

## PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – 17TH DECEMBER 2019

### Report of the Head of Strategic Support

#### Part A

#### ITEM 6 APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME – 1st APRIL 2018 to 31st MARCH 2019

##### Purpose of Report

To provide the Personnel Committee with information relating to the Apprenticeship Scheme within the Council and the apprenticeship target for the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019.

##### Recommendation

That the findings of the Apprenticeship Scheme reporting be noted by the Personnel Committee.

##### Reason

The Public Sector Apprenticeship Targets Regulations 2017 came into force on 31st March 2017. All public bodies with 250 or more staff in England as of 31st March have a target to employ an average of at least 2.3% of their staff as new apprentice starts over the period of 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2021.

##### Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

SMT were provided with details of the apprenticeship reporting in July 2019 and it was discussed at the Joint Management Trade Union Meeting (JMTUM) on 10th October 2019.

This is the second report on the Apprenticeship Scheme covering the period 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2019.

##### Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions

The findings of the Apprenticeship Scheme reporting will be noted following agreement at Personnel Committee.

##### Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

##### *Financial Implications*

There are no financial implications arising from this decision.

## *Risk Management*

There risks outlined within this report are highlighted in Part B below.

Background Papers:       None

Appendices:               None

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## Part B

### Background

1. The Government introduced the Apprenticeship Scheme with effect from 6th April 2017.
2. As required under that scheme, reports are due within six months of the end of each reporting period. The first reporting period covered 1st April 2017 to 31st March 2018. This is the second report covering the period 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019.
3. The information should be published by 30th September each year in an easily accessible location to the public. It is therefore considered that the appropriate place to publish the Return Section 1 - Data Publication is on the internal and external Council website. The Return Section 2 – Apprenticeship Activity return does not have to be published.
4. The target for public sector bodies is 2.3% apprenticeship starts each year based on the organisations headcount as of 31st March each year. The apprenticeship target remains at 12.
5. Apprenticeship starts can include both existing employees who take advantage of apprenticeship funding as well as newly employed apprenticeship posts.
6. The Council has been working towards meeting the quota through a proactive approach, as far as it is possible for the Council to achieve. Work has continued into the 1st April 2018 – 31st March 2019 reporting period to increase the number of apprentices employed by the Council.

### **Findings**

#### 7. Return Section 1 – Data Publication

The Data Publication includes several figures which will enable the Government and the public to understand each body's headcount and the number of apprentices they employ, and then use that information to assess the progress a body has made towards meeting the target. The figures outlined in Section 1 will be published as outlined at paragraph 3.

**Figure A: The number of employees whose employment in England by the body began in the reporting period in question.**

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**Figure B: The number of apprentices who began to work for the body in that period and whose apprenticeship agreements also began in that**

**period.**

- This includes employees who were already working for the body before beginning the apprenticeship, as well as new apprentices hires.

8

**Figure C: The number of employees employed in England that the body has at the end of that period.**

518

**Figure D: The number of apprentices who work for the body at the end of that period.**

11

Public bodies are also required to provide two percentages in order to give context to the other figures. These percentages do not reflect the progress a public body has made towards the target:

**Figure E: Figure B expressed as a percentage of figure A.**

9.64%

**Figure F: Figure D expressed as a percentage of figure C.**

2.12%

If the public body is in their first reporting period they must also provide:

**Figure G: The number of apprentices who worked for the body immediately before that period.**

6

In addition, the Apprenticeship Activity Return (Return Section 2) requires public bodies to send the following figures, which will help identify their progress towards meeting the target, to the Department for Education. Public bodies could also consider providing these figures in the Data Protection.

**Figure H: Headcount on the day before the first day of each reporting period in the target period**

518

**Figure I: Figure B expressed as a percentage of figure H.**

1.54%

#### 8. Return Section 2 – Apprenticeship Activity Return

The Apprenticeship Activity Return includes both information on a body's progress against the target and information to assess actions taken towards, and challenges faced in, meeting the targets.

The return includes quantitative and qualitative elements:

<b>QUANTITATIVE</b>
<b>Headcount on the day before the first day of each reporting period in the target period; and</b>
518
<b>Figure B in Return Section 1 (the number of apprentices who began to work for the body in the reporting period in question and whose apprenticeship agreements also began in that period), expressed as a percentage of headcount on the day before the first day of the reporting period in question. (This will enable the Government to assess the progress a body has made towards meeting the target).</b>
1.54%
<b>QUALITATIVE</b>
<b>Action that the body has taken to meet their apprenticeship target (i.e. how it has "had regard")</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The number of new recruits to apprenticeship posts has increased since the last reporting period.</li><li>• The majority of enrolled apprentices have been recruited from existing staff. This has been possible due to the range of standards increasing.</li></ul>

**If the target has not been met then specific further evidence may be required. This may include an explanation of why the target was not met, actions the body has taken to overcome the challenges it has faced and/or mitigating factors which demonstrate the body's commitment to apprenticeships.**

- The main challenges have been around waiting for new standards to be developed e.g. Planning.
- Additionally, a lack of training providers for standards developed e.g. Pest Control Operative, has impacted upon the opportunities to undertake apprenticeship training

**Information about action the body proposes to take to meet their future apprenticeship targets: and**

- We have a number of new apprenticeship starts already planned for 2019/20, with a mix of external and internal individuals being placed on the scheme. We hope to be able to meet our annual target for starts next year.

**If the body considers that a future target is not likely to be met, an explanation of why that is so.**

- It is anticipated that the future target will be met.