



# **REPORT TO EMPLOYMENT PANEL**

## **PORTFOLIO AREA: PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT**

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**Date of Meeting: 8 July 2011**

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**Public**

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**Inside Policy Framework**

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**Title: Apprenticeship Scheme**  
**Report of: Chief Executive**  
**Report reference: CE 18/11**

### **Summary:**

Members will be aware that apprenticeships are an excellent way for local authorities to build capacity to address current and future skills gaps and offer high quality employment opportunities for local people. Apprenticeships are a key part of the Government's skills strategy for both young people and adults. An Apprenticeship Scheme Framework has been developed which sets out the principles and processes of taking on apprentices. Employing apprentices would be beneficial to both Carlisle City Council and the local community.

### **Recommendations:**

The Employment Panel is asked to:

1. Approve the Apprenticeship Scheme Framework for Carlisle City Council and receive future reports on developments with apprentices.

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**Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers: None**

# **1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND OPTIONS**

## **Introduction**

- 1.1 Carlisle City Council has considered introducing an apprenticeship scheme in the past but decided against it for financial and organisational reasons. A different approach is being taken this time which does not involve specific numbers of apprentices or identify which areas of the City Council will offer apprenticeships.

## **A New Approach to Apprenticeships**

- 1.2 An Apprenticeship Scheme Framework has been developed which sets out the principles and processes for taking on apprentices. The Organisational Development Team will be responsible for promoting apprenticeships within the City Council, supporting managers to identify where apprentices could fit into their teams and working with training providers who will deliver the apprenticeships. Managers will be responsible for finding the funding to pay apprentices and getting the position approved through the Establishment Change process.
- 1.3 The Framework explains what an apprenticeship is, why apprentices would be beneficial to the City Council, how apprentices would be recruited, what they would be paid, what the terms and conditions would be, the responsibilities of managers and sources of support. This will be included in section C of the Policy Framework with other operational policies and procedures. See Annex A for the Apprenticeship Scheme Framework.

## **Benefits of Apprenticeships**

- 1.4 Introducing apprenticeships would benefit the City Council in several ways. These include:
- Supporting succession planning and tackling skills shortages by 'growing our own'
  - Increasing the number of young people working for the City Council
  - Offering high quality employment opportunities for local people
  - Raising skill levels of City Council staff
  - Contributing to key objectives within the Corporate Plan 2011 – 2012, (5) Reduce worklessness and (6) Improve the skills of the workforce

## **How Apprenticeships Can Benefit the Local Economy**

- 1.5 Approximately 2000 young people leave Cumbria every year to find better education and employment opportunities and apprenticeships can play a key role in providing high quality jobs with qualifications which could encourage them to stay.
- 1.6 The Corporate Plan recognises the importance of upskilling the local population in order to achieve economic growth. Research by Populus for the first National Apprenticeship Week in 2008 demonstrated that:
- 77% of employers believe apprenticeships make them more competitive
  - 76% say that apprenticeships provide higher overall productivity
  - 80% feel that apprenticeships reduce staff turnover
  - 83% of employers rely on their apprenticeship programmes to provide the skilled workers they need for the future
  - 88% believe that apprenticeships lead to a more motivated and satisfied workforce
  - 57% report a high proportion of their apprentices going on to management positions within the company
- 1.7 The National Apprenticeship Service is working with the Cumbria Work Based Learning Provider Forum challenging Cumbrian employers to recruit 100 apprentices in 100 days. The challenge started on 1<sup>st</sup> June and ends on 18 October (100 working days). Events to promote the challenge have been held across Cumbria and have been well attended by local employers. The challenge is being supported by Jobcentre Plus, Connexions Cumbria and Cumbria Chamber of Commerce as they see it as an excellent way to boost employment opportunities especially for young people. The Leader and Chief Executive of Cumbria County Council launched the campaign as the County Council has been a long-time supporter of apprentices.

## **Using Apprenticeships to Grow the Workforce**

- 1.8 One of the key objectives in the Organisational Development Plan is to 'Build capacity to address current and future skills gaps' and apprenticeships offer an excellent way to do this. There are apprenticeship programmes available for most areas of City Council work and new ones are regularly being developed. A mapping exercise will be undertaken to show managers the apprenticeships that cover their areas of work and this will be used as part of a campaign to

raise awareness of apprenticeships at the City Council and the benefits they bring.

- 1.9 Age-related demographic data is being analysed to identify the parts of the City Council where the most urgent succession planning is needed. Apprenticeships will help to 'grow our own' staff by taking on young people and offering them high quality jobs with qualifications and opportunities for progression within the City Council.

