Agenda Item 4

Employment Committee
19 November 2025

Title: Corporate Apprenticeship Programme Update
Lead Officer: Tracy Dolphin Head of People and Communications/ Elaine Priestley HR & Payroll Manager
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Rebecca Davidson
Wards of the District directly affected: None directly impacted.

Approvals required	**Date**	**Name**
Portfolio Holder	3.11.25	Rebecca Davidson
Finance	31.10.25	Andrew Rollins
Chief Executive	31.10.25	Chris Elliott
Head of Service(s)	31.10.25	Tracy Dolphin
Section 151 Officer	31.10.25	Andrew Rollins
Monitoring Officer	31.10.25	Graham Leach
Leadership Co-ordination Group	-	

Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Cttee / Council?	No
Contrary to Policy / Budget framework?	No
Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)?	No
Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)?	No
Accessibility Checked?	Yes

Summary

This report presents an annual update in relation to the Warwick District Council Corporate Apprentice Programme as requested by Employment Committee.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Employment Committee:

(1) Notes the content of the report and the Apprenticeship Update.

(2) Notes that although the Public Sector Apprenticeship target was discontinued with effect from 31st March 2022, Warwick District Council continues to publish progress voluntarily.

1.0 **Reasons for the Recommendation**

1.1 **This is an annual report provided for Members consideration.**

1.1.1 The public sector apprenticeships target concluded on 31 March 2022. From 1 April 2022 there is no longer a target set for public sector employers.

1.1.2 The funding for the Corporate Apprenticeship Scheme is £182,500 for 2025/2026. It is important to note this is not part of service area budgets and roles are not guaranteed at the end of it.

1.1.3 As of October 2025, since its launch in 2018 the Corporate Apprentice Scheme has funded opportunities for thirty-four apprenticeships. At the time of reporting:

- 15 out of 34 secured alternative employment within the Council, 3 of whom have subsequently gone on to work elsewhere
- 8 out of 34 are still undertaking their apprenticeships
- 11 out of 34 successfully completed their apprenticeships and left for other opportunities.
- 2 left prior to completing their apprenticeship

Recent recruitment includes:
Planning Apprentice – Level 7 RTPI
Project Management Apprentice – Green Spaces L4
Horticulture Apprentice – Landscape L2

And are in the process of recruiting:
Committee Services Apprentice – Business Admin L3
Community Safety team Apprentice – Safeguarding Support Officer L3

In addition to this, outside of the Corporate Apprenticeship Scheme budget, Service area currently funds and support a further 5 apprentices.

1.1.4 It is particularly positive to report that several former Apprentices have progressed their careers to managerial and professional roles and many continue to study.

1.2 **Levy Funded Training**

1.2.1 The Apprenticeship Levy was initiated by the UK government in April 2017, for all employers paying a wage bill of more than three million per year. Employers that meet the criteria are required to pay 0.5% of their payroll each month as a levy tax. This levy can then be reinvested back into the workforce in the form of Apprenticeship training. The Apprentice Levy is calculated monthly directly from payroll using a 0.5% apportionment of the Councils Gross Pay Bill. This was calculated to be £94,130 for 2024/2025 payroll. After applying the allowance and adjustments, the total Apprenticeship Levy paid by the council for 2024/2025 payroll was £79,737.

1.2.2 The Council can access its Levy contribution plus a 10% top up (based on 99.36% of the levy paid), to fund Apprenticeship training funding each year. This equates to £87,148 for 2024/2025. Any unspent balances roll into the next year. Should the Levy funding be exceeded, 80% of excess costs would be topped up by the government.

1.2.3 To maximise the use of the Apprenticeship levy the Council has taken the opportunity to secure apprenticeship training for existing members of staff, in addition to training funded for those employed as Apprentices. In 2024/2025 £62,379 was paid to training providers. This has funded training for nineteen staff, largely at degree level.

1.2.4 To date a total of circa £725,200 of levy funded training has been accessed.
- £404,700 of Levy Funded training has been accessed for established members of staff
- £276,500 for apprentices employed via the Corporate Fund; and
- £44,000 for apprentices employed directly by Service areas.

