

Note to Management Team

Apprenticeship Scheme

Background

I refer Management Team to the Central Services Directorate Plan 2012/13 in which it was agreed that Personnel would look into the potential benefits and costs to introducing an Apprenticeship Scheme to the organisation.

Facts

Apprenticeships are a Government initiative to offer an alternative to university for people looking for a direct and affordable route to skilled jobs and careers. Apprenticeships are available to anyone over 16 years of age and who are not in full-time education and are in employment. An apprentice can therefore learn a profession in the workplace whilst being entrusted with tasks that contribute to the organisations productivity.

Apprenticeships are available at different levels; intermediate (Level 2), advanced (Level 3) or higher (level 4) and at each level there are specific additional qualifications that must be achieved by the apprentice. These qualifications cover such areas as maths, English, IT and act as back up the technical and competency qualifications the apprentice gains in the workplace.

There are a wide range of apprenticeships available with over 200 different types of apprenticeships on offer however, many of these would not “fit” with the services that the Council delivers and therefore a table of the courses that would best match the roles/skill requirements of the organisation can be found in Appendix A.

There needs to be consideration taken regarding how the training is to be delivered as it is normal that the training element of an apprenticeship is provided by local a local college of further education. However, some of the courses that have been identified are not available at The College of West Anglia (COWA) e.g. apprenticeships in Leisure. Therefore, research has been conducted regarding colleges that are within easy travelling distance and also specialist training providers so as this gap can be bridged. A table of training providers with the courses they have available can be found in Appendix A.

As the Council is not deemed as either a small or medium sized enterprise it does not qualify for full funding of an apprentice. This, therefore requires that an employer pays an apprentice £2.65 per hour (apprentice minimum wage from October 2012) for apprentices who are either under 19 or in the first year of their apprenticeship. The National Minimum Wage is then applicable for those over the age of 19 who have completed their first year of an apprenticeship. Typically employers pay a lower starting rate and then increase pay after 6

months of service or when an apprentice has demonstrated competence in the workplace. **N.B.** Added to the cost of employing an apprentice there is also the cost of their training which is part funded by the Government (please see Appendix B).

Each apprenticeship post will need to be clearly described as a training role within the job description and any recruitment to the posts should be carried out locally via the Council Website, the Job Centre and by COWA. As an apprentice employer the Council would be able to display the employer badge as illustrated below on all Council documents, at no cost and the Council would also be able to display a certificate in Reception to recognise the commitment to the Apprenticeship Scheme.



Apprentices are required to be supported by the employing organisation through reviews and managers would be expected to act as coaches with each apprentice. It is important that apprentices are not used cynically by employers and a clear training framework is in place. Additionally a workplace learning mentor will be required to be available to act as scheme coordinator, this can be absorbed into the Personnel Officers role.

Proposal

The proposals are:

- That a request is taken to Cabinet to recruit six apprentices to be employed on 18 month Fixed Term Contracts that are extra nummery to the Fixed Term Establishment List and should be funded corporately. The pay scheme proposal is set out below:

- 16 to 20 year olds or those within first year of apprenticeship

£2.65 per hour £2.65 for the first six months.

£3.68 per hour from six months up to twelve months.

£4.98 per hour from twelve months onwards (for those aged 16 to up to the age of 21)

This would be a cost per apprentice over an 18 month period of £13,484 (including on costs).

- 21 years and older and in second year of apprenticeship

£6.08 per hour from twelve months onwards

This would be a cost per apprentice over an 18 month period of £14,795 (including on costs).

N.B Provisional discussions with Judy Close, Unison Branch Secretary have been conducted regarding this pay scheme and have in principle been viewed as acceptable.

- That the following areas be considered as suitable employment opportunities for apprentices:
 - Business Administration based within Kings Court.
 - Front Office Receptionist based at Downham Market Leisure Centre
 - Accountancy based at Kings Court
 - Horticulture based at the Depot
 - Creative Arts based at the Corn Exchange
 - Exercise and Fitness based at Lynnsport

- That the cost of training the apprentices where necessary be financed by the Corporate Training Budget.

- That the apprenticeship logo be displayed on Council documents and at Reception.

Decision Required

That Management Team agree to these proposals.

Janet Flood
Personnel Officer
August 2012

Appendix A

Table of apprenticeships and training providers

Apprenticeship	Level Available	Job Role Match	Duration of Apprenticeship	Training Provider
Business and Administration	2 & 3	Clerical and Admin Assistants	Each level – 18 months	CWA
Customer Service	2 & 3	All front facing service areas.	Each Level – 18 months	CWA
Horticulture	2 & 3	Grounds staff	Level 2 – 20 months Level 3 – 24 months	CWA
IT Application Specialist	2	Information and Communication Technology	12 months	CWA
Creative Arts – Technical Theatre (Rigging, Lighting and Sound)	2 & 3	Arts and Entertainment Technician	Each level – 12 months	City College, Norwich
Sales and Telesales	2	Membership Sales – Leisure and Public Space	12 to 18 months	City College, Norwich
Marketing	2 & 3	Arts and Entertainment	Level 2 – 12 months Level 3 – 18 months	Peterborough Regional College
Accountancy linked to AAT*	2 & 3	Financial Services	Both levels 12 to 18 months	Norwich City College or/ Peterborough Regional College
Creative and Digital Media*	3	Graphics	18 months	Norwich City College
Contact Centre Operations	2	CIC	12 months	Peterborough Regional College
Local Taxation and Benefits	3	Revenues and Benefits	12 to 18 months	The Welfare Advice Service
Instructing Exercise and Fitness	2	Recreational Assistants, Fitness Trainer	18 months	Lifetime Learning
Front Office	2	Leisure Receptionists	18 months	Lifetime Learning

* These course run based on an academic year as they are day release. Peterborough Regional College has an intake for Accounts on the first Wednesday in November.

Appendix B

Table of part funded training

Learning Provider	Level 2 £			Level 3 £		
	16 – 18	19 – 24	25 +	16 – 18	19 – 24	25 +
COWA	Free	450	450	Free	600	600
Norwich City	Free	500	700	Free	500	700
Peterborough Regional College	Free	1000	1500	Free	1000	1500
Lifetime Training	Free	Free	1500	Free	Free	1800
Welfare Advice Service	n/a	n/a	n/a	Free	3000	3000