

Subject:	Apprenticeship developments across Brighton and Hove		
Date of Meeting:	Children and Young People's Committee 6 June 2016		
Report of:	Executive Director, Families, Children and Learning		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 There is increased recognition of the importance of vocational pathways and the current government has undertaken major reforms to apprenticeships. It is committed to delivering 3 million new apprenticeship starts by 2020 and has produced legislation aimed at improving the standard of apprenticeships.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on apprenticeships, following the work of the Employer Skills Taskforce and the City Employment and Skills Plan, that were both presented at the March committee meeting. Apprenticeships pathways have been identified as a way of growing new talent in Brighton and Hove, creating a tailor made workforce with the right skills, to help support business growth in the region.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That the committee notes the Employer Pledge and its recommendations.
- 2.2 That the committee notes the progress that has been made, in establishing an in-house apprenticeship team to support the Employer Pledge.
- 2.3 That the committee notes the implications of the apprenticeship reforms and the Apprenticeship Levy.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATIONCity Employment and Skills Plan

- 3.1 A report detailing the City Employment and Skills Plan (CESP) was presented at the Children, Young People and Skills Committee on March 7 2016.

- 3.2 The key priorities in the CESP regarding apprenticeships included the following:
- Explore new delivery models for boosting the number of apprenticeship opportunities across the Greater Brighton region
 - Create a step change in how the City Council and other public sector bodies create apprenticeship opportunities as major employers.

Employer Skills Task Force

- 3.3 In addition the Employer Skills Taskforce (ESTF) completed its consultation in March 2016, led by and involving local employers and a set of eight recommendations were made. Please see full report in the appendix. At the launch event as part of an Employer Pledge, businesses were asked to commit to one or more of the following:

- Offer a traineeship, apprenticeships or higher apprenticeship
- Offer a workplace visit to your business
- Offer a work placement to a young person
- Offer help with student projects or enterprise activities in schools and colleges
- Offer to speak to pupils about careers and recruitment
- Become a school governor
- Mentor a budding entrepreneur
- Provide employment advice about your industry

To date 45 employers have made a total of 106 pledges and all employers have been contacted and connections established with schools and colleges. This includes employers engaging directly with schools and helping promote the importance of apprenticeships. A good example is BACA, who are starting a pilot for construction apprentices, aged 16-18, working with a local construction company, who has committed to offering apprenticeship opportunities to students, with BACA as the training provider. This model is being explored for other professions, for example hospitality, focused clearly on where business growth and opportunities lie.

Existing and new governors are being consulted about taking on the responsibility for being a school governor for Enterprise, to help support schools with employer engagement and forge connections with local businesses.

- 3.3 The Task Force also recommended the establishment of a brokerage service, and the scoping of this brokerage service is being looked at within the development of the CESP. A further report will come to this committee.
- 3.4 As an interim measure, a small apprenticeship team has been set up within the council to maximise value for money from the Apprenticeship Levy which will come into force in April 2017. This team will oversee the following:
- Creation of new apprenticeship opportunities within the council to support the public sector quota of 2.3% apprenticeship numbers as part of the Apprenticeship Levy (The council's administration has committed to 100 apprenticeship starts in 2016 and 150 in 2017.)

- Identification of internal candidates for apprenticeship opportunities as part of staff development and to support apprenticeship targets
 - Support for the Employer Pledge in employer engagement and enquiries from employers. (list of pledges above in 3.3)
 - Continued support of IAG in schools and colleges, actively promoting apprenticeship opportunities in the region. (All council apprentices are paid based on the minimum wage for their age group which exceeds the national apprenticeship recommended wage.)
- 3.5 The council has a track record of recruiting apprentices, and currently has 40 who work in a range of departments and disciplines, including HR, ICT, Teaching Assistants, Procurement and Finance, Transport Planning and Business Administration. In addition an internal programme has been launched, offering a range of higher level apprenticeship opportunities to existing staff, to support professional development and around 40 members of staff have taken up this opportunity. This includes opportunities in HR and Business Improvement.
- 3.6 The council has established an apprenticeship ambassador network, which actively promotes apprenticeships in schools and colleges. Following on from the work by the ESTF, and as part of the interim apprenticeship team work, a wider apprenticeship ambassador group is being established, to draw on a more diverse and varied group of apprentices, to engage with young people and support schools to be able to give high quality advice.
- 3.7 An overarching goal of the ESTF was to create a minimum of a 1000 new apprenticeships in 1000 days. The Task Force wanted to see a visual representation of the progress being made in apprenticeship numbers which may be a barometer, but other visual representations are being considered. The brief has been prepared and a tender process has started to find a suitable partner to deliver this work.

4. CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 Regular progress reports will be given to this committee including the development of the brokerage service, as part of the work on the Youth and Employability Foundation.
- 4.2 The Skills Funding Agency will announce further guidance in June 2016, regarding the impact of the Apprenticeship Levy and this will be reported at future committee meetings.
- 4.3 The Employer Pledge and the tracking of apprenticeship starts in the Greater Brighton area will commence shortly and will be reported back to future meetings.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The funding has already been allocated to support the creation of an interim apprenticeship team for one year, from the corporate modernisation board.

The Apprenticeship Levy will be a levy on UK employers to fund new apprenticeships. The levy will be charged at a rate of 0.5% of an employer's wage bill.

The estimated cost for the council is around £1.2 million per annum.

Finance Officer Consulted: Andy Moore

Date: 20/05/16

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 The national and local context to the development of apprenticeships is described in the body of this report. There are no specific legal implications arising from this report which is for noting by Committee only.

Lawyer Consulted: Sandra O'Brien

Date: 24/05/16

Equalities Implications:

- 5.3 Part of the aim of the Employer Pledge is to eliminate long-term youth unemployment amongst 18-24 year olds, by improving routes to learning and work for all young people, in line with the council's equalities policies and strategic priority 4.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.4 Improving job prospects for young people will have a positive impact on the resident workforce and will improve economic sustainability.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendix 1 – Employer Skills Task Force Report

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.5 There are no direct crime and disorder implications

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.6 The creation of an internal apprenticeship service will help the council maximise the benefits from the Levy.

Public Health Implications:

- 5.7 The work of the Apprenticeship service will help create pathways for young people to get into work. It will also aim to have a positive impact on those residents that are unemployed, or under-employed.

Corporate / Citywide Implications

5.8 This paper addresses strategic priority 4 of the committee, boosting the number of apprenticeships by 2019.

