

# 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:** 24 March 2022      **Time:** 10.00 – 11.30 via Teams

**Officer:** Amin Aboushagor      **Email:** [Amin.aboushagor@londoncouncils.gov.uk](mailto:Amin.aboushagor@londoncouncils.gov.uk)

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| Item 1. Welcome, introductions and apologies   | Rebecca Davey<br><b>Chair (5 mins)</b>                    |
| Item 2. Notes of the last meeting and matters arising  | Rebecca Davey<br><b>Chair (5 mins)</b>                    |
| Item 3. Reduction in borough apprenticeships for young people<br><i>Presentation</i>                                       | Dianna Neal (( <b>20 mins</b> )<br><b>London Councils</b> |
| Item 4. Proposals for Apprenticeship Awards 2022<br><i>Presentation for discussion and agreement</i>                       | Amin Aboushagor<br><b>London Councils (10 mins)</b>       |
| Item 5. Annual data collection (headcount/levy spend/payscales)<br><i>Presentation – proposed timescales for agreement</i> | Amin Aboushagor<br><b>London Councils (5 mins)</b>        |
| Item 6. Flexi-Apprenticeships  | Andy Lunn<br><b>ESFA (10 mins)</b>                        |
| Item 7. Updates and Discussion:  |   |
| • Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)   | Andy Lunn<br><b>ESFA (5 mins)</b>                         |
| • Local Government Association (LGA)   | Jamie Saddler<br><b>LGA (15 mins)</b>                     |
| • ASG members  | All ( <b>10 mins</b> )                                    |
| Item 8. AOB, close and next meeting  | Rebecca Davey<br><b>Chair (5 mins)</b>                    |

***Date of next meeting: 16<sup>th</sup> June 2022, 10.00am – 11.30am***

# Young People's Education and Skills (YPES)

## Apprenticeship Sub-Group

**Date** 2 December 2021 **Venue** Via Teams

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

**Contact Officer:** Anna-Maria Volpicelli

**T:** 020 7934 9779 **E:** [Anna-maria.volpicelli@londoncouncils.gov.uk](mailto:Anna-maria.volpicelli@londoncouncils.gov.uk)

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### Attendance:

#### **Members**

Alan Galloway	London Borough of Hillingdon
Amadea Afful	London Borough of Islington
Andile Artino	London Borough of Hackney
Anthony Hartigan	London Borough of Redbridge
Barbara Hamilton	City of London
Brianne Lindsay	London Borough of Bromley
Bridget Arnold	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Carol Stewart	London Borough of Lewisham
Christine Shobande	London Borough of Camden
Courtney Richards	London Borough of Hounslow
Darshna Dhokia	London Borough of Islington
Dean Howard	London Borough of Harrow
Deborah Harrington	Royal Borough of Kingston
Eliane Belben	London Borough of Bromley
Huma Hadi	London Borough of Lewisham
Ishma Lakhwani-Coalo	London Borough of Hounslow
Jo Robertson	London Borough of Hounslow
Fabiola Palermo	Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
James Pierce	London Borough of Merton
Lloyd Bryson	London Borough of Sutton
Melody Thornton	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Michelle Fitzgerald	London Borough of Brent
Nyna Sourì	London Borough of Havering
Rebecca Davey ( <b>Chair</b> )	London Borough of Waltham Forest
Sarah-Jane Marcello	London Borough of Hackney

Scarlett Bochan	London Borough of Southwark
Susan Pieterse	Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
Vanita Nicholls	London Borough of Ealing
Varsha Mistry-Hand	London Borough of Havering

### ***In attendance***

Andrew Lunn	Education & Skills Funding Agency (left prior to ESFA update)
Jamie Saddler	Local Government Association

### ***Officers***

Amin Aboushagor	London Councils
Anna-Maria Volpicelli	London Councils
Dianna Neal	London Councils

