
Subject:	APPRENTICESHIP POLICY UPDATE
Meeting and Date:	Cabinet – 7 December 2015 General Purposes Committee – 10 March 2016
Report of:	Director of Governance, Head of Communication and Engagement and Head of Leadership Support
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Keith Morris – Skills, Training, Tourism, Voluntary Services and Community Safety

Purpose of the report: To review and update the Apprenticeship, Graduate Placement and Work Experience policy and associated contract/agreements.

To develop a trial of work experience placements in conjunction with Dover Job Centre Plus.

The role of Cabinet is to determine whether to adopt the revisions to the overall scheme (i.e. Apprenticeship/ Graduate/Internship Placement and Work Experience) and to determine the terms and conditions upon which Work Experience Placements are offered.

The role of General Purposes is to determine the terms and conditions upon which Apprentices and Graduate/Internship Placements hold office.

Recommendation: Cabinet approves:

1. That the Apprenticeship, Graduate Placement and Work Experience Schemes, Policies are updated to reflect the changes in this report. :
2. That through the regeneration programme, conversations are held with employers, developers and training providers to encourage the right skills/training offer to the local workforce.
3. That this Council works with East Kent College to develop a more structured work placement programme.
4. That to support the skill development of the local workforce the Work Experience Placements with Job Centre Plus are trialled in the Communication and Engagement Team
5. That the Head of Paid Service or Director of Governance are authorised to approve any contracts or agreements that may be necessary to give effect to the revised arrangement

General Purposes Committee agrees:

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6. That the number of apprenticeship places available directly from this Council is increased to 6 apprenticeships per annum.
 7. That due to the nature of the training programmes and qualifications, the length of apprenticeship programmes is extended to up to 2 years.
 8. That each apprentice under the age of 18 is paid 1.5x the National Minimum Wage for apprentices for up to 2 years.
 9. That each apprentice over the age of 18 is paid the National Minimum Wage for their age for up to 2 years.
 10. That the Head of Paid Service or Director of Governance are authorised to approve any contracts or agreements that may be necessary to give effect to the revised arrangement.
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1. Summary

In order to ensure the Apprenticeship, Graduate Placement and Work Experience Scheme is up to date and continues to be fit for purpose, to reflect the latest Government guidance and current practices the scheme has been reviewed and a number of changes, enhancements and recommendations proposed.

Introduction and Background

- 1.1 In May 2012 Cabinet, General Purposes Committee and Joint Staff Consultative Forum agreed the 'Apprenticeship, Graduate Placement and Work Experience Schemes, Policies and Associated Contracts/Agreements'.
- 1.2 With regards the Apprenticeship Policy, the 2012 report approved;
 - (a) A Modern Apprenticeship Policy working with K-College as a preferred partner
 - (b) That the Head of Paid Service, or Director of Governance are authorised to approve tripartite contractual agreements (contract for apprenticeship) between the Council, an apprentice and K-College or other training partners
 - (c) That the Council provides four apprenticeship training contracts per year, linked to an appropriate NVQ qualification
 - (d) That apprentices are paid at 1.5 x the National Minimum Wage for apprentices for the first year and at the National Minimum Wage for their age for any apprenticeships that continue into year 2
- 1.3 This report does not recommend any changes to the Graduate Placement agreement already in place.
- 1.4 In 2014 a Workforce Planning review was undertaken and this included a review of how the modern apprenticeship scheme is working with recommendations on how to

ensure the scheme is updated to reflect current practices and continues to be fit for purpose. In addition, the latest Government advice surrounding apprenticeships emphasises the need to ensure that the placement gives the apprentice the skills they need for the workplace, through a quality work programme that stretches the apprentice and improves their capabilities.

- 1.5 In March this year Dover Job Centre Plus approached the Council to seek support with their work experience scheme. The scheme is designed to enable young, unemployed people to volunteer for placements lasting between 2 and 8 weeks. Participation is 25-30 hours per week and the host employer pays no wages or fares to the participant. A work experience agreement would be in place prior to a placement commencing and at the end of a successful placement the host employer provides the participant with a reference.
- 1.6 This provides an excellent opportunity for the Council to further engage with the community and develop local talent and skills. It also supports the Government's initiative of offering work placements as an ideal introduction to work place skills and to the work ethic.

