

Young People's Education and Skills: Apprenticeship Sub-Group

AGENDA

Chair: Rebecca Davey **Title:** Assistant Director – Employment, Business and Skills, London Borough of Waltham Forest

Date: 11 March 2021 **Time:** 10.00 – 11.30 via Teams

Officer: Tim Gallagher **Email:** Tim.gallagher@londoncouncils.gov.uk

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| Item 1. Welcome, introductions and apologies | Rebecca Davey
Chair (5mins) |
| Item 2. Notes of the last meeting and matters arising | Rebecca Davey
Chair (5mins) |
| Item 3. London Progression Collaboration | Kashif Mirza,
London Progression Collaboration (20mins) |
| Item 4. Results of January ASG survey and discussion | Tim Gallagher
London Councils (25mins) |
| Item 5. Updates and discussion of Covid-19 impact on borough apprenticeships programmes: | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • London Councils <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Apprenticeship and Levy Data Collection • Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Apprenticeships Week • Local Government Association (LGA) | Tim Gallagher
London Councils (15mins)

Andy Lunn
ESFA (10mins)

Jamie Saddler
LGA (5mins) |
| Item 6. AOB, close and next meeting | Rebecca Davey
Chair (5mins) |

Date of next meeting: 10th June 2021, via teams, 10-12noon

Young People's Education and Skills (YPES)

Apprenticeship Sub-Group

Date 19 November 2020 **Venue** London Councils

Meeting Chair Rebecca Davey, Head of Business Growth, Employment, London Borough of Waltham Forest

Contact Officer: Anna-Maria Volpicelli

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Attendance:

Members

Alan Galloway	London Borough of Hillingdon
Alpa Ruparelia	City of Westminster
Amadea Afful	London Borough of Islington
Amy Butterworth	London Borough of Southwark
Anthony Hartigan	London Borough of Redbridge
Anthony Ristic	London Borough of Lambeth
Bridget Arnold	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Cheryl Jones	London Borough of Bexley
Denise McShane	London Borough of Hounslow
Fatima Zaidi	Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
Ishma Lakhwani-Coalo	London Borough of Hounslow
Ivan McDougall	City of London
Jack Biggs	London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
Jamel Alleyne	London Borough of Barnet
James Pierce	London Borough of Merton
Karen Taylor	London Borough of Enfield
Karis Daniel	London Boroughs of Havering and Newham
Katharine Owen	London Borough of Havering
Katie Compton	London Borough of Croydon
Kwabena Kimathi	London Borough of Lewisham
Katie Dawson	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Brianne Lindsay	London Borough of Bromley
Lorna Fraser	London Borough of Southwark

Marie Morgan	London Boroughs of Richmond and Wandsworth
Melody Thornton	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Michael Marshall	London Borough of Camden
Michelle Fitzgerald	London Borough of Brent
Rebecca Davey (Chair)	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Ripon Miah	London Borough of Tower Hamlets
Sophie Furness	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Tracey Fergus	London Borough of Haringey
Vanita Nicholls	London Borough of Ealing
Varsha Mistry-Hand	London Borough of Havering
Victoria Isaacs	London Borough of Harrow
<i>In attendance</i>	
Andrew Lunn	Education & Skills Funding Agency (on behalf of Steve Latus)
Geraldine Turton	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Nick Heard	National College of Education
<i>Officers</i>	
Dianna Neal	London Councils
Tim Gallagher	London Councils
Anna-Maria Volpicelli	London Councils
<i>Apologies</i>	
Alexandra Kelly	London Borough of Sutton and Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Carol Stewart	London Borough of Lewisham
Esmay Bear	London Borough of Hackney
Fabiola Palermo	Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
Fiona Ginty	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Jamie Saddler	Local Government Association
Justine Guynan	Onesource/London Boroughs of Havering and Newham
Maxine Sobers	London Borough of Haringey
Rochalie May	London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
Steve Latus	Education and Skills Funding Agency

1 Welcome Introductions and apologies

1.1 Rebecca Davey, Chair, welcomed members to the meeting.

2 Notes of the last meeting and matters arising

- 2.1 The notes of the last meeting were agreed. There was one remaining action outstanding from the last meeting, the setting up of a Teams channel for ASG members. This is with London Councils IT and in progress.

3 Schools Apprenticeships

Melody Thornton, London Borough of Waltham Forest

- 3.1 Melody spoke to her presentation on the [Waltham Forest Partnership \(the hub\)](#) working with the National College of Education (NCE) who offer school apprenticeship programmes. Apprenticeships in schools are slowly increasing but building relationships with them has been the hardest part. They found that schools were unaware that the levy could be used to upskill staff and that this was a good way for schools to make staff feel valued and worthwhile (offering progression route).
- 3.2 Schools in the borough expressed their preference to work with NCE and following some background research Waltham Forest found NCE are very school focussed/specific. They started by holding late afternoon information sessions for staff and teachers and found these were well attended. It was important to include academies and remember to include all young people. Communications have now significantly improved, YPO framework and smooth procurement framework.
- 3.3 Nick Heard, Executive Director at NCE, said that Waltham Forest had set clear goals and together they devised a strategy to suit the needs of the borough, forming the Waltham Forest Hub. Historically NCE have found a lot of reticence within schools around apprenticeships but this has primarily been because of the lack of awareness. NCE London (based in Stratford) have fifteen hundred learners but women are still under-represented and they are working to improve this through partnership working.
- 3.4 NCE deliver around 15% of national school-based apprenticeships and actively encourage schools to use levy funds. They encourage learners to feed back so they can continue to improve their offer and work with each local authority to identify their needs. Professional Learning Mentors are now online.