### ***Apologies***

Alexandra Kelly	Royal Borough of Kingston
Deborah Allen	London Borough of Lambeth
Karen Taylor	London Borough of Enfield
Lorraine Pearce	London Borough of Haringey
Michael Marshall	London Borough of Camden
Rebecca Heptinstall	London Borough of Islington
Steve Whitehead	London Borough of Hounslow
Sue Pearce	Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

## **1 Welcome, introductions, and apologies**

- 1.1 Rebecca Davey, Chair, welcomed members to the meeting, particularly new attendees. These were Scarlett Bochan (Southwark), Andile Artino (Hackney), Dean Howard (Harrow), Nyna Sourì (Havering), Jo Robertson (Hounslow) and Amin Aboushagor (London Councils). Several apologies were received, which are recorded above.

## **2 Notes of the last meeting and matters arising**

- 2.1 The notes of the last meeting were agreed. The action on supplying a list of data points collected by London Councils was included as an appendix to the papers for this meeting.

### **3 Pay-scales survey 2021**

- 3.1 Amin Aboushagor presented on the results of the London Councils pay scales survey undertaken in October, and thanked colleagues for once again achieving a 100 percent response rate.
- 3.2 L2 apprentices pay ranges between £4.41 and £12.22, but more often than not, the rate of pay is at the London Living Wage (LLW). Higher level apprentices are generally paid at the grade of the role they are employed in. The local government pay award settlement is not yet finalised, but this will see an additional increase once it goes into effect.
- 3.3 There has been an increase in the number of boroughs paying the LLW year on year from 17 to 21. L2 average pay has risen to £10.51, with median pay at £10.85, L3 average pay has risen to £10.66, with median pay at £10.85. This means there has been an 18% increase at L2 and a 9% increase at L3, which has been consistent since 2016.
- 3.4 Amin asked colleagues to consider why they think the L2 increase has seen such a significant increase. Rebecca said that this annual benchmarking exercise has helped to even out the level of pay across London. Comments from colleagues:
- With LLW, some managers prefer to recruit at a higher level, because it can seem a high cost to pay for a lower level apprentice.
  - Apprenticeships are historically an underpaid role, and businesses find it difficult to recruit at minimum wage. There is also the challenge of affordability, and we should lobby for a national apprentice minimum wage increase.
  - More boroughs are meeting the London Living Wage, so L2 would naturally have seen the greatest increase.
  - Boroughs are struggling in the labour market to recruit at entry level.

**Action: Anna to circulate presentation in post meeting note**

### **4 Review of Apprenticeships Awards 2021**

- 4.1 Rebecca said that it was a shame we were unable to hold this year's event in person, but hopefully, the 2022 Awards will be able to take place either as a live event or in a hybrid capacity. Rebecca also wanted to record the ASG's thanks to the judging panel for their work, noting that the previous winners are invited to take part in the judging which brings a unique perspective to the shortlisting and

final decisions. Running through the [existing categories](#), Rebecca asked colleagues to consider if these were still right and what more we could be doing.

- 4.2 Rebecca noted that, predominantly, winners come from central London boroughs, and asked the group how we could support outer London boroughs, for example, by holding a workshop on how to complete applications. Opening the floor up to colleagues, Alan (Hillingdon) advised that two years ago they had successfully had short listings, but this year it was simply a matter of capacity and didn't feel that a workshop was necessary. This was echoed by other colleagues who noted that timing is a real issue due to communication requirements and questioned whether the time given to complete and submit applications could be extended. It was suggested there should be a separate category for schools instead of this falling under the 'supply chain' or 'schools'. Michelle (Brent) asked if this process could be digital as there is a lot of administrative work involved in collating the nominations, and Dean (Harrow) suggested that we could look at the categories included in the [National Apprenticeship Awards](#) and align with these if appropriate.
- 4.3 Rebecca thanked colleagues for their comments and advised that from her own experience, in her capacity as Chair of the judging panel, the best applications were apprentice testimonials. She suggested that this should be an item for the next meeting so that colleagues will have more time to think about new categories and changes to the process.