Apprenticeships

2. The following enhancements are proposed as updates to the current apprenticeship element of the policy
 - 2.1 The Council reiterates that the underlying premise of an apprenticeship is to provide an opportunity to improve the quality of life, skill base and employability for the future for the apprentice, through training and education, with a full understanding that the work programme ceases at the end of the qualification period.
 - 2.2 Due to the nature of the training programmes and qualifications, it is recommended the length of apprenticeship programmes, in the current Policy, be extended to up to 2 years (depending on the training and qualification gained and subject to the Manager submitting a work programme appropriate for the period). In addition each apprentice under the age of 18 is paid 1.5x the National Minimum Wage for apprentices for up to 2 years and each apprentice over the age of 18 is paid the National Minimum Wage for their age for up to 2 years and the number of apprenticeship places available is increased to encourage up to 6 apprenticeships per annum (on a rolling basis where programmes are over 12 months), this includes the aspiration to create 2 corporate apprentices who move between services.
 - 2.3 Since commencing the apprenticeship programme more training providers have approached the Council, some offering different skill sets and training courses, with differing relevance to the skill sets required by the Council. However, it is recommended, as part of the developing Memorandum of Understanding with East Kent College (EKC), that EKC should be the first line of enquiry. Should EKC not be able to offer the relevant skills/ training required it is further recommended a diverse approach to identifying the right training provider is encouraged by the manager, with the support of the Officer Employment Management Group. Managers are to be required to liaise with the training provider when developing the work programme so there is a clear match between the work being undertaken and the qualification being studied.

- 2.4 A Support Manual is developed for managers, to ensure the service area, team and apprentice all get the best out of the experience. In particular that a suitable mentor is identified at the start of the process, who works with the manager to develop the apprenticeship training programme and supports the recruitment and interviewing process.
- 2.5 A peer mentoring approach between the apprentices is established to help the apprentices to effectively develop and ensure that skills and capabilities are being fully developed.
- 3. The Employment Management Group on behalf of the Head of Paid Service oversees the approval of apprenticeship programmes. This is to ensure that the apprenticeship being proposed provides a genuine apprenticeship that offers a suitable training and development programme, whilst supporting the Council's business objectives and that a suitable mentoring programme is in place. The Employment Management Group process criteria has already been updated to ensure:
 - 3.1 The work programme is suitable, meets the business and apprentice's qualification requirements and can be accommodated within the timeframe
 - 3.2 There is a clear entry and exit strategy as a requirement of the developed work plan
 - 3.3 There is a clear and agreed business need for an apprenticeship (as opposed to another workforce development option) – if the service requires someone who can come in and hit the ground running, with an immediate increase to efficiency and potential income – then another option should be considered and a separate case made, for example, Kent Business School offer a year placement at a slightly higher level (funding required similar to that of an apprentice)
- 4. It is also recommended that through the regeneration programme on-going conversations are held with employers, developers and training providers to encourage the right skills/training offer to the local workforce. An example of this is working as a partnership approach with East Kent College to develop Dover district's first skills fair linked to DDC regeneration projects, due to be held in November 2015. This project seeks to enhance the offer by inviting future employers to the skills fair to align to the training being offered to jobs of the future.

Work Experience:

- 5. The following enhancements are proposed as updates to the current work placement element of the policy:
 - 5.1 It is widely recognised that work experience placements allow this Council to effectively engage with our local communities, whilst offering invaluable work experience and an insight into the workings of the Council. Government advice is that a work placement offers an ideal introduction to work place skills and work ethic and

those that undertake apprenticeships are better placed if they have had some work experience before they embark on their apprenticeship.

- 5.2 There have been a number of successful work experience placements at this Council since the introduction of the Apprenticeship, Internships and Work Placement Policy in 2012. Each placement is usually for a week, is a high quality bespoke work experience placement. The feedback from the student has always been positive.
- 5.3 However, the work experience requests are often received quite late and directly from the students and although to date, we have been able to deliver nearly all of the work experience requests we have received, the tight time scale often requires managers and staff to divert from their normal duties to allow the Council to move quickly to plan, react and deliver the placement. As a result, managers and staff often feel that there isn't a great deal in it for them from the work placement, as they spend most of their time explaining what is happening with less time for actual doing.
- 5.4 Going forward, as a result of the lessons learnt from these work placements a more structured work experience programme could be developed, which better links to East Kent College. There is also the potential to work with the Clinical Commissioning Groups, helping deliver part of the Health and Wellbeing agenda. This approach would allow the Council to provide work experience to a broader base of students.
- 5.5 The recommended approach is for the Council to work with East Kent College to develop a more structured programme. This would result in students with a clearer work path focus being placed, who whilst gaining invaluable knowledge and experience can also offer more back to the service. As part of the programme students who are interested in a work placement will provide details of what topics would ideally be of interest, provide their CV and details of their future study and career direction.
- 5.6 This approach would better allow the Council to have sufficient time to properly plan a programme of activity that best meets each student's requirements. It is anticipated that 5 students could be accommodated each year on a work experience week. The students would be fully mentored for the week. The examples at Annex A, shows the sort of range of activities that have been offered in a couple of areas of interest. Each programme provides variety, enabling the student to move from team to team, providing interest and variety and in turn not over burdening one team. The experience at Annex A(ii) did offer the student a better opportunity to actually be hands on and this is the approach that we would seek with future work placements.
- 5.7 It is recognised that the impact of supporting a work experience placement will be a slight reduction in productivity during the time of the placement. However, if properly planned, the whole process is positive for both the individual students involved and a positive contribution for the Council.
6. In addition, to further support the skill development of the local workforce it is recommended the proposed Work Experience Placements with Job Centre Plus are trialled in the Communication and Engagement Team, with an evaluation and way forward report at the end of the trial.
7. **Resource Implications**
- 7.1 To increase the current budget for apprenticeships from the current resource envelope of £35k pa to £50k pa.