1.2.5 Four members of staff who joined the Council as apprentices have gone on to study at degree level.

1.2.6 With effect from 1st January 2026 the government is changing how level 7 apprenticeships are funded.
'*The government is refocusing investment towards young people at the start of their working lives, rather than those already in work with higher levels of prior learning and qualifications. What's changing from 1 January: Level 7 apprenticeships will continue to be government-funded for young people aged 16 to 21, and for care leavers or those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who are under 25 at the start of their apprenticeship in England. Any apprentice who started a level 7 apprenticeship before 1 January 2026 will continue to be funded through to completion'.*

1.2.7 The Council has joined other voices, in lobbying that the level 7 RTPI Chartered Town Planner should be excepted as a vital pathway into the profession to bolster the capacity to deliver the increasing need for housing. Currently up to 70% of those studying via the Chartered Town Planner apprenticeship work and train in Local Government and without access to levy funding they will not be able to train and enter the planning workforce.

1.2.8 To support our Development Services team an RTPI Apprentice has been recently recruited, and an existing member of the team staff is being supported to study the level 7 RTPI qualification with effect from September 2025.

1.3 **Public Sector Apprenticeship Target**

1.3.1 Public sector bodies with 250 or more staff in England had a target to employ an average of at least 2.3% of their staff a as new apprentices within the period of 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2023. This has now ended but is positive to note that from a low starting point of 0.2% Warwick District Council achieved an average of 1.7% over this time. This is a significant increase from its starting point but is constrained by available funding.

1.3.2 **Public Sector Apprenticeship Reporting**

Whilst the target was abandoned in 2022 a requirement for Public Sector employers to report statistics continued. However, this is no longer the case as the DFE advised as below. '*There is no longer a statutory target for public sector apprenticeships. Given the burden placed on public sector organisations to submit their employee and apprenticeship data to the Department, feedback from providers was sought to establish the relevance of these statistics going forwards. The feedback confirmed that there would be no detriment to end reporting on public sector apprenticeships. Therefore, the department will cease to publish further Public Sector Apprenticeship statistics'*.

It is therefore no longer possible to provide benchmarking statistics. Warwick District Council data, which is published on the website, is given below.

Reporting percentages	**2017-2018**	**2022-2023**	**2023-2024**	**2024-2025**
Percentage of apprenticeship starts (both new hires and existing employees who started an apprenticeship) as a proportion of employment starts between 1 April to 31 March	1.5	6.2	6.4	10.7
Number of employment starts	68	79	94	75
Percentage of total headcount that were apprentices on 31 March	0.2	1.2	1.2	1.8
Percentage of apprenticeship starts (both new hires and existing employees who started an apprenticeship) between 1 April to 31 March as a proportion of total headcount on 31 March	0.2	1.0	1.2	1.7
Headcount as 31st March	476	486	495	531

1.4 **Promotion of Corporate Apprenticeship Scheme/Work Experience**

1.4.1 Some examples of how the scheme is promoted:

During the academic year 2024/2025 staff from the Human Resources team attended five Career/Job fairs/Next steps events held in schools. In addition to this during National Apprenticeship week we, together with one of our apprentices, supported the Coventry Apprenticeship Fair. These events supported promotion of not just the apprenticeship scheme but career opportunities for local government. These opportunities enable us to engage with Careers Advisers and young people in the District and the West Midlands Area to talk about career and further education opportunities not just at Warwick District Council but also within the wider area of local government.

1.4.2 During 2024/2025 the Council has continued to support requests for work experience from students within our district. Some students undertaking work experience within specific service areas, which is supplanted by our corporate work experience event which was held in July 2025. The three-day event continues to give students the opportunity to learn more about Warwick District Council and the services we provide as well as to gain valuable practical work experience. The work experience programme was open to schools within our district, schools we have been collaborating with, and the opportunity was also extended to children of members of staff. As part of the programme students had the opportunity to work within departments of their choice, learn more about important topics which may affect their careers in the future as well gain an understanding of the role of their local Council. The programme continues to be designed and run by staff from across the Council.

1.4.3 Feedback from participants included:

"They were amazing, put so much effort in and did so much to show me what their job was. I sat in on interesting meetings and the brief they set me really helped me apply what I had learned from being out and about seeing what the Council does"; "Nice to go out and about and get the general gist of how everything works"; "Interesting placement – not a place I was initially going to";"I liked how friendly people were when they were showing me things, very interesting"; "Nice people – explained everything and great advice"; "Great representation of planning and its different aspects which have helped me understand if I want to consider it as a possible career".

1.5 **Next Steps**

1.5.1 It is important to recognise the success of the Apprenticeship Programme within the Council. The number of opportunities offered is controlled by the budget available. Following the success of the 2025 recruitments, and commitments to longer-term high-level apprentices, the next tranche of recruitment will take place in 2027/28.