**Action:**

- **Anna to circulate the list of previous borough winners in the post meeting note.**
- **Review of Apprenticeship Awards to be an agenda item for March 2022 meeting.**

## **5 Flexi-Apprenticeships**

- 5.1 Andy Lunn advised that tendering for the £7 million grant had now ended, and that they hope to announce the successful bidders for flexi-apprenticeship agencies shortly. Andy likened these new organisations (equivalent to the old ATAs who will no longer exist) to a temporary recruitment agency that places apprentices in short placements to achieve a full apprenticeship, particularly in those sectors where full-time apprenticeships are difficult due to the fact they are

more 'project' based. Typically, these are the construction, digital, and creative sectors who might not have the capacity to deliver a full apprenticeship.

5.2 15-month contracts will be sent out soon, with the expectation that delivery will start end of January 2022, ending in March 2023.

5.3 Comments from colleagues following Andy's update:

- These seem to be directed more at SMEs than local government.
- Will flexi-apprenticeships be across all standards, or focused on specific areas as a pilot? Andy advised that technically, it could be across all sectors.
- Will local authorities be able to access flexi-apprenticeship agencies? Andy confirmed that they would, adding that there are strong terms and conditions set in the contract, so it will be a proper service.
- If we use a flexi-apprenticeship agency, does this mean the apprentice will not count towards the public sector target? Andy said that he felt they wouldn't be, but he would check. Jamie (LGA) added that you can currently count an apprentice through an ATA, but asked Andy how it would work with multiple employers.
- Looking at project supporting SMEs, can you mix and match, and is there an option for apprentices to work for several companies at the same time? Andy confirmed that this is the case.
- Would the flexible approach work from a WFH perspective, sharing the apprentice in different organisations on different days of the week, so they are able to get the on-the-job experience required? Andy advised that WFH policies were individual to each employer, and that everything needs to be more adaptable. Flexi-apprenticeship agencies will charge an hourly rate to the employer for the apprentice.
- In terms of paying apprentices, can the levy be used to pay apprentice salaries? Andy replied that levy funding still cannot be used for salaries.
- Is there a factsheet on the Flexi Apprenticeship that can be passed to colleagues in Economic Development?
- Apprentices have been struggling to get through gateway and have suffered from not being able to work on site during COVID; they need real world experience.
- LAs can share apprentices.
- Would it be a good to have a presentation at a future date from an SME on how flexi-apprenticeships are working for them?

5.4 Jamie (LGA) advised there are a couple of sectors in local government that this could work well for, maintained and primary schools, where they may not be able

to afford a full time apprentice but where an apprentice can be shared on a rotational basis, and also for social care apprenticeships. This works for two-tier district councils that could share costs and we need to think around this creatively.

- 5.5 In response to the question of whether the Flexi-apprenticeship agency would have a full programme set up for an apprentice, Andy stated that a large part of the programme should be in place prior to the apprentice starting.
- 5.6 Dianna added that there is a new ministerial team at DfE which is an opportunity to push for apprenticeship levy reforms. It was agreed that lobbying for levy funds for use towards/or as salaries was very important and should be ongoing.
- 5.7 When asked if there would be another bidding round, Andy said although nothing is confirmed, it is possible that another round could commence around the end of 2022, beginning of 2023.
- 5.8 Rebecca thanked Andy and members for the discussion asking if we could have this subject as an agenda item at the next meeting in March 2022.

**Action:**

- **Andy Lunn to forward fact sheet on flexi-apprenticeships for circulation to members.**
- **London Councils to include as an agenda item at the next meeting.**

**Item 6. Updates and Discussion**

**London Councils**

- 6.1 Amin presented a proposal from London Councils to combine the headcount, levy spend, and pay scales survey into one annual survey, which would take place in October of each year to tie in with DfE reporting deadlines. Members agreed that this would be a good idea, and it was **AGREED** to take this forward with further discussion at the next meeting in March 2022 to agree timescales.