Geraldine Turton, Royal Borough of Greenwich

- 3.5 Geraldine spoke to her presentation which shared the Greenwich journey and talked about the challenges they have faced. The team is based in the Professional Development Centre and delivers training across the borough.
- 3.6 Previously schools have had to put money aside for training/professional development for staff but with the advent of the levy, this has significantly increased opportunities. Following consultation with schools and academies the borough decided to become the main provider for school apprenticeships. Each school has a co-ordinator and there is a dedicated team which administers their [Apprenticeship Plus programme](#), offering a wraparound service.
- 3.7 Working with four other boroughs, they aim to provide a comprehensive set of programmes and offer more specialist training where needed but they have to recognise that they cannot do everything.
- 3.8 Geraldine agreed that building and maintaining relationships with schools is critical and that there is a high administrative burden in doing so. There have been a lot more challenges this year but there have been some advantages to moving online, for example finding time for the 20% off the job training. 95% of learners have gone on to secure roles.
- 3.9 Rebecca thanked the speakers. Cheryl Jones from Bexley advised that schools there are showing more interest in apprenticeships and the levy. Most are using it to upskill existing staff, but all want a level 4 HILTA style standard. Many TA type roles only work approximately 24 hours per week which is difficult as some providers are hesitant to sign up employees who work less than 30 hours per week.
- 3.10 Nick added that schools are poor in succession planning and looking at the talent pool within their own staff but this is the 'golden thread'.

4 Pay scales 2020 and Levy Data

- 4.1 Tim Gallagher confirmed there was a 100% response rate to the surveys on apprenticeship pay and levy spend.
- 4.2 **Pay Survey:** Apprenticeship pay varies widely across London Boroughs. The number of boroughs paying the London Living Wage (LLW) has increased from 15 to 17. There has been a year on year increase (in 2016 just four boroughs paid the LLW).

- 4.3 **Levy Survey:** Although boroughs have doubled the spending of levy funds from last year's survey there is still a significant underspend overall. Challenges in spending the levy pot raised by colleagues include: limited resources to fund salaries for new apprentices or release existing staff for 20% off the job training; recruitment and administration are resource intensive; levy funds cannot be used for pre-apprenticeship training; lack of engagement from schools; and additional challenges caused by the pandemic.
- 4.4 Rebecca thanked Tim for his presentation remarking that for Waltham Forest, reaching the LLW has to be a priority. Not being able to utilise levy funding is going to be a rich issue going forward.
- 4.5 Rebecca opened the item up for questions. Comments in the 'Teams' chat included the suggestion of using the 'Kickstart' programme for pre-apprenticeships and Cheryl commented that delays by NAS were having a negative effect on levy spend. Alpa Ruparelia from Westminster agreed and added that delays in the digital account means data is askew. Rebecca suggested that perhaps we could focus on this and apprentices at risk of being made redundant/have been made redundant, at a future meeting.
- 4.6 Kwabena Kimathi, Lewisham, said with regard to levy transfers, LPC have been useful in directing them to employers. The fact that levy funds can only be used for training, and not in any part towards salaries, was always going to be a problem. Anthony Hartigan, Redbridge, agreed that maximising levy spend was difficult as it is restricted to training. Allowing existing staff to be out of office for the 20% off the job training is also a problem for already overstretched and under-staffed services.
- 4.7 Dianna Neal, London Councils, said that we need to work on lobbying the government for changes as everyone is becoming increasingly frustrated with the inflexibilities. Now that we are in differing circumstances, perhaps we can argue for a new approach coming out of COVID-19. London Councils is carrying out its annual survey of businesses with LCCI, which includes questions around apprenticeships and how businesses are spending the levy.

5 Updates and discussion of Covid-19 impact on borough apprenticeships programmes:

London Councils

- 5.1. Tim advised there will be a further Kickstart meeting with JCP on Friday 27 November, 11 am to 12 noon. The meeting will be an opportunity for boroughs to get overall feedback on gateway applications, as well as ask JCP questions

about Kickstart with guidance on what makes a good placement. London Councils continues to work with the GLA on the development of the Good Work mission and the wider recovery.

Action: AMV to circulate link to register to attend JCP meeting in post meeting note.

- 5.2 The care leavers meeting will continue straight after this meeting and members are welcome to join by remaining on the call. Bridget Arnold asked if there would be any notes from this meeting, Tim said there would and confirmed he will circulate post meeting.