1.5.2 To further support and promote the Apprenticeship offering at Warwick District Council, one of our former apprentices has taken on the role of 'Apprenticeship Ambassador', their remit includes:

- Visiting careers fairs to speak to students about apprenticeships at WDC
- Being a voice and representing the current and future WDC apprentices at

corporate meetings (Ways of Working, Workforce Steering Group, Employment Committee)

- Working with HR to improve opportunities for current WDC apprentices, including the way that they work and opportunities
- Working with HR to look at the process for employing future apprentices, including the type and level of apprenticeships that are offered and the time of year they are advertised
- Working with HR to look at how to retain apprentices subject to roles available after they have completed their qualification, to keep the experience and knowledge within WDC.

1.5.3 In conjunction with this an Apprentice networking Group has been set up and launched during National Apprenticeship week with a facilitated session exploring behavioural preferences and communication styles. Following the positive feedback further sessions included 'giving and receiving feedback' and 'imposter syndrome'. This is to support personal networking, development and professional growth.

2 Alternative Options

2.1 Not considered as the scheme is linked to our Recruitment Retention and Remuneration project aligned to 'Grow your Own' talent.

3.0 Legal Implications

3.1 None

4.0 Financial Services

4.1 The Apprenticeship Scheme is funded from an allocated budget. This is regularly reviewed to ensure monitoring of the scheme where there is an overlap into the next financial year.

5. Corporate Strategy

5.1 Warwick District Council has adopted a Corporate Strategy which sets three strategic aims for the organisation as highlighted below:

5.2 **Delivering valued, sustainable services** – The Apprenticeship scheme aligns with the Corporate Strategy's aim of delivering valued, sustainable services. By putting a focus on 'grow our own', the council demonstrates its commitment to positive employment practices and an inclusive culture where people can thrive. Measurements include 'Number of apprentices that secure a permanent role with the Council'. It is important to recognise that whilst we strive to ensure a career pipeline this is dependent on roles available.

5.3 **Low cost, low carbon energy across the district -** The report primarily focuses on a review of the scheme. It does not have a direct impact on the Low Cost, Low Carbon Energy objective, nor contribute directly to this strategic aim. Indirectly, by creating an environment to 'grow our own' and working with people from different backgrounds, experiences, and viewpoints, we can help to find more creative and pioneering ways to potentially help tackle issues related to sustainability and lowering carbon energy. It helps to ensure everyone has a voice and can collaborate, bringing their own unique viewpoints.

5.4 **Creating vibrant, safe, and healthy communities of the future** – By fostering a positive work environment for those starting in their careers or enhancing it further, the council indirectly supports the broader goal of community well-being, ensuring the council reflects a commitment to social responsibility, which can positively influence community perceptions. Although the report does not directly address this objective, it indirectly aligns with the council's broader vision of a vibrant and inclusive community.

6. **Environmental/Climate Change Implications**

6.1 No implications

7.0 **Analysis on the Effects of Equality**

7.1 The Council's recruitment processes include best practice in the promotion of equalities.

8.0 **Data Protection**

8.1 No implications

9.0 **Health and Wellbeing**

9.1 There is a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of existing employees utilising the training element of the apprenticeship programme to support skills and knowledge enhancement. Equally there has been feedback from teams where our new apprentices have joined to indicate a rejuvenation of having an apprentice join the team to bring new ideas, creativity and innovation.

10.0 **Risk Assessment**

10.1 There is a risk of not recruiting to posts, which is monitored.

11.0 **Consultation**

11.1 Report reviewed with SLT/JCF November 2025

Corporate Apprentice Programme Update (Appendix 1)

1. Apprentices Funded by Corporate Scheme

Apprentice Post	Qualification and Level	Service Area
April 2018 to March 2019		
Revenue Apprentice	L3 Bus Admin	Finance
Data Analyst Apprentice	L4 Data Analyst	ICT
Digital Marketing Apprentice	L3 Digital Marketing Diploma	People and Communications
Arts Development Apprentice	L3 Community Arts	Culture
NS Bus Admin	L2 Bus Admin	Neighbourhood Services
Building Control Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Development Services
April 2019 to March 2020		
Democratic Services Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Democratic Services
Construction and Surveying Apprentice	L4 Construction and Surveying	Assets
Construction and Surveying Apprentice	L3 Construction and Surveying	Assets
AAT Apprentice	L2 & 3 AAT	Finance
Arts Development Apprentice	L3 Events Asst	Culture
Licensing Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Health and Community Protection
April 2020 to March 2021		
Finance Admin Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Finance
Customer Services Advisor Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Finance
Business Admin Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Culture
Project Management Apprentice	L4 Project Management	Neighbourhood Services