**LGA**

- 6.2 Jamie referred to the newsletter circulated last week advising that the government published the 20/21 Public Sector Target reporting dataset, and advised that local government outcomes were not as bad as they could have been during the pandemic period. There is clear evidence of growth, and London

is third in terms of regional performance. However, only 28 out of 33 boroughs had completed and Jamie reminded colleagues that submitting the data was required by law. Jamie congratulated the three boroughs that had hit their targets.

- 6.3 The LGA have written to the new Education Minister requesting a meeting and to which he has agreed. They are proposing to discuss both pooled PAYE and levy funding for salaries.
- 6.4 The issue of schools pooled PAYE was raised and Jamie advised that, although not for all, a school could pay a salary privately, which can be done via the Digital Apprenticeship Service (DAS). Jamie was asked if he had a short note on pooled PAYE and paying privately, and he agreed to send a communication to members.
- 6.5 The Local Government Apprentice of the year was announced in May and the Local Government Apprenticeship Challenge, which is run on a regional basis, had a hundred and twenty apprentices take part. However, there was no representation from London and Jamie is keen that this should change. Noting that there is a charge of £150 per apprentice taking part, Jamie asked whether the organisers of the Challenge could present on it at the next meeting.
- 6.6 Lastly, Jamie reminded colleagues of the webinar, Making Apprenticeships More Impactful, taking place next week and that the quick survey on T Levels was open to 16 December. The next newsletter is due to be circulated on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> December, and those members that are new to the group or who have yet to sign up for these are welcome to email him for future communications.
- 6.7 Alan (Hillingdon) advised that ASG members have been invited to the next Operational Sub-group meeting, which will focus on T Levels and is taking place on the 16<sup>th</sup> December. For more information, members can email [peter.obrien@londoncouncils.gov.uk](mailto:peter.obrien@londoncouncils.gov.uk)

**Action:**

- **London Councils to propose timescale for annual survey at next meeting for discussion and agreement by members.**
- **Jamie to forward a note on pooled PAYE and private pay to Anna for onward circulation to members.**



## **Item 7. Proposed 2022-2023 schedule of meeting dates**

- 7.1 The schedule of meeting dates proposed were agreed, and it was decided that the Chair would discuss the format of how the meetings would take place, whether virtually or hybrid, ahead of each meeting.

## **Item 8. AOB**

- 8.1 The Chair asked London Councils to email members in the new year to find out what topics they would like to see covered for the year ahead, adding that the summer meeting (16 June 2022) should focus on schools.
- 8.2 A question was posed about whether there is a current source of funding or information to access support for Maths and English. Bridget (Greenwich) advised that their college LSEC, offer functional skills and would be happy to share contact details.
- 8.3 In response to a question on looking to build a career pathway for teacher training, Dean (Harrow) posted the following links in the chat:
- [Postgraduate Teacher Apprenticeship \(QTS\) Primary or Secondary | Middlesex University London \(mdx.ac.uk\)](https://www.mdx.ac.uk/postgraduate-teacher-apprenticeship-qts-primary-or-secondary) - Postgraduate Teacher Apprenticeship (QTS) Primary or Secondary | Middlesex University London. The Apprenticeship programme is an employment-based route offering you a way to qualify as a teacher (QTS) while based mainly in a school.
  - [Teacher Apprenticeship – BeReady – Be Future Ready \(bereadygroup.org\)](https://www.bereadygroup.org/teacher-apprenticeship)

### **Action:**

- **London Councils to email members in the new year to ask for topics colleagues would like covered at future meetings.**
- **Anna to include link to Young People's Education and Skills Board landing page to members for information.**