Education Skills Funding Agency

- 5.3 Andrew Lunn confirmed that information gathered from the apprenticeship levy survey can be shared with policy makers at the DfE. The incentive payments mean that employers receive £1,500 or £2,000 for every new apprentice they hire, and this will be in place until March 2021. Andy said that there might be some news soon on pooling transfers. In response to a question, Andy said he would be happy to send information on pre-employment/traineeships and advised:
- The ESFA have extended V9 of COVID-19 guidance
 - Job retention scheme extended
 - Redundancy service rolling out to apprentices facing redundancy or who have been made redundant
 - The National Apprenticeship Awards 2020 take place next week (25th November).

Local Government Association

- 5.5 Jamie Saddler had given last minute apologies to the meeting but provided a written update and as time was running on, Tim said that this would be shared in the post meeting note.

Action: AMV to circulate LGA update in post meeting note.

- 5.6 Rebecca thanked Tim and Andy for their updates and asked if there were any questions. With National Apprenticeship Week taking place in February 2021, it would be useful to have the Teams channel up and running. Vanita Nichols, Ealing, asked about managing end point assessments since March (face to face observations). As Andy had left the meeting, she agreed to take this up with him

directly. Karen Taylor, Enfield, asked how many staff other boroughs have (they have two working in apprenticeships) and most colleagues confirmed that they have a similar number.

- 5.7 Rebecca closed the meeting asking that anyone with ideas for agenda items should be in contact directly with herself and Tim.

Date of next meeting: Thursday 11 March 2021, 10-12.00, via MS Teams

DRAFT

Apprenticeship Sub-Group - actions and updates from 19.11.20

Date of meeting	Item	Action	Whom	Comment	Open/Closed
10.9.20	8.3	Look at feasibility of setting up a 'Teams' channel for borough colleagues	TG	Actioned 12.2.21	Closed
19.11.20	5.1	Circulate link to register to attend JCP Kickstart meeting	AMV	Circulated post meeting note of 19.11.20	Closed
19.11.20	5.5	Circulate LGA written update	AMV	Circulated post meeting note of 19.11.20	Closed

Young People's Education and Skills: Apprenticeship Sub-Group

Apprenticeship Sub-Group Survey

Item 4.

Contact: Tim Gallagher

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Introduction and background

1. This paper provides the results of the survey of apprenticeship sub-group members carried out in February 2021. The purpose of the survey was to understand how boroughs' apprenticeships programmes have been affected by the pandemic and to understand what topics members of the apprenticeship sub-group would like to be discussed at future meetings. 17 boroughs responded to the survey.
2. The full results of the survey are contained as an annex to this report.
3. The results of the survey will inform discussions at future apprenticeship sub-group meetings.

Key findings

1. **76 percent of respondents said that recruitment levels of new apprentices had decreased since the start of the pandemic.** One borough noted that new starts were initially postponed until September 2021 but these have now been pushed back to the next financial year. Another borough noted that the diversity of the Government's offer (e.g. Kickstart, traineeships, T-levels) has made it harder to focus on apprenticeships.
2. The picture was more mixed for the recruitment of apprentices from the existing council workforce. **41 percent of respondents said that numbers had decreased, 41 percent said they had stayed the same and 18 percent said numbers had increased.**
3. **The majority of boroughs (53 percent) said they planned to increase recruitment of new apprentices once lockdown measures have eased.** One borough noted that it would take some time to recover their pipeline.
4. **76 percent of boroughs said they planned to increase the number of existing staff members taking apprenticeships.** 24 percent anticipated continuing with a programme of a similar size, and no boroughs planned a reduction.
5. An open question was asked about the impact of the pandemic on boroughs' apprenticeship programmes. Respondents were asked to share specific challenges and

opportunities and actions they have taken to mitigate any problems. Boroughs highlighted some of the following points:

- Several boroughs noted that some apprentices have struggled with home working. Some apprentices have faced challenges around motivation, mental health and feelings of isolation. Some apprentices do not have adequate space and/or wifi to work from home. Some have needed learning breaks and there have been some withdrawals.
 - There have been additional challenges for apprentices working in trades occupations where home working has not been an option and they have not been able to develop the practical experience of working on site.
 - Boroughs highlighted the actions they have taken to help apprentices working from home. These have included things like introducing greater flexibility to people's working hours, offering physical and mental health support, providing engagement and staff feedback via team chats and well-being sessions. Many boroughs highlighted the importance of additional supervision and contact with apprentices working from home.
 - Several boroughs noted that they had extended apprenticeship contracts early in the pandemic. One borough noted that a recent cohort of learners all went on to secure permanent roles in the council.
6. A question was asked about what ASG members found most useful about apprenticeship sub-group meetings. Six options were given and respondents could pick up to two. **The highest scoring was 'Opportunities for sharing experience and best practice with other boroughs' (82 percent), followed by 'Updates on national apprenticeships policy' (65 percent).** Some of the comments noted that 'all of the above' were useful.
7. A question was asked about what topics ASG members would be interested in hearing about at future meetings, with 12 options given. **'The most popular were Challenges around apprenticeships and home working' and 'The role of apprenticeships in the recovery' (both 65 percent).**

Discussion points

On the basis of these findings, it is clear that the overall number of new apprentices in boroughs will have declined during the financial year. It is positive that the majority of boroughs plan to increase their apprenticeships recruitment once lockdown measures ease. Apprenticeships can play a vital role in the social and economic recovery. During the meeting it would be useful to consider the following points:

- Given the financial pressures currently facing councils, how do we encourage them to continue to increase apprenticeship recruitment?

