

Title: Corporate Apprenticeship Programme Update  
Lead Officer: Tracy Dolphin / Elaine Priestley  
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Tracey  
Wards of the District directly affected: None directly impacted

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## Summary

This report presents an annual update in relation to the Warwick District Council Corporate Apprentice Programme.

## Recommendations

It is recommended that the Employment Committee:

- (1) Approves that the redeployment period is extended to 12 weeks prior to the end of the apprenticeship and employment.
- (2) Notes the content of the report and the Apprenticeship Update (Appendix 1)
- (3) Notes that although the Public Sector Apprenticeship target was discontinued with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, Warwick District Council continues to publish progress voluntarily.

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## 1. Background/Information

### 1.1 Corporate Apprentice Scheme

- 1.1.1 As of October 2022, since its launch in 2018 the Corporate Apprentice Scheme:
- has funded opportunities for 23 apprenticeships
  - to date 10 secured alternative employment with the Council – this includes five in the last year
  - 5 are still undertaking their apprenticeships
  - 8 successfully completed their apprenticeships and left for other opportunities
  - we are in the process of recruiting 5 more apprentices.

### 1.2 Career Progression

- 1.2.1 It is particularly positive to report that some members of staff who joined as Apprentices have progressed their careers and are now employed in managerial and professional roles, this year that has included:

- Learning and Engagement Officer
- Data Analyst
- Licensing Technical Support Officer
- Trainee Assistant Accountant
- Project Officer – Office Relocation Strategy (18 months)

### 1.3 **Levy Funded Training**

- 1.3.1 The Council made a payment of £71,789 in 21/22 which is a payroll deduction, processed directly from payroll each month using a % apportionment of Gross Pay. In order to maximise use of the Apprenticeship Levy the Council has taken the opportunity to secure apprenticeship training for existing members of staff, also funded by the Apprenticeship Levy. To date circa £320,000 worth of Levy Funded training has been accessed for established members of staff and £166,000 for apprentices.
- 1.3.2 This currently funds training for 16 permanent employees and a further 2 have completed their qualifications. The Council receives £55,000 of Levy Training funding each year but the Government tops up any excess costs by 95%. This training is largely at degree level.
- 1.3.3 Three of our first intake of apprentices are now in established positions and studying at degree level.

### 1.4 **Future Recruitment**

- 1.4.1 There is currently potential to corporately fund a further five apprentices this year, in addition to the three already appointed. The Council is actively recruiting to these opportunities at present.

### 1.5 **Public Sector Apprenticeship Target**

- 1.5.1 Public sector bodies with 250 or more staff in England have a target to employ an average of at least 2.3% of their staff as new apprentices within the period of 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2022. From a low starting point 0.19% Warwick District Council has achieved an average of 1.76% in this time period. That is approximately a tenfold increase from its starting point.

Official DfE statistics [published earlier this year](#) shows most public sector bodies have so far failed to meet that bar over the first four years of the target. Average public sector apprenticeship starts between 2017-18 and 2020-21 as a percentage of headcount, was an overall average of just 1.7 per cent between April 2017 and April 2021. The average for Local Government was 1.2%.

### Warwick District Council Apprenticeship Target Progress

| Reporting percentages  | 2017-2018 | 2018-2019 | 2019-2020 | 2020-2021 | 2021 - 2022 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| 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           | 1.47      | 16.09     | 21.33     | 13.3      | 11.9        |
| Percentage of total headcount that were apprentices on 31 March  | 0.21      | 2.39      | 3.71      | 4.59      | 2.08        |
| 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 | 0.19      | 2.90      | 2.34      | 1.91      | 1.45        |

#### 1.6 Promotion of Corporate Apprenticeship Scheme.

1.6.1 There were challenges recruiting during the pandemic and the opportunity and capacity to attend careers fairs has been limited over the last few years. However, in line with this Committee's suggestion, press releases have been published and recently there was the opportunity to attend a school's careers fair and the event was supported by two of the Council's current Project Management Apprentices. They are great representatives of the WDC Apprenticeship Programme.

#### 1.7 Next Steps

- 1.7.1 It is important to recognise the success of this initiative within the Council. There have been challenges over the last few years to provide a positive learning opportunity with remote based working. This has been achieved through 'remote' apprenticeship networking events and service area initiatives.
- 1.7.2 Work will continue to support current apprentices in a changing workplace. A networking session has been arranged for recent recruits and their managers in December.