### **Apprenticeship Qualifications for Existing City Council Staff**

- 1.10 Although apprenticeships are traditionally seen as being for young people, apprenticeships are also open to adults and the Government has increased the number of adult apprenticeships which are available. The City Council could use apprenticeship qualifications with existing staff who would remain on their current terms and conditions while benefiting from gaining a relevant qualification.

### **How Apprenticeships Would Work at Carlisle City Council**

- 1.11 If the Apprenticeship Scheme Framework is approved by the Employment Panel, the Organisational Development Team will work with the National Apprenticeship Service to map the City Council areas of work for which there are apprenticeship programmes. The Team will be responsible for promoting apprenticeships to managers and supporting any that want to take on an apprentice. Managers will be responsible for identifying funding and completing the Establishment Change Form. Advice will be available from Organisational Development on how to recruit apprentices and they will also find a college or training provider who will deliver the qualifications.
- 1.12 Apprenticeships are available at three levels:
- Intermediate – level 2
  - Advanced – level 3
  - Higher – level 4
- 1.13 Detailed information on contracts and conditions is contained in the Apprenticeship Scheme Framework in Annex A, but in brief, all apprentices would be offered a fixed term contract, two years for level 2 apprentices and three years for level 3.

- 1.14 Detailed information on pay for apprentices is contained in the Apprenticeship Scheme Framework in Annex A, but in brief, level 2 apprentices in the first year of an apprenticeship would be paid £110 a week and in the second year would be paid £125 if they are under 21 and the national minimum wage (£6.08 per hour from October 2011) if over 21. Level 3 apprentices would be paid at Grade A on the pay scale chart, point 1 in the first year and point 2 in subsequent years.

## **2 CONSULTATION TO DATE**

Senior Management Team

## **3 CONSULTATION PLANNED**

Consultative Joint Committee

## **4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- i. Approve the Apprenticeship Scheme Framework for Carlisle City Council and receive future reports on developments with apprentices.

## **5 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

Introducing apprenticeships to Carlisle City Council would bring a range of benefits for both the organisation and the local economy.

## **6 IMPLICATIONS**

- Staffing/Resources – The Scheme would operate outside the current pay policy in that the pay levels for those engaged directly as Apprentices have fixed pay rates. In exchange the City Council would guarantee a training scheme designed to fit them for employment either within the City Council if there are suitable vacancies or in other organisations if there are not. Other than that, there is no change to existing employment practices.

- Financial – Apprentices would be funded from existing staffing budgets, although some could be taken on through future major capital projects.
- Legal – Apprentices would be employees of the Council and subject to the usual terms and conditions of employment and proper recruitment processes.
- Corporate – An apprenticeship scheme would contribute to key objectives within the Corporate Plan 2011 – 2012, (5) Reduce worklessness and (6) Improve the skills of the workforce.
- Environmental – None
- Crime and Disorder – None
- Impact on Customers – None
- Equality and Diversity – Apprenticeship schemes have traditionally attracted young people although they now available to anyone over 16. The City Council has an ageing workforce and apprenticeships offer a way to employ more young people which would help to balance the age profile.

### Impact assessments

Does the change have an impact on the following?

<b>Equality Impact Screening</b>	<b>Impact Yes/No?</b>	<b>Is the impact positive or negative?</b>
Does the policy/service impact on the following?		
Age	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Positive</b>
Disability	<b>No</b>	
Race	<b>No</b>	
Gender/ Transgender	<b>No</b>	
Sexual Orientation	<b>No</b>	
Religion or belief	<b>No</b>	
Human Rights	<b>No</b>	
Social exclusion	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Positive</b>
Health inequalities	<b>No</b>	
Rurality	<b>No</b>	

**CARLISLE CITY COUNCIL**  
**APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME FRAMEWORK**

**Background**

Carlisle City Council has a long history of supporting learning and development opportunities for its staff and promoting learning in the local community.

The City Council, like many other local authorities, has a low proportion of young people working for it. In February 2011, there were no staff aged 19 or under, and only 3% of staff were under 25. In comparison, 38% of staff were over 50 and 10% were over 60. The 2007 workforce profile in the Workforce Development Plan 2006 – 2010, said 34% of staff were over 50 and 5% were under 25. The percentage of staff over 50 has increased since 2007 and the percentage under 25 has decreased which shows the age profile of the City Council workforce is moving upwards.

The high proportion of older workers has implications for future service delivery if a more targeted approach to succession planning is not introduced. The City Council needs to encourage more young people to consider careers in local government and will work with local schools, training providers, Carlisle College and the University of Cumbria to achieve this.

Apprenticeships will be a key part of a new approach to succession planning and will help the City Council to tackle skills shortages by 'growing our own'. They will also contribute to the City Council's Economy priority by offering young people in Carlisle high quality jobs and opportunities to study for relevant national qualifications.