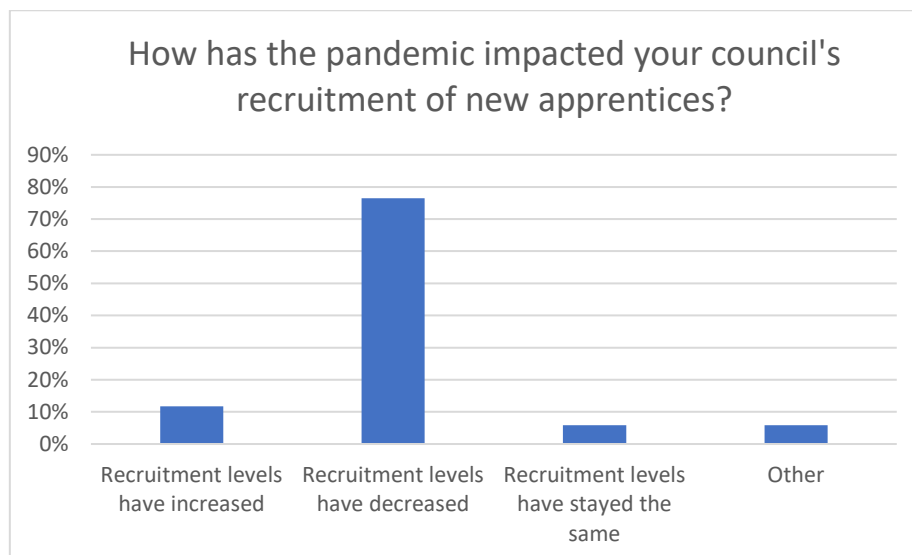
- How can we encourage councils to act as anchor institutions and encourage an expansion of their apprenticeship programme as part of their economic recovery activities?
- How can we effectively link apprenticeships and elements of the government's Plan for Jobs, such as Kickstart and traineeships, alongside local activity? In particular, can boroughs work with local employers to help create apprenticeships for Kickstart participants at the end of their placements?
- What key lessons can we learn from supporting apprentices when working from home, particularly if there is more part-time working from home in the future?
- How do we get internal apprenticeship programmes to meet the needs of councils' learning and development needs in the future?
- How can we work with local businesses to drive up apprenticeship numbers, as part of the economic recovery?
- The Skills for Jobs White Paper states that from August 2021 levy-paying employers can pledge specific amounts of their funds for transfer, and a match-making service will be introduced. How can boroughs take advantage of this and increase levy transfers?

Recommendation:

For ASG members to note the results of the survey and discuss the impact of the pandemic on borough apprenticeships programme in more detail.

Item 4. Apprenticeship sub-group survey February 2021 - appendix

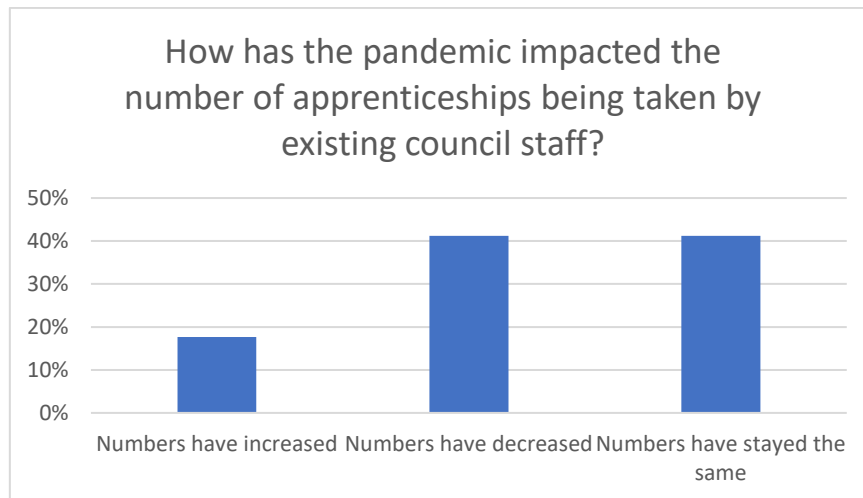
1. How has the pandemic impacted your council's recruitment of new apprentices?



Comments

- We ran a 100 Apprenticeships in 100 days campaign to increase apprenticeship recruitment
- Initially at the start of the pandemic our pipeline for new apprentices was quite healthy but we had to delay their starts to after September 2020. Although a number of the delayed starts happened quite a large number were not realised and won't be in time for the end of year 31/03/2021.
- Our strategy is to actively continue recruitment, despite the pandemic
- Huge push for entry level roles for kickstart, traineeships and t-levels. Government should have consolidated their offer and focussed on one thing rather than diversifying so much and asking employers for more entry level opportunities at a time when workforce is going through immense change and pressure.

