

REPORT TO: Employment Learning and Skills Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 16th November 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Environment

SUBJECT: Apprenticeships

WARD(S): Borough-wide

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report seeks to update the Board on the progress of the apprenticeships programme.

2. RECOMMENDED: That

2.1 **The Board considers the development of the apprenticeship programme and identifies any future developments that it wishes to see.**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 In January 2009 the Employment Learning and Skills Specialist Strategic Partnership launched a new apprenticeship programme APT4U. The aim of this project is to generate 100 new apprenticeships in businesses by offering an incentive of £2,000. Businesses that have never had an apprentice are encouraged to take one and those businesses that have taken them in the past are approached to take an extra apprentice. The cost of the project is £300,000 and it is resourced from working neighbourhood funding.

3.2 The main focus is to target opportunities on young people that are not in employment education or training (NEET). As such, a close working relationship has developed between Halton People into Jobs (HPiJ) which manages the programme and Connexions. A senior Connexions adviser has recently been seconded to HPiJ to boost the project team. Regular case conferences take place where young people are identified for the programme and these are then matched with apprentice vacancies within local businesses.

3.3 To date 68 new apprenticeship opportunities have been established with local businesses across a wide range of occupations including

engineering, admin, childcare, construction, horticulture, catering, pharmacy assistant, dental surgery assistant etc. Appendix 1 provides details of those already in post with a training provider signed up.

- 3.4 Of the total number of new apprentices including those soon to start 52 are NEET young people. Of these 5 are care leavers have started and another 2 care leavers are awaiting CRB clearance to commence apprenticeships within the Children's Centres. The target for care leavers has been set as a minimum of 10 although there are aspirations of reaching 15.
- 3.5 National Government continues to place high importance on the creation of apprenticeships and recently the Daily Post has launched a campaign to sign up an additional 500 apprenticeships in the sub region. Wirral Council has announced its intention to support the creation of 100 apprenticeships within businesses by meeting the cost of the first 18 months which is similar to a programme that Knowsley Council operates.
- 3.6 The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) was launched in April 2009 as one of the successor organisation to the Learning and Skills Council and it has the remit to drive forward the Governments ambition for apprenticeships. The NAS is very impressed with the number of employer based apprenticeships that have been created through the WNF APT4U Project and is keen to explore how their funding could add value.
- 3.7 The NAS is keen to develop Group Training Associations (GTA) which are funded collaborative initiatives involving groups of employers and/or training providers to develop joint apprenticeship programmes that operate across industrial sectors or geographical areas. Instead of contracting with a variety of individual apprentice providers, NAS would passport the apprenticeship funding to the GTA who would either directly deliver the apprenticeships or broker with existing apprentice providers to deliver the apprentice frameworks to meet the needs of employers. NAS are very keen to explore the potential for the Council to become a geographical based GTA in Halton that would broker the delivery of apprenticeships to both private and public sector organisations. Should there be support for such a proposal an outline business case will be worked up.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Apprenticeships can help develop employability skills and help people gain confidence. They support the Community Strategy and Council Corporate Plan Key Objective: To promote and increase the employability of local people and remove any barriers to employment.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The progress of the programme made to date is very good given it was launch just as the recession really started to take effect. In the longer term there are concerns that the existing national programme of working neighbourhood funding is only budgeted to March 2011 after which time the project may need to stop unless alternative funding is secured.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

Supporting care leavers and NEETs with apprenticeships is viewed as a key part of the support programme for those groups.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Apprenticeships are a key part of the ELS SSP work programme.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

In some instances people who we are seeking to take onto an apprenticeship will have known health problems that are perceived barriers to employment. In such instances employers will be given support in terms of advice and adaptations and individuals may need support through the development of condition management plans.

6.4 A Safer Halton

None known at this stage

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None known at this stage

7. RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 From experience in other local authorities it will take some time to work through the existing workforce so rapid progress should not be expected in the first 6 months.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 Apprenticeships offer real opportunities for people that need their skills developing, particularly at entry level employment and clearly bring benefits to their employers. A particular focus will be on young people that are NEET, but the other priority groups that have been identified will be targeted too e.g. disabled, women re-turners, ex-offenders.

9. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

- 9.1 There are no background documents under the meaning of this Act.

Apprenticeship Types

Type	Job	Qualification
NEET	TD Nurse	Dental Nurse
Adult	mechanics	nvq l 2
Adult	Child Care	NVQ L3
Adult	Engineering	NVQ L2
NEET	Equestrian	NVQ L2
Adult	C/Service	NVQ L2
NEET	TDNurse	NVQ L2
NEET	Electrician	NVQ L2/3
NEET	Business Admin	NVQ L2
NEET	Business Admin	NVQ L2
NEET	Hairdressing	NVQ L2
NEET	Plasterer	NVQ L3
Adult	C/Service	NVQ L2
NEET	Business Admin	NVQ L2
Adult	C/Service	NVQ L2
Adult	C/Service	NVQ L2
NEET	Business Admin	NVQ L2
NEET	C/Service	NVQ L 2
Adult	Catering	NVQ L2
Adult	Business Admin	NVQ L2
Adult	Hairdressing	NVQ L3
NEET	Business Admin	NVQ L2
NEET	Electrician	NVQ L2
Adult	Roofing	NVQ L2
NEET	Motor Mechanics	NVQ L3
NEET	Hairdressing	NVQ L2
NEET	Hairdressing	NVQ L 2
Adult	Trainee Dispensing Assistant	NVQ L2
Adult	Electrician	NVQ L2/3
Adult	Engineering	NVQ L2
NEET	Business Admin	NVQ L2
NEET	Business Admin	
Adult	Business Admin	NVQ L2
NEET	Electrician	NVQ L3
NEET	Equestrian	NVQ L2
NEET	Engineering	NVQ L2
NEET	Business Admin	NVQ L2
Adult	Dental Nurse	NVQ L 2
NEET	Painter & Decorator	NVQ L 2

NEET	Electrician	NVQ L2
Adult	Business Admin	NVQ L3
NEET	Motor Mechanics	NVQ L2
NEET	Business Admin	
Adult	Motor Mechanics	NVQ L2
NEET	Child Care	NVQ L3
NEET	Business Admin	NVQ L2
NEET	Trainee Dispensing Assistant	NVQ L 2
NEET	Trainee Sports Coach	
NEET	Business Admin	NVQ L2
NEET	Dental Nurse	NVQ L 3
NEET	Engineering	NVQ L2
NEET	Motor Mechanics	NVQ L 2
Adult	Child Care	NVQ L 3
Adult	Plastering	NVQ L2

There are three types of apprenticeships:

- Apprenticeships (equivalent to 5 GCSE's at grades C and above) work towards work-based learning qualifications i.e. NVQ level 2, Key Skills Certificate (literacy, numeracy & ITC skills) and in most cases a relevant Technical Certificate which is a knowledge based qualification such as a BTeC. Completion of an apprenticeship allows entry to an Advanced Apprenticeship.
- Advanced Apprenticeships (equivalent to 2 'A' level passes) work towards a work-based learning qualifications i.e. NVQ level 3, Key Skills Certificate (literacy, numeracy & ITC skills) and in most cases a relevant Technical Certificate which is a knowledge based qualification such as a BTeC. To start this programme entrants must have 5 GCSE's at grades C and above or have completed an Apprenticeship.
- Higher Apprentices work towards a work-based learning qualification i.e. NVQ level 4 and in some cases a knowledge based qualification such as a Foundation degree.