### 2. Alternative Options available to Employment Committee

2.1 The Employment Committee could decide not to support the recommendations.

### 3. Consultation and Member's comments

3.1 The report will be considered at JCF 15<sup>th</sup> November 2022 and MTUJP on the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

### 4. Implications of the proposal

#### 4.1 Legal/Human Rights Implications

4.1.1 None.

**4.2 Financial**

4.2.1 There are no financial implications.

**4.3 Council Plan**

4.3.1 The Council Plan has an external and internal focus as follows:

| <b>External</b>                                 | <b>Internal</b>                             |
|---|---|
| People – Health, Homes, Communities.            | Effective Staff.                            |
| Services – Green, Clean, Safe.                  | Maintain or Improve Services                |
| Money – Infrastructure, Enterprise, Employment. | Firm Financial Footing over the Longer Term |

4.3.2 The Apprenticeship Programme supports both the internal and external focus. Supporting employment, providing training enabling effective staff to maintain and improve services.

**4.4 Environmental/Climate Change Implications**

4.4.1 No implications.

**4.5 Analysis of the effects on Equality**

4.4.2 This has been reviewed and is not necessary at this stage. The Council’s recruitment processes include best practice in the promotion of equalities.

**4.6 Data Protection**

4.6.1 There are no implications at this stage.

**4.7 Health and Wellbeing**

4.7.1 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 and ways of working

**5 Risk Assessment**

5.1 There is a risk of not recruiting to posts.

**6 Conclusion/Reasons for the Recommendation**

**6.1 Reasons for the Recommendations**

6.1.1 **Recommendation 1** When working with Stratford DC policies were aligned to give a standard 6 week security of employment period in instances where employment is at risk. During this period those ‘at risk’ to have prior opportunity to be considered for vacancies and redeployment. This potentially limits the notice period and costs and is appropriate in instances when the work has ceased, either on grounds of redundancy or the end of a fixed term appointment. The recommendation to vary this for apprentices reflects that the termination date is implicit from the start of employment and aims to maximise the opportunity to secure permanent employment with the District Council.

6.1.2 **Recommendation 2** This is an annual report provided for Members consideration.

6.1.3 **Recommendation 3** The public sector apprenticeships target came to an end on 31 March 2022. From this date there will no longer be a target set for public sector employers.

Public sector employers who are currently required to report against the public sector apprenticeships target are asked to continue to gather, and later report:

- new apprenticeship starts
- total number of apprentices
- organisational headcount

The DFE will publish this data annually to support transparency and external accountability and help maintain the momentum public sector employers have built up once the current statutory target ends.

**Background papers:**

None.

**Supporting documents:**

None.

**Report Information Sheet**

Please complete and submit to Democratic Services with report

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Committee / Date</b>   | 29 <sup>th</sup> November 2022  |   |
| <b>Title of report</b>  | Corporate Apprenticeship Programme Update                                     |   |
| <b>Consultations undertaken</b>   |   |   |
| <b>Consultee<br/>* required</b>   | <b>Date</b>   | <b>Details of consultation<br/>/comments received</b> |
| <b>Ward Members(s)</b>  |   |   |
| <b>Portfolio Holder</b>   | 8/11/22   | Jody Tracey   |
| <b>Financial Services *</b>   |   |   |
| <b>Legal Services (*SDC)</b>  |   |   |
| <b>Other Services</b>   |   |   |
| <b>Chief Executive</b>  | 8/11/22   | Chris Elliott   |
| <b>Head of Services(s)*</b>   |   |   |
| <b>Section 151 Officer</b>  | 8/11/22   | Andrew Rollins  |
| <b>Monitoring Officer</b>   | 8/11/22   | Andrew Jones  |
| <b>CMT (WDC)</b>  | 8/11/22   |   |
| <b>Leadership Co-ordination<br/>Group (WDC)</b>   |   |   |
| <b>Other organisations</b>  |   |   |
| <b>Final decision by this<br/>Committee or rec to another<br/>Cttee / Council?</b>                  | Yes/ No<br>Recommendation to: <del>Cabinet</del> / Council<br>..... Committee |   |
| <b>Contrary to Policy / Budget<br/>framework?</b>   | No/Yes  |   |
| <b>Does this report contain<br/>exempt info/Confidential?<br/>If so, which paragraph(s)?</b>        | No/Yes, Paragraphs:   |   |
| <b>Does this report relate to a<br/>key decision (referred to in<br/>the Cabinet Forward Plan)?</b> | No/Yes, Forward Plan item – scheduled for<br>..... (date)                     |   |
| <b>Accessibility Checked?</b>   | Yes/No  |   |