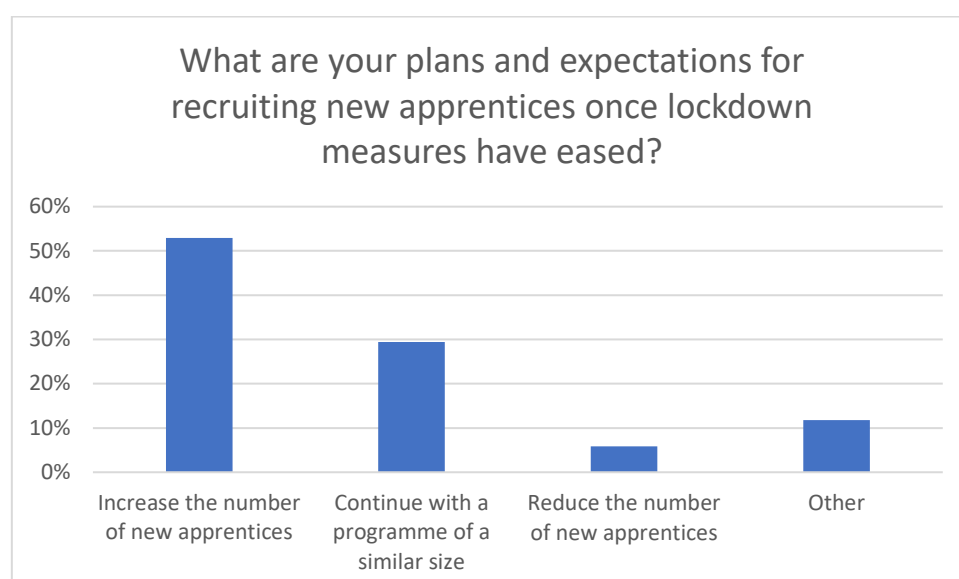
2. How has the pandemic impacted the number of apprenticeships being taken by existing council staff?



Comments

- We launched a BAME Management Development Programme.
- Although numbers have decreased from last year the % of all starts in 2020/21 has increased so far from 19% to 26%
- higher number of learners who have withdrawn or paused course
- In addition to the pandemic, this reduction in our Council is also due to voluntary redundancies, re-structures and budget savings.

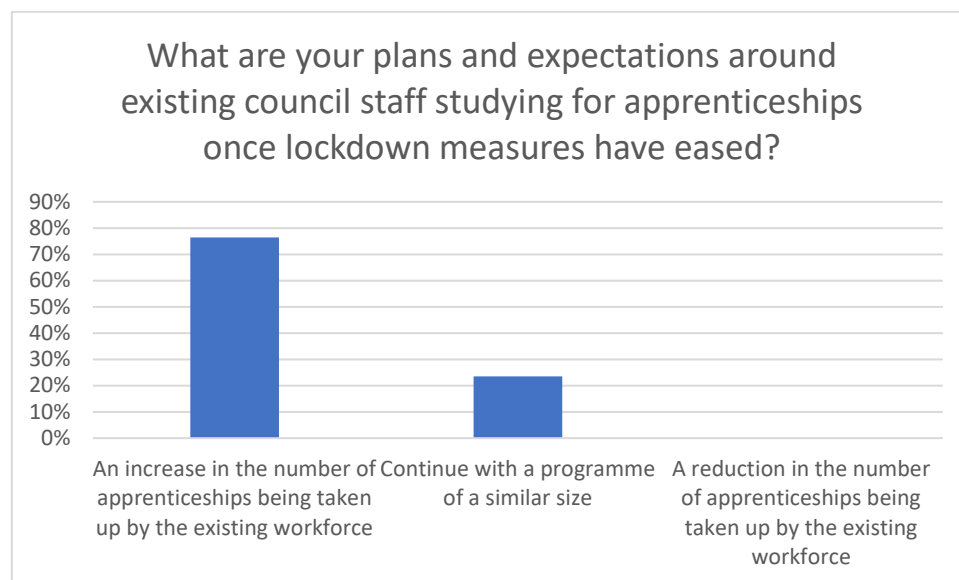
3. What are your plans and expectations for recruiting new apprentices once lockdown measures have eased?



Comments

- Align the apprenticeship scheme with the corporate staff scheme (two separate teams) and place our focus on the recruitment and support of young and/or vulnerable people in apprenticeships. It is likely that next financial year there may be a reduction in our recruitment target to start with.
- Not yet clear
- Due to budget restraints the apprentice headcount has not been kept in restructures.
- It will take some time to recover our pipeline.
- We are looking at recruiting apprentices as part of a workforce development programme. The majority of our new apprentices may be to upskill existing staff and work with career graded development roles to support the needs of our organisation.

4. What are your plans and expectations around existing council staff studying for apprenticeships once lockdown measures have eased?



Comments

- But not because of Covid, the same as ever, we want to invest as much levy as possible.
- We are targeting specific staff in areas where established standards and training providers can support the development of existing staff.

- Once the restructure/blueprints are embedded, the plan is to visit every head of service to discuss skills need/gaps for the future and use apprenticeship standards to support this wherever possible. We are also looking at introducing management/leadership programmes from levels 5-7 for our existing managers.

5. How has the pandemic impacted apprentices already working within the council, and what action has the council taken to enable them to continue with their apprenticeship? Please share specific challenges and examples of successful actions.

