticeships.
2. Developing new apprenticeship frameworks -currently most occupational areas are covered by an apprenticeships framework but we can work with providers to establish new standards and frameworks.

3. Offering our current workforce opportunities to retrain and up-skill, gain additional qualifications and so enhance their career opportunities.
4. Creating training posts in the establishment structure to ensure a consistent talent pipeline with trainees in their second/third year supporting those just starting so creating a supportive system for development
5. Ensuring a Yearly Apprenticeships Cohort.

Types and Levels of Apprenticeships

Our contribution to the national Apprenticeships Levy is close to £1.2m and this will enable funding of training and development programmes required to equip new and existing employees gain the knowledge and skills to fulfil a variety of roles. Funding via the levy is not age or service time related but is linked to national frameworks and standards which ensure the quality of training and achievement of recognised qualifications. In turn this helps to increase the skill level of the workforce and enhance career prospects and life chances.

What is an Apprenticeship?

An Apprenticeship is a genuine job offer and the individual is employed from day one. These programmes combine practical training in a job with an associated study programme. Apprentices will work alongside experienced staff gaining job specific skills, earning a wage with employment benefits such as holiday and sick pay and are given time for studying to the equivalent of one day per week. Equally the apprentice may be a skilled employee developing their talents through a career pathway. All include elements of on and off the job training and in the new Apprenticeship Standards some require an assessment at the end of the programme to assess the apprentice's ability and competency in their job role.

Overview of Apprenticeships Levels

Apprenticeship Levels Name	Level	Educational Equivalent
Intermediate	2	5 GCSE passes (A-C/9-4)
Advanced	3	2 A' Level passes/Level 3 Diploma/International Baccalaureate

Higher	4-7	Foundation Degree and above/Higher National Diploma
Degree	6-7	Bachelor's or Masters' Degree

Apprenticeships Pay

The national minimum wage (NMW) for apprentices is £3.70 per hour as from April 2018. The apprentice NMW applies to apprentices aged under 19 or aged 19 or over and in the first year of their apprenticeship. Apprentices aged 25 and over, and not in the first year of their apprenticeship, will be entitled to the National Minimum Wage. Havering pays £6 per hour in the first year and the NMW for their age (or £6 whichever is the higher) in the second year.

There is a concern that the salary budget for apprentices has not been increased. In light of the levy, it is appropriate to consider an increase the budget for apprentices – especially as salaries have increased in both

Entry Requirements

Apprenticeships are available to anyone over the age of 16 living in England. The entry requirements will vary depending on the job role and apprenticeship level. People with a learning difficulty or disability can now access a Level 2 Intermediate Apprenticeship as long as they can achieve an entry level 3 qualification during their apprenticeship. As a Disability Confident Employer the Council will offer an interview to any applicant who declares that they have a disability and meets the minimum criteria defined for the role.

Duration of apprenticeships

The minimum duration of an apprenticeship is based on a 30 (or more) hour week including off the job training undertaken. Where an apprentice, for whatever reason, works reduced weekly hours, for example in caring roles, in schools or for those with a disability, the apprenticeship will be extended to take this into account. At least 20% of the working week must be off the job training.

Training Providers

The Council will, wherever practical, work with local training providers to ensure that each apprentice is assured a good quality experience and receives:

- An Induction Programme
- A detailed training plan which includes on the job training
- Regular progress reviews
- Opportunities to put off the job learning into practice so that the qualifications can be completed
- Mentoring and support throughout the apprenticeship

Breadth of Apprenticeships offer

A wide range of Frameworks for Apprenticeships exist and so it is possible that all areas of the business could offer opportunities for employment via this route. The Council intends to offer Apprenticeships at all levels for example:

Intermediate	Level 2 for example in Social care, ICT, Business Support and Administration - NVQ2/3
Advanced	Level 3 for example in HR , Finance, Procurement, Legal, Planning, Project Management NVQ3 or equivalent
Higher	Level 4-7 As above NVQ 4-7 or equivalent
Degree	Level 4 for example in Planning, HR , Social Work, Legal and Finance