Apprentice Post	Qualification and Level	Service Area
Learning and Engagement Apprentice	L3 Cultural Learning and Participation Officer	Culture
Digital Marketing	L3 Digital Marketer	People and Communications
April 2021 to March 2022		
Project Management Apprentice	L4 Project Management	Neighbourhood Services
Project Management Apprentice	L6 Project Management	ICT
April 2022 to March 2023		
Business Admin Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Development Services (Building Control)
Learning and Engagement Apprentice	L3 Cultural Learning and Participation	Culture
Business Admin Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Finance
April 2023 to March 2024		
Events Apprentice	L3 Events Asst	Culture
Climate Change Project Mgmt Apprentice	L4 Project Management	Climate Change
Digital Marketing	L3 Digital Marketer	People and Communications
Community Wellbeing Support Apprentice	L3 Business Admin	Community partnership
April 2024 to March 2025		
Assistant Accountant	L2 & L3 AAT	Finance
Environment Health Officer Apprentice	L6 BSc Degree Environmental Health	Community Protection
Customer Services Apprentice	L3 Customer Service	Customer & Digital
Learning and Engagement Apprentice	L3 Cultural Learning and Participation	Culture
April 2025 Onwards		

Apprentice Post	Qualification and Level	Service Area
Project Management – Green Space Apprentice	L4 Project Management	Climate Change
Planning Apprentice	L& Chartered Town Planner	Development Services
Horticultural Apprentice	L2 Horticulture	Green Space

2. Internal Apprenticeship Training Funded by Government Levy

See table below:

Internal Apprenticeships	Qualification and Level	Service Area
Procurement	L4 Procurement Practices	Finance
Building Control	L3 Construction and Building Control	Place Arts and Economy
Monitoring Officer	L7 RTPI	Place Arts and Economy
Planning	L7 RTPI	Place Arts and Economy
Building Control	L6 Building Control	Place Arts and Economy
Accountancy	L7 CIMA	Finance
Audit (career grade)	L7 Internal Audit	Finance
Audit (career grade)	L7 Internal Audit	Finance
Service Desk	L6 Cyber Security	ICT
ICT	L7 MBA Senior Leader Masters	ICT
Building Consultant*	L6 Building Control	Place Arts and Economy
Business Support (Building Control) *	L6 RTPI BA Professional Management (Chartered Manager)	Place Arts and Economy

Internal Apprenticeships	Qualification and Level	Service Area
Audit	L7 Internal Audit	Finance
Accountancy *	L4 AAT	Finance
Trainee Building Surveyor *	L6 Chartered Surveyor	Assets
Planning	L7 RTPI	Place Arts and Economy
Revenues	L5 Operations/ Departmental Manager	Finance
Planning	L7 RTPI	Place Arts and Economy
Trainee Building Surveyor *	Building Surveying BSC L6	Housing
Audit	Internal Audit L7	Finance
Audit	Internal Audit L7	Finance
Planning	L7 RTPI	Place Arts and Economy

*__Originally employed as apprentices__

APPRENTICE SALARY SCALES 2025

Level	Apprentice Salary bands from April 2024 including Working for Warwick Award 23 & 24 = 4.2%	
Point 1 WDC	£291.19 per week (£ £8.87 per hour) £15,194 per annum (NMW for 16-17 yr old – (£7.55)	All New Starter WDC Apprentice 1.4.25 -18% pay increase
Point 2	£385.91 per week (£10.43 per hour) £20,136 per annum (NMW for 18-20 yr old- £10.00)	18th birthday and have complete 12 months of the scheme 1.4.25 -16.3% increase
Point 3	£ 471.01 per week (£12.73 per hour) £24,577 per annum (NMW 21 & over £12.21)	21st birthday and have complete 12 months of the scheme. 1.4.25 - 6.7% increase

To be updated each year in line with appropriate rates

Apprentice rate add NMW % pay award to existing rate

(Annual rate is hourly x 37 divided by 7 x 365.25)

Levels of apprenticeship

Name	Level	Equivalent educational level
Intermediate	2	GCSE
Advanced	3	A level
Higher	4,5,6 and 7	Foundation degree and above
Degree	6 and 7	Bachelor's or master's degree