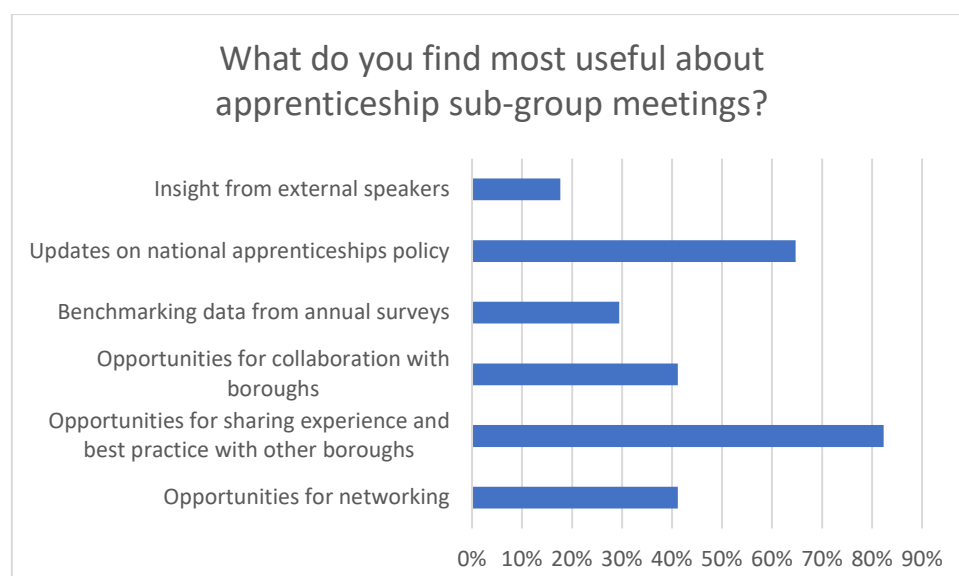
- It's harder for new apprentices to embed in the organisation and work remotely without a team. Some apprentices have also struggled with motivation and their performance has dropped. The managers and training providers have been in constant touch with them and offered support as needed to make sure their progress well on their apprenticeship.
- Shortly after the first lockdown we gave a blanket 3 month extension to the employment contracts of all Council apprentices finishing within 6 months from that point. We were concerned that apprentices would need some extra time to complete their training and we also didn't want their employment to end during a time when it would be so hard to find another job. As an organisation we have provided a lot of guidance and support to help staff through the changes to working caused by the pandemic. This covers things like much more flexibility to peoples working hours, physical and mental health support, plenty of engagement and staff feedback via team chats and wellbeing sessions. Where particular issues have arisen we have a team that provides pastoral support to help the apprentice, their line manager and their assessor work through any problems. This has been really valuable in helping apprentices overcome any hurdles related to working and learning remotely. For example where an apprentices work duties have changed because of the pandemic we have helped to link them up with work in other teams to cover any gaps in meeting the requirements of their training.
- Everything has been moved online/virtual. Some managers & mentors have daily check ins/catch up with apprentices There is a dedicated person within the L&D team, supporting existing members of staff on apprenticeships.
- Of those existing staff who enrolled onto apprenticeships as CPD (upskilling), some have struggled and needed learning breaks. We've had a handful of

withdrawals. Our entry level apprentices seem to be getting on fine and are finding ways to navigate through the difficulties.

- We have managed keep most of our apprentices on programme during the pandemic and some of these have now completed their apprenticeship. Those that had difficulties, we put them on a break in learning.
- Extending Apprenticeship contracts hence enabling completions, extended job search and waiting for new courses to start so that apprentices can progress.
- Current apprentices have expressed how difficult they find it working from home. Some have completed only one apprenticeship so that they can go into jobs where they are physically with other people. All apprentices have been given ongoing pastoral support. Additionally, at the start of lockdown all current apprentices who were not progressing from the scheme were given the option of an extension to their contracts. This has helped and given valuable time to support them with progression.
- Fortunately, our cohort of learners, who were predominantly younger members of staff completed in November 2020 and went on to secure ftc/perm roles with us. The existing staff undertaking apprenticeships have coped well and overall the support offered by providers has been fantastic. The one thing that seems to still not be right is the technology - for all the advancements there are consistent issues with logins and system access/availability.
- It has made on the job learning quite difficult. It has led to more support meetings to ensure progress is aligned with the standards required for EPA. There have been contract extensions put in place, to give the apprentices a good opportunity to complete in more realistic timescales.
- The most affected apprentices were those working in Trades occupations where working from home was not feasible and didn't develop practical experience of working on site. This was mitigated by doing more studying from home and e-learning interventions.
- Very difficult - study moving to online has not met everyone's learning needs. also a struggle as unable to physically engage with each other. Issues raised relate to feelings of isolation; lack of engagement and understanding from training providers; feelings of being "left to it" We have tried to counter with group meetings; reviewing our approach to pastoral care; putting interventions in place to support wellbeing

