

APPRENTICESHIPS UPDATE

Presented by Head of Human Resources

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Employing apprentices is a productive and effective way to grow talent and to develop a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce as well as being part of effective workforce planning and aligning with business need and growth strategies.

This report provides Members with an update on the current apprenticeships provided at the Authority, the funding of the apprenticeships and potential apprenticeships for the future.

RECOMMENDATION

Members Note: (1) this report.

BACKGROUND

- 1 Apprenticeships allow people of all ages, from school leavers and university graduates, to people who want to further their careers or change career direction to earn while they learn and gain the skills they need to build a rewarding career.
- 2 Apprenticeships are available at different levels, starting from a GCSE equivalent to a university degree equivalent. Training can last from 12 months to 5 years, depending on the level.
- 3 The Authority has been providing apprenticeships since 2013.

APPRENTICESHIP LEVY AND FUNDING

- 4 The Authority pays the Apprenticeship Levy as it has an annual pay bill of more than £3 million.
- 5 The Apprenticeship Levy is paid at a rate of 0.5% of an employer's annual pay bill which is then off-set by the apprenticeship allowance of £15,000.
- 6 The Authority currently pays approximately £12-15k in Apprenticeship Levy each year and the government adds a top-up of 10% to this amount.

- 7 The Authority aims to maximise the Apprenticeship Levy each year and from April 2023 to March 2024 this has all been spent.
- 8 The estimated planned spending for the next 12 months is £11,500 based on the apprentices we currently have.
- 9 Levy funds cannot be used to pay apprentice wages but are used to fund the training for their specific apprenticeship.
- 10 The Authority can also get an additional £1,000 to support an apprentice in the workplace if they are:
- 16 to 18 years old;
 - 19 to 25 years old and have an education, health and care (EHC) plan or has been in the care of their local authority.

This can be used for any costs associated with supporting an apprentice in the workplace. For example, uniforms, salary.

APPRENTICE PAY

- 11 Apprentices must be paid a minimum of the apprentice minimum wage. The current apprentice rate is £5.28 per hour. The Authority does not pay the apprentice rate of National Minimum Wage (NMW), it pays the National Living Wage/National Minimum Wage dependent on the age on the apprentice.
- 12 The rates in the table below are for the National Living Wage (for those aged 23 and over) and the National Minimum Wage (for those of at least school leaving age).

	23 and over (National Living Wage)	21 to 22	18 to 20	Under 18	Apprentice
April 2023 (current rate)	£10.42	£10.18	£7.49	£5.28	£5.28

- 13 These rates and the age ranges will be changing from April 2024, as shown in the table below. So, workers aged 21 and over will be entitled to the National Living Wage.

	21 and over (National Living Wage)	18 to 20	Under 18	Apprentice
April 2024	£11.44	£8.60	£6.40	£6.40

- 14 Officers are currently reviewing apprenticeship pay levels and will report back to Members in due course.

CURRENT APPRENTICES

- 15 The table below shows the current apprenticeships on offer at the Authority. Three of these are apprentices and two are undertaken by existing staff. Apprentices currently make up 2.4% of the Authority's workforce.

Apprenticeship	Training Provider	Level	Duration
Animal Care and Welfare Assistant	Writtle University College	Level 2	18 months
Countryside Ranger	Bridgewater & Taunton College	Level 4	24 months
Information Communications Technician	Newham College	Level 3	18 months
General Welder	South Essex College of Further & Higher Education	Level 2	18 months
Team Leader/Supervisor	MARR Corporation Limited	Level 3	12 months

- 16 Our current apprentices come from a number of different boroughs:
- Enfield;
 - Waltham Forest; and
 - Epping.
- 17 The Authority works with a number of different training providers, both local and national. The training providers selected depend on a number of different elements including what apprenticeships are offered, the method in which the apprenticeship is delivered e.g. online, face to face, and how local the training provider is to the apprentice. Our current training providers are listed in the table above and cover the following areas:
- Chelmsford, Essex;
 - Newham, London;
 - Taunton, Somerset;
 - Southend, Essex; and
 - Cardiff, Wales.
- 18 At the end of the apprenticeships, if there are permanent or fixed term roles available at the Authority, apprentices are encouraged to apply for these and we have a number of previous apprentices now in permanent roles at the Authority.

FUTURE PLANS

- 19 As part of the 2024-2027 Business Plan officers will be looking at succession planning across the Authority to identify critical roles that are fundamental to the Authority's success and how staff can pass on their skills and expertise as well as identifying skills gaps. Apprenticeships will be looked at as part of this process.
- 20 The Marinas have already been identified as an area where apprentices could help with succession planning and skills gaps. So, as part of a restructure that will be brought to Members in the next couple of months, an apprentice at each

of the Marinas will be proposed.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

21 There are no environmental implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

22 The financial implications are detailed in the body of this report.

HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

23 The Authority is committed to helping our people grow and progress and see the value they can offer. Our apprentices are given hands-on experience in a variety of job roles, to ensure that the Park provides excellent apprenticeships and training programmes to local residents from levying boroughs, developing raw talent and ensuring they have the knowledge and skills to progress in the future. In order to achieve this the Authority will continue to work with local partner agencies to:

- deliver training programmes to meet employment needs of the Authority;
- enable the Authority to attract, retain and develop a skilled and motivated workforce; and
- ensure people from our levying communities are given opportunities to receive the skills, training and support offered as part of the Authority's apprenticeship programme.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

24 There are no legal implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

25 The proposed Apprenticeship scheme mitigates against some of the risks within the Authority's Risk Register. These are:

- SR3.3 - The Authority fails to attract and retain staff of the appropriate calibre.

Increased learning and development initiatives will assist in attracting and retaining highly skilled staff and assist with future succession planning.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

26 A significant benefit of apprenticeships is the potential for a more diverse workforce. Apprenticeships offer opportunities to those from under-represented groups and promotes inclusivity.

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BACKGROUND REPORTS

None

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive	E/248/12	Introduction of an Authority wide Apprenticeship Scheme	22 Nov 2012
Executive	E/286/13	Apprenticeship Scheme Update	20 June 2013

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NMW National Minimum Wage

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