Nationally, apprenticeships are available to people aged over 16 with no upper age limit, and while the key aim of the Carlisle City Council Apprenticeship Scheme will be to increase the number of young people working for the City Council, apprenticeships can also be offered to older people. The apprenticeship frameworks can also be used to benefit existing staff.

**Principles**

All apprenticeships combine work with qualifications and are available at three levels:

- Intermediate – level 2
- Advanced – level 3
- Higher – level 4

There are many different teams at Carlisle City Council to which apprentices could make a significant contribution. As apprenticeships combine training on the job with relevant industry qualifications, an apprentice would not be able to replace a trained member of staff as they need time to develop their skills and gain experience. However, apprenticeships offer an excellent way to build capacity within teams. Information on the different vocational areas covered by apprenticeship frameworks is available from the Organisational Development Team.

## **Recruitment**

The initial stage of recruiting an apprentice is the same as for any other member of staff. The Establishment Change Form (ES1) should be completed by the relevant manager and passed to Finance and Personnel for comments.

Advice is available from the Organisational Development Team on how to recruit apprentices once the ES1 form has been approved. They will work with managers to find an appropriate college or training provider to deliver the qualifications and will also recommend ways to advertise the apprenticeship in addition to the usual City Council places e.g. National Apprenticeship Service website and Connexions Cumbria (both free).

A training provider or college should be identified before interviews take place for the apprenticeship to ensure that there is an appropriate qualification available. Although there are apprenticeship frameworks covering over 80 vocational areas, not all of them are available in Cumbria due to a lack of providers. Where possible local training providers or colleges will be used, but for some vocational areas a regional or national provider may be needed.

## **Pay**

The National Minimum Wage (NMW) applies to apprenticeships and there are different rates of pay depending on the age of the apprentice and what stage of the apprenticeship they are at. Some organisations which employ apprentices pay the NMW while others choose to pay more. From October 2011, the NMW for apprentices under 19 and for those in the first year of an apprenticeship aged over 19 will be £2.60 per hour. For apprentices over 21 after the first year of their apprentice the NMW for over 21s applies which will be £6.08

The amount of pay offered by Carlisle City Council will depend on the level of apprenticeship undertaken. For level 2 apprenticeships, Carlisle City Council will pay above the NMW to young apprentices and apprentices over 21 in the first year of an apprentice, offering £110 per week (equivalent to £2.90 per hour for a 37 hour week). In the second year apprentices under 21 will receive £125 per week, and apprentices over 21 will be paid the NMW (£6.08 from 1 October 2011).

Level 3 apprentices will be paid at Grade A on the pay scale chart, point 1 in the first year and point 2 in subsequent years, £12,489 and £12787 as of April 2011, above the NMW for both apprentices in the 1<sup>st</sup> year of an apprenticeship and those over 21.

## **Contracts and conditions**

All apprentices will be offered a fixed term contract, two years for level 2 apprenticeships and three years for level 3 apprenticeships.

Apprentices will benefit from the usual Carlisle City Council benefits including annual leave, pension scheme and flexi-time (if appropriate for the role). Apprentices will be encouraged to take up the learning and development opportunities offered by the City Council to its staff.

For most vocational areas, apprentices will be required to attend college or a training provider on a day or block release basis. Apprentices will be given paid time off to attend this and may be given time off for study at additional times depending on the needs of the course.

Funding for qualifications as part of the apprenticeship for under 19s will be paid by the National Apprenticeship Service. For apprentices over 19, an employer contribution is needed for qualifications and this will usually be paid by the Organisational Development Team.

It is hoped that apprentices will continue working for the City Council and gain a permanent or temporary contract at the end of their apprenticeship. They will be able to apply for internal vacancies up to six months before the end of their fixed term contract. Those who have not secured a position three months before the end of the contract will be placed on the redeployment register. If there are no suitable internal positions available or likely to become available in the immediate future, support will be given to apprentices to find employment with other local organisations. The Organisational Development Team will work with Connexions Cumbria to provide this support.

### **Responsibilities of Managers**

Service Managers are responsible for:

- Initial identification of apprenticeship opportunities in their service areas
- Sourcing funding to pay the wages for an apprentice
- Recruitment of apprentices
- Nominating a mentor for the apprentice
- Ensuring the apprentice is given appropriate time to complete the relevant qualifications including paid time off for day or block release

Line Managers/supervisors are responsible for:

- Ensuring the appropriate young person's risk assessment is completed
- Complying with health and safety regulations relating to the area of work and any particular requirements or restrictions on young people
- Providing any necessary equipment or clothing
- Planning an appropriate work programme for the apprentice
- Working with the college or training provider to support the relevant qualification
- Mentoring and supporting the apprentice

### **Further Information**

For further information and support on apprenticeships please contact the Organisational Development Team.

Organisational Development Team  
June 2011