- Most employees are working from home managers have had to make sure full support is given during their daily role, apprentices also have all the required technology to support remote training, if required managers and mentors are meeting face to face safely to support continued learning
- Extensions of apprentice contracts particularly for manual/trade based apprenticeships which have faced significant delays to delivery and EPA's. Challenges include a smaller number of cohorts from existing providers e.g. not running Jan intakes due to low numbers.
- All apprentices are working from home. Some come into the office on certain days for mentoring support. Apprenticeship Lead has kept in touch on a more regular basis with apprentices via Skype/Teams. Study has mainly been remote but some classroom sessions are now occurring. Newsletters were sent out initially. This didn't happen during the summer months as lockdown restrictions were eased but these are about to be reinstated. EPAs have all happened with positive outcomes. Biggest challenge in the beginning was new/young, inexperienced apprentices as not all had good space/wifi to work from home. Office chairs to encourage good posture could be requested to be sent to home addresses for apprentices to use. Frequent communication and keeping in touch was appreciated by most apprentices, especially those who lived alone.
- No change - online delivery and remote working have their challenges but we adapt

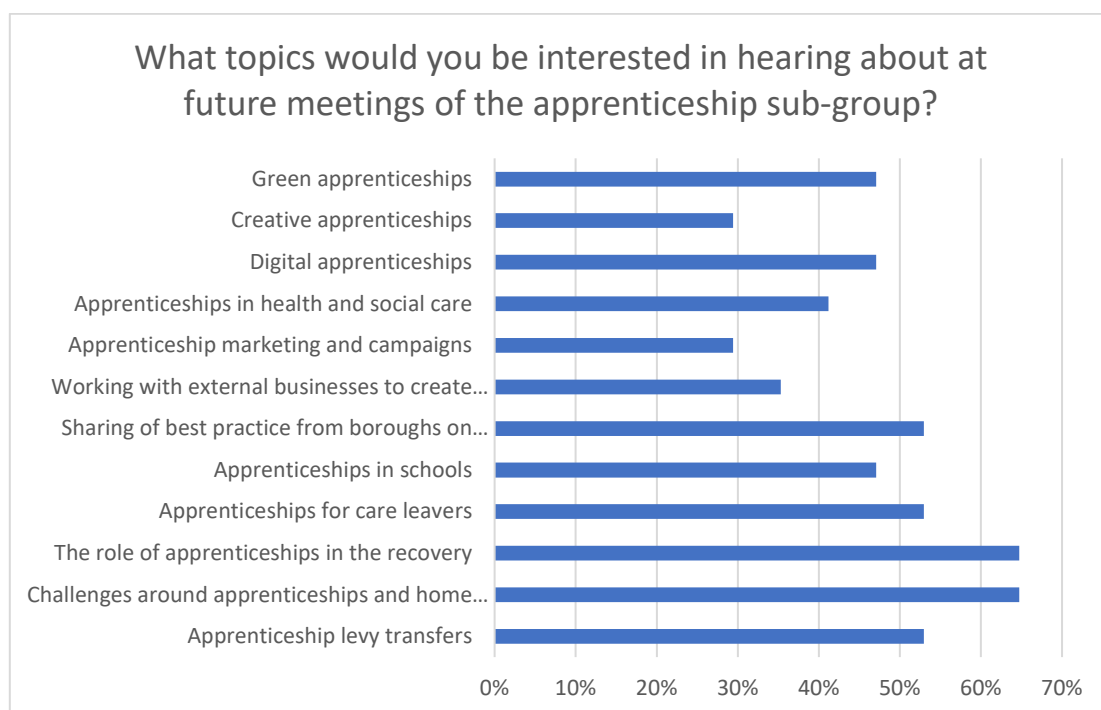
6. What do you find most useful about apprenticeship sub-group meetings?



Comments

- All the above.
- The benchmarking data is absolutely invaluable and make scrutiny reports meaningful. And I wouldn't be without my colleagues across the boroughs. Some long lasting relationships have been formed - a few of us regularly get together or MS Teams chat in between ASGs
- All of the above!
- It was hard for me to pick as the event is useful for all the above. As a group we get inspiration from each other, sharing good practice is always great, learning from others. The update from NAS is particular good from a point that they can hear our queries and feedback and hopefully take this back to be discussed. It would be great from time to time to have training provider hints and tips so we can ensure paperwork always runs smoothly and all parties work together.

7. What topics would you be interested in hearing about at future meetings of the apprenticeship sub-group?



Comments

- At a time of financial difficulties for public sectors, it would be interesting to know how other local authorities fund the apprentice salary. Do they have a ring-fenced budget for apprentices or is this funded by the departmental

budget? Also have they embed apprenticeship as part of workforce planning and developed any career pathways e.g. hard to recruit areas, etc.

- Gaps in apprenticeship standards has been discussed before but I'm not sure if it has gone anywhere. A feeder to the Social Work Degree apprenticeship at level 3 or 4 would be welcome for our current and any new Social Work Assistants, together with a level 4 classroom assistant feeder for schools.

Young People's Education and Skills: Apprenticeship Sub-Group

Annual Data Collection on Apprenticeship Delivery by London Boroughs

Item 5.

Contact: Tim Gallagher

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Introduction

1. This paper requests that the Apprenticeship Sub Group (ASG) notes London Councils' approach to the annual data collection of apprenticeship delivery in London boroughs. The approach will ensure it remains a useful tool for boroughs whilst minimising the effort involved. It presents a recommended course of action for ASG to comment on.