**Date of next meeting: Thursday 24th March 2022, 10-11.30am, format to be advised.**

# How to address the decline in 16-24 apprenticeships

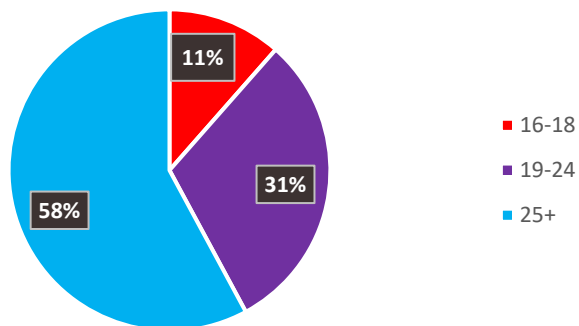
Dianna Neal, London Councils

# Background

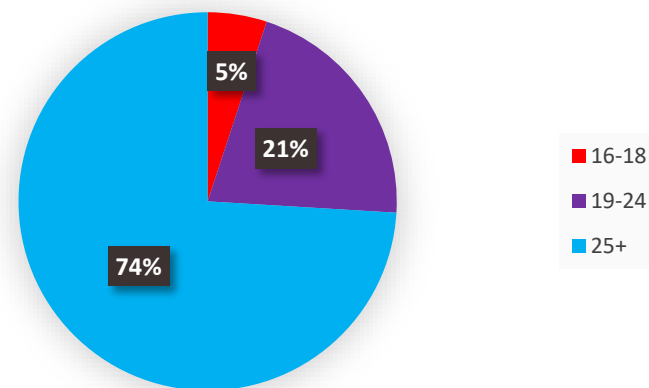
- The apprenticeship levy was first introduced in the 2017/18 financial year
- Since 2017-18, the absolute number of apprentices in councils and schools aged 16-18 has fallen by 72 percent (as of 2020/21)
- The number of apprentices aged 19-24 has also decreased by 45 percent
- However, apprentices aged 25+ have increased by 178 percent
- Alongside the decline in 16-24 y/o apprentices, since 2017-18 the number of L2 apprenticeship starts has fallen by 80 percent
- L3 apprenticeship starts have only risen by 5 percent over the same period
- By contrast, the number of L4-7 starts has more than quadrupled over the same time horizon
- Regarding apprenticeship pay, since 2016, L2 apprentice pay has risen by 31 percent
- Over the same period, L3 apprentice pay has risen by an even greater amount, 59 percent.

# Age of apprentices in councils and schools

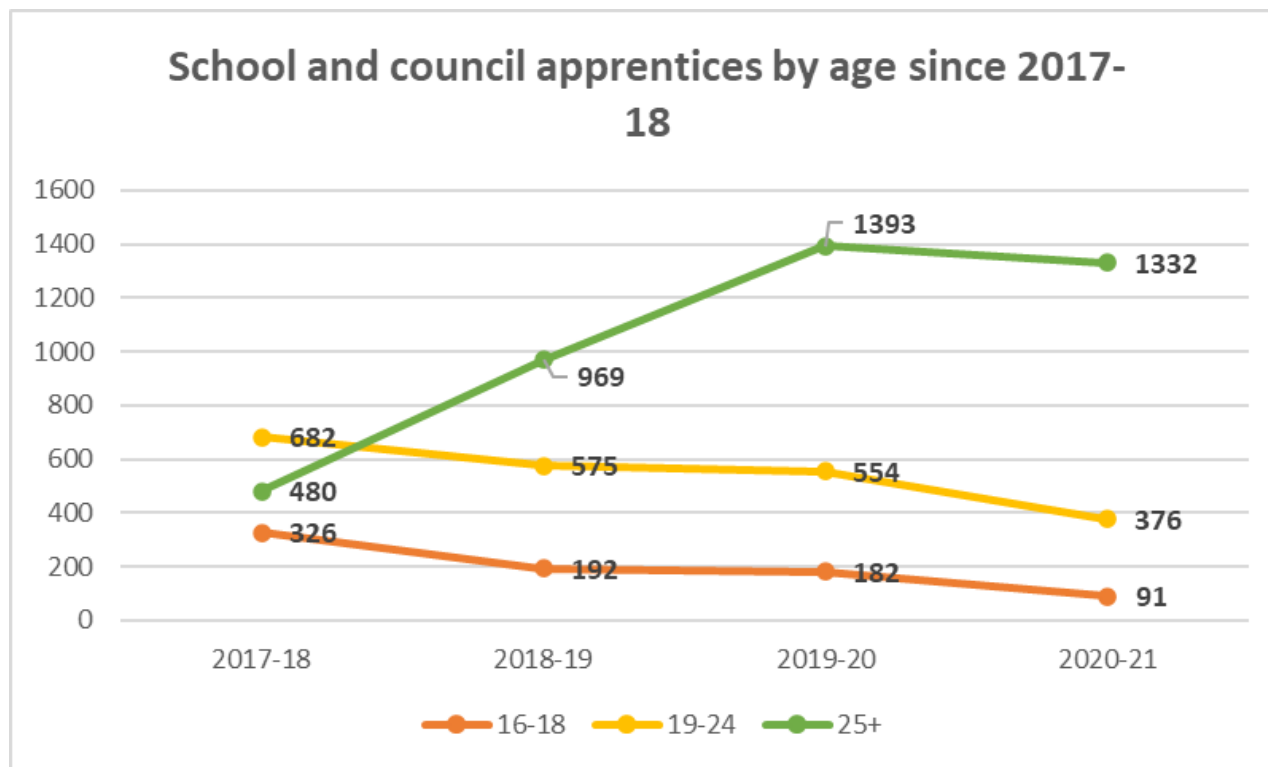
School and council apprentices by age, 2017/18