Challenges

There are a number of challenges in delivering against this Framework

- 1. Maximising return on Levy contribution.** The levy contribution is a significant cost for the council and it is essential that we seek to utilise it as fully as possible so raising awareness and requiring managers to consider apprentices as part of their workforce planning process. Effective procurement is also a key challenge and where possible the council will look to work with other authorities to develop strategies to support the delivery of apprenticeships across London Boroughs. Havering, Newham and Bexley already share services via OneSource and this should make it easier to develop shared approaches to apprenticeships. Establishing an approved provider framework can make it easier for partners to procure the training they require.
Recommendation 1 Consider a Strategic Partner arrangement to help set up the programme
Recommendation 2 Develop a shared approach - Havering – Newham – Bexley and shared procurement arrangements through an Apprenticeships Hub. (London Councils is working procure a provider for the social work degree).
- 2. Rethinking Resourcing.** To be successful it will be necessary to review and challenge our recruitment processes and thinking so that we recruit for potential and recognise our responsibility to develop those entering and currently working in the Council. This is part of the wider People Strategy which sets out our approach to ensuring the Council attracts, recruits and retains the right people now and into the future and covers workforce planning, succession management and talent development. Establishing responsibility for the promotion and development of apprenticeships is key to securing effective outcomes.
- 3. Costs of apprenticeships.** The government has been very specific about what levy funds can and cannot be used for. The Levy funding is for apprenticeship training and assessment (through an approved provider up to the maximum allowed per funding band (see government website <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding-bands>)). The levy cannot be used for wages, statutory licences to practice, travel and subsistence costs, managerial costs, traineeships, work placement programmes and costs of setting up an apprenticeships programme. The council will need to plan to use existing vacancies and look to ensure that wherever possible posts are offered on an apprenticeship basis. This will require a change in attitude and thinking to allow for “in development” appointments rather than a “hit the ground running” approach. This will also prompt a review of the approach to redeployment. Where there are departmental restructures apprenticeships should form part of the solution as well as for hard to recruit areas and creating a talent pipeline and “growing our own”.
- 4. Care Leavers.** Apprenticeships can help those leaving care into employment. Research shows that this is dependent upon the right support for care leavers and their ability to acquire basic skills for employment. It is essential that pre-apprenticeship work experience and traineeships are available to help prepare care leavers for the world of work, alongside the right support mechanisms. (This links to the Council’s wider strategy for Corporate Parenting and support for care leavers.) **Does it ??**
- 5. People with Disabilities.** Those with disabilities often find it hard to find and sustain employment. Finding ways to provide access to education and skills can improve life chances so supported internships and access to pre-employment work experience are critical to helping them access apprenticeships and employment.

6. **Disadvantaged young people.** Young people aged 18-24 can be amongst the most challenged as they try to compete in the labour market against more experienced candidates. Good quality apprenticeships can provide an entry route and development that enables access to a competitive salary and career start. Research shows that good quality programmes are key to establishing commitment to the business and supporting the development of the future workforce and talent pool. It is essential that there are sufficient employment opportunities at the end of the programme to stimulate the growth of apprentices, secure a return on investment and protect the council's reputation as a good employer.
7. **Long term unemployed/returners.** Apprenticeships can provide a route to employment for the long term unemployed and those returning to the labour market after a break by providing access to training in new and different skills and refreshing existing skills. Traditionally apprenticeships have tended to focus on providing opportunities for younger people, however, they can be used to increase diversity and open opportunities for a wider range of the local population and to support the development of a mature entrant talent pool.
8. **Cross sector partnership and wider community benefits.** The successful development of and success of apprenticeships can be enhanced through working with partners across the borough. By collaborating on standards and procurement and the provision of quality training opportunities we can contribute to the development of a skilled workforce and enhanced economic stability for our residents. Partnering with colleagues, for example in health, the emergency services, colleges and schools can help to promote apprenticeships and realise the potential they offer to increase skills and career opportunities.
9. **Apprenticeship monitoring.** Tracking apprentices and their career outcomes is vital for evaluation of the benefits to the individual, the council and the local community. End of programme evaluation, exit interviews and follow-up will provide evidence that the programmes are successful in filling skills gaps, creating a talent pool and enhancing career options, financial and social mobility. The aim is to rely less on contingent workers and to build a skilled and loyal workforce now and into the future. Where people are able to work there is more independence and better wellbeing.
10. **Data collection.** Collecting reliable data is essential in order to report on and publish the council's contribution to the national targets for the public sector and the return on investment in the Levy contribution. It is also important to inform decision-making and future policy development. Our aim is to improve skills, diversity and opportunity so a baseline is needed to understand the current position and plan for the delivery of these outcomes. In addition qualitative data will be needed to assure the quality of the programmes and to ensure that apprentices are supported and able to perform well in their roles. At this point the Council is nowhere near achieving the target set by UK government for the number of apprenticeships starts (2.3% of the workforce).

Delivery

The successful delivery of Our Apprenticeships Framework will depend on effective partnership and collaboration between HR and OD, procurement, the senior leadership team and managers and well as external providers and schools. Consideration should be given to setting up an Apprenticeships Hub within the Shared Service which can co-



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ordinate delivery of the strategy across the 3 Boroughs. This will enable better access to the Levy funding, a raised profile and a more consistent approach to increasing the number of apprenticeships and apprentices. This cannot be funded by the Levy.