8. **Corporate Implications**

- 8.1 Comment from the Section 151 Officer: The anticipated budget requirements will be included in the budget forecast for 2016/17 to go through the approval process. (VB)
- 8.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comments to make.
- 8.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: The equality officer has discussed this report with the author and whilst it does not specifically highlight any equalities implications, age has been referred to in the background papers intentions and terms of placement programmes. Members are reminded that in discharging their responsibilities they are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15>

9. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Example of Work Experience Programmes

10. **Background Papers**

Apprenticeship, Graduate Placement and Work Experience Schemes, Policies and Associated Contracts/Agreements – May 2012

Contact Officer: David Randall, Director of Governance

Annex A (i) - Example of a Work Experience programme (Democratic and Legal) Mentors: HR/RB Co-ordinator: HL		
Date	Activity	Lead Officer
Day 1	08:45 Brief Induction (Fire, H&S , DP) AM Introduction to Democratic Services PM Introduction to Corporate Services (FOI/DP/complaints/Digital Agenda/Emergency Planning/Business Continuity)	HL – PA and Technical Support Officer RB – Team Leader Democratic Services CC – Head of Corporate Services
Day 2	AM Introduction to Regulatory Services PM Observing a training course on the work of the Regulatory Committee	PN/AK – Environmental Protection Manager/Environmental Crime Team Leader LM/RP - Head of Legal Services and Licensing Team Leader
Day 3	AM Observing cases in the Magistrates Court at Folkestone (including Enviro crime prosecution) PM Introduction to Human Resources	SA - Legal Executive (Court) HR Adviser
Day 4	AM Observing at the Electoral Matters Committee Late AM Overview of Pollution Enforcement activity PM Discussion with Solicitor to the Council and Trainee Solicitor on Legal matters and legal training	LC (Head of Democratic Services) PN/PD _ Environmental Protection (Out and about in the district) HR - Solicitor to the Council/Legal Services –
Day 5	AM Decision Making – Reports, recording on Modern.Gov, Delegations PM Wash up session – issues from the week	HR/RB RB to coordinate support as required

Annex A (ii) - Example of a Work Experience programme (Human Geography)

Mentor: DR

Co-ordinators: AW (Monday), HL (Tuesday to Friday)

Date	Activity	Where/Who
Day 1	08:45 Brief Induction (Fire, H&S , DP) All day with Regulatory Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Health • Environmental Protection • Licensing 	AW – PA to the Chief Executive PN/AK – Environmental Protection
Day 2	All day: Parks for People Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey work in the parks • Administrative tasks in the office 	JW – Project Manager, Kearsney Parks (At Kearsney Park and back in the office)
Day 3	All day: Up on the Downs Project The project is hosting a judging panel for an artistic gateway sculpture for the path that leads from the port to the White Cliffs. Admin support to prepare for this event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • am: Visit the proposed site for the sculpture. Provide some context to Up on the Downs and DDC's work on habitat management, landscape, heritage and tourism. • pm: at DDC offices. Help put together the packs for the judges 	RH Scheme Manager Up on the Downs Landscape Partnership Scheme (Walking the whole of the artistic gateway footpath route on the White Cliffs, outdoor clothing and footwear required)
Day 4	AM Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Options • Private Sector Housing PM Decision Making <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports/Modern.Gov • Delegations • Member and Officer decisions 	ET - Housing Options Manager Robin Kennedy - PSH Manager DR - Director of Governance HR - Solicitor to the Council)
Day 5	AM Local Plan and Land Allocation document PM Wash up session – issues from the week	AF -Regeneration and Development - Policy and Projects Manager HL to coordinate