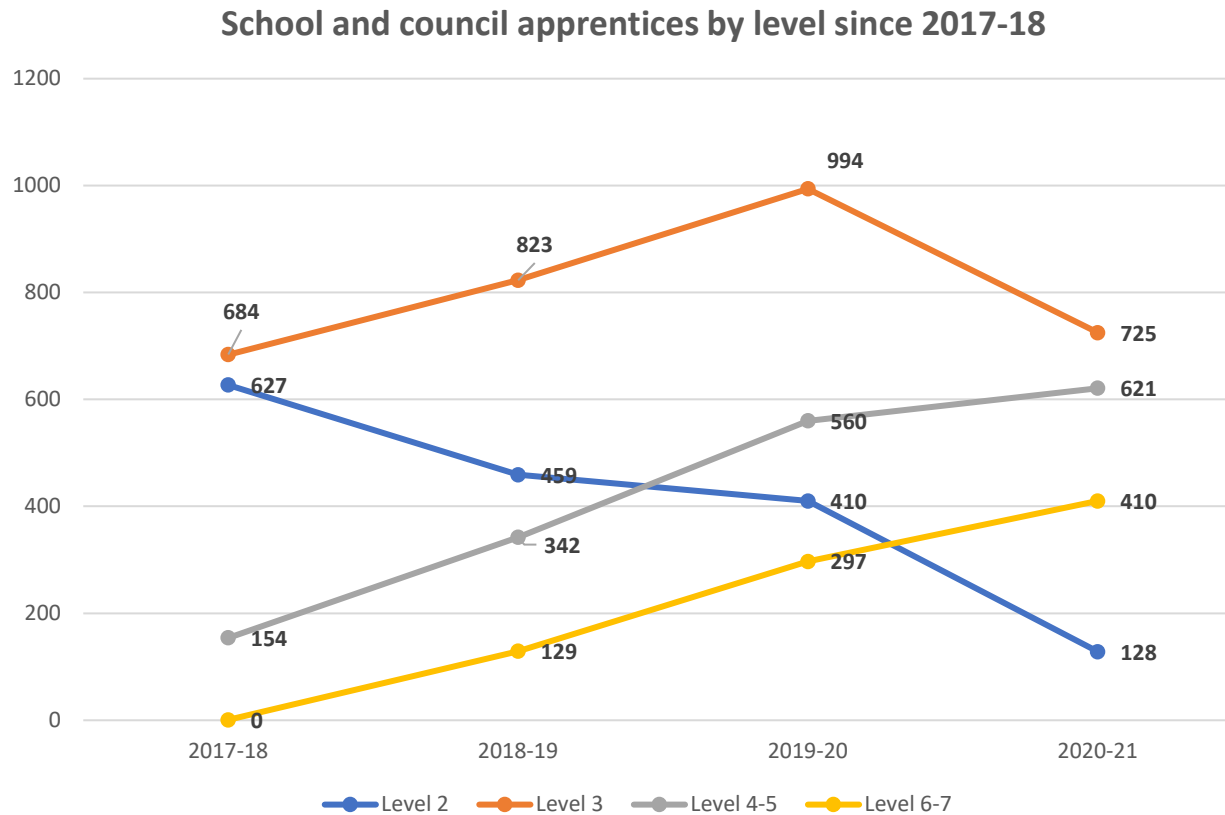
School and council apprentices by age, 2020/21