Background

2. Every year London Councils collects data from all London boroughs a range of data relating to apprenticeship starts. Last year we collected data on the following:
 - The number of apprentices directly recruited by boroughs
 - The number of apprentices recruited by contractors that deliver services on behalf of a borough
 - The number of apprentices placed with ATAs where boroughs pay the salary and provide the placements for but do not employ the apprentice
 - The number of apprenticeships generated through levy transfers
 - The number of apprenticeships generated through working with businesses who aren't contractors
 - In each case we also record information on the age, level, diversity, disability and number of apprentices who were previously NEET.
3. With the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy in April 2017, boroughs are also required to submit a separate data set to government. The government collects data from London boroughs on:

- Achievement towards the government's 2.3% target
 - Total organisational headcount
 - Qualitative information on the challenges achieving the government target and information on the mitigating steps boroughs are taking
4. ASG agreed in 2018 to combine London Councils' historic data collection with the new reporting requirement of government. It was recognised that there were multiple benefits for continuing to report on London Councils' long-standing apprenticeship data set:
- It will allow London Councils to continue to track long-term progress against key indicators before the apprenticeship levy was introduced.
 - It allows boroughs to compare apprenticeship data relating to age, ethnicity, disability, level of apprenticeship, NEETs, and which apprenticeship starts are new recruits to the council and which are existing staff. This data is not provided to government but has been useful in the past to both London Councils and boroughs when benchmarking relevant to local targets and performance indicators. This data also helps highlight good practice to boroughs.
 - It also allows London Councils and boroughs to continue to track delivery of apprenticeships in the supply chain, through levy transfers and through working with local employers. Although not required by government, it is important to demonstrate the quantity of indirect opportunities created by London boroughs.
5. Every year London Councils sends out the data to borough Leaders/Mayors and chief executives. We circulate the report to ASG prior to it being sent to Leaders/Mayors and chief executives, and at this stage ASG members will have the opportunity to review the report and alert us to any inaccuracies or updates.

6. London Councils also presents the data to the Greater London Employment Forum, which is made up of borough leaders or cabinet members and trade union representatives.

Proposed changes for data collection in 2021

7. For the last two years we have collected data from boroughs on the amount of apprenticeship levy available to them and the amount they have spent. We have previously asked about this alongside the pay survey in the autumn. However, given that we ask about this data in relation to the previous financial year, it makes more sense to collect it in April when it is more up-to-date. It also sits more closely to the data around apprenticeship starts than apprenticeship pay. Therefore, we are proposing to collect data on levy spend as part of this survey.
8. When last year's data was presented at a meeting of the Greater London Employment Forum (which comprises borough Leaders or cabinet members and trade union representatives) in February 2021, the group requested further information around the progression and retention of apprentices. In order to collect this information, we are proposing to ask for the following additional data in relation to the 2020/21 financial year:
 - a. The number of apprenticeship completions (new and existing staff)
 - b. Of these completions, the number of new apprentices that went on to jobs in the council; and existing council employees that progressed into new roles in the council.
 - c. The number of these completions that went on to jobs elsewhere
9. We are aware that not all boroughs will have access to this information, particularly the final point. We would be interested to hear the views of colleagues on these additional questions.
10. Given the additional questions we are asking and the current pressures on colleagues' time, we are proposing to extend the period by one week that boroughs have to respond to the survey.

Timetable

11. The requests for data will be sent out to ASG members on **Monday 22 March 2021**. The latest point for receiving the data will be **Friday 30 April 2021**, factoring in the drafting of the report and internal approval procedures. Failure to provide the data by this date may mean it is not included in the final report.

12. The timeline for this process will therefore be:

- Monday 22 March – requests for data sent to ASG
- Friday 30 April – data received
- Late May/early June – report drafted and circulated to ASG for final comments
- Thursday 10 June – draft report presented to ASG meeting
- Mid-late June – report sent to Leaders/Mayors and chief executives

This is a tight timeline. Therefore, adherence to the 30 April reporting deadline is essential.

Proposed approach for collecting data in 2021

13. London Councils will request data from ASG members on the following:

- Apprenticeship delivery within:
 1. the organisation/borough
 2. supply chain/contractors
 3. delivered through an ATA
 4. delivered in schools
 5. delivered through apprenticeship levy transfers
 6. delivered through working with local businesses who aren't contractors
- Organisational headcount, in order to assess how boroughs are performing against the public sector target
- The number of apprentices that were new starters and the number that were existing staff

- Key metrics on the apprentice:
 1. Their level of study
 2. Their age
 3. Their ethnicity
 4. Their gender
 5. Disability
 6. Whether they were previously NEET
- The amount of apprenticeship levy available to boroughs during the 2020/21 financial year and the amount spent
- Additional data relating to retention and progression:
 - The number of apprenticeship completions (new and existing staff)
 - The number of these completions that went on to jobs in the council (new and existing staff)
 - The number of these completions that went on to jobs elsewhere

14. A template will be provided to boroughs for submitting their data by Monday 22 March 2021.

15. ASG members will be required to submit this data by Friday 30 April 2021.

Recommendation:

For ASG members to note the contents of this report and provide comments on the proposed approach.