# Age of apprentices in councils and schools



# Levels of apprenticeships in councils and schools



## Questions to consider

- Could existing council recruitment practices be adapted to focus less on experience and more on attitudes and behaviours for lower-level apprenticeships?
- Are there more effective ways to promote apprenticeships and attract more candidates by reviewing the different types of council communications?
- Do councils systematically consider creating apprenticeships first for new entry level posts when vacancies arise before considering a graded role?
- Can young people working at councils already on job support programmes such as Kickstart, Restart, or JETS be transitioned or supported into apprenticeships?
- Would it help to raise awareness among senior officers and politicians about the reduction in young apprentices?

Questions and comments?



# Review of London Borough Apprenticeship Awards

London Councils

# Background

- London Councils has organised the London Borough Apprenticeship Awards since 2010
- There are currently six award categories:
  1. Apprentice of the Year
  2. Best contribution by a new apprentice
  3. Best progression by an apprentice
  4. Best apprentice working in the supply chain or in schools
  5. The Andy Scott award for best manager or mentor
  6. Best work with supply chains and local businesses to create new apprenticeships
- Last two awards have been held virtually due to Covid-19, but aim is to return to an in-person event in 2022

# National Apprenticeship Awards (NAA) Comparison

- We compared the NAA categories to the existing London Borough Apprenticeship Awards categories, of which there are nine
- Some NAA award categories are not relevant to the borough awards while others are already present
- Additionally, our awards include categories not included in the NAA specifically related to boroughs

## London Borough Apprenticeship Awards Categories

Apprentice of the Year

Best contribution by a new apprentice

Best progression by an apprentice

Best apprentice working in the supply chain or in schools

The Andy Scott award for best manager or mentor

Best work with supply chains and local businesses to create new apprenticeships

## National Apprenticeship Awards Categories

The BCS, Chartered Institute for IT Award for SME Employer of the Year:  
1 – 249 employees

The British Army Award for Large Employer of the Year: 250 – 4,999 employees

NCFE Award for Macro Employer of the Year: 5,000+ employees

The MAERSK Award for Recruitment Excellence Award

The Marshall Award for Intermediate Apprentice of the Year

The BT Award for Advanced Apprentice of the Year

The Royal Navy Award for Higher or Degree Apprentice of the Year

The Lloyds Banking Group Award for Rising Star of the Year

The Royal Air Force Award for Apprenticeship Champion of the Year

# Proposals following Review

- No NAA categories will be taken forward
- Separation of best apprentice working in borough schools/supply chains into two separate award categories to make seven categories in total
- Lengthening of nomination submission window from one month to two month
- Implementing regular communications from London Councils to boroughs during the application window
- Digitisation of nomination process cannot take place this year due to short timescales, but will be considered for the 2023 awards

# Proposed Apprenticeship Awards Timescales

- 05 April - Nominations open for submission until **31 May** with nomination information circulated to boroughs
- 03 May – 1<sup>st</sup> nominations reminder communicated to boroughs
- 17 May – 2<sup>nd</sup> nominations reminder communicated to boroughs
- 24 May – 3<sup>rd</sup> nominations reminder communicated to boroughs
- 31 May – Final deadline day reminder communicated to boroughs
- Mid July – Awards shortlist announced
- Late July – invitations to apprenticeship awards issued
- September – Apprenticeship awards